



REDEEMER

WINTER HAVEN

To all who are weary and desire rest, to all who mourn and long for comfort, to all who sin and need a Savior, Redeemer opens wide her doors with a welcome from King Jesus the mighty Friend of sinners, the Ally of his enemies, the Defender of the indefensible.



November 30, 2025 – The First Sunday of Advent

Season of the Cross: Purple for Advent

The season of Advent, a season of waiting, is designed to cultivate our awareness of God's actions—past, present, and future. In Advent, we hear the prophecies of the Messiah's coming as addressed to us—people who wait for the second coming. In Advent, we heighten our anticipation for the ultimate fulfillment of all Old Testament promises, when the wolf will lie down with the lamb, death will be swallowed up, and every tear will be wiped away. In this way Advent highlights for us the larger story of God's redemptive plan.

Advent Introduction

Every year, for the four Sundays leading up to Christmas, we observe the season of Advent. The word Advent means "a coming or an arrival." It is a time for both honesty, and also hope. Honesty, because the world is broken. Hope, because the world is being redeemed. During Advent, we acknowledge the desolation that is an inevitable part of life in a sin-weary world, while, at the same time, turning our hearts, in joyful expectation, towards the consolation of Jesus' kingdom come! The truth is, the coming kingdom has already come. In the baby born in Bethlehem. Jesus Christ. Immanuel. God with us. Each Sunday during Advent, we will emphasize a different theme as we celebrate the heart of God to be relationally present with his people. He has come, in Jesus, to be with us in this mess of our own making. Jesus will soon come again, so that we might dwell with him, forever, in the world that he is remaking. In all the time in between, we wait, sustained by the life-changing truth of the Incarnation. Jesus is God running to us!

Song of Ascent

The first song we sing together guides us as we "go up" or approach the presence of God to worship Him. This song is meant to rouse us to worship and awaken our hearts.

Come Behold The Wondrous Mystery

Advent Theme: Love

While the law cannot justify us or make us righteous; it is a teacher given to lead us to Christ, the fulfiller of the law.

Our Advent theme this week is **love**. The Story of the world begins with love. Eternal love. Between the Persons of the Godhead. Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Spilling over into the making of all things. Humanity, most of all. We were made by love and for love. To be naked and known, by our Maker, and by one another. Sin is the sad betrayal of this love. It has left us wandering and restless. Hiding and posturing. Alone. We have walked from God. But He refuses to walk away from us. In fact, He has come running after us. Like a shepherd, chasing after his lost sheep, He ran. Leaving the ninety-nine for the one. You and Me. The Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ, Immanuel, has come for us. To rescue us. And bring us home. In that new world, we will see Him face-to-face again. We will walk with Him, side-by-side, again. We will be loved, and we will love, as it was in the beginning.

Advent Reading: Ezekiel 34:11-16

We read God's Word, the Bible, together. It reminds us of who God is and what He expects from us.

11 "For thus says the Lord God: Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out. 12 As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. 13 And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land. And I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the ravines, and in all the inhabited places of the country. 14 I will feed them with good pasture, and on the mountain heights of Israel shall be their grazing land...

...There they shall lie down in good grazing land, and on rich pasture they shall feed on the mountains of Israel. 15 I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord God. 16 I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them in justice.

Prayer of Adoration and Confession

We pray together, praising God for who He really is (Adoration) and admitting our inability to live up to what He expects of us (Confession).

Song of Advent

In this song of advent we acknowledge our need of a Savior and anticipate His return.

O Come O Come Emmanuel

Assurance of Pardon: John 10:14-18

We read God's Word together and are reminded that grace and mercy are freely given to all who have faith in Jesus Christ.

14 I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, 15 just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. 16 And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. 17 For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. 18 No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father."

Greeting

In Jesus, we have not only been reconciled to God, we have also been reconciled to one another. Therefore, we greet one another as brothers and sisters.

Songs of Praise and Celebration

Our response to God's free grace is celebratory worship. We express our praise to God for who He is and what He has done to save us.

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing
Living Hope

Worship Through Giving: Give Online at redeemerwh.org/give

We respond to the good news of God's mercy and grace for us in Jesus by giving generously to the work of this church and the kingdom of God.

Kids' Worship Dismissal

Children **through fifth grade** are dismissed for kids' worship.

Prayer of Thanksgiving & Intercession

We again express in prayer our gratitude to God for what he has done and ask him to continue to act for our good and the good of others in our community and the world.

Proclamation of God's Word

A small portion of God's Word is explained to us and applied to our own lives.

Luke 15:1-24

Confession of Faith: Nicene Creed

As an expression of our faith in Jesus Christ in solidarity with his people, we declare the substance of what we believe.

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker 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; by the power of the Holy Spirit He became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. 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, with the Father and the Son He is worshiped and glorified. He 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 forward to the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Sacrament of Communion

The ritual meal of Communion is a sign and seal of the grace we have in Jesus. That is, it symbolizes the work Christ did for our salvation (sign) and communicates the grace and mercy we have been given (seal) as a result of His death and resurrection..

Mary's Song (Our King of Peace)

Song of Response & Sending

We respond to the good news of God's mercy and grace by singing again of His goodness and greatness.

Love of God

Benediction

Because the hand of God's wrath was raised against Jesus, we now receive the hand of God's blessing as we are sent out to live our lives to the glory of God.

May the LORD bless you and keep you;
May the LORD make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;
May the LORD turn His face toward you and give you His peace,
Both now and forevermore. Amen.

Proclamation of God's Word

A small portion of God's Word is explained to us and applied to our own lives.

1 Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. 2 And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them." 3 So he told them this parable: 4 "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? 5 And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. 6 And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' 7 Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

8 "Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek diligently until she finds it? 9 And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.' 10 Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

11 And he said, "There was a man who had two sons. 12 And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.' And he divided his property between them. 13 Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living. 14 And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. 16 And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything.

17 "But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! 18 I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants."' 20 And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. 21 And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' 22 But the father said to his servants, 'Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. 23 And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. 24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to celebrate.

Pg. 874 (Luke 15:1-24)

Resources

Kenneth Bailey, *The Cross and the Prodigal*

Tim Keller, *The Prodigal God*

Henri Nouwen, *The Return of the Prodigal Son*

James K.A. Smith, *On the Road*

Sermon Series: Advent: God Running to Us

Sermon Title: God's Heart for the Lost

Date: November 30, 2025

Hook: *Have you ever lost something precious to you? How did you respond?*

I. THE SHEEP

"There is something almost terrifying about the destructive self-determination of a human being. We insist we know what's best for us even though the disastrous results may be self-evident." - Philip Keller

II. THE SEARCH

"We find rest because we are found; we make it home because someone comes to get us." - James K.A. Smith

III. THE SHEPHERD

"The shepherd is the sheep's providence." - Charles Spurgeon

Takeaway: *Run towards sinners!*

ADVENT RESOURCES

Advent Activities

redeemerwh.org/advent-kids

Advent Hymns & Songs

Spotify: redeemerwh.org/advent-hymns-spotify

Apple Music: redeemerwh.org/advent-hymns-apple

Behold the Lamb of God (Andrew Peterson)

Spotify: redeemerwh.org/btlog-spotify

Apple Music: redeemerwh.org/btlog-apple

Available in the foyer



Announcements

Christmas Party: Our Christmas Party is **Sunday, December 7 at 5pm** at the Packing House (302 3rd St SW). We'll have heavy hors d'oeuvres and a coffee cart serving hot & cold (regular & decaf) drinks. This event is for adults only.

Christmas Eve: Make plans to join us **Wednesday, December 24**, for Christmas Eve. We'll have identical candlelight services at **4 & 5:30pm**. Childcare will be provided for children up to three years old.

One Service: Beginning on **Sunday, December 28**, we will transition back into one service at 10am.

Congregational Meeting: The session has called a congregational meeting to be held on **Sunday, January 4**, immediately following the morning worship service for the purpose of electing elders and deacons.

Women's Retreat: Ladies, registration is now open for our Redeemer Women's Retreat **January 30-Feb 1, 2026**. Join us at The Grove Resort in Orlando as we practice and experience Deeper Rest in Christ Alone. To register and to see more details including speakers, cost, schedule, and rooming choices, please visit redeemerwh.org/womensretreat. *Please note that prices increase on December 2.*

Get Connected: The best way to stay up-to-date with what's happening at Redeemer is through our online newsletter (redeemerwh.org/newsletter) and our mobile app (redeemerwh.org/app).

Worship Playlists: Follow our weekly set list on Spotify and Apple Music so that you can become familiar with the songs that we'll be singing on Sundays. You can find the playlist on the "RedeemerWH" app (above) or at: (redeemerwh.org/worship).

Our Mission

Our mission is to make Jesus' invisible kingdom visible in Winter Haven, Polk County, and the world.

Church Planting

One of the ways we hope to accomplish our mission is by planting new churches throughout Polk County. We proudly partner with Renew Polk (renewpolk.org) and the Florida Church Planting Network (flchurchplanting.org).

Community Groups

We also meet during the week in homes for what we call Community Groups. They are intended to be the primary "church" experience for all who are a part of Redeemer. If you are interested in visiting a community group, contact Ashley Bennett, ashmbennett1013@gmail.com.

MISSION
FUND

2025 GOAL: \$50,000
RECEIVED: \$11,587

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