



Hope Ev. Lutheran Church

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WEEKLY NEWS ✠ December 25, 2022

✠ IN THE LORD'S HOUSE TODAY ✠

WELCOME! We are happy that you are worshipping with us. As Psalm 122:1 says, *"I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord!'"* Here in the Lord's House our Lord Jesus Christ is truly present in His Word and Sacrament to give us His gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation. The Sunday Divine Service is also being live-streamed on Hope's [Facebook page](#) and the service folder (bulletin) may be [accessed here](#). *"Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever"* (Psalm 136:1).

✠ THE WORD FOR TODAY ✠

THE LIVING AND LIFE-GIVING WORD OF GOD DWELLS AMONG US IN THE FLESH

In the beginning God created all things through His Word, His Son. But man fell into sin, and with man all creation was cursed. Therefore, God spoke His Word again, this time into the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary. The glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle of our human nature (Ex. 40:17–21,34–38). *"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us"* (John 1:1–14). The Son of God took on our flesh and blood and died on the cross in order that we might receive the right to become the children of God through faith. Baptized into Christ's body, we are made partakers of a new Genesis, *"the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit"* (Titus 3:4–7). In Christ, the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man has truly appeared.

✠ THE MUSIC FOR TODAY ✠

WE PRAISE YOU, JESUS, AT YOUR BIRTH (LSB 382)

In the late Middle Ages, just before the Reformation, the experience of ordinary Christians was quite different from today. They knew that they were supposed to go to worship and that holy things happened there, but most of the service was sung or spoken in Latin, not in the language of the people. While many of the words were the same as we use in the liturgy today, many worshipers could not understand them. At that time, there were just three German songs that were allowed to be sung by the people in worship. At Easter they could sing *"Christ Is Arisen"* (LSB 459). At Pentecost they were allowed to sing a verse that later expanded into *"To God the Holy Spirit Let Us Pray"* (768). And at Christmas they sang a verse that eventually became the first stanza of this hymn. This verse was sung right before the reading of the Christmas Gospel. Martin Luther used this popular religious song and the other six stanzas. It was likely sung for the first time in 1523. *"We Praise You, Jesus, at Your Birth"* thus became the first Christmas song of the Reformation, and began the Protestant heritage of Christmas songs and carols. (from *The Word in Song*)

✠ PREPARING FOR WORSHIP ✠

- **PREPARE** to receive the Lord's Supper by reviewing *"Christian Questions and Their Answers"* beginning on 329 in the front part of *Lutheran Service Book*.
- **REFLECT** on Psalm 2 in the front part of *Lutheran Service Book*.
- **PONDER** today's Hymn of the Day, *LSB 378, "Break Forth, O Beauteous Heavenly Light"*

HOLY COMMUNION is celebrated at each Sunday morning Divine Service, with both chalice and individual cup offered. Members of congregations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod may partake of the Sacrament trusting that in this Holy Meal the Lord Jesus Christ is present and gives His Body and Blood for our forgiveness, life, and salvation. Guests are asked to speak with the pastor prior to communing. Those who have a health concern with the alcohol in the cup are asked to speak with the pastor. If you are taking Communion, please fill out the attendance card by marking an "X" in the box by the names of those communing, and hand the card to an usher as you go to the Lord's Table.

✠ SCRIPTURE READINGS TO PREPARE FOR NEXT SUNDAY ✠

CIRCUMCISION & NAME OF JESUS (January 1, 2023)

- Old Testament: **Numbers 6:22–27** – The LORD gives His benediction to Aaron in order to put His name on His people.
- Psalm: **Psalm 8** – *"O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth."*
- Epistle: **Galatians 3:23–29** – In Christ we are sons of God through faith in Him.
- Holy Gospel: **Luke 2:21** – Our Lord is circumcised and given the name "Jesus."

✧ PARISH NEWS AND NOTES ✧

A VERY BIG THANK YOU TO ALL WHO PARTICIPATED in and purchased gifts for the “Christmas Giving Tree”. All gifts were delivered the week of December 11th to the perspective charities- Lydia’s House and Our Little Haven. Both organizations were most grateful for the donations. Merry Christmas!

TAXPAYERS TO THE STATE OF MISSOURI—both individuals and businesses—now have the unique opportunity to direct up to 50% of their state taxes to provide scholarships for qualifying children to attend a Lutheran school. The Missouri State Treasurer’s Office launched a new tax credit program called MOScholars. The program allows organizations like the Missouri District to convert these tax dollars into scholarships for qualifying students attending LCMS schools. By pre-paying up to fifty percent of your state tax liability that you will have to pay regardless, you are able to help provide Christian education for children. To date, taxpayers have worked with the District through MOScholars to provide scholarships for 23 students to attend Lutheran schools. There are currently 65 additional students awaiting scholarships for this school year. The deadline for helping these students is December 31. Directing taxes to Lutheran education through this program is as simple as completing an online form and pre-paying a portion of state taxes in the amount of the credit reservation. The Missouri District website (mo.lcms.org) contains more information on MOScholars, as well as the links to get the process started. Contact Leah Sieveking at the District office at 314-590-6211 or leah.sieveking@mo.lcms.org with any other questions. Thank you for your participation in MOScholars through the Missouri District.

SACRED MUSIC & TALK FOR THE CHRISTMAS SEASON... You can listen 24/7 to sacred talk and music for the 12 days of Christmas at issuesetc.org, lutheranpublicradio.org, Amazon Alexa, Google Home, TuneIn, Apple HomePod and the Lutheran Public Radio mobile app.

STEWARDSHIP BLURB FOR SUNDAY, December 25: **John 1:5 - “The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.”** Through all of our hardships, all of our sorrows, all of our pains and loneliness, Jesus’ light shines in the darkness, and we are not overcome. In the face of our sin, in the midst of our pettiness, against all our pride, Jesus’ light shines and illuminates our hearts and changes us, day by day, into a greater reflection of His likeness.

STEWARDSHIP AT HOPE ✧ November		
ATTENDANCE LAST WEEK Sunday: 99	FINANCIAL	
	November	Year to Date thru November
	<u>Actual</u> <u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual</u> <u>Budgeted</u>
	Income: \$26,343 \$24,076	Income: \$312,737 \$264,854
	Expense: \$41,638 \$23,571	Expense: \$286,162 \$269,799
THIS WEEK AT HOPE ✧ December 25, 2022		
SCHEDULE	SUNDAY SCHOOL HOUR OFFERINGS	WEEK’S CALENDAR
9:00 – DIVINE SERVICE Live stream at www.facebook.com/hopelutheranstl	2nd Floor: NO Sunday School	MONDAY
NO Coffee Hour	Basement: NO Sunday School	TUESDAY
NO Bible Study/ Sunday School	Basement Auditorium: NO Adult Bible Class	WEDNESDAY NO Kantorei rehearsal
NO Schola Rehearsal		THURSDAY
NO Youth Catechism Class		FRIDAY
		SATURDAY New Year’s Eve 4:00 Divine Service