

# The Sentinel

January 2026

*Our Saviour's Lutheran Church is a dynamic community,  
centered in Christ, called, nurtured and sent-  
to celebrate, serve and do justice.*



# Following the Star – Walking Another Road with the Magi

**Pastor Martha**

This week we celebrated the Feast of Epiphany. We remember the magi who followed the star to Bethlehem, knelt before the Christ child, and returned home ‘by another road.’ This phrase ‘another road’ is packed with meaning for us today, church. This other road in the magi story is the road of non-cooperation with evil and civil disobedience. They refuse to return to Herod to report Jesus’ whereabouts, as Herod had commanded them to do.

We are living in very troubling times. As I write this, there are reports coming in on my phone of neighbors being snatched out of their cars and off the street by ICE agents on Lake Street, just blocks from church. We are living through a reign of cruelty and terror right now. We see Herod-like behavior coming from the White House as political opponents are targeted, neighbors are ‘othered’ and dehumanized, and as a twisted version of Christianity is invoked as a tool for more greed and cruelty.

We are called to be like the magi. To follow the star – the guidance of our God – and to walk ‘another road’ – not the easy road, not the convenient road, not the road of avoidance or the off ramp of despair, but the way of the cross. We are called to follow Jesus with our hearts, soul, mind and strength. This has never been easy for the people of God, and we need each other to discern how the Spirit is calling us to use our gifts in this moment. This Sunday at the 9am adult forum, I invite you to join our conversation about how we are called to follow the star and walk another road in this moment.

As we continue to seek and guidance and good courage from our God, may we be inspired by the saints who walked as the magi did. Later this month we celebrate the witness of Dr. Martin Luther King. In his book, *Stride to Freedom*, he chronicles the story of the Montgomery bus boycott when 50,000 Black citizens together decided to walk ‘another road’ of non-cooperation with evil. He writes of how their struggle had a ‘divine dimension’:

“There is a creative power that works to pull down mountains of evil and level hilltops of injustice. God still works through history His wonders to perform.”

May God continue to give us good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that God’s hand is leading us and God’s love supporting us. Through Jesus Christ, our Savior, Amen.



# Remarks from Interfaith Clergy Press Conference, January 8, 2026

**Pastor Martha**

Dear church, I wrote the above newsletter article before Renee Good was killed in our streets by ICE. I was grateful to be able to speak at a clergy press conference on Thursday with interfaith clergy. Here are my remarks:

My name is Martha Bardwell and I serve as Lead Pastor at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church here in South Minneapolis.

Today I am feeling heartbroken, for our community here in Minneapolis and for our nation. Right on this block, children who attend my church catch the bus every morning for school. But yesterday their block, their bus stop became a scene of terror. So this dear family I love is recovering from trauma today. And for these kids and kids throughout Minneapolis there are no buses today - there is no school today because we are doing what we need to do to keep them safe. To keep them safe from our own government. How messed up is that? I had to explain that to my own 8 year-old and 11 year-old children this morning.

This Sunday my congregation along with many Christian churches around the world will celebrate the baptism of Jesus Christ in the Jordan River. We will anchor our souls, our minds, and our strength in the story of God's beloved Son Jesus, and in our own baptismal call which is crystal clear: to love God, to love our neighbors as ourselves, to work for justice and peace, to serve all people following the example of Jesus. Every time we gather around our baptismal font, I as pastor get to address the congregation and ask them: Do you renounce evil and the forces that defy God? And the community responds with one voice: We renounce them.

Today we stand together across faith and race and culture as leaders in this community to say with one voice – we renounce this evil.

We reject government terror and government lies

We reject the violent tactics of this federal surge of ICE presence that has already caused loss of life – nobody – nobody should be shot while trying to stand with their neighbors.

We renounce this evil.

We need ICE out of Minnesota now. We need the officers involved in this killing to be arrested immediately. We need Congress to act and to hold this administration accountable for the reckless cruelty and unconstitutional actions of ICE.

And to all of us in this nation, no matter who you voted for – hear us crying out in Minneapolis today – and turn with us, with firm commitment; away from evil and towards the good.

We remember Renee Good today – and every time we say her name, may her name remind us, anchor us, in what our calling is here as people of faith and people of good will – we are called to choose the good, to work for the common good, to hold fast to what is good.

We need ICE out of Minnesota now, and until that day comes – we will not be intimidated. We will continue to push back against this reign of terror – as clergy, as neighbors, as elected leaders – as Minnesotans. We will stand together arm in arm.

And when our federal government sends agents of cruelty  
we will be agents of care.

When they send agents of hate, we will be agents of love.

When they send agents of harm, we will be agents of healing.

We will be a surge of courageous love and nonviolence, for the sake of all God's children. Join us.



# JANUARY

## WEDNESDAY EVENING SCHEUDLE

### WEDNESDAY 1/7

NO PROGRAMMING

### WEDNESDAY 1/14

5:30 - 6:15 COMMUNITY MEAL

6:15 - 7 SPIRIT IS ALIVE

YOUTH LENTEN MUSIC LEADERSHIP

7 - 8 ADULT CHOIR\*

### WEDNESDAY 1/21

5:30 - 6:15 COMMUNITY MEAL

6:15 - 7 SINGING CIRCLE

7 - 8 ADULT CHOIR

### WEDNESDAY 1/28

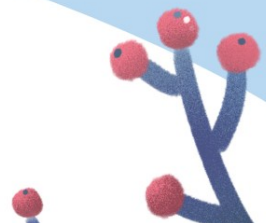
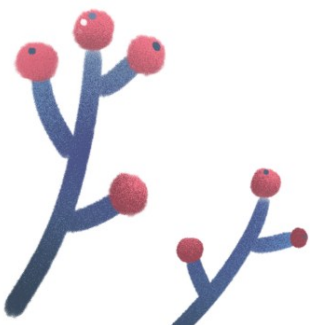
5:30 - 6:15 COMMUNITY MEAL

6:15 - 7 SPIRIT IS ALIVE

YOUTH LENTEN MUSIC LEADERSHIP

7 - 8 ADULT CHOIR

\*=SINGING IN WORSHIP THE FOLLOWING SUNDAY  
(REHEARSAL @ 10 AM)





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## **Spirit Is Alive – Lenten Music Leadership / Youth Singing Group**

***Alyssa, & Kent***

On January 14 & 28, and February 11 @ 6:15 pm, Kent and Alyssa will lead a youth singing and instrumental group in preparation for our Lenten services, which begin on February 25 (Ash Wednesday is February 18).

Young people who participate will learn to sing and/or play Marty Haugen's Holden Evening Prayer and will help accompany the congregation throughout Our Saviour's Wednesday Lenten Journey. This group will take the place of Our Saviour's Youth Choir during Lent. Bring an instrument if you have one!

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## **Prayer / Reader Schedule**

***Alyssa & Kent***

The Sunday worship prayer and reader schedule has been sent to those who have expressed interest in reading and/or leading prayers during worship. If you would like to participate in this ministry, please reach out to either Kent ([kent@oursavioursmpls.com](mailto:kent@oursavioursmpls.com)) or Alyssa ([alyssa@oursavioursmpls.com](mailto:alyssa@oursavioursmpls.com)).

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## **Special Music**

***Alyssa & Kent***

Would you like to share a special musical selection or prelude on a Sunday morning? Do you play an instrument or sing? If your answer to any of these questions is YES, please reach out to either Kent ([kent@oursavioursmpls.com](mailto:kent@oursavioursmpls.com)) or Alyssa ([alyssa@oursavioursmpls.com](mailto:alyssa@oursavioursmpls.com)).

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## **Sound Team**

***Alyssa & Kent***

Are you interested in helping with sound on Sunday morning? We are working to create a team to support Mike Libby (who is currently our team captain!). If yes, please reach out to either Kent ([kent@oursavioursmpls.com](mailto:kent@oursavioursmpls.com)) or Alyssa ([alyssa@oursavioursmpls.com](mailto:alyssa@oursavioursmpls.com)).

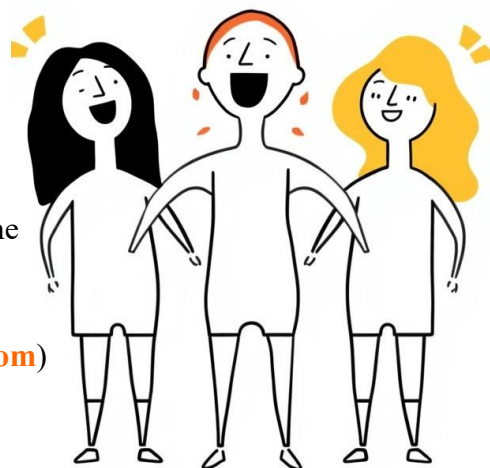
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## **Choir Starts Back Jan. 14th**

***Alyssa & Kent***

We are grateful for all who share their gifts in worship and look forward to this season of music and prayer together! Adult Choir rehearsals resume on Wednesday, January 14, at 7:00 p.m. Rehearsals will continue on Wednesdays through the end of May.

Check your email or reach out to either Kent ([kent@oursavioursmpls.com](mailto:kent@oursavioursmpls.com)) or Alyssa ([alyssa@oursavioursmpls.com](mailto:alyssa@oursavioursmpls.com)).





## Adult Forums in January

This month begins amid deep pain and injustice following the tragic incident in our city of Minneapolis on January 7, 2026. We continue to pray, accompany, and be present with our neighbors in God's love and grace. Below is the schedule for this month's Sunday Adult Forums. Please join us when you are able.

### ***Pastor Esther***

**1/11** – Processing time: sharing and reflecting on the January 7 shooting

**1/18** – *Helping People Feel at Home: The Gift of Hospitality and Ushering* Led by Jeanne Heer

**1/25** – Book study: *See Me, Believe Me: A Guide to Deepen Allyship with Congregational Leaders of Color* (Session 1 of 2)

**2/1** – Book study: *See Me, Believe Me: A Guide to Deepen Allyship with Congregational Leaders of Color* (Session 2 of 2)



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# January Mission of the Month: Our Saviour's Housing

**Arden R. Sasak**

Our Saviour's Housing, a program of Our Saviour's Community Services (OSCS), provides emergency shelter and supportive housing to adults in Hennepin County.

Our emergency shelter on Chicago Ave (four doors down from OSLC) is open 24/7, 365 days a year. Guests at our shelter receive their own room, three meals a day, and support from our staff and volunteers.

Our permanent supportive housing program provides housing services and case management to those who have experienced homelessness and live with mental, chemical, and/or physical health conditions. For as long as we are needed, we support residents in affordable rental housing, on-site and scattered throughout Hennepin County.

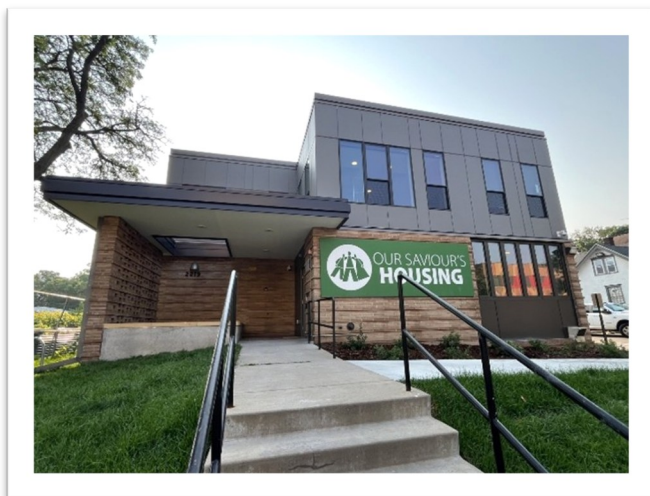
During our 2024 - 2025 fiscal year:

- **109 guests** accessed our emergency shelter for one night or more.
  - ◇ 53 guests stayed at our emergency shelter as part of our medical respite partnership with Fairview Health Services.
  - ◇ 36 guests connected with our onsite mental health provider during their time at the emergency shelter, as part of a partnership with People Incorporated.
- 110 residents received ongoing support and case management in permanent supportive housing.
  - ◇ **10 residents** lived in our two on-campus properties operated by OSCS.

The biggest change our program experienced in 2025 was the remodel and expansion of our emergency shelter. After several months operating out of a temporary location this year, **our emergency shelter returned to Chicago Ave this past July**. This renovation made our building more accessible for our guests and expanded our capacity from 21 guests to 38 guests.

Your Mission of the Month gift to Our Saviour's Housing will help us continue supporting those in our community seeking emergency shelter and supportive housing.

Thank you for supporting our work!



This year, a new second floor was added to our emergency shelter on Chicago Ave. Renovations also made our building safer and more accessible for shelter guests.



A photo of Gum, a resident in our permanent supportive housing program who has also previously stayed at our emergency shelter.



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# Praying in the Spirit: December Lilly Grant Updates

***Sarah Lindley***

## **Lilly Grant Cohort Leaders Retreat!**

On Saturday, December 6th, Lilly Grant leaders from St. Paul's/San Pablo, All Nations Indian Church, and OSLC gathered for a full-day retreat. The retreat was facilitated by consultants Shamsa Dhayow and Raj, who guided us through exercises to prepare our bodies, hearts, and minds to listen and share with fullness. Our conversations centered on sharing stories, engaging in faith practices from each community, celebrating the gifts within each congregation, and discussing collective and individual next steps as we continue to grow in relationship with one another.

## **Las Posadas**

On Friday, December 19th many members from OSLC joined St. Paul's/San Pablo and other congregations as we experienced Las Posadas. This was our 4th Lilly Grant shared event of 2025! We walked Lake Street, holding paper lanterns and singing songs of the journey traveled by Mary and Joseph as they prepared for the birth of Jesus. We returned to St. Paul's/San Pablo, greeted with welcome and song, and shared in a feast together! Our bellies filled with soup and tamales and pupusas, we danced to music in the sanctuary and cheered as children broke piñatas! It was a celebration rich with welcome, art, music, and relationship. Our Posadas experience continued as, led by Rebekah Fergus, the OSLC youth shared the story of Las Posadas with the OSLC congregation on Sunday, December 21st.

## **Sunday School Planning for Youth and Prayer**

On Sunday, January 4th OSLC Sunday School teachers gathered with OSLC Lilly Grant Program staff to imagine what might be ahead for the winter and spring during the faith formation hour. We began preparations for our monthly youth-led services, made plans to fold our preschool and kindergarten children into the 10:00 Sunday music time, and left energized by a brainstorm of ways to incorporate more acting and music into youth faith formation at Our Saviour's as well as opportunities for youth voices to be lifted up during the Prayers of the People each Sunday!

## **We Welcome your Wonderings and Feedback!**

Do you have questions about the Praying in the Spirit Lilly Grant? Ideas that are bubbling in your heart and mind? We'd love to connect with you! Reach out to Esther, Alyssa, Kent or Sarah Lindley ([sarahfranklindley@gmail.com](mailto:sarahfranklindley@gmail.com)). We are eager to hear from you!



*Las Posadas*



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**This Saturday and Sunday, January 10 and 11!**



Can they survive ---  
and will they ever find  
a place to belong?

**ILLUMINATING  
— SOUND —**

A SHADOW PUPPET AND MUSIC SHOW

**January 10 & 11 at 4PM**

The Southern Theater  
1420 Washington Ave S, Minneapolis, MN 55454

Get tickets at  
[www.10thwave.org/events](http://www.10thwave.org/events)  
or by clicking the  
qr code above

## **New Parking Code for Hope Academy Parking Ramp**

***Nancy Nygaard Johnson***

We have a new parking code for January thru April to use to enter the Hope Academy Parking ramp. Pick up a card with the new code at church to keep in your car. The card also notes the hours that parking is available. As a reminder, during school hours, we should be parking on floor 3 and higher. The old code will be valid thru the middle of January in case you don't get the code right away. The parking code is available from the office during business hours or by emailing me at [n2j2@comcast.net](mailto:n2j2@comcast.net).

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## **Property Work Day – Saturday January 17th**

***Nancy Nygaard Johnson***

Join the Property Committee for our Work Day on Saturday January 17th from 10am to Noon. We will focus on indoor work in the kitchen and Sanctuary, along with picking up trash outside. Many hands make light work.





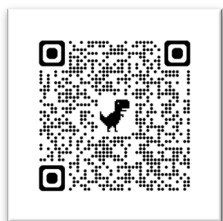
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## January Boldcafe B.Y.O.D. (Bring Your Own Dinner)

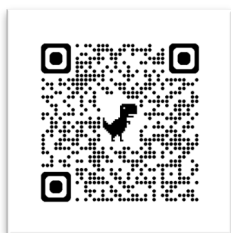
**Angela T Khabeb**

Kick off the new year by joining us for our next Boldcafe Monthly **ONLINE** Dinner, Thursday, January 15, at 7pm CST, hosted by the Rev. Angela T. Khabeb! She will lead our discussion about passion for the new year. Granddaughters, daughters, nieces, etc., are encouraged to join! Participants are all encouraged to bring a favorite stuffed toy or doll.

Download a special coloring sheet to use during our time together here:



Register and pass this invitation along:



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## OSLC Records Updating

**Nancy Nygaard Johnson**

Name, address, phone, birth date, baptism date, email and more. This information is part of what we have for each member at Our Saviour's. We store this in Power Church, the online system we use for member information and contribution tracking. As you can imagine, over time, the information becomes outdated. You drop your landline, you retire and no longer have a work phone number, or when you joined, we didn't get all the information we requested. We want to update our information so it's more accurate and it doesn't contain information that is no longer usable. Starting in January, we will be doing a pilot to determine the best way to have each household review and update your information. Once we determine the best methods to use, we will open it up to all households. You may wonder – what do we use this information for? We use it to create a church directory, it is used for reporting to the Synod, it's used to provide demographics, and it's used when we get requests for baptisms or when members transfer in or out. I will be reaching out to a variety of households during January for the pilot. Please consider helping to come up with the best way to do this. If you have any questions, please contact me at [n2j2@comcast.net](mailto:n2j2@comcast.net).



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# Call for Tax Volunteers!

***Pastor Esther***

Debra Richardson is a dear friend of OSLC! She currently works for Community Action Partnership of Hennepin County to provide free tax return preparation for individuals who need assistance—such as those with low to moderate income, people with disabilities, seniors, military members, students, and individuals for whom English is a second language.

Debra is looking for **more volunteers** and a host site for the upcoming tax season to serve in roles such as preparer, reviewer, interpreter, greeter, and site coordinator. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Debra at [drichardson@caphennepin.org](mailto:drichardson@caphennepin.org) or call (952) 697-1310



**Community Action**  
Partnership of Hennepin County

## Call For Tax Volunteers!

**Community Volunteers are the heart of free tax services!**

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA), program is an IRS sponsored partnership with Community Action Partnership of Hennepin County (CAPHC) to help people with lower incomes complete their annual tax returns at **NO COST!**

**Free tax services are important!**

- These services help people and families keep more of their money when every dollar counts!
- They provide access to valuable tax credits only available through filing a tax return, supporting households that need those credits the most!

## LEARN A NEW SKILL WHILE SUPPORTING YOUR COMMUNITY

**No tax experience? No problem!**

### **BENEFITS**

- Become an IRS-certified tax preparer
- Free Tax law training/certifications
- Get internship hours and
- College credit
- Build your resume
- Network with other tax and Finance Professionals
- Help your community
- Flexible volunteer hours
- Required technology is provided



## **POSITIONS AVAILABLE**

- Tax Preparer
- Quality Reviewer
- Greeter
- Screener
- Interpreter
- Computer Specialist
- Marketing Specialist
- Instructor

**Ready to take the next steps? Please contact CAPHC VITA Site Coordinator.**

Debra Richardson

she/her/hers

**CAPHC VITA Coordinator**

(952) 697-1310 (office) | [caphennepin.org](http://caphennepin.org)

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## **Youth Gathering**

***Pastor Esther, Patrick Herson, Scottie Osthus, and Laura Twedell***

This year, OSLC youth are kicking off with a road trip to Luther College to attend the Rev. Yehiel Curry, Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, keynote address for the 2026 Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration. The event will take place on Monday, January 19, at 10:30 AM in the Center for Faith and Life (CFL) Main Hall on Luther College's campus.

The theme of the day—and Bishop Curry's keynote—is “Courage for the Common Good.”

If you and your youth are interested in attending, please reach out to Pastor Esther or register on the sign-up sheet. We plan to leave the church early Monday morning, no later than 7:30 AM, and return around 6:30 PM.

Tentative gathering:

On January 17 at 5:00 PM or January 18 after church, we plan to gather at Patrick Herson's house for pizza, holiday treats, games, and fun conversations. Please let Patrick Herson ([patrick.herson@gmail.com](mailto:patrick.herson@gmail.com)) know which date works best for you.

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## **Whereabouts?**

***Pastor Esther***

I will be attending the [Quality of Call Initiative](#) of the ELCA, part of the Presiding Bishop's Leadership Initiative, from January 12–14. This initiative was established to:

“Grow a church that is equitably served by people who are empowered to serve with their gifts, irrespective of identity markers that have historically been targeted by systems and individuals for bias, discrimination, and oppression.”

As part of Phase One, Region 3 (Minnesota and the Dakotas) was awarded a \$100,000 grant to promote quality call experiences for female-identifying and non-binary rostered leaders actively serving ministries in



the region. Approximately eight leaders from each of the nine synods in Region 3 have been invited to attend a Leadership Summit in Alexandria, MN, under the theme “Called to One Another: Cultivating God’s Kin-dom Together.”

I am grateful for the invitation and excited to gather with other Region 3 female and non-binary rostered leaders to connect, reflect on what a “quality call” looks like, and explore how we can support one another.

From January 29–February 2, I will also be attending [EXTRAVAGANZA](#) (EXT) in St. Louis, MO—an annual ELCA gathering for children, youth, and family ministry leaders focused on renewal, education, and connection. I am especially grateful to have received a scholarship to attend the [Network Multicultural Initiative](#), a pre-conference leadership gathering for leaders of color serving in children, youth, and family ministry. This community exists to support leaders in this vital work of the church and to strengthen our grassroots network through increased diversity.

While at EXT, I hope to meet with the EXT Learning Team to discuss the possibility of offering Kingian Nonviolence Training at EXT and at the 2027 Youth Gathering in Minneapolis.

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## **Racial Justice Work for Minneapolis Area Synod**

***Pastor Esther***

I wanted to let you know that I am part of the Racial Justice core team in our synod guided by Pastor Jen Collins, the Assistant to our Bishop. I am excited to be part of this team and vital role in connecting and raising voices and actions for racial justice in our synod. The group will be meeting quarterly (4th Tuesday Evenings) and we will be hosting the first meeting this January 27 at 6:30PM. From OSLC, I am grateful to Alyssa Lund-Kyrola our recent member will be attending the gathering on behalf of the church. Thank you for your time, Alyssa!

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## **ELCA Local Hunger Grant 2026**

***Pastor Esther***

Thanks be to God, OSLC submitted the domestic hunger grant proposal this past December 2025. I am grateful to our Council, Outreach Table, and Pastor Martha for reviewing and approving the proposal. I would also like to thank OSCS Emergency Shelter and GMCC for agreeing to be our partners on this project.

The proposal, entitled Unhoused Voices, Hearts Awake, is a three-year grant of \$30,000 designed to listen to and hold regular caring conversations with our unhoused neighbors (up to 50 adults) who are experiencing trauma, grief, addiction, mental health challenges, and lack of housing. A wonderful addition to this grant is the involvement of our confirmation students, who will participate in the listening conversations and help serve breakfast to residents of the OSCS Emergency Shelter.

Please pray that this grant will be received positively so that we can be more present and supportive of our unhoused neighbors.

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## **Marimba Concert hosted at Our Saviour’s Monday, Jan. 26th @7pm, *Free to the public***

***Kent Goodroad***

On Monday, Jan. 26th @ 7 pm, Our Savior's Lutheran Church will host Heartland Marimba Quartet for an amazing free evening concert. They will perform a wide range of virtuosic trios, duos and solos featuring



classical, new easy-listening contemporary works, to ragtime. Heartland Marimba Quartet, the premier touring ensemble of the Heartland Marimba organization, has appeared in over 140 concerts across the country since its creation in 2016 by acclaimed soloist Matthew Coley. Through its programming choices, HMQ offers a platform to the music of American composers and continues to expand its repertoire with works from composers worldwide. The four distinct creative forces of Matthew Coley, Eri Isomura, Marco Schirripa, and Jose Uzcategui combine to create a virtuosic and electrifying ensemble. With its mission of reaching a wider audience and increasing appreciation for marimba music, HMQ develops and disseminates the classical marimba art form in both academic and community contexts.

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## **OSLC Annual Meeting – Sunday, February 8 at 11:30**

***Samantha Heaton***

Please mark your calendars for our Annual Congregational Meeting, to be held on Sunday, February 8 at 11:30 a.m., following worship. At this meeting, we will gather to do the important business of the congregation, including the approval of the annual budget and the election of council and committee members.

A mailing with additional information will be sent in advance, and you will also hear announcements during worship in the coming weeks. During the meeting, we will share samosas purchased from our Somali neighbors. Contributions toward the cost of the samosas will be welcomed at the meeting.

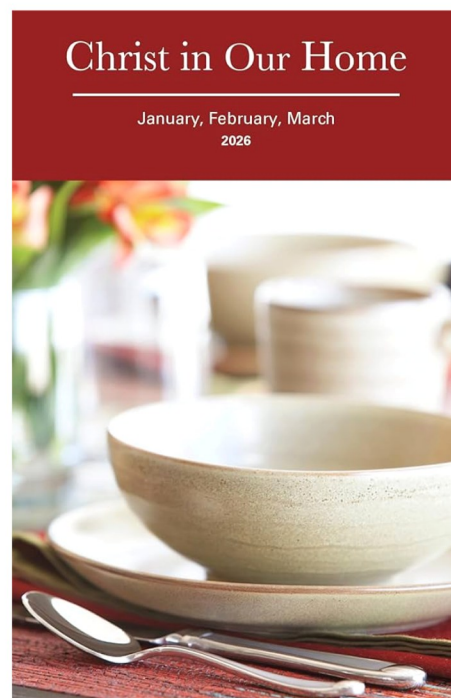
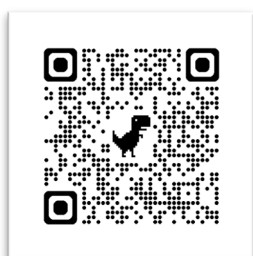
Childcare will be provided, and we hope you will join us for this important meeting.

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## **Christ in our Home Delay**

***Nancy Nygaard Johnson***

Due to a shipping issue, we have not received the 1st quarter of 2026 Christ in our Home devotional booklets. We expect to receive them by the end of January or early February. Until then, you can access January using this link:





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# Our Saviour's Lutheran Church Foundation: Supporting Our Shared Future

***Eric Molho***

Through the generosity of donors across generations and the thoughtful stewardship of those who have served on its board, the Our Saviour's Lutheran Church Foundation resources have grown to more than \$800,000.

The primary beneficiary of the Foundation's resources is our congregation itself. The Foundation makes a meaningful gift to the church's operating budget annually. Additionally, the Foundation has made grants and loans to both Our Saviour's Lutheran Church and Our Saviour's Community Services.

In October, the Foundation approved a loan to the church to help manage costs related to the new roof and solar. This loan will be repaid by the congregation at highly favorable rates on a manageable monthly schedule - another example of how the Foundation helps sustain our ministry and mission.

We extend our gratitude to the current members of the Foundation Board of Directors: Paul Batalden, Gabe Herrick, Jakob Johnson, Ethan Kehrberg, Kara Lattu, Linda Thorson, and Mike Troutman.

As our congregation begins a major capital campaign, the Foundation will be a key partner - helping to manage cash flow and supporting the church through thoughtful gifts and loans.

Many members choose to support the church through planned gifts or bequests - a meaningful way to leave a legacy of faith and generosity. Such gifts can be made to the congregation directly (for Church Council to steward) or to the Foundation. If you have questions about how to make a planned gift directly to the congregation or through the Foundation, please contact me or another member of the Foundation board for more information.

In the months ahead, as you prayerfully consider your annual giving, your campaign participation, and our congregation's bright future, we invite you to keep the Foundation in mind.

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## Our Wednesday **vegetarian community** meals at 5:30 at the Hospitality Center are back!

***Marcin Cienski***

Alex, my mom, and I warmly invite you to join us.

We'll be surprising you with new dishes and improved recipes — we can't wait to share them with you!



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## Looking to be more involved at OSLC?

**Sam Bardwell, Linda Thorson and Kim Guessford**

Dear Church, have you been hoping to become more involved at Our Saviour's but didn't know how? Has a little more time opened up in your life that you'd like to fill with meaningful time spent pursuing our mission with fellow members of our beloved community? Good News! We are seeking people like you to fill numerous leadership roles at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church. Please reach out to Linda Thorson ([ljthorson90@gmail.com](mailto:ljthorson90@gmail.com)), Kim Guessford ([guessfordkim@gmail.com](mailto:guessfordkim@gmail.com)), or Sam Bardwell ([bardwellsam@gmail.com](mailto:bardwellsam@gmail.com)) and we will help to connect your interest and intention with a table in need of just that! Christmas Blessings!

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## A Note from Pastors Martha and Esther about Fund Asks for Pastoral Staff

In a sermon, Pastor Esther mentioned that Pastor Martha had reached out to members to help her purchase a car last month. We wanted to provide transparency around our learning process and how we navigated this ask over the last month so that you can see how we as a community are moving forward with care and intention. Both pastors sent this note to members that Pastor Martha had approached:

*Dear members,*

*Thank you for offering to assist with Pastor Esther's purchase of a car, and thanks for your patience over the holidays waiting for me to loop back!*

*OSLC executive council and personnel committee have clarified our policy around asks for funds for pastoral staff. The ELCA has a clear guideline against directly or indirectly soliciting members for special gifts for pastors. This boundary exists due to the power dynamics involved in pastor - lay relationships. Of course, pastors all have different life situations - and we are carrying this reality to the synod level for more conversation and imagination around how we can collectively support pastors as church together.*

*Neither Pastor Esther, personnel committee, executive committee, or I knew of this guideline before I reached out - we all have been learning and growing together. I celebrate our impulse for generosity as I am also grateful for clear boundaries that can help us maintain healthy, caring relationships.*

*The best way to support OSLC staff is through giving to the congregation to support our budget. As you know, we also support neighbors and members in need through the Helping Hands Fund. If you would like to redirect your gift that way you are most welcome to!*

*Most of all I want to say THANK YOU to all of you for being generous, loving members of this community. We care for and support our leaders, and that is a good and wonderful thing. And, we keep learning and growing. Thanks be to God!*

*Peace and blessings,*

*Pastor Martha, with Pastor Esther*



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# **Property Project and Capital Campaign Update**

***Pastor Martha***

Our capital campaign is really taking off. Here are some updates:

- We are working on scheduling a first meeting for our steering committee, which will include both Paul Pribbenow (Augsburg University President) and Rev. Jim Bear Jacobs (Healing Minnesota Stories) as honorary co-chairs.
- We are also working on designing a logo and doing branding for the campaign. We have contracted with a firm who are helping us turn the tone and values of the campaign into visual language. Thanks for the name ideas you shared – those went in the hopper for them to work with. This is exciting!
- We are working on a legal agreement between Indigenous Protector Movement and us so that we can transfer the Green House to them in October 2026. We are likely to have a congregational meeting and vote about this land transfer sometime later this spring.
- One disappointment is that our project was not selected for MHFA funding this year. MHFA funding is critical for the overall viability of our project. We were told repeatedly that it would be surprising and rare if we got funding in this first attempt – as it usually takes multiple rounds to get funded. It does set our project back one year, as MHFA funding only happens once a year. We do not lose heart! If anything this makes us even more determined to keep up with our fundraising so we can have an even more competitive application for 2026. We have a stellar consultant, Andy Hughes, who is working with us to put together an even stronger application.

Please keep this project in your prayers. This project truly is so needed and is a vision of hope in these troubling times.

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## **Abundant Life Retreat – January 30 – February 1**

***Pastor Martha***

Three 7th and 8th grade youth from Our Saviour's will be attending the Abundant Life Retreat along with Pastor Martha at the end of this month. The Abundant Life Retreat explores healthy relationships and sexuality through a lens of faith. Held at Camp Wapo, the retreat is a collaborative effort between multiple Lutheran Churches in the Twin Cities and is led by a trained sex educator and local pastors along with adult chaperones from each church.

The retreats offer different content in a two-year rotation. One year will focus on "Faith and Sexuality" with workshops on sex and the Bible, the language and anatomy of sexuality, gender identity, sexual orientation, and addressing personal concerns about puberty. The other year will focus on "Faith and Healthy Relationships," with workshops on self-esteem, healthy relationships, consent and concern, and values-based decision making with an emphasis on social media and internet use.

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## From Elaine Johnson

*Dear Congregation,*

*I am writing this to share with you what I am experiencing with my daughter, Liza. She, as many of you know, grew up at OSLC. OSLC welcomed her home to Minnesota from the Ukraine when she was 15 months of age. From that day forward she embraced the community as much as the community embraced her. Nancy Pederson, Bruce's wife, offered to give her years of piano lessons, Judy Halverson led the Gospel Kids as they sang incredibly created lyrics by Judy herself and much much more.*

*Liza grew up with Pastors Janet Tidemann, Hans Lee, Laurie Eaton and now our own, Pastor Martha. She started her vikar year at Grace Lutheran Church, LaGrange, IL September 2025. Prior to that she did some interning with the congregation during her Master's in Divinity Program at UChicago. Below is a list of two of latest sermon's she has given. If you want to see what a difference a congregation can make in the life of a child, watch one of these sermons.*

*Latest Sermons (Find on Grace Lutheran LaGrange, Il. website):*

*\*December 14, 2025 - Sermon on Mary and her inclusion of an OSLC Christmas Program.*

*\*December 28, 2025 - I hear the voice of Pastor Janet Tidemann over and over in this sermon of hers.*

*(If you want to listen to earlier sermons just search on Grace Lutheran's website).*

*Just know, her brother, Denis, is also up to creating a sweet life and the two share a lovely sister-brother bond. Thank you Our Saviour's! You continue to amaze me.*

*Appreciatively,*

**Elaine**

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## Intergenerational Dance and Potluck Come and Dance January 24, 2026

### **MCFF Table**

MCFF Table is excited to invite you to a lively and fun-filled intergenerational dance and potluck on Saturday, January 24th. Dancing 3:30 to 5:00 pm and potluck at 5:00pm.

Whether you're a seasoned dancer or taking your first steps onto the dance floor, Robin Nelson will call and guide you accompanied by live music.

See you on the dance floor.





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## **A thank you to the Our Saviour's Community from Daniel Swenson-Klatt and Butter Bakery Cafe**

As I retire and close Buter Bakery Cafe on December 31, I want to say thank you. I recognize that I am retiring from the daily operations of a business that has been a part of the life of this congregation for the past 20 years. I want to share my gratefulness for your love and support over the years.

Butter Bakery Cafe would not have even been a possibility if not for the community here that provided me with the inspiration, motivation, and encouragement to take the initial leap. You've been investors of your time, talents, and finances to make Butter Bakery Cafe a well-loved place in the heart of south Minneapolis. As a congregation, you were there at its start and I know that many of you will have been there for the December 31 Butter Ball Drop to count down to a new year and new chapter for beloved space at the corner of 37th and Nicollet.

Butter has been your meeting place, your caterer (including a lunch for Pastor Laurie Eaton as she was considering accepting a call here) and place to eat after Sunday worship until the pandemic impacts shortened the cafe's week. Pizza dough balls arrived for Bread Oven events, bars and sandwiches for funerals, and eclairs for the Easter Vigils - or, perhaps I could I say we held an Easter Vigil in the hope that eclairs would show up. Butter has been a donator of bakery goods for the Shelter program and a host for Language Program readings and events. The cinnamon biscuits made an appearance at a Synod Convention. Butter's original coffee brewer found a home at Wilderness Canoe Base. So many First Friday Men's groups and Wilderness Canoe Base guide reunions, and a Young Adult Group were held around the community table so lovingly donated to the cafe by Gladys Budd and Marie Svang. Eight members of the OSLC community worked at the cafe over the years. Butter Bakery's advocacy voice was strengthened through the work of Isaiah members from our congregation. The expanded mission into training young adults who have experienced homelessness was rooted in our shared ministry through the Shelter program.

At this time, I am still in the process of securing a next owner for the business and/or space at 3700 Nicollet. There are paths that might lead to something much like Butter and ones that would use the space for a different bakery business. The delay has been with efforts to deal with my business' Covid 19 Small Business Association loan. The SBA has been struggling with being understaffed and backed up by the recent shutdown, so I ask for your prayers that our government will come through and help this business transition reach its completion.

As my time with Butter ends and the business takes on new ownership, I am very excited to explore all the ways the community building and the well-loved recipes can continue on. It is my hope, that Our Saviour's will be a home to these activities and a place where the taste of Butter Bakery will still be found.

The life of Butter in the future years? It continues here among you.

***Daniel Swenson-Klatt***

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# Hello Hospitality TEAMS

**Jeanne Heer**

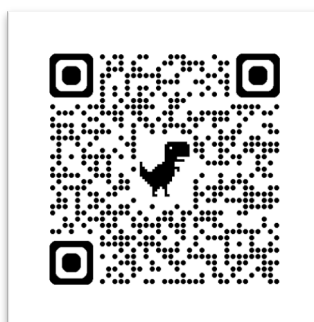
The church is continuing the holy experiments related to hospitality.

- We'll have coffee and tea (beverages only) at 9:00 during the forum through 10:30am.
- Then after worship (about 11:30am) there will be beverages and treats. This allows us to greet newcomers as we share in hospitality time. This includes announcements and celebrations in the Hospitality Center

In addition Pastor Esther and Pastor Martha would like you to keep in mind the following to be welcoming: *"Sometimes we'll have newcomers, elders, youth, or children with special needs who may ask for something different than what's currently being offered. When this happens, let's respond with love, flexibility, and care and do our best to meet these needs—reflecting God's abundance and hospitality in all we do."*

FIRST Letter of last name	Team Leaders	DATES
C - G	Dave Comstock & Jeanne Heer	Jan. 2026
H - K	Craig Johnson & Laura Kehrberg	Feb. 2026
L - R	Sarah Lindley & Eric Molho	Mar. 2026
S - Z	Paula Keller & Lucy Selander	April 2026
A - B	Joel Beard & Elaine Johnson	May 2026

Please use the QR Code to go to the signup Genius to help or bring treats, or contact this month's hospitality leaders: Jeanne Heer [heerjm@gmail.com](mailto:heerjm@gmail.com) 763-954-1552 and Dave Comstock [pastordaveip@gmail.com](mailto:pastordaveip@gmail.com) 317-506-8184





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## Women's Retreat is February 20 – 22

### Sabbath Rest: Caring for Body and Soul

***Registration coming very soon***

We will gather with Valley of Peace women at the beautiful Dunrovin Retreat Center at Marine on St. Croix from February 20-22. Our theme is “Sabbath Rest: Caring for Body and Soul.” We will engage in prayer, bible study, social time, somatic practices, and more to nurture our spirits in this heartbreaking time. We are working on a brochure and registration process over the next week. For now, hold the dates!

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## Indigenous Cooking Classes at OSLC

**With April Smith, our previous community meal cook**

***Pastor Martha***

Our friend April Smith is leading indigenous cooking classes in the OSLC kitchen this winter and spring! It's through Minneapolis Community Ed. If you'd like to participate, you can learn more and sign up here:

January Class:



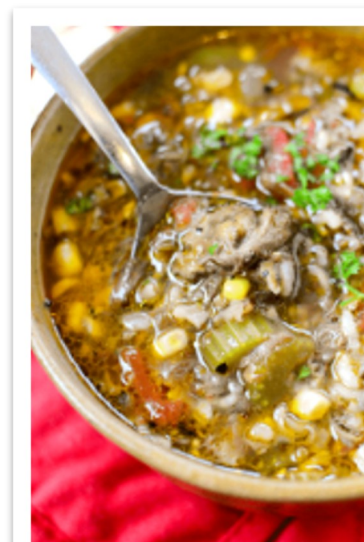
Feb. Class:



March Class:



March/April Class:



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# Whatever happened to Peace on Earth?

***Amy Blumenshine***

“Whatever happened to Peace on Earth?” asked Willie Nelson in song a few years back. I remember how hypocritical the church of my childhood seemed as it sang of Christmas peace while supporting the American invasion of Vietnam. {Decades later, it’s clear that the US invaded Vietnam on lies and that the powers-that-be kept lying to Americans as we protested the bombing of civilians in N. Vietnam and neighboring countries-- along with other immoral atrocities. To this day, the children of those countries confront unexploded ordinances and toxic substances spread by our public treasure.}

The veterans of that moral injury mess have been carrying burdens in various ways ever since. Some sought to stop war at the time and some continue to this day. Veterans for Peace (VfP), for instance, in their Christmas message, invoked the truce started by troops in the trenches of WWI on Christmas eve {WWI resulted in the war deaths of 37 million and the Great Flu pandemic that killed over 50 million after infecting a third of the world:}

As veterans of war, we reclaim that history of the Christmas Truce in their name. As witnesses to and instruments of the brutality and dehumanization of armed conflict, we are no longer willing to be used to bring death, destruction, and suffering to others. We call on you to commemorate the Christmas Truce of 1914 with a determination to reconcile with enemies, to reconstruct and rebuild after war’s devastation, and to lay down arms.

We call on our active duty military comrades, National Guard, ICE and Border Patrol soldiers to recognize our common humanity, say “I will cause no more suffering and harm to my sisters, brothers, their children. ” Understand that what you do today you will live with the rest of your life.”

As an adolescent, my favorite carol spoke of the Divine beckoning that inspires and empowers peacemakers. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow included these verses in I heard the bells on Christmas Day:

And in despair I bowed my head: There is no peace on earth,” I said,” For hate is strong and mocks the song of peace on earth, good will to all.\*” Then pealed the bells more loud and deep: “God is not dead nor doth She\* sleep: The wrong shall fail, the right prevail, with peace on earth, good will to all.” Till, ringing, singing, on its way, the world revolved from night to day, A voice, a chime, a chant sublime, Of peace on earth, good will to all!\*

We who recognize and protest the insanity of war follow the beckoning of our Divine Mother who never stops believing in our divine/human capacity to collectively gain wisdom.

\*Words changed to reflect our growth in wisdom beyond patriarchy.



## Lectionary Text for Home Devotions

### January 11

Isaiah 42:1-9

Psalms 29

Acts 10:34-43

Matthew 3:13-17

### January 18

Isaiah 49:1-7

Psalms 40:1-11

1 Corinthians 1:1-9

John 1:29-42

### January 25

Isaiah 9:1-4

Psalms 27:1, 4-9

1 Corinthians 1:10-18

Matthew 4:12-23

#### How to Reach Us

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church  
2315 Chicago Ave  
Minneapolis MN 55404  
612-871-2967  
[oursavioursmpls.org](http://oursavioursmpls.org)

#### Pastors:

Martha Schwehn Bardwell Option 3

Esther Sianipar Option 4

#### Music Directors:

Alyssa Schwitzer option 6

Kent Goodroad

#### Office Manager:

Marcin Cienski option 7

OSCS 612-871-5900

#### Executive Director:

Michael Huffman option 1

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## PRAYER LIST

Pray for the family of Renee Nicole Good as they grieve her tragic death this week by an ICE agent in south of Minneapolis. Pray for our city—its leaders, pastors, lay leaders, medical teams, educators, families, and children—for healing and resilience. Pray for ICE agents, for reduced harm, an end to weapons, and for justice to be served.

Erik Hall's grandfather Lyle passed away. Pray for Erik and his family as they grieve and find comfort in God's love and tender.

Bob Hybben's mom Lois passed away peacefully. Pray for Bob, Suzanne Burke and Bob's family as they grieve and find comfort in God's love and peace.

Glenda's sister, Brenda is diagnosed with cancer. Pray that she can tolerate cancer treatments.

Angela !Khabeb has a fracture in her spine. Pray for speedy recovery and strength.

Safe travels for Alfred and Gertrude Flomo to Liberia in this season. Pray for Alfred's surgery in January as he has just recently been diagnosed with prostate cancer.

Pray for Sumatra and Aceh, Indonesia for recovery after massive earthquake, major floods and landslides that killed more than 1,000 people.

Karen Winans just had a fall. She is now home. Pray for speedy recovery.

Pray for our Somali and immigrant neighbors who are feeling fearful about their legal status and unsafe due to the current administration.

Rebekah Fergus' friend and business partner, Dan, recovering from a fall off a ladder.

Alexandra Locke, wife of Noah and daughter-in-law of Burce Pederson, had a stroke and is currently in speech-language therapy. The stroke did not affect her body movement. Pray for healing and a full recovery of her communication abilities.

Paul Hnath, for strength and endurance.

Marco, one of the ELC students who recently been detained by ICE. Pray for his safety and release so he can be reunited with his family.

Pray for an end to gun violence and all kinds of violence in our neighborhood and globally, and for the safety and well-being of young children and youth during this difficult and divided political world.

Pray for Elaine Doorenbos, mother of Laura Kehrberg, who has been diagnosed with Lewy Body Dementia and moving to hospice. Pray for Elaine's comfort and peace and for her husband and family during this difficult transition.

Our unhoused neighbors, who are spread out, seek shelter, mental health and stable housing.

Bruce Bakke is undergoing treatment for prostate cancer - pray for healing and strength

Anton Moore is experiencing medical issues. Pray for healing and support and safety.

Pray for our LGBTQIA+ siblings that they find the restoration of a community, justice and equity in this divided world.

Peace and justice in Venezuela, Israel and Palestine, Iran, Ukraine, Sudan, Indonesia, the United States, and around the world. May the global economy and conflict be reconciled with the needs of people.

Undocumented adult immigrants in Minnesota who have just lost access to full health coverage and essential services through MNCare, that they may be guided to alternative sources of care for their physical and overall well-being.

Dave Hawkinson, a friend of Cindy Deveraux, suffered multiple fractures in a car accident and is currently in assisted living for his recovery. Pray for a full recovery.

Those who have lost their jobs due to executive administrative decisions. May they find strength, hope, and confidence as they seek new opportunities.

Mulki, daughter of our quilting neighbor Kadrah, is dealing with a genetic skin condition for which there is still no cure. Pray for strength and healing.

For our members working in government during these challenging times: Deb Swenson-Klatt, Tal Anderson, Nate Blumenshine, Ken Lewis (in county government), those working in city governments, and our teachers and school administrators. Also pray for federal employees, especially those in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion roles, which are being dismantled along with the vulnerable children, families, and communities they serve.

Those experiencing mental illness, isolation, and anxiety especially for Mateo Baumgartner, son of Ralph, struggling with mental illness.

Joy McDonald Coltvet has breast cancer. Pray for effective and continual treatment.

Carolyn Green is recovering from chemotherapy and prays to remain cancer-free following her recent ovarian cancer diagnosis.

Noah, son of Bruce Pederson, is experiencing vasculitis and is responding well to cancer treatment.

Erica Larson, a dear friend of Tal Anderson and a colleague of Pastors Martha and Esther in the synod, who is undergoing treatment for stage 4 breast cancer.

Julia Klatt Singer, sister of Dan Swenson-Klatt, is still recovering after a hit-and-run accident. She is back at work, but her heel has not fully recovered. Please also pray for the driver involved.

Jim, uncle of Sophia Stout, has been diagnosed with prostate cancer.

International students whose visas have been revoked, for the safety and justice of prisoners detained in El Salvador, Sudan and elsewhere, and for immigrant families living in fear — may they find protection, support, and hope in the face of uncertainty and hardship.



## January at Our Saviour's

Sunday, January 11	9am	Faith formation for all ages – Nursery, Godly Play, Sunday School, Adult Forum
	10am	Choir
	10:30am	<b>Worship in Sanctuary and Online</b>
	11:30am	Hospitality, announcements and fellowship (HC)
Tuesday, January 13	12:45pm-2pm	Staff Meeting (CR)
	4pm-6pm	GMCC: Caring Community Weekly Dinner (1100 East Lake Street)
Wednesday, January 14	8:30am-9:30am	Donuts in the Narthex (DIN)
	10:15am-12pm	Bible Study in Person and on Zoom
	5:30pm	Community Meal (HC)
	6:15	Spirit is Alive (Youth Lenten Music Leadership)
	7pm	Choir (Sanctuary)
Saturday, January 17	10am-Noon	Property Work Day
Sunday, January 18	9am	Faith formation for all ages – Nursery, Godly Play, Sunday School, Adult Forum
	10am	Choir
	10:30am	<b>Worship in Sanctuary and Online</b>
	11:30am	Hospitality, announcements and fellowship (HC)
Tuesday, January 20	12:45pm-2pm	Staff Meeting (CR)
	4pm-6pm	GMCC: Caring Community Weekly Dinner (1100 East Lake Street)
Wednesday, January 21	8:30am-9:30am	Donuts in the Narthex (DIN)
	10:15am-12pm	Bible Study in Person and on Zoom
	5:30pm	Community Meal (HC)
	6:15	Singing Circle
	7pm	Choir (Sanctuary)
Saturday, January 24	9am-Noon	Synod Youth Choir (Sanctuary)
	3:30pm-5pm	Intergenerational Dance and Potluck
Sunday, January 25	9am	Faith formation for all ages – Nursery, Godly Play, Sunday School, Adult Forum
	10am	Choir
	10:30am	<b>Worship in Sanctuary and Online</b>
	11:30am	Hospitality, announcements and fellowship (HC)

Monday, January 26	7pm	Heartland Marimba Quartet (Sanctuary)
Tuesday, January 27	12:45pm-2pm	Staff Meeting (CR)
	4pm-6pm	GMCC: Caring Community Weekly Dinner (1100 East Lake Street)
Wednesday, January 28	8:30am-9:30am	Donuts in the Narthex (DIN)
	10:15am-12pm	Bible Study in Person and on Zoom
	5:30pm	Community Meal (HC)
	6:15	Spirit is Alive (Youth Lenten Music Leadership)
	7pm	Choir (Sanctuary)
Saturday, January 31	5pm-9pm	Indigenous Cooking Class (Kitchen+HC)