



# The Saltshaker

December 2024

Redeemer Lutheran Church

360.384.5923



858 WEST SMITH ROAD  
BELLINGHAM, WA 98226  
360.384.5923

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### **Sunday Worship Service Schedule**

9:00 AM: Adult Bible Study

10:30 AM: Worship Service

January Newsletter deadline is  
Monday, December 23, 2024

### **IN THIS ISSUE:**

- Pastor's Pen
- Stewardship
- Council Briefs
- December Birthdays
- Bulletin Board Announcements
- Preschool News
- Poem
- Advent Brunch Photos

for Unto Us  
a Child  
is Born

## *From the Pastor's Pen*



Last Sunday (Dec 1<sup>st</sup>) the Epistle reading was from 1 Thessalonians 3. Verses 9-10 read, *“For what thanksgiving can we return to God for you, for all the joy that we feel for your sake before our God, as we pray most earnestly night and day that we may see you face to face and supply what is lacking in your faith?”*

Have you ever waited with bated breath for someone’s arrival? Maybe a child was coming home from college or a military deployment. Maybe your best friend in college that you haven’t seen in years. Or your spouse who has been away on a trip taking care of the kids on the other side of the country. But now they are coming. They’ll be here any moment. You’re excited. Joy wells up in your heart.

When Paul wrote the above words to the Christians in Thessalonica, he was writing to a congregation he had met only briefly. We read in Acts 17 about his short-term ministry there. He preached, got persecuted, and was sent away for his safety. Although it was a brief visit, God’s Word did a marvelous work. People came to faith and a church was started.

While Paul could have boasted about what great results came from his short visit, he does not. He gives thanks to God: *“Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace. We give thanks to God always for all of you...”* (1 Thess 1:1-2a). Paul thanked God.

While there is much excitement in our world at this time of the year as Christmas approaches, very little of it has anything to do with the arrival of the Lord Jesus. Let’s let Paul’s words to the Thessalonians be a guide for us this time of year: “How can we thank God enough?”

The truth is... we can’t. Not really, at least. How can we truly thank God enough for sending us a Savior? Who was born into our flesh to take upon himself our sins? Who died for us to bring us the joy of sins forgiven? For the gift of eternal life? Can we really thank God enough for all this?

While we cannot really give God enough thanks for all he’s done, we can take some time to stop, and give him thanks for the gift of his Son, who’s coming is, after all, the reason for the season. And I know of a good place to do that...

See you in church,

Pastor Rex E. Watt

# The Bulletin Board

**DEVOTIONALS:** “Our Daily Bread” for December-February and “Portals of Prayer” for October-December are available at the mailbox table.

**SUNDAY ADULT BIBLE STUDY: MEETS AT 9:00 am.** “The Gospel According to Paul” led by Pastor Watt.

**MEN’S SATURDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY & BREAKFAST: A Study of Proverbs led by Anthony McLeod.** 8:00 am the first Saturday of each month here at the church. **The next meeting will be on Saturday, December 7th.**

**LADIES BIBLE STUDY: The third Friday of each month at 11:00 am.** A study of Luther’s Small Catechism. **The next meeting will be on Friday, December 20th.**

**LWML QUARTERLY MEETING:** Friday, December 20th, following the Ladies Bible Study.

**MITE SUNDAY:** The first Sunday of each month is “Mite Sunday”. Don’t forget your mites, Sunday, December 1st.

**VOTERS MEETING: December 8th,** following morning worship. The 2025 budget will be reviewed.

**EVANGELISM MEETING:** The next Evangelism Meetings will be Thursday, December 19th, at 1:30 & 7pm. **A NEW EVANGELISM TRAINING STUDY: “How to Talk About Your Faith”,** an introduction on how to have a spiritual conversation. Material provided by Lutheran Hour Ministries.

**CUSTODIAL VOLUNTEER SIGN UP SHEET: We are still in need of weekly cleaning volunteers.** Please see the sign up sheet in the fellowship area if you would be willing to help out. **Thank you!** *The council hopes to reach a decision regarding custodial service in December.*



## Bethlehem’s King

There’s a song in the air; there’s a star in the sky;  
There’s a mother’s deep prayer, and a baby’s low cry;  
And the star rains it’s fire while the beautiful sing.  
And the manger of Bethlehem cradles a King.

*J. G. Holland*



**Elder Care List**

A - Hah: Doug Bender (Head Elder)  
 Hal - Li: Kari Marttila  
 Lu - Pa: Anthony McLeod  
 Po - Z: Colin Grabish

**December Birthdays**  
 12/01 Niko Marttila  
 12/03 Matilda Kimes  
 12/13 Lynnata Marttila  
 12/13 Jesse Potvin  
 12/27 Marsha Edin  
 12/27 Rex Watt

**January Birthdays**  
 01/03 Jaxon Kuljis  
 01/11 Arenda Hovde  
 01/12 Mary Ann Olsen  
 01/16 Robin Stephens  
 01/18 Dennis Urbanec  
 01/19 Jacquelyn Smith  
 01/26 Adalyn Noste



**December Anniversaries**

12/11 Anthony & Wendy McLeod  
 12/16 Paul & Marianne Giusti  
 12/19 Patrick & Kelsey Heaviside  
 12/22 Niko & Molly Marttila  
 12/28 Landon & Kaarina Van Berkum  
 12/31 Steven & Micah Potvin

*As the angels sing heavenly praises for our God above,  
 As the dawn touches the Earth with its soft rays,  
 As another chapter of your life starts anew,  
 I wish that God will grant you your heart's greatest desire  
 And your presence endows peace to others  
 as refreshing as the morning dew.  
 Have a blessed and wonderful birthday or anniversary!*

**Fellowship Host/Hostess Volunteer Schedule**

Dec. 01 - Advent Fellowship Brunch  
 Dec. 08 - Mary Ann Olsen & Cristi Lysne  
 Dec. 15 - Annette Dixon & Wendy McLeod  
 Dec. 22 - Tami Marcos & Dee Watt  
 Dec. 29 - Potluck

**ASSISTING US IN WORSHIP – DECEMBER  
 Altar Care**

Lynnata Marttila

**Note:** If your birthday or wedding anniversary is not listed on this page or if it is incorrect, please contact the church office so we can make the correction.

**Worship Volunteer Schedule**

	<b>Elder/Assistant</b>	<b>Usher</b>	<b>Lay Reader</b>	<b>Soundboard</b>	<b>Counters</b>
Dec. 01	Doug/Anthony	Rowan Hogle	Connor Dupuis	Kari Marttila	Wendy/Tim
Dec. 08	Doug/Anthony	Ian McLeod	Tim Bledsoe	Ian McLeod	Anthony/Corinne
Dec. 15	Doug/Anthony	Connor Dupuis	Ross Abbe	Kari Marttila	Ron/Jon
Dec. 22	Doug/Anthony	Anthony McLeod	Joe Dupuis	Ian McLeod	Wendy/Travis
Dec. 29	Doug/Anthony	Rowan Hogle	Corinne Thorsen	Kari Marttila	Anthony/Tim



# December

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>01</b> 9:00 am: Adult Bible Study 10:30 am: Worship /Communion Sunday School <b>Advent Fellowship Brunch</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>03</b> 6:30 pm: Elders	<b>04</b> <b>Bulletin Deadline</b>  1:00 & 7:00 pm: Advent Worship 6:00 pm: Soup Supper	<b>05</b>  6:30 pm: Young Adult Bible Study	<b>06</b>	<b>07</b> 8:00 am: Men's Bible Study & Breakfast
<b>08</b> 9:00 am: Adult Bible Study 10:30 am: Worship /Communion Sunday School	<b>09</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> <b>Bulletin Deadline</b>  1:00 & 7:00 pm: Advent Worship 6:00 pm: Soup Supper	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> 9:00 am: Adult Bible Study 10:30 am: Worship /Communion Sunday School	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 6:30 pm: Council	<b>18</b> <b>Bulletin Deadline</b>  1:00 & 7:00 pm: Advent Worship 6:00 pm: Soup Supper	<b>19</b> <b>Evangelism Meeting</b> 1:30 & 7 pm  <b>PS Christmas Program</b>	<b>20</b> 11:00 am: Ladies Bible Study LWML Quarterly Meeting  <b>PS Christmas Break Begins</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> 9:00 am: Adult Bible Study 10:30 am: Worship /Communion <b>Children's Christmas Program</b>	<b>23</b> <b>Saltshaker Deadline</b>	<b>24</b>  7:00 pm: Christmas Eve Candlelight & Carol Sing Service	<b>25</b> <b>Bulletin Deadline</b>  <b>Merry Christmas</b> office closed	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> 9:00 am: Adult Bible Study 10:30 am: Worship /Communion Sunday School <b>Potluck</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>  7:00 pm: New year's Eve Service with Communion	<b>01</b> <b>Happy New Year!</b> office closed  <b>2</b>	<b>02</b>  <b>0</b>	<b>03</b>  <b>2</b>	<b>04</b>  <b>5</b>



*Christmas Eve*  
Candlelight Service  
Carol Sing

Tuesday, December 24th  
at 7:00 pm



**New Year's Eve Worship  
with Communion**

Tuesday, December 31st  
7:00 pm





# ADVENT WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Midweek Advent Services

Wednesdays at 1:00 & 7:00 pm

December 4th, 11th & 18th

Soup Suppers will be at 6:00 pm,  
preceding the evening service.

## Why do we celebrate Advent?

The word Advent means “coming”. During Advent, we prepare for the coming of the One who was born that first Christmas in a stable. We prepare for the One who saved us from sin, death and the power of the devil: our Lord Jesus Christ! What a wonderful and exciting time of preparation!

### ADVENT SOUP SUPPERS SIGN-UP

A sign up sheet is now posted in Fellowship Hall. Opportunities to bring soup, bread/crackers, milk or cookies for this wonderful time of fellowship are available.

Soup suppers will be at 6:00 pm preceding the  
Wednesday Evening Advent Services  
December 4th, 11th & 18th





## Repenting of “Yours” and “Mine”

Retailers have had their Christmas displays up since before Reformation Sunday. The kids have made their list and checked it twice, or three times or more. It won't be long before the tree will start shedding its needles, the stockings emptied, the gifts unwrapped, toys broken, and the too small or out of style clothes returned. Before we know it, the annual celebration of Christmas will be over.

But for the children of God, we know that the gift of Christmas doesn't ever end. Week in and week out, the Lord continues to shower His gifts on us. Every time the Lord gathers us to His house, and we are led to kneel at His table, the gift of forgiveness is repeatedly granted to us. It is nothing we deserve. It comes to us freely!

The fourth stanza of the stewardship hymn, “Forgive Us Lord for Shallow Thankfulness” (LSB 788) highlights both this gift and our response.

*Teach us, O Lord, true thankfulness divine, that gives as Christ gave, never counting cost*

To learn thankfulness is necessary. The parents of young children are well-versed in the fact that they must teach their children thankfulness. It does not come naturally. The spiritual genetics inherited from our parents allow us to think that the world revolves around us. When we receive something, there is an inward desire to think that we in some way deserve it.

But there is no way that we deserve anything we get from our Lord. We need that ongoing lesson from God Himself. Thankfulness toward God is worked in us by the Holy Spirit. God's Word works this thanksgiving in us. We need this weekly reminder that Jesus didn't consider “equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself” for us, to the point of death on a cross (Phil. 2:6). He didn't bat an eye. He paid the price! Our life of stewardship is one of daily and weekly thanksgiving inspired by the Lord Himself.

*That knows no barrier of “yours” and “mine,” assured that only what's withheld is lost.*

Because Jesus gave us everything and more, there can be no ownership. The child at Christmas is quick to claim that the newly gifted toy is “mine!” But as Psalm 24:1 asserts, “The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein.” There isn't anything in creation that is ours. When we cling to and claim ownership of anything in creation, we are losing out on the continual gifts with which the Lord desires to shower upon us. Closed hands cannot receive anything new. We cling to the old and dead and miss the new thing that the Lord desires to do in and for us.



We are led to repent of the “yours” and “mine” and remove the lie that we have any ownership. In this we have the promise that God will continue to give to us. Not just at Christmas, but every Sunday at the altar in the Lord’s house.

**LCMS Stewardship Ministry – [lcms.org/stewardship](https://lcms.org/stewardship)  
Newsletter Article – December 2024**

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed  
on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee. **Isaiah 26:3**

What comforts, Lord, to those are given,  
Who seek in Thee their home and rest!  
They find on earth an opening heaven,  
And in Thy peace are simply blest.

**W.C. Dessle**

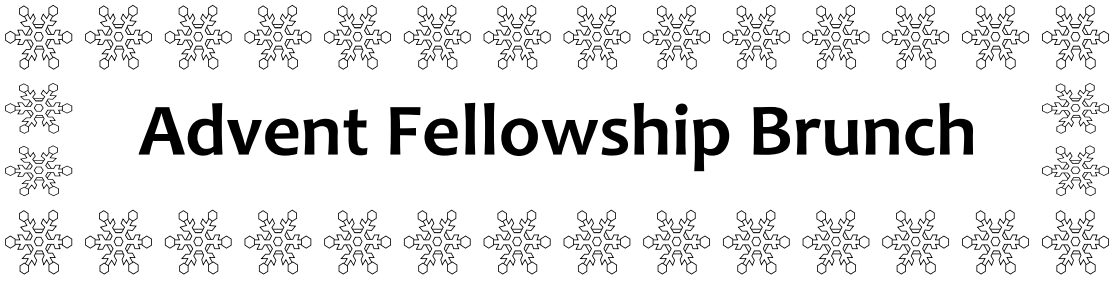
God is a tranquil Being and abides in a tranquil eternity. So must thy spirit become a tranquil and clear little pool, wherein the serene light of God can be mirrored. Therefore shun all that is disquieting and distracting, both within and without. Nothing in the whole world is worth the loss of thy peace; even the faults which thou hast committed should only humble, but not disquiet thee. God is full of joy, peace, and happiness. Endeavor then to obtain a continually joyful and peaceful spirit. Avoid all anxious care, vexation, murmuring, and melancholy, which darken thy soul, and render thee unfit for the friendship of God. If thou dost perceive such feelings arising, turn gently away from them.

**G. Tersteegen**

from Daily Strengths for Daily Needs, Mary W. Tileston

Submitted  
by   
Marianne Giusti





# Advent Fellowship Brunch











Thank you, Barb, for blessing us with this beautiful Advent board!

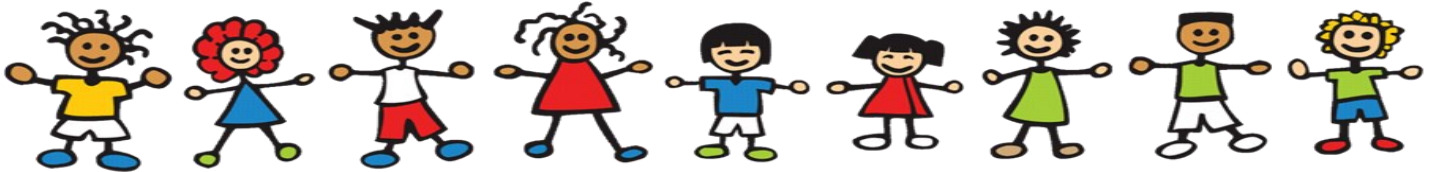




# Redeemer Lutheran Preschool



Redeemer Lutheran Preschool  
858 W. Smith Rd.  
Bellingham, WA 98226



**Merry**  
**Christmas**

**Merry Christmas from the Redeemer Lutheran Preschool!**

Please join us for our Christmas program,

**“The Many Shapes of Christmas”**

**Thursday, December 19th  
at 7:00 pm.**



## NEW ADDRESS



### Greetings from Peggy Hind!

Peggy is settled into her new home and is welcome to visitors! Peggy's phone number has remained the same, if you would like Peggy's new address please contact the church office.



Please join us in welcoming Donna Christianson, pictured above, back into membership. We are happy to have you back at Redeemer!



Carl making final preparations to the holiday military boxes and getting ready to ship!

**THANK YOU** to both Carl and Mary Ann Olsen for their time and dedication in this ministry to our service members in the US military.







Thank you to the library moving crew!



## Chrismon Fixing Party!

A fun afternoon spent fixing Chrismons, visiting and enjoying a delicious lunch!





Council Briefs  
November 2024

Pastor opened with a prayer and devotion.

Secretary Report: Council meeting Minutes for October were reviewed, corrected, and accepted by council.

Treasurer's Report: Year to Date, Offerings and Tithes are short of the Planned budget by \$6,121.96. October Offerings and Tithes were short of the plan by \$4,958.74. All major projects are excluded from these numbers.

The Budget Committee presented a balanced budget to the Council and the council accepted it. We are forecasting a significant reduction in giving for 2025 and there is no forecast for an increase in the Preschool revenues in 2025 therefore, the proposed 2025 budget is smaller than the 2024 budget.

In order to reach a balanced budget proposal for 2025, each Redeemer department budget was reduced. In addition, there were two significant cuts proposed by the Budget Committee. First, Pastor Watts' compensation package was reduced with the understanding that if there is a surplus at the close of 2025, the surplus will be paid to Pastor, up to the amount his compensation was reduced, in January 2026. The second significant cut was reducing the amount of donations Redeemer makes to the District.

Pastor's Report: For the month of October, Pastor Watt preached 3 out of 4 Sundays, conducted one service at Woodway Senior Living, and taught one Young Adult Bible Study in his home. Pastor also made 4 pastoral visits, and 2 shut in visits. The Young Adult Bible Study was cancelled due to scheduling conflicts of the Young Adults. The average worship attendance in October was 56.

Education Committee Report: All is going well with the preschool. Heidi and Payton have been cleaning the preschool rooms a bit every day after class. They have been asked to keep track of their hours so they may be paid accordingly.

The Sunday School will be doing a simple Christmas program. Dee is working with the students on three songs for the program.

Elders Report: The Elder Board is continuing to work on a donation schedule for members wanting to hold events at Redeemer. There will also be guidance on the types of events that would be allowed. The Elders are continuing to work on a photo member directory for the congregation.

Stewardship Report: The Advent By Candlelight Brunch will be after the December 1<sup>st</sup> service this year. There will be a special program, an in-gathering for the Redeemer Kitchen and Pre-school,



and a Christmas Carol singalong. The Brunch items will be provided but the congregation members have been asked to contribute to a special dessert buffet.

Property Report: The project to remove some trees behind the education wing and to prune some bushes near the road, has begun. All expenses are being paid by a generous donor and are not reflected in the proposed 2025 budget. Rocks will also be delivered for a flower bed in front of the church.

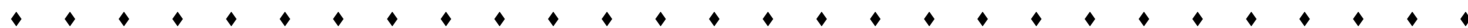
Evangelism Report: Ross Abbe reported that upcoming Evangelism meetings will be focused on family and our faith.

Unfinished Business: Two cleaning companies have bid on the cleaning of the church. Council was able to review one bid that was fully detailed and the other wasn't available at the meeting. In order to be sure we are comparing "apples to apples," no decision was made. For now, we continue to rely on member volunteers to help with basic cleaning tasks.

New Business: A representative from the NW District of Education visited the church and pre-school. The representative thought that our facility would pass inspection to provide pre-school and daycare before and/ or after care. This could be an option for additional revenue if our pre-school numbers continue to decline in the future.

A portable speaker system and microphone for the Fellowship area was discussed as a useful tool for events like Advent by Candlelight etc... This will be seriously researched by council.

Pastor gave a closing prayer.



### **Redeemer contributed 20 shoeboxes to Operation Christmas Child.**

Thank you to all who filled boxes that will bring Christmas Love and Joy to impoverished children around the world.



**Loading up!**



**And delivery!**





## Lutheran’s For Life Quote: December 08

“If heaven had been our home, would we have wanted to enter a world of grief and pain, of evil and death? Yet enter it Jesus did to give us His home to be ours forever. So, He loved us in undeserved grace. And so will we sing in the heavenly Jerusalem a refrain like that of our choirs: Hail, thou ever blessed morn, Hail redemption’s happy dawn, Sing through all Jerusalem: ‘Christ is born in Bethlehem.’ Alleluia.”

*Richard Gurgel, President, Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • [lutheransforlife.org](http://lutheransforlife.org)*

## Stay connected to the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

**IF YOU WANT HELP UNDERSTANDING** the world from a Lutheran perspective:

*The Lutheran Witness* ([lcms.org/witness](http://lcms.org/witness))

**IF YOU LIKE HEARING** directly from the president and other members of the president’s office: Witness, Mercy, Life Together blog ([wmltblog.org](http://wmltblog.org))

**IF YOU WANT TO CONNECT** with other LCMS Lutherans: LCMS Facebook ([facebook.com/thelcms](https://facebook.com/thelcms)), Twitter ([!thelcms](https://twitter.com/thelcms)), Instagram ([thelcms](https://instagram.com/thelcms)) and Periscope.

**IF YOU WANT TO HEAR** from LCMS leadership: Leader blog ([blogs.lcms.org](https://blogs.lcms.org), category/leader-blog)

**IF YOU’RE SEARCHING** for stories of the Church in action:

*Lutherans Engage the World* ([lcms.org/lutheransengage](https://lcms.org/lutheransengage))

**IF YOU’RE LOOKING FOR NEWS:** *Reporter* ([blogs.lcms.org/reporter](https://blogs.lcms.org/reporter))

**IF YOU CAN’T GET ENOUGH** of all things mission:

*Journal of Lutheran Mission* ([lcms.org/journaloflutheranmission](https://lcms.org/journaloflutheranmission))

**IF YOU WANT IT ALL:** LCMS News and Publications ([blogs.lcms.org](https://blogs.lcms.org))



## Free Cards



### SHARE GOD’S WORD BY USING FREE GIDEON CARDS

How would you like to extend the missionary outreach of our church to some 200 countries around the world? You are encouraged to use Gideon cards to send the Word and Change a Life!

Every time you send a Gideon card, your donation for Bibles will send God’s Word to someone who desperately needs it—perhaps in your own neighborhood or somewhere else around the world.

Gideon cards can be given in the memory of someone special (sympathy cards) or for any special occasion, and that’s a life-changing difference!

Check out the display of free Gideon cards in our church. Where are they? They are on the wooden shelf at the back wall in the fellowship room. Help yourself. Then, let these cards acknowledge your gift in memory or in honor of someone, and provide Bibles, helping fulfill the Great Commission. Thank you for sharing God’s Word around the world.