

W elcome to W orship
St. Luke's E vangelical
Lutheran C hurch

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December 3, 2023



Disciples and Ministers: *All the People*

Pastor:

NWOS Bishop: *Daniel Beaudoin*

ELCA Presiding Bishop: *Elizabeth Eaton*

Companion Church: *Mwanawotta, Tanzania*

Web Page: <http://www.stlukesnb.org>

eMail: StLukesNB@gmail.com

Church Phone: 419-257-3253

*Whether this is your first time with us or you have been here your whole life, **WELCOME** to the place where we stand together before God as equals. If you are new here and seeking a church home, please contact the church office at 419-257-3253 and leave a message.*

Assisting in Worship

Organist: *Janet Goldner*

Worship Leader: *SAM Bob Fett*

Scripture Reader and Prayer Leader: *Pam Van Mooy*

Acolyte: *Easton Wymer*

Ushers: *Bryant Matthes, Matt Matthes*

Videographer: *Beth Williams*

To the Glory of God

December Candles: *Carol Williams*

December Bulletins: *Carol Williams*

December Newsletter: *available for sign-up*



Christmas Poinsettias – The Altar Guild has ordered 20 poinsettias. If you are interested in purchasing one or more of them, please find a form on the Information Table. Thank you.

Choir rehearsals are Sundays @ 9:30 a.m. You may join us anytime. Everyone age 16 and older is invited to join us. Come and lift your voice in praise to God.

Order of Worship

First Sunday of Advent, December 3, 2023

God is glad you have joined us for worship today. At the symbol ✠ assembly members may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked upon us at baptism.

**please stand, sit, or kneel as you feel comfortable.*

Pandemic update: we will continue monitoring the CDC and following their guidelines.

GOD GATHERS US

GREETING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE WITH SILENT MEDITATIVE PRAYER

Use your breath as a form of prayer as you listen to the music. When you breathe in, pray, "Gracious God." When you exhale, pray, "open my heart."

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Friends, let us worship God today, for God is great -

ALL: God has blessed us with life, with faith, and with community.

Leader: Let us worship God today, for God is good -

ALL: God forgives us, and encourages us, and loves us.

Leader: Let us worship God today in the name of the Father, the ✠ Son, and the holy Spirit.

ALL: Because we are God's people

*GATHERING HYMN #264

PREPARE THE ROYAL HIGHWAY

ADVENT PROCLAMATION

Leader: These are the days of expectation, the days of watching and waiting. God as promised us a Savior who will change our lives and make us new. We wait in hope for the Lord who is our help and our shield. We celebrate the hope we find in Christ. Let us light the candle of HOPE as we wait in hope for the Lord.

CHOIR ANTHEM

LIGHT ONE CANDLE

AN OFFERING OF CONFESSION

Leader: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, who opens the heavens and draws near to us with salvation. God is patient and merciful, desiring all to come to repentance. Trusting this promise of grace, let us confess our sin.

Please take a moment for silent confession.

Leader: Everlasting God,

**ALL: you love justice and you hate wrongdoing.
We confess the fear, greed, and self-centeredness
that make us reluctant to work against oppression.
We are complicit in systems of exploitation.
We choose comfort over courage.
We are careless with creation's bounty.
Look upon us with mercy.
Turn our hearts again to you.
Make us glad to do your will and to walk in your ways
for the sake of our waiting world. Amen.**

Leader: Hear these words of assurance: God clothes you with garments of salvation and covers you with robes of righteousness. In the tender compassion of ✠ Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. God's covenant is eternal, and God's blessing rests upon us all. Amen.

*KYRIE HYMN #151



1, 3 Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.
2 Christ, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy.



Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.
Christ, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy.

*CONFESSIONAL RESPONSE

Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **ALL: and also with you.**

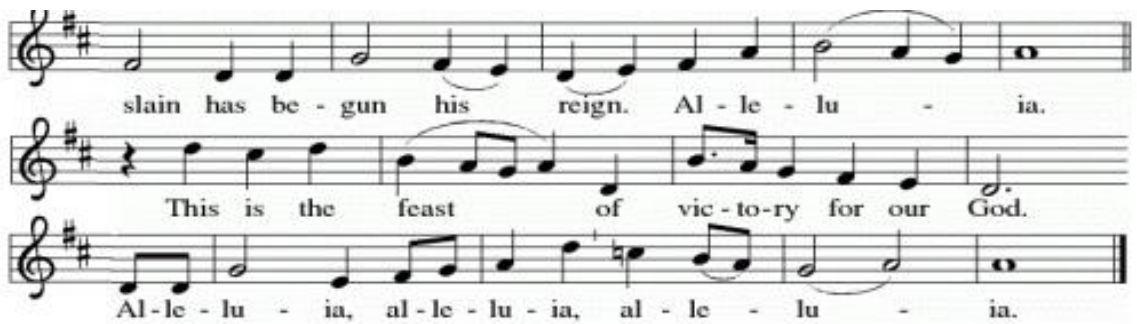
*THIS IS THE FEAST

This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb
who was slain, whose blood set us free to be peo - ple of God.

This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Pow - er, rich - es, wis - dom, and
strength, and hon - or, bless - ing, and glo - ry are his.

This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. Sing with all the peo - ple of
God, and join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless - ing, hon - or,
glo - ry, and might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia,
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia. For the Lamb who was



*PRAYER OF THE DAY

Leader: Let us pray:

ALL: Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection awaken us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and keep us blameless until the coming of your new day, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

GOD SPEAKS TO US

PROPHETIC READING

ISAIAH 64:1-9

Reader: Why don't you tear the sky open and come down? The mountains would see you and shake with fear. ²They would tremble like water boiling over a hot fire. Come and reveal your power to your enemies, and make the nations tremble at your presence! ³There was a time when you came and did terrifying things that we did not expect; the mountains saw you and shook with fear. ⁴No one has ever seen or heard of a God like you, who does such deeds for those who put their hope in him. ⁵You welcome those who find joy in doing what is right, those who remember how you want them to live. You were angry with us, but we went on sinning; in spite of your great anger we have continued to do wrong since ancient times. ⁶All of us have been sinful; even our best actions are filthy through and through. Because of our sins we are like leaves that wither and are blown away by the

wind. ⁷ No one turns to you in prayer; no one goes to you for help. You have hidden yourself from us and have abandoned us because of our sins.

⁸ But you are our father, LORD. We are like clay, and you are like the potter. You created us, ⁹ so do not be too angry with us or hold our sins against us forever. We are your people; be merciful to us.

Reader: Word of God, word of life. **ALL: Thanks be to God.**

PSALM READING *(responsively)* PSALM 80: 1-7, 17-19

Reader: Listen to us, O Shepherd of Israel; hear us, leader of your flock.

ALL: Seated on your throne above the winged creatures, reveal yourself to the tribes of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh.

Reader: Show us your strength; come and save us! Bring us back, O God! Show us your mercy, and we will be saved!

ALL: How much longer, Lord God Almighty, will you be angry with your people's prayers?

Reader: You have given us sorrow to eat, a large cup of tears to drink. You let the surrounding nations fight over our land; our enemies insult us.

ALL: Bring us back, Almighty God! Show us your mercy, and we will be saved!

Reader: Preserve and protect the people you have chosen, the nation you made so strong.

ALL: We will never turn away from you again; keep us alive, and we will praise you.

Reader: Bring us back, LORD God Almighty. Show us your mercy, and we will be saved.

Reader: Word of God, word of life. **ALL: Thanks be to God.**

DISCIPLESHIP READING

1 CORINTHIANS 1:3-9

Reader: ³ May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace. ⁴ I always give thanks to my God for you because of the grace he has given you through Christ Jesus. ⁵ For in union with Christ you have become rich in all things, including all speech and all knowledge. ⁶ The message about Christ has become so firmly established in you ⁷ that you have not failed to receive a single blessing, as you wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. ⁸ He will also keep you firm to the end, so that you will be faultless on the Day of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ God is to be trusted, the God who called you to have fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Reader: Word of God, word of life. **ALL: Thanks be to God.**

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

setting 2 pg 124

The musical score is written in G major (one flat) and 4/4 time. It consists of four systems of staves. The first system is for the 'ALL:' part, with lyrics 'Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,'. The second system continues the 'ALL:' part with lyrics 'al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.'. The third system is for the 'Leader/Cantor' part, with lyrics 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.' The fourth system is for the 'ALL:' part, with lyrics 'Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,'. The fifth system continues the 'ALL:' part with lyrics 'al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.'. The score uses a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The 'ALL:' parts are marked with a 'z' time signature, indicating a cut time or similar. The 'Leader/Cantor' part is marked with a 'KX' time signature, indicating a common time or similar.

ALL: Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Leader/
Cantor
Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.

ALL: Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

*GOSPEL READING

MARK 13:24-37

Jesus encourages his followers to look forward to the day when he returns in power and glory to end all suffering.

Leader: There is good news for us this day and it comes to us from the Gospel of Mark chapter 13. **ALL: Glory to you, O Lord.**

Leader: “In the days after that time of trouble the sun will grow dark, the moon will no longer shine, ²⁵ the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers in space will be driven from their courses. ²⁶ Then the Son of Man will appear, coming in the clouds with great power and glory. ²⁷ He will send the angels out to the four corners of the earth to gather God's chosen people from one end of the world to the other.

²⁸ “Let the fig tree teach you a lesson. When its branches become green and tender and it starts putting out leaves, you know that summer is near. ²⁹ In the same way, when you see these things happening, you will know that the time is near, ready to begin. ³⁰ Remember that all these things will happen before the people now living have all died. ³¹ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

³² “No one knows, however, when that day or hour will come - neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son; only the Father knows. ³³ Be on watch, be alert, for you do not know when the time will come. ³⁴ It will be like a man who goes away from home on a trip and leaves his servants in charge, after giving to each one his own work to do and after telling the doorkeeper to keep watch. ³⁵ Watch, then, because you do not know when the master of the house is coming - it might be in the evening or at midnight or before dawn or at sunrise. ³⁶ If he comes suddenly, he must not find you asleep. ³⁷ What I say to you, then, I say to all: Watch!”

Leader: The gospel of the Lord. **All: Praise to you, O Christ.**

THE MESSAGE

*HYMN OF THE DAY #597

MY HOPE IS BUILT ON NOTHING LESS

*THE APOSTLES' CREED

ALL: I believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

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

*PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE INTRODUCTION

Prayer Leader: With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

*PRAYER SONG HYMN #262

WAIT FOR THE LORD

The image shows two staves of musical notation for the hymn 'Wait for the Lord'. The first staff contains the melody and lyrics: 'Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.' The second staff contains the melody and lyrics: 'Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!'. The music is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff ends with a double bar line and a sharp sign, and the second staff ends with a double bar line.

*PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Prayer Leader: Merciful God. **ALL: receive our prayer.**

We pray for Rick, Kolton, Ron, Jim, Cheryl, John, Fred, Shirley, Larry, Bob, Caroline, Marilyn, Bertha, Jim, Barb, Cali, Howard, Jim, Emelyn, Isabella,

Mary Ann, Kevin, Shirley, A.J., Mavery, Caroline, Ethan, Brent, Richard, Deanna, Laura, Michael, Cindy, John, Gary, Paul, Sue, Teresa, Doug, Betty, David, LuAnn, Colene, Eva, Braxton, Eric, Lisa, Chris, Arlene, Logan, Don, Ashley, Beth, Holly, Tessa, Riker, Kelly, Al, Pat, Dan, and Cooper.

***THE PRAYER OUR LORD TAUGHT US**

**All: Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come
Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;**

**And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us;
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil,**

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory forever and ever. Amen**



***REPEAT PRAYER SONG HYMN #262**

WAIT FOR THE LORD

***SHARING OF THE PEACE**

Leader: The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

ALL: and also with you.

Leader: Let the peace of Christ reign among us.

Please share God's peace."

INVITATION FOR OFFERINGS

Leader: In gratitude for all that we have received from God let us now present our tithes, and offerings for the work and mission of God's church.

OFFERTORY

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE #182

LET THE VINEYARDS BE FRUITFUL



Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of



bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be



fed with the bread of life. Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u -



nite them with the prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your



pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

*OFFERING PRAYER

Leader: Let us pray.

ALL: God our hope, the eyes of all wait upon you, and you open your hands in blessing. From all that you have given us, receive these gifts, signs of our thanksgiving and praise, through Jesus Christ our hope. Amen.

GOD NOURISHES US

*THE TABLE PRAYER

Leader: God of all creation, all you have made is good.

ALL: God of all goodness, generations have turned to you, gathered around your table, and shared your abundant blessings. Number us among them that, as we gather these gifts from our abundance, and give thanks for your rich blessings, we may feast upon your very self and care for all that you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and Servant. Amen

***THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

SETTING #2 HYMNAL PAGE 129

Leader: The God of hope be with you. **ALL: And also with you.**

Leader: Lift up your hearts in the hope of Christ. **ALL: We lift them to the Lord.**

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **ALL: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Leader: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life.

ALL: We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life and the gift of new life in Jesus Christ. Shower us with your Spirit, and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love. And so, with all the universe and the hosts of heaven, we join in praise and sing...



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow - er and might,



heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the



high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -



san - na in the high - est. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

*WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Leader: In the night he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, gave it to his disciples, saying

ALL: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.

Leader: Again, after supper, Jesus took a cup, gave thanks; and gave it for all to drink, saying

ALL: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me.

Leader: For as often as we eat this bread and drink this cup we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. In this meal, righteousness and hope meet together. Come, take your place at the table.

DISTRIBUTION

*HYMN AFTER COMMUNION #204

THANKFUL HEARTS AND VOICES RAISE

Thank-ful hearts and voic - es raise; tell ev-'ry-one what God has done.

Let all who seek the Lord re - jice and bear Christ's ho - ly name.

Send us with your prom - is - es and lead your peo - ple forth in joy with
shouts of thanks - giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Leader: Please join me prayer,

ALL: Generous God, in bread and cup you have revealed your glory for all people to see together. Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim your good news of liberation and release, brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

GOD SENDS US

*BLESSING

Leader: The God of hope bless you, the love of Christ sustain you, and the anointing of the Spirit ✠ remain upon you now and forever.

*THE AMEN



*SENDING HYMN

*DISMISSAL

Leader: Go in hope and stay awake.

ALL: Thanks be to God.



POSTLUDE

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**ELCA "Hunger Appeal" Offering** - Each week as we leave worship, we remember the poor by placing loose change offerings in the "hunger bowls" on the Information Table in the Narthex.

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Please remember to stop by the Information Table and sign the greeting cards, reminding our members and friends that we are thinking about them.

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## TODAY'S WORSHIP COPYRIGHT PERMISSIONS

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*"Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers"* TEXT: Laurentius Laurenti, 1660-1722; tr. Sarah B. Findlater, 1823-1907 Music: Swedish folk tune

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December 24, 2023

St. John's Lutheran Church in McComb

8:00 a.m. Celebrating the 4th Sunday of Advent

7:00 p.m. Celebrating Christmas Eve

St. Luke's Lutheran Church in North Baltimore

10:15 a.m. Celebrating the 4th Sunday of Advent

9:15 p.m. Celebrating Christmas Eve Music

9:30 p.m. Celebrating Christmas Eve Worship

Both services in person and on Facebook



Please help to keep our Prayer List up-to-date by notifying the church office of any changes, additions or deletions.

**WE GIVE THANKS:** for the blessing of worship and fellowship in this season for Advent, as we wait together. Thanks be to God!

**MEMBERS:** Carl Lieser, Jim Wymer, Pat Wheeler, Rick Van Mooy, Kolton Williams, Ron Bean, Cheryl & John Kruse, Fred Husing, Shirley Heilman, Larry Slaughterbeck, Bob Kelley, Caroline Lieser, Marilyn Ziegler, Bertha & Jim Carter, Barb Williams.

**FAMILY AND FRIENDS:** Cali, Howard Till, Jim Heize, Emelyn, Isabella, Keven Bickle, Shirley Hollowell, Cheryl, A.J., Mavery Breece, Caroline, Ethan, Brent Bradley, Richard Roberts, Deanna Griffith, Laura, Michael Sullivan, Cindy.

**GRIEVING:** for Dee Stewart and family following the death of her father, Jim Heize, on November 20.

**MILITARY:** for all those who are in training and who are serving in the military & their families; the chaplains (*especially those in combat zones*); grieving families and friends of those who died while serving.

**COMPANION CHURCH:** Mwanawotta Lutheran Church, of the Dodoma Diocese, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania.

**WIDER CHURCH PRAYERS:** all ministries of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America), our presiding **Bishop Elizabeth Eaton**, all our bishops, pastors, and leaders of the congregations of the NWOS (Northwestern Ohio Synod), **Bishop Daniel Beaudoin**, and our 15 Central Conference congregations.

**THE WORLD:** for peace in our country and around the world. For the end of violence against one another. For world leaders to seek guidance from you.

**NORTH BALTIMORE Food Panty DECEMBER** requested donations include mac & cheese, pasta and pasta sauces.

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## **In Search of a Pastor**

The call committee from St. LUKE'S and ST. JOHN'S met on November 16th and went over the call document. It is a lengthy document that we will need to carefully prepare. We may need to meet with the congregations through survey and conversations during the next few months to help clarify what we are looking for in our next pastor. We have scheduled two meetings each month for the next few months in order to complete the document. We pledge to do our best.

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## **The glory of the Lord shall be revealed!**

This year's Advent Study theme is based on where and how we encounter God. Each session of the study will explore one way we encounter God, from revelation to proclamation. At this time when our world bears the wounds of conflict, hunger and disaster, it can be challenging to uncover where and how God is at work. Yet we know in faith that God is actively working in the world, transforming, reconciling, sustaining, and inciting us to ever-greater acts of justice and mercy. Pick up an Advent calendar and study guide today.

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The **Spring Gathering** of the Central Conference Lutheran Women will be held on Saturday, April 20, 2024 at Trinity Lutheran Church in Findlay. The theme is "Earth Day," and Lauren Sandhu from the University of Findlay Biology Department will be our guest speaker. Mark your calendar NOW and keep watch for further details.



# Sermon Notes

Write 3 teachings or ideas you heard in today's sermon:

1.

2.

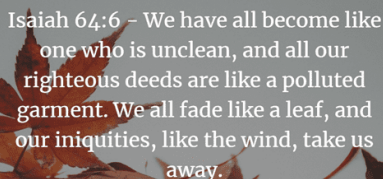
3.

Something I might do to put this sermon into practice.

Write a brief prayer relating to the sermon.

## Old Problems and New Beginnings

By now the last of the leaves have likely fallen from trees in northern climes, and any still holding on look dry and dead. Snow has arrived, and its thick blanket shows the stains of city filth and grime, reminding us of the waste we are pouring over the land and into the water. This is the season we begin a new year in the life of the church and, as with our worship, we begin with a confession of our participation in the world's suffering.



Isaiah 64:6 – We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.

Heavy hearts and burdened consciences will relate to Isaiah's confession, "We have all become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy cloth. We all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away"

(Isa. 64:6). Then, just as the cold nights in the northern hemisphere reach their longest, Mark addresses us with promises that the signs of the coming of the Son of Man will include the darkening of the sun, moon, and stars. Hold on, there is hope!

The promise of Advent is that God is always at work in the world, bringing new beginnings and a new creation to people and powers long bent on destruction. Yet, because we live in the generation that exists between the "already" of Christ's resurrection and the "not yet" of God's full restoration of the creation, we cannot know when that final day will arrive. Instead of becoming preoccupied with the end times, we are counseled to live our lives in a state of preparedness—trusting that our home is God's home and that God is coming once again to dwell with us. That trust is the strength that sustains us as we "wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 1:7).

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[Church Office Hours M-F 9-1](#)