



Hope Ev. Lutheran Church

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WEEKLY NEWS ✠ December 31, 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 ✠

THE SEED OF DAVID COMES TO HIS TEMPLE

A Rod has come forth from the stem of Jesse (Is. 11:1-5) – the Seed of David whose kingdom shall be established forever (2 Sam. 7:1-16). In the fullness of time, God sent forth His Son Jesus to redeem us from the judgment of the Law (Gal. 4:1-7). Now He is presented in the temple in fulfillment of the Law and revealed to be "a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel" (Luke 2:22-40). Christ has enlightened us in baptism, giving us to be adopted as sons of God and heirs of eternal life. Receiving the Holy Sacrament of His body and blood, we are prepared to depart this world in peace, for our eyes have seen the salvation of God in Him.

✠ THE MUSIC FOR TODAY ✠

The carol *Angels from the Realms of Glory* was written by Moravian James Montgomery. Montgomery had a sorted career in publishing, as a clergyman, and poet. This carol made its debut in 1816 and was commonly sung to a French tune. In the U.S. the common tune for this carol is *Regent Square* composed by Henry Smart. Smart was responsible for cultivating wonderful congregational singing in the churches he served in London even though he was blind. This tune was composed for a Presbyterian hymnal called *Psalms and Hymns for Divine Worship*.

✠ 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 89 in the front part of *Lutheran Service Book*.
- *PONDER* today's Hymn of the Day, *LSB 389*, "Let All Together Praise Our God."

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 BAPTISM OF OUR LORD— Jesus is baptized to fulfill all righteousness – in our place (January 7, 2024):

- Old Testament: **Joshua 3:1-3, 7-8, 13-17** – Israel crosses the Jordan and enters the Promised Land.
Psalm: **Psalm 45** – "My heart is overflowing with a good theme; I recite my composition concerning the King."
Epistle: **1 Corinthians 1:26-31** – Christ is our righteousness, our sanctification, and our redemption.
Holy Gospel: **Matthew 3:13-17** – Jesus is baptized to fulfill all righteousness for us.



✠ PARISH NEWS AND NOTES ✠

NEW CHRISTMAS BANNERS AND THEIR MEANING: Jesus is the *Rose of Sharon* (Song of Solomon 2:1) which is the same Hebrew word used in Isaiah 35:1, “The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.” In this passage the Lord prepares salvation for His exiled people, reminding us of how He has prepared eternal salvation for all people through *Christ’s Incarnation* (Chi Rho, XP) as a baby in a manger. The five petals of the rose also remind us of the five wounds on Christ’s hands, feet, and side during His crucifixion.

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](https://www.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 31: Luke 2:39 - “And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned ... to their own town of Nazareth.” The Law of God is good. Of course, it always shows us our sins, but that is good, too! We need to be driven back to the forgiveness of Christ. And the Law also shows us the truly blessed way to live. As Mary and Joseph found their joy in a godly life, so should we see the Law as a guide for Christian living and as the roadmap for saying thank you to the Lord for all His grace and mercy to us.

STEWARDSHIP AT HOPE ✠ December 3 - 16					
ATTENDANCE LAST WEEK Sunday: TBD		FINANCIAL			
		December 3 - 16		Year To Date through November	
		Actual	Budgeted	Actual	Budgeted
		Income: \$15,554	\$13,220	Income: \$310,406	\$321,928
		Expense: \$30,983	\$22,123	Expense: \$282,252	\$293,779
THIS WEEK AT HOPE ✠ December 31, 2023					
SCHEDULE	SUNDAY SCHOOL HOUR OFFERINGS		WEEK’S CALENDAR		
9:00 - DIVINE SERVICE Live stream at www.facebook.com/hopelutheranstl No Coffee Hour No Bible Study/Sunday School 4:00 - EVE OF CIRCUMCISION DIVINE SERVICE	2 nd Floor:		MONDAY		
	Early Childhood Sunday School		New Year’s Day-Church office Closed		
	Basement:		TUESDAY		
	Primary – Junior High Sunday School		WEDNESDAY		
		Basement Auditorium:	NO Kantorei rehearsal		
		Luther’s Large Catechism	THURSDAY		
		Pastor Asburry	FRIDAY		
			SATURDAY		
			7:00 – Epiphany Festal Divine Service		