

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**  
**WEEK OF DECEMBER 12, 2021**

**IN OUR PRAYERS:** Jim Cleveland; Carolyn Wilkins; Jack & Lureen Vaught; Tony Sikora; Maddie; Aiden Snyder; Cindy; Jim Lambert; Mason Salomon

**ALTAR FLOWERS** are given today by Mike & Cathy Spencer in loving memory of Andy and in joyful anticipation of the resurrection on the Last Day.

**CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM** today between services. Please join us for songs and readings as we celebrate the birth of our Savior Jesus.

**YOUTH GROUP CHRISTMAS PARTY TODAY**, Dec. 12. Supper at 6pm with games, activities, etc. to follow. Hope you and your families can join us!

**STOCKING STUFFING** for the Socks for Vets project will be next Sunday, Dec. 19, between services. Adults, youth, and children are all invited to participate! We will have donuts and fellowship, too!

**CONFIRMATION REVIEW SESSION** next Sunday, Dec. 19, at 11:30am. Parents, please join us as we review what we've covered so far and go over the plan for the rest of the year. (Likely a little bit shorter session).

**ADVENT MIDWEEK SERVICES:** on Wednesdays in Advent (Dec. 15, 22), join us for a potluck supper at 6pm followed by the service at 7pm. Vicar Woelmer has planned a series of services and sermons walking through the teachings and blessings of Holy Baptism. Join us for all four!

**CALENDAR**

Sun. Dec. 12 (Advent 3 – Gaudete)	8:00 & 10:00am Holy Communion 9:00am Children's Christmas Program 11:30am Confirmation 6:00pm Youth Group Christmas Party
Wed. Dec. 15	6:00pm Potluck Supper 7:00pm Holy Communion
Thu. Dec. 16	7:00pm Bible Study
Sun. Dec. 19 (Advent 4 – Rorate Coeli)	8:00 & 10:00am Worship 9:00am Stocking Stuffing & Fellowship 11:30am Confirmation (Parents please attend)

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The Third Sunday in Advent is known as *Gaudete* Sunday, which means “rejoice!” This encouragement in the Introit, like the encouragement to “give thanks” on Thanksgiving Day, is an encouragement to stop and reflect on the “reason for the season.” The reason for *joy* this Sunday is the *hope* that we have in Jesus Christ. The Lord is at hand to speak tenderly to you and to comfort you that your iniquity is pardoned (Is. 40). John the Baptist was the very messenger who was sent to prepare the way for the One who would bring this *hope* into the world, and yet, as we hear in our Gospel reading, he (like all of us) needed a reminder of this *hope* in Jesus.

One way that we are reminded of this *hope* is through Blue, the color of Advent. In comparison to Violet, the penitential color, Blue is the color of hope. While both Violet and Blue reflect the theme of royalty, Blue reflects the color of the sky from which the Lord Jesus will return. Blue reflects the eternity of heaven and the *hope* and *joy* of dwelling in God’s presence forever. However, we see yet another color during the season of Advent: Rose.

While some churches change the paraments and vestments to Rose, many more churches simply celebrate *Gaudete* Sunday by lighting the Rose-colored candle on the Advent wreath. Rose reflects the theme of joy-filled anticipation for Christ’s coming. Rose reminds us that we are halfway through a penitential season, and it beckons us to stop and reflect on the *hope* and *joy* that Christ brings to us now, even as we anticipate the Day of Christmas.

*O Come, Thou Key of David, come  
And open wide our heav’nly home;  
Make safe the way that leads on high,  
And close the path to misery.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
Shall come to thee, O Israel!*

-Vicar Woelmer