This Sunday at St. Luke's
November 29, 2026

8:15 a.m. – Holy Communion (said service)
10:30 a.m. – Holy Communion with organ, choir and sermon

Steven Cagel, organist

The First Sunday in Advent



The Comings of Christ

(*Advent* is from a Latin word which means 'coming'.)

The season we begin this Sunday is often thought of as preparation for Christmas when we celebrate the birth of Jesus, just as Lent is preparation for Easter when we celebrate His resurrection. In fact, there are three aspects of Advent: past, future and present. In the past, at a particular moment in history, the eternal Son of God humbled Himself and took upon Himself our human nature. He lived as a man among men, teaching them about God and showing them what God is like. In His death upon the cross, He revealed the depths of divine love by trampling down death by death. But, there is more to the story, in the future He will appear a second time, this time not to deal with sin (in the sense of having to die all over again to make satisfaction for it) but rather to save those who are eagarly

awaiting Him and to bring in His eternal rule in a renewed and perfected world. At that future coming, He will judge the quick (living) and the dead.

But, in a sense, Jesus comes in the present. The Holy Spirit makes Him known in the reading and study of the scriptures as well as in the Sacraments. He is not a faraway Lord but One near at hand. "He walks with me and talks with me." He is our great contemporary, brother and friend. So, there is a present aspect to Advent.

A reoccuring theme on the First Sunday in Advent is **urgency**. Our Lord's coming, whether for the individual by death or at His final and great appearing at the end of the age, is nearer than when we started our journey of faith. Let us therefore cast away all that is not worthy of a follower of Christ and wake up to new opportuntities for love and service.

COLLECT FOR THE FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

ALMIGHTY God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to life immortal, through him who liveth and reigneth with the thee and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. *Amen.*

THE EPISTLE – ROMANS 13:8-14 (J.B. Phillips)

To love others is the highest conduct

8-10 Keep out of debt altogether, except the perpetual debt of love which we owe to one another. The man who loves his neighbour has obeyed the whole Law in regard to his neighbour. For the commandments, 'You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, You shall not covet' and all other commandments are summed up in this one saying: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself'. Love hurts nobody: therefore love is the answer to the Law's commands.

Wake up and live!

11-14 Why all this stress on behaviour? Because, as I think you have realised, the present time is of the highest importance—it is time to wake up to reality. **Every day brings God's salvation nearer.** The night is nearly over, the day has almost dawned. Let us therefore fling away the things that men do in the dark, let us arm ourselves for the fight of the day! Let us live cleanly, as in the daylight, not in the "delights" of getting drunk or playing with sex, nor yet in quarrelling or jealousies. Let us be Christ's men from head to foot, and give no chances to the flesh to have its fling.

NOTE: This is one of the passages on which the Advent Collect is based. The urgency makes them appropriate at the beginning of Advent. (William Sydnor)

THE GOSPEL – St. Matthew 21:1-13 (J.B. Phillips)

Jesus comes to Jerusalem and the Temple in fulfillment of prophecy

21 **1-3** As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage and the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples ahead telling them, "Go into the village in front of you and you will at once find there an ass tethered, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. Should anyone say anything to you, you are to say, 'The Lord needs them', and he will send them immediately."
4-5 All this happened to fulfil the prophet's saying—'Tell the daughter of Zion, Behold your king is coming to you, lowly, and sitting on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey'.
6-9 So the disciples went off and followed Jesus' instructions. They brought the ass and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and Jesus took his seat. Then most of the crowd spread their own cloaks on the road, while others cut down branches from the trees and spread them in his path. The crowds who went in front of him and the crowds who followed him all shouted, "God save the Son of David! 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!' God save him from on high!"
10-11 And as he entered Jerusalem a shock ran through the whole city. "Who is this?" men cried. "This is Jesus the prophet," replied the crowd, "the man from Nazareth in Galilee!"
12-13 Then Jesus went into the Temple and drove out all the buyers and sellers there. He overturned the tables of the money-changers and the benches of those who sold doves, crying—"It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer'. But you have turned it into a 'den of thieves!'"

NOTE: The cleansing of the temple makes clear the sterner side of God's revelation in Jesus Christ. The Lord comes not only as Saviour who loves and forgives, but also as King and Judge. Neither aspect can be overlooked without distortion.

LECTIONARY READING

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON – Malachi 3:1-6, 4:4-6 (RSV)

The coming messenger

3 "Behold, I send my messenger [John the Baptist] to prepare the way before me, and the Lord [Jesus] whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts. **2** But who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand when he appears?

“For he is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap; [3] he will sit as a refiner and purifier
of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, till
they present right offerings to the Lord. [4] Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem
will be pleasing to the Lord as in the days of old and as in former years.
[5] “Then I will draw near to you for judgment; I will be a swift witness against the
sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who
oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow and the orphan, against those who thrust
aside the sojourner, and do not fear me, says the Lord of hosts.
[6] “For I the Lord do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed.

The great day of the Lord

4 [4] “Remember the law of my servant Moses, the statutes and ordinances that I
commanded him at Horeb for all Israel.
[5] “Behold, I will send you Eli′jah the prophet before the great and terrible day of
the Lord comes. [6] And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts
of children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the land with a curse.”

NOTE: The prophet says that God is going to send a messenger (someone like Elijah; John the Baptist fills this bill) to prepare people for the coming of the Lord. When the Lord comes, He will judge His people. Those who have received His Word and are found faithful will be openly acknowledged and declared in the right. (William Sydnor)

THIS SUNDAY

Preacher: The Rector

Lector (OT) – Lois Joldersma

Lector (Epistle) -- John Kautz

Acolyte – Jim Noblett
Verger – Dr. Alvin Cash
Ushers – Roger, Steven and Teresa Wankel

(New usher volunteers and altar servers are needed! Why not put your name in this blank?

November and December

- **Thanksgiving Day Service** – Thursday, Nov. 26, at 11 a.m. followed by a Thanksgiving dinner.
- **St. Andrew the Apostle** – Monday, Nov. 30, HC Jennus Chapel at noon.
- **SLMG Monthly Meeting** – Tuesday**,** Dec. 1, at 11 a.m.
- **WSL Christmas Bazaar** – Saturday, Dec. 5, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- **Christmas by Candlelight Concert** – Saturday, Dec. 19, at 6 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 20, at 3 p.m.
- **St. Thomas the Apostle** – Monday, Dec. 21, HC Jennus Chapel at noon.
- **Christmas Eve Family Service** – Thursday, Dec. 24, at 5 p.m.
- **Christmas Eve Traditional late-night communion service** – Thursday, Dec. 24, at 10 p.m.
- **The Nativity of Our Lord, Christmas Day Service** – Friday, Dec. 25, at 9 a.m.
- **Vestry Meeting** – Sunday, Dec. 27, following the 10:30 a.m. service.

OLD FASHIONED SUNDAY SCHOOL

There will be no Adult Sunday school this Sunday.

Options

In-church.

Online. Services are livestreamed on Facebook and available for viewing following the service on You Tube. To access both put "Parish Church of St. Luke, Blue Ridge, Ga." In the search bar.



Tip of the Canterbury Cap to Kevin Sartain for putting in place a system whereby credit cards may be used for ticket sales to this year's Christmas concerts.



JOIN THE CHOIR!

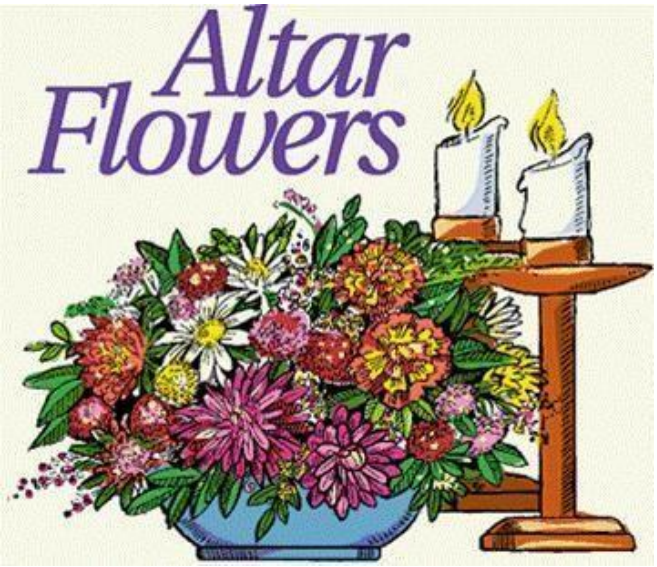


For information, contact, Diana Burden Mark at 678-852-6907 or email dburden6907@gmail.com.

The Anglican Relief and Development Fund

OUR MISSION

St. Luke's mission is to grow spiritually in the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ and in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit and to share our faith, our hands and hearts for the sake of the Gospel, our community and the world.



SIGN-UP FOR FLOWERS

Please call or email the church office if you wish to sign up. Flowers are needed throughout the end of the year.

Financial Pledge for the Year of our Lord 2027

As stewards of God's gifts and in gratitude for all blessings, I pledge the following amount to the work of Christ through St. Luke's Church for 2027.

Name

_____

Address

_____

_____ __

Amount

_____

_____Weekly _____ Monthly_____Yearly

(Please tick the appropriate blank)



St. Luke's Church, "The Parish Church of the Mountains," 7 Ewing St., (POB 1821), Blue Ridge, Georgia 30513; (706) 632-8245; www.stlukesblueridge.org; stlukes@tds.net.