

RESURRECTION NEWS



December 2022

Pastor's Letter

December 2022

Brothers and sisters in Christ,

“In the name of him who came, who comes, and who will come again.” These are the words with which one of the pastors at my church growing up would typically begin his sermons during the season of Advent. This threefold coming of Christ succinctly summarizes the message of the Advent season, which culminates in our celebration of Christmas at the end of this month. We can see the dynamic of this threefold coming of Christ in play throughout the Gospel Readings in the Advent and Christmas seasons.

In the Gospel Reading for the First Sunday in Advent, we read the Palm Sunday story of our Lord's “Triumphal Entry” into Jerusalem. On the one hand, this text seems out of place in the Advent season—it would seem to fit better in Holy Week. And yet, the intimate tie to Holy Week is precisely why this text fits so nicely at the beginning of Advent. As we begin our journey toward Christmas, we are reminded that the Christ who came at Christmas came so that he might work redemption for us through his death on the cross. And this is the same Christ of whom we sing in the Divine Service, “*Hosanna in the highest*”, as we prepare to receive his bodily presence under the forms of bread and wine in the Holy Communion.

In the Gospel Reading for the Second Sunday in Advent, we read of our Lord's teaching to his disciples of the end times: “*Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.*” The same Christ who came to earth on Christmas is the same Christ who will come again on the last day to judge the living and the dead.

In the Gospel Reading for the Third Sunday in Advent, we turn our attention to John the Baptizer, who asks our Lord, “*Are you the coming one, or should we look for another?*” The very fact that John asks this question reminds us that our Lord's coming is not always as we expect. Just as his coming at Christmas was in a humble manger, so too is his coming to us today in Word & Sacrament a humble, yet profound reality.

In the Gospel Reading for the Fourth Sunday in Advent, we hear John the Baptizer's confession: “*I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness: make straight the way of the Lord.*” This reminds us that when John prepared the way for Christ, he was, in fact, preparing the way for the Lord himself—God in the flesh—who came to be with us in the person of Jesus.

In the Gospel Reading for Christmas Eve, we hear the famous Christmas account from Luke chapter 2. In this account, we read of the historical events of our Lord's first coming on Christmas. He came to bring “*peace on earth*” and “*good will toward men.*” This peace and good will are ours by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone, who continues to come to offer us this peace and good will as we gather to receive his Word and Sacrament. And he, too, will come again on the last day to bring us full and final peace and good will, which will last for eternity in the new creation.

Finally, in the Gospel Reading for Christmas Day, we read that “*the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.*” Literally, he “*tabernacled among us.*” The idea that the apostle John wants us to see in this text is that the way in which our Lord came on Christmas is like the way in which the Lord came to live among the people of Israel in the Old Testament. He came to bridge heaven and earth so that we might experience the blessings of his presence. But unlike the Old Testament presence of the Lord in the Tabernacle, our Lord Jesus' coming to us at Christmas is an enduring reality which will last to eternity because of his present and future comings.

I pray that our Lord would greatly bless your Advent and Christmas celebrations as you place your hope in him who came, who comes, and who will come again, even Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Peace in Jesus,
Pastor Akers

Notes from your Deaconess

Dear Brothers and Sisters of LCR,

Advent season has arrived, along with our culture's obsession with getting new stuff for a gift-giving day at the end of December. The pressures for Christians and churches to conform to what those around them and those in power expect and sometimes demand has occurred throughout history, even as it does today.

I've been working through the contents of the Book of Concord these last several newsletters, and most recently I have been reading through the history which preceded the actual assembly of this set of Lutheran confessions. Difficult years and divisive events continued following Luther's death in 1546. The Pope and the powerful Roman Catholic Church worked with the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V to eliminate the troublesome reformers along with the changes and practices for which they advocated. This involved actual battles, imprisonments, ousting of professors from schools, and executions. Four years after Luther's death the Emperor commanded the death penalty for all heretics. Church leaders and pastors had to return to specific doctrinal teachings and return to the liturgy portions which had been removed, or risk being closed and face imprisonment. Sadly, many decided *not* to stand for the clear reforms and doctrinal corrections which the Lutherans had articulated in the Augsburg Confession and its Apology—including Philip Melancthon, its primary author as you may recall.

Over the more than thirty years following Luther's death, several major controversies regarding doctrine came into play. The Formula of Concord, which consists of two parts, the Epitome and the Solid Declaration, addressed the various controversies—with the Epitome as a more succinct treatment of the problems, but the Solid Declaration including more support for the positions taken. The doctrinal controversies included: confusion about the effects of Law and Gospel regarding our salvation and life in Christ; the meaning of Christ's Descent into Hell; disagreements about what things in worship practices could be changed without compromising the church's faithfulness to God's word (adiaphora); understandings about Christ's righteousness and our justification; the meaning of Christ's real presence in the Lord's Supper; the place of good works in a Christian's life; "synergism," a teaching that implies that a person has the ability to "work with" God to achieve salvation; and original sin's definition. Several staunch Lutherans worked together to pull together the texts for this doctrinal statement, but the two men most responsible for the actual wording were Jacob Andreae and Martin Chemnitz. Between the years of 1573 and 1577 they created preliminary texts. They published the entire set of confessional statements which we know as the Book of Concord in 1580, first in German, and then also in Latin. I encourage you to spend some time with this foundational book as it will increase your understanding about how we clearly ground our faith as Lutherans in the scriptures.

As the Christmas Fair will be held the first Saturday of December, I'm planning on holding just one Saturday women's Bible study. We'll meet in person December 10 at 8:30am downstairs at church, although you also would be welcome to join via Zoom for which I can send a link.

Under his mercy,
Sharon M. Conover

Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted...But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed...All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness. 2 Timothy 3:12, 14a, 16

Thursday Bible Study

Thursday Bible Study will be on break during the season of Advent. Class will resume again on **Thursday, January 5**.

Men's Breakfasts

The next Men's Breakfast is scheduled for **Saturday, December 17**. Breakfast will be served at **8 a.m.** in the Fellowship Hall with a discussion to follow at 9 a.m. Pastor Akers will lead our discussion topic on Christian engagement with transgenderism. Men's Breakfasts are held on the third Saturday of the month.

Mid-Week Advent Service Schedule

The first Sunday in Advent falls on Sunday, November 27. Mid-week Advent Communion services will be held on the following **Wednesdays at noon & 7 p.m.: 11/30, 12/7, 12/14, & 12/21**. The noon services will be live streamed on Facebook.

Christmas Eve & Day Schedule

Christmas Eve Divine Service with candlelight will be held at **7 p.m.** Christmas Day Divine Service will be held at **10 a.m.** Note that Christmas Day is a Sunday this year, so there will be no Sunday School that morning.

Annual Congregational Meeting

The annual congregational meeting is scheduled for **Sunday, December 11** following the Divine Service. December 18 will be the backup date, should the weather be poor on the 11th. A pizza lunch will be provided.

Winter Cancellation Policy

In the event of bad weather over the winter, Sunday School may be canceled. However, the Divine Service will not be canceled unless *absolutely* necessary. Check the church website or Facebook page for an announcement about any cancellations. Due to the unpredictable nature of winter weather, Sunday morning Matins will not be held in the winter.

Angel Tree

LWML will be decorating the Angel Tree soon. Please take a tag or two. Please attach the child's name tag to the wrapped package and have your gifts returned to the church by December. 20. They will then be delivered to the Shelter. Thank you for supporting Mid-Maine Homeless Shelter. If you have questions, please contact Sharon Kinter at 702 278 0173

LWML Fair

The fair is Saturday, December 3. Please see signup on bulletin. We can always use cookies, cookies, and more cookies for the cookie walk. Bakes items individually wrapped and labeled would be helpful as well. Please call Anna Rowe at 207-649-8483 with questions.

Christmas Poinsettias

Every year, we grace the chancel with poinsettias during the Christmas season. If you would like to purchase a poinsettia, please include \$22 per plant with your offering envelope marked – "flowers" with the poinsettia insert. The deadline to order is December 11. You may also provide your own poinsettia for the chancel. If you provide your own, please have to the church by December 23.

Thank You's

Thank you for your support to my mission work! Your Christian generosity helps make my work in Italy possible!! I remember well my trip to your congregation... that seems like a lifetime ago... many blessings to you and your ministry!

Blessings to you in the name of Jesus. Keep me in your prayers!

Rev. Tyler McMiller, Church Planter/Theological Educator in Italy through LCMS OIM

Thank you for your generosity in support of our students thru student aid. Your donations are much appreciated.

Blessings to you all,

Rev. Mark J. DeLassus, VP of Advancement, Concordia Theological Seminary

Thank you for your generous give. Your partnership in our ministry of preparing future pastors, deaconesses, missionaries and other leaders for service to the church is a wonderful blessing!

In Christ,

Vicki Biggs, Sr. VP Seminary Advancement Concordia Seminary

Thank you for your generous gift. It is only through continuing support of faithful friends like you that we are able to continue God's work with the street children and their families in Kenya.

Blessings Dan and Patty Schmelzer

We were excited to hear we were assigned your church again in my fourth and final year of seminary! We cannot express our joy and thankfulness for all your prayers, support, and love for us.

Sincerely,

Benjamin, Elizabeth, & Nathaniel Janssen

Defending the Faith

Sometimes the Best Defense is a Good Defense.

About the origin of Life.

This isn't meant to be a scholarly treatise on the origin of life, but just one small piece of evidence. One more that serves to build a cumulative case to support the Christian worldview.

It deals with a question that both theists and atheists have to answer if they want to support their views. That is simply "where did FIRST life come from?"

Often, we'll hear it stated this way: "Why do you Christians insist on telling this "Creation" fable, when evolution explains everything?" This is the cry of the naturalistic evolutionist as they do their level best to eliminate God as an explanation.

"Evolution" is a term that means different things to different people. So as we talk with our atheist or agnostic friends, we want to stop and ask them exactly what they mean by "evolution".

If they mean simply that organisms change over time, or change as a result of adapting to their environment, we would agree.

Antibiotic-resistant bacteria is a perfect example. We've all heard this one. If you don't take the complete course of your prescribed antibiotics, you will not only not kill the bacteria that's causing your infection, but you'll make it stronger. It will evolve such that it becomes resistant.

Another is "Darwin's Finches" - Galapagos finches that have evolved to have different sizes of beaks based on their food sources.

These are well documented and non-controversial.

But the worldview of the naturalistic evolutionist falls apart when they try to explain how life began. They will try to employ evolution as a solution, but that first life form evolved from WHAT? Here, we disagree - profoundly.

They must assert that first life arose from non-life (the technical term is "abiogenesis"). It had to.

First life was exactly that - first. There was nothing else there for it to evolve from!

Think about that for a moment.

They claim that very first life form arose from gases, water, rocks, dirt and who knows what else. That's a huge assertion!

To start, they have to assume a primordial environment that was not hostile to life.

But there's a problem with that assumption - and it's a big one.

Science has dated the oldest rocks on the planet to between 3.5 and 3.8 billion years old. But from 3.8 to 3.9 billion years ago, the earth was in the "heavy bombardment period" where it was the frequent target of asteroid and meteor collisions - so many that the surface of the earth was completely molten.

If molten rock isn't hostile to life, I don't know what is, so that part of their assertion fails dramatically.

So what? Here's so what - those oldest rocks on the planet have been examined. Know what the scientists found in them?

Fossils. In fact, they were Stomatolite fossils - fossils of a microbial mat - and that means that *complex life was already in existence very shortly after the molten surface of the earth cooled*.

Here's what that means with regard to their assertion - evolution simply didn't have enough time to work in order to produce the metabolically complex life found in Stomatolite fossils.

This is the equivalent of Aunt Millie who calls to say she's on the way to visit and is leaving Melbourne, Australia in 5 minutes - and shows up at your door in Maine 10 minutes later.

Something's up. There has to be more to the story.

You have to ask how she pulled off that seemingly miraculous feat - and that's a good question for the scientist to ask too.

If they can put their prejudice aside for a moment and ask that question with an open mind, the answer will lead them right where it has lead us Christians - to the conclusion that first life not only did not arise spontaneously from the primordial soup, but that it was created.

It was created not by accident, but on purpose. But what - or who was responsible for it?

There is only one reasonable answer to that question. An Almighty and powerful God!

We Christians know that God Himself spoke life into existence on the 5th and 6th day of creation. (Genesis 1:20-31)

So there's one more piece of evidence that points away from the naturalistic explanation of first life and toward a theistic explanation.

I'm always open to comments, suggestions and even criticisms at charles.j.macpherson@gmail.com.

Charlie MacPherson, SDG

***Members of the Month –The Shaw Family:
Jessie, Dan, Emily, Jacob***



Hiking is serious business, especially hiking up/down mountains: One must be careful not to fall off! However, falling “in” seems to have worked really well for Jessie and Dan Shaw! Huh??? Well, they “fell in” love while hiking the Appalachian Trail (AT) as “thru hikers”—the term for those who begin the hike at one end, hiking through to the other end, and completing the hike in less than a year. But that’s getting way ahead of ourselves in their story...

Dan is a Mainer: He was born in Augusta and grew up in Whitefield. Dan attended Erskine Academy—located in South China, Maine and serving as a high school for eight surrounding towns. From his youth, Dan was a dedicated rugby fan, and played at University of Maine in Orono where he studied after high school and even played in Australia. Though Dan had started studying psychology at Orono; during two years of study abroad in Australia, he became more interested in becoming a dietician. During those years, Dan also continued to play rugby! Dan came back to the U.S. and worked at the Senator in Augusta. At that time, a friend who was planning to hike the Appalachian Trail invited friends to join her. Dan took advantage of the opportunity, quit his job, and left for the rendezvous site from which the group would drive to the beginning of the trail at Springer Mountain, Georgia. (The AT is a 2,000 mile trail spanning from Georgia to Katahdin, Maine.)

Another friend, Jessie Holtzen, had also accepted the invitation...and we’ll get to her shortly! Having finished the AT experience, Dan returned home to Maine.

Meanwhile, out west in Nebraska, was Jessie Holtzen—who was born in Hastings, grew up in Deshler, Nebraska. Jessie grew up on a farm where corn, soybeans, cows, and hogs were some of the crops/livestock being cared for. Jessie was baptized and confirmed at Trinity Lutheran Church in Friedensau, NE. Jessie attended Deshler Lutheran grade school, then went on to public high school. During her youth, Camp Luther in Schyler, Nebraska became an important part of Jessie’s life. Jess attended there for 13 years—as a camper, a volunteer (in high school), then a cabin leader for three summers during college. This was a beautiful part of her growing up, and Jess is pleased that her nieces are going there and keeping the family tradition going!

Following her graduation, Jessie managed a restaurant in Lincoln, Nebraska. She received an invitation from the same friend as Dan’s to join in with a group planning to hike the AT. The opportunity was too exciting to turn down, so Jessie left her job, moved home, put everything in storage except her hiking gear, and headed to the rendezvous!

Jessie, Dan, and the other members of the hiking group began the trail on March 4, 2012, and finished on September 17, 2012. After the group celebrated their summiting, Dan returned to his family in Maine and Jessie to hers in Nebraska. You’ve all guessed it...hearts were not happy: They had “fallen in!” So Jessie moved to Maine, and found work in Portland at Margaritas. Dan also moved to Portland where he continued his education toward becoming a dietician.

In 2013, Jessie had an opportunity to own and operate a restaurant in her hometown of Deshler, Nebraska—The Wheelhouse. She moved back to take on the challenge. Dan and another friend, who was a chef, also moved to Nebraska to help Jessie and work with her. They all worked in most positions in the restaurant, and Jess became known for the incredible homemade pies she produced—just as would be expected in a small farming community restaurant: Favorites were the coconut cream, the bourbon peach, and the cherry pies! The restaurant opened in June 2015 and Jess and Dan became engaged in November. Though still living in Nebraska, they were married in April of 2016 in the little chapel on the Southern Maine Community College campus in South Portland so Dan’s family could be in attendance. Many of Jessie’s family were also able to attend. A year later, Emily joined the family (2017) and four years later Jacob arrived (2021).

Dan had transferred his studies to University of Nebraska in Lincoln and graduated with a B.S. in Nutrition in 2019. Jessie and Dan gave up the Wheelhouse restaurant and moved to Maine, also in 2019. They moved to Farmingdale, and both took jobs here. Having done his dietary internship in Lincoln, Dan was able to sit for his board exam. Dan passed his boards to become a registered dietician in 2019 in Maine!

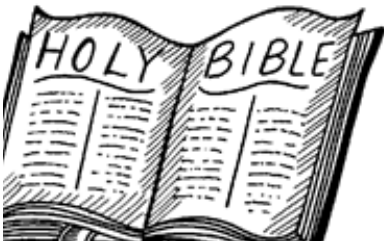
Emily, born in Hebron, Nebraska is a sweet little five-year old. These days she's into kindergarten; and loves reading, coloring and drawing, and she's "just busy being five!" Jacob who was born in Maine (Damariscotta) loves to try and crawl up the stairs before Mommy or Daddy catches him! He loves balls and cars...and adores his big sister—following her everywhere. He's very close to his "change of life," i.e., beginning to walk!

Jess has worked for Sherman's Maine Coast Book Shop for several years. She does ordering of non-book items and helps keep the records for the stores. When onsite, she worked in the Damariscotta and Boothbay locations, but following maternity leave, she was able to continue working in an at-home capacity. Dan currently works for Central Maine Health Care in Lewiston.

The Shaw family has not done much hiking this past year, but they have a goal of getting Emily and Jacob out as much as possible so they learn to love and appreciate the beautiful outdoors. They look forward to visiting all the fairs, mountains, lakes, and coastline Maine has to offer.

December Stewardship

	<u>December 4</u> (10 a.m.)	<u>December 11</u> (10 a.m.)	<u>December 18</u> (10 a.m.)	<u>December 24</u> (7 p.m.)	<u>December 25</u> (10 a.m.)
<u>Acolyte</u>	Evan Farr	Matthew Akers	Hayley Farr	Evan Farr	Matthew Akers
<u>Worship Assistant</u>	Charlie MacPherson	Steve Farr	Brad Fitzpatrick	Mark Larsen	Chris Batson
<u>Ushers</u>	Rick Drageland	Seth Carlson	Chris Batson	Glenn Carlson Jr.	Jeff Sammons
<u>Greeters</u>	Sharon Klipp	Dorothy McAllister	Rev. & Vary Fischer	The Andersons	Christine Thomas
<u>Altar Care</u>	Amanda Goldsmith	Sasha Fitzpatrick	Kitty Carlson	LeeAnne Larsen	Julie Kohl
<u>Flowers</u>	Jayne Labbe	Sharon Klipp	Sharon Klipp	Sharon Klipp	Sharon Klipp
<u>Fellowship</u>	LWML	Congregational Meeting (Pizza)	Open	-----	-----



Monthly Worship

December 4

Second Sunday in Advent

Psalm: 50:1-15

Old Testament: Song of Songs 2:8B-14

Epistle: Romans 15:4-13

Holy Gospel: Luke 21:25-33

December 11

Third Sunday in Advent

Psalm: 85

Old Testament: Isaiah 40:1-8

Epistle: 1 Corinthians 4:1-5

Holy Gospel: Matthew 11:2-10

December 18

Fourth Sunday in Advent

Psalm: 111

Old Testament: Deuteronomy 18:15-19

Epistle: Philippians 4:4-7

Holy Gospel: John 1:19-28

December 24

The Nativity of Our Lord
(Christmas Eve)

Psalm: 110:1-4

Old Testament: Isaiah 9:2, 6-7a

Epistle: Titus 2:11-15a

Holy Gospel: Luke 2:1-20

December 25

The Nativity of Our Lord
(Christmas Day)

Psalm: 2

Old Testament: Isaiah 52:6-10

Epistle: Hebrews 1:1-12

Holy Gospel: John 1:1-14

BIBLE QUIZ

1. Where was Jesus born?
A. Nazareth
B. Bethlehem
C. Jerusalem
D. Jericho
2. Which of the following is not a gift that the wise men brought for Jesus?
A. Gold
B. Silver
C. Myrrh
D. Frankincense
3. Who said "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill to men"?
A. Mary
B. Angels
C. Wise men
D. Elisabeth
4. Who was the father of Jesus?
A. Simeon
B. Zacharias
C. Joseph
D. God
5. What ritual did Jesus undergo when he was eight days old?
A. Circumcision
B. Birthday party
C. Baptism
D. Christening
6. To what country did he family escape to after they were warned of the death threat to Jesus?
A. Edom
B. Phoenicia
C. Egypt
D. Syria
7. In what city was Jesus brought up as a child?
A. Nazareth
B. Bethlehem
C. Jerusalem
D. Jericho



12/2 Lydia Bendas
Dorothy McAllister
12/3 Ruth Milhous
12/10 Elizabeth Akers
12/12 Maira Goldsmith
12/13 Sharon Conover
Allison Farr
12/15 Ethan Carlson
12/18 Steven Bendas
12/20 Benjamin Schiebel
12/23 Dan Callahan
12/25 Evelyn Gilbert
12/27 Natalie Crowley
12/30 Matthew Esculano



12/2 Jessie Shaw
12/10 Gail Maestas
12/21 Evan Farr
Hayley Farr
12/25 Dottie Evertsen



12/16 Fernando & Mari Gouvea
12/20 Peter & Lois Doran
12/27 Dan & Sharon Callahan



12/17 Esther Gould
John Gould
12/19 Rick Dostie



All the way home in the back seat of the car the boy was quiet. His father asked him three times what was wrong.

Finally, the boy replied, "The preacher said he wanted us all brought up in a Christian home, but I wanted to stay with you guys."

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Terri asked her Sunday School class to draw pictures of their favorite bible stories. She was puzzled by Kyle's picture, which showed four people on an airplane. So, she asked him which story it was meant to represent.

"The flight to Egypt," said Kyle.

"I see... And that must be Mary, Joseph, and the Baby Jesus," Ms. Terri said. "But who's the fourth person?"

Kyle explained, "Oh, that's Pontius the Pilot!"

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A father was approached by his small son who told him proudly, 'I know what the Bible means!'

His father smiled and replied, 'What do you mean, you 'know' what the Bible means?'

The son replied, 'I do know!'

'Okay,' said his father. 'What does the Bible mean?'

'That's easy, Daddy...' the young boy replied excitedly, 'It stands for 'Basic Information Before Leaving Earth.'

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BIBLE QUIZ ANSWERS

1. B (Matthew 2:1)
2. B (Matthew 2:11)
3. B (Luke 2:13-14)
4. D (Mark 1:1)
5. A (Luke 2:21)
6. C (Matthew 2:14)
7. A (Matthew 2:23)