



St. John's Lutheran Church, ELCA

"A Legacy of Worship and Outreach in San Antonio since 1857"

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Phone 210-223-2611

December 8, 2019
Second Sunday of Advent



GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

Prelude

Improvisation on "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

Bells

Welcome and Announcements

Advent Litany

Advent calls us to prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ.
Amid the noise and busyness of our world,
a voice cries from the wilderness:
"Prepare the way for the coming of what is truly important."
So we attune our ears and our hearts to that voice which,
even now, is calling our name.

**In this frantic season, we ask God to strengthen us
against the rush toward excess.**

**Let us, instead, choose moments of grace and pathways of peace.
Let us use this time to prepare ourselves in ways
that allow us to hear God's call to be a people
who help bring healing to the world.**

And so, today, a second candle now shines in our midst
as an act of quiet preparation,
and it is named Peace.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Gathering Hymn

"The King Shall Come"

ELW #260

Greeting

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

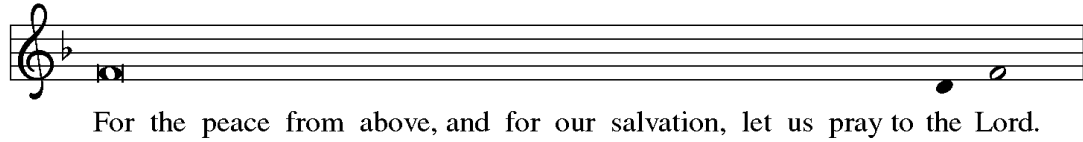
And also with you.

Kyrie

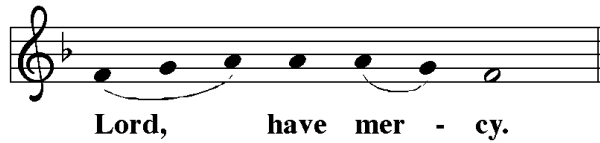
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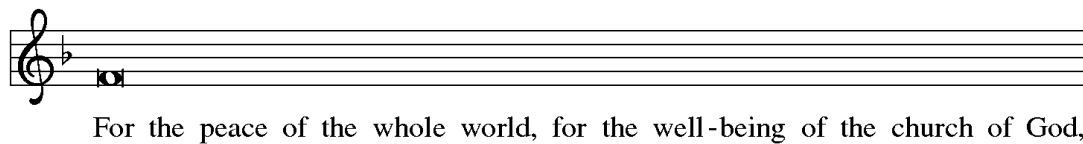
In peace, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.



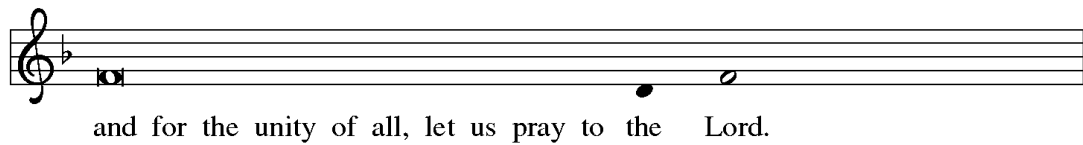
For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



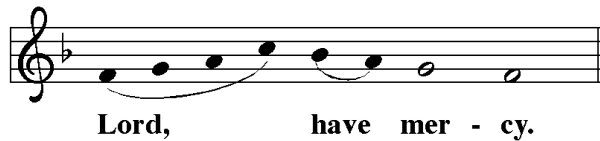
Lord, have mer - cy.



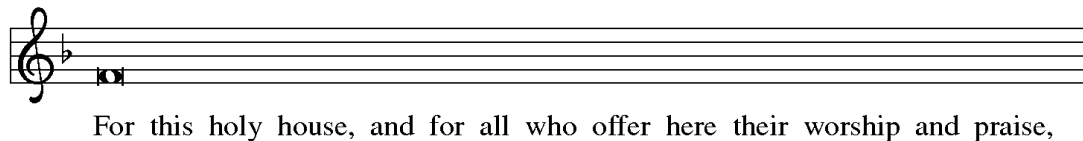
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



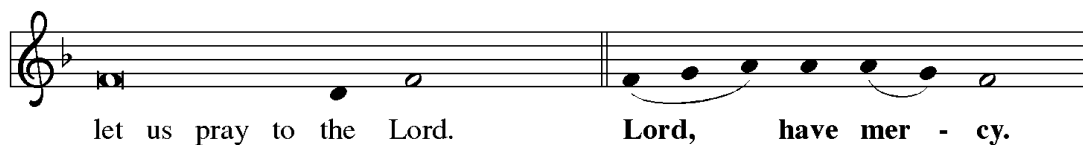
and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



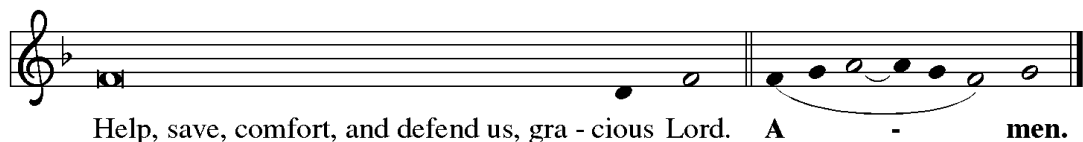
Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. A - men.

Prayer of the Day

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture and preaching; we respond in profession of faith and prayer

St. John's Choir Advent Program

Reading **Ron Schmidt**

Choir **"Gloria"** **Movement I from Gloria Vivaldi**

Solo **"Comfort Ye My People and Every Valley"** **Louie Ramos, tenor**
Messiah by Handel

Choir **"And the Glory of the Lord"** **Messiah by Handel**

Reading: Matthew 3:1-12 **Roger Steckly**

In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah:

"A voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'"

John's clothes were made of camel's hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not think you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

"I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

Hymn **"There's a Voice in the Wilderness"** **ELW 255**

Choir **"How Shall We Know Him?"** **Gilbert Martin**

Reading: Matthew 1:18-25

Kyle Dorsey

This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel."

When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

Choir

"The Angel Gabriel"

John Howell

**Soloists: Delia Tedder, Christian Stevens,
Kathleen Clark, and Elle Anderson**

Hymn

"Prepare the Royal Highway"

ELW 264

Reading: A Candle of Peace

Karen Knudson

Through the lighting of candles, the Advent season allows us to prepare our hearts and minds for the celebration of the birth of our Savior Jesus. Is your heart filled with peace? Do you have peace with your friends, neighbors, family, or most importantly, yourself? We need to know that there are two kinds of Peace in our lives: inner peace and peace with others.

Inner peace starts with God, and it grows as we focus on His strength and allow Him to take a part in our lives. Where we may have weaknesses and fallbacks, His strength perseveres and grants us inner peace. Take, for instance, the following verse from Isaiah: *You will keep him in perfect peace who's mind is focused on You because He trusts in You.* Now, put that verse into your own words: *God will keep me in perfect peace as my mind focuses on Him and trusts Him.* Where you may feel anxiety or inner turmoil, trust in God to guide you, as He will guide you on this journey of Advent.

Creating peace with others may be easier than we perceive it to be. Reflect on the following verse from Matthew: *Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called the children of God.* Peace with others starts when we know that God has asked us to be peacemakers in our world. What steps can you take to healing our broken relationships? Can an apology be made with a coworker or friend? We can bring peace to our world one heart at a time. Carry your candle, run to the darkness, seek our the hopeless, take your candle, and go light your world.

Choir

"Go Light Your World"

**arranged by Allen Pote
Soloist: Pam Garteiser**

Hymn:

To the Tune of: "This is My Song"

ELW 887

Words by Pastor Herb Brokering

O God of love, we live all life before you.
Give us full worth, your mircale of love.
Make Christ our hope, so we find in our neighbor
The love to praise each other's dignity.
Center our lives, the body, mind and spirit
So we embrace our human family.

Give us your faith, your laughter, your compassion;
Give us your dream, your hope, your thankfulness.
Give us your strength to bear the pain of sinning,
Your healing touch, your life, our victory.
We stand where saints have walked with joy before us;
You give your grace for us to give away.

You give us birth, then your unending future,
Each rising sun, each day and then the night.
You give long years, a journey in tomorrow;
You give the seed, we bear the harvest tree.
We know the cold, the sunshine, then the springtime.
Lift high our hearts for sights we are to see.

Prayers of Intercession

*Each petition concludes: "Lord, in your mercy." The congregation responds: "**Hear our prayer.**"*

We hold in prayer: Bob Cauble, Frances Bara, Chris Gates, Danny Myers, Rev. Louise Shaw, Jet Smith, Ralph Detwiler, Augustin Fuentes, family of Mary Williams.

For prayer request updates, please contact the church office by phone or email at (210) 223-2611 or info@StJohnsSA.org

Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

(Please share with those nearest you these or similar words: "Peace be with you.")



MEAL

*We bring our "first fruit" offerings to the Table of the Lord
where we are strengthened and nourished with the Body and Blood of Christ*

Offering

Offertory Hymn

"Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful"

ELW #182

Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful *Offering Song*

Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be
fed with the bread of life. Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u -
nite them with the prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your
pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

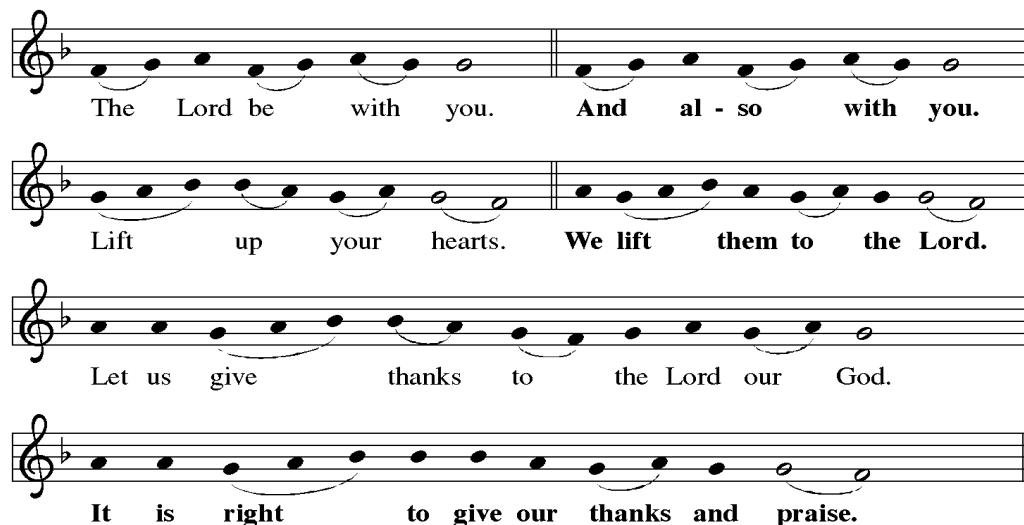
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Offertory Prayer

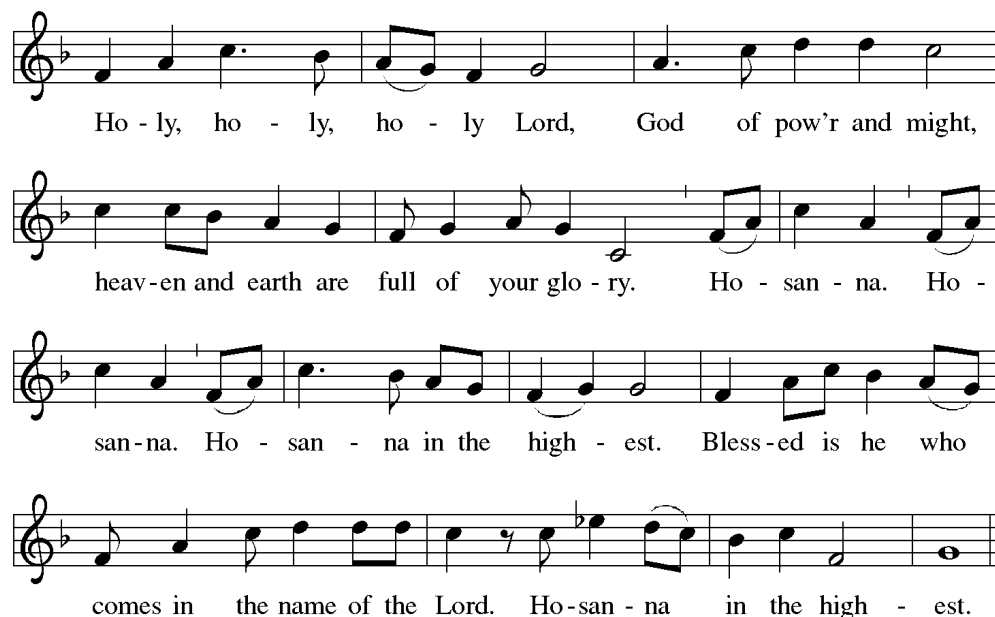
Giver of every good thing, we set before you the gifts that you have already given to sustain our lives and to share with others. Help us to be good stewards of the earth and all that is in it, and let our lives be a testimony to the abundant feast you prepare for all who hunger. **Amen**

Great Thanksgiving



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

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



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.

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life: Blessed are you for the birth of creation. Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light. Blessed are you for your promise to your people. Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams. Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will. Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

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.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

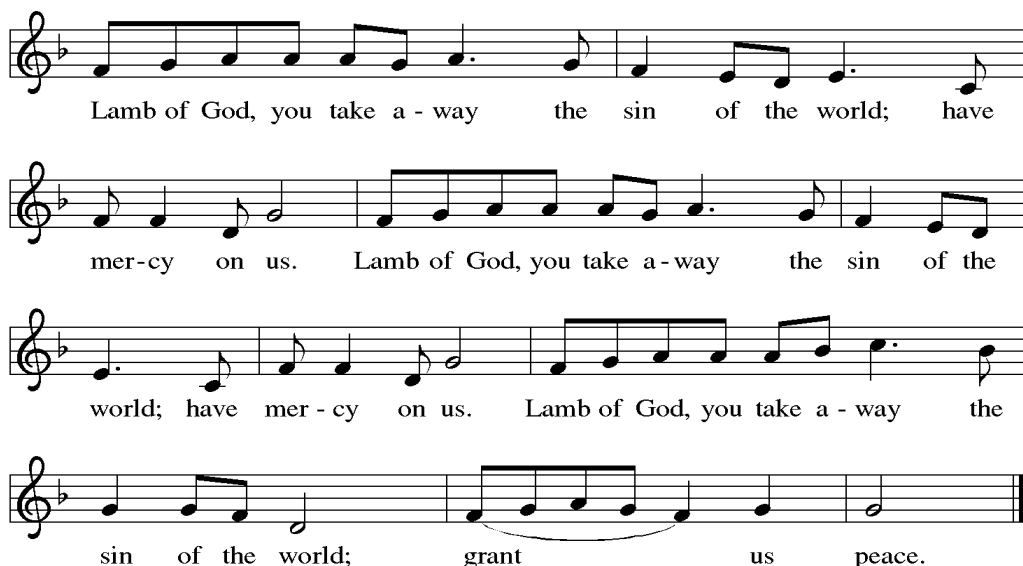
All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Remember us, Lord, in your kingdom, and help us to pray:

**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.**

Come to the table where Christ meets you, and where all are welcomed.

Agnus Dei



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.

Holy Communion

We believe that Christ is truly present in the consecrated bread and wine and we welcome all who wish to receive the Holy Sacrament. Please follow the direction of the ushers. A gluten free host is available upon request.

Communion Hymns

ELW #262 *Wait for the Lord*
ELW #461 *All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly*
ELW #256 *Comfort, Comfort Now My People*

Communion Blessing

Communion Prayer

God of abundance,
we give you thanks that in this holy meal
you have invited us to feast with you and one another.
May the taste of your love remain with us,
and may our words and our work in your name
invite others into your bountiful grace.
Send us from your table to proclaim your presence,
even as we await the glorious coming of Christ our Savior.
Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us out in mission to the world

Benediction

May God, who gathers us in love,
lead you in pathways of righteousness and justice.
May God, who knows us more deeply than we know ourselves,
lead you in pathways of forgiveness and freedom.
May God, who fills us with good things,
lead you in pathways of equity and abundance.
The blessing of the holy Trinity, + one God,
be upon you and remain with you forever. **Amen.**

Sending Hymn

"Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding!"

ELW #246

Dismissal

Go in peace. Christ is with you.
Thanks be to God!

Postlude

"Praeludium and Fugue in C Major"

J.S. Bach

Worship Leaders

Presiding Minister + Pastor James Dew
Assisting Minister + Julie Shadrock

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Worship is central to who we are as a people of God. Every time we gather to hear and respond to the Word, to offer up our prayers for the needs of many, and to receive Christ's living presence in the consecrated bread and wine, we seek to "become what we receive", namely, the Body of Christ for the sake of the life of the world. As we are gathered, fed, and then sent back out in mission, God empowers us to be bearers of blessing and vessels of grace, commissioning us to intentionally live out the reign of God throughout the course of our weekly living.

This week at St. John's

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| Sun 8 • Confirmation Instruction 11:00 AM | Wed 11 • Campus Ministry Dinner 6:00 PM |
| Sun 8 • Cookie Walk Memorial Hall 11:00 AM | Wed 11 • Choir Practice 7:00 PM |
| Mon 9 • Congregation Council Meeting 7:00 PM | Fri 13 • Christmas with Illumen 7:00 PM |
| Tue 10 • Memorial for Mary Williams 10:00 AM | Sun 15 • Children's Christmas Program |
| Wed 11 • Mid-Week Word and Prayer 11:00 AM | 12:15 PM |

Please see our online calendar at stjohnssa.org (under the Home tab) for weekly recurring events and the current month's Tidings.

Financial Reports and Council Minutes are available in the Member Section of the church website, and in the church office by request.

ELCA World Hunger Advent Calendars are available on the large First Floor table. ELCA Good Gifts Catalogs are also available.

The Advent Devotional Booklet for 2019 is now available to be picked-up on the hallway tables. Also, you may read it online through the St. John's website.

"Seats and Feet" Drive

Please help provide much needed underwear and socks for CAM and SAMM. Men, women and children's sizes are needed. The items need to be brand-new, still in the original packaging. Please place under the Christmas tree in Memorial Hall by December 20. Contact Bea Imken for details 210 878-7874.

Let the Children Come

The peaceable kingdom was a favorite subject for Quaker minister and painter Edward Hicks, who created at least sixty-two paintings of this messianic prophecy. Check your local library to see if they have art prints or art books of Hicks's work, and bring a poster or coffee table book that illustrates the comforting and vivid prophecies of Isaiah in today's Old Testament reading. You may also print two of Hicks's peaceable kingdom paintings, which are in the public domain, at the websites for the **National Gallery of Art** and the **Metropolitan Museum of Art**. Display the artwork on a beautiful small table or stand where the assembly will see it as they enter the worship space. Children will readily take in the comforting concept of ordinarily discordant animals living together in friendship in God's promised new world.

Theological Reflection

Sometimes our repentance is nothing more than our attempt to avoid punishment, whether it's getting sent to the principal's office or to hell. Other times our repentance is the realization that we truly wish we had not done what we did, and we pray we never do it again. We often follow repentance with confession and the question "Will you forgive me?" This can easily become a request that the person we have wronged let go of their hurt so we can feel better. Repenting and confessing without asking for forgiveness can be extraordinarily hard—but it signals that our primary concern is not our feelings of guilt or shame, but the well-being of the other. It might be interesting to keep the confession of sin during Advent but refrain from immediately asking God's forgiveness—an exercise in emphasizing God's will for restoration rather than our desire to escape condemnation.

Liturgical Calendar Commemorations

Lucy, martyr, died 304

Friday, December 13, 2019

Lucy was a young Christian of Sicily who was martyred during the persecutions under Emperor Diocletian. Her celebration became particularly important in Sweden and Norway, perhaps because the feast of Lucia (whose name means "light") originally fell on the shortest day of the year.

John of the Cross, renewer of the church, died 1591

Saturday, December 14, 2019

John was a member of the Carmelite monastic order, and worked to reform it. His writings reflect a deep interest in mystical thought and meditation.

The Artwork of the Week

All the furnishings designed for St. John's by the American Seating Company are exceptional, but the altar- the table of the Lord- is the centerpiece of worship. The front panels of the altar show the sacred monograms of the alpha and omega (signifying that our Lord is the beginning and the end of all things) and the IHS symbol (the abbreviation of the Greek word for Jesus).

Above and in back of the altar, the *reredos* (carved screen) features the work of Alois Lang, the American Seating Company's master carver. An ornate molding of grapes and leaves frames the inscription, "Abide in me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, so neither can ye, except ye abide in me." Above this is Lang's fine carving of the Last Supper. Lang was known for his depictions of Michelangelo's masterpiece. Other examples are located in Grafton, Iowa, St. Louis, Missouri, La Grange, Illinois and Great Falls, Montana. St. John's Last Supper carving was evaluated and treated by noted wood conservator, Robert Marshall, in early 2019.



Alois Lang is seen here carving one example of the Last Supper.



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.