

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025**

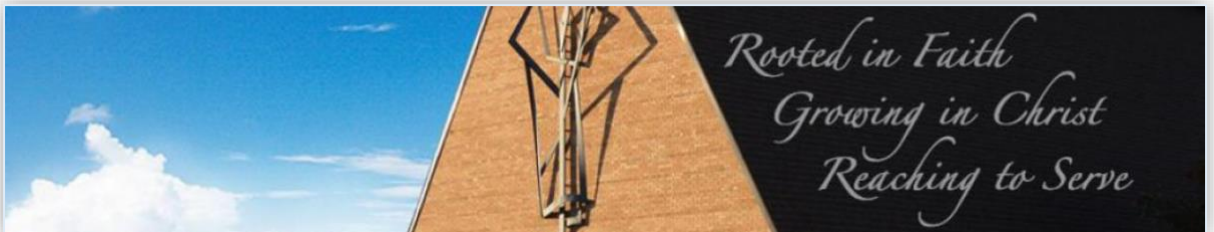
*Fourth Sunday of Advent*



**Our Savior's Lutheran Church**

Virginia, MN

Pastor Liz Cheney



**PRELUDE**

*Kristen Weikum, Organist*

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, whose home is heaven and earth, whose salvation is sure. **Amen.**

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

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Long-expected God,

**we confess that we look to ourselves**

**for the peace and security only you can provide.**

**We reach for swords and spears, reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war.**

**We become impatient while waiting and weary of keeping awake.**

**Free us from self-reliance, and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors.**

**Increase our trust in God's timing, and awaken us to your advent among us,**

**that we may abound in the hope you have promised. Amen.**

God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God's own righteousness.

† You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior. **Amen.**



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



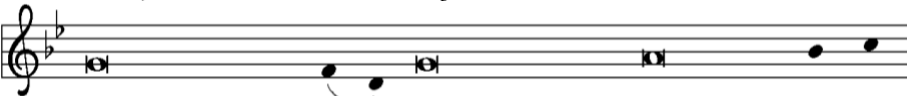
**Lord, have mer - cy.**



For the peace from a - bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



**Lord, have mer - cy.**



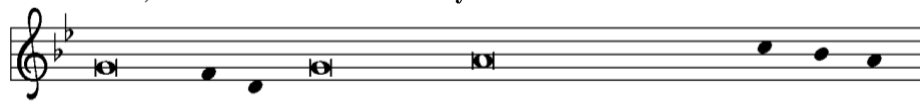
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of



God, and for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



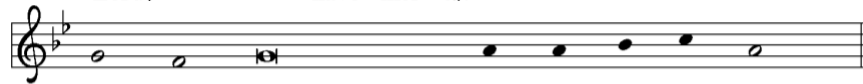
For this ho - ly house, and for all who offer here their wor - ship and



praise, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



A - men.

**PRAYER OF THE DAY** Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**FIRST READING:** Isaiah 7:10-16

*Lector, Jen Fredrickson*

*An Israelite and Aramean military coalition presented a serious threat to King Ahaz of Judah. In response, Ahaz decided to secure his throne and kingdom by seeking Assyrian help. Isaiah reminds Ahaz that human attempts to establish security will fail. The prophet gives the sign that is the only source of true safety: Immanuel, God is with us!*

<sup>10</sup> The Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, <sup>11</sup> “Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven.” <sup>12</sup> But Ahaz said, “I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test.” <sup>13</sup> Then Isaiah said, “Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also? <sup>14</sup> Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel. <sup>15</sup> He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. <sup>16</sup> For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.”

Word of God. Word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

**PSALM: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19. Please respond with the verses in bold print.**

*Let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved. (Ps. 80:7)*

<sup>1</sup> Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph <sup>1</sup> like a flock;  
shine forth, you that are enthroned up- <sup>1</sup> on the cherubim.

<sup>2</sup> **In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, <sup>1</sup> and Manasseh,  
stir up your strength and <sup>1</sup> come to help us.**

<sup>3</sup> Restore <sup>1</sup> us, O God;  
let your face shine upon us, and we <sup>1</sup> shall be saved.

<sup>4</sup> **O LORD <sup>1</sup> God of hosts,  
how long will your anger fume when your <sup>1</sup> people pray? R**

<sup>5</sup> You have fed them with the <sup>1</sup> bread of tears;  
you have given them bowls of <sup>1</sup> tears to drink.

<sup>6</sup> **You have made us the derision <sup>1</sup> of our neighbors,  
and our enemies laugh <sup>1</sup> us to scorn.**

<sup>7</sup> Restore us, O <sup>1</sup> God of hosts;  
let your face shine upon us, and we <sup>1</sup> shall be saved.

<sup>17</sup> **Let your hand be upon the one at <sup>1</sup> your right hand,  
the one you have made so strong <sup>1</sup> for yourself.**

<sup>18</sup> And so will we never turn a- <sup>1</sup> way from you;  
give us life, that we may call up- <sup>1</sup> on your name.

<sup>19</sup> **Restore us, O LORD <sup>1</sup> God of hosts;  
let your face shine upon us, and we <sup>1</sup> shall be saved. R**

**SECOND READING:** Romans 1:1-7

*Most of the Christians in Rome do not know Paul. In this letter's opening he introduces himself as an apostle divinely appointed to spread God's gospel. The gospel's content is the promised coming of Christ, and Paul's mission is to bring about the obedience of faith among all nations, including his Roman audience.*

<sup>1</sup> Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, <sup>2</sup> which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, <sup>3</sup> the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh <sup>4</sup> and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, <sup>5</sup> through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the gentiles for the sake of his name, <sup>6</sup> including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

<sup>7</sup> To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Word of God. Word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



**Congregation:**

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



**Cantor:**

Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

## GOSPEL: Matthew 1:18-25. The Holy Gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Matthew's story of Jesus' birth focuses on the role of Joseph, who adopts the divinely-begotten child into the family of David and obediently gives him the name Jesus, which means "God saves."*

<sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. <sup>20</sup> But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." <sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

<sup>23</sup> "Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son,  
and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means, "God is with us." <sup>24</sup> When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife <sup>25</sup> but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

## CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM *'Twas the Night Before Christmas* Directed by Katie Feldt

*Children will sing verse 1 of each hymn; please join them to sing verse 2 only*

### SONG #1

### *Away in a Manger*

ELW# 277

Congregation, Vs 2:

*The Cattle Are Lowing; the Baby Awakes*

*But little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes*

*I love you, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky*

*And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh*

**SONG #2**                      **Angels We Have Heard On High**                      **ELW# 289**

*Congregation, Vs 2: Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What gladsome tidings be  
Which inspire your heav'nly song?  
Gloria, in excelsis Deo, Gloria, in excelsis Deo*

**SONG #3**                      **Silent Night, Holy Night**                      **ELW# 281**

*Congregation, Vs 2: Silent Night, holy night!  
Shepherds quake at the sight  
Glories stream from heaven afar  
Heav'nly hosts sing, alleluia!  
Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!*

**SONG #4**                      **Joy to the World**                      **ELW# 267**

*Congregation, Vs 2: Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns!  
Let all their songs employ  
While fields and floods  
Rocks, hills and plains  
Repeat the sounding Joy, repeat the sounding Joy  
Repeat, repeat the sounding Joy*

**APOSTLES CREED**

**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, he 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.**

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION** In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

\* Respond after each prayer petition: *Pastor/Assistant, "God of Grace," congregation, "hear our prayer."*

**SHARING THE PEACE** The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**  
Please share a sign of God's peace with one another.

**OFFERING** Thank you for your continued financial support of OSLC! Whether you join us in person or online, the ministry & missions of Our Savior's depend on faithful giving. You can give the following ways:

- + online links can be found by accessing our website at <https://www.oslcmn.com/>
- + Using the QR code found here:
- + Contacting the church office to set up regular automatic giving
- + Dropping off or mailing in your offering



**CHOIR OFFERTORY HYMN**      *The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came*      *Directed by Anna De Foe*

**OFFERING PRAYER** Nourishing God, you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Through this meal, satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come. Amen.

**WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

**LORD'S PRAYER** Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray. pg. 191  
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; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and 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** Here is life. God is with us. Come, receive what God has promised.

**COMMUNION HYMNS:**

*Lamb of God*



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

*Infant Holy, Infant Lowly  
Your Little Ones, Dear Lord*

ELW# 276  
ELW# 286

## TABLE BLESSING

**PRAYER AFTER** God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness. Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger, and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus. Amen.

**BLESSING** May God who comes among us, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness, and good news to share today and always. Amen.

## SENDING HYMN

*Joy to the World, Vs 3 & 4*

ELW#267

**DISMISSAL** Go in peace. Keep awake. Thanks be to God.

## POSTLUDE

*Kristen Weikum, Organist*

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## WE HOLD IN OUR PRAYERS

Please pray for people in need of comfort, hope, healing, or safe transition: Dale, Adeline, Sue, Jim, Wendy, Fred, Harry, Scooby, Larry, Caleb, Pete, Jake, Laurie, Mike, Matthew C, Mark O., Marge, Dana, Doug, Matthew, Bill, Mark, Dena, Jeff & family, Dan, Steve, Rick & Betsy, Gordon, Ross (post-transplant surgery), Doris, Shari, Anna, Jeanette, Aaron, Shawn, Nicole, Gayla-heart, Sarah, Brandy, Rick, Janet, Tom, Lynn M., Archer, Sharon, Mary, Debbie, Leanne, Addy, Deb, Cliff, Lorraine M., Eric, Kyle, Pr. Art, Bob D, John W., Gerilyn, Phyllis, Wally, Tedd, Ralph, Chuck, Sue. *Please pray for Liz Kuitunen and family at the passing of Harry.*

***Call the church office if you have a prayer need and we will send it to the prayer chain if you desire. If you are in need of any pastoral care or if you or someone you know would like a visit, please call Pastor Liz Cheney at 218-780-8907 or the church office at 218-741-6207.***

**CONTACT US** Office: 218-741-6207 Email: [office@oslcmn.com](mailto:office@oslcmn.com)  
OSLC, 1111 8<sup>th</sup> St. South, Virginia, MN  
Website: [www.oslcmn.com](http://www.oslcmn.com) [www.facebook.com/oslcmn](http://www.facebook.com/oslcmn)  
YouTube Page "Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Virginia MN Office"

**OFFICE ADMIN HOURS:**

**CLOSED MONDAYS & HOLIDAYS. OPEN TUES.– FRIDAY, 9AM-5PM**

**PASTOR'S OFFICE HOURS** Pastor Liz is here Tues.–Thurs. & does visits etc., Mon. & Fri.  
Call @ 218-780-8907 or email at [lizcheney44@gmail.com](mailto:lizcheney44@gmail.com)

**STAFF**

**Pastor:** Rev. Liz Cheney

**Secretary:** Colleen Brown Jacobson

**Bookkeeper:** Carole Rutka

**Custodian:** Steve Gagnon

**Musicians:** Kristen Weikum, Mark Ongalo, Jen Fredrickson, Anna & Jim De Foe



Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**DEC. 21<sup>st</sup> 2025, FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT**

**CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM** We are in for a special treat today during worship! The Youth, under direction of Katie Feldt, will perform a Christmas Play for us. It will take place during the children's message/sermon portion of the service.

**CHRISTMAS BASKETS** The lists for Christmas Baskets are still in the narthex, and the food can be brought to the back of the Fellowship Hall on the Left – this morning, or by tomorrow morning, 9:30am. You can also join us tomorrow to pack and deliver the baskets in our community - it only takes 1.5-2 hours. Stop in at approx.9:30am tomorrow.

**CHRISTMAS EVE** This service will begin at 4 p.m. Wed., Dec. 24<sup>th</sup>. **Please plan on arriving by 3:30**, half-hour before, to hear our choir sing special music! The choir will also lead the congregation in familiar Christmas carols during that time. All are welcome!

**NEW YEAR'S DAY** Come join us for a special New Year's Day Fellowship & Lunch at 1pm, visiting & games after. There is no cost for the dinner, just come & bring in the New Year with us! Thurs., Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>, 1pm – later afternoon.

**ANNUAL REPORTS** Thank you for the Annual Reports! If you haven't completed yours yet, please stop in Tuesday 9am – 5pm to drop it off. *Thank you~ We will have a preliminary report in the office for you to look at Sunday, Jan. 4<sup>th</sup>.*

**LIFT** LIFT will resume Wed., Jan. 7<sup>th</sup> with an All-Church event at Gethsemane Lutheran with Bishop Amy Odgren leading a study "Who is my Neighbor."

**WORSHIP SPONSORSHIP** The Livestream is sponsored by Tom Klabecek, in memory of his wife Jarie. To sponsor Livestream or local TV Broadcasts in honor of a person or special event (wedding annivers., birthday, etc..) or in memory of a loved one, you may do so in any amount- It helps maintain our sound/camera equipment. See the kiosk/glass cabinet in the narthex to sign up.

**FURNACE/PIPE PROJECT:** *Thank you for your continued support of this project as we move toward our next payment. The next big update will take place at our Annual Meeting on Jan. 18<sup>th</sup>. Work is underway!*



**WANT TO GIVE SPECIFICALLY TO OUR HEATING & PIPE PROJECT?**

We've created a new QR code to give electronically toward this project through our giving app. It's a quick way to give & makes a big difference. Every gift helps - together, we can do this!

Check out the 'update board' in the narthex to see where we're currently at.

The graphic includes a QR code and a stylized orange thermometer with a red liquid level, set against a teal background with white and yellow accents.

**THIS WEEK @ OSLC:**

- 12/21 9:30AM WORSHIP AND CHILDREN'S PROGRAM
- 12/22 6PM BOY SCOUTS
- 12/23 OFFICE OPEN UNTIL 5PM,  
CLOSED THE REMAINDER OF THE WEEK
- 12/24 4PM CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP-CHORAL SINGING  
AT 3:30PM, JOIN US.
- 12/25-26 OFFICE CLOSED

Our Savior's Lutheran Church  
*Christmas Eve*  
*Worship Service*

will be Wed., Dec. 24<sup>th</sup> at 4pm

You are welcome to join the Choir  
singing traditional Hymns  
before worship, starting at 3:30

*New Year's Day*  
*Fellowship & Lunch*

JOIN US AS WE BRING IN THE NEW YEAR TOGETHER!  
A SEAFOOD BUFFET WILL BE SERVED AT 1:00  
FELLOWSHIP & GAMES TO FOLLOW

*Thurs., Jan. 1<sup>st</sup> at 1pm*

H A P P Y N E W Y E A R

**OUR NEXT  
COMMUNITY  
BREAKFAST IS  
SAT. JAN. 10  
9-11:30AM**

*Our Annual Meeting*

**WILL TAKE PLACE  
AFTER WORSHIP  
JAN. 18TH, 2026**

## THRIVENT CARDS FOR MINISTRY

If you are a Thrivent member and would like to be a part of an ActionTeam to get a gift card for purchasing food for the Community Breakfasts and the Community Closet, let Nancy Fisher know. It's very easy to get on the Thrivent website to get the card. You are eligible to get 2 cards a year. If you would like to do this, call Nancy at 218-750-2729 or see her in church!

Thank you for helping the church feed many people in our community~

The Community Closet will be closed this week and the next for Christmas and New Years. It will be open Wed. Jan. 7<sup>th</sup>.



**New this year - All Church Living in Faith Together!**

People of all ages are invited to gather for an intentionally intergenerational evening of learning and faith formation - this includes YOU!

We hope you will join us for dinner, worship, and a time of learning together.

On Wednesday, January 7, all are invited to join us as we welcome Bishop Amy Odgren, NEMN Synod Bishop as she leads us in exploring the ELCA, Synod and our winter theme "who is my neighbor?"

**Wednesday,  
January 7th  
6:00 - 8:00pm  
Gethsemane Lutheran  
Church**



God Pause for Friday, December 19, 2025

Matthew 1:18–25 (NRSV)

[Read Matthew 1:18–25 on biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com)

<sup>18</sup>Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup>Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. <sup>20</sup>But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." <sup>22</sup>All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: <sup>23</sup>"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." <sup>24</sup>When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, <sup>25</sup>but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

**Devotion** Yesterday we said this was a story of reframing. Today we will see how this is a story of naming, of a thrilling voice calling. Gabriel told Joseph to name the child Jesus. This is the Greek version of the Hebrew name Joshua. It means Jehovah is salvation. The child is not a child of shame, but a child of salvation. Then Matthew interprets this naming event by associating it with another naming story. When the prophet Isaiah was speaking truth to King Ahaz in Isaiah, God offered a sign. He said, "The young woman ... shall bear a son ... and name him Immanuel." (Isaiah 7:14) This name means God is with us. Here is the scene. Two young Jewish people are in a precarious situation. Their reputations are in jeopardy with a scandalous pregnancy. Their country is in jeopardy as it suffers the oppression of an empire. Honestly, I would name that despair. But now there is another name to call out: Jehovah is salvation. God is with us.

**Prayer** Oh God who is with us in our darkest hour, may we feel your presence today. Immanuel, Immanuel, Amen.

*Steve Thomason '15 Ph.D. Dean of the Chapel and Associate Professor of Spiritual Formation and Discipleship, Luther Seminary*