

# ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT



December 05, 2021

10:00 a.m.

## INTRODUCTION

*Forerunners and messengers advance the advent of our God. While John the baptizer's voice in the wilderness may be the principal focus of the day, Malachi's prophecy could as easily herald the coming Christ as forerunner of the LORD of hosts. Finally all the baptized are called to participate in the sharing of the gospel. In so doing we prepare the way for the coming of Jesus and assist all people in capturing a vision of the "salvation of God."*

## PRELUDE



+ GATHERING +

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Pastor (P) Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, who alone does wonders, who lifts up the lowly, who fills the hungry with good things.

Congregation (C) Amen.

P Let us confess our sin, trusting in the tender mercy of our God.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

P God for whom we wait,

C in the presence of one another, we confess our sin before you. We fail in believing that your good news is for us. We falter in our call to tend your creation. We find our sense of self in material wealth. We fear those different from ourselves. We forget that we are your children and turn away from your love. Forgive us, Blessed One, and assure us again of your saving grace. Amen.

P God, in Christ Jesus, has looked with favor upon you! Through the power of the Holy Spirit, ✠ your sins are forgiven. You are children of the Most High, inheritors of the eternal promise, and recipients of divine mercy. God strengthens you anew to follow the way of peace.

C Amen.

The assembly is seated.

GATHERING HYMN 264 Prepare the Royal Highway (vs. 1 & 4)

1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!  
2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: your own e - ter - nal king!  
3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!  
4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.

Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!  
Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!  
Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.  
His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.

Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:  
God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!  
All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:  
So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:

*Refrain*  
Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

Text: Frans Mikael Franzén, 1772-1847; in *Lutheran Book of Worship*  
Music: BEREDEN VAG FÖR HERRAN, Swedish folk tune, 17th cent.  
Text © 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*, admit. Augsburg Fortress.

## GREETING

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

**C** **And also with you.**

## KYRIE



**A** Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son:    **C** Lord, have mer - cy.  
*Lord, . . . . have mer - cy:*



**A** Chri - ste e - le - i - son:    **C** Christ, have mer - cy.  
*Christ, . . . . have mer - cy:*



**A** Ky - ri - e e - le - i - son:    **C** Lord, have mer - cy.  
*Lord, . . . . have mer - cy:*



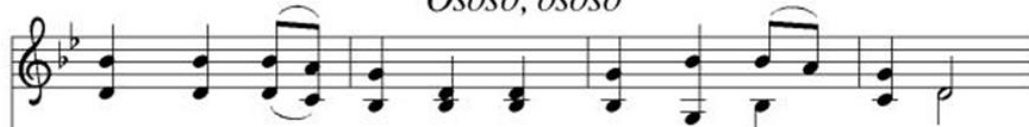
## PRAYER OF THE DAY

**P** Let us pray.


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.

**C** **Amen.**

## Come Now, O Prince of Peace

*Ososǒ, ososǒ*


*O - so - sǒ o - so - sǒ, pyong - hwa - ūi - im - gŭm*  
 1 Come now, O Prince of peace, make us one bod - y.  
 2 Come now, O God of love, make us one bod - y.



*u - ri - ga han - mom i - ru - ge ha - so - sǒ.*  
 Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec - on - cile your peo - ple.  
 Come, O Lord Je - sus, rec - on - cile your peo - ple.

## CHILDREN'S SERMON



+ WORD +

## FIRST READING: Malachi 3:1-4

*God announces a covenant with Israel. A messenger like Malachi (his name means “my messenger”) will prepare the way for the coming of the Lord by purifying and refining God’s people, as silver and gold are refined.*

‘See, I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight—indeed, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. ²But 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; ³he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the descendants of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, until they present offerings to the LORD in righteousness. ⁴Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years.

Reader           The word of the Lord.

**C**               **Thanks be to God.**



## SECOND READING: Philippians 1:3-11

*The apostle Paul was the pastor of many new churches. He writes in this letter about his joy to be in partnership with the Christians of Philippi. Listen to how tender-hearted Paul, sometimes a stern preacher, is with his friends as he encourages them to grow in love and knowledge.*

<sup>3</sup>I thank my God every time I remember you, <sup>4</sup>constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, <sup>5</sup>because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. <sup>6</sup>I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup>It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. <sup>8</sup>For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. <sup>9</sup>And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight <sup>10</sup>to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, <sup>11</sup>having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

Reader            The word of the Lord.

**C                    Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

Al - le - lu - ia. You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

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

**GOSPEL: Luke 3:1-6**

*John the Baptist is a herald of Jesus, whose way is prepared by “repentance for the forgiveness of sins.” As we hear the careful record of human leaders, we sense the spectrum of political and religious authority that will be challenged by this coming Lord.*

P The holy gospel according to Luke, the third chapter.

**C Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, <sup>2</sup>during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. <sup>3</sup>He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, <sup>4</sup>as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah, “The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. <sup>5</sup>Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; <sup>6</sup>and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’”

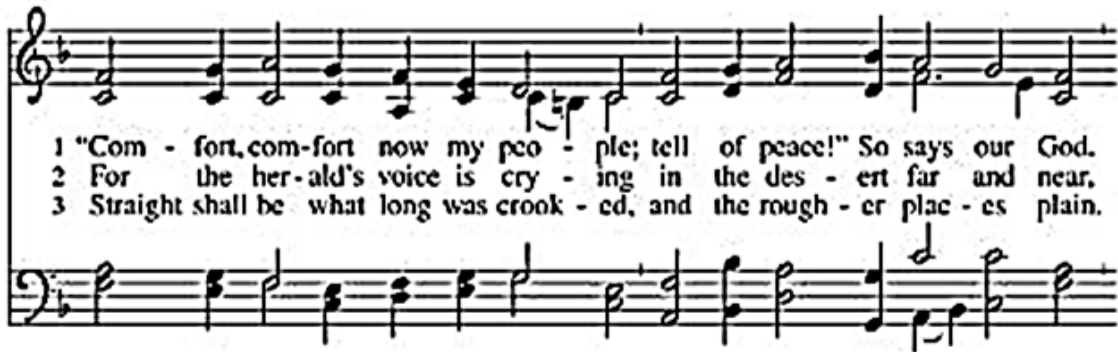
P The gospel of the Lord.

**C Praise to you, O Christ.**

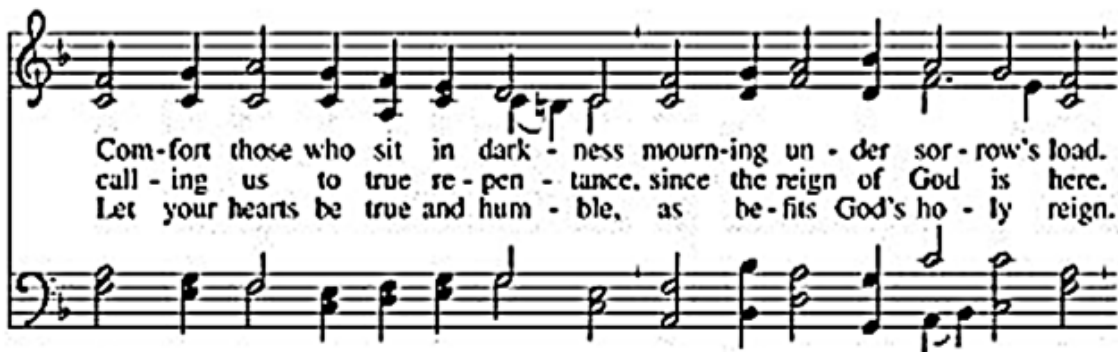
**SERMON** *We encounter the living word of God in the preaching.*

**HYMN OF THE DAY**      **256**      *Comfort, Comfort Now My People*





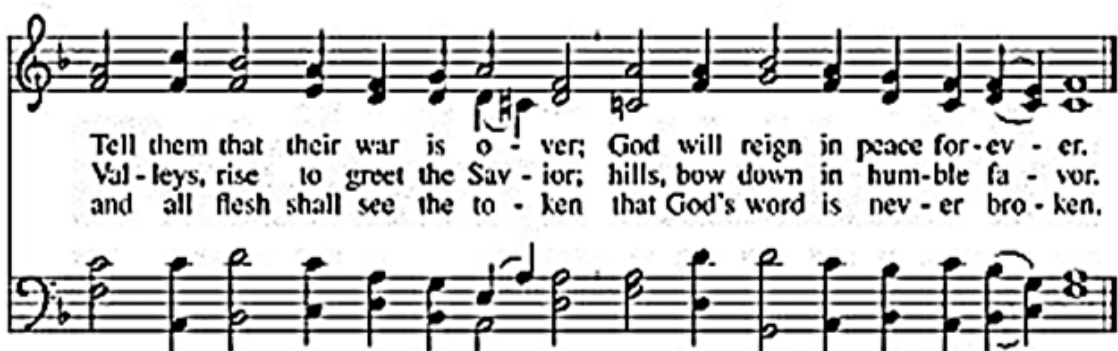
1 "Com - fort, com-fort now my peo - ple; tell of peace!" So says our God.  
 2 For the her - ald's voice is cry - ing in the des - ert far and near.  
 3 Straight shall be what long was crook - ed, and the rough - er plac - es plain.



Com-fort those who sit in dark - ness mourn-ing un - der sor - row's load.  
 call - ing us to true re - pen - tance, since the reign of God is here.  
 Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, as be - fits God's ho - ly reign.



To God's peo - ple now pro-claim that God's par - don waits for them!  
 Oh, that warn - ing cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way.  
 For the glo - ry of the Lord now on earth is shed a - broad,



Tell them that their war is o - ver; God will reign in peace for - ev - er.  
 Val - leys, rise to greet the Sav - ior; hills, bow down in hum-ble fa - vor.  
 and all flesh shall see the to - ken that God's word is nev - er bro - ken.

## **APOSTLES' CREED**

**A** Let us confess our faith.

**C** 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 INTERCESSION**

*Each petition ends: Hear us, O God.*

*Congregational response: Your mercy is great.*

## **PEACE**

**P** The peace of Christ be with you always.

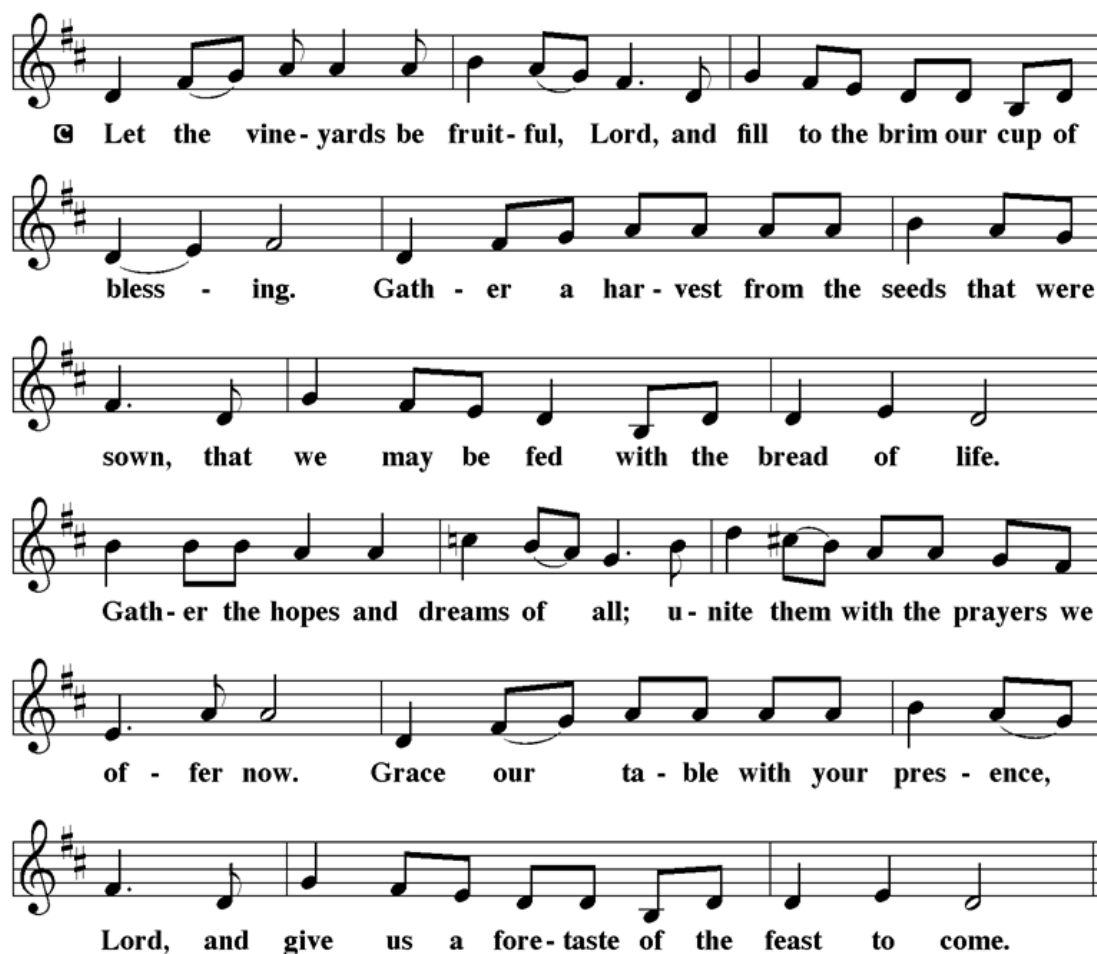
**C** And also with you.

*We greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.*

## OFFERING

*An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.*

### OFFERING HYMN *Let the Vineyards be Fruitful Lord*



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 dreams of all; u-nite them with the prayers we  
of-fer now. Grace our ta-ble with your pres-ence,  
Lord, and give us a fore-taste of the feast to come.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray.

C Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

**+ SENDING +**

**BLESSING** *We receive the blessings of the triune God.*

**P** The God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit, through Christ Jesus for whom we wait.

**C** Amen.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**SENDING HYMN**            **249**    *On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry (vs. 1, 2, 4 & 5)*

1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an - nounce - es  
 2 Then cleansed be ev - 'ry life from sin; make straight the  
 3 We hail you as our Sav - ior, Lord, our ref - uge  
 4 Stretch forth your hand, our health re - store, and make us  
 5 All praise to you, e - ter - nal Son, whose ad - vent

that the Lord is nigh; a - wake and heark - en,  
 way for God with - in, and let us all our  
 and our great re - ward; with - out your grace we  
 rise to fall no more; oh, let your face up -  
 has our free - dom won, whom with the Fa - ther

for he brings glad tid - ings of the King of kings!  
 hearts pre - pare for Christ to come and en - ter there.  
 waste a - way like flow'rs that with - er and de - cay.  
 on us shine and fill the world with love di - vine.  
 we a - dore, and Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er - more.


Text: Charles Coffin, 1676-1749; tr. composite  
 Music: PUER NOBIS, European tune, adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1571-1621

**DISMISSAL**

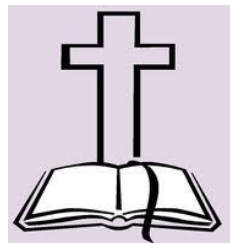
- P We believe out loud that God’s mission for us is:
- C to be an active community that welcomes all people to nurture and share their faith and gifts with everyone, according to God’s call.**
- P Go in peace. Christ is near.
- C Thanks be to God.**

+ + +

*Sundays and Seasons v.20200805.1416  
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	<p><b>JAN &amp; JERRY HARRISON DEDICATE TODAY’S ALTAR FLOWERS TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND IN CELEBRATION OF THEIR 50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY.</b></p>
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<u>Calendar for December 5 - 12</u>				
Dec.	5	Sun.	10:00 am	Worship, Second Sunday of Advent
	8	Wed.	noon	Bible study (online)
	12	Sun.	10:00 am	Worship, Third Sunday of Advent

<p><b>Next Sunday’s Readings, Second Sunday of Advent:</b></p> <p><a href="#">Zephaniah 3:14-20</a> <a href="#">Isaiah 12:2-6</a> <a href="#">Philippians 4:4-7</a> <a href="#">Luke 3:7-18</a></p>	
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## SERVING TABLE

Serving	December 05	December 12
<b>Presiding</b>	Pastor Tom	Pastor Tom
<b>Preaching</b>	Pastor Tom	Pastor Tom
<b>Assisting Minister</b>	Audrey Post	Beth Alexander
<b>Cup Minister</b>	N/A	N/A
<b>Lector</b>	Chris Reece	Stephanie Leitch
<b>Cantors</b>		
<b>Altar Guild</b>	Andrea Notley	Audrey Post Billie Reardon
<b>Counters</b>	Janet Barber Susan Warren	Audrey Post Billie Reardon
<b>Announcements</b>	Pastor Tom	Pastor Tom

## PRAYER REQUESTS

*New concerns:* Gladys Kane, having surgery for breast cancer; Isaac (son of Terri Schmitt) for healing (both physical and emotional).

*For the sick:* Val Sullivan; Margarete Decker (mother of Caroline Collins); Don Dowd; Isabelle Taylor (granddaughter of Bill & Connie Taylor), being treated for rheumatoid arthritis and Primary Immunodeficiency; Theresa Martin (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Dan Graney (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Sarah (friend of Cassandra White).

*In treatment for cancer:* Stephanie Barber; Cathie Nitti (niece of Sharon Simmons); Jenny (niece of Laura Sullivan & Colin Hackley); Rosalinda Wright; Maggie Soff (friend of Sandy Sampson); James Sablan (brother of Donna Schiffer); Isabell Cintron (friend of Sharon Simmons); Sarah Lucas (friend of Cassandra White); Bruce Blubaum (cousin of Sharon Simmons); Chris Dickman (synod council member), child of Pr. Katrina Foster (friend of Cheryl).

***For health and protection:*** For all affected by coronavirus: those experiencing mental health difficulties due to isolation; those with the disease struggling to recover; those on the front lines fighting, researching and treating the disease (doctors, nurses, medical personnel, EMTs, the millions of unemployed people, etc.); for the unaccompanied children entering the US, including those “unaccounted for”.

***For prisoners:*** Femi and Eddie; all those on death row.

***Other concerns:*** Karen Olson; Blanche White (Melissa Barton).

***Church concerns:*** St. Stephen’s Congregational Council; The Florida-Bahamas Synod Council, all congregations searching for ways to stay connected and proclaim the Good News; Reconciling Works; Grace Lutheran Church; Bishop Pedro Suarez; Bishop Elizabeth Eaton; Our Savior Lutheran Church in Freeport, Bahamas; the ELCA Advocacy offices and ministry; St. Paul Lutheran Church, Pensacola.

***World concerns:*** For all recovering in the Florida Panhandle from Hurricane Michael, including Messiah Lutheran Church; the people of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands continuing to recover from hurricanes; migrants fleeing violence in Central America; all those migrants and asylum seekers imprisoned by the US government; the people of Venezuela (birthplace of Bp. Suarez) and Hong Kong; for the Supreme Court as it considers cases involving the LGBTQ community.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**FLOWER CHART FOR 2022:** Do you have an anniversary, birthday or special memory you would like to honor? Celebrate the occasion by sponsoring the flowers for our service and signing up for the 2019 Flower Chart located on the bulletin board in the narthex. The cost is \$35, and you can place that in the offering plate.

**RSVP FOR NEXT WEEK:** Remember to use the Sign-up Genius to reserve your spot for worship service (<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0c45a4a62ea7fbc16-sunday>). The deadline is noon on the Friday before worship. The calendar has dates available throughout the summer.

### CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

We'll be decorating the chancel area with poinsettias for Christmas. Would you like to dedicate one (or more)? The cost is \$10, and the dedication list will be in the Dec. 19 and Dec. 26 bulletins. Just fill out the form in the bulletin and place it with your payment in the offering plate, or email Lori with the information.

**The deadline is Sunday, Dec. 12.**

POINSETTIA ORDER FORM	
NAME _____	QUANTITY _____
DEDICATION _____	
_____	