

Third Sunday in Advent December 15, 2024

As We Gather - Are you feeling the joy? At this point in the month of December, studies show that many people are not feeling joy. Many people are feeling overwhelmed as they approach Christmas, feeling stressors that include not having enough money, missing loved ones, and anticipating family conflict. No matter how we come to our time of worship today, even if stressed, distracted, and frazzled, what great timing to hear what God speaks to us in this season and each day. From all our Readings today, we hear of joy! It is a joy not based on our own momentary perspectives of how things should go, but rather a joy from God's eternal perspective for our sake and what has freely been done for us. As our Advent season continues, may our true joy be found in the one for whom we prepare—Christ, who was born for us and who is with us and for us and is today in our midst as He comes to us in the means of grace.

Offering and Registry of Worship Cards: Please fill out a Registry of Worship Card found in the pew racks. We ask that you print the names of every person in your family, indicating if they take communion. One side of the card is for members and the other side for guests. As the offering is collected, pass the cards to the center aisle so our ushers can gather them.

Saturday Worship: Offerings and Worship Cards will be received in the offering plates at the rear of the church either upon entering or when leaving. Thank you for your gift to the work of the Lord.

About Protecting the Healthy: To protect yourself and others from COVID-19 and other infectious respiratory diseases, individuals may choose to mask at any time. Appropriate hand washing by everyone is encouraged. People with symptoms of an infectious illness are highly encouraged to stay home. Symptoms include fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea. Thank you for helping to keep everyone healthy as we receive God's gifts in worship.

GENERALLY, BE MINDFUL, NOT FEARFUL.

Prelude and Meditation: Before worship we talk to God (see prayers on page 308 in the hymnal); during worship God talks to us; after worship we talk to one another.

Prelude:

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS
The Greeting and Sharing of Peace *(stand)*

Confession and Absolution

Hymn of Invocation:

Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers

LSB 515



1 Re - joice, re - joice, be - liev - ers, And let your lights ap - pear;
2 The watch - ers on the moun - tain Pro - claim the Bride-groom near;
3 The saints, who here in pa - tience Their cross and suf - f'rings bore,
4 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;



The eve - ning is ad - vanc - ing, And dark - er night is near.
Go forth as He ap - proach - es With al - le - lu - ias clear.
Shall live and reign for - ev - er When sor - row is no more.
A - rise, O Sun so longed for, O'er this be - night - ed sphere.



The Bride-groom is a - ris - ing And soon is draw - ing nigh.
The mar - riage feast is wait - ing; The gates wide o - pen stand.
A - round the throne of glo - ry The Lamb they shall be - hold;
With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, We plead, O Lord, to see



Up, pray and watch and wres - tle; At mid - night comes the cry.
A - rise, O heirs of glo - ry; The Bride-groom is at hand.
In tri - umph cast be - fore Him Their di - a - dems of gold.
The day of earth's re - demp - tion That sets Your peo - ple free!

Text: Laurentius Laurenti, 1660–1722; tr. Sarah B. Findlater, 1823–1907, alt.

Tune: Swedish

Text and tune: Public domain

Stand

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Lighting the Advent Wreath

- P** We light the third Advent candle as we prepare for the arrival of the Savior, who would come to His people in human flesh, and who promises to come again. In a world of darkness, a light shines. Jesus Christ is the light of the world.
- C** **The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**
- P** The third, pink Advent candle has been known as the shepherd candle or the candle of joy. The third Sunday of Advent is known also as Gaudete Sunday. *Gaudete* in Latin means "rejoice," as found in Philippians 4:4. We find our joy in Christ this season and always as we prepare to celebrate His birth. Jesus affirms the joy found only in Him as we remain connected to Him: "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full."
- C** **The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.**
- P** Guided by the light of joy, we respond with the psalmist: "Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth! Serve the LORD with gladness! Come into His presence with singing!"
- C** **Know that the LORD, He is God! It is He who made us, and we are His; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture.**
- P** Enter His gates with thanksgiving, and His courts with praise!
- C** **Give thanks to Him; bless His name!**
- P** For the LORD is good; His steadfast love endures forever,
- C** **and His faithfulness to all generations."**

Confession and Absolution

- P** If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
- C** **But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

is now, and will be forever. | Amen.
Rejoice in the Lord | always;
again I will say, | Rejoice.

LSB 152

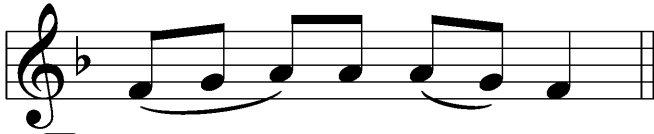
Kyrie

P In peace let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.

P For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.

P For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.

P For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.

P Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.



C A - men.

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.



C And al - so with you.

P Let us pray.

Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



C A - men.

Sit

Old Testament Reading

Zephaniah 3:14–20

¹⁴Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion;
shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart,
O daughter of Jerusalem!

¹⁵The LORD has taken away the judgments against you;
he has cleared away your enemies.

The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst;
you shall never again fear evil.

¹⁶On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:

“Fear not, O Zion;
let not your hands grow weak.

¹⁷The LORD your God is in your midst,
a mighty one who will save;

he will rejoice over you with gladness;
he will quiet you by his love;

he will exult over you with loud singing.

¹⁸I will gather those of you who mourn for the festival,
so that you will no longer suffer reproach.

¹⁹Behold, at that time I will deal
with all your oppressors.
And I will save the lame
and gather the outcast,
and I will change their shame into praise
and renown in all the earth.

²⁰At that time I will bring you in,
at the time when I gather you together;
for I will make you renowned and praised
among all the peoples of the earth,
when I restore your fortunes
before your eyes," says the LORD.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Epistle

Philippians 4:4–7

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; ⁶do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

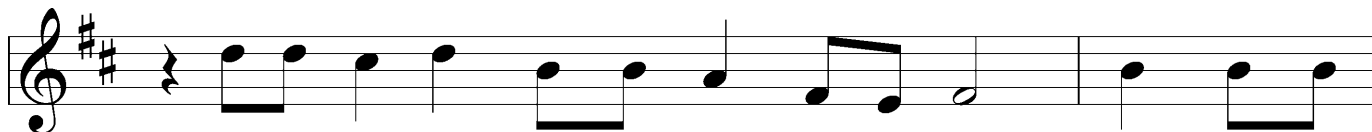
L This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

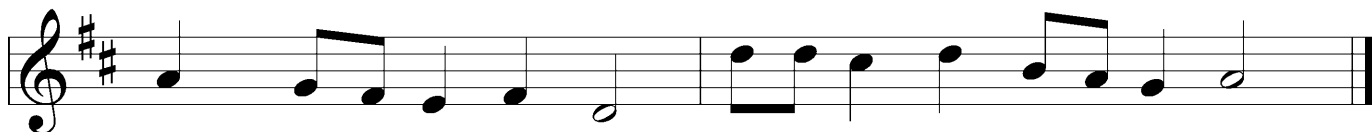
Stand

Alleluia and Verse

LSB 156



C Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the



words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Hymn of the Month:

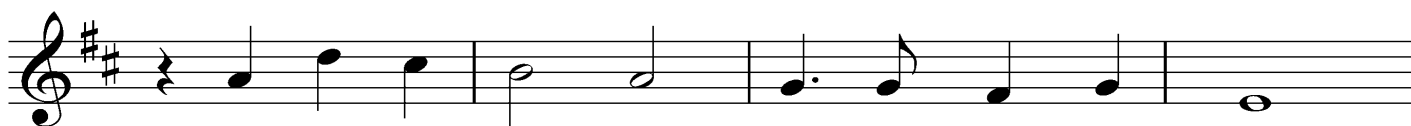
Peace Came to Earth



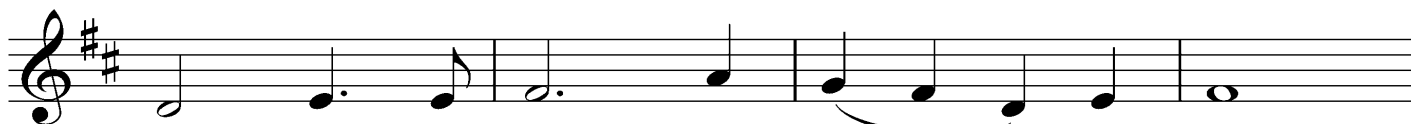
1 Peace came to earth at last that cho-sen night
2 And who could be the same for hav-ing held
3 You show the Fa - ther none has ev - er seen,
4 How else could I have known You, O my God!



When an - gels clove the sky with song and light
The in - fant in their arms, and lat - er felt
In flesh and blood You bore our griefs and pain,
How else could I have loved You, O my God!



And God em - bod - ied love and sheathed His might—
The wound-ed hands and side, all doubts dis - pelled—
In bread and wine You vis - it us a - gain—
How else could I em - brace You, O my God!



Who could but gasp: Im - man - u - el!
Who could but sigh: Im - man - u - el!
Who could but see Im - man - u - el!
Who could but pray: Im - man - u - el!



Who could but sing: Im - man - u - el!
Who could but shout: Im - man - u - el!
Who could but thrill: Im - man - u - el!
Who could but praise Im - man - u - el!

Text: Jaroslav J. Vajda, 1919–2008

Tune: Timothy Shaw

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Tune: © 2023 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: CPH Advent License no. 110000852

Sermon

Stand

Nicene Creed

C I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life ✝ of the world to come. Amen.

Prayer of the Church

Sit

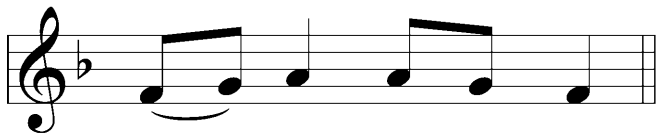
Choir Anthem: (*Sunday Only*) “Ring In Joy”

Gathering of Our Tithes and Offerings (*Sunday Only*)

Registry of Worship Cards (*Sunday Only*)– *Please pass your completed cards to the center aisle*

Service of the Sacrament

LSB 160

Preface**P** The Lord be with you.**C** And al - so with you.**P** Lift up your hearts.**C** We lift them to the Lord.**P** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.**C** It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

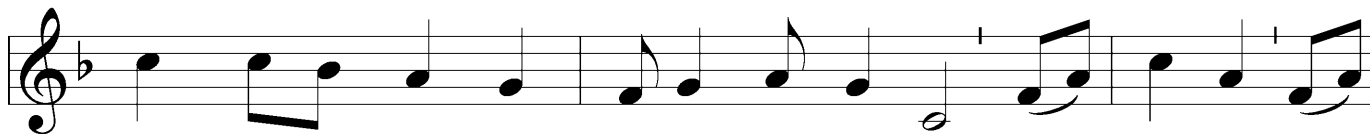
P It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared, proclaiming Him the promised Messiah, the very Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and calling sinners to repentance that they might escape from the wrath to be revealed when He comes again in glory. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and singing:

Sanctus

LSB 161



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:



Heav-en and earth are full of Your glo - ry. Ho - san-na. Ho -



san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is He who



comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high - est.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

LSB 161

P Blessed are You, Lord of heaven and earth, for You have had mercy on those whom You created and sent Your only-begotten Son into our flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. With repentant joy we receive the salvation accomplished for us by the all-availing sacrifice of His body and His blood on the cross.

Gathered in the name and the remembrance of Jesus, we beg You, O Lord, to forgive, renew, and strengthen us with Your Word and Spirit. Grant us faithfully to eat His body and drink His blood as He bids us do in His own testament. Gather us together, we pray, from the ends of the earth to celebrate with all the faithful the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which has no end. Graciously receive our prayers; deliver and preserve us. To You alone, O Father, be all glory, honor, and worship, with the Son and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

The Words of Our Lord

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My \dagger body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My \dagger blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

P As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

C **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

P O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

Lord's Prayer

C **Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

Pax Domini

LSB 163

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.



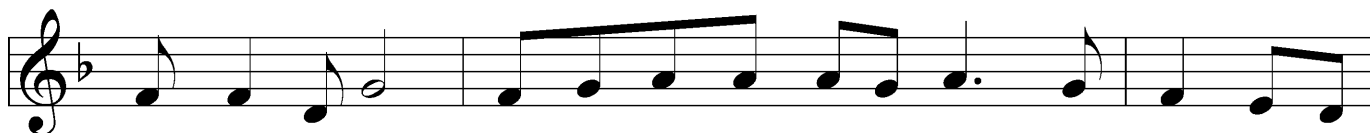
C A - men.

Agnus Dei

LSB 163



C Lamb of God, You take a - way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a - way the sin of the



world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a - way the



sin of the world; grant us peace.

Sit

Distribution

Distribution Hymns (Sunday Only)

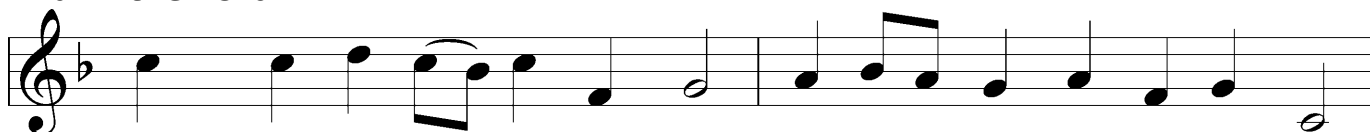
LSB 333 Once He Came in Blessing

LSB 354 Arise, O Christian People

Stand

Thank the Lord

LSB 164



C Thank the Lord and sing His praise; tell ev-'ry-one what He has done.



Let all who seek the Lord re - joice and proud-ly bear His name.



He re-calls His prom-is - es and leads His peo-ple forth in joy



with shouts of thanks-giv-ing. Al-le - lu - ia, al-le - lu - ia.

Post-Communion Collect

(Saturday)

P Let us pray together.

C I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

(Sunday)

P Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



C A - men.

Benediction

LSB 166

- P** The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.



C A - men.

Closing Hymn:

Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee

LSB 803



- 1 Joy - ful, joy - ful we a - dore Thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love!
2 All Thy works with joy sur-round Thee, Earth and heav'n re - flect Thy rays,
△ 3 Thou art giv - ing and for - giv - ing, Ev - er bless-ing, ev - er blest,



Hearts un - fold like flow'rs be - fore Thee, Prais-ing Thee, their sun a - bove.
Stars and an-gels sing a-round Thee, Cen - ter of un - bro-ken praise.
Well-spring of the joy of liv - ing, O - cean - depth of hap - py rest!



Melt the clouds of sin and sad - ness, Drive the gloom of doubt a - way.
Field and for - est, vale and moun-tain, Flow - 'ry mead-ow, flash-ing sea,
Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Spir - it, Foun - tain - head of love di-vine:



Giv - er of im - mor - tal glad-ness, Fill us with the light of day.
Chant-ing bird, and flow - ing foun-tain Call us to re - joice in Thee.
Joy - ful, we Thy heav'n in - her - it! Joy-ful, we by grace are Thine!

Text: Henry Van Dyke, 1852–1933, alt.

Tune: Ludwig van Beethoven, 1770–1827; adapt. Edward Hodges, 1796–1867

Text and tune: Public domain

Postlude:

ATTENDANCE AND OFFERINGS FROM LAST WEEK

Midweek Advent Service	30
Saturday Worship Attendance.....	20
Sunday Worship Attendance.....	103
Envelope and Loose Plate Offerings	\$0
Simply Giving/Vanco.....	\$0
Paypal Offerings	\$0
Website (ShareFaith).....	\$0
Total of Offerings Received.....	\$0
Misc. Income, Memorials and Special Gifts.....	\$0

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIFE THOUGHTS IN THE CHURCH- Advent III – Gospel-motivated voices For Life bring reasonableness to the cultural conversation about life issues (Philippians 4:5). It means a message of joy and hope instead of just another angry and fearful demeanor. The sanctity of life proclaims good news to neighbors made poor (Luke 7:22) by pressures toward abortion and physician-assisted suicide. God remains mighty to save (Zephaniah 3:17), even in surprise pregnancy and terminal diagnosis.

FLOWER SPONSOR – No Flower Sponsor this week.

BULLETIN SPONSOR – No Bulletin Sponsor this week.

FELLOWSHIP HOUR (SUNDAY) – Team 4 is serving today; team 5 will serve next week. Everyone is invited. There is no charge and a freewill offering is voluntary. December freewill offerings will go to One More Child.

COMMUNICATIONS MEETING – The Communications Board will meet today, Sunday, December 15th, after service.

ANNUAL NEW MEMBER WELCOME – Join us today, Sunday, December 15th, during Fellowship Hour, as we welcome all the new members that have joined Christ Lutheran this past year.

ANGEL TREE GIFTS DUE TODAY– Please bring the UNWRAPPED gifts – with tag attached, and place in the marked box in the Narthex. All gifts are due today, Sunday, December 15th.

MIDWEEK ADVENT SERVICE – Join us for the mid-week Advent Service at 6:30pm on Wednesday, December 18th.

CHRISTMAS ORNAMENTS - Mary Martha has their 3rd annual ornament collection box in the entryway to the Fellowship Hall for the tree in the Fellowship Hall. Please write your family name on an unbreakable ornament and place in the box. Christmas themed ornaments only, no Santa Clause or scary types, please.

CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICES –Christmas Eve service will be at 6:30 PM and on Christmas Day at 10 AM.

CAROLING IN THE COURTYARD - There will be Caroling in the Courtyard on Christmas Eve at 5:30 before our 6:30 service. Refreshments will be served.

CHURCH POTLUCK – The next church potluck is on Sunday, December 29th. A sign-up sheet is posted on the Mary Martha Bulletin Board. Help is needed with set-up and clean up.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING – A special congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, December 29th. This meeting is for the approval of a necessary roof repair on the Fellowship Hall.

ALTAR FLOWER SPONSORS FOR 2025 - The new Flower Chart has been posted on the bulletin board in the Narthex. If you would like to sponsor altar flowers in the coming year, please write your name in the chart on the appropriate date. There is an instructional poster on the board next to the chart explaining what to do. The envelopes specially designated for your sponsor offering are in a pocket just below the Flower Chart.

ALTAR GUILD- HELP NEEDED - We are looking for two to four individuals willing to serve on a Communion service team -- men and couples also welcome! This is a low time-commitment role of roughly an hour combined each weekend for one month each year and a wonderful opportunity to serve God and church. Full training will be provided and completing a year of membership at Christ Lutheran Church is not a requirement. Please see Dawn Peters for more information.

MARY MARTHA QUILTERS – CHANGED TO WEDNESDAY’S -The Mary Martha Quilters meet on Wednesday’s each week at 10 AM. All Ladies from the congregation are invited to come. You don’t have to be a quilter or know how to sew as we need people who can cut, arrange, and tie.

HELP WANTED- The Church is in need of workers in several positions around the Church. These include Ushers, Offering Counters, Altar Guild, Lectors, Sound Board, Video Assistance, Elders (requires one year membership, and many other opportunities to serve. Please consider using your time and talents in some way here at Christ Lutheran.

ADOPT-A-BLOCK – VOLUNTEERS NEEDED– To reserve your spot on the team or if you have questions, please contact either Robin Fox or Pastor Chris.

TRUSTEE WORKDAY - The Trustee Workday is each Wednesday from 9am – 1pm. If you would like to help with the various needs of the church, come join us. A job, whether large or small can be found to help with. If you notice something you think needs attention, come let us know. Thanks for helping.

USED HEARING AIDS: Used hearing aids can be donated. Place them in the Munz mailbox in the church mailroom. Pastor Jerry Munz collects them and takes them to the Lakeland Hearing Center. If you want a tax receipt be sure to ask Pastor Jerry to get one for you.

DREAM CENTER VOLUNTEERS – Volunteers are needed to help check- in and sort items here at Christ Lutheran for the Dream Center. Please see or contact Robin Fox at 863-513-4774 to schedule a day and time to volunteer.

CHECK YOUR MAILBOX – Please check your mailbox in the narthex.

CHURCH DIRECTORY – For those that are not aware, our church member directory is now available online. Please see the flyer sheets in the narthex for more information or email Kim Kaniecki at stewardship@clclakeland.org.

NAMETAGS – We would like to encourage all our members to please wear their nametags to church. If you can't find your nametag or don't have one, please sign-up for one on the bulletin board in the Narthex of the church.

STEWARDSHIP CORNER - Philippians 4:5–6 – “The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.” Wouldn't you like to be free from worry and anxiety? Isn't it worry and anxiety that often keep us from living the generous life God has called us to? St. Paul contrasts anxiety with prayer, supplication and thanksgiving in making our requests known to God. In other words, when you are tempted to anxiety and worry, pray to the Lord with a thankful heart and pour out your supplications before Him.

