

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church December 2023



Advent begins with the pleading voice of the prophet Isaiah. "O, that You would tear open the heavens and come down, that the mountains would quake at your presence!" You can sense in this vivid and demanding language the deep desire and holy impatience of the prophet. He wants God's transforming presence to come and change everything - not someday, not tomorrow, but NOW.

What are the longings of your heart? Where do you deeply desire God's transforming presence to come, now? Advent is a season to voice the tension between the world as it is and the world as it is meant to be, to dwell in the promises of our faith, and to place our trust in God. Placing our trust in God means being in real relationship, where we share our longings, our anger, our pain and heartache – and demand: Ceasefire in Gaza, now! Healing and hope for our neighbors in Camp Nenookaasi - now! Reconciliation in our personal relationships – now! Peace in our hearts – now! O, that You would tear open the heavens and come down, that our world, our city, our neighborhood, our church, and our very bodies would quake at your presence, and be mended by your peace!

In Advent we draw close to the mystery of the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ. In Jesus, God indeed comes down. God pitches God's tent, setting up a divine encampment among us. God hears and responds to our cries and our pleading – for God's kingdom to come and will to be done, on earth as in heaven. Now. Together, may we keep awake and vigilant for the ways the kingdom of God is emerging, even in our heartache – perhaps, especially there.

Pastor Martha

### Come, Now! Christ, Our Peace

**Advent and Christmas at Our Saviour's 2023** 

Sunday Morning Worship 10:30am

December 3 - Advent I

December 10 - Advent II

December 17- Advent III
and Sunday School Christmas Program

December 24 – Advent IV plus 9am Coffee/Tea gathering with 9 Lessons & Carols from King's College

Caroling December 21
Meet at church at 3pm

Christmas Eve Worship
December 24 two services: 4pm and 9pm
Candle lighting and Carol Singing

Wednesday evenings: December 6, 13 and 20 at homes or at church with the choir for a meal, prayer, song and reflection

#### Wednesday Night Gatherings in Advent – Sign up with Hosts

On Wednesday evenings throughout Advent, we will gather in members' homes to share in fellowship, food, prayer and bible study. Gatherings start the first week of December.

See the list of hosts below, and email the host to reserve your spot. We will also have a sign-up at church on the first Sunday of Advent, December 3.

Host	Dates & Time	Email contact	Location (address in directory, or email host)	# of Guests
Eric Molho & Tal Anderson	Dec. 6, 13, 20 6pm, flexible	ericmolho@yahoo.com	Downtown Mpls	6
Aneesa Parks	Dec. 6, 13, 20 5:30pm	aneesamparks@gmail.com	South Minneapolis	5
Cindy Devereaux	Dec. 6, 13, 20, 5:30pm	crdevereaux@gmail.com	South Minneapolis (Nokomis Square)	12
Dorothy Bass & Mark Schwehn	Dec. 6, 13, 20	dorothy.bass@valpo.edu	Wyzata	6 (2 spots left)
Linda Thorson & Jeanne Heer	Dec. 6, 13, 20 5pm	heerjm@gmail.com	Brooklyn Park	10 (3 spots left)
Choir – All are Welcome!	Dec. 6, 13	mrmpreus@gmail.com	Church	Unlimited
Bruce Pederson	Dec. 7, 14, 21 Thursdays- if interest	bpeders1@gmail.com	TowerLight in St. Louis Park	10
Bardwell family	Dec. 6, 13, 20 5:30pm	martha@oursavioursmpls.org	North Minneapolis	10
Abrahamson and Ruggles family	Dec. 6, 13, 20 5:30pm	dorearuggles@gmail.com	Seward neighborhood	6



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#### **Robbinsdale City Band Holiday Concerts**

Get in the Holiday spirit at a Robbinsdale City Band concert! Concerts are open to the public and have free admission.

7:30pm Thurs Dec 7th @ Crystal Community Center, 4800 Douglas Dr N. Come at 7pm for cookies!

7pm Thurs Dec 14th @ Faith United Methodist Church, 2708 33rd Ave NE. This concert will also be live streamed.

Our own Nancy Nygaard Johnson is a member of the clarinet section. If you are interested in the livestream, contact Nancy at n2j2@comcast.net for a link.

#### Little Library is empty!

#### Nancy Johnson



Our little library on Chicago Ave is in need of books for both Children and Adults. Please drop them off at church in the 2 bins right inside the Chicago Ave entrance. Our neighbors are thankful for our books!

## "Burst into jubilant song with music" (Psalm 98:4) - Celebrate 30 years of Mary Preus - December 10 after worship

Sunday Dec 5th, 1993, Mary had her first Sunday as the choir director for Our Saviour's! In those 30 years, Mary has directed the choir, planned and led worship, led the Wednesday Bible Study and so much more. When Mary was hired by Pastors Don and Janet, they weren't sure how long she would stay, but they wanted her to be part of Our Saviour's. Guess that worked out pretty good! To honor Mary for her 30 years of service, enjoy some chocolate treats provided by the choir after worship on Sunday Dec 10th.

"Hallelujah, we sing your praises!"

#### Trevor Skorburg's Ordination – December 9 at 2pm

Trevor Skorburg will be ordained on December 9th at 2pm at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church in Bloomington! Trevor served among us as a seminary contextual ed student while he did his studies at Luther Seminary. We are thrilled that he has been called to serve at Zion Lutheran Church in Buffalo, MN! The service will also be streamed on the St. Stephen's website: **ststephen.net.** Wear your red and see you there!

#### **Choir Christmas party at Mary Preus' house**

Wednesday, Dec. 20 at 6:30pm. Potluck (Mary provides a main dish) Food, songs and festivities! 2416 East 22nd St.

Mpls. 55406



# Thank you to everyone who turned in a pledge card or pledged online as part of our Stewardship campaign for 2024.



#### Nancy Johnson

There is still time to get your pledge in. Even if you plan to continue at the same amount into 2024, we still need a pledge from you. You can turn in your pledge card at church, mail it to church, fill out an online pledge card clicking on the QR Code, or send an email to our Financial Secretary Nancy at n2j2@comcast.net.

Please get your pledge in ASAP so we can finish our 2024 budget process. If you have offering envelopes for 2023, you will have them for 2024. Please pick them up at church starting Dec 10th. If you are new to Our Saviour's and would like them, there are some available. If you need them delivered, please call the church office at 612-871-2967.

## An Introduction to the Our Saviour's Lutheran Church (OSLC) Foundation

Linda Thorson

**Purpose:** The Foundation was established to provide a permanent way for members and friends to benefit the ministry of Our Saviour's Lutheran Church through memorials, bequests and similar financial gifts. The Foundation supports OSLC ministries and other charitable work in the community.

**History:** The Foundation was established in 1963. Over the years, the Foundation has provided critical financial resources to the church and other nonprofit organizations. The Foundation has provided loans to OSLC for unexpected big expenses.

**What it does for OSLC:** The Foundation supports the ministries of OSLC by providing funds directly to the Our Saviour's Lutheran Church budget. The amount varies each year; ranging from \$39,000-\$42,000.

**How it works**: It is separately incorporated and is managed by the Foundation Board of Directors. The Foundation invests primarily in the Ministry Growth Fund of the ELCA which is a long-term, socially responsible fund. The Foundation also invests in the Mission Investment Fund, a financial ministry of the ELCA.

**Future:** The Foundation board is currently discerning its role in the community while continuing to support the ministries of OSLC. The board is exploring how our work might best help to transform the structures of underlying racial, economic, and other forms of injustice.

**Who:** The Foundation board of directors include: Bob Hybben, Paul Batalden, Mike Troutman, Linda Thorson, Meredith Bruster, Alfred Flomo, Ethan Kehrberg, Evan Gelles, Gabe Herrick, Jakob Johnson, Jared Brandell-Douglas, Kara Lattu. The members of the board are elected at the annual meeting of the congregation.



## Indigenous Thought and Theology Presentation on Zoom Linnea Peterson



The ELCA is hosting a presentation called "Indigenous Thought and Theology," led by Indigenous Lutheran theologian Vance Blackfox. The presentation is on Thursday, November 30, starting at 7 pm. You don't need to preregister; the Zoom link is on the ELCA's Truth and Healing page if you click on the QR Code.

From the ELCA website: "Indian people have unique and beautiful ways of understanding the world. Indigenous wisdom – as it relates to living in relationship with Creator, Mother Earth, and other created beings – should be centered if we want to provide better care for our home and all our relatives. Indigenous Thought and Theology provides an introduction to this wisdom and examines Indigenous ways of understanding, respecting, and interacting with this wondrous world we inhabit."

## Adult forums in Advent - with Community Art-Making Pastor Martha

During 9am Adult Forums in Advent, we will be working on a communal art project as we share in conversation together. Coloring posters with the words 'Hope, Peace, Joy, Love' will be scattered through the Hospitality Center to color. These posters will go up in our worship space for Christmas.

Adult forums are at 9am in the hospitality center and on Zoom.

Here is the link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86297261334

#### December 3 – Advent at Our Saviour's, and Sharing Advent Traditions

Pastor Martha will give an overview of Advent at Our Saviour's. During the forum time you may sign up for Wednesday evening Advent gatherings, which will be hosted at members' homes and at church. We will collect questions for Pastor Esther to address in the forum next week. And we will share our Advent traditions with one another.

#### December 10 – Getting to know Pastor Esther

Come and learn about Pastor Esther's life, from growing up in Indonesia, to living in OH and AZ, to coming to Minnesota to attend Luther Seminary. Bring your questions!

# December 17 – Storytelling: Remembering "the fire" and its lessons for today December 24 – Listening to the King's College Broadcast of Lessons and Carols We will listen to the broadcast of Cambridge University's King's College as they share a service of 9 Lessons and Carols.

# Christmas Program worship – Sunday, December 17 Rehearsal on Saturday, December 16 from 10-12 Pastor Martha

The Christmas Program at OSLC will be on December 17 as the 'Word' part of our worship. Our children and youth will tell the old old story of Jesus' birth in a faithful and fresh way, with costumes and singing!

We will have rehearsal on Saturday, December 16 from 10am-noon.

#### **Lutheran Advocacy-MN & COP 28**

#### Maryellen Skan

Tammy Walhof, director of Lutheran Advocacy-Minnesota (LA-MN), has been chosen as one of four representatives from the ELCA Churchwide Organization to attend COP 28, the United Nations Climate Change Conference. That event will be held in Dubai, UAE, Nov. 30-Dec. 12. Tammy is enrolled in the land use track of meetings, which addresses topics such as agriculture, forestry, and food security.

LA-MN is a state public policy office of ELCA Advocacy and is a ministry partner of the Minneapolis Area Synod (MAS). LA-MN advocates for justice in the areas of hunger, poverty, and care of God's creation. Maryellen Skan, a member of OSLC, is a lay member on the Policy Council representing the MAS. Updates about Tammy's learnings and experiences about climate change when she returns or possibly while she is attending will be forthcoming! Learn more about the conference at (UNFCCC) by clicking on the **QR Code**.

## Mission of the Month - Helping Hands Fund Supporting members, neighbors and Camp Nenookaasi with basic needs Pastor Martha

Our Helping Hands Fund is the mission of the month.

This fund is used at the discretion of the pastors for folks who come to our doors – whether members or neighbors - with particular financial needs. Now that we have developed a relationship with Camp Nenookaasi encampment down the street, we are also using Helping Hands money to support those neighbors and their needs. In the last week, we have purchased gloves, socks, and fuel. Over the last year, we have helped several people with things like rent assistance, hotel stays for people experiencing housing instability, medical bills, transportation for a family emergency, and income assistance from loss of work.

We are not a social service agency, but sometimes people fall through the cracks of our systems, and we are a compassionate place to turn. When we give, the gift of money is accompanied by a listening, compassionate ear; prayer, and invitation to Christian community (as appropriate).

Thanks in advance for your generosity and for the mercy and compassion that flows from our God to those in need.

#### **Grant Stevensen's Non-Stipendiary Call**

#### Pastor Martha

In November, Grant Stevensen received a non-stipendiary call to serve as an ELCA pastor assisting at Our Saviour's from the Minneapolis Area Synod council, at the request of the OSLC church council. This means that the work Grant has already been doing around Our Saviour's – including leading trainings on faith and organizing for our congregational inreach (January 2023) and neighborhood inreach (Spring 2023), leading a book study (summer 2023), and preaching periodically constitutes a call in the ELCA.

It is non-stipendiary – meaning, Grant is not receiving a salary for this work, though we may occasionally pay stipends for particular services (like leading trainings). Grant has also been supporting Phillips neighborhood pastors in gathering periodically to see how we can work together to address needs in the neighborhood, and through this non-stipendiary call, his gifts in faith and organizing might be called upon from some of our neighbor churches. Grant has other paid sources of income, but he needs to be serving in a congregational context as well to maintain his clergy status. Because the call is non-stipendiary, the call is through the synod, not through our congregation (hence, we had no congregational meetings or vote).

I recognize some of this might sound confusing and church-jargony. The bottom line is in the second sentence above – the call is a way to honor the work Grant is already doing among us as the work of rostered clergy.

If you have any questions about Grant's non-stipendiary call, please don't hesitate to reach out to Pastor Martha.



#### **Pastor Martha's Sabbatical 2024**

#### April 15 - July 15, 2024

Pastor Martha

At our last council meeting, council passed a sabbatical policy and voted to grant me a sabbatical from April 15 to July 15.

I am very grateful to receive this time for rest and renewal, learning and leisure! Pastor Esther and I will be working on a sabbatical coverage plan in the coming months. I am deeply grateful to this community for generously granting me this time away. I am cognizant that may other workers are not afforded a time for renewal like this. My sincere hope is that this time will be a gift for all of us, as you will have time to bond with Pastor Esther, and I will have time to renew my energy and refresh my imagination for the big work we have ahead of us in reimagining our property and continuing to live out the gospel in Phillips neighborhood and beyond.

## Property Reimagining Timeline, and January Forums Pastor Martha

We have started piecing together a 'property reimagining timeline' in the Narthex Hallway.

Please take time to visit this space! You will see that next to the timeline, we have space for people to draw and add their visions for our property on a property map coloring sheet. So far, our Sunday school kids have contributed the most ideas!

We will be taking our property discernment to the next stage during forums in January and February.

#### Is a Trip to El Salvador in Your Future? nfo Session December 17 after church

#### Kristie Hennig

A trip to El Salvador for adults and young adults (grade 11 and up) is being imagined for this summer. Travelers will come from a handful of churches in the Minneapolis Area Synod – including, we hope, OSLC. It will be led by Kristie Hennig from OSLC, who has led 14 such groups prior to the pandemic.

In country we relate to the Salvadoran Lutheran Church and several urban and rural faith communities there. We'll meet with students in the Seeds of Hope sponsorship program, stay at Pastor Christian's guest house, and learn about the impact of the civil war of the 1970's and emigration today. (And much more!)

Maybe you enjoyed meeting Pastor Christian and painting a cross with him at Our Saviour's this past October. Maybe you have friends or family who have been on life-changing trips to Central America and you are curious about such an experience for yourself. But maybe you're not sure this is the right fit for you.

You are welcome to explore the possibility – obligation-free! -- in an informational meeting scheduled for Sunday, December 17 following worship at OSLC. We'll look at some slides together, hear from past participants, and have a chance to ask questions. See you then!

kristiehennig@gmail.com, 651-235-2451.

#### **A Christmas Chain Reaction Prayer**

#### Amy Blumenshine

I write as the slaughter of innocents bombardment of Gaza is suspended for yet another day... on the anniversary of the award of the Nobel Peace Prize to a MN farm kid who grew to orchestrate the world declaring war illegal. This noble effort is still in progress. God keeps pushing us to try again.

Imagine this: Day by day, the Gaza slaughter is postponed while prisoners are released by Israel and Hamas. The world sees the harm war has done to people and planet in Gaza and Ukraine. "What sense does this make?" the people ask. "Everybody loses." A moral shift against funding war starts to take place.

The two Christian (claimed) nations, Ukraine and Russia, recognizing their joint commitment to neighbor love as Christians, declare a truce in honor of Jesus's birth. They even agree to celebrate all the different days identified as Christmas! Mothers get to re-unite with their conscripted adult children who will be sent home! During this truce, Ukraine and Russia commit to negotiating a lasting peace that is best for their nations and the shared planet. The children and all the plants and animals and other living beings sing for joy.

This startling declaration inspires the current Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) negotiations happening in New York City. There's an upswelling of nuclear nation citizen awareness that nuclear weapons spending is a death spiral activity. The current wars themselves demonstrate the absurdity of the deterrence excuse for building bombs. What is the sense of building something that "should never be used" but continually pollutes and threatens?

Within the TPNW framework, anything associated with nuclear weapons is now illegal. The trillions of dollars and scientific expertise allocated to this enterprise – which is actually now prohibited – is available to be re-purposed to the shared global threat of climate catastrophe. The children and all the plants and animals and other living beings sing for joy.

Conveniently, the Conference of Parties (COP28) to the Climate Convention is meeting in Dubai. COP28 recognizes the huge greenhouse gas emissions of war-making--and nuclear war preparation in particular. The conference notes and condemns the entwinement of national security with the control and development of fossil fuels. They agree to save the future of humanity on the planet by making the arms industry illegal. The children and all the plants and animals and other living beings sing for joy.

Now the focus shifts on converting warheads to windmills. Imagine aircraft carriers being converted to homes for refugees from islands periodically flooded by rising oceans. The nearly 900 US military bases are converted to provide low-income housing. The economic stimulation also mitigates immigration pressures on our borders. Within the US, converted military bases usually also include addiction treatment centers. Now there is funding for not just intervening in the social determinants of poverty and addiction but for research breakthroughs in addiction interventions! The children and all the plants and animals and other living beings sing for joy.

By February, the planet can breathe again... children will be less afraid of our future. That's all I want for Christmas.



## Read This Article to become Evangelized to join the Outreach and Evangelism Table!

Before our annual meeting in February, the Outreach and Evangelism Table set a goal to recruit eight to ten members for the 2024 term. Members who will operate in a new way! (Hint: They will never attend a meeting!) During the Adult Forum on November 26th that new vision was shared along with budget allocations. Click on the

QR Code to see a slide deck from that day. *NOTE: The slide deck includes links for more information about each organization we are in relationship with if you'd like to learn more.* 



#### Aligning a Budget to our Beliefs

Outreach Table has two ways we allocate money to support the work in our community; a \$3000 line item in the overall church budget is a collective contribution on behalf of OSLC, and Ministries of the Month is an individual way to contribute.

In 2023 Ministries of the Month collected between \$630 and \$2200 for each organization; more than Outreach allocated in our budget for most organizations. Therefore, the Outreach Table decided to shift some organizations we supported in the past to Ministries of the Month, and to add new organizations to our collective support. *Note: to see a full list of the Ministries of the Month and the contributions for 2023, see the slide deck.* 

The pie graph shows how the \$3000 in the Outreach Budget will be allocated in 2024. The largest allocations to Align Minneapolis and Mental Health Connect signal new opportunities.

- Align Minneapolis (https://www.alignmpls.org/) combines direct service for our unhoused neighbors with efforts to build power in ways that shift our public policies. Unhoused neighbors have a seat at these tables and are learning to organize so their experiences are centered.
- Mental Health Connect (https://www.mhconnect.org/) is a collaborative of faith communities working together to help destignatize mental illness to make sure all people can find the free, customized, and confidential help they need.



#### Aligning our Action to our Beliefs

How will the Outreach Team operate with no meetings?! We will be going out into the community on field trips to visit other faith communities, to learn about the work of community organizations, or to public meetings about our neighborhood. These experiences will be led by Pastor Esther and the Outreach team, but will be open to all members. The idea is that intergenerational fellowship of our own members will create joy and meaning above and beyond evangelism and outreach. Some field trips will be perfect for young families. Others will be perfect for the youth group or for the elders. NOTE: On slide 10 there is a ten-point plan detailing how this could work. During the forum members starred parts they loved, added notes to what they questioned or wanted to change, and crossed off parts that don't seem right for our congregation yet. Feel free to send your notes to AneesaMParks@gmail.com.

OK, the article is over. Are you evangelized to join the Outreach Table? There are only eight to ten spots. Grab yours

#### Save the date!

#### Our Saviour's Intergenerational Retreat at Wilderness Canoe Base Thursday, July 25th - Sunday July 28th 2023

Camp website https://lakewapo.org/programs/wilderness-summer-family-camp/

More information coming in January.

Questions? Ask Jeanne Heer 763-954-1552



Our Saviour's Lutheran Church December 2023

## Lectionary Text for Home Devotions

#### December 3

Isaiah 64:1-9 Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 1 Corinthians 1:3-9 Mark 13:24-37

#### December 10

Isaiah 40:1-11 Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13 2 Peter 3:8-15a Mark 1:1-8

#### December 17

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 Psalm 126 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 John 1:6-8, 19-28

#### December 24

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 Luke 1:46b-55 Romans 16:25-27 Luke 1:26-38

#### December 31

Isaiah 61:10—62:3 Psalm 148 Galatians 4:4-7 Luke 2:22-40

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#### **Prayer List**

- Mary Preus' brother Joel, as he begins cancer treatment
- Paul Rogers, in hospice, and Cam Rogers accompanying
  him
- Rristie Hennig's niece, Sarah, with treatment for pancreatic cancer
- Kristie Hennig's brother, Kenny, with surgery soon for oral cancer
- Elizabeth, Linda Thorson's niece
- Jim Erickson, recovering from shoulder replacement surgery
- Emily, Jeanne Heer's niece, diagnosed with cancer
- Noah, Bruce Pederson's son, diagnosed with prostate cancer
- Glenn, Linnea Peterson's grandfather, recovering from surgery
- Anton Moore, undergoing physical therapy
- Bill Rowe, recovering from deep brain stimulation surgery
- Peace in Ukraine, Middle East and in the world

#### How to Reach Us

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church 2315 Chicago Ave Minneapolis MN 55404 612-871-2967 oursavioursmpls.org

Pastor:

Martha Schwehn Bardwell option 3

Esther Sianipar **Music Director:** 

Mary Preus option 6

Office Manager:

Marcin Cienski option 7

**OSCS** 612-871-5900

**Executive Director:** 

Michael Huffman option 1

Deadline for the January 2024 Sentinel is Monday, December 27

December 2023 at Our Saviour's					
Sunday, December 3	9:00am –10:30am	Sunday school, Godly Play, Nursery and Adult Forum			
•	10:00am	Choir and Hospitality			
	10:30am	Worship in Sanctuary and Online			
Tuesday, December 5	12:45am-2:00pm	Staff Meeting (CR)			
Wednesday, December 6	•				
wednesday, December 6	-	In Person Bible Study			
	6:00pm	Choir evening prayer and rehearsal			
Sunday, December 10	9:00am –10:30am	Sunday school, Godly Play, Nursery and Adult Forum			
	10:00am	Choir and Hospitality			
	10:30am	Worship in Sanctuary and Online			
	11:30am-12:00pm	Mary Preus 30 year celebration			
Tuesday, December 12	12:45am-2:00pm	Staff Meeting (CR)			
Wednesday, December 13	10:15am-12:00pm	Online Bible Study			
	6:00pm	Choir evening prayer and rehearsal			
Friday, December 15	2:00pm	Service for Shirley Dahlen			
Saturday, December 16	10:00am-12:00pm	Christmas Program rehearsal			
Sunday December 17	9:00am –10:30am	Sunday school, Godly Play, Nursery and Adult Forum			
	10:00am	Choir and Hospitality			
	10:30am	Worship in Sanctuary and Online			
		Christmas Program during Worship			
Tuesday, December 19	12:45am-2:00pm	Staff Meeting (CR)			
Wednesday, December 20	10:15am-12:00pm	Online Bible Study on Zoom			
	6:30pm				
Thursday, December 21	3:00pm	Gathering for snacks and caroling (HC)			
Sunday, December 24	9:00am	Coffee and Tea gathering with 9 Lessons and Carols			
	4:00pm	from King's College Candle lighting and Carol singing			
	7:00pm				
Wednesday, December 27	10:15am-12:00pm	Online Bible Study			
	7:00pm	Choir rehearsal			

