

ABOUT THE COVER

DECEMBER–JANUARY–FEBRUARY — QUARTER 1 2025

December 1, 2024



Advent

About the Cover: As a cloud once obscured the disciples' view of Jesus' ascension into heaven, a day is coming when He will return in the same way (see 1 Thessalonians 4:17). The world shall see Jesus coming with all of His saints on the Day of Judgment. Though we do not see Him with our natural eyes today, we see Him by faith in His Word and Sacrament, where He delivers the benefits of all that He accomplished in His ministry, death, and resurrection. For in Christ, we have already passed through judgment and into eternal life through His forgiveness of our sins.

December 8, 2024



Advent

About the Cover: The cries of John in the wilderness for a Baptism of repentance prepared the way of the Lord's first coming. For His second coming, Paul's deep desire is that we will be "pure and blameless for the day of Christ" (Philippians 1:10). The Lord has accomplished this for us by His abounding love that went all the way to the cross. So, it is by faith today that we are counted as pure and blameless because He is the pure, blameless, and spotless Lamb of God who has taken away our sin (see John 1:29).

December 15, 2024



Advent

About the Cover: One day, like the bright morning light that breaks through the darkness of night, the Lord's second coming will bring rejoicing. While we do not know the day, the Lord is at hand today. God's Word shines brightly, dispelling the darkness of anxiety and fear and replacing it with rejoicing in what He has accomplished for us in the forgiveness of our sins. The Lord is at hand. Let us rejoice today!

December 22, 2024



Advent

About the Cover: The Old Testament sacrifices and offerings were always given in order to point forward to Christ. Christ has come to fulfill the Law, not merely with the outward observance of sacrifices and offerings, but with His whole body. For Christ has accomplished what we could never do. By taking on human flesh, He has redeemed and sanctified us, going all the way to the cross. He has become the one-time and eternal sacrifice for us.

December 29, 2024



Christmas

About the Cover: The Lord commanded that two turtledoves or pigeons were needed to redeem the firstborn son. Moses instructed fathers to tell their children that this was a reminder of the Lord's redemption of His people from the hand of Pharaoh. When the Father sent the Son, Christ Himself did the work of redemption as He stood in our place. Christ has bought us back from our outstanding debt of sin, not with silver or gold, but with His holy and precious blood.

January 5, 2025



Christmas

About the Cover: After Mary and Joseph found Him in the temple on the third day, Jesus responded, "Why were you looking for Me? Did you not know that I must be in My Father's house?" (Luke 2:49). After His death on the cross, women came to the tomb looking for Jesus on the third day. But the angels said, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen" (Luke 24:5–6). Jesus was doing what the Father sent Him to do: winning forgiveness, life, and salvation for us. We cannot but treasure these things in our hearts as well.

January 12, 2025



Epiphany

About the Cover: The Lord looks upon His chosen people as precious because of His love. Christ, who has always been the eternal and beloved Son of the Father, willingly passed through the waters of a Baptism of repentance that He did not need. He brings blessing through the sacred waters of our Baptism as we are joined to Him, the only Son of the Father. When the Father looks upon us, He sees Christ. Because of this, we are precious and loved in His eyes as His dear children.

January 19, 2025



Epiphany

About the Cover: In instituting marriage, the Lord created a picture of the kind of love that He has for His people. Christ's love and commitment to His Bride, the Church, led all the way to Him giving Himself for her upon the cross to make her pure, blameless, and holy. He rejoices over us, His Bride, and continues to share His eternal life with us.

January 26, 2025



Epiphany

About the Cover: The Lord has fashioned a variety of individual members; each one is loved, cherished, and indispensable to His one Body. This Body is not merely constituted by shared interests but by Christ, the Head. Every Lord's Day, He brings together the congregation of believers into a blessed harmony around His Word and Sacrament. For the church is Christ's Body, which He has redeemed and made alive by His cross and resurrection.

February 2, 2025



Epiphany

About the Cover: Mary and Joseph did as the Lord's Law instructed and brought the Christ Child to Jerusalem to offer sacrifice. Jesus' whole life was one of fulfilling the Law of the Lord. When He grew, He again went up to Jerusalem to make a sacrifice. But this sacrifice was the once-for-all-time sacrifice of His own body on the cross to atone for the sins of the whole world. So by the gift of faith, we are counted as righteous because of His perfect fulfillment of the Law.

February 9, 2025



Epiphany

About the Cover: The fishermen had given up after a frustrating night's worth of casting and pulling in empty nets. But then Jesus stepped into the boat, had them push off from land, and taught them. At His word, casting those empty nets brought in an amazing haul of fish so great that the nets were breaking and boats were sinking. Indeed, the Lord brings in an astonishing catch of believers, not by our power, but by the power of His Gospel of forgiveness.

February 16, 2025



Epiphany

About the Cover: Paul boldly states that without Christ's resurrection, "your faith is futile and you are still in your sins" (1 Corinthians 15:17). There would be no point to a life lived in faith. "But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead" (1 Corinthians 15:20). This changes everything! Christ's bodily resurrection means that His cross atoned for our sins and that we, too, will be raised. It means that our lives lived in faith in Christ are never in vain because our Redeemer lives.

February 23, 2025



Epiphany

About the Cover: Tombstones bear testimony to the sting that death still inflicts on this world. However, it could not hold Christ in the tomb. His tomb remains empty to this day. He has conquered sin, death, and the devil. At the day of His return and judgment, all shall be bodily raised to stand before the Lord. But we, the church, will be rejoicing over death's defeat and loss of its sting because Christ's forgiveness, life, and salvation is already ours today by faith.