

Lebanon Lutheran Church

December 2022 Newsletter

Sunday School 9:30 am
Worship Service 11:00 am
Phone (540) 465-5456

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Lebanon Church VA 22641
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NALC

North American Lutheran Church



A Message From The Pastor

Thousand, thousand saints attending Swell
the triumph of His train:

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! Christ the Lord
returns to reign.

From the hymn by Charles Wesley, 18th Century. Public Domain.

Blessed Adventide! And a Merry Christmas! As I write it is still Advent, and while it is traditional to reserve the December Newsletter for the Christmas message, I am resisting that urge, at least a little, to concentrate on another essential facet of Christian truth – the triumph of Christ.

The Second Sunday of Advent, *Populus Zion*, is devoted to the theme of the return of the triumphant Christ; it is the Good News appointed for the day. The Church, from the Introit on, is addressed as the expectant Bride of Christ, waiting for His imminent and glorious return. She is to be awake, ready, standing straight, standing forth and be counted among the blessed for whom Christ died.

The quotation at the head of this article is the first stanza for the Hymn of the Day for *Populus Zion*. We traditional Lutherans not only appoint texts, but also hymns for the Sundays of the Church Year. And what a hymn it is! Entitled, *Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending* (the first complete thought of the first stanza serving as the title) it is majestic, stately, emphatic, visually evocative, one of Wesley's best. I have my difficulties with some aspects of Wesley's theology, and even more with the churches that claim his mantle (he is considered one of the fathers of Methodism, if you weren't aware), but this hymn is quite good indeed.

I will provide a brief consideration of each line of the stanza for devotional purposes:

“Lo, He comes...” Here the great Advent theme of the Coming One is signaled. He comes because He has promised to do so. He has declared it in His Word to the Church. It is a certainty. Once He came in mercy, and littleness... as a babe. But so too, He comes again, as we confess in the Creeds. How does He come? Well, here the hymns depict His coming glory and triumph. He is victorious over sin, death, and the devil and now comes to distribute the fullness of that victory to His people, the Church. How does He come?

“with clouds descending...” This is a reference to the pronouncement of Jesus in Matthew 24:29-31 and parallels, which is itself a long-foretold prophecy of Daniel’s. The passage from Daniel is illuminating:

...and ^obehold, with the clouds of heaven
there came one like a son of man,
and he came to the ^cAncient of Days
and was presented before him.

¹⁴ ^pAnd to him was given dominion
and glory and a kingdom,
that all ^qpeoples, nations, and languages
should serve him;
^rhis dominion is an everlasting dominion,
which shall not pass away,
and his kingdom one
that shall not be destroyed. ¹

Jesus is the heavenly Son of Man to whom is given “dominion” (rulership and authority) and a “kingdom”, one that “will not pass away and shall not be destroyed”.

Our Lord Jesus comes to establish the Kingdom of God in a finally perfected form. Where human kingdoms eventually fail, destroy themselves, or both, Jesus’ will be inviolable. This is good news for those who have been added to that Kingdom! It is good news for the Church. It is terrifying news for the enemies of God. How is He able to do this, and how is He worthy to do such a wonderful thing?

“Once for every sinner slain...” According to the testimony of St. John’s Apocalypse (see Rev. 4:11), this is the reason why Jesus is able to bring about the Kingdom of God, *at least insofar as it pertains to us*. Of course, Jesus is powerfully and ably divine, worthy to be praised *just because* He is the eternal Son of God, but there is a sense in which His self-offering upon the cross is the divinely accomplished deed that makes the Kingdom of God inhabitable, *for us!* His atoning, sin-destroying, humanity elevating, death upon the cross brings about the peaceful communion of God and Man. As his death destroys sin, defeats death, and routes the devil, it

^o Matt. 26:64; Mark 14:62; Rev. 1:7; 14:14

^c [See ver. 9 above]

^p Ps. 110:1, 2; Isa. 9:6, 7; Rev. 11:15

^q See ch. 3:4

^r See ch. 2:44

¹ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#) (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2016), Da 7:13–14.

also removes the barriers that man had placed between himself and God. With these barriers trampled, human beings may enter the Kingdom through the new covenant in Jesus' blood. Through faith in Jesus, the angel barring the way to Eden relents, and the faithful may enter the paradise of God.

“Thousand... saints attending, swell the triumph of His train...” This one is perhaps a little less obvious. It appears to be a reference to the total number of the faithful (the exactly perfect amount known to God alone!) that have, in faith, owned the triumph of Jesus, and so have been ransomed from their worldly and otherworldly enemies. The image is likely from Revelation. It recalls the Roman practice of “triumph” which refers to a victorious general marching through the city, through an arch built for the occasion, with his captives and conquests following behind him. The plunder from the losers – slaves, and other goods – would follow in humiliation. Here though, the image is renewed after the purposes of our Lord: captivity itself is led captive (Eph 4:8) and the saints follow their Lord, not in abjection, but in shared victory! Their innumerable ranks add to the glory of the conquering Lord Jesus. He leads them to the new and perfect dwelling place of God and Man, the heavenly temple, the new Jerusalem, the restored earth, to enjoy peace and bliss forever.² In the Church, and by faith, they participate in His victory and enjoy the fruits thereof.

“Alleluia! Christ the Lord returns to reign...” And what do these co-victors do in response to this Good News of their Lord's triumph? They praise! They testify! They sing hymns! They cry *Hallalu Jah*, that is, “praise be to Yahweh” in the assembly of the righteous. That would be the Hebrew, or, as we have it in the hymn, *Alleluia*, the Greek form of the same. How could they not, having received such precious gifts, the spoils of the final battle between God and His enemies? (See Eph 4:8 again.)

We are His beloved, His Church, those ransomed from godless and empty ways. The devil can no longer bind us in his servitude. Through faith in Worthy One, Jesus Christ, we participate in His victory – even now – as we look for His return.

As we near the celebration of the birth of the humble child born in Bethlehem, let us be sure to also own Him as the triumphant Lord of glory who will reign over us forever!

Amen, Come Lord Jesus!

Prayerfully,
Pastor Porter

² I am indebted to Anthony Esolen's article on this hymn from Word and Song. (Esolen, 2022)

Events at Lebanon

Do you or someone you know need a ride to Church?

Please contact Ann Deming
(540)869-5795 Leave Mssg.

Wednesday's

8:15 AM Matins

10:00 AM Individual
Confession & Absolution

1:30 PM Communion

5:30 PM Vespers

December Birthday's

1st Ben Hamman
7th Kathryn Flynn
14th Michael Reidy
18th Brenda Rose
20th Ellie Miller
28th Jesse Lowe
28th Arlene Hamman

Women's Meeting
No Meeting In December
Next Meeting January
25th @ 7:00 PM

Men's Prayer Breakfast
Saturday, December 10th
8:00 AM @
Queen Street Diner

Christmas Candy Bags

Sunday, December 18th
immediately following
the Divine Service we
will prepare candy bags
(lunch provided)

Christmas Caroling

Sunday, December 18th
after prepare Christmas
candy bags.

December Anniversaries

27th Christopher &
Colleen Porter

Sunday School Class led by
Rev. J.D. is at 9:30 Sunday

Sunday School Class led by
Lucy King is at 9:30 Sunday

Children's/Elementary
Sunday School Class led by
Leslie Heird and Dorothy
Harriman is at 9:30 Sunday

Choir Practice

Choir will practice
Thursday, December 1st
and December 15th
@ 7:00 PM

**See Evelyn if interested in*
joining the Choir

Church Anniversary *Planning Meeting*

Sunday, December 11th
immediately following
the Divine Service

Ladies Christmas *Brunch*

Saturday, December
10th @ 10:00 AM
*(*See flyer insert for more info)*



Lebanon Women's Christmas Brunch

Saturday, December 10 at 10 am

Fellowship Hall

This year we are celebrating Christmas with a brunch and an opportunity to give needed items to the Shenandoah Pregnancy Center!

Please bring a breakfast item and Christmas cookies to share.

Shenandoah Pregnancy Center Wish List¹

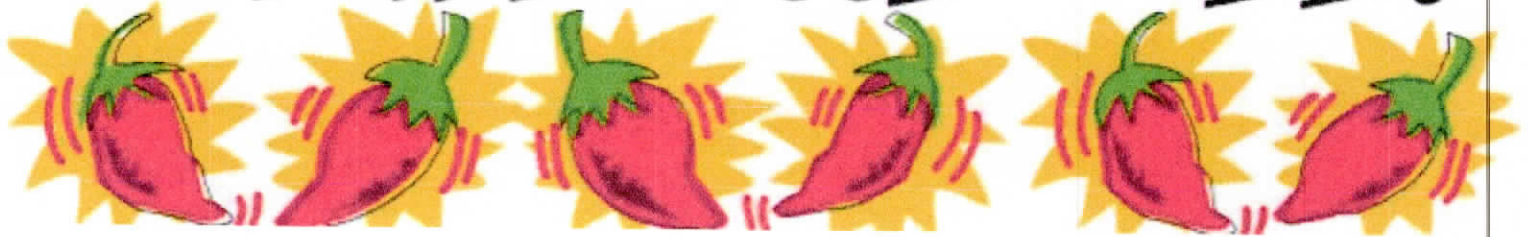
| | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Baby toothbrush & toothpaste | Teethers and Pacifiers |
| newborn mittens | 2-handled sippy cups |
| Baby wipes | Formula* |

*Enfamil Gentlease, Similac Pro Sensitive,
Similac 360 Total Care, Similac Soy Isomil

Also need feminine products, tooth brushes and toothpaste, mother's milk tea, fenugreek supplements, cloth diapers and diaper rash ointment.

¹ Baby clothes like onsies and 0-18 mos winter clothes welcome.

Chili Cook-Off!



Winner Receives "Bragging Rights"



**Sunday, January 14,
2023 @ 12:30**

**Lebanon Lutheran
Church**

We need chili makers & tasters!! Come, bring a friend and enjoy an afternoon of fellowship & food. We would love to have you join us for Sunday School @ 9:30 and Divine Worship Service @ 11:00.

****Free Will Offering - to benefit activities for Lebanon Lutheran Church's 175th Anniversary Celebration in 2023***

Making Advent Wreaths



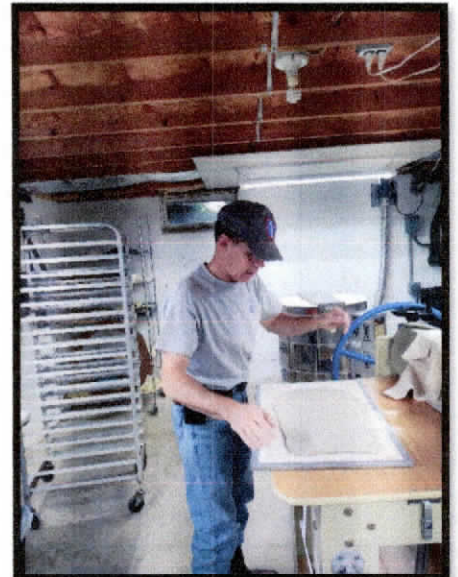
Food Drive



OCTOBER & NOVEMBER FOOD DRIVE

Compassion Cupboard and the Food Pantry were very thankful for all of the food items donated by members at Lebanon for the Food Drive. Thanks be to God for giving us the ability and means to accomplish this.

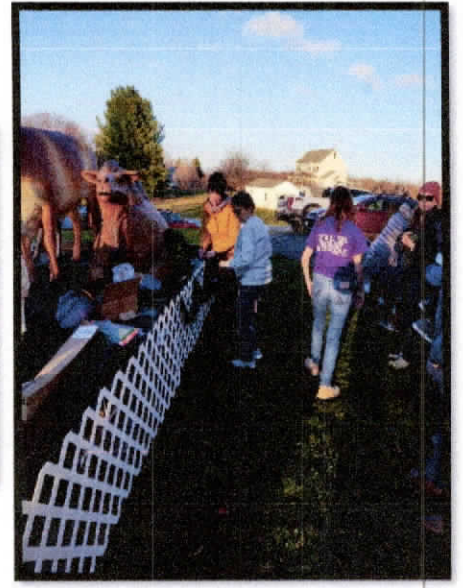
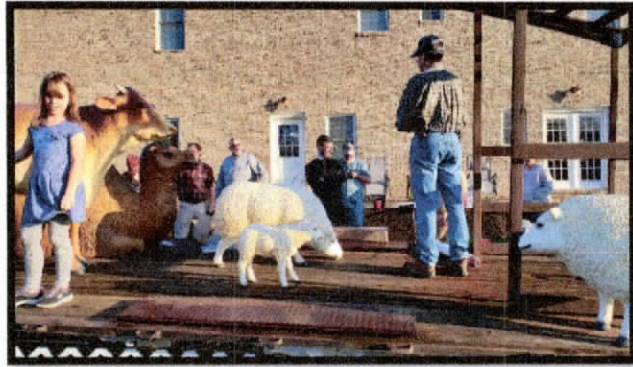
Making Ornaments For Christmas Parade



We would like to thank Mike and Melinda Reidy for opening their home to us and for all of their help to make this year's star Christmas ornament for the Strasburg Christmas Parade. Also, thank you to all of the many volunteers that help make these beautiful ornaments.



Decorating Christmas Parade Float



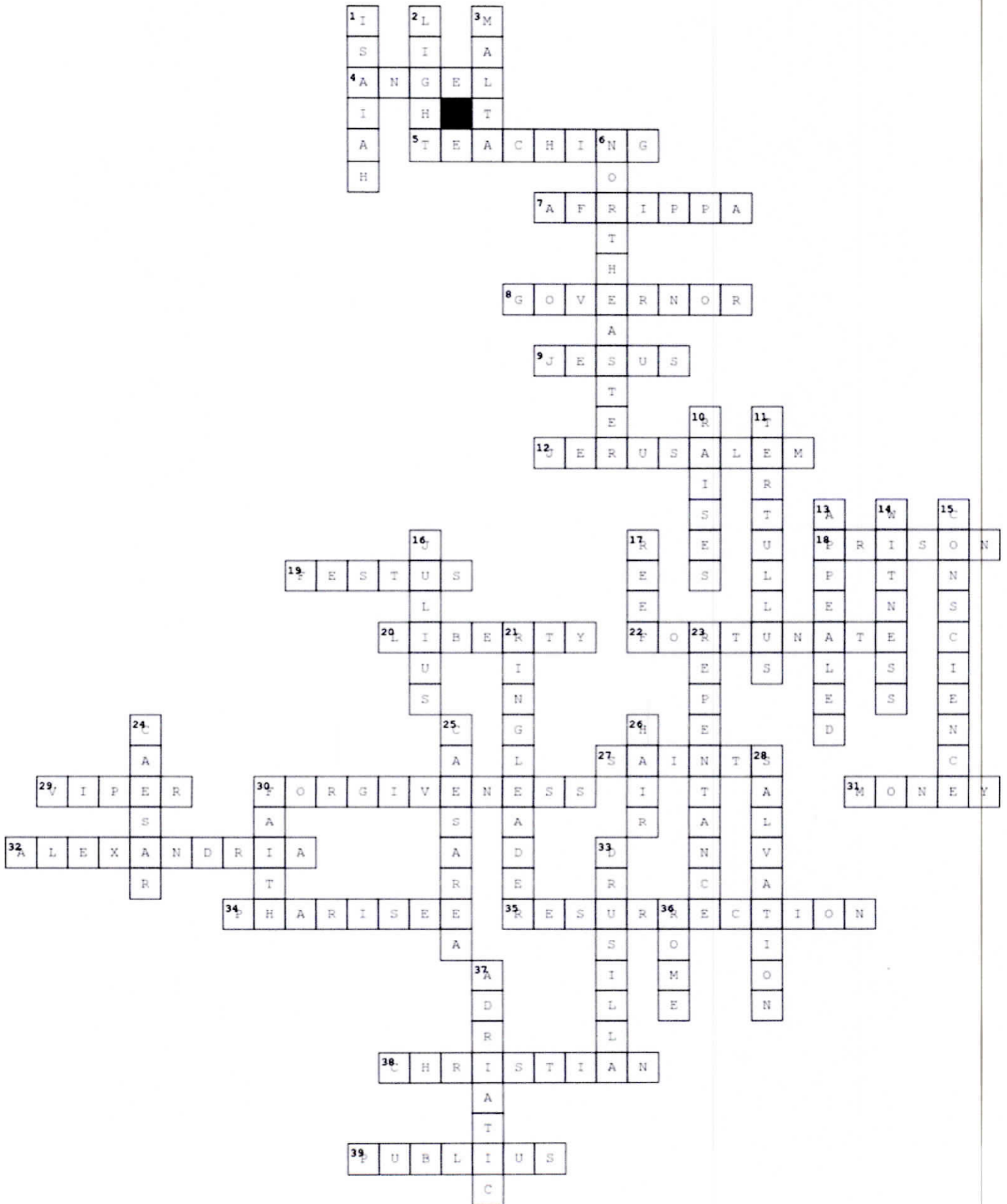
Thank you to all that helped decorate the Christmas Parade Float!



Great time of fellowship!



Acts Chapters 24-28



Acts Chapters 24-28

Across

4. Paul said this of God's stood before him and told him he must stand before Caesar? (27)
5. Paul welcomed those who came to him, "proclaiming the kingdom of God and _____ about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance." (28)
7. He is the king? (25)
8. They laid their case against Paul, before him? (24)
9. Paul asserted He was alive! (25)
12. The governor had asked Paul if he wanted to go here, to be tried? (25)
18. Felix left Paul here when he was succeeded? (24)
19. He succeeded Felix as governor? (25)
20. Paul is kept in custody but the governor gives him some of this? (24)
22. Paul considers himself this, to be before king Agrippa. (26)
27. With the authority of the chief priests Paul put many of these in prison? (26)
29. This bit Paul but had no ill effect on him? (28)
30. Jesus said, "that they may receive _____ of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me." (26)
31. Felix hoped he would receive this from Paul? (24)
32. They transferred to this ship sailing to Italy? (27)
34. The strictest party of the Jewish religion? (26)
35. There will be this among the just and unjust? (24)
38. "And Agrippa said to Paul "In a short time would you persuade me to be a _____?" (26)
39. He was the chief man of Malta? (28)

Down

1. Paul quotes this prophet? (28)
2. When you turn away from darkness you turn to this? (26)
3. The name of the island where Paul was shipwrecked? (28)
6. A tempestuous wind struck down from the land was called this? (27)
10. "Why is it thought incredible by any of you that God _____ the dead?" (26)
11. He was a spokesman for the high priest and the elders? (24)
13. "This man could have been set free if he had not _____ to Caesar." (26)
14. Jesus said, "to appoint you as servant and _____ to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you," (26)
15. This of Paul's is clear toward God and man? (24)
16. He was the centurion of the Augustan Cohort? (27)
17. The ship strikes this? (27)
21. They say Paul is this of the sect of Nazarenes? (24)
23. "that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds in keeping with their _____." (26)
24. Paul says he is standing before who's tribunal? (25)
25. Paul was in prison here? (25)
26. Not one of these is to perish from anyone's head? (27)
28. "Therefore let it be known to you this _____ of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will listen." (28)
30. Paul tells the ones on the ship he has this, in God? (27)
33. The wife of Felix? (24)
36. With the soldier who guarded him, Paul was able to stay by himself in this city? (28)
37. The sea they were crossing? (27)

All questions are formed from the ESV Bible.

Chapters are in parenthesis.



Lebanon Lutheran Church



| ◀ Nov 2022 | | December 2022 | | | | | Jan 2023 ▶ |
|---|---|---------------|---|--|---|--|------------|
| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat | |
| | | | | 1 7:00 Choir Practice | 2 5:30 Meet for Woodstock Christmas Parade @ 6:30 | 3 3:30 Meet for Strasburg Christmas Parade @ 4:30 | |
| 4 9:30 Sunday School 11:00 Divine Service 2:00 Pastor @ Ben's Recital in Upperville <i>*Advent 2</i> | 5 10:00 Acts Bible Study 7:00 Adult Catechism Class | 6 | 7 8:15 Matins 10:00 Individ. Confession 1:30 Communion Service 6:00 Pastor @ Ben's Recital @ Daniel Morgan Middle School | 8 6:00 Outreach Meeting 7:00 Church Council Meeting | 9 | 10 10:00 Ladies Potluck Brunch 8:00 Men's Prayer Breakfast @ Queen Street Diner | |
| 11 Santa Lucia Day 9:30 Sunday School 11:00 Divine Service <i>*Advent 3</i> | 12 10:00 Acts Bible Study 7:00 Adult Catechism Class | 13 | 14 8:15 Matins 10:00 Individ. Confession 1:30 Communion Service 6:30 Pastor @ H-burg Lutheran Church of Valley | 15 7:00 Choir Practice | 16 | 17 | |
| 18 9:30 Sunday School 11:00 Divine Service 12:30 Prepare Candy Bags & Caroling <i>*Advent 4</i> | 19 10:00 Acts Bible Study 7:00 Adult Catechism Class | 20 | 21 8:15 Matins 10:00 Individ. Confession 1:30 Communion Service 5:30 Vesper Service | 22 | 23 | 24 <i>11:00 PM Christmas Eve Service</i> | |
| 25 Christmas Day 11:00 Christmas Day Service <i>*The Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ</i> | 26 | 27 | 28 8:15 Matins 10:00 Individ. Confession 1:30 Communion Service 5:30 Vesper Service | 29 | 30 | 31 | |