

# MARCH

## Advent Newsletter 2021

*“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. <sup>2</sup> And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “See, the home<sup>[a]</sup> of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples,<sup>[c]</sup> and God himself will be with them; <sup>4</sup> he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.” <sup>5</sup> And the one who was seated on the throne said, “See, I am making all things new.”” **Revelation 21:1-5***

This past year has felt like a chapter out of the book of Revelation, especially when it comes to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, there is hope! There is light at the end of this long and arduous tunnel we have been in. Multiple vaccines are out. Cases are beginning to decrease. Hospitalizations are down. A return to in person gatherings is close.

We know it has been a long and difficult year of Zoom worship, social distancing, wearing masks and following CDC guidelines trying to keep everyone safe and healthy. We have been doing our part as the Church following the guidance of Advent’s COVID-19 Task Force and Council to help lessen the strain on our healthcare systems and workers while keeping everyone protected. However, there is still work to be done. As Bishop Eaton tweeted on February 28, 2021, “This long pandemic is going to come to an end. Continue to be vigilant, wear your masks, and trust the science of the vaccines. The vaccines are safe, effective, and will help us return to life in person.”

What this means for us at Advent is we still need to be diligent in wearing our masks while social distancing. However, we should be able to start gathering for outdoor worship this month. Thanks Be to God! Advent’s COVID-19 Task Force met and made the recommendation to hold outside in person worship. The Task Force has confirmed that we meet two out of the three criteria needed for outside

worship and the other requirement number is close to an acceptable figure. (See Dashboard for more information)

+ For the CSRA we are at 8% of people who test positive for COVID-19 which is fewer than 10% of the people in our region needed.

+ ICU beds for our area is at 65% which is less than 80% of capacity.

- The rate of COVID-19 cases per day in our region is 23 in 100,000. CDC and Synod Guidelines would like it to be less than 20 in 100,000, but the Task Force felt comfortable that by following proper protocols, we should be safe to gather outdoors for worship.

Our overall plan to resume in person activities at Advent will be a multi step process, but thankfully we are entering Step 1.

Step 1 is resuming outside weekly worship with Holy Communion (weather permitting). Beginning March 14<sup>th</sup>, we be holding all Sunday morning worship times outside. Wednesday night Lenten services will remain on Zoom as well as other meetings and events for the time being. As the cases in our area continue to decrease and more people are vaccinated, we will move to Step two.

Step 2 will involve moving to inside in person worship and activities. This step will include the need to still wear masks and practice social distancing, but we will be inside Advent's building. The Task Force will continue to study the numbers for our area and set forth perimeters for when it is safe to enter this step of the process.

Step 3 will involve resuming all in person activities. This will take place when the Task Force gives the all clear for us to resume normal practices.

Until then, we begin the process of returning to normal operations by moving into Step 1 of the process. We will follow the outside worship protocols that were set in place back in October 2020. These protocols for outdoor worship can be found in the newsletter.

As we reflect on the one year anniversary of March 15, 2020 when Advent moved to Zoom worship, we hold in prayer all those who have experienced such great loss and suffering. Over 500,000 Americans have died from this pandemic and countless others suffer still with illness, grief and loss. Still there is much to be

thankful for even in the midst of such loss. We give God thanks and praise for all the healthcare and essential workers who have worked endlessly to protect us from COVID-19. We thank all of you for your openness to try new things while respecting the decision of Advent's leadership. We thank the leadership of Advent's Church Council and COVID-19 Task Force. You all have been so faithful to God's Church at Advent and we are so grateful for you!

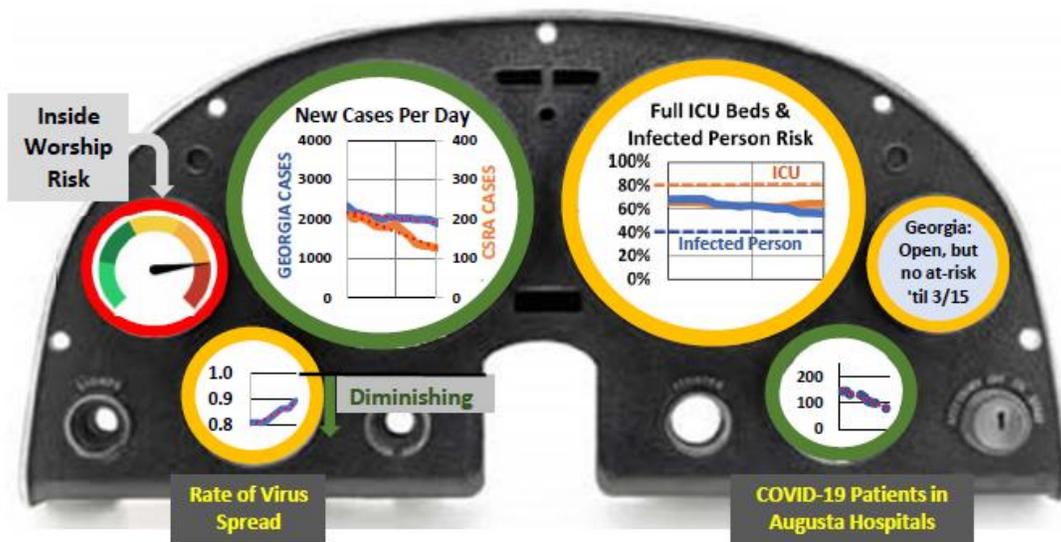
Revelation reminds us of the day where our tears will be wiped away and death will be no more. Through Jesus, we have hope in that future day with our Lord. As we begin to transition to more in person opportunities, we also get a glimpse of this joyous time here and now when we can be together once more. Thank you all for the love you have shown towards us personally and to one another throughout this pandemic! A new day is coming, just a little while longer.

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Andrea and Pastor Jason

**Advent COVID-19 Dashboard**  
**March 2, 2021**

Synod Holy Week Guidance:	Outdoor Gatherings	Limited Indoor Gatherings	Current Status
% Positivity	< 10%	< 5%	8%
Cases per 100,000	< 20	< 10	23
% Open ICU beds	< 80%	< 70%	65%





Our Lenten theme for this year delves into the rich and diverse aspects of our Lord's love for us shown most clearly in the life, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus. Each Sunday service focuses specifically on a meaningful descriptor of God's love and applies that description to the words and actions of our Lord who is God's love incarnate come down to save us. Each Wednesday is our Lenten Compline or end of the day prayer service. An Advent member who has received professional ministry training, discerning a call, or in the process of training will lead our time of devotion reflecting on how they experience God's love being shown. We thank Jared Fischer, Pam Tipler, Vicki Kohler, and Marcy Jimenez for sharing their ministry and life experiences with us.

#### **Lenten Schedule (Location)**

Wed. March 3	7pm Lenten Service (Zoom)
Sun. March 7	9:30am Worship (Zoom); Enriching Love
Wed. March 10	7pm Lenten Service (Zoom)
Sun. March 14	9:30am Worship (Advent Outside); Living Love
Wed. March 17	7pm Lenten Service (Zoom)
Sun. March 21	9:30am Worship (Advent Outside); Holy Love
Wed. March 24	7pm Lenten Service (Zoom);

#### **Holy Week Schedule (Location)**

Sun. March 28	9:30am Worship (Advent Outside); Palm Sunday: Saving Love
Thurs. April 1	7pm Worship (Zoom); Maundy Thursday: Selfless Love
Fri. April 2	7pm Worship (Zoom); Good Friday: Sacrificial Love
Sun. April 4	9:30am Worship (Advent Outside); Easter: Joyous Love

## **IN PERSON WORSHIP INSTRUCTIONS**

### **Step 1 Begins March 14**

- + Worship will be held Outside In-person. There will be no indoor in-person worship at this time.
  
- + Worship will also be available through Zoom at the same time as in person worship. For Zoom worship, the login information will remain the same. For the login details, check your weekly Advent email or email the church for the login information. The service will also be put on Advent's website and Facebook page.
  
- + In the event of inclement weather, outdoor worship will be cancelled, and we will hold worship through Zoom only. A Calling post and email will be sent out by 8:30am to inform everyone of the cancellation. If you have not been receiving the calling post or email, please email the church with your information so we can add you to the email/calling post list.

#### **Outside In-Person Worship Protocol**

When you arrive, you will set up your chair (or get an Advent chair which will be made available) and set it up in a social circle. After your household is set up in your circle, we ask that one person from each family come forward to the Communion table (with your mask on), while social distancing, and use the hand sanitizer. Once, your hands are sanitized, we invite you to take a prefilled communion cup (**Wine or Grape Juice**) for each family member and bulletin(s) and proceed back to your Social Circle. Please do not get communion or bulletins for someone outside your household. We are trying to keep the Altar area sanitized. Once everyone is back in their circles with the elements and bulletin(s), we will proceed with worship. We will give you more information during the service on how, and when to open your prefilled chalice. After worship is finished, please feel free to stay and fellowship with one another using the circles. Sunday school and Confirmation will begin at 11:15am via Zoom.



## Update From The Church Office

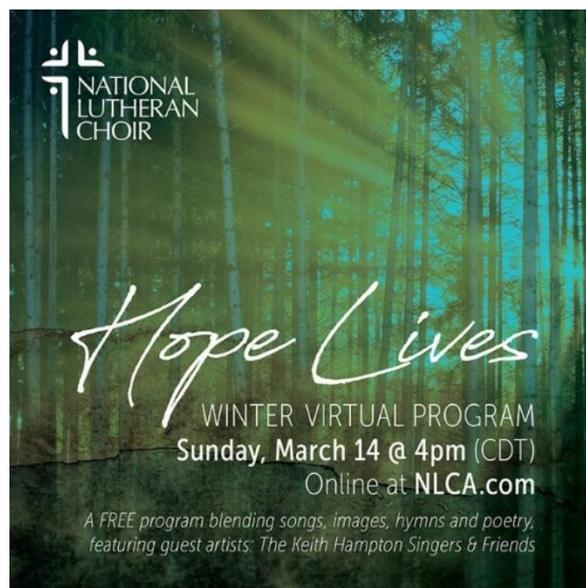
We are sad to announce that Tara Spray is no longer the secretary at Advent. We thank Tara for her three years as Advent's secretary and she will be missed dearly. We wish her the best on her future endeavors. During this time of interim, we will be evaluating the needs of the Church and Staff at Advent for the secretary position. During this time, the pastors will be taking care of the day-to-day secretarial duties. If you need anything office related, feel free to contact the pastors directly. Office hours will vary based on the pastors schedules, but if you need to access or drop something off at the church, please feel free to call, text or email them personally.

## SYNOD NEWS



**Diversity & Justice Training**  
Saturday, March 13  
10am-12Noon ET / 9-11am CT  
Register at [ELCA-SES.org](http://ELCA-SES.org)

**40-40-40**  
Lenten Hunger Appeal  
To benefit ELCA World Hunger  
February 17 - April 3, 2021  
**40 Days. 40 Miles. \$40**  
Sign up at [ELCA-SES.org](http://ELCA-SES.org) TODAY!  
#40forLent



**NATIONAL LUTHERAN CHOIR**

*Hope Lives*  
WINTER VIRTUAL PROGRAM  
Sunday, March 14 @ 4pm (CDT)  
Online at [NLCA.com](http://NLCA.com)  
A FREE program blending songs, images, hymns and poetry,  
featuring guest artists: The Keith Hampton Singers & Friends



**Saturday, March 13th at 9am**

(Just a reminder to wear a mask and practice social distancing.)

If you are able to come and work, we sure could use your help with Outside Projects which include:

Spreading Mulch in flower beds  
Weeding and Trimming  
Community Garden clean up  
Clean up special areas  
Make Social Circles

Spread Insect Control  
Power washing  
Paint touch up  
And more...

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME



BEGINS

**Sunday, March 14**

## March Calendar of Events

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Location</b>
3/2	10am	Bible Study	Zoom
3/3	12pm	COVID-19 Task Force	Zoom
	6:30pm	Lenten Fellowship	Zoom
	7pm	Lenten Worship	Zoom
3/4	6:30pm	Bible Study	Zoom
3/6	1pm	Youth Hiking Trip	Mistletoe State Park
3/7	9:30am	Worship	Zoom
	11am	Sunday School	Zoom
	11am	Confirmation	Google
3/9	6:30pm	Ministry Night	Zoom
3/10	6:30pm	Lenten Fellowship	Zoom
	7pm	Lenten Worship	Zoom
3/11	7:30pm	Social Justice Class	Zoom
3/13	9am	Outdoor Work Day	Advent
3/14	9:30am	Worship	Advent or Zoom
	11:15am	Sunday School	Zoom
	11:15am	Confirmation	Google
3/16	10am	Bible Study	Zoom
	6:30pm	Church Council	Zoom
3/17	6:30pm	Lenten Fellowship	Zoom
	7pm	Lenten Worship	Zoom
3/18	6:30pm	Bible Study	Zoom
3/21	9:30am	Worship	Advent or Zoom
	11:15am	Sunday School	Zoom
	11:15am	Confirmation	Google
3/24	6:30pm	Lenten Fellowship	Zoom
	7pm	Lenten Worship	Zoom
3/25	7:30pm	Social Justice Class	Zoom
3/28	9:30am	Worship	Advent or Zoom
	11:15am	Sunday School	Zoom
	11:15am	Confirmation	Google



3/1	Sean Sullivan	3/17	Gary & Patti Agenbroad
3/2	Ethan Fillgrove	3/23	Mike & Carol Smith
3/5	Elaine Easton	3/31	Bob & Ginnie Frabizio
3/5	Elaine Mertins		
3/7	Liza Fincher		
3/9	Thomas Koch		
3/11	Debbie Merzlake		
3/11	Mary Filpus-Luyckx		
3/12	Morgan Heavener		
3/13	Carole Hanes		
3/16	Bryan Tupper		
3/17	Michael Cartee		
3/18	Nick Reed		
3/22	Sarah Van Bladel		
3/24	Robin Keller		
3/25	Kenneth Burkman		
3/26	Kristen Teffeteller		
3/27	Violet Herrmann		
3/29	Benjamin Rivera		
3/31	Irene Trappe		
3/31	Logan McCarty		

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