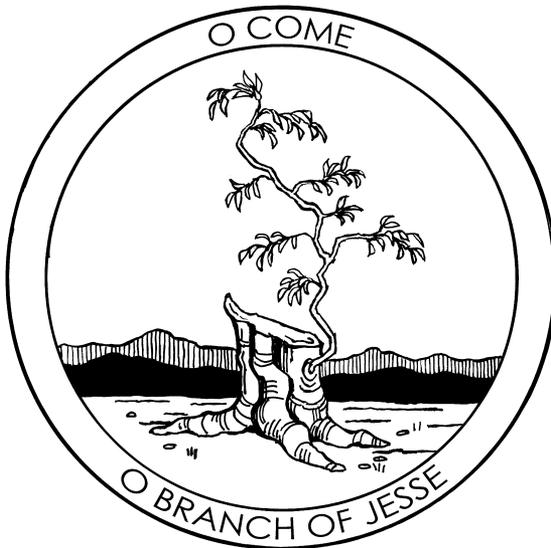


Nativity Evangelical Lutheran Church

“Our 92nd Year”

December 7, 2025



Welcome to Nativity Lutheran Church; please take a moment to fill out the visitor cards found in the pews. Prayer request can be filled out on the reverse side of the visitor card; you may place the card in the offering box or give them to Pastor Kuhl. The service today includes Holy Communion and all who desire to receive what our Lord offers in this meal, his body and blood for the forgiveness of sins and the promise of eternal life, are welcome to partake. For your convenience, restrooms are located in Goetz Hall on the lower level; the staircases in the church building narthex access them. There is a semi handicapped, unisex restroom located through the left front door of the sanctuary.

Second Sunday Of Advent

Presiding Minister: The Rev. Dr. Steven C. Kuhl

Lector/Reader: Arlene Renard

Minister of Music: Dennis Jon Wolfgang

At the heart of our Advent preparation stands John the Baptist, who calls us to repent and make a new beginning. As the darkness increases we turn toward the approaching light of Christ. For Christians he is the root of Jesse, the righteous judge who welcomes all, especially the poor and meek of the earth. We wait with hope for that day when the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and there will be no more hurt or destruction. From the Lord's table we are sent in the spirit of John the Baptist to proclaim that in Christ the kingdom of God has come near.

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Prelude

Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying – setting by
Johann Gottfried Walther WACHET AUF

Prepare the Royal Highway-BEREDEN VÄG FÖHERRAN
setting by Rachel Spry Lammi

Sleepers Wake (WACHET AUF) – Johann Sebastian Bach

Welcome and Announcements

Confession and Forgiveness

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at
baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

**Please stand if able.*

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, whose home is heaven and earth, whose salvation is sure. **Amen.**

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Kyrie – ELW No. page 138

P: Long-expected God,

C: we confess that we look to ourselves for the peace and security only you can provide. We reach for swords and spears, reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war. We become impatient while waiting and weary of keeping awake.

Free us from self-reliance, and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors. Increase our trust in God's timing, and awaken us to your advent among us, that we may abound in the hope you have promised.

Amen.

P: God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God's own righteousness. † You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior.

C: Amen.

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Gathering Hymn

Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding – ELW No. 246

Tune: MERTON

The Advent Wreath

One of the best-known customs for the season is the Advent wreath. The wreath and winter candle-lighting in the midst of growing darkness strengthen some of the Advent images found in the Bible. The unbroken circle of greens is clearly an image of everlasting life, a victory wreath, the crown of Christ, or the wheel of time itself. Christians use the wreath as a sign that Christ reaches into our time to lead us to the light of everlasting

life. The four candles mark the progress of the four weeks of Advent and the growth of light. Sometimes the wreath is embellished with natural dried flowers or fruit. Its evergreen branches lead the household and the congregation to the evergreen Christmas tree. In many homes, the family gathers for prayers around the wreath.

Second Week of Advent

Use this blessing when lighting the first two candles.

P: Blessed are you, God of hope, for you promise to bring forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse who will bring justice to the poor, who will deliver the needy and crush the oppressor, who will stand as a signal of hope for all people. As we light these candles, turn our wills to bear the fruit of repentance, transform our hearts to live in justice and harmony with one another, and fix our eyes on the root of Jesse, Jesus Christ, the hope of all nations.

P: O people of hope, come,

C: let us rejoice in the faithfulness of the Lord. Amen.

Hymn During the Lighting of the First Two Candles

Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah-ELW No. 240 vs. 2

Tune: TIF IN VELDELE

Prayer of the Day - "Today's Readings" Insert

Please respond Amen.

**Please be seated for the Readings*

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 11:1-10 - "Today's Readings" Insert

Isaiah describes the coming of a future, ideal ruler who will renew David's royal line (the stump of Jesse). Gifted by the spirit of God, this ruler will reign with perfect justice. Enmity and danger will be restored to harmony and peaceful coexistence.

L: Word of God, word of life.

C: Thanks be to God.

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Psalmody

Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19 - “Today’s Readings” Insert

May the righteous flourish; let there be an abundance of peace.

(Psalm 72:7)

Please join in chanting responsively using tone 8.

Epistle Reading

Romans 15:4-13 - “Today’s Readings” Insert.

God’s promise to include Gentiles within the circle of God’s blessed people has been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Christians live out their unity by welcoming and encouraging each other just as Christ has welcomed them into God’s family.

L: Word of God, word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

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Gospel Acclamation - ELW No. 175

Taizé Alleluia – Verse proclaimed by the cantor.

Prepare the way | of the Lord. * All flesh shall see the salvation of God. Alleluia. (Luke 3:4, 6)

**Please stand if able.*

Gospel Reading

The Gospel is announced: Matthew 3:1-12

Response: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Just before Jesus begins his public ministry, John the Baptist appears, calling people to mend their ways and speaking of a powerful one who is to come.

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R: The Gospel of the Lord.

Concluding Response: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Pastor Steven Kuhl

Hymn of the Day

There's a Voice in the Wilderness – ELW No. 255

Tune: ASCENSION

Please stand for the final verse.

Profession of Faith

The Nicene Creed – ELW page 104

Prayers of the People

P: God of Grace,

C: hear our prayer.

Sharing of Peace

Offering Hymn

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel – ELW No. 257 verses 1-4

Tune: VENI, EMMANUEL

**Please be seated.*

You may place your offerings, visitor cards and prayer request cards in the white church found in the narthex of the church either before or after our worship service.

Offering Prayer

**Please stand if able.*

P: Nourishing God, you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Through this meal, satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come. **Amen.**

The Meal/Great Thanksgiving – ELW page 107

Sung

Proper Preface for Advent
Holy, Holy, Holy ELW page 144

Eucharistic Prayer III – ELW page 110
Sung Eucharistic Acclamations – ELW page 145

Christ has died. & Amen.

Spoken Eucharistic Acclamation

...We look with hope for his coming. **Come, Lord Jesus.**

...Bring the gift of peace on earth. **Come, Holy Spirit.**

Lord's Prayer – ELW Page 145

Lamb of God - ELW Page 146

Invitation To Communion

Here is life. God is with us.

Come, receive what God has promised.

Distribution

**Please be seated.*

All are Welcome to receive the Lord's Meal at His table.

Please come forward to the Communion Rail.

Communion Music

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel – setting by Alec Wyton

Tune: VENI, EMMANUEL

Post Communion Canticle - ELW No. 204

Thankful Hearts and Voices Raise

**Please stand if able.*

Prayer after Communion

P: God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness. Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger, and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.
Amen.

Benediction

P: May God who comes among us, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness, and good news to share today and always. **Amen.**

Sending Hymn

Prepare the Royal Highway – ELW No. 264

Tune: BEREDEN VÄG FÖHERRAN

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Keep awake.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

There's a Voice in the Wilderness – Tune: ASCENSION
setting by Dennis Janzer

*Our Sunday Bulletin is uploaded to our Website on
Saturdays.*

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Nativity's Leadership

Rev. Dr. Steven C. Kuhl - Pastor

Dennis Jon Wolfgang – Director of Music/Organist

James Ribnek, III – President

Dr. Robert Saur – Vice President

Jill Mickelson – Treasurer

Nicole DeBack – Secretary

Church Council Members at Large

Sandra Larson, Dennis Jon Wolfgang

Prayer Concerns and Announcements

As a Community we pray: For those with immediate needs of healing and strength: Gary Brautigam, Marvelyn Cockroft, Gary Hanson, Cheryl Isotalo, Maureen Jones, James Larson, Sarah O'Brien, Rev. Mick Roschke, Marion Saur, Maureen Sopa, Jennifer Wigand and Rev. Dean Willich. If you know of individuals that need to be added to or taken off the list please let any Council Member know.

Birthdays for Two Weeks

Thursday, December 4th, **Roger Reinert**

Friday, December 5th, **Marcus DeBack**

Saturday, December 13th, **Maureen Jones**

Sunday, December 14th, **Steven Kuhl**

For those of you receiving our bulletin in the US Mail there was not one printed last week because of the snowstorm. It took Dennis till 12 noon to dig everything out including his car and Pastor Steve has to navigate his way in from East Troy after clearing everything of the snow. Canceling was the wise choice.

Service of Healing: – Because of our worship service being canceled last Sunday we were not able to offer the Lutheran Rite of Healing. The Healing Service has been rescheduled to the fourth Sunday of Advent, December 21st during the normal 11 AM worship service.

Christmas Poinsettias: Our order has been placed with Milaeger's for eleven Poinsettias, they will be delivered the morning of December 23rd.

The next **Nativity Church Council** will be next Sunday, December 14th following worship. We will be preparing

the 2026 church budget. All members of Nativity are invited to attend Church Council meetings.

A Nativity Christmas

Mark your calendars for Saturday December 27th 2:00 PM for our Nativity Christmas Concert. Tenor Stuart Mitchell and organist Dennis Jon Wolfgang perform music of the season. Pastor Steve will narrate “A Carol Nativity” by Alfred V. Fedak with audience sing-a-long of the carols. “Coffee, punch and Christmas Cookies follow in Goetz Fellowship Hall.

Help Needed: Following worship on December 21st we will collate, fold and staple the Bulletins for Christmas Eve and the programs for the “A Nativity Christmas” Concert, please stay and help if you are able.

Mark your calendars for the First Sunday after Christmas, December 28th, we will again hold our very popular Service of **Lessons and Carols** with **Communion** at our normal 11 AM worship time.

This is the Second Sunday of the **New Church Year**. Our three-year Lectionary (the appointed scripture readings for each day) cycle has started over with Year A, the year of Matthew.

Ten Distinctive Characteristics of Matthew’s Gospel

1. Matthew displays a penchant for organizational patterns (three sets of fourteen in 1:1-17, seven parables in chapter 13, five major speeches in the gospel as a whole).
2. Matthew exhibits a “doubling motif” according to which stories are sometimes repeated (*12:38-42; 16:1-4*) and characters occur in pairs (*8:28-33; 20:29-34*).
3. Matthew shows particular interest in “the Law”—that

is, in the moral codes of the Old Testament and of first century Judaism (*see 5:17-48; 15:1-6; 19:3-9; 23:2-3*).

4. The fulfillment of prophecy is an important theme (see the twelve “fulfillment citations”: *1:22-23; 2:5-6, 15, 17-18, 23; 4:14-16; 8:17; 12:17-21; 13:14-15, 35; 21:4-5; 27:9-10*).

5. Matthew’s gospel is the only one that displays Jesus talking explicitly about “the church” (*16:17-20; 18:15-18*).

6. The disciple Peter receives special prominence in this gospel (*14:28-31; 16:17-20; 17:24-27; 18:21-22*).

7. Matthew is especially concerned about God’s continuing relationship both to Jews (*1:21; 10:6; 15:24; 27:15*) and to gentiles (*8:10-11; 24:14; 28:19*).

8. Matthew’s gospel seems to present an apocalyptic vision of the world that clearly divides things into spheres of divine or demonic influence (*see 13:24-30, 36-43; 15:12-13*).

9. Matthew emphasizes Jesus’ identity as the Son of God (*see 3:17; 4:3, 6; 16:16; 17:5; 21:37; 22:2; 26:63; 27:40, 43, 54*).

10. The presence of God is an overriding theological motif throughout this gospel (*see 1:23; 10:40; 18:20; 23:21; 25:31-46; 28:20*).

Author: Mark Allan Powell, now retired, was professor of New Testament at Trinity Lutheran Seminary in Columbus, Ohio, for thirty eight years. He is the author of numerous books, including Matthew in the New Interpretation series (WJK, 2023)

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This Week’s Calendar

Location Key: “S”=Sanctuary, “G”=Goetz Fellowship Hall, “UC”=Upper Meeting/Conference Room, “C”=Children’s Area

TODAY: 12/7 **Advent II**

11:00 AM “S” Nativity Worship

Service with Communion

Following Worship: Coffee and
Fellowship & rescheduled “Hanging of the
Greens”

Tuesday: 12/9 12:00 PM “G” S.A. 12-step
Wednesday: 12/10 9:00 AM “UC” Quilters
8:00 PM A.A. Al-Anon
Friday: 12/12 12:00 PM “G” S.A. 12-step
Saturday: 12/13 8:30 AM “S Organ Lesson
Sunday: 12/14 **Advent III**
11:00 AM “S” Nativity Worship with
Communion - Following Worship: Coffee
and Fellowship

Next Sunday’s Readings – Advent III

Isaiah 35:1-10, Psalm 146:5-10, James 5:7-10
Matthew 11:2-11

Future Dates

December 21st – 11:00 AM – Fourth Sunday of Advent

Normal Advent IV Communion Service with Lutheran Rite of
Healing with prayers and anointing for those who wish.

Wednesday December 24th 5:30 PM

Christmas Eve Worship Service

Prelude begins at 5:00 PM

A Solemn Celebration of the

Birth of Christ, featuring:

+ Blessing of Tree and Creche

+ Organ music and the Singing

of Christmas Carols with Tenor Robert Stuart Mitchell

+ Children’s Message

+ Reflection on the Christmas

Gospel & amp; Holy Communion

A Nativity Christmas Concert

Saturday December 27th 2:00 PM

Continued

A Nativity Christmas Concert with Robert Stuart Mitchell
and Dennis Jon Wolfgang

Sunday, December 28th 11:00 AM – A Beautiful Service of
Lessons and Carols with Communion

Stewardship/Offerings: We are always grateful for everyone's financial support, no matter how large or small the gift. If you cannot attend worship in person, you may mail your offerings and donations to the church at any time. The mailing address is on the back of this bulletin. Have you remembered Nativity Lutheran Church in your estate planning?

Nativity Lutheran Church is **pet friendly**; you are invited to bring your leashed service of companion animal to all Nativity Worship Services of Events.

Commemorations this Week and Last

Commemorations: When we are baptized, we are baptized into the body of Christ. We understand this body to be the communion of saints, a diverse witness of men and women across time and space. Throughout its history, the church has sought to lift up Christians who have been unique, exemplary people of faith. As we remember such Christians, we remember them in the context of remembering Christ. It is not that these people are perfect, as we are all both saint and sinner. Yet their lives point to how God's "extraordinary grace (works) in ordinary people". "The saints are to be remembered so that we may strengthen our faith when we see how they experienced grace and how they were helped by faith" (Augsburg Confession).

Monday December 1st, Andrew, Apostle - Monday, (transferred): The first of the disciples to be called by Jesus, Andrew quickly began to bring others to the Savior,

including Simon Peter. The Bible also shows him leading some Greeks to meet Jesus, and he brought forward the boy with five loaves and two fish, with which Jesus fed thousands.

Wednesday, December 3rd, Francis Xavier, missionary to Asia, died 1552: Francis Xavier (SAYV-yeahr) was born in the Basque region of northern Spain. Francis's native Basque language is unrelated to any other, and Francis admitted that learning languages was difficult for him. Despite this obstacle he became a missionary to India, Southeast Asia, Japan and the Philippines. At each point he learned the local language and, like Martin Luther, wrote catechisms for the instruction of converts. Another obstacle Francis overcame to accomplish his mission work was a propensity to seasickness. All his travels to the Far East were by boat. Together with Ignatius Loyola and five others, Francis formed the Society of Jesus (Jesuits). Francis spoke out against the Spanish and Portuguese colonists when he discovered their oppression of the indigenous people to whom he was sent as a missionary.

Thursday, Monday 4th, John of Damascus, theologian and hymnwriter, died around 749: Born to a wealthy family in Damascus and well educated, John left a career in finance and government to become a monk in an abbey near Jerusalem. He wrote many hymns as well as theological works. Foremost among the latter is a work called *the Fount of Wisdom*, which touches on philosophy, heresy, and the orthodox faith. This summary of patristic theology remained influential for centuries.

Saturday, December 6th, Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, died around 342: Though Nicholas is one of the church's most beloved saints, little is known about his life. In the fourth century he was a bishop in what is now Turkey. Legends that surround Nicholas tell of his love for God and neighbor,

especially the poor. One famous story tells of Nicholas secretly giving bags of gold to the three daughters of a father who was going to sell them into prostitution because he could not provide dowries for them. Nicholas has become a symbol of anonymous gift giving.

Sunday, December 7th, Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, died 397: Ambrose was a governor of northern Italy and a catechumen when he was elected bishop of Milan. He was baptized, ordained, and consecrated a bishop in one week's time, while bishop he gave away his wealth and lived in simplicity. He was a famous preacher and is largely responsible for the conversion of Augustine. He was also well known for writing hymns. On one occasion, Ambrose led people in a hymn he wrote while the church in which they were secluded was threatened by attack from Gothic soldiers. The soldiers turned away, unwilling to attack a congregation that was singing a hymn. Ambrose is credited with authorship of three hymns in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, including "Savior of the Nations Come" (ELW 263).

Saturday, December 13th, Lucy, martyr, died 304: Lucy was a young Christian of Sicily who was martyred during the persecutions under Emperor Diocletian. Apparently she had decided to devote her life to God and her possessions to the poor. Beyond that, however, little is known for certain about Lucy. However, her celebration became particularly important in Sweden and Norway, perhaps because the feast of Lucia (the name means "light") originally fell on the shortest day of the year. A tradition arose of a girl in the household, wearing a crown of candles, bringing saffron rolls to her family early in the morning on the day of Lucia. From Sundays & Seasons Copyright © 2025 Augsburg Fortress



Nativity Evangelical Lutheran Church

Traditional Worship Service

Sundays at 11:00 AM

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