



Friends in Christ,

Pastor's Corner

By the time this newsletter reaches you, the wider world will have moved on. Trees will be at the curb, playlists will have shifted, and the calendar will be pointing firmly toward “what’s next.” But the Church, it lingers.

We are still in the Christmas season.

Christmas does not end on December 25. It stretches, breathes, and unfolds. The story is still being told—not all at once, but slowly, as a gift meant to be lived with rather than rushed past. This is one of the quiet gifts of the church year: when the world hurries forward, we are invited to stay.

Soon, Christmas will widen into Epiphany, the season of revelation. A star appears. Strangers notice. Light is seen not by those in power, but by those paying attention. God’s love begins to spill beyond familiar boundaries, revealing that this child is not only for some, but for all.

That widening continues at the Jordan River, where we will celebrate the Baptism of Our Lord on January 11. Before Jesus teaches or heals, before he gathers disciples or challenges the world, he steps into ordinary water and is named: beloved, claimed, God’s own. That naming comes before achievement or impact—and it comes for us, too.

This in-between season may feel quiet. There are fewer big moments on the calendar and less urgency in the air. But quiet does not mean empty. Formation often happens here—between the star and the water, between promise and calling, between celebration and sending.

In baptism, we are reminded that we are not defined by how much we produce or how quickly we move on. We are defined by grace. The promise spoken over Jesus is spoken over us as well, and it does not expire when Christmas decorations are packed away.

I’ll admit—I’m already looking ahead to Lent and the depth it brings. But for now, this season invites us to linger. To notice. To trust that God is still at work in ways both seen and unseen.

The world may have moved on.
But the good news is still unfolding.

Peace,
Pastor Bunny



Annual Congregational Meeting

The annual congregational meeting will be held Sunday, **January 18th** following 10:00 AM worship. In the event of bad weather, Sunday, January 25th will serve as a snow date. Items to be discussed include the 2026 budget, electing a nominating committee, and Synod Assembly attendees. A Zoom link will be provided if you are unable to attend in person. Please reach out to Sue Clapp or Pastor Bunny if you have any questions. Please make this a priority. Thank you.

Sue Clapp, Congregation President & Your Elected Church Council

Youth News:

Reminder! Sunday School is back!! We meet at 9 AM every Sunday in the large classroom downstairs! All ages welcome!!!

Chili Cook-off and "SOUP"er Bowl

Sunday, February 8th will be the OSLC Annual chili cook-off! This will take place right after service, so you'll be home in plenty of time for the Super Bowl kickoff! If you are interested in bringing chili, please sign up on the bulletin board. Otherwise, bring your appetite and be ready to vote for your favorite!

Instead of a free-will offering this year, we ask you bring a can of soup (or any canned good, really) to be donated to one of our local pantries! We're planning an extra fun way to donate your soup and place your Super Bowl bets, so stay tuned for more details! Contact Hannah with any questions!

Youth Photos



Korver, Eric, and Parker assisting with service.

Thank you to all our youth and their contributions; noisy offering, acolytes, assisting ministers, readers, and other volunteer work!



Evelyn Fiester at Kennedy High School's annual "Cocoa and Carols" celebration. Evy sang with her Franklin Middle School show choir at this year's event. Good job, Evy!

Phil and Andy's Pantry



For the month of January, we will be collecting personal hygiene products for those in need. Please consider bringing in items like soap, shampoo, combs, toilet paper, deodorant, mouthwash, toothpaste and tooth brushes, toilet paper or even things like nail polish or clippers. The receiving pantries are always so overwhelmed and appreciative!

Thank you for any donations you choose to provide!

When Darkness Is Holy

As we moved through Advent and Christmas, many of our prayers and songs speak about light. Light shining. Light breaking in. Light overcoming darkness. These words are familiar, beautiful, and deeply rooted in Scripture.

And yet, over the past few years, I've been paying closer attention to how we use this language—and who it may unintentionally hurt.

In our culture, light is often equated with goodness, safety, and purity, while darkness is treated as something to fear, escape, or overcome. When these ideas are repeated—especially in worship—they can reinforce harmful messages for our black and brown siblings, whose bodies, histories, and identities have too often been associated with “darkness” in ways that are unjust and dehumanizing. This is not usually intentional. But harm does not require intent.

Scripture itself offers a more faithful and nuanced account. The Bible does not treat darkness as evil. Creation begins in darkness, with God's Spirit hovering over the deep (Genesis 1:2). God speaks *within* the dark, not after it is erased. The psalms tell us that darkness is not dark to God (Psalm 139). Jesus is born at night, not under spotlights, but in hiddenness. The tomb, the womb, and the stable all share something in common: they are places where God is quietly at work, unseen, forming new life. Darkness in Scripture is often holy—protective, full of promise.

When we talk about Christ coming into the world, we don't need to describe darkness as something bad in order to proclaim good news. The Incarnation tells us that God does not wait for perfect conditions or well-lit spaces. God comes near. God dwells with us. God makes a home among us—right where we are.

We are learning together how our words shape our world. When we choose language that honors the dignity of all God's children, we proclaim good news more fully.

Thank you for walking this path together—with humility, curiosity, and love.

Peace,
Pastor Bunny

Adult Bible Study Updates

We'll begin January with a brand-new opportunity for learning and conversation. Starting **Sunday, January 5, at 9:00 a.m.**, we'll launch a **Sunday-only study series** exploring what our neighbors believe and how our own Lutheran identity helps us engage them with curiosity and respect.

Our guide for this journey will be *Honoring Our Neighbor's Faith* (Augsburg Fortress), a clear and accessible resource introducing a wide range of religious traditions—Islam, Baptist traditions, Judaism, Pentecostalism, Eastern faiths, and many more. The book is not required, but if you enjoy reading along or want to go deeper, I gladly recommend it for your own exploration.

I'm looking forward to starting the new year with you in meaningful conversation.

– Pastor Bunny

Lent Bingo!!

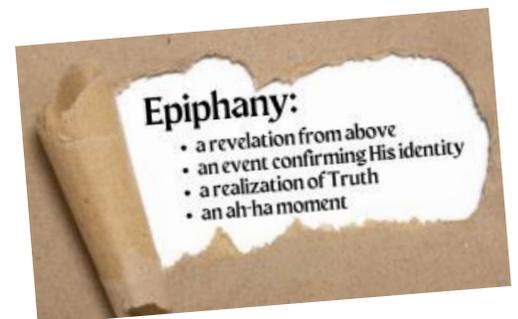


As we finish up the Advent season, it's already time to start thinking about Lent!! Ash Wednesday is February 18th. We have a fun Lenten challenge for the congregation during this upcoming season of Lent - LENT BINGO! Bingo cards will be available starting Sunday, February 15th and will continue all the way until Easter! All BINGO's will be awarded a prize! Turn your completed card into Hannah to claim your prize!

Merry Christmas – now what? Epiphany!

Epiphany is celebrated 12 days after Christmas as a representation of the 3 Wisemen making their way to find Jesus in the manger. Some would argue if there were 3 wise women, they would have been on time and brought diapers and casseroles rather than frankincense and myrrh.

The Epiphany marks the “official” end of the Christmas season. Epiphany means “manifestation” or “revelation” - Jesus had already been revealed to the world as a human baby, born to Mary in Bethlehem. But Epiphany marks Jesus’ divine revelation not only to the Jews, but to *all* people as the Son of God.



During Epiphany, we hear the stories about Jesus’ baptism, Jesus’ first miracle, and Jesus’ transfiguration; God literally come down from Heaven and declares, “this is my Son with whom I am well pleased” - does it really get more divine than that?! Let Epiphany remind you that although the Christmas season with the miracle child is technically over, Jesus’ divinity can reveal itself and is working miracles all year long.

Serving Our Congregation

Bunny Dillard – Head Pastor

Sue Clapp – Congregation President

David Sampson – Treasurer

Therese Plummer – Office Manager

Hannah Plummer – Children & Youth
Ministries Director

Forrest Green – Music Director

Terri Hodge – Bell Choir Director

Readers

January 4 – Catherine Burroughs

January 11 – Suzanne Schmitt

January 18 – Laurene Case

January 25 – Nancy Greer

February 1 – Sue Clapp

February 8 – Beth Anderson

February 15 – Karen Janney

February 22 – Therese Plummer

****Readers can pick up their reading in the “Reader” mailbox located between the offices in the back hallway.**

Acolytes

January 4 – Korver Sindelar

January 11 – Mason Schmitt

January 18 – Parker Zeien

January 25 – Eric Strottman

February 1 – Evy Fiester

February 8 – Korver Sindelar

February 15 – Mason Schmitt

February 22 – Parker Zeien

Assisting Ministers

January 4 – Natalie Fiester

January 11 – Sue Clapp

January 18 – Nancy Greer

January 25 – Hannah Plummer

February 1 – Racel Sindelar

February 8 – Natalie Fiester

February 15 – Sue Clapp

February 18 – Nancy Greer (Ash Wed.)

February 22 – Hannah Plummer

Ushers

Jan. 4 – D. Sampson, M. Houg, T. Zuber

Jan. 11 – Mark & Suzanne Schmitt,
Ann Larson, Beth Anderson

Jan. 18 – Fiester’s

Jan. 25 – Sue Clapp, Al Johnson,
Bob Sindelar, Rachel Sindelar

Feb. 1 – Strottman’s

Feb. 8 – D. Sampson, M. Houg, T. Zuber

Feb. 15 – Mark & Suzanne Schmitt,
Ann Larson, Beth Anderson

Feb. 22 – Fiester’s

Prayer for Pastor

January 4 – Joann Kohl

January 11 – Arnold Strottman

January 18 – Karen Janney

January 25 – Natalie Fiester

February 1 – Laurie Strottman

February 8 – Ann Larson

February 15 – Nancy Greer

February 22 – Derek Sindelar

Greeters

January 4 – Marv Gerjets

January 11 – Suzanne Schmitt

January 18 – Beth Anderson

January 25 – Rachel Sindelar

February 1 – Marv Gerjets

February 8 – Beth Anderson

February 15 – Ann Larson

February 22 – Therese Plummer

Children's Sermon

January 4 – Pastor Bunny

January 11 – Hannah Plummer

January 18 – Beth Anderson

January 25 – Hannah Plummer

February 1 – Pastor Bunny

February 8 – Hannah Plummer

February 15 – Beth Anderson

February 22 – Pastor Bunny

Sunday School Teacher

January 4 – Rachel Sindelar

January 11 – Natalie Fiester

January 18 – Hannah Plummer

January 25 – Rachel Sindelar

February 1 – Natalie Fiester

February 8 – Hannah Plummer

February 15 – Rachel Sindelar

February 22 – Natalie Fiester

2025 Financial Update

Contribution results for the week ending 12/21/2025:

General Giving: **\$4,362.00**

Total Giving: **\$4,435.55**

Weekly averages through 12/21/2025 (51 weeks):

Average Actual General Giving: **\$3,910.21 (\$199,420.59 YTD)**

Average Actual General Expenses: **\$3,915.58 (\$199,694.45 YTD)**

The averages reported above are the averages of "actual" general giving and general expenses, not the forecasts.

Bell Choir 12-7-25



Click here to watch full service with [Bell Choir accompaniment](#)

Youth Bell Choir 12-7-25



Click below to watch videos of Youth Bell Choir playing:
["Away in a Manger"](#) and ["Infant Holy, Infant Lowly"](#)

Photos from the Confirmation Christmas celebration 12-10-25

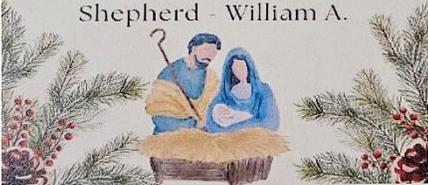


Youth Christmas program – “The Biggest Fan of Jesus” on 12-14-25




The Biggest Fan of Jesus
STARRING OSLC YOUTH.

John the Baptist - Korver S.
Pastor - Parker Z.
Gabriel - Rupert S.
Lyrael - Fiona S.
Zechariah - Eric S.
Mary - Caroline A.
Elizabeth - Evy F.
Joseph - Steven A.
Donkey - Paul A.
Shepherd - Mason S.
Shepherd - William A.



Youth Christmas Program 12-14-25 (cont.)



To watch the Youth Program video, click on this link of the full service recording and advance to the 9-minute mark; [December 14th Service with Youth Program](#).

Special Music on 12-21-25



Eric and Josiah Robinson Click for video:
[Sunday December 21, 2025 Special Music](#)



Click for videos: [Jingle Bells by Korver & Rupert](#)
[Korver plays Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairies.](#)

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service



OSLC Christmas Party – 12-7-25



