

ST. MICHAEL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Our mission is to celebrate and share God's love in Jesus Christ

²⁵ “There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. ²⁶ People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷ Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in a cloud’ with power and great glory. ²⁸ Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”



²⁹ Then he told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees; ³⁰ as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. ³¹ So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. ³² Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. ³³ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.”

First Sunday of Advent
December 1, 2024 at 8:15 & 11:00 AM
ELW Setting 7

WELCOME TO ST. MICHAEL'S!

If you are visiting with us for the first time, please share in all that is ours in Christ! We invite you to consider making St. Michael's your church home. Please ask us about our participation in God's mission in the world. By God's grace we celebrate and share Christ. *Our worship service at 11:00 this morning is streamed live to St. Michael's Facebook and YouTube pages. Please keep conversation to a minimum in the sanctuary, you may be picked up by our sound system. If you prefer not to be seen on camera please speak to an usher and they will seat you outside of the video frame. Thank you for your understanding.*

DIGITAL SIGN IN

You are welcome to sign in to worship digitally. Please use the QR Code that can be found here in the bulletin or the iPad located in the narthex.



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Advent is about the “coming days.” God’s people have always lived in great expectation, but that expectation finds specific, repeated enunciation in the texts appointed for these four weeks. The ancients anticipated a “righteous Branch to spring up for David.” The Thessalonians awaited “the coming of our Lord Jesus with all the saints.” Jesus’ contemporaries hoped for the time “to stand before the Son of Man.” With them we eagerly await the coming days: another Christmas celebration, a second coming, and the advent of Christ in word and supper.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

“Savior of the Nations Come”

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

The assembly is invited to stand. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, alive in the world, reviving creation, arriving soon.
Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.
Silence is kept for reflection.

God of mercy,

we confess that we have sinned. We trust earthly powers and human authority alone. We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.

God of might, **we confess that we have sinned. We have turned away from our neighbors. We have trusted false promises.**

God in our midst, **we confess that we have sinned. We plead: come to us. Bring your mercy to birth in us.**

A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God through † Christ Jesus, whose day draws near. **Amen.**

GATHERING HYMN

“The King Shall Come”

ELW 260

- 1 The King shall come when morning dawns
and light triumphant breaks,
when beauty gilds the eastern hills
and life to joy awakes.
- 2 Not as of old a little child,
to bear and fight and die,
but crowned with glory like the sun
that lights the morning sky.
- 3 Oh, brighter than the rising morn
when Christ, victorious, rose
and left the lonesome place of death,
despite the rage of foes.
- 4 Oh, brighter than that glorious morn
shall dawn upon our race
the day when Christ in splendor comes,
and we shall see his face.
- 5 The King shall come when morning dawns
and light and beauty brings.
Hail, Christ the Lord! Your people pray:
come quickly, King of kings.

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KYRIE



*Se - ñor, Se - ñor, ten pie - dad: ten pie - dad de no -
Lord, . . have mer - cy on us; O . . . Lord, have . . .*



*so - tros. Se - ñor, Se - ñor, ten pie -
mer - cy. Lord, . . have mer - cy on*



*dad: ten pie - dad de no - so - tros.
us; O . . . Lord, have . . mer - cy.*



*Cris - to, Cris - to, ten pie - dad; ten pie - dad de no -
Christ, . . have mer - cy on us; O . . . Christ, have . .*



*so - tros. Cris - to, Cris - to, ten pie -
mer - cy. Christ, . . have mer - cy on*



*dad: ten pie - dad de no - so - tros.
us; O . . . Christ, have . . mer - cy.*



*Se - ñor, Se - ñor, ten pie - dad; ten pie - dad de no -
Lord, . . have mer - cy on us; O . . . Lord, have . . .*



*so - tros. Se - ñor, Se - ñor, ten pie -
mer - cy. Lord, . . have mer - cy on*



*dad: ten pie - dad de no - so - tros.
us; O . . . Lord, have . . mer - cy.*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection alert us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and redeem us for your life of justice, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

One of the best-known customs for the season is the Advent wreath. The wreath and winter candle-lighting strengthen some of the Advent images found in the Bible. Christians use the wreath as a sign that Christ reaches into our time to lead us to the light of everlasting life. The four candles mark the progress of the four weeks of Advent. In many homes, the family gathers for prayers around the wreath.

HYMN

“He Came Down”

ELW 253

**He came down that we may have love;
he came down that we may have love;
he came down that we may have love;
hallelujah forevermore.**

Text: Cameroon traditional

We praise you, O God, for this evergreen crown that marks our days of preparation for Christ’s advent. As we light the first candle on this wreath, rouse us from sleep, that we may be ready to greet our Lord when he comes with all the saints and angels. Enlighten us with your grace, and prepare our hearts to welcome him with joy. Grant this through Christ our Lord, whose coming is certain and whose day draws near.

Amen.

The assembly is seated.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING

Jeremiah 33:14-16

In the Old Testament, “righteousness” often has to do with being faithful in relationship. God acts righteously both in punishing Israel for its sin and in having mercy. In today’s reading, Jerusalem’s future name—“The LORD is our righteousness”—proclaims that God is even now working salvation for Israel.

A reading from Jeremiah.

¹⁴ The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ¹⁵ In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David, and he shall execute justice and righteousness in

the land. ¹⁶ In those days Judah will be saved, and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: “The LORD is our righteousness.”

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SECOND READING

1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

Upon Timothy’s report from the congregation at Thessalonica, Paul is exuberant with gratitude for them. In this passage from his letter, Paul voices overflowing thanks, joy, and blessings for the people of this growing church.

A reading from First Thessalonians.

⁹ How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? ¹⁰ Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith.

¹¹ Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. ¹² And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. ¹³ And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

The assembly is invited to stand.

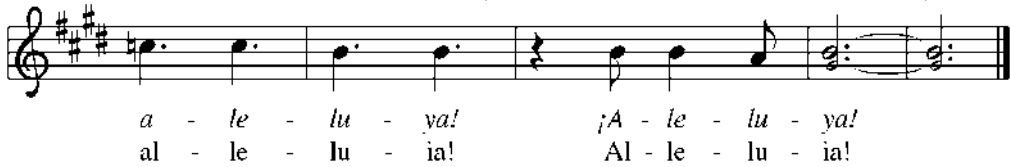
GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



A - le - lu - ya, a - le - lu - ya, a - le - lu - ya!
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

A - le - lu - ya, a - le - lu - ya, a - le - lu - ya!
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

A - le - lu - ya, a - le - lu - ya,
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,



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.

The holy gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:]²⁵ “There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves.²⁶ People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.²⁷ Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in a cloud’ with power and great glory.²⁸ Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

²⁹ Then he told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees;³⁰ as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near.³¹ So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near.³² Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place.³³ Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

³⁴ “Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life and that day does not catch you unexpectedly,³⁵ like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth.³⁶ Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place and to stand before the Son of Man.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly is seated.

SERMON

The assembly is invited to stand.

HYMN OF THE DAY

“My Lord, What a Morning”

ELW 438

Refrain

My Lord, what a morning;
my Lord, what a morning;
oh, my Lord, what a morning,
when the stars begin to fall.

1 You will hear the trumpet sound,
to wake the nations underground,
looking to my God's right hand,
when the stars begin to fall. *Refrain*

2 You will hear the sinner cry,
to wake the nations underground,
looking to my God's right hand,
when the stars begin to fall. *Refrain*

3 You will hear the Christian shout,
to wake the nations underground,
looking to my God's right hand,
when the stars begin to fall. *Refrain*

Text: African American spiritual

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE INTERCESSION

As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence, responding with "receive our prayer".

A brief silence.

God of righteousness, your people live in hopeful expectation of your coming. Fill your church with renewed passion for our shared mission, and deepen our relationships with other Christians and other faith traditions in our local community and across the world. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God of the cosmos, all creation shows that your presence is near. Help us sense your goodness and love in the sun and moon, in sprouting leaves and bare branches, in the roaring sea and quiet breeze. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God of the nations, your reign extends over all principalities and powers. Give leaders and all in authority hearts for justice and peace. Encourage efforts to enact policies that benefit the common good. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God of change, you accompany us through life's transitions. Be near to all who are changing jobs, moving, welcoming children, or facing the loss of loved ones. Sustain those who are ill or suffering especially...those we name aloud now...and those we hold in our hearts. In times of change, remind us of your steadfast love. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God of community, your Spirit holds us together. Sustain our care for one another especially through the interfaith homeless outreach Council, Joseph's House and the LSM Camden Food Pantry. Inspire us to seek new ways to live together and to embrace the diversity of thought and identity in our communities. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

God of memory, we give you thanks for faithful ones who have died. Tend to our grief and sorrow with renewed trust in your promise of abundant and eternal life. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ.
Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

The assembly is seated.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ. Immortal Invisible.

OFFERING

MUSICAL OFFERING

8:15: “Offertorio Pastorale”

11:00: “Watchman Tell Us of the Night” – Vocal Choir

Offering is being gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need. You are invited to place your offering in one of the offering plates located in the rear of the Sanctuary or send your offering to the church office through the mail or by having your bank mail a check directly. You can also contribute using the electronic giving options found on our church website and app.

The assembly is invited to stand.

OFFERATORY

“Take My Life That I May Be”

ELW 583

Refrain

Take my life, that I may be
consecrated, Lord, to thee;
take my moments and my days;
let them flow in ceaseless praise.

- 1 Take my hands and let them move
at the impulse of thy love;
take my feet and let them be
swift and beautiful for thee. *Refrain*
- 2 Take my silver and my gold,
not a mite would I withhold;
take my intellect and use
ev'ry pow'r as thou shalt choose. *Refrain*

OFFERING PRAYER

Creator God, you made the whole world, even the farthest stars, and you draw near to feed us. We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine. Strengthen us with this food that we may live in expectation for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

DIALOGUE

The presiding minister greets the assembly and invites all present to give thanks.

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

PROPER PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



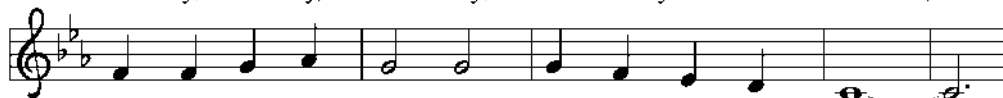
San - to, san - to, san - to, es el Se - ñor,
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord . . . God,



Dios del u - ni - ver - so: san - to, es el Se - ñor.
God of might and pow - er; ho - ly is the Lord.



San - to, san - to, san - to, san - to, es el Se - ñor,
Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord . . . God,



Dios del u - ni - ver - so: san - to, es el Se - ñor.
God of might and pow - er; ho - ly is the Lord.

Ho - san - na en el cie - lo, ho - san - na en la
Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na here on

tie - rra. Ben - di - to el que vie - ne en el
earth. Blest is he who comes in the

nom - bre del Se - ñor. Ho - san - na en el
name . . . of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the

cie - lo, ho - san - na en la tie - rra. Ben -
high - est, ho - san - na here on earth.

di - to el que vie - ne en el nom - bre del Se - ñor.
Blest is he who comes in the name . . . of the Lord.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal: you we praise and glorify, you we worship and adore.

You formed the earth from chaos; you encircled the globe with air; you created fire for warmth and light; you nourish the lands with water. You molded us in your image, and with mercy higher than the mountains, with grace deeper than the seas, you blessed the Israelites and cherished them as your own.

That also we, estranged and dying, might be adopted to live in your Spirit, you called to us through the life and death of Jesus.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke

it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Together as the body of Christ, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup we remember your Son, the first-born of your new creation. We remember his life lived for others, and his death and resurrection, which renews the face of the earth. We await his coming, when, with the world made perfect through your wisdom, all our sins and sorrows will be no more.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, holy and merciful one, holy and compassionate, send upon us and this meal your Holy Spirit, whose breath revives us for life, whose fire rouses us to love. Enfold in your arms all who share this holy food. Nurture in us the fruits of the Spirit, that we may be a living tree, sharing your bounty with all the world.

Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

Holy and benevolent God, receive our praise and petitions, as Jesus received the cry of the needy, and fill us with your blessing, until, needy no longer and bound to you in love, we feast forever in the triumph of the Lamb: through whom all glory and honor is yours, O God, O Living One, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy church, now and forever.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Let us pray:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

We give thanks as we receive the real presence of our resurrected Lord in, with, and under the bread and the wine. Communion will be distributed continuously under the direction

of the ushers. Take an empty cup to receive from a pouring chalice (let the communion assistant know if you prefer grape juice). Please let the pastor know if you require a gluten free host. When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say “The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you.” and each person may respond, “Amen”. Worshippers who are not yet communing are invited to come forward for a blessing.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

God feeds us with tender mercy. Come to the table.

LAMB OF GOD



Cor - de - ro de Dios, tú que qui-tas el pe-ca-do del mun-do;
O Lamb of . . God, you . . take a-way the sin of the world; . .



ten pie-dad de no - so-tros, ten pie-dad de no - so-tros.
have . . mer-cy up - on us, have . . mer-cy up - on us.



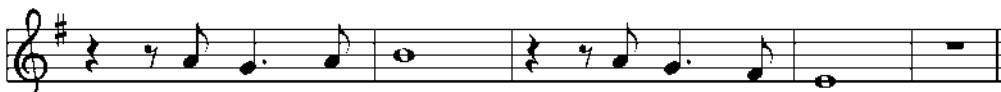
Cor-de - ro de Dios, tú que qui-tas el pe-ca-do del mun-do;
O Lamb of . . God, you . . take a-way the sin of the world; . .



ten pie-dad de no - so-tros, ten pie-dad de no - so-tros.
have . . mer-cy up - on us, have . . mer-cy up - on us.



Cor-de - ro de Dios, tú que qui-tas el pe-ca-do del mun-do;
O Lamb of . . God, you . . take a-way the sin of the world; . .



da - nos tu paz,
grant us your peace,

da - nos tu paz,
grant us your peace.

The assembly is seated.

COMMUNION HYMNS “O Lord, How Shall I Meet You”

ELW 241

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1 O Lord, how shall I meet you,
how welcome you aright?
Your people long to greet you,
my hope, my heart's delight!
Oh, kindle, Lord most holy,
your lamp within my breast
to do in spirit lowly
all that may please you best.</p> <p>2 I lay in fetters, groaning;
you came to set me free.
I stood, my shame bemoaning;
you came to honor me.
A glorious crown you give me,
a treasure safe on high
that will not fail or leave me
as earthly riches fly.</p> | <p>3 Love caused your incarnation;
love brought you down to me.
Your thirst for my salvation
procured my liberty.
Oh, love beyond all telling,
that led you to embrace
in love, all love excelling,
our lost and fallen race.</p> <p>4 Rejoice, then, you sad-hearted,
who sit in deepest gloom,
who mourn your joys departed
and tremble at your doom.
All hail the Lord's appearing!
O glorious Sun, now come,
send forth your beams so cheering
and guide us safely home.</p> |
|--|--|

Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607-1676; tr. Composite; Used by permission from OneLicense.net #A-711336

After all have communed the assembly is invited to stand if able.

TABLE BLESSING

The Body and Blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in Christ's Grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Generous God, we thank you for the gift of life, for the bread of salvation. We thank you for coming among us, for leading us into peace. We thank you for showering us with mercy, for sending us into the world. Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us as we feed the hungry in your name. **Amen.**

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

God of endings and beginnings, God in the darkness and the light, God, our hope for the journey, ✚ bless and keep you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

“Rejoice, Rejoice Believers”

ELW 244

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Rejoice, rejoice, believers,
and let your lights appear;
the evening is advancing,
and darker night is near.
The bridegroom is arising
and soon is drawing nigh.
Up, pray and watch and wrestle;
at midnight comes the cry. | 3 The saints, who here in patience
their cross and suff'rings bore,
shall live and reign forever
when sorrow is no more.
Around the throne of glory
the Lamb they shall behold;
in triumph cast before him
their diadems of gold. |
| 2 The watchers on the mountain
proclaim the bridegroom near;
go forth as he approaches
with alleluias clear.
The marriage feast is waiting;
the gates wide open stand.
Arise, O heirs of glory;
the bridegroom is at hand. | 4 Our hope and expectation,
O Jesus, now appear;
arise, O Sun so longed for,
o'er this benighted sphere.
With hearts and hands uplifted,
we plead, O Lord, to see
the day of earth's redemption
that sets your people free! |

Text: Laurentius Laurenti, 1660-1722; tr. Sarah B. Findlater, 1823-1907; Used by permission from OneLicense.net #A-711336

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel. **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

“Wachet Auf”

The Altar Flowers are given by Carol Jensen in loving memory of her husband, Ed.

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIONS

Isaac Watts, hymnwriter, died 1748

Monday, November 25, 2024

Thought by many to be the greatest hymnwriter in the English language, Watts as a youth was critical of the quality of the metrical psalter of the time. He wrote about 600 hymns—many based on the psalms, but others that are not.

Andrew, Apostle

Saturday, November 30, 2024

The first of the disciples to be called by Jesus, Andrew quickly began to bring others to the Savior, including Simon Peter. The Bible also shows him leading some Greeks to meet Jesus, and he brought forward the boy with five loaves and two fish, with which Jesus fed thousands.

Francis Xavier, missionary to Asia, died 1552

Tuesday, December 3, 2024

A native of the Basque region of Spain, Xavier became a missionary to India, Southeast Asia, Japan, and the Philippines. He also helped to found the Society of Jesus (Jesuits).

John of Damascus, theologian and hymnwriter, died around 749

Wednesday, December 4, 2024

A monk in an abbey near Jerusalem, John wrote many hymns as well as theological works. One of his works, *The Fount of Wisdom*, remained influential for centuries.

Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, died around 342

Friday, December 6, 2024

Little is known about Nicholas, except that he was a bishop in present-day Turkey. According to legend, he was famous for his giving to the poor, and so has become a symbol of anonymous gift-giving.

Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, died 397

Saturday, December 7, 2024

While a governor of northern Italy, Ambrose was elected bishop of Milan on the same day he was baptized. He was a famous preacher, a writer of hymns we still sing today, and helped lead St. Augustine to faith.

CONFIRMATION CLASS

Confirmation class meets on an irregular schedule. The class schedule for the next few weeks is as follows:

- Sunday, December 8 (12/4 is canceled)
- Sunday, December 22

All classes start at 7:00 PM. If you have any questions about confirmation or are interested in being a presenter for this year's program please contact Pastor Chris.

SMLC CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON ON 12/15/24

Our annual Christmas Luncheon is approaching! Keep your calendar open for Sunday, December 15th at 12:00PM. Tickets are \$10/per person and will be available on Sundays in the Narthex. Bring your favorite Christmas Cookies to share for dessert!

FESTIVAL CHOIR INVITATION

The Festival Choir is a seasonal ensemble available to all SMLC members and non-members. This choir is designed to provide an opportunity for singers whose schedules prevent them from making the weekly commitment to sing in the Vocal Choir. The Festival Choir will sing for the Christmas Even 10:00PM Liturgy. The choir will rehearse during the month leading up to Christmas. Rehearsals will be offered on Sundays after the 11AM service from 12:10-12:45PM. MP3 files will be given to help singers learn the music at home. Reach out to Mark Dishong for more information.
(Rehearsal Dates: 11/24, 12/1,8,22.)

MONTHLY PRAYER SERVICE

Start the new month off right by joining us for an early morning prayer service at 7:00 AM on Wednesday, December 4th.

HANGING OF THE EVERGREENS

Join Altar Guild on Sunday, December 8th at 12:00 PM as we decorate the sanctuary for Christmas. All are welcome.

BOOK CLUB 12/2

Join us on for our next book club meeting on Monday, December 2nd at 7:00 PM for our next book discussion. We will be discussing *Comfort and Joy* by Kristin Hannah. All are welcome. We hope to see you there.

JOSEPH'S HOUSE DINNER CASSEROLES

The next opportunity to volunteer to make DINNER casseroles will be **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2024**. Casseroles can be dropped off to the church kitchen before or after Sunday worship services. Please mark your casserole as **Pork (sausage), Beef, Turkey (sausage), or None (vegetarian)**. This will assist the staff serving to meet any dietary needs for the dinner guests. To sign-up, visit this link: <https://bit.ly/3CABNwi>. *Volunteers are needed to serve dinner at Joseph's House on the second Tuesday of each month. We will meet at church at 7:30pm and return around 10:00pm. If you would like to serve, please contact Ray Kratz by phone (609-923-5718) or email (raykratz@gmail.com).*

POLITICS & THE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Why don't we talk politics in the Lutheran Church? Is the reason theological, constitutional, or church policy? Is change needed? If you are interested in exploring these issues, join Ruth Morgenroth for a discussion on December 11th at 6:00PM (prior to the Holden Evening Prayer service). Sandwiches and beverages will be served, so please RSVP if possible. Contact Ruth at 856-261-3464.

POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS

In continuation with our tradition, we will once again be decorating the sanctuary with poinsettias on Christmas Eve. Flowers cost \$10 each, and dedication forms can be found in the narthex or through Constant Contact. Forms and payment are due **Wednesday, December 18th**. If you have any questions, please reach out to the office.

MIDWEEK HOLDEN EVENING PRAYER FOR ADVENT

Advent is a busy time of year for so many of us. While so much of our society is gearing up for Christmas we are also trying to prepare ourselves to celebrate the birth of the Christ Child. Our Midweek Holden Evening Prayer Service can help provide an opportunity for that preparation. Join us Wednesdays during Advent (December 4, 11, 18) at 7:30 PM.

BUILDING SUSTAINABILITY FOR A FAITH-FILLED FUTURE

We are continuing to move closer to our campaign goals. With an overall target of \$120,000, as of today we have received pledges of \$95,000. To discuss your potential contribution or for more information about our campaign, please do not hesitate to contact Pastor Chris at (973) 570-8084 or pastor@stmlutheran.org. Together, we can build a future that embodies the principles of faith, sustainability, and community that leaves a lasting imprint for generations to come.

CHRISTMAS SHARING TREE

The tree in the Narthex is decorated with tags for gift ideas for a child living in Lutheran Social Ministries' affordable housing. If you would like to provide a gift (or gift certificate) for one or more of these children, please select a tag from the tree, and add you name and phone number to the sign-up sheet next to the matching name. Please return UNWRAPPED gifts (in gift bags, placed under the tree) by **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15TH**. Gifts and certificates should be valued between \$25 and \$35. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

PARISH CALENDAR

Sunday, December 1

8:15 AM Worship In-Person
9:30 AM Sunday School
11:00 AM Worship In-Person/YouTube/
Facebook
12:15 PM Vocal Choir Rehearsal
6:00 PM NA Meeting

Monday, December 2

7:00 PM Book Club Meeting

Tuesday, December 3

7:00 PM Executive Committee Meeting
7:30 Communication Meeting

Wednesday, December 4

7:00 AM Monthly Prayer Service
9:30 AM Weight Watchers
7:30 Mid-Week Advent Service

Thursday, December 5

7:30 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal

Friday, December 6

Saturday, December 7

Sunday, December 8

8:00 AM JH Casserole Drop-off
8:15 AM Worship In-Person
9:30 AM Sunday School
11:00 AM Worship In-Person/YouTube/
Facebook
12:00 PM Hanging of the Evergreens
12:15 PM Vocal Choir Rehearsal
4:00 PM Compassionate Friends Dinner
& Candle Light Service
6:00 PM NA Meeting
7:00 PM Confirmation Class



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.