



Hope Ev. Lutheran Church

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WEEKLY NEWS ❖ December 24, 2023

❖ 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 ❖

JOHN THE BAPTIZER POINTS EVERYONE TO THE MESSIAH

The coming of God in all His unveiled power at Mount Sinai was terrifying to the people of Israel. The thundering voice of the Lord puts sinners in fear of death (Deut. 18:15-19). God, therefore, raised up a prophet like Moses—the Messiah, the Christ. God came to His people veiled in human flesh. The skies poured down the Righteous One from heaven; the earth opened her womb and brought forth Salvation (Introit) through the blessed Virgin Mary, the mother of the Lord (Luke 1:39-56). The fruit of her womb is the very Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, the One whose sandal strap John was not worthy to loose (John 1:19-28). In Jesus we are delivered from fear and anxiety. In Him alone we have the peace of God which surpasses all understanding (Phil. 4:4-7).

❖ THE MUSIC FOR TODAY ❖

O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL (LSB 357)

This ancient advent hymn originated in part from the "Great 'O' Antiphons," part of the medieval Roman Catholic Advent liturgy. On each day of the week leading up to Christmas, one responsive verse would be chanted, each including a different Old Testament name for the coming Messiah. When we sing each verse of this hymn, we acknowledge Christ as the fulfillment of these Old Testament prophecies. We sing this hymn in an already-but not yet-kingdom of God. Christ's first coming gives us a reason to rejoice again and again, yet we know that all is not well with the world. So along with our rejoicing, we plead using the words of this hymn that Christ would come again to perfectly fulfill the promise that all darkness will be turned to light. The original text created a reverse acrostic in Latin: "ero cras," which means, "I shall be with you tomorrow." That is the promise we hold to as we sing this beautiful hymn.

❖ 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 111 in the front part of *Lutheran Service Book*.
- **PONDER** today's Hymn of the Day, LSB 357, "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

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 ❖

THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS (December 31, 2023)

- Old Testament: **Isaiah 11:1-5**—The rod of Jesse's stem.
Psalm: **Psalm 89:1-8**— "O LORD God of hosts, who is mighty as you are?"
Epistle: **Galatians 4:1-7**—The fullness of time.
Holy Gospel: **Luke 2:22-40**—The consolation of Israel—Simeon's song and Anna's thanksgiving for the Christ.



✠ PARISH NEWS AND NOTES ✠

OUR NEW BLUE BANNERS POINT TO JESUS as the coming King. The Root of Jesse banner, with a live shoot arising from the root, comes from Isaiah 11:10, “In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples – of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious.” Jesus descended from the line of Jesse and his son, David. In the second banner the door is partially open to reveal the Chi Rho (XP) symbol with a crown for the coming King. Jesus said, “I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture” (John 10:9).

VOLUNTEER CHURCH CLEANING: The Church Council will host a winter cleaning day on Saturday, January 13 from 9AM till 12 noon. The plan is to do some deep cleaning in and around the facility with special attention to the upper floors and sanctuary. Breakfast will be provided. Please mark your calendar and look for more details in the coming weeks. If you can attend, please RSVP to Bart Day at bart.day@lcef.org

END OF THE YEAR STEWARDSHIP: The Board of Finance wants to thank the congregation for your continued faithful financial support of our ongoing mission and work, including special contributions to the capital campaign. If you have not yet pledged to the campaign, we would ask you prayerfully consider this opportunity for sacrificial giving to improve our facilities. We encourage members to remember Hope in your regular giving, even if you are traveling at the end of the year. It is important that we receive all contributions for 2023 before the end of the year. Again, we thank you for stewarding the gifts given to you. The Lord will certainly bless.

THE LUTHERAN SOUTH BANDS WILL HOST *Big Band Swing* on Friday, January 12 from 6:00 - 10:00 p.m. The night will feature the local professional big band “The Ambassadors of Swing.” Tickets are available for \$30 each and include beer, wine, and hors d'oeuvres. Free swing dance lessons will be offered at 6:30 p.m. It is sure to be a fun evening as we raise money for the band to go on tour this spring! Get tickets at LSlancers.org/events

CALLING ALL MEMBERS OF HOPE! So far, we have received commitments from about 50% of our regular givers, achieving about 75% of our \$700,000 goal for the basement renovation. The Building Committee will base their recommendations to a January Special Voters Assembly meeting on the total committed. If you haven’t given your commitment, please welcome a letter and a phone call from the campaign team. Special envelopes for contributions by check are available in the narthex and church office and can be mailed to you upon request. Please note “Renewing for Life and Hope” in the memo line for proper recording of your contributions. Online options are available through the church website www.hopelutheranstl.org/giving and at <https://www.vancopayments.com>. Sign into the Vanco app and search for “Hope Ev. Lutheran Church”. Use the drop-down list to access Renewing for Life and Hope.

STEWARDSHIP BLURB FOR SUNDAY, December 24: **Philippians 4:6 - “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”** Paul puts two things in opposition to each other: anxiety and prayer. So, trade your worries for prayers! You have a Father who loves you and desires to hear your prayers and bless you.

STEWARDSHIP AT HOPE ✠ December 3 - 16					
ATTENDANCE LAST WEEK			FINANCIAL		
Sunday: 78			December 3 - 16		Year To Date through November
			Actual	Budgeted	Actual
					Budgeted
Income:			\$15,554	\$13,220	\$310,406
Expense:			\$30,983	\$22,123	\$282,252
					\$321,928
					\$293,779

THIS WEEK AT HOPE ✠ December 24, 2023		
SCHEDULE	SUNDAY SCHOOL HOUR OFFERINGS	WEEK’S CALENDAR
9:00 - DIVINE SERVICE	2 nd Floor:	MONDAY
Live stream at	Early Childhood Sunday School	9:30 Christmas Day Festal Divine Service
www.facebook.com/hopelutheranstl	Basement:	TUESDAY
No Coffee Hour	Primary - Junior High Sunday School	WEDNESDAY
No Bible Study/Sunday School	Basement Auditorium:	NO Kantorei rehearsal
4:00 - CHRISTMAS EVE FESTAL DIVINE SERVICE	Luther’s Large Catechism	THURSDAY
	Pastor Asburry	FRIDAY
		SATURDAY
		Pastor’s day off