

Seasonal Summaries for Bulletins

WELS Arizona-California District Worship Committee

December 2015

Many congregations include a short paragraph in each Sunday's service booklet explaining the particular focus or emphasis of that service. Some congregations may also want to include another brief paragraph explaining the specific season of the church year and its larger focus. The following paragraphs may be adopted or adapted for use in service booklets to explain the church year's seasons.

Advent

The first season of the church year is the *Advent* season. Advent includes the four Sundays before Christmas Day. The word Advent means "coming." As we anticipate the celebration of Jesus' first coming into this world at his birth, we also prepare for his second coming at the end of time.

Christmas

Christmas is both a day and a season. During the twelve days of Christmas (December 25 through January 5), we continue our celebration of the incarnation of Jesus Christ, the Son of God who was born of the Virgin Mary to be our brother and our Savior.

Epiphany

We are presently in the church season called *Epiphany*. The word Epiphany means "to reveal." The season begins on Epiphany Day (January 6), when we remember how the star revealed Jesus as the Savior to the Magi from the East (Matthew 2:1-12). The season extends from January 6 through the Sunday before Ash Wednesday. During the Epiphany season, our worship focuses on the many ways that Jesus revealed himself as our Savior, especially in his ministry, miracles, and message.

Lent

The season of *Lent* begins on Ash Wednesday and includes the six and a half weeks prior to Easter Sunday. Lent focuses our attention on the most important events and truths of the Christian faith. We hear our Lord's call to repent of our sin, and we remember Jesus' sufferings and death that won our redemption from sin.

Easter

Our celebration of Jesus' resurrection from the dead extends through the seven week-long *Easter* season. The earlier weeks of the Easter season focus on Jesus' resurrection appearances. The later weeks of the Easter season focus on the comforting spiritual truths that result from Jesus' resurrection. Near the end of the Easter season, we also celebrate our Lord's *Ascension* into heaven forty days after his resurrection.

Pentecost

We are presently in the season of the church year called the *Sundays after Pentecost*. Pentecost Day (Acts 2:1-41) is celebrated seven weeks after Easter and marks the birth of the Christian Church. The Sundays after Pentecost emphasize the life of the Church and the life of the Christian in light of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

End Time

The last four weeks of the church year are called the *End Time* season. As the name suggests, our thoughts during this season are primarily directed toward the end of the world: Christ's return and final judgment, heaven and hell, and Jesus' eternal reign as the King of kings and Lord of lords.