

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS 2022



Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

As we begin the Advent Season, it is important to know that the Lord has a message of HOPE for the world. In response to the long litany of global uncertainties, God presents Jesus' promise to come again. His first advent was humble – like a lamb. He arrived in the middle of the night, as the Babe of Bethlehem, in order to be our Saviour. His second advent will be different. Every eye will see Him when He returns with power and glory to be our Judge and King.

The idea of Christ as Judge was not made up by the Church. It is from God Himself. He described it to the Prophet Jeremiah: *“A King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgement and justice in the earth”*. Jesus also spoke of it: *“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.”* (Matthew 25. 31-32)

Judgement requires preparation. In our case, this means repentance or ‘returning’ – returning to God and to His holy way. Leave self with all of its ambitious schemes, and return to Jesus Who gave Himself up for you. Leave the world and its material infatuation and turn to your Father who bestows forgiveness and healing and everlasting life. Stop searching for pleasure and comfort here, and seek the truth and happiness of Heaven.

But how? Even when we know what we should do, it can be difficult to do it. And so we ask the Lord to stir up our wills. (Collect, page 259, BCP) We need His help to step out of our spiritual rut and turn back to Him. He gives this help by His Spirit who is living within us, and by His Church, the Body of Christ. For centuries, the tools for repentance and spiritual renewal are prayer, fasting, self-denial, and the reading and meditation on God's Word. As you reflect on these may I offer some possibilities specifically for Advent:

1. **Compline** (p. 722 BCP) will be prayed **at 8:00 PM on Sundays**: join in on Facebook or by Vimeo;
2. **Compline** will be prayed **at 8:00 PM on Wednesdays via ZOOM** – please contact the Office to receive the link; or sign up for it in the Main Entry.
3. Use **the Advent Wreath Daily Devotions** booklet in your home (see parish website).
4. Keep **the Advent Ember Days** (December 15, 17 and 18) as days of solemn prayer for the Church's ministry.
5. Consider **fasting and/or abstaining** (going without some pleasure) on Fridays.

The situation is urgent but the HOPE is real: Christ has promised to come again! *“The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, let us put on the armour of light.”* (Romans 13.12) *Maranatha! Come Lord Jesus, come quickly!* (1 Cor. 16.22)

Yours in Christ our King

Chris VanBuskirk +

(Please turn the page for the schedule of Christmas Services.)

CHRISTMAS SERVICES 2021



Christmas Eve (December 24th)

4:00 PM The Holy Eucharist
7:00 PM The Holy Eucharist ❖
10:00 PM The Holy Eucharist ❖
(Please note time change from past years)

Christmas Day (December 25th)

10:00 AM The Holy Eucharist
5:00 PM Evening Prayer ❖

The Feast of Stephen (December 26th)

8:00 AM The Holy Eucharist ❖
9:15 AM Morning Prayer
10:00 AM The Holy Eucharist
5:00 PM Evening Prayer

The Second Sunday After Christmas (January 2nd)

8:00 AM The Holy Eucharist
9:15 AM Morning Prayer
10:00 AM Carols and Lessons ❖
5:00 PM Evening Prayer

❖ **Proof of vaccination will be required to attend these Services.**

(Unvaccinated children 12 & under are welcome with vaccinated guardian- masks required)

For your consideration, please...



2021 has been a difficult year financially for many people. Many Churches have struggled this year as well. We are currently sitting with a large deficit. The financial committee is asking if you are able to increase your weekly offerings by the cost of a cup of coffee - together we can make a big difference.

Thank you!