

# First Sunday After Christmas

## December 31, 2023

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*Pastor's Corner for December 31-January 6*

### **New Clothes** **(Isaiah 61:10-62:3)**

Christmas 2023 is already in the history books. What did you get?

I remember a day when getting clothes for Christmas was not on the top of the list. (Not unless it came with an activity attached: gloves for skiing, shoes for hiking, that sort of thing!) Needless to say, things have changed over the years. While I'll always have my favorite old sweatshirts on hand for puttering around in the garden

outside or walking the dog (one of those favorite work shirts is over 30 years old), I'm always happy to get new stuff on special days like Christmas that make the New Year feel a little newer.

On this last weekend of 2023, the prophet Isaiah turns our attention to new clothes and the action of God to get us decked out and feeling like a million bucks. WE have not put on new duds, Isaiah reminds us. Rather, "[our] God" has "clothed [us] with garments of salvation; He has covered [us] with the robe of righteousness!" (61:10). It reminds me of how God took care of Adam and Eve's hopelessly inept effort to clothe themselves with fig leaves after their Fall in the Garden of Eden. God covered their shame with "garments of skins" (Gen 3:21). He ensured that they would thrive despite their failure with the one area of the Garden God had put off limits. You and I screw up too. The passing of one year to the next reminds us of the mistakes of 2023. But the Christmas Christ-child is God's gift of rescue! What did we get this year? We got Jesus —God's way of giving all of us a clean slate and fresh start for 2024.

The renewing work of the Lord to coax goodness and praise from the people of the world is also compared in our text to a garden unexpectedly sprouting and budding. Winter might be just beginning, but there are flowers —paperwhite narcissus (I had to Google that!) —already popping up near the circle drive at the entrance to RLC. When you come by this weekend, linger for a minute out front and take a look. May they remind you, as they reminded me today, that God is good and is sometimes doing His best work in a season in which we least expect to see it.

With hope reborn for 2024,  
Pastor Jonathan

Please note, there is no Sunday morning Christian education, Sunday School for children and youth, or Monday night Bible studies this week.

# Prayers of the Church

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## Weekly Bible Study Opportunities

### Sunday

#### ***Isaiah – Herald of the Messiah***

Sundays, 9:30-10:30 am in the Fellowship Hall

January 7-February 11

Contacts: Bob and Barb Shimmel

This 6-week study is from the Concordia Publishing House series: God's Word for Today. Each session will combine a presentation of the scriptural focus in Isaiah, followed by opportunities to explore relevant applications for life today.

#### ***Training to Become a Stephen Minister***

Sundays, 2:00-4:00 pm in Room 151, Family Life Center

January 7-May 26

Contact: Pastor Alan Shaw

### Monday

Monday Night Women's Bible Study

#### ***Measured by Grace: How God Defines Success* by Sharla Fritz**

Mondays, 7:00-8:00 pm in Room 151, Family Life Center

January 8-May 20

Contact: Jamee Thieme

In the Bible, you'll find no lack of sinfulness, shortcomings, rejections, and broken people. People like Joseph, Rahab, David, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, The Samaritan Woman, Peter, and Paul. We see them as people God transformed, turning their lack into faithfulness for His good. Study these eight biblical figures to see that God

does the same for you.

Men's Weekly

***A Study of Heroes of the Faith***

Mondays, 7:00-8:15 pm in Room 240, Family Life Center

January 8-May 20

Contact: Tom Gebbia

We will study and discuss the Heroes of the Faith series published by Concordia Publishing House - starting with *Intrepid Heroes of the Faith*, which includes Joshua, Gideon, Sampson, and Daniel.

**Tuesday**

***Tuesday Morning Bible Study and Fellowship***

Tuesdays, 10:30-11:30 am in the Fellowship Hall

January 2-May 21

Contacts: Pastor Jonathan Blanke, Pastor Zach Sarrault

We will look at the appointed readings from each week that are used in the weekend sermons.

***Mama Bear Apologetics... Also for Papa Bears***

Tuesdays, 2:00-3:00 pm in Room 240, Family Life Center

January 2-February 6

Contacts: Pastor Zach Sarrault, Erika Hulse

Learn how to raise kids who think critically, love Biblically, and stand firm against the cultural tide. This book study will equip you to teach your kids how to affirm Biblical beliefs about what is true and what is false.

**Wednesday**

***Mama Bear Apologetics... Also for Papa Bears***

Wednesdays, 6:00-7:00 pm in Room 240, Family Life Center

January 3-February 7

Contacts: Pastor Zach Sarrault, Erika Hulse

See listing above, identical classes.

***Help Is Here: Finding Fresh Strength and Purpose in the Power of the Holy Spirit***

Wednesdays, 6:30-8:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall

January 3-February 7

Contacts: Tim Kearby, Mindy Stephani

We will use Max Lucado's five-session study to learn more about this "helper" whom we know as the Holy Spirit. *Help Is Here* reminds us that our Good Shepherd doesn't just feed us; he leads us. He does more than correct us; he directs us. God keeps us on track —he's commissioned the Holy Spirit to guide us down the winding roads of life, wherever they may lead us.

***Men with Kids***

Wednesdays, 6:30-7:45 pm in Room 247, Family Life Center

January 3-April 24

Contact: Tom Gebbia

This group is designed to bring men in a similar season with similar life experiences and goals together.

***Grace-Full Women***

Wednesdays, 6:30-7:45 pm in Room 251, Family Life Center

January 3-February 7

Contact: Shane Jarvis

As we read through the in-depth Bible study of *Ruth: More Than a Love Story* by Elizabeth Ahlman, we will come to see how God watches carefully over every little detail so His grace may come to fruition and fully abound.

## Saturday

### ***This Is the Church***

Saturdays, January 20, January 27, March 3 Only

9:30-11:00 am in Room 151, Family Life Center

Contact: Pastor Jonathan Blanke

Three 90-minute gatherings, Conversations around the Basics of the Christian Faith, will focus on what Christians believe and how the Christian faith can be understood in distinction from other world religions.

**To register for a class**, pick up a registration card at the Information Centers in the Narthex and Family Life Center Lobby, complete and return in offering plate or place in the Church Office mailbox.

Any questions can be directed to the church office at [office@rlcary.org](mailto:office@rlcary.org) or 919-851-7248.

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**Wednesday Night Workshop  
Schedule Starting January 3**

<b>5:00-6:00 pm</b> Dinner, FLC Gym	<b>6:30-7:30 pm</b> Heavenly Handbells, Sanctuary
<b>5:00-5:30 pm</b> Jubilee Bells, Sanctuary	<b>6:30-8:00 pm</b> Adult Christian Ed <i>Help Is Here</i> , Fellowship Hall <i>Men with Kids</i> , RM 247 <i>Grace-Full Women</i> , RM 251
<b>5:30-6:00 pm</b> Rainbow Choir, Sanctuary Sonshine Singers, Choir Room	<b>7:00-8:00 pm</b> 1st Communion Instruction, RM 244
<b>6:00-7:00 pm</b> Kidz Live, RM 151 Ignite, The Warehouse <i>Mama Bear Apologetics</i> , RM 240	<b>7:00-8:15 pm</b> Confirmation, RM 240 <b>7:30-8:45 pm</b> Sanctuary Choir, Sanctuary

### Stephen Ministry

**From Broken to Whole**

The RLC Stephen Ministry group is hosting a training session for those with a

servant heart. Sound like you? Or do you know someone that could benefit from having a confidential listening partner?

Your Stephen Ministry group is a great resource that helps walk alongside broken or breaking people; people experiencing difficult circumstances and need someone to talk to.

*We're looking for people to join this ministry.* Training is provided so you don't have to feel like you're being asked to do anything without a support system behind you.

**Training Starts January 7, 2024**

We only ask that you prayerfully consider this ministry. Look for anyone with a Stephen Minister badge or email Pastor Alan at [alan.shaw@rlcary.org](mailto:alan.shaw@rlcary.org) for more information. We look forward to serving you.

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## **The Coffeehouse for Special Needs Adults**

Friday, January 12

We thank all of our volunteers who help us to have wonderful Coffeehouses! We couldn't do it without our faithful volunteers. Please come be a volunteer! Our special needs guests love to attend these events and we need lots of volunteers to make them feel special and loved.

We need Setter Uppers at 5:30 pm (both food and room), Servers at 6:30 pm, and Cleaner Uppers at 8:30 pm.



Sign Up: <https://bit.ly/3kqoHGN>

The first Coffeehouse of 2024 is **Friday, January 12** from 7:00-8:30 pm in the Family Life Center gym. Jim Linn's band, *Bona Fide Brass*, will play for us.

Questions? Contact Brenda Peterson through RCB or the church office at [office@rlcary.org](mailto:office@rlcary.org) or 919-851-7248.

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## RLC W orship Servants and Training

### **Ushering and Greeting at the Praise W orship Service**

Sundays, 11:00 am in the Family Life Center

For those who will be Greeting and/or Ushering in our Praise W orship service, please plan to attend one of the three brief training sessions scheduled in January. Meet in the Family Life Center Lobby.

**Monday, January 8 at 7:00 pm**  
**Sunday, January 14 at 10:00 am**  
**Sunday, January 28 at 10:00 am**

There is always a need for more volunteers to assist in all of our worship services. Please consider being a greeter or usher, a worship assistant or lay reader, a slide

tech or live stream team member. Feel free to reach out directly to the following for more information:

- Saturday, 6:00 pm - Lori Jannings
- Sunday, 8:00 am - Brenda Peterson
- Sunday, 9:30 am - Dara Linn
- Sunday, 11:00 am - Suzi Heffner

You may also contact the church office ([office@rlcary.org](mailto:office@rlcary.org), 919-851-7248) for assistance.

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## Finance Updates

### Change is coming soon...

Vanco - that provides the platform for our electronic and mobile donations - is changing the design for both online and mobile use. Our RLC Council is providing the finishing touches of personalization now and will soon publish the link to the new version. Stay tuned!

### Offering Envelopes

If you typically use these for donation, the new packet for 2024 will be placed in your RLC mailbox after Christmas. Watch for it to appear. If you have not had, but want to receive envelopes, please contact the Finance Team at [finance@rlcary.org](mailto:finance@rlcary.org). Thanks!

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## Moms Together

Moms, you are invited to join other moms for daytime get togethers to socialize, share tips, make new friends, and work on crafts/projects.

Childcare is available for a small fee.

We also meet for evening activities occasionally.

For dates and to sign up: <https://bit.ly/3ZVhyB8>

Questions? Contact Erika Hulse, Children and Family Ministry Director  
[erika.hulse@rlcary.org](mailto:erika.hulse@rlcary.org).

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## Youth Ministry

Middle School and High School

We will take a break to celebrate Christmas  
and the New Year and be back in 2024!

Questions? Contact Ms. Jenny, Youth Director  
[jenny.piontek@rlcary.org](mailto:jenny.piontek@rlcary.org) or 919-851-7248, ext. 24

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## Resurrection Lutheran Preschool

# Happy New Year!



[rlpcary.org](http://rlpcary.org) | 919-851-7270 | [office@rlpcary.org](mailto:office@rlpcary.org)

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## Resurrection Lutheran School



**rlscary.org**  
Junior Kindergarten-8<sup>th</sup> Grade

[rlscary.org](http://rlscary.org) | 919-851-7271 | [contact@rlscary.org](mailto:contact@rlscary.org)

## Latest Lion's Tale

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For online services, connect through our YouTube channel at  
[youtube.com/ResurrectionLutheranChurchCaryNC](https://youtube.com/ResurrectionLutheranChurchCaryNC)  
or through our website at  
[rlcary.org/about-us/online-worship](http://rlcary.org/about-us/online-worship).

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## This Week's Visual Faith Sheet

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Attendance and Giving

### **In-Person W orship Attendance**

- Wednesday, December 20 - Carols Outside  
6:00 pm - 62
- Saturday, December 23  
No 6:00 pm
- Sunday, December 24 - Christmas Eve  
3:00 pm - 140  
4:30 pm - 222  
6:00 pm - 137  
8:00 pm - 347  
10:00 pm - 114
- Monday, December 25 - Christmas Day  
10:00 am - 86

**Total In-Person W orship: 1,108**

### **Views of Online W orship at RLC's YouTube Channel**

- Sunday, December 24 - Christmas Eve  
8:00 pm - 245

**Total Online Views: 245 views**

### **General Fund Giving and Spending - November 2023**

	Current Month	Year to Date
General Receipts	\$ 123,763.02	\$ 540,400.52
Total Disbursements	<u>\$ 125,538.89</u>	<u>\$ 577,213.69</u>
Receipts Less Disbursements	\$ -1,775.87	\$ -36,813.17

**This Week's Offerings: \$46,087.17**

**Average Weekly Giving for 2023/24: \$24,563.66**

**Average Weekly Giving Budgeted for 2023/24: \$27,761.30**

We are grateful for all who are able to maintain financial contributions to our congregation! There are four ways to make your offering:

- Place in offering plate during the worship service
- Mail to Resurrection Lutheran Church, 100 Lochmere Drive West, Cary, NC 27518
- Online Giving through [rlcary.org/ministries/online-giving](https://rlcary.org/ministries/online-giving)
- Download the Vanco Mobile app, search for Resurrection Lutheran Church, transfer funds from your checking or savings account to RLC

Questions? Contact [finance@rlcary.org](mailto:finance@rlcary.org).

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## Church Calendar



100 Lochmere Drive West, Cary NC 27518

[rlcary.org](https://rlcary.org)

919-851-7248 | [office@rlcary.org](mailto:office@rlcary.org)

## Prayers of the Church – December 31, 2023

*Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence,  
so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.  
Hebrews 4:16*

### We lift the following prayer requests this week:

#### Ongoing Prayers

\*Diane Cuper, \*Eve Sommers, \*Anne Altieri, \*Charlotte Raines, \*Eric Hammergren, \*Anita Moore, \*John Shaeffer, \*Vern Ebert, \*Aaron, Marcus, \*Malcolm, \*Sandy Nigg, Henry Otten, Michael Flannery, \*Helen Campbell, Paul Batt, Peter and Esther Kuo, \*Geoffrey Wiggins, Caitlyn, Mark Zimmerman, Justus Nicolai, Alex Fernandez, \*Cheri Spitz

#### Ongoing Cancer Treatments

\*Mike Allen, Anne Price, Angie Price, Alison Zieglmeier, Carol Diliberto, Jackie, Kathy Siemon, Scott Brinkley, \*Bill Xenakis, Linda, Jimmy Ketner, Hope Mackelprang, Melissa Huntsman, Sue, Kathy, Pamm Haley, Bob, Michael Murphy, Greta Nelson, Marina de Moura Torres, Paul Wozniak, Carol Stano

#### For Expectant Moms

Carolyn St. Laurent, Hannah Peterson, Analissa Vasquez, Sara Phillips

#### Those Prayed for on December 24, 2023

#### Thanking God Today

- Our RLC Family
- Family Celebrations and Time Together, Anniversaries, Birthdays, Weddings, Baptisms
- Our Many Blessings
- Safe Travels
- Caring Organizations Within Our Local Communities
- Our Sunday School Students and Their Teachers, Offering Praises in Worship on December 17
- Connections Between RLC Staff and Our School Students

#### For Healing

- \*Kim Goss
- All Those Exposed to COVID, with COVID, and Recovering from COVID
- Blind Ministry Guests - Maria Barker, Sheila McNair, Linda Jones, Desiree, James
- \*Eve Sommers, Continued Recovery
- \*Greta Nelson
- Paul Wozniak, Recovery at Home
- Julie Wozniak, Recovery
- Patricia Wellington, Chemo Treatments

- Miriam Beyer, Daughter-In-Law of \*Charlotte Beyer
- \*Bill Xenakis, Radiation Therapy
- Jan Bloom
- Evelyn Bloom
- Pastor William Otto, Cancer Treatment and Surgery
- Bruce, Brother of \*Ralph Klevenow
- \*Meredith A.
- Michael
- \*Pam Dickson
- \*Stephanie Ford
- Jimmy, Cancer Treatment
- Myrna, Recovery From Car Accident

### **For Comfort**

- Friends and Family of Andy Renninger, Especially His Mother, Ellen Renninger, Aunt of \*Dawn Leister
- Friends and Family of Greg Todd, Neighbor of \*Linda Crandall
- Friends and Family of Lauren Call

### **For Provision, Peace, Strength, and Patient Endurance**

- Persecuted Christians
- Uganda Lutheran Church
- People of Ukraine, and All Those Who Serve to Support Them
- People of Maui, Morocco, Libya, Afghanistan, and All Affected by Natural Disasters
- People of Israel and the People of Gaza, Peace in the Middle East
- All Those Supporting Family Members with Caregiving Needs
- Annie Ruth Ford, Mother of \*Dennis Ford
- \*Eric and \*Jill Hammergren
- \*Jan and Paul Wozniak
- Jan and Rich Bloom
- Stuart and Sue Sanders, and the \*Boyer Family
- \*Ginny and \*Ed Koren
- Those Enduring Marriage Struggles and Families in Turmoil
- Those Seeking Jobs and Career Changes
- Victims, Families, and Communities Suffering with Gun Violence
- For Those Who Find the Holiday Season Difficult - Separation from Family, Loneliness, Grief
- RLC Financial Health and Stewardship
- \*Mike Persson, Next Steps in Employment Process

### **For the Lord's Wisdom, Guidance, Strength for the Health and Well-Being of the People They Serve**

- Pastor Jonathan and Juli, Associate Pastor Zach and Kelsey, Assistant Pastor Alan and Faith, and Their Families
- Pastor Jon Richter, Serving St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Norlina NC
- Resurrection Lutheran Church and Schools Staff, and Area Pastors and Schools Staff
- Our Stephen Ministers

## For Our Missionaries

- \*Mark and \*Megan Mantey, Kenya  
[Click here for the Mantey's Newsletter!](#)
- JP and Aimee Cima, Cambodia  
[Click here for the Cima Family Newsletter!](#)
- Shauen and Krista Trump, Kenya  
[Click here for the Trump's Newsletter!](#)

*Lord Jesus, thank You for Your abiding Presence and saving grace. All is in Your Hands.  
We trust You are working all things according to Your good plan and purposes,  
and with that trust and confidence, we release these prayers to You. In Your Holy Name, Amen.*

**\*RLC Members**

*Updated 12/28/23*