



Access the entire church calendar from the home page by clicking on the calendar button.

You can then navigate not only to the current month but upcoming months.



Living Christ Lutheran Church's
Vision:
Embracing Hearts —
Transforming Lives —
Sharing Jesus' Love

**Come
Worship
with
Us**

**January 4th,
11th, 18th,
& 25th, at
10 AM**



FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN EVENT Saturday, Jan. 17th, 2026 in Schaumburg - 4:45 to 6:15 pm. Come help us pack dehydrated meals to feed starving children around the world. I have 40 slots. Sign up sheet is in the lobby. Any questions see Patty. Bring a friend or 2.



What's Inside
January 2026

Article	Page
Pastor	2
Worship Previews and Notes	3
Those Serving Us	3
Altar Guild	3
Ushers Needed	3
Altar Flowers	3
Outreach	4
Feed My Starving Children	4
Church Finances	4
Celebrating You	4
Communications	4
Ministry of the Month	5
Gift Cards	7
Arlington Heights Mayor's Breakfast	7
Birthdays/Anniversaries	7
Planning Ahead	7
LWML	7
Elders	7

The Living Letters

January 2026



FROM THE
PASTOR

Unwrapping the Gift of Jesus Christ.

Epiphany, celebrated on January 6th, marks the day the Magi recognized Jesus' divine nature through their gifts. This season reminds us of the profound divine revelation of Christ to the world, inspiring awe and reverence in our hearts.

It begins with Jesus' birth, when God's glory shone around the shepherds, revealing His divine nature. The angels proclaimed, ...born this day in the city of David is a savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11). This divine revelation invites us to trust in Jesus' divine identity and love.

Jesus is made known to the Gentiles through the Magi, who come bearing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh-symbols of His kingship, divinity, and eventual sacrifice. These gifts remind us that Jesus is the King of the Jews, the divine Son of God, and the Savior who died at Calvary for the sins of the world.

John the Baptist testifies to Jesus' divine nature, calling Him the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). When Jesus was baptized, the Spirit descended from heaven and rested on Him, affirming His divine identity. His baptism revealed Him as the true Messiah, God's Anointed One, and His purpose to take away the sin of the world is for you too, as you are baptized into Jesus and the Holy Spirit dwells within you.

Jesus begins his ministry and calls his disciples, an unlikely group of men who were uneducated in theology. They were not Rabbis or teachers. They were the blue-collar people of the day, working hard to eke out a living: men who were sinners, and even a tax collector.

Jesus goes forth into the crowds, proclaiming the gospel message and healing every disease. Jesus' great mercy and salvation lead us "to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly" with our God (Micah 6:8). Jesus is the righteous one of God, faithful in his teachings. He gives his people true righteousness as he justifies you by faith so that your prayers go up to God like incense. Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law. He continues to give you his mercy and love in all situations. Jesus is your most precious gift, your treasure, and your hope.

In Christ,

Pastor Bill



LIVING CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

Embracing hearts. Transforming lives. Sharing Jesus' love.



**Come Worship with Us In
Person or Online**

January 4, 11, 18 & 25 at 10 AM

Inside:

Page 3 Worship Notes and Previews
Page 4 Outreach
Page 5 Christian Service

Worship Notes and Previews

1/4: Second Sunday after Christmas
Assigned Readings: 1 Kings 3:4-15
Ephesians 1:3-14
Luke 2:40-52

1/11: The Baptism of Our Lord
Assigned Readings: Isaiah 42:1-9
Romans 6:1-11
Matthew 3:13-17

1/18 Second Sunday after the Epiphany
Assigned Readings: Isaiah 49:1-7
1 Corinthians 1:1-9
John 1:29-42a

1/25 Third Sunday after the Epiphany
Assigned Readings: Isaiah 9:1-4
1 Corinthians 1:10-18
Matthew 4:12-25



ALTAR FLOWERS SIGN-UP

The cost is \$70 for the 2 arrangements or \$35 for 1 arrangement. Your check can be made out to LCLC and placed in the offering plate. Please let the office know if the flowers are in celebration of an occasion or in memory of someone. An Altar flower sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board by the elevator.



CAN YOU HELP?

We are very short on persons to serve as **ushers**. If you are able, please see Laura to be put on the schedule.



ALTAR GUILD Please prayerfully consider signing up to serve on the altar guild for one month of 2026. A sign-up sheet can be found on the bulletin board by the elevator. If you feel you cannot commit for a whole month, please consider signing up for one week. If you are not sure what is involved or how to do it, talk to Laura or Lynne H. If you would like to assist for a week or more, let us know.

Those Serving us this Month

Altar Guild:
Laura

Pastoral Assistant:
1/4 Marty
1/11 Art
1/18 Art
1/25 Marty

Lay Reader:
1/4 Marty
1/11 Becky
1/18 George R.
1/25 Gilda

LCD Projector:
1/4 Smitha
1/11 Lynne H.
1/18 Patty
1/25 Lynne H.

Live Streaming
1/4 Wendy
1/11 Lynne R.
1/18 George S.
1/25 Wendy

Ushers:
1/4 Jack and Fred
1/11 Marty and Smitha
1/18 George R. and Art
1/25 Jack and Fred

Welcome Partners:
1/4 Nancy
1/11 Laura
1/18 Gilda
1/25 Nancy



OUTREACH

Thank you all for your generosity for the foster children at Lutheran Child and Family Services. Though it was a challenge to get our donations in due to weather, illness, and the holidays, you persevered! Together we were able to send \$1235 to bless their Christmases. Thank you.

Becky



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At the Congregational meeting in November, there were questions about previously presented exhibits of Budget versus Actual results for the past year. When the full calendar year of 2025 is balanced and reconciled sometime in January, the Finance Committee will provide a document for any interested member that shows the full year 2025 Income Statement in the familiar Actual versus Budget format. We will announce it in the weekly worship supplement and several copies will be at the back of the sanctuary. If you want one and don't get one, please call Lynne at the church office and we will email one to you.

Marty

CELEBRATING YOU

Starting in January we will have a special fellowship the third Sunday of each month celebrating YOU! If you are celebrating your birthday, anniversary, or another event that month, we will celebrate you at that special fellowship. Regular fellowships will continue on other Sundays. Feel free to sign up to help with any of the fellowships. Please contact me with any questions. I can't wait to celebrate with you!

Patty



Communications

Newsletter

Month	February '26	March '26
Articles due	1/10	2/10
Ready to proof	1/15	2/15
Proofer	Gilda	Karen
Ready to collate	1/23	2/23
Collate team	Kathy	George R.

Thank you to Karen for your help with the December newsletter.

Here is the schedule for February and March. A new schedule will be made for the next year in a few weeks. If you would like to serve by helping proof or collate the newsletter, give the church office a call.



Christian Service News

Dear Living Christ Friends,

We are supporting Matt and Martha Miles, their group and their family as our Ministry of the Month for January. Please continue to remember them in your prayers as they reach out in California to those who are seeking Christ.

Nancy Koelper, Director of Christian Service

Here is part of a recent letter From Matt and Martha:

Dear Friends and Family,

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year 2026! We are so grateful for you and continue to remember you in our prayers! May this season be sweet as we celebrate the birth of Jesus!

We have been celebrating the big and small ways we see God at work in this season. I continue to visit young men that are incarcerated at the Juvenile Hall here in Modesto and each time I go I experience God's joy. I probably mention that everytime I share a story. A couple of weeks ago I led a Bible study on a passage from the Gospel of Matthew about forgiveness. Over the course of the study 5 young men filtered in and out of the group. One young man joined us a bit late, but came excited to engage with the passage. As the other young men each left to make their phone calls, he stayed and began to tell me his story. He told me that he had been on the run in a stolen car with some friends. While driving in a high speed chase from the police, he heard a voice tell him to pull over. He thought one of his friends was talking to him. 'No!', they said. 'Keep driving! We didn't say anything!' He kept driving, but again heard the voice say 'Pull over.' He decided to listen to the voice and pull over. He was arrested and sent to Juvenile Hall. While there, he heard the voice again, this time it told him to get a book. "The voice didn't say which book to get, but to just get a book", the young man told me. An orange book grabbed his attention and he heard the voice tell him to take that book. He took the book back to his cell and began to read it. The book turned out to be a Bible. 'As I was reading the Bible, I didn't hear the voice again, but the Bible was speaking to me. I began to realize that the voice I was hearing was God's voice and that I wasn't going crazy.' He looked around the room and pointed out to a handful of young men and told me that he had helped them start reading the Bible. He also told me that he was back in here because even though he had started following Jesus, he had acted as his old self. He confessed that he had an anger problem and had come in with the desire to fight a lot of the other young men, but had decided to make a truce with them instead. 'What's the point of fighting them? There is so much violence and I always believed that I would only live until 21. Now I am believing that I am going to live longer.' As we looked at the passage with the other young men, he quickly grasped how Jesus is not putting a limit on forgiveness, but is asking us to forgive so that we too can be in right relationship with God. He also brought up how important it is for us to forgive ourselves. As I was finishing up, a young man who lost the privilege of coming out for Bible study was banging on his door to get my attention. 'Are those Bibles you are carrying?', he asked me. 'Yes', I said. 'Can I have one? I have a New Testament, but I really want to read the whole Bible. 'Of course,' I told him. Over the last month, I have been able to give about 10 young men Bibles of their own. The hunger for God continues to astonish me and fill me with joy.

Martha and I have been building a stronger relationship with Youth for Christ, the organization we are partnering with. This week we had the leader of the Juvenile Hall and after care ministry over for a meal and we talked more about how we could partner together. We felt really encouraged by his invitation to be a part of team (continued on page 6)

Ministry



of the month



he is putting together in the new year to rethink the aftercare program and how to better serve the young people we are ministering to in Juvenile Hall.

I (Matt) have also begun to prayerwalk different neighborhoods each week with some other men and I was able to invite this leader to join us and cast vision about our desire to prayerwalk around the Juvenile Hall and the neighborhoods the young men & women we are meeting are coming from.

This advent in Modesto has been very dark. I (Martha) can count on my hand the sunny days we have had. Most days there are dark clouds that look like rain but there has been almost no rain. When the sun breaks through it feels like a warm hug and it lifts our spirits! The spiritual atmosphere has felt similar. I have had so many women sharing stories of horrific domestic violence and abuse. It felt so dark and our hearts were breaking. Women were dealing with possible homelessness, food shortages, money shortages for basic necessities and just feeling hopeless. Some are still in that place. The light and miracle is that as they reach out to God he is answering impossible prayers. He is providing through so many people, churches and organizations. One landed 2 jobs, another got housing and is budgeting, another is taking steps toward freedom. God is reminding us that He sees their tears and is moved by their cries, he always responds in his perfect way and timing. Emmanuel means God with us. It is the song that has kept coming to mind this advent. There are so many people, myself included, who are living as captives to something or someone. The idolatry, adultery, fear, violence, hopelessness, hate, poverty, greed, unforgiveness, pride, deception, mistrust and injustice are rampant in our world. We need the songs of longing and lament. We are desperate for Emmanuel God with us. He is the light that has broken into our dark world as a babe and he will come again as the King of Kings! That is our hope, Yeshua, Messiah, the Prince of Peace, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Wonderful Counselor, the great I AM! Thank you Lord Jesus Christ for coming to save us. Thank you for setting captives free when you triumphed over sin and death by taking our punishment and place on the cross! You rose from the grave and showed us that you are the only way, the truth and the life. You alone deserve our worship and allegiance. There is no one like you! Reign in our hearts and in this dark world! You are the Light that conquers darkness! You are the lover of our souls who pursues us! You are the word made flesh who dwells with us and in us. Thank you Lord and Savior! We magnify you Jesus!

"O come, O come Emmanuel and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lowly exile here, until the Son of God appear. Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel. Shall come to thee oh Israel."

Christ's Love our Ours Too,
Mateo, Martita, Josiah, Asher, Noah and Micah

We put out a request for gift cards on Facebook for single moms and we are so grateful for your generosity! We also wanted to tell you that by the grace of God our wishlist is nearly fulfilled! We are hoping to shop for new vehicles in the New Year. Please pray for wisdom and for reliable vehicles. We wouldn't be able to do what we do without all of you! God uses you all to pray for us, support, encourage and uplift us! We thank God for each one of you every time we remember you! We are currently raising our budget to accomodate our growing family and we also have a desire to give more. We want to invite more people to the table, help our friends who are hurting and create fun memories with people who are operating on very limited budgets. Please prayerfully consider joining our support team. Another way to give is through prayer! If you would like to join our prayer team please let us know, we try to send out separate prayer updates with our specific requests.



1 Karen
5 Wendy
17 Judy
22 Marty
23 Anthony
25 Gary

Happy Anniversary
Rachael and Shaun
1/9/1999



Gift Cards

Thank you to those of you who support the Gift Card Fund by purchasing and ordering gift cards. Cards are ordered the first Sunday of each month.

Hundreds of cards are available through this program. Popular cards will continue to be available throughout the month. Would you consider purchasing gift cards once in a while to be used for gifts or for your everyday purchases at grocery stores, gas stations, and restaurants?

The proceeds from the sale of gift cards are used for non-budgeted items needed for our church. We also use some of the proceeds to help others. Be sure to check them out.

Check with me by e-mail or phone anytime to see what is available.

Patty
Gift Card Coordinator



Arlington Heights Mayor's Community Prayer Breakfast Date and Time

Thursday Feb 5, 2026
7:00 AM - 9:00 AM CST

Location

Double Tree by Hilton Chicago
75 W Algonquin Rd, Arlington Heights

Fees/Admission

\$25 Individual

\$250 table of 10

Tickets and more information can be found on the Arlington Heights Chamber of Commerce website.



PLANNING AHEAD

Jan 4	Mites collected after service Sunday Morning Bible Study resumes Gift Card Orders placed Bible Class Resumes Newsletter Deadline	Check Your Calendar
Jan 7	Feed My Starving Children	
Jan 15	Board of Directors Meeting	
Jan 17	Mites collected after the service	
Jan 20	Scrip Orders placed	
Feb. 1	Newsletter Deadline	
Feb. 15	Board of Directors Meeting	
Feb. 17	Ash Wednesday	
Feb. 18		

Elders: Art
Marty

LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE AT LCLC

Mites will be collected Sunday, January 4th. Mites are collected the 1st Sunday of the month every month by the Women's Guild. Thank you. LWML mites given in December totaled \$31.05. The mites collected go to the Lutheran Women's Missionary League, which supports many international mission projects.

Thank you for your support.

Nancy

