

Third Sunday of Advent

December 15, 2024





Graphic design by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

Third Sunday of Advent

December 15, 2024

Memorial Lutheran Church | Nevada, Iowa

Prelude: "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" - arr. Leavitt/Cherwien
Lois Theesfield, organ

Welcome

Call to Confession

Friends, there are times when the weight of the world can feel so heavy on us. Fortunately, when we come before God in confession, God removes that weight. God sees our shame, our guilt, our sin, and offers us grace. So join me in the prayer of confession. Come and allow yourself to be freed. Come and allow yourself to begin again. Let us pray:

Prayer of Confession

Liberating God, There are days when the world can feel like it's crumbling. There are days when I doubt that I can make a difference. I ask myself, What could these two hands do? What could this one voice say? Shake me free of my own paralysis and self-doubt. Remind me that I am not called to fix everything. I am simply called to do the good that is mine to do. With hope in my heart and a fire in my bones, I pray. Amen.

Words of Forgiveness

Friends, no matter how many times we lose momentum, doubt our own ability, or tell ourselves that the problems of the world are simply too big, God sees what we cannot. God calls us by name, surrounds us in grace, and invites us to begin again.

In the name of Jesus Christ your sins are forgiven.

Trusting in this good news, join me in proclaiming these words of forgiveness:
We are loved. We are forgiven. We are invited to do the good that is ours to do. Thanks be to God for this new beginning. Amen.

Gathering Song: "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" - ELW #257 verses 5-6

Prayer of the Day

Listening God, We know that you are constantly speaking to us. Through music, scripture, nature, and relationships, you make yourself known again and again. In gratitude, we long to return the favor. In gratitude, we long to meet you. So in this moment, we are quieting the noise in our heads. We are closing our eyes. We are leaning in. We are listening. We are longing to do the good that is ours to do. Speak to us that we might hear you. Speak to us as only you can. With hope in our hearts we listen, we pray, **Amen.**

Candle Lighting Liturgy

Light a Candle

Advent 3

The musical score is written on four staves in a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The lyrics are printed below the notes.

Light a can - dle for joy in the dark - ness, In each trial, we know You are
near; Ad - vent watch - ing and wait - ing for Je - sus, God with us, is
wip - ing our tears, Em - man - u - el, joy is
here; joy is hear!

First Reading: Isaiah 58:9b-12

Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer;
you shall cry for help, and he will say, "Here I am."

If you remove the yoke from among you,
the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil,

¹⁰ if you offer your food to the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,
then your light shall rise in the darkness
and your gloom be like the noonday.

¹¹ The LORD will guide you continually
and satisfy your needs in parched places
and make your bones strong,
and you shall be like a watered garden,
like a spring of water
whose waters never fail.

¹² Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
the restorer of streets to live in.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Children at Heart Sermon

Gospel Acclamation: "We are Waiting for Jesus" - ACS #905

1 We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
2 We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.

We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.

Sun of jus - tice, shine up - on us; we are trust - ing in your prom - ise.
Lov - ing Shep - herd, walk be - side us; stir our hearts, and gent - ly guide us.

We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.
We are wait - ing for Je - sus; Je - sus brings peace.

The image shows a musical score for a Gospel Acclamation. It consists of four staves of music in G major (one sharp). The first staff has two vocal parts: a soprano part and an alto part. The second staff has two vocal parts: a soprano part and an alto part. The third staff is a single vocal line. The fourth staff has two vocal parts: a soprano part and an alto part. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Text: John Helgen, b. 1957
Music: JESUS BRINGS PEACE, John Helgen
Text and music © 2013 Augsburg Fortress

Gospel Reading: Luke 3:7-16

The Gospel according to Luke
Glory to You, O Lord

⁷ John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Therefore, bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ⁹ Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."

¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, "What, then, should we do?" ¹¹ In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none, and whoever has food must do likewise." ¹² Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" ¹³ He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." ¹⁴ Soldiers also asked him, "And

we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."

¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶ John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water, but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with ^(b) the Holy Spirit and fire.

The Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you, O Christ

Hymn of the Day: "Do the Good That's Yours to Do"

Words by Anna Strickland; Music from the *Piae Cantiones*, 1582



Peo - ple came from all a - round just to see the tea - cher
"Tell me, John, what should I do as a tax col - lec - tor?"
Some are called to of - fer care, some to ex - hor - ta - tion



Liv - ing in the wil - der - ness, speak - ing to the see - kers
"Take on - ly what's yours to take; don't a - buse your debt - ors"
Some to hos - pi - tal - i - ty, some to ed - u - ca - tion



He had no pre - ten - tious - ness; he would tell you blunt - ly
Soldiers, shepherds, fish - er - men asked him the same ques - tion
All our gifts col - lec - tive - ly work to bring sal - va - tion



So they sought out his ad - vice on how to live just - ly
John re - spond - ed all the same, "Share all your pos - ses - sions"
Do the good that's yours to do with de - ter - min - a - tion

Apostles Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

Sharing of the Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

Offering

Music Voluntary: *"Once He Came in Blessing"* - Michael Burkhardt
Lois Theesfield, organ

Offering Prayer

Creator God,
you made the whole world,
even the farthest stars,
and you draw near to feed us.
We praise you for these gifts of bread and wine.
Strengthen us with this food
that we may live in expectation
for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Eucharistic Prayer

Loving Creator,
there are days when the world feels like it's on fire.
There are days when grief surrounds us,
when bad news feels relentless,
when we reach the end of our rope.
And yet, in the face of fear,
we gather here in this sanctuary of hope.
We light candles. We sing.
We fight tooth and nail to hold on to your promises.
And we return to you, the one who has always drawn near to us,
bringing peace to the storm, comfort to the weary, and hope to the despairing.
And so, with all your people—past, present, and yet to come—
with the angels who proclaimed good news to the shepherds
and the saints who taught us to keep faith alive,
we lift our voices in unending praise, saying:

Holy, Holy, Holy

To the tune of *Bring a Torch, Jeannette Isabella*, "Everlasting Light" by David Eck

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly One. God of pow - er, God of might. Heav'n and
earth are full of your glor - y. Ho - sa - na in the high - est. Blessed! Blessed
is the one who comes. Blessed! Blessed! in the name of God.

Words of Institution

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on these gifts of bread and wine.
May they be for us the body and blood of Christ,
so that we may become the body of Christ in the world—
a people of hope, light, and love.
With faith in our hearts, we roll up our sleeves.
With faith in our hearts, we strive to do the good that is ours to do.
And with faith in our hearts, we join together in prayer,
saying the words Jesus taught us:

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

Invitation to Communion

Hymns during Communion

“Come Now, O Prince of Peace” - ELW #247, verses 1-2

“Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness” - ELW #843

Prayer after Communion

Nourishing God,

Sometimes we tell ourselves that too much has taken place to begin again. We think the world is too far gone.

We think we have made too many mistakes.

We tell ourselves that we couldn't possibly begin again.

But then we come to this Table and we get a glimpse of your kingdom.

And just like that, we have hope.

Just like that, we begin again.

Thank you for the gift of this fresh start.

Thank you for planting hope deep in our bones.

Thank you for meeting us in ordinary bread and wine to remind us that it's never too late to build your kingdom here.

We are grateful.

Amen.

Announcements

Blessing

God of endings and beginnings,

God in the darkness and the light,

God, our hope for the journey,

+ bless and keep you now and forever.

Amen.

Sending Hymn: *“Hark a Thrilling Voice is Sounding”* - ELW #246

Dismissal

Go in peace. Prepare the way for Emmanuel.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude: *“Oh, Come Emmanuel”* - Wilbur Held

Lois Theesfield, organ

Prayers for Healing

If you have a prayer request, please email pastorkathleen@mlcnevada.org or emily@mlcnevada.org, or call the church office at 515-382-6509.

Please keep Pastor Anita Nuetzman and family in your prayers following the death of her husband, +Dennis Nuetzman.

Please keep the family of +Darla Bohrer (niece of Sandy Christian) following her death

Please keep Steve Halverson in your prayers following the death of his brother, Craig Halverson, in Dallas, Texas on Thursday, October 24. Craig graduated from Nevada High School in 1969

Caleb Roof	Crystal Vines	Jacobson
Jo Rod	Katie Bass <i>niece of Judy Coverdale</i>	Carol Vincent
Kelsee Holzmer <i>granddaughter of Joyce Mack</i>	Wayne Johnson	Cassie Harrell
Diane Eilers	Troy Vincent	Jean Smith
Mary-Anne Jungst <i>sister-in-law of Steve Jungst</i>	Kati Stieler <i>sister-in-law of Dan Stieler</i>	Easton Farrington
Steve Schrum <i>father of Jill Rhodes</i>	Johann Thiel	Janice Hartz
Jake Jacobson	Mike Neal	Jackie Byers <i>daughter of Shellie Black</i>
Evelyn Onstot	Christina King	Donna See
Marty Schuler	Sherry Kluever	Norma Dannan <i>friend of Betty Runge</i>
Katy Beno <i>sister of Sandy Christian</i>	Kim Elliott	Fred Samuelson
Kathy Larsen	Pr. Marcia Kisner	Jaylee Bartleson
Eric Forsyth	Marlene Waddell <i>friend of Virginia Palmisano-Goettsch</i>	George Forsyth
Ardith Forsyth	John Bass <i>son-in-law of Ron & Gloria</i>	Janeen Driscoll
		Julie Sutherland
		Jan Cook

Hospitalizations: *If you are in the hospital or are going to be in the hospital and want us to be aware of it, please call the church office or have someone call on your behalf. Unless directed otherwise, your name will be placed on the prayer list and included in electronic notifications.*

Announcements

HELP NEEDED - FOOD AT FIRST - December 19

It is Memorial's turn to prepare and serve for Food at First this coming Thursday, December 19. People will be needed in the following slots:

3:00-4:30 - Prep

4:30-6:15 - Serve

6:15-7:00 - Clean up

This month is a bit tricky, as it is also the same evening as Vespers. We of course want as many people as possible to attend Vespers to enjoy this beautiful service of Word and music. If you are able to help in anyway, please e-mail Josh Lotz at jlotz83@gmail.com. Thank you!

Church Council Update

Thank you once again to all who were willing to be on the ballot for Congregation Council for the 2025-2027 term. Please help us to welcome the following individuals, as we give thanks for their ministry among us in this particular way for the next few years.

Connie Kinyon

Carl Link

Mike Neal

Lynn Rhodes

It's that time of year - Poinsettias!

From now until December 19 you may order poinsettias. You may designate your poinsettia in honor of a loved one, in thanksgiving, or simply just because! The poinsettias are scheduled to arrive for our Christmas Eve worship services and may be taken home following the 10 AM worship service on Christmas Day. Please fill out an order form in the Narthex or contact the church office if you would like to place an order.

Quiet Christmas Service

Sunday, December 22 at 5 pm at Memorial Lutheran

We know that the holidays can often be a difficult time. This season can be filled with too much noise, too much rushing around, or maybe too much grief. This season may not feel like what you want or expect Christmas to feel like. Whatever you may be experiencing in this season, you belong and are invited to come and be with others. Come and hear scripture. Come and pray. Come as you are to find hope and peace in the companionship of Christ and others.

Generous Gifts Tree

As you walked into the Narthex this morning, you may have noticed the return of our Generous Gifts Tree! You will see a very colorful little tree filled with all kinds of present-shaped ornaments with different monetary values written on them, and you will notice there are some rather substantial gifts hanging on the tree.

Now if you recall recent communications from our treasurer and Stewardship Committee, you will remember that we have been (and are continuing to be) behind with our projected giving for the year. As of October 31, 2024, we are **behind approximately \$33,000** for our General Fund income vs expenses. If we were to **all pray, discern, and work together** to be able to generously give what is on each of these ornaments on top of our regular giving, we would be caught up with our projected giving to the General Fund.

We are asking that you would take a look at the tree, talk with others in your household, and listen if God might be urging you to take one or maybe even more gift ornaments to add to your regular giving. Thanks for your prayerful consideration.

Important Year-end Giving Information

Thank you for your continued generous support of Memorial Lutheran Church! This email is to help you plan your end of year giving if you wish to receive contribution credit for gifts in 2024.

In order to comply with the IRS, we will only be able to accept gifts for contribution credit in 2024 if the following are true:

1. We receive the gift in the office or the office mailbox by midnight on 12/31/2024 **and the gift is dated 12/31/2024**. Please use the mailbox outside the North doors if the office is closed.
2. A mailed gift is dated **AND** postmarked on or before 12/31/2024. If you intend to mail your gift, date your check 12/31/2024 or before and get it to the post office by closing on 12/31/2024 - **make sure to take it to the counter and ask it to be postmarked in your presence** - this assures it is done on that same day.
3. A gift from distributions such as an IRA is also dated **AND** postmarked by 12/31/2024.
4. Make your gift online using tithe.ly/give before midnight on 12/31/2024.

Thank you for your attention to this important information regarding our mission and ministry together in Nevada and beyond! We wish you all blessings of this Christmas season and a most joyous New Year!

Thank you for your Thrivent Choice Dollars contributions!

We would like to thank all those who have designated their Thrivent Choice Dollars to Memorial. In addition to funding **annual scholarships** for students attending ELCA schools, Thrivent Choice Dollars have been distributed in the following ways this year: **\$2,500** toward Memorial's "A Welcoming Space = A Welcoming Place" Heating/Cooling Project and **\$500** to much-needed hygiene products for Cubbie's Cupboard. Thank you for your generosity!

Tributes for Pr. Duane Miller's Retirement

Pastor Duane Miller, Memorial's interim pastor from September 2019 through April 2021, is retiring and his son would like to collect words of tribute from our congregation. If you would like to contribute, please email your congratulations, memories from his time at Memorial, etc. to emily@mlcnevada.org, or place them in the secure box outside Emily's office. Thank you!

MLC Member Survey

Earlier this year our congregation council set a goal to reach out to Memorial's membership in the hopes of listening well to the needs and hopes of our congregation. A subcommittee was formed to create a survey that would help in identifying what needs are being



met, as well as what needs are not currently being met. The council needs everyone's honest feedback in order to identify how we can best serve and love as Memorial Lutheran Church. Thank you in advance for your time and your thoughts. Your participation will help us to grow and abide together in Christ for the sake of the world.

Online Giving with Tithe.ly

Thank you for joining us for worship today! If you would like to support our ministries, online gifts can be made using <http://tithe.ly/> give or by scanning the QR code. ***Did you know? In Tithe.ly, you can set up one-time or recurring gifts to the General Fund, Capital Improvement (for upcoming building projects), the “A Welcoming Space = A Welcoming Place” heating and cooling project, and more!***



Save the Date

Mid-week Advent Worship & Supper

When: Wednesday, December 18, 6:00 PM—Supper; 7:00 PM—Worship

Christmas Vespers - “Come: Greet the Child”

An evening of handbell, vocal, and instrumental music

When: Thursday, December 19, 6:30 PM

Deadline to Order Christmas Poinsettias

When: Thursday, December 19

Quiet Christmas Service

When: Thursday, December 22, 5:00 PM

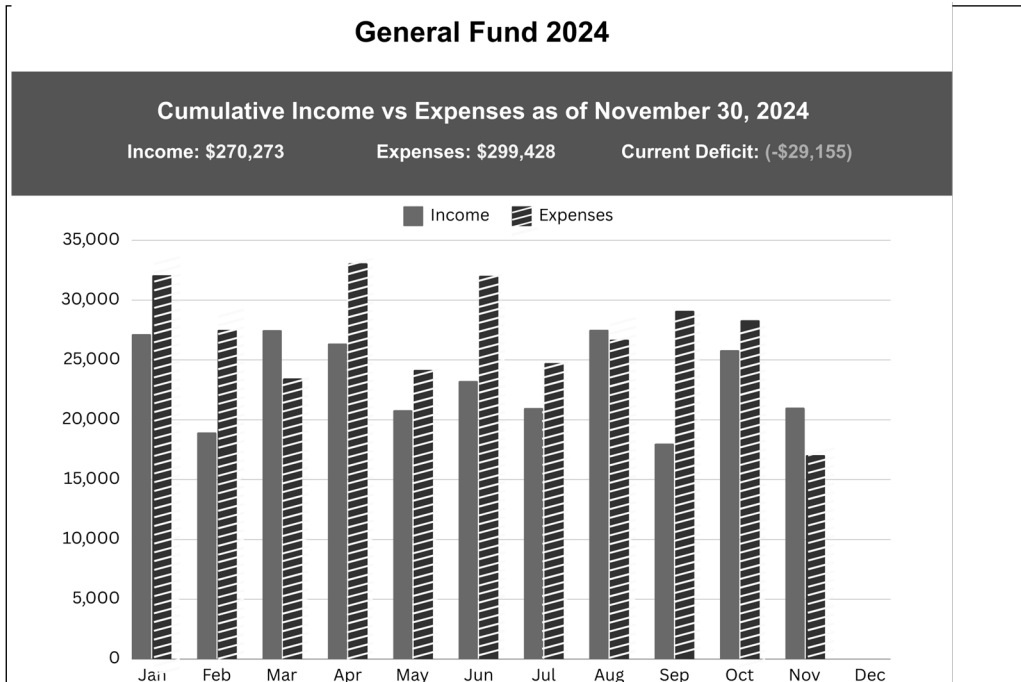
Christmas Eve Worship Services

When: Tuesday, December 24, 5:00 PM and 8:00 PM

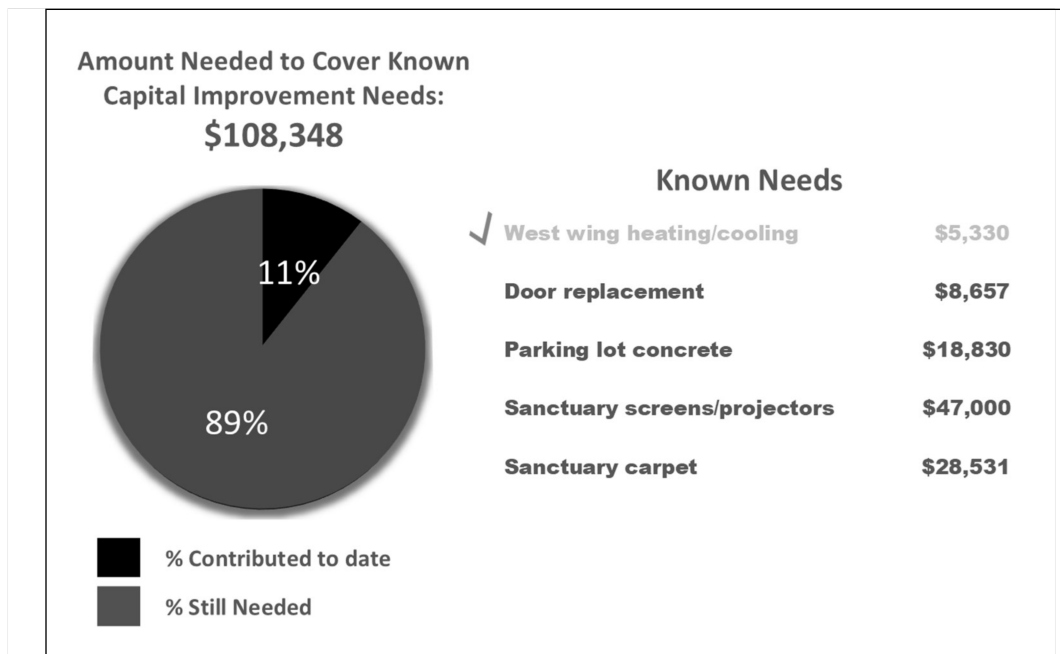
Christmas Day Lessons & Carols Service

When: Wednesday, December 25, 10:00 AM

General Fund Giving—Help us end the year ahead!



Capital Improvement Needs



Memorial Lutheran Church
701 11th Street, Nevada, IA 50201
Phone 515-382-6509
pastorkathleen@mlcnevada.org
emily@mlcnevada.org
www.mlcnevada.org

@memluthnevada



Memorial Lutheran

Memorial Lutheran ELCA

Kathleen Lotz, Pastor | Lois Theesfield, Director of Music Ministry
Emily Dalthorp, Parish Administrator for Outreach & Engagement
Mike Coverdale, Custodian

Texts and graphics from From Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2024 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #20739. New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.
Used by permission. All rights reserved. Cover image designed by macrovector / Freepik
