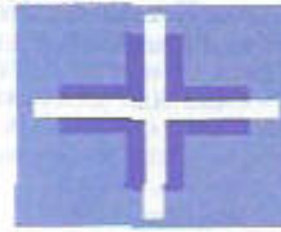


DEUTSCHER GOTTESDIENST

German Worship Service
First Sunday of Every Month at 2:00 PM
CENTRAL ST. MATTHEW UCC
1333 S. CARROLLTON AVENUE
NEW ORLEANS, LA 70118
Gemeindebüro: 1801 Metairie Road,
Metairie, LA 70005
November 23, 2022



I was requested to communicate to the membership of Gottesdienst some words about the beginning of Advent and Christmas. Advent begins the church year because the church year begins where Jesus' earthly life began — in the Old Testament prophecies of his incarnation. Since we do not meet every Sunday, our first Advent Service is in fact, the Second Sunday in Advent, December 4 at the usual time of 1400. After Advent comes Christmas, which is about his birth; (we do not have services on Christmas Day, but we will have a Christmas Eve Service on December 24 at 1530) then Epiphany, about his miracles and ministry; then Lent, about his Calvary-bound mission; then Easter, about his resurrection and the sending of the apostles; and then Ascension (40 days after Easter) and Pentecost, with the sending of the Holy Spirit.

The first half of the church year (approximately December through June) highlights the life of Christ. The second half (approximately June through November) highlights the teachings of Christ. The parables and miracles play a big part here. That's "the church year in a nutshell," and it should help reveal how Advent fits into "the big picture."

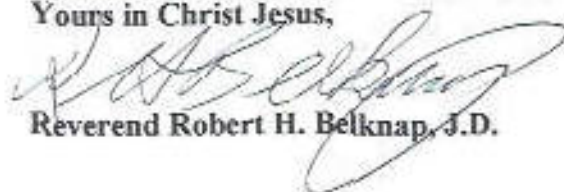
Advent specifically focuses on Christ's "coming," but Christ's coming manifests itself among us in three ways — past, present, and future. We all know that Christ is already born, yet is He truly in our hearts and in our lives? Have we prepared ourselves to celebrate the enormous gift the Father has given us by making His Word incarnate to live and dwell among us?

The readings which highlight Christ's coming in the past focus on the Old Testament prophecies of his incarnation at Bethlehem. The readings, which highlight Christ's coming in the future, focus on his "second coming" on the Last Day at the end of time. And the readings that highlight Christ's coming in the present focus on his ministry among us through Word and Sacrament today.

I have not met many of you and hope that this letter will alert you of our upcoming services, I truly hope to see and meet every one of you. Usually after each Sunday Service we will meet upstairs for coffee and some deserts, please come and join us.

God's richest blessings to you and have a most joyous Christmas.

Yours in Christ Jesus,


Reverend Robert H. Belknap, J.D.