St. James Lutheran Church Third Sunday of Advent December 15, 2024



# St. James Lutheran Church

Leader: Bryce Hewlett, SAM Assistant: Pat Larson Acolyte: Edi Southwell Organist: Linda Gross Church Address: 1705 Oak Street, Bettendorf, IA 52722 Office Email: *stjamesbett@gmail.com* Church Office: 563-355-4161 Website: *www.stjamesbett.com* 

# WELCOME!

Guests, we are glad you have joined us today! If you would like to receive contact from St. James following this worship service, please fill out a card from the pew slot and put it in the offering plate. Welcome!

Children's Church for children takes place during our worship service. The children will be dismissed after the *Prayer of the Day* and will be brought back after the *Prayers of Intercession* to join their families.

# GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

# PRELUDE WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Third Sunday of Advent:

**R1**: We light again the two candles in our Advent wreath, to remind us of God's gifts of hope and peace (*first two candles are lit*). Today we will light the third candle, the candle of joy.

**R2:** As we wait for Christmas, the birth of Jesus, we look forward to the joyful celebrations and festivities we may share with those we love. The prophet Zephaniah calls us to "Sing aloud...rejoice and exult with all your heart!" because God will renew you in his love, save the lame, and gather the outcast. The good news of Jesus' birth and the promise of God's peace are still tidings of great joy for us today.

**R1**: St. Paul says, "The Lord is near. Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say it - rejoice!" The third candle reminds us of our joy in Jesus Christ. (*3rd candle is lit*)

C: Thank you, God, for the gift of joy. Help us to recognize the moments of joy in our lives, and to live joyfully so that others may be filled with the joy that comes from knowing Jesus Christ. Amen!

## Advent Hymn: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel / and ransom captive Israel That mourns in lonely exile here / until the Son of God appear

Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel / shall come to thee O Israel

O come, Desire of Nations, bind / in one the hearts of humankind. Bid all our sad divisions cease / and be yourself our Prince of Peace

Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel / shall come to thee O Israel

O come, Thou Day-spring, come and cheer / Our spirits by Thine advent here Disperse the gloomy clouds of night / and death's dark shadow put to flight

Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel / shall come to thee O Israel

The assembly rises in body or spirit

# **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

P: God of mercy,

C: we confess that we have sinned. We trust earthly powers and human authority alone. We grow fearful. We cling to false comforts.

P: God of might,

C: we confess that we have sinned. We have turned away from our neighbors. We have trusted false promises.

P: God in our midst,

C: we confess that we have sinned. We plead: come to us.

Bring your mercy to birth in us.

P: A righteous branch springs forth: it is Christ the Lord, our Savior, in whom we have forgiveness, life, and mercy. By the power of the Holy Spirit, receive the grace and forgiveness of God through + Christ Jesus, whose day draws near.

# C: Amen.

#### Re - joice, re - joice, be - liev - ers, and let your lights ap - pear; 1 The watch-ers on the moun-tain pro-claim the bride-groom near; 2 3 The saints, who here in pa - tience their cross and suf - f'rings bore, Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O 4 Je - sus, now ap - pear; Ø eve-ning is ad - vanc - ing, and dark - er night is the near. ap - proach - es with al - le - lu - ias forth as he clear. go shall live and reign for - ev - er when sor - row is no more. longed for, o'er rise, O Sun so this be - night-ed sphere. a a - ris - ing and The bride-groom is soon is draw-ing nigh. The mar - riage feast is wait - ing; the gates wide o - pen stand. round the throne of glo - ry the Lamb they shall be - hold; A -With hearts and hands up - lift - ed, we plead, O Lord, to see pray and watch and wres - tle; at mid - night comes the Up, cry. A - rise, O heirs of glo - ry; the bride-groom is hand. at tri-umph cast be - fore him their di - a - dems of gold. in day of earth's re - demp - tion that sets your peo - ple the free!

#### **GATHERING HYMN ELW 244 Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers**

#### PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

C: Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

The assembly is seated Children are dismissed for Children's Church

# WORD

#### FIRST READING Zephaniah 3:14-20

<sup>14</sup> Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout. O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! <sup>15</sup> The LORD has taken away the judgments against you; he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more. <sup>16</sup> On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: "Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. <sup>17</sup> The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing <sup>18</sup> as on a day of festival." I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. <sup>19</sup> I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise

and renown in all the earth.

<sup>20</sup> At that time I will bring you home,

at the time when I gather you;

for I will make you renowned and praised

among all the peoples of the earth,

when I restore your fortunes

before your eyes, says the LORD.

A: Word of God. Word of Life. C: Thanks be to God.

## Psalmody: Isaiah 12:2-6 (read responsively)

<sup>2</sup> Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid,

for the LORD GOD is my strength and my might, and has become my salvation.

<sup>3</sup> With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

<sup>4</sup> And you will say in that day: Give thanks to the LORD, call on God's name; make known the deeds of the LORD among the nations; proclaim that this name is exalted.

<sup>5</sup> Sing praises to the LORD, for he has done gloriously; let this be known in all the earth.

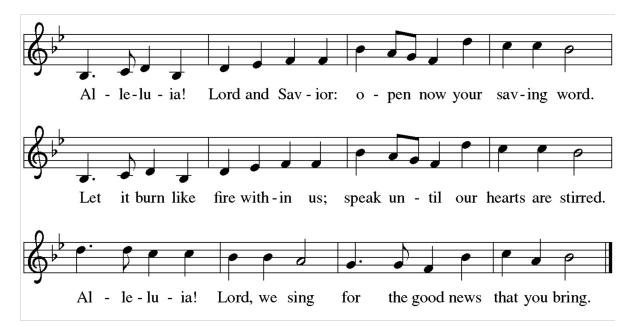
<sup>6</sup> Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

# **SECOND READING** Philippians 4:4-7

<sup>4</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. <sup>5</sup> Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. <sup>6</sup> Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. A: Word of God. Word of Life. **C: Thanks be to God.** 

The assembly rises in body or spirit to welcome the gospel.

#### **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**



#### **GOSPEL**

P: The holy gospel according to Luke 3:7-18

# C: Glory to you, O Lord.

<sup>7</sup> John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? <sup>8</sup> Therefore, bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. <sup>9</sup> Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."

<sup>10</sup> And the crowds asked him, "What, then, should we do?" <sup>11</sup> In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none, and whoever has food must do likewise." <sup>12</sup> Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" <sup>13</sup> He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." <sup>14</sup> Soldiers also

asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

<sup>15</sup> As the people were filled with expectation and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, <sup>16</sup> John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water, but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>17</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

<sup>18</sup> So with many other exhortations he proclaimed the good news to the people. P: The Gospel of the Lord. **C: Praise to you, O Christ.** 

The assembly is seated

#### **SERMON**

"Fire and Brimstone"

The assembly rises in body or spirit

#### Praise the One who breaks the dark-ness with a lib - er - at - ing light; 1 2 Praise the One who blessed the chil-dren with a strong yet gen-tle word; 3 Praise the one true love in - car - nate: Christ, who suf - fered in our place; praise the One who frees the pris-'ners, turn-ing blind-ness in - to sight. praise the One who drove out de-mons with a pierc-ing, two-edged sword. Je - sus died and rose for man - y that we may know God by grace. Praise the One who preached the gos - pel, heal-ing ev - 'ry dread dis - ease, Praise the One who brings cool wa - ter to the des-ert's burn-ing sand; Let us sing for joy and glad-ness, see-ing what our God has done. calm-ing storms and feed - ing thou-sands with the ver - y bread of peace. from this well comes liv - ing wa - ter quench-ing thirst in ev - 'ry land. Praise the one re - deem - ing glo - ry; praise the One who makes us one.

#### HYMN OF THE DAY ELW 843 Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness

# APOSTLES' CREED

A: Join me in confessing our faith in the words of the Apostles' Creed.

#### C: I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived

by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The assembly is seated

# PRAYER

#### **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

A: As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God's presence.

A: God who reforms, fill your church with courage to do your will. Empower your people in taking risks that bear fruit. Raise up leaders who will proclaim the good news. Lord, in your mercy, **C: receive our prayer.** 

A: God who creates, you hold in balance diverse ecosystems. Encourage efforts to protect wild lands from devastation. Care for animals and people in the path of destructive fires, storms, and other disasters. Lord, in your mercy, **C: receive our prayer.** 

A: God who leads, this world cries out for true justice. We pray for peace in areas of the world made unstable by political upheaval and for the safety of all people, especially common folks who are newly or perpetually in harm's way through no fault of their own. We pray for the people in **Syria**, **France**, **Ukraine**, **and the Holy Land**. Increase the desire of all people to speak out for anyone who is confronted with discrimination and oppression. Keep safe first

responders, those serving in the military, and those whose duty it is to protect others, especially **Anthony, Brandon, Eli, Nathan, and Samantha.** Lord, in your mercy, **C: receive our prayer.** 

A: God who embraces, help us notice the places where your people are hurting or sick, especially Addie, Amy, Barry, Bev, Carol, Danica, Donna, Dotty, Drew, Frieda, Grant, Jason, Jeanne, Jeff, Jerry, John, Jon, Julia, Konnor, LaVonne, Lon, Lynn, Mark, Michelle, Michelle, Minhon, Phil, Russ, Ruthann, Sandy, Sherry, and Theo. Show your compassion and remember your people in love. Lord, in your mercy, C: receive our prayer.

A: God who abides, you dwell among the people of this congregation. Deepen our relationships with one another, and make us aware of the diverse talents and gifts present here, especially our Property Committee, Altar Guild, and Ushers. Lord, in your mercy, **C: receive our prayer.** 

A: God who consoles, we thank you for the time we have had with loved ones who have died. Comfort us with the promise of everlasting life in you. Lord, in your mercy, **C: receive our prayer.** 

A: Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ. **C: Amen.** 

The assembly rises in body or spirit

# PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always. C: And also with you.

Greet one another by shaking hands or with a word or sign of Christ's peace. The assembly is seated.

# MEAL

**OFFERING** your offering may be placed in the plate as it is passed. We thank all who support God's ministry here and in the world.

Stand as the offering is presented at the rail.

#### **OFFERTORY:** Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful



#### **OFFERING PRAYER**

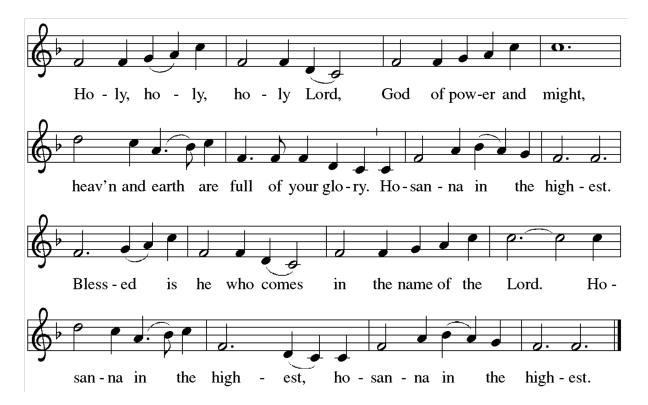
A: Creator God, you made the whole world, even the farthest stars, and you draw near to feed us. We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine. Strengthen us with this food that we may live in expectation for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **C: Amen.** 

#### **GREAT THANKSGIVING**

P: The Lord be with you. C: And also with you.

- P: Lift up your hearts. C: We lift them to the Lord.
- P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
- C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P: It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



P: Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life: Blessed are you for the birth of creation. Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light. Blessed are you for your promise to your people. Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams. Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will. Blessed are you for your Son Jesus, the Word made flesh.

P: In the night in which he was betrayed,

our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood,

shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

P: Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

- C:Christ has died. C: Christ is risen. C: Christ will come again.
- P: Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.
  C: Come, Holy Spirit.
- P: All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever. **C: Amen.**

P. Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

C: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

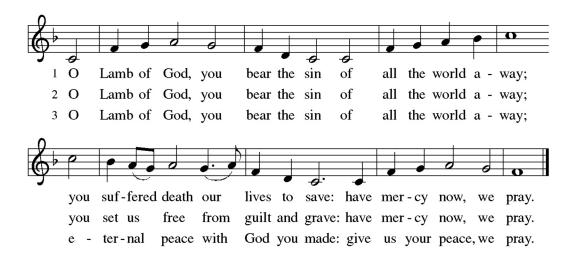
P: God feeds us with tender mercy. Come to the table. All are welcome here.

# C: Thanks be to God.

The assembly is seated.

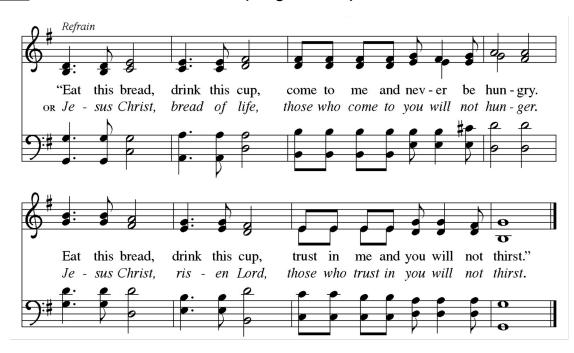
Come, for Christ invites you. Communion today will be distributed at the altar rail (please stand or kneel, as you are comfortable), the ushers will direct you forward to receive the bread (which is gluten-free) and cup either wine (red) or grape juice (white).

# Hymn: Lamb of God



#### <u>COMMUNION HYMNS:</u> <u>Hymn</u>: ELW 250 *Blessed Be the God of Israel*





#### Hymn: ELW 472 Eat this Bread (sing 3 times)

The assembly rises in body or spirit.

#### **BLESSING**

P: The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in eternal life. **C: Amen.** 

#### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

A: Generous God, we thank you for the gift of life, for the bread of salvation. We thank you for coming among us, for leading us into peace. We thank you for showering us with mercy, for sending us into the world. Come, Lord Jesus, and go with us as we feed the hungry in your name. **C: Amen.** 

# SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

#### **BLESSING**

P: God of endings and beginnings, God in the darkness and the light, God, our hope for the journey, + bless and keep you now and forever. **C: Amen.** 

# SENDING HYMN: ELW 264 Prepare the Royal Highway

1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near! 2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: your own e - ter - nal king! 3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom-ised king! king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove. no earth - ly 4 His is ev - 'ry hill and val - ley Let a lev - el road ap pear! Palm branch-es strew be - fore him! Spread gar-ments! Shout and sing! Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute bring. too may His is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and rule love. Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto ry: prom-ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing God's prom-ise will not you! All ing: So your praise be sound-ing for kind - ness so let a - bound - ing: Refrain the he ful - fills God's word! Ho - san - na to Lord, for

# **AFFIRMATION OF CHRISTIAN VOCATION**

P: Siblings in Christ, both your work and your rest are in God. Will you pattern your life on the Lord Jesus Christ, in gratitude to God and in service to others, at morning and evening, at work, and at play, all the days of your life?

#### C: I will, and I ask God to help me.

P: Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.

C: Thanks be to God.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

<u>**Prayer and Learning Groups**</u>—12/18 at 2PM & 12/19 at 6PM. Sign up sheets and more information can be found in the Narthex. Please sign up <u>today</u> if you're interested!

<u>Christmas Poinsettias</u>—\$20 each—Those wishing to purchase a poinsettia(s) can put their donation in the offering plate or turn it into the office. Anyone who purchases a poinsettia is welcome to take them home after either service on Christmas Eve.

12/18—5:30PM Blue Christmas Service at Grace Lutheran in Davenport, IA.

**12/22**—Baptismal Service. Anyone desiring to be baptized should contact the Church Office at (563) 355-4161.

**Fall 2024**—Letters have been sent to congregants to update our member records! Put updated forms in the black collection box in the Narthex. If you have any questions you can contact the **church office at (563) 355-4161.** 

**Quilt Raffle**—St. James annual quilt raffle will open on December 1st . The funds received from the raffle are used primarily to purchase quilt batting (filler) and supplies for the quilt ministry. Look for Shirley Richlen in the Narthex to ask questions or pay for tickets.

**Quilt Silent Auction**—In addition to the raffle quilts, please find a twin sized quilt named "Jelly Roll Quilt" made with stripes in beautiful brown tones.

The quilt is on display in the Narthex with a silent auction sheet and bidding will end

on December 22. Proceeds will go towards purchasing more quilting materials. Thank you for your interest! Any questions, please see Joleen Bakken.

**Finance Committee**—In order to be counted for 2024, all pledges and contributions must be received at the church no later than Sunday, December 29th . All contributions received after that date will be counted in January of 2025. If you are mailing your contribution, allow plenty of time for the mail processing. Contact Marilyn Pieart with any questions at (563)340-6529.

<u>Christian Ed.</u>— We are looking for volunteers to help assist with Children's Church on Sundays in 2025. For questions or for more information, please contact **Mandy Peters-Speidel at (563) 370-8262.** 

<u>**Giving Tree**</u>—16 families were given gifts that included 40 children! Parents of those children and 10 Seniors from the Health Care Center were also given gifts —It's a leap of faith that we do this, so the Social Ministry Team would like to thank all who made it possible this year!

We livestream our services on YouTube each week to help us worship together and stay connected even when we are not at full health. Please take advantage of that option if you need it - even if it's just for one Sunday!

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzjnqGF4g\_QWtn\_I2SqpL5Q

Attendance last week:	Saturday Evening	35	
	Sunday Morning	64 Youtube	3

This week's birthday:

12/20 Mandy Peters-Speidel

There are no anniversaries this week.

The flowers from December 15th until January 5th are poinsettias that can be purchased for \$20 each and are able to be taken home after either of the Christmas Eve services.

#### Worship Assistants

December 15

Presider **Assisting Minister** Advent Readers Acolyte Usher YouTube Assistant Altar Guild Counters December 22 Presider **Guest Speaker Assisting Minister Advent Readers** Acolyte Usher YouTube Assistant Altar Guild Counters December 24 Presider **Assisting Minister** Usher Altar Guild December 24 Presider **Assisting Minister** Acolyte Altar Guild Usher

9:00 AM Worship with Holy Communion

Bryce Hewlett, SAM Pat Larson Jason & Melissa Forari Edi Southwell Kelly Crooks & Caroline Hicks Deb Crooks Marilyn Pieart & Diana Worley Needed 9:00 AM Worship with Holy Communion Bryce Hewlett, SAM Pastor Elaine Olson Judie Brooks Diana & Darryl Worley Lillian Speidel Pat Larson & Ron Mekalson **Deb** Crooks Shirley Richlen Needed 4:00 PM Worship with Holy Communion Bryce Hewlett, SAM Shirley Richlen Melissa Forari & Anna Forari

11:00 PM Worship with Holy Communion

Bryce Hewlett, SAM Janet Brakel Dex Hewlett & Eden Bileddo Ellen Hogbin Caroline Hicks & Angie Schmidt

Ellen Hogbin

#### Prayers for Healing and Support

#### **Congregational Members**

Lynn Chamberlain, Bev Chappen, Sherry Germanio, Sandy Henry, Jeff Hicks, Frieda Houldsworth, John Leder, LaVonne Mienke, Jeanne Peters, Minhon Ridenour,

#### **Family and Friends**

Addie (Diana Worley's co-worker's daughter), Amy (friend of Jenny Martin), Barry (cousin of Ellen Hogbin), Carol (friend of Joleen & Erik Bakken), Danica (Friend of Deb Crooks), Dotty (friend of Joleen & Erik Bakken), Donna (Ed Arp's sister), Drew (Pat Larson's friend), Grant (grandson of Carol Leacox), Jason (Lynn Chamberlain & Sherry Germanio's son), Jerry (friend of Joleen & Erik Bakken), Jon (Joleen Bakken's nephew), Julia (Keegan's girlfriend), Konnor (Bert Leder's grandson), Mark (friend of Jason Forari) Michelle (friend of Joleen & Erik Bakken), Michelle (friend of Joleen & Erik Bakken), Phil (Steve Miller and Pat Sorensen's brother), Russ (friend of Steve & Sue Miller, husband to Chris), Ruthann (Justina Pessein's mom), Theo (Lora Gwin's Godson)

#### **Military Personnel**

Anthony Karasek (Judy Larson's great nephew) Lt. Col. Brandon Sandoval USAF (Pat Larson's grandson) CPT Eli Smith (Jerry and Myrna Mattly's grandson) Nathan Pearson USAF (Jenna & Kane Schmidt's friend) Samantha Richard (friend of Larson family)

If you have anyone who needs to be taken off or added, please notify the church office.

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# **December 2024**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat		
15 9AM Worship 10:15AM Council Mtg. Advent Week 3	16 4:30PM Christian Ed. Mtg.	17 No Sarah Circle	18 2PM Prayer & Learning Group 5:30PM Blue Christmas at Grace 6-8PM Food Pantry	19 9-11AM Food Pantry 11:30AM GANG at Hy-Vee 6PM Prayer & Learning Group	20	21 5:00PM Saturday Service		
22 9AM Worship Baptism Service Advent Week 4	23 9:30AM Monday Morning Fellowship	24 4PM Christmas Eve Service 11PM Christmas Eve Service	25 No Food Pantry <i>Christmas</i> Office Closed	26 9-11AM Food Pantry	27	28 5:00PM Saturday Service		
29 9AM Worship	30	31	1/1 No Food Pantry <i>New Years</i> <i>Day</i> Office Closed	1/2 9-11AM Food Pantry	1/3	1/4 5:00PM Saturday Service		
1/5 9AM Worship	1/6 6PM Dessert 7PM Epiphany service	1/7 4PM Property	1/8 6-8PM Food Pantry	1/9 9-11AM Food Pantry	1/10	1/11 5:00PM Saturday Service		
1/12 9AM Worship 10:15AM Finance Mtg.	1/13	1/14	1/15 6-8PM Food Pantry	1/16 9-11AM Food Pantry	1/17	1/18		