



THE PILGRIMAGE

The newsletter of Pilgrim Lutheran Church (LCMS), Broadway at Florey, Kilgore, Texas
December 2019

We glorify God by receiving the forgiveness of sins by grace through faith in Jesus Christ and sharing that salvation through word and deed with those in our midst, in our community, and throughout the world.

Jesus came, comes, and is coming as He promised

This past Thanksgiving, for a variety of reasons, my sister did not know for sure whether or not my mother and I would actually come down to Austin to celebrate the holiday until Thanksgiving was nearly upon us. And, once we decided not to go to Austin, the people who invited us for a meal locally for the same reasons also did not know whether or not we would actually come there until it was nearly time to eat. Although our reasons were different, the situation reminded me of something I had recently learned from my father's first cousin, a long-term missionary in Puerto Rico, about people on that island: they reportedly would rather say that they are coming and then not show up than say that they are not coming to begin with (I for one would be more offended by the no-show than by the declined invitation).

Not only in this Advent season with its focus on the "comings" of our Lord—His past coming in the flesh of the man Jesus, His present coming in Word and Sacrament, and His future coming in glory to judge the living and the dead—but always we can be certain that Jesus is coming as He promised. In fact, Jesus's past and present comings are a kind of evidence of His future coming. His having kept His promises in the past helps us know that He will keep His promises that are yet to be fulfilled in the future.

To some extent we may rightly think of Advent as a penitential season of preparation for our celebration of the Nativity of Our Lord: Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and the other days of the Twelve Days of the Christmas Season. But, we also rightly recognize that we are not preparing or otherwise waiting for Jesus to come at Christmas, for He already came in the past to live the perfect life that we fail to live and to die in our place on the cross the death that we otherwise would deserve because of our failures to live perfect lives. At Christmas we celebrate God's birth into human flesh to save us from our sins, and we do so even as He comes to us in Word and Sacrament in that very celebration. Jesus's coming that for the most part remains in the future is His coming a final time with glory to judge both the living and the dead.

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Of course, given the way that God judges people at the moment of their deaths, leaving the verdict to be revealed to all on the Last Day, that final coming in a sense has already happened for some, although those who have passed from this life to the next are nevertheless waiting for their bodies to be resurrected and so to fully experience the joys of heaven or the torments of hell, so Jesus's final coming still matters to them. Revelation 6:9-11 is often taken as suggesting that the temporarily-disembodied souls in heaven are aware of the passage of time and are anxious for judgment and the vengeance upon the wicked it will bring.

The Lord Jesus's Christ's final coming for judgment at a day and hour that no one knows has His people being ready at all times (Matthew 24:36, 44). We at least try to live the holy lives that God would have us live (2 Peter 3:11-12). And, when we fail to do so, as we will fail, with daily sorrow over our sin and trust in God to forgive our sin for Jesus's sake, we live in His forgiveness of our sins against Him, and, in turn, we extend our forgiveness to those who sin against us.

Some have in the past, do now, and will in the future scoff at what they consider to be the never-to-be-fulfilled promise of the Lord's final coming, but, heeding God's Word, believers recognize that what seems to be slowness is in fact the Lord's patience, not wishing that any should perish but that all should reach repentance (2 Peter 3:3-10), an emphasis of the Advent season.

You do not have to wait long for special opportunities for interactions with your brothers and sisters or for special opportunities for worship to come during the Advent and Christmas seasons this month. From our participation in the Kilgore Christmas Parade, our usual Chili Supper afterwards, and the Pilgrim Christmas Party, to our three Midweek Advent Evening Prayer services, Christmas Eve Candlelight Service of Readings and Hymns, and Christmas Day Divine Service, there are special opportunities throughout the month. (See the calendar in this newsletter for dates and times.) All are invited, so all are encouraged to reach out to family, friends, and classmates or coworkers and also invite them. (Surveys show that most people who end up joining a church were first invited by someone they knew and trusted.) The gifts of God's already-fulfilled and to-be-fulfilled promises are to be shared!

Now into my ninth year of service to Pilgrim and so my ninth Advent and Christmas in East Texas, I gratefully pray for all of our members and friends and communities to have blessed Advent and Christmas seasons!

*His and your servant,
Pastor Galler*



INVESTMENT	FIXED RATE		FLOATING RATE	
	Rate	APY	Rate	APY
One-Year Note	2.125%	2.14%	1.625%	1.63%
Three-Year Note	2.250%	2.27%	1.625%	1.63%
Five-Year Note	2.500%	2.52%	1.625%	1.63%
Flex Savings			1.000%	1.00%
Rainy Day Fund*			1.250%	1.26%

*Amounts over \$10,000 receive the Flex Savings rate

ACCOUNTS FOR CONGREGATIONS			
Congregation Savings		1.250%	1.26%
Building Fund Savings		2.500%	2.53%

DAILY BIBLE READING	
1	Luke 1:46-55 Revelation 1-2
2	Psalm 1 Rev. 3-5
3	Psalm 2 Revelation 6-8
4	Psalm 3 Revelation 9-11
5	Psalm 4 Rev. 12-14
6	Psalm 5 Rev. 15-17
7	Psalm 6 Rev. 18-20
8	Psalm 7 Rev. 21-22
9	Psalm 8 Isaiah 1-3
10	Psalm 9 Isaiah 4-6
11	Psalm 10 Isaiah 7-9
12	Psalm 11 Isaiah 10-12
13	Psalm 12 Isaiah 13-15
14	Psalm 13 Isaiah 16-18
15	Psalm 14 Isaiah 19-21
16	Psalm 15 Isaiah 22-24
17	Psalm 16 Isaiah 25-27
18	Psalm 17 Isaiah 28-30
19	Psalm 18 Isaiah 31-33
20	Psalm 19 Isaiah 34-36
21	Psalm 20 Isaiah 37-39
22	Psalm 21 Isaiah 40-42
23	Psalm 22 Isaiah 43-45
24	Psalm 23 Isaiah 46-48
25	Psalm 24 Isaiah 49-51
26	Psalm 25 Isaiah 52-54
27	Psalm 26 Isaiah 55-57
28	Psalm 27 Isaiah 58-60
29	Psalm 28 Isaiah 61-63
30	Psalm 29 Isaiah 64-66
31	Luke 1:46-55 Mark 1



DECEMBER 2019

Pilgrim Lutheran Church
 www.pilgrimlc.org
 903-984-4333

Pastor's Regular Study Hours
 Tuesday 5:00–8:00 PM
 Wednesday–Friday 9:00 AM–Noon
 Saturday Noon–3:00 PM

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT (B) 9:15 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service	2	3 Noon Kilgore Ministerial Fellowship Lunch 6:30-8:00 PM Christmas Parade Chili Supper after	4 Noon Rotary Mtg. 7:00 PM Evening Prayer	5 Pastor gone to Plano Study Group	6	7 10:00 AM Service at the Willows
8 SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT (B) 9:15 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service Pilgrim Christmas Party after 7:00 PM <i>Messiah</i> (1 st UMC Lngvw.)	9 5:30 PM Rotary Board Meeting	10 6:00 PM Elders' Meeting	11 (Rotary meets at Kilgore College) 7:00 PM Evening Prayer	12 (Circuit #14 does not meet in December)	13	14
15 THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT (B) 9:15 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service Toni Erickson (B)	16 Andrew Freeman (B)	17	18 Noon Rotary Mtg. 2:30 Nursing Home Birthday Party 7:00 PM Evening Prayer (Placing of the Greens after) M/M Wilson (A)	19	20	21
22 FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT (B) 9:15 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service	23	24 CHRISTMAS EVE 6:00 PM Candlelight Service of Readings and Hymns	25 CHRISTMAS DAY 10:00 AM Divine Service	26 M/M Holcombe (A)	27	28 10:00 AM Service at the Willows
29 FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS (G) 9:15 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service	30 M/M Griffin (A)	31 EVE OF THE CIRCUMCISION AND NAME OF JESUS	Elder on Duty: Jeromy McMurray (Back-up: Carl Gardner)			

“The advent of our King / Our prayers must now employ, / And we must hymns of welcome sing / In strains of holy joy.” (Lutheran Service Book 331:1)

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The Pilgrimage is a monthly newsletter for the members and friends of



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