

**Ember Days**

“The material in the Large Catechism originated as sermons by Martin Luther on the basic texts of Christian teaching. Already in the Middle Ages, some regional synods in Germany had called for regular preaching on the “catechism” (usually defined as the Ten Commandment, Apostles’ Creed, Lord’s Prayer and, sometimes, the Ave Maria). The Ember Days, four time of fasting spread throughout the church year {*The Wednesday, Friday and Saturday after 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Lent, Pentecost, Holy Cross Day(Sep 14), and St. Lucia’s Day(Dec 13)*}, were often designated for this purpose. Even before the Reformation, Wittenberg’s city church, St. Mary’s also seems to have followed this practice. Luther himself preached on various portions of the catechism as early as 1518” (*The Book of Concord*, Kolb, preface to Large Catechism, p.377)

“Thus, we have, in all, five parts covering the whole of Christian doctrine, which we should constantly teach and require young people to recite word for word. Do not assume that they will learn and retain this teaching from sermons alone. <sup>25</sup>When these parts have been well learned, you may assign them also some Psalms and some hymns, (*Luther himself wrote six hymns based on the parts of the Catechism.*) based on these subjects, to supplement and confirm their knowledge. Thus, our youth will be led into the Scriptures, so they make progress daily.

<sup>26</sup>However, it is not enough for them simply to learn and repeat these parts verbatim. The young people should also attend preaching, especially at the time designated for the Catechism, so that they may hear it explained and may learn the meaning of every part. Then they will also be able to repeat what they have heard and give a good, correct answer when they are questioned, and thus the preaching will not be without benefit and fruit. <sup>27</sup>The reason we take such care to preach on the Catechism frequently is to impress it upon our youth, not in a lofty and learned manner but briefly and very simply, so that it may penetrate deeply into their minds and remain fixed in their memories. (Preface of 1529, Large Catechism, (Tappert, T. G. 2000, c1959. *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*. Fortress Press: Philadelphia).

**O Antiphons**

Between December 17 and 23, the church begins to anticipate the coming of Christ’s Mass. In the daily Vespers service, the seasonal antiphons for the canticle the Magnificat is replaced with 7 different antiphons. These antiphons are all addressed to different names for our Lord and thus they all begin with the interjection, “O.” The hymn, “Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel” is based on these antiphons.

Although we will not use them as an antiphon,  
December 20.--O Key of David and scepter of the House of Israel,  
 you open and no one can close, you close and no one can / open:  
 Come and rescue the prisoners who are in darkness and the shadow of death. (*Isaiah 22:22, Rev 3:7, Luke 1:79*)

December 22.--O King of nations, the ruler they long for, the  
 cornerstone uniting all / people;\*  
 Come and save us all, whom you formed / out of clay.(*Acts 17:26*)

**Catechism Schedule**

- Advent 2022 – Confession/Office of the Keys
- Lenten 2023 – Lord’s Supper
- Pentecost 2023 – Daily Prayers
- September 2023 – Table of Duties
- Advent 2023 – Christian Questions with their Answers
- Lenten 2024 – Ten Commandments
- Pentecost 2024– Apostles’ Creed
- September 2024 – Lord’s Prayer
- Advent 2024– Holy Baptism

The Order of Matins, p. 208

+ <b>Hymn</b>	<b>#262</b>
+ “O Lord, open my lips...	p.208f
+ <u>Ascription of Praise for Advent</u>	p.209
“Praise to you, O Christ, King who comes to save us.”	
+ <u>Advent Invitatory</u>	p.209
P. “Behold, the Lord comes to save us.”	
C. Oh, come, let us worship him.	
+ <u>The Venite</u>	p.209f
“Oh, come, let us sing...”	
+ <b>ASBH #3 “The Only Son from Heaven”</b>	
<u>Psalmody</u>	
Psalm 132	(printed)
Psalm 98	(printed)
<u>Reading</u>	
Wed – Isaiah 2:2-5, St. Luke 1:26-38	
Fri – Isaiah 11:1-5, St. Luke 1:39-47	
Sat – 2 Thess. 2:1-8, St. Luke 3:1-6	
Common Responsory	p.211
“Forever, O Lord, your Word...”	
<u>Catechism Reading</u>	
Wed – Confession, Q. 1 and 2 (p.304)	
Fri – Confession, Q. 3 (p.304)	
Office of the Keys, Q. 1 (p.305)	
Sat – Office of the Keys, Q. 2& 3 (p. 305)	
Sermon	
Offering	
+ Benedictus.....	p.217-219
“Blessed be the Lord God...”	
+ The Prayers.....	p.219
Kyrie (“Lord, have mercy...”)	
Lord’s Prayer	
Salutation	
Collect of the Day	(inside)
Special Prayers	
Collect for Grace	
+ Benedicamus/Benediction	p.222-223

### Luther's House Postil, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent, Volume 1, p. 42-43

The first, that we should hear the word of Christ diligently, is indicated by this that John, when he was already in prison, as soon as he heard of the wonderful works of Christ, sent his disciples to Him with the command that they should ask Him: "Whether He were the one that should come," concerning whom Moses and all the other prophets had written so much, and concerning whom there should be so much preached in the New Testament? That is, whether He were the promised Christ, concerning whom it was written that the Jews' kingdom and Moses' doctrine should continue until His coming, after which Moses' doctrine and worship should cease, and a new doctrine and worship be established, not only among the Jews, but also among the heathens in the whole world, as this had been clearly and unequivocally prophesied. Therefore, since soon after John's imprisonment it had commenced, and the Lord Jesus Himself had begun to preach concerning eternal life and the kingdom of God, John now wishes to direct his disciples to the Lord Himself; sends them therefore to Christ, that with their eyes they might see the miracles, and with their ears hear that doctrine proclaimed, concerning which the prophets had so long foretold that Christ would thus bring them upon earth and reveal Himself. Therefore this sending is nothing else than as if John would say: It is true I myself know that He is the very Christ, as I have hitherto preached concerning Him, but the people do not believe it yet, and since I am now in prison, and must quit preaching, they would no more regard my testimony concerning Him. Therefore that you may be assured of this, and my preaching be not in vain in you, go to Him yourselves now, and hear it from His own lips, in order that henceforth you may separate yourselves from me and all Jewry, and cling alone to this Man, upon whom depends everything pertaining to your and the whole world's salvation. This is the final purpose of this message of John to Christ, that his disciples should themselves see and hear Him, learn to know Him, and thus believe in Him and be saved.

Well, what does Christ say to this message? He says neither Yes nor No, when they ask Him whether He were the one, but refers them to the public testimony of His works and says: Here you see, hear and comprehend that I am He; for just as Isaiah and other prophets have foretold that Christ should heal the lame, give the blind their sight, etc., thus you see it now before your eyes, and need no further instruction nor answer, if you will but rightly receive this. This is now a precious, beautiful sermon concerning Christ, embracing everything which can be preached concerning Him, what kind of a King He is and what kind of a kingdom He has; namely, a kingdom to which the blind, lame, leprous, deaf, dead people and especially poor sinners, and all who are wretched, needy and nothing, belong, and in which they find comfort and help.

## Ember Days in Advent, 2023



Historic Peace Lutheran Church in Friedenberg, Missouri (aka Hill of Peace Church, just outside of Perryville, MO) was built in 1885. Our congregation participated in a Christmas Country Church Tour on December 14, 2023.

## Trinity Lutheran Church & Early Childhood Learning Center

1000 North Park Avenue, Herrin, IL 62948  
Church 942-3401, Learning Center 942-4750

[www.trinityh.org](http://www.trinityh.org)

**Pastor Michael D. Henson · Deacon Gary K. Harroun**  
*Pr. Henson and Dcn. Harroun are members of the  
Evangelical Lutheran Diocese of North America ([Eldona.org](http://Eldona.org))*