

# LIVING+WORDS

LIVING WORD LUTHERAN CHURCH

605-438-9672

DECEMBER 2023 NEWSLETTER



Living Word Lutheran Church Staff:  
Tim DeJong, Lisa Aker  
and Pastor Melanie

*A Blessed and Merry Christmas  
and Happy New Year*

## Christmas Schedule of Events

- |                                                                           |                                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Dec. 3</b> ....9:00 AM Sunday School<br>10:00 AM Worship/Communion     | <b>Dec. 17</b> ....10:00 AM Worship<br>5:00 PM Blue Christmas                                        |
| <b>Dec. 6</b> ....5:30 PM Mid-week Advent meal<br>6:30 PM Advent Service  | <b>Dec. 20</b> ....5:30 PM Mid-week Advent meal<br>6:30 PM Advent Service                            |
| <b>Dec. 9</b> ....1:00-3:00 PM SS Program Practice                        | <b>Dec. 24</b> ....10:00 AM Sunday Worship<br>5:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight<br>Worship/Communion |
| <b>Dec. 10</b> ...9:00 AM Sunday School<br>10:00 AM Worship/SS Program    | <b>Dec. 31</b> ....New Year's Eve<br>10:00 AM Worship                                                |
| <b>Dec. 13</b> ....5:30 PM Mid-week Advent meal<br>6:30 PM Advent Service |                                                                                                      |
| <b>Dec. 16</b> ....9:30 AM St. Lucia Breakfast                            |                                                                                                      |

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## ADVENT – A TIME OF PREPARATION FOR FAMILIES

*Advent is a time of preparation—a time for us to prepare our hearts for the coming of the Savior. Our lives are so busy, but it is the perfect time for families to slow down, just a little bit, to focus on the true meaning of the season! Enjoy the following as a part of your Advent preparation.*

Advent reminds us of the mystery of the Virgin birth of our Savior Jesus Christ. The season of Advent marks the beginning of the Church Year for Christians all over the world. It begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas Day, which is the Sunday nearest November 30, and ends on Christmas Eve (Dec 24). During Advent, we prepare our hearts for the mystery of the incarnation by focusing on the Virgin Birth and the faith of the virgin Mary, the shepherds, and the wise men.

In particular, Advent is a time to join together with others to celebrate the coming of Christ's birth. It can also be a wonderful time to celebrate your faith together as a family. Families have learned the joy of celebrating Advent with their children. You can also follow the season with your children with meaningful traditions that include Bible readings, prayers, and crafts.

### **Advent Wreath**

Many Christian families use an Advent wreath to celebrate the themes of Advent in the home. The Advent wreath is rich in symbolism and is typically an evergreen wreath that contains five candles that retells the Christmas story. The circle of greenery reminds us that God is eternal, the Alpha and Omega without beginning or end. The candles symbolize the light of God entering the world through the birth of Jesus. The four outer candles represent a period of waiting for the birth of Jesus and their light reminds us that Jesus is the light of the world that comes into the darkness of our world. They

also remind us that we are called to be a light to the world as we reflect the light of God's love and grace to others. The themes most often used for the four weeks of Advent are Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. However, the choice of themes is not limited to these exclusively. The candles have different colors that remind us of the themes for Advent. Traditionally the primary color of Lent is purple, which reflects fasting that formed part of the build-up to Christmas in earlier centuries. The color purple also reminds us of the link between the birth and death of Jesus. On the third Sunday of Advent the color changes to pink or rose in anticipation of the end of the birth of Jesus Christ. The center candle is white and is called the Christ Candle. It is traditionally lit on Christmas Eve or Day where there is a service on these days. Your family can make your own Advent wreath or you can buy one from your local Christian bookstore. You can gather around your family dinner table on Sunday evenings and light a candle, read a portion of scripture, and say a prayer each Sunday in Advent. Here is a list of prayers and verses to go with each theme.

### **First Sunday: Hope**

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. Isaiah 9:2  
One purple candle is lit.  
“Almighty God, as the Advent season begins, we cry out to you in hope. In a world of darkness and death our only hope is in you. Wherever we find ourselves this season, Loving God, remind us that our hope is in you. Be with us on this Advent journey. Amen.”

## **Second Sunday: Love**

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”  
John 13:34-35

Two purple candles are lit.

“Dear God, you loved us so much that you sent your only Son Jesus Christ live and die for us. We pray that you remind us this week of your love for us and that we may share your love with others. Let us live in the reality of your free and eternal love. Amen.”

## **Third Sunday: Joy**

But be glad and rejoice forever in what I will create, for I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. Isaiah 65:18

Two purple candles and one pink candle are lit.

“Dear Jesus, you came to bring us joy. Help us to not to find our joy in the things of this world, but in you and your Kingdom. This week in our Advent journey, open our eyes to the joy that surrounds us. Amen.”

## **Fourth Sunday: Peace**

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this. Isaiah 9:6-7

Three purple candles and the pink candle are lit.

“Dear Jesus, we pray that you would reveal yourself to us today as the Prince of Peace. We need peace in our lives, our homes, our families, our church, and our whole world. Help us to slow down and seek out the peace that only you provide, that we may become peacemakers for others. Amen.”

## **Christmas Eve/Day**

While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. Luke 2:6-11

All five candles are lit.

“We have been waiting for this day, Jesus Christ, Son of God. On this Christmas Day, we pray that you would help us live as those who let hope, peace, joy, and love reign in our lives, our families, our home, and our world. As the candles burn brightly and light our home, let us live as those who have the Christ's light burning inside us today and everyday. Amen.”





# YOUTH NEWS



Dynamic Disciples had fun making and eating their turkey snacks.

**December 17**  
**Blue Christmas Service of remembrance at Parkview**  
**at 5:00.**  
**Anyone who has lost a loved one or endured any kind of loss is invited to attend this service of healing.**



# LIVING WORD LUTHERAN WOMEN

*For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.* Isaiah 9:6



As we enter into this Advent season may we be eager to know and hear of the sure and certain Hope that we have in Jesus, our Redeemer and Friend. God's promise of salvation has been fulfilled through His perfect Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

The St. Lucia Advent Breakfast will be held on Saturday, December 16th at 9:30am. It's a perfect time to stop and reflect on the reason for this beautiful Christmas season. Please join us as we sing carols, listen to God's saving Word and hear the legend of St. Lucia.

There is no charge to attend. However, we do

ask that you please contact the church office to make your reservations at 605-438-9672.

All women of Living Word are invited to attend our Christmas Bible Study and fellowship on December 19th at 6:30pm. Pastor Melanie will be leading this special study.

Please take time out of your busy Christmas preparations to receive God's perfect peace through His Word and turn our hearts and minds toward our coming Lord and Savior.

To God be all glory, honor and praise!

Your servant in Christ,

Sue DeJong, LWLW Coordinator

## St. Lucia Breakfast



Once again, the Living Word Lutheran Women are preparing for the St. Lucia Breakfast. This will be the ninth year of hosting the breakfast to remember the young Swedish girl living around 300 AD. Lucia was a young Christian girl living in a time when Christianity was persecuted. But even though she was tortured, she never

turned from her faith. It is said she gave up her wealth and comfortable life to serve the poor. She was seen serving others in her simple, white, cotton dress with a crown of candles and lingonberry leaves. Lucia means Child of Light.

All women are invited to this traditional Swedish breakfast on December 16 at 9:30 in the fellowship hall. It is free to attend but for planning and seating, we would like you to make a reservation by calling 605-438-9672 or stopping in the church office.

Ladies, please join us Saturday, December 16 for a time to enjoy a festive event with friends and prepare our hearts for the Christmas season ahead.



# IMPACT MISSIONS

## MINUTES FROM THE IMPACT THE WORLD BOARD MEETING NOVEMBER 16, 2023

Members present: Marcia Heinje, Sue DeJong, Linda Anderson, Gloria Cooley, Vicki Strege and Pastor Melanie

The meeting opened with a Zoom meeting with Jordan and Lexi Hins from Istanbul, Turkey. Jordan, the son of Kirby and Rita Hins of Milbank, and his wife, Lexi, introduced themselves and explained about their mission work. They are associated with the Cru Ministries and reaching out to the college aged community in Turkey. The main religion in Turkey is Islam and Muslim. There are very few Christians in Turkey, and they are reaching out to young people to introduce them to the love and mercy of Christ. Our church is designating the December Noisy Change offering to their ministry. Jordan is not given any financial support other than what he raises through donations to his ministry. Jordan and Lexi will have a YouTube presentation for us at the December 3 worship service to share information about their mission work in Istanbul. We are pleased to have a “hometown boy” as a recipient of our Noisy Change Offering.

Linda made a motion that was seconded by Vicki to have a weekly announcement in the Sunday bulletin reminding us of the mission of the month so as to keep this mission opportunity in the minds and hearts of the parishioners. Motion passed.

Kelly Peterson was present at the meeting to give the board members a better understanding of the financial system used at LWLC.

The following Noisy Change designations were established for the coming months:

December	Jordan Hins Mission
January	Water purification systems in Vietnam
February	Call to Freedom (sex trafficking)
March	Vietnam Trip
April	VBS
May	Alpha Center (right to life)
June	Ukraine
July	Israel
Aug	Dynamic Disciples
September	

October	Beacon Center
November	Operation Christmas
December	

Financial Statement: \$9,723.94 is the balance on hand as of November 2023.

Pastor Melanie was asked to explain the details of the Vietnam Mission Trip to the congregation on November 19<sup>th</sup>.

It was noted that there is at this time \$3,371 available for the mission trip to Vietnam.

Sue made a motion that was seconded by Gloria to hold a rummage sale in April to raise funds for the mission trip to Vietnam. Motion passed.

Marcia made a motion that was seconded by Sue to take up to \$300 from the Impact the World budget to purchase craft items from a merchant in Israel to sell in our church to raise money for the Vietnam Mission Trip. Motion passed.

The ITW board is working on a plan to change the percentages of the Benevolence Quarterly Contributions to include Jordan Hin’s mission in Turkey. We are proposing to ask the council to decrease the Grand County Food Pantry and the Big Stone-Ortonville Food pantry to 8% each and Call to Freedom to 5% so as to be able to put Jordan Hins on the Benevolence Quarterly Contribution List at 5%. This will be presented at the December council meeting.

A motion was made by Linda and seconded by Marcia to designate the contributions for the Advent and Lenten meals for the Vietnam trip. Motion passed.

Sue made a motion that was seconded by Linda to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed.

The next meeting will be held on January 11, at 1:30 pm.



**COOKS**



**SERVERS**



**PANCAKE & SAUSAGE MEAL**



**SILENT AUCTION BASKETS**



Proceeds benefit the Vietnam Mission Trip in 2024.

**FELLOWSHIP**





## PASTOR'S LETTER

### THE SEASON OF ADVENT

*Hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. Romans 8:24-25*

Dear Church family of Living Word:

The word Advent means “coming.” It is the season of the Church year where we are reminded of the reality of Christ’s coming into our world. It is a season of preparation and anticipation, not simply for the celebration of Christmas, but to recognize that hope and expectation are a part of our daily life of faith.

When writing on the subject of Advent, Martin Luther spoke of three different “comings” of Christ:

The **first** coming was indeed when Christ was born as a child in Bethlehem---his coming in the past. The first advent was when the eternal Son of God took on human flesh and became a living part of our world.

As Christians, we also believe in the **second** coming of Christ---his coming in the future. At the end of all time, Christ will return to bring his kingdom to fulfillment. On that day he will raise us up to appear before his throne of judgment.

The **third** coming of Christ of which Luther spoke has no single particular time attached to it, so it is perhaps better to put no number to it all. This other coming of Christ does not occur with portents in the heavens, no choirs of angels on high. It is an advent that is hard to see at all, because it happens through the Spirit of God. This is Christ’s coming into the present, when our Lord enters into the hearts of everyday people in the here and now, through his Word, in faith.

Of the three, this may be the single most important Advent of Christ, at least as far as our salvation is concerned. Because it is only through the advent of



faith that the first and second comings of Christ take on meaning for us as individuals. It is when Christ enters our hearts that his presence became a reality for each of us in our lives, and we recognize all the many ways that God is truly with us. (...from *Looking to the Manger* by Rev. Kristopher Madsen)

Our recent Lectionary readings over the past few Sundays have spoken to the preparation we must make for the coming of Christ into the world, not just in the celebration of His birth, but most importantly, our preparation for his second coming. This preparation takes place in our hearts as Luther said, when the first and second comings become real to us and we receive the assurance of our salvation and eternal life with our Savior when this world comes to an end.

In this season of preparation this year, let us be more mindful than ever of Christ’s coming looking to the manger in a deeper way than ever before. May you have a most Blessed Christmas and a New Year of love and happiness.

In Christian love,  
Pastor Melanie





# COUNCIL MINUTES

## LWLC COUNCIL MEETING REPORT NOVEMBER 15, 2023

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Gene Vostad, Pastor Melanie, Steve Strege, Marty Buttke, Dale Prisinger, Moe Reede, Kelly Peterson, Rhonda Beckman and Tina Balling.

**OPENING:** Pastor gave the opening prayer.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:** Moe made a motion, and it was seconded by Marty to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

**APPROVAL OF THE SECRETARY'S REPORT:** Steve made a motion, and it was seconded by Dale to approve the secretary's report. Motion carried.

### FINANCIAL REPORT:

October 31, 2023

<i>Income</i>	\$20,728.78
<i>Expenses</i>	\$19,779.89
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 948.89</b>

**BUSINESS MANAGER REPORT:** Kelly reported that the computer she will order for her business manager position will be under \$1000 including the monitor, keyboard etc. Steve made a motion to authorize Kelly to set up all of LWLC's regular bills on autopay. Moe seconded and the motion carried. Rhonda made a motion, and it was seconded by Marty to approve the business manager's report. Motion carried.

**PASTOR'S REPORT:** Thank you to David Kruger and Brian Sandvig for filling in while Pastor was in Sierra Leone. Communion by intinction will be held at the Christmas Eve 5pm candlelight service. The mid-week Advent series will start 11-29 and will last four weeks. A light meal will be served before the Advent services. The Sunday School Christmas program will be 12-10 at 10am. Kelly made a motion to accept the Pastor's report and it was seconded by Moe. Motion carried.

**PROPERTY & MANAGEMENT:** The front bushes

were trimmed. The fire pit benches were put in the shed for the winter. Tim put the reflectors out by the parking lot entrances. The trees on the south side of the parking lot will need to be watched in the spring. Kelly made a motion and it was seconded by Rhonda to approve the Property & Management report. Motion carried.

**WORSHIP & EVANGELISM:** Nothing new to report. A motion was made by Kelly and seconded by Moe to approve the Worship & Evangelism report. Motion carried.

**YOUTH & EDUCATION:** Nothing new to report. A motion was made by Steve and seconded by Marty to approve the Youth & Ed report. Motion carried.

**OLD BUSINESS:** The Space Needs committee met and will pass out a hand-out at the annual meeting. The Call Committee reports that there are no new applications.

**NEW BUSINESS:** A pancake and sausage meal will be served after the annual meeting November 19<sup>th</sup> with the proceeds going to the mission trip next spring. Kelly will look into the planning of a new church directory. Kelly made a motion, and it was seconded by Marty to allow Laura Stahl (non-member) to use the church for her wedding either April 20<sup>th</sup> or May 11<sup>th</sup>. Laura's brother-in-law who is a pastor in Tennessee will officiate. Motion carried. Council authorizes Laurie Maas to proceed with the Dynamic Disciples sign and to look into t-shirts and hoodies with the DD logo and ones with the LWLC logo. We would like to thank Rhonda, Marty and Dale for their faithful service as council members. We would also like to thank Nancy Kruger for all the hours she has spent over the years on the church newsletter.

**DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING:** The next council meeting is scheduled for December 13th after the advent service.

**ADJOURNMENT:** A motion was made by Kelly and seconded by Steve to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was closed with the Lord's prayer.

# December 2023

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1	2
3	9:00 Sunday School 9:00 Coffee Fellowship 10:00 Worship/Communion Install Council Members 11:00 Choir practice	4	5	6 3:30 Confirmation 3:30 Dynamic Disciples 5:30 Meal 6:30 Worship	7 9:00 Community Coffee	8	9 1-3 Program practice
10	Sunday School Christmas Program 9:00 Sunday School 9:00 Coffee Fellowship 10:00 Worship/noisy change 11:00 Chapel Communion 11:00 Choir practice	11	12	13 3:30 Confirmation 3:30 Dynamic Disciples 5:30 Meal 6:30 Worship 7:30 Council	14 9:00 Community Coffee	15	16 9:30 St Lucia
17	9:00 Sunday School 9:00 Coffee Fellowship 9:00 January Servant Team meets 10:00 Worship 11:00 Choir practice	18 7:00 Education Committee	19	20 3:30 Confirmation 5:30 Meal 6:30 Worship	21 9:00 Community Coffee	22 NEWSLETTER ITEMS DUE	23
24	CHRISTMAS EVE 9:00 Coffee Fellowship 10:00 Worship 5:00 Candlelight worship/Communion	25 CHRISTMAS DAY Church & Office Closed	26	27	28 9:00 Community Coffee	29	30
31	9:00 Coffee Fellowship 10:00 Worship						

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1	2
3		4	5 Ryan Keeton (b.) Sean Keeton (b.) Hope Pekelder (b.) Kylee & Gretchen Weber (w.)	6	7	8 Sandra Hansen (b.) Kevin Hedge (b.) Teresa Meister (b.) Charles & Nadine Veon (w.)	9 Cynthia Fish (b.) Jessica Lewno (b.) Brian Dallman (b.)
10	Siriana Bien (b.) Rita Dahle (b.)	11 Lori Dockter (b.)	12	13	14 Jennifer Anderson (b.) Gloria Cooley (b.) Maggie Kruger (b.)	15 Marcia Heinje (b.) Laurie Maas (b.)	16
17	Troy Peschong (b.) Brenda Seehater (b.)	18 Craig & Carolyn Randleman (w.)	19 Jeremy Nelson (b.)	20 Joshua Keeton (b.) Dylan Meister (b.) Hunter Reede (b.) Janel Sandvig (b.)	21	22 Marge Nelson (b.) Claire Schwandt (b.)	23 Jean Flaig (b.)
24		25	26	27 Shirley Schmidt (b.)	28 Mary Kinder (b.)	29 Kendall & Nanci Van Peurseem (w.)	30 Charles & Sally Heinje (w.) Barbara Kloster (b.)
31	Susan Hippen (b.)						

# LWLC Committee Contacts

## 2023 Council Members:

**President:** Gene Vostad, 605-321-9120  
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**Vice President:** Marty Buttke, 605-432-4457  
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## Living Word Lutheran Women Officers:

**Coordinator:** Sue DeJong, 605-949-1982

**Vice-coordinator:** Marcia Heinje, 605-938-4142

**Secretary/Treasurer:** Annette Redepenning, 605-432-6688

**Mission Action:** Gloria Cooley, 605-445-1555

**Mission Growth:** Karen McCrea, 605-432-6335

**Mission Community:** Susan Vostad, 605-434-1825

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