

Where Two or Three Are Gathered: Worship for Small Assemblies
Advent 2018 – Waiting and Watching

Summary:

Advent is... “About the church’s continual prayer that ‘God will come’ (the root meaning of Advent) to us, bringing life to a dying world.” BOOK: *Keeping Time; The Church’s Year*, Gail Ramshaw, 2006. P. 73

Advent is not... pretending to wait for Mary to have a baby ☺. We know the end of the story already so this is not pretending to wait, but instead we are looking for ways that the story and the presence of God is true among us now.

The church year ends on Christ the King Sunday (November 25, 2018) which is the official end of YEAR B. Welcome to YEAR C where we focus on the Gospel of Luke. Preachers and planners will do well to read the whole Gospel and get Luke’s way of story telling into their heads.

Resource:

Here is a great (and free) web resource to get an overview of the entire year. A copy is included below so you have all the Prayers of the Day. <https://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Congregations-and-Synods/Worship/Lectionary/YearC>

The Flow of the Four Sundays

The Sundays of Advent take us on a journey.

Dec. 2: Luke’s Gospel calls us to ‘be on guard’ and ‘be alert at all times’.

Dec. 9 We meet John the Baptist... the one who points... the one who shows the way.

Dec. 16 John calls us to hope.

Dec. 23 Mary sings her song of love, and it’s revolutionary.

Setting the worship space:

How will people know that the season has changed from the long green season? How will they know that Advent has arrived and you are entering the phase of waiting, watching and hoping. Probably the Advent wreath will come out. At Luther College in Regina I’ve been using a living advent wreath with a few long vine like plants. Again from (*Keeping Time; The Church’s Year*, Gail Ramshaw, 2006. P. 74)

“Most churches use an Advent Wreath... it is a beloved aid to prayer. What can the Advent Wreath communicate? As December progresses and the days grow darker, the increasing light signifies our prayer for the coming of the light of Christ into the world. The round circle of fire is an ancient human archetype, a symbol of the sun and the life it brings. Th four candles need have no specific allegorical meaning. The old practice of two purple candles, one pink or rose, and the last purple arose in coordination with the reading and colors of older times. For our lectionary, the use of four white or blue candles is appropriate.”

Essentially... it’s a calendar made of candles and with care you can assign meanings to the candles. (Faith, Hope, Joy, Love) or (Alert, Point, Hope, Kingdom). You are free to create!
Sanctuary shift idea that works cheaply and well in small spaces:

One of my favourite Advent seasons I have celebrated was in Edson AB. We took as much out of the sanctuary as we could (chairs and banners and podiums) to leave the walls empty of the normal trappings. We used low lights, lots of candles throughout, and long bolts of blue cloth to transform the space into the blue of the predawn light. (Shift workers know how the sky turns an amazing blue just before the pinks and reds and whites of dawn). Then, using large squares of paper we cut out LARGE silhouettes of the symbols in the readings. The space became more full of symbols as we approached Christmas. On Christmas Eve we were surrounded by images that we had preached about and journeyed with before we added the symbols of manger and baby... For example, this year you could use:

Dec. 2 Sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves.

Dec 9. John, pointing, paths, wilderness.

Dec. 16 Fruit. Axe with tree? Giving?

Dec. 23 Mary, or any of the images from the Gospel reading.

Can you see the sanctuary speaking the story and showing the signs?

Can you hold off on wisemen for Epiphany? Maybe this layout can carry you through to Lent?

Additions and Omissions

The Sunday service will function mostly as normal... but consider some suggestions from *Keeping Time; The Church's Year*, Gail Ramshaw, 2006. P. 75:

1: Sing the Kyrie but not the canticle of praise or Glory to God as this is a hopeful and reflective time.

2: During communion sing the Taize chants #262, 472, 528, 751.

3: Choose hymns that beg God to enter the darkness with us. For example

A: O come, O come, Emmanuel #257

B: Saviour of the Nations, Come #263

C: Each Winter As the Year Grows Older #252

D: As the Dark Awaits the Dawn #261

(Note: Singing Christmas hymns during Advent suggests that we have already arrived at the fullness of the season, and this practice diminish the unique emphasis of Advent... try to hold off! Let the 12 day season of Christmas be it's own thing.)

4: The ELW includes a dismissal "Go in peace, remember the poor." It may be necessary to warn the people that this new phrase is coming as it is awkward and subversive... but it is an appropriate antidote to the excessive holiday spending.

Peace!

Peace to you in the planning season! Hopefully these suggestions can help guide your Advent Planning.

Rev. Sean Bell – Program Committee for Worship of the ELCIC

Year C 2018/2019

Year C focuses on the Gospel of Luke. The semi-continuous Old Testament readings are of prophetic proclamation chosen in chronological order and highlighting Jeremiah. The second, New Testament, readings are chosen mainly from Galatians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Timothy and 2 Thessalonians.

Advent
Dec. 2, 2018 through Dec. 23, 2018

Time after Epiphany

Jan. 6 through Mar. 5, 2019

The Three Days

Apr. 18 through Apr. 20, 2019

Time after Pentecost

June 10 through Nov. 27, 2019

Christmas

Dec. 24, 2018 through Jan. 6, 2019

Lent

Mar. 6 through Apr. 17, 2019

Easter

Apr. 21 through June 9, 2019



YEAR C 2018/2019 – Advent

This **Church Year Calendar, Propers and Daily Lectionary** uses the *Revised Common Lectionary* as it appears in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship (2006)*.

Scripture references are from the *New Revised Standard Version* of the Bible.

The appointed psalm refrain for Sundays and festivals is from the verse in parentheses.

DAY AND DATE	FIRST READING	SECOND READING	PSALM
Thu, Nov 29	Nehemiah 9:6-15	1 Thessalonians 5:1-11	Psalm 25:1-10
Fri – Nov 30	Nehemiah 9:16-25	1 Thessalonians 5:12-22	Psalm 25:1-10
<p><i>Or</i></p> <p>Friday, Nov. 30: Andrew, Apostle</p> <p><u>Readings</u> Ezekiel 3:16-21 Psalm 19:1-6 (4) Romans 10:10-18 John 1:35-42</p> <p><u>Prayer of the Day</u> Almighty God, you gave your apostle Andrew the grace to obey the call of your Son and to bring his brother to Jesus. Give us also, who are called by your holy word, grace to follow Jesus without delay and to bring into his presence those who are near to us, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.</p> <p><u>Gospel Acclamation</u> Alleluia. You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Alleluia. (Acts 1:8)</p> <p>Color: Scarlet/Red</p>			
Sat – Dec 1	Nehemiah 9:26-31	Luke 21:20-24	Psalm 25:1-10

Sunday, Dec. 2 - First Sunday of Advent

Readings

Jeremiah 33:14-16
Psalm 25:1-10
1 Thessalonians 3:9-13
Luke 21:25-36

Prayer of the Day

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection alert us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and redeem us for your life of justice, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia. Stand up and | raise your heads—*
your redemption is | drawing near. *Alleluia.* (Luke 21:28)

Color: Blue

Mon - Dec 3	Numbers 17:1-11	2 Peter 3:1-18	Psalm 90
Tue - Dec 4	2 Samuel 7:18-29	Revelation 22:12-16	Psalm 90
Wed - Dec 5	Isaiah 1:24-31	Luke 11:29-32	Psalm 90
Thu - Dec 6	Malachi 3:5-12	Philippians 1:12-18a	Luke 1:68-79
Fri - Dec 7	Malachi 3:13-18	Philippians 1:18b-26	Luke 1:68-79
Sat - Dec 8	Malachi 4:1-6	Luke 9:1-6	Luke 1:68-79

Sunday, Dec. 9 - Second Sunday of Advent

Readings

Malachi 3:1-4
Baruch 5:1-9 (alternate)
Luke 1:68-79
Philippians 1:3-11
Luke 3:1-6

Prayer of the Day

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming give to all the people of the world knowledge of your salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia. Prepare the way | of the Lord.
All flesh shall see the salva- | tion of God. *Alleluia.* (Luke 3:4, 6)

Color: Blue

Mon - Dec 10	Isaiah 40:1-11	Romans 8:22-25	Psalm 126
Tue - Dec 11	Isaiah 19:18-25	2 Peter 1:2-15	Psalm 126
Wed - Dec 12	Isaiah 35:3-7	Luke 7:18-30	Psalm 126
Thu - Dec 13	Amos 6:1-8	2 Corinthians 8:1-15	Isaiah 12:2-6
Fri - Dec 14	Amos 8:4-12	2 Corinthians 9:1-15	Isaiah 12:2-6
Sat - Dec 15	Amos 9:8-15	Luke 1:57-66	Isaiah 12:2-6

Sunday, Dec. 16 - Third Sunday of Advent

Readings

Zephaniah 3:14-20
Isaiah 12:2-6
Philippians 4:4-7
Luke 3:7-18

Prayer of the Day

Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that,

rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia. I am sending my messenger before you,*
who will prepare your way before you. Alleluia. (Matt. 11:10)

Color: Blue

Mon - Dec 17	Numbers 16:1-19	Hebrews 13:7-17	Isaiah 11:1-9
Tue - Dec 18	Numbers 16:20-35	Acts 28:23-31	Isaiah 11:1-9
Wed - Dec 19	Micah 4:8-13	Luke 7:31-35	Isaiah 11:1-9
Thu - Dec 20	Jeremiah 31:31-34	Hebrews 10:10-18	Psalms 80:1-7
Fri - Dec 21	Isaiah 42:10-18	Hebrews 10:32-39	Psalms 80:1-7
Sat - Dec 22	Isaiah 66:7-11	Luke 13:31-35	Psalms 80:1-7

Sunday, Dec. 23 – Fourth Sunday of Advent

Readings

Micah 5:2-5a

Luke 1:46b-55

Psalms 80:1-7 (alternate)

Hebrews 10:5-10

Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]

Prayer of the Day

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia. Here I am, the servant | of the Lord;*
let it be with me according | to your word. Alleluia. (Luke 1:38)

Color: Blue