



BLESSED SACRAMENT LUTHERAN CHURCH

“In our Christian Creed we confess that Christ was conceived and became man or was incarnate, that He became a real human being by assuming a body. We confess that He assumed genuine flesh and blood from the Virgin Mary, that He did not pass through her as the sun shines through a glass but brought her virgin flesh and blood with Him.” — Dr. Martin Luther, 1538 Epiphany Sermon on Matthew 2:1-12

Dear Saints,

Fourth Sunday of Advent & Christmas Eve 18 Dec. 2020

Please note that, thanks be to God, we have found a home for the foreseeable future.
Blessed Sacrament will be gathering at

Maple Street Community Church
9485 Maple Street, Hayden, ID 83835

- * Sunday 20 Dec @ 1pm Augsburg Academy, 2pm Mass, Maple Street
- * Wednesday 23 Dec @ 4pm, Midweek Mass, MacPherson Home
- * Thursday, Christmas Eve 24 Dec @ 5pm, Maple Street
- * Sunday 27 Dec *** No Divine Service, Pr John on holiday ***
- * Sunday 3 Jan @ 1pm Augsburg Academy, 2pm Mass, Maple Street

We may understand Advent through a theology of Gift, moving from the *Giver* (God the Father) and His motive of love to the Perfect *Gift* (God the Son), and further to the *giving* (the Gift being conceived of the Holy Spirit of God and born of the Virgin Mary), to further still to whom the Perfect Gift was *given* (namely to the likes of you and me). Who, what, how, to whom and now why? Why *this* gift? And to what end is He given?

First, *why this gift?* The gift is the Messiah and it had to be the Messiah if any attribution was going to be made to God. That's the story, that's what Jesus' contemporaries called him - both those who embrace and opposed his messianic claims. There's no question about that. It's an undeniable historical fact about Jesus of Nazareth: He was repudiated to be the One God anointed as King. Why the gift a King? The answer is that only the gift of the Messiah completes the biblical and historical narrative of Israel, only Messiah fits as the hallmark and signature of the true and living God. It's the right answer to the right story. Salvation is of the Jews and so this gift had to be a Jew and not just any Jew but the expectant heir to David's throne. Why this gift? Because only this story of Israel's history coming to its climax lends credibility to the extraordinary event of the Incarnation of God as the Messiah King. And that is the tidings of great joy of Christmas; it's the report, the eyewitness testimony, the oath: God comes as King in Jesus.

Strange things surround the birth of Jesus that bespeak of the Advent of a great King; things that accompany the births of heroic figures and emperors. Stars are aligned, magi appear, heaven & earth spark against each other, angelic figures break in, a virgin conceives. Something utterly extraordinary is happening: a time of fulfillment is signaled. An ending to the old way the world was ruled and the

beginning of how it will be ruled. All of this is reported to set the stage for the momentous news: the King has come, born in Bethlehem; the King comes, borne upon bread and wine; the King will come again, borne upon the clouds. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

Sunday Mass. Color Blue. Sermon on Ps 126: “Role Reversal” Processional: **357 w/“O” antiphon**; Kyrie p.152; Hymn of the Day: **384**; Psalm **89.1-5, 19-29** chanted responsively during the distribution; Distribution Hymn **364** (a cappella); Post-Communion Canticle: **Nunc Dimittis**; Recessional: **367**.

Catechesis. Sunday catechesis for all will take place from 0900 - 0945. We will continue with a new lesson in “Loving the Liturgy.”

Midweek Mass. We gather at the MacPherson’s @ 4pm for the last midweek Adventen Mass. The

	Dec. 20	Fourth S. in Advent	2 Sam. 7:1–11, 16	Psalm 89:1–5 (19–29)	Rom. 16:25–27	Luke 1:26–38
CHRISTMAS	Dec. 24 <i>Eve</i>	The Nativity of Our Lord	Is. 7:10–14	Psalm 110:1–4	1 John 4:7–16	Matt. 1:18–25
	Dec. 25 <i>Dawn</i>	The Nativity of Our Lord	Is. 62:10–12	Psalm 98	Titus 3:4–7	Luke 2:(1–14) 15–20

Divine Service is under an hour. Text will be 2 Samuel 7.1-16 and homily: “Jesus Sits on David’s Throne.” Homemade soup served thereafter.

Christmas Eve. Carols before Mass: **377; 379**.

Color White. Sermon: “Unavoidable Jesus.” Processional: **367**; Kyrie p.152; Gloria p. 154; Hymn of the Day: **368**; Psalm **110** chanted responsively during the distribution; Distribution Hymn **374** (a cappella); Post-Communion Canticle: **Nunc Dimittis**; Recessional: **363**.

Christmas Morning. Although we shall not be gathering, I’ve attached a sermon for Christmas Morning, entitled “The Meal in the Manger” from St. Luke 2.1-20. Please enjoy (best read aloud).

*** No Divine Service 27 December (Pr John on holiday) *** Next Mass, 3 January 2021 ***

Prayers for the saints. Barb, upon the death of her husband, Tom; Maya and her family; Kelsey, with disconcerting mammogram; Scott with terminal brain cancer; Sandi, a friend of the Drake family. Safe and peaceful Christmas celebrations.

Resources: Pastor Bombaro was on Issues, Etc. Wed. 16 Dec., speaking on the goodness of God and the problem of evil and pain. <https://issuesetc.org/2020/12/16/3512-answering-arguments-against-christianity-a-loving-god-couldnt-allow-evil-and-suffering-dr-john-bombaro-12-16-20/>

Look for two articles this week on www.1517.org on “The Rituals of Preaching” and “God’s Unmasked Face” (inspired by Michael Ashley). Pastor will be a guest on Jonathan Fisk’s Saturday Youtube program tomorrow at RevFiskJ @ 0730.

Have a blessed and safe Christmastide and New Year celebration!

Gratefully yours in Christ Jesus,
Pastor John