



## Shepherd of the Springs Lutheran Church

Missouri Synod, Colorado Springs, CO.

### December, 2025 Calendar

**Sun. Nov. 30**

**1st Sun. In Advent**

**Weds. Dec. 3**

6:00PM Advent Supper  
7:00pm Advent Vespers

**Sun. Dec. 7**

**2nd Sun. in Advent (Populous Zion)**

**Weds. Dec. 10**

6:00pm Advent Supper  
7:00pm Advent Vespers The World  
Refuses to "Come and See Jesus"

**Sat. Dec. 13**

9:00am Mens' Group

**Sun. Dec. 14**

**3rd Sun. In Advent (Gaudete)**

**Sun. Dec. 14**

**5:00PM Shepherds' Christmas Outing at  
Flying W Christmas Dinner and Show**

**Weds. Dec. 17**

6:00pm Advent Supper  
7:00pm Advent Vespers "Come and See" Thomas-  
Seeing is Believing!

**Sun. Dec. 21**

**4th Sun. In Advent (Rorate Caeli)**



**Wed. Dec. 24**

**7:00pm Candlelight Vespers of  
the Nativity of Our Lord  
Lessons and Carols**

**Thurs. Dec. 25**

**9:00am The Nativity of Our Lord**

**Sun. Dec. 28**

**Feast of the Holy Innocents, Martyrs**

**Thurs. Jan. 1**

**9:00am Circumcision and Name of Jesus**

**December Bible Study**  
**Sundays at 10:30am—Open to all**

**The Gospel According to St. Matthew**  
**Our Lord's Passion: His Arrest, Trials, and Death (26:14 – 27:66)**

- Sun., Dec. 7      **Jesus before Caiaphas (Illegal Sanhedrin Trial) (26:57-68)**  
**And Peter's Three Denials (69-75)**
- Sun., Dec. 14    **Jesus before Pilate ( 27:1-26)**
- Sun., Dec. 21    **The Crucifixion of Our Lord Jesus (27:27-44)**
- Sun., Dec. 28    **The Death of Our Lord Jesus (27:45-56)**  
**The Burial of Our Lord Jesus (27:57-61)**



**Advent Suppers will be held on**  
**Weds. Dec. 3, 10 and 17 at 6:00PM.**

**Everyone is welcome to join in a supper meal,**  
**complete with dessert.**

**Come, join in the fellowship of Advent.**

Sign-up on the board in the Narthex if you would like to bring a dish.

## “Wait and Pray: ‘Come, Lord Jesus.’”

That’s the prayer the Church has been praying now for nearly two thousand years. That’s the prayer that brings Holy Scripture to a close: *“He who testifies to these things says, ‘Surely I am coming soon. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! The grace of our Lord Jesus be with all. Amen’”* (Rev. 22:20-21). Actually, come to think of it, that’s the prayer the Church has been praying since Adam and Eve received the first Gospel promise in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:15), after their Fall into sin. The Lord God promised to send the Seed of the woman to crush the serpent’s head and save them. So, they prayed for the Seed of the woman to come, which is the same as praying, “Come, Lord Jesus,” since Jesus is the promised Seed of the woman!

Over the years, God’s children continued to utter this prayer in various ways: *“Come, Holy Messiah”*; *“Come, O Suffering Servant”*; *“Come, O Holy One of Israel”*; *“Come, Son of David,”* and so forth. Many different titles have been used by God’s people throughout history, as God’s revelation of this Coming Savior unfolded, but they all resulted in the same prayer we Christians still pray today: *“Come, Lord Jesus.”*

What this means is that God’s people have always lived in the hope and expectation of His Coming. The Old Testament saints looked forward to the Coming Messiah promised to them, even as we continue to look forward to the Second Advent of our Lord Jesus Christ on the Great Last Day. In other words, God’s people have always been a people waiting in hope and expectation for God to fulfill His promises.

That’s the hard part! Waiting! We humans don’t like to wait, especially in our day of high-speed technology and instant communication. We send an email or text message or post something on FaceBook, and we expect people to respond right now; right away! When they don’t, we may even begin to entertain fantasies as to why they haven’t. Did I offend her? Is he ignoring me? Why haven’t they responded yet?!

But, with or without high-speed technology and instant communication, waiting is just downright hard. It’s always been so! That’s because Old Adam, our sinful human nature, wants what he wants, and he wants it now, now, now! Patiently waiting is just not his thing. Never has been. Never will be!

That’s precisely why the Season of Advent is a true gift and blessing to you! You don’t really like it, precisely because it calls you to be patient and wait, but that’s good for you, nonetheless. Advent is a season given to you for prayer and self-reflection and examination. It’s a penitential season, much like the season of Lent, which is why the liturgical color of **violet** is used—the color of repentance. That’s a hard pill to swallow, especially since the rest of the world is engaged in their “holiday season” since Halloween!

However, Advent is good for you! It says to you, “You are Christians, who are in the world, but not of the world. Wait. Be patient. The joy will come, but not yet. Now is the time to prepare. Now is the time to pray. Now is the time to examine yourselves, so that you will recognize your sinfulness and your desperate need of a Savior, for only then does your prayer, ‘Come, Lord Jesus,’ have meaning; only then can you truly utter that prayer in sincere anticipation and expectation, just as the faithful have been uttering it since the beginning.”

Yes, it’s hard to wait! And, yes, your Lord knows that, which is why He provides His people with the strength and stamina to do so. He is not an absentee Landlord. He is not a God far off. He is ever-Present among His people to feed and comfort and sustain them during the long wait. He was with His people in the Old Testament, feeding and comforting and sustaining them by His precious means of grace, even as He remains among us to do the same. They had Circumcision; we have Baptism. They had the Sacrificial System; we have the Blessed Lord’s Supper. They had prophets and priests sent to preach the Law and Gospel to them; we have called and ordained servants of the Word to do the same. They received these means of grace in anticipation of the Coming Messiah; we receive them from our Messiah who Came, and in anticipation of His Coming again!

The Holy Word and Sacraments of our ever-Present Lord delivers to His Church the strength and stamina you need as you journey through the wilderness of this sinful world, waiting for the Consummation of all things when He returns in great glory. So, you wait! But, you are not alone. You wait with all the saints who have gone before you, and with all the holy angels, and even with our Lord Jesus, the King of kings and the Lord of lords!

So, as hard as it is, embrace this season of Advent, dearly beloved! It truly is a gift and blessing to you. Learn to wait. Learn to examine yourselves. Learn to pray, “*Come, Lord Jesus.*” Christmas is coming. Soon, we will celebrate the Divine Mystery of the Holy Incarnation of our Lord and Savior Jesus, the Christ. We will marvel at the manger and the shepherds in the fields and the song of the angels. But, not yet! Now is the time to prepare our hearts to receive Him when He comes at Christmas. As the world busies itself with all the hustle and bustle of its “*holiday season,*” let the Church busy herself with self-examination, repentance, prayer, anticipation, and expectation. Let us allow the Season of Advent to have its way with us, that we may be led to pray with the faithful of all time:

*Stir up, we implore you, your power, O Lord, and come, that by your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and be saved by your mighty deliverance; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever. Amen!*

In Jesus’ Holy and Precious Name,

Pastor +++





### *Happy Birthday*

*Vicky Ackerman Dec. 1*  
*Jason Packer Dec. 19*  
*Teddy Suszek Dec. 30, 2023*

### *Happy Anniversary*

*Larry and Sue Groggel*  
*Dec. 2*  
*Drew and Tiffany Ochsner*  
*Dec. 10*



**Shepherd of the Springs members collected food for the Food Pantry at Holy Cross Lutheran Church.**

**Thank you, Everyone, for your participation and help.**



***IN COMMEMORATION OF  
ST. LUCIA OF SYRACUSE, MARTYR  
December 13***

On December 13, the Church commemorates and gives thanks to God for St. Lucia, Martyr.

The young virgin commemorated this day was one of many martyred under Emperor Diocletian, the last great widespread persecution of Christians under roman authority. Her martyrdom took place in her native Sicily in AD 304.

According to tradition, Lucia (or Lucy, which means “light”) was born to wealthy and noble parents sometime around AD 280. Her father died when she was but a child. Lucia privately decided that she would never marry. She vowed to remain a virgin and to bestow the dowry her father had left her upon the poor. Her mother, unaware of her daughter’s resolve and in poor health, betrothed her to a wealthy young pagan man.

Lucia and her mother visited the shrine of St. Agatha, who had died confessing Christ years before in the Decian persecution. They prayed for the gift of healing. Her mother was restored to health. With her mother’s health no longer a concern, Lucia persuaded her mother to allow the distribution of the entirety of her dowry to the poor. When word reached the young man to whom she was betrothed that Lucy had given away what he regarded as his treasure, he was quite angry. He

denounced her to the governor of Syracuse as a Christian. She was then executed according to imperial policy.

A later tradition says that before Lucia was slain with the sword, her eyes were gouged out. This was supposedly in retaliation for prophesying that the persecution would soon end and that the emperor who had commanded it would soon be dead himself.

Because her name means “light” and her commemoration falls at the time of year in the northern hemisphere when nights are longest, festivals of light commemorating the brave young virgin of Syracuse became popular and spread throughout Europe.

In Scandinavia, where the hours of darkness are greatest, a tradition arose of clothing young women in white with a red sash, symbolizing the blood of martyrdom. A crown of lighted candles would be placed upon their heads in honor of the martyr’s name, and they would carry to their family some tasty baked goods to give away, made especially in memory of St. Lucia.

*Let Us Pray: O God, by whose grace and power Your holy martyr Lucia triumphed over suffering and remained faithful unto death, grant us, who now remember her with thanksgiving, to be so true in our witness to You in this world that we may receive with her new eyes without tears and the crown of light and life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever. Amen.*

## **Some Christmas History**

Submitted by Gary Law

The Christmas “season” (historically called “Christmastide”) starts with Christmas Eve, December 24th, and extends to Epiphany, January 6th (hence the 12 Days of Christmas). The actual origin of designating December 25th as the birthdate of Jesus is unclear. Other dates were proposed in January, April, or May. The Annunciation, the announcement of Gabriel to Mary that she would become the “mother of God” is celebrated on March 25th. All of the early Christian sources seem to agree that Jesus was conceived on the Passover in March or April, 2 B.C. Where they got the idea it



was on Passover remains a mystery. With March 25th agreed as the conception date, it is 9 months to December 25th.

It is often claimed that Christians picked December 25th as the birthday of Jesus to supplant the Roman pagan festival of Saturnalia. The problem with this idea is that this festival didn't start until the pagan emperor Aurelian created the feast about 274 A.D. Saturnalia was celebrated based on the winter solstice, December 17th or later the 23rd, never the 25th. It is also unlikely the early church would appropriate a pagan festival when it was, at that time, so intent on distinguishing itself categorically from pagan beliefs and practices.

Easter was the important feast day in the early church. Epiphany, as the remembrance of Jesus' baptism, was also important. Early Christians considered celebration of Jesus's birthday as irrelevant and even inappropriate. After all, no one knew when Jesus was born. A number of the Church Fathers made sarcastic comments about the pagan custom of celebrating birthdays. From the church's perspective it was the "deathday" that should be honored for saints and martyrs as this was seen as their true "birthday" to the new, resurrected life. Although some were celebrating Christmas as early as 222 AD, it wasn't until the 4th century that a date was agreed upon and the church began to celebrate the birth of the Christ as "Christmas". It wasn't until the 9th century that Christmas began to be widely celebrated with a specific liturgy.

As you know from Scripture, sermons, nativity stories, hymns, etc., Jesus's birthplace was Bethlehem. Bethlehem's earlier name was Ephrathah, meaning "fruitful". Jacob buried Rachel there (Genesis 35:19). Events in the book of Ruth occur here. King David was born and tended sheep here. Mary and Joseph traveled 91 miles from their home in Nazareth in Galilee to Bethlehem in Judea. There was another Bethlehem (Joshua 19:15), which no longer exists, closer to Nazareth, but it is not in Judea, and the Gospel writers specify the Bethlehem in Judea (Matthew 2:1 and Luke 2:4). Bethlehem is also usually depicted as a small village, probably because of the prophet Micah's description as "little" (Micah 5:2). In Jesus day, however, it may have been larger since both St. Luke and Josephus use the Greek word for "city" rather than "village". It was reduced to "village" size after the Romans devastated Judea in response to a revolt in 132-136 AD. Maybe.

None of the contemporary Christmas customs have their origin in theological or liturgical affirmations, and most are of fairly recent date. The intense preparation for Christmas that is part of the commercialization and secularization of the holiday has blurred the traditional liturgical distinction between Advent and the Christmas season, with most thinking Christmas is over on the 26th, when it is really just beginning. But be of good cheer! The angels bring tidings of great joy, for without Christmas there would be no Easter! **Have a joyous Christmas!**







### **Members**

Ron Dodge

Paul Hildebrand

The Packer Family

Darrell Root

Marlene Schmidt

Lindsey Suszek

### **Military**

Major (CH) Gerson Flor (Canadian  
Armed Forces)

Major Julia Bell (USSF)

1LT Frederick Heidt (USAF) (Friend of  
Larry and Sue)

Master Sergeant (USMC) Kyle Chase  
(Dale & Kari's Nephew)

First Sergeant (USA) Benjamin Kueter  
(Deployed to South Korea)

Sergeant First Class (USA) Jordan  
Etchells (Dale & Kari's Son)

SrA Trevor Smith (USAF)

Cadet Ethan Dodson (USAF)

### **Family Members**

Gayle Rathbone (Heather's Mother)

Patty Krueger (Barry's Wife)

Kathi Chase (Kari's Sister)

Rainer Dieterle (Conny's Father)

Dennis Etchells (Dale's Brother)

Eli (Shannon and Ben's nephew)

Blake (Shannon's brother)

Raquel (Lindsay's sister)

Janice Patterson (Pastor's Mother)

Please request for addition to or removal from the  
Shepherd's Prayer List directly from Pastor  
Patterson.

## Denied A Christian Burial

(Compiled by Evelyn Law)



Charles Coffin (pronounced sharl co-fenh) wrote the lyrics to two of our Advent hymns: The Advent of Our King (LSB 331) and On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry (LSB 344). Born on October 4, 1676 in Northern France, he was a teacher and writer. He wrote about 100 hymns. In 1718 he became the Rector of the University of Paris and served in that position until he died.

When he died of pneumonia on June 20, 1749, his parish rector refused to give him last rites and a Christian burial because he was a Jansenist.

The movement that became known as “Jansenism” originated in the posthumously published work of the Dutch theologian Cornelius Jansen who died in 1638. It was primarily active in France.

Jansen and his followers claimed that the Roman Catholic Counter-Reformation's opposition to the doctrines of grace defined by Martin Luther and John Calvin had erred in the other direction. The Counter-Reformers emphasized human responsibility at the expense of the divine initiative. Thus they relapsed into the 5th-century heresy of Pelagianism—the teaching that humanity is essentially good and one can attain salvation without divine aid. Jansen stressed the damage caused to human nature by original sin; exalted the all-powerful character of the grace made available by Christ; and supported the Augustinian arguments regarding the necessity of grace for any good act, the infallible efficacy of

grace, and the absolutely arbitrary character of predestination.

Jansenism was especially opposed by the Jesuits. Although the Jansenists identified themselves only as rigorous followers of St. Augustine's teachings, Jesuits coined the term "Jansenism" to identify them as having Calvinist leanings. Pope Innocent X, in 1653, condemned five key doctrines of Jansenism as heretical. Although Jansenist leaders denied that the five doctrines fairly represented their position, they endeavored to accommodate the Pope's pronouncements while retaining their uniqueness. By so doing, they enjoyed a measure of peace in the late 17th century under Pope Clement IX. However, further controversy led to Pope Clement XI condemning 101 of their doctrines in 1713.

Although the 1713 pronouncement condemned Jansenism, many in France interpreted it as an attack on the rights of the French Church. The University of Paris and the provincial Parlement were hotbeds of opposition. As rector of the University and clerk to the Parlement of Paris, even Coffin's hymns were viewed by some with suspicion.

Due to Coffin's persistence in appealing against the Pope's pronouncement, the Archbishop wished to make an example of him. He, therefore, instructed the parish rector of Saint-Etienne-du-Mont to refuse to administer last rites to Coffin or to give him a Christian burial. Four thousand Parisians joined Coffin's funeral procession. The Parlement of Paris subsequently issued an official and strong "remonstrance" to the king. According to some historians, because the crown had supported the suppression of the Jansenists, the religious rite took on political overtones, and the resulting popular demonstrations contributed to the growing disenchantment with the monarchy that would later play into the coming Revolution.

Despite the refusal to give Coffin what was considered to be a Christian burial, we know that all who believe on Jesus as their Savior will be raised up on the last day, and we will live with our Lord in the new Heavens and new Earth forever.

***"Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"***





*“The advent of our King  
Our thoughts must now employ;  
Then let us meet him on the road  
With songs of holy joy.”  
LSB331;*

*first verse; the Advent of our King; Charles Coffin*



**Shepherd of the Springs Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod**  
A Confessional, Evangelical, Sacramental, and Liturgical Church

**Where the Lutheran Reformation Lives!**

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