

# First Sunday of Advent

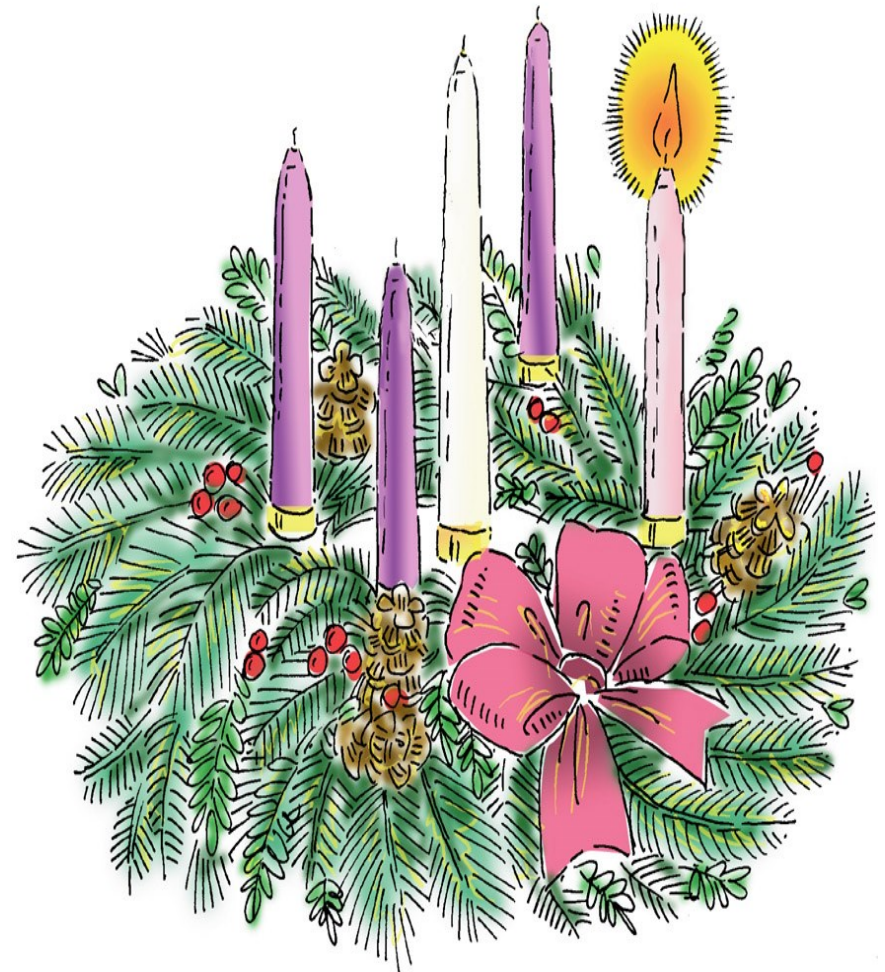


IN OUR PRAYERS: We remember those in special need of God's love and care including: Deb Zanfes, Wilma Nielsen, Owen Finer, Rhonda Bakken, Bonnie Anderson, Dennis Mandsager, Margaret Sloan, Kort Freeman, Lois Jurries, Heide Rienhardt, Margaret Sloan, Garwin Anderson, Lois Quam, Pastor Trudy Peterson, Karyn Davis, Rod Snavelly, Bob & Janet

Mortenson, Lucille Anderson, Norma Larson, Richard Omundson and those we name in our hearts.

\*Our missionary: Courtney Davis in Papua New Guinea (now on furlough)

\*Our companion synods: The Southern Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania-Yakobi Parish, companion with Lost Island and the Evangelical Lutheran Church Laz-Paz Parish in Chile, companion with Bethany .



This is the time of year that we are looking for Volunteers to help us cover all the different "Jobs" that keep our Church running smoothly. Please take a look at your personal calendars to see if there is some time that you could either be a Greeter, Communion Assistant, or Lector during this upcoming year. There is also a need for help with the different Committees (Youth, Education, Worship, Evangelism and Stewardship). More the merrier! If you are interested in volunteering for any of the above, please call the Office and let us know. Our Church number is (712) 852-4450. Diane is looking forward to talking with you!

Bethany Lutheran Church  
703 Broadway- Emmetsburg, IA  
Worship 10:30 AM  
Sunday School 9:30 AM

Lost Island Lutheran Church  
3797-310th St. - Ruthven, IA  
Worship 8:45 AM  
Sunday School 10:15 AM

December 3, 2017

## HANGING OF THE GREENS

*adaptation by Jeanyne Slettom*

**Pastor:** *The Hanging of the Greens is a service for the first Sunday in Advent. It is based on the English tradition of decorating the home with wreaths, garlands, a Christmas tree, and evergreens for Advent and Christmas. In a church setting, it readies the sanctuary (and church members) for the season.*

### ORGAN PRELUDE

#### WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### \*CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

\* Those who are able, please stand

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, the Lord of Israel who comes to set us free, the mighty Savior who comes to show mercy, the Dawn from on high who guides us into peace. **Amen.**

Let us come before God in confession.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

**ALL: To you, O God, we lift up our souls. You know us through and through; we confess our sins to you. Remember not our sins; remember us with your steadfast love. Show us your ways; teach us your paths; and lead us in justice and truth, for the sake of your goodness in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

Sisters and brothers, come with joy and draw water from the well of salvation. Remember the gift of baptism: your sin is washed away in the name of + Jesus; you belong to Christ; you are anointed to serve. Stand up and raise your heads! The reign of God is near. Amen.

\***GATHERING HYMN:** *Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers* LBW #25

**Pastor:** CALL TO WORSHIP – (Responsive)

How shall we prepare this house for the birth of Jesus?

**With branches of cedar, the tree of excellence and strength.**

How shall we prepare this house for the eternal Christ?

**With garlands of pine and fir, whose leaves are ever living, evergreen.**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thank you to the readers and participants in today's Hanging of the Greens Service.  
Thank you to the Altar Guild for decorating the church.

Poinsettias to decorate the Church are always welcome. If you would like to share one, please put your name on it so that it can be returned to you. Please call the Church office (852-4450) if you are giving the plant as a memorial of a loved one so we can acknowledge it in the bulletin.



Glenn Henriksen's Christmas piano and organ concert will be at Bethany Lutheran on December 10th at 2 PM. Please come and enjoy the music and fellowship. Bring a friend or two and enjoy the afternoon with us. A free will offering will be taken.



The Bethany Sunday School Christmas Program will be December 10th during the 10:30 am Church Service. There will be taco lunch following the program.  
**\*This will mark the last day of Sunday School until January 7, 2018 for Bethany.\***



On December 16th at 9:30 am, Lost Island Caroling will begin at the Ruthven Care Center. All are welcome to join us in caroling.

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## VOLUNTEERS –BETHANY

Organist	Janis Campbell
Ushers for December	David Sidles, Lonnie Naig
Ushers for January	
Assistant side ushers for Dec 3	Joe & Lindsay Carter
Assistant side ushers for Dec 10	Ben & Gretchen Hofstad
Altar Guild December	Kathy Mehan
Altar Guild January	Pam & Mike Hermansen

### TODAY, December 3, 2017

Lector: Hanging of the Greens-Many  
 Greeters Kent & Belinda Davidson  
 \*Sharon Sobkoweit

Communion Asst: Mark & Darca Saxton  
 Phoenix Campbell

Acolytes: Parker Schmeling, Luke Carter    Braydon & Bryce Cooke

### NEXT SUNDAY, December 10, 2017

Sunday School Program  
 Bob Andersen  
 \*Dawn Freeman

### TODAY, December 3

Organist:  
 Altar Guild for December  
 Altar Guild for January  
 Reader: Kyle Norris  
 Communion Asst: Kadin Norris  
 Acolytes: Olivia Sorenson

### LOST ISLAND

Tim Nielsen  
 Lenora Kropf, Alaire Nielsen

### NEXT SUNDAY, December 10

Tim Nielsen  
 Kate Sorenson

## OPPORTUNITIES

### Sunday, Dec 3

5:00 Outreach

### Monday, Dec 4

9:00 am Quilters  
 1:30 pm ECC Communion  
 6:00 pm Quilters

### Wednesday, Dec 6

12 Noon Men's Bible Study  
 1:30 SACK, 5:00 COOL, 8:00 LIFE  
 5:30 Adult Bible Study

### Thursday, Dec 7

10:30 Lakeside Bible Study  
 6:30 pm Sarah Circle/Elaine Nauss/Pot Luck  
 6:50 pm Tabitha Circle/Alaire Nielsen  
 3:30 pm SACK - 7:00 pm COOL— 8:00 pm LIFE

### Sunday, Dec 10

8:45 am Lost Island Worship  
 9:30 am Bethany SS Program Practice  
 10:15 am Lost Island Sunday School  
 10:30 am Bethany Christmas Program/Noisy Offering—OBI  
 Taco Dinner following Church—Bethany  
 1:00 pm Vespers—PARC Hall, Kath, ECC— 2:00 Glenn Henriksen Concert

How shall we prepare this house for the prophet of Galilee?

**With wreaths of holly and ivy, telling of his passion, death and resurrection.**

How shall we prepare our hearts for this revelation of God?

**By hearing again the words of the prophets and the promises of God.**

For in the story of Jesus we see revealed the transforming power of God. We are reminded anew of God's vision of wholeness, justice, and peace for all of creation. **Thanks be to God.**

**Pastor:** Let us pray; Our Father, we long for the simple beauty of Christmas – for all the old melodies, words, and symbols that remind us of when your Son, Jesus, came one night as a babe in a manger. We bring you our thanks for every sign, small and large, of your love; for all the ways that you have blessed us. May all that we do and say bring honor to your name, and may the joy and spirit of Christmas remain with us now and always. In the name of Jesus, who came to save His people from their sins, we pray. Amen

## PREPARING FOR CHRISTMAS

**Reader/Jonah:** Today we are getting ready for the celebration of Christ's birth by preparing our worship space for Christmas. This morning we worship together on the first Sunday of Advent. The colors of the paraments have been green for months so today we change them to Blue. Blue, or sometimes purple, is the traditional color for Advent paraments, both are the color of royalty, because both were very expensive to produce before invention of chemical dyes. It took a LOT of berries to create either deep blue or deep purple. So, our beautiful blue paraments are a symbolic way to say that we are waiting and preparing for the return of our King.

**HYMN:** *O, Come, O, Come, Emmanuel* vs. 1 & 2    LBW #34  
Light Altar candles

## EVERGREENS

**Scripture reader/Olivia:** **ISAIAH 9:2, 6-7**

<sup>2</sup> *The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined.*

<sup>6</sup> *For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders;*

and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

<sup>7</sup> His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace  
for the throne of David and his kingdom.

He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onward and forevermore.

The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

**Reader/Isaac:** As we continue to get the church ready for Christmas, we put evergreens – holly and ivy – in the windows of the nave. Churches and homes have used evergreens as Christmas decorations for centuries. For the ancient Romans, evergreens were an emblem of peace, joy and victory. The early Christians placed them in their windows to show that Christ entered the home. Evergreen never change color, even in the middle of winter. They symbolize the unchanging nature of God, and they remind us of the everlasting life that is ours through Christ Jesus.

Reader 6: Holly is symbolic of Jesus Christ in two ways, the red berries represent the blood that Jesus shed on the cross. Legend states that the cross was made of the wood of the holly tree and that the holly berries were originally white, but that Christ's blood stained the berries forever red. Holly's pointed leaves symbolize the crown of thorns placed on Jesus' head before he died on the cross. Ivy symbolizes eternal life because it is an evergreen. Ivy needs to cling to something in order to grow, and so that reminds us that we need to cling to God for support throughout our lives.

(Candles, evergreen and holly placed on the window sills)

**GOD WILL SEND A LIGHT TO THE NATIONS [ADVENT WREATH & CANDLES]**

**Scripture reader/Braxton: ISAIAH 60:2-3**

<sup>2</sup> For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples;  
but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you.

<sup>3</sup> Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

**Reader/ Miriam :** Advent is a time of expectation, and this is symbolized not only by the four-week period of preparation, but also by the lighting of an Advent candle on each Sunday of the season.

**Reader/Logan:** The greatest gift of Christmas is the gift of Jesus. In him all creation is reconciled to God. In him there is life, hope and a future.

(Place the manger beside the tree)

**Pastor:** Let us pray. Heavenly Father, bless the coming Christmas. Keep each heart from fear and distress, loneliness and pain season with peace and joy. Grant that each visitor to this place may be grateful for your goodness, leaving only serenity of knowing that you truly love each of us and all of your creation. We ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Go in His grace and in His peace, and tell everyone the good news of Jesus!

**BENEDICTION**

**CLOSING HYMN:** *Hark, the Glad Sound!*

LBW #35

**DISMISSAL:** Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE**



We invite all who are baptized to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion with us. We ask that you believe that Christ is present in the bread and wine and that you desire the benefits He offers. If you would like to come forward for a blessing and not receive Holy Communion, please indicate by crossing your arms. If you are not able to come forward, please indicate to the usher and we will serve you at the pew. Grape juice is present in the center of the tray. Gluten free wafers are also available.

## THE CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA

**Reader/Heidi:** Most of our Christmas greenery comes from European traditions, but one plant comes from Central America. There is an old Mexican legend about how Poinsettia's and Christmas came together. There was once a poor Mexican girl called Pepita who had no present to give the baby Jesus and the Christmas Eve service. As Pepita sadly walked to the chapel, her cousin Pedro tried to cheer her up and said, "I'm sure that even the smallest gift, given by someone who loves him, will make Jesus happy." Pepita didn't know what to give, so she picked a small handful of weed from the roadside and made them into a bouquet. She felt embarrassed because she could only give this small present to Jesus. She knelt down and put the bouquet at the bottom of the nativity scene. Suddenly the bouquet of weeds burst into bright red flowers, and everyone who saw were sure they had seen a miracle. From that day on, the bright red flowers are known as the "Flores de Noche Buena" or "Flowers of the Holy Night". As we bring poinsettias to the altar, please think about the best gift we can bring to Jesus.

Poinsettias are placed at the front of the church)

## THE NATIVITY

**Scripture reader/Tianna: ISAIAH 7:14**

<sup>14</sup> *Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel.*

**Reader/Tianna:** When God sent his son into the world as a baby, he was born to a poor young woman in a stable, and laid in a manger. God reached out to ALL people, the poor, the wealthy, the simple, the wise, the powerless, and the powerful.

Knowing God is possible because he came to us, at our level. Whenever we see a Nativity we find ourselves with Mary and Joseph; with the Shepherds and the Wise Men; bowing before the manger, overwhelmed by God's expression of love coming to us.

**HYMN:** *Away in the Manger*

LBW #67

(Put Nativity in place)

The four candles provide us with a visual way to count off four Sundays of this season. The flame of each new candle reminds us that something is happening, but something more is still to come. The Advent season is not complete until all four candles are lighted, with the central Christ candle also burning brightly on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

(Put advent candles in the wreath (PINK ONE LAST))

**Reader/Logan** There is also symbolism in the colors of the candles in the Advent wreath. The three purple candles symbolize the coming of Christ from the royal line of David. The pink candle is lighted on the third Sunday of the Advent season. This candle symbolizes joy; its use goes back to the Latin Church, which asked the worshipers to fast during this period of time.

The Gospel of John speaks of Christ as the true light coming into the world. In commemoration of that coming, we light candles for the four weeks leading to Christmas and reflect on the coming of Christ. It is significant that the church has always used that language—the coming of Christ—because it speaks to a deep truth.

Christ is coming. Christ is always coming, always entering a troubled world, a wounded heart. And so we light the first candle, the candle of hope, and dare to express our longing for peace, for healing, and the well-being of all creation.

One candle is lit as "We Light the Advent Candles" verse 1 is sung

**HYMN:** *"We Light the Advent Candles"* Text: © 1994 Gracia Grindal Used by permission To the Tune of LBW #59 "When Christmas Morn is Dawning"

We light the Advent candles,	The first one will remind us,
Against the winter night.	That Christ will soon return.
To welcome our Lord Jesus,	We light it in the darkness,
Who is the world's true Light.	And watch it gleam and burn.
To welcome our Lord Jesus,	We light it in the darkness
Who is the world's true Light.	And watch it gleam and burn.

## THE CHRISTMAS TREE

Scripture reader/Ben JOHN 1:1-5, 9-14

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup> in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

<sup>9</sup> The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

<sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup> He came to what was his own and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup> But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. <sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

**Reader/Amelia** A beautifully decorated Christmas tree is one of the most easily recognized symbols of Christmas. Legend tells that Martin Luther was the first to use a lighted tree. One Christmas Eve, Luther wandered outdoors and noticed the beauty of the starry sky. He began to think about the glory of the first Christmas Eve as seen in Bethlehem's radiant skies. He wanted to share this beauty with his wife and children so he cut an evergreen tree, glistening with snow and took it home, He put candles on it to represent the star in the skies. The use of a candle-lit tree spread to all of Europe, then America came to regard it as the central ornament of Christmas. We now invite all to come help decorate the Christmas tree.

Decorate and plug in the lights on the tree.

**HYMN** during the decorating:

*I Am So Glad Each Christmas Eve* LBW #69

*After tree decorated: In Unison*

**Pastor: BLESSING OF THE CHRISTMAS TREE**

**Loving God, we come with joy to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, whose path of justice and inclusivity lights a path for all who follow him. May this tree, arrayed in splendor, remind us of the life-giving cross of Christ, that we may always rejoice in the new life that shines in our hearts. In Jesus' name. Amen.**

## HOMILY

NICENE CREED— pg 64

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE** -respond "Hear Our Prayer"

## SHARING OF THE PEACE

**OFFERING:** Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow LBW #565

**OFFERTORY PRAYER:** Merciful Father, **we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us—ourselves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## COMMUNION LITURGY-SPOKEN

*Let us pray together*

**Merciful God we do not presume to come to your table trusting in our own righteousness but in your abundant Mercy. Grant us therefore, Gracious Lord, so to eat and drink the body and blood of your dear Son Jesus Christ that we may live in Him and He in us now and forever AMEN.**

The Lord be with you

**And also with you**

Lift up your hearts

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give God thanks and praise**

It is indeed right and salutary...

**Holy Holy Holy Lord God of Power and might. Heaven and Earth are full of your Glory. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the Highest!**

**Words of Institution and Lord's Prayer**

*AGNUS DEI*

Lamb of God you take away the sin of the world

**Have Mercy on us**

Lamb of God you take away the sin of the world

**Have Mercy on us**

Lamb of God you take away the sin of the world

**Grant us your peace**

RECEIVING OF HOLY COMMUNION