

# December 2022

## Mount Calvary Lutheran Church & Preschool

2055 S. Franklin St. Rd  
Decatur, IL 62521

217-428-0641

Pastor Brett Hinrichs

[pastor@mtcalvarydecatur.org](mailto:pastor@mtcalvarydecatur.org)

Vicar Nathan Nelson

[vicar@mtcalvarydecatur.org](mailto:vicar@mtcalvarydecatur.org)



### Office Hours

Monday – Thursday

8am - 12noon

Office Closed:

December 23<sup>rd</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>

Check out our Newest  
Parish Pulse Section,  
“MTC KIDS CORNER”

### Join Us Sundays

Worship Service

at 9am

Christian Ed. Hour

at 10:30am

### Wednesdays in

Advent 6:30 PM

See page 3 for schedule

# *A Message from Vicar Nathan*

As we enter into December with all of the excitement of Christmas, a song that you will likely hear me listening to frequently is Come, O Come, Emmanuel. This is easily my favorite Christmas hymn, and it has such a deep message that it delivers with its yearning yet joyful melody. It always helps me remember why Jesus humbled Himself to come into this world and be human like us, looking at how the children of Israel were pleading for their redemption to appear.

At our current point in history, while living out our faith in Christ, we can easily forget that Jesus's coming was not originally directed for our own benefit first. Certainly God loves all people, but Jesus was first the answer to the prophecies given for the Jewish people. Paul mentions this in Romans 1:16: *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile."* Even the hymn echoes this truth in its first verse:

*O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile hear until the Son of God appear.*

In my ears, these words eerily echo the cries of the Israelites during their time of slavery in Egypt. *"The Israelites groaned in their slavery and cried out, and their cry for help because of their slavery went up to God. God heard their groaning and He remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob."* (Exodus 2:23b-24) This similar cry can be heard throughout all of the Old Testament by the Jewish people. It can be heard by the Jews as they groaned in their Babylonian captivity. It can be heard by the Jews during the time of Jesus' birth as they had suffered under Greek invaders just to exchange them for their current overlords from Rome. Even more significantly, this cry can be heard from all of God's people in the Old Testament as they suffered under the harsh reality of sin and its consequences. This cry for the salvation of the Lord to come is best heard in the fourth verse of the hymn:

*O come, Thou Branch of Jesse's tree, free us from Satan's tyranny  
That trust thy might pow'r to save, and give them vict'ry o'er the grave.*

It was this plea of Israel that Jesus was the answer to. He was God's long promised deliverance to His people, that He would save them and live with them as Emmanuel, "God with us."

But what of us? I'm not Jewish, and I don't believe we have much if any Jewish heritage in our congregation here at Mount Calvary. For that matter, the church at large, scattered throughout the world and across time, is not all Jewish. So why should we rejoice that Emmanuel "shall come to thee, O Israel" if we aren't Jewish?

Well, here the simple fact of the matter. We may not be Jewish, but we are made heirs to the covenants of Israel through Jesus. In Romans 11, Paul says that we Gentiles have been grafted into the promises given to Israel, and Isaiah, the prophet who foretold the coming of Emmanuel, also prophesied that *"foreigners who bind themselves to the Lord to minister to Him, to love the name of the Lord...these I will bring to My holy mountain and give them joy in My house of prayer...for My house will be called a house of prayer for all nations."* (Isaiah 56:6-7) We are not Israelites, but we can rejoice that God has chosen to call us as His own people. And so we all can happily join in the refrain: *Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to thee, O Israel!*

I pray that God would give you the richest blessings in this time of Advent and Christmas as we all await Christ's final coming when He will live with us as our Emmanuel for all eternity. Come, Lord Jesus! Amen.

# GROW TOGETHER

## Worship at Mt. Calvary

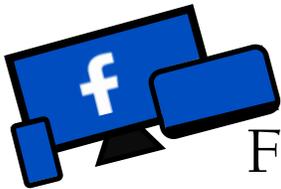
### Sunday Opportunities

Worship Service at 9<sub>AM</sub>

— A “relaxed” traditional service with hymns and standard orders of worship —

Christian Education Hour at 10:30<sub>AM</sub>

— Adult Bible Study, Confirmation Class, Additional Classes—



### Connect at Home



Facebook Live Worship: Sunday at 9<sub>AM</sub>

Radio Worship: Sunday at 9<sub>AM</sub> on 100.9FM WZUS

## Weekday Bible Studies

Men's Bible Study

Monday evenings at 6:30<sub>PM</sub>

Women's Bible Study

Tuesday mornings at 9:00am      Christmas Studies

Thursday Bible Study

1st & 3rd Thursday evenings at 6:00pm



*All Bible Studies are meeting in-person, but still have remote or call-in options.*

# MATTHEW



## Who is Jesus?

### A Joint Midweek Aevent Series

*This Advent, the members of Concordia, Mt. Calvary, Mt. Zion, and Trinity will gather for joint worship services, as follows:*

**Wednesday, November 30<sup>th</sup> – Concordia Lutheran Church, 6:30 pm!  
“Jesus Is The Son Of David!”**

**Wednesday, December 7<sup>th</sup> - Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church, 6:30 pm!  
“Jesus Is The Son Of Abraham!”**

**Wednesday, December 14<sup>th</sup> – Trinity Lutheran Church, 6:30 pm!  
“Jesus Is The Son Of Solomon!”**



# CHRISTMAS

at Mt. Calvary

**Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup> – Youth-Led Worship Service 9am**

**Saturday, December 24<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 7pm**

**Sunday, December 25<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Day Service w/Communion 9am**

**Saturday, December 31<sup>st</sup> – New Year’s Eve Worship w/Communion 6pm**

**Sunday, January 1<sup>st</sup> – Regular Sunday Worship w/ Communion 9am**

# SERVE TOGETHER



Our students are so excited for Christmas! Their Halloween costumes were hardly put away before their attention was turned to Christmas, and so our Bible stories all this month will be the Christmas Story!

Units of Study this month will be everything Christmas! Devotions will focus on the Christmas Story. We will learn that Jesus is the true meaning of why we celebrate Christmas. We hope to have an Elf from New Life Pregnancy Center visit our classroom to pick up our baby gift donations.

We will make an Advent Chain to countdown to Christmas Day. We will make an angel and talk about what an angel is. We will even eat Reindeer Sandwiches!

Our Christmas Program will be Wednesday, December 21st at 11:30 AM.

*Stitches of Love*

Our small group of ladies had hoped to meet a personal goal of 1000 hats for 2022 and we did! Lots of work and lots of yarn went into all the hats, scarves, dish cloths, and other items. Plus we were blessed with having some people from other Lutheran churches also donate items because they believe in our ministry to the Macon County community. Not to mention generous gifts of cash and yarn that helped make this possible.

Hats: 1004      Dish Cloths: 422      Scarves: 167      Headbands: 3

Baby Hats: 66      Fingerless Gloves: 4 pr      Small Blankets: 2

In next month's Parish Pulse we will outline where these items were donated.

# Heavenly Holidays Bazaar

7am-2pm Saturday, December 3

Mount Calvary Lutheran- 2055 S. Franklin Street Rd.

Prepare now for the holidays by marking your calendars for our holiday bazaar. Homemade treats and cookies sold by the pound! Handcrafted items, for Christmas and everyday!

Our Ladies Guild has been busy planning to provide you:

☆ Cookie Walk ☆

☆ Bake Sale ☆

☆ Christmas Room ☆

☆ Cookbooks ☆

☆ Crafters ☆



Sponsored by: Mount Calvary Ladies Guild





## **A Year-End Giving Campaign to Support God's Kingdom Growth in Decatur**

It's no secret that we live in a world which finds itself increasingly divided. Almost daily, we hear news of rising hostilities and cut-throat competition to the point that another group splinters off from the rest.

In direct contrast to this fragmented society we live in, Jesus regularly spoke about a profound unity that we share as His body, the Church. In John 17, He even went so far as to pray, *"that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you"* (John 17:21). Can you imagine that? Sharing a unity with one another in the same way that Jesus is one with His Father? That is truly amazing! **And what's even more crazy is that through Jesus, despite our human failings, we do share that unity of faith. And unity like that can't help but be seen and noticed.** This is why Jesus tells us that the world will know that we are His disciples through our unity.

In full trust of that promise, **our 5 Lutheran association congregations are teaming up with our LSA for a year-end campaign that help will show our fragmented world the unity we share in Christ and therefore help them see His love.** As distinct congregations and as a shared school, we each have a unique role to play in God's Kingdom. So whether it is in South Shores, up north near Interstate 72, or at the school campus itself, **we're ALL seeking the same goal: to grow in Christ and to share Him with this community and the world!**

*Knowing that God can do great things with even small gifts, we would ask you to prayerfully consider giving an "above-and beyond" year-end gift to the Unity 23 fundraiser. Recognizing God's Work in ALL our ministries, 50% of these funds given will stay with the local congregation from in they were given and the remaining 50% will go toward our shared mission, our LSA.*

Dear friends, may our unity be a witness! As Jesus says, *"Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me."*

**Unity 23 envelopes are available at Sunday Worship, the church office, & LSA. Gifts can also be given via our online giving platform, just select, "Unity 23"**

# Venezuelan News -Volume 12

Yili's health has improved. She will still be off her feet for a while. But the swelling has gone down a lot. Santi is back home. At least for now the health situation is much better. I was afraid we were going to lose Yili. She will still have issues going forward. She has pulmonary hypertension, and they don't know why. The medicines are helping. She has got her "hope" back. That is great to see.

I am happy to say that the donations have improved. God heard out prayers. I appreciate all the support I have gotten from my brothers and sisters of Mt. Calvary. I know that sometimes it's hard sharing someone's vision. And I must admit this is a weird vision. Who would have imagined such a thing. But we live in a big world – that is sometimes made smaller (closer) by technology.

Venezuela has had a tough rainy season this year. There has been a lot of flooding, all over the country. Maracaibo, where our friends live has had some flooding as well. Fortunately, they have not been affected yet. And they are getting near to the end of the rainy season.

After the first of the year, I plan to give a presentation on the ministry and Venezuela. We will have it in the sanctuary where everyone can see the PowerPoint slides. I will do this during the adult education hour. I am not doing this as a "fund raising" event. I've had questions as to who/what/where and I thought it might be good to spend 45 minutes presenting the information. If I can talk them into it, I would like to have some video blurbs of the ladies. Brush up on your Spanish.

I am getting a package ready to go down there. Some school supplies, clothes, and odds & ends. Yinette always wants me to send Nutella. LOL. We have sent several packages down there. I might talk about that in January. We shall see. The package should get there before the end of the year. I have a locker in Miami that I can send items to and the shipping company will send whatever arrives into the locker either by boat or plane (by plane is very expensive). Because the US and Venezuela aren't on speaking terms exactly, we have to depend on third party shipping companies that can go back and forth.



## Contact Info:

If you are interested in this mission or want to help, you reach out to me, Dan Reynolds, at any time via email at [on30ng@gmail.com](mailto:on30ng@gmail.com)

AND/OR join our Facebook Group, "The Least of These" (to join, contact me or my daughter Katie Gambrill on Facebook so we can add you to the group)

## Support Info:

Our PayPal address is: [theleastrofthese3@yahoo.com](mailto:theleastrofthese3@yahoo.com)

Our Venmo is: Kaitlyn-Gambrill



## Dove Christmas Care & Share Annual Basket Drive

Distribution will take place at St. Paul's Lutheran Church - 1 Bachrach Ct.  
Toys and gifts can be brought to the East entrance of Dove, until Dec. 1 at noon.

Starting on Dec. 2 drop off donations will go to St. Paul's.

This year, we will also be collecting gifts for seniors in nursing homes.

If you would like to sign up to volunteer, our work dates are as follows:  
**Dec. 2-3, 5-10 and 12** 9am- 4pm for organizing, sorting, counting and unloading donations

**Dec. 13-16** for assisting with toy and gift distribution 8am- 4pm

Volunteers are free to come and go as they please! If you want to sign up to volunteer, have inquiries, want to adopt a family (or families) by providing a complete food and gift basket, or have any other questions, please reach out to Angie Williams at 217.428.6616 or email her at [awilliams@doveinc.org](mailto:awilliams@doveinc.org).

### From the Ladies Guild:

Plan to attend the Yearly Ladies Guild Planning Meeting on January 14th at 8:30 AM. We will focus on planning events for 2023.

**LWML Mite Sundays are always the FIRST Sunday of each month!  
Please remember to turn in your mites. YOUR MITES DO COUNT!**

#### A note from Marsha Warnick, Financial Secretary...

Check Your Updated Mailboxes on.....  
December 11 for 2023 envelopes and EF# reminders  
January 15, 2023, for 2022 Contribution Statements

*Need help with something? Contact Marsha Warnick*

# SHARE TOGETHER

## Upcoming Events for 3F's (food, fellowship, fun)

Our December meal will be at the Fellowship Hall December 9th at 5:30pm. There will be a sign up sheet for dishes to share, but those who would prefer to donate some money for pulled pork, this will also be an option. Beth Langdon has graciously agreed to plan some festive games for us. More information will be forthcoming.

3F's is for any adult from Mt. Calvary!  
Please join us as we laugh, talk and of course, eat!

## *Ladies Christmas Dinner*

The Ladies are having a Christmas party on  
**Tuesday, December 6<sup>th</sup> at 6pm** here at Mt. Calvary  
and ALL ladies are welcome to join us!

Just add your name to the sign up sheet on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall to let us know you are coming. Please bring finger foods to share and a \$5 gift. If you have any questions, reach out to Beth Little at 217-855-2802 or [bethelittle2333@gmail.com](mailto:bethelittle2333@gmail.com)

## *Winterfest—Coming January 14-15, 2023*

*Mark your calendars to join our Winterfest event celebrating Winter! It will be an open-house style afternoon with ongoing entertainment and a winter village with trains. There will be more information and announcements coming about this family and friends invitation event. In the meantime, mark those new 2023 calendars with the dates!*



# MTC KIDS CORNER

**Welcome to the MTC Kids Corner page! Here you'll find updates about youth and family ministry activities happening each month!**

## Events and Activities

- **Youth-Led Worship Service**
  - \* Kids of all ages will plan and lead our Sunday worship on December 18<sup>th</sup>. A rehearsal for the service will be held on Dec. 17<sup>th</sup> from 10am-12pm.
  - \* A meal and relaxed hangout time w/ Christmas movie to follow (ending near 3pm).

## Children's Church

- **Songs for Youth-Led Worship**
  - \* During Children's Church we will be practicing songs for the youth led service. We encourage you to help your kids practice them at home!

## General Reminders

- **At Home Advent Devotional Kits**
  - \* Knowing that parents are the #1 spiritual influencers in a child's life, we encourage you to pick up a family Advent kit to help encourage conversation about Christ in your day-to-day lives, especially as we prepare for to celebrate Christ's birth at Christmas.

## Confirmation Connections

- **Youth-Led Worship Planning**
  - \* Please make sure your teens are at confirmation class this month so that they can participate in the planning of our youth led service.
- **Sermon Reports**
  - \* December is a great time to turn in your sermon reports since we won't be working on new class materials.
- **Church Service Requirements**
  - \* Please make sure to sign up with Vicar Nathan to indicate where you want to serve in our congregational worship life (readers, ushers, etc.).

# SERVING IN GOD'S HOUSE IN DECEMBER

## ELDERS

12/4	Russ Jozwiak
12/7	Dan Reynolds
12/11	Doug Gerhardt
12/18	John Graff
12/24	Russ Jozwiak
12/25	Dan Reynolds
12/31	Doug Gerhardt
1/1	John Graff

## READERS

12/4	Debbie Roberts
12/11	Tom Little
12/18	Russ Jozwiak
12/25	Frank Dunmire

## A/V TECHNICIANS

12/4	Jim Stevens/Joel Fletcher
12/7	Jim Stevens/Joel Fletcher
12/11	Jim Stevens/Joel Fletcher
12/18	Jim Stevens/Joel Fletcher
12/24	Jim Stevens/Joel Fletcher
12/25	Jim Stevens/Joel Fletcher
12/31	Jim Stevens/Joel Fletcher
1/1	Jim Stevens/Joel Fletcher

## MEALS ON WHEELS

Dec 6	Sharon & Rod Butler
Dec 13	Lyn & Jim Stevens
Dec 20	Nancy Peck
Dec 27	Barb & Roger Harting

## OTHER SERVANTS

ALTAR FLOWERS	Sandy Haseley & Marsha Warnick
BANNERS	Sharon & Rod Butler
BUILDING & GROUNDS	Roger Harting
CHANCEL CANDLES	George & Debbie Roberts Dale & Barb Jones
COFFEE/TEA	
CHOIR	Peter Miller
NURSERY	Sharon Goers
PLANTS	Debbie Goveia
RECYCLING	Lyn Stevens
SOUND & VIDEO	Jim & Lyn Stevens Joel & Stacey Fletcher
SUNDAY SCHOOL	Gale Krueger Dan Reynolds
TABULATOR(S)	Rodger Koester & Marsha Warnick
HEAD USHER	Andrew Napier

## ORGANISTS

12/4	Steve Ford
12/7	Krista Hinrichs
12/11	Steve Ford
12/18	Peter Miller
12/24	Steve Ford
12/25	Steve Ford
12/31	Lisa Peterman
1/1	Lisa Peterman

# “Just a Thought”

*Dear Santa,*

*This year could you bring me a ton of forgiveness, a ton of mercy, and ton of grace. That will give me enough to share. Thanks, Beth*

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*Dear Beth,*

*You got the wrong guy. Better start with a prayer for forgiveness. Just a suggestion. Good luck with you requests. I like that sharing part though.*

*Santa*

*ps. Your cookies were good!*

“The LORD is my strength and my defense; he has become my salvation. He is my God, and I will praise him, my father’s God, and I will exalt him.”

-Exodus 15:2

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

12/2	Jim Butler
12/3	Nancy Howard Megan C. Johnson
12/4	Richard Austin Karlie Rae Jeffers Vickie Mendenhall
12/7	Pastor Brett Hinrichs Tayler Howse
12/14	Kelsie Gerhardt
12/16	Lori Wallen
12/17	Alan Reynolds
12/20	Ryan Jozwiak
12/26	Cecilia Barding
12/30	Nicholas Atteberry Jean Wangrow

## DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

12/1	Alan & Allison Dull
12/3	Jim & Carol Sulwer
12/13	Scott & Paula Busboom
12/28	Dale & Barbara Jones
12/29	Steve & Sandy Haseley
12/30	Alan & Bethe Little
12/31	Jim & Beth Butler Bob & Sheila Norman

# Partner Ministry Updates



## LSA UPDATES

### Giving Back:

**LSA Student Government's "Share-The-Gift" Fundraiser:** During the month of December, students, families, and community supporters will raise money to buy Christmas presents for kids in foster care through Lutheran Child and Family Services. Each classroom, team, and student group will have an opportunity to "adopt-a-child" and meet the needs for that child and family! If you are interested in contributing, please contact Susan Keene at [skeene@lsadectur.net](mailto:skeene@lsadectur.net).

### Upcoming Events:

**LSA Student Christmas Concert:** The LSA Christmas concert will be held in the gymnasium on Sunday, December 11<sup>th</sup> at 3pm. We'd love to see our congregational families, friends, and community member join us for this great musical experience!

### Hiring for Open Positions:

**Looking for a great place to work?** Join the LSA Lions family! We are currently hiring for the following open positions. Please contact Brian Booth at [bbooth@lsadecatur.net](mailto:bbooth@lsadecatur.net) for more info.

- ◆ Elementary Music Teacher

### The LSA ReSale Shop:

The LSA ReSale Shop accepts the following **clean** items: New & used clothing with no rips or holes; useable kitchen items including small, working appliances, pots & pans, dishes, glassware, serving pieces, etc. (no chips or broken pieces); home décor with no chips or broken pieces; holiday items for any holiday; toys with ALL parts.

All donation items should be put in bags or boxes of a manageable size with clothing separate from household items. A good question to ask yourself before donating: "Is the item I'm going to donate something that I would buy?" If the answer is "yes", then the ReSale Shop would love to have your donation. Volunteers are always needed. You can stop by anytime or call the Shop for details.

*The LSA ReSale Shop is located at 421 E. Cerro Gordo Decatur, IL. The phone number is 217-423-0122.*

# CID HAPPENINGS

## First Ever “Act Like Men” Retreat January 20-22

Men in high school and up will gather for a weekend of activity and instruction, food and encouragement. Assertiveness, health & fitness, competence, vocation, adventure, piety, and more will be discussed and practiced.

Don't miss this opportunity to gather with other Christian Men and explore what Saint Paul meant when he admonished the Corinthians to & act like men. (1 Corinthians 16:13)

\$50 per person. Participants will stay in the Retreat Center, a 42-bed dorm-style house. Meals will be provided. You will need to bring your own bedding, towels, & toiletries.

Register today at:  
[www.cilca.org/act-like-men-retreat](http://www.cilca.org/act-like-men-retreat)

## Camp CILCA Events Save the Date!

March 4 Pancake Dinner: A “Thank You” Event for all CILCA supporters!

March 10-11 Act Like Men: Woodcutters Retreat: Men felling trees, splitting wood, and growing in the Word.

March 26: Annual Banquet with Special Guest Speaker Mrs. Katie Schuermann

April 1: Spring Work Day: Help open up the camp for the season.

April 1: SUMMER CAMP REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN! **You can get a 15% discount on Summer programs by registering early!**

*Go to our website or Facebook for more information!*

## Reimbursements for Prison Ministry Materials

Consider donating printed Gospel-centered materials to a nearby state or federal prison or county jail. Thanks to a generous grant from central Illinois LWML, members of CID congregations or these churches can make such donations and receive at least partial reimbursement from the District. CID will reimburse up to \$200 on a donation.

Start by contacting a prison or jail near you to learn of their ground rules and procedures for donated materials. Contact CID Prison Ministry Coordinator Rev. Rodney Blomquist if you have questions. Telephone him at (217) 825-6160 or send an e-mail message to [prisonministry@cidlcms.org](mailto:prisonministry@cidlcms.org).

## Small Church Summit

Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Farmersville, Illinois, invites members of small churches in the Central and Southern Illinois Districts to the second “Small Church Summit” on the day after Epiphany, Saturday, January 7, 2023, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. (“Snow date” is Jan. 14.) This free event is open to all. It will work best for your church to send your pastor and one to three laypeople.

For more information, see the Gatepost (<http://www.cidlcms.org/resources/gatepost/2022.GatePost.3.pdf>)

To register for this event, please visit <https://forms.gle/Z1Xey4BQNiLN533q8>



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D I S T R I C T

of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

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