



# The Lutheran Church of Our Saviour

## The Communicator—December 2024

From The Desk of Pastor Wilck



### What is Advent?

Advent is a four-week season dedicated to reflective preparation for the arrival, "advent," of Jesus Christ's Nativity at Christmastime as well and Christ's expected return in the Second Coming. During this important event on the church calendar, each week of Advent focuses on a different theme - hope, peace, joy, and love. Christians from all denominations and backgrounds celebrate Advent in different ways but all focus on the anticipation of waiting for the arrival of Jesus.



"The celebration of Advent is possible only to those who are troubled in soul, who know themselves to be poor and imperfect, and who look forward to something greater to come." ~ Dietrich Bonhoeffer

"God of hope, I look to you with an open heart and yearning spirit. During this Advent season, I will keep alert and awake, listening for your word and keeping to your precepts. My hope is in you." ~ Matthew Kelly

"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Isaiah 7:14

### What Does Advent Mean?

In Christianity, Advent refers to the period of four weeks leading up to Christmas. It begins on the Sunday closest to November 30 (St. Andrew's Day) and ends on December 24. It is a time of anticipation and preparation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ on Christmas Day.

Some people may know that the Advent season focuses on expectation and think it serves as an anticipation of Christ's birth in the season leading up to Christmas. This is part of the story, but there's more to Advent.



The word, "Advent," is derived from the Latin word *adventus*, which means, "coming," or "arrival," which translates to the Greek word *parousia*. Scholars believe that during the 4th and 5th centuries in Spain and Gaul, Advent was a season of preparation for the baptism of new Christians at the January feast of Epiphany, the celebration of God's incarnation represented by the visit of the Magi to the baby Jesus (Matthew 2:1), his baptism in the Jordan River by John the Baptist (John 1:29), and his first miracle at Cana (John 2:1). During this season of preparation, Christians would spend 40 days in penance, prayer, and fasting to prepare for this celebration; originally, there was little connection between Advent and Christmas.

## From The Desk of Pastor Wilck, cont.



By the 6th century, however, Roman Christians had tied Advent to the coming of Christ. But the, “coming,” they had in mind was not Christ’s first coming in the manger in Bethlehem, but his second coming in the clouds as the judge of the world. The Advent season was not explicitly linked to Christ’s first coming at Christmas until the Middle Ages.

### What Does Advent Symbolize?

Advent symbolizes the church's present situation in these “last days” (Acts 2:17, Hebrews 1:2) as God’s people wait for the return of Christ in glory to consummate his eternal kingdom. The church is in a similar situation to Israel at the end of the Old Testament: in exile, waiting and hoping in prayerful expectation for the coming of the Messiah. Israel looked back to God’s past gracious actions on their behalf in leading them out of Egypt in the Exodus, and on this basis, they called for God once again to act for them. In the same way, the church, during Advent, looks back upon Christ’s coming in celebration while at the same time looking forward in eager anticipation to the coming of Christ’s kingdom when he returns for his people.

In this light, the Advent hymn “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” perfectly represents the church’s cry during the Advent season:

**O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here  
Until the Son of God appears.  
Rejoice! Rejoice!**

While Israel would have sung the song in expectation of Christ’s first coming, the church now sings the song to commemorate the first coming and expects the second coming in the future.

*Joachim Wilck*

## Financial Report *submitted by Deb Ciccone*

Financial Report as of the 10/31/24

Below is a financial update as of the end of October (83% of the way through the year). As you can see our income year to date (YTD) continues to be ahead of budget, while our expenses are slightly lower than our forecasted budget.

	October Actual	YTD Actual	YTD as a % of Annual Budget
Income	\$23,706.89	\$222,442.03	96%
Expense	\$21,051.84	\$213,104.39	78%
Net Income	\$ 2,655.05	\$9,337.64	

If you have any questions, please contact me,

Respectfully,

Deb Ciccone

Treasurer

## The Church Grapevine

*information provided by members of the church*

“They have nothing!” Ann Seppa had just returned with Ed Jarvis from visiting Maggie’s place. In the past, quite a few churches were involved and supported Maggie’s Place for their annual Thanksgiving Dinner, served the Friday before. This year was different. Due to Maggie’s poor health and a breakdown of other leadership support, it seems many of the churches, including our neighbors at Trinity Emmanuel Lutheran church were not going to be supporting Maggie’s dinner in the same way. The easiest option would have been to follow the lead of these other churches and advise Maggie to cancel. But quitting is not Ann Seppa’s style, and neither is it Ed Jarvis or Jerry Stich or Elton Schulz’s style.



Soon Deb Ciccone arrived in a rain storm with a trunk full of pies and cookies she had picked up at Costco. Eventually all food items that had been coming into the church for several days were loaded and the crew headed off to Maggie’s to prepare for the next days dinner. How did it turn out? Well, you will have to ask one of them the next time you see them, or wait for the next edition of the Communicator to find out.



There is an awful lot of giving going on here! Did you know we raised over \$3000 for Hurricane Relief! Wow! As you walk through the Narthex you can see evidence of the generosity of the members of Our Saviour. The Angel Tree which Jerry set up is bare. All the tags have been picked up and many bags of gifts already surround the base of the tree and are ready to be delivered to Coldwater House for Women and Children. So far people are following the directions of not wrapping the gifts, but putting them in a gift bag instead, along with the ID tag. You may notice there are blank envelopes next to the tree for last minute cash or check donations. Fortunately there is still some time to contribute as the deadline is December 15th.

PB&J Sign up sheets are on the Narthex table and many have signed up to continue the mission to make 200 sandwiches a month. The next opportunity for this type of giving is December 12th at 9:30 a.m. Our Cornucopia food drive has been ongoing and we will continue to collect food till December 8th. The women of WELCA pitched in and provided gift cards to thankful families. Following the collection of food items, we will deliver them to St. Theodore’s Food Pantry. The need is great this year. Our church receives phone calls daily with struggling people looking to find sources of food help. The increases in the recent immigrant influx has put additional strains on food pantries and other services in our area. Just yesterday a family from Cuba arrived at our door, having just come over the border from Mexico. They were bused to Rochester and had lost the paper telling them the address of where to go for help. The only info they had was that they thought it said “Lutheran.” Google had sent them here to Our Saviour. →

Using our cell phone to translate we tried to help figure out where they should go, but ultimately, they thanked us and headed out to the bus stop pulling their suitcases behind them. We pray they found their way... The need certainly is great.



Speaking of WELCA, what a busy November they had! Election Day was a zoo here at the church. There was quite a good turnout for Voting and the ladies put out quite a spread for the Annual Election Day Soup and Bake Sale. Many voters took advantage of the delicious pulled pork sandwiches and wide ranging soup selection, not to mention all the wonderful cookies, cakes and other confectionaries. There were plenty of smiles from the voters, many of which came to vote on their lunch break and were grateful to purchase something to eat. And the women were grateful too, having raised \$866 through this effort and with sponsorship from Thrivent for whom we are grateful.

After all that hard work, WELCA will now turn to celebration as they gather at the church on December 10th at 11:30 a.m. for their annual Christmas Luncheon. Secret Pals will be revealed and new ones picked for the coming year. Lunch will be provided, but ladies can also bring a dessert or snack to



Many groups are busy preparing for the Advent and Christmas Season. The Altar Guild has a lot to get ready. Jennifer Large submitted her order to stock up on candle oil. Cheryl Stone took an inventory of wafers and wine and provided the Finance Committee with her projected budget needs for 2025. On December 7th at 9:30 a.m. she and the other members of the Guild will gather in the Narthex to prepare for Christmas. There is polishing to be done, candles to be prepared and many other tasks to complete. The church relies on them to make sure we have everything we need to prepare for Christ's coming at Christmas... and they can always use more help, if you have some time on your hands.



Are we getting the word out? Well, we are trying. In an effort to improve communications inside and outside the church, the Council voted to create a new Communications Committee. For the last many years monies have been budgeted for mass media. Much of these funds were spent advertising for our services in the Penny Saver. It was determined by the committee that this was not the most effective way to let the outside world know who we are. With limited resources the decision was made to focus on making the church look festive and beautiful from the road for the Advent/Christmas Season. Christmas lights and a manger have been purchased and will be installed by Peyton Osterling and Conner Large, on the day after Thanksgiving. Future ideas of banners, more visible signage and how we might light our window from the inside are being discussed for 2025.



So...Our Saviour is giving and preparing in many ways. But we are also taking time to celebrate. Not only are the ladies of WELCA gathering for a Luncheon, but the Jubilees are holding their annual Christmas Luncheon too. The Luncheon will take place at Brook Lea Country Club again and Bob Newbury will once again lead us in festive Christmas Song. If you are free for Lunch on December 17th you should consider signing up. The cost is \$25 and menu information is available in our announcements and on the Narthex table.

It's time to break out the Advent hymns and get ready for the most musical season in the church. The choir has been busy preparing for Advent and Christmas. In particular, they are getting ready for the service of Lessons and Carols happening Sunday, December 8th at 4:00 p.m. The liturgy is changing with the season and so lots of new service music and hymns need to be learned. The musical changes that each season bring are refreshing and hopefully inspiring as well.

Our Saviour music program suffered a major setback in November. It happened on a Sunday morning. As the Bell Choir was playing the prelude, Lucas turned the Organ on to get ready to play the opening hymn. Suddenly through the array of speakers across the back of the church came the most horrible sound. The congregation gasped because it was so loud. Some thought it was just some feedback from the sound system but we didn't get off that easy. The main power supply and amplifier of the organ had just perished. The lights came on but no buttons worked and it made no sound.

Gary Shipe from Allen Organ is currently working on sourcing a replacement part for the organ, but at its present age of 60 years we will have to weigh whether or not it's worth it or not to fix. We will keep the congregation apprised of what we learn about that. In the meantime, we have used some of our special music funds to purchase an electric synthesizer keyboard which has the ability to provide sounds of many instruments for our worship experience.

November also brought some positive additions to the choir. Michael and Marvin Pao, two of our new teens from Africa, joined the choir and Michael has been practicing with his native drum and will soon collaborate on a piece of music with the choir. The church has also hired a new soprano section leader. Nadia Shaw is a high school senior from Greece, NY and a private voice student of our music director Jonathan Howell. You will soon be hearing her soaring voice helping to lift the choir to new heights. She is also preparing a special rendition of, "O Holy Night." to be sung on Christmas Eve. We are delighted to have her with us.



Have you noticed children running around! For years we have been praying for more families with children to attend church, and that is beginning to happen. God answers prayers. The word is getting out. The Sunday school teachers are working very hard to provide high quality religious education for our young people. Special activity days on the first Sunday of every month are continuing, and although Sunday School will be in recess on December 29th, the children will present a new church banner to the congregation on January 5th. Also, on December 8th, Diane Parke/Potter will have the children do some bell ringing before she heads off to the sunny shores of Hawaii.



And you don't have to be a kid to learn something at Our Saviour. Pastor Wilck is offering bible study on the Sundays of Advent which will cover the lessons of the day in depth. Pam Spencer continues to facilitate the Alpha Course, which is an excellent way to begin a conversation about our faith. If you know someone who is in the "search phase," of their faith journey, you should bring them to Alpha. The Christian Book and Movie club will meet in January, but now is the time to get a copy of the book "Lifemark," by Chris Favre. It deals with topics of faith, adoption and parenting.



## What is a QCD all about?

Taxpayers who are age 72 (prior to 12/31/22) have the option to transfer up to \$100,000 to charity tax-free each year. For those who turned 72 on or after 1/1/23, the minimum age for this tax free charity contribution is 73 years of age.

### What to do:

1. Contact their IRA trustee. The QCD is tax-free as long as distributions are paid directly from the IRA to an eligible charitable organization.
2. Distributions can be made electronically, directly to the charity, or by check payable to the charity.
3. An IRA distribution such as an electronic payment made directly to the IRA owner does not count as a QCD. Likewise, a check made payable to the IRA owner is not a QCD.
4. You do not have to itemize deductions to qualify for this benefit. The amount given to charity is reduced directly from taxable income when you file your taxes. The 1099-R that you receive from your IRA trustee includes the total required minimum distribution (RMD) including QCD's.
5. Like other IRA distributions, QCD's are shown on line 4 of Form 1040. If part or all of an IRA distribution is a QCD, enter the total amount of the IRA distribution on line 4a. Then, the amount of the taxable portion (total IRA distribution less QCD) is entered on line 4b. Enter "QCD" next to line 4b. This reporting information applies to 2022 taxes. Future years may have different rules or different lines on form 1040.
6. Make sure that you have a receipt. The receipt must state the date and amount of the contribution and indicate whether the donor received anything of value in return. (See Publication 526 available on IRS.gov. For more information about this topic, see IRS.gov, Publication 590-B.

If you have any questions, contact your tax professional. Tax preparation software such as TurboTax does a good job walking you through this topic.

## Birthdays & Anniversaries in December

Abigail Wiesmore—December 3

Becky Wiesmore—December 3

Sue Neal—December 4

Dick Ransom—December 4

Kevin Gear—December 6

Lance Strasser—December 6

Sharon Nazarian—December 7

Gerald Miller—December 8

Don Jermyn—December 9

Dr. Drew Emerson—December 11

Paul Hamblin—December 12

Danielle Gatto—December 14

Nancy Schwach—December 16

Kelly Cuff—December 18

Roger Wood—December 19

Stephanie Karcher—December 21

Linda Palmer—December 22

Elsie Roe—December 24

Jim Palmer—December 26

Bob Newbury—December 27

Yvonne Dougherty—December 28

Alice Crawford—December 31

John & Deb Macksamie—December 1st (40 years)

Jakob and Molly Witt—December 11 (3 years)

John & Joyce Tesch—December 15 (23 years)

David & Janeen Oliver—December 29 (12 years)

Arnold & Gail Boldt—December 31 (34 years)

# December at Saviour

Dec 2024 (Eastern Time - New York)

LCOS Rochester, Holidays in United States

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9am - Choir Practice 9:15am - Bible Study 9:15am - Sunday School 10am - Communion Service	2 5:30pm - Communications 6:30pm - Scouts BSA	3 10am - Bible Study	4 6:30pm - ALPHA COURSE	5 6:30pm - Bell Choir Practice	6 5:30pm - German School	7 9am - German School 9:30am - Christmas Altar Guild
8 Second Sunday of Advent 9am - Choir Practice 9:15am - Bible Study 9:15am - Sunday School 10am - Communion Service 11:15am - CLC Meeting	9 6:30pm - Scouts BSA	10 10am - Bible Study 11:30am - WELCA Christmas Party 6:30pm - Properties Committee	11 6:30pm - ALPHA COURSE	12 9:30am - PB & J Making @ 10:30am - Worship Committee 6:30pm - Bell Choir Practice	13 5:30pm - German School	14 9am - German School
15 Third Sunday of Advent 9am - Choir Practice 9:15am - Bible Study 9:15am - Sunday School 10am - Communion Service	16 6:30pm - Council Meeting 6:30pm - Scouts BSA	17 10am - Bible Study 12pm - Jubilee's Luncheon @	18 6:30pm - ALPHA COURSE	19 6:30pm - Bell Choir Practice	20 5:30pm - German School	21 9am - German School
22 Fourth Sunday of Advent 9am - Choir Practice 9:15am - Bible Study 9:15am - Sunday School 10am - Communion Service	23	24 Christmas Eve 4:30pm - Christmas Eve Service 10pm - Christmas Eve Service	25 Christmas Day	26	27	28
29 9am - Choir Practice 9:15am - Bible Study 10am - Communion Service	30	31 New Year's Eve	1 New Year's Day	2 6:30pm - Bell Choir Practice	3	4

REQUESTED  
CHANGE OF SERVICE

Lutheran Church of Our Saviour  
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## The Lutheran Church of Our Saviour— Communicator



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*Website: www.OurSaviourRochester.org*

The Reverend Joachim Wilck, Pastor

*A member congregation of the Upstate  
New York Synod Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America*

### Live Stream!!!!

Sunday's at 10:00 a.m.



**Live Streaming**

Go to our website and click the link.

[www.oursaviourrochester.org](http://www.oursaviourrochester.org)

Or copy or type this into your browser:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/  
UCZ97KCbyuuanQXPLPt53UOw/live](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZ97KCbyuuanQXPLPt53UOw/live)