

A person is silhouetted against a dark blue night sky, sitting on a dark hill. A tall, thin street lamp stands to the left of the person, with its light glowing brightly, casting a warm orange and yellow glow. A small, white crescent moon is visible in the dark sky above the person.

Keep awake

MARK 13:37



First Sunday in Advent December 2-3, 2023



AS WE GATHER

Welcome to the season of waiting! Not only is Advent a period of preparation for Jesus' first coming at Christmas, but this sacred season readies our hearts for Jesus' ultimate coming: when He, as King of kings and Lord of lords, returns in power on the Last Day, when every knee will bow before Him and every eye will see Him as the One who reigns in sovereign majesty over all things. Until the arrival of that glorious Day, we wait for Him in confident faith, strengthened by His Word and Meal, trusting that He has redeemed us by His cross and resurrection. With the expectant people of old, may our worship together lead us to say: "Our soul waits for the LORD; He is our help and our shield" (Psalm 33:20).

REGARDING COMMUNION

Advent calls our attention to Jesus—the Word made flesh who *came* among us, full of grace and truth (John 1:14)—who *comes* to us still in the bread of His Body and wine of His Blood in Holy Communion and *will come* again on the last day. As a congregation of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, we celebrate and receive Christ's Holy Supper for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with Him and one another. Our Lord invites to His table those who trust His words, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive and love as He forgives and loves us so that we might show forth his death and resurrection until He *comes*. ***Since Christian denominations have differing understandings of Holy Communion, if you are not a member of a Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod congregation and have not communed here before, we ask that you speak with the pastor or elder prior to communing with us the first time. Those not communing are invited to cross their arms over their chests and approach the pastor for a blessing during the distribution. Also, if certain factors prohibit you from partaking of regular wine, non-alcoholic wine is available in the center circle of the tray. If you would like to begin sharing this sacred meal with us on a regular basis, please ask the pastor for a time of faith instruction and formation.***

***If you are in need of a gluten-free wafer for Communion,
please let Pastor or an Elder know.***

Liturgical Color:

Blue is the color of water and sky, thus hope, for the baptized who know that Christ came down from heaven to earth and is coming again.

Visitors: We are glad you have chosen to be with us today! We would especially like to follow-up with you beyond today, so please take a moment to leave your best contact information in the guest books at each entrance/exit. **A cry-room for parents and children is just off from the front entryway, and there's a wonderful nursery downstairs at the end of the fellowship hall for you to make use of at any time.** Do you have any questions about anything here? Don't hesitate to ask one of the ushers or elders, or talk to the pastor.

Prelude

Please rise, as able.

The Lighting of the Advent Wreath

- P** You, O Lord, are our lamp:
- C** You turn our darkness into light. (Ps. 18:28)
- P** With You, O Lord, is the well of life:
- C** In Your light shall we see light. (Ps. 36:9)

The first candle is lit at this time.

All: O Lord, Creator of the universe, in this season of Advent, when the sun's light is swallowed up by the growing darkness of the night, You renew Your promise to reveal among us the splendor of Your glory, made visible to us in Jesus Christ Your Son—the Word made flesh who came among us in earthly life—full of grace and truth. Enable us anew to cling to Him in faith, hope, and love by the work of Your Holy Spirit among us, we pray—Amen.

(Prayer request cards will be collected as the hymn is sung.)

Invocation Hymn..... "Come, Thou Precious Ransom, Come" #350



1 Come, Thou pre - cious Ran - som, come, On - ly hope for
2 En - ter now my wait - ing heart, Glo - rious King and
3 My ho - san - nas and my palms Gra - cious - ly re -
4 Hail! Ho - san - na, Da - vid's Son! Je - sus, hear our



sin - ful mor - tals! Come, O Sav - ior of the world!
Lord most ho - ly. Dwell in me and ne'er de - part,
ceive, I pray Thee; Ev - er - more, as best I can,
sup - pli - ca - tion! Let Thy king - dom, scep - ter, crown,



O - pen are to Thee all por - tals. Come, Thy beau - ty
 Though I am but poor and low - ly. Ah, what rich - es
 Sav - ior, I will hom - age pay Thee, And in faith I
 Bring us bless - ing and sal - va - tion, That for - ev - er



let us see; Anx - ious - ly we wait for Thee.
 will be mine When Thou art my guest di - vine!
 will em - brace, Lord, Thy mer - it through Thy grace.
 we may sing: Hail! Ho - san - na to our King.

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Divine Service, Setting One

Confession and Absolution

The sign of the cross † may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

Confession and Absolution.....page 151

- P** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.
- P** If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
- C** **But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**
- P** Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.
- C** **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**
- P** In the mercy of almighty God . . . Lord Jesus Christ.
- C** Amen.

Service of the Word

Entrance Hymn "O Savior, Rend the Heavens Wide" #355 (1-3)



1 O Sav - ior, rend the heav - ens wide;
2 O Fa - ther, light from heav - en send;
3 O earth, in flow'r - ing bud be seen;



Come down, come down with might - y stride;
As morn - ing dew, O Son, de - scend.
Clothe hill and dale in garb of green.



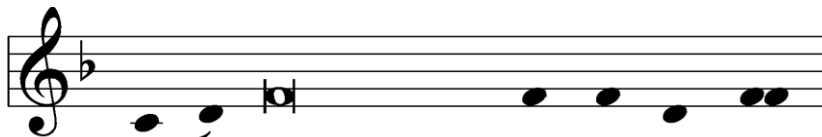
Un - lock the gates, the doors break down;
Drop down, you clouds, the life of spring:
Bring forth, O earth, a blos - som rare,



Un - bar the way to heav - en's crown.
To Ja - cob's line rain down the King.
Our Sav - ior, sprung from mead - ow fair.

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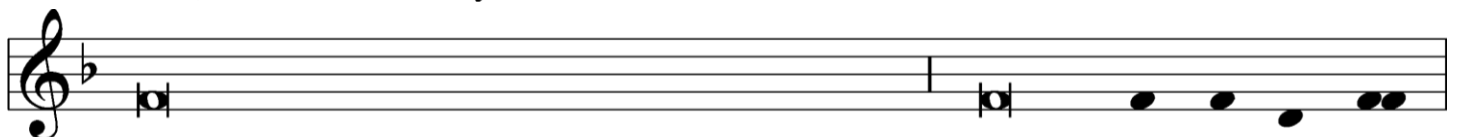
Kyrie.....pages 152-153



A In peace let us pray to the Lord.



B Lord, have mer - cy.



A For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



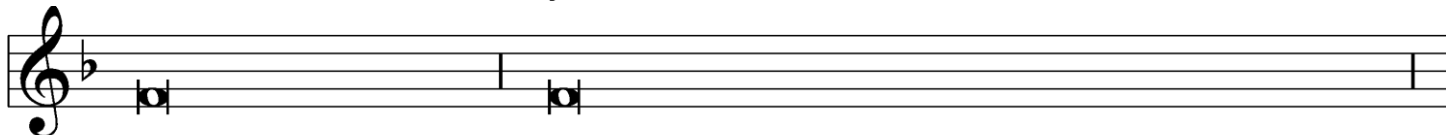
A For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God,



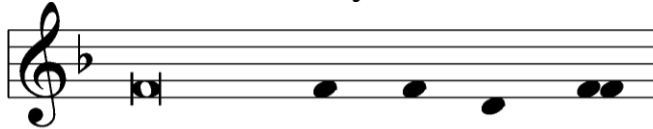
and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



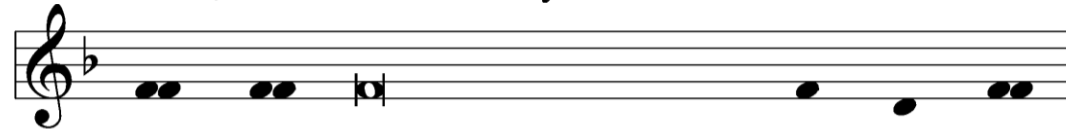
A For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise



let us pray to the Lord.



C Lord, have mer - cy.



A Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord.



C A - men.

Salutationpage 156



P The Lord be with you.



C And al - so with you.

P Let us pray.

Collect of the Day (*spoken in unison*)

Stir up Your power, O Lord, and come, that by Your protection we may be rescued from the threatening perils of our sins and saved by Your mighty deliverance; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Please be seated.

First Reading **Isaiah 64:1-9**

Oh that you would rend the heavens and come down,
that the mountains might quake at your presence—
as when fire kindles brushwood
and the fire causes water to boil—
to make your name known to your adversaries,
and that the nations might tremble at your presence!
When you did awesome things that we did not look for,
you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence.
From of old no one has heard
or perceived by the ear,
no eye has seen a God besides you,
who acts for those who wait for him.
You meet him who joyfully works righteousness,
those who remember you in your ways.
Behold, you were angry, and we sinned;
in our sins we have been a long time, and shall we be saved?
We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment.
We all fade like a leaf,
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
There is no one who calls upon your name,
who rouses himself to take hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us,
and have made us melt in the hand of our iniquities.
But now, O LORD, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.
Be not so terribly angry, O LORD,

and remember not iniquity forever.
Behold, please look, we are all your people.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Gradual *(spoken in unison)*

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion.

Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem.

Behold, your king is coming to you;
righteous and having salvation.

Blessèd is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

From the house of the Lord we bless you. *(Zechariah 9:9)*

Choir Anthem *"Of the Father's Love Begotten" (Wohlgemuth)*

Epistle Reading **1 Corinthians 1:3-9**

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus, that in every way you were enriched in him in all speech and all knowledge—even as the testimony about Christ was confirmed among you—so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Please rise.

Alleluia and Verse *page 156*



C Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Holy Gospel **Mark 13:24-37**

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the thirteenth chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

[Jesus said:] “In those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And then he will send out the angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of heaven.

“From the fig tree learn its lesson: as soon as its branch becomes tender and puts out its leaves, you know that summer is near. So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that he is near, at the very gates. Truly, I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

“But concerning that day or that hour, no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard, keep awake. For you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his servants in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to stay awake. Therefore stay awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or when the cock crows, or in the morning— lest he come suddenly and find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Please be seated.

Hymn of the Day “*My Lord, What a Morning* #968

Refrain

My Lord, what a morn-ing; My Lord, what a
morn-ing; Oh, my Lord, what a morn-ing, When the
stars be-gin to fall, When the stars be-gin to fall.

The image shows three staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff is labeled 'Refrain' and contains the melody for the first line of the hymn. The second and third staves continue the melody for the subsequent lines. The lyrics are printed below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across notes.

1 You'll hear the trum - pet sound, To wake the
 2 You'll hear the sin - ner cry, To wake the
 3 You'll hear the Chris - tian shout, To wake the

na - tions un - der - ground, Look - ing to my God's right
 na - tions un - der - ground, Look - ing to my God's right
 na - tions un - der - ground, Look - ing to my God's right
Refrain

hand, When the stars be - gin to fall.
 hand, When the stars be - gin to fall.
 hand, When the stars be - gin to fall.

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Sermon..... “Awake Early Morning, Watching the Stars”

Please rise.

Nicene Creed..... *page 158*

**I believe in one God,
 the Father Almighty,
 maker of heaven and earth
 and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
 the only-begotten Son of God,
 begotten of His Father before all worlds,
 God of God, Light of Light,
 very God of very God,
 begotten, not made,
 being of one substance with the Father,
 by whom all things were made;
 who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
 and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
 and was made man;
 and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
 He suffered and was buried.
 And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures**

and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.

And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.

And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayer of the Church

P We wait in hope for the Lord!

C He is our help and our shield.

P . . . who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.


C Amen.

Please be seated.

Offering

Please rise.

Offertorypages 159-160



C What shall I ren-der to the Lord for all His ben-e-fits to
me? I will of - fer the sac-ri-fice of thanks-giv - ing and will
call on the name of the Lord. I will take the cup of sal-
va - tion and will call on the name of the Lord. I will pay my

vows to the Lord now in the pres-ence of all His peo-ple, in the
courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Je - ru - sa - lem.

Service of the Sacrament

Communion Liturgypages 160-163

P The Lord be with you.

C And al - so with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

P It is truly good, right, and salutary . . . evermore praising You and singing:

Sanctus.....page 161

C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might:



Heav-en and earth are full of Your glo-ry. Ho - san-na. Ho - san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high - est.

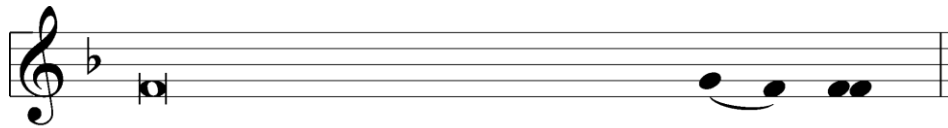
Prayer of Thanksgiving.....page 161

- P** Blessed are You . . . one God, now and forever.
- C** Amen.

Lord's Prayer

The Words of Our Lord

Pax Domini.....page 163



- P** The peace of the Lord be with you al - ways.

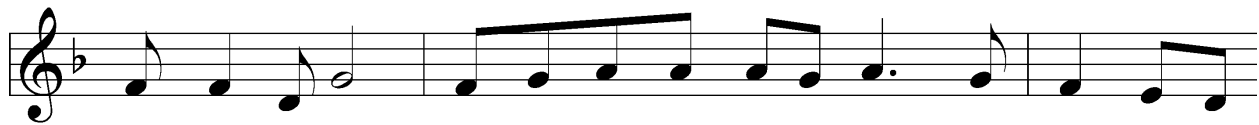


- C** A - men.

Agnus Dei.....page 163



- C** Lamb of God, You take a - way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a - way the sin of the



world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, You take a - way the



sin of the world; grant us peace.

Communion Distribution

Sit (until motioned to rise and proceed forward if going for Communion or a blessing).

Instrumental/Silent Reflection

(Sunday Only)

Communion Hymns "Once He Came in Blessing" #333



1 Once He came in bless - ing, All our sins re -
2 Now He gent - ly leads us; With Him - self He
3 Soon will come that hour _____ When with might - y
4 Come, then, O Lord Je - sus, From our sins re -



dress - ing; Came in like - ness low - ly,
feeds us Pre - cious food from heav - en,
pow - er Christ will come in splen - dor
lease us. Keep our hearts be - liev - ing,



Son of God most ho - ly; Bore the cross to
Pledge of peace here giv - en, Man - na that will
And will judg - ment ren - der, With the faith - ful
That we, grace re - ceiv - ing, Ev - er may con -



save us; Hope and free - dom gave us.
nour - ish Souls that they may flour - ish.
shar - ing Joy be - yond com - par - ing.
fess You Till in heav'n we bless You.

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Communion Hymn "O Living Bread from Heaven" #642



1 O liv - ing Bread from heav - en, How well You
2 My Lord, You here have led me To this most
3 You gave me all I want - ed; This food can
4 Lord, grant me then, thus strength - ened With heav'n - ly



feed Your guest! The gifts that You have giv - en
 ho - ly place And with Your - self have fed me
 death de - stroy. And You have free - ly grant - ed
 food, while here My course on earth is length - ened,



Have filled my heart with rest. Oh, won - drous food of
 The trea - sures of Your grace; For You have free - ly
 The cup of end - less joy. My Lord, I do not
 To serve with ho - ly fear. And when You call my



bless - ing, Oh, cup that heals our woes! My heart, this
 giv - en What earth could nev - er buy, The bread of
 mer - it The fa - vor You have shown, And all my
 spir - it To leave this world be - low, I en - ter,

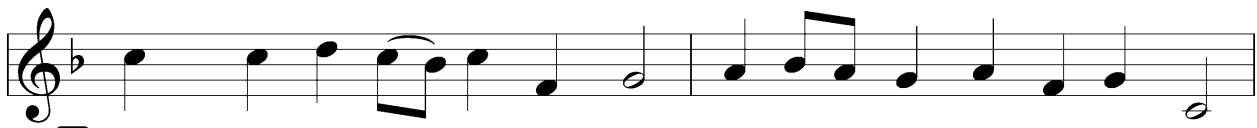


gift pos - sess - ing, With prais - es o - ver - flows.
 life from heav - en, That now I shall not die.
 soul and spir - it Bow down be - fore Your throne.
 through Your mer - it, Where joys un - min - gled flow.

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Please rise.

Post Communion Canticle..... *“Thank the Lord” page 164*



☐ Thank the Lord and sing His praise; tell ev-'ry-one what He has done.



Let all who seek the Lord re - joice and proud-ly bear His name.



He re-calls His prom - is - es and leads His peo - ple forth in joy



with shouts of thanks-giv-ing. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Post Communion Collect..... page 166

P Let us pray.

Gracious God, our heavenly Father. . .one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Benediction..... page 166

Sending Hymn..... *"The Advent of Our King" #331*



1 The ad - vent of our King Our prayers must now em - ploy,
2 The ev - er - last - ing Son In - car - nate deigns to be,
3 O Zi - on's daugh - ter, rise To meet your low - ly King,
4 As judge, on clouds of light, He soon will come a - gain



And we must hymns of wel-come sing In strains of ho - ly joy.
Him - self a ser - vant's form puts on To set His ser - vants free.
Nor let your faith - less heart de - spise The peace He comes to bring.
And His true mem - bers all u - nite With Him in heav'n to reign.

5 Before the dawning day
Let sin's dark deeds be gone,
The sinful self be put away,
The new self now put on.

6 All glory to the Son,
Who comes to set us free,
With Father, Spirit, ever one
Through all eternity.

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Dismissal (Bethlehem's Mission)

P Grow in Christ,

C Live in Love and Share the Faith!

Postlude

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Next week's readings:

O.T. Isaiah 40:1–11; Epistle: 2 Peter 3:8–14; Gospel: Mark 1:1–8

Attendance Saturday: 30
Total Offering: \$8,465.00
Home Use: \$8,115.00

Attendance Sunday: 57
Missions: \$0.00
Benevolences: \$350.00

Serving us today:

Elders.....Jack Easterwood (Saturday), Alan Miller, Willie Crespo (Sunday)
Musicians Gary Moege (Saturday), Rich Vanderburgh (Sunday)
Altar Committee.....Teresa Hillsman-Chair Lisa Gulick, Beryl Lindley
Susie Mills, Cindy Schnell, Samantha Schnell
Flower Committee Penny Humphrey (Chair), Cindy Smith

This Week's Schedule

Sunday	1:00 p.m.	Youth Catechesis
	4:00 p.m.	Progressive Dinner
Monday	9:30 a.m.	Exercise Class
	2:00 p.m.	Christmas Store
	2:00 p.m.	Moms and Tots at the Park
Tuesday	11:00 a.m.	Braille in Concordia
	2:00 p.m.	Christmas Store
Wednesday	9:30 a.m.	Exercise Class
	10:30 a.m.	Bible Study
	2:00 p.m.	Christmas Store
	5:30 p.m.	Faith Night Potluck/Discussion
	7:00 p.m.	Advent Midweek Service
	8:00 p.m.	Choir Practice
Thursday	9:30 a.m.	Pastor at Warrensburg Christian School
	1:00 p.m.	Games and Cards Group
	3:30 p.m.	Adult Faith Formation Class
	7:00 p.m.	Ezekiel Bible Study
Friday	9:30 a.m.	Exercise Class
	6:00 p.m.	Friday Family Fun Night
Saturday	5:30 p.m.	Worship
Sunday	9:15 a.m.	Christian Education
	10:30 a.m.	Worship

Prayers

For Sustenance, Healing, and Provision—We remember those who are dealing with illness, are homebound or in nursing homes, are undergoing and recovering from surgery, as well as going through hospitalization and rehabilitation: Charlie Becker, Mel Bockelman, Paula Brewer, Mark Brown, Ray & Mary Carstensen, Bob & Barbara Compton, Marion Droege, Rev. Tom Fatka (Tommy Fatka's dad), Wilma Gertz, Peggy Forstad, Winnie & George Goldsmith (Steve's parents), Karen Haase, Ken Hoemann,

Juanita Holcomb (Peggy Forstad's mother), Mary Johnson, Wanda Kreisel, Lloyd McCarter, Jeannie Peterson, Maryanna Savery, Rose Steitz, and & Joe Zeman.

For Military Members—We remember all service and support personnel who are deployed and stationed away from us and their families.

Prayer Requests & Spiritual Care—If you would like to make a prayer request, contact Pr. Joel or email the church office. Also, if you're feeling the strain, feel free to call or text Pr. Joel or contact your elder or the church office. We rely upon the Holy Spirit and his gifts in Christ during every time of uncertainty and can never be thankful enough for the gift of each other!

Special Days for Members This Week

Birthdays—Melvin Theroff-3rd, Barb Compton-5th, Katie Schumaker-8th.
Anniversaries—Jesse & Stacy Jenkins-2nd, Charles and Kaye Fair-8th.

Worship Services

Saturday Services start at 5:30 p.m. Sunday Services are at 10:30 a.m. Sunday Services are live on Facebook, YouTube and the webpage at [**blchurch.com**](http://blchurch.com).

Looking toward Advent!—Our overarching theme for the three Wednesday midweek Advent services this year—**December 6, 13, & 20**—will be *Light in the Darkness*. Our weekly themes will be: (1) *Darkness & Light*, (2) *Living & Dying in Darkness and Light* and (3) *Christ the Light Comes in the Dark*. Once again, we'll be using the beautiful and contemplative Holden Evening Prayer. Join us in our sanctuary on **Wednesday evenings at 7 p.m.**

Advent Booklets from Lutheran Hour Ministries and the Society of St. Andrew, in addition to a miscellaneous variety of devotionals and an *Every Moment HOLY 2023* Advent Journal, are available at the entrance by the mailboxes and the west/front entrance of the church building.

Sunday School and Christian Education

Children's Advent Devotions—Rebecca Holland will be holding Advent time here at Bethlehem for children (up to age 8) on **Wednesday's from 3:30-4:30 p.m.** Come learn with us many ways the Old Testament pointed to God sending His son Jesus for our salvation. We will have a story, coloring, snack and crafts. Parents should stay to learn alongside the children.

Sunday Proverbs Bible Study—*Oh, to love wisdom and live wisely!* How many times have you said and thought that? Join us for our Sunday Bible study—*Living (& Loving) Wisdom*—which explores the book of Proverbs through the lens of the Ten Commandments and Christ "the Wisdom of God" (1 Cor. 1:24. Pr. Joel is drawing

from David Coe's *Provoking Proverbs*. **We start at 9:15 a.m.** (in the conference room) and still have a lot of ground to cover!

Sunday School Christmas Preparation—Sunday School is currently starting at **9:00 am** to allow time to practice for this year's Christmas program. Join us **on December 17 at 10:30 a.m.** during the morning service for a presentation of "*Peace Came to Earth*" by the Sunday School children. *Seeking peace by our own efforts is an endless pursuit, but God instructs us with a peace that surpasses understanding. He gives us peace in five separate ways that meet our needs, perhaps before we even know them. This peace comes through the birth of Jesus. Using a five-point Christmas star as a metaphor, see the five ways Jesus brings us peace from God as the Prince of Peace.*

Let's join the LCMS Memory Verse Challenge! The Sunday School children will be challenged to learn these verses every week, and you can too! To help make this easy to do and remember, each Sunday I will post the weekly verse on the BLC Facebook page, provide a coloring page with the verse printed on it to take home (find this at the mailboxes), and post the verse in the **Band** app. Download this free app and join the group **BLC Sunday School**. I created a Group Challenge (Rehearse the weekly memory verse), for which you can check-in daily. I'll make a new challenge for each month. You can also visit lcms.org/worship/memory-verse-challenge to find the weekly verse.

Wednesday Bible—Join us as we start anew **at 10:30 a.m.** in the conference room—just in time for Advent and the new Church Year! We'll be looking at the Apocrypha and the time between the two Testaments.

Faith Night happens on the first Wednesday of every month (**December 6th is next**) with a simple shared potluck meal from **5:30 to 6:00** (or so), followed by a faith discussion **until 6:45**. Through the end of the year, we're focusing on *Keeping Every Moment HOLY* by reflecting on liturgies and prayers from this great new resource in book or app form (www.everymomentholy.com). Plan on coming for this beneficial time together on St. Nicholas Day!

Thursday Bible Study—Pastor Bertels' study on the book of Ezekiel meets in the conference room and is open to all who have the interest and time available. **It starts at 7 p.m.**

Music

Choir meets on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. for fellowship time and rehearsal from 7:00-8:00p.m. During Advent we will meet after the Wednesday service. We are always looking for new members! Please contact Peggy Forstad with any questions

about joining the choir.

Opportunities to Serve

Poinsettias—You still have time to purchase a poinsettia. The cost is **\$10.00**. If you would like to purchase one in memory or honor of someone or to the Glory of God, please complete the forms that are located at each entrance. **Make checks payable to Mary Martha Guild.**

Thrivent will be meeting on December 10 right after the service to prepare the sacks for the Children's Program which will be held on December 17.

The 50th year of Christmas Store has officially begun with Bethlehem being the host church. We have already started signing people up! We have also begun our quest for donations by sending out letters to 393 previous donors. You can donate in several ways: **Pay Pal Charities** has us in their list of charities, **Mail** a check to the Food Center or donate at **The Food Center.org** and click the donate button on the Christmas Store area. **We will also be needing help handing out the vouchers on December 13, 14, 15, 16. If you can help, please let me know! Sue Cottrill.**

Bulletin Board—A section of the bulletin board at the North entrance has been dedicated to our congregation members who are home-bound and in nursing homes. Please check it out to see how you can reach out to those who can no longer come to services regularly. Send a card or leave one in the pocket on the board to be delivered during a visit. If you have a picture of a loved one you can share, please send it to Rebecca to have it posted!

Fellowship

Exercise Class happens at **9:30 a.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays** in the Fellowship Hall. This class is low impact exercise open to anyone, men or women.

The Games and Card Group meets on **Thursdays at 1:00 p.m.** in the Youth Room downstairs. Everyone is welcome to come to this fellowship time.

The Quilting Group meets on the **second and fourth Tuesday** of the month from **9:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m.** (September through May). Anyone is welcome to help with this project. No special sewing skills are needed. Bring your own lunch or go out and grab something. If you have any questions, please contact Georgia Luker.

The Annual Progressive Dinner will be held on **Sunday, December 3, 2023**. We will start at **4:00 p.m.** with appetizers at the Crespo's home (1301 Countryview Lane) and then head to the VanWey's home for desserts (429 Grover). **Please sign up near the mailboxes to bring an appetizer or dessert.** If you need a ride or want to carpool please contact the church office.

Friday Family Fun Night has been moved to Friday, December 8 at 6:00 p.m. due to the holiday parade being on the 1st. The theme is “Christmas Around the World”. Bring a dish from another country that may be your heritage or something you just really like from somewhere else.

This and That

The 4th Annual Saint Paul Christkindlesmarkt—Join us on **Friday, December 8th from 4-8pm and Saturday, December 9th from 11am-7pm** for this festive, family-friendly, outdoor event on the campus of Saint Paul Lutheran High School in Concordia, MO. Enjoy traditional German Christmas Market food like Bratwurst, Kartoffelpuffers (*potato pancakes*), Pommes Frites (*french fries*), Crêpes, Mutzen (*fried donuts*), and more! Plus, traditional drinks including Kinderpunsch (hot *kids’ punch*), Heiße Schokolade (*hot chocolate*), Kaffee (*coffee*), Glühwein (*mulled wine*), Bier (*beer*), and more! Shop amongst the vendors offering their handmade goods and wares, listen to the live entertainment on the main stage, take a carriage ride around campus, plus activities for children, including a coloring contest, scavenger hunt, story time with the Christkind, and a visit from St. Nikolaus. **Some of our own Bethlehem members also have booths and are involved with entertainment, along with some of our own Warrensburg vendors! Come and support and celebrate!**

The Johnson County Resource Center happens every Tuesday and Thursday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the basement of First Presbyterian Church (206 N. College)—providing breakfast, a hot lunch, and a place to hang out. Housing assistance and case management are provided, as well as Medicaid signup. **Katy Trail’s Mobile Medical Unit provides health care on every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month.** Everything is free, so that is the place to be for those struggling with the basics!

2023 Elders

Willie Crespo (last name begins A-F) 660-679-8121, crespo6fam@gmail.com

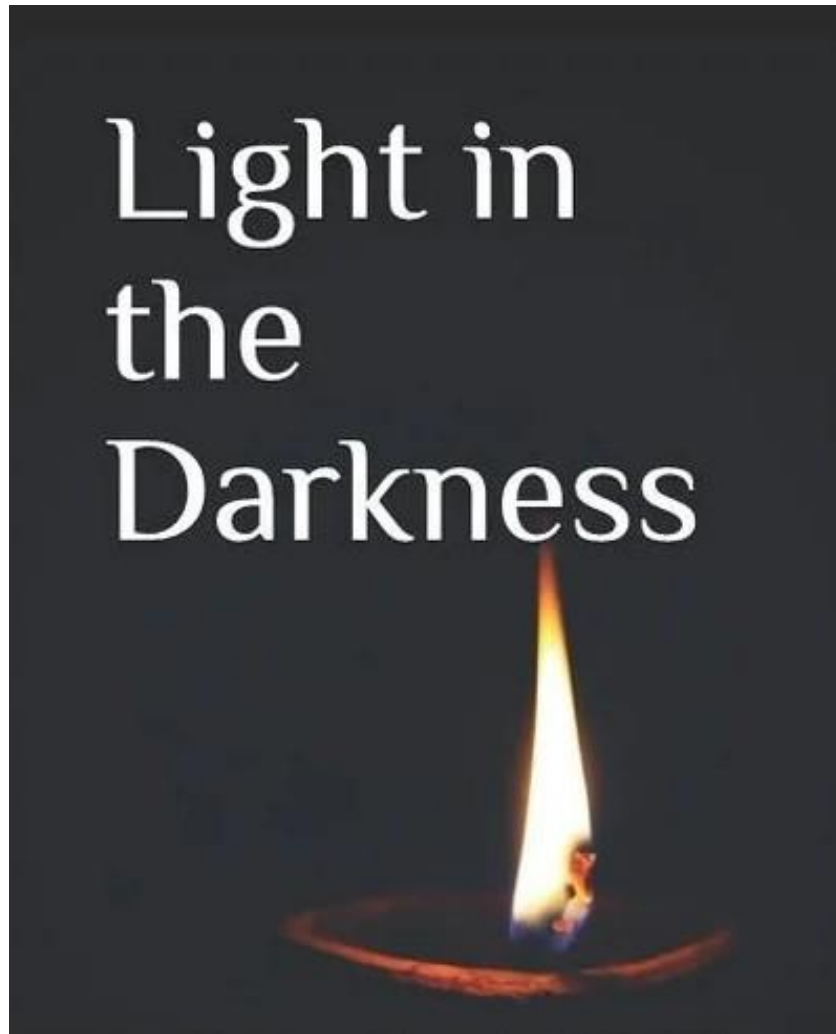
Ricky Bertels (last name begins G-K), 660-262-8080, rick1janice2@gmail.com

Jack Easterwood (last name begins L-O) 660-678-2045, easter.egg2380@gmail.com

Alan Miller (last name begins P-Z) 660-909-1764, alormiller@aol.com

Advent Services

7:00 p.m.



December 6- *Darkness & Light*

December 13- *Living & Dying in Darkness and Light*

December 20- *Christ the Light Comes in the Dark.*

**“O God of light, Your Word, a lamp unfailing,
Shall pierce the darkness of our earthbound way...”**

FRIDAY FAMILY FUN



Friday, December 8 at 6:00 p.m.

**Bring a dish representing a country
of your choosing**

Small Gift Crafts and Games



CHRISTKINDLESMARKT

Saint Paul Lutheran High School

Come visit the fourth annual German Christmas market, where you can enjoy authentic German food and drink, and support your local community by purchasing handmade goods and wares. There will be entertainment and activities for children of all ages. Official opening ceremony is at 6pm Friday.

 Friday, December 8th 4pm - 8pm
Saturday, December 9th 11am - 7 pm

 205 S. Main Street,
Concordia, MO 64020

 www.splhs.org/support/christkindlesmarkt/

 christmasmarket@splhs.org

Contact Information

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 607 N. Maguire, Warrensburg, MO 64093

Our Mission

· Grow in Christ · Live in Love · Share the Faith

Our Vision

To be a community of believers, disciples, and servants while we deepen our personal faith and reach others for Christ.



Rev. Joel R. Kurz

Tuesday & Thursday: 8am–5pm, Wednesday & Friday: 10am-5pm

Otherwise by appointment

Office: 660-747-6742

Cell Phone: 660-441-5710

Email: jkurz@blchurch.com

Website: www.blchurch.com Facebook: [blcwarrensburg](https://www.facebook.com/blcwarrensburg)

Office Manager

Cindy Smith

Monday–Friday: 8am-5pm

660-747-6742

csmith@blchurch.com

Congregation Life Facilitator

Rebecca Holland-VanWey

Wednesday: 1pm-5pm

Thursday: 1pm-5pm

rholland@blchurch.com

Bookkeeper

Teresa Hillsman

Tuesday: 9am-11am

Thursday: 9am-11am

thillsman@blchurch.com

Please note that Bethlehem Lutheran Church has a closed-circuit video system. This allows for live streaming on the web, viewing of the service on screens in the building and helps to enhance our security. Please see a trustee or an elder if you have any questions.