APOSTLES LUTHERAII CHURCH

THE REVEREND JAY SERAFIN

7092 Main Street, Gloucester, VA 23061 (804) 693-9098 | apostles-elca.org | facebook.com/ApostlesELCA



FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2025 | 10:00 AM

Our Mission is to be a Caring Inclusive Christian Community responding to God's grace through Worship, Service, and Sharing the Gospel.





WELCOME TO APOSTLES LUTHERAN CHURCH!

It is an honor to worship God with you this morning. We pray you experience the Spirit's loving presence as we share our words, our actions, and the Holy Meal.

If this is your first time worshipping with us, please fill out a card in the pew rack with your contact info. A restroom can be found by exiting the rear door of the worship space. It is directly in front of you to the right. Additional restrooms can be found in the back corner of the fellowship area, near the Pastor's office.

RECONCILING in CHRIST

We, the people of Apostles Lutheran Church, follow Paul's message to the Galatians (3:28): "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." Believing that because we are all one in Christ, and created in God's image, all are welcome as beloved children of God. We welcome into the full life of the church all those whom God sends us. **Rejoicing in God's amazing diversity, we welcome people of all ages, races, gender identities and expressions, sexual orientations, and physical and mental abilities.** Centered in Christ, we commit ourselves to racial equity, breaking down dividing walls and building a community where all are beloved.

FOR PASTORAL CARE

The Reverend Jay Serafin is our pastor. Pastor Jay's **schedule is noted in the calendar on the back of this bulletin.** Call Pastor Jay at 570-205-7506 or email him at <u>j80j84@msn.com</u> (preferred) or <u>pastor.apostles@gmail.com</u>. Messages can also be left on the Apostles answering machine 804-693-9098.

PRAYGROUND

Welcome to our youngest members! The area in the front of our sanctuary is for families and young children. There are quiet toys, books and drawing materials. We ask two things:

1) sit in the front pews near your children and 2) please sit with your children in the pews during the sermon. They may return immediately after. Thank you and welcome!

NAME TAGS

Please wear your nametag! Guests: please fill out and put on a name tag before worship today. Blank nametags are in the baskets located in the pews.

GATHERING

The new church year begins with a wake-up call: Christ is coming soon! In today's readings both Paul and Jesus challenge us to wake from sleep, for we know neither the day nor hour of the Lord's coming. Isaiah proclaims the day when God will gather all people on the holy mountain and there will be no more war or suffering. Though we vigilantly watch for the promised day of salvation, we wait for what we already have: Christ comes among us this day as the word and meal that strengthens our faith in the promises of God.

PRELUDE AND SILENT PRAYER

Martin Luther said of music: "Next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world." Please take a moment to **silence all cell phones.**

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please rise in body or in spirit. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, whose home is heaven and earth, whose salvation is sure.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Long-expected God,

we confess that we look to ourselves for the peace and security only you can provide. We reach for swords and spears, reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war. We become impatient while waiting and weary of keeping awake.

Free us from self-reliance, and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors. Increase our trust in God's timing, and awaken us to your advent among us, that we may abound in the hope you have promised.

God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God's own righteousness.

 → You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN ELW #260

"The King Shall Come"



- The King shall come when morn-ing dawns and light tri um-phant breaks,
- 2 Not as of old a lit-tle child, to bear and fight and die,
- 3 Oh, bright er than the ris ing morn when Christ, vic to rious, rose
- 4 Oh, bright er than that glo rious morn shall dawn up on our race 5 The King shall come when morn-ing dawns and light and beau - ty bring



when beau - ty gilds the east - ern hills and life to joy a - wakes but crowned with glo - ry like the sun that lights the morn-ing sky. and left the lone-some place of death, de - spite the rage of foes. the day when Christ in splen-dor comes, and we shall see his face. Hail, Christ the Lord! Your peo - ple pray: come quick-ly, King of kings.

Text: John Brownlie, 1859-1925

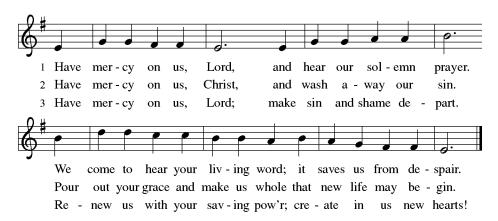
Music: CONSOLATION, A. Davisson, Kentucky Harmony, 1816

APOSTOLIC GREETING

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

And also with you.

KYRIE



PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection save us from the threatening dangers of our sins, and enlighten our walk in the way of your salvation, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

ADVENT DEVOTION & LIGHTING OF THE WREATH

ELW #240

"Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah", Verse 1



Thank you to Heinz and Irene Albert for lighting the wreath today!

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

Sit

FIRST READING ISAIAH 2:1-5

The visionary message presented in this reading focuses on a future day when God establishes a universal reign of peace. Divine decisions will make war obsolete, and the worshiping community responds: "Let us walk in the light of that Lord now!"

¹ The word that Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

² In days to come the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established as the highest of the mountains and shall be raised above the hills: all the nations shall stream to it. ³ Many peoples shall come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." For out of Zion shall go forth instruction and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ⁴ He shall judge between the nations and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more. ⁵ O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the LORD!

Response after the First Reading The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 122

¹ I was glad when they ^I said to me, "Let us go to the house ^I of the LORD."

- Now our | feet are standing within your gates, | O Jerusalem.
- ³ Jerusalem is built ¹ as a city that is at unity ¹ with itself;
- ⁴ to which the tribes go up, the tribes | of the LORD, the assembly of Israel, to praise the name | of the LORD. R
- ⁵ For there are the ¹ thrones of judgment, the thrones of the ¹ house of David.
- ⁶ Pray for the peace | of Jerusalem: "May they pros- | per who love you.
- ⁷ Peace be with- [|] in your walls and quietness with- [|] in your towers.
- 8 For the sake of my kindred | and companions, I pray for | your prosperity.
- ⁹ Because of the house of the ¹ LORD our God, I will seek to ¹ do you good." **R**

ROMANS 13:11-14

Paul compares the advent of Christ to the coming of dawn. We live our lives today in light of Christ's coming in the future.

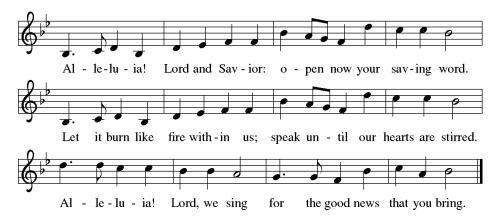
¹¹ Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is already the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; ¹² the night is far gone; the day is near. Let us then throw off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; ¹³ let us walk decently as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in illicit sex and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴ Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Response after the Second Reading
The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Please rise in body or in spirit.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



The gospel is announced.

The Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew, the 24th Chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL

MATTHEW 24:36-44

Jesus describes his second coming as a sudden, turbulent event that will bring about deep change to our normal, day-to-day lives. Therefore, he urges people to stay awake, be aware, and wait expectantly, because the Son of Man will come unannounced.

[Jesus said to the disciples,] ³⁶ "About that day and hour no one knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. ³⁷ For as the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. ³⁸ For as in the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and they knew nothing until the flood came and swept them all away, so, too, will be the coming of the Son of Man. ⁴⁰ Then two will be in the field; one will be taken, and one will be left. ⁴¹ Two women will be grinding meal together; one will be taken, and one will be left. ⁴² Keep awake, therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. ⁴³ But understand this: if the owner of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into. ⁴⁴ Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

The gospel concludes:

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

SERMON

PASTOR JAY SERAFIN

Silence is kept after the reflection.

HYMN OF THE DAY

ELW #436

"Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying"



NICENE CREED

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

We believe in one God,

the Father, the Almighty,

maker of heaven and earth,

of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

the only Son of God,

eternally begotten of the Father,

God from God, Light from Light,

true God from true God.

begotten, not made,

of one Being with the Father;

through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation

he came down from heaven,

was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary

and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate:

he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again

in accordance with the scriptures;

he ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,

and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,

who proceeds from the Father and the Son,*

who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,

and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

Each portion of the prayers ends with these words: God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

We share a sign of Peace with our neighbors saying **Peace be with you** to which we respond **And also with you**. Please know that it is fine if you do not want to shake hands but would rather just share a sign of peace.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

Sit

OFFERING

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need. To give online:

- + Visit <u>apostles-elca.org/contributions</u>
- \pm From your mobile phone, text the word GIVE to 844-215-5453

OFFERTORY HYMN ELW #184



Text and music © 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

Please rise in body or in spirit

OFFERING PRAYER

Music: Ronald A. Nelson, b. 1927

Let us pray. Nourishing God, you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Through this meal, satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come.

Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

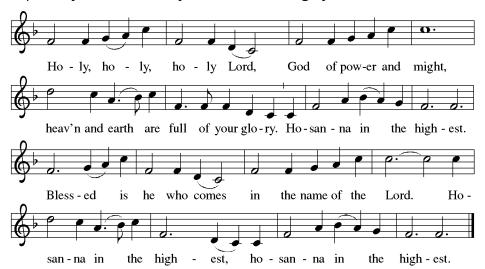
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The thanksgiving continues with the preface.

... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



The great thanksgiving continues.

... Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

The great thanksgiving continues.

... We look with hope for his coming.

Come, Lord Jesus.

The great thanksgiving continues.

... Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

The great thanksgiving concludes.

... All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

Here is life. God is with us. Come, receive what God has promised.

Sit

COMMUNION

All are invited to join us at the Lord's table to receive the presence of Jesus through the bread and wine. Jesus himself invites you and Jesus turns no one away.

You will be invited to come forward either to receive the elements or to receive a blessing. For those receiving the elements, after receiving the bread, please take a glass from the tray held by the acolyte. There are pre-filled glasses of grape juice in the tray for those who do not drink wine. Gluten free wafers are also available upon request.

LAMB OF GOD



HYMN DURING COMMUNION

ELW #438

"My Lord, What a Morning"

fall.



hand, when the stars be-gin to

Text: African American spiritual Music: BURLEIGH, African American spiritual

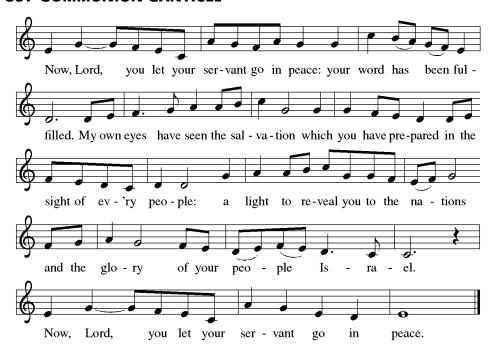
look-ing to my God's right

After all have returned to their places, all rise in body or in spirit.

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen.

POST-COMMUNION CANTICLE



PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray. God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness. Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger, and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission back into the world.

BLESSING

May God who comes among us, Father,

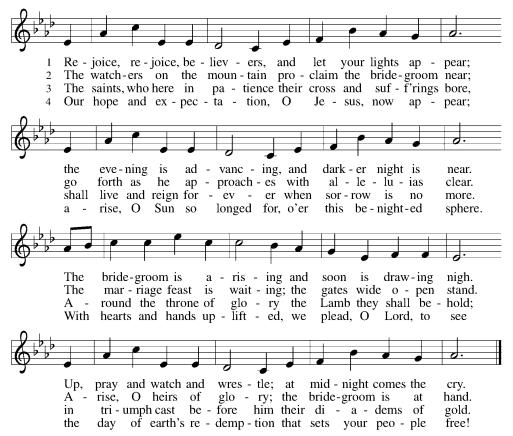
→ Son, and Holy Spirit, grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness, and good news to share today and always.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN

ELW #244

"Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers"



Text: Laurentius Laurenti, 1660–1722; tr. Sarah B. Findlater, 1823–1907 Music: HAF TRONES LAMPA FÄRDIG, Swedish folk tune

18

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Keep awake.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

WORSHIP LEADERS

	Serving Today	Serving Next Week
Worship Leader/Preacher	Pastor Jay Serafin	Pastor Jay Serafin
Lay Assisting Minister	Pete Liljeberg	Irene Albert
Lector	Chase Ambrose	Doug Dalager
Acolyte	Chase Ambrose	Ray Scholz
Accompanist	Janet Gomez	Janet Gomez
Altar Care	Judy Wright	The Alberts
Communion Bread	Donna Ambrose	The Alberts
Greeter/Usher	Judy Wright	Heinz Albert
Technology	Doug Dalager	Chris Hawkins

SERVANTS FOR THE WEEK

	Serving This Week	Serving Next Week
Cleaning Team	Liljebergs	The Alberts
Tellers	Betsy Liljeberg/Ben Grimes	Barbara Runk/Ben Grimes
Fellowship Set Up	Jennie Hawkins	Ray Scholz
Fellowship Food	Scholzs	The Alberts
Fellowship Clean Up	Scholzs	The Alberts

READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY

First Reading: Isaiah 11:1-10

From David's line, a ruler bringing justice and peace

Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

May the righteous flourish let there be an abundance of peace

Second Reading: Romans 15:4-13 *Live in harmony, welcoming one another*

Gospel: Matthew 3:1-12

A voice cries:

Prepare the way of the Lord

TURN ON, TUNE IN, WAKE UP!

In the 1960's people were urged to turn on, tune in, and drop out—to leave the material world behind in favor of an alternate reality. In today's gospel, Jesus also urges us to tune into an alternative to the material world, one he called the coming of the Son of Man. In Jesus' person, the dominion of God comes into the world, and the risen Christ continues to give us abundant signs of its presence. Jesus commands his followers not to drop out of the world, but to be on the lookout for him in it.

Christians await the second coming of Christ, the *parousia*, when we believe we will experience God's reign in its fullness. In the meantime, we live, in the words of some theologians, "already, but not yet." We look for glimpses of the dominion in the here and now. The season of Advent, and today's readings, are designed to help turn us on to the excitement and anticipation of God's reign in our lives and tune in to the infinite opportunities we have to participate in it. In other words, they want to wake us up!

St. Paul exhorts us in today's second reading to lead lives of faithful obedience until the final day. He also challenges us to participate in God's dominion in the here and now, calling us to wake from sleep, to "put on Christ." Eyes wide open and wrapped in Christ, we are called to a new day. Isaiah describes his own vision: gathered by God, learning and teaching God's ways, walking in God's paths, beating swords into ploughshares and spears to pruning hooks. Wide-awake, active, and ready for encounters with Jesus, we may find God's dominion when and where we least expect it.

COMMEMORATIONS

"The saints are to be remembered so that we may strengthen our faith when we see how they experienced grace and how they were helped by faith."

- On November 30th, we remember **Andrew**, the first of the disciples to be called by Jesus, Andrew quickly began to bring others to the Savior, including Simon Peter. The Bible also shows him leading some Greeks to meet Jesus, and he brought forward the boy with five loaves and two fish, with which Jesus fed thousands.
- On December 3rd, we remember Francis Xavier, a missionary to Asia who died in 1552
 - A native of the Basque region of Spain, Xavier became a missionary to India, Southeast Asia, Japan, and the Philippines. He also helped to found the Society of Jesus (Jesuits).
- On December 4th, we remember **John of Damascus**, a theologian and hymnwriter who died around 749. A monk in an abbey near Jerusalem, John wrote many hymns as well as theological works. One of his works, The Fount of Wisdom, remained influential for centuries.
- On December 6th, we remember **Nicholas**, Bishop of Myra, who died around 342. Little is known about Nicholas, except that he was a bishop in present-day Turkey. According to legend, he was famous for his giving to the poor, and so has become a symbol of anonymous gift-giving.
- On December 7th, we remember **Ambrose**, Bishop of Milan who died in 397. While a governor of northern Italy, Ambrose was elected bishop of Milan on the same day he was baptized. He was a famous preacher, a writer of hymns we still sing today, and helped lead St. Augustine to faith.

BLANKETS FOR GUEST

Thanks to a Thrivent Action Grant, we have been able to purchase material to make fleece blanks for the clients of GUEST (Gloucester United Emergency Sheltering Team). We will be making the blankets during fellowship this morning – we would love for you to help us!! Thanks to Linda Hodges for putting this together!

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday school will NOT be held during December – it will resume in January.

ADVENT HUNGER STUDY

Betsy Liljeberg will be leading an Advent Hunger Study starting next Sunday after worship - the ELCA Advent Hunger study 2025 is a three-session guide titled **A Stable Lamp Is Lighted** that accompanies the short documentary **Intersections: Justice Ministry With ELCA Partners**. The study focuses on exploring the root causes of hunger and poverty. Please join us!!

CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE AT THE SERAFIN'S

Pastor Jay and Jamie will have their annual Christmas open house on Saturday, December 13th from 3:00 PM – 6:00 PM. Please sign up to attend on the sheet in the narthex. Thanks!

POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS

Poinsettias this year will be \$15 – there is a sign up sheet in the narthex to give one in memory or in honor of someone – deadline to order is Sunday, December 14th.

APOSTLES LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Today we gather on the original and ancestral homelands of the Pamunkey, Mattaponi, Chickahominy, Rappahannock, and Nansemond peoples and we give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor all our indigenous siblings who have and continue to call this land their home.

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS

Rich Bitting, Manning Freeman, Don Garfield, Ellen Kendzierski, Doug Leip, Ellen Quirk, Michael Schlemmer, Keith & Juanita Sturdy, George Thomas, Jewel
Thomas, Lena Woodlief, and Nancy Wagner

OUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Patricia Armentor, Paul Bauer, Karen Bell (Pam Moore's sister), Bob & Dixie, Calli Bonfey, Patricia Boyd & Brad Zelmer, Amanda Brown, David Brown, Dennis & Dorothy Brown, Sally Burkholder, Amy Carter, Kate Casper, Laura Clodfelter, Jackie Collier, Ben Davis (friend of Donna Ambrose), Tommy & Kathie Davis, Jenny DeSha, Al DeWitt, Linda Edwards, Colton Elliot (Michael Schlemmer's cousin), Laura Fleige (Janet Gomez's sister), Teresa Floersheim-Miller (Ingrid Peterson's mother), Suzanne and Frank Gibson, Steven Godwin (Juanita Sturdy's grandson), Jimmy & Fay Gray (Chris Hawkins' family), Karen Guire, Mike Hall, Melvin Hawkins (Chris Hawkins' father), Chaneice Hayden (Daniel Hayden), Rosie Heins, Carl & Kaleb Hess, Aris Hibbs (friend of Ray Scholz), the family of Spencer Hodges, Ray Hughes, Wendy Isernia (Heinz and Irene's daughter), Suzanne Kinkade (friend of Ellen Quirk), Legend, the Little Family, Marion Lucier, Manuel, Lotte Mathias, Wayne Mathews, Wayne McCormick, Michael, Sylvia Midgette (Krystle McMahan's grandmother), Debbie Minteins, Keith Morgan, Gary Mowery, Jamie Mullaney, Carol Pascale (Lynn Jaeger's mother), Chastity Perkins (co-worker and friend of Donna Ambrose), Brad Person (Lilly Frost's uncle), Dick Peterson & his brother, the Prusa Family, Joan Ritter, Glen Robertson, Pastor Wendy Roundy, Carol Schlemmer, Daniel Schmidt, James Schollian (friend of Nancy Wagner), Michael Scholz (Ray Scholz's nephew), Joseph Serafin (Pastor Jay's father), Kathy Shackleford, Elana Sierson, Fred Smith, Tammy Smith, Jean Sterling, Dave Wagner (Nancy's husband), Wayne McCormick, Chuck Webb (Tina Britt's father), Makenzie Webb (Tina Britt's niece), Elizabeth & Steven White, Vicki Williams, Cory Woodlief, Jim Wright (Judy Wright's husband), Logan & Shannon Wymer, Greg Yvonovich (friend of Margaret & Ben Grimes), **Derek Zwiers** (friend of CK Ambrose)

OUR SPONSORED CHILDREN IN GUATEMALA Amayra, Hugolino, Manuela, and Pablo

PRAYER REQUESTS

There is a book located at the rear of the worship space for you to write any prayer requests you have for today. Fill out a "Prayer Request" (on the back of each pew) and place it in the offering plate to add a prayer request to the "Prayer List" included in the bulletin and the newsletter. **Please print legibly!**

THIS WEEK AT APOSTLES

November 30, 2025 - December 7, 2025

TODAY	10:00 AM	Worship Service
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11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship/Making Blankets

MONDAY 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM Pastor Jay in the Office

7:00 PM Service and Sharing Ministry Team

7:00 PM AA

TUESDAY 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM Pastor Jay in the Office

7:00 PM Al-Anon/AA

WEDNESDAY 7:00 PM Choir Practice

FRIDAY Girl Scouts

SATURDAY 6:30 PM Young and Sober

SUNDAY 10:00 AM Worship Service

11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship/Advent Study

HAPPY BIRTHDAY To ...

Daniel Gomez – December 2nd | **Taylor Badger** – December 5th

HAPPY BAPTISMAL ANNIVERSARY To ...

Emmaleigh Hautz – November 30th | **CK and Chase Ambrose** – December 1st

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY To ...

Ray and Lynn Scholz - December 2nd

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