

THE GRAPEVINE

THE NEWSLETTER OF OUR SAVIOUR LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Dear people of Our Saviour,

Happy Advent!

Advent begins with a promise spoken into deep and honest places. Scripture tells us, “The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned” (Isaiah 9:2, NIV). These words do not dismiss the darkness we know. They speak into it, naming the realness of our lives and the world we inhabit.

Advent helps us learn how to wait with hope. It is the beginning of the church year, a season shaped by longing and expectation. Advent is not simply preparation for Christmas. It is an invitation to pay attention to the God who comes toward us in the world as it truly is. In these weeks, scripture teaches us how to watch for light in honest places, how to listen for God’s promise in the middle of ordinary days, and how to trust that Christ draws near long before we feel ready. The readings that follow guide us into this kind of waiting.

Week One

Jesus calls his disciples to keep awake. Advent does not begin with celebration but with attention. Christ urges us to watch for signs of God’s movement in places we might overlook. Hope begins when we stay awake to the world God loves.

Week Two

John the Baptist appears in the wilderness. His voice is strong and clear. Turn toward the Lord. Prepare the way. This is not fear speaking. It is truth telling. John makes space for new life by naming what needs healing and pointing to the One who brings it.

Week Three

John speaks again, this time from a prison cell. His question, “Are you the one who is to come,” sounds like the voice of someone who has carried hope for a long time. Jesus answers by pointing to what is unfolding all around him. The blind see. The poor receive good news. The kingdom is already breaking in.

(continued on page 2)

Week Four

We turn to Joseph, who chooses trust in the face of uncertainty. His plans fall apart, but the angel tells him, “Do not be afraid.” God is at work in ways he cannot yet see. Christ enters the world through the quiet faithfulness of ordinary people who carry the promise forward.

Through all of these readings runs a thread that is easy to miss if we move too quickly. Isaiah speaks of people who walk in darkness, not people who have escaped it. John cries out from the wilderness, a place without clear paths or bright direction. Joseph receives his calling in a moment when his plans have collapsed and his future feels unclear. In each of these stories, the darkness itself becomes the place where God speaks. In her book *Learning to Walk in the Dark*, Barbara Brown Taylor describes trusting that God is often most present when our own vision is limited. Advent teaches us that the light of Christ does not wait for us to find our way. It meets us in the shadows and reveals a world God is already redeeming.

Invitations to Wonder

- Where do you notice even a small light rising in your life
- What part of your life feels like a wilderness
- Where have you heard a quiet voice of hope in the past week
- What signs of God’s kingdom are appearing around you in small or ordinary ways
- How might Joseph’s story encourage you to trust God’s presence in a place that feels uncertain
- Where might God be teaching you to see differently, not in spite of the darkness but within it
- What do you find yourself longing for as Christ draws near

Let us now be guided by Christ as we light our Advent wreath, week by week, candle by candle. May this season open your eyes and your heart to the God who comes close.

In Christ,
Pastor Joanna

OUR SAVIOUR’S FIRST FALL FEST WAS A TREMENDOUS SUCCESS!

We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed in any way. Your efforts—whether setting up, cleaning up, preparing food, decorating, coordinating crafts and games, or operating the hayride—were essential in making the day special. We are also grateful for Linda Griffith’s assistance with publicity, securing the event signage, and providing the bouncy house (generously funded by Thrivent), which was an absolute highlight for the many children in attendance. A special thank-you as well to Mary Havens for providing a Thrivent card to help with supplies and fun! The children enjoyed face painting, animal balloons, pumpkin decorating, and plenty of fluffy cotton candy.

We were delighted to welcome **Phil Urban** as our featured entertainer, whose performance was enjoyed by many adults. In addition, we were honored to raise **over \$1,000** in support of Phil’s daughter, **Mikayla**, as she continues her cancer journey. We also appreciated the wonderful performance by the **Bobcat Players** from Saluda River Academy for the Arts.

What a wonderful November 9th afternoon at Our Saviour! Thanks to the dedication, support, and teamwork of so many, our first Fall Fest was truly a “hit.” We look forward to an even greater celebration next year!

Melodie Capole, the Young Adults. And the Youth Ministry Team

CHRISTMAS BAGS FOR MEMBERS

There will be eight bags put out on December 7 for the following members:

- Herman & Elizabeth Shealy
- Delores Hopkins
- Sandy Graham
- Marie Shealy
- Steve Rucker
- Anne Moyer
- Greg Chapman
- Katie Doble

The bags will remain there until Sunday, December 21.

OSLC NEWS & NOTES



COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS November 2025

- The church will buy several rectangular, light-weight tables to replace some of the heavy-weight tables now used only occasionally.
- Because the sound equipment in the Fellowship Hall is so unreliable, Council also decided to buy an inexpensive karaoke-type amplifier.
- Council agreed to extend permission for St. Katherine's Academy to use our facilities until the end of the school year in June 2026.

RAZBERRIES

Razberries will be at the home of Francis and Rebecca Fingerlin on Friday December 12, 2025 beginning at 6:30pm. Please bring your favorite hors d'oeuvres and beverage of choice. We ask that you bring a nonperishable food item to be donated either to Our Saviour's food box or to God's Helping Hands. You can RSVP to Rebecca by text 803-203-2218 or email rebeccafingerlin@aol.com

2026 Church Directory

The sign-up sheets for the teams and the ministries are on the table in the Narthex until December 14th. If you haven't already, please take a moment to sign up for all those you are interested in. Don't forget to check the church directory membership to make sure the information for your family is

DECORATING THE SANCTUARY

The Worship Team and Altar Guild will be decorating the sanctuary for Christmas on December 13 at 9:30 am. Everyone is invited to join us.

DECEMBER MINISTRIES

FLOWERS		GREETERS
Dec 7	<i>Bill Aull</i>	<i>Mark & Ann Satterwhite</i>
14	<i>*Need Volunteer</i>	<i>*Need Volunteer</i>
21	<i>Poinsettias</i>	<i>Doris Wessinger</i>
24	<i>Poinsettias</i>	<i>*Need Volunteer</i>
28	<i>Francis & Rebecca Fingerlin</i>	<i>*Need Volunteer</i>
WORSHIP ASSISTANTS		LECTORS
Dec 7	<i>Gail Marcum</i>	<i>Wayne Lybrand</i>
14	<i>Melba Murphy</i>	<i>Melba Murphy</i>
21	<i>Marie Lybrand</i>	<i>Caroline Raszewski</i>
24	<i>Isma Boland</i>	<i>*Need Volunteer</i>
28	<i>Rebecca Fingerlin</i>	<i>Rebecca Fingerlin</i>
<u>DECEMBER</u>		<u>JANUARY</u>
USHERS		
	<i>Chief Mark Satterwhite</i>	<i>*Need Volunteer</i>
	<i>*Need Volunteer</i>	<i>*Need Volunteer</i>
ALTAR GUILD		
	<i>Isma Boland & Melba Murphy</i>	<i>Steve & Beverly Nivens</i>
OFFERING PICKUP		
	<i>Wayne Lybrand</i>	<i>Linda Griffith</i>
TELLERS		
	<i>Beth Cleland & *Need Volunteer</i>	<i>Linda Griffith & Melba Murphy</i>
PROPERTY COMMITTEE		
	<i>Steve Nivens</i>	<i>Steve Nivens</i>

AVERAGE WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

November 2025

WORSHIP—42

COMMEMORATION PROFILES

Ruth Nicholson

The Lutheran Church, as part of its worship, celebrates the lives of notable Christians of the past. Our hymnal provides a calendar (pp. 15–17) for us to follow which recognizes these individuals on the anniversary of their deaths.



December 3

**Francis Xavier, missionary to Asia
(1506-1552)**

Francis Xavier has been called the Apostle of the Indies and Japan. He was born into a prosperous Spanish-Basque family and studied in Paris. In 1534 Xavier, Ignatius Loyola, and five others took vows of poverty and chastity, dedicating themselves to preaching to non-Christian peoples. These men formed the nucleus of the new Jesuit order. After his ordination, Xavier traveled to India and preached there and in Ceylon (now called Sri Lanka) for seven years. In 1549 he went to Japan to set up missions. He fell ill and died before he could enter mainland China on yet another missionary journey. In all his evangelizing endeavors, Xavier's attention to local languages and customs contributed to his success in making converts, as did his efforts to train native clergy.

December 7

**Ambrose, Bishop of Milan
(c. 339-397)**

Son of a Roman official, Ambrose began his professional life in government. His steadiness, modesty, and skill in public speaking made him popular with his subjects. When the local Christian bishop died in 374, the people of Milan requested Ambrose as his successor. Even though he was only a catechumen at the time, Ambrose agreed; his baptism, ordination, and consecration (on December 7) soon followed. As bishop, Ambrose faced heresies as well as a flood of recent converts needing instruction. He was a skillful preacher, teacher, and hymn writer (see ELW 263, 559, 571) and possibly the author of the Athanasian Creed.

December 14

**John of the Cross, renewer of the church
(1542-1591)**

John was born into a poor family with roots in nobility. He joined a Carmelite monastery and became a priest in 1567. Because he favored stricter adherence to the rules of the order, John urged reform similar to that being undertaken with the women of the order by Teresa of Avila. His superiors had him imprisoned, but he escaped. John is remembered as a founder of the reformed Carmelites and also as a poet and Christian mystic.

ELCA PRESS RELEASES



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

- | | |
|-------|---|
| 11/12 | Presiding Bishop Curry Joins Portico Board as Advisory Member |
| 11/12 | A Pastoral Message for These Troubled Days |
| 11/13 | Kevin Shock Elected Bishop of the Allegheny Synod |
| 11/17 | ELCA Church Council Adopts Child Protection Social Message |

WELCA—THE RIPPLE

Since there is so much information available on line from our SWO and ELCA, here are the websites for everyone to go look at and share information for our circles. Suggest that all leaders look at the websites at least once a month to keep up with events and other opportunities available in our conference, synodical unit, and the WELCA. The Ripple is published quarterly and the Fall 2025 edition is on the website which is really easy to maneuver with tools for leaders, forms, publications, and information about the Triennial and Convention. www.scwelca.com.



OFFICERS

President—Linda Griffith (Rebekah)
Vice President—Isma Boland (Cameron)
Treasurer—Ann Satterwhite (Lydia)
Secretary—Caroline Raszewski (Lydia)

The end of one era, moving to a new one—As my years as president this month, I want to thank all of you for your generous support and dedication to OSLC-WELCA. We have continued to support the mission and goals as set by our Synodical women (SWO and ELCA) and have continued to be a part of the Saxe Gotha Conference. As we move forward, I am sure our unit will continue to share and support our congregation and community through generosity. Marie has asked that I continue to do the Grapevine article each month as part of the vice president's duties. LindaG

Message from our new president, Marie—On behalf of the Women of the ELCA at Our Saviour and statewide, I would like to thank our President, Linda Griffith, for serving for the past nine years. Linda has been our source of information, organization, and guidance and we are very grateful for her willingness to faithfully serve our WELCA unit. Thank you, Linda!!!

I also want to thank you for the faith you have entrusted in me to be the 2026 WELCA President. As we all know, our ladies group is getting smaller which means we have fewer hands to fulfill the same amount of duties. At the October Joint meeting, we began discussing options for making our unit continue our missions with less resources. This may mean combining some assignments or changing the way "we have always done it".

We are blessed with a wonderful, caring group of committed women and by working together, and with God's guidance, we can continue to keep our unit strong and support each other in our callings. I'm looking forward to sharing ideas and goals as we move through 2026. Please contact me if you have any suggestions or concerns. Communication is the key!

Merry Christmas to everyone!
Marie Lybrand

As the year comes to an end—please get your tickets for the Social Event being sponsored by both LMM and WELCA. We need to get a confirmed number for food by December 10th. Tickets are \$15 each and include the meal, entertainment, and lots of fun and fellowship. Get your tickets today from Linda Hill or Linda Griffith. Invite a friend to share in our holiday celebration.

ONE MORE MEETING THIS YEAR — Since the Community Lunch is in the Fellowship Hall with the Saluda River Academy of the Arts children singing, a lot of you will already be at the church; therefore, Linda is requesting that we have our last Executive Board meeting for the year at 2 PM. This meeting should include all the circle leaders and officers. Please bring your final circle reports in writing to give to our secretary and any ideas you would like to share for the new leadership. Pastor Joanna will install all the officers in January along with the Congregational Council members. (Note: Ann Satterwhite will open with prayer.) Come early and help us decorate the hall!

WELCA 2026 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January (TBA) Installation of OSLC-WELCA Officers.
March 13-15 *Wild Women Retreat* at Lutheridge.
March 15 Saxe Gotha Conference Meeting-Faith/WestColumbia.
April (TBA) Joint Circle Meeting
Devotion/Prayer-Lydia;
Refreshments-Cameron/Rebekah)
June 19-20 SCWELCA Convention
Redeemer Lutheran, Newberry
July 16-19 Triennial Gathering in Des Moines, Iowa
September 20 Saxe Gotha Conference Meeting-Mt. Tabor/West Columbia
October (TBA) Joint Circle Meeting
(Devotion/Prayer- Cameron/Rebekah; Refreshments-Lydia)

OSLC CHRISTMAS POST OFFICE

Our Saviour's Post Office will be open for business for the Christmas season beginning December 7. Place your Christmas cards in the appropriate "mailbox" based on your last name. At your convenience, collect cards gifted to you and take them home to enjoy!

Let us truly cherish the blessing of family and friends!

Happy Holidays and God bless!
O.S. Postmaster



*Our Saviour's WELCA
Invites all to the Social Event of the Year!
A Joyous Christmas with LMM*

...Joy is more than what you feel;

Joy is sharing.

Monday, December 15, 2025

Our Saviour Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall

6-8 PM

*This year, the Cameron and Rebekah Circles have been charged with
planning a*

Social Event for family and friends.

*So, invite your family and friends to join us for an evening of
Food, Fun, and Fellowship.*

Tim's Catering will provide our meal

*And a surprise visit from one of the 'Bad Women' of the Bible will
perform.*

This is definitely a social you will not want to miss!

Tickets \$15.00 per person

(Note: Please bring your ticket to be eligible for door prize.)

See Linda Hill or Linda Griffith for your tickets today.

DEADLINE WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2025



Pictures from our Fall Fest

PRAYER REQUESTS

Those listed below have special prayers needs at this time. We keep the entire congregation in our prayers at all times, but sometimes special prayers are needed. If your name is on the list or you have added someone's name and they no longer need to be on the list, please contact the church secretary so the name can be removed.

*Gary Black
Greg Chapman
Jeannie Chapman
Katie Doble
Anne Moya
Steve Rucker*

*Elizabeth Shealy
Marie Shealy
Debbie Chapman Tidmarsh (daughter of
Jeannie Chapman)
DeLeon & Jane Wallace*

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Jennifer Gossett	12/03
Lisa Sawyer	12/07
Wayne Lybrand	12/08
Sutton Smith	12/08
David Yonce	12/08
Kay Black	12/16
Sonya Urban	12/29
Linda Hill	12/31

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Francis & Rebecca Fingerlin 12/28

Please Note: if there are any errors or omissions in birthdays or anniversaries, notify the church office. We want to make sure our records are correct.

GOD'S HELPING HANDS

God's Helping Hands current needs are: fruit cups, Vienna sausages, noodles, cream of mushroom, cream of chicken, and cream of potato soups, jello, cooking oil (no olive oil), crackers, cookies, canned tomatoes, canned beans, and Macaroni & Cheese. Please place donations in the designated container in the Cameron Hallway.

GRAPEVINE ARTICLES

If you have articles, reports and/or pictures that you or your group would like printed in the next Grapevine, please send them to the Church Office by **Tuesday December 27.**

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

December 24, 4:00 pm



THANKSGIVING MEAL DONATIONS TO FAMILIES IN NEED

The Lydia Circle, along with the generous support of our community Food Lion on Sunset Blvd, donated two thanksgiving meal bags for two families to prep their Thanksgiving meal including the turkey and two pies, as well as two \$40 Food Lion gift cards. Gail and Marie delivered the meals to Saluda River Academy for the Arts.

Pictured is the associate at Food Lion helping to load the meals, and along with Gail and Marie, is Susie Bonnette of Saluda River and Chris Yarborough, the Resource Officer for Saluda River. They were so grateful to OSLC and the Lydia Circle was so happy to help his Thanksgiving by giving and sharing.



POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS



The Worship and Music Committee would like to request your assistance this year by asking you to lend a poinsettia for our Christmas Services at a cost of \$14.00 (includes tax). Your check should be made payable to the church and marked "POINSETTIA". Please indicate in the space below the information you want printed in the Christmas bulletin. Please place in the offering plate or mail to the church

with your check **BEFORE December 19, 2025.**

I desire to order _____ poinsettia(s).

I desire the following information printed in the bulletin:

Given ____ IN MEMORY OF or ____ IN HONOR OF or ____ OTHER

(list designation) _____

By _____ **(Please print legibly)**