HOLIDAY ISSUE



GOODNews



A Community in the Model of Christ

From the Pastor...

Believe. Behold. From Advent to Epiphany.

"For behold, I bring you tidings of..." (you know the rest of the verse).

We interpret "behold" these days as "Look!" or "See!" To behold something is to fix your gaze on it. But just as the word implies our intentional observing or having our eye fixed on a sight or image, the "hold" part doesn't get much traction in our way of speaking. Being held conveys being caught or gripped—in our modern English, grasping something is also about understanding, while coming to grips with a life event or circumstances is about understanding to the point of acceptance. But if we speak of something as something taking hold, or holding our attention, we lose sight of the part of the word, "behold" that essentially reminds us of the adage that "seeing is believing."

There are quite a few moments in our Bible that direct us to "behold" or "look" or "see" what God is doing. The fulfillments of God's promises, often coming to fruition, or when visions and signs are often marked with the viewer being invited and commanded to "behold" a cosmic or divine event. To behold God's work is about witnessing and believing—even knowing—what God is up to.

The Advent themes of anticipation, hope, and promise are enveloped by a beholding of sorts. But as Easter-people, who have already come through the birth of Jesus, his ministry, his life with us, and his death and resurrection, the Advent hope fixes our gaze on a time beyond what has been seen of God in Christ Jesus. Hope takes on a new imagination—in effect, we join with those who anticipated the coming of the Messiah in the Christ child. We look back to their world, to their hopes for a world not only at peace with itself—nations and peoples continuing on in peacetime, as an interlude between war and death, but a lasting peace—a world with all conflicts and inequities resolved or concluded. We join them in this hope, and find ourselves in their shoes in the season of Advent—hoping for something we do not yet see, but can only believe, and trust God will bring about in the same birth of a new world from Christ.

Our take on Advent this year comes to grips with this expectant hope; we joyfully and patiently wait for the dawn of Christmas to break—the light of a new day and a new world just over the horizon. We can see the stirring of the light in the clouds and the signs of morning. The birds chirp and sing in preparation and in the quiet before all are awakened and life stirs from sleep. In Advent, the dawn is not yet—the sun has not peeked and dispelled the shadows. We are reminded that hope is a promise of things to come, an imagination of what could be and what we take hold of. We are reminded of Paul's words, "Now hope that is seen is not hope, for who hopes for what one already sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience." Instead of beholding what is to come—seeing the world made new and at peace—we **only believe it is coming.** We see the signs and the fragments of light throughout the world, clouded in the shadows of sin

and death—of war, greed, famine, and ignorance. We come to grips with a world that is held back from becoming what it is meant to be, but we do not have full knowledge and sight of it. In Advent we can only believe that what is coming will be a sight to behold.

Such is the difference between the Advent and Easter hope in believing that our sight is not yet clear—we do not see the fulfillment of God's anointing Jesus as Messiah in the resurrection, we instead wait with a world in need of Christ. "For now we see only a reflection, as in a mirror, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known," Paul tells the Corinthians, reminding them that faith, hope, and love are the gifts of the Spirit. It is only in believing that hope remains hope—the trust that what God gave through prophecies and visions will come to pass. To believe is to understand first that we are not God, but that God is trustworthy to deliver and make good on what is promised in the world to come. To have hope that the light of day is just beyond the horizon is a way of coming to grips with a God that seems distant and unknowable except for the little signs that God gives to break the darkness with greater hints of the light to come.

The miracle, the thing to behold in the coming of God in the child, Jesus, is to see the light peaking over the horizon—we behold the image and the light of God in the birth of his Son, and entering humanity so that we might better understand God through Christ, the Light of the World. In Christmas, we **behold**—we are reminded that we have seen Emmanuel—God with us. We understand this Jesus to be God's Son and a see the light peak out over the horizon. We are reminded of the ways that Jesus made tangible and manifested God's presence in a way that we cannot unsee—the ministry of Jesus and revealing himself as God's chosen and beloved—"to be a light to enlighten the nations." It is not just "a child is born," but all that God will do in Jesus to obliterate the darkness of our understanding—to see God as God wants to be seen—working to eliminate the world's suffering and divisions and bring all things to new being. We behold in Epiphany a greater light—not just of what this child could be called—Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, the Prince of Peace—but what this child would become to bring light to our lives.

And so in this season of Advent, we **believe** the lights we see in the darkest places are God, come to be with us. This Christmas season, we **behold** the God who is present with us, given as a light to our humanity. And this Epiphany, we **behold** the light to guide our ways in the person and life of Jesus Christ. **From before the morning, to the brightness of day, we are given beacons of hope, and signs of light from a God who breaks our darkness.**

- Pastor Thomas

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OUR REDEEMER'S STAFF

- · Thomas Voelp, Pastor pastorthomas@ourredeemers.net (206) 783-7900 ext. 2
- · Gian Foddai, Informal Worship & **Music Director** gianfranco@ourredeemers.net
- Kenna Hight, Faith Formation Coordinator faithformation@ourredeemers.net
- Karen Lee, Traditional Worship & **Music Director** karen@ourredeemers.net
- · Debbie Lematta, Communications Coordinator communications@ourredeemers.net
- · Lake Neill. Volunteer Coordinator volunteer@ourredeemers.net
- · Justine Ranney, Admin. Assistant, office@ourredeemers.net
- · Karie Stearns, Administrator administrator@ourredeemers.net

Office 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.



What's Happening in December

December 1, Monday 5 PM - Church Ladies Beer Night | Old Stove Brewing

December 2, Tuesday 7 PM - Executive Team Meeting

December 3, Wednesday 12 PM - Staff Meeting

5 PM - B.A.T. Meeting

7 PM - Our Redeemer's Choir Rehearsal | Sanctuary

December 5, Friday BEER & CAROLS (w/ Family Activities) | Our Redeemer's

December 6, Saturday 9 AM - Luciafest Practice | Our Redeemer's

10 AM - Noon - Advent Contemplation | Mary Peterson's

Condo

2 PM - Hand Bells Rehearsal | Our Redeemer's

December 7, Sunday ₱9 AM - Informal Worship

ADVENT 2 10 AM - ORCA: Harbor Seals (5-11 y/o);

Sea Lions (6th grade)

10 AM - Youth Christmas Party | Downstairs

10:15 AM Otters (3-5 y/o) **⊕11** AM - Traditional Worship

3 PM - Norwegian Ladies Chorus Concert | Our Redeemer's

December 9, Tuesday 7 PM - Church Council Meeting

December 10, Wednesday 12 PM - Staff Meeting

7 PM - Our Redeemer's Choir Rehearsal | Sanctuary

10 AM - Volunteer Grounds Crew | Our Gardens December 12, Thursday

9 AM - Luciafest Practice | Our Redeemer's December 13, Saturday

2 PM - Hand Bells Rehearsal I Our Redeemer's

December 14, Sunday ₱9 AM - Informal Worship

ADVENT 3

10 AM - ORCA: Harbor Seals (5-11 y/o);

Sea Lions (6th grade)

10 AM - Embodied Church | Fellowship Hall

10:15 AM Otters (3-5 y/o) **+11** AM - Traditional Worship

3-6 PM - Ballard Sunday Dinner | Ballard First Lutheran

5 PM - LUCIAFEST | Our Redeemer's

December 16, Tuesday **₱7 PM - BLUE CHRISTMAS**

December 17, Wednesday 7 PM - Our Redeemer's Choir Rehearsal | Sanctuary

December 18, Thursday 6:15 PM - Monthly Youth Group Meet up | Next Level

Burger, Ballard

December 20, Saturday 2 PM - Hand Bells Rehearsal | Our Redeemer's

3 PM - Orchestra Rehearsal | Our Redeemer's

December 21, Sunday **⊕9** AM - Informal Worship

ADVENT 4 ⊕11 AM - CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

3 PM - Ballard Sunday Dinner | Ballard First Lutheran

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

⊕10 PM - TRADITIONAL CHRISTMAS EVE

CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

12:30 PM - Caroling to the Homebound

December 25, Thursday CHRISTMAS, Office Closed

December 28, Sunday **10 AM** - Combined Worship

What's Happening in January

January 1, Thursday	New Year's Day-Office Closed	January 13, Tuesday	7 PM - Church Council Meeting
January 3, Saturday	9 AM - Liturgical Arts Team	January 14, Wednesday	12 PM - Staff Meeting 7 PM - Choir Rehearsal
January 4, Sunday EPIPHANY SUNDAY	♣9 AM - Informal Worship 10 AM - ORCA: Harbor Seals (5-11 y/o); Sea Lions (6th grade) 10:15 AM Otters (3-5 y/o) ♣11 AM - Traditional Worship 12:30 PM - "Ungreening" the Church w/Liturgical Arts Team	January 18, Sunday	♣9 AM - Informal Worship 10 AM - ORCA: Harbor Seals (5-11 y/o); Sea Lions (6th grade) 10:15 AM Otters (3-5 y/o) ♣11 AM - Traditional Worship 3-6 PM - Ballard Sunday Dinner Ballard First Lutheran
January 5, Monday	5 PM - Church Ladies Beer Night Old Stove Gardens	January 19, Monday	MLK Day-Church Office Closed
January 6, Tuesday	7 PM - Executive Team Meeting	January 21, Wednesday	7 PM - Choir Rehearsal
January 7, Wednesday	7 PM - Choir Rehearsal	January 25, Sunday	♣9 AM - Informal Worship 10 AM - ORCA: Harbor Seals
January 10, Saturday	1 PM - CPR Training Class Our Redeemer's		(5-11 y/o); Sea Lions (6th grade) 10:15 AM Otters (3-5 y/o) 11 AM - Traditional Worship
January 11, Sunday	♣9 AM - Informal Worship 10 AM - ORCA: Harbor Seals (5-11 y/o); Sea Lions (6th grade) 10:15 AM Otters (3-5 y/o)	January 28, Wednesday	7 PM - Choir Rehearsal



♣11 AM - Traditional Worship

Norwegian Ladies Chorus December 7th Christmas Concert

The Norwegian Ladies Chorus of Seattle will perform their annual Christmas concert at Our Redeemer's on Sunday, December 7th at 3:00 pm. Everyone is invited!







Haven't Made Your 2026 Commitment Yet?

There's Still Time!

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who has already shared their commitment to Our Redeemer's 2025 Season of Generosity, Cultivating Faith. Your generosity is helping nurture a future grounded in faith, abundance, and hope, and it strengthens every ministry we carry forward together.

If you haven't had a chance to participate yet, we'd love to include you. Scan the QR code or use a printed card fount at church to submit your commitment digitally. Every pledge—of any size—makes a meaningful difference in the life of our community. Let's continue growing goodness together in 2026!

Save the Date: Annual Budget Meeting Sunday, February 8th, 10:10 AM



Ministry Spotlight: Church Auction

Community Gathering and Building Relationships

by Diana Myers - Council member, Auction Chair-2026

Our last two Ministry Spotlights focused on relationship-building and the importance of welcome and hospitality. As we look ahead and begin planning next year's Auction (hard to believe 2026 is just around the corner!), I can't help but think back to last year's event. It drew a great crowd and truly brought our church community together. In fact, there was such lively conversation during the delicious meal that Gianfranco's wonderful music could barely be heard—a sure sign of success! We all agreed afterward that everyone had a fantastic time connecting with one another.

The heart of the evening was the relationships within our community and the spirit of welcome and hospitality shown by our Auction volunteers, which made it all possible.



Our 2026 fundraising auction will be on Saturday, March 7th. Once again, we're working to create a meaningful, church-wide evening where everyone comes together to support and fund our various ministries.

During the previous two years, we've raised \$23,500 and \$22,000. Our "Fund a Need" campaign provided those vibrant red umbrellas and stands that give our space a friendly, summery feel—hopefully encouraging new people and neighbors to join us. (After all, the word "Welcome" on the front of our church is there for a reason!). Last year, we used funds to refresh the Fellowship Hall with new paint and the ability to purchase our much needed lightweight and more attractive round tables.

Looking ahead to March, we invite you to join us for our "Hollywood Glamour" Auction. Come enjoy dinner, make bids and donations (bidding is optional), and partake in the lively festivities. The Auction team has already been enjoying moments of fun and laughter as we plan this event. Our goal is to host another memorable gathering where we can share a meal, strengthen our sense of community, and support our ministries in the next year.







Christmas Eve Hand Bells & Orchestra

You're invited to bring your instrument or learn to play hand bells to festive Christmas carols! Practices are as follows:

- Saturday, December 6 from 2:00-3:00 pm hand bells only
- Saturday, December 13 and 20 2:00 pm-hand bells, 3:00 pm - orchestra instruments
- Thursday, December 24 Play at the 10:00 pm Christmas Eve service

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

Let's Go Caroling December 21st

Mark your calendar for Sunday, December 21st, at 12:30 pm! Join us in the narthex as we bring holiday cheer to members of Our Redeemer's community who can't make it to church.

We'll grab our caroling books and head out to nearby nursing homes and assisted living facilities to share the spirit of the season with heartfelt and festive Christmas carols.

Don't forget to wear your favorite Christmas sweaters, scarves, hats—and, most importantly, your smile! Let's make this season merry and bright together! RSVP to Karen Lee: karen@ourredeemers.net. All are invited to participate in this special experience!



"Prophecies and Promises" A Single Service at 10 AM-December 28th

"Prophecies and Promises" is a single service, not unlike "Lessons and Carols" services held in the Episcopal and Anglican traditions. It is a service that focuses on the well—prophecies concerning the coming of Christ and the promises he brings in his birth as God's Son. In this single service, we sing hymns and songs in celebration of Christmas—not necessarily the ones we sing on Christmas Eve. Without communion, and with a more call-and-response style to the order of service, "Prophecies and **Promises"** prepares us for the coming year, reflects on what brought us through the past year, and allows us a time to come together with all the joy of Christmas and with less of the pageantry and pressure! Join us on December 28th at 10:00 am for this special service.



Poinsettias Donate by December 17th



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 and be acknowledged in or Christmas bulletins. Donate any amount you wish in a flower envelope available at church or use the QR code.

Luciafest & Christmas Eve Volunteer Opportunities

We are currently in search of numerous volunteers for Luciafest on Sunday evening, Dec. 14th! Available roles include set up (arranging furniture and preparing food), serving food, clean up, and ushers. Lucia is usually one of our busiest community nights, so we need all the help we can get. If

interested, sign up at https://rebrand.ly/tpjvxx9, use the QR code here; or email Lake, volunteer@ourredeemers.net. You may email Lake, Holly Gundaker, hgundack@live.com, or Linda Carbone, lindac19@comcast.net with any questions.



Help make the Christmas Eve Service happen! We need volunteers to assist to help with our 4:00 pm Family Candlelight Service or our 10:00 pm Traditional Candlelight Service. Volunteer jobs entail serving communion as a family, lighting the Advent

wreath, ushering, greeting, and presenting various readings or prayers. If you or your family are interested participating, you are encouraged to email Lake, <u>volunteer@ourredeemers.net</u> or sign up at this link: https://rebrand.ly/e87v72g, or use the QR code at right.



It's Christmas Pageant Time!

Sunday, December 21 11 AM (2nd Service)

Get ready for a heartwarming tradition! Our annual Christmas pageant will take center stage during the 11:00 AM worship service on Sunday, December 21st—and we want your kids to join the fun!

Children of all ages are welcome to participate. We'll gather for a single rehearsal to assign roles, distribute costumes (date TBD), and bring this simple yet magical pageant to life.

Contact Kenna Hight (<u>faithformation@</u> <u>ourredeemers.net</u>) if your family wants to be a part of this Christmas tradition!





Faith Formation



Advent Contemplation

Saturday, December 6, 10 AM-Noon | Mary Peterson's Condo

Begin your Advent season with intentional rest. In the midst of the holiday rush, take time to slow down, breathe, and reflect on God's presence. Join us for a quiet, contemplative morning focused on re-centering ourselves in Divine reality.

RSVP to Mandy Neill at neillmandy@qmail.com for details and directions.



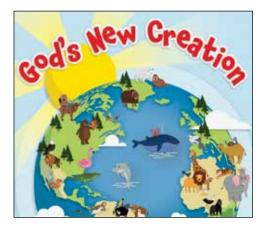
Youth Christmas Party

Sunday, Dec. 7, 10–11 AM · Youth Room (Downstairs)

All Middle and High School students are invited to our 6th Annual Youth Christmas Party between services! We'll enjoy festive snacks, competitive Reindeer Games, and everyone's favorite, a White Elephant qift exchange. What to bring:

- Festive attire
- A wrapped gift (new or used, goofy encouraged!) valued at \$10 or less.

Questions? Contact Mandy Neill at neillmandy@gmail.com.



Mark your calendars Our Redeemer's hosted week long Vacation Bible School (VBS) summer camp August 3-7. Stay tuned for information about registration.

December Drive for the Ballard **Food Bank**

Food | Socks | Personal Hygiene Items

As we move into the winter season, the need for support at the Ballard Food Bank continues to grow. This December, we're collecting nonperishable food, new socks, and personal hygiene items to help care for our neighbors who are facing increasing hardship.

Donations of socks may be placed in a designated separate container, but all items (food, socks, and hygiene products), will be delivered together to the Food Bank.

Our collection runs through December 17, with delivery scheduled for December 18. **Help is needed!** If you're able to assist with transporting donations to the Ballard Food Bank, please let Stephanie Running know. The volume of need is high, and Stephanie cannot manage this delivery alone.

Your generosity makes a meaningful difference in a world that feels a little more uncertain each day. Thank you for offering comfort, dignity, and nourishment to our neighbors this season.





Beer & Carols

Friday, December 5, 7 PM

Join us in the Fellowship Hall for festive singing with Music Directors Karen Lee and Gian Foddai! Bring your favorite holiday beverage (we'll provide hot chocolated and cider, plus kids' activities). Come enjoy a holly jolly celebration of the season!



Volunteer Grounds Crew - Join In! Friday, December 12, 10 AM-noon

With the soil nice and damp, we'll be focusing on ivy and blackberry removal in the parking lot and along 24th Ave. NW. Come help clip back vines, load up yard waste cans, or take on the satisfying challenge of digging out those stubborn roots! All helping hands are welcome.

Questions? Contact: Connie Sandstrom, conniesandstrom05@qmail.com.





Experience Luciafest!

Sunday, December 14, 5 PM | Our Redeemer's

Join us for a light-filled celebration of light, hope, and tradition at Our Redeemer's and experience a luminous Luciafest on Sunday, December 14, 5:00 pm. Discover the magic of this cherished Swedish tradition featuring:

- Sankta Lucia and her attendants spreading light and charity.
- A stunning Lucia procession (tåg) with star boys and festive costumes.
- A delightful Cookie Smorgasbord of Scandinavian treats.
- Dancing around the Christmas tree with joyful music.

Let Lucia's message of faith and hope brighten your holiday season.

Everyone is welcome to be part of this unforgettable evening!

Come to Holden Village | Summer 2026 July 5-10 | Registration Opens January 2nd

Our Redeemer's Week at Holden Village is set for July 5-10, 2026! It's a special time for connection, reflection, and learning amidst the beautiful surroundings of Holden Village.

Our Redeemer's Week at Holden Village is scheduled for Sunday–Friday, July 5–10. These dates include the two travel days, giving you the full Monday–Thursday program in the village. Want more unhurried time for rest and exploration? You're welcome to add the weekend before or after your stay.

This week offers a special opportunity for connection, reflection, and learning in the stunning surroundings of Holden Village. Everyone will register directly through Holden Village, as we did last year.

Registration opens at 10 AM on January 2, 2026, and spots may fill quickly—so plan to sign up early.

Register at: www.holdenvillage.org



Church Ladies Meet for Holiday Cheer

Monday, December 1, 5 PM | Old Stove Gardens Brewery

Join the women of Our Redeemer's on Monday, December 1st at Old Stove Gardens Brewery! Let's celebrate the holiday season! Wear your Christmas sweater, hat or holiday bling as we mark the holiday season and spend an easygoing evening of conversation, laughter, and connection, with hearty bites, warm drinks, and plenty of nearby parking. All women (and those who identify as female) are welcome—come as you are and celebrate the fall season with friends old and new!

CPR/AED Training with the Seattle Fire Department

Friday, January 10, 1 PM | Fellowship Hall

The Seattle Fire Department will offer an Adult/Child/Infant CPR and AED training here at Our Redeemer's. Participants who wish to receive official certification may do so for a \$30 fee (cash or check made payable to Medic 2). This is a great opportunity to learn lifesaving skills—consider signing up!

To register, contact Justine at office@ourredeemers.net or call (206) 783-7900.

Coming to a Table Near You!

Sunday, January 11, 6 PM | Various Homes

Friendship – Connection – Good Food! All this and more can be yours if you sign up to attend and/or host one of the Breaking Bread Dinners on January 11, 2026. These potlucks in various homes give us a chance to spend time together, learning about each other's joys and struggles and forming deeper connections. Also, there's really good food!

Sign- ups will start in mid-December. Mark your calendar now. Questions? Contact Annie McGrew (annemcgrew@msn.com) or Cindy Anderson (cindyrowanderson@gmail.com).



Celebrating December Birthdays

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

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

Celebrating January Birthdays

2	Ryan Brady	12	Marie Nordquist-Lessard	22	Paul Wallstrom	
2	Carleen See	12	Charlie See	25	Janice La Brash	
5	Erica Prentice	13	Carole Trigstad	27	Jonah Hlastala	
5	Miah Wander	14	Joshua Liljenstolpe	27	Lars Sveum-Hanso	n
8	Annelise Glover	14	Arlene Templin*	29	Elisabeth Parker	ı
9	Paula Hl <mark>astala</mark>	21	Lynne McNeill	30	Mary Melvey	





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

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



