

# "O Come, Let Us Adore Him"

## THE OUR SAVIOR GUIDE TO CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

Christmas is made for worship. In the span of 16 hours, the people of Our Savior will gather for 3 services. Each service will have its own unique style and emphasis. Each service will be significantly different. Yet each and every service will have its focus on the Word of God and the miracle of that Word made flesh in Jesus Christ. Since Christmas Day and New Year's Day are on Sunday, that makes the dawning of Christmas and New Year all the more special. Let's try and come out in full force for the dawning of Christmas and the New Year 2023! Why not dedicate this whole week, as it is intended, to worship the newborn King? And you will find it a special joy to invite a friend or neighbor to come with you!

### CHRISTMAS EVE 7PM

*"The Christ Child Comes for All Children"*

Gather around the manger at a family service for children of all ages. In candlelight communion we will wonder at the miracle of God coming as a baby... to our world and to our hearts. Capture the childlike faith and joy this Christmas Eve as the child of Bethlehem is born anew in us. Bring a friend!



### CHRISTMAS EVE 11 PM

*"Silent Night, Holy Night"*

As a reverent hush covers the earth on the Silent and holy Night of Christmas Eve, we gather for the Midnight Mass and Candlelight Singing. Come and share the beauty and wonder of this night in the peace and presence of the Christ Child.

### CHRISTMAS DAY, DECEMBER 25, 10:00AM

*"A Contemplative Service of Readings & Carols"*

School is out, the presents are unwrapped, the parties are over. It is time to leave the hustle and bustle behind and find the real meaning of Christmas. Christmas Day worship offers a unique blending of the best Christmas poetry and treasures of Christmas music. In readings and carols, you will find a peaceful time for thought and reflection so that you can rest secure that every item on your Christmas list is finally checked off—except for one: like Mary, take all these things and ponder them in your heart. You will find this worship one of the most meaningful of the year.

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 1, 2023; 10:00AM

*What's in a Name?*

The first worship of the New Year celebrates the 8<sup>th</sup> Day of Christmas and the Naming of Jesus. This ancient festival of the church gives us the very name of God to begin the New Year. The God, who knows us by name, honors us with the name of Jesus to call upon in prayer and praise. Make a resolution to wear out the name of Jesus by using it in faith throughout the New Year! Christmas Carols continue on the 8<sup>th</sup> Day of Christmas.

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 8, 2023; 10:00AM

*The Baptism of Our Lord*

This service of Baptismal Renewal reminds us that every day of the New Year is a daily drowning to sin and rising to Christ in the waters of Baptism. Expect to get sprinkled just enough to leave walking wet in the world!

### SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2023; 11:20AM

*Congregation Meeting*

We'll upstage the Super Bowl, Sunday, February 12 at 11:20am with our Annual Congregation Meeting and Planning for an exciting new year in 2023. If you have a chance to bring a snack or finger food, we'll have a super-snacking brunch buffet potluck that will give a preview to the best Super Bowl party goodies later in the afternoon.

*Soup-er Sunday*

February 12 is Super Bowl Sunday. For most folks, that means football; for Our Savior that means a special offering for World Hunger. We'll roll out an enormous soup bowl to remember those for whom life is more than a game... those for whom a bowl of soup might mean making it through another day. Plan prayerfully to turn February 12 into a "Soup-er Sunday."

### WORSHIP IN THE NEW YEAR

What will worship look like in 2023? We'd like your response to help us answer that question since Covid changed our regular patterns for worship. Is it time to go back to worship as it was before? Or are the current precautions still helpful since Covid is still active, even within our own congregation? There are members whose immune systems are not ready for a return to in-person worship and there are other members who feel Covid concerns are no longer necessary. In that wide range of opinions, let us know how you feel about 1) In-person ushers vs. Bulletins on tables, 2) Passing the offering plates vs. Basket at worship entrance, 3) The Greeting of Peace handshake/hug, 4) Communion by kneeling and personally receiving bread and wine vs. Individuals receiving the bread and wine on tables. Let us know your thoughts on these and other worship patterns we may not have addressed. (*Survey forms will be available in the centrum.*)

# Birthdays

- 2 Melissa Zaragoza
- 3 Jarret Combs  
Natalie Granados
- 8 Jessica Brown
- 10 Arne Hauge
- 11 Lisa Adair
- 12 Beth Cook
- 13 Eric Combs
- 13 Diana Perez
- 15 Daniel Kurt  
Debbie Zimmermann
- 16 Bonnie Folkmann
- 19 Debbie Lonon
- 22 Glenda Hardi
- 22 Frances Hare  
Collette Lippincott
- 23 Rachel Shafer  
Ann Williams
- 24 Jeff Bartosh
- 25 Olivia Ranta
- 26 Verona Martin
- 29 Christopher Cannon  
Dottie Hutchinson



## Baptism Birthdays

- 7 Beth Shafer
- 12 Dawson Spindle
- 15 Lynn Coleman
- 16 Jesse Starr
- 18 Herb Salmons
- 19 Ashley Lubben
- 21 Betsy Hardi
- 27 Jonathan Starr

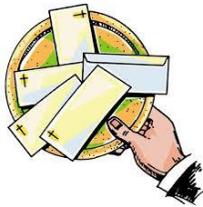
## Wedding Anniversaries

Date		Years
7	Henry & Baerbel Williams	62
26	Craig & Christine Spindle	21



## We've Got Your Number

... and we're waiting for you to come pick it up! New numbered offering envelopes for 2023 will be ready just in time for your generous stewardship in the New Year, 2023.



## NORTH TEXAS REFUGEE MEETING

A new year is brimming with new possibilities for service. For 20 years, our Bethlehem House has provided safety and security for over 40 refugee families. That ministry is currently being re-evaluated along with the future of the Bethlehem House. To help us in our discussions, representatives of Refugee Services of Texas (RST) will meet with us on January 8<sup>th</sup> after Sunday worship. The meeting will be short and will include time for questions and discussion. It is open to anyone interested in our partnership with RST and the ongoing use of the Bethlehem House. We encourage you to stay as we make plans for a new year and future ministry.

## Where Have All the Flowers Gone?

The flowers are back after the darker days of Covid, and the flower chart is up! We are changing the price and the procedure for Sunday flowers in 2023. We will have flowers only on the Sundays that people have signed up for and each bouquet will now cost \$20. We are not going to engage a florist this year but we'll have altar guild members—particularly Caroline Flanigan, Julie Williams, and Amy Ismail—provide them on the Sundays flowers are requested. This not only reduces the cost, but gives us generally better flower arrangements. Many thanks to the above trio for making this happen. If you would like to help with flower arranging, give the office a call. The Flower Chart is empty and waiting for you to designate the beauty of flowers for worship in celebration of, in honor of, in memory of, or any reason you might choose.



## 192 Pounds on Santa's Sleigh

Our December Food Drive netted 192 of non-perishable goods which Santa (disguised as Nancy Wilson) loaded onto his sleigh (Nancy Wilson's car) to give goodies to needy families just in time for Christmas. Thanks to all who responded to our food drive and gave so generously. And speaking of Santa's sleigh... how about Julie Williams taking one last bunch of fresh garden vegetables from our Community Garden to Good Samaritan food pantry! I guess that makes us all Santa's helpers!

## NEWS ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

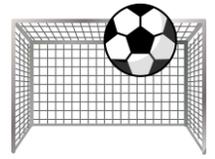
The Our Savior newsletter is first class! No longer will you be getting dates and details about our congregation a month late. Our bulk mailing results were so poor that we've put bulk mailings in the dustbin to go first class. Since first class is almost 3X the price, we will try to cut some of the cost by relying on email. If you do not mind receiving the newsletter only by email, please provide an email address. Many of you have given us your emails but we'd always like to broaden our list so let us know your email address if you've not already done so. Since first class mail in 2023 will be .60 or more per letter, let us know if you still want a hard copy of the newsletter beside the email version. (The newsletter is always available on our website—oslmesquite.org—and on Facebook.)



Email: \_\_\_\_\_

- I want the newsletter sent via email and regular mail  I want the newsletter sent via email only

# A Win for the World



The World Cup was played in Bethlehem over 2,000 years ago. It did not happen in a stadium that seats 90,000 but in a barn that barely held a handful of people and animals. Tiny as it was,

the whole world was crowded into that barn—races and nations, rich and rejected, presidents and peasants, powerful and poor, animals and, yes, even angels perhaps. They were crowded into that barn to witness the greatest final ever played. In a contest against prejudice and poverty, against cruelty and corruption, against wars and weaponry, against disease and death, a baby entered the fray and a victory was assured.

The Bethlehem manger was a win for the world.

The 2022 World Cup is now over. The whole world was watching. People across the planet were riveted to TV screens and computers and cell phones in a frenzy that engulfed virtually all the nations. For a brief moment in time the world had a common cause and one simple goal—to kick a soccer ball into a soccer goal. Caught up in World Cup fever, nations rooted for each other, forgot differences, and broke away from the routine to find exhilaration in a game.

Alas, it was only a game. And the exhilaration was only momentary. Bloodshed and brutality would force their way back onto computer screens and TV sets and soon as the last whistle blew. In fact, the forces of destruction never stopped.

World Cup competition pales in comparison to the contest begun in Bethlehem so long ago. The forces of evil were lined up to stop what God was up to. Sin, death, and the devil—as Martin Luther defined them—came out in full force to defy God ... to challenge mercy and justice, grace and love. A baby's cry began the warfare, but the battle was over before it had begun. Hate is no match for love. Greed cannot conquer grace. And no matter how hard it tries, death cannot stand against God's eternal life.

God chose no weaponry on this battlefield—only a baby, a baby who was God, who brought life, and who spoke the Word—the Word become flesh. In that moment, we were all crowded into that stable, riveted to the child in the manger, watching with breathless anticipation for what God was doing.

In that moment, the world was united in the arms of God so that people could root for each other, forget differences, and find exhilaration in a common cause, working for a single goal.

Of course, it doesn't always work that way. On the very first Christmas the whole world wasn't watching—unless you count a few shepherds and their flock as a symbol for the world. And there was no frenzy—unless an angel choir counts as a 90,000-voice cheering section. And, even today, the world isn't riveted to give full attention to that baby—not the way Mary was anyway.

But God was watching ... alongside Mary and Joseph, Shepherds and Angels ... alongside you and me.

This Christmas we'll gather at a stadium named Our Savior Lutheran Church to cheer God's victory over sin and death. In a frenzy of faith, hanging on every word of Luke 2:1-20, riveted to the candles that glow in a silent night, we'll be watching and cheering and singing with the whole world, crowded into a barn to witness the victorious moment of God's declaration of the triumph of love. And with the whole world we can forget the differences of class, color, and creed because that baby was born for them all.

After all, if a soccer game can unite us, why cannot God's love unite us? Why cannot justice unite us? Why cannot peace unite us? The Bethlehem manger becomes the place that unites us.

Indeed, the

Bethlehem manger is a win for the world. For we either win together or we are not citizens of our world, of God's World, of the Kingdom of Grace and Love. Isn't that the cheer of those cheerleading Bethlehem angels: Peace and Goodwill to unite us all ... in a Bethlehem manger ... where all win God's World Cup together.



*The following have contributed to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal*  
Keith & Diana Bruneau Michael & Sonja Conoly  
Paul & Carol Flanigan Craig Johnson Bonnie Johnston  
Barb Krause John & Pat Mangham Marie Mazza  
Ruth Montgomery Shari Murphy  
Reuben & Adama Ndomahina Dorothy & Vince Nelson  
Mike Phares Lois & John Schelter Connie Skyles  
Mary Britt & Jim Stovall Mel Vahlenkamp Ann Williams  
Henry & Baerbel Williams Mike & Julie Williams  
Nancy Wilson Mike & Debbie Zimmermann



*On a dark, chilly, Christmas night, God placed a candle  
in the window of heaven that still sheds its light of  
love, peace, and joy for our world.*