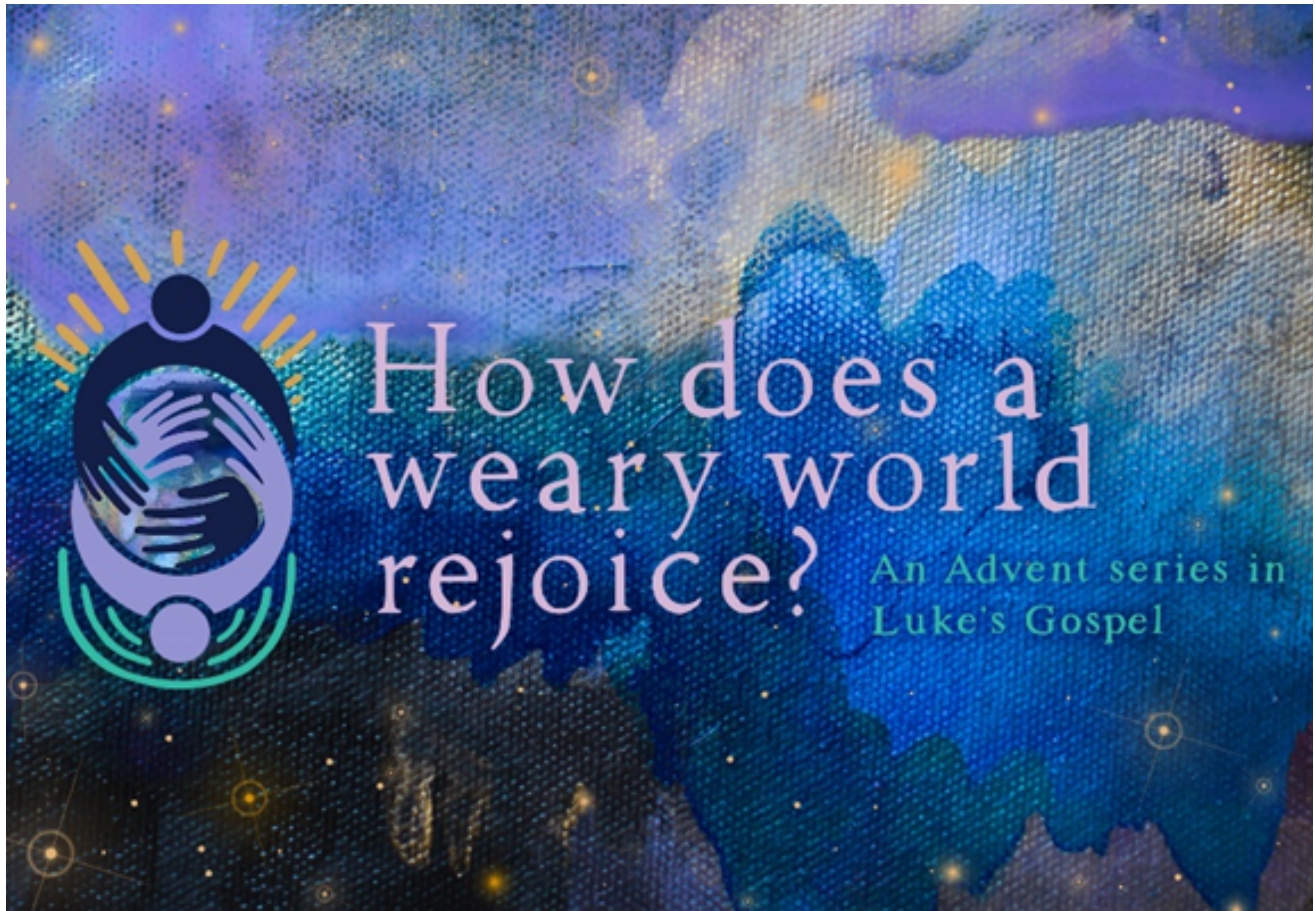


Lord of Life

DECEMBER 2023 | THE LIFE LINE



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From Pastor Karla

Greetings Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Wow! How did we get here already? To December? I am always a bit conflicted at this time of year.....I love the church season of Advent, but do not enjoy the short (often grey sky) days of this time of year. So, when I saw the topic, "How Does a Weary World Rejoice?" from "A Sanctified Art" ("a ministry to support worshipping communities in integrating art and creativity into their spiritual practices" - www.asanctifiedart.org) for Advent.....it summed up my conflict = I can feel weary (grey) and rejoice (Advent!) at the same time.



The theme comes from a line from the hymn "O Holy Night" – "a thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices". With each week (1st Sunday of Advent through Baptism of the Lord Sunday), we will have a sub-theme:

- "We acknowledge our weariness"
- "We find joy in connection"
- "We allow ourselves to be amazed"
- "We sing stories of hope"
- "We make room"
- "We root ourselves in ritual"
- "We trust our belovedness"

We will explore all of this **together, as a community**. As they describe this Advent:

"We will hold space for our weariness and our joy. We will seek a 'thrill of hope' in our hurting world. We will welcome joy – even and especially if, like the prophet Isaiah, we cry out for comfort (Is. 40:1 – "Comfort, o comfort my people, says your God."). In this weary world, may we find many ways to rejoice."

Keep reading and you will see all the many ways that we can **come together, as a community...as the Body of Christ**, to worship...to share our sorrows and our joys. Our Sunday worship services will be a bit more meditative; the mid-week services will be earlier in the evening, 6:00pm with the beautiful service of "Holden Evening Prayer"; we will gather in a barn to sing our praises; we will come together the MORNING of Christmas Eve (4th Sunday of Advent) for a completely different and fun "brown bag pageant" and return that evening for Holy Communion and Candle Lighting to welcome the Christ Child.

When we are weary, we can endure it much more easily when we are surrounded by our community. When we are joyful, we want to celebrate with our community. My prayer for the upcoming seasons of Advent and Christmas, is that WE, as the Lord of Life community, do come together!!!! I invite you to ALL of the services...maybe try the mid-week service if you have never attended one before.

Let us, together, acknowledge our weariness and find joy in connecting with our community.

In peace and with aloha,
Pastor Karla

Looking Ahead/Save the Date

Advent / Christmas Worship Offerings



Sunday, December 3rd - 1st Sunday of Advent

8am & 10:30am

"We acknowledge our weariness"

Wednesday, December 6th - Mid-Week, 6pm

Holden Evening Prayer

Sunday, December 10th - 2nd Sunday of Advent

8am & 10:30am

"We find joy in connection"

"Christmas in the Barn" - 4pm

@ the Boyle Family Farm, 7393 Sundown Rd.

Wednesday, December 13th - Mid-Week, 6pm

Holden Evening Prayer

Sunday, December 17th - 3rd Sunday of Advent

8am & 10:30am

"We allow ourselves to be amazed"

Wednesday, December 20th - Mid-Week, 6pm

"A Worship Service for the Weary"

(Longest Night / Blue Christmas Service)

Sunday, December 24th - 4th Sunday of Advent

ONLY one worship service - 10:30am

"A Brown-Bag Christmas Pageant"

Sunday, December 24th - Christmas Eve

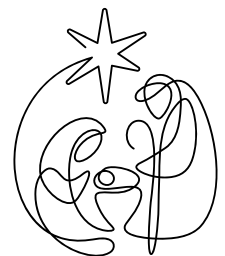
4pm & 6pm

"We Make Room"

with Holy Communion and Candle Lighting

Monday, December 25th - Christmas Day

At Wartburg Seminary at 10:00 am



Sunday, December 31st - 1st Sunday after Christmas

ONLY one worship service - 10:30am

"We root ourselves in ritual"



Sunday, January 7th - Baptism of the Lord

8am & 10:30am

"We trust our belovedness"

From Our Council President

Susan Hansen



*People, look east. The time is near of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able,
Trim the hearth and set the table.
People look east and sing today.
Love, the Guest is on the way.
LBW 248*

The church is decorated. Advent and Christmas sermons and music are being prepared. The excitement of the season is upon us! We can hardly wait for the culmination of the season, Christ's coming into this world to bring us hope, peace, and grace. Lord of Life is in preparation mode!

Beyond the decorating and special services, we are preparing for a new pastor. The call committee continues to work on the Ministry Profile. The church council has reviewed a draft and provided recommendations to the call committee. Why is it taking so long? In a limited amount of space, we express who we are, what is important to the ministry of this congregation, and how we respond to the needs of our congregation, our community, and our world. It's important to allow time to reflect on how best to communicate Lord of Life's mission; Loved by God, Sent to Serve. Thank you to the call committee for their dedication to this task.

Your church council is also in preparation mode. The 2024 budget is being shaped in preparation for the annual meeting. If you have not yet submitted a pledge, it's never too late! Thank you to the congregation for your contributions to the work of the church.

The nominating committee is at work as we seek new council members. Please prayerfully consider the opportunity to serve. Thank you to council members who have faithfully given their time and talents during this year of change.

Finally, you are welcome to express appreciation to our paid staff through a monetary gift. Please note "staff gift" on the envelope or check and submit by December 17. Thank you to the dedicated staff who tirelessly support the life of this congregation.



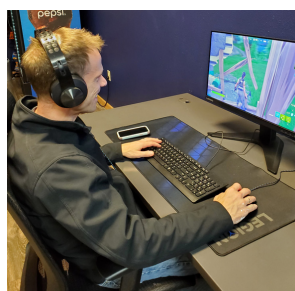
Faith Formation

Intergenerational Faith Formation - Sunday, December 3

Come and join us on Sunday, December 3rd for this wonderful time together. Maria and Troy Troftgruben will lead in song, discussion and activities to kick off Advent. If you have not attended one of these events, I (Pastor Karla) encourage you to attend, it really is a great time of fellowship and learning.

Confirmation

We are going to have more fun this month. We (7 students, Kim and Pastor Karla) will be picking out one of our favorite songs and discussing what it means to us. Music can inspire and comfort us in our joys and sorrows. Songs can also be prayers! We will be looking at the life of a disciple of Christ (us!) can be enhanced by modern sites and sounds...we just need to be aware of it.



Youth Events

Photos above were taken at last month's youth outing to Dubuque E-Sports League.

Our youth "event" for December will be on Sunday, December 17th and will actually be an ALL ages event – we will start right after the 2nd service, going downstairs to share in some pizza, bake some cookies, play games and watch some "Christmas" movies. Come dressed as your favorite character from the movie "Elf"!!!

Looking ahead / Save the Date !!!

Intergenerational Faith Formation on Sunday, January 7th

One of the themes that ran through the surveys that you all filled out for the call committee is that you would like to rebuild, reestablish a sense of community here at Lord of Life....something that got put on hold during the pandemic. So, on this day, in between services we will have a "Get to know each other time" -- all ages will interact with questions to prompt conversation. AND, confirmation students will be taking photos of families and individuals. All of this will be put together in a new church "directory"!!! This will be helpful to us and very, very helpful to the new pastor. Please save the date!

Care in Our Congregation

thank you

Thank you to all who have turned in your stewardship pledge for the 2024 general fund budget. Your support of the ministries is a blessing and your pledges will allow the Church council to plan an informed budget for the upcoming year. If you have not turned in your pledge yet, there is still time, no worries at all. Thanks again!!!

Thank you to all who worked on Sunday, November 26th....in between services and after the 2nd service, the decorating went smoothly and the gathering area and sanctuary look beautiful!!!!



Senior Lunch Group

Due to the Christmas holidays we will be meeting on the first Thursday of the month, December 7th. Please join us for lunch and fellowship at 11:30 a.m. at Tony Romo's, 350 Bell St. If you have any questions or would like to make your reservations, contact Peggy Granovsky. We look forward to sharing some Christmas cheer with all of you.

Men's Breakfast Group

We will meet at 8:30 am on Saturday December 9th, in the lower level of the church. If you'd like to share in the food and fun you can contact Jon Dienst at 599-4524 or just show up!



Prayer Shawl Ministry Group

The Prayer Shawl Group is taking a break in December. Join us in the New Year!

Looking ahead / Get excited!!!

Pastor Karla will be starting a Bible Study on Monday, January 29th at 6:00pm. She will be sharing her love of the "Ted Lasso" television show (on Apple TV). Each week will include viewing an episode with a Bible Study to follow. You do not need to know anything about football (soccer), coaching, the team of AFC Richmond to join this group. Information about episodes will be handed out weekly in case you want to watch episodes that are between the study and focused episodes. The Bible Study will run for 6 weeks. Let Pastor Karla know if you are interested in attending.



Care in Our Community

Little Free Food Pantry



Pictures from the Theisen's award event



Thank you to all who donate food and hygiene items for our Little Food Pantry. Whether you put them in the grocery cart in the narthex, put them in the basket in the church entrance, or set them on the desk in the pantry supply room, your donations are found and so appreciated. The need is always great, especially during the holiday season.

Open Closet

The Open Closet is temporarily closed due to some construction work at St. John's Lutheran Church. All clothing, etc. donations will be given to the Dubuque Rescue Mission until the Open Closet reopens.

Give a Little/Help a Lot

We don't often think of a tube of toothpaste, a box of Kleenex, or a bottle of shampoo as a luxury, but for someone who is food insecure, the choice may be whether to buy a needed personal care item or enough milk and cereal to get through the week. The holidays are especially challenging for someone on a limited budget. Difficult choices must be made. Can I afford to have the whole family over for dinner? Will it be possible to buy the gift my child has been longing for?

Let's add a little something extra to our Little Food Pantry this Christmas. We know that personal care items are costly when your budget is stretched to the limit. We are appealing for your help with the donation of a variety of personal care items such as bar soap, deodorant, toothpaste, mouthwash, women's personal products, toilet paper, shampoo, etc. Please help us take a little of the financial stress out of Christmas for some of our neighbors in need.

For more information, please refer to "The Giving Tree" display in the fellowship area at church.



Care in Our World

Let us pray...Gracious God, grant peace among nations. Cleanse from our own hearts the seeds of strife: greed and envy, harsh misunderstandings and ill will, fear and desire for revenge. Make us quick to welcome ventures in cooperation among the peoples of the world, so that there may be woven the fabric of a common good too strong to be torn by the evil hands of war. In the time of opportunity, make us be diligent; and in the time of peril, let not our courage fail; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Advent/Christmas Schedule

Sunday Worship

Dec. 6,10,17: Services at 8:00 & 10:30 am

Mid-week Advent Worship

Wed. Dec. 6,13: 6:00 pm Holden Evening Prayer

Wed. 20th: 6:00 pm Longest Night Service

Sunday Dec. 24 10:30 AM

A Brown-Bag Christmas Pageant

Christmas Eve Services @ 4 & 6 pm

(Livestream: 10:30 services, Mid-Week & Christmas Eve 4:00)

Come Join Us!



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(563) 582-7371



Scan code to give now

www.lordoflife.online