

DECEMBER 2022



# *The*Visitor

## *Filled With Hope & Gratitude*

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**A Community in the Model of Christ**

## From the Pastor...

We live in anxious times. Individually and collectively, many of us struggle with anxiety, socially, economically, politically, and yes, even ecclesiastically (the church's future). Anxiety is the produced experience of living in times of uncertainty, lack of control, and unpredictability. Anxiety is an emotional burden and exhaustion, a feeling, whether rational or irrational, and one that impacts our bodies, relationships, and overall personal mental health, and well-being.

**In this season of Advent, we are invited to practice a balancing act, a move from anxiety to anticipation.**

Not easy. The two are seemingly contradictory, and perhaps they are. So what kind of invitation is it that anticipation even helps to mitigate the challenges of anxious systems? At root, it is an invitation to trust in a future coming not of our own creation.

How we wait matters, that is, what we do while we wait matters. For us, as people of faith, we wait by listening, by making room for a Word to be spoken and embodied among us. We wait for an emerging future in Christ to come to us through the Holy Spirit. Our waiting, as has always been the case for people of faith, has been rooted in our practice of listening.

When we are baptized in Christ, it is proclaimed, *"I baptize you, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."* Our first initiation into the life of the church comes communally as we anticipate these words spoken out loud for us to hear. They are words of Promise about how our lives are caught up in the life of Jesus. *"Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore, we have been buried with him by*

*baptism into his death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life."* (Romans 6:3-4)

Advent is a season of anticipation, of waiting and watching for the moments of life that God gives, a life received as gift, and not of our own creation.

One of the biggest adaptive challenges that communities of faith have to learn in these anxious times is living into this tension between what God is doing, and what we strive to do. God can be minimized or narrowly conceived as giving the people of God a spiritual laundry list of things to attend to while we wait. However, because Christ is a person and not a principle, we are to wait as if the person of Jesus continues to speak to us, and as if there are new things we need to hear that help us to repent just as much by our unlearning, as by our strategizing.

**For sure moving from anxiety to anticipation will not be easy. It is, however, the central invitation and trust of the Advent season, and equally so, of the entire Christian journey.**

May we lean into this new future with anticipatory expectation of new things to come, including the things that need to die in us so that new life in Christ might be born in our world. What anxiety is God calling you to let go of for a new future to be born?



Pastor David

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David".

## Advent ★ Filled With Hope & Gratitude

This Advent, we are focusing on the theme "Filled with Hope & Gratitude." Inspired by a new hymn from the new hymnal *All Creation Sings*, we look at Advent as a time of God bringing justice and joy to the earth, the liberating work of God in the world. Each week we will light the candles on the Advent Wreath, and speak together words of confession and forgiveness as we wait and watch for the arrival of Christ.

Join us for **Advent Midweek Evening Worship** Thursdays at 6:30 pm, December 8, 15, and 22.

# This Month at Our Redeemer's

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## OUR REDEEMER'S STAFF

- Gretchen Mertes, Pastor  
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- David Hahn, Transition Facilitator  
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- Phillipa Dugaw, Volunteer Coordinator  
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welcome@ourredeemers.net
- Karie Stearns, Parish Administrator  
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Phone: 206-783-7900

Office Hours: Mon. - Thurs. 10am-3pm

**OUR VISION:** In the model of Christ and for the life of the world, we are an inclusive, devoted, caring, and spiritual community that accepts challenges, takes risks, and grows.



December 1, Thursday

7 PM - Ensemble Rehearsal

December 3, Saturday

**9 AM - 3 PM - LIVE RETREAT: "The Spirituality of Waiting" | Our Redeemer's**  
9 AM - Lucia Rehearsal  
2 PM - Bells Rehearsal

**December 4, Sunday**  
**ADVENT 2**

**9 AM - Informal Worship**  
Sprouts: 9 AM | In-Person  
10 AM - O-ROCK Youth Classes & Confirmation | Downstairs  
10 AM - Adult Forum | Fellowship Hall  
**11 AM - Traditional Worship**

December 6, Tuesday

12:30 PM - Staff Meeting  
6:30 PM - LIVE - Synod-Wide Weekly Bible Study | [Online](#)  
7:15 PM - Racial Justice Advocates

December 7, Wednesday

6 PM - Auction Meeting  
6:30 PM - Kid's Choir  
7 PM - Choir Rehearsal

December 8, Thursday

**6:30 PM - Advent Midweek Evening Worship**  
7 PM - Ensemble Rehearsal

December 10, Saturday

9 AM - Lucia Rehearsal  
2 PM - Bells & Orchestra Rehearsal

**December 11, Sunday**  
**ADVENT 3**

**9 AM - Informal Worship**  
Sprouts: 9 AM | In-Person  
10 AM - O-ROCK Youth Classes & Confirmation | Downstairs  
10 AM - Adult Forum | Fellowship Hall  
**11 AM - Traditional Worship**  
5 PM - LUCIAFEST

December 13, Tuesday

12:30 PM - Staff Meeting  
6:30 PM - LIVE - Synod-Wide Weekly Bible Study | [Online](#)  
7 PM - BEER & CAROLS

December 14, Wednesday

6:30 PM - Kid's Choir  
7 PM - Choir Rehearsal

December 15, Thursday

**6:30 PM - Advent Midweek Evening Worship**  
7 PM - Ensemble Rehearsal

December 17, Saturday

9 AM - Pageant Rehearsal  
2 PM - Bells & Orchestra Rehearsal

**December 18, Sunday**  
**ADVENT 4**

**9 AM - Informal Worship**  
Sprouts: 9 AM | In-Person  
**10 AM - YOUTH CHRISTMAS PARTY** | Downstairs  
10 AM - Adult Forum | Fellowship Hall  
**11 AM - CHRISTMAS PAGEANT**  
2 PM - Ballard Sunday Dinner | Ballard First Lutheran

December 20, Tuesday

6:30 PM - LIVE - Synod-Wide Weekly Bible Study | [Online](#)  
7 PM - Church Council  
**7 PM - BLUE CHRISTMAS** | Our Redeemer's

December 21, Wednesday

6:30 PM - Kid's Choir  
7 PM - Choir Rehearsal

December 22, Thursday

**6:30 PM - Advent Midweek Evening Worship**  
7 PM - Ensemble Rehearsal

December 24, Saturday

**4 PM - Christmas Eve Family Candlelight Service**  
**10 PM - Christmas Eve Traditional Candlelight Service**

**December 25, Sunday**  
**CHRISTMAS**

**10 AM - Christmas Day Worship**

*Our Redeemer's offices will be closed December 23 - 30 for the holidays. There will be one service on January 1st at 10:00 am.*



# Worship and Music

## Contemplative Prayer Service

Advent Midweek Evening Worship

Thursdays 6:30 pm, December 8, 15, 22

In a time when the busy-ness seems to be accelerating, allow yourself a brief moment to breathe.

Come and wait the return of Christ this Advent in song, prayer, and silence at this brief service of reflection the first three Thursdays in December.

Remember that Advent is a time of waiting, and anticipation. Don't rush the experience – savor the moment.

## Blue Christmas

*"I wish I had a river I could skate away on..."*  
– Joni Mitchell

While for some the holidays can be joyful, many of us struggle with grief and sadness as the days grow shorter. If this resonates with you, know you are invited to Blue Christmas. We gather just as we are to pray, ask God for consolation, and lay our burdens down at the foot of the cross.

You are welcome to participate as fully or as passively as you like. Peace to you, and we hope you will join us.



When the holidays are difficult...

Tuesday, 7 PM  
December 20

Holiday coffee/refreshments following service. Childcare provided.

Don't hesitate to call the church office for more information.  
206-783-7900  
2400 NW 85th Street, Seattle

our redeemer's  
LUTHERAN • BALLARD



# Worship and Music

## *Christmas Eve at Our Redeemer's*

### **4 pm ★ Family Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**

People of all ages are invited to this joyful Christmas worship service! This year, we will be singing all the traditional carols, and inviting the Crayons of Christmas for a special message of God's grace and love. We will celebrate holy communion together, and end with the blessing of Silent Night sung together in candlelight. This is a brief, 45-minute service, aimed at allowing our youngest ones to fully enjoy the Christmas Eve church experience.



### **10 pm ★ Traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**



With choir, orchestra and brass, and hand bells, we welcome the Christ Child with joyful song! Holy communion, prayer, and the telling of the Christmas story are a gift to all at this worship service. The service includes our beautiful tradition of singing of Silent Night in candlelight. We welcome the whole community to share in this message of hope and joy of Emmanuel – God with Us.

## **Christmas Eve Hand Bells & Orchestra**

**All are welcome to participate!**  
**Bring your instrument or learn to play hand bells to festive Christmas carols!**

**Practices: Saturday, December 3, 2:00–3:30pm (hand bells only)**  
**Saturday, December 10 & Saturday, December 17, 2:00–3:30pm**  
**(hand bells and orchestra instruments)**

**Interested? Contact Karen Lee,**  
**[karen@ourredeemers.net](mailto:karen@ourredeemers.net)**



# Living Generously



Many thanks are due to those who participated in our Abounding in Hope emphasis: **Karie Stearns, Erin Miller, Debbie Lematta, Janet Woodfield, Linda Carbone,** and everyone who helped to prepare our beautiful, personalized envelopes for the congregation. **Bob Carlson, Kari Guddal, Connie Sandstrom, Cindy Anderson, Carl Christenson, Phillipa Dugaw,** our **O-Rock and Confirmation kids,** and everyone who pitched in make the Swedish Pancakes happen. And finally our Generosity Story speakers in worship: **Shelbe Kukowski, Tom Bernard, Guy Michaelson,** and **Carolyn Swanson.** What a generous and loving congregation we have!

## Living Generously: Abounding in Hope

*Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and **hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.** – Romans 5:1-5*

From the middle of October through the middle of November we celebrated God's generosity toward us, and prayerfully considered what our response to God's love might be with our lives – service, finances, and soul. The returns truly have me Abounding in Hope! Over 60 families have returned pledge cards, and it truly warms my heart. Almost as much as the joy of feasting together on November 13th on Swedish pancakes, lingonberries, whipped cream, and bacon! God's spirit is moving and creating ministry and action within this community that will be a boon for our neighborhood, and the world!

If you have not yet, please return your pledge cards as soon as possible. We use pledges to plan our budget for the coming year, and this year is particularly important, as we are hoping to call another rostered leader to our congregation! Thank you!

I am completely delighted to see what new and exciting life God's spirit breathes into our community for the coming year. May we always be abounding in hope!

Peace to you,

Pastor Gretchen

**Keep up with the church's Fiscal Year 2022-2023 financial reports by clicking [HERE](#) or emailing [administrator@ourredeemers.net](mailto:administrator@ourredeemers.net). These reports will be updated monthly.**

## Celebrating December Birthdays!

1	Vicky Hobbs	6	Fred Flickinger	14	Marian Forssen
1	Orin Beranek	6	Bob Kromer	16	Ada Brady
2	Dinah Coble	7	Ingrid Brissette	16	Colin McBride
2	Kyle McBride	7	Karen Wilson	16	Ilana Niedner
3	Justin Kiggins	8	Juniper Niedner	19	Natasha Parker
4	Umar Abdullah	9	Angeline Dovich	24	Ronda Andrews
4	Erica Lee	9	Emily Malone	25	Ross Coble
4	Randi Parker	11	Jensen Kiggins	26	Julie Lowe
4	Harold Sigurdson	13	Anne Lewis	26	Johnna Michaelson
5	Ed Kloth	14	Sean Brady	30	JoAnn Gibson*

\*Birthday blessings to JoAnn Gibson who is celebrating her 90+ birthday in December.



# Faith Formation



## Christmas Pageant!

Sunday, December 18th, 11 AM

On December 18th, we will hold our annual Christmas pageant during the 11 worship service. Children of all ages are invited to participate. **We have one rehearsal on Saturday, December 17th at 10:00 am.** Roles and costumes will be assigned that day. If your child is hoping for a particular role, please let Pastor Gretchen know in advance. **These are the roles: Narrator 1, Narrator 2, Mary, Joseph, Shepherds (and Sheep), Gabriel, Angels, the Magi (at least three, can be more!), Stars, and Singers.** The pageant is simple, and traditional, and is a lot of fun for everyone involved. Be encouraged and get involved!

## Adult Forums in December

Sundays, 10 AM | Fellowship Hall

We continue our discussions about **what does it mean to be church** in the first half of December. We'll explore the simple, and not so simple question, about what it means to be church in today's complex, pluralistic society. **How do we make sense of all these cultural changes? What does it mean for us to be church amid such varied spiritual commitments, and interests? How can we still hold on to Jesus when sometimes our neighbors do not seem to be as interested in Him as we are?** Let's gather together and continue our conversation. New participants and voices are welcomed!



## Youth Christmas Party!

Sunday, December 18th, 10 AM

All Middle and High School youth are invited to celebrate the Christmas season in between services on December 18th. We'll meet in the youth room downstairs for games, Christmas treats, a hot cocoa bar, and a white elephant gift exchange! Please bring a wrapped gift (the goofier the better) under \$10 to participate in the white elephant. Questions? Email Mandy at [welcome@ourredeemers.net](mailto:welcome@ourredeemers.net).



**THE LiVE PROJECT**  
living into vocational engagement

**The LiVE Project** is a networked lay learning community discerning God's call; theologically thoughtful, culturally responsive, and communally engaged; connecting churches and forming Christian public leaders; a flexible, hybrid model of learning: Zoom and face to face.

## The LiVE Project: Upcoming Offerings

**Learn More** <https://rb.gy/yyfzcc>

- **"The Spirituality of Waiting"** Saturday December 3, 9 AM -3 pm at Our Redeemer's  
Retreat Description: *How will we wait? The Art of Gathering* by Priya Parker invites unique ways for us to explore the contours of waiting and community interaction. Come and experience practical tips for how you and your communities of faith can deepen their callings by cultivating communities of belonging and inclusion. Lunch will be provided.
- **Acts Bible Study: Tuesdays 6:30-7:30 pm, December 6, 13, 20**  
\*FREE Offering - Various rostered leaders in our synod will co-facilitate a weekly study of Willie James Jennings' book, *Acts: A Theological Commentary on the Bible*. Purchase of the book is encouraged, although not a necessary requirement to fully participate.  
Zoom Meeting ID: 822 0985 0836; Passcode: *Acts*.



# Faith Formation

Along with learning more about the Lutheran religion collectively, and exploring individual faith, a valuable part of confirmation for youth is entering into deeper relationships with and within our congregation. Our goal is that each of our confirmands would have at least one non-authoritative adult (not a parent or teacher) who is invested in them, a vital ministry position we're calling "Relators." **This could look like writing periodic emails or cards to your confirmand, taking them out for ice cream, attending one of their sporting events, or even simply making an effort to seek them out on Sunday mornings and chat with them.** Is intentionally connecting with one of our middle school youth something you are interested in learning more about? Contact Mandy Neill ([welcome@ourredeemers.net](mailto:welcome@ourredeemers.net)).

## Faith Formation - Confirmation Report by Stephanie Fowler

Confirmation is in full swing this fall with an energetic group of 7th and 8th graders! At the beginning of the school year we asked the confirmation youth about their interests and concerns. Responses included: concerns about climate change, conflicts and war around the world, lack of affordable housing and homelessness, political unrest within the United States, reproductive rights, learning how to pray for self and others, learning more about the Bible, and understanding what it means to be Lutheran. We work to integrate these questions and concerns into our class discussions throughout the year.

The class meets in the youth room downstairs weekly between services. We've already covered many topics and discussion questions including: What is confirmation, and why do we affirm our baptismal promises?, The Bible as a library, The Gospels, Paul and the Epistles, Languages of the Bible, Who was Martin Luther, and why did he and others want to reform the Catholic Church?, Are we called to continue re-forming the church?, and What does it mean to be a reconciling in Christ congregation of the ELCA? That's a lot and we're still going!



2022 Confirmands, Ben Kalina and Max Germann



## Organ Dedication Recital and Reception

Friday, January 6th, 7 PM

The great day is finally here! Come and celebrate the renovation and rebuilding of our organ on the Day of the Epiphany, January 6th. We have invited wonderful musicians from around the Seattle area to come and demonstrate our amazing instrument, and dedicate its existence to the glory of God. This concert will be a public offering for the greater community as well as our own congregation. Following the concert, we will have a champagne and dessert reception.

If you are interested in helping prepare for this event, please contact Pastor Gretchen.

Spread the word, and please join us for this wonderful and long-awaited event!



# Community



## Luciafest

December 11, 5 PM

Luciafest returns to Our Redeemer's Sunday, December 11th! Our traditional Swedish celebration of Saint Lucia's Day will have all the traditional trappings: **Sankta Lucia, her attendants, star boys, Scandinavian goodies and dancing around the Christmas Tree.**

**Invite your friends and bring the family** to this beloved tradition!



## Beer & Carols

December 13, 7 PM

Join our greater community for a joyous evening of singing and Christmas merriment in the Fellowship Hall! Everyone is invited!

## Become an Emmaus Visitor by Julie Vannoy, Caring Community Team

What is an Emmaus visitor? An Emmaus visitor is someone who values connection and community. Being an Emmaus visitor offers an opportunity for our homebound members to continue to feel connected to and a part of Our Redeemers. Our visitors make a monthly visit to offer conversation, companionship and communion to one of our members who is no longer able to make it to church.

We will be offering an instructional class after the holidays ~ rest assured, you will be well prepared. This ministry is a true gift ~ the value for both the giver and the receiver is priceless. We're Hoping you consider this and look for more information after the holidays!



**Sharing Your  
Time and  
Talents**

**Learn how you can help out by clicking [HERE](#) or using the QR code below. Once on the volunteer page you can toggle between the various needs using the tabs at the top of the page. Questions? Contact Phillipa at [volunteer@ourredeemers.net](mailto:volunteer@ourredeemers.net).**



## You Are a Blessing - Thank You!

by Phillipa Dugaw, Volunteer Coordinator

What a year we've had! When you look back at the start of this year and compare it to the end of the year it's amazing how much we have accomplished as a congregation!

**Our numbers have increased; from Sunday worship, to having more events in and outside of our building, to more meetings moving away from Zoom and being in-person. The list goes on and on!**

So often we're not sure if we're going to be able to deliver everything we have planned...but YOU always come through! So with that, the staff here at Our Redeemers would like to give a HUGE thank you to every single one of you that stepped up to be of service.

Who knows the impact of your kindness and your time? **What we do know is that it was a blessing and appreciated.**



# Social Justice

## Ballard Sunday Dinner

December 18

Your help is requested to help feed our hungry neighbors in December! Find a friend, sign up on Our Redeemer's Sign-Up Genius in the tab called "Ballard Sunday Dinner" (<https://rb.gy/tuwavk>). We will mentor you (if you want) in planning a meal, shopping, or leading in cooking. Try it - it's fun and rewarding!



## The Giving Christmas Tree

Take an ornament from Our Redeemer's giving tree and return the gift listed there by the due date in order to help local families this Christmas!

Gifts will distributed through Mary's Place, Broadview-Thompson K-8, and our Road to Housing guests.



*"Please accept my gift that is brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me, and because I have everything I want."*

## Earth Justice Spring 2023



Save these dates to care for the Earth with your Our Redeemer's Lutheran community!

**April 22, 2023**

Pacific Beach cleanup, lodging options to stay Friday and/or Saturday nights. More information published as lodging location and pricing secured.

**May 6, 2023**

Neighborhood Recycling Roundup with electronics and Styrofoam collected.

**Questions or offering event support?**

Contact: Pamela Altman or Connie Sandstrom, co-chairs  
206-375-5449

# At Our Redeemer's



Thanksgiving Community Dinner



Lutheran World Relief InGathering



## Auction Save the Date

Saturday, February 11, 2023

What better time to celebrate our ministry together and pretend we're in the tropics than February! **Our theme for February 11 is "One Love" and island attire will be entirely appropriate.** There will be activities and fun for people of all ages, and of course our live auction supporting the ministry and mission of our church. If you have an item or experience to donate to the auction (class, meal, vacation spot, activity, service, or fun idea) please contact Erin Miller, [erin@millercentral.com](mailto:erin@millercentral.com).





2400 NW 85th Street  
Seattle, WA 98117

[www.ourredeemers.net](http://www.ourredeemers.net)  
206-783-7900

**return service requested**

#### **SUNDAY WORSHIP**

**9 AM Informal Service**

in-person

**11 AM Traditional Service**

in-person & online

Stream Online at 11 AM

Facebook: [facebook.com/OurRedeemers](https://facebook.com/OurRedeemers)

Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/822691346>

#### **Church office hours:**

Monday-Thursday

10 AM - 3PM

# *Filled with Hope & Gratitude*

You are invited to these December events

## **Christmas Eve Candlelight Services**

**Saturday, December 24**

**4 PM Family Service | 10 PM Traditional Service**

## **Luciafest**

**Sunday, December 11, 5 PM**

Sankta Lucia, her attendants, star boys, Scandinavian goodies  
and dancing around the Christmas Tree!

## **Beer & Carols**

**Tuesday, December 13, 7 PM**

The greater community gathers for Christmas cheer and musical merriment.

## **Blue Christmas**

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When the holidays are difficult, we gather just as we are to pray,  
ask God for consolation, and lay our burdens down.



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