



December Newsletter 2025

"Inviting ALL to Live the Gospel through Faith, Love, and Compassion"

10970 185th Street West ♦ Lakeville MN 55044 ♦ 952-435-5757 ♦ www.familyofchrist.com

Message from Pastor

The Power of Yes

Christmas is coming and with it all sorts of wonderful extra things that we can be part of. Many of us love the craziness of the season but even I get a bit overwhelmed by all the opportunities, the responsibilities, and the struggle of the most wonderful and dark time of year. Add to it the stress of world in which we struggle with all sorts of insecurities and it makes me want to say "no", and not just to a couple things. The thing about Christmas though is that it's the season when God says "yes" to us in Christ, and invites us to say "yes" to loving as we have been loved.

In a time of deep transition and change, there are so many reasons to not say yes. Even the small yeses in our daily lives feel riskier somehow. Decisions about where we put our money, our time, our energy, our confidence, and our faith feel more important than ever during these volatile times. We come from a history of people who said yes. Throughout the story of the people of God, brave and faithful, everyday people said yes to God. In Advent, these "yeses" are even more significant.

In the story of the birth of our savior, so many people said yesses that changed the world. From Elizabeth and Zechariah, to Mary and Joseph, the shepherds and the wise men all had to say yes. What is God calling us to "Yes" to?

What does it take to get to yes? Why does it matter? Why does it matter that we believe this? This is a story that we tell, that isn't just on a page or in ancient tales, but one that lives in our bones, and calls to us to say our own yes when we are called into what God is doing now.

Happy Advent,

Pastor Brent



"The Power of Yes" © 2025 Church Anew



Advent and Christmas

Saturday, December 6th
Woman's Advent Luncheon
11:30am

Sunday, December 7th
Advent Band
9:30am

Sunday, December 14th
Community Christmas Pageant
9:30am
Trinity Care Ctr Party
1:30pm

Sunday, December 21st
Holden Christmas
9:30am

Wednesday, December 24th
Christmas Eve
Service
4:30pm

Sunday, December 28th
Mary Said "Yes"
A Time of Stories and Song
9:30am

Advent Band, December 7th

Currently play and instrument? Played one many years ago and want to dust it off and see if you still have it?

Then join us as we celebrate the Advent and Christmas season with a Sunday filled with instrumental music. All abilities welcome to join us as we hope to celebrate the coming of our savior.

**Contact Jeremy Mann
for additional information.**

CHRISTMAS CAROL SING-ALONG with COCOA, COFFEE AND COOKIES Sunday, December 21st @ 6:30pm

You are invited to the
Third Annual Caroling Event.

Join Jon and Solveig Englund
at their home
for a fun evening of
music making.
Text Solveig for her
Lakeville address:
(480) 406-4066



Christmas Pageant Ugly Christmas Sweater December 14th at 9:30am

It's time for the Family of Christ's Christmas Pageant. If you haven't already, please let us know if you (adults welcome) or your children would like to be a part of the program.

Contact Dana or Pastor Brent if you are interested in helping or participating.

Below is the schedule for this year's Christmas Program and Sunday School.

Sunday, Nov. 23 10:30-11:30 Practice program and SS

Sunday, Nov. 30 10:30-11:30 Practice program and SS

Sunday, Dec. 7 10:30-11:30 Practice program and SS

Saturday, Dec. 13 Dress Rehearsal 9:30-11:00am for all

Sunday, Dec. 14 Christmas Pageant 9:30am – Arrive by 9:00am

December 21 & 28: No Class- Christmas Break



**Christmas Eve at Family of Christ
Wednesday, December 24th
Join us for a candlelight service
at 4:30pm.**



Decorators Wanted!

Join us after worship on Sunday, November 23rd to decorate the sanctuary.

We are looking for about 6 - 10 adults to help.

If this is something you would like to be a part of, please sign-up on the clipboard at Sunday's service, or on the Sign-Up Genius link

Family of Christ Advent Luncheon and Basket Fundraiser Saturday, December 6

Come enjoy the Christmas spirit and join in our potluck luncheon, basket raffle, and fellowship time on December 6th at 11:30.

It is a potluck with a \$5.00 donation. In addition bring 6 cookies.

Please consider donating a basket!

Raffle tickets will be on sale after worship on Nov. 23 and Nov 30 and the day of the luncheon.

Profits will go to Messiah Lutheran Food Shelf.

We are looking for members to help with this event on Nov. 23, Nov. 30, Dec. 5, and/or Dec. 6. Please sign up on the clipboard or on the sign-up genius



Raffle Basket Donations

Our Advent Luncheon and Fundraiser will be here before you know it. It is time to start planning a basket to donate. Bring the baskets in any time between now and Nov 19 if you can.

We will be selling tickets ahead of our luncheon. Those dates will be Nov. 23 and Nov 30.

So, we need baskets to raffle off! They do not need to be big and extravagant, just something fun!

We will also auction off any larger items (event tickets, cabin getaways, etc.)

Need an idea?? The options are endless...

Spa Basket

Date Night Basket

Fishing Basket

Puzzle Basket

Baking Basket

Ice Cream Basket

Gift Wrap Basket

Gardening Basket

Kid's Craft Basket

Book Basket

Coffee Basket

Lottery Basket

Trinity Care Center Gifts and Party Dec. 14th at 1:30pm

Join us in one or two ways as we support the residents at
Trinity Care Center.

Pick a stocking from the gift tree in the narthex, take the name out, write your name next to the resident's name on the sign-up sheet, then buy and wrap a gift/s for that person. Watch for tags coming soon.

Please bring the labeled wrapped gift/s to church by Dec 7th.

Then join in helping the residents celebrate the season by delivering the presents to them, singing carols at the party, and enjoying refreshments as we get to know the residents on Sunday, Dec 14th.

Come dressed in festive wear- **all ages welcome.**

It is a wonderful way to serve together as a family.

Please sign up on the clipboard in the Narthex.



A Big Thank You!

Look at all the great things we have accomplished in the last few weeks! The parking lot was sealed & striped, the sinks in the south bathrooms were replaced, the broken concrete at the south door was replaced and poured fresh, new windows in the sanctuary, and less noticeable by sight, a new internet was installed to support our on-line streaming needs. None of which was possible without the support of all of you! Thank you for saying "yes" to this budget request!



Lakeville Community Choir

The Lakeville Community Choir is looking for more members! And to make it even easier for you, they now rehearse right here at Family of Christ.

Whether you consider yourself a good singer, or just a car/shower singer, your voice is welcomed!

Stop in on a Thursday evening from 7-8 in the Sanctuary to find out what they are all about.

Contact Barb Watson (bwats918@gmail.com) with any questions, or Brita in the church office.



Thank YOU!

Thank you to all the volunteers who have graciously accepted to help with our Sunday School, Confirmation, or Youth Group this year.

Our programming thrives because of you. Thanks for being a shining example of service to others. It has been a great fall, and we look forward to a wonderful year supporting our youth, young and old, on their faith journey.

So, a huge shout out to you all!

Youth Schedule:

Nov. 19: Confirmation and Youth Group
Nov. 26: Mission Trip Fundraiser: Cub Bagging
Nov. 26: Youth Game Night 6th-12th grade at 6:30
Dec. 3: Confirmation, Program Practice, and Youth Group
Dec. 6: All Member Advent Luncheon and Fundraiser
Dec. 10: Confirmation, Program Practice, and Youth Group
Saturday, Dec. 13: Christmas Program Rehearsal 9:30-11
Sunday, Dec. 14: Youth Sunday, Christmas Program, and Trinity Care Outreach
Dec. 17: Christmas Party- Combined 6-12th from 6-8pm
Dec 24 and Dec. 31: No Class – Christmas Break



Mission Trip Meeting November 16th

Calling all families of 6th-12th graders. Next summer we are having a local mission trip.

Dates for this are tentative but we are looking at June 14-17th.

In the summer of 2027, we have 2 trips being planned. High schoolers will head to



Puerto Rico, and our middle schoolers will head to a “nearby” city.

Both will be through Youthworks.

If your youth has a heart for serving, meeting new people, becoming closer to each other, and growing in their faith, then have them join us on these Mission Trips. Costs are still being determined. We are meeting after worship on Nov. 16th to plan to organize fundraisers for the year- this is for parents and youth.

Our first fundraiser has been raking leaves and our 2nd one is Nov. 26th bagging groceries. If any of our FOC members have any fundraising ideas, please contact dana@familyofchrist.com



Youth Game Night

Do you love games and hanging out with friends?
Are you a 6th-12th grader? If so, then come and join us on Wednesday, **November 26th** from 6:30-9:00pm. Feel free to bring caffeine-free drinks to share and/or a snack to share. Bring your favorite games as well. It is also a great opportunity to invite a friend or two. Adult chaperones are welcome as well.

Youth Fall Retreat

Twenty of our youth had a wonderful weekend at Camp Spring Lake Retreat Center in Rosemount on Oct. 3-5th.

It turned out to be a hot and windy weekend and we loved it!

Our youth had fun exploring prayer, eating yummy food and snacks, playing games, Grogg in the dark woods, and of course battling it out in the hunger games. Thanks to Brent, Dana, Nichole VanMinsel, Steve Klimpke, and Mary Auna for helping lead, chaperone, and/or drive.





December Mission of the Month
FAMILY OF CHRIST COMMUNITY FUND

Helping and encouraging people of Family of Christ and those around us is an important part of Family of Christ. Each year we collect donations for this fund so we can help those in need and encourage one another in faith. Please consider making a donation to this fund or buy some gift cards and send them to church.

2026 Statement of Intent Pledge Cards:

If you have not already turned in your pledge card for 2026 they are available from the church office or online.

REMEMBER we need to have your completed pledge card to count for the matching funds!!
Please contact Linda at linda@familyofchrist.com.

Stewardship Matching Message from Chuck Halvorson

Are you aware of our new matching funds?

We have some members that have committed \$25,000 for a matching fund to encourage others to increase their pledges. This means that your new or increased pledge is matched—effectively doubling the impact of your giving!

Please give generously to help Family of continue to change lives!

DEADLINE FOR 2025 GIVING:

Please note all gifts for 2025 need to be received in the office by Sunday December 28th.

If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact Linda at linda@familyofchrist.com.

Thank you for all your gifts to Family of Christ.

“FoCus” is a monthly publication of Family of Christ Lutheran Church.

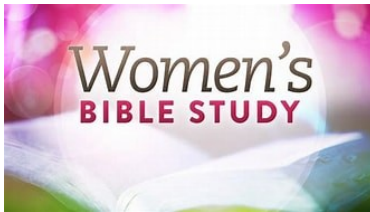
Please contact the church office to submit items for publication in our newsletter.

Family of Christ Staff Ministry Team:

Lead Pastor:	Pastor Brent Erler
Church Administrator:	Linda Bauer
Children, Family and Outreach Coordinator:	Dana Sahlin
Ministry Coordinator:	Brita Hanchek
Musicians:	Mary Wescott
	Ann Mikiska
	Solveig Englund
	Kim & Steve Wolff
Custodian:	Kelly Kritsberg

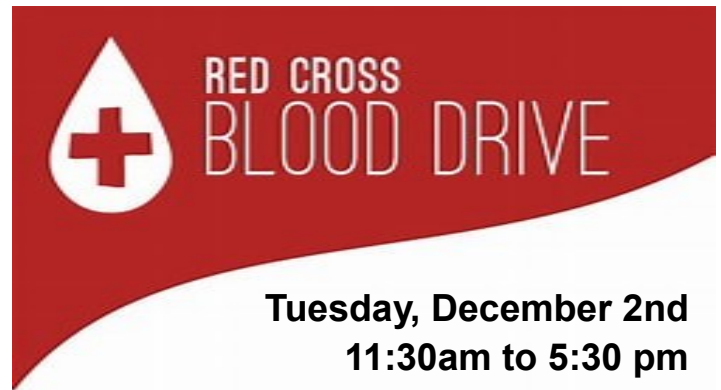
Family of Christ Lutheran Church
is a member of the **ELCA**

Email us at:
office@familyofchrist.com
Visit us at: www.familyofchrist.com
Telephone: 952-435-5757



Women's Bible Study Monday, December 1st

Our study this fall is entitled:
"Money, Stewardship, and Generosity"
by Rev. Christa von Zychlin.
We will meet at FOC at 10am.
All FOC women and guests are welcome.



Tuesday, December 2nd 11:30am to 5:30 pm

To donate blood, go to www.redcrossblood.org
Contact Glenda Lind for more information.

Luther Park Men's Retreat January 9-11

Join us for our first annual "Strength & Stillness: Men's Retreat".

Escape busy life for a weekend of tranquility, community, worship and growth.

When was the last time you felt truly refreshed in your body, mind, or spirit? Water sustains life, restores what's dry, and connects all of creation. Throughout scripture, God uses water to cleanse, renew, and bring new beginnings. From the waters of creation to the waters of baptism, God's presence flows through it all. Together, we'll dive into what it means to be renewed by the Water of Life—a source that never runs dry. Join us for a weekend of reflection, connection, and inspiration!

Lead by our own Pastor Brent and Steve Wolff

See the website or social media for signup link

Tanzania Thank You, Asante Sana

In October we supported our Tanzania partners in the following ways:

Secondary Scholarships: \$8,835
Medical Scholarship: \$ 870 (more to come)
Iringa Hope Micro Loan: \$2,619
Dignity for Daughters: \$ 700
Thank you for your amazing support. This changes lives!



A COMPANIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SAINT PAUL AREA SYNOD (ELCA)
AND THE IRINGA DIOCESE OF TANZANIA (ELCT)

Helping our Community

If you or anyone you know is in need of help this Holiday Season please contact the church office or Pastor Brent.

Many of our members have stepped up to support others and we have resources available.

This is what we do as a church.

We are running low on keys for our outside doors.

If you have a key to the church that you are not using please contact Linda at the church office.



Mark your calendar:

Sunday, November 23 Christmas Program Practice Begins
Tuesday, November 25: Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service at St. John's
Wednesday, November 26: Youth Game Night
Saturday, December 6: Advent Luncheon
Sunday, December 7: Advent Band
Sunday, December 14: Youth Christmas Program
Sunday, December 14: Trinity Care Caroling and Present Delivery
Sunday, December 21: Caroling with Solveig
Wednesday, December 24: Christmas Eve Service

Dates to Remember

Sun. Nov 23: Christmas Pageant practice begins
Tue. Nov 25: Ecumenical Thanksgiving at St. Johns
Wed. Nov 26: Youth Game Night
No Wednesday Programming
Sun. Nov 30: Christmas Pageant practice
Wed. Dec 3: Dinner/Conf/Youth Group
Sat. Dec 6: Advent Luncheon
Sun. Dec 7: Worship//Advent Band
Christmas Pageant Practice
Wed. Dec 10: Dinner/Conf/Youth Group
Sat. Dec 13: Pageant Practice
Sun. Dec 14: Christmas Pageant
Trintiy Care Ctr Party
Wed. Dec 17: Youth Combined Party
Sun. Dec 21: Worship/Holden Prayer Service
No Sunday School
Wed. Dec 24: Christmas Eve Service
Sun. Dec 28: A Time of Stories and Song

Vision Statement

Family of Christ invites ALL to Live the Gospel though Faith, Love, and Compassion



Our Core Values F-A-M-I-L-Y:

Faith
Acceptance
Meaningful relationships
Impact
Love
Youth