

DECEMBER 2023



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...and more!

A Community in the Model of Christ

From the Bishop...

In the song *Amazing Grace* we sing, “I once was lost but now I’m found.”

Because my job sometimes involves travel, there are times when I am wandering unfamiliar airports – trying to find my flight, trying to find edible food, trying to find a place to charge my phone, trying to find a place where there isn’t a cacophony of sound and crowds of people. And sometimes at airports I also experience a feeling like a disconnection from my “self.” Sometimes I am wandering the airport trying to find my “self.” Strangely, there are moments at airports where I get this feeling as though I am unmoored from what connects me to other people. Honestly, I don’t know if this is something only I experience or if others feel the same way.

There have been a slew of recent articles and social media posts written about how churches are dying and pastors are leaving and people are upset and no one goes to church anymore and so on. These posts are hard to read, and I wonder – is this a sign that we are feeling unmoored? That we are searching for something? Or maybe it is simply being lost.

In the gospel of Luke, Jesus tells two parables – one about a lost sheep and one about a lost coin (Luke 15:1-10). You probably remember these parables – the shepherd leaves the ninety-nine in search of the one. The woman turns over her entire house for the one coin that is missing from her purse. I think that traditionally we hear these parables as Jesus searching for the one who needs to hear the good news of Jesus for the very first time. But I think that is a misreading. The lost lamb was a part of the shepherd’s flock. The lost coin was in the woman’s purse. This story is for insiders. For those who know and yet have gotten lost.

This lostness might be of one’s own volition.

The sheep wanders from the prescribed pasture. But it can also be something that just happens. A coin cannot, on its own, get lost.

We have all experienced the disruption of the pandemic, the cracks in our government, the warming of our climate causing suffering and death, and so much more. We notice changes in our churches and in our families and in our communities. Many of us have experienced personal troubles and tragedies. These all can lead to a sense of feeling adrift. And it can lead to fractures in our church community and our faith life.

However, the circumstance comes about – because of one’s own actions or because of something that descends upon us – lostness occurs. And even when we know God’s love and grace and comfort, even when we know that community is important, even when we are already part of God’s community and church, we can still feel unmoored, lose our sense of belonging, our capacity to trust. We can get so lost that we don’t know who we are or whose we are or where we belong anymore.

I don’t know where you are at as you read this article today. Perhaps you are feeling snug with the other ninety-nine in the sheepfold of God. Perhaps you are a coin cozy with the other nine coins. But perhaps you are not. Perhaps you, too, are wondering and wandering. Perhaps you, too, are feeling disconnected from friends or family or your church community. Perhaps you, too, are wandering in Concourse C wondering how in the world you get to Concourse A. Perhaps you, too, are a sheep bleating for help or a coin under the couch cushions.

If this is you, the good news is that God is a searcher and a finder. The amazing news is that God is the shepherd hiking into the wilderness looking for you. The astounding news is that God is the housewife lighting her lamp and sweeping every corner in the house to find you.

You are worth looking for. You are loved and desired. And when God finds you, there is rejoicing and laughter and a party! As Dan Erlander writes, “Love is God’s action to bring us into abundant life – reconciled to God, to each other, and all creation!”

In the 2023-24 course offerings of the synod’s LiVE Project there are many ways to be community together and the body of Christ together. There are ways to encourage and uplift one another. There are retreats, ongoing classes, and a year-long “Abide in the Word” Bible Study. (Learn more at <https://www.lutheransnw.org/ministries/the-live-project>) If you are feeling unmoored, lost, alone, adrift, I encourage you to first join in your community at your church and second, to join in the offerings in the wider synod. We are church together. We are journeying together. We get lost, and we get found, together.



Together we sing, “We once were lost but now we’re found.”

+ Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee
bishop@lutheransnw.org

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OUR REDEEMER'S STAFF

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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 at Our Redeemer's

December 2, Saturday	9 AM - Lucia Rehearsal 11:30 AM - Christmas Caroling Meet at Our Redeemer's
December 3, Sunday ADVENT 2	9 AM - Informal Worship 9 AM - Sprouts In-Person Downstairs 10 AM - O-ROCK Youth Classes Downstairs 10 AM - Confirmation Library 10 AM - Adult Forum: Parables-Hunting for Hidden Truths Fellowship Hall 11 AM - Traditional Worship 3 PM - Norwegian Women's Choir Concert Sanctuary
December 4, Monday	5 PM - A Women's Gathering Reuben's Brews Ballard
December 5, Tuesday	1:30 PM - Staff Meeting 7 PM - LiVE Synod-wide Bible Study Zoom
December 6, Wednesday	6:30 PM - Kid's Choir 7 PM - Choir Rehearsal
December 9, Saturday	9 AM - Lucia Rehearsal 2 PM - Christmas Eve Bells Rehearsal
December 10, Sunday ADVENT 3	9 AM - Informal Worship 9 AM - Sprouts In-Person Downstairs 10 AM - O-ROCK Youth Classes Downstairs 10 AM - Confirmation Library 10 AM - Adult Forum: "Art Church" Fellowship Hall 11 AM - Traditional Worship 5 PM - LUCIAFEST Our Redeemer's
December 12, Tuesday	1:30 PM - Staff Meeting 5:30 PM - Executive Team 7 PM - LiVE Synod-wide Bible Study Zoom 7 PM - BEER & CAROLS Fellowship Hall
December 13, Wednesday	6:30 PM - Kid's Choir 7 PM - Choir Rehearsal
December 16, Saturday	Christmas Pageant Rehearsal (time TBD) 2 PM - Christmas Eve Bells & Orchestra Rehearsal
December 17, Sunday ADVENT 4	9 AM - Informal Worship 9 AM - Sprouts In-Person Downstairs 10 AM - Youth Christmas Party Downstairs 11 AM - Christmas Pageant 2 PM - Ballard Sunday Dinner Ballard First Lutheran
December 19, Tuesday	1:30 PM - Staff Meeting 7 PM - Council Meeting 7 PM - LiVE Synod-wide Bible Study Zoom 7 PM - BLUE CHRISTMAS
December 20, Wednesday	6:30 PM - Kid's Choir 7 PM - Choir Rehearsal
December 23, Saturday	2 PM - Christmas Eve Bells & Orchestra Rehearsal
December 24, Sunday CHRISTMAS EVE	11 AM - Family Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 10 PM - Traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
December 25-27	Office Closed
December 31, Sunday NEW YEAR'S EVE	10 AM - Combined Worship



Living Generously

Dear people of Our Redeemer's,

This past summer the Council became aware of a potential discrepancy in a staff member's compensation, which appeared to be lower than what was agreed upon at the time of their hiring. A review of Our Redeemer's records was conducted by our bookkeeper and Personnel Team. Following the records review, and a vote by Council, a Settlement Agreement and Release was jointly prepared and signed. Payout of wages due to this employee will occur in November and December 2023, and within the first quarter of 2024. Our financial statements will reflect the payouts which total just over \$32,000. (~\$8,000 in November and December each, and ~\$16,000 in the first quarter of 2024).

We are thankful for all of our talented and hardworking staff, and are pleased this was resolved in a manner reflective of our mission, and of the Grace freely given to us by God.

With Gratitude,

Stephanie Fowler
Council President



A Gift For You!

As a thank you for your giving during our "Unashamed Generosity" campaign, we have a special gift for you: a special metal ornament/bookmark created by Anne McGrew that is beautifully laser cut with Our Redeemer's name. This custom piece will be available to anyone who wants one on Sundays.

Thank you for your generosity and enjoy your gift!

Christmas Eve Hand Bells & Orchestra

All are welcome to participate!

Bring your instrument or learn to play hand bells to festive Christmas carols! **Practices are as follows:**

- Saturday, December 9 from 2:00–3:30 pm - hand bells only
- Saturday, December 16 and December 23 from 2:00–3:30 pm - hand bells and orchestra instruments

Instrumentalists will perform at Our Redeemer's at the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, December 24, 10:00 pm.

Questions? Contact Karen Lee, karen@ourredeemers.net. Let Karen know you're participating, and she'll have a part ready for you!





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! We will be singing all the traditional carols, celebrate holy communion together, and end with the blessing of Silent Night sung together in candlelight. This is a 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.



Advent: The Gift of the Present

Advent is a season that offers a chance for us to slow down, breathe, and allow ourselves to be fully present to the moment. This year, allow Advent to be a time of renewal and sabbath away from the bustle of the season. Let the quiet of the sanctuary remind you that God walks with you through it all. You are invited to be fully present, here and now.

As we celebrate each of the four Sundays with peace, hope, joy, and love, we find ourselves becoming more anchored in Christ's coming, and ready for his light to scatter the shadows of the present time. Come to us, O Emmanuel!

Advent Sundays & Christmas Eve Help Needed [SIGN UP LINK](#)

Celebrating the Advent season takes many hands and helpers at Our Redeemer's! We hope that you and your family might consider being a part of the ministry we offer to our community. Each Sunday and in both our 4:00 pm and 10:00 pm Christmas Eve services, we need the following:

- Ushering: handing out bulletins and helping with offering and candles on Christmas Eve
- Greeting: standing in the narthex with a smile and "welcome!"
- Communion Assistants: setting up and serving communion
- Technology: lighting and sound
- Readers in the services: reading Scripture or prayers.

We welcome your gifts! [SIGN UP HERE](https://rebrand.ly/bi8fvvc) (<https://rebrand.ly/bi8fvvc>). Questions? Contact Mandy Neill (welcome@ourredeemers.net).



Worship and Music

Blue Christmas

While for some the holidays can be joyful, many of us struggle with grief and sadness. 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.



When the holidays are difficult.

Tuesday, 7 PM
December 19

Refreshments following the service provided by the Caring Committee Team. Childcare provided.

Don't hesitate to call the church office for more information.
(206)783-7900

our redeemer's

LUTHERAN • BALLARD

2400 NW 85th Street, Seattle

Come Sing With Us!

Join us on Saturday, December 2 at 11:30 am as we bring Christmas cheer to Our Redeemer's folks who can't make it out to church. We'll gather in the narthex, pick up our caroling books, and visit nearby nursing homes and assisted living facilities to sing festive and beloved Christmas carols! Wear your Christmas sweaters, scarfs, and hats, and especially, your smile! RSVP to Karen Lee: karen@ourredeemers.net. We hope you can participate in this special experience!



Christmas Pageant - December 17

Sunday, December 17th, 11 AM

On December 17th, we will hold our annual Christmas pageant during the 11:00 am worship service. Children of all ages are invited to participate. We have one rehearsal on Saturday, December 16th at 10:00 am. Roles and costumes will be assigned that day. The pageant is simple, and traditional, and is a lot of fun for everyone involved. Questions? Contact Erica Prentice at erica.a.prentice@gmail.com.



Faith Formation

Adult Forums

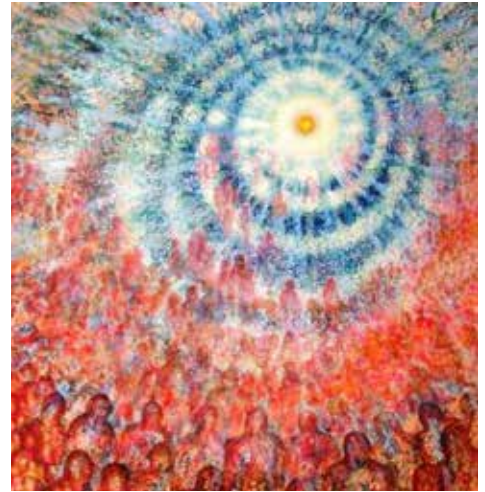
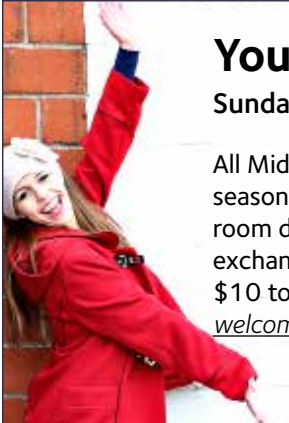
Sundays, 10 AM | Fellowship Hall

“Art Church” – December 10

One Sunday a month, we stop merely talking about God and experience God through different aspects of life: creativity, nature, and embodiment. On Sunday, December 10th we practice “Visio Divina,” seeing the sacred in everyday life through photography. Come and see “the only known photograph of God.”

Parables: Hunting for Hidden Truths - December 3 & 17

We'll finish up this quarter's deep dive into Jesus' parables on December 3rd and 17th. In our western culture, we've been trained to view the Parables as moralistic fairy tales. But they were meant to be wrestled, teased apart, and ultimately to turn our conventional wisdom on its head; once coined “spiritual hand grenades.” As Jesus said, “come and see...”

Youth Christmas Party!

Sunday, December 17, 10 AM

All Middle and High School youth are invited to celebrate the Christmas season in between services on December 17th. We'll meet in the youth room downstairs for games, Christmas treats, 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.*

Advent Devotions: Consider and Celebrate

For Advent this year Stephanie Running has updated a devotional from 2020 that is downloadable in one document for you to follow throughout the season. It is called "Consider and Celebrate". [LINK to download the devotional](https://rb.gy/nmfyf) (https://rb.gy/nmfyf). Hard copies are also available in the church office.

Celebrating December Birthdays!

- | | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Vicky Hobbs | 6 Fred Flickinger | 16 Colin McBride |
| 1 Orin Beranek | 6 Bob Kromer | 16 Ilana Niedner |
| 2 Dinah Coble | 7 Ingrid Brissette | 19 Natasha Parker |
| 2 Kyle McBride | 7 Karen Wilson | 20 Cathy Fransson |
| 3 Harrison Hendricks | 8 Juniper Niedner | 24 Ronda Andrews |
| 4 Umar Abdullah | 9 Emily Malone | 25 Ross Coble |
| 4 Erica Lee | 13 Anne Lewis | 26 Julie Lowe |
| 4 Randi Parker | 14 Sean Brady | 26 Johnna Michaelsen |
| 4 Harold Sigurdson | 14 Marian Forssen | 30 JoAnn Gibson* |
| 5 Ed Kloth | 16 Ada Brady | |

*Birthday blessings to JoAnn Gibson who is celebrating her 90 + birthday this month.

We give thanks for the life of June Carol Pfeiffer - November 2, 2023 (b. May 11, 1926).



Social Justice



Earth Justice Spring 2024

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

May 11, 2024, 10 AM - 2 PM

It's another Neighborhood Recycling Roundup with electronics, bikes, and Styrofoam collected. We're looking for a co-chair for this event. Please contact Connie Sandstrom at conniesandstrom05@gmail.com if you can help out.

Spring, 2024

Pacific Beach cleanup! More information to come.

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 be 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."

Help Out at Ballard Sunday Dinner During the Holidays

Ballard Sunday Dinner (BSD) is a ministry in which we partner with local churches to feed our hungry neighbors on the third Sunday of each month. Please consider signing up to help out during the holiday season. All needed roles have lots of availability, and we'll partner up with you until you're comfortable! Sign up by using this link: <https://rb.gy/ea817>.

Reach out to Amy Borgmeyer (amy.borgmeyer@gmail.com) if you have any questions. Thank you for all that you do!





Community



A Women's Gathering - You're Invited!

Monday, December 4, 5 PM | Reuben's Brews, 5010 14th Ave NW

Are you looking to strengthen your connections with the women of Our Redeemer's? Join us every first Monday of the month at Reuben's Brews at 5:00 pm for an evening of engaging conversation, food, and beverages! The group size varies, ranging from a cozy 4 to a lively 12. Regardless of the number, you're sure to leave with a heart full of warmth! Be a part of the upcoming conversation on Monday, December 4th. Reach out to Kari Guddal at (206)790-1780 or Connie Sandstrom at (206)375-5449 with any questions. Everyone identifying as a woman is welcome!



Breaking Bread Together-January Dinners

Sunday, January 21, 6 PM | Various Congregant Homes

Have you been wanting to get to know more folks at Our Redeemer's? In January we'll have our second installment of Breaking Bread Together Dinners. Save the date: Sunday, January 21st, when groups of around 6 people will gather at one of our group member's homes for dinner. Signups are coming soon. Questions? Email Mandy Neill at welcome@ourredeemers.net.

Our 2024 Auction

A leader is urgently needed for our 2024 Fundraising Auction. Here's your chance to be creative, collaborate with others, and help out the church! Contact welcome@ourredeemers.net for more information about our annual fundraiser and how you can help out!

Madonna's Book Group

The Madonna's will meet next on Sunday, January 21st, 3 PM at a member's home. The book the group is reading over the holidays is THE ALL OF IT by Jeannette Haien. Please join in! Contact Lynne at buckomcneill@yahoo.com with questions or to have your information added to the contact list.

Holden Village 2024

July 14-21 | Holden Village
Register by December 31st

Do you long for time in nature, more time to spend with your fellow parishioners, or a break from email and social media? You're in luck! Our Redeemer's is going to Holden Village next summer and registration is now OPEN! Choose from a 5-day or 7-day stay. The costs are:

5 days: adult \$685, child (over 4) \$480;
7 days: adult \$889, child (over 4): \$634.

Register using this LINK (<https://rebrand.ly/5174bf>).



Community



Rest & Reset Retreat: Come Away With God

Friday, February 16 - Sunday, February 18

Register at <https://rb.gy/tgmb3i> by December 31st

In these times of increased stress in our lives and world it's more important than ever that we take care of ourselves. You're invited to our first ever adult Rest Retreat at Rainbow Lodge, a cozy cedar lodge at the base of Mount Si in North Bend. There we'll explore what Sabbath means, connect with God, and find rest for your mind, body and spirit. You'll have time to unwind, walk nature trails, participate in new spiritual practices, have fun, and most importantly, REST! The retreat cost for the weekend and all meals is \$290 (\$60 more to have a solo room). The Retreat is co-hosted by the following Lutheran churches: St. Matthew's, Faith Lutheran and Our Redeemer's. Come all who are weary!



Women's Retreat

May 3-5, [Registration Extended into 2024](#)

Anyone who identifies as female is invited to Seabeck Conference center on Hood Canal May 3-5. It will be a time of building community, digging deeper, and finding inspiration in God and one another. **The theme is "Finding Hope in Troubling Times"** with guest speaker Deanne Wildermuth, a fun and personable retired Lutheran pastor. The cost is \$290 for the entire weekend (full or partial Scholarships available by request). A \$58 deposit due at time of registration. Paper registration forms are available in church office or fill out a google form here: <https://rebrand.ly/pytax06>. Please pay a deposit by check to the main office or through online giving on Our Redeemer's website and choose "Other" and designate "Women's Retreat".



Candidate Interviews in Progress

by Andrew Shimer

The Synod has presented their first slate of potential candidates with the Call Committee. Each candidate has a rich history and plenty of material provided for us to review! While we have been given first impressions of the candidates, we are now doing the due diligence of delving into each individual's ministry profile to get a deeper understanding of who we'll be interviewing. Our goal is to schedule and conduct interviews in the coming weeks.

Beer & Carols

December 12, 7 PM

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





Community



Celebrate the Tradition of Luciafest

December 10, 5 PM | Our Redeemer's

Bringing the story of Sankta Lucia to life is a beloved tradition in Sweden. Our Redeemer's is delighted to host an annual tradition - bringing Lucia's message of light and charity to the community. The festivities begin at 5:00 pm, Sunday, December 10.

Luciafest is a magical evening filled with all the traditional trappings: Sankta Lucia, her attendants, star boys, Scandinavian goodies, and dancing around the Christmas tree! Don't miss a traditional tåg (procession), festive music, food, dancing and costumes.

This holiday season let Lucia bring faith, hope, and a reason to believe in good things to come into your life!

Poinsettias

Please donate by December 17



Donations are being collected for poinsettias to decorate our sanctuary this Christmas. Your donation may be given in memory of or to honor a loved one in your life. Donate any amount you wish in a flower envelope available at church or donate online: <https://rb.gy/5z2fti>.



"Thank You" of the Month

Dear Friends at Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your congregation's generous gift! Thanks to you, vulnerable seniors, families, refugees and immigrants receive new opportunities to achieve health, justice, and hope.

One quick story of the impact of gifts like yours comes from a volunteer from our Senior Companion programming, where isolated seniors are matched to a volunteer:

"I have known my client for approximately six years. When we first met, she was shy, standoffish, lonely, and confined to her home mostly. With the help of Senior Companion, I was able to gain her confidence and her trust, which began to greatly improve how we communicated. Today, my client is wild about living and always ready to go and explore!"

Thank you for your support, which offers transformations to clients across our programs!

- Kelly McDonald (she/her/hers), Senior Regional Advancement Manager, Lutheran Community Services NW



2400 NW 85th Street
Seattle, WA 98117

www.ourredeemers.net
(206)783-7900

return service requested

SUNDAY WORSHIP

9 AM Informal Worship
11 AM Traditional Worship

Stream Online (11 AM)
Facebook: [facebook.com/OurRedeemers](https://www.facebook.com/OurRedeemers)
Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/822691346>

Church office hours:
Monday-Thursday
10 AM - 3PM

Christmas Season Events

<p>Our Redeemer's Giving Tree Take a tag and help give a gift to children and families in need from around Seattle.</p>	<p>Sunday, December 17, 11 AM Christmas Pageant Our children and youth tell the Christmas story.</p>
<p>Saturday, December 2, 11:30 AM Caroling to the Homebound Join Karen Lee and the choir to carol for those who can't make it to church.</p>	<p>Tuesday, December 19, 7 PM Blue Christmas A mellow service for those who are dealing with loss at the holidays.</p>
<p>Sunday, December 10, 5 PM Luciafest Tradition at its best with Swedish Luciafest, Cookie Smorgasbord, and traditional dancing around the tree!</p>	<p>Sunday, December 24 4 PM Family Christmas Eve Candlelight Service A brief service of lessons and carols with a special message for kids!</p>
<p>Tuesday, December 12, 7 PM Beer & Carols Bring a beverage and sing all your favorites in the Fellowship Hall.</p>	<p>Sunday, December 24 10 PM Traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with Handbells, Choir, and Orchestra.</p>



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