A New Church Year — Advent Leads to Christmas, and on to Epiphany

It’s beginning to look a lot like . . . Advent? Yes, while Christmas decorations gleam in stores and on houses, and Christmas carols fill the air, the part of the church that follows the liturgical year (which includes Christ Church) says, “Wait!” Christmas is indeed coming, and we are preparing to joyfully celebrate it, but there’s a season with its own graces and charms first. Advent begins this Sunday. The nave is decked in blue for the season, stars and candlelight gimmer, and the songs are ones of eager anticipation. It’s a time of waiting and preparing—come, be a part of it for the next four Sundays at 9:30 a.m. December 3, 10, 17, and 24.

Then, when the sun sets on December 24, Christmas dawns, and we will celebrate that richly for twelve days. At the end of those days comes the festival of Epiphany, marking Christ’s coming for the whole world, followed by the Baptism of Our Lord and the time after Epiphany. In the darkest and coldest time of the year, the church welcomes light and warmth!

Here are highlights for these weeks; see the calendar for times and for many other activities.

• **Sunday, December 3** – We begin a new church year, with gospels mostly from Mark, represented by a winged lion.

• **Wednesday, December 6** – The commemoration of St. Nicholas. Worship and lunch beginning at 11:30 in the morning, and the evening supper and worship at 6:00 and 7:00 will feature kid-friendly food and gifts in the spirit of the true St. Nick.

• **Sunday, December 10** – After worship, we stay for Sunday school and, for adults, an important congregation meeting to pass a budget and elect new officers and council members.

• **Monday, December 25** – On Christmas morning at 10:00, Christ Church celebrates a very special service to welcome the Word made flesh. And we all gather around the table for communion.

During coffee this Sunday we will celebrate Pastor Carlson’s 35th anniversary of ordination with special treats.

• **Wednesday, December 13** – This is the day of St. Lucy (or Lucia), which has many traditions around the theme of light. Come and learn—worship at 11:30, lunch at noon. And in the evening, enjoy child-welcoming food and activities at 6:00 and 7:00.

• **Sunday, December 17** – We light three candles on the Advent wreath and then, after worship, offer a peek ahead with the annual Intergenerational Pickup Christmas Pageant.

• **Sunday, December 24** – This year, the fourth Sunday of Advent falls on the 24th, so we will offer a worship service at 9:30 a.m. as usual. Then at 5:00 p.m. we’ll gather for carols, the beloved Christmas story, and candlelight. This year’s Christmas Eve service will also include the church’s version of a celebration feast, the meal of holy communion.

• **Monday, December 25** – On Christmas morning at 10:00, Christ Church celebrates a very special service to welcome the Word made flesh. And we all gather around the table for communion.

• **Sunday, January 7** – The Baptism of Our Lord starts off the time after Epiphany, and with it the return of Sunday school and forums.

• **Saturday, January 6** – Our annual Epiphany party returns, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. See page 6.

• **Sunday, January 7** – The Baptism of Our Lord starts off the time after Epiphany, and with it the return of Sunday school and forums.
December & January Birthdays

December
12/2 Traci Boser
12/3 Isis Faulk
12/5 Clayton Jelinek
12/7 Mary Brown
12/8 Jeremy Gustafson
12/14 Nate Perbix
12/15 Cheryl Leuning
12/20 Marni Schmidt
12/21 James Bartsch
12/29 Cathy Sieving
12/30 Del Kniebel
1/2 Ray Peters
1/3 Nick Goeddard

January
1/4 LeAnn (Bergquist) Marudas
1/6 Evelyn Wermager
1/10 Meyer Schoenike
1/11 Alayna Young
1/12 Nora Katz
1/16 Stephanie Wieland
1/18 Amanda Jenkins-Buegel
1/19 Micah Buckley-Farlee
1/20 Daniel Holmgren
1/21 John Christianson
1/25 Kylie Tindell
1/26 Caleb Jenkins-Buegel

Helping Hands

... for December
Aaron Amosson & Jodi McGuire
Bob Anderson & John Schmidt
Jason Bergquist
Sarah Brunsvold & Jeff Weispfenning
Ernie Caltvedt
Siri Caltvedt
Yi-ru Chen-Sarkanen & Simo Sarkanen
Kristine & David Denton
Hilary Gebauer & Marc Katz
Clayton Jelinek
Barb & Ron Johnson
Marge Meffert
Kevin Olsen
Bob Victorin-Vangerud

... for January
Mary Brown & Luther Johnson
John Buegel
Dawn Dankers & Michelle Hovey
Donna & Pete Gawreluk
Nick Goeddard
Liz & Roger Gomoll
Tim Hokkanen
Anna Mason & Kevin Kniebel
Robyn & Marcus Nooney
Claire Rosenkvist
Rita & Ken Schoenike
Susan & Levi Stugelmeier
Cathy Sieving
Morrie Wee
Karen Woestehoff

Each member is part of Helping Hands. You may be asked to help with Sunday Coffee and other hospitality related events as needs arise. Mary Bode and Joanne Seltz, coordinators.

December Retirees Gathering
Join us for cider and caroling on Wednesday, December 27th at 11:00 a.m. in the Concordia Room. Kristine West Denton will accompany us, and the singing will be followed by a light lunch—no potluck. Everyone is welcome!
Lectionary Readings
December 2017 & January 2018

December 3
First Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 64:1-9
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
1 Corinthians 1:3-9
Mark 13:24-37

January 7
Baptism of Our Lord
Genesis 1:1-5
Psalm 29
Acts 19:1-7
Mark 1:4-11

December 10
Second Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13
2 Peter 3:8-15a
Mark 1:1-8

January 14
Second Sunday after Epiphany
1 Samuel 3:1-20
Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18
1 Corinthians 6:12-20
John 1:43-51

December 17
Third Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
Psalm 126
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28

January 21
Third Sunday after Epiphany
Jonah 3:1-5, 10
Psalm 62:5-12
1 Corinthians 7:29-31
Mark 1:14-20

December 24 (9:30 a.m.)
Fourth Sunday of Advent
2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16
Luke 1:46b-55
Romans 16:25-27
Luke 1:26-38

January 28
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany
Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Psalm 111
1 Corinthians 8:1-13
Mark 1:21-28

December 24 (5:00 p.m.)
Nativity of Our Lord I
Isaiah 9:2-7
Psalm 96
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-20

December 25
Nativity of Our Lord III
Isaiah 52:7-10
Psalm 98
Hebrews 1:1-12
John 1:1-14

January 7
Baptism of Our Lord
Genesis 1:1-5
Psalm 29
Acts 19:1-7
Mark 1:4-11

Treasurer’s Report
Time for cautious optimism! Although member giving is running behind what we budgeted, expenses are also running below the budgeted amount, leaving us over $6,000 in the black right now! Expenses will probably increase toward the end of the year, but we hope that our income will also increase. Thank you for keeping up with your pledges and all your giving!

Christ Church Lutheran Finances
(As of October 31, 2017)  ACTUAL  BUDGET (10 mos.)  DIFFERENCE
Member Giving/Envelopes  229,261.93  248,333.34  (19,071.41)
Other Income  79,082.10  84887.50  (5,805.40)
Total Income  308,344.03  333,220.84  (24,876.81)
Total Expenses  308,170.65  333,370.79  (25,200.14)
Transfers Pending  6,500.00
Total Surplus (or Deficit)  6,673.38  (149.95)  6,823.33

From the Church Council
Update for December
At the time of going to press, Council had not met during November. Due to the Thanksgiving holiday, our November meeting was rescheduled for November 29. Our primary item of business on the agenda was formulating a 2018 budget to present for consideration at the congregational meeting to be held on December 10 at 11:15 a.m. in the Sanctuary. In addition to the budget, Council planned for the forum on December 3, which it usually hosts one week before the congregation meeting. The Council forum is an opportunity to discuss the important mission and ministry that our weekly offerings will support in the coming year. Our budget is more than numbers in a spreadsheet—so we encourage everyone at Christ Church to attend and to participate in both the forum and the congregational meeting. In addition, the Nominating Committee will announce its slate of nominations to serve as at-large council members and officers in 2018.

One item of business was conducted between our October and November meetings. Via email, Council approved keeping the health coverage for Pastor Carlson and our custodian, Chuck Merrell, at the same benefit level as in prior years. (Our other employees are covered by other plans.)

50th Wedding Anniversary Celebration
Ken and Rita Schoenike invite the congregation to their 50th Wedding Celebration Open House on Saturday, December 30, 2017 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at church. No cards or gifts are requested. If you plan to attend, please RSVP to tammyschoenike@gmail.com or 952-233-8712.
This month Closeup features Siri Caltvedt, who has been a member of Christ Church Lutheran for two years.

When did you start attending Christ Church Lutheran and what brought you here?

I moved to Longfellow in December 2014 from Uptown and knew that this special church was close by. (I had been here for a concert a year earlier.) I finally made it to a Sunday worship in fall of 2015. Mary Bode’s welcome was so warm, Pastor Carlson flipped out when I introduced myself—she’d always wanted a daughter she could name Siri!—and Martin Seltz was Chaplain for Lutheran Summer Music when I was a camper. So it seemed like a natural fit. I joined a few Sundays later.

Do you live in the neighborhood?

Yes—just a zig and a zag away, on 33rd Avenue at 32nd Street.

What about our congregation keeps you coming back?

Music, preaching, connection to ancient traditions—and so many German-speaking people!

Do you have any stories to tell about your time here or about events or activities you have been involved in?

I have a weaving project that I have yet to finish. I’ve enjoyed singing with the choir, soloing with Greg Peterson, and being part of the book group. Singing for Will Stark’s funeral was a great honor but also very difficult emotionally.

How does Christ Church help you live and share your faith?

Being part of this faith community has made me more aware of what’s going on in the world. Pastor Carlson’s and Pastor Haaland’s sermons are always so enlightening and reveal God’s deep love for us. I will never forget Pastor Carlson’s story about the duck so overwhelmed by grief that he refused to leave the side of his dead partner in the road and how she compared him to the disciples after Jesus’ crucifixion.

What do you do when you’re not in church?

I sing, teach other people to sing, play the piano, run, and read about the criminal justice system. I am involved in Voices of Hope, the choir for the women of the Minnesota Correctional Facility—Shakopee, and I sing with the Minnesota Chorale. I’m a member of, and active in, two professional associations and the Smith College Club of Minnesota.

What can you tell us about yourself that we may not have known?

Even though I am of Scandinavian descent, German language and culture is very close to my heart. I attended Waldsee (the German language program at Concordia Language Villages) several summers, spent my senior year of high school in Germany’s Black Forest and West Berlin, and almost majored in German in college. Thanks to that early training and musical ear, I can speak with no accent. So meeting me is puzzling for Germans who are unaware that I am American (and, I confess, flummoxing a German gives me great pleasure!).

“Closeup” is a Courier feature to help us get better acquainted with our fellow members. If you would like to share your story in “Closeup,” call Donna Lindberg at 651.552.8499.

Safe House Shed Completed for Winter

After some of months of work, Christ Church volunteers have completed the building of a wonderful new shed for Safe House, a Lutheran Social Service shelter for homeless youth in St. Paul. The materials for this project were purchased with funds from our recent Second Century Campaign—part of a $30,000 pledge for capital improvements at Safe House. The staff at Safe House is thrilled with the new building in their backyard! The plan is for them to live with it over the winter and then choose the kind of storage they’d like on the inside. That work will be completed next spring. Special thanks are due to Jonathan Stensland, who planned and led this project, as well as to Pastor Haaland, whom Jonathan reports to be “a very good, agile, astute carpenter in his own right.” Both donated generously of their time, as did Marcus Nooney, Michael Jefferis, and Gary Wahlstrom.

Are you on track to fulfill your pledge?

Wonderful things are happening at church and in our community (see story above) thanks to generous giving to the Second Century Campaign. The end of Year 3 out of five in that campaign is nearing. We are grateful for all pledges. If you have a question about your pledge status, please email Liz Gomoll: ewgomoll@yahoo.com

Second Century Campaign
Courtyard completion celebrated; visited by national grantors

On November 5, we celebrated the courtyard restoration project with a beautiful rite written by Cantor Martin Seltz, and a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Along with Christ Church members, it was attended by Lock Bounds from the Friends of Christ Church, contractor Dale Forsberg, and architect Angela Wolf Scott.

Nearly 90 percent of the total costs were paid by two grants. It was financed in part with funds provided by the State of Minnesota from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund through the Minnesota Historical Society, and it was supported by a grant from National Fund for Sacred Places, a partnership of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and Partners for Sacred Places.

On Thursday and Friday, November 9 and 10, Christ Church served as hosts for Chad Martin from Partners for Sacred Places in Philadelphia and John Hildreth from the National Trust for Historic Preservation in Charleston, South Carolina, during their site visit for the National Fund for Sacred Places, which made a $130,000 grant to our courtyard restoration. The criteria for the grant included buildings and congregations that could demonstrate a national significance, a preservation funding need, commitment to being a community-wide asset, capacity for additional capital fundraising, and overall vibrant congregations.

It was primarily the late Will Stark’s persistence and expert work that earned the National Fund courtyard grant. Will engaged them through a long application process that resulted in Christ Church being in the prestigious first cohort of fourteen Sacred Places grantees across the nation. Many thanks to Bob Davis and the Project Management Task Force for bringing the project to completion.

Chad and John’s primary purpose was to see the restored courtyard. They also toured the full church facility, led by Ann and Bob Davis. Christ Church leadership experienced good conversations with them. Friday morning their time was spent with the Friends of Christ Church Lutheran. It was a wonderful opportunity to wrap up the National Fund grant and to cultivate this important relationship with national preservation organizations.

Check out their home page at https://fundforsacredplaces.org/.

COOKIES! Volunteers needed!

Do you love baking Christmas cookies? Would you like the experience of fellowship and baking with the cooks of our church? We have an opportunity for you!

Christ Church baking group will be baking Christmas cookies in the church kitchen during November / early December (see dates below and watch the bulletin). Cookies will be packaged and sold, and the money collected will be donated to a food program in our community.

If you would prefer, you can bake at home and donate a batch or two of cookies to help fill the boxes (we can supply a recipe and/or ingredients, or make one of your favorites).

Are you more of a cookie eater than baker? We can use your help too. Order a $12.00 box of cookies! If you have a red container from last year, please return and we will reuse it (leave on one of the treat tables in the Education Building). If you are not an eater or a baker, cookie boxes make great gifts!

To order your box of cookies, look for the sign-up sheet in the Education Building on Sunday.

2017 Christmas Cookie Baking Schedule for December

Friday, 12/1 10:00–3:00 Baking
Saturday, 12/2 1:00–5:00 Baking
Monday, 12/4 10:00–3:00 Baking
Tuesday, 12/5 Volunteers bake at home (ingredients can be picked up at church beforehand)
Thursday, 12/7 10:00–3:00 Baking
Friday, 12/8 10:00–3:00 Pack Christmas cookie boxes

Come when you can and stay as long as you want. For scheduling, it would be great if you would call or talk to Rita (651.681.9975) or MariLu (612.978.4566), telling them when you will be able to help.

Thanks to Thrivent Financial for partnering and sponsoring us in this project through their Thrivent "Action Teams #Live Generously" program.
Epiphany Party
4:00 p.m., Saturday, January 6

It’s become an annual tradition! Come, celebrate Epiphany—and party even past the twelfth day of Christmas! This year’s Epiphany Party will be held from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m., Saturday, January 6 at the church. We’ll eat, drink, and make merry. We’ll sing some of our favorite Christmas and Epiphany carols. We’ll bless our church building, our house of worship. We’ll also send everyone home with a liturgy to bless your own dwelling places—homes, apartments, bedrooms—for the coming year. (It’s an ancient tradition to bless dwelling places on the feast of the Epiphany—come and learn all about it!) All are invited. There will be special activities for children.

Progress in the balcony

After months when the preparations for the organ took a back seat to the courtyard renovations, lately the balcony has seen much more activity. Contractors have removed the last of the old screen wall and erected a steel framework for the wall’s replacement. They have put fine gravel behind the back wall to stiffen it and provide improved acoustics. They have added several layers of wallboard to the front “knee wall” of the chamber, for the same reason. And an electrician has brought new wiring up from the basement to serve the new organ. The wooden paneling in the balcony has been removed and will be refinished, as will the pews from the balcony. And the chamber will be painted. The acoustician for the project, Dawn Schuette from Chicago, visited over Thanksgiving week and was very pleased at the changes being made. Meanwhile, our organ continues to be built at the Dobson Organ shop in Lake City, Iowa. When complete, it will be erected there, then disassembled and shipped here in late January. It will be put together in the chamber with all its thousands of pipes, and then the screen wall will be put back in place. Only then will the organ be “voiced,” a process in which the sound of each pipe is adjusted to suit our particular sanctuary. That process will take a couple of months, and then our new organ at last will be finished!

Genealogy 101
Saturday, December 9, 10–11:30 a.m.

Have you wanted to research your family history, but you’re not sure how to start? Or maybe you are fairly new to genealogy and would appreciate some pointers? In her presentation, “Genealogy Smart Start, Things I Wish I’d Known,” Liz Gomoll will show you how to get started and avoid the mistakes she made as a beginning genealogist. Liz is president of the five-state Northland Chapter of the Association of Professional Genealogists, co-editor of the Minnesota Genealogist quarterly journal, and recently published With Love to All, a collection of World War I letters and photographs. She has done research for clients across the country and across the Atlantic. The class will meet on Saturday, December 9, from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. in the Kretzmann Room at Christ Church Lutheran. It is offered as an extension of Christ Church’s Genealogy Group.

First Pastoral Call for Rinehart

We extend our blessings and congratulations to Daniel Rinehart, former contextual education student at Christ Church through Luther Seminary. Daniel is being ordained at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Falls Church, Virginia, on Saturday, December 16. He is being called by Hope Lutheran Church, Clinton, Maryland. Pastor Carlson will attend and participate in his ordination.

Daniel’s wife, Leslie Nightingale, also worshiped at Christ Church. She is a teacher in the Washington, DC area.

New Addresses

These Christ Church members have recently moved within the area:
Kevin Reuther and Gerry Tyrrell
2868 West River Parkway
Minneapolis, MN 55406

Sergei Lenskii, Tatiana Lenskaia, Nadia Lenskaia
505 University Ave SE, #102
Minneapolis, MN 55414
Forum Schedule, December into January

Except as noted, forums begin at 11:15 a.m. in the Kretzmann Room on the lower level of the education building. Listen for the bell to ring as a reminder the forum is beginning.

December 3 (Advent 1)
Council-led Forum
The Christ Church Council will offer this forum, which will include announcements, details, and discussion to prepare for next week’s congregational meeting.

December 10 (Advent 2)
Congregation Meeting
This year’s December congregational meeting will be held in the Sanctuary, following coffee fellowship.

December 17 (Advent 3)
Intergenerational Pageant
After coffee and fellowship in the Atrium, come back to the Sanctuary for an Intergenerational Pickup Pageant. There is a part for everyone!

December 24 (Advent 4)
No forum

December 31 (First Sunday of Christmas)
No forum

January 7 (Baptism of Our Lord)
Learning a New Language in a New Land
S. Bardwell – Our Saviour’s Community Services, English Learning Center

January 14 (Second Sunday after Epiphany)
Housing Justice – Part II
Ron Johnson

January 21 (Third Sunday after Epiphany)
Lutherans and Catholics Praying Together
Dirk Lange – Luther Seminary and the Lutheran World Federation

January 28 (Fourth Sunday after Epiphany)
Council-led Forum
Details on the January forums will be publicized later.

Be sure to stay around after worship on December 17 for the Intergenerational Pickup Pageant! All ages are invited to take part, and of course we need people to appreciate the actors’ talents!

November Food Drive a huge success!

Thanks to everyone who contributed to the November Food Drive—and thanks especially to the children of the Spark! Sunday school class for organizing this wonderful collection! Just before the Thanksgiving holiday we were able to deliver 485 pounds of food and personal hygiene items to Community Emergency Service, our local food shelf. Thanks to all who put the gospel into action!

A cart of donated food from Christ Church, a small part of the total.

Don’t Forget the Cards!

In this season when we delight in receiving greeting cards from far-flung friends and family, remember that our own Stationery Group produces and sells beautiful cards featuring tatting and hand drawing. Take a look at them most Sundays after worship, at a table in the atrium.

All voting members, be sure to come to the Congregation Meeting on Sunday, December 10, at 11:15 a.m. in the Sanctuary. Important business includes passing a budget for the coming year and electing Council members and officers. To learn more about the issues, come also to the Council forum on Sunday, December 3, at 11:15 in the Kretzmann Room.
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<td>First Sunday of Advent</td>
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<td>7pm Preservation Property Mission</td>
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<td>10am Genealogy Smart Talk</td>
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<td>Second Sunday of Advent</td>
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<td>Meals on Wheels through Dec. 15</td>
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<td>7:00pm Racial Justice • 7:00pm FCCL Bd.</td>
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<td>9:30am Stationery • 11:30am Worship • 12 noon Lunch • 1pm Staff • 6:00pm Supper • 7:00pm Worship</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Safe House Meal Delivery • 7:00pm Choir • 7:30pm Project Mgmt</td>
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<td>12:30pm Finnish Christmas Carol Sing</td>
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<td>10:00am ChristMass</td>
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<td>2:00pm Schoenike Anniversary</td>
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<td>First Sunday of Christmas</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>10am Family Morning</td>
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December 2017