

**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, 2024 Newsletter for Wilson Lutheran Church*



*Wilson Lutheran Church  
401 310<sup>th</sup> Street, Wilson, WI 54027  
Phone: 715-772-3150  
Office Email: [wiluth@wwt.net](mailto:wiluth@wwt.net)  
Web Site: [wilsonlutheran.org](http://wilsonlutheran.org)  
Pastor: Rev. Bob Dahm  
Pastor Email: [PastorBob@wwt.net](mailto:PastorBob@wwt.net)*

*Cover Picture by Pastor Doug Brandt*

# THE GIFT THAT IS YOU!

## 2024 Christmas Message



As I reflect on my time in Malawi back in early November, I had so many experiences that merit being shared. As I write this letter, perhaps the most important lesson I can offer was that of my new reality as a guest overseas.

Everywhere I turned, I truly felt like I was the most important person present. Yes, there were times where I was the honored guest as a bishop. I was granted the best seats in the church, in the van, on the stage. When I walked the grounds at the Lutheran Compound in my purple clerical, EVERYONE immediately stopped what they were doing to greet me, even if that was their first encounter with me. I was fed better than most and I never had to carry my own luggage. I had women pour water over my hands before certain meals (including

communion) much like Christ did during the Last Supper in washing the disciples' feet. And despite my innermost desires to remind them that I was just another guy, I simply could not insult them in that manner. The way in which they treated me was at the core of their faith practice.

Thankfully, Deacon Laura taught me a valuable insight that helped my understanding more clearly. They didn't treat only bishops that way, they treat all guests that way! Having been to Malawi five times before she took me, Laura has experienced that generous hospitality time and time again. And now that I'm a few weeks removed from their genuine welcome, I still firmly believe that their faith has taught them to love their neighbor and lift them up no matter how far away we may come.

What if we all treated our neighbor as though they are the most important person present at that time? What if we lifted the spirits of the people God places in our lives each and every day? As we prepare for the Christmas story once again this year, we emphasize the gift that comes in the Christ child, God made flesh to live among us mortals. Just think about the lives that the Christ child touched! It started with Mary and Joseph, continued to the shepherds in the fields, and even gave the heavenly host something to praise!

Of course, Jesus went on to touch so many lives - people in need of healing, children in need of welcoming, outcasts in need of community, sinners in need of redeeming. Jesus became the gift who helped them all feel that they were the most important person present at the time, people worthy of his unconditional love, people whose spirits were uplifted.

As we march through the season of Advent toward the birth of God Emmanuel, Jesus the savior of the world, remember the gift of God's presence in your lives. Recognize that God is even present within you and that you are a gift as well! And much like my new friends in Malawi, be that gift for others. Reveal Christ's presence to others through your continued faithfulness and dedication to the God of love because that love can overcome division. You are a gift to this synod and to God's church when you let God's light shine in and through you! May this Christmas also reveal to you the light of Christ through others.

Bishop Martin

## PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

December 2024 – Seasons of Advent and Christmas

### **Sunday, December 1 – Advent 1**

- ❖ Liturgy: Evangelical Lutheran Worship
- ❖ Color: Blue
- ❖ Holy Communion
- ❖ Readings: Jeremiah 33:14-16; Psalm 25:1-10; 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13
- ❖ Holy Gospel: Luke 21:25-36: God will fulfill God's purposes and, already, hidden signs of that fulfillment abound. On that great day there will be dismay, perplexity, confusion, and terror, but God's people shall be given strength to stand boldly and receive God's promised redemption.

### **Sunday, December 8 – Advent 2**

- ❖ Liturgy: Evangelical Lutheran Worship
- ❖ Color: Blue
- ❖ Readings: Malachi 3:1-14; Luke 1:68-79; Philippians 1:3-11
- ❖ Holy Gospel: Luke 3:1-6: John the Baptist is a herald of Jesus, whose way is prepared by "repentance for the forgiveness of sins." As we hear the careful record of human leaders, we sense the spectrum of political and religious authority that will be challenged by this coming Lord.

### **Sunday, December 15 – Advent 3**

- ❖ Liturgy: Evangelical Lutheran Worship
- ❖ Color: Blue
- ❖ Holy Communion
- ❖ Readings: Zephania 3:14-20; Isaiah 12:2-6; Philippians 4:4-7
- ❖ Holy Gospel: Luke 3:7-18: John the Baptist heralds the mighty one who is coming. John teaches that preparation for God's reign is not a matter of identity but of bearing fruits of merciful justice, radical generosity, and vocational integrity.

### **Sunday, December 22 – Advent 4**

- ❖ Liturgy: Evangelical Lutheran Worship
- ❖ Color: Blue
- ❖ Holy Communion
- ❖ Readings: Micah 5:2-5a; Luke 1:46b-55; Hebrew 10:5-10
- ❖ Holy Gospel: Luke 1:39-55: Elizabeth, John's mother, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, are two women filled with the Holy Spirit and with faith. In Elizabeth's inspired greeting and Mary's song of praise we hear of a saving God who remembers, scatters, lifts up, and fulfills all things.

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

- ❖ Liturgy: Evangelical Lutheran Worship
- ❖ Color: White
- ❖ Holy Communion
- ❖ Readings: Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96; Titus 2:11-14
- ❖ 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 29 – Christmas 1**

- ❖ Liturgy: Evangelical Lutheran Worship
- ❖ Color: White
- ❖ Holy Communion
- ❖ Readings: 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26; Psalm 148; Colossians 3:12-17
- ❖ Holy Gospel: Luke 241-52: Jesus grew up in a family that went to the Passover festival each year. It was in this environment of faithful adherence to the law that Jesus grew into spiritual maturity and an understanding of his identity and mission.

**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 612-270-3838 (cell), or by email at [PastorBob@wwt.net](mailto:PastorBob@wwt.net).

**W/ELCA Meetings:** The next regular WELCA meeting will be held Thursday, December 12, beginning with the bible study at 9:30 a.m. The bible study is open to all members – men and women – of the congregation and friends. Monthly WELCA meetings are held the second Thursday of each month, immediately following the bible study. All women of the church are invited to attend.

**Wilson Lutheran Church  
W/ELCA November 14, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

President Tracy Davis called the meeting to order at 1100  
Tracey led us in prayer.

8 members present: Sharon Bowell, Ginny Overland, Louanne Anderson, Mary Brandt, Peggy Schram, Janet Brandt, Tracy Davis, Karen Esanbock

Secretary's report read, Motion by Louanne and Second by Ginny to approve as read. Approved.

Treasurer's report read with Beginning balance of \$1520.79 and ending balance of \$1529.92. Motion by Mary, second by Janet to approve as read. Approved.

**Old Business:**

306 personal care kits were delivered to LWR. Plan to begin a donation drive in January, possibly using the green jug for monetary donations at various times during the year.

**New Business:**

Discussion regarding dispersing funds for donations. Motion by Ginny and second by Peggy to donate as follows:

- \$125 for each of 5 area food pantries
- \$100 designated gift
- \$50 thank offering to W/ELCA
- \$100 to ELCA
- \$75 to LWR shipping of donated items

Motion approved as read.

Next meeting December 12 following Bible study at 9:30AM  
Motion by Louanne and second by Peggy to adjourn.  
Closed with the Lord's Prayer

Submitted by Karen Esanbock, secretary

**Wilson Lutheran Church Council Meeting Highlights – October 10, 2024**

- We received a check from the US Department of the Treasury/FEMA. Non-profit organizations received these checks.
- A contribution from Evie Spielman’s family in memory of Evie was received.
- Pastor Bob gave an update on his health.
- A Thank You to Scott Borton for his assistance in purchasing and setting up a new computer for the office.
- A Thank You to Janet Brandt for filling in Darlene’s position. Tori Timm has been hired for the Church Secretary position. Janet will work with Tori for orientation
- Fire inspection was completed. No issues found. Inspection is held annually.
- Dave Powers spoke with Mike Ellefson about repairs to the front doors. They may be able to repair the door threshold.
- Susan’s Mission Personal Care Kits were delivered to the Lutheran World Relief warehouse in Newport MN.
- Live Poinsettias have been ordered for the church. This year we will again offer Virtual poinsettias.
- The Green Jug will be put out for Advent. Proceeds will go to the Spring Valley Community Cancer fund.
- The Annual Meeting will be held on the last Sunday in January 2025.

**Food Pantry Support:** Thank you for your continuing support of our hunger ministry. Your contributions are making a difference. November contributions went go to Elmwood. December contributions will go to Spring Valley.

We continue to hear about the increase in the number of families using food shelf programs. Plus the elimination of federal food share programs has impacted our senior citizens and those with disabilities, which means local food shelves are in even greater need of our support. Please remember our neighbors in need. Your contributions to the food pantry box in the narthex are making a real-world difference in the lives of others.

**Tuesday Community Supper:** Gethsemane Lutheran Church will be serving the Tuesday Community Supper from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> in the Fellowship Hall at Gethsemane. The menu is: Ham, Cheesy Potatoes, Candied Carrots, Roll and Christmas Cookies.

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.

**ACOLYTE and READER SCHEDULE**

Month	Date	Acolyte	Reader
December			
	1	Aran	Ginny Overland
	8		Barb Knopps
	15	Maggie	Kathy Borton
	22		Tracy Davis
<i>Christmas Eve</i>	24	Aran and Maggie	Janet Brandt
	29	Maggie	Rex Brandt

**ASSISTING WITH WORSHIP**

Month	Altar Care	Communion Assistant	Ushers	Sundays
December	Rex and Janet Brandt	Volunteer	Lamb Family	5 Sundays Christmas Eve

**Please check the clipboards on the table in the narthex for months still needing your help.** If you're unable to serve the entire month, perhaps you could share the Sundays with another person? Please let Pastor Bob know if you are able to help, or sign up on the sheets in the narthex.

**BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES**

Birthdays				Anniversaries	
Nov 21	Cade Lamb	Dec 20	Nicole Spielman		
Nov 23	Jenny Finder	Dec 21	Dave Powers		
Dec 2	Trenton Faber	Dec 21	Braden Gregg		
Dec 5	Dalton Faber	Dec 21	Landon Olson		
Dec 5	Arlan Hague	Dec 23	Rex Brandt		
Dec 15	Curt Gregg	Dec 30	Joni Finder		
Dec 19	Barbara Knopps	Dec 30	Bradyn Lamb		
Dec 20	Kent Butler	Dec 31	DeeAnn Rambo		

**UPCOMING EVENTS – 2024**

DATE	Time	EVENT
December 18	7:00 p.m.	Service of Healing and Hope
December 24	3:00 p.m.	Christmas Eve Worship

**Thank You:** "I would like to thank to thank all of the congregation who gifted me cards/ money from y confirmation. It was greatly appreciated. God Bless, Brady Lamb.

**Secret Santa Program:** The Aging and Disability Resource Center of St. Croix County is gearing up for its annual Secret Santa Program in an effort to make the holiday a little brighter for a few St. Croix County special residents. The ADRC has been delivering Secret Santa gifts to individuals for more than 24 years! We continue to be providing the Secret Santa program and the cheer it brings this holiday season.

Do you know someone with disability age 18-59, or individuals 60 or better, who have little or no family in the area, limited income, or recently suffered a loss? If so, please email [adrcinfo@sccwi.gov](mailto:adrcinfo@sccwi.gov) with the name, phone number and address of the individual, or call 715-381-4360. The ADRC will be coordinating and mailing a gift. Please have the Secret Santa nominations to the ADRC by Tuesday, December 10.

This program operates solely on donations and private contributions each season, so all assistance is greatly appreciated.

Amy Roemhild, CSW  
Health and Human Services Supervisor, SDRC

## AREA HAPPENINGS

**Zion Senior Choir Christmas Concert & Candlelit Kaffee Kallas:** "Love in Born" will be presented beginning at 4:00 p.m. Sunday, December 8 at Zion Lutheran Church in Woodville. A smorgasbord of Norwegian and tradition food will be available.

**Christmas Sale:** Christ Lutheran Church (the Purple Door Church in North Menomonie) is hosting its annual Christmas Sale, Saturday, December 14 from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. Featured will be crafts, quilts, decorations, and baked goods. CLC is located at 1306 Wilcox Street, but it's a bit easier to turn off North Broadway onto Elm Street. Fewer stop signs and turns.

## HEALTH UPDATE

The news is good! The results of the CT scan done on Monday, the 25<sup>th</sup> are positive. The tumor in the upper right lung has shrunk a little more, and the one mid-chest has remained the same after being reduce during the first chemo treatment regimen. Of the two most recent tumors on the adrenal glands, one has remained the same and the other slightly increased in size, but the oncologist thinks that might be scar tissue. There are two lymph nodes that have increased very slightly in size, but he's not concerned about them either. So, all-in-all, he was satisfied with the result. There are two more treatments this round of chemo, followed by another CT scan about mid-January. If that looks good, we'll return to immunotherapy, just with a different chemical concoction.

Side effects from this new round of chems have lasted a little longer following the second treatment, and included some new fun stuff 😬 I didn't experience the first time. I'm told that will likely continue to be the case moving forward. I like a little variety in my life, but I can do without this kind. 😊

I continue to be blessed by your ongoing prayers and support. You lift me up in so many ways each day, and for that I am truly thankful.

Blessings to all of you.

Pr. Bob

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### **Scarlett ManessGramma's Funnies (From a Facebook posting by Shirley Rostamo)**

I am old and I just realized I still have so many unanswered questions!!!! I never found out who let the Dogs Out...where's the beef...how to get to Sesame Street... why Dora doesn't just use Google Maps...why eggs are packaged in a flimsy paper carton, but batteries are secured in plastic that's tough as nails...why women can't put on mascara with their mouth closed... why "abbreviated" is such a long word... why lemon juice is made with artificial flavor yet dish-washing liquid is made with real lemons... why they sterilize the needle for lethal injections... and, why do you have to "put your two cents in" but it's only a "penny for your thoughts" where's that extra penny going to... why do "The Alphabet Song" and "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" have the same tune... why did you just try to sing those two previous songs... and just what is Victoria's secret? ...and do you really think I am this witty?? I actually got this from a friend, who stole it from her brother's girlfriend's, uncle's cousin's, baby's momma's doctor who lived next door to my old class mate's mail man...Now it is your turn to take it from me. Peace!!

**VIRTURAL POINSETTIAS**

We will continue our Christmas tradition with Virtual Poinsettias filling the windows of our church building, a tradition that has been so welcomed by the five food shelves we support: Baldwin, Elmwood, Glenwood City, Spring Valley and Woodville. The cost of each virtual poinsettia goes directly to these food shelves, allowing them to purchase perishable items not received from other sources. Your generosity has made a real difference, and meant to much our neighbors in need.

To participate, complete the order form below and return it to the church office with a check made payable to Wilson Lutheran Church, in the amount of \$10.00 per plant. An order envelope will also be included in each Sunday’s service folder.

Please have your orders in to the church office by Wednesday, December 18. Those in whose name the gift is given will have a Virtual Poinsettia, like the one below, placed in the windows. The names of the giver and those remembered and honored will be included on each “plant”. They will also be listed in the Christmas Eve service folder and the January newsletter.

Let’s brighten the winter landscape on “Wilson Lutheran Hill” by filling our church windows with the beauty of these red virtual poinsettias.

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***VIRTUAL POINSETTIA ORDER***

\_\_\_\_\_ *Poinsettias @ \$10.00 each*

***Given by:***

\_\_\_\_\_

***In Memory of***

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

***In Honor of***

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_ ***(#) To the Glory of God***

***Make checks payable to Wilson Lutheran Church. Please order by Wednesday, December 18.***





**Revised Common Lectionary**  
**Daily Readings – Year C**  
**December 2024**

Date	Day	Psalm	Old Testament	Epistle	Gospel
1	Sunday	Psalm 25:1-10	Jeremiah 33:14-16	1 Thessalonians 3:9-13	Luke 21:25-36
2	Monday	Psalm 90	Numbers 17:1-11	2 Peter 3:1-18	
3	Tuesday	Psalm 90	2 Samuel 7:18-29	Revelation 22:12-16	
4	Wednesday	Psalm 90	Isaiah 1:24-31		Luke 11:29-32
5	Thursday	Luke 1:68-79	Malachi 3:5-12	Philippians 1:12-18a	
6	Friday	Luke 1:68-79	Malachi 3:13-18	Philippians 1:18b-26	
7	Saturday	Luke 1:68-79	Malachi 4:1-6		Luke 9:1-6
8	Sunday	Luke 1:68-79	Malachi 3:1-4	Philippians 1:3-11	Luke 3:1-6
9	Monday	Psalm 126	Isaiah 40:1-11	Romans 8:22-25	
10	Tuesday	Psalm 126	Isaiah 19:18-25	2 Peter 1:2-15	
11	Wednesday	Psalm 126	Isaiah 35:3-7		Luke 7:18-30
12	Thursday	Isaiah 12:2-6	Amos 6:1-8	2 Corinthians 8:1-15	
13	Friday	Isaiah 12:2-6	Amos 8:4-12	2 Corinthians 9:1-15	
14	Saturday	Isaiah 12:2-6	Amos 9:8-15		Luke 1:57-66
15	Sunday	Isaiah 12:2-6	Zephaniah 3:14-20	Philippians 4:4-7	Luke 3:7-18
16	Monday	Isaiah 11:1-9	Numbers 16:1-19	Hebrews 13:7-17	
17	Tuesday	Isaiah 11:1-9	Numbers 16:20-35	Acts 28:23-31	
18	Wednesday	Isaiah 11:1-9	Micah 4:8-13		Luke 7:31-35
19	Thursday	Psalm 80:1-7	Jeremiah 31:31-34	Hebrews 10:10-18	
20	Friday	Psalm 80:1-7	Isaiah 42:10-18	Hebrews 10:32-39	
21	Saturday	Psalm 80:1-7	Isaiah 66:7-11		Luke 13:31-35
22	Sunday	Luke 1:46b-55	Micah 5:2-51	Hebrews 10:5-10	Luke 1:39--55
23	Monday	Luke 1:46b-55	Micah 4:6-8	2 Peter 1:16-21	
24	Tuesday <i>Christmas Eve</i>	Psalm 96	Isaiah 9:2-7	Titus 2:11-14	Luke 2:1-20
25	Wednesday <i>Christmas Day</i>	Psalm 97	Isaiah 62:6-12	Titus 3:4-7	Luke 2:1-20
26	Thursday	Psalm 148	2 Chronicles 24:17-24	Acts 6:1-7; 7:52-60	
27	Friday	Psalm 148	Proverbs 8:32-36		John 21:19b-24
28	Saturday	Psalm 148	Isaiah 54:1-13	Revelation 21:1-7	
29	Sunday	Psalm 148	1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26	Colossians 3:12-17	Luke 2:41-52
30	Monday		2 Chronicles 1:7-13		Mark 13:32-37
31	Tuesday		1 Kings 3:5-14		John 8:12-19

**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
**Prayer Ventures**  
**December 2024**

**1** *First Sunday of Advent* Give thanks for God's boundless love and mercy, made tangible and sure through the birth of Jesus Christ, and for the free gift of salvation and hope that sets us free and leads us to eternal life in the kingdom of heaven.

**2** *World AIDS Day (Dec. 1)* If left untreated, HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) can cause AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome). In 2023, 39.9 million people were living with HIV and 630,000 people died from AIDS-related illnesses. Pray for individuals, families and communities impacted by HIV and AIDS, and for health care workers, researchers, clinics and faith communities working to treat, prevent and eradicate HIV and increase awareness of HIV and AIDS.

**3** *International Day of Persons with Disabilities* Pray for our neighbors and siblings in Christ who live with disabilities, that they will be welcomed, respected, valued and fully included in every aspect of the church and society. Give thanks for the wide-ranging work of ELCA Disability Ministries and the 16 social service organizations that make up the Lutheran Services in America Disability Network.

**4** "Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts" (Colossians 3:14-15). Pray for the Spirit to shape our lives, that our words and actions might embody the gospel, the heart of our faith.

**5** Pray for those in Florida and the Gulf Coast who are grieving losses and recovering from hurricanes. Pray for assistance, resources and support to help them recover and rebuild, and thank God that our donations to Lutheran Disaster Response enable our church to respond to crises and care for those enduring trauma and devastation.

**6** Give thanks for the ELCA Good Gifts catalogue, which helps us understand the needs and priorities of our neighbors and provides opportunities for us to respond with compassion and generosity in ways that promise great, immediate and long-term impact.

**7** "To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul" (Psalm 25:1). Lift up everything to God — your joys, concerns, questions, lamentations, confessions and praise.

**8** Thank God for the example of John the Baptist, who endeavored to spread the life-giving news of Jesus Christ and to encourage faith in a loving, forgiving God.

**9** Pray that our faith and anticipation will be stirred by Advent candles, songs, art and Scripture that draw our attention to God's abundant love for humanity and amazing gift of Jesus Christ.

**10** Give thanks for siblings in Christ who accompany us on our baptismal journeys and encourage our faith and understanding of God's ways. Pray that we will not hesitate to share the gospel or to show love, concern or mercy for others, as God does for us.

**11** "I wonder as I wander, out under the sky, how Jesus the Savior did come for to die for poor ordinary people like you and like I" (*With One Voice* 642). Praise God that our salvation does not depend upon our actions, the strength of our faith or our perfect understanding of what God has accomplished for us through Jesus Christ.

**12** December is a time of anticipation and joyful celebration, expressed through shared meals, gatherings of friends and family, community events and special opportunities for worship. Promise to invite and welcome others, especially those in our communities who feel alone, ignored or forgotten.

**13** Give praise and thanks to God for blessing us with Jesus Christ, our true Savior, Messiah, teacher, light and hope.

**14** Pray that, day after day, we will grow more generous in responding to our neighbors in need, strengthening our communities, supporting our global companions and expanding the ministries and outreach of our congregations.

**15** Promise to be a faithful, generous and merciful follower of Jesus Christ, proclaiming the gospel in word and deed and doing God's work in the world.

**16** *Las Posadas* Las Posadas ("the Inns") is a Mexican Christmas tradition in which worshipers reenact the experience of Mary and Joseph as they searched for a

place where Mary could give birth. Remembering Mary and Joseph's difficult journey, promise to embody hospitality, compassion, generosity and justice in responding to modern-day homelessness, poverty and immigration.

**17** Pray for students returning home from colleges, universities and seminaries, that they will experience joy and renewal as they reconnect with family, friends and faith communities.

**18** *International Migrants Day* Remember our neighbors and siblings in Christ who seek refuge and welcoming places to rebuild their lives. Pray for those held in refugee camps and waiting at border crossings, that they will be treated with love and respect and supported in their difficult journeys. Give thanks for the work of our church in partnership with Global Refuge (formerly Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service).

**19** "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God" (Philippians 4:6). To worry is normal, especially in these times. Know that you are not alone and that God listens to our prayers, caring for us through faith communities and our siblings in Christ.

**20** *Katharina von Bora Luther (1499-1552)* Give thanks for Katharina Luther, Martin Luther's source of inspiration and trusted partner in life. Let us thank God for partners and spouses who accompany us in our baptismal journeys and help us to do God's work in the world.

**21** *Winter solstice* Praise God for the mysteries of creation, the cycles of life and the reflection they inspire.

**22** Pray that — like Elizabeth awaiting the birth of John, and Mary awaiting the birth of Jesus — we will trust God and move forward through our uncertainties.

**23** Remember those who serve our communities during the holidays, including church staff, first responders, retail and restaurant workers, health care providers, members of the military and those who maintain the infrastructure of our communities.

**24** *Christmas Eve* "That there were shepherds, means that no one is to hear the Gospel for himself alone, but [everyone] is to tell it to others who are not acquainted with it. For he who believes for himself has enough and should endeavor to bring others to such faith and knowledge" (Martin Luther, "Sermon for Christmas Day; Luke 2:1-14"). Promise to share the story of your baptismal journey with confidence and joy, so that others might find comfort in the good news of Jesus Christ.

**25** *Christmas Day* God's glorious light breaks through sin, death and despair to illuminate the gifts we receive through the birth of Jesus Christ — love, mercy, hope and new life. Praise God!

**26** Kwanzaa begins this week. Give thanks to God for our siblings of African descent, and for the richness of their traditions, cultures, values, stories, faith and leadership.

**27** Pray for those living with political conflict and instability, that they will grow in hope and resilience and experience lasting peace, justice and healing.

**28** Give thanks for the enduring impacts of Christmas and the good news of Jesus Christ, letting them shape your life and guide you throughout the year.

**29** "As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive" (Colossians 3:12-13). Promise to bear witness to God's love for all people, a love unconfined and undiminished by national borders, political affiliations, human laws or social problems.

**30** Christ's church is diverse and global, manifested in different Christian faiths and traditions. Pray for ELCA congregations and ministries, ecumenical partners, global companions and neighboring faith communities that join us in sharing the gospel and doing God's work in the world.

**31** *New Year's Eve* Our faith, hope and joy in Christ do not ebb and flow with the seasons, the holidays or our church calendar. They are an ever-present reality, nurtured and strengthened by the Spirit's presence in our daily lives. Give thanks and praise to God!

# December 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>1</b> 9:00 Worship with Holy Communion 10:00 Sunday School	<b>2</b> Pastor's Sabbath	<b>3</b> Pastor's Day Off	<b>4</b> 6:00 Confirmation	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> 9:00 Worship 10:00 Sunday School	<b>9</b> Pastor's Sabbath	<b>10</b> Pastor's Day Off	<b>11</b> 6:00 Confirmation	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> 9:00 Worship with Holy Communion 10:00 Sunday School	<b>16</b> Pastor's Sabbath	<b>17</b> Pastor's Day Off	<b>18</b> 7:00 Service of Healing & Hope	<b>19</b> 9:30 Bible Study 10:30 WELCA 12:30 Council		<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> 9:00 Worship <b>Newsletter Deadline</b>	<b>23</b> Pastor's Sabbath	<b>24</b> 3:00 Christmas Eve Worship with Holy Communion	<b>25</b> Merry Christmas 	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> 9:00 Worship with Holy Communion	<b>30</b> Pastor's Sabbath	<b>31</b> Pastor's Day Off	January 1 	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>