

CHRONICLER

While we weren't able to celebrate the "Hanging of the Greens" on November 30 due to the snowstorm that resulted in our cancelling Divine Worship, we still can remember the message we would have shared. Below is the first reading when the greens are laid. Please remember the true meaning of Christmas as we go through this month.

"What greater festival is there in all the church than the celebration of the birthday of Christ, who came to bring love and life and joy? For this special occasion how fitting are the trees, with arms pointing upwards, dressed in green to speak of life and growth. Decked in glowing lights and beautiful ornaments, they reflect the happiness in the friendly faces gathered here today. In His name and for His sake, we now begin this family festival of decorating the Sanctuary. The festive atmosphere which begins now by decking the halls with greens and hearing the story of that first Christmas once again is brought full circle as we realize that the greatest gift of all is that baby born in a manger, Jesus Christ! So, let us begin the celebration by placing the greens on the altar and see in them the promise of new life and a sign of the hope that in Christ, all will live forever."

The other stories that would have been shared are represented by these symbols—the candles—the wreaths—the Christmas tree—the holly and greens—the bells—the poinsettia—the Chrismons and ornaments—the gifts—the Shepherd's crook/candy cane—the Creche—the star—and the Bible. How many of these do you have as a part of your family's tradition and share with each other? All? Some? None?

A big thank=you to Marilyn Jessen who had the vision of bringing "Hanging of the Greens" back as a tradition to OSL. And to Julie Dlouhy, the choir members, Ophie Hart, and the other singers and musicians and readers who put in a lot of time in preparing themselves for this special service. May be next year?



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Message from Pastor Manz

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

December always arrives with a familiar mixture of anticipation and weariness. The days grow short, the nights long, and our calendars fill quickly. Yet into the shadows of winter the Church speaks her clearest word: Christ has come, Christ comes now, and Christ will come again. Advent is not simply a countdown to Christmas; it is the Church's yearly confession that all life, all faith, and all hope rests upon the One who took on our flesh to redeem it.

At the heart of December is not nostalgia, sentimentality, or the warm glow of holiday traditions. At the heart is a Person—Jesus Christ, true God and true Man. When we say the Word became flesh, we mean our flesh: the same frailty, the same vulnerability, the same human nature we bear every day. Christ's incarnation is not an idea; it is God's decisive entrance into our world of sorrow, fear, and sin.

The manger is not an image of harmless divine cuteness. It is the opening act of a rescue mission. The wood of the crib points to the wood of the cross. And the flesh that Mary holds is the same flesh that will be offered for the life of the world. The Christ Child is born not merely to teach us but to save us. He comes to take our place, bear our sin, and restore our humanity.

The miracle of the Incarnation is not locked in the past. Christ's coming to us is not limited to Bethlehem. He continues to come here and now in the ways He has promised: His Word, His Baptism, and His Supper.

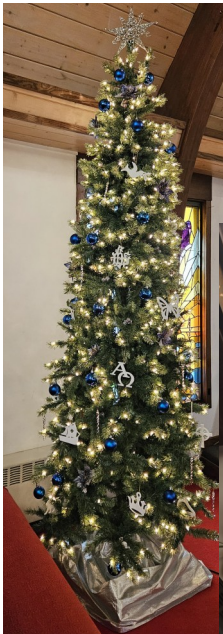
In Holy Baptism, He has clothed you with His righteousness. You have been united with His death and resurrection. The same Christ who lay in the manger now dwells with you through water and Word. His incarnation means your adoption: God is not far off, and you are not forgotten.

In Holy Communion, the Word-made-flesh feeds His people with His very body and blood. Christmas proclaims that God has taken on a body; the Lord's Supper proclaims that He gives that body for you. He comes not merely to inspire but to nourish, strengthen, and forgive. What He once assumed in Mary's womb, He now places into your hands and upon your lips. The Sacrament is a Bethlehem for today—Christ truly here for sinners.

As we celebrate His first coming and rejoice in His continual sacramental coming, we also lift our eyes to His return. Advent teaches us to wait with confidence, not fear. The Judge who is coming is the same Savior who has already borne your judgment. The King who will appear in glory is the same Christ who once wrapped Himself in our humility. For Christians, the final day is not a threat but a promise. The darkness is passing. The Light has already dawned.

As we enter this holy season, may the Lord grant you a renewed wonder at His nearness. May His incarnation comfort your sorrows, His forgiveness quiet your conscience, and His presence in Word and Sacrament strengthen your faith. And may your home—whether loud, quiet, joyful, or anxious—be filled with the peace of Christ who comes for you.

A blessed Advent and Christmas to you all!
In Christ,
Pastor Manz



Thank you to the group of "elves" that decorated the church on Monday, November 24. Everything looks festive and bright.





LWML NEWS

Our Faith Society has been busy with our mission work. We have spearheaded a Food Pantry collection during the month of November. This month we are collecting items for the Seniors at Linden Place for Christmas. We have done this the past few years and have delighted the residents there with our gifts. Suggestions for the collection include: socks, fleece blankets, note cards and stamps, small treats or candies, puzzle books, decks of cards, pens and pencils, any hygiene products such as soap, shampoo, shaving cream, deodorant, body spray, lotion. Please join us in this collection to help brighten another's Christmas!

The next quilting dates will be in January but no definite dates have been set. Be sure to watch the bulletin and church screen to find out those dates. It's a wonderful fellowship time while creating much needed warm quilts.

We have changed our normal January scheduled meeting date to **Monday, January 12th at 4 pm**. There will be **NO** meeting in **February** but we will resume our normal meeting schedule on **March 16th** at 4pm.

Have a blessed and safe Christmas and New Year's! Remember to keep Christ in your Christmas this year and always!

Important Dates Coming Up

December 8 @ 6:00p	Elder's Meeting
December 9 @ 5:30p	Trustees Meeting
December 10 @ 1:00p	Bible Study
@ 7:00p	Mid-Week Advent Service
@ 7:30p	Confirmation
December 13 @ 9:00a	Council Meeting
December 14 @ 3:00p	Christmas Caroling
December 17 @ 1:00p	Bible Study
@ 7:00p	Mid-Week Advent Service
@ 7:30p	Confirmation Class
December 18 @ 10:15a	OSL West
December 24 @ 4:00p	The Nativity of Our Lord
	- Christmas Eve Service
December 25- January 3	Pastor on Vacation
December 25 and January 1	- Church Office Closed



Christmas for Seniors

An additional opportunity for the OSL Family to show their love to the folks at Linden Place (aka Mc Cann Village).

Many senior residents at Linden have no family so a small group at Linden have taken on the task of collecting donations to create Christmas gift bags for the residents.

A collection box is set up in the Narthex as well as a list of suggested items for men and women. The list is also printed in the December Chronicler. As you are out shopping consider picking up a few items to help fill the Linden Place Christmas bags.

The collection will end on **December 11th**.

If you have questions contact Julie
521-3473

Suggested Items to Purchase: for Christmas for Seniors

Socks
Fuzzy Socks
Purse size hand sanitizer
Deodorant (Men's or Women's)
Hand lotion
Small Kleenex pocket size
Tooth paste
Snacks—Cheese and Crackers
Christmas Candies
Candy canes
Peppermint sticks
Hot Chocolate packets
Word search
Crossword puzzles
Pens and pencils
Small note pads
Flip note books and envelopes
Purse size calendars
Wall calendars
Scotch tape
Dish towels
Hot pad holders

Acolyte Schedule – September 2025 to August 2026

Beginning this year, each confirmand is expected to acolyte for an entire calendar month. Given there are 12 months, each student will serve two months total. Below is a tentative schedule for the year. Please let the Pastor know if any adjustments need to be made. If an acolyte is unable serve on a given Sunday because of an emergency or unexpected situation, *they are responsible for finding a replacement and communicating that to the Pastor*. Thank you for your service in the church!

September: Sophia Manz

October: Alexis Sorensen

November: Rylee Harkin

December: Makenna Dunkerson

January: Blake Sorensen

February: Bryleigh Boger

March: Sophia Manz

April: Alexis Sorensen

May: Makenna Dunkerson

June: Rylee Harkin

July: Blake Sorensen

August: Bryleigh Boger



JoAnn Bringolf delivered 10 quilts and one baby blanket to the St. Nick's Club. These will be distributed on December 6 to those in need with other items. Thank you quilters.

December Volunteers

Ushers - Michael Weddell

Greeters: Carmen & Dorothy Sanders

Fellowship: JoAnn Bringolf, Manz family & Deanna Ihde

Elder: Tim Huegel

Media: Doug Woebeking

Altar Guild: Loretta Tool

Acolyte: Mckenna Dunkerson

Piano: Ophie Hart

Organ: Joy McGinley

Below is a communication Patsy Weddel received from former member Beth Tepe. Beth and her husband, Les were members of OSL from 1997 until 2019, when they moved to Florida to be closer to family. It is with sadness that we report Les's death,, but with joy to hear from Beth at this time.

November 21, 2025

9:09 a.m.

Patsy dear! Did you get this? I need to know if all the lines are clear before I text you a long one! I am so old and slow. Love!!! Beth Tepe.

9:11 a.m. (my response)

Wow! It is so very good to confirm that I did get this. You have been in my heart and head!

6:43 p.m.

Good reason, dear friend! You are the first person I'm informing that Les, my dear husband died on September 13, 2025. He didn't suffer much, if at all, from Alzheimer Disease, for way longer than anyone ever knew, including myself. The first clue I saw was in Bible class when he "answered" a question all over the place, ending with "well, I don't remember where I was going with this," ... and Pastor Moore remarked "neither do we..." and everyone laughed. Except me. I had seen other tiny clues, but didn't mention it to anyone.

That's the big news. I miss him – his presence in the room. But, along with our mutual faith in our wonderful God, and our faithful relationship, I am taking his absence with a look to the future and our meeting again in heaven with certainty, and from what I hear, with more in a timely way.

Finally and with apologies I am reaching out to our dear friends at Our Savior in Newton. Your name popped right up as the first, as I owe you several letters!!! I've been wanting to write for a long time.

My own physical health is iffy at best, and I hope God will not wait too long before He takes me home as well!! Suffice it to say, I'm pretty miserable and will gladly go with Him.

The Lord only knows how much I wish I could see you again! Oops. That almost sounded some strange.

I have to quit for now, and hit the sack. Oldness is catching up.

Lots of love to both of you!

50 Fun Facts About December: Winter's Festive Finale

Discover the magic and wonder of the year's final month with these fascinating facts about December. As winter settles in across the Northern Hemisphere, this month brings a unique blend of holiday cheer, cultural traditions, and natural phenomena.

1. The name "December" comes from the Latin word "decem," meaning ten, as it was originally the tenth month in the Roman calendar.
2. In the ancient Roman calendar, December had only 29 days. The Julian calendar, introduced by Julius Caesar in 45 BCE, gave December 31 days.
3. The winter solstice, typically occurring on December 21 or 22, marks the shortest day of the year in the Northern Hemisphere.
4. Christmas, celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ, is observed on December 25th by many Christians worldwide.
5. Hanukkah, the Jewish Festival of Lights, often falls in December, lasting eight nights.
6. Kwanzaa, a week-long celebration of African American culture, begins on December 26th.
7. Saint Nicholas Day is celebrated on December 6th in many European countries.
8. The ancient Roman festival of Saturnalia was held in mid-December, influencing many modern Christmas traditions.
9. The Geminid meteor shower, one of the most spectacular of the year, peaks in mid-December.
10. The Northern Lights (Aurora Borealis) are often more visible in December due to longer nights.
11. December marks the beginning of the wet season in many parts of the Southern Hemisphere.
12. The coldest temperature ever recorded on Earth (-128.6°F/-89.2°C) was in Antarctica on December 21, 1983.
13. The North Pole experiences 24 hours of darkness in December due to its tilt away from the sun.
14. Turquoise, one of December's birthstones, is believed to bring good fortune and protection.
15. Zircon, another December birthstone, comes in a variety of colors but is most popular in its blue form.
16. Tanzanite, the third birthstone, was discovered in Tanzania in 1967 and is rarer than diamonds.
17. The narcissus, December's birth flower, symbolizes good wishes, faithfulness, and respect.
18. Holly, also associated with December, represents defense and domestic happiness.
19. Sir Isaac Newton, the influential physicist and mathematician, was born on December 25, 1642.
20. Ludwig van Beethoven, the renowned composer, was baptized on December 17, 1770, while his exact birth date remains unknown.
21. Walt Disney, the pioneering animator and entrepreneur, was born on December 5, 1901.
22. Jane Austen, the celebrated English novelist, was born on December 16, 1775.
23. Louis Pasteur, the groundbreaking chemist and microbiologist, was born on December 27, 1822.
24. "December" is the title of a popular song by the rock band Collective Soul.
25. The poem "A Visit from St. Nicholas" (also known as "'Twas the Night Before Christmas") was first published anonymously in December 1823.
26. Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" was first published on December 19, 1843.
27. The classic film "It's a Wonderful Life" premiered on December 20, 1946.
28. Many popular Christmas songs, such as "White Christmas" and "Jingle Bells," were written about December weather and traditions.
29. The Giant Lantern Festival (also known as Ligligan Parul) is held in San Fernando, Philippines, in December, featuring intricate lanterns up to 40 feet tall.
30. In Japan, eating KFC on Christmas Eve has become a popular tradition since the 1970s. The tradition began when KFC launched its "Kentucky for Christmas" campaign in 1974.

Continued on page 8

Continued from page 7

31. In Venezuela, it's tradition to roller skate to Christmas mass in Caracas during December. This tradition is called "las patinatas," which translates to "the skating".
32. The Krampus Run (Krampuslauf) takes place throughout December in various Alpine regions of Austria, Germany, and Switzerland.
33. In Sweden, the St. Lucia Day celebration on December 13th involves a procession led by a girl wearing a crown of candles.
34. Most bears enter hibernation before December, using the month to maintain deep sleep.
35. December marks the start of the breeding season for gray seals in the UK.
36. Monarch butterflies complete their migration to Mexico by December, where they overwinter.
37. The December moth, active during winter months, is one of the few moth species that can withstand cold temperatures.
38. In the Southern Hemisphere, December sees the blooming of many native plants like the New Zealand Christmas Tree.
39. Many businesses experience their highest sales volumes in December due to holiday shopping.
40. The stock market often experiences the "Santa Claus Rally" a trend of stock prices rising in the last week of December.
41. December retail sales typically peak during the two weeks before Christmas Day.
42. Many corporations set December 31st as their fiscal year-end, making it one of the busiest months for financial reporting, tax planning, and business budgeting worldwide.
43. December 26th, known as Boxing Day in some countries, is a major shopping day with significant sales and discounts.
44. The Andromeda Galaxy (also known as Messier 31) is often visible to the naked eye in the Northern Hemisphere during clear December nights.
45. December's full moon is traditionally known as the "Cold Moon" or "Long Nights Moon."
46. The Ursid meteor shower occurs annually in late December, peaking around December 21-22.
47. The Great Conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn occurred on December 21, 2020, the closest since 1623.
48. On December 14, 1962, Mariner 2 became the first spacecraft to fly by Venus, marking a milestone in space exploration.
49. Pepsi was first served in December 1891.
50. The first text message sent was Merry Christmas in December 1992.

I hope you have had as much fun learning about the fun facts of each month this past year as it has been for me to research and present them to you. I'm sure you have each learned a thing or two from the trivia—I know I have. Mickey

