

"From the Top"

A monthly publication of
Spirit of Our Savior Lutheran Church, ELCA

Volume IV, Issue 12

December 2025

Christmas Activities and Worshipping the King

What's going on and where do you need to be this month?

Here's a quick reference for you:

December 7: Caroling Caravan—we'll carpool from the church parking lot at 12:30 and make stops around Highland and San Bernardino and back to church. If you or someone you know could use some Christmas cheer brought to your doorstep, please contact the church office and we'll get you on the schedule. All ages and stages are encouraged to participate in this musical activity.



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December 9: Christmas in the Park—We'll have an outreach booth set up at Wildwood Park as part of the Christmas in the Park event welcoming the San Bernardino Ho Ho Parade.. See page 9 for more details.

December 24: Christmas Eve Worship 6 PM

December 25: Christmas Day Worship 10 AM

December 27: Memorial Service for Dorothy Hamre 11 AM

Join Us for Sunday Worship! In person or YouTube live. Traditional Service at 8:30 AM, Contemporary Service at 10:30 AM. Watch anytime on YouTube at www.youtube.com/@SOSLutheran **Wednesday Bible Study** in person or online via Zoom at 10 AM Zoom Meeting ID: 854 2429 7034 Passcode: 487951

**Following Jesus
and led by the Holy Spirit,
we love and serve
God and our neighbors.**

Pastor: Rev. Steve Anderson (951) 217-1885

COUNCIL:

President: Rich Kamiyama 335-3636
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Treasurer: Dick Brossia (951) 833-4647
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Congregation Support: Gordon Gertner 709-3186
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Worship & Music: Barb Frey 881-6069

STAFF:

Accompanist: Zabdiel Miranda
Church Secretary: Becky Tarts 496-9550
Custodian: Joe Balli 380-4018
Worship Leader: Heather Evans 725-8473

Special Thanks to Margie Arnett for keeping the Facebook page updated and relevant.

This newsletter is printed at no charge by LPI and supported by the generosity of the vendors listed. When you are in need of services, please remember to say 'thanks' to the businesses who help publish this newsletter.

Things you may need to know:

Newsletter Deadline: 15th of the month

Bulletin Deadline: 12:00 p.m. Wednesdays

Submissions must be in writing—email preferred.

Spirit of Our Savior Lutheran Church
P: (909) 882-5013 office@soslutheran.org
Office Hours: M, W, Th 8 AM—4:30 PM Friday 8 AM—Noon

Attendance for October

	Trad	YT	Cont	YT*
10/5	unknown			
10/12	23	3	39	1
10/19	20	2	42	2
10/26	23	2	35	4

*YT YouTube number of devices online, not number of people.

**"From the Top"
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Hello Church –

This year, the beginning of December, almost to the day, also marks the beginning of Advent (11/30) – a season in the church year filled with both anticipation and preparation for the arrival of Jesus, our promised Messiah. O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (a personal favorite of mine), verses 1-4 of which are shown below (there are eight total verses), is full of both anticipation and preparation. It is also, though, ultimately a prayer for both the first and second coming of our promised Messiah, Jesus, and is based upon a collection of 8th century Latin verses titled “O antiphons.”



1. *O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear.*

3. *O come, O come, O Lord of might,
as to your tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times you gave the law
in cloud, and majesty, and awe. Refrain*

Refrain
*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to you, O Israel.*

4. *O come, O Branch of Jesse, free
your own from Satan's tyranny;
from depths of hell your people save,
and give them vict'ry o'er the grave.
Refrain*

2. *O come, O Wisdom from on high,
embracing all things far and nigh:
in strength and beauty come and stay;
teach us your will and guide our way.
Refrain*

ELW Hymn #257

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel fills us with both anticipation and a call to prepare ourselves for our promised Messiah's arrival through numerous key words or phrases found throughout its verses. A few of these phrases, just from Verse 1 alone, are:

- **O Come:** O Come (repeated throughout the hymn), is an impassioned, heartfelt plea for the long awaited Messiah to come and fulfill God's promises to His people.
- **Emmanuel:** The Hebrew name for Jesus which means "God with us," is found throughout the Bible, but in this instance is drawn from Isaiah 7:14.
- **Ransom captive Israel:** Is drawn from both Isaiah 35:10 and Jeremiah 31:11 where both prophets respectively speak of Israel's bondage – and redemption

only the promised Messiah can bring.

- **That mourns in lonely exile here:** This phrase refers to Israel, which felt both spiritually and emotionally separated from God's presence as they awaited the promised Messiah's arrival.

My prayer for all who read these words is that the season of Advent, with its splendor and beauty sometimes lost amidst the noise and confusion of the loud and busy world in which we live, will indeed see you filled with anticipation for our Messiah's second coming – the true meaning of this season. My prayer is also that the Holy Spirit will work in you to ensure you are fully prepared for what our Messiah's second arrival means.

iGg,



Pastor Steve

Annual Reports are due!

Please have any reports or articles for the
Congregational Annual Report
into the church office before
Monday, December 29th at 8 AM.

The only exception is financial statements.

Congregational Household Prayer list for December

Week 1: Raymond Allen; Andrew Anderson; Kurt & Melissa Anderson; Pastor Steve & Arlea Anderson; Elizabeth Anderson-Kennedy

Week 2: Viola Angebrandt; Joe & Margie Arnett; Kiran Arter; Assumma Family; Brenda & Louis Asta; Chris Baer Arter

Week 3: Lillian Ball; Tim & Julie Ball; Joseph & Marlene Balli; Allen Bartleman; Bob & Connie Bell; Gilbert Beltran

Week 4: Karen Blake; Brett & Karen Brossia; Dick & Martha Brossia; Jill Catlin; Alice Chapman; Jorge & Jennifer Cervantes



President's Note

Dear Church Family,

As we enter this season of Advent, I have been thinking about the part of the Christmas story that often gets overlooked. When Mary and Joseph arrived in Bethlehem, the inn was full. Still, the innkeeper found a place for them. It was not fancy, and it was not perfect, but it was enough. In that simple act of making room, the world received its Savior.

I find myself thinking about what it means for us to make room for Jesus today. None of us has a perfect life or a perfect schedule. We are always busy, always balancing commitments, and always trying to keep up with the demands of each day. Yet God still calls us to open our hearts in whatever way we can.

I know many of us feel that nudge from time to time. A feeling that God is inviting us to take a step forward. Maybe it is joining a ministry. Maybe it is returning to worship more regularly. Maybe it is lending a hand to someone who needs encouragement. When we feel that call, I believe it is Christ gently asking us to make room for Him.

I want to share personally that I have felt this same call in my own life. Serving our congregation has reminded me again and again that Jesus is already at work among us. Each time someone volunteers, each time someone prays for another, each time someone shows kindness, the love of Christ grows in our midst. Small steps matter. Simple acts matter. They become the spaces where Christ is welcomed.

My hope and prayer for our congregation this December is that each of us will make room in our hearts for the gentle call of Christ. And when we hear that call, I pray we will have the courage to respond. Even the smallest opening we offer Him can become the place where Jesus brings peace, hope, and new beginnings.

May the Lord bless you this Christmas season, and may His presence fill your home and your heart.

Merry Christmas,
Rich Kamiyama



Christmas Poinsettias

The 2026 church year begins with the season of Advent.

Advent is a time of anticipation and preparation for the celebration of Christ's birth. In keeping with our tradition, the Sanctuary will be adorned with poinsettias against a backdrop of flickering candles for the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services as we gather to worship.

If you would like to purchase one or more poinsettias for display at these services, please use specially marked envelopes in the Narthex, and place them in the offering plate Dec. 7 through Dec. 21. There will also be dedication sheets available for those who wish to recognize someone with their purchase. If paying by check, please write "poinsettia" in the memo section.

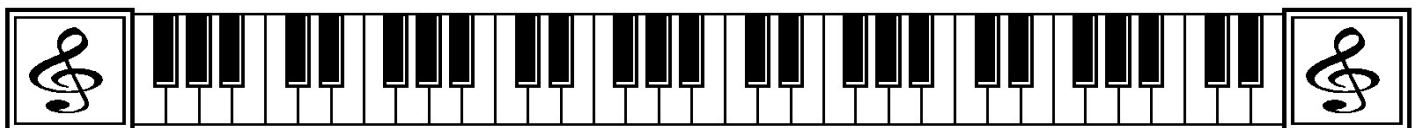
**Plants will be available for you to take home to enjoy
(or give as a gift) following the Christmas Eve service.**

This purchase is NOT tax deductible.

A Joyful Noise

Welcome to A Joyful Noise, a little corner of our newsletter dedicated to celebrating the music that helps shape our worship. Here, you'll find insights into different worship styles, introductions to new songs, and spotlights on the pieces we're currently singing together in church. You'll also get behind-the-scenes updates from our Praise Band—what we're practicing, why we choose certain songs, and how we hope the music lifts and deepens your worship experience.

Our hope is that A Joyful Noise not only keeps you informed but also helps you connect more deeply with the heart of our contemporary worship. May this space encourage you, inspire you, and maybe even introduce you to your next favorite song of praise.



CONGREGATION SUPPORT BY GORDON GERTNER

Get in the Spirit of Christmas; Join us as we visit a few shut-ins to sing Christmas Carols to bring Christmas Cheer to them. We will gather in the Parish Hall after the 10:30 service to organize and coordinate our route. There are very few on our list this year so 2 hours max time line.

Scheduled for December 9th 5:30 to 8:30 pm. Christmas in the Park to Welcome San Bernardino's Ho Ho Christmas Parade. We will set out tables to welcome the crowds, to share info about our church, and hand out T-shirts, small gifts & provide crafts for the kids. Come share the Christmas Story and Spirit with others. Setup will begin at the park around 4:30.

One more Item for this December we are planning on adopting a family for Christmas. If you feel so moved to make a donation toward this project just mark you donation for "Christmas Family". We will be working with Pastor, to find a family that needs a little extra to make their Christmas special. If you know of a family you would like added to the list please share with Pastor.



In closing I wish to thank all those that have always stepped up to help me make our events a success. I need to step back for a break as I am getting older, still work full time & having more health issues I need to attend to. So I ask you all to step up and help and support Laura Davis as she will take over for 2026. My special PRAYERS: for all those that are helping her plan & implement projects to make 2026 a wonderful year of Fellowship & Outreach for SOSLC..

Good Gifts Campaign

Good Gifts is part of ELCA World Hunger. The church council has designated all loose \$1 bills in our Sunday offerings to go toward this project for the months of October, November, December of 2025. This project is so important that the church council has already extended the campaign for the months of January, February, and March of 2026.

We will make a special push for Christmas this year also for ELCA Good Gifts. See the table in the Narthex by the Christmas tree for more information. Make a donation of \$30 take a Pig Ornament from the tree. Make a donation of \$50 take a Goat Ornament from the tree. Take the ornament for yourself or give as a gift to someone else as a gift from you. Other ornaments of different amounts were out of stock when I ordered will keep checking back to see if they become available before Christmas.

Make a donation in any amount take a Christmas card to give to someone to let them know you have made a donation in their name. Choose from: "Angels we have HERD on high, Have yourself A DAIRY little Christmas, It's BEE-ginning to look a lot like Christmas, O Citrus TREE, O Citrus TREE, while they last.

Look through the ELCA Good Gifts Catalog (found on the kiosk or the information center in the Parish Hall) for all the ways you can make a difference in others' lives. You can make your donations to Spirit of Our Savior Lutheran Church (SOSLC), Mark Good Gifts in the memo line we will send it in for you. You can go Online to: ELCA.org/goodgifts by Phone: 800-638-3522, or Mail to: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, P.O. Box 1809, Merrifield, VA 22116-8009 for yourself.

Christmas is the time for giving - so give if you can to help stop hunger for someone else, to make their life a little better. We are doing this now but the need is year round so you can donate any time of the year that works for you.

Congregation Support: Gordon Gertner

"Epidermolysis Bullosa Crazy Train Fund Drive"

Just want to thank you all for your support on this project. We have met our goal. When adding up the numbers we raised **\$5,061.00** for this fund drive. By collecting loose \$1 bills in the Sunday offerings, your donations, our wine tasting event, as well as donations from WELCA & the LCOS Foundation we reached our goal. The Wine Tasting Event was fun and we received lots of feedback that this was a great event.

Just as a note Shawn who handled the donation of the wine and provided the information on **Suveg Cellars** and helped to Host the event is no longer with Suveg Cellars. He has moved on and working for a restaurant in Redlands. We wish him all the best in his new job.

Alec Termer our other Host is still going through the stacks of records that Beverly Wotnow donated to him, enjoying every minute. He has shared records with others he knows and they are grateful. Thank You Bev!

We will be sending out the funds collected to Debra of America (Debra.org). They improve the quality of life for those living with EB in the United States. If you wish to make further donations to EB in the future please send them direct to Debra of America.

Christmas in the Park Returns

This holiday season, the Wildwood Park Neighborhood Association cordially invites you to the Ho Ho Parade Arrival Party on Tuesday, December 9, 2025, from 4:30 pm - 9:30 pm (set up to dismantle), to be held at our local Wildwood Park (40th and Waterman Avenue). Open to the public starting at 5:30 pm, family fun includes an array of free activities including crafts, games, an outdoor showing of a holiday movie starting at 6:20 pm, music, FREE hot cider and cookie for all attendees, music, and a raffle of fun prizes all culminating in the arrival of the Community HoHo Parade around 8:15 pm with a line-up of festive cars and characters.



PROPERTY NEWS BY KURT ANDERSON

Landscaping Projects

The landscaping project at the corner of Sierra Way and Leroy Street has been completed and the invoice has been paid. Thank you to everyone who participated in this project (except for the gophers who have found a way to breach the gopher barrier that was installed). Dick Brossia has purchased several sonic devices and installed them. We are waiting to see how effective they are in relocating our trespassers. We met with High Desert Affordable Landscape, who was our contractor for this project, to explore other options. They submitted a bid to install wire "baskets" underneath each plant. As I write this article, Council is considering whether to move forward with this additional expenditure.

Other phases of the landscape project are included for funding in the 2026 Budget including completing the landscaping within the new parking lot planters, grading, and reseeding the triangle in the parking lot, and improving the landscaping along Leroy Street.

Drainage Project

Robert Eisenbeisz is preparing a new drainage plan based on the recently completed topographic survey and the original grading plan for the church. Robert, Pastor, Dick Brossia, and I met on October 13 to review the work in progress. Robert will be contacting the City to determine what approvals and permits may be required. The lowering of the courtyard grass area grade and the replanting of the lawn will be part of the drainage project. We are in the process of ordering a new Title Report so that Robert has all the necessary information about any easements that may exist on our property. I have contacted American Towers to request plans and information regarding the location and depth of the electrical service to the tower site. We are hopeful to have all plans completed and approvals in place by January so that we can go to bid and do the work in early Spring.

Sound and Video Systems

At the October Council meeting we approved hiring a firm specializing in video broadcasts to assess and fix the issues we are having with our YouTube showing of the Sunday services. Equipment has been ordered, and work should have begun and will hopefully be completed prior to your reading this article.

Just a reminder that we need additional assistance during both services to run the video and sound systems. Please prayerfully consider making this a part of your

ministry. Training is provided.

Work Around the Church

A Special "Thank You" to all who have stepped up to assist with the janitorial work during Joe's absence. The Council has authorized me to prepare a scope of work and solicit bids from firms for consideration at a future Council meeting. The purpose is to secure help until Joe can return. Since this may take a while, I am also preparing a weekly task list so that, if you can help, you can easily see what has been done and what still needs to be done each week. The list will be in a folder in my mail box by the office and you can print your name next to a task after you have completed it. Even if we hire a cleaning service, there will still be tasks that we, as members of the congregation, will need to complete.

Richard Gutierrez and I have scheduled a work day to repair the faucets in the kitchen and in the Library. Thank You to Gordon and Rod for stopping by the church to put up sandbags by several of the doors in preparation of the November storm.

Landscaping Thank Yous

We have finally (for the most part) finished the first phase of our Landscaping Plan for SOS. We wish to thank Joyce Seeger who was the driving force to make it a priority. Landscaping is the first thing people see when arriving at our campus and the corner looks great now. Joyce was the first to see the need and made a financial donation to make sure this was completed. She was also part of the planning committee that worked on the project. We also want to say thanks to the Nelson & Copeland families as they directed memorial funds from Gary Nelson and James Copeland toward this project. Thank you to Gaylene Swanson and all the others that made donations toward this project.

Thank You all from the Landscaping Committee!

Kurt Anderson, Melissa Anderson, Pastor Steve Anderson, Dick Brossia, Gordon Gertner, Joyce Seeger.

Phase One complete. Phase two coming 2026.

Women of the Church News (WELCA) BY MELISSA ANDERSON

The following quote are more important words from a friend. They are, "DIVERSITY is God's Creation. EQUALITY IS God's justice. INCLUSION IS God's family."

MARY BIBLE STUDY GROUP – We meet on the second Thursday of the month from **10:00 - 11:30 A.M. in the library (December 11th)**. This month we will study "Practicing Advent Imagination: Matthew's dreamers and Isaiah's visions" by Rev. Sara Olson Smith. "We cannot build a new future that we cannot imagine. The long nights of Advent gift us with time to dream. This study will offer us ways of imagining God's future for us and all creation through the dreams of Joseph, the Three Wise Men and Isaiah. The study is from Gather Magazine and copies are duplicated for you, so you do not have to have the magazine to participate. If anyone comes across another study they would like to try, let me know as our study does not have to be from this one source. Come join us for Bible Study, fellowship, a cup of coffee and a snack.

LIGHT OF THE WORLD BIBLE STUDY GROUP – This group normally meets the 4th Thursday from 10:00 – 11:30 in the library but due to this date falling on Christmas will share study time with the Mary Bible Study Group on December 11th. We will continue to study The Pharisee and the Tax Collector from Luke 18:9-14. This lesson illustrates that God favors the humble over the proud. The lesson is from the book Parables: The Greatest Story Ever Told by John White. Copies of the lesson are duplicated so you do not have to have the book to come and join us for Bible Study, fellowship, and a cup of coffee.

REBECCA QUILTING GROUP – This group meets the 1st & 3rd Thursday from 10 – 3 in the Parish Hall (December 4th & 18th). If you would like, bring something to share for lunch, though it is not required. This is an important fellowship where we make quilts for those in need. Even if you have never quilted before, I invite you to join us and learn something new as there are many different tasks that need to be done to complete each quilt. Come and stay for as long as your schedule allows. Next month I will be able to report the results from Thank offering Sunday which occurred on November 30th, after this newsletter article was due.

WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY GROUP – We meet weekly from 10:00 A.M. to 11:00 A.M. in the library and via Zoom. We are continuing our study on the revised common lectionary which involves reading the scripture and discussing important questions during Advent. Pastor Steve sends out information in an e-mail at the beginning of each study week. If you are not already on the list, let him know so you can be included. Also, copies of the lesson are available on the day of the study. I invite you to join us for the study led by Pastor Steve. The Meeting ID is 854-2429-7034 and the Passcode is 487951 for the study.

EVENTS / SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES / INFORMATION

***San Bernardino Community Wellness Campus (formerly known as Central City Lutheran Mission or CCLM)** – Currently they are not accepting any donations due to their building process. I will let you know when they are accepting donations again.

The Pacifica Women of the ELCA Convention & Gathering** was Friday, afternoon, November 14th – Saturday afternoon, November 15th at Clairmont Lutheran, 4271 Clairmont Mesa Blvd., San Diego, CA 92117. The theme was ***Here I Am, Send Me from Isaiah 6:8. I WANT TO THANK EVERYONE who contributed 1) their old glasses and glass cases, including the office of Dr. Richard Kamiyama to the Lions Club of San Diego. , 2) rice, beans, canned fruit and vegetables to the Community Christian Service Agency, also of San Diego., and 3) gift cards to local Target & Wal Mart stores.

***The Spring Event** is Saturday, March 7, 2026, at Shepherd of the Valley, which is in Eastern San Diego County. The theme is "Spreading God's Love". Watch for more details in the newsletter and in the weekly church bulletin.

***Check Out These On-line Sites:** Pacifica Synod Notes and Newsletter and Pacifica Synod Women of the ELCA Pacifica Partners are both available on Facebook. You may also email questions to the Pacifica WELCA President's e-mail at [**welca@verizon.net**](mailto:welca@verizon.net)

Questions or Need More Information – Contact Melissa Anderson at 909-213-1059 or e-mail at [custernut@aol.com**](mailto:custernut@aol.com)**

Happy Birthday to . . .

4 – Margaret Nilson 16 – Arlea Anderson

4 – Sergio Reyes 18 – Mary West

5 - Tracy Hubbard 21 – Kari Kamiyama

5 – David Sparks 23– Amy Eisenbeisz

6 – Janice Eisenbeisz 23 - Judi Penman

13 – Herman Zietlow 25– Mackenzie Cervantes

14 – Mary Tartalone 27 – Tim Ball



27 – Robert Eisenbeisz

28 – Jorge Cervantes

31 – Jasmine Simmons


 Calling All Guardian Angels


 The Guardian Angel program is one of support for the young people who
 are participating in Confirmation Class. Pastor Steve has indicated that we
 will have three students that will start meeting with him after the first of
 the year. Each student will fill out a questionnaire and their Guardian Angel
 (s) will send them cards on special occasions, notes of encouragement and
 small gifts of candy or other items so that they know they have the support
 of the congregation throughout this journey.



 If you are interested in becoming a Guardian Angel, there will be
 information/sign-up flyers in the Narthex beginning in early December
 with the names of each confirmand. You can also contact Kurt or Melissa
 Anderson to learn more.



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we love and serve God
and our neighbors.**

