



SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

DECEMBER 10, 2023

10:30 AM

Our Savior's Lutheran Church
359 North Leonard Street, West Salem, Wisconsin
608-786-0030 office@oursaviorswestsalem.org
www.oursaviorswestsalem.org

Pastor Jonathan M. Schmidt
Pastor Jean R. Schmidt



WELCOME TO WORSHIP! God gathers us through Word and Sacrament to celebrate God's presence and to receive God's gift of grace. God has made us his people through our baptism and keeps us close to him through the preaching of the word and God's presence in the bread and wine of Holy Communion. We give thanks today for the gift of faith God has planted in us, and we depart to be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

We extend a special **welcome** to those who are our guests. May God bless this time of worship for you as we are blessed by your presence. If you have no church home we invite you to join with us and consider Our Savior's as your church home. If you are not baptized and would like to talk about baptism as part of your faith journey, please speak with one of the pastors.

FELLOWSHIP PADS: We ask everyone to sign and pass the fellowship pad in the pew and return it to the rack when done.

OFFERING: No offering is collected during our worship this day; however, we do welcome your support of our ministries and thank you for your gifts. Together we make a difference in the lives of others.

Offering plates are available as you leave the sanctuary. For online giving go to the church website: oursaviorswestsalem.org/giving. Or text your gift amount to 608-471-7267 and follow the instructions on the response you receive. Or use the QR Code to the right.

Thank you for your generosity and support of our work together.



Order of Worship

*Please stand as you are able

PRELUDE

WELCOME

***READING** 2 Peter 3:8-15a

⁸Do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day. ⁹The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance. ¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a loud noise, and the elements will be dissolved with fire, and the earth and everything that is done on it will be disclosed. ¹¹Since all these things are to be dissolved in this way, what sort of persons ought you to be in leading lives of holiness and godliness, ¹²waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set ablaze and dissolved, and the elements will melt with fire? ¹³But, in accordance with his promise, we wait for new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home. ¹⁴Therefore, beloved, while you are waiting for these things, strive to be found by him at peace, without spot or blemish; ^{15a}and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation.

***LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES**

Praise to you, O God, who gives us courage to start again. You fasten righteousness around your waist and baptize with the Holy Spirit's fire. Bless us as we mirror your mighty fire in these simple flames, and teach us to mirror your justice in the paths we prepare. We ask that peace abound, until none hurt or destroy over all the earth.

Amen.

**Light two candles to watch for Messiah:
let the light banish darkness.
He shall feed the flock like a shepherd,
gently lead them homeward.**

READING Isaiah 40:1-11

¹Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. ²Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins. ³A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. ⁵Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken." ⁶A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. ⁷The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people are grass. ⁸The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand forever. ⁹Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!" ¹⁰See, the Lord GOD comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. ¹¹He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

SUNDAY SCHOOL PROGRAM "Follow the Star"

***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**

P: With hope and expectation, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all who await God's day of restoration.

*(After a brief silence...The **congregation** is invited to read aloud individually the prayer petitions as the spirit moves them. If more than one person reads the petition, all the better!)*

Send forth your faithful people with words of promise and forgiveness. Teach your church here at Our Savior's and at our living faith partners at Bethany Mauston, to be bold in revealing your good news in word and in deed. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Reveal your majesty in mountain peaks, flowing rivers, and blossoming wilderness roads. Heal the earth where it longs for renewal. Bring wholeness to the earth and all its creatures. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Turn the hearts of the nations toward righteousness and peace. Increase cooperation for justice between countries, especially Ukraine and Russia, and Israel and Hamas; political parties, and diplomatic leaders. In times of prosperity, direct leaders to be generous for the sake of all. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Comfort your people with tender words of love and healing. Surround all who are grieving, all who know depression or anxiety; or all who feel lonely, forgotten, or who are homebound especially Sylvia and Errol. Be a steadfast presence when all else feels uncertain. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Grant holy patience to all who are waiting this season. Give hope to those seeking employment. Bring reassurance to people awaiting new diagnoses or treatments. Protect expectant parents. Watch with those who keep bedside vigil. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Send your love, and watch over your servants to be faithful disciples of Jesus. Be with our confirmation students, especially Alexis, Arianna, and Isaiah as they seek to grow in their discipleship, and guide their families that together they may reflect your love and grace. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

With you a thousand years is like a day. Bless the memory of the saints from ages past and the anticipation of saints yet to be born. Inspire us to live with faith as we await your new heaven and new earth. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

P: Listen to these and all our prayers, O God of hosts, and restore us with your great and everlasting mercy. **Amen.**

***PEACE**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
And also with you.

(Please share a sign of peace with those around you.)

MISSION MOMENT

***GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed our 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 call your people to cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the paschal feast, that renewed in the gift of baptism, we may come to the fullness of your grace.

***EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

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.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

***LORD'S PRAYER** page 112 (*in front of hymnal*)

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**

In this meal, righteousness and peace meet together. Come, take your place at the table.

HOLY COMMUNION *All who believe that our Lord Jesus Christ is truly present in the bread and wine of Holy Communion, bringing to us the gift of forgiveness and the promise of eternal life, are welcome to gather at the Lord's Table. Younger children are invited to come forward to receive a blessing.*

Both wine and grape juice are available – grape juice glasses are circled in purple. Gluten free wafers are also available.

COMMUNION HYMN "Prepare the Royal Highway" **#264**

***POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

Generous God, in bread and cup you have revealed your glory for all people to see together. Nourished by this meal, send us out to proclaim your good news of liberation and release, brought to birth in Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

***SENDING OF HOME COMMUNION**

*BLESSING

The God of peace bless you, the love of Christ sustain you in hope, and the anointing of the Spirit remain upon you now and forever. **Amen.**

*HYMN "On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry" #249



1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an - nounc - es
2 Then cleansed be ev - 'ry life from sin; make straight the
3 We hail you as our Sav - ior, Lord, our ref - uge
4 Stretch forth your hand, our health re - store, and make us
5 All praise to you, e - ter - nal Son, whose ad - vent



that the Lord is nigh; a - wake and heark - en,
way for God with - in, and let us all our
and our great re - ward; with - out your grace we
rise to fall no more; oh, let your face up -
has our free - dom won, whom with the Fa - ther



for he brings glad tid - ings of the King of kings!
hearts pre - pare for Christ to come and en - ter there.
waste a - way like flow'rs that with - er and de - cay.
on us shine and fill the world with love di - vine.
we a - dore, and Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er - more.

*DISMISSAL *(Done from the back of the church)*

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

POSTLUDE

OUR SAVIOR'S WORSHIP TEAM

www.oursaviorswestsalem.org

Pastor Jonathan Schmidt, Senior Pastor 612-0217

Email: pastorjon@oursaviorswestsalem.org

Pastor Jean Schmidt, Associate Pastor 612-0217

Email: pastorjean@oursaviorswestsalem.org

Linda Berg, Organist/Choir Accompanist/Director of Music

Email: linda@oursaviorswestsalem.org

Laurie Noelke, Handbell Choir Director/Assistant Worship Musician

Eric Sorenson, Senior Choir Director

CARD MINISTRY - Please be sure to sign the cards for this week's shut-ins, Sylvia Hetland and Errol Kindschy. The cards are on the table by the Pre-K/K classroom.

WORSHIP LEADERS

10:30 a.m.
Worship Assistant Isaac Arentz
Communion Assistant Carolyn Karl
Welcoming Team Erin Hebrink Family
Home Communion Carolyn Karl
Altar Guild for December Pam Gresens

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP - A time for fellowship and treats between services on Sundays! Please sign up to bring treats or to serve what others have provided.

CONFIRMATION AFTER SCHOOL & CLASS

Wednesday, December 13
3:30 pm - After School
6 pm - 6 Confirmation Class
6 pm - 7 Confirmation Class
7 pm - 8 Confirmation Class
7 pm - 9 Confirmation Class

EGGNOG & CAROLS - December 10 - 6 PM @ Hunters.

SENIOR CONNECTION - December 12 @Linda's Bakery.

CHRISTMAS CANTATA "Joy" December 17 - Join us as the Senior Choir presents the musical cantata "Joy!" This work tells the story of Christ's birth through a variety of styles based on both familiar Christmas carols and original pieces.

"ADVENTING" with the people of God - at St. Teresa (210 E. Hamlin St.)
- December 20 @ 7 PM. We join with St Teresa's and the Presbyterian Church of West Salem to edge even closer to the manger at Bethlehem. Christmas cookies, hot chocolate, and cider to follow.

CHECK IT OUT AND GIVE IT A TRY!



If you play piano and want to try your Christmas piano music on the organ, come up to the balcony Sunday, December 17 after the 10:30 service and let's hear what it sounds like! Linda will be there to help you. All ages welcome.



THANK YOU ...

We thank ALL of our Sunday School children for participating in the program today!

Along with:

Page – Kenzie Knebes
King Herod – Trenton Stellick
Chief Priest 1 – Bailey Baganz
Chief Priest 2 – Brynnleigh Baganz
Melchior – Mabel Sjoquist
Balthazar – Makynlee Crankshaw
Gaspar – Addyson Knebes
Mary – Leah Gross
Joseph – Declan Gilberts
Angel soloist – Alise Jothen

Special thank you –

Music leaders – Linda Berg and Naoko Giblin
Tech support – Dean Olson

And ... our awesome Sunday School teachers for helping teach the children their songs and lines, and helping keep things organized – Jen Evenson, Audrey Schlifer, Jessalyn Hickey, Amanda Vick, Lindsey Gilberts, Stacey Sjoquist, and Eric Iliff

And ... to our parents and family members for helping the children practice their lines and music

Jon Iliff chose to organize and direct this year's Sunday School Christmas program for his High School Senior Exit Project. We thank Jon for wanting to do this and for all of his hard work making it happen! Great job, Jon!!

SCRIP CARDS AVAILABLE

Scrip cards make great gifts and help support Our Savior's Sugar Creek Bible Camp Camperships and World Hunger!

Culver's, Kwik Trip, Kwik Trip car wash, Woodman's.

Available after worship services and in the office during the week.



KWIK TRIP

WOODMAN'S

HUNGRY JAR OFFERING FOR DECEMBER – SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE

Across the US, too many kids go without a bed—or even a pillow—to sleep on. These children end up sleeping on couches, blankets, and even floors, which has adverse effects on their physical and mental health. All children deserve a safe, comfortable place to lay their heads. Sleep in Heavenly Peace (SHP) is a national organization with local chapters – one right here in LaCrosse. They are a group of volunteers dedicated to building, assembling and delivering top-notch bunk beds free of charge to children and families in need.

Each bed that SHP delivers to a child sleeping on the floor offers comfort and safety. Oftentimes, the kids who get their beds have never owned a bed of their own. Every kid deserves a good night's rest. \$250 will sponsor a bed and mattress, along with a pillow, sheet set, and comforter. Our gifts make sure kiddos have a comfy place to lay their heads at night.

THANK YOU! To those who participated in our annual tree and church decorating this year – Jeff & Melissa Haldeman, Clara Cody & Weston & Amara, Carla Burkhardt, Lydia Jochen, Ty, Candice, Emelia, Addy, & Ellie Tlustosch, Jason & Nate Stefferud. Thanks to Jon & Lynnette Labus for once again hand-picking beautiful Christmas trees that perfectly fit our sanctuary.



CHRISTMAS EVE

*We are there, at the manger,
worshiping the child!*

1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 10 PM

Music ... Holy Communion ... Candlelight and the Christmas Gospel



YouTube (and maybe Livestream?) Worship

*Recording of the 3:30 PM
Christmas Eve worship
posted on web site by 7 PM*

Access video on home page of web site

Watch home page for Livestreaming – we hope to be "live" by Christmas Eve



CHRISTMAS DAY

Monday, December 25 + 10 AM

Worship with Holy Communion

*In the light of day rejoice as we continue to celebrate
the wonder of the newborn Christ!*