

December 2025



ONLINE SERVICE DETAILS

Connection Details for SUNDAY MORNINGS @ 10:00 a.m.

ALL SERVICES ARE LIVE-STREAMED THROUGH OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL
which can be found through Hope Lutheran's website: <https://www.hopelutheran.ca/>

Connecting by phone:

1. Dial 587-328-1099
2. Then press 487-603-306 #
3. Press # again.

Zoom

To watch our service on Zoom, click the button on our home page (www.hopelutheran.ca).
ZOOM is ONLY active when the service is in progress.



As we enter the seasons of Advent and Christmas, and then step into a new calendar year, I'm reminded how the Church teaches us to live in two kinds of time at once. The world races toward year-end deadlines, shopping lists, and resolutions, but the Church invites us first to slow down—to watch, wait, and prepare for Christ's coming.

Advent is a season of hope rooted not in wishful thinking but in God's promise. The candles we light each week push back the darkness just a little more. They remind us that even small acts of faith—prayer offered at bedtime, kindness extended to a neighbour, generosity shared quietly—carry Christ's light into a weary world. And how much this is needed in these times!

Then comes Christmas, not just a single day but a season. We celebrate the astonishing truth that God chooses to dwell with us—here, in our lives, our families, our struggles, our joys. The birth of Jesus is God's way of saying, **"You are not alone. I am with you, and I am for you."**

As January arrives and we turn the page to a new year, many of us naturally reflect on what has been and wonder about what will come. At Hope, this has also been a time of listening for God's direction. We continue to ask: What is the Spirit calling us to be? How can we grow in welcome, service, and discipleship? What does faithfulness look like for a church in 2026 and beyond?

I'm grateful for the many voices and hearts contributing to this conversation. Please continue to pray for Hope, its ministries, and its future. Pray for wisdom, courage, and a deep sense of God's presence guiding us.

This December and January, my invitation is simple:

Let Christ be your steady light.

When days feel short and sad, may His hope sustain you.

When schedules feel crowded, may His peace settle you.

When the future seems uncertain, may His love assure you that God is already there ahead of you.

Thank you for your faithfulness, your prayers, and your partnership in the gospel. May the seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany fill your home and heart with the light of Christ.

In hope and peace,

Pastor Greg

+MESSAGE FROM CHURCH COUNCIL

Chair's Message – December & January Newsletter

As we come to the close of another year and step into a new one, my heart is full of gratitude for the patience, interest, and steady, faithful commitment of so many people in our Hope community. This has been a year of transition, new ideas, renewed energy, and lots of work behind the scenes. And none of it would be possible without the incredible people who give of their time, wisdom, and care.

Some of this work is highly visible. But much of it is not, and it is this unseen faithfulness that quietly sustains our community week after week. I want to especially lift up:

- **Marianne, Joanne, and Marcia**, whose leadership in the Fall Fair, Gathering Table, and many ongoing ministries keeps us connected, nourished, and brought together in fellowship.
- **Kathy and Jim**, whose altar guild ministry grounds us in reverence and beauty.
- **Mark**, who has faithfully appeared wherever help is needed around the building.
- **Gretchen and Marianne**, for their leadership in facilities management.
- The Finance Committee - **Dale, Steve, Dave, Lois, and Cam** - for the many hours they give to stewarding our resources with care;
- The Personnel Committee - **James, Rachel and Kurt**, who are guiding the process to consider our organizational needs and recommend paths ahead;
- The Visioning Committee - **Rachel, James, Kyle, Nathan, and Victor**, for their thoughtful leadership in guiding us to identify our core values and a vision for the future of Hope; and
- **Greg** for his humble leadership of the music for the monthly new worship experience

I am certain I have missed someone, and I offer my sincere thanks to all who serve quietly, faithfully, and generously. You embody the heart of this community.

I also want to extend deep gratitude to our staff, who show up with such care and willingness to go above and beyond. This has been a very full season leading up to Christmas, and we pray for rest, renewal, and moments of joy for **Zena, Pastor Greg, and Lea Seminuk**, who have carried additional responsibilities during Mary's leave. We continue to hold **Mary** in our prayers, wishing her recovery, strength, and wellness as she gradually returns to work.

This newsletter spans three seasons of the church year—**Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany**—each offering a gift and a calling for us as a community:

Advent

A season of waiting and holy expectation.

My hope for us: that this Advent we enter deeply into our Rooted in Hope discernment, listening together for the core values that will anchor our life as a congregation. May our waiting be active, prayerful, and full of trust in the Spirit's leading.

Christmas

A season of joy, belonging, and God's love taking on flesh.

My wish for us: that we celebrate not only the birth of Christ, but one another—opening our doors wide to visitors, neighbours, and those who are seeking. May Hope be a place where the light of Christ is felt in genuine welcome, warmth, and community.

Epiphany

A season of revelation, guidance, and new beginnings.

My prayer for us: that as the magi followed the star, we, too, recognize the light God places before us. May we identify the vision and mission we are being called into, and follow with courage into the years ahead.

As we journey through these seasons together, may we pay attention to the light that is already here, and the light still calling us forward.

Thank you, each of you, for the ways you contribute to the life and mission of Hope Lutheran. It is a privilege to walk this path with you.

With gratitude and peace,

Anne Harding, Council Chair

FINACIAL UPDATE TO CONGREGATION

		2025		Variance	Notes
		Actual	Budget		
Revenues	Offerings	254,659	276,000	(21,341)	1
	Committee & Activities	1,220	1,161	59	
	Administration & Property	109,992	99,667	10,325	2
Revenues Total		365,871	376,827	(10,957)	
Expenses	Wages & Benefits	190,359	200,891	10,532	3
	Committee & Activities	26,885	33,300	6,415	4
	Administration & Property	137,989	151,016	13,027	5
	Synod & Ministry	15,015	17,400	2,385	
Expenses Total		370,248	402,607	32,359	
Extended Mini					
Synod & Ministry		0	0	0	
Extended Ministry Total		0	0	0	
Surplus / (Deficit)		4,377	25,780	(21,403)	

Notes

1. Offerings are down compared to Budget by \$21,210
2. Rental Income is up by \$3,618; Investment Income is up by \$3,656; Craft Fair and Other Income is up by \$3,051.
3. Wages and Benefits are down due to changes in Pastor Salary, Admin staff leave and over estimates in regulatory withholdings and benefits expenses in the Budget.
4. Committee & Activities are down compared to Budget due to Worship expenses \$1,234; Fellowship expenses \$3,192; Education \$587; Council Discretionary \$500
5. Administration and Property expenses are down due to over estimates in Safety Budgeting \$5,551; Equipment Repairs and Groundskeeping Supplies \$10,816

Understanding Our Conversations with Calgary Unity Lutheran Mission

As Hope Lutheran continues our conversations with the leaders and members of Unity Lutheran, we want to ensure everyone has a clear understanding of what is, and what is **not**, being discussed. These conversations are grounded in our mission, our values, and our commitment to welcoming those who wish to join our community. The chart below offers a simple overview to help all of us stay informed and aligned as we discern the path ahead together. If you have additional questions or concerns you'd like to make sure we address in these conversations, please reach out to a task force member: Pastor Greg, Anne Harding, Steve Medhurst, Kyle Bakx or Nathan Gingrich.

What We Are Talking About	What We <i>Might</i> Be Talking About	What We're <i>Not</i> Talking About
Having one pastor serve the people of Hope Lutheran — including current members of Unity — and that pastor is Pastor Greg Smith .	Bringing in a contract person (lay or deacon) to provide language support for those who need it (e.g., a worship service in Cantonese)	Calling a second pastor or employing more than one pastor.
Intentionally welcoming a group of new members (20 to 40) who we know speak Cantonese .	Including more celebration of different languages (Cantonese, German, Mandarin, Spanish) so multilingual members feel welcome and included.	Changing Hope's regular Sunday morning service into a multilingual service that congregants would be <i>required</i> to learn or adapt to.
Continuing to budget as we always have , receiving financial gifts from all members in support of one shared mission .	Allocating a set amount of funds within the annual budget to support a new ministry that may emerge from Unity members joining Hope (similar to past decisions, like allocating \$20,000/year to Lutheran Campus Ministry for the last 3 years).	Creating separate or parallel financial accounts dedicated to a "Unity mission" within or connected to Hope's financial structure.
Strengthening our governance structure for Hope Lutheran — which will likely include updating our bylaws to add staggered terms for council members, ensuring continuity and stability.	Inviting one or two members of Unity's current management committee (their version of a council) to join Hope's church council , helping ensure informed and representative decision-making as we welcome new members.	Allowing any particular group's interests to override Hope's established governance or to determine decisions in ways that do not align with Hope Lutheran's mission and shared direction .

Congregational Visioning: What Are Our Key Values?

Key values tell us who we are as a congregation, and also tell us who we want to be. After we decide as a congregation on 3-4 key values, we will use them to do value-based budgeting as well as to plan future initiatives and activities.

The values identified by the congregation in October are: Belonging, Compassion, Creativity, Collaboration, Curiosity, Faithfulness, Generosity, Grace, Hope, and Joy. Council has also suggested Love and Supportiveness.

Ideally, our discussion will involve the whole congregation in considering these values to determine which ones are central to our vision for the coming years.

Each week starting in Advent (with a hiatus over Christmas), we will focus on 1 or 2 of the values and delve deeply into them to consider what each one means, how we express it as a congregation, and how that value might shape our future. I will use a variety of discussion techniques to keep conversations varied and to encourage different members to participate. For example, visual images will serve as the starting point for some discussion. For others, we will use Biblical stories and characters. Others will start with songs and hymns. All of these serve as ways to invite people to think deeply about the values.

The goal is to involve all groups in the congregation that meet weekly. I will prepare the discussion activities for them, and I am also willing to lead discussions if requested. Gathering Table discussions during Advent will center on the values. Pastor Greg will focus his sermons on the values, and several discussions after church will be held for those who are interested.

By early February, responses will be collected, collated, and returned to the visioning committee and council for further consideration. Perhaps a consensus will already have emerged??

Finally, but most importantly, the children will participate in age-appropriate children's talks about the values in worship services. These talks will open up each week's discussion. Children are a valuable part of our congregation and deserve to be involved, but they also can unsettle in good ways adult thinking (as experience has taught me).

Links to the activity sheets can be found in the Thursday mailout or on the website under events here: <https://www.hopelutheran.ca/events/hope-visioning-activities>

Please feel free to contact me with any ideas, questions, or comments,

Rachel Schmidt
rlynnschmid@gmail.com

OFFICE NEWS

Interim office hours are Monday – Thursday 9:00am – noon.

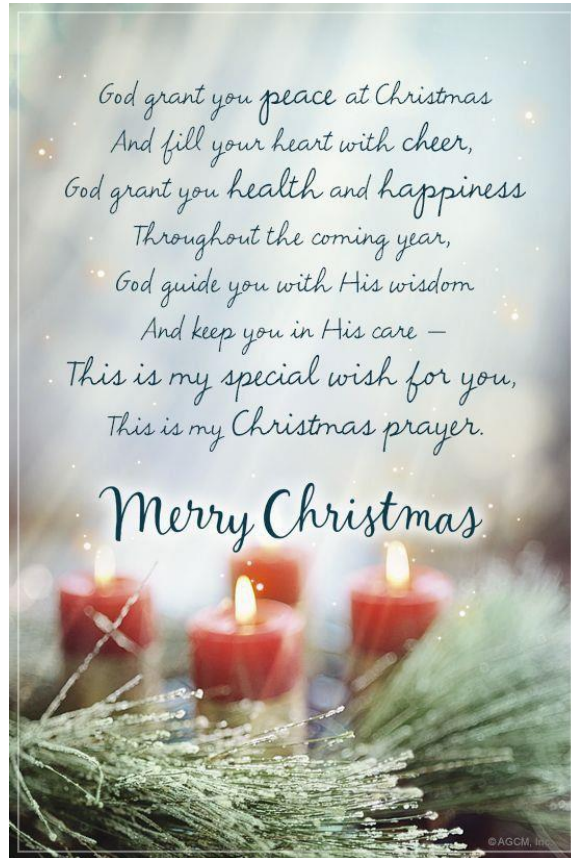
Zena will be away November 27 – December 5th.

The office will be closed for the holidays from December 24 @ noon reopening January 5, 2026.

Please contact Pastor Greg's cell for emergencies.

We wish you all things wonderful this Christmas season. May you be blessed with peace, hope, joy and love each and every day!

From Zena, Lea and Pastor Greg



YEAR END OFFERING CUTOFF AND TAX RECEIPTS

Please be aware that the church office will close at noon on **December 23rd**. *Any offering sent by mail that is not received by that time might not be eligible for the 2025 tax receipt.* Offering donations made by email transfer will be credited to the next banking day, so the EMAIL cutoff is December 30th (banks often close early on December 31). Envelopes collected at the Christmas Worship Services will be counted in 2025 as well.

In summary these are the deadlines to allow for inclusion in 2025 tax year:

Envelopes collected at Worship services until December 28

Email transfers until December 30

Mailed items received before December 23 - which depends on the mail system.

Tax receipts will be available as soon as possible in the new year. With reduced office staff, we request your patience in this regard and we do not anticipate any issue meeting the end of February CRA deadline. A bulletin notice will let you know when they are in your church mailbox.

2026 ENVELOPES

In order to reduce waste and control costs, Hope will be going to MONTHLY offering envelopes in 2026. In the past few years, only about 20% of the envelopes were used. However, we recognize that some people like the routine of weekly giving and we will supply additional un-numbered and undated envelopes anyone who requests this -- please contact the office and we can set you up with extras for 2026.

KEY HOLDER AUDIT

We are currently doing a security assessment. Please let Zena know if you have a key and/ or code to the church (we do not need to know the code) and let us know if it is an interior/interior master/exterior key. You can email Zena at coordinator@hopelutheran.ca. If you do have keys and you don't need to access the building, please return them to the office. Thank you for your cooperation.

ALTAR FLOWERS

If you would like to donate flowers for the Altar in 2026, please email chuch@hopelutheran.ca and let us know if you have a particular date in mind, or use the sign up sheet in the office.

The cost will remain at \$50/ bouquet. Please ensure that you have provided the payment for any bouquets you signed up for in 2025; remittances can be made using your offering envelope, E-transfer, or in the church office (please indicate "flowers & Date" on a separate line or in the memo section).

WORSHIP NEWS

Communion Sundays in December will be on December 7 & 21.

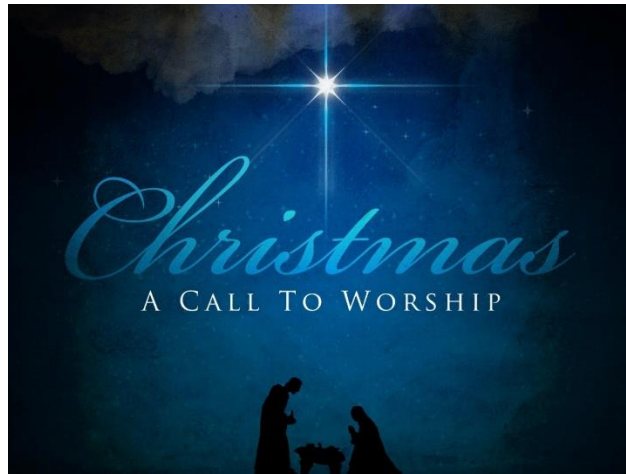
December 14th will be the Christmas Pageant! We can look forward to some handbell playing and a potluck will be served afterward.

December 21st – New Worship Experience

December 21st – Longest Night (on YouTube)



The Longest Night will be an online worship experience only. The service will be posted to Hope's YouTube page for all to view and reflect.



Christmas Eve Worship Services, Wednesday December 24TH – 4:30PM & 7:00PM

Christmas Day Worship Service, Thursday December 25TH – 11:00AM

January Worship Dates:



Wednesday, January 14th – 1:15pm worship at Varsity. Please join Pastor Greg and Joyce in providing this appreciated service.

January 25 – New Worship Experience

January 25 – Tentative date for Kids Camp Sunday at ADVENT Lutheran Church.

ADVENT BEGINS ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30



Advent Worship and Sermon Series – UP

In the midst of the darkness, the Scriptures for Advent invite us to see the “UP” side of what God is doing and about to do. We anticipate the arrival of the Christ child. We also anticipate what God is doing and will be doing through the Jesus community (the church) and what he is UP to in the world.

SUNDAY

Nov 30 (Advent 1)

Dec 7 (Advent 2)

Dec 14 (Advent 3)

Christmas Pageant and Potluck

Dec 21 (Advent 4)

*New Worship Experience this
Sunday*

TEXT

Matthew 24:36-44

Matthew 3:1-12

Matthew 11:2-11

Matthew 1:18-25

TITLE

Wake UP

Suit UP

Listen UP

Look UP

Epiphany Season Sermon Series

Epiphany is the season when Jesus is revealed—through signs, stories, relationships, and moments that open our eyes. This 7-week series traces how Christ reveals who God is, who we are, and what the world can become.

Epiphany of Our Lord (Jan 4)

Theme: “Revealed to the Nations”

Baptism of Our Lord (Jan 11)

Theme: “Revealed as Beloved”

Epiphany 2 (Jan 18)

Theme: “Revealed in Abundance”

Epiphany 3 (Jan 25)

Theme: “Revealed in the Word”

Epiphany 4 (Feb 1)

Theme: “Revealed Through Resistance”

Epiphany 5 (Feb 8)

Theme: “Revealed in the Deep Waters”

Transfiguration Sunday (Feb 15)

Theme: “Glory: Strength for the Road”



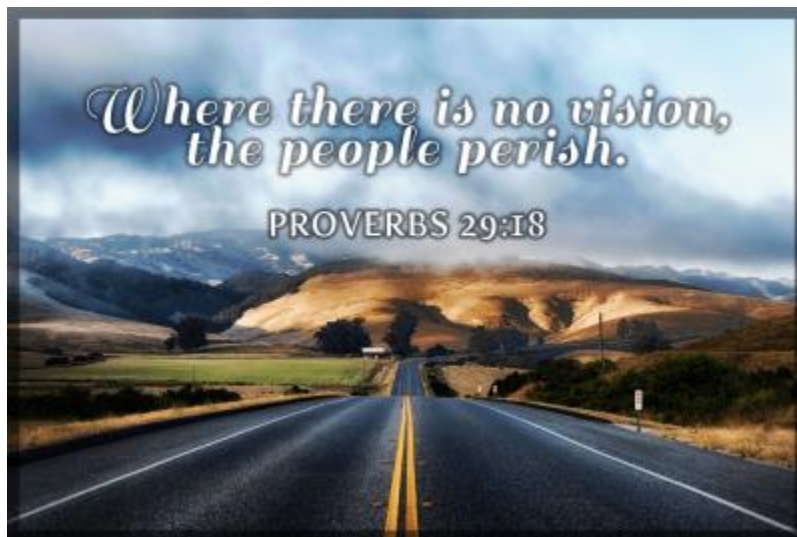
THE GATHERING TABLE RETURNS DURING ADVENT

Our midweek meal and worship experience will be held **Wednesdays December 3, 10 & 17th**. A simple supper will be served at 5:30pm followed by a short service at 6:30pm.

Contact Joanne S if you would like to bring soup.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

BIBLE STUDY



We will offer a three weeks study on Visioning. We will be guided by the themes of Advent and what all of us in the congregation have discussed in the past few months. Come and join on Wednesdays, December 3, 10 and 17.

Our theme for January 2026 - Relevant Lutheranism : Being Lutheran in the 21st Century

In recent decades, we have seen a sharp decline in the number of people who identify as Lutheran in North America. What happened?

Can the Lutheran expression of the Christian faith make sense to the 21st century person?

How do we stay true to the essence of who we are and adapt to the changing times?

What does it mean to be a Lutheran?

These are some of the questions this study will explore. Come and join us as we wrestle with being authentically Lutheran and culturally relevant.



CONFIRMATION

The class of 2025-2026 is in full swing. Once again, we are collaborating with Advent Lutheran and Lutheran Church of the Cross. Below is the schedule going forward.



DATE	LOCATION	TOPIC
December 7, 2025	Church of the Cross	Prophets
December 14, 2025	Hope	Christmas Party (Potluck lunch)
January 11, 2026	Advent	Wedding at Cana
January 18, 2026	Church of the Cross	Call of the Disciples
January 25, 2026	Advent	Feeding 5,000

SPIRITUAL LIFE NEWS

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

December 2 - Kira Syro	December 9 - Emma Kaminski	December 25 – Mariah Kaminski
December 3 - Keith Cornelius	December 12 – Richard Gingrich	December 27 - Brad Adams
December 6 - Lynda Bondli	December 19 - Cameron Runka	December 27 - Berna Frattaroli
December 7 - Susan Binder	December 21 - Maegan Kuziej	December 27 - Murray McCargar
	December 22 - Emily Harding	December 28 - Dale Blomquist

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Jan 3 – Elijah Gingrich	Jan 14 – Hannah Isinghood	Jan 26 – Raini Svensson
Jan 7 – Michelle Baer	Jan 14 – Brenda Waller	Jan 27 – Christoph Gingrich
Jan 7 – Keeley Isinghood	Jan 15 – Lina Gader	Jan 31 – Doreen Braitenbach

DAILY BIBLE READINGS – December

Monday, December 01, 2025: Psalm 124; Genesis 8:1-19; Romans 6:1-11;

Tuesday, December 02, 2025: Psalm 124; Genesis 9:1-17; Hebrews 11:32-40;

Wednesday, December 03, 2025: Psalm 124; Isaiah 54:1-10; Matthew 24:23-35;

Thursday, December 04, 2025: Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19; Isaiah 4:2-6; Acts 1:12-17, 21-26;

Friday, December 05, 2025: Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19; Isaiah 30:19-26; Acts 13:16-25;

Saturday, December 06, 2025: Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19; Isaiah 40:1-11; John 1:19-28;

Sunday, December 07, 2025: Second Sunday of Advent

Monday, December 08, 2025: Psalm 21; Isaiah 24:1-16a; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12;

Tuesday, December 09, 2025: Psalm 21; Isaiah 41:14-20; Romans 15:14-21;

Wednesday, December 10, 2025: Psalm 21; Genesis 15:1-18; Matthew 12:33-37;

Thursday, December 11, 2025: Psalm 146:5-10; Ruth 1:6-18; 2 Peter 3:1-10;

Friday, December 12, 2025: Psalm 146:5-10; Ruth 4:13-17; 2 Peter 3:11-18;

Saturday, December 13, 2025: Psalm 146:5-10; 1 Samuel 2:1-8; Luke 3:1-18;

Sunday, December 14, 2025: Third Sunday of Advent

Monday, December 15, 2025: Psalm 42; Isaiah 29:17-24; Acts 5:12-16;

Tuesday, December 16, 2025: Psalm 42; Ezekiel 47:1-12; Jude 1:17-25;

Wednesday, December 17, 2025: Psalm 42; Zechariah 8:1-17; Matthew 8:14-17, 28-34;

Thursday, December 18, 2025: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; 2 Samuel 7:1-17; Galatians 3:23-29;

Friday, December 19, 2025: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; 2 Samuel 7:18-22; Galatians 4:1-7;

Saturday, December 20, 2025: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; 2 Samuel 7:23-29; John 3:31-36;

Sunday, December 21, 2025: Fourth Sunday of Advent

Christmas

Monday, December 22, 2025: Luke 1:46b-55; Isaiah 33:17-22; Revelation 22:6-7, 18-20;

Tuesday, December 23, 2025: Luke 1:46b-55; 2 Samuel 7:18, 23-29; Galatians 3:6-14;

Wednesday, December 24, 2025: Nativity of the Lord - Proper I

Thursday, December 25, 2025: Nativity of the Lord - Proper II

Thursday, December 25, 2025: Nativity of the Lord - Proper III

Friday, December 26, 2025: Psalm 148; Wisdom 4:7-15; Acts 7:59-8:8;

Saturday, December 27, 2025: Psalm 148; Proverbs 8:22-31; 1 John 5:1-12;

Sunday, December 28, 2025: First Sunday after Christmas Day

Monday, December 29, 2025: Psalm 20; Jeremiah 31:15-22; Luke 19:41-44;

Tuesday, December 30, 2025: Psalm 20; Isaiah 26:1-9; 2 Corinthians 4:16-18;

Wednesday, December 31, 2025: Psalm 20; 1 Kings 3:5-14; John 8:12-19

Thursday, January 01, 2026: Holy Name of Jesus

Thursday, January 01, 2026: New Year's Day

Friday, January 02, 2026: Psalm 20; Genesis 12:1-7; Hebrews 11:1-12;

Saturday, January 03, 2026: Psalm 72; Genesis 28:10-22; Hebrews 11:13-22;

Sunday, January 04, 2026: Psalm 72; Exodus 3:1-5; Hebrews 11:23-31

Epiphany

Monday, January 05, 2026: Psalm 72; Joshua 1:1-9; Hebrews 11:32-12:2;

Tuesday, January 06, 2026: Epiphany of the Lord

Wednesday, January 07, 2026: Psalm 72; 1 Kings 10:1-13; Ephesians 3:14-21;

Thursday, January 08, 2026: Psalm 29; 1 Samuel 3:1-9; Acts 9:1-9;

Friday, January 09, 2026: Psalm 29; 1 Samuel 3:10-4:1a; Acts 9:10-19a;

Saturday, January 10, 2026: Psalm 29; 1 Samuel 7:3-17; Acts 9:19b-31;

Sunday, January 11, 2026: Isaiah 42:1-9; Psalm 29; Acts 10:34-43

Monday, January 12, 2026: Psalm 89:5-37; Genesis 35:1-15; Acts 10:44-48;

Tuesday, January 13, 2026: Psalm 89:5-37; Jeremiah 1:4-10; Acts 8:4-13;

Wednesday, January 14, 2026: Psalm 89:5-37; Isaiah 51:1-16; Matthew 12:15-21;

Thursday, January 15, 2026: Psalm 40:1-11; Isaiah 22:15-25; Galatians 1:6-12;

Friday, January 16, 2026: Psalm 40:1-11; Genesis 27:30-38; Acts 1:1-5;

Saturday, January 17, 2026: Psalm 40:1-11; 1 Kings 19:19-21; Luke 5:1-11;

Sunday, January 18, 2026: Isaiah 49:1-7; Psalm 40:1-11; 1 Corinthians 1:1-9

Monday, January 19, 2026: Psalm 40:6-17; Exodus 12:1-13, 21-28; Acts 8:26-40;

Tuesday, January 20, 2026: Psalm 40:6-17; Isaiah 53:1-12; Hebrews 10:1-4;

Wednesday, January 21, 2026: Psalm 40:6-17; Isaiah 48:12-21; Matthew 9:14-17;

Thursday, January 22, 2026: Psalm 27:1-6; 1 Samuel 1:1-20; Galatians 1:11-24;

Friday, January 23, 2026: Psalm 27:1-6; 1 Samuel 9:27-10:8; Galatians 2:1-10;

Saturday, January 24, 2026: Psalm 27:1-6; 1 Samuel 15:34-16:13; Luke 5:27-32;

Sunday, January 25, 2026: Isaiah 9:1-4; Psalm 27:1, 4-9; 1 Corinthians 1:10-18; Matthew 4:12-23

Monday, January 26, 2026: Psalm 27:7-14; Judges 6:11-24; Ephesians 5:6-14;

Tuesday, January 27, 2026: Psalm 27:7-14; Judges 7:12-22; Philippians 2:12-18;

Wednesday, January 28, 2026: Psalm 27:7-14; Genesis 49:1-2, 8-13, 21-26; Luke 1:67-79;

Thursday, January 29, 2026: Psalm 15; Deuteronomy 16:18-20; 1 Peter 3:8-12;

Friday, January 30, 2026: Psalm 15; Deuteronomy 24:17-25:4; 1 Timothy 5:17-24;

Saturday, January 31, 2026: Psalm 15; Micah 3:1-4; John 13:31-35;

FELLOWSHIP ACTIVITIES



Men's Breakfast Bistro

December 6th & January 3rd, 8:30 am at Cora Brentwood.

8:30am the first Saturday of each month at Cora Brentwood. The concept is simple – order and pay for your own breakfast and enjoy some great conversation. Always happy to have new faces join us! Please contact Robert: robert.hiebert@gmail.com for more details.

AN AFTERNOON OF CHRISTMAS MUSIC

Sunday, December 7th from 2:30pm – 4:30pm

Calgary Unity Lutheran Community would like to invite you to attend an afternoon of Christmas music! Held at Hope Lutheran, the afternoon will include carols, musicians and handbells! Light refreshments and fellowship to follow.



Advent Service of Lessons & Carols

Sunday, December 7th – 7:00pm at Highwood Lutheran Church. Address: 419 Northmount Dr NW

Food bank donations will be gratefully accepted.

PAGEANT PRACTISE AND PIZZA PARTY

December 13th – 4:00pm

HOPE'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PAGEANT AND POTLUCK LUNCH

Sunday, December 14th – 10:00am at Hope Lutheran Church. Invite family and friends along to join us for this wonderful annual tradition. Please bring a dish or two to share for lunch.



UNDER 100 CLUB

Thursday December 18th, 12:00pm

Another Hope tradition, please join us at our Christmas Café for lunch, some fun Christmas activities, and caroling! Please bring a plate of Christmas baking to share for dessert.

Please sign up if you plan on attending on the sign-up sheet on the Nurturing Connections board (so we can prepare food accordingly)



MINDFUL MOVEMENTS EXERCISE Class - NEW SESSION!!!

Led by physiotherapist Tonia Wood

November 12 - December 10

11:30am - 12:30pm

5 weeks for only \$40!

Nonagenarians are free!

Try first class for free - guaranteed you will love it!

Physio receipt will be provided for payments.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



This Advent and Christmas season, we would like to encourage you to reach out to fellow Hope members with a phone call, email or card in the mail! A small gesture can mean so much! If you would like suggestions of folks you could call, please contact Zena, or go through the church directory and call someone you haven't seen or talked to in a while!

Advent Care Packages

We will be making some care packages to go out to our homebound members. They will be ready for distribution on December 14th and we'd like your help! There will be a table with gifts and contact information. We ask that you help us out by taking a package or two - give your recipient a call and

arrange for a drop off or simply stop by to deliver some Christmas cheer from Hope! Take your children and grandchildren along as well!

SOCIAL MINISTRY NEWS

STITCHING FOR HOPE

Tuesday mornings at 10:00 am - NO Stitching for Hope on December 24 and December 31

A group of stitchers meet at 10 am every Tuesday morning at Hope to work on blankets while enjoying some great fellowship (and often coffee and treats). Can't stitch? No problem, come for the visit!



Santanonymous – Sig Zoller & family along with friends created this grassroots program several years ago. Supporting teen moms at a local high school, this year they will bring joy and gifts to 29 young parents their children. At Kids Camp Sunday in November our SS children and confirmands helped assemble Christmas treat bags and they also made Christmas cards. The Stitching for Hope group donated hand-made blankets, hats and slippers. Thank you Hope for helping care for others!

CHARITY OF CHOICE

Our Charity of Choice for November and December is Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR).

Giving Tuesday – December 2nd:

Thanks to a generous donor – a long-time supporter of CLWR who wishes to remain anonymous – every gift will be matched, up to a total of \$100,000.

CLWR has a 'Gifts from the Heart' donation catalogue on their website including **Tiny Hearts**, a program for kids to donate from \$4-14 to provide families with gifts of ducklings, seeds, or trees (to name a few) to help families establish ongoing food sources. Check out this page if your kids want to get involved! <https://donate.clwr.org/products/tiny-hearts>. CLWR Gifts from the Heart Catalogues are now available and there are copies on the info tables and in the office.

Their **Matched Gift** program matches your donation (3-4x your donation!) and will provide assistance such as emergency food, crop know-how, and garden tools. These gifts range from \$20-250 and can be found here: <https://donate.clwr.org/products/matching-gifts>

The full gift listing can be found here: <https://donate.clwr.org/products/all-gifts> and is chock full of impactful gifts and would make great family Christmas donations, if you are so inclined!

Our Charity of Choice for January and February is yet to be determined. If you have suggestions, please contact Zena.

Puzzle and Book shelf - as the weather cools, remember to check out the puzzles and books on our shelf. Donations of current reading material and puzzles without pieces missing are always welcome! Please tape boxes so pieces don't get loose!

MINISTRY PARTNERS



University of Calgary

MSC 487 (Faith & Spirituality Centre)
Supper on Wednesdays
Women's Circle

Mount Royal University

Z 203 (Cultural Inclusion Centre)
Supper on Thursdays

SAIT

MB 305 (Stan Grad Interfaith Centre)
Discussion on Fridays



Soup making, weekly suppers, discussion, "Holy Bakery", worship, farm trip, BBQs, retreat at Sylvan Lake, games night, karaoke, drumming, and much more!



Lutheran Campus Ministry Calgary



Presenting on Luther @SAIT



Halloween @SAIT



Soup Making @Hope



Growing Together fundraiser



Brazilian Samba Drumming @MRU



Holy Bakery Every Tuesday @uofc



[lutheran_on_campus_yyc](https://www.instagram.com/lutheran_on_campus_yyc)

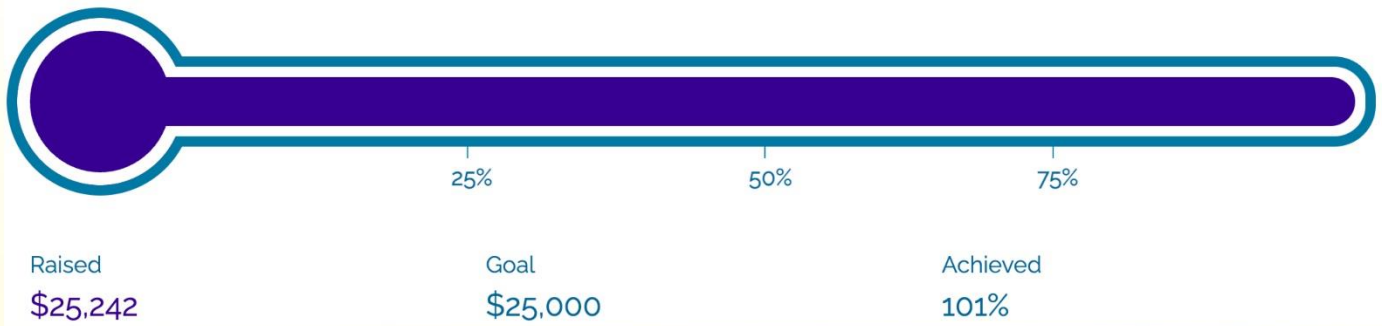


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margaret.koizumi@ucalgary.ca

"Growing Together" Fundraising Total (Does not include \$5000 Crowdfunding Alberta match)



Growing Together Indeed!

With our largest goal yet, our annual fundraiser went beyond expectations with not only meeting our \$25,000.00 goal but adding another \$5000 through a crowdsourcing grant we were able to access with a total of **\$30,242.00**. Many thanks to our board consisting of: **Pamela Giles** (chair) from Resurrection Lutheran Church in Saskatoon, **Brian Weatherill** (vice-chair) from Hope Lutheran Church, **Retta McLeod** (treasurer) from All Saints Lutheran Church, **Marla Johnson** (secretary) from Hope Lutheran Church, **Frank Stahnisch** (UofC faculty representative) from Advent Lutheran Church, and **Scott Redpath** from All Saints Lutheran Church. We certainly need to thank and highlight our annual fundraising committee: **Cindy Robinson, Lisa Schnarr, Joe Stolee, Jennifer Meredith, and Pamela Giles** for all their work around the auction and event set up and planning. We could not make this event possible without the generosity of **Hope Lutheran Church**- not only of space but financial support and prayers. For **tech teams** who are willing to teach our students and **Zena** who is consistently supporting this work with scheduling and working out kitchen schedules to accommodate the Campus Ministry. Also a note of thanks to the **Hope Stitchers** who donated some beautiful afghans for the auction.

Soup Making

In order to feed students at both MRU and UofC every week with a hot soup supper followed by some intentional conversation through our Simple Supper programming, we need to make soup! In partnership with the church, we were able to receive a license to cook commercially at Hope's kitchen. This means for every semester- we are cooking soup to serve over 40 bowls a week for every week of the academic semester. That's a lot of soup..... many thanks to volunteers from Hope who came out for the afternoon to help students cut, chop, stir, measure and wash. We are so grateful. This winter, we had over **170 onions** to chop- in case you were wondering why the church smelt like onions?!?



FROM THE WIDER CHURCH

Bishop Trish's November Message



We are called!

Churches will be decked out in red at the end of October as we celebrate our Reformation roots and then in white as we remember the saints, the beloved family of God that has come before us and continues today through us!

As I have travelled to visit congregations across our Synod – I see you! I see the diverse and faithful ways you are being hope in this world. Tiny Sunday School classes, clothing and nutritious meals for people in need, people caring for one another, lay leaders providing word and worship, so much diversity and creativity is your gift! This work, this ministry, is so important – you are living your call!

Rev Kevin Vandiver of Lutheran Church of the Reformation in Washington, D.C. in his recent sermon at the installation of the new ELCA Presiding Bishop, Rev. Yehiel Curry, preached into this time of the world. From Luke 4:16-30 he led us joyfully to understand Jesus' "mission statement" (The Spirit of the Lord is upon me...), but then Vandiver pointed out that the response to this great news was the people driving Jesus out to a cliff! That edge of the cliff, the precipice, Vandiver explained, is the crisis all Christians face as we meet the world with the too-good news of Jesus. The life of God's people is not easy.

Reformation too, reminds us of the pain and trials of change, of lives lost in proclaiming the gospel. All Saints illuminates the heritage of faithful people on whose shoulders we lean and it calls us to stay the course for those who will follow.

And so, the call remains – to each of us to continue in our baptismal covenant (or to anticipate our baptism!) sharing God's purpose in a world that seems to be edging closer to the precipice. Remember, God is persistent and faithful to all the promises given. We need not be afraid. We need to simply continue as best we can.

Blessings as you gather, worship, pray, resist, get up again, share joy, enact justice – as you continue in transformative ministry and upholding the family of God. You are not alone and you are much appreciated in this church.

Blessings,

Trish Schmermund
Bishop, Synod of Alberta and the Territories
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS

We thought it would be fun to get to know each other a bit better by hearing about the congregation's family Christmas traditions. We hope you enjoy reading these submissions as much as we did!

"One of my favourite Danish Christmas traditions is circling the Christmas tree holding hands while we sing Christmas songs and hymns - in both English and Danish. All ages and stages sing cheerfully whether they know most of the words or not. We love the cheeky Danish song where the little elf is trying to keep the rats from stealing his rice pudding. "På loftet sidder nissen med sin julegrød" translates to "in the rafters sits the elf with his Christmas porridge". And after circling both



ways and singing at least 10 songs, we end with one of our favourite carols are "Stille Nat, Hellige Nat" which is "Silent Night, Holy Night". And then we do indeed "Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace."

(I promise you there is a small tree in the middle)

- Anni Søgård Poulsen Adams

"Every December 24th with the extended family we have Chinese food late afternoon to then get to church, and we come back for games, and fondue later at night. The 25th, every year we have cinnamon buns in the morning, before the brunch. Then it is the turkey with all its trimmings, and tourtiere of course."

- Elaine Stringer

"Martin and I have been collecting one Christmas ornament from each major trip we go on. Ideally it reflects something special we saw or did on that trip and is locally made.

Over our 32-year marriage, there are a sizeable number! When decorating our tree, we reminisce about the trips and our life together.

My favourite Johnson Family memories include the numerous board games, card games and new Christmas games we play after Christmas dinner and on Boxing Day each year.

We've played games since childhood and have passed this love on to the next 2 generations. Pictionary and Definition games are favourites. Where did we all learn to lie so well and so innocently? My blood-related family members laugh so hard that we are all crying! Game nights need to have a big box of Kleenex nearby."

- Sharon Alcock

REFLECTIONS

O CHRISTMAS TREE

Kathy Lee

Back in the days on the farm we always had a Douglas fir Christmas tree. Sometimes the tree my dad brought home was a rather pathetic specimen, small and spare of branches. But, as in Charlie Brown's Christmas, once it was decorated it looked beautiful. Mom was too busy with Christmas preparations at home and at church to have time to decorate a tree so my sister and I did the decorating on the last day of school which sometimes was as late as December 23. I can't remember if our dad put the lights on the tree, or if we managed to do that ourselves. My sister was quite proficient when it came to things like that so that may have been the case. In any event, once the lights were secured, we got down to the serious business of hanging the ornaments and the tinsel icicles. The icicles were made of aluminum foil, not plastic like they are nowadays, and so they hung beautifully and stayed in place, not hitching a ride on someone's clothes due to static electricity.

During the Christmas season there was much visiting and entertaining going on. We accepted invitations for coffee from relatives and friends. Sometimes we were out both in the afternoon and the evening. Without fail, the first thing Elaine and I did after we'd taken off our coats, was to check out the tree in each house. We wanted to see how it measured up in comparison to ours. Sadly, ours didn't usually make the grade, especially when the tree was bedecked with fancy bubble lights or "indent baubles." Elaine determined that we should have some ornaments like that, so she took it upon herself to order some from the Eaton's catalogue. When they arrived, we were thrilled. Oh, they looked so nice hung on the tree! Afterwards, even without bubble lights, we were satisfied that our tree compared with the best of them. Believe it or not, I still have a couple of those ornaments my sister ordered so long ago and they are given pride of place on our tree every year. They are at least seventy years old.

It used to be a much-anticipated outing to choose a tree but after we learned that our son-in-law was allergic to live trees we switched to artificial ones. One of the last real trees we had was a Scotch pine. It was beautiful, but hard to decorate with its long needles. And taking it down was a nightmare because it was shedding like mad. To make matters worse, the living room had shag carpeting (already in place when we bought the house) – and not just run- of- the -mill shag carpeting, but carpeting with really, really long fibres. I tried vacuuming up the needles, but it wasn't long before the hose got jammed with needles lying crosswise. Ack! I spent the better part of the morning on hands and knees picking out every last needle out of the rug. No more Scotch pines! No long after, we got rid of that shag carpeting. (It was white. Can you imagine, with four kids and a dog?)

One last memory is of the two years we spent in Westport, CT. The church we attended, St. Paul Lutheran, had a live tree, roots intact, which was later planted in the grounds surrounding the church. There were several trees in different stages of growth dotting the landscape so the practice had been going on for quite a number of years. What wonderful stewardship of God's creation!

Blessings and peace to all my readers. God is with us!

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2026



GATÓN-23-



Youth is when you're allowed to
stay up for New Year's. Middle age
is when you're forced to.

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Bible Word Search

Apostles / Disciples



O	I	J	E	H	J	F	X	T	U	Q	R	H	T	B
S	W	I	B	M	A	A	V	Q	O	P	O	U	Q	S
T	J	W	E	L	U	A	M	L	B	N	H	B	G	Z
W	U	N	Q	B	J	Y	W	E	I	G	H	B	Z	E
E	D	B	F	H	U	Q	J	C	S	G	D	F	O	E
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G	E	F	P	E	W	T	B	S	M	B	Y	C	O	Z

Word list:

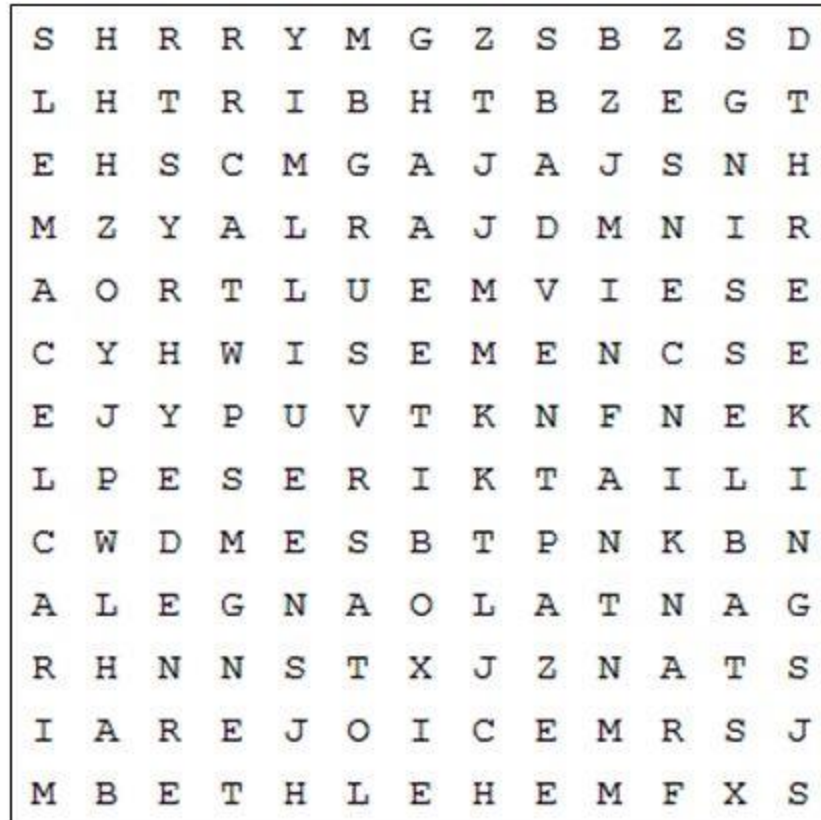
PETER
ANDREW
JAMES
JOHN
PHILIP
BARTHOLOMEW

THOMAS
MATTHEW
JAMES
THADDAEUS
SIMON
JUDAS





Joy to the World



ADVENT
ANGEL
BETHLEHEM
BIRTH
BLESSINGS
CAMELS
FRANKINCENSE

INFANT
JESUS
JOSEPH
MAGI
MANGER
MARY
MIRACLE

MYRRH
NATIVITY
REJOICE
STABLE
STAR
THREE KINGS
WISE MEN

