

**LAMB OF GOD**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH



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**December 10, 2023**

**Today's theme:  
Prepare To Meet Him**

**Welcome, guests!** God’s love welcomes you—no matter who you are or where you come from— and so do we. We believe that Jesus Christ is the true Savior of all people. By his perfect life, innocent death, and triumphant resurrection he saves all sinners even without our help. Jesus Christ makes us special people, right with God and ready for life! We learn this from the Bible, God’s authentic message of grace and guidance for us. Whether you are a first-time guest or a curious observer with little religious background, we are delighted to share our worship with you. Please come back and worship with us again.

If you would like to know more about Lamb of God, visit our website [www.lambofgodlafayette.com](http://www.lambofgodlafayette.com), like us on Facebook, Instagram and/or YouTube. Lamb of God is a congregation of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod WELS ([www.wels.net](http://www.wels.net)) est.1850.

**Children’s “My Worship Notes”** are included in another document. They can be used by children of any age to keep notes during the service.

**Prepare To Meet Him!** Scriptures teach that King Jesus is the Son of God in flesh and the only hope for salvation. Jesus himself claimed that he is the only way into the glorious kingdom of heaven. You do not approach meeting someone like that casually or carelessly. You prepare meticulously. What does that mean? What does a life of readiness—ready to meet such a King—look like? In one word: repentance. If we insist on hanging onto our sins, how can we receive the One who came for the very purpose of taking those sins away?

Throughout history, God has raised up called servants—like John the Baptist—to preach a message of repentance. This repentance is central to our preparation for the Lord’s coming. Without repentance, the King’s coming only terrifies. But all those who believe and repent look forward to the coming of the King and the consummation of his everlasting kingdom.

## INVOCATION

*[We invoke, that is, call up on the name of the Triune God, to be present with us through Word and Sacrament. The sign of the cross is made to remind believers of their baptism in the name of the Triune God.]*

In the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## OPENING HYMN

**Prepare the Royal Highway**

CW 302

*Please stand.*

## CONFESSION

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

**If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just  
and will forgive us our sins  
and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

**Holy God, gracious Father,**

**I am sinful by nature**

**and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions.**

**I have not loved you with my whole heart;**

**I have not loved others as I should.**

**I deserve your punishment both now and forever.**

**But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins**

**with his innocent suffering and death.**

**Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.**

*Silence for meditation and reflection*

## **ABSOLUTION**

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

*Be seated.*

## **LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES**

We light two Advent candles, remembering Jesus, who came in history. He came into a world of sin and death.

**We remember Jesus, who came as the promised Messiah. John the Baptist prepared the way of the Lord.**

We hear his Advent call to repent.

**We light two Advent candles as a sign of our repentance and desire for renewal.**

Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest.

**Through your Word and Spirit may our souls be blessed.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

**Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Protect us by your strength, and save us from the threatening dangers of our sins; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.**

**Amen.**

# THE WORD

*[Like Mary, we sit at the feet of Jesus to hear his Word (Luke 10:39).]*

## FIRST READING

*Isaiah 40:1-11*

*[Isaiah prophesies about one who could come to prepare people to meet their sovereign LORD.  
This prophecy is fulfilled in the ministry of John the Baptist.]*

<sup>1</sup>Comfort, comfort my people,  
says your God.

<sup>2</sup>Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
and proclaim to her  
that her hard service has been completed,  
that her sin has been paid for,  
that she has received from the LORD's hand  
double for all her sins.

<sup>3</sup>A voice of one calling:  
"In the wilderness prepare  
the way for the LORD;  
make straight in the desert  
a highway for our God.

<sup>4</sup>Every valley shall be raised up,  
every mountain and hill made low;  
the rough ground shall become level,  
the rugged places a plain.

<sup>5</sup>And the glory of the LORD will be revealed,  
and all people will see it together.  
For the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

<sup>6</sup>A voice says, "Cry out."  
And I said, "What shall I cry?"

“All people are like grass,  
and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the field.

<sup>7</sup>The grass withers and the flowers fall,  
because the breath of the LORD blows on them.  
Surely the people are grass.

<sup>8</sup>The grass withers and the flowers fall,  
but the word of our God endures forever.”

<sup>9</sup>You who bring good news to Zion,  
go up on a high mountain.  
You who bring good news to Jerusalem,  
lift up your voice with a shout,  
lift it up, do not be afraid;  
say to the towns of Judah,  
“Here is your God!”

<sup>10</sup>See, the Sovereign LORD comes with power,  
and he rules with a mighty arm.  
See, his reward is with him,  
and his recompense accompanies him.

<sup>11</sup>He tends his flock like a shepherd:  
He gathers the lambs in his arms  
and carries them close to his heart;  
he gently leads those that have young.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**



## SECOND READING

2 Peter 3:8–14

*[St. Peter reminds us that judgment day will come at an unexpected time. So prepare with daily repentance.]*

<sup>8</sup>But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. <sup>9</sup>The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

<sup>10</sup>But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything done in it will be laid bare.

<sup>11</sup>Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives <sup>12</sup>as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. <sup>13</sup>But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.

<sup>14</sup>So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*[It has been a tradition in the Christian church to stand for the reading of the gospel for the past 2,000 years. Just as subjects rise when a king speaks, we rise out of respect for the words of our King.]*

*Please stand.*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Luke 3:4,6

\*Soloist will introduce the refrain. The congregation will repeat the refrain. Soloist will sing the verses.  
The congregation will sing the refrain.



### Refrain



Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.  
And all people will see God's salvation.

### Refrain

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## GOSPEL

Mark 1:1-8

[God raised up John the Baptist to preach a message of repentance and forgiveness, preparing people to meet their Lord and King.]

<sup>1</sup>The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God,  
<sup>2</sup>as it is written in Isaiah the prophet:

“I will send my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way”—

<sup>3</sup>“a voice of one calling in the wilderness,  
‘Prepare the way for the Lord,  
make straight paths for him.’”

<sup>4</sup>And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup>The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. <sup>6</sup>John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup>And this was his message: "After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. <sup>8</sup>I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

The Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise be to you, O Christ!**

*Be seated.*

## **CHILDREN'S SERMON**

*Children are invited to sit in the front of the sanctuary.*

## **HYMN OF THE DAY**

**On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry**  
CW316

## **SERMON**

**based on Mark 1:1-8**

### **Our Pressing Need for Preparation**

## **CONFESSION OF FAITH**

† *Public confession is faith's response to God's saving Word. The word creed comes from the Latin word "credo" which means I believe. The Apostles Creed is so named not because it was written by Jesus' apostles but because it is a brief statement of the gospel truths they taught. Its writing and use dates to the very early years of the Christian church.*

## **Apostles' Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

**He descended into hell.**

**The third day he rose again from the dead.**

**He ascended into heaven**

**and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.**

**From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Christian Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## **HYMN**

### **Comfort, Comfort All My People**

CW312

## **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

*[The Prayer for the Church includes prayers for our brothers and sisters in our congregation. Since we belong to something bigger than ourselves, the Christian Church, we pray for the needs and struggles of all God's people on earth.]*

*Brief intercessory prayers may be added in a fitting place.*

Loving God and Lord, you created the universe that surrounds us and the globe on which we live. You control all things through your Son, who sits at your right hand in glory.

**Comfort us with the promise of your eternal presence.**

Give your Word power as it works in our hearts and minds. Clear away our confusion, and demolish our doubts. Send your Spirit to strengthen both our confidence in your promises and our desire to live according to your will.

**Take away our love of sinning, and restore us each day by your grace.**

The signs of the times warn us that the end of time is near. Protect us from scoffers who sneer at your truth. Spare us and Christians around the world from all forms of hate and persecution.

**Give us courage to carry the cross with patience and joy.**

Instill in the hearts of our children a desire to follow you as they prepare for future days. Help them distinguish between what is passing and what is eternal, between instant thrills and lasting joy. Encourage more young people to prepare for service in the public ministry of the gospel.

**Mold us and move us to be good examples for our youth.**

Hold in your care, Lord, those who are experiencing physical or emotional pain and all who are afflicted by disease or facing death. [Especially bless . . . *here name the person and the cause of the petition.*] Pour out your compassion on the grieving, and comfort the mourners who miss someone they loved.

**Move us to pray for these brothers and sisters and to help when we can.**

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

*Silent prayer*

Whether we pray together or alone, you have promised to hear and answer us. Give us patience to accept your blessings in whatever way you send them. In your love and wisdom, prepare us for the day when you will take us to be with you forever. **Hear us for Jesus' sake. Amen.**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done  
on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins,  
as we forgive those  
who sin against us.**

**Lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and forever. Amen.**

## **OFFERING**

If you wish to give an offering:

- place it in the offering plate
- scan this QR code
- text any dollar amount to **84321**
- mail a check to the church—1893 E 600 North, West Lafayette, IN 47906
- go to the church website [www.lambofgodlafayette.com](http://www.lambofgodlafayette.com) and click **GIVE** in the upper right corner.



## CLOSING HYMN

## The King Shall Come

CW 93 25 sts. 1,3,5



1 The King shall come when morn - ing dawns And  
3 Oh, bright - er than the ris - ing morn When  
5 The King shall come when morn - ing dawns And



light tri - um - phant breaks, When beau - ty gilds the  
Christ, vic - to - rious, rose And left the lone - some  
light and beau - ty brings. Hail, Christ the Lord! Your



east - ern hills And life to joy a - wakes—  
place of death De - spite the rage of foes.  
peo - ple pray: Come quick - ly, King of kings!

## THE BLESSING

*[The blessing of Aaron has been spoken over God's people for over 3,500 years. The Lord said, "So they will put my name on [them], and I will bless them" (Numbers 6:27).]*

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and ✠ give you peace. **Amen.**

## Acknowledgments

Setting Three from Christian Worship

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### **Serving at Worship (12/10)**

Vacancy Pastor: Bruce Marggraf  
Piano: Liz Schmidt  
Usher/Greeter: Correll family  
Acolyte: Mitchell Becker  
Livestream: Dave & Aiden Graves

### **Serving Next Week (12/17)**

Vacancy Pastor: Bruce Marggraf  
Piano: Liz Schmidt  
Usher/Greeter: Graves family  
Acolyte: Kaylee Bednarski  
Livestream: Amanda & Lauren Schoonmaker  
Refreshments: Need a volunteer

## **UPCOMING ACTIVITIES**

- Sun, Dec 10
- Bible Study – 9:15am
  - Worship Service – 10:30am
  - Catechism class – after service
- Wed, Dec 13
- Purdue Campus Ministry (WALC room) – 8pm
- Thu, Dec 14
- Mornings with Mommy 10-11am

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Adult Bible Study – Sunday's at 9:15am**

We will read the gospel of John starting at the beginning, discuss what St. John wrote, and apply it to our lives today. Most Christians know John 3:16 by heart, but how many of us have studied the rest of this wonderful gospel book? Come and learn with us, your faith will be strengthened!

**Would you like to receive the weekly email update from Lamb of God?** If so, please provide your email in the Friendship Register on your row or contact the church office at [loginlafayette@gmail.com](mailto:loginlafayette@gmail.com).

The next **Mornings with Mommy (MwM)** will be held on **Thursday, December 14<sup>th</sup>** from **10-11am**. Click on the QR code to register or go to the Lamb of God website at:

<https://lambofgodlafayette.com/ministry/mornings-with-mommy/>.

- Dec 14 - Happy Birthday, Jesus
- Jan 11 – Winter Days – Snowflakes, Hats and Mittens



Register here

## PRAYER REQUESTS

"I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people - for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness." (1 Timothy 2:1-2)

For all those in our midst who may be dealing with physical ailments, including Gail Rathgeber (Deb Turley's mother), Denise Gilmore (Diane Brady's sister), Kyle Correll, (son of Judy and Don), Jim Holmes and Joan Bonnet; for all those who are suffering from abuse in the home, that they might seek help.

For Lamb of God, that the Good Shepherd will lead and sustain the congregation through the vacancy and that he will provide another shepherd soon.

For peace within Israel and in her relationships with regional and world nations.

That the Holy Spirit would work in the hearts of all those who join us for worship each Sunday. That our Lord would give us the means to show the love of Christ as we support our neighbors in need.

That as we pray "give us our daily bread" our Almighty King would grant us good government, honest and faithful leaders, judges, a strong armed forces to defend and protect us, health of body and mind, good neighbors, godly spouse, godly children and Christian friends.

For all military families who are separated by deployment or other training/ schools.