

December 2024

# The Common Thread

Newsletter of Our Saviour's Lutheran Church

## MIDWEEK ADVENT SERVICES

December 4, 11, 18  
Meal 5-6pm  
Activity 6-7pm



This year we are trying something different for our Wednesday evening Advent gatherings. We will gather around a meal and then spend an hour celebrating the season together with an intergenerational activity.

**December 4th:** Caroling with the residents of the Good Sam

**December 11th:** Carols & Crafts: Come decorate your own nativity scene as we hear a Christmas story and sing together.

**December 18th:** Cocoa & Cookies Join us for a cookie exchange (bring 2 dozen cookies to share) and a night of cookie decorating for all ages.

*\*Other than cookie exchange cookies, all items will be provided for you\**

### WOMEN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY: DECEMBER 2ND AT 6PM

Ladies of all ages welcome to join us for a meal and Christmas Program. Donations will be collected for the food pantry rather than a gift exchange.

### CHRISTMAS CAROLING: DECEMBER 15TH AT 4-6PM

Meet us at the church as we carpool around town. Caroling concludes at Sheryl and Orville Kjelland's home for a potluck supper.

**CHRISTMAS  
CANDLELIGHT  
SERVICE**  
Christmas Eve, 5pm



## Your Gifts are Needed!

Can you help in one or more of these places?

- Communion Bread Bakers
- Sunday School, Connect, & Youth Teachers
- Meals for Youth
- Advent Meals
- Home Communion
- Council and Committee Members

### Notice:

Beginning in 2025, newsletters will be sent bi-monthly.

# From the Pastor's Office

What do you want for Christmas?

The question is one that, as an adult, is almost always met with an exhausting groan of “I don’t know.” My siblings and parents have no idea what to ask for, my husband has no idea what to put on his list, and if I’m honest, I really don’t need any more things, so I am never really sure how to answer. Which is probably part of the problem with the question - Christmas gifts are *things*. They are almost always tangible items that are able to be wrapped up in wrapping paper or gift bags to be set under the tree and then unveiled on Christmas. But I really don’t need more things.

Now as a child, I relished in the question. I wanted lots of things for Christmas. My kids also want all the things for Christmas. They have circled about 300 things in the toy catalogs that have arrived in the mail, as if Christmas is some sort of free vending machine of toys and electronics.

But as an adult, I just really don’t know what I want to add to the Christmas lists. Perhaps because the things I really long for, aren’t gifts that can be wrapped or in some cases, even possibly given to another person. I want a long nap. I’d like a whole day off where no one needs anything from me. I’d like a tropical vacation away from these painfully low temperatures. I’d like someone to come to my house and meal plan, grocery shop, and prepare the meals for the week. Any volunteers? No? Okay. Then I’ll settle for world peace.

Truly the things my heart desires are not things that can be given to another person. I desire hope, light, joy, and rest. I desire a fair and equitable world, free of hunger, suffering, and greed. I desire deep seeded contentment and communal care and joy of our neighbors. They are not things that can be wrapped up in a bow and handed from one human to another. And yet they are things that we are told can be wrapped in swaddling cloths and handed to all of humanity in the form of a helpless infant.

This Advent, as we light the candles on our wreaths, we light candles for hope, joy, love, and peace. We pray for these gifts to come into the world, trusting that it is only through Jesus that any of these things can really be given. Perhaps, it is in the lighting of these candles and the coming together for worship that we can give each other the gifts that our hearts long for - for the hope, joy, love, and peace that world yearns to receive. And perhaps, we can help give glimpses or moments of those things to our neighbors this season through our faithful worship and service of one another, because if you are anything like me, those are what you really want for Christmas.

-Pastor Kayla



## Home Communion Volunteers

In preparation for Pastor Kayla to be on parental leave this spring, she is hoping to train and lift up a handful of members who would be willing and able to bring communion to our homebound or hospitalized members in her absence. If you are interested in being trained for this important ministry, please sign up on the clipboard in the narthex or call the church.



## **EASTERN NORTH DAKOTA SYNOD**

**ENDOWMENT**

The Eastern North Dakota Synod Endowment consists of six endowment funds. Investment in these endowment funds supports the mission and ministry of congregations, the synod, and ministry partners, as well as providing robust accompaniment for rostered ministers. The Eastern North Dakota Synod Endowment Funds will ensure robust and thriving ministry for generations to come. Would you consider giving to one of these funds this holiday season?

### **Sustaining Endowment Fund**

Gifts to the Sustaining Endowment Fund will support the synod mission plan. All undesignated gifts to the Eastern North Dakota Synod Endowment will be directed to this fund.

### **Vital Leaders Endowment Fund**

The purpose of the Vital Leaders Endowment Fund is to sustain rural ministry and enhance the quality of leadership for our pastors and deacons.

### **Native American Ministry Endowment Fund**

This endowment will ensure sustained, robust synod funding for existing Native American Ministries in the synod and will provide support for emerging ministries in the future.

### **Resurrection Endowment Fund**

Disbursements from the Resurrection Endowment will support new and renewing ministry initiatives across the Eastern North Dakota Synod.

### **Holy Innovations Endowment Fund**

The Holy Innovations Endowment will encourage ministry vitality and inspire congregations and ministries to think boldly and innovatively about being the church in the world today. Grants from this endowment will support innovation and experimentation in congregations and ministries.

### **Campus Ministry Endowment Fund**

The Campus Ministry Endowment will ensure sustained, robust synod funding for existing Campus Ministries in the synod and will provide support for emerging ministries in the future.

#### **How to Give:**

Online: <https://www.eandsynod.org/endowment-funds>

By Check: Checks may be remitted to the Eastern North Dakota Synod, with the specific fund listed in the memo line. Mail to:

Eastern North Dakota Synod  
PO Box 2019; Fargo, ND 58107

# Council & Committee Reports

## Outreach

The outreach committee is heading up the Thanksgiving meal that will be served at Our Saviour's this year. Thank you to everyone who donated supplies and their time to make that meal happen.

The food pantry has received many monetary donations this year which has made it possible to purchase food items that are not donated but are needed or in high demand. We want to thank the youth for their work in collecting food during their trick or treating event this Halloween - it was so great to see the shelves so full! For Advent this year, we will be having a calendar with each day from the 1st of December to the 25th. Each day will have a suggestion of an item the food pantry is in need of that people can purchase as part of their Advent preparations. All items can be dropped off at the food pantry after the 1st of the year, helping to stock the shelves as we head into a new year! Instead of a gift exchange during the Ladies' Christmas party this year, we are also asking all attendees to donate an item to the food pantry.

The outreach committee is always looking for more members and volunteers for the food pantry - come join us!

-Sue Phelps, Patty Dahlen, Jenny Holand, Linda Seim



## Annual Meeting Notice

Our annual meeting will be held January 19th, 2025. All active members (those who have communed or financially given in the last 2 years) are encouraged to attend. A potluck will follow the meeting.

## Financial Snapshot

*as of November 30th  
submitted by Treasurer, Dori Carlson*

### **2024 Income**

\$192,009.58

### **2024 Expenses**

\$190,110.17

*Please turn in all giving for 2024 before December 31st  
to be counted as part of your offering for the year.*

Financial giving reports will be generated and mailed to all giving units by February 1st. If you need a number prior to February, you can inquire by calling the church office, but paper reports will not be mailed until all reports have been processed.



Thank you to all our volunteers who decorated the church for the Christmas season!



## Poinsettia Order Form

To order a poinsettia please cut off and return this form to the church office.

POINSETTIA  
ORDERS



Join in the holiday season by donating a poinsettia to be used to decorate the church. Anyone wishing to sponsor one of these poinsettias, please fill in the form below.

The price for a poinsettia is \$30.00. Your poinsettia can be given as a memorial or in honor of someone, or as a gift to the church.

This form, along with your check, can be dropped in the collection plate or brought to the church office.

Please designate my poinsettia: (please print)

In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

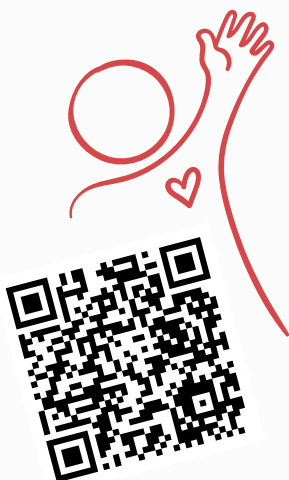
In Honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

Gift: \_\_\_\_\_ Attached is my check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Given By: \_\_\_\_\_

(Please return form by Sunday December 15<sup>th</sup>)

# Youth and Family News



## Volunteers Needed!!

We are looking for volunteers for January - May for the following positions with our older youth programs:

*Drivers for service projects/fieldtrips*

*Meals*

*Youth Group Assistants*

Sign up by following this link! Thank you!



## CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

**December 15th, during Sunday  
worship**

*\*practices December 8th, at 9:30am and during  
worship Sunday school time and December 14th.*



## YOUTH GROUP CHRISTMAS PARTY

**December 18th, 7pm**

Snacks and Games provided  
Bring a \$5-10 gift to exchange.

*Youth Programs will be on break for Christmas through the New Year.  
Sunday School resumes January 12th. Connect resumes January 8th.*



## Contact Us

Pastor Kayla: [pastorkaylahill@gmail.com](mailto:pastorkaylahill@gmail.com)  
Pastor's Cell: 701.226.1684  
Margaret (office): [oslcp@polarcomm.com](mailto:oslcp@polarcomm.com)  
Website: [www.oslcparkriver.com](http://www.oslcparkriver.com)

