

LOGOS

The word from Word of Life

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Have you not *known...heard...understood?*

This year the ‘church year’ ended on November 26th and begins again on December 3rd. What special name is given to the last Sunday of the church year? What season begins with the first Sunday of the new church year?

The title for November 26th was “Christ the King” and the readings for that day were centered on the second coming of Jesus and the events that will happen at that time. Beginning with December 3rd, there will be four Sundays in the season of “Advent” – a time to reflect and prepare for the celebration of Jesus’ first coming. It is interesting that there are angels mentioned in both the first and second arrival of Jesus on earth. In the first they are announcing to those on earth the birth of a baby, a Savior, the Messiah, the Lord (Luke 2:11). At the second coming the angels will be sent out by the Son of Man, the Savior, to gather the believers (Matthew 24:31).

What do we learn from the readings during the remaining Sundays? The four Gospels provide first-hand information about the life of Jesus; activities, sayings, evidence about His commitment to the Father, and challenges to us – “go to all nations, make disciples, baptize, teach” (Matthew 28:19-20). The Old Testament readings substantiate the reason Jesus came to earth (reconcile us to God) and the readings from the Letters in the New Testament give encouragement for our daily living in the Kingdom of God which began with the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ.

There are many in the world that have not been, or have chosen not to be, exposed to the teachings in the Bible. This results in not fully understanding the importance of the “why” of the events that Christians commemorate in December. What sets Christianity apart from other “religions”? First of all “Christ” is the essence of that name we are called – Christians. As recorded in the Bible, after the creation of the world and the disobedience of Adam and Eve in the garden, God purposely put into play the plan of salvation for his loved creation. God did not leave his human creation on their own to fend for themselves, to “work” on a way to him. This is not true of the majority of other religions. The Occult (animism, witchcraft) are concerned about spirits, not God. Buddhism is about self-renunciation which after many lives leads to “the final elimination of the self, which is absorbed into the impersonal One or Monad”*. There have been dynamic people with strong leadership skills and moral teachings who have created religions (i.e. Mohammed-Islam), but which do not encourage an intimate relationship with God.

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Worship Texts for December					
Date		1st Reading	Psalm	2nd Reading	Gospel
Dec. 3	1st Sunday of Advent	Isaiah 64:1-9	Psalm 80:1-7	1 Corinthians 1:3-9	Mark 13:24-37
Dec. 10	2nd Sunday of Advent	Isaiah 40:1-11	Psalm 85	2 Peter 3:8-14	Mark 1:1-8
Dec. 17	3rd Sunday of Advent	Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11	Psalm 126	1 Thessalonians 5:16-24	John 1:6-8, 19-28
Dec. 24	4th Sunday of Advent Christmas Eve	2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 Isaiah 7:10-14	Psalm 89:1-5 Psalm 110:1-4	Romans 16:25-27 1 John 4:7-16	Luke 1:26-38 Matthew 1:18-25
Dec. 31	1st Sunday after Christmas	Isaiah 61:10-62:3	Psalm 111	Galatians 4:4-7	Luke 2:22-40

This intimate relationship is the basic element lacking in other religions that can only be found in Christianity – a loving God coming to us. A God who from the beginning of creation has had compassion for the people of the world, planned a way to repair His relationship with them and has accomplished this by sending to us a gift, His son, the babe in Bethlehem. Ask yourself - what if Jesus had not lowered himself to be born as a human, taught us how to truly love, lived exactly what he spoke, said “To see me is to see the Father (John 14:9), died (taking our sins upon the cross) and rose again? No other prophet or “holy” person in any religion can claim what Jesus accomplished in conquering death and providing access to God. Christianity is more than a religion, it is a relationship between God and us, a God that wants us to know him in an intimate way and to share eternity with him. If we do know, have heard, and do understand what has been done for us by Jesus Christ, we can say and share nothing other than, “Jesus is THE Way”!

Is “going to heaven” on your wish list? Cross it off for we are given, by God’s grace, true HOPE in each and every day and for eternity!

[Since early Christianity, Christians have commonly referred to Jesus as "Jesus Christ". The word Christ is derived from the Greek χριστός (Christos), which is a translation of the Hebrew משיח (Meshiakh), meaning the "anointed" and usually transliterated into English as "Messiah".]

* “But Don’t All Religions Lead to God?” by Michael Green, a British theologian, Anglican priest, Christian apologist and author of more than fifty Christian books.



For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his
shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Isaiah 9:6



Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ
7000 N Sheldon Rd, Canton, MI 48187
www.lcmc.net

Sunday, December 3rd

Potluck at 5:00pm

Communion Service
at 6:00pm .



Like Every Newborn

“The Lord is King, and hath put on glorious
apparel; the Lord hath put on his apparel,
and girded himself with strength.”

Like every newborn, he has come from very far.
His eyes are closed against the brilliance of the star.
So glorious is he, he goes to this immoderate length
To show his love for us, discarding power and
strength.

Girded for war, humility his mighty dress,
He moves into the battle wholly weaponless.

Madeleine L’Engle, The Ordering of Love, (Colorado Springs,
CO: WaterBrook Press), 2004



Word of Life Core Values

- *Jesus is Lord.*
- *Jesus is our guide.*
- *Forgiveness of sin leads to healing.*
- *Prayer changes things.*
- *Faith is God’s gracious gift that saves.*