



THE PILGRIMAGE

The newsletter of Pilgrim Lutheran Church (LCMS), Broadway at Florey, Kilgore, Texas
December 2025

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 once, comes now, and will come a final time

Dear Members and Friends of Pilgrim Lutheran Church,

Halloween was barely past this year when many in society seemingly skipped right over Thanksgiving and were in full-on Christmas mode. For example, a national chain of coffee shops that I sometimes patronize was already offering its Christmas drinks and this year apparently did not even offer its usual Thanksgiving Blend. People not only immediately replaced their outside Halloween decorations with their Christmas lights but also were planning Christmas parties and purchasing Christmas presents with Thanksgiving plans almost as an afterthought.

The passing of Reformation Day and All Saints' Day left us in the Church spending the end of the old Church Year focused on the Last Things, a three-Sunday emphasis that somewhat carries over to the beginning of the new Church Year. In the current season of Advent, we are penitentially preparing to celebrate the one-time coming of the Son of God humbly in the human flesh of Jesus born of the Virgin Mary in order to suffer and die on the cross and so save all people from their sins. But, we also penitentially prepare both for our Lord's humbly coming to us now repeatedly in order to give us the benefits of His cross and for His coming to us a final time in glory in order to judge the living and the dead.

Although to some extent those three comings are connected to every season of the Church Year, those three comings are especially associated with Advent. The hymn "Once He Came in Blessing" as we have it now (*Lutheran Service Book* 333) makes clear the ways that Christ comes and the blessings that He gives, perhaps more clear than both other hymns and its own previous versions (compare *The Lutheran Hymnal* 74 and *Lutheran Worship* 30).

As indicated at the bottom of *LSB* 333, the hymn was written in German by John Horn (c.1490-1547), and the first and fourth stanzas were translated into English by Catherine Winkworth (1827-1878), while the second and third stanzas were translated by those working on *LSB*, which was published in 2006. Notably, *LSB* did not simply re-translate the same two

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Article continues from the preceding page.

“middle” German stanzas used by *TLH* and *LW*, but rather *LSB* made other “middle” stanzas by translating into English other stanzas of the original German hymn

The past “Once” that the hymn says that the Son of God came was “lowly” in the flesh of the Virgin Mary, when He “Bore the cross to save us; Hope and freedom gave us” (*LSB* 333:1). During the present “Now” when He repeatedly comes, also “humbly” in bread and wine, “With Himself He feeds us ... Manna that will nourish Souls that they may flourish” (*LSB* 333:2). The future “Soon” that He will come is “with mighty power” and “splendor” and is for the purpose of “With the faithful sharing Joy beyond comparing” (*LSB* 333:3). Note well that we pray for our Lord Jesus to come now in His Word and Sacraments to keep us both believing and confessing our sins and the faith so that we may praise Him in heaven (*LSB* 333:4).

With the new Church Year’s switch to the liturgy of Divine Service, Setting One, we have a fuller general confession of sins as part of the “Preparatory Rite” before most Divine Services. Also, I am available for private confession and individual Holy Absolution not only during the penitential seasons of Advent and Lent but during every season of every Church Year. All are invited and welcome to confess the sins that they “know and feel in their hearts”, as the Small Catechism puts it, or that “particularly trouble” them, as the *LSB* rite puts it (*LSB* 292-293). And, we continue to confess the faith every Sunday in the words of the Apostles’ Creed, Nicene Creed, or Athanasian Creed.

All are also invited and welcome to any of the special services this month (Midweek Advent Evening Prayer, Christmas Eve Candlelight Service of Readings and Hymns, and Christmas Day Divine Service) or other special activities (94th Annual Kilgore Christmas Parade and Chili Supper, Midweek Advent Soup/Salad Suppers, the Annual Congregational Christmas Party, and the Placing of the Greens with Salad/Pizza lunch). See the calendar for details.

God the Father has loved us with great love in His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, and He graciously brings us to repentance and faith by the power of His Holy Spirit. With daily sorrow over our sin and trust in God to forgive our sin for Jesus’s sake, we truly are ready for Christ’s present and future comings, which are in some sense “guaranteed” by His past coming that we celebrate at Christmas. Blessed Advent and Christmas tides to all!

*His and your servant,
Pastor Galler*

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 2025



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Investment	Fixed Rate ²		Floating Rate ²	
	Rate	APY	Rate	APY
One Year Note ¹	3.800%	3.85%	3.000%	3.03%
Three Year Note ¹	3.750%	3.80%	3.250%	3.29%
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\$100,000 minimum, 18 month term				
Flex Savings			1.000%	1.00%
Rainy Day Fund			1.250%	1.26%
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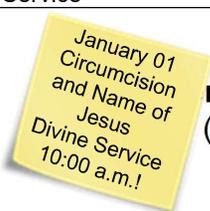
Pilgrim Lutheran Church

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	2 6:30-8:30 PM Kilgore Christmas Parade Afterwards Chili Supper at Pilgrim	3 6:00 PM Soup/Salad Supper 7:00 PM Advent Evening Prayer	4 10:30 AM to 2:00 PM DFW Study Group meets in Wylie 4:15 PM Catechesis 7:30 PM Catechesis Ann Worsham (B)	5	6 (Willows Services are suspended)
7 FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT(B) 9:15 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service "15-2 Folk" Gathering	8 Don Gibson (B)	9 6:00 PM Elders' Meeting	10 6:00 PM Soup/Salad Supper 7:00 PM Advent Evening Prayer	11 4:15 PM Catechesis 7:30 PM Catechesis	12	13
14 SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT (B) 9:15 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service Congregational Christmas Party	15	16 Andrew Freeman (B)	17 6:00 PM Soup/Salad Supper 7:00 PM Advent Evening Prayer	18 4:15 PM Catechesis 7:30 PM Catechesis M/M John Wilson (A)	19	20
21 THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT(B) 9:15 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service Placing of the Greens (Mary/Martha is providing lunch)	22	23	24 THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD—CHRISTMAS EVE (W) 6:00 PM Candlelight Service of Readings and Hymns	25 THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD—CHRISTMAS DAY (W) 10:00 AM Divine Service	26	27
28 THE HOLY INNOCENTS, MARTYRS (R) 9:15 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service	29 Pete Menconi (B)	30	31 NO Midweek Bible Study	 on Duty: Jeromy McMurray (Back-up: Carl Gardner)		

“The very Son of God sublime Entered into earthly time

To lead us from this world of cares To heaven’s courts as blessed heirs. Alleluia!” (LSB 382:5)

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713 Florey Street
Kilgore, Texas 75662-3503

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