



The Episcopal Church of the Advent
November 4, 2025 Newsletter
Twenty-first Sunday After Pentecost



This coming Sunday, November 9th, Advent will celebrate the baptism of Everett Clark Yost, son of Zach (above, right) and Briana Yost and Jameson Kovar, son of Grace and Michael Kovar. The proud grandparents are Dianne and Patrick Yost. Join us in this celebration of our baptismal vows!

From left to right: Gavin Wallace, Hunter Moore, Luke Roman, Zach Yost

Sermon Notes: Sermon on the Plain

November 2, 2025, All Saints' Sunday came wrapped in double joy: we welcomed Rev. Harold Lockett back to lead our worship and celebrated his ordination as an Episcopal priest. The sanctuary was full—full of praise, full of memory, full of saints living and gone.

Rev. Lockett opened our prayer service with his familiar welcome, reminding the congregation: “God is good, and God has been good since the last time I joined you at Advent,” he said. “God has been good to all of us, despite the unforeseen things which might have affected us; the goodness of God is always present in our lives.”

The Gospel from Luke 6:20–31 is the opening of Jesus’ “Sermon on the Plain” and lands like a thunderclap of grace amid our world’s noise. While Matthew’s more famous Sermon on the Mount soars with poetic “blessed are the poor in spirit,” Luke grounds the beatitudes in raw, embodied reality: “Blessed are you who are poor... you who are hungry now... you who weep now” (vv. 20–21). This plea is a manifesto for the upside-down kingdom, delivered on level ground: rich and poor, oppressor and oppressed, stand eye-to-eye before God.

This is Jesus' way of teaching us to embrace the golden rule of eternal life, unlike the human rules we make for ourselves.

Rev. Lockett explained, "We have human rules we abide by, one being the law of self-preservation. With this rule, we do whatever it takes to care for ourselves and our family. We look out for ourselves so that we may continue doing well in life. The second human rule is the law of self-defense. We must protect ourselves and our property regardless of what comes against us. The problem with the two laws is that they don't take into consideration life after death—or life eternal. They only take care of our basic human nature."

This translates into: We who believe in our Lord and Savior are offered eternal life. Jesus provided the golden rules for entering the kingdom of heaven. The text of Luke tells us that Jesus spent the night in prayer, and then chose twelve apostles and descended to a "level place" crowded with seekers from Judea, Jerusalem, and the Gentile coast (6:17). He lifts his eyes on his disciples and proclaims:

- Four Beatitudes (vv. 20–22): "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh. Blessed are you when people hate you... on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice... your reward is great in heaven."
- Four Woes (vv. 24–26): "But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation. Woe to you who are full now, for you will be hungry. Woe to you who are laughing now, for you will mourn and weep. Woe to you when all speak well of you..."
- The Love Command (vv. 27–31): "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you... Do to others as you would have them do to you." (The Golden Rule, Luke-style.)

This isn't gentle wisdom; it's revolutionary. Luke's Jesus speaks to the marginalized as the blessed ones, while warning the comfortable that their status quo is a spiritual dead-end. Rev. Lockett reminds us that "When you have a blessing, you also have a curse. Blessed and cursed go together. Woe means to be careful."

The beatitudes invert imperial values: Rome blesses the wealthy; Jesus blesses the destitute. The Greek *makarios* ("blessed") means "honored by God," not "happy." Poverty here isn't romanticized but named as the arena where God's reign breaks in now ("yours is the kingdom").

Rev. Lockett explains that Jesus was saying the blessedness comes to those who put their focus on God. When you are poor, without much, you think about the goodness of God. And with those who have everything, they may focus on themselves, and not on God. When you have everything you need, you already have your bounty on earth. You have to be careful, because there is the law of reversal in Luke, where if you elevate yourself, you will be brought down, and if you humble yourself, you will be raised up. "Just as you have it, it can be gone. Or you have nothing and then have it all," said Rev. Lockett.

In this reading of Luke, we learn that woes aren't curses but wake-up calls. Wealth, fullness, and popularity can numb us to dependence on God. As the Episcopal scholar Amy-Jill Levine notes, Luke's Jesus isn't anti-rich but anti-indifference; the danger is hoarding while others starve. The love command echoes Leviticus 19:18 but radicalizes it: love isn't for neighbors only but enemies—a word evoking personal and political foes alike.

"God's Golden Rule of Life is to claim your blessings. Look to God. All blessings come from God. Don't worry how you need more of this or that," said Rev. Lockett. "This is what Jesus was trying to help the people who

were gathered to understand. He wanted them to know that you could have it today, and it would be gone tomorrow." In other words, "Don't get so caught up in your possessions that you lose your focus on the presence of God in your life. That's what's important. By claiming your blessings and avoiding the woes, we become the saints of God. Like the ones who went before us, who gave their lives sacrificially. We remember them because they put their focus on God and not on themselves."

Rev. Lockett concluded by proclaiming, "The Golden rule of Eternal life is to treat others as we want to be treated. Treat others right. We leave this life as the people who loved the Lord. That's what it means to embrace the laws of God, which gets us beyond this life. God is the author of our fate and the author of all the good gifts in this life."

Question for Reflection: How does Luke's Sermon on the Plain (6:20–31) challenge you to reorient your understanding of blessing, security, and love in light of both earthly realities and the promise of eternal life?

In Christ+, Kim

First Wednesday Get-Together
Shelley MacMillan • 1101 Plainview Road
Wednesday, November 5 • 5:30 PM

Our "First Wednesday" in November is at Shelley MacMillan's farm on Plainview Road. Come meet your fellow fabulous Advent parishioners! This monthly gathering is especially good for newcomers. Ask a couple of folks and they'll tell you what fun these get-togethers are! We encourage you to bring wine or an hors d'oeuvre. Abundant parking. We're starting earlier than usual because of the change in seasons. We look forward to seeing everyone!

Save the Date - Ingathering Sunday – November 16: In the spirit of Episcopal tradition, join us in this cherished rite where parishioners process forward during the Eucharist to present their pledges, as a joyful commitment of financial stewardship for the year ahead. Drawing from the Book of Common Prayer's emphasis on thanksgiving and common worship, this act symbolizes your personal "ingathering" of blessings, offered in community for the growth and mission of our parish. **A parish dinner is served after the 10:30 service.** Ham and chicken will be provided. Side dishes and desserts will be needed to complete the meal. Please drop off your side dishes and desserts in the parish house dining room on that Sunday morning.

The Greening of the Church, Saturday, November 29 – Everyone is invited to participate in our annual Greening of the Church for the beginning celebration of the Advent season. We will gather at the church at 1:00 pm on Saturday, November 29. All are welcome, no experience necessary, just a good attitude and a willing heart as we bedeck the church windows, Narthex, and Altar with Advent greenery; install the Advent wreath; welcome the Angel Tree; Smilax the Reredos; and generally have a fun and festive time of fellowship.

Rick will provide greenery and berries plundered from local gardens and landscapes, but if you have some materials you would like to contribute, or gloves and a pair of pruning shears to wield, by all means bring them.

It is always helpful to have a sense of who and how many might be coming, or if you have questions, holler back at me:

Advent-urously Yours,
Rick
treadwellcrown@gmail.com

Stewardship Campaign: By now, parishioners should have received mail and email containing pledge cards and other information. If you haven't, please email info@adventmadisonga.com.

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Stewardship: In the Episcopal Church, stewardship is the responsible and grateful use of all God's gifts—including time, talent, and treasure—to do God's work and spread God's love. It is a personal response to God's generosity that involves serving others, caring for creation, and making an annual pledge as a commitment to support the church's mission and ministries. Key aspects of stewardship:

- Time, talent, and treasure: Stewardship encompasses all aspects of life, not just financial giving. It includes how members use their time in service, their talent to contribute to the community, and their financial resources through regular pledges.
- Personal response to God's generosity: It is viewed as a spiritual practice and a thankful response to the generosity received from God.
- Mission and ministry: Pledges and other acts of stewardship support the life and mission of the church, enabling it to carry out its work in the local community and the world.
- Caring for creation: Stewardship also includes a commitment to caring for the Earth and the natural world, seeing it as a gift from God to be protected and not exploited.
- Annual pledge: A key practice is the annual pledge, a commitment to give a certain amount of money to the church, which helps with planning and budgeting for ministries.

Food insecurity: "Since I moved to Madison 11 years ago, I have never ceased to be amazed by the giving spirit of the people of Madison and Morgan County. I got a vivid reminder of this spirit last Saturday when I came to work at the Madison-Morgan Community Food Pantry, and saw the absolute truckload of food that had been collected by the children of our area through their "Trick-or-Treat So a Child Can Eat" food drive. Not only had the kids collected food, but they packed the boxes and helped with their distribution...And got a great lesson in compassionate giving and service along the way.

That spirit of compassionate giving is especially needed right now, as many of our neighbors are experiencing increased food insecurity. About 14% of households in our county receive SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits to help them buy food, and the delay in receiving these funds in the midst of the government shutdown is already placing a burden on family finances. The Pantry distributed about 25% more food boxes than "normal" last Saturday, and this trend is unlikely to reverse as food prices continue to increase and the holidays approach.

The cost to the Pantry of a box of food for a presentable Thanksgiving meal is \$65, and your contributions to the Pantry toward the goal of providing those meals would be most appreciated. Checks can be sent to the Madison-Morgan Community Food Pantry, 951 Eliza Morris Street, Madison, GA 30650. (For those wishing to contribute non-perishable food items, please contact Elizabeth Branch—She is working on the installation of a permanent food collection box in the Narthex.)

Many thanks—Nancy Bush

[Link to Madison Morgan Community Food Pantry's 5th Annual Community Thanksgiving Day Meal.](#)

Father Tryggvi's contact information and office hours: Father Tryggvi's email is priest@adventmadisonga.com. He typically holds office hours at the Parish House on Mondays and Tuesdays. For pastoral emergencies, please call his cellphone number at 828-446-7843. For an appointment, please contact the church office at 706-342-4787 and leave a message to schedule an appointment.

**Rota for the Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost
November 9, 2025**

LEM: 10:30 A.M. Marrett

1st Reading: Ramfos

2nd Reading: McCauley

Altar Guild: Abbott-Yost-Strickland

Flower Guild: Branch

Organ Tech: K Jackson

Vestry of the Day: Branch

**Readings for the Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost
November 9, 2025**

[Link to Readings](#)

First Reading: Haggai 1:1-15b, 2:9

The Psalm: 145:1-5, 18-22

Second Reading: 2 Thessalonians 2:1-5, 13-17

The Gospel: Luke 20:17-38

Parish Prayer List

Fr. Dann Brown, Susan Crosher, Lynn Cupples, Bob Cupples, Flossie Dodge, Mary Ann Edelman, Arni Greer (Árnason), Anita Hunt, Kate Jackson, Beth Tamplin Jones, Jan Kozel, Bill Kurtz, Susan Kurtz, Kathy Lehman, Brian Lehman, Gloria Leo, Jack Leo, Jerry Maddoz, Tony McCullar, Jennifer Mize, Dutton Morehouse, Jennie Newton, Annette Piazza, Lynne Roach, Dick Schmidt, Kathy Schmidt, Emily Sigman, Betty Thomas, Jack Ward, Gloria Ward, Eric Wiemann, Jay Whitcomb

Birthdays: **3** Tom Eskew, **5** Erik Ramfos, **7** Alex Booker, Sabrina Booker, **9** Patrick Yost, Jeanne Symmes Reid, **10** Richard Simpson, **13** Fr. Dann Brown, **19** Paul Roman, **27** Beverly Abbott

Anniversaries: **5** Kathy and Brian Lehman, **21** Mary and Bob McCauley, **24** Genia and Ray Bennett

Recurring weekly calendar

- Rite I Eucharist: Sunday, 8:00 AM
- Sunday school (adult): Sunday, 9:15 AM
- Rite II Eucharist: Sunday, 10:30 AM
- Morning Prayer service: Wednesday, 9:00 AM
- Off the Rails AA group: M, Tu, Th @ noon
- Madison AA group: Th, F, Su @ 7:00 PM

To learn more about Advent's Pastoral Care ministry, or to request addition of a person to the Prayer List, go to <https://adventmadisonga.com/advent-ministries/>. Use the same link to inquire about weddings, baptisms, or funerals and the use of the Memorial Garden.

The Episcopal Church of the Advent

338 Academy Street • Madison, Georgia 30650 • 706-342-4787

www.adventmadisonga.com • adventmadison@bellsouth.net

Priest-In-Charge, The Reverend Tryggvi Árnason

Devon Dartnell - Senior Warden, Vic Jackson - Junior Warden

Newsletter editors: Kim Jackson and O. J. Booker

News and Newsletters: <https://adventmadisonga.com/news/>

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