



Hope Ev. Lutheran Church

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WEEKLY NEWS ❖ December 20, 2020

❖ IN THE LORD'S HOUSE TODAY ❖

WELCOME! We are happy that you are worshipping with us. As Psalm 122:1 says, "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord!'" Here in the Lord's House our Lord Jesus Christ is truly present in His Word and Sacrament to give us His gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation. We continue to follow appropriate social distancing and hygienic protocols as noted in the service folder. The Sunday Divine Service is also being live-streamed on Hope's [Facebook page](#) and the service folder (bulletin) may be [accessed here](#). "Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever" (Psalm 136:1).

❖ THE WORD FOR TODAY ❖

JOHN THE BAPTIZER POINTS EVERYONE TO THE MESSIAH

The coming of God in all His unveiled power at Mount Sinai was terrifying to the people of Israel. The thundering voice of the Lord puts sinners in fear of death (Deut. 18:15-19). God, therefore, raised up a prophet like Moses—the Messiah, the Christ. God came to His people veiled in human flesh. The skies poured down the Righteous One from heaven; the earth opened her womb and brought forth Salvation (Introit) through the blessed Virgin Mary, the mother of the Lord (Luke 1:39-56). The fruit of her womb is the very Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, the One whose sandal strap John was not worthy to loose (John 1:19-28). In Jesus we are delivered from fear and anxiety. In Him alone we have the peace of God which surpasses all understanding (Phil. 4:4-7).

❖ THE MUSIC FOR TODAY ❖

O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL (LSB 357)

This ancient advent hymn originated in part from the "Great 'O' Antiphons," part of the medieval Roman Catholic Advent liturgy. On each day of the week leading up to Christmas, one responsive verse would be chanted, each including a different Old Testament name for the coming Messiah. When we sing each verse of this hymn, we acknowledge Christ as the fulfillment of these Old Testament prophecies. We sing this hymn in an already-but not yet-kingdom of God. Christ's first coming gives us a reason to rejoice again and again, yet we know that all is not well with the world. So along with our rejoicing, we plead using the words of this hymn that Christ would come again to perfectly fulfill the promise that all darkness will be turned to light. The original text created a reverse acrostic in Latin: "ero cras," which means, "I shall be with you tomorrow." That is the promise we hold to as we sing this beautiful hymn.

❖ PREPARING FOR WORSHIP ❖

- *PREPARE* to receive the Lord's Supper by reviewing "Christian Questions and Their Answers" beginning on 329 in the front part of *Lutheran Service Book*.
- *REFLECT* on Psalm 111 in the front part of *Lutheran Service Book*.
- *PONDER* today's Hymn of the Day, LSB 357, "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

HOLY COMMUNION is celebrated at each Sunday morning Divine Service, with both chalice and individual cup offered. Members of congregations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod may partake of the Sacrament trusting that in this Holy Meal the Lord Jesus Christ is present and gives His Body and Blood for our forgiveness, life, and salvation. Guests are asked to speak with the pastor prior to communing. Those who have a health concern with the alcohol in the cup are asked to speak with the pastor. If you are taking Communion, please fill out the attendance card by marking an "X" in the box by the names of those communing, and hand the card to an usher as you go to the Lord's Table.

❖ SCRIPTURE READINGS TO PREPARE FOR NEXT SUNDAY ❖

CHRISTMAS DAY (December 25, 2020)

Old Testament: **Exodus 40:17-21, 34-38**—God's glory fills the Tabernacle

Psalms: **Psalm 2**—The Messiah's triumph and kingdom

Epistle: **Titus 3:4-7**—The washing of rebirth

Holy Gospel: **John 1:1-18**—The Word became flesh

✠ PARISH NEWS AND NOTES ✠

IN KEEPING WITH THE ST. LOUIS CITY "REOPENING STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES," we are conducting in-person public worship with proper hygienic and social-distancing measures. Effective Sunday, September 13, we resume our regular Sunday morning schedule to include Sunday School, Bible Class, and Catechism Class. We are also offering a second Divine Service opportunity on Wednesdays at 7:00 pm, beginning September 16. For more details, see the most recent (7/29/20) [Pastoral Letter](#) on our [website](#).

AN ADDITIONAL CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE is being added to our Christmas schedule to accommodate safe, healthy worshipping in this year of pandemic. We will still celebrate Christmas Eve at 4:00 p.m. and we will *repeat* that service again at 7:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve. Our complete schedule of Christmas services is:

<u>Christmas Eve (Dec. 24)</u> 4:00 pm – Divine Service 7:00 pm – Divine Service (<i>repeat</i>)	<u>Christmas Day (Dec. 25)</u> 9:30 am – Divine Service	<u>New Year's Eve (Dec. 31)</u> 4:00 pm – Divine Service
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A VERY BIG THANK YOU to all who participated in and purchased gifts for the "Giving Tree". All the gifts were delivered the week of December 13th to the perspective charities - Our Little Haven and Lydia's House. Both organizations were most grateful for the donations.

A MOST SINCERE AND HEARTY THANK YOU to all of you dear saints at Hope for your concern, prayers, and support during Rachel's recent battle against COVID and during my own battle with COVID and pneumonia. Thank you for the cards and texts showing your concern. I am ever grateful to all of our member clergy who filled in during this time of cross-bearing. Also, thank you so much for all of the cards and well wishes on the occasion of my 30th anniversary of ordination (December 16)! -Pastor Asburry

TITHING ENVELOPES FOR 2021 MAY BE PICKED UP TODAY IN THE ELEVATOR LOBBY. Please do not begin using them until January.

OPEN ALTAR FLOWER DATES in January are Sunday, Jan 10, 17, 24, and 31. Vases are \$21 each and are yours to take home after the service. There is a 2021 flower calendar in the narthex that if you would like to put flowers on the altar on a particular Sunday sign up on the calendar and take an envelope by the calendar to put your payment in. You can also call Carol, 752-0525 or 692-3619 to reserve a date.

STEWARDSHIP BLURB FOR SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20: **Philippians 4:6** - "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." Paul puts two things in opposition to each other: anxiety and prayer. So, trade your worries for prayers! You have a Father who loves you and desires to hear your prayers and bless you.

STEWARDSHIP AT HOPE ✠ November 29- December 12, 2020

ATTENDANCE
Sunday: 71

FINANCIAL

<i>Nov. 29 - Dec. 12</i>		<i>Year-to-Date</i>	
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	
Income:	\$8,293	\$10,697	Income: \$231,683.50
Expense:	\$10,536	\$10,697	Expense: \$211,932.34

THIS WEEK AT HOPE ✠ December 20, 2020

SCHEDULE

9:00 - DIVINE SERVICE
Live stream at
www.facebook.com/hopelutheranstl
10:30 - Sunday School/Bible Study
11:45 - Youth Catechism Class

SUNDAY SCHOOL HOUR OFFERINGS

Nursery:
2nd Floor -
Sanctuary:
"Biblical Themes in the 'O Antiphons' and 'O Come, O Come, Emmanuel'"
Rev. Dr. Tom Egger

WEEK'S CALENDAR

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY
4:00 pm Christmas Eve Divine Service
7:00 pm Christmas Eve Divine Service

FRIDAY
9:30 am Christmas Day Divine Service

SATURDAY
Pastor's Day Off