

# LAMB OF GOD

## LUTHERAN CHURCH



1893 E 600 N  
West Lafayette, IN 47906

[loginlafayette@gmail.com](mailto:loginlafayette@gmail.com)  
[lambofgodlafayette.com](http://lambofgodlafayette.com)  
765.414.5227

**December 17, 2023**

**Today's theme:**  
**He is Bringing Perfect Joy**

**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.

### **He is Bringing Perfect Joy**

The historic Christian Church gave Latin titles to each Sunday. They titled the Third Sunday in Advent "Gaudete," which means "Rejoice!" As we reach the midway point of Advent, we remember that when the King shall come, he will bring us perfect and everlasting joy.

Joy is not the same thing as happiness. Happiness is an emotion. Joyfulness is a condition. Happiness comes from your circumstances. Joyfulness comes from your King entering into your heart and assuring you of his abiding love and your glorious future. Therefore, happiness is fleeting. Joyfulness is enduring.

## OPENING HYMN

## Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness

CW 517

*Please stand.*

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

**Amen.**

## 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.**

## LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

We light three Advent candles, remembering Jesus, the Light of the world. He came to defeat the prince of darkness.

**We remember Jesus, who came in answer to his people's prayers. John proclaimed him the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.**

We hear his call to see the light.

**We light three Advent candles as a sign of our trust and confidence.**

Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest.

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

## THE WORD

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

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

**Hear our prayers, Lord Jesus Christ, and come with the good news of your mighty deliverance. Drive the darkness from our hearts, and fill us with your light; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.**

**Amen.**

*Be seated.*

## FIRST READING

*Isaiah 61:1-3,10,11*

*[Through the prophet Isaiah, the Savior-King proclaims good news of great joy for all those who are brokenhearted.]*

<sup>1</sup>The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me,  
because the LORD has anointed me  
to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,  
to proclaim freedom for the captives  
and release from darkness for the prisoners,  
<sup>2</sup>to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor  
and the day of vengeance of our God,  
to comfort all who mourn,  
<sup>3</sup>and provide for those who grieve in Zion—  
to bestow on them a crown of beauty  
instead of ashes,  
the oil of joy  
instead of mourning,  
and a garment of praise  
instead of a spirit of despair.  
They will be called oaks of righteousness,  
a planting of the LORD  
for the display of his splendor.

<sup>10</sup>I delight greatly in the LORD;  
my soul rejoices in my God.  
For he has clothed me with garments of salvation  
and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness,  
as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest,  
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.  
<sup>11</sup>For as the soil makes the sprout come up  
and a garden causes seeds to grow,  
so the Sovereign LORD will make righteousness  
and praise spring up before all nations.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## HYMN (PSALM OF THE DAY)

## God is My Strong Salvation

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

Psalm 71A

Soloist will sing the verses. The congregation will sing the refrain.

### Refrain



God is my strong sal - va - tion; what foe have I to fear?

In you, LORD, I have taken / refuge;  
let me never be / put to shame.  
In your righteousness, rescue me and de- / liver me;  
turn your ear to me and / save me.  
Be my rock of / refuge,  
to which I can / always go.

### Refrain

Since my youth, God, you have / taught me,  
and to this day I declare your / marv'lous deeds.  
Even when I am / old and gray,  
do not forsake / me, my God,  
till I declare your power to the next gener- / ation,  
your mighty acts to all who / are to come.

**Glory be to the Father and / to the Son**  
**and to the Holy / Spirit,**  
**as it was in the be- / ginning,**  
**is now, and will be forever. / Amen.**

### Refrain

## SECOND READING

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

[The promises of the coming King let us live with joy, regardless of present circumstances.]

<sup>16</sup>Rejoice always, <sup>17</sup>pray continually, <sup>18</sup>give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

<sup>19</sup>Do not quench the Spirit. <sup>20</sup>Do not treat prophecies with contempt <sup>21</sup>but test them all; hold on to what is good, <sup>22</sup>reject every kind of evil.

<sup>23</sup>May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>24</sup>The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.

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

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



Refrain



I will send my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way before you. *Refrain*

## GOSPEL

John 1:6–8,19–28

*[John the Baptist teaches the infinite superiority of Christ Jesus. John was only a witness to the light. Jesus is the light who gives life and perfect joy.]*

<sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe.

<sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

<sup>19</sup>Now this was John's testimony when the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. <sup>20</sup>He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Messiah."

<sup>21</sup>They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?"

He said, "I am not."

"Are you the Prophet?"

He answered, "No."

<sup>22</sup>Finally they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

<sup>23</sup>John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.' "

<sup>24</sup>Now the Pharisees who had been sent <sup>25</sup>questioned him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

<sup>26</sup>"I baptize with water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know. <sup>27</sup>He is the one who comes after me, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie."

<sup>28</sup>This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

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

**O Lord, How Shall I Meet You**

CW324

## SERMON

**based on 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24**

### **A Christian Gift List for Christmas**

*Please stand.*

## CONFESSION OF FAITH

† *Public confession is faith's response to God's saving Word. Christians composed the Nicene Creed in the fourth century to defend the Bible's teachings that both Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are true God, equal to the Father in one eternal, undivided Trinity.*

## NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is,  
seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one being with the Father.**

**Through him all things were made.**

**For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,  
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.**

**He suffered death and was buried.**

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.  
He ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who in unity with the Father and the Son  
is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

*Be seated.*

## PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

### 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
- on the church website [www.lambofgodlafayette.com](http://www.lambofgodlafayette.com) and click **GIVE** in the upper right corner.



## **THE SACRAMENT**

### **PREFACE**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared when he called people to repentance and pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy name and join their glorious song:

### **HYMN**

**Holy, Holy, Holy**

CW 200

## **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Blessed are you, Lord God, eternal King and gracious Father. In love you made us the crown of your creation. In mercy you planned our salvation. In grace you sent your Son to redeem us from sin.

We remember and give you thanks that your eternal Son, Jesus Christ, became flesh and made his dwelling among us, that he willingly placed himself under law to redeem those under law, that he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death on a cross, that he has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

Bless us as we receive your Son's body and blood in this Sacrament. Forgive our sins, increase our faith, strengthen our fellowship, and deepen our longing for the day when Christ will welcome us to his eternal feast. Praise and thanks and honor and glory be to you, O God our Father, and to your Son and to the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my + body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my + blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**Amen.**

## HYMN

**Lamb of God**

CW 202

## DISTRIBUTION

### DISTRIBUTION HYMN

**Hark the Glad Sound! The Savior Comes**

CW 313

## PRAYER

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;  
**his mercy endures forever.**

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,  
**we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.**

O God the Father, source of all goodness, in your loving-kindness you sent your Son to share our humanity. We thank you that through him you have given us pardon and peace in this Sacrament. We also pray that you will not forsake us but will rule our hearts and minds by your Holy Spirit so that we willingly serve you day after day; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## CLOSING HYMN

## The King Shall Come

CW 93 25 sts. 1, 4–5



1 The King shall come when morn - ing dawns And  
4 Oh, bright - er than that glo - rious morn Shall  
5 The King shall come when morn - ing dawns And



light tri - um - phant breaks, When beau - ty gilds the  
dawn up - on our race The day when Christ in  
light and beau - ty brings. Hail, Christ the Lord! Your



east - ern hills And life to joy a - wakes—  
splen - dor comes And we shall see his face.  
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 (12/17)**

Vacancy Pastor: Bruce Marggraf

Piano: Liz Schmidt

Usher/Greeter: Graves family

Acolyte: Kaylee Bednarski

Livestream: Amanda & Lauren Schoonmaker

Refreshments: Rob Smith

**Serving Next Week (12/24)**

Vacancy Pastor: Bruce Marggraf

Piano: Liz Schmidt

Usher/Greeter: Jeff & Jen Holmes

Acolyte: Mitchell Becker

Livestream: TBD

Refreshments: Need a volunteer

**UPCOMING ACTIVITIES**

- Sun, Dec 17
- Bible Study – 9:15am
  - Worship Service – 10:30am
  - Catechism class – after service

**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!

**Passing of Gail Rathgeber**

Our heavenly Father received Gail Rathgeber (Deb Turley's mother) into His loving arms on Friday morning, December 15<sup>th</sup>. A Celebration of Life service is being planned for Saturday, December 30<sup>th</sup> at Lamb of God with a meal following. Time TBD. Additional details and opportunities to serve the family will be shared as they become available. In the meantime, please support and lift up Deb and her family in prayer as they grieve.

**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, January 11<sup>th</sup>** from **10-11am**. Click on the QR code to register or go to the Lamb of God website at:

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



Register here

- Jan 11 – Winter Days – Snowflakes, Hats and Mittens

## 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 grief, including Deb Turley on the passing of her mother, Gail Rathgeber; for those dealing with physical ailments, including, 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.