

December 2024



December



OUR SAVIOUR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH - WHITEHALL, WI

The Messenger

Hello, Welcome to Advent and a New Year for our Lutheran Church,

Advent, the coming of Jesus is a very Holy Moment for all Christians. The Gospel of Luke will be read often during this year C in our Lectionary. Luke will start us off explaining the second Advent of Jesus and it does not portray a gentle appearance. Luke 21:25-28, 25”There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. ²⁶People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷Then they will see ‘the Son of Man

coming in a cloud’ with power and great glory. ²⁸Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

I believe that Christians who Love God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit and Truth above all else, will easily be able to stand up and raise our heads to receive our redemption. God sees us for who we are and what is in our hearts. God knows we are sinful humans and “cannot free ourselves”. God alone will know when to grant Grace to his created people. That is “Good News” to the true Christian believers.

Luke then brings us back to the preparation of Jesus coming as an adult by introducing John the Baptist who dedicates his life to God by preparing “the Way of the Lord”. He spends many days of his adult life, preaching and baptizing, telling anyone who will listen, that the one who is greater than he is, will be coming soon to show us the way.

Then on the Sunday before Christmas Luke describes the wonderful meeting between the two pregnant relatives, Elizabeth and Mary. Luke’s Gospel is the only one of the four, to indicate these two are somehow related. Luke 1:41-42, 41When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴²and exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.” Mary then expresses the beautiful Song of Praise which we call the Magnificat, (magnify in Latin). Luke is emphasizing that John and Jesus are going to be born to faithful Jewish families.

Please consider opening your Bible to Luke 1 and read Mary’s wonderful response to Elizabeth’s blessing of Mary and the unborn Jesus. When we consider Mary was around 12 years old, the words may have been divinely inspired. We are told Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, maybe Mary has been since the moment of conception. Something we can find out when we get to Heaven.

As of the writing of this message, December 15 is when our Sunday School will present their representation of the Birth of Jesus. This is always a wonderful time to be in the sanctuary to again witness the Advent of Jesus as a human baby and see the young people in Sunday School in person. I will not be leading worship that day as I will be in Irving Texas. Pastor Diane House has volunteered to come for that Sunday to lead worship at Grace and Our Saviour’s.

I truly hope all of you can find time for yourselves to relax and refresh so that the holidays may be a

time of Love and Joy not stress.

God Bless you all.

Scott W. Brown, SAM

THE GIFT THAT IS YOU!

2024 Christmas Message



As I reflect on my time in Malawi back in early November, I had so many experiences that merit being shared. As I write this letter, perhaps the most important lesson I can offer was that of my new reality as a guest overseas.

Everywhere I turned, I truly felt like I was the most important person present. Yes, there were times where I was the honored guest as a bishop. I was granted the best seats in the church, in the van, on the stage. When I walked the grounds at the Lutheran Compound in my purple clerical, EVERYONE immediately stopped what they were doing to greet me, even if that was their first encounter with me. I was fed better than most and I never had to carry my own luggage. I had women pour water over my hands before certain meals (including

communion) much like Christ did during the Last Supper in washing the disciples' feet. And despite my innermost desires to remind them that I was just another guy, I simply could not insult them in that manner. The way in which they treated me was at the core of their faith practice.

Thankfully, Deacon Laura taught me a valuable insight that helped my understanding more clearly. They didn't treat only bishops that way, they treat all guests that way! Having been to Malawi five times before she took me, Laura has experienced that generous hospitality time and time again. And now that I'm a few weeks removed from their genuine welcome, I still firmly believe that their faith has taught them to love their neighbor and lift them up no matter how far away we may come.

What if we all treated our neighbor as though they are the most important person present at that time? What if we lifted the spirits of the people God places in our lives each and every day? As we prepare for the Christmas story once again this year, we emphasize the gift that comes in the Christ child, God made flesh to live among us mortals. Just think about the lives that the Christ child touched! It started with Mary and Joseph, continued to the shepherds in the fields, and even gave the heavenly host something to praise!

Of course, Jesus went on to touch so many lives - people in need of healing, children in need of welcoming, outcasts in need of community, sinners in need of redeeming. Jesus became the gift who helped them all feel that they were the most important person present at the time, people worthy of his unconditional love, people whose spirits were uplifted.

As we march through the season of Advent toward the birth of God Emmanuel, Jesus the savior of the world, remember the gift of God's presence in your lives. Recognize that God is even present within you and that you are a gift as well! And much like my new friends in Malawi, be that gift for others. Reveal Christ's presence to others through your continued faithfulness and dedication to the God of love because that love can overcome division. You are a gift to this synod and to God's church when you let God's light shine in and through you! May this Christmas also reveal to you the light of Christ through others.

Bishop Martin



More Church News



Our Saviour's Lutheran Church Council Minutes November 12, 2024

Board Members Present: Dave Anderson, Scott Brown, Marnie Anderson, Kris Dubiel, Kay Nelson, Ellen Hauser, Clarice Laehn and Lori Paulson.

Dave Anderson, council president, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Preparation:

1. **Opening Devotions:** Devotions by Scott Brown
2. **Prayer Requests/Homebound:** Dennis Dubiel: Family of 10-year-old Raymond Lambright
3. **Communication from Congregation:** none

Communication/Action:

1. **Secretary's Report:** Kay Nelson made a motion to approve minutes of October 6, 2024, with a second by Clarice Laehn. Motion carried.
2. **Treasurer's Report:** The following fund balances were presented per October 2024 financial reports: General Fund: \$98,565.14; On Going: \$11,603.49; Improvement: \$40,310.91. Lori Paulson made a motion to approve the treasurer's report with a second by Kay Nelson. Motion carried.
3. **Ministry Teams Updates:**
 - a) **Music & Worship:**
 1. Noisy Offering of \$361.45 for October went to hurricane relief; November will go to Christmas is For Kids; and December will go to Improvement Fund.
 - b) **WELCA:**
 1. Collection boxes have been set up at church and at Ritter's Hardware.
 2. WELCA has given approximately \$1000.00 in various donations this year.
 3. WELCA's regular December meeting will be hosted by Grace at Pleasantville at 1:30 pm on December 5. We will have a Bible study led by our S.A.M. Scott Brown, followed by a coffee time with Christmas treats provided by all the attendees. All are asked to bring 1/2 dozen of a favorite Christmas baking. Meet at OSL at 1pm to car pool.
 - c) **Lutheran Brotherhood:** No report.
 - d) **Life & Growth:**
 1. There will be a Good Gifts tree again this year.
 2. A quilt retreat is scheduled for February 5 th -7 th in the church basement. Set up would be February 4 th .
 - e) **Finance & Property:**
 1. A bid of \$85,000 was received to redo the parking lot. This bid is void and other options will be researched.
 2. Someone will have to climb down a ladder into the elevator shaft to turn up heat to avoid it freezing this winter.
 3. The podcast license needs to be renewed.

Sharing from Scott Brown (SAM):

1. In lieu of a Christmas gift Scott would like a donation to go to someone in need.

2. Scott's computer is running slow so will have Bob Johnson look at it. Also, Kris Dubiel has a laptop he can try.
3. Scott attended the health fair at Peace Lutheran in Pigeon Falls on November 9 th .
4. The Parish Board will meet regarding the renewal of Scott's contract.
5. Thanksgiving service is scheduled for 6p.m., Tuesday November 26 th at Grace Lutheran.
6. Christmas Eve services are scheduled for 4 p.m. at Our Saviour's and 6 p.m. at Grace Lutheran. No Christmas Day services will be held.
7. Rev. Diane House of the Northwest Synod will fill in for Scott on Sunday, December 15 th .
8. Families of confirmands will be asked to read for Advent.

Celebration/Affirmation:

1. The next council meeting is scheduled for December 3, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.

Business Items:

1. The annual meeting is scheduled for February 2, 2025, immediately following Sunday's service. Reports will be due by January 7, 2025.

Adjournment and Lord's Prayer:

Ellen Hauser made a motion to adjourn with a second by Marnie Anderson. Motion carried.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by Lori Paulson, Council Secretary

Our Saviour's Members in Nursing Homes

Pigeon Falls Nursing Care Center-P.O. Box 310-Pigeon Falls, WI 54760
Deloris Coburn, Jeanette Gilbertson, Marian Miller & Arline Stuve
Richard Eide and Ann Toraason

Assisted Living- Pigeon Falls - P.O. Box 310-Pigeon Falls, WI 54760

Sunrise Manor - 36024 Park Street - Whitehall - 54773
Clinton Larson

Trempealeau County Health Care Center-W20410 WI-#121Whitehall- 54773
James Windjue

Grandview Nursing Home - 620 Grandview Avenue - Blair - 54616
Marilyn Speerstra, Mavis Mitskogen, Donna Oates,
Olin and Jan Feimreit, Donald Dinsmore,

Meadowbrook Care Center-1311 Tyler Street-Black River Falls - 54615

Dove Healthcare-51019 Ridge View Road-Osseo-54758
Ralph Johnson, MaryJane Hernes

Oak Gardens Place-342 Twin Oak Dr-Altoona-54720
Clarice Henrickson



Church News



December Birthdays

- 3 - Judy Haralson
- 6 - Gavin Gaulke, Janice Johnson,
- 7 - Eric Gaulke
- 9 - Olivia Moats
- 10 - Chris Foss
- 11 - Clarice Henrickson
- 12 - Kaylin Metzler
- 14 - Sandra Erickson, Barbara Johnson, Dennis Lyngen, Bryanna Schneider
- 15 - Mary Lou Beck, Adam Berg
- 16 - Clayton Densmore
- 17 - Andrew Johnson
- 18 - Mary Jane Herness, Matthew Gilbertson
- 21 - James Hughes Jr.
- 22 - Marnalee Anderson, Celina Kopp
- 24 - Randall Lindberg
- 27 - Constance Kastad
- 28 - Carol Byington, Clinton Larson, Caitlin Toraason
- 29 - LeAnn Ring
- 30 - Lisa Schmitt
- 31 - Sawyer Kurth, Debra Olson, Jeffrey Rieck, Mackenzie Standish



Prayer Requests



Please keep the following in your thoughts and prayers:

Arline Stuve, Mavis Olson, Dawn Coburn, Mary Lou Beck, Lisa James, Mavis Mitskogen, Norman Nordby, Jane Holen, Paula Hentges, Stella Michels, Dennis Dubiel and the friends and family of Donald Densmore.

If you would like **special prayers** said for yourself or loved one, please contact the church office at osluthwh@gmail.com



More Church News



Our Noisy Offering for December will be designated for Our Saviour's Improvement Fund. Your contributions will help us prepare for repairs and replacements!!

November's Noisy Offering was dedicated to "Christmas is for Kids," which is organized by the Trempealeau County Sheriff's Department. Your donation of \$459.56 will help to brighten Christmas for children in our area who might not otherwise be remembered.

Members in Service

- * Altar Guild = Kris Dubiel, Karen Witte
- * Altar Flowers = Kris Dubiel, Karen Witte
- * Usher = David and Marnie Anderson

FOOD PANTRY NEEDS

The Whitehall Food Pantry is seeing a rise in families in need and is short on the following food items:

- * Toilet Tissue,
- * Fruit juice or
- * tuna.

Donations can be left in the narthex of Our Saviour's Lutheran Church or dropped off at the church office Tuesday mornings or Wednesday afternoon. Any and all donations are very appreciated by all those in need in our community. Thank you for your generosity and God Bless!



More Church News



Poinsettia plants for the church at Christmas

The everlasting beauty of the poinsettia is an age-old Christmas tradition. Its petals form the shape of a brilliant star, symbolizing the rise of the Star of Bethlehem on Christmas night.

Members of Our Saviour's may bring poinsettia plants prior to the Christmas Eve service. Please complete the dedication portion of the form below to be included in the bulletin.

Poinsettia plants can also be ordered for \$10.00 each. Orders & dedication requests need to be placed by December 15th. We are hoping that selling poinsettia plants will make it easier for members to participate in decoration.

Completed forms can be taken to the church office or collected in the NatheX offering plate.

Christmas Poinsettia Form

_____ I am bringing in my own plant, please include the dedication.

_____ I am placing an order.

Color preference (if available) _____

Will you be taking your poinsettia home? _____ yes _____ no

Order Total: \$ _____

From: _____

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____



More Church News

Sunday School Christmas Program

During worship on Sunday, December 15th, the Sunday School children will be performing their annual Christmas program. There will be songs sung, skits performed, and fun to be had by all!! Please join us in celebrating the Christmas season!



No Sunday school will be held on December 1st, 22nd, and 29th.

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Worship Services on Tuesday the 24th, Christmas Eve:

- Our Saviour's Lutheran Church at 4:00 pm
- Grace Lutheran at 6:00 pm

There will NOT be a worship service on Christmas Day, Wednesday, December 25th.



Christmas Decorations

We will take down the church Christmas decoration after the service on **Sunday, January 12, 2025**. Please plan to stay after the church service for un-decorating the tree & putting away the decorations. Thanks for any help you can give.



WELCA



Thanks to all who have donated to the TCHCC, Pajama Grama, & the Food Pantry in November. Now the Gift Tree is up in the narthex for December for mittens and hats. Socks are welcome too. These will be donated to the Whitehall Elementary School.

We have applied for & received a THRIVENT Gift Card with which we will purchase socks, underwear & sweatpants for the little ones that may have accidents at school & need dry clothes.

WELCA MEETING

Grace Lutheran is hosting our December W-ELCA meeting on **Thursday, Dec. 5, 2024 at 1:30** in their church in Pleasantville. We will have a Bible study. It's also a Christmas party! **Please bring 1/2 dozen of a Christmas treat for our lunch.**

We will meet in the church parking lot at 1 pm to car pool.

We look forward to many joining us.

We will NOT meet in January or February.

Stay warm & we'll see you on March 6, 2025, when we begin meeting again. Watch the Messenger & Sunday bulletin for details about that meeting.

Merry Christmas to all !!

Church Finances



DISBURSEMENT & GIVING RECEIPTS -Nov 1-30

DISBURSEMENT & GIVING RECEIPTS -Nov 1-30			
Disbursements:			
Administration	\$0.00	\$231.52	
Physical Plant	\$0.00	\$4,493.67	
Salaries & Benefits	\$0.00	\$4,043.72	
Benevolence	\$0.00	\$4,300.00	
Parish Expense	\$0.00		
Dues and Fees	\$0.00		
Harvest Dinner	\$0.00		
Total Disbursements =		\$13,068.91	
Giving Receipts			
Simply Giving Total =	\$2,635.00		General Fund Total = \$2,986.00
On-Going Total =	\$459.56		Improvement Fund - Total = \$165.00
November 2024 Giving Grand Total =		\$6,245.56	

GOD'S GOOD GIFTS for CHRISTMAS

Once again the Life and Growth Committee is sponsoring the Christmas Good Gifts Mission.

How does it work ?

Decide what gifts you want to give, mark the form and enclose it with the money in an envelope and bring to service or mail it to the OSLC office by the end of December.

As members of Our Saviour's Lutheran Church we believe that God's love is shared with us and we can follow our purpose statement by " SHARING GOD'S LOVE WITH ALL " .

GIVE BY CHECK

A check is enclosed for \$ _____

Make checks payable to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

DETACH AND ENCLOSE IN PROVIDED ENVELOPE

GOD'S GLOBAL BARNYARD	Item	Price	Qty	Total
Chicks	WHG0106	\$10		
Rooster	WHG0133	\$15		
Family farm	WHG0107	\$715		
Goat	WHG0102	\$50		
Goat + flock of chicks	WHG0154	\$60		
Couple of goats	WHG0147	\$100		
Herd of goats	WHG0155	\$300		
Cow	WHG0097	\$500		
Share of a cow	WHG0098	\$50		
Piglet	WHG0099	\$30		
Fish farm	WHG0101	\$250		
Share of a fish farm	WHG0152	\$50		
Honeybees	WHG0100	\$20		
Honeybees + vegetable garden	WHG0153	\$220		
Abundant community	WHG0172	\$1,020		
God's Global Barnyard	WHG0051	any \$ amount		
CLEAN WATER	Item	Price	Qty	Total
Water filter	IDG0099	\$30		
Portion of an irrigation project	WHG0111	\$100		
Safe water access	WHG0108	\$2,500		
Share of a safe water project	WHG0109	\$250		
Latrine	WHG0134	\$150		
WOMEN AND CHILDREN	Item	Price	Qty	Total
Safe birth	WHG0173	\$750		
Microloan for a woman	WHG0119	\$125		
Farmers' field school for a woman	WHG0148	\$75		
School fees and uniform for a girl	WHG0121	\$40		
School supplies for a child	WHG0122	\$10		
School supplies for a classroom	WHG0123	\$300		
Computer for a community center	WHG0162	\$800		
One month of internet connectivity for students	WHG0168	\$100		
Environmentally friendly cookstove	WHG0156	\$105		
Nutrition for a child: one month	WHG0116	\$25		
Nutrition for a child: one year	WHG0117	\$300		
Stock a backpack with food	WHG0129	\$10		

AGRICULTURE	Item	Price	Qty	Total
Climate resilience kit	WHG0175	\$910		
Fruit-tree seedling	WHG0124	\$10		
Fruit-tree farm	WHG0125	\$150		
Community vegetable garden	WHG0126	\$200		
Seeds and gardening tools	WHG0157	\$50		
HEALTH AND NUTRITION	Item	Price	Qty	Total
Serve 10 at a feeding ministry	WHG0130	\$20		
Serve 50 at a feeding ministry	WHG0131	\$100		
Clinic visit for a child	WHG0114	\$10		
Stock a health clinic for a week	WHG0118	\$75		
Mosquito net	WHG0138	\$10		
Mosquito nets for a family	WHG0165	\$20		
Vaccinations for a child	WHG0113	\$30		
Hygiene kit	WHG0167	\$25		
HELP IN TIMES OF CRISIS	Item	Price	Qty	Total
Accompany a migrant returning home	WHG0174	\$1,750		
Feed a refugee family: one week	IDG0081	\$50		
Feed a refugee family: one month	IDG0082	\$200		
Counseling for disaster survivor: one week	DDG0092	\$160		
Counseling for disaster survivor: one month	DDG0091	\$640		
One night of shelter for a vulnerable LGBTQIA+ youth	WHG0164	\$50		
One week of shelter for a vulnerable LGBTQIA+ youth	WHG0163	\$350		
Month of necessities for a disaster survivor	DDG0080	\$200		
Blanket	IDG0093	\$10		
LEADERS AND CHANGE-MAKERS	Item	Price	Qty	Total
Scholarship support for an int'l woman leader	GCS0001	\$100		
Support a YAGM for one month	GCS2136	\$1,500		
Vocational training	WHG0158	\$75		
Seminary for a week	E270134B	\$150		
Seminary for a semester	E270134C	\$2,500		
Support an ELCA missionary	GCS2135	any \$ amount		
GROW THE CHURCH	Item	Price	Qty	Total
Bible	GCS1001	\$10		
Motorbike for a pastor	GCS1002	\$375		
Sunday school start-up kit	GCS1003	\$65		
GIVE WHERE NEEDED MOST	Item	Price	Qty	Total
	MC00053	any \$ amount		

December 2024



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<u>1</u> Sunday Worship- 9:30am NO Sunday School	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u> Church office open 8am-12pm Quilters - 8:30 - Noon Council Meeting – 6:30 pm	<u>4</u> Bible Study- 9:30am Church office open 1-5pm Confirmation 3:30pm	<u>5</u> WELCA meeting at Grace at 1:30pm. Carpool at 1pm	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>8</u> Sunday Worship- 9:30am Sunday School - 10:30	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u> Church office open 8am-12pm	<u>11</u> Bible Study- 9:30am Church office open 1-5pm Confirmation	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u>
<u>15</u> Sunday Worship with Rev. Diane House– 9:30am. The Sunday School Christmas Program during Worship. Poinsettia order deadline	<u>16</u>	<u>17</u> Church office open 8am-12pm Quilters - 8:30 - Noon	<u>18</u> Bible Study- 9:30am Church office open 1-5pm Confirmation 3:30pm	<u>19</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>21</u>
<u>22</u> Sunday Worship- 9:30am No Sunday School	<u>23</u>	<u>24</u> Church office open 8am-12pm OSL Christmas Eve Worship at 4pm. Grace Lutheran Christmas Eve Worship at 6pm	<u>25</u> No Bible Study Church Office Closed No Confirmation No Christmas Worship at OSL 	<u>26</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u>
<u>22</u> Sunday Worship- 9:30am –with Mr. Scott Brown No Sunday School	<u>30</u>	<u>31</u> Church office open 8am-12pm	MAY ALL YOUR TROUBLES DURING THE COMING YEAR BE AS SHORT AS YOUR NEW YEAR’S RESOLUTION!!			

***"Sharing God's Love With
All"***

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church
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Tuesday 8am-12pm
Wednesday 1-5pm

Church Secretary: Cheryl Daffinson
Church Office: 715-538-4334
Church E-mail: osluthwh@gmail.com
Church Website: oslwhitehall.org

Check us out on Facebook at: [Our Saviour's Lutheran Church of
Whitehall, WI](#) and



Merry Christmas
and
Happy New Year!

The text is surrounded by various festive icons including green stars, snowflakes, holly leaves, a Christmas tree, and a globe. There are also decorative green swirls and red and green dots scattered around the text.