

First Sunday of Advent

December 1st, 2024



Gethsemane Lutheran Church

3600 Hampton - St. Louis, MO 63109

Worship God, welcome all to nurture a community of harmony, healing, and justice.

Welcome to worship! We're delighted you are here!



Gethsemane Lutheran Church is a *Reconciling in Christ* Congregation. **You are welcome here.**



We ask all members, guests, and visitors to please fill out the **attendance slip** in your worship folder and place it in the offering plate.



Please **silence** phones and other devices during the worship service. Sharing that you're at Gethsemane on social media is encouraged! "Check in" using hashtag: #glcstlCheckIn.



The presence, energy, and noise of **children** are always welcome in worship at Gethsemane. The sound of a child in worship is music to our ears. We welcome and encourage kids to move and play. Additional space to move and Wiggle Bags are located in the narthex entry area.



Postures are a way in which we engage the body in worship. These movements (sitting, standing, making the sign of the cross) are optional; please engage in them only as you are comfortable or able.



Holy Communion is offered to all who seek the presence of Christ. This is a welcome table.



Gethsemane Lutheran Church wishes to **acknowledge** and **honor** the Osage, Quapaw, Myaamia, Očhéthi Šakówiŋ, Kaskaskia, and Kickapoo peoples upon whose ancestral homelands we gather for worship, as well as all our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to care for this place—this land—and call it their home.

CHURCH STAFF

Minister: Pastor Cheryl Walenta Gorvie
Connections Coordinator: Gretchen Jenson
Music Director: Dr. Aria Thomé
Organist: Amy Crousore
Council President: Gary Borkowski
Office Manager: Eve Cooney

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Office Hours: Vary. Please call before coming to the church to ensure someone will be here to let you in.

Church Office – (314) 352-8050

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www.gethsemanestl.org

*With One Voice Holy Communion Setting 4
Advent Year C*

Advent is about the “coming days.” God’s people have always lived in great expectation, but that expectation finds specific, repeated enunciation in the texts appointed for these four weeks. The ancients anticipated a “righteous Branch to spring up for David.” The Thessalonians awaited “the coming of our Lord Jesus with all the saints.” Jesus’ contemporaries hoped for the time “to stand before the Son of Man.” With them we eagerly await the coming days: another Christmas celebration, a second coming, and the advent of Christ in word and supper.

GATHERING

PRELUDE: *Wake, Awake, for Night is Flying*

by Philipp Nicolai
arr. By John Behnke

The congregation may stand as comfortable.

ADVENT CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

P: Blessed be the Lord, our God, Who guides our feet into the way of peace.

Let us rejoice and be glad! Amen!

P: Now is the time to bear fruit worthy of repentance. Let us, therefore, confess our sin in the midst of God’s beloved.

Silence for reflection

P: Divine Peacemaker,

C: we confess that we prefer to flee from our sins,
pretending that our actions are just and good,
while keeping others bowed down and powerless.
We have waged war, not peace, in our communities;
we have wronged our neighbors far and near.
We have been weighed down by fear and division.
We have courted disasters, clung to our oppressors.
Refine us, O Lord of hosts; purify us like gold and silver.
Make our love overflow.
Come to us, O God,
That your mercy would quicken within us.

P: God looks upon us with favor, Even now calling us to rejoice always. For a righteous branch springs forth for us: Christ Jesus our Lord. Through the Holy Spirit of fire and rebirth We receive grace and forgiveness. We are strengthened through the promise fulfilled, To work for justice and peace in all the earth.

Amen.

The following interaction begins with the congregation speaking and the pastor responding.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

P: God proclaims the promise will be fulfilled: salvation, safety, justice, and righteousness for the beloved.

C: We wait in hope for the coming Messiah.

P: We are sent signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars: the kingdom of God is near.

C: We wait in hope for the coming Messiah.

P: And so we stand with our heads held high, working for justice, acting with mercy. We light the first candle on this wreath, a flame of peace-filled hope lighting the way toward God's promise fulfilled.

As the first candle is lit, we sing:

Maranatha- Alleluia II, Berthier

Ma - ra - na - tha, Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - - ia.

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GREETING:

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also, with you.

KYRIE

A In peace, in peace let us pray to the Lord. **A** For the

C Lord, have mer - cy.

peace from a-bove, and for our sal - va - tion, let us pray to the

Lord. **A** For the peace of the whole world, the well - be - ing of the

C Lord, have mer - cy.

Church of God, and for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the

Lord. **A** For this ho - ly house, and for all who of - fer here their

C Lord, have mer - cy.

wor - ship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

Help, save, com - fort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.

A - men

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray. Holy one, you have promised us that the day of peace for which we are waiting is near.

C: Keep us faithful in love and watchful in prayer, so that we may wage your peace in our world, and stand with confidence and joy at the coming of Christ, in whom we place our trust. Amen.

The congregation is seated.

WORD

THE FIRST READING: JEREMIAH 33:14-16

In the Old Testament, “righteousness” often has to do with being faithful in relationship. God acts righteously both in punishing Israel for its sin and in having mercy. In today’s reading, Jerusalem’s future name— “The Lord is our righteousness”—proclaims that God is even now working salvation for Israel.

¹⁴The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ¹⁵In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David, who shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ¹⁶In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: “The Lord is our righteousness.”

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 25:1-10

The choir will lead the singing of the Psalm with the congregation singing the bolded lines.

¹To | you, O Lord,
I lift | up my soul.

²**My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be | put to shame,
nor let my enemies triumph | over me.**

³Let none who look to you be | put to shame;
rather let those be put to shame | who are treacherous.

⁴**Show me your | ways, O Lord,
and teach | me your paths.**

⁵Lead me in your | truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all | the day long.

⁶**Remember, O Lord, your compas- | sion and love,
for they are from | everlasting.**

⁷Remember not the sins of my youth and | my transgressions;
remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your good- | ness, O Lord.

⁸**You are gracious and up- | right, O Lord;
therefore you teach sinners | in your way.**

⁹You lead the low- | ly in justice
and teach the low- | ly your way.

¹⁰**All your paths, O Lord, are steadfast | love and faithfulness
to those who keep your covenant and your | testimonies.**

SECOND READING: 1 THESSALONIANS 3:9-13

Upon Timothy's report from the congregation at Thessalonica, Paul is exuberant with gratitude for them. In this passage from his letter, Paul voices overflowing thanks, joy, and blessings for the people of this growing church.

⁹How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? ¹⁰Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith. ¹¹Now may that very God, our Father, and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. ¹²And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. ¹³And may the Lord so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The congregation may stand as comfortable.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY: *Wake, Awake, For Night is Flying*

Hymn# 436

The congregation may stand as comfortable.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

P: Let us confess our faith in the God who wages peace, in our hearts, through our hands and feet, with our voices.

We believe in God, the source of peace in creation, ordering the heavens and the earth to reflect the fullness of shalom, calling all people to care for what has been gifted to us.

We believe in God, Word made flesh, Prince of Peace, Who teaches justice and mercy, Who brings new life to a broken world, Who leads through service, and guides our feet into the way of peace.

We believe in God, wild, wonderful Spirit, Who works through us, pushing us to change the world through loving-kindness, resistance to evil, and peace-full living; Who never leaves us alone; Who amazes us with unending love; Who calls us to echo shalom.

We believe in God, Who wages peace with us for all the world.

THE PRAYERS

AM: As we prepare for Christ's coming, waging the peace we long for, we humbly bring our hopes and our brokenness before the God of all peace.

A brief silence.

AM: ... God of peace,
receive our prayer.

P: God of peace, receive our prayers and embrace us all in your love, in the name of Jesus Christ..
Amen.

THE PEACE

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.
And also, with you.

P: I invite you to share a sign of peace with those around you.

The ministers and congregation may greet one another with a gesture of peace, using these or similar words: **Peace be with you.**

The congregation is seated.

MEAL

THE OFFERING: *The Offering is received as the Lord's table is prepared.*

MUSICAL OFFERING: *Come Thou Long Expected Jesus* by Robert A. Hobby

The congregation rises in body or spirit.

OFFERING PRAYER

AM: Loving God, you are with us always. Thank you! Bless what we offer you. Create generous hearts in us. Guide us in the paths of Your peace.

Amen.


THE GREAT THANKSGIVING



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 our thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everliving God. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes again to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, Holy, Holy

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord,
 Lord God of pow'r and might, heav-en and earth are
 full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.
 Bless - ed, bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the
 Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

P: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

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

COMMUNION

P: The table is ready. Come to this table, you who have been here often, and you who have not been here in a long time. You who have tried to follow Jesus, and you who have failed. You who are full of faith, and you who are full of doubt. All are welcome at God's table. Christ himself invites you to meet him here in this place of refuge.

The congregation is seated.

All who seek the Lord are welcome at Christ's table to receive the gift of God's grace! Those not receiving the bread and wine are welcome to come for a blessing. Please come forward at the direction of the ushers.

MUSIC DURING DISTRIBUTION:

Lamb of God



Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers

Hymn# 244

Creator of the Stars of Night

Hymn# 245

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
Amen

The congregation may stand as comfortable.

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE



Now, Lord, you let your ser - vant go in peace:
your word has been ful - filled. My own eyes have
seen the sal - va - tion which you have pre - pared in the sight of all
peo - ple: a light to re - veal you to the
na - tions and the glo - ry of your peo - ple Is - ra - el.
Glo - ry to the Fa - ther and to the Son, glo - ry to the
Ho - ly Spir - it, as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and
will be for - ev - er. A - men, a - men, a - men.

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

AM: Jesus, Prince of Peace, we are strengthened by this meal together, send now the power of your Spirit that we become agents of Your love and peace for a weary world. **Amen**

SENDING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

These are ways we welcome all to nurture a community of harmony, healing, and justice.

BLESSING

P: The love of God surround you, the grace of Jesus fill you, and the life of the Spirit bless you and give you peace.

Amen

SENDING HYMN: *Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending*

HYMN# 435

DISMISSAL

AM: Go in peace. Share God's love.
Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE: *Wake, Awake for Night is Flying* Wachtet Auf, setting by Franklin Ashdown

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We invite all **members, guests** and **visitors** to join us for coffee and doughnuts between services in the Walter Eckman Fellowship Hall downstairs.



**The flowers this week are given by Natalie Fontana
In honor of those who will be missing someone
this holiday season.**



WORSHIP LEADERS		
PREACHER/PRESIDER	Rev. Tina Reyes	
GREETER	Norm Hopfer	Debbie Schaller
USHERS	John Sandberg Cayce Morris	Rob Schainker Nancy Luebke
ASSISTING MINISTER	Rick Schuessler	Gary Borkowski
LECTOR	Garrett Finazzo	Carolyn Schainker
CHILDREN'S SERMON	Chris Schmidt	
BREAD BAKER	Natalie Fontana	
FELLOWSHIP HOST	TBD	
DONUT DRIVER	Cayce Morice	
ALTAR GUILD	Angie Fulton	
CAMERA	Linus Christian	
WINE SPONSOR	Kate Hartz	

PRAYER REQUESTS:

Cindy Breed: healing and guidance

Barb Johnson: healing and strength

Elizabeth Penny: peace and comfort

Request for:	<i>On Behalf of:</i>
Ellen (heath), Tina (Hope), Mom and Dad (continued health), Safe Travels for ALL this week	<i>Cat Leonard</i>
The people of Gaza and the Occupied Territories; Lebanon, Ukraine, Sudan; all impacted by disaster; Nicole and Haemin (healthy pregnancy); Ginny Olson (strength, pain relief); for peace with justice in our world.	<i>Maryn Olson and Angie Fulton</i>
Family unity and healing for son Frank	<i>Kate Schejbal</i>
Jessica, Justin, Henry, Andy and Ollie Hoppe (continued health and happiness while the babies are in the NICU)	<i>Penny Family</i>
Bill (Nick's Dad) - Healing after knee procedure, Love to those who are lonely during holidays.	<i>Kohlberg Family</i>
Prayers for Marc and Ellen	<i>Beth Jung</i>
Chris and Michael (healing, comfort, faith)	<i>Schaller Family</i>

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Pledge Cards can still be turned in. Place in the offering basket, give to an Usher or send to the Church office.

COMMITTEES! Budget Requests for 2025 are due to Dan Flaxbart or your Church Council Liaison by Dec 2. Annual Reports are due to the Church Office by Dec 6.

Adopt-a-Family! Gethsemane has adopted **40 people** this year through St. Anthony's, one of our social ministry partners. Remember to bring your gifts to Gethsemane by December 8th.

December Big Ask We are collecting blankets and gift cards this month, along with the Adopt-a-family (member) partnership. Gift cards to local stores (Aldi, Schnucks, Walmart, Walgreens, etc) will be divided between St. Anthony's and Isaiah 58. A basket for gift cards is in the narthex.

Caring Casseroles! See the enews for recipes and more information about the Caring Casseroles ministry. Cook a casserole and help us stock our freezer to help those in need of a meal.

Living Nativity: Saturday, December 7th at 4 pm. Join us for hot chocolate, cookies, and a petting zoo. Enter the sanctuary to meet the holy family, sing some Christmas carols, and hear the story of Jesus' birth. Thanks to all who have volunteered to help with this fun community event!

The next **Women's Luncheon** is Monday, Dec 16 at 11:30 am. It is a week earlier than usual to avoid Christmas week. The group will meet at Bartolino's South on Lindbergh. RSVP to Lois Wind or Joan Williams by Fri., Dec. 13.

Flowers and Wine Sponsorship The new 2025 sign up sheets for Altar Flowers (\$30) and Communion Wine/Juice (\$10) are available, and are right underneath the 2024 sign up sheets. If you sponsor Altar Flowers and would like a flower dedication to appear in the bulletin, please leave a note in Eve Cooney's mailbox with your name, the date and what you would like the dedication to say.

Bel Canto Chorus Christmas Concert Enjoy Christmas music and support local singers (including Ed and Cindy Breed!) on Sat. Dec 7, at 4 pm at First Congregational Church, 6501 Wydown Blvd. in Clayton. General Tickets are \$20, Students with ID are \$12. Tickets may be purchased online at www.bcchorusstl.com

Red Cross Blood Drive The Red Cross will return to Gethsemane **tomorrow, December 2, from 1-5 pm.** All types are needed! Schedule your appointment on Gethsemane's website.

LuMin St. Louis announces our annual **Trivia Night** to be held on Saturday, February 8, 2025 at Bethel Lutheran Church on Forsyth. Doors will open at 5:45pm with announcements starting at 6:15 and play at 6:30 pm. This year, the price for an individual player is \$25 and a table of 8 is \$200. There will be a basket raffle, a 50/50 raffle, dollar inter-round games and more. Registration opens January 1, 2025.

You or your business can also sponsor a round of trivia. Contact Pastor Tina Reyes for details at pastor.luminstl@gmail.com.

LuMin meals! Please sign-up online or in the Fellowship Hall to provide meals to the Dinner and Jesus nights at LuMin (Lutheran Campus Ministry). The final date Gethsemane has signed up for is: **Sunday, December 8**. Detailed instructions are on the sign up.

The Messenger has a new digital format! If you have any items to include for the January newsletter, please send them to Gretchen at glcstsocialmedia@gmail.org by **Dec 20**.

Thursday e-newsletter! Gethsemane is using Constant Contact to send the weekly e-news on Thursdays. If you would like to be included, please click this QR code to fill out a form indicating that you would like to be added to the list. Also, be sure to check your spam or junk folders!



Gethsemane Lutheran Church Calendar Dec 1 - 8, 2024

12/1 Sunday	8:30 am 9:45 am 11:00 am 5:00 pm	First Sunday in Advent Worship Service: In-Person and on YouTube Fellowship Hour, NO Sunday School, Blood Pressure Worship Service: In-Person Vocal Choir Rehearsal
12/2 Monday	All Day 11 am – 5 pm 6:00 pm	Committee Budget Requests due to Dan Flaxbart or Council Liaison Blood Drive Handbell Choir Rehearsal
12/3 Tuesday	10:00 am	Bible Study
12/4 Wednesday	10:00 am	Staff Meeting
12/7 Saturday	4 – 5 pm	Live Nativity! Baby Jesus, Animals, Cookies, Cocoa
12/8 Sunday	8:30 am 9:45 am 11:00 am 1 - 3 pm 5:00 pm	2nd Sunday in Advent - Gifts for Adopt-a-Family Due! Worship Service: In-Person and on YouTube Fellowship Hour, Children’s Program Rehearsal Worship Service: In-Person Confirmation Meeting Vocal Choir Rehearsal

Upcoming Dates to Consider

Date	Time	Event
Tues, Dec 10	6:00 pm	Project Sanctuary
Sun, Dec 15	Between Services 11 am	Committee Meetings Children's Christmas Program
Mon, Dec 16	11:30 am	Women's Luncheon – Bartolino's South
Tues, Dec 24	4:00 pm	Christmas Eve Service
Wed, Dec 25	10:00 am	Christmas Day service of readings and carols
Sun, Jan 26	9:30 am	One Service followed by Congregational Meeting

Blood Pressure (BP): First and third Sunday of each month in the fellowship hall.

Women's Luncheon: Fourth Monday of every month. *Except for Holidays.

WEEKLY THEME

Advent 1: Weight, Wait, Wait

“The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise...” To quote Ted Knight’s character Judge Smails in *Caddyshack*, “Weeeellll...we’re waiting!!” The wait has become heavy for us. It’s weighing us down with the burdens: years of distress among the nations; centuries of injustice; millenia of discord. It seems the very power of the heavens shake. Our heads bow not in reverence but in exhaustion. The weight of the wait is difficult.

And still we are called to stand up and raise our heads. We are called to look around and see what is happening, realizing that God has not abandoned us in our wait. No, God calls us to keep our trust in the divine, remembering the steadfast love and faithfulness God brings to the faithful. We are reminded that the world has always been in distress. Instead of being weighed down, we are called to be active in expectation.

Yes, God promises redemption; and even so, God works within us to help the world live into the promise. We wait upon the Lord, serving God and interacting with others. We work for justice. We act with mercy. We are in an Advent of active expectation, enacting hope for all who wait.



Gethsemane is a Reconciling in Christ Congregation Affirmation of Welcome

Christ's welcome knows no boundaries! Therefore, our welcome knows no boundaries and we invite all people to full participation in the life of the congregation.

We at Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Saint Louis embrace...

People of any race or ethnicity...

People who are male, female, transgender, or any other gender identity...

People of any age...

People wherever they are, or wherever they have been, on their faith journeys...

People who are single, married, widowed, divorced, separated or partnered...

People who are straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, or any other sexual orientation...

People with a variety of political perspectives...

People who have, or had, addictions, phobias, abortions, or a criminal record...

People who are homeowners, renters, living with parents, or homeless...

People who are fully-abled, disabled, or of differing abilities...

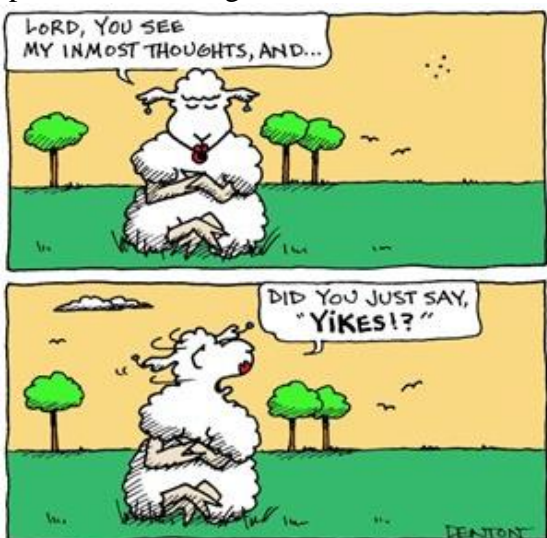
People of differing educational backgrounds...

People of any socio-economic condition...

People not mentioned above, all of whom are created and loved by God!

As we celebrate and seek to preserve the beautiful, amazing diversity of God's creation, we pledge to ourselves and to all others that we will strive to live as a reconciling people in our life together and in our outreach to the world. We are committed to being a radically loving and welcoming community of faith.


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