



OUR REDEEMER MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
TO KNOW CHRIST AND TO MAKE HIM KNOWN

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DECEMBER 2025

FROM YOUR PASTOR

Signs and Symbols of Christmas Salvation

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

-Isaiah 7:14

Beloved in the Lord,

With the end of the Church year, we have been warned to look for the signs of the coming of the Son of Man. We have been warned that there will be signs in the sun, moon, and stars, in heaven and on earth that Christ is coming. I find it ironic, maybe not so coincidental, that during this same time, many people are decorating their houses for Christmas. I'm not sure how many make the connection or think it intentional that we are putting up all around us signs and symbols of the coming of Christ as we hear about them at the end of the Church year.

It does bother me more than a little bit, maybe more than it should, when houses have their Christmas tree and all their decorations out, lit, and on full display when we aren't even halfway through November yet. And they may not be trying to give us signs and indications of the coming of Christ, either His first coming or His second, but they are there.

We use all sorts of things to decorate for Christmas. I often think we take many of these decorations for granted, that we use them because "that's what we've always done" without thinking much about why we've always done it that way. We use, in church and in our homes, many traditional Christmas decorations, but these traditional decorations are not arbitrary. There are reasons, meaning, and purpose behind using them, and I believe that when we know, talk about, and teach the significance of these things we benefit all the more as we see them in our homes and we

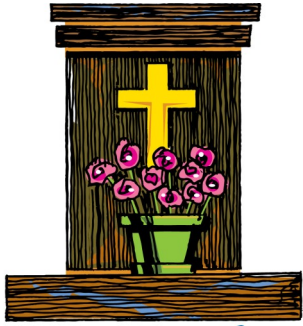
strengthen the tradition of handing down not only decorations, but their meaning and message to the next generation and those around us.

You might say that some things only have the meaning that we give them which might result in different meanings for the same thing. I don't mind that, especially when one thing can have many meanings that all point us to Christ in different ways. All the better we can see how it all points to Jesus. For example, red and green are traditional Christmas colors, but why? Maybe someone would say, simply, because those are the colors of Christmas, or because those colors go well and complement one another, which is all well and good. However, green is also the color of life and growth while red is also the color of blood. How wonderful it is that when we see the red and the green intertwined with one another, we can be reminded that this Christmas season, the birth, life, and blood of Christ is for our eternal life.

This Advent season, we will be taking our Wednesday services and considering three other common Christmas decorations, signs, and symbols and focusing on how they preach and teach the story of Christ for you. We will look at the Christmas Tree, the Star, and the Angels, and the role that each of them play in the Christmas story. Each of them serve as, not simply cosmetic, aesthetically pleasing decorations, but preachers of the birth of our God in the flesh to bear our sins, shed His blood and die upon the cross for our forgiveness, and rise again to new life for our eternal life in His perfect Kingdom

In anticipation for His coming,

Pastor Simeck



FROM THE Pulpit

12/3 | First Wednesday of Advent

Topic: A Tree from a Stump

Text: Isaiah 11:1-10

12/7 | Second Sunday of Advent

Topic: Serpents, Stones, and Salvation

Text: Matthew 3:1-12

12/10 | Second Wednesday of Advent

Topic: A Star to Light the Way

Text: Matthew 2:1-6

12/14 | Third Sunday of Advent

Topic: Coming As He Said

Text: Matthew 11:2-15

12/17 | Third Wednesday of Advent

Topic: Angel Announcers

Text: Luke 2:8-14

12/21 | Fourth Sunday of Advent

Topic: Fear and Faith

Text: Matthew 1:18-25

12/24 | Christmas Eve

Topic: A Visitor from Bethlehem

Text: Luke 2:15-17

12/25 | Christmas Day

Topic: Light and Hope

Text: John 1:1-14

12/28 | Christmas I

Topic: Life and Hope

Text: Matthew 2:13-23

12/31 | New Year's Eve

Topic: Back and Forth to Christ

Text: Luke 12:35-40

Organist / Accompanist



12/3 | Rev. Shane

12/7 | Angie Stueven

12/10 | Rev. Shane
Mary Sandbulte

12/14 | Rev. Shane

12/17 | Rev. Shane

12/21 | Mary Sandbulte

12/24 | Rev. Shane

12/25 | Rev. Shane

12/28 | Angie Stueven

12/31 | Rev. Shane



12/3 | Acolyte: Jacob Rieck

Crucifer: James Lafrentz

12/7 | 8AM: James Lafrentz

10:30AM: Joel and Elijah Simek

12/10 | Acolyte: Elliot Leonard

Crucifer: Jacob Rieck

12/14 | 8AM: Jacob Rieck

10:30AM: Lucas Birger

12/17 | Acolyte: Leah Eden

Crucifer: Kaden Ver Hoeven

12/21 | 8AM: Elliott Leonard

10:30AM: Joel and Elijah Simek

12/24 | 5PM: Acolyte Needed

12/25 | 9AM: Acolyte Needed

12/28 | 8AM: Leah Eden

10:30AM: Jacob Birger

12/31 | 6:30PM: Joel and Elijah Simek



December 7

None

December 14

None

December 21

None

December 28

None

If you'd like to provide flowers for the altar, please see the sign up sheet in the narthex.

Upcoming Non-Sunday Services

December 3—12 and 6:30pm
Advent Service- The Christmas Tree

December 10—12 and 6:30pm
Advent Service- The Star

December 17—12 and 6:30pm
Advent Service- Angels

December 24—5pm
Christmas Eve Lessons and Carols

December 25—9am
Christmas Day Divine Service

December 31—6:30pm
New Year's Eve Divine Service



ORLC CHRISTMAS CONCERT

December 7, 2025
3PM

Sioux Falls Lutheran School
Vaughn & JoAnn Meyer
Fine Arts Center

6715 S Boe Ln
Sioux Falls, SD 57108



HEALING HEARTS

Healing Hearts is a group of men and women who are at any stage of grieving the loss of a loved one. The purpose is to share in loss, get to know others, and find support within our church family. We meet monthly.

This month Healing Hearts will meet on **Thursday, December 4 at 10:00 a.m.** No need to RSVP. We'd love to have you join us!



Nativity Play

Practices:
December 14 during Sunday School
December 20 - 10AM-12PM

Performance:
Sunday, December 21 - 9:15am

SIGN UP HERE:



There are two ways to give tithes and offerings electronically!



Download the Vanco Mobile App—found on your phone's app store. This is the easiest way to give just once, or set up recurring gifts to Our Redeemer Lutheran Church.



TXT2Give—Text (833)610-0639 the amount you want to give and you will be linked to an easy one-time setup so it will be even easier the next time! Or—scan this QR code with your smartphone camera to get started!



Holiday Stress?

Try These Top 5 Tips for a Healthy Holiday Season

If the holidays sometimes leave you feeling overwhelmed and out of control, you're not alone. And if the Grinch has stolen your spirit and good intentions, try some of these tips to reclaim your ho-ho and stay happy and healthy.

1. **Keep up healthy habits.**

Make a pact with yourself during the holidays. Decide that you'll move more and do something active every day over the next three weeks. Take it a step further, and pledge to start the day with a healthy breakfast, limit the sweets and get at least seven hours of sleep each night. If you don't completely give up your healthy habits, you won't feel like you have to start over once the holidays are over.

2. **Beware of seasonal sweets.**

The holidays often dish up extra helpings of less-than-healthy treats. Try preparing healthy snacks that are ready to eat when the urge to snack strikes. If you're hosting a holiday party, challenge yourself to make delicious and healthier options.

3. **Stay active.**

Instead of beating yourself up about missing a workout, sprinkle some healthy activities into your daily routine. For example, if the weather isn't too frightful and you're working from home, ride your bike around your neighborhood during a lunch break. If dinner is going to be a feast, opt for a light lunch, then take a vigorous walk.

4. **Take time for yourself.**

Give yourself the gift of peace. If you need some downtime to recharge, declare a "me-treat" and do something that relaxes you. Try yoga, spending time in nature, or what ever you find peaceful. I sometimes just enjoy curling up with a good book in front of the fireplace.

5. **Make a plan for the new year.**

Your poinsettia's pooped and the gifts are all gone. Now what? It's a great time to reset for the new year – but don't go dashing through your to-do list too fast, or you might not stick to your plan. Lay out realistic, sustainable steps for the months ahead. For example, start a daily walking routine or sign up for S.A.I.L. Class.

Karen Morfitt, RN, ORLC Parish Nurse

(Information from the American Heart Association)

Soup and Pie Luncheon

Saturday, January 10, 11am-1pm

Free-will Donation

Variety of Soups

Hot Dogs

Variety of Pies



TO KNOW CHRIST AND TO MAKE HIM KNOWN

DECEMBER WORLD WATCH LIST COUNTRIES

MAURITANIA

Mauritania is staunchly Islamic and Christian activities are severely restricted, making it difficult for Christians to express their faith. For those who convert from Islam, it's almost impossible.

Christianity is viewed as a negative Western influence, and Christian converts face severe hostility both from the authorities and from their families. Apostasy is legally punishable by death, although there are no known cases of this in recent years – but the threat remains. Converts risk expulsion from the family home and loss of livelihood; they may even be forced to leave the country. The presence of Islamist extremist groups also constitutes a threat to those who leave Islam. Baptisms can only be carried out secretly but many converts are reluctant to do this, fearing the awful consequences of being discovered.

While visiting or migrant Christians from Western countries are largely left alone, evangelism is strictly forbidden and can lead to prosecution: Christian activities are restricted to designated places of worship. Most Christians in Mauritania are from sub-Saharan Africa and they can face discrimination in employment, because of both racial and faith-based discrimination. They face additional economic difficulties due to the government's 'Arabisation' policy, which leaves less room for foreign workers, especially Christian ones.

Although the growth of the internet and social media helps converts to connect with other Christians, this is still fraught with difficulty due to slow technological development in many regions as well as a lack of privacy within families.

- Please pray that believers will be able to find ways to meet together and grow in faith with a Christian community.
- Pray that God will overturn laws that forbid conversion from Islam, that all people will be able to follow the religion of their choosing.
- Ask God to protect His people from extremist

groups and maintain political stability in Mauritania.

BANGLADESH

Converts – whether from a Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist or an ethnic/tribal background – face the most severe restrictions, discrimination and attacks in Bangladesh. Fearing attack from extremists, they often gather in small house churches or secret groups. Churches that evangelize among the Muslim majority face persecution, but even traditional churches such as the Roman Catholic Church may experience attacks or threats made to their clergy. The 2025 World Watch List reporting period saw significant political turmoil in the country, as violent riots led to the resignation of the prime minister and an increase in extremist attacks on Christians, especially converts. Volatile times are always a special challenge for religious minorities.

Christians who belong to ethnic minorities can experience double persecution – first for their ethnicity, second for their faith. This year, members of the majority-Christian Bawm ethnic group have been killed, and many forced to flee, caught up in a complex conflict between the military and rival armed groups.

- Last year's riots and the breakdown of law and order led to many believers being attacked. Ask God to protect every Christian in Bangladesh, give them strength to stand firm in their faith, and to bring healing and comfort to the victims of attacks.
- Many believers in Bangladesh were impacted by a cyclone in May 2024. Pray for hope and restoration even as they deal with persecution and recovery from a natural disaster.
- Praise God for the Bangladeshi believers who continue to live as salt and light even though it puts them at risk.

Find more information at:

<https://www.opendoors.org/en-US/persecution/countries/>

**Members:**

Marge Dreesman	Larry Sroufe
Duane Genzlinger	James Streyle
Duane Hartmann	Rhoda Thomas
Don Hennies	Jeanne Toay
Ella May Kelly	Mary Warns
Louise Lafrentz	
Carole Lang	
Judy Meyer	
Mary Muchow	
George Sagissor	

Our Homebound Members

Betty Berry	Roberta Mathiason
Dan Clauson	Dorothy Oleson
Mary Clauson	Maxine Owens
Marge Dreesman	Larry Sroufe
Dorothy Dueis	Jeanne Toay
Cib Gaffer	Mariea Warns
Duane Genzlinger	Audrey Wintersteen
Ella May Kelly	

Serving in the Military

Joshua Bohling	Andrew Quam
William East	Matthew VanTassel
Curtis Furry	Tyler VanTassel
Jordy Martinez	Caleb Wosje
Luis Martinez	

Loved Ones:

Glenda; Mother of Jason Consoer
 Nicole; Aunt of Ashley Consoer
 Lorraine; Mother of Carol Daniels
 William, Father of Becky Dewitz
 John; Friend of Ken & Orlene Eichhorn
 Matt; Barb Ewoldt's Son
 Mark; Son of Bob Graham
 Pat; Friend of Bob Graham
 Chuck; Family of Ed & Jean Harmdierks
 Ruby; Ed Harmdierks' Sister
 Dan; Duane & Helen Hartmann's Son-in-Law
 Joan; AJ Holtz's Grandmother
 Dennis; Son of Phyllis Joyce
 Byron; Roberta Mathiason's Son
 Kolbe; Friend of Roberta Mathiason
 Randy; Karen Morfitt's Brother
 Joshua; Grandson of Bob & Marlene Nelson
 Jim; Son-in-Law of Donna Neumeister
 Craig; Brother of Nathan Sandbulte
 Susie; Daughter-in-Law of Helen Schauer
 Kathy; Sister of Julie Suter
 Gaylon, Audrey Wintersteen's Son-in-Law
 Arnie; Father of Missionary Barb Rebentisch
 Jim Wegehaupt; Former Member

Please Note:

Those on the prayer list will be removed after 3 months unless we are otherwise notified.



"HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?"

CHILDREN:

Sunday School—We have Sunday School for PreK-High School on Sunday mornings at 9:15AM. Our Sunday School teachers are:

Preschool: Mrs. Kristy Eden & Mrs. Kris Leonhardt
 5 yrs-2nd Grade: Mrs. Deb Huntsinger
 3rd-5th Grade: Mr. Bryan Eden
 6th-8th Grade: Mr. Tim Eden
 9th-12th Grade: Mr. & Mrs. Craig & Stephanie Eden

Kids 4 Christ—Mrs. Janelle Lafrentz, Mrs. Jody Rieck, and Mr. Derek Greenwaldt lead our children Kindergarten—5th grade at Kids 4 Christ (K4C) every 1st and 3rd Friday. A meal will be served at 5:30 p.m., followed by our K4C program. The program ends at 7:30 p.m.

MIDDLE SCHOOL YOUTH:

Catechesis Classes—We have catechesis classes every Wednesday during the school year from 6PM-7PM for 5th—8th graders except during Advent and Lent. Mr. Bryan Eden teaches the 5th grade class, and Rev. Brett Simek teaches the 6th-8th grade class. There is a church family meal before class at 5PM for anyone who may wish to eat at the church.

JUNIOR AND HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH:

Youth Group—Mr. and Mrs. Craig & Stephanie Eden lead our youth group on Wednesday evenings 6PM—7PM for 8th—12th graders, as well as monthly activities throughout the year for 6th—12th graders.

HIGH SCHOOL AND ADULTS:

Vocal Choir—Choir rehearsals are each Wednesday evening at 7PM (7:30 during Advent and Lent). If you are interested in joining choir, please speak with or email Rev. Shane—HShane101@gmail.com.

Handbell Choir—We meet each Tuesday at 6:45PM. If you are interested in joining the handbell choir, please contact Matt Nussbaum.

ADULTS:

Sunday Morning Bible Study—Sunday morning Bible study is led by Rev. Brett Simek each Sunday at 9:15AM. Join us in the Fellowship Hall downstairs!

Wednesday Adult Bible Study—We have Bible Study each Wednesday at 6PM except during Advent and Lent, led by Rev. David Morfitt.

Healing Hearts—Healing Hearts is a group of men and women who are at any stage of grieving the loss of a loved one. The purpose is to share in loss, get to know others, and find support within our church family. We meet monthly on the first Thursday at 10AM.

S.A.I.L. Classes—Parish Nurse Karen Morfitt leads our SAIL class, an exercise class focused on strength and balance every Monday and Thursday at 1:30PM.

SENIOR MEMBERS:

Senior Saints Bible Study—We meet the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month at 1PM.

Senior Saints Brunch—We meet at Perkins on 41st Street the second Thursday of every month at 9:30AM.

MEN:

Guys' Garage—Mr. Tim Goettsch leads the Guys' Garage group. They meet the first Monday of each month at 6PM. There are different activities each month.

WOMEN:

LWML—We have two LWML groups at ORLC. Evening LWML meets the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30PM. Ebenezer LWML meets the third Thursday of each month at 1:30PM.

Women's Bible Study—We meet the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of every month at 6:30PM.

ALL MEMBERS:

Volunteering—We are looking for people of all ages to help serve on Sunday mornings. We are looking for greeters, ushers, altar guild members, acolytes, and help running presentations. If you are interested, contact the church office!