

# Lord of Life Lutheran Church

*Vision Statement: to love God and His creation as a Christ-centered/family-oriented ministry.*

Website: [lord-life.org](http://lord-life.org)/Facebook: [Facebook.com/LordofLifeAlpharetta](https://www.facebook.com/LordofLifeAlpharetta)

**Sunday, December 22<sup>nd</sup>**

**4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent**

**WORSHIP – 10:30am**  
*Worship service also available  
live on Facebook*



**Reminders & Announcements**

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**Christmas Eve Candlelight  
Services – December 24<sup>th</sup> at  
5pm and 7pm**

**7pm service will be live on  
Facebook**



**Last call for Christmas Poinsettia orders! The cost is \$15 each. Please fill out the form located in the Narthex this Sunday or let Tiffanie know your order. The poinsettias will be used to decorate the altar on Christmas Eve and can be taken home after the 7:00pm Christmas Eve service.**

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Advent: A time of waiting, anticipation, reflection, praying, and the perfect, glorious illumination of what seems so often to be the darkness of the world around us. Advent is a season of expectation in our denomination. The word itself means "coming" or "arrival". We know the beautiful Christmas story leading up to the birth of our Savior, a baby born in a simple manger, the Son of God, the Messiah, the Prince of Peace, the Light of The World, the Greatest Gift of Love ever given to each of us as we wait these four December Sundays and 2 full days until Christmas Eve. Each week of Advent we feel the anticipation and see the lights of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love grow brighter as we light first 1, then 2, 3, and 4 candles.

Hope: "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned." (Isaiah 9:2)  
Fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies, God's promises, and the coming birth of Christ all bring hope to each of us and to a dark world.

Peace; "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men" (Luke 2:14). In a world struggling with conflict, deception, aggression, fear, and unrest, we sense and feel around us and in us the peacefulness we often can't explain that comes each year at Christmas. We wait for the coming of Christ to restore unity and reconciliation to our own and the world's brokenness.

Joy: "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people" (Luke 2:10). Joy returns to us in a spirit of shared gladness in celebrations and worship, fellowship with friends, and excitement in knowing that The Good News is for each of us and to all people. Joy fills our hearts when we share that Good News with people we know and love.

Love: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." Believers feel a sense of selfless love, compassion for others, and respond in giving some of what we have been given to others we know and even strangers we may never meet. Imagine sharing another kind of gift, a gift of The Gospel; one that reveals God's promise of eternal life to all who accept the truth and believe that His Son Jesus is our one and only Lord and Savior.

On Christmas Eve a fifth candle brings the Advent season into full illumination of God's greatest gift. The Light of The World is a gift of spiritual illumination; a gift we receive not only at Christmas, but also throughout the year in all that we choose to say and do. As Christians, our hope, our joy, our peace, and our love, when shared freely, will reflect the light of Jesus to a world shrouded in darkness.

Our spiritual, Advent journey and waiting finally leads us to lighting the Christ candle as we herald the birth of Jesus Christ. He is Emmanuel. God is with us, now and forever.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matthew 5:16

The new Advent banner hanging in our sanctuary throughout this season of waiting for Christmas was designed, sewn, and presented as a gift to Lord of Life Lutheran church by Deb Meyer.

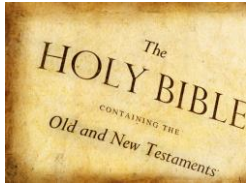
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**Tithes and offerings can be sent via Venmo at any time.**  
**@LordofLifeChurch-LordofLifeChu**



## ***The Lessons for Sunday, December 22<sup>nd</sup>***

First Lesson:  
Second Lesson:  
Gospel Lesson:

## ***Fourth Sunday of Advent***

Micah 5:2-5a  
Hebrews 10:5-10  
Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]

## ***The Lessons for Sunday, December 29<sup>th</sup>***

First Lesson:  
Second Lesson:  
Gospel Lesson:

## ***First Sunday of Christmas***

1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26  
Colossians 3:12-17  
Luke 2:41-52



## **Being Recognized, Encountering Christ**

Often called the visitation, the encounter between Mary and Elizabeth is full of joy, recognition, gratitude, and blessing. Luke immediately follows the annunciation with Mary's journey to visit Elizabeth, who gives this unmarried pregnant girl not only a safe haven but also the first glimpse of what it means to be the mother of the Savior. The encounter is full of

mystery and grace: the mystery of new life forming but still invisible, and the grace of recognizing each other as the Spirit-filled mothers they are becoming.

The story is also full of theological gravity: as the women encounter each other, so do Jesus and John the Baptist. Yet the theological meaning is almost overshadowed by the sheer physicality of the encounter. Imagine the hasty travel, demonstrative greeting, joyful exclamation, the unborn John leaping for joy, and robust singing. As the celebration of Christ's birth approaches, the four active and responsive bodies in this text remind us that this is, after all, the incarnation itself unfolding.

God becomes a body in Jesus, and that body will be offered up for the sake of the world. This body, recognized already by John in the womb, will eventually undergo the suffering and shame of death on a cross. Without losing sight of that big picture, Sunday we enter into the up-close picture of Mary and Elizabeth's encounter and share in the joy and gratitude they have in common with all who recognize Christ in their neighbor.

**Come to worship and witness the prologue for the Christmas story**

