



MERRY CHRISTMAS & HAPPY NEW YEAR

JESUS' FAMILY TREE IS DIFFERENT

How do you decorate your Christmas tree? What are some of the favorite memories from Christmas tree decorations? As a child, among our many decorations on the tree, our family had the manger scene near our Christmas tree. Kim and I practice that still to this day. One of the famous Bible passages takes about Jesus family lineage, or His family tree.

Have you ever looked into your family lineage or family tree? It can bring some interesting discoveries. It seems that if you look back far enough, everybody can find a king or a martyr or someone who came over on the Mayflower. Kim and I were searching a little bit of our family trees and found that our families actually owned the same small castle just 200 years apart from each other. Also the Scottish clans we came from have similar colors and patterns. It even appears that Kim is possibly related to the real King Duncan of which the fictions King Duncan in Shakespeare's Macbeth is based on. Finding somebody great or famous in your family tree is exciting and can validate you as someone important too. That, of course, is why Luke reminds us that Jesus' family was of the line of David (Luke 2:4).

Jesus' place in his family tree is different, though. Most of us feel validated by someone great who came before us. But David is actually validated by the one who came many generations after him. David—a mighty warrior, king, inspired poet, a man about whom a couple books of the Bible are written, for whom both a great city and a little town are known—is nevertheless actually remembered only because of the tiny baby born Christ Day. So now when we do look back, we look no further. Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection for us validates us before the Throne of God and gives us the greatest gift of Eternal Life.



*Merry Christmas,
Pastor Love*



DECEMBER 2024

Sunday, December 1

First Sunday in Advent

8:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion at St. John's

10:15 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion at Faith

Wednesday, December 4

Midweek Advent I

6:30 p.m. Worship with Holy Communion at Faith

Sunday, December 8

Second Sunday in Advent

8:30 a.m. Worship at St. John's

10:15 a.m. Worship at Faith

Wednesday, December 11

Midweek Advent II

6:30 p.m. Worship at Faith

Sunday, December 15

Third Sunday in Advent

8:30 a.m. Children's Christmas Program and Worship at St. John's

10:15 a.m. Children's Christmas Program and Worship at Faith

Wednesday, December 18

Midweek Advent III

6:30 p.m. Worship at Faith

Sunday, December 22

Fourth Sunday in Advent

8:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion at St. John's

10:15 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion at Faith

Tuesday, December 24

Christmas Eve

4:00 p.m. Candlelight Worship at St. John's

7:00 p.m. Candlelight Worship at Faith

Wednesday, December 25

Christmas Day

8:30 a.m. Worship at St. John's

10:15 a.m. Worship at Faith

Sunday, December 29

First Sunday after Christmas

8:30 a.m. Worship at St. John's

10:15 a.m. Worship at Faith

Monday, December 30

6:30 p.m. Worship at Faith



Advent Series 2024

His Name Shall Be Called

MIDWEEK OF ADVENT 1 *Wonderful Counselor*

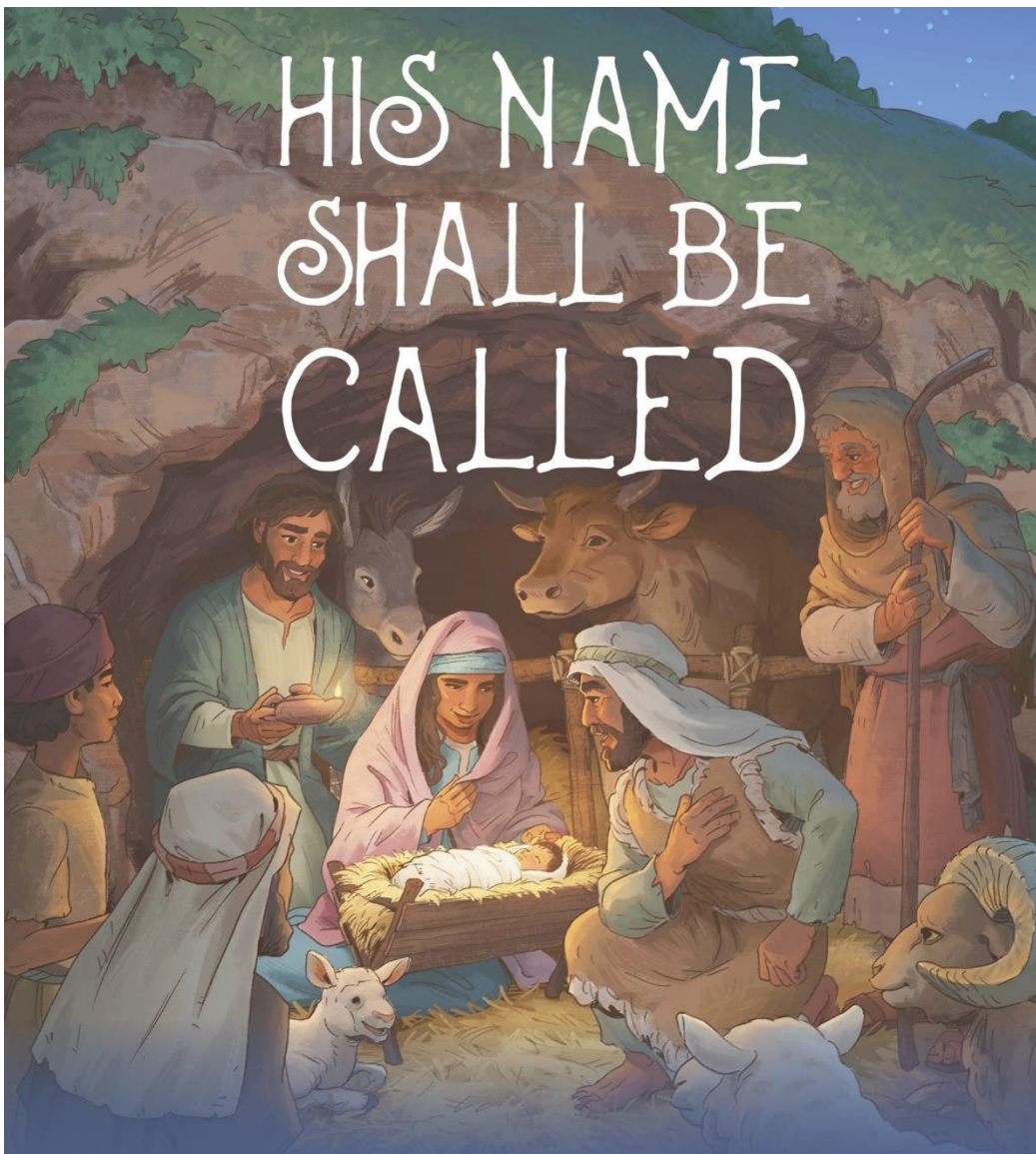
MIDWEEK OF ADVENT 2 *Mighty God*

MIDWEEK OF ADVENT 3 *Everlasting Father*

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD *Prince of Peace*

During the season of Advent, we prepare to celebrate the birth of God's Son, who was given the name Jesus—a Hebrew name that means "God saves." In addition to His earthly name, Holy Scripture calls Jesus by various titles which describe something about His person or work. In this year's Advent series, we are going to examine four

titles given to Jesus in Isaiah 9:6. Those titles are "Wonderful Counselor," "Mighty God," "Everlasting Father," and "Prince of Peace." We will learn how each of these titles describes something about who Jesus is and what He did for our salvation.



*Children's
Christmas
Program*

Sunday,
December 15

St. John's
8:30 a.m.
Faith 10:15 a.m.

From LCMS Stewardship Ministry

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.





FAITH BIRTHDAYS

December 7	Dorothy Woller
December 8	Caleb Ney Dawson Schade
December 9	McKenzie Wicke
December 10	Mark Porath
December 11	Emma Hein Andrew Pfaff Russell Stogbauer
December 12	Cole Calmes
December 16	Jerome Buch Sally Hannemann Carol Wegner
December 18	Angelique Garvin
December 19	Amber Slozes William Wayda
December 20	Seth Dux Travis Klug Laurie Goetsch
December 21	Cade Rajek
December 26	Robert Duwe Mary Olsen
December 27	Jensen Olson
December 28	Rebecca Schulz George Wood Jr.
December 29	Sarah Blum Shane July Kim Young
December 30	Carol Wakely
December 31	Michael Stur

ST. JOHN'S BIRTHDAYS

December 2	Barb Czech
December 4	Kathy Sturm Carol Kleinschmidt
December 10	Lori Baumann
December 13	Zack Jahnke
December 20	Wallace Emmerich
December 27	Tanner Hoffman
December 30	Dan Sturm

FAITH ANNIVERSARIES

December 3	Leon & Beth Bartelt 41 years
December 9	Gene & Karen Pagel 57 years
December 11	Robert & Debbie Kufahl 43 years
December 14	Alan & Sheila Klug 40 years
December 28	Edward & Connie Stiver 56 years
December 31	Harold and Phyllis Zocher Woller 16 years

ST. JOHN'S ANNIVERSARIES

December 1	Randy & Lisa Stack 12 years
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A Special Gift for
the New Addition
in memory of
LYDIA GOETSCH
from Jim Goetsch
and the Goetsch
family



PANCAKE DINNER & BAKE SALE

Over \$3400.00 was
raised at this year's
annual Pancake

Dinner and Bake Sale in October.
283 meals were served including more
than 30 carryouts.

December 2024 Elder, Usher, Greeter, Scrip Schedule

Sunday, December 1 10:15 a.m.

Elders Mike Beilke, Kyle Young
 Ushers Bob and Bernice Porath
 Greeter Duane Grunenwald
 Scrip Bernice Porath

Sunday, December 8 10:15 a.m.

Elders Rodney Dahlke, Randy Braatz
 Ushers Cindy Braatz, Carol Hein
 Greeter Duane Grunenwald
 Scrip Cindy Braatz

Sunday, December 15 10:15 a.m..

Ushers Mark Porath, Kyle Young
 Elders LeRoy Laabs, Carol Hein
 Greeter Sandy Laabs
 Scrip Cindy Krenz

Sunday, December 22 10:15 a.m.

Elders Mike Beilke, Mark Porath
 Ushers Brian and Lynn Klug
 Greeter Duane Grunenwald
 Scrip Lynn Klug

Wednesday, December 25 10:15 a.m.

Elders Jason Westfall, Rodney Dahlke
 Ushers Brian and Lynn Klug
 Greeter Duane Grunenwald
 Scrip Lynn Klug

Sunday, December 29 10:15 a.m.

Elders Randy Braatz, Kyle Young
 Ushers Cindy Braatz, LeRoy Laabs
 Greeter Sandy Laabs
 Scrip Cindy Braatz

Sunday, January 5 10:15 a.m.

p.m.
 Elders Lee Pfaff, Randy Braatz
 Ushers Cindy Braatz, Carol Hein
 Greeter Duane Grunenwald
 Scrip Cindy Braatz

Wednesday, December 4 6:30 p.m.

Elders Jim Beilke, Lee Pfaff
 Usher Chris Stogbauer, Gene Mootz
 Greeter LuAnn Kleinschmidt
 Scrip Debbie Stogbauer

Wednesday, December 11 6:30 p.m.

Elders Joe Heisinger, Jason Westfall
 Usher Ed Stiver, Amanda Heisinger
 Greeter Ed Stiver
 Scrip Debbie Stogbauer

Wednesday, December 18 6:30 p.m.

Elders Rodney Dahlke, Lee Pfaff
 Ushers Keith Wendt, Gene Mootz
 Greeter Keith Wendt
 Scrip Debbie Stogbauer

Tuesday, December 24 7:00 p.m.

Elders Jim Beilke, Joe Heisinger
 Ushers Amanda Heisinger, Cindy Braatz
 Greeter Amanda Heisinger
 Scrip Cindy Braatz

HOLY COMMUNION

Sunday, December 1 10:15 a.m.
 Wednesday, December 4 6:30 p.m.
 Sunday, December 22 10:15 a.m..
 Sunday, January 5 10:15 a.m.
 Monday, January 6 6:30 p.m.

Monday, December 30 6:30 p.m.

Elders Mike Beilke, Rodney Dahlke
 Usher Chris Stogbauer
 Greeter Chris Stogbauer
 Scrip Debbie Stogbauer

Monday, January 6 6:30

Elders Jim Beilke, Jason Westfall
 Usher Ed Stiver
 Greeter Ed Stiver
 Scrip Debbie Stogbauer

ELDERS

Rodney Dahlke, chairman Randy Braatz, secretary
 Joe Heisinger, Mike Beilke, Lee Pfaff,
 Mark Porath, Jason Westfall,
 Keith Wendt, Kyle Young



Faith Lutheran Church

15425 South County Road K

Merrill, WI 54452

Church e-mail: faithmerrillwi@gmail.com

Church website: faithlutheranmerrill.com

Pastor Donald Love

Office Phone 715-536-5443

Home Phone 715-722-0540

Cell Phone 1-815-922-0397

Pastor's Office Hours

Mon. and Tues: Home

Wednesday: Faith

Thursday: St. John's

Church Office Hours

Tues. and Thurs. 9 a.m.-12 noon

Mon., Wed., and Fri. varies

Emergency Contacts

Terry Seidler 715-536-9742 (home)

715-203-5733 (cell)

ALTAR GUILD DECEMBER SCHEDULE

Through December 2 Jeri Raddatz and Sandy Laabs

December 3-16 Phyllis Buch and Deb Stogbauer

December 17-30 Gene and Karen Pagel

December 31 – January 13 Chris Pfaff and Phyllis Beilke

December 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat																										
1 9:15 a.m. Sunday School 10:15 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion 11:15 a.m. Bible Class	2	3	4 5:30 p.m. Confirmation Class 5:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal 6:30 p.m. Advent Worship with Holy Communion	5	6	7																										
8 9:15 a.m. Sunday School 10:15 a.m. Worship 11:15 a.m. Bible Class 4:30 p.m. ISI at Bruce Pfginsten's	9 6:30 p.m. Church Council	10	11 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. AbleLight 5:30 p.m. Confirmation Class 5:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal 6:30 p.m. Advent Worship	12	13	14 3:00 p.m. Women of Faith December Activity Lyric Choir at Presbyterian Church, Wausau																										
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CHRISTMAS CAROLING



Lunch will be served right after worship service at Faith followed by caroling to shut-ins on

Sunday, December 15.

Come along and help share the Christmas spirit. Bring a friend!



Gifts for children: Tags are available at Faith. Gifts need to be returned by

Sunday, December 15. For information, contact Bonnie Grueneberg at 715-613-0003 or e-mail at bkg9005@gmail.com



CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR PINE CREST RESIDENTS

Pine Crest is asking for donation of Christmas presents and/or money which allows Pine Crest to give a gift to each resident. Items should be dropped off by Sunday, December 8 at Faith. A list of items can be found on the Scrip table in the back of church.



Week of December 1, 2024 **Revelation 1:7-8** Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him, and all tribes of the earth will wail on account of him. Even so. Amen. "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

Week of December 8, 2024 **Philippians 4:6-7** Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Week of December 15, 2024 **Philippians 4:4-5** Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand.

Week of December 22, 2024 **John 1:1-3** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.

Week of December 29, 2024

Matthew 1:21 You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.



St. John's Lutheran Church

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715-536-1810

Church e-mail: stjohns486@gmail.com

Pastor Donald Love

Office Phone 715-536-5443

Home Phone 715-722-0540

Cell Phone 1-815-922-0397

E-mail

church7663@sbcglobal.net

Pastor's Office Hours

Mon. & Tues. Home

Wednesday Faith

Thursday St. John's

Friday Off (Family Day)

Elders

Jeremy Fromm 715-574-2003

Don Gille 715-573-8197

Mark Czech 715-409-9174

Mike Schultz 715-539-0995

Christian Day Care

Patti Beilke 715-539-8120

Elder of the Month

Bob Burish 715-573-7078

Setting the Lord's Table

Joy Free

December 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 8:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion <i>Sunday School during Sermon</i>	2	3	4 5:30 p.m. Confirmation Class at Faith 6:30 p.m. Advent Worship with Holy Communion at Faith	5	6	7
8 8:30 a.m. Worship <i>Sunday School during Sermon</i> 4:30 p.m. ISI at Bruve Pfingsten's	9	10 6:00 p.m. Council Meeting 7:00 p.m. Elders' Meeting	11 5:30 p.m. Confirmation Class at Faith 6:30 p.m. Advent Worship at Faith	12	13	14
15 CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM 8:30 a.m. Worship 1:00 p.m. Caroling Meet at Faith	16	17	18 5:30 p.m. Confirmation Class at Faith 6:30 p.m. Advent Worship at Faith	19	20	21
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THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

Pray For Us Calendar

ADVENT: THE SECOND COMING — DECEMBER 1-15

Advent means coming. We anticipate the promised return of Christ as the judge of the world. We look with hope to the day of the resurrection of all flesh, when those who believe in Christ will rise to everlasting life.

The Church waits for the Second Coming in repentance, hope and faith. For the following, we pray "Lord, have mercy."

1. For hearts that imitate the generosity and graciousness of Jesus. Pray that God's people would be eager to show forth the love of God through their good works for their neighbor.
2. That the Lord would preserve His Word and Sacraments in our midst, so that we may be kept strong in the one, true faith until Christ's return.
3. That the people of God would be faithful in their attendance of the Divine Service, where God

strengthens our faith toward Him and our steadfast love for one another.

4. That all people would fear God and find hope in His gracious forgiveness through Christ.
5. For all who do not believe in Jesus, that they might hear the Gospel and believe.
6. For all Christians, that we might repent of our sins and prepare for Christ's return.
7. For steadfast faith as the world writhes and groans in anticipation of the day of judgment.

8. For the ministers of the Word, that they would be faithful to their calling.

9. For the Church's missionaries, that through them the Word would go forth into the world with power.

10. For our government, that we might live peaceable and quiet lives.

11. For parents, that they would see their role in raising children as a holy calling from God in these last days.

12. For patience, as we wait for Christ's coming, that we might believe God is not slow in keeping promises, but patient.

13. For those who mourn the loss of loved ones, that the promise of the resurrection may be their hope.

14. For those who are dying, that they may entrust their whole lives unto God who keeps them.

15. For the coming of Christ. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.



ADVENT: THE INCARNATION — DECEMBER 16-31

During Advent we rejoice that God sent His Son to be the redeemer of the world. We gather with all Christians to celebrate this gracious gift from our heavenly Father. We trust in Christ alone as our Savior.

The Church gathers to thank God and ask for faith to trust in His gift of a Savior. For the following, we pray "Lord, have mercy."

16. For faithful reading of Old Testament, that all who read may see Jesus as the promised Savior.
17. For opportunities to proclaim the Gospel in this season. When the world is open to hearing the story of Christmas, may we be unashamed in our witness.
18. That all Christians might see the needs of their neighbor and love with the love of Christ.
19. For those who only attend worship at Christmas, that the Spirit would work faith through the hearing of the Word.
20. That we may believe the truth of the two natures of Christ.

21. For St. Thomas, apostle. That with him we might believe and confess that Jesus is Lord and God.

22. For faithful readings of the New Testament. That all the words of the apostles and evangelists may result in faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

23. For pastors who serve as Christ's under-shepherds in our midst. That they might proclaim the truth of the Good News of Christmas.

24. Rejoice that Jesus is Immanuel. God is with us to save us.

25. Rejoice in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We have seen His glory — glory as the only-begotten of God.

26. Thank God for St. Stephen, the first Christian



Martyr. That we might also serve God with our lives — thoughts, words and deeds.

27. That God would grant us faith to believe that He comes to us in the Means of Grace.

28. For all those who face depression and desperation at this time of year. That God's gift of love in Christ would gladden their hearts.

29. For all those who travel. That God would grant them safety.

30. That all would know and believe in the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus for the world's salvation.

31. That the Lord would abundantly bless the efforts of the LCMS and its partners in the coming years. That the Gospel is the primary focus of all that is done and proclaimed.

Congregations and individuals are invited to copy these pages for newsletters or other distribution. Download at lcms.org/prayforus or call 888-843-5267 to request a copy.

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH
MISSOURI SYNOD



Hope-Filled Advent Verses

December

Daily Reading Plan



- Day 1: Isaiah 40:3-5
- Day 2: Isaiah 40:9-11
- Day 3: Isaiah 52:7-10
- Day 4: Isaiah 7:10-14
- Day 5: Isaiah 11:1-5
- Day 6: Isaiah 9:6-7
- Day 7: Jeremiah 33:14-16
- Day 8: Micah 5:2
- Day 9: Zechariah 6:12-13
- Day 10: Psalm 89:1-4
- Day 11: John 3:16
- Day 12: Galatians 4:4-5
- Day 13: 2 Corinthians 9:15
- Day 14: John 1:1-8
- Day 15: John 1:9-18
- Day 16: Matthew 1:18-25
- Day 17: Luke 1:5-13
- Day 18: Luke 1:14-17
- Day 19: Luke 1:18-25
- Day 20: Luke 1:26-38
- Day 21: Luke 1:39-45
- Day 22: Luke 1:46-56
- Day 23: Luke 1:57-66
- Day 24: Luke 1:67-80
- Day 25: Luke 2:1-20
- Day 26: Matthew 2:1-2
- Day 27: Luke 2:21-35
- Day 28: Revelation 21:1-7
- Day 29: Isaiah 6:1-2
- Day 30: Isaiah 6:3
- Day 31: Revelation 19:1

Because of God's tender mercy, the morning light from heaven is about to break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide us to the path of peace. Luke 1:78-79

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
15425 South County Road K
Merrill, WI 54452

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JOY to the WORLD