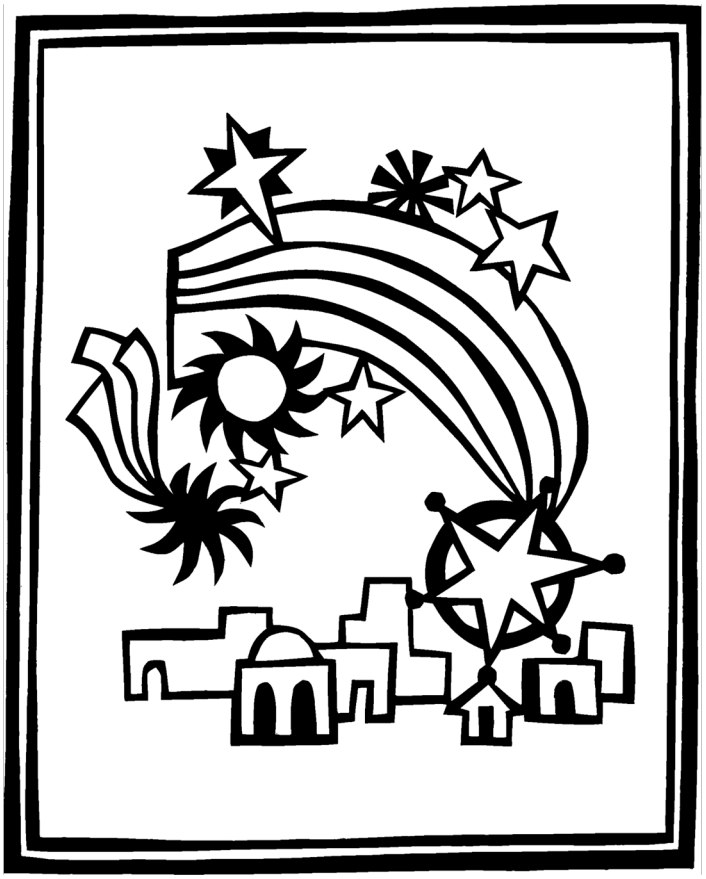
Christmas in July

July 26, 2026



MEMORIAL
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

Christmas in July

July 26, 2026

Memorial Lutheran Church | Nevada, Iowa

Prelude: *"Joy to the World"* - arr. John Carter
Lois Theesfield, piano

Welcome

Confession and Forgiveness

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

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God,
whose steadfast love is everlasting.
Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

God-with-us,
we confess that we have turned away
those seeking shelter,
claiming there is no room when we have plenty.
We have made power and wealth our idols,
while you show us true glory: a baby in a manger.
We have overlooked the shepherds,
expecting good news in prettier packaging.
Too often, we have valued violence
instead of your peace.
Turn us from our ways to your ways.
Grant us the grace to begin again.
Free us from all that keeps us bound,
and forgive our sin,
through Jesus Christ, who gives himself for us.
Amen.

Hear the good news and rejoice!
You are God's chosen ones,
holy and beloved,
+ forgiven in Christ,
and freed to respond in joy.
Amen.

Gathering Hymn: *"O Come, All Ye Faithful"* - ELW #283

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you gave us your only Son to take on our human nature and to illumine the world with your light. By your grace adopt us as your children and enlighten us with your Spirit, through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

First Reading: 1 Kings 3:5-12

5 At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God
said, "Ask what I should give you." 6 And Solomon said, "You have shown
great and steadfast love to your servant my father David because he
walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of
heart toward you, and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love
and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. 7 And now, O LORD
my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David,
although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. 8
And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a
great people so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. 9 Give
your servant, therefore, an understanding mind to govern your people,
able to discern between good and evil, for who can govern this great
people of yours?"
10 It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. 11 God said to him,
"Because you have asked this and have not asked for yourself long life or
riches or for the life of your enemies but have asked for yourself
understanding to discern what is right, 12 I now do according to your word.

Indeed, I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you, and no one like you shall arise after you."

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

The Work of Christmas by Howard Thurman

All read together

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among brothers,
To make music in the heart.

Second Reading: Romans 8:26-39

[26] The Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we
ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words. [27] And
God, who searches hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit
intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.
[28] We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who
are called according to his purpose. [29] For those whom he foreknew he also
predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the
firstborn within a large family. [30] And those whom he predestined he also called,
and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also
glorified.

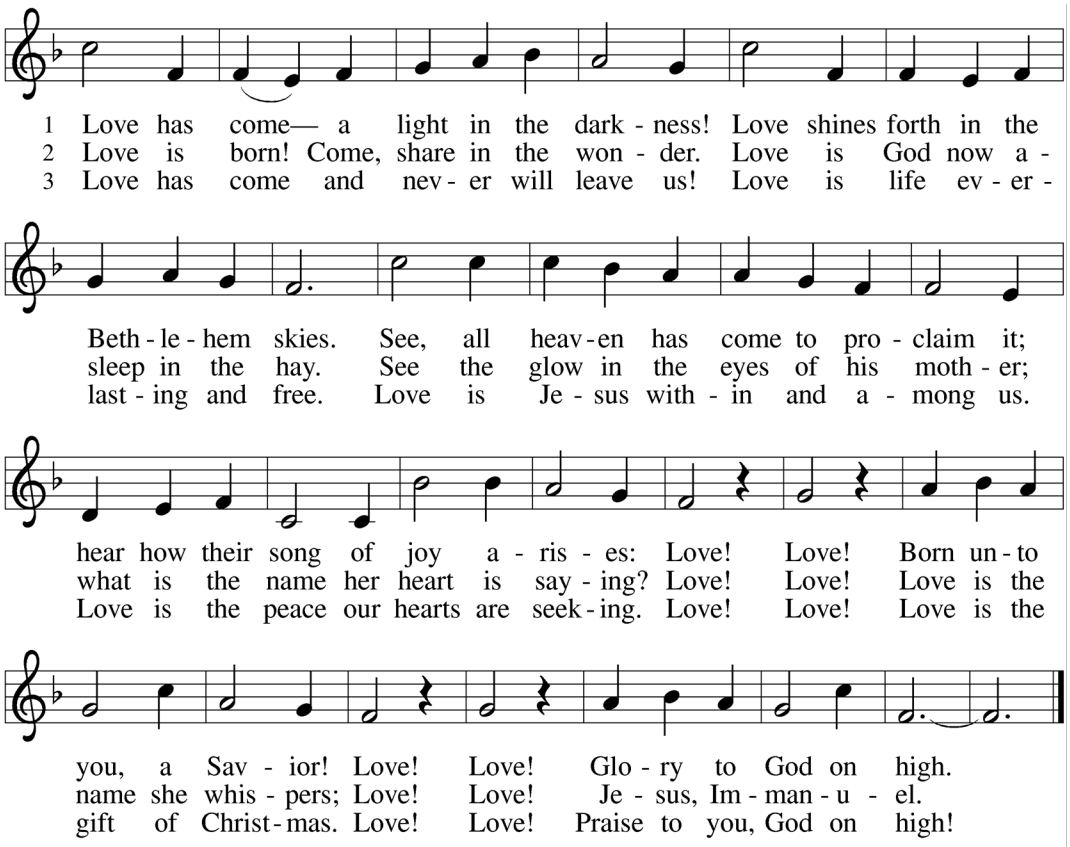
[31] What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against
us? [32] He who did not withhold his own Son but gave him up for all of us, how will
he not with him also give us everything else? [33] Who will bring any charge against
God's elect? It is God who justifies. [34] Who is to condemn? It is Christ who died, or
rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes
for us. [35] Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction or distress or
persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? [36] As it is written,
"For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered."

[37] No, in all these things we are more than victorious through him who loved us. [38] For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, [39] nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Children at Heart Sermon

Gospel Acclamation - *"Love Has Come"* ELW #292, verse 1



Text: Ken Bible, b. 1950
Music: UN FLAMBEAU, F. Seguin, *Recueil de noëls composés en langue provençale,* 1856
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Gospel Reading: Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

The Gospel according to Matthew
Glory to You, O Lord

31 [Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like
a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field;32 it is the smallest of all
the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree,
so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

33 He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a
woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened."

44 "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found
and reburied; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.
45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; 46 on
finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.
47 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and
caught fish of every kind; 48 when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put
the good into baskets but threw out the bad. 49 So it will be at the end of the age.
The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous 50 and throw
them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

51 "Have you understood all this?" They answered, "Yes." 52 And he said to them,
"Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is
like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what
is old."

The Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you, O Christ

Sermon

Hymn of the Day: *"Prepare the Royal Highway"* - ELW #264

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 the Lord be with you always.
And also with you.

Offering

Music Voluntary: *Dance Prelude on "Bring a Torch, Jeannette, Isabella"* -
arr. Christopher Uehlein
Lois Theesfield, organ

Offering Prayer

God of heaven and earth,
from the beginning, you have called forth life,
in which you take delight.
The trees, the fields, and the seas sing for joy.
Bless now these gifts, received from your bounty,
that we may join the chorus of creation
to tell of your salvation from day to day.
Amen.

The Meal

This is Christ's table and Christ's meal. All are welcome here. Kids are welcome to commune at the discretion of their parents. If you are unable to come forward please let an usher or the pastor know so that we can bring you Communion at your seat.

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

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

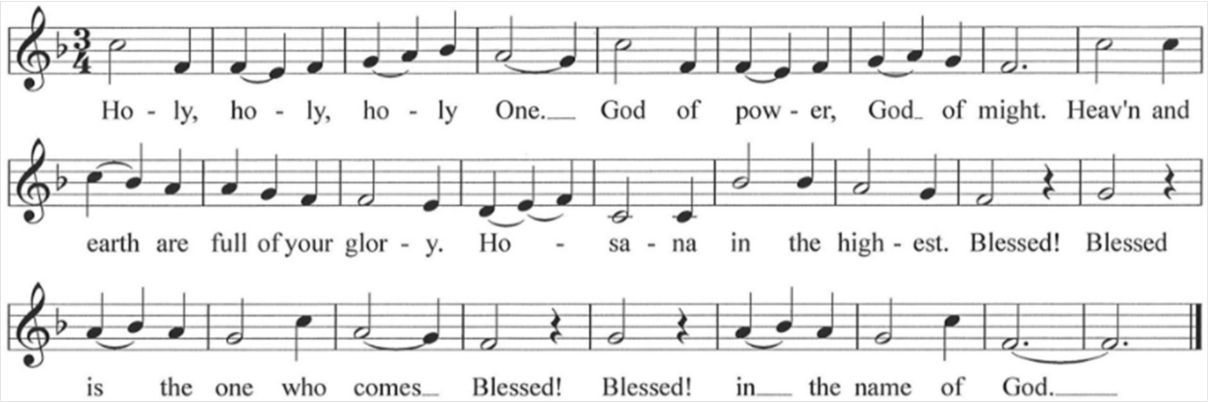
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Eucharistic Prayer

...we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, Holy, Holy

From David Eck's Everlasting Light to the tune of Love Has Come



Words of Institution

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

The kingdom of God is set before you.
Eat and rejoice.

Hymns during Communion

"Away in a Manger" **- ELW #277**
"Joy to the World" **- ELW #267**

Prayer After Communion

Merciful God,
we thank you for Jesus, who is our heavenly food.
Strengthened by this goodness,
send us forth to announce your peace,
comfort the afflicted,
and share the good news of great joy.
Amen.

Announcements

Blessing

The God of love,
Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit,
lavish you with grace,
illumine your path,
and increase your joy,
today and always.
Amen.

Sending Hymn: ***"Go, Tell it on the Mountain"*** **- ELW #290**

Dismissal

Go in peace. Live by the Spirit.
Thanks be to God.

Postlude: *"Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful"* - arr. John Behnke
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.

Prayers for Keith Twedt and family following the death of his wife +Judi Twedt

Prayers for Almeda Warner and Amy Vinzant following the death of their brother +Ken Tillotson

Judy Craven

Randy Theesfield
brother of Lynn Theesfield

Lynette Meis
friend of Steve & Nan Jungst

Mike Coverdale

Mel Craven

Beverly Johnson

June Rush
sister of Joan Ridgway

Nan Jungst

Paul Johnson

Mary Brinkman

Ashley and Ming Xu
friends of Aly Sassman

Kathy Lynn Johnson

Teresa Krebs

Kari Toot

Tanya Sorem

Julie & Craig Sutherland

June Copenhaver
mother of Diane Martin

Pastor Andrea Myers
wife of Pastor Ronald Myers

Charlie Lloyd

Bert Ann Ray

Wayne Kinyon

Loren Bryant
brother of Arlys Neal

Jill Rhodes

Connie Robinson
sister of Shirley Klonglan

Barb McDaniel

Ken Huffaker
father of Kendra McCauley

Ardith Forsyth

Eileen Miller

Karen Anderson

Caleb Roof

Evelyn Onstot

Katy Beno
sister of Sandy Christian

Eric Forsyth

Crystal Vines

Katie Bass
niece of Judy Coverdale

Wayne Johnson

Troy Vincent

Mike Neal

Christina King

Sherry Kluever

Kim Elliott

Pr. Marcia Kisner

Marlene Waddell
friend of Virginia Palmisano-Goettsch

Cassie Harrell

Jean Smith

Easton Farrington

Janice Hartz

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.*

Save the Date

TODAY: Christmas in July
When: Sunday, July 26 during and following worship
Where: Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall

Bible Study
When: Thursday, July 30, 8:30 AM
Where: Chapel

Vacation Bible School
Open for Preschool through 5th grade; cost $10 per family
When: August 2 - 5, 6:00 - 8:00 PM
Where: St. Patrick Catholic Church

Wiggly Worship
When: Sunday, August 2, 10:45 AM
Where: Chapel

CROP Walk Meeting
When: Wednesday, August 5, 1:00 PM
Where: Lounge

Fellowship & Outreach Meeting
When: Wednesday, August 5, 5:00 PM
Where: Lounge

Bible Study
When: Thursday, August 6, 8:30 AM
Where: Chapel

Beer & Theology
When: Thursday, August 6, 6:30 PM
Where: Cubbies on Main

Continued on next page

Executive Committee Meeting
When: Tuesday, August 11, 5:00 PM
Where: Lounge

CANCELED: Lutheran World Relief Work Day
When: Wednesday, August 12, 1:00 PM

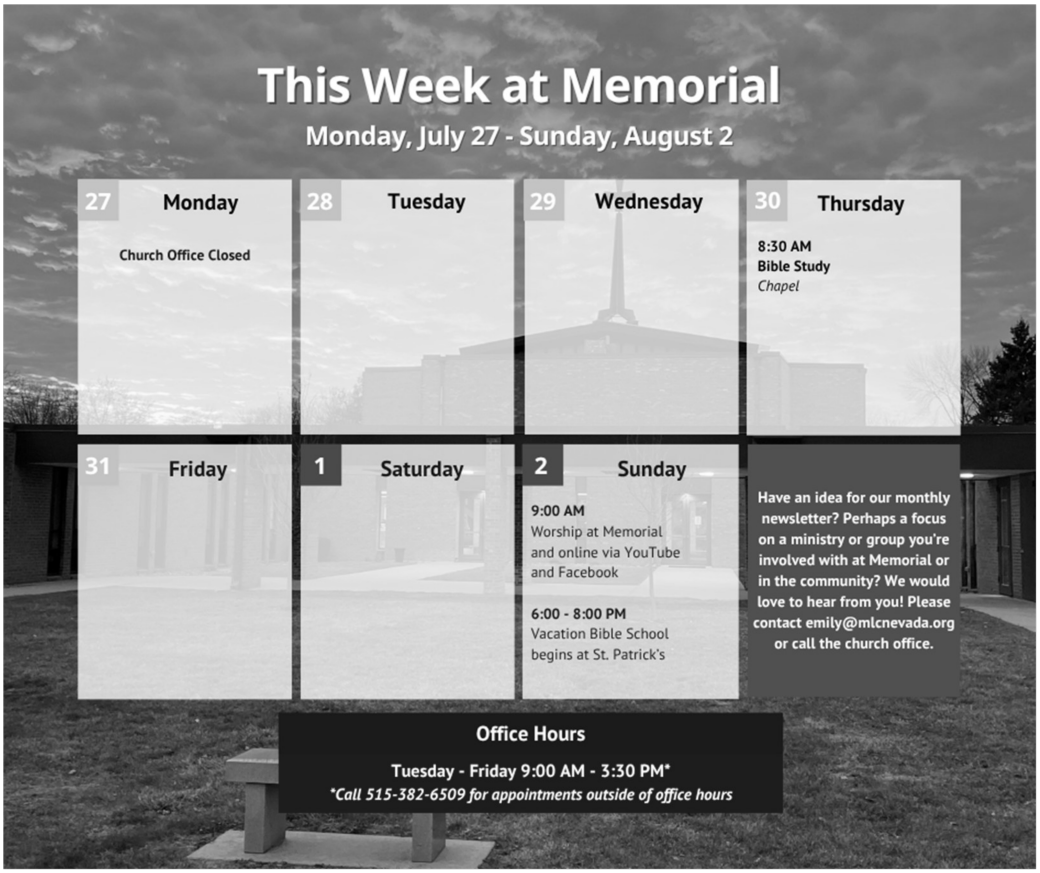
Faith Formation Meeting
When: Wednesday, August 12, 5:00 PM
Where: Lounge

Bible Study
When: Thursday, August 13, 8:30 AM
Where: Chapel

Finance Team Meeting
When: Thursday, August 13, 5:00 PM
Where: Staff Work Room

Bible Study
When: Thursday, August 20, 8:30 AM
Where: Chapel

Council Meeting
When: Thursday, August 20, 7:00 PM
Where: Fellowship Hall



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

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