

# Our Saviour's Lutheran Church

Arlington, WA

[www.arlingtonwachurch.org](http://www.arlingtonwachurch.org)

January 2026



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

**Our purpose:** *Celebrate, cultivate and share God's love.*

**Our Values :** *Welcoming, Compassion, Serving, Respect.*



## The Messenger

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**Adult Education begins again on Sundays at 9:00am** in the classroom: **A Child Is Born** A Beginner's Guide to Nativity Stories. Author Amy Jill-Levine. Discover the fascinating connections between ancient birth stories and the Nativity of Jesus in this captivating study. Classes start January 11<sup>th</sup>. Order your book soon! 1/11: The Conception & Birth of Isaac and Ishmael, 1/18: The Conception & Birth of Samson, 1/25: The Conception and Birth of Samuel, 2/1: Jesus: Heir to Traditions.

**Celebration of 2025 Ministry & Annual Congregational Meeting** will be held on a Sunday in February, in the Gym following the morning service, date TBD. The meeting will include a review of 2025 ministry at Our Saviour's and the election of leaders for 2026.

**Church Council Opportunity** - We are looking to fill three positions for "retiring, out-going members from council". Please consider serving. You can call Kathy Thordarson, Ruth Gonzales & Max Maxwell or any of the council members if you are interested or have questions.

### **Congregation Council member:**

- Be a member in good standing of the congregation, regularly attending worship services and involved in congregational life.
- Attend all meetings of the council.
- Attempt to discover, through prayer and discernment, what is best for the congregation.
- Consider the well-being of the council when dealing with specific issues and ministries.
- Treat all matters relating to council deliberations as confidential, until such time as the information is determined a matter of public record.
- Assist the pastor in nurturing the spiritual life of the congregation.
- Care for the congregation's membership.
- Ensure that the decisions of the congregation are carried out.
- Be a part of a united body by supporting all decisions of the council, even if you don't agree with the decision.
- Treat members of the council and staff as brothers and sisters in Christ.
- Be familiar with the governing documents of the congregation.
- Be a leadership presence in the congregation.

**New Members** - Interested? Connect with Pastor John for February 2026!



**From Pastor John**

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

Thank you for your cards, notes, and thoughtful gifts!

This fall we heard some of the big Stories from the old testament, Creation, exodus, David, Exile, prophets and rebuilding post exile.

Now, we will hear from John's Gospel. It has been widely described as “shallow enough for a child to wade, yet deep enough for a hippopotamus to swim”

A new creation is on the way. Jesus becomes one of us and moves into our neighborhood to abide among us.

**Eugene Peterson, in his contemporary rendering of the Bible, *The Message*, has given us an alternative version of John 1:** The Word was made flesh and blood and moved into the neighborhood. We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory, like Father, like Son, generous inside and out, true from start to finish.

**Outreach To The Vulnerable Team:** How can we help with those who need shelter, warmth and food? By providing food items such as canned meat, peanut butter, energy bars, or other non-perishable items that take little or no preparation. As winter approaches warm clothing such as gently used blankets, winter coats, gloves, knit hats, beanies, etc. will be needed. You can drop off these items at church from 9am to 2pm Monday to Thursday and I will take them to the Arlington Community Resource Center. For questions or more suggestions on how you can help please call the church office. Thank you.



**Meal Project:** This project is now administered through the **Volunteers of America**. OSLC will provide "Grab and Go" meals on January 20<sup>th</sup>. The meals will be delivered to the **Arlington Community Resource Center**.

**Mission Circle** will meet on Tuesday, Jan 6<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> at 9 a.m. until noon, or whenever we finish for the day. Hope to see everyone there! Mission Circle makes quilts that are sent to Lutheran World Relief. Contact the church office for more information.

**Men's Coffee Fellowship** will meet here at the church on Wednesday, Jan. 14<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> at 10am. We will exchange stories, drink some java, and eat some pastries. For more information, please contact Jim Kjargaard.

**Phoebe Circle** is a bible study group for women that meets on the third Thursday of the month. Phoebe Circle will meet on Thursday January 15<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am in the classroom at OSLC. Bring your bible and copy of "Gather" if you have it. If not, we share! Phoebe Circle is always welcoming to new people. If you have any questions, contact the church office.

**Comfort Squad** is for those who are grieving no matter the reason. Our purpose is to offer support while we navigate the grieving process. Comfort Squad meets on Friday, January 23<sup>rd</sup> at 10:00am in the classroom. Contact the church office for more information.

**Josephine Gifts-A special thank you** to everyone who took a tag from the giving tree for Josephine Caring Community in Stanwood. Everyone was so generous and loving to participate. Our Saviour's helped out on 30 gift bags! There were many happy faces and hearts. Thank you.~Toni Forsman

**OSYM (Our Saviour's Youth Ministry) News**  
Submitted by Jennifer Ess  
**Christmas Baskets**

On behalf of the 4 families we were able to help this year – THANK YOU!!! Because of the extremely gracious generosity from so many people we were able to gift each family a full Christmas dinner and some fun breakfast treats for Christmas morning. We were able to provide extra food items to help fill their pantries as well. Every wish-list item was also fulfilled!! Each family also received a grocery store gift card so they are able to pick up any additional items they need. The look on the families' faces when they saw all the gifts spoke volumes about what this meant for them. A HUGE THANK YOU to the Quilters who created a beautiful quilt for each of the 4 families – another unexpected gift! Thank you to Bev and children of the childcare for helping to wrap the extra gifts. All the families were very grateful and appreciative – they were all at a loss for words and tears were shed. I wish you could feel the joy coming from these families when they receive their baskets.

Thank you everyone for your continued support of this ministry at Our Saviour's. This ministry would not be possible without each and every one of you. What a wonderful gift to give these families during this time. Thank you for continuing to be God's light in the world for these families, and so many others in need. We can't wait to do it all again next year.





## Our Saviour's Choir Christmas - "The Word Was God"

Laurie Breon - Choir Director





# OUR SAVIOUR'S CHRISTMAS ADVENT & EVE SERVICE





**CHILDCARE NEWS**

*by Melissa Hackworth, Program Supervisor*

Happy New Year! We are excited to see what 2026 brings! December was such a fun month for us! The kids were kept busy with a lot of different activities, including learning about the birth of Jesus, singing Christmas songs and making presents for their families. The Childcare Staff had a “Secret Santa” gift exchange with one another, along with some delicious treats made by Miss Bev and Miss Vicky, it was wonderful! Our Childcare families spoiled us as well with gifts for both staff and classrooms. We feel incredibly blessed each year to have such caring families that are a part of our Center!

**Preschool News**

*By Jennifer Ess - Director*

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the staff of Our Saviour's Preschool! We hope everyone was able to celebrate and enjoy some time with family and friends. The teachers will be back in the classroom in January after taking a much needed, and deserved, break.

December is always a month that passes quickly at the preschool. The students are busy making Christmas gifts for their families, practicing for their Christmas program, and are EXCITED for the upcoming holidays! If only there was a way to harness some of their energy to use!! The students were able to put on another great Christmas Program for friends and family. Seeing all the support for the students makes all of us so happy and proud. We had fun party days in both classrooms – complete with Christmas pajamas and stuffies, and of course frosting cookies! We will have a pajama day again when we start back up in January.

January brings learning about winter weather, arctic animals, snow, and learning about Jesus as a young boy. We also review our Preschool routines and share what we did with families during Christmas Break.

Preschool does have a few spaces still available for anyone looking for a preschool home – we'd love to have them join us! Thank you for all the support and prayers for our Preschool students and team.



From the Bishop:

January 2026

Several years ago, when I was a young pastor serving in a congregation, a member came to tell me he was leaving the church for another one. When I asked why, he said, “I don’t like all the lovey-dovey stuff.” I was caught off guard and didn’t have a very good response in the moment. Now I wish I had said something like, “When you say ‘lovey, dovey’ are you referring to the Sermon on the Mount when Jesus says we are to love even our enemies? Or when Jesus says his new command is that we love one another as he has loved us? Or when Jesus, hanging on the cross, says, ‘Father, forgive them?’ Or when the risen Jesus shows up on the shore, feeds his friends, and asks Peter – three times – ‘Do you love me?’ Or, maybe you mean Paul, who says that you can have all kinds of gifts and accomplishments, but without love, you are nothing. Or when Paul writes that out of faith, hope, and love, love is the greatest or ...”. You get the idea. But I didn’t have those words that day.

Now, several years later, I wish I could answer him again. Because as much as he thought he was rejecting something weak, living into God’s expansive love is anything but. It can be beautiful and life-giving, yes – but it is also demanding and hard. Especially when that love calls us to care for people we don’t particularly like, let alone agree with.

Today, in this fractured time, in this fractured world, how do we live into being ‘lovey-dovey’ in the way God first shows us through Jesus? How do we love when we’re afraid? How do we love those who are causing real harm? How do we love people with whom we feel uncomfortable or “icky?” How do we love those we would rather avoid? How do we love those we despise?

First, we have to be honest with ourselves. As clearly as we may see the sin of others, we also must acknowledge our own. We fall short time and time again. We cannot justify ourselves out of sin, nor can we place ourselves above anyone else. God is the one who comes in Jesus to bring wholeness, reconciliation, and salvation – not just to some, but to the whole world (John 3:16-17).

Second, every person is made in the image of God. Every person is a small miracle. God formed each person with care and intention. Every person, all eight billion of us on this planet, are a wonder and a joy to God. God loves each person beyond measure. God loves those fleeing countries (like Moses and the holy family). God loves those tangled up in messes of their own making (like David). God loves those who are trying their very best (like Martha). God even loves those who would rather scroll on their phones than engage (well ... for a scriptural reference perhaps this could be those churches in Revelation who are neither hot nor cold). God loves us all. Thank God!

And because of God’s amazing love, we are called to listen to one another and open our hearts to one another. This, of course, also means speaking up when there is injustice or harm – not out of hatred but out of love. Love rooted in Christ requires us to name and resist when harmful decisions made by those in power damage lives, especially when those decisions fall hardest on people who have been marginalized, silenced or erased. Love rooted in Christ pushes us to advocate for policies and practices that move people and systems toward equity and inclusion – whether we are talking about immigrants or farmers, children or grandmothers, those with homes and those without – neighbors all.

Third, we cannot love as God calls us to love on our own (see #1 above). We need the Holy Spirit and we need community. We need one another for accountability, and we need each other to help us journey forward together – beyond fear, beyond hatred, beyond the walls that we so easily build. Love cannot remain theoretical and abstract. No. Love is gritty and enfleshed.

As we begin 2026, I pray that, through the Holy Spirit, we love God and one another in our words and our actions. I pray that we practice loving all – even our enemies. And I pray that in this new year, others will look at us and say, “Wow. They are fiercely ‘lovely-dovey.’”

Following the Way of Jesus, may it be so.

Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee | [bishop@lutheransnw.org](mailto:bishop@lutheransnw.org)



**Northwest Washington Synod**  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God’s work. Our hands.



# The Messenger

Month	Actual Giving	Actual Expenses	Difference
November	\$27,095.03	\$24,387.43	\$2,708.60
Y.T.D. (July. - Nov)	\$118,629.99	\$130,847.85	\$-12,217.86

The budget year runs from July 1, 2025-June 30, 2026

*Thank you for giving  
to Our Saviour's!*

**give thanks  
to the LORD,  
for he is good;  
his LOVE endures  
forever.**



PSALM 107 1

## Worship Attendance for December 2025

	<i>In person</i>	<i>Online</i>
<b>7<sup>th</sup>:</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>14<sup>th</sup>:</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>98</b>
<b>21<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>56</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>24<sup>th</sup>:</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>28<sup>th</sup>:</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>67</b>

Minutes of the monthly Church Council meeting is posted on the office bulletin board for all to read. You can also request a copy be sent to you by email or mail. Contact the church office at (360) 435-8921 or [office@arlingtonwachurch.org](mailto:office@arlingtonwachurch.org)

## January Worship Servers

	4	11	18	25
<b>Audio/Video Booth Techs (Need 2)</b>	Allen & Darcy Larson	Max Maxwell Greg Husted	Max Maxwell Vance DeWard	Max Maxwell Kathy Thordarson
<b>Communion Assistants</b>	No Communion	Howard & Sharon Knoepfle	Ron & Kathy Thordarson	Judy Donoghue Peggy Shortt
<b>Lectors</b>	Barb Chamberlin	Alyce Riddle	Kevin Ess	Jamie Smith
<b>Ushers/ Hosts</b>	Hart Family	Vance & Tammy DeWard	Barb Chamberlin Lisa Masters	Karen Crone Family
<b>Flowers</b>				
<b>Teller/s</b>	Sharon Knoepfle Jan Hopson	Max Maxwell Kathy Thordarson	Sharon Knoepfle Sharron Knutson	Kerry Graves Jan Hopson
<b>Lock Up</b>	Deb Isler	Jan Hopson	Deb Isler	Kevin Ess
<b>Coffee Hour</b>	Phoebe Circle			

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 New Year's Day Office Closed  6:00p Basketball	2	3
4  9:00a OSYM for Kids <b>10:00a Worship</b> 11:00a Coffee & Conversation 4p Basketball	5  6:00p Scout Troop 92	6  9:00a Mission Circle	7  5:00p Choir Rehearsal	8  6:00p Basketball 7:00p Learning Board Center Mtg	9	10
11 9:00a Adult Class 9:00a OSYM for Kids <b>10:00a Worship</b> 11:00a Coffee & Conversation 11:30a Finance Mtg 4p Basketball	12  6:00p Scout Troop 92	13	14  10:00a Men's Coffee Fellowship 5:00p Choir Rehearsal	15  10:00a Phoebe Circle 5:30 pm Church Council Mtg 6:00p Basketball	16	17  10:00am CPR/ AED Training
18  9:00a Adult Class 9:00a OSYM for Kids <b>10:00a Worship</b> 11:00a Coffee & Conversation 4p Basketball	19 <b>Martin Luther King Jr Day</b>  6:00p Scout Troop 92	20  9:00a Mission Circle	21  5:00p Choir Rehearsal	22  6:00p Basketball	23  10:00a Comfort Squad	24
25  9:00a Adult Class 9:00a OSYM for Kids <b>10:00a Worship</b> 11:00a Coffee & Conversation 4p Basketball	26  6:00p Scout Troop 92	27	28  10:00a Men's Coffee Fellowship 5:00p Choir Rehearsal	29  6:00p Basketball	30	31

“ Happy Birthday to you ...”

1 Neco Settimo  
10 Jennifer Ess  
13 Susan Gehrig  
17 Dennis Heaton  
17 Doris Senica  
19 Daniel Ewing  
21 Dawn Cahoon  
29 Donna DeWard  
29 Toni Forsman

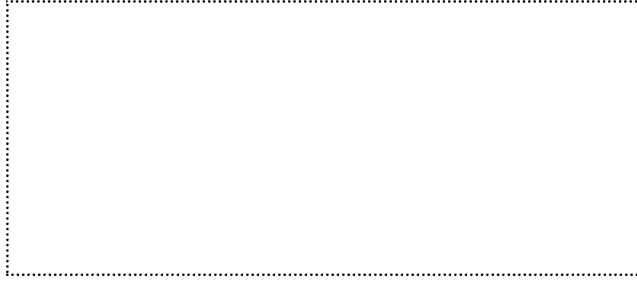


Happy Anniversary!



☺ *Did we forget you? If your special date is not listed here, first, forgive us! Then, call the office so that we can update our database. Thanks!*





Share Your  
FAITH  
With Others....  
Show Love

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