

**Wilson Lutheran Church  
401 310<sup>th</sup> Street  
Wilson WI 54027  
Address Service Requested**

**Mission Statement  
Gathered. Renewed. Sent**

**We are:  
Gathered by the Spirit.  
Renewed by the Word.  
Sent to Serve**

## *December, 2023, Newsletter for Wilson Lutheran Church*



*Wilson Lutheran Church  
401 310<sup>th</sup> Street, Wilson, WI 54027  
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Pastor Email: [PastorBob@wwt.net](mailto:PastorBob@wwt.net)*

*Cover Picture by Pastor Doug Brandt*



Advent, Christmas and Epiphany blessings to you from Bishop Laurie Skow-Anderson, Synod Ministers, Elizabeth Bartsch, Sara Villarreal Bishop, Diane House, Lidix Montoya, Randy Olson, Laura Ramlow

## Mary the Brave: Mary the God Bearer

As a young pastor and working mom, I struggled with the challenges of balancing work and home life, often while carrying a child in my womb, arms, on my hip, in a front or back baby pack, or car seat. Now my children are adults, and I have the joy of watching them carry my grandchildren. They do it differently than I did, their car seats are much nicer than the ones we had, but like us, they carry their children with much love.<sup>1</sup> I still carry my adult children and grandchildren and will always carry them, in my heart with much love. This Advent and Christmas season I'm reflecting on Mary, the God bearer. (In Greek it's Theotokos<sup>2</sup>.) Mary carried Jesus. Like all parents she carried her child with love, but she is also the God bearer. It was a brave thing Mary did to bear God into the world.

To love is a brave thing. It is a brave thing to become a parent. Mothers put their own lives at risk bearing a child in their womb and giving birth. It requires a measure of bravery for parents to bring a child into this world filled with the bad news of climate disasters, gun violence, war, political upheaval, racism, food/water insecurity, and escalating health and higher education costs.

History has painted Mary to be quiet, meek and mild, submissive to God's will, but a closer read shows us that Mary was brave. Mary was neither meek nor superhuman.<sup>3</sup> She had grit. She was faithful, courageous, strong and brave. Most of all, she was human. Her encounter with the angel Gabriel, the messenger of God made her brave. She knew that her pregnancy was dangerous and she could die giving birth. She also knew that as an unmarried teenaged mother it would cause upheaval in her family and community. She would give birth to Jesus during Roman occupation, a time of political unrest. Mary was *brave*. Her encounter with the living God made her brave

Her encounter with God gave her bravery and the faith to see that if God was calling her God would also protect her. It revealed to her that God chooses the people on the margins, those overlooked and underestimated. Bearing God in the world was to bring good news and hope to those oppressed. May Mary, the God Bearer, inspire us all to be brave!

This Advent and Christmas season, I invite you to be Theotokos, God Bearers. I invite you to carry the good news of Christ's birth, life, death and resurrection to all those we meet on this journey of life and the love of Jesus in your hearts always. Bishop Laurie Skow-Anderson

*Luke 1: 26ff In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you..." "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, ... the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God... For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.*

<sup>1</sup> Robert Munsch, *I'll Love You Forever*, Firefly Books (September 1, 1995)

<sup>2</sup> Since the 3rd century, Christians had referred to Mary as theotokos, "God-bearer." The first documented usage of the term is in the writings of Origen of Alexandria in AD 230. [Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God | uCatholic](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Mary the Brave: Neither Meek nor Superhuman - CBE International](#)

## **Anticipation, Waiting: The Answer**

*"How long, O Lord?" (Psalm 13:1)*

Anticipation is a word we hear a lot during Advent. It's a word that can bring with it anxiety, fear, and despair. Perhaps we're anxious about the outcome of a medical test, the success of a surgery, or the health of a loved one. It may be the fear of losing a job and despair over finding a new one or just the uncertainty of the future for our children with all the turmoil in today's world. When we experience those feelings we respond in prayer, as did the psalmist, with the words *"How long, O Lord?"*

Anticipation can also be that joyful longing for things we hope for. At this time of year, it's often the anticipation on holiday events – Christmas concerts, live theatre, our favorite old time (black and white) movies on television. How about *Miracle on 34<sup>th</sup> Street* or *the Christmas Story* for one ("your gonna' shoot your eye out kid"). But most of the joyful times are more personal like seeing family and friends who may have been absent from our everyday lives, gathering around the table for holiday meals, or the annual Christmas baking frenzy tradition.

One thing about anticipation, whether it carries with it anxiety or joy, the common denominator is waiting. It's perhaps the hardest thing human beings have to do. Whether we wait stressed out, worried sick, or in joyful anticipation, we wait.

We don't like to wait long either. The less we have to wait the happier we are. Yet Advent is that time of waiting, and Christ admonishes us to be alert at all times; not to let our hearts be worn down by the worries – the anxiety, fear and despair - of the world. Rather, we are told to joyfully anticipate the coming of God's kingdom.

God answered the prayer of God's people, *"How long, O Lord?"* with the birth of his Son, the birth we celebrate and give thanks for on Christmas Day.

Because God answers our waiting, our Advent anticipation is not colored with anxiety, fear, or despair. That is so because we are children of God who loves us so much that God sent his Son to be with us always; not to judge us for our sins, but to save us from them; not to lead us to death, but to bring us to eternal life; not to add to, but to relieve us from our anxiety, fear, and despair with words of hope, peace, and joy.

Because God is the answer to our waiting, it is the second coming of his Son for which we also wait in joyful anticipation. We wait for the time when all our anxieties, all our fears, and all our despair will be banished from a world filled with war, violence, and evil of every kind; the time when the darkness of this world will be overcome by the light of Christ.

It is this for which we obediently and patiently wait, joyfully anticipating the coming again of our Lord and Savior. He came once and promises to come again. It won't be quick enough to suit us, but we're just going to have to wait. He will come again, in God's own time, to be the answer to our waiting; the answer to our prayer, *"How long, O Lord?"*

May the peace of Christ be with you. Pastor Bob

*(Modified and reprinted from the December 2015 newsletter.)*

## **PREPARING FOR WORSHIP**

December 2023 – Seasons of Advent and Christmas

### **Sunday, December 3 – Advent 1**

- ❖ Liturgy: Evangelical Lutheran Worship
- ❖ Color: Blue
- ❖ Holy Communion
- ❖ Readings: Isaiah 63:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; 1 Corinthians 1:3-9
- ❖ Holy Gospel: Mark 13:24-37: Jesus encourages his followers to look forward to the day when he returns in power and glory to end all suffering.

### **Sunday, December 10 – Advent 2**

- ❖ Liturgy: Evangelical Lutheran Worship
- ❖ Color: Blue
- ❖ Readings: Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; 2 Peter 3:8-15a
- ❖ Holy Gospel: Mark 1:1-8: The Gospel of Mark does not begin with a story of Jesus' birth but with the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord.

### **Sunday, December 17 – Advent 3**

- ❖ Liturgy: Evangelical Lutheran Worship
- ❖ Color: Blue
- ❖ Holy Communion
- ❖ Readings: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
- ❖ Holy Gospel: John 1:6-8, 19-28: John's gospel describes Jesus as the "light of the world." John the Baptist is presented as a witness to Jesus, one who directs attention away from himself to Christ, the true light.

### **Sunday, December 24 – Christmas Eve**

- ❖ Liturgy: Evangelical Lutheran Worship
- ❖ Color: White
- ❖ Holy Communion
- ❖ Readings: Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96; Titus 3:4-7
- ❖ Holy Gospel: Luke 2:1-20: God's greatest gift comes as a baby in a manger. Angels announce the "good news of great joy" and proclaim God's blessing of peace.

### **Sunday, December 31 – Christmas 1**

- ❖ Liturgy: Evangelical Lutheran Worship
- ❖ Color: White
- ❖ Holy Communion
- ❖ Readings: Isaiah 62:10-62:3; Psalm 148; Galatians 4:4-7
- ❖ Holy Gospel: Luke 2:22-40: Luke's narrative continues with stories that emphasize Jesus' connection to Judaism. His family is devout in its observance of the law, and Jesus himself is recognized as one who will bring glory to Israel.

## MISSION STATEMENT

GATHERED – RENEWED – SENT

Gathered by the Spirit. Renewed by the Word. Sent to Serve.

**Pastor's Office Hours:** Pastor Bob may be reached at the church office, 715-772-3150, Wednesday through Friday, and Saturday morning. In the event of an emergency or hospitalization, he can be reached at 715-235-4900 (home), 612-270-3838 (cell), or by email at [PastorBob@wwt.net](mailto:PastorBob@wwt.net).

**W/ELCA Meetings:** The next regular meeting will be held Thursday, November 9. Pastor Bob will lead a Bible study from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. (men and women are welcome to attend), followed by a business meeting. Monthly meetings will be held the second Thursday of each month. All women of the church are invited to attend.

### **W/ELCA November Meeting Minutes:**

Opened with prayer

President Tracy Davis called meeting to order at 10:54 AM

6 members present, Mary Brandt, Janet Brandt, Sharon Bowell, Tracy Davis, Louanne Anderson, Karen Esanbock

Secretary's report read. Motion by Sharon, second by Janet to approve, motion approved.

Treasurer report read. Balance of \$3750.45 with \$34.78 cash from coffee and cards. Motion by Louanne, second by Karen to approve, motion approved.

### Old Business:

1. Advent Brunch. Flyers placed in Narthex and Fellowship Hall and sent in newsletters. Sharon will get the OJ, plates, napkins, cups and coffee. Tracy will get the milk. Tracy, Janet and Louanne will help set up.
2. Prayer Chain. Mary has the signup form ready for distribution in bulletins and newsletter. Folder will be placed in narthex to collect forms. Mary will compile lists.
3. Distribution of funds. Sharon reported meeting offering can be submitted quarterly. Decision made to give total meeting offering amount collected to W/ELCA synod. After discussion, motion made by Karen, second by Sharon to distribute \$3250.00, motion approved. Motion by Tracy, second by Janet to distribute funds as follows: Malawi - \$1000, Katie's Fund - \$200, W/ELCA Thank Offering - \$50, Staying Put - \$300, SV Cancer Fund - \$300, Stepping Stones in Menomonie - \$400, each of the 5 Food Pantries we support - \$200 each. Motion approved.
4. Discussion regarding meeting changes for the calendar year tabled until December.

### New Business:

1. Woodville Legion is accepting referrals for Thanksgiving Dinner supplies.
2. Sharon informed the group regarding the Northwester Newsletter from the W/ELCA Synod she receives via email. She can forward to members if requested.

Motion by Mary, Second by Louanne to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 1145 AM

Next meeting December 14 following Bible Study at 9:30 AM

Closed with the Lord's Prayer

Submitted by Karen Esanbock, secretary

**Wilson Council:** The next regular meeting is scheduled for 12:30 p.m. Thursday, December 14. All members of the church are welcome to attend.

**November 9 Council Meeting Highlights:** (Complete minutes are available in the church office.)

- Bids for the parking lot are still in process.
- Pastor Bob presented the council member term update. Jerry Glampe and Sharon Howell agreed to a second term on council, Barb Knopps agreed to be on the ballot for the secretary position. There will be two openings for trustee positions, Sherry Ellefson is the nominating committee.
- Thanksgiving meals are available for those in need through the Woodville American Legion, contact Pastor Bob.
- We will do Virtual Christmas Poinsettias at \$10.00 each with proceeds going to the local food pantries. Barb Lamb will order eight real Poinsettias for the stand.
- The Christmas Tree will be put up and decorated on Thanksgiving.
- Thank you, thank you, thank you Tory Timm for all you are doing for the Sunday School children. You are very much appreciated!
- The annual meeting will be on January 28 after services with potluck following.
- Beginning December 3, the Green Jug will be set out during Advent with proceeds going to ELCA Good Gifts Program.

**Tuesday Community Supper:** St. Mary's Church will be serving the Tuesday Community Supper from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 5th in the Fellowship Hall at Gethsemane. The menu is: ham and potato soup, bread, fruit and a dessert bar. Please come and enjoy the company of your friends and neighbors.

The Tuesday Community Supper is served the first Tuesday of the month at Gethsemane Lutheran Church, 1350 Florence Street, Baldwin, Wisconsin. This is a free meal open to anyone in the community. Area churches, businesses and organizations take turns preparing and serving good nutritious food.

**Food Pantry Support:** Thank you for your continuing support of our hunger ministry. Your contributions are making a difference. The food pantry box in the narthex was again filled. November contributions went to the Baldwin Food Shelf. December contributions will go to Glenwood City. The elimination of the federal FoodShare Funding program has impacted our senior citizens and those with disabilities, which means local food shelves are in even greater need of our support. Please help our neighbors in need.

**ASSISTING WITH WORSHIP**

Month	Altar Care	Communion Assistant	Ushers	Sundays
December	Rex and Janet Brandt	<b>HELP NEEDED</b>	Barb and Charlie Brandt	5 Sundays Christmas Eve

**UPCOMING WORSHIP EVENTS – 2023**

DATE	Time	EVENT
December 20	7:00 p.m.	Service of Healing and Hope
December 24	3:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve Worship
December 31	9:00 a.m.	Service of Lessons and Carols

**ADVENT POT LUCK BRUNCH**

Don't forget the Advent Pot Luck Brunch on Sunday, December 3, immediately following worship. Join us for GREAT food and fellowship as we begin the Season of Advent.

### ACOLYTE and READER SCHEDULE

Month	Date	Acolyte	Reader
December			
	3	Owen	Linda Powers
	10	Aran	Owen Hague
	17	Brady	Ryan Peterson
<i>Christmas Eve</i>	24	Lucie and Owen	Sherry Ellefson
<i>New Years Eve</i>	31	Aran	Rex Brant
January			
	7	Brady	DeeAnn Rambo
	14	Lucie	Kathy Borton
	21	Owen	Janet Brandt
	28	Aran	Doug Faber

### PARISH BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES – December 2023

Birthdays				Anniversaries	
Dec 2	Trenton Faber	Dec 20	Kent Butler		
Dec 5	Dalton Faber	Dec 21	Dave Powers		
Dec 5	Arlan Hague	Dec 23	Rex Brandt		
Dec 19	Barbara Knopps	Dec 30	Bradyn Lamb		
		Dec 31	DeeAnn Rambo		

### WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

We welcomed three new members to our church family during November. Logan and Tessa Olson were received by Affirmation of Baptism on November 5<sup>th</sup>, and their son, Landon was received by Baptism on November 12



### JOIN THE PRAYER CHAIN

We are updating our Prayer Chain and welcome all who would like to be a part of this ministry of prayer support for people experiencing difficult times: hospitalization, surgery, illness, personal pain and loss, as well as prayers of thanksgiving during times of joy.

If you are interested in praying for friends who have requested prayer complete this form and place it in the offering plate, leave it on the table in the narthex, or give it to Pastor Bob. We'll contact you with further information after the prayer chain has been generated.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Your email will be used to share general information about the program with the group.

If you are not available to answer your phone, do you prefer:

A voice message.

A call back.

Thank you for your interest in this important part of Wilson's ministry.



Revised Common Lectionary  
 Daily Readings – Year B  
 December 2023

Date	Day	Psalm	First Reading	Second Reading	Gospel
1	Friday	Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19	Zechariah 14:1-9	1 Thessalonians 4:1-18	
2	Saturday	Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19	Micah 2:1-13		Matthew 24:15-31
3	Sunday	Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19	Isaiah 64:1-9	1 Corinthians 1:3-9	Mark 13:24-37
4	Monday	Psalm 79	Micah 4:1-5	Revelation 15:1-8	
5	Tuesday	Psalm 79	Micah 4:6-13	Revelation 18:1-10	
6	Wednesday	Psalm 79	Micah 5:1-5a		Luke 21: 34-38
7	Thursday	Psalm 85:1-2; 8-13	Hosea 6:1-6	1 Thessalonians 1:2-10	
8	Friday	Psalm 85:1-2; 8-13	Jeremiah 1:4-10	Acts 11:19-26	
9	Saturday	Psalm 85:1-2; 8-13	Ezekiel 36:24-28		Mark 11:27-33
10	Sunday	Psalm 85:1-2; 8-13	Isaiah 40:1-11	2 Peter 3:8-15a	Mark 1:1-8
11	Monday	Psalm 27	Isaiah 26:7-15	Acts 2:37-42	
12	Tuesday	Psalm 27	Isaiah 4:2-6	Acts 11:1-18	
13	Wednesday	Psalm 27	Malachi 2:10-3:1		Luke 1:5-17
14	Thursday	Psalm 126	Habakkuk 2:1-5	Philippians 3:7-11	
15	Friday	Psalm 126	Habakkuk 3:2-6	Philippians 3:12-16	
16	Saturday	Psalm 126	Habakkuk 3:13-19		Matthew 21:28-32
17	Sunday	Psalm 126	Isaiah 61:1-4; 8-11	1 Thessalonians 5:16-24	John 1:6-8; 19-28
18	Monday	Psalm 125	1 Kings 18:1-18	Ephesians 6:10-17	
19	Tuesday	Psalm 125	2 Kings 2:9-22	Acts 3:17-4:4	
20	Wednesday	Psalm 125	Malachi 3:16-4:6		Mark 9:9-13
21	Thursday	Psalm 89:1-4; 19-26	2 Samuel 6:1-11	Hebrews 1:1-4	
22	Friday	Psalm 96	Zephaniah 3:8-13	Romans 10:5-13	
23	Saturday	Psalm 96	Zephaniah 3:14-20	Romans 13:11-14	
24	Sunday <b>Christmas Eve</b>	Psalm 96	Isaiah 9:2-7	Titus 2:11-14	Luke 2:1-20
25	Monday <b>Christmas Day</b>	Psalm 98	Isaiah 52:7-10	Hebrews 1:1-12	John 1:1-14
26	Tuesday	Psalm 148	Jeremiah 26:1-9, 12-15	Acts 6:8-15; 7:51-60	
27	Wednesday	Psalm 148	Exodus 33:18-23	1 John 1:1-9	
28	Thursday	Psalm 148	Jeremiah 31:15-17		Matthew 2:13-18
29	Friday	Psalm 148	Isaiah 49:5-15		Matthew 12:46-50
30	Saturday	Psalm 148	Proverbs 9:1-12	2 Peter 3:8-13	
31	Sunday	Psalm 148	Isaiah 61:10-62:3	Galatians 4:4-7	Luke 2:22-40

**WILSON LUTHERAN CHURCH  
VIRTUAL POINSETTIA ORDER FORM**

**Given By:**

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**In Memory of:**

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**In Honor of:**

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**Number of Poinsettias Given:** \_\_\_\_\_ **X \$10.00 =** \_\_\_\_\_

**Orders are due Monday, December 18.**

**Make check payable to Wilson Lutheran Church, and return to the church office at:  
401 310<sup>th</sup> Street, Wilson, WI. 54027**



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
**Prayer Ventures**  
**December 2023**

**1** *World AIDS Day* Remember in prayer all who have been and continue to be affected by HIV and AIDS, and pray for the work we do together through the ELCA's HIV and AIDS Ministry — building awareness, serving people who live with HIV and AIDS, advocating for change, and supporting effective, affordable prevention, treatment and care globally.

**2** The United Nations estimates that 90% of wartime casualties are suffered by civilians. Pray for an end to the violence, loss of life, suffering and injustice caused by war and conflict in the world, especially in Ukraine and the Middle East.

**3** *First Sunday of Advent* Praise God, source of our hope, strength, healing and new life, and Jesus Christ, who lived among us to reveal God's grace.

**4** Approximately 15% of the world's population lives with some form of disability, including about 42.5 million people in our country. Pray for the Spirit to sustain our commitment and guide our efforts to welcome, respect and fully include people with disabilities in every aspect of society and the church. Give thanks for the work and resources of ELCA Disability Ministry, the Evangelical Lutheran Deaf Association and the Lutheran Services in America—Disability Network.

**5** Pray that we will not lose heart when we read stories of the church in decline or hear fewer people expressing faith in Christ. Ask the Spirit to strengthen our trust in God's unwavering presence and work in the world and to help us bring the gospel to those still yearning for hope, healing and good news. "Your people long to greet you, my hope, my heart's delight" (ELW 241).

**6** Pray for ELCA missionaries serving alongside our global companions and churches around the world. Give thanks for communities of faith where our mission personnel worship and celebrate their faith with siblings in Christ.

**7** *Hanukkah* Pray for our Jewish neighbors around the world who are beginning their eight-day celebration of Hanukkah — the Festival of Lights.

**8** Remember in prayer people for whom the Christmas season stirs depression, loneliness and grieving. Promise to welcome these struggling people into our communities of faith and to connect them with new friends and siblings in Christ who will offer care and support during the holidays and throughout the year.

**9** Reflect prayerfully on the symbolism of the Advent wreath and candles, which help us anticipate and celebrate God's boundless love and the promise of eternal life fulfilled in the birth of Christ — a light that breaks through the darkness of the world and changes everything.

**10** Pray that we will be faithful and enthusiastic witnesses to the good news of Jesus Christ for all people in every circumstance of life.

**11** Give thanks for our church's commitment to service, generosity, justice and ending hunger and poverty for the sake of our neighbors in need. Pray that the ELCA Good Gifts catalog and the ministries of the ELCA will help us understand the needs of our neighbors and how we can work together to make a lasting impact in the world.

**12** Praise God for the diverse Advent and Christmas traditions of the Christian church around the world, traditions that enrich our faith and understanding of how Christ has impacted communities, cultures and nations.

**13** Pause during the busyness of the holidays and pray for our neighbors in need, especially those experiencing suffering, poverty, war, recovery from disasters and displacement from their homes. Pray that they will find relief, hope and renewed strength in the certainty of God's attention and love, evidenced in the gift of Jesus Christ and reflected in our concern, response and advocacy.

**14** Give thanks for the seasons of the liturgical year and the Scripture, colors, symbols, prayers, music and rituals of faith that help us live in the rhythm of life as children of God and siblings in Christ.

**15** Ask God to help us reflect on those who are not present whenever we gather and to remember that these children of God bring unique voices, gifts and life experiences to the worship, activities and gatherings of our congregations.

**16 *Las Posadas*** Give thanks for the tradition of Las Posadas, which recalls Mary and Joseph's Nativity journey and is observed in parts of Latin America and in some Latino communities in the United States.

**17** Pray that we will have the humility, honesty and boldness of John the Baptist, who did not shy away from expressing his faith in Jesus Christ even when challenged and threatened.

**18 *International Migrants Day*** Pray for those who, with great risk and uncertainty, have left their home countries and familiar surroundings to seek welcoming communities where they feel safe, respected and free to reestablish their lives and raise their families.

**19** Give thanks to God for the assurance of life eternal in the kingdom of heaven and for the Spirit equipping us to embody God's compassion in the world while we await the return of Christ.

**20** What stirs joy in you today? Give thanks for the people and experiences that bring joy into your life, even if only briefly. "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

**21 *Winter solstice*** As the days of the Northern Hemisphere grow shorter, pray that we will be guided and reassured by the light of Christ, which illuminates God's love, mercy and truth in our lives and in every corner of the world.

**22** Praise God for this time of remembrance, anticipation and celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, a birth that changed the world and our lives in ways that exceed our imagination and comprehension.

**23** Give thanks for those who serve our communities during Christmas, including people in health care, elder care, law enforcement, the hospitality industry, emergency services and the military.

**24 *Christmas Eve*** Shout "Glory to God in the highest!" The good news of the birth of the promised Messiah and Savior for all creation and humankind has been made known to us and is the foundation of our faith and life.

**25 *Christmas Day*** Lift up shouts of thanksgiving and praise for all to hear! God lives among us in the birth of Jesus Christ and pours hope and joy into our lives to fill their voids and mend our brokenness.

**26 *Kwanzaa*** Pray for our African-descent neighbors and siblings in Christ who celebrate Kwanzaa, a weeklong observance of African culture and traditions that emphasizes family, community and shared principles. Give thanks for the rich and enduring practices of our African-descent siblings and the global African community.

**27** Give thanks that the gift of grace found in Jesus Christ is both deeply personal and for all humankind. "Of what benefit would it be to me if Christ had been born a thousand times, and it would daily be sung into my ears in a most lovely manner, if I were never to hear that he was born for me and was to be my very own?" (Martin Luther, 1522).

**28** Christmas may have come and gone, but we carry into every day the joy of Christmas and the birth of the Christ child, the manifestation of God's love for humanity. Give praise and thanks to God!

**29** Lift up prayers of relief and thanksgiving for God's mercy, which is fair and generous and is never swayed by our actions or words, no matter how good or well-intended.

**30** Share with God your hopes, concerns, uncertainties and aspirations for the year ahead. Pray for the Spirit to strengthen our faith in God's concern for us and in God's attention to our prayers — spoken and silent.

**31 *New Year's Eve*** Our baptism with water, the word of God and the blessings of our siblings in Christ marks us as children of God and followers of Jesus, loved, forgiven and made new every day of our lives. Alleluia!

# DECEMBER 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
<b>3</b> 9:00 Worship with Holy Communion <b>Advent Pot Luck Brunch</b>	<b>4</b> <b>Pastor's Sabbath</b>	<b>5</b> <b>Pastor's Day Off</b>  1:30 Pastor's Text Study (Tent.)	<b>6</b> 6:00 7 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Confirmation	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>10</b> 9:00 Worship	<b>11</b> <b>Pastor's Sabbath</b>	<b>12</b> <b>Pastor's Day Off</b>  1:30 Pastor's Text Study	<b>13</b> 6:00 7 <sup>th</sup> and 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Confirmation	<b>14</b> 9:30 Bible Study 10:30 WELCA Meeting 12:30 Council Meeting	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>17</b> 9:00 Worship with Holy Communion	<b>18</b> <b>Pastor's Sabbath</b>	<b>19</b> <b>Pastor's Day Off</b> 9:30 – St. Croix Conference - Woodville 1:30 Pastor's Text Study (Tent.)	<b>20</b> <b>7:00 pm Service of Healing and Hope</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b> <b>3:00 pm Christmas Eve Worship</b>  <b>No Morning Worship</b>	<b>25</b> <b>Merry Christmas</b> 	<b>26</b> <b>Pastor's Day Off</b>  1:30 Pastor's Text Study (Tent.)	<b>27</b>  <b>No Confirmation Class</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>31</b> 9:00 Worship with Holy Communion	January 1 	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>  <b>No Confirmation Class</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>