



# INCARNATION

## LUTHERAN CHURCH

### WELCOME TO WORSHIP

**On December 28, 2024, we will have one worship service at 10:00 am. It will NOT be live-streamed. You can watch Pastor Joy's pre-recorded sermon [HERE](#)**

[Watch later on Facebook](#)

[Watch later on the Web](#)

[Download a PDF of a guide for families worshipping together.](#)

## Festive Christmas Worship

### First Sunday of Christmas, December 28

One Service at 10:00 am

Watch Pastor Joy's pre-recorded sermon for December 28 [HERE](#)

### Second Sunday of Christmas, January 4

Connect to worship at 9:00 am [HERE](#)

Connect to worship at 10:30 am [HERE](#)

### Prayer Concerns

Dottie House; Kathy Kvinge & family; Gil Hartley; Julie & Royal Erlandson; Carlos Rodriguez; Joan Volkmann; Karen Gladen; Maria & family; Ron Anderson; Erin Holmen; Deb Rykken; Karen Stauder; Kara Genia & family; Jon Nelson; Kate Tollefson & family; Carol Beckerleg; Marian Ness; Lowell Odland; Linda Hudepohl; Lorinda Mishek's mother; Ruth & Paul Howard's niece; Nicole & Troy Heller's brother-in-law; Kay Leerssen's daughter; Tom Henk's brother; Deb Rykken's brother; Sue Bernlohr's mother; Mike Wielenberg's mother; Al and Carolyn Ek's son; Kara Johnson's friends Ken & Trish; Nancy Haugen's friends David, Michelle & family and Colette & family; Kim Wielenberg's friend, Cindy; Dede Mattison's friends, Allan and Yvonne; caregivers

*To be added to the public prayer concerns list, please get in touch with [Julie Durbin](#). If you would like to add someone else to the public prayer concerns list, please obtain their consent first.*

## Altar Flowers

*If you would like to have altar flowers given in honor or memory of someone, don't hesitate to get in touch with the Incarnation Office at 651-484-7213 to sign up (cost: \$25). Donations help offset the cost of the beautiful flowers the Worship Arts team provides. Altar flowers express our love for God, enhance our gathering around the Word and Sacrament, and represent changing seasons both in the church year and in nature.*



Click on the image above to link to our giving page.

### Giving a Gift

We are grateful for your continued support of the ministries at Incarnation. Your generosity is not only vital to our church's worship but helps us have an impact on people in the surrounding communities and beyond. We invite you to continue with us on this journey! If you have questions about setting up an electronic recurring donation or making a gift through stocks, an IRA, or a donor-advised fund, please reach out to [Amy Faymerville](#), our gifts manager.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### 2025 Giving Statements

2025 Giving Statements will be distributed electronically at the end of January via our new donor management system called Pushpay. Watch for the email.

**Note:** It will include all donations for 2025 regardless of what system it was processed through (Realm or Pushpay). Learn more at the link below:

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)



**Welcome to the 2025-2026 Kairos season. The Kairos logo, the Jerusalem cross, is a universal symbol for Kairos/God's time. Kairos sessions will be held at 10:15 am in the Fireside Room unless otherwise noted.**

*NOTE: There will be no Kairos on December 21. Kairos resumes on January 11.*

### January 11 & 18

**Learning from Both the Tender and the Harsh Words of Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew**

Presenter: Matt Skinner, Asher O. and Carrie Nasby  
Professor of New Testament, Luther Seminary

All four Gospels present Jesus as a teacher with both reassuring and unsettling things to say. The contrast is most striking in Matthew's Gospel, where you can read a passage full of grace and comfort, then turn the page and be taken aback by threats of judgment. How do Jesus's promises of mercy relate to his warnings? This overview of some of the main themes in Matthew will offer a clearer view of how the Gospels remember Jesus's teachings, what those teachings mean, and how we might sort through them ourselves to make better sense of Jesus's message to us.



Skinner, also Scholar for Adult Education at Westminster Presbyterian Church, is a longtime cohost of Sermon Brainwave, a weekly podcast that helps preachers work with biblical passages as they prepare their sermons. One of his recently published books is *Matthew: The Gospel of Promised Blessings*, which explores the Gospel of Matthew and its most important themes.

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## Thank You, Incarnation, from LifeHaven!



*Members from Mom's ILC Small Group and Hands & Hearts joyfully wrapped the gifts before they were delivered to LifeHaven.*

The staff & Youth at LifeHaven send many thanks for the generous gifts from Incarnation through the **LifeHaven Youth Holiday Gift Drive**! There were more than 120 gifts (including a beautiful handmade crib quilt & hand knit blankets) and \$300.00 in gift cards given to twelve youth and their children.

Fifty additional gifts were donated to the LifeHaven House & Program. This included items to welcome new youth to LifeHaven, such as PJs, slippers, desk chairs, & comforters. There were also items donated to help youth transition into independent living, such as



pots & pans, 2 vacuums, & dishware sets. \$875.00 in gift cards were donated to the LifeHaven Program for year-round use for birthdays, rewards for achieving set goals, use before benefits become available, & other emergency situations. We also had \$1,000.00 given to the LifeHaven program in cash donations that were very timely in repairing & replacing two LifeHaven house refrigerators!

The LifeHaven House is currently housing & supporting five youth & their children. LifeHaven staff also continue to support & be a resource to seven young adults & their children that have transitioned out of LifeHaven and into independent living.



## Door Greeters Needed to Welcome Players and Keep the Game Going!

Our gym is open for pickleball! We're looking for enthusiastic players and friendly **door greeters** to help welcome everyone. Door greeters will cover two-hour shifts each session to let players into the building. For instructions and to sign up for available dates and times, click the link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0C45ABAB28A57-51542625-pickleball#/>



## 2025 Holiday Baking Drive Campaign for Ralph Reeder Food Shelf — Final Results and THANK YOU!

We cannot thank you enough for your generosity in giving to our 2025 Holiday Baking Drive Campaign. We transported carloads of donations and baking goods throughout the campaign, weighing in at 2560 pounds. And one Small Group donated an additional 175 pounds for the holidays. In total, we donated 2735 pounds to the Ralph Reeder Food Shelf for holiday giving to our neighbors. That is over a TON of generosity! Thank you!!

As well, you have been very generous in giving financial donations this fall and through the holiday season. Through your generosity, we have received \$26,900! Ralph Reeder Food Shelf can make great use of these funds, acquiring items that are greatly needed through their channels. Again, thank you!!

During this season of giving, thank you for being a part of our “Church Without Walls” ministry and providing generously for our neighbors through our partnership with the Ralph Reeder Food Shelf.

While this year's campaign has officially come to an end, food insecurity, unfortunately, has not. Please continue to support the Ralph Reeder Food Shelf and those they serve here in our community.

Incarnation donation link – choose 'Ralph Reeder Food Shelf' in the Fund drop-down:  
<https://pushpay.com/g/incarnationmn>



## Solid Ground Christmas Joy



We want to express our deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed to making Solid Ground's Christmas truly special. Your generosity in donating Christmas trees, purchasing gifts for families, organizing, wrapping, and delivering presents, capturing heartwarming photos of Solid Ground families during the holiday party, baking delicious Christmas cookies, creating a cookie decorating activity with all the frosting and sprinkles, and assisting at the holiday party has brought much joy to families this Christmas season.

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## INCARNATION

### SMALL GROUPS

### Small Groups in the New Year

We are about to begin a new season of Small Group Ministry!

Look for the Small Group tables on **Sunday mornings, January 4, 11, 18**

### Our Money Stories

"Christians are usually sincere and well-intentioned people until you get to any real issues of ego, control power, money, pleasure, and security. Then they tend to be pretty much like everybody else. We've often given a bogus version of the Gospel, some fast-food religion, without any deep transformation of the self; and the result has been the spiritual disaster of "Christian" countries that tend to be as consumer-oriented, proud, warlike, racist, class conscious, and addictive as everybody else—and often more so, I'm afraid."

—Richard Rohr, *Breathing Underwater: Spirituality and the 12 Steps*

Join in this Small Group for a safe space to talk about your own life stories and how you have been shaped by your relationship with money. Consider this an opportunity to begin the new year in a positive way. We will use the fuller version of the Our Money Story Study Journal to support our conversation.

Offered by Tim Gray—suggested timing, Sunday afternoons at 4:00—reach out if you'd like to propose different timing

### Matthew: The Gospel of Promised Blessings by Matthew Skinner

*Planned to begin in January 2026*

The Gospel of Matthew portrays Jesus and his message as full of tender compassion and urgent warning. This six-part exploration of an enigmatic Gospel takes readers into the themes, topics, and tensions at the heart of Matthew's story about the life and work of Jesus. Chapters focus on blessing and comfort, judgment and retribution, the meaning of discipleship, Jesus' vision for the Church and world, conflicts and complaints, and how the Gospel of Matthew speaks to believers today.

Components include video teaching sessions featuring Matthew Skinner and a comprehensive Leader Guide.

Offered by:

## **Parents Small Group**

This Small Group's purpose is to gather parents of young (and growing) children to grow in faith together, create relationships with each other as well as share conversation about the joys and challenges of parenting. We will dig into God's living word, share ideas and explore how to form faith together with our children and as a family. All are welcome including Incarnation Preschool families and those worshipping at Incarnation who have a preschooler.

ILCKids/Childcare is available for participants of this Small Group with advance registration—to register for childcare, see link below.

Wednesdays, 6-7 pm on the following dates January 28 (pizza), February 4 (pizza), February 25 (Lent), March 4 (Lent), March 25 (Lent), April 8 (pizza), April 29  
Small Group Leader: Caleb Cordes

<https://onrealm.org/IncarnationLuth/PublicRegistrations/Event?linkString=NTM5ZDM2NDYtYzhhYS00Mjc4LWE0NTgtYjNiMDAxMzE5NTNm>

## **Renewal and Encouragement for Caregivers — *this group has limited openings; contact Katie or Patty to be added***

The purpose of the group is to meet with others in our faith community who are serving as caregivers, share our stories, and find encouragement and renewal through deep listening and companionship over our month together.

Optional book - Refilling The Reservoirs by Brenda Bos—we will discuss some topics from the book, but it is not required reading.

Small Group Leaders – Katie Solfest & Patty Nilsen, Small Group Room C  
Tuesday afternoons in January 6, 13, 20, and 27, 1:00 – 2:30 pm

## **Practicing Meditation with the Psalms – this group is full, contact Emily to be added to the waitlist**

We will meet in the chapel with candles and dim light. Participants can sit in a traditional chair or bring a mat or blanket to sit on the floor. We will listen to one Psalm together and have a short conversation on it. Then we will do a traditional guided meditation, including deep breathing, attention to the body, listening, etc. Before the meditation is complete, we will hear the Psalm again and end with a breath prayer. We will all leave quietly.

Small Group Leader: Emily Schwieters  
Meeting 5 Monday evenings, 6:30-7:30 pm. Jan 5, Jan 19, Feb 2, Feb 16, March 2

## **A Preview of Lent Small Groups**

### **Tell Me Something Good: Grounding ourselves in the good news this Lent**

Lent was originally a season for those new to faith to learn and prepare for their baptism at Easter. During that time, they would study what was central to Christianity. What are the core, foundational parts of Jesus' life and ministry? What makes it good news? Can we trust that the good news is truly good, even when it challenges us?

The good news brings us back to our roots, back to what grounds us: loving our neighbor, caring for the vulnerable, pursuing justice and mercy, and resting in God's unending grace. The good news grows like a mustard seed that flourishes rapidly into a tree to shelter the birds. It sounds like children laughing. It feels like feet washed with tender care. The good news is alive in the world. When we are grounded in the good news, the goodness of God can infinitely flourish and grow.

We hope this series will provide fertile ground for conversation and worship, rooting our hearts and lives in the expansive goodness of God. This Lent, may the



teachings of Jesus lead us forward. Let the good news ground us. And let that good news inspire us to take action in a world desperate to hear, see and taste what is good.

Interested? Sign up at Small Groups table on January 4, 11, 18

# Youth & Family Ministry

## The Weekly Update



On Wednesday, December 17, after pizza at 5:00pm and our final Advent worship at 6:00pm, 50+ kids and 14 adults headed out into the surrounding neighborhood, wearing reflective vests and all manner of light-up hats and glasses, for a time of caroling. The weather cooperated, and we sang at 20+ houses, splitting into two larger groups. We met relatives visiting from Norway, a diverse set of families, college kids home for the holidays, friends from school, and even babies getting ready for bed. We sang upbeat tunes, such as We Wish You a Merry Christmas and Joy to the World, and soft lullabies, such as Away In A Manger and Silent Night. When we returned, we had hot chocolate, candy canes, and cookies (provided by our PreSchool). What a joyful experience... very meaningful! We'll be off for the Christmas/winter break until January 7, 2026. See you next year!

### A Few Updates

1. SIGN UP NOW... Summer Service Trip to Duluth, MN – July 26-31 – current 6-8 grade – [register here](#)
2. Christmas Eve Worship at 1:00 (families w/ young children), 3:00, 5:00, 7:00; Christmas Day and 12/28 at 10:00 am
3. Our First Thursday schedule in January shifts – Thursday, January 8, 7:00-8:30 am

4. Serve cookies and coffee on Sunday (2 hrs) – [sign up here](#)
5. Be a Pizza Person on Wednesday (next one: 1/7) – [sign up here](#)

To view our schedules and loads of other stuff, head to our [MSM](#) or [HSM](#) webpages.

## Disaster Response

Lutheran Disaster Response shares God's hope, healing, and renewal with people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the United States and worldwide. When the dust settles and the headlines change, we stay to provide ongoing assistance to those in need.

### International:

- [Middle East Crisis](#)
- [Eastern Europe Crisis Response](#)
- [Horn of Africa Drought](#)
- [Middle East & Europe Refugee Crisis](#)
- [South Sudan Relief](#)
- [AMMPARO: Protecting Migrants](#)

### Domestic:

- [Flooding](#)
- [Hurricanes](#)
- [Severe Storms](#)
- [Tornadoes](#)
- [Wildfires](#)

Like Lutheran Disaster Response on [Facebook](#), follow @ELCALDR on [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#) and follow @ELCA\_LDR on [Instagram](#).

- If you are new to Incarnation or you want to learn more about Incarnation ministries, [please complete this online form](#) we'll use to connect you to a ministry leader according to your interests.
- Please consider [giving online](#), allowing Incarnation to receive the funds quickly. You will be able to donate to the Ralph Reeder Food Shelf, Feed My Starving Children, the Operating Budget and more through the same link.
- [You can find the online worship web page here.](#)
- [To email the council directly, click here.](#)
- To request council minutes, please email [Julie Durbin](#).
- To be added to the public prayer concerns list, contact [Julie Durbin](#). If you would like to add someone else to the public prayer concerns list, please obtain their consent first.
- If you are ill, someone is hospitalized, or there is a death, call the Incarnation Office at 651-484-7213. If it is outside of Office Hours, contact the on-call Pastor at 651-484-7213 ext. 204.
- [The Staff Directory, with email addresses, can be found here.](#)
- Questions? [Contact Julie Durbin](#).

## Incarnation Lutheran Church

[incarnationmn.org](http://incarnationmn.org)

651.484.7213

### UNSUBSCRIBE — UPDATE CONTACT INFORMATION

If your contact information has changed or if you would no longer like to receive Online Worship Emails from Incarnation, please contact [Marina Nyberg](#) to take you off the list.

Please note that when you choose to unsubscribe using the link below, you will no longer receive ANY Incarnation email communications through Constant Contact. For this reason, you're asked to email [Marina Nyberg](#) if you wish to be removed from specific Incarnation email communications.





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