



# The Trumpet

**Gloria Dei Lutheran Church - The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod**

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**December 2017**

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**Your letters, articles, and  
photos are welcome! Please  
submit them for the next**

**Trumpet to:**

[gloriadei1981@gmail.com](mailto:gloriadei1981@gmail.com)

*Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. (Hebrews 10:19-25)*

Dear friends in Christ,

Advent is here. It is a time of waiting. When I was a child, I thought that Advent was a time of waiting because I had to wait for Christmas morning to arrive so I could open the presents under the tree. But as I grew, it became clear that during Advent we do not wait for Christmas, we wait for Christ. Advent is the season where we remember that our lives as Christians are lives of waiting for Christ.

During Advent, we remember our Old Testament brothers and sisters, who waited (See Hebrews 11). God had promised to send the Messiah. They believed Him. They waited for Jesus to be born. Most of them died before He came. But they died in faith, sustained by God, and they were saved. During Advent, we remember that we stand in a long, long line of people who have waited upon God. That is exactly what we should be doing, for God is faithful.

During Advent, we also remember that Christ was born, that He came and fulfilled the promises He made. He was born of the Virgin Mary. He did crush the serpent's head when He died on the cross. He did rise again and conquer death. He has made us His own in baptism. He does come to us every day in His Word and in the Sacraments and gives us forgiveness and peace and hope and love and all the gifts of salvation.

Advent is a time of remembering that God kept His word. That is why it is not wrong for us to remember the events of Jesus' birth during Advent.

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# Pastor's Page Continued

While it is good for us to wait until Christmas to celebrate His birth together, the fact that He kept His promise is at the heart of why we wait for Him.

But there is one more promise He has yet to fulfill. He promised to return on the Last Day. He will raise the dead, and take us home to heaven. He promised. He will come. As believers in Christ we are those who wait for His Advent – His coming again.

Jesus is faithful to His promise, so we wait for His return faithfully. He speaks to us in His Word, and by that Word the Spirit keeps us in His light and truth.

Jesus promises good to us, and the Spirit keeps us strong in faith despite the troubles, temptations, and trials of this life. So, we wait for His return hopefully, enduring the long journey by being sustained in the Word and Sacraments.

Jesus loves us. The Father so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son to save us. Jesus lived a life of love, so that we would know that as He loved the people around Him in His day, so He loves us in our day. The Spirit draws us to believe that He loves us. And since He has loved us, and lives in us, we wait for His return lovingly, encouraging one another by gentle words and compassionate deeds, to be strong until He comes.

Advent is a time of waiting. Wonderful waiting. Beautiful waiting. Joyful waiting. Enduring waiting. Waiting with believers in our day, just as believers in the past joined together to wait. Waiting filled with the peace of Christ, and the comfort of His mercy and the strength of His love. We do not wait alone. We wait with the other believers God has joined to Himself in this place. And we wait with Christ, for He promised that He would never leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5). So even while we wait for His return, we are not alone.

Jesus said, "Surely I am coming soon." And we reply, with the Advent saints of every generation, "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!" (Revelation 22:20)



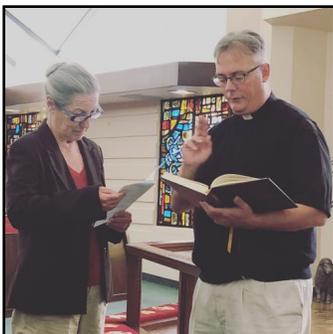
A blessed Advent to you!

In Christ,  
*Pastor Horn*

## Member Updates

Bev Arnett  
1800 Plateau Vista Blvd. #30106  
Round Rock, TX 78664

## November Events



New Member Diane Yeagley



Hike in November at  
Hellhole Canyon



Thanksgiving

# "in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another"



Gloria Dei has been a small church as long as I have been a member here. It has not only been a small church, it has been a humble church. Gloria Dei is a church that gets by on the volunteer efforts of those who care; however, it's so small it can't quite fill its Board of Directors. It has somehow gotten by, but never had a lot (if any) left over at the end of the year. Gloria Dei is a church in which people who say, "we're not growing enough, we're not bringing in enough...we're not enough." There's always a thread of negativity, a self-esteem issue if you will, that runs through a small church, in whispers and off-hand conversations. We seek assurance that we will survive in the things that are visible: people, money, and the state of the building.

This year has been hard at times. I look forward to the end of the year and a new start in 2018. I look forward to this new start of the church year. I seek rest from the busyness of life in the mystery of Christ's incarnation. I seek fresh eyes, so that I can wonder again.

Bonhoeffer said in an Advent sermon,

*God is not ashamed to be with those of humble state. He goes into the midst of it all, chooses one person to be His instrument, and does His miracle there, where one least expects it. He loves the lost, the forgotten, the insignificant, the outcasts, the weak, and the broken...When we reach a point in our lives at which we are not only ashamed of ourselves, but believe God is ashamed of us too, when we feel so far from God, more than we ever have felt in our lives, then and precisely then, God is nearer to us than He has ever been...It is then that He lets us know that feeling of despair is taken away from us, so that we may grasp the wonder of His love, His nearness to us, and His grace.*

Advent is a time where we are reminded that though we may be small, we are enough for God. We are reminded that His ways are not our ways. I would prefer if we receive about three big, rich families who have a lot of time on their hands to join the congregation, especially if one of them is a handyman who would love to be trustee. I would prefer to see the pews filled to standing room only on every Sunday morning. I would prefer not to have to figure out what we need to cut in the budget in order to afford things like fixing plumbing leaks. But His ways are not our ways.

So, I try to recognize the miracles that God has brought to Gloria Dei. They are not always obvious; you need to look closely for them. This year, we have seen a Sunday School start up again. We have the cries of little ones during service. We have gained new members who have blessed us tremendously. We have had visitors who have found new meaning in church again. We have beautiful music to listen to every Sunday. We have a pastor who preaches Christ crucified for the forgiveness of sins, who genuinely loves Christ and His little flock here. We have people who genuinely care for each other and help each other in times of need—the examples that I could name of this are innumerable. We have a beautiful Women's Bible study every Wednesday that has even been able to welcome women who don't go to Gloria Dei. We have fun game nights, hikes, and work days. We are at peace with each other in the fellowship of Christ.

God's mercy is not showy. God chose Mary, a poor, humble virgin, to be the mother of His Son, and He has chosen Gloria Dei to bring His gifts to a few. God gave His Son to the world in the form of a human, a baby boy in a manger. His way to redeem the world was to put His Only Son on a cross. It is not the way we would have chosen for Him to redeem us.

God has clearly chosen Gloria Dei to serve the people that are there, because God has blessed us. The pews are not always full, but maybe that is to teach us that each and every person who is in one of our pews matters, and to remember those who are at home and not able to come to church. Mary sang in the Magnificat, "God's mercy is for those who fear him." Maybe we have to continually wrestle with the budget so that we know that we are dependent on God--and only on God--in His mercy every year, every day, to survive. Maybe plumbing leaks happen so that Heather is reminded she needs to pray for a trustee. ;)

Each year, at Advent we seek peace, we seek quiet, we seek wonder, and we seek joy. *God only seeks us.* And tells us to seek these things only in Him. His ways are not our ways. Maybe we can take some time now to rest in the joy of Advent and Christmas. Maybe we can sit together and close our eyes and stop thinking about everything we have to do, and instead think of how blessed we are to be sitting here in this beautiful congregation.

God Bless You,  
Heather

"Where there is great love there are always miracles. The miracles of the church seem to me to rest not so much upon faces or voices or healing power coming suddenly near to us from afar off, but upon our perceptions being made finer, so that for a moment our eyes can see and our ears can hear what is there about us always."

-Willa Cather



# Advent and Christmas at Gloria Dei

## **Advent Midweek Services**

**Wednesdays at noon and 7pm  
Soup Supper 6pm**

December 6  
December 13  
December 20

## **Advent Evensong Services**

**Saturdays at 5pm**

December 9  
December 16  
December 23

## **Advent Divine Services**

**Sundays at 9am**

December 3  
December 10  
December 17  
December 24

**Christmas Eve Service - December 24, 7pm**

**Christmas Day Service - December 25, 10am**