



The early church fathers made the audacious claim that God became what humans are so that humans might become what God is. Christmas re-enchants the world and makes of “humanity fully alive” the glory of God.—Donald Heinz

Christmas re-enchants the world! In a world of ones and zeroes, of ideology and politics as usual (or unusual!), of accounting and discounting, a gift is given to enchant us with something borderline magical, ridiculous, scandalous, even. This gift is the idea, the belief, the claim that God once walked around as human flesh, blood, and bone, embedded in a family, a culture, a tradition, an era. We think ourselves beyond this kind of mythological thinking where the Zeuses and Apollos of Olympus take day trips for romantic excursions or to see what’s going on with the commoners, yet we remain intrigued by the idea that God might just be walking around here somewhere.

At Christmas, we re-enchant ourselves with a story that centers God’s reckless love for the world that has God birthed and breathing among us. This story dismantles our certainties and numbers-driven, fixed ways of thinking and opens us up to impossibilities coming to be in our midst. This story might also even put us on the look out! As the above quote points out, this incarnation isn’t just for the Word becoming flesh as Jesus, but for us, to make humanity fully alive and divinized. What that means for us is that God might just show up anywhere, as any human being: your annoying neighbor, that whiny child, the “illegal” at the border, a prison inmate. If that (im)possibility can’t enchant us, what could?

Merry Christmas! And may you be re-enchanted and made fully alive by this amazing story of incarnation! God might just show up anywhere! Anytime!

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Worship Schedule

Sunday, December 1 First Sunday of Advent

First Lesson: Jeremiah 33:14-16
Psalm 25:1-10

Second Lesson: 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13
Holy Gospel: Luke 21:25-36

Sunday, December 8 Second Sunday of Advent

First Lesson: Malachi 3:1-4
Luke 1:68-79

Second Lesson: Philippians 1:3-11
Holy Gospel: Luke 3:1-6

Sunday, December 15 Third Sunday of Advent

First Lesson: Zephaniah 3:14-20
Isaiah 12:2-6

Second Lesson: Philippians 4:4-7
Holy Gospel: Luke 3:7-18

Sunday, December 22 Fourth Sunday of Advent

First Lesson: Micah 5:2-5a
Psalm 80:1-7

Second Lesson: Hebrews 10:5-10
Holy Gospel: Luke 1:39-55

Tuesday, December 24 Nativity of Our Lord

First Lesson: Isaiah 9:2-7
Psalm 96

Second Lesson: Titus 2:11-14
Holy Gospel: Luke 2:1-20

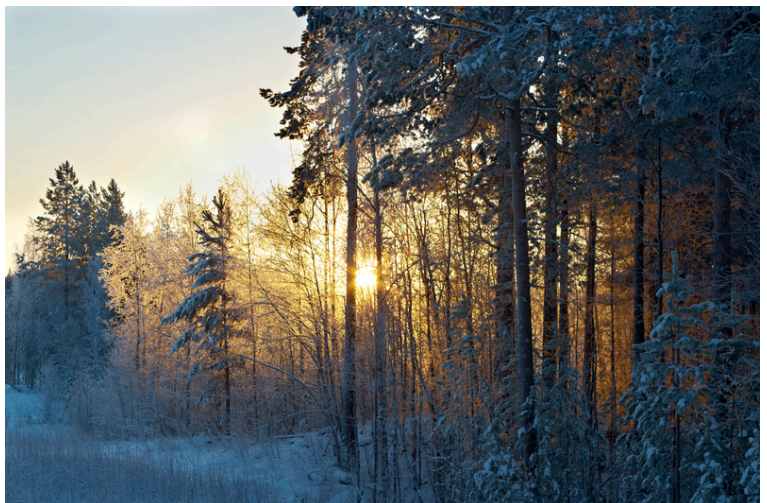
Sunday, December 29 First Sunday of Christmas

First Lesson: 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26
Psalm 148

Second Lesson: Colossian 3:12-17
Holy Gospel: Luke 2:41-52



Joyful Voices Rehearsals:
Tuesday, December 10, @ 5:30
p.m. and Monday, December 23 @
6:15 p.m.



Worship Matters: Advent

To Wait, To Watch, To Hope

December 1 marks the beginning of the Church Year, and the first of the four Sundays of Advent (from the Latin *adventus*, meaning coming). The church's 'new year' does not begin with the celebration of an event, but with a season of hope and longing, of joyful expectation, and peaceful preparation.

It can be difficult to know just how to navigate the call that lies at the heart of Advent: to wait, to watch, to wake. The pressure of our culture is almost overwhelming to celebrate Christmas throughout December (and maybe even November). We do not have much practice (or patience) with waiting; and in our fast-paced, high-tech, have-it-now society, we have grown accustomed to things being readily accessible. So how do we wait, and wait with joyful hope in this season? How do we prepare to celebrate the anniversary of Jesus' birth and anticipate his return?

Many answers can be found in our readings for the season. The building blocks of Advent – the stories, memories, songs, promises, and hopes can all be found in our scripture texts. Rich images from the prophets Jeremiah, Isaiah, Zephaniah, and Malachi, speak of our hope for the restoration of peace and justice in our world. Our Gospel readings will call us to 'watch,' to 'prepare' (John the Baptizer). We will wait for miracles to be born as we celebrate the unexpected and joyous pregnancies of Mary and Elizabeth. In scripture we also find the songs of the season: Mary's song (Magnificat), Zechariah's song (Benedictus), the O Antiphons (O Come, O Come Emmanuel), and psalms of hope and longing.

We weave these elements together in our Advent worship. We bypass the cues from the commercial and entertainment world to develop with words, music, and symbols, the sense of waiting and longing for the Gift of God. The minor strains of our hymns, the simple chants, the blue paraments (symbolizing hope), the expanding light of the candles on the Advent wreath, all are part of keeping this season.

In the midst of all we do to 'celebrate Christmas,' Advent summons us to a new beginning in the life and world around us. "Restore us, O God; let your face shine on us." we pray with the psalmist. We know the world is not as just, not as loving, not as whole as it can and should be, but the coming of Christ and his presence among us give us reasons to live our days with hope . . . and so we wait and pray . . . for peace and healing to a world waiting to be reborn.

Maranatha! Come, Lord Jesus!



SANDWICH AND SCRIPTURE

Concordia Narthex
11:30 am
December date TBD



WELCOME AND RECONCILING ONE DAY RETREATS

**Learn how we as churches can live the radical
welcome and love of Jesus.**

We are entering the second phase of the process toward potentially becoming a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Synod! Whereas the first phase featured short events around themes of Welcome, Scripture and Tradition, and Sexual Orientation, Gender Expression, and Identity, the second phase will consist of a day-long event where we will center the stories of LGBTQIA+ people of faith, explore the reality of intersectionality, and learn how our congregations might become allies. Join us, the Synod's Welcome and Reconciliation Team, for this time of learning, community building, and discernment!

There is a session in four of our conferences:

- Sat, November 16 at St. Andrew's in Grand Rapids
- Sat, December 14 at Gloria Dei in Duluth
- Sat. January 25 at Faith in Isle
- Sat, February 8 at Messiah in Mountain Iron

Lunch and morning snacks will be provided. Cost is \$10.

Coffee at 8:30 a.m., program begins at 9:00 a.m.

Register here: <http://bit.ly/RIC2425> or use the QR code at right.

Registration closes the Monday before each session.

Learn more: <https://nemnsynod.org/welcome-reconciling-team/>

VOTE YES TO
ALLYSHIP!

BEGINS AT 8:30 AM
WITH COFFEE AND
FELLOWSHIP; ENDS
AT 3 PM

GOOD FOR
EVERYONE!

ESPECIALLY
IMPORTANT IF YOU
ARE A SYNOD
ASSEMBLY VOTING
MEMBER!

THERE IS SESSION
NEAR YOU!



**DECEMBER 14, 2024, 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM, GLORIA DEI LUTHERAN
CHURCH, 219 N 6TH AVE E, DULUTH,**

OCTOBER, 2024 FINANCIAL REPORT

| <u>OCTOBER, 2024</u> | <u>ACTUAL</u> | <u>BUDGETED</u> | <u>YEAR TO DATE</u> |
|----------------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| INCOME | \$14,755.00 | \$13,433.33 | \$117,441.16 |
| EXPENSES | \$12,600.34 | \$14,611.42 | \$131,726.65 |
| NET | 2,154.66 | (\$1,178.08) | (\$14,285.49) |

Christmas Eve Service will be at 5 p.m.

Bridges to Christ is hosting coffee after worship on December 8. Donations will be given to Opportunity Palestine. Opportunity Palestine works to sustain the educational institutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL). They support 4 K-12 schools serving over 2,100 students regardless of gender, race, religion, or ability to pay. Peace education and interfaith dialog are embedded in the curriculum. Young Palestinians live under a disturbing reality of ever present violence, making life extremely complicated. By providing a consistent, healthy, and nurturing environment, the Lutheran schools and educational programs directly address the anxieties and fears that, too often, frustrate the lives of their students. Opportunity Palestine also supports other ELCJHL programs including the Al-Mahaba Kindergarten on the Mount of Olives for Children in East Jerusalem, and the Environmental Education Center in Beit Jala. **Thank you for your support of this ministry.**

Cookbooks are here and being distributed by Bridget! Any extra cookbooks will be available for sale on Sunday, December 8, after worship.

Eventide (based on "Abide With Me" hymn: Quilters have another opportunity to join Ann & Lynn on **Thursday, Dec 12th at 6:30 p.m.** in the Fellowship Hall. Help with piecing, sewing & tying quilts, which are given away to various people & places.

BRRR...it's getting cold out! Bridges To Christ is collecting lined hats and socks for CHUM beginning **Dec 1st-15th.** Look for the green bucket in the Narthex. We would be happy to shop for you, so donate cash or check (made out to Bridges To Christ) in the box in the green bucket.

Concordia Giving Tree- The Concordia Giving Tree for Stowe Elementary School is up! To help spread Concordia's Christmas spirit, please take tags from the tree in the narthex to shop for children in need. There is also a great need for SuperOne gift cards, school supplies, hats, mittens, chap stick, and winter outdoor clothing (new or gently used). We will be collecting all the items until December 16th. If you do not like to shop, we will gladly shop for you (cash or checks made out to Lynn Carlson are accepted). Any questions, please contact Lynn at (218) 341-7190. Thank you for assisting the Stowe families during this Holiday Season!



ALTERNATIVE GIFT GIVING

Did you know that the average American plans to spend \$942 on Christmas gifts this year? Challenge yourself to rethink the tradition of gift-giving by purchasing from ELCA Good Gifts or LWR Fair Trade Fair. When you purchase fair trade handcrafts, chocolate, coffee and teas as gifts, you connect yourself to a larger cause and make a real difference in people's lives. Every item sold means a step away from poverty for the talented artisan or farmer who created it.

Earth friendly gifts options are:

Interfaith Fair Trade Coffee (<http://shop.equalexchange.coop/organization-orders>) Equal Exchange is a democratically organized worker-owned co-operative dedicated to building a new model of trade based on fairness, environmental sustainability and strong relationships between farmers and consumers.

SERRV International (<http://www.serrv.org>) Promotes social and economic justice for developing countries by purchasing international products at a fair wage. Concordia receives 10% net value of each individual order when you use our Concordia's Order # "FOOLWR PCL454".

ELCA Good Gifts (<https://goodgifts.elca.org/>), the giving catalog of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, lifts up more than 65 gift ideas filled with meaning and love. ELCA Good Gifts are a special way you can help make a significant impact on the mission and ministries of our church while giving a gift to a friend, pastor, teacher, neighbor or other loved one.



Endowment Board Member Opportunity

The Endowment Board is looking for two new members to fill open positions starting in February for a five-year term. Members manage incoming donations and distribution of funds. The board meets two or three times a year. Please prayerfully consider joining this important church ministry. If you are interested, please contact Delores Grunwald (218-724-3210) or email: deloresgrunwald@gmail.com.

Prayer and Visitation Ministry

Let the Prayer Chain members join with you in your prayers and supplications. They are just a phone call away. All prayers are confidential and names or details are not needed. God is aware of all circumstances and waits to hear from you.

Please contact Reba Almquist at 525-6968.

For hospital or other visitations, please contact the office at 728-4229.

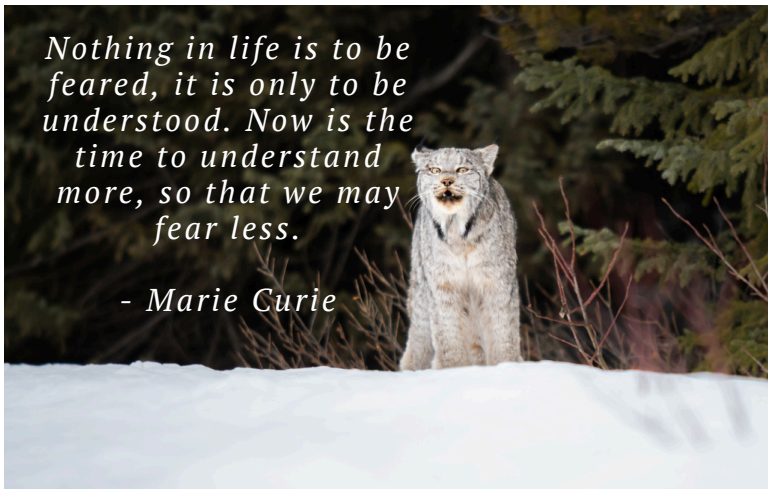
Remember in Your Prayers

Please remember the following people who have been hospitalized, under a doctor's care, those recuperating, struggling, or those grieving since our last newsletter: The family of John Hoppe, Those affected by natural disasters, Rory and Greg Raymond, Eileen Fish, Anne Holecek, the families of victims, the survivors, and communities where mass shootings have occurred. Patti Pearson, Those marginalized for their sexual or gender identity, race, or ability, Neil and Barb Parikh, Tom Nelson, Max, Wayne Kari, the people of Ukraine, Palestine, Lebanon, Iran, Israel, and Russia, Roger Erickson, Tim Bell, migrant families, Phillip Hedges, Carrie Birdseye-Erickson, and Jamie Desemone.

Please remember those in our congregation who are in nursing homes or are homebound. Please pray for them and consider stopping by for a visit. Prayer and visitation is an important ministry of the congregation.

Heritage Haven: Warren Roberts

A reminder that, on account of privacy, hospitals and nursing homes will NOT contact the Church to share that you have been admitted unless you or a family member tell them or the hospital chaplains to do so. Protecting privacy is also a way we care for our friends who may or may not wish for others to know of their illness or condition. If you hear that someone is sick or hospitalized, do not tell others unless you have been given permission by them to do so. **If you wish to be visited by the Pastor or placed on the prayer list, contact the Church office.** If you have a conversation with someone who is ill, hospitalized, or has come to be in a short or long term care facility, ask them if they want the congregation and Pastor to know what is happening before you pass the word along. Do not assume that because you know, that the individual wants everyone else to, as well. Honoring the privacy of our neighbors, as well as expressing our own desire for the church or pastor to know of our condition, helps to prevent troublesome situations and helps us support one another!





Flower and Sanctuary Candle Sign-up

A nice way to remember a loved one or celebrate a special occasion is to have altar flowers or the sanctuary candle on Sunday morning. The sign-up sheet is in the Narthex for both. Cost for flowers is \$22 and the candle is \$8. Contact the office with any questions.

Please note that when you have altar flowers for worship, you may take them home following worship. The glass vases must stay at church, however.

December Birthdays

- 1 Evelyn Christensen
- 4 Aaron Edwards
- 6 Anne Thomas
- 13 Allie Bergman
Carol Kari
- 19 Lynne Erickson
- 20 Lorena Holmstrom

If your birthday isn't listed or has the wrong date, please let the office know.



Equal Exchange Coffee Donations

Equal Exchange coffee donations needed for church coffee supply. Coffee funds are running low. Donation envelopes are available in the narthex information rack. Place an envelope with any donation amount in the offering plate with note "Equal Exchange coffee fund."





Book review
What if we Get it Right? By Ayana Elizabeth Johnson, 2024, One World Publishing

The title of the book represents the positive, hope-filled approach Ayana Johnson uses to flesh out the current discussions and actions revolving around climate change issues. She spends three pages on the crisis and how bad things are, the rest of the 433 pages are devoted to current thinking in various areas related to climate issues, and solutions to the problems that human actions have caused that threaten our planet. The author's stated purpose: "This book is about possibility and transformation. It's about what the world could be if we charge ahead with the array of climate solutions we have at our fingertips, solutions at the intersection of science, policy, culture, and justice."

The format of the book is different. The author is an oceanographer and climate scientist. The heart of the book is her interviews with various experts in fields directly and indirectly involved in climate work. The book is divided into eight sections: POSSIBILITY (setting the stage with climate scientist Kate Marvel); REPLENISH AND RE-GREEN (explores ecosystems, food systems, etc.); IF WE BUILD IT (building to conserve the natural world); FOLLOW THE MONEY (financial systems that affect climate); CULTURE IS THE CONTEXT (Hollywood, news outlets, community activism); CHANGING THE RULES (policy, politics, and rules); COMMUNITY FOREMOST (diasporas and homes, indigenous community responses); TRANSFORMATION (future of coastal habitations and joyous possibilities for a future that restores our planet's health. At the beginning of most of these sections is an introduction of ten problems and ten possibilities that introduce the section.

Those interviewed are from many fields of expertise, climate scientists, Hollywood producers, visual artists, politicians, lobbyists, poets, venture capitalists, and climate justice attorneys. I will emphasize one interview with Rihanna Gunn-Wright, who was one of the policy experts who wrote the Green New Deal policy in 2019, that eventually was voted down by the U. S. legislature. It was only a 14 page document as a framework for decarbonizing the U. S. in a decade, while addressing systemic injustices, creating millions of jobs, an re-energizing the "real" economy, production of real goods, providing all with high-quality health care, affordable housing, clean air and water, healthy, affordable food, and access to nature. I had no idea it was so comprehensive in addressing all aspects of climate affecting our lives.

A helpful tool introduced in the book is the 'climate action Venn diagram, designed to help people understand their ability to help in the climate crisis, and how to bring personal beliefs and talents to this important cause. In looking at the 'sweet spot' in the middle of the diagram is the word: 'action.' This means doing something to help address the climate crisis, rather than talking about it or wishing it away. The author offers these guidelines in finding your sweet spot. Keep showing up; bring your superpowers; join something; find your people; be a problem solver; choose your battles; nourish joy; love nature.

Ayana Johnson concludes: "Averting climate catastrophe, this is the work of our lifetimes. So, go where there is need and where your heart can find a home. And, when it all feels too much, return to this simple guiding question: What if we act as if we love the future? Be tenacious on behalf of life on earth."

John Hanson (from 11/2024 Green Blades Rising Newsletter)



Daily Food Distribution: So far this Fall, Concordia has donated 12 lbs of various foods including macaroni & cheese, canned meals and soups. All at CHUM are truly grateful for your generosity, but the need continues. We remember when, in the 1970s, the “Emergency Food Shelf” was created by CHUM to address what was thought to be a short-term need. Here we are, 50 years later, and food insecurity is still great.

Cans of Non-Cream Soup: So we’d like to propose that Concordia take on the on-going project of supplying soup. Pop-top 10 oz cans of non-cream soups are always a great need. Please make this a continuing part of your grocery shopping. Just drop them in the CHUM box in the narthex; Dave & I will deliver them on our weekly Friday morning at the CHUM food shelf. These cans of nourishing soups can be a life-line for our hungry neighbors.

Always remember that your donations are so appreciated by everyone at CHUM. And along with actual foods, CHUM staff can use our cash donations to make our dollars go even further. Each dollar donated can easily be used to purchase up to \$7 worth of foods through sources only available to CHUM and similar charitable agencies.

Thank you so much for your on-going love and support of this important work!

Sincerely,
Dave & Jane Wedin



Shelter Expansion Press Conference

Wet Feet Are No Fun...

You may have seen us ask for socks in past newsletters or social media posts. We tend to get a nice influx for a while, and then it tapers off and our guests still need dry, dependable foot coverings. The fact of the matter is, we are giving away up to 50 pairs a day and with winter coming, this will only increase.

Some may ask, "How on earth are you going through so many socks?" Well, let us tell you. We average over 100 guests every day at our shelter. Our guests come from all walks of life, and no one story is the same. One thing that is more consistent across the board is lack of access to laundry, and rarely an extra change of clothes. We have a washer and dryer at Chum, but it can take up to two hours to get a whole load of laundry done. With so many people staying at our shelter, not many get a chance to use this service. Even if they can, people don't want to have to walk around barefoot while they wait for clean clothes.

So, many folks wear their socks until they are no longer, well, socks. Then they start off on a new pair. When temperatures start to dip, wet feet pose a risk of getting frostbite, and our guests are dealing with enough already.

Would you consider giving of the gift of socks? It seems so mundane and even unimportant when you are unfamiliar with the conditions people experiencing homelessness are facing. But, to our guests, and to our community facing homelessness, they are a priceless gift. Below is a link to our Amazon wishlist where you can purchase and send socks directly to us. Or you may bring sock donations to Concordia or to CHUM during the business week from 9 am-5 pm (102 W 2nd St). Thank you for your support.

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/YTY5KW3439G1?ref_=wl_share

You may have already seen a few news articles about this, but we wanted to make sure you know that our shelter is going to be undergoing a big expansion project! We are incredibly excited about what this will provide for our guests. There will finally be more space for people experiencing homelessness. It is our hope that this shelter expansion will offer our guests a better place to be while sorting through the challenges they face. With more room and resources, our expanded shelter will be able to provide a safer, more comfortable environment where individuals can find support, stability, and the tools needed to move toward a more secure future.

We still have a long road ahead of us. But, this project wouldn't be possible without the dedication and generosity of our community. By working together, we can help provide dignity, care, and hope to those experiencing homelessness. Stay tuned for updates as we work toward creating a more inclusive and supportive space for everyone in need!



On view September 3 through December 20, 2024

***Dreaming Our Futures* features more than 100 works by 29 Indigenous artists.** The exhibition premiered at the Katherine E. Nash Gallery at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities (January 16 – March 16, 2024), and traveled to Rochester Art Center (April 24 – July 21, 2024) before coming to the Tweed Museum of Art.

The exhibition was curated by Brenda J. Child (Red Lake Ojibwe), Northrop Professor of American Studies, University of Minnesota, and Howard Oransky, Director of Katherine E. Nash Gallery, with Christopher Pexa (Bdewákaŋtuŋwaŋ Dakota, Spirit Lake Nation), Associate Professor of English, Harvard University.

A fully illustrated exhibition catalogue with critical essays by several prominent Native American scholars is distributed worldwide by University of Minnesota Press and available for purchase at the museum.

Dreaming Our Futures: Ojibwe and Očhéthi Šakówiŋ Artists and Knowledge Keepers is organized by the Katherine E. Nash Gallery at the University of Minnesota.

(1) Rabbett Before Horses Strickland, Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe Ricing, 2022. Oil on canvas, 60 × 84 in. (152.4 × 213.4 cm) Courtesy of the artist. © Rabbett Before Horses Strickland

(2) Waŋblí Mayášleča (Francis J. Yellow, Jr.), Lakǰóta. Ikicize Nunpa (Two Fighters), 2011. Watercolor and ink on antique stock certificate, 6¾ × 10¼ in. (17.1 × 26 cm) Collection of the Plains Art Museum, Fargo, North Dakota, 2015.002.0080 © Waŋblí Mayášleča (Francis J. Yellow, Jr.)

(3) Joe Geshick, Bois Forte Band of Ojibwe. The Welcoming, 2004. Oil on canvas, 72 × 84 in. (182.9 × 213.4 cm) Collection of the Acreage at Osceola, WI. On loan from Kiran Stordalen Trust

(4) Leah H. Yellowbird, First Nations Algonquin-Metis, Anishinaabe. Waabig Wan (Flower), 2014. Acrylic on canvas, 18 × 48 in. (45.7 × 121.9 cm) Tweed Museum of Art, UMD, Sax Brothers Purchase Fund, D2015.32 © Leah Yellowbird

Pastor: Rev. Jeffery Davis
Cantor: Jennifer Dums
Joyful Voices Pianist: Patti Martenson
Pianist: Anneliese Braaten
Sunday School Teachers: Rachelle Anderson, Bryan Anderson, Bridget Bohn, and Marcia DeMeo-Morse.
Office Duties: Carmen Norlien
Custodial Duties: David Haavik
Treasurer: Mark Morse

Church Council Members

Rachelle Anderson
Bridget Bohn, President
Trevor Christensen, Vice-President
Ashley Hoppe
Makenzie Morse
Mark Morse, Treasurer
Dan Norlien

Committees

Building & Grounds: Trevor Christensen
Social Justice: Pastor Jeff

Stewardship: Pastor Jeff
Worship & Music: Lynne Erickson, Mary Johnson, and Patti Martenson

Ministries

Altar Guild: Reba Almquist
Bridges To Christ: Ann Edwards
Caring Ministry: Jane Wedin
Quilters: Karin Cummings

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Duluth, MN 55803

Office Hours: Please call first, as circumstances vary from week to week.

CHUM

David and Jane Wedin

Conference and Synod Assemblies

Open

Lutheran Campus Ministry Duluth Board

Patti Martenson

NE Minnesota Synod Youth Board

Margaret Roeser

Union Gospel Mission

Lois Witchall

Voyageurs Lutheran Ministry

Bridget Bohn



The Messenger is a monthly publication of Concordia Lutheran Church. Items for the January newsletter are due by Tuesday, December 17. Please email your items, corrections, questions, or comments to duluthconcordia@gmail.com

We reserve the right to edit your items.
This newsletter was produced using Canva.

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