

THE MESSENGER

December 2024

The newsletter of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church

Church Decorating for Christmas Season

Sunday, December 1 @ 11:30 am. Everyone is welcome!

Advent Wednesday Meals & Worship

Do you enjoy casual or evening worship? Join us for Midweek Advent services in the fellowship hall on the lower level of the church. These gatherings will have an informal, Bible Study format, featuring confession and absolution, and opening and closing hymns.

December 4, 11, and 18 a potluck meal begins at **5:30 pm**.

Worship will be held in the fellowship area at **6:30 pm**.

Free Swing Dancing Class

Friday, **December 13** for anyone in the community in the fellowship area. Class starts at **7:30 pm**; open dance until 10:00 pm. No partner is needed.

January Youth Roller Skating Outing

Save the date! On **January 12**, all youth in grades 6-12 are invited to a fun-filled day of roller skating at Melody Gardens in Marshfield. We'll start with lunch at the church at **11:45 am**, then head to the skating rink, returning to church by 5:30 pm. The cost of skating will be covered for all attending youth members, and friends or family are welcome to join us for the event!

In this Messenger:

- 1) Church Decorating, Advent Meals & Worship, Swing Dancing, Roller Skating Outing
- 2) Pastor's Devotion
- 3) Calendar
- 4) Attendance & Financial Updates
- 4) Birthdays/Anniversary
- 4) Men's Bible Study, Women's Discipleship
- 4) Chili Cook-off Winners
- 4) Christmas 2024



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Keep Christ in Every Day

“But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.’” (Luke 2:10-11)

During this time of year we usually hear the phrase, “Keep Christ in Christmas.” Certainly, this is a good thing to keep in mind during the Christmas season. As our country becomes more secularized during this time when people are concerned about buying all the right gifts, as people become busy to go to all of the parties, and as people stress over making the desserts and treats, it’s easy for anyone to forget the main reason to celebrate Christmas.

But after the Christmas season when the lights come down, the Christmas sales are over, and the Christmas songs and movies stop playing, people go back to their lives and seem to lose the joy we just celebrated. Why is that? Why is it that after Christmas we do not hear people say we should keep Christ in every day of our lives?

This was the message of the angels to the shepherds on that first Christmas night. They proclaimed a message of great joy that was meant for all people for all time: Christ the Savior was born! Later on we read about how the shepherds went to see Jesus lying in the manger, they praised God, and they told others about what they had seen and heard.

Let this Christmas joy, the message of Christ’s birth, remain with you even after the Christmas season. Keep Christ in everyday of your lives. Rejoice every day that our Savior was born to live and die for you. There is no greater joy than this! The message we hear on Christmas that a Savior was born for us fills us with joy because we are forgiven. And this forgiveness we have received from Christ remains with us always.

Therefore, let this joy of the birth of Christ our Savior be evident in your lives every day. Keep Christ in Christmas. Keep Christ in New Years. Keep Christ in Easter. Keep Christ in your birthday. Keep Christ in your anniversary. Keep Christ in your days of sorrow and in your days of joy. Keep Christ in every day.

- Pastor Neal Behm

MESSENGER SIGN-UP: To get an electronic copy of each month’s *Messenger* in your email, go to ChristMerrill.com/email and subscribe to *Messenger*. Paper copies will continue to be available at church.

Please submit items for next month’s *Messenger* by the 20th of this month to ChristMerrillEducation@gmail.com

December 2024

View the most up to date calendar at christmerrill.com/calendar.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 9:00 am Worship (Holy Communion) 10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Teen Bible Study 10:30 am Adult Bible Study 11:30 am Church Decorating	2	3	4 9:00 am Adult Bible Study 5:30 pm Potluck Meal 6:30 pm Advent Worship 7:30 pm Choir Practice	5 5:30 pm Catechism Class 6:30 pm Men's Bible Study 6:30 pm Women's Discipleship Group	6	7
8 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Teen Bible Study 10:30 am Adult Bible Study <i>Bring Clothes Closet donations</i>	9 6:30 pm Fellowship Committee Meeting	10 2:00 pm Worship @ Bell Tower 6:00 pm Council Meeting	11 9:00 am Adult Bible Study 5:30 pm Potluck Meal 6:30 pm Advent Worship	12 5:30 pm Catechism Class	13 7:30 pm Swing Dancing	14
15 9:00 am Worship (Holy Communion) 10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Teen Bible Study 10:30 am Adult Bible Study <i>Pick up NLHS fruit orders at church</i>	16 6:00 pm Board of Elders Meeting	17	18 9:00 am Adult Bible Study 5:30 pm Potluck Meal 6:30 pm Advent Worship	19 5:30 pm Catechism Class	20	21
22 9:00 am Worship	23	24 6:30 pm Christmas Eve Worship	25 9:00 am Christmas Day Worship	26	27	28
29 9:00 am Worship	30	31				

8:00 am Sundays - worship service on the radio (96.3FM, 730AM)
 9:00 am Sundays - worship service online at [youtube.com/@christmerrill](https://www.youtube.com/@christmerrill)

<i>Spiritual Growth Weekly Averages</i>	October
Sunday worship/Online	67/4
Men's Bible Study	6
Sunday Bible Study	14
Wednesday Bible Study	10
Women's Discipleship	7
Sunday School	3
Teen Bible Study	3

CHURCH FINANCIAL UPDATE

Our Offerings to the Lord (as of 10/31/24)

Anticipated offerings: \$135,642

Actual offerings: \$113,209

Actual expenses: \$117,117

General Fund balance as of 11/10/24: \$18,623

Your offerings help to support the ministry of the congregation. Giving continues to trend below budget. Please consider how your offerings benefit our church, our fellowship events and our ability to reach our community. For more information, see the Treasurer Report on the bulletin board by the elevator.

SHUT-IN VISITATION: Members are encouraged to visit and/or keep them in our prayers. **Brad B. Laurene H. Tom L. Phil M. Lorna P. Kathleen P. Dick S.**

BE PART OF CHRISTMAS 2024! Whom will you reach? Christmas Eve has now become the most attended



service by unchurched people, even surpassing Easter. Studies show that most people will say yes to a direct invitation to a Christmas Eve service, especially when asked by someone they trust. Those same studies reveal that dechurched individuals enjoy singing familiar Christmas carols. C24, short for Christmas 2024, is our opportunity to share the gospel with those in our community, both leading up to and on Christmas Eve. Invite them to join you at our 6:30 pm Christmas Eve worship service. Christmas Eve will be here before you know it—let's start reaching out now!

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS



1 Julie M. 17 Adeline H. 21 Scott S.
 6 Abby R. 18 Lee K. 22 Annie K.
 12 Paxton K. 21 Jerome B. 29 Cindy W.
 16 Joy K. 21 Pamela P. 30 Melissa S.
 16 Tom L.

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARY

17 Larry & Lois W.

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Join us for Bible Study in the entry at **6:30 pm** on **December 5!** It's an opportunity to read Scripture, discuss it, and see how it relates to our lives today. **All men are welcome**, no matter your age or previous Bible Study experience.

WOMEN'S DISCIPLESHIP GROUP

We'll gather on Thursday, **December 5** at **6:30 pm** in the west end of the church's lower level. **All women are invited!**

Congrats Chili Cook-off Winners: Nick, Losha, and Jacob

