



## Advent: Season of Hope

**O Day of Peace**, will be our Call to Worship this Advent season. The text is written by Carl P. Daw Jr. b. 1944. The tune is Jerusalem, by Hubert H. Parry, 1848-1918.

*O day of peace that dimly shines  
through all our hopes and prayers and dreams,  
Guide us to justice, truth, and love,  
delivered from our selfish schemes.  
May swords of hate fall from our hands,  
Our hearts from envy find release,  
Till by God's grace our warring world  
Shall see Christ's promised reign of peace.*

*Then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb,  
Nor shall the fierce devour the small;  
As beasts and cattle calmly graze,  
a little child shall lead them all.  
Then enemies shall learn to love,  
all creatures find their true accord;  
The hope of peace shall be fulfilled,  
for all the earth shall know the Lord.*

In November we come to the end of our liturgical church year with Christ the King Sunday. We enter the season of Thanksgiving, and the new liturgical church year begins with the First Sunday in Advent. It is a season of thanks; a season where hope is brought to the fore. Advent prepares us to receive the Babe of Bethlehem, the Promised One. The sanctuary is adorned with the liturgical color of Advent blue, and glimpses of the coming Christmas celebration begin to appear.

We do dream of peace, that often shines dimly. Though our prayers are unceasing, the world rages on. We walk on in hopes of justice, truth, and love, but find it difficult even to bring the same from our own cold hearts. Swords of hate, whether with literal weapons, or more often the weapon of our tongue, are a constant. While we dream of light, even our own hearts are often darkened.

What a beautiful biblical image of the lion, or wolf, dwelling with the lamb. One hopes that no longer will the fierce devour the small. Peaceful pastures - a symphony of serenity - may it abound. God let it be so.

A little child shall lead them; lead us. In the beginning, and the end, it is all about Jesus. Many today would put Jesus aside. But only in Jesus is there true peace, justice, truth, and love. Therein lies the center. Jesus only.

**Let us hold fast the confession our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.** (Hebrews 10:23) **"Hold fast that which is good."** (1st Thessalonians 5:21) **"Hold fast what you have, so that no one may seize your crown."** (Revelation 3:11)

-Pastor Michael Sparby

Approaching the Christmas season so many of us adore, I'd like to address a few churchy words theologians like to use and sound impressive when using them. The first word is *incarnation* and the second is *Emmanuel*.

You will again hear the passage from the first chapter of John on Christmas Day. The passage famously concludes in verse 14 with, *"And the Word became flesh and lived among us..."* This verse speaks directly to the concept of incarnation. In other words, it speaks to a God who literally takes on human flesh and enters this world in the form of baby Jesus. It's in stark contrast to what some believe and experience - a God who exists far away, only to look down on us from God's heavenly throne. Instead, the incarnate God speaks to a God who is willing to take on the human experience with all the joys and sorrows that come with it. One can readily see Jesus did indeed make his way through the human experience. He felt joy. He felt pain. His eyes teared up. And even if I can't recall a story when he laughed, I gotta believe he really did!

Another passage found in the Christmas season comes from the gospel of Matthew, which references Isaiah 7:14: *"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means, 'God is with us.'"* One of the most important lessons I ever learned in seminary was in a pastoral care class. I hoped to learn what to say, especially to someone hurting or grieving. What I learned was much more important. Instead of learning what to say, I was taught to show up; be present. As time passes, few will remember what I say, but will remember I was there. That's precisely why the name *Emmanuel* means so much to me. It's a constant reminder God is always with us. Consider the final words in the gospel of Matthew: *"And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."* (Matthew 28:20b) Presence matters because God embodies it and teaches it.

Christmas is known for its gift giving nature. We share gifts with one another to reveal our love for them. This year, I hope that regardless of the quantity or quality of the wrapped presents that lay under the tree, you will recognize the gift of presence. Not only the presence of your loved ones, but particularly the presence of God. So many of you will grieve as you experience the lack of presence from a loved one due to death or distance. My heart grieves with you. My hope lies in a God who provides and will gift you all with someone who will be present with you in some way at some time. If nothing else, remember God's presence as you receive the body and blood of Christ in the worship services you attend, for that's yet another way in which God shows up.

Fellow disciples, Merry Christmas to you all and may the presence of God incarnate, Emmanuel, embrace you in such a way that brings warmth to your heart! -Bishop Martin

## FINANCIAL REPORT: October 2025

*Detailed reports are available in the office*

<b>General Checking Balance 10/31/25</b>	<b>\$ 8,599.94</b>
<b>Revenue</b>	
Unrestricted Offering	\$ 15,199.46
Restricted Benevolence, Mission, Other	\$ 2,962.09
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 18,161.55</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 17,384.78</b>

### Year-to-date

Unrestricted Offering	\$ 151,598.73
Restricted Benevolence, Mission, Other	\$ 33,179.08
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 184,777.81</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 205,780.33</b>

## **2025 NOISY OFFERINGS/MISSION**

<b>JAN</b>	Benjamin House Shelter/Rice Lake	<b>\$ 449.49</b>
<b>FEB</b>	Project Comfort/Quilts Shipping	<b>454.94</b>
<b>MAR 2</b>	"Youth in Christ" Prairie Farm Guests In/Out	
<b>MAR</b>	Arbor Place/Menomonie	<b>513.42</b>
<b>APR</b>	Luther Park Camperships	<b>800.74</b>
<b>MAY</b>	Missionary Sponsorship	<b>1,082.30</b>
<b>JUNE</b>	Lutheran Disaster Response	<b>665.81</b>
<b>JULY</b>	Luther Park General Fund	<b>352.56</b>
<b>AUG</b>	5 Local Food Shelves	<b>665.09</b>
<b>SEPT</b>	5 Local Nursing Homes/Activity Dept.	<b>509.87</b>
<b>OCT</b>	Homeless Youth Christmas Stockings	<b>848.04</b>
<b>NOV</b>	World Hunger	<i>\$50 + pending</i>
<b>DEC</b>	Christmas Critters (ELCA Good Gifts)	<i>\$50 + pending</i>

*"We appreciate your noisy offering to Stepping Stones, assuring it will make a difference to Dunn County communities. It will benefit our 3 core programs: Food Pantry, Emergency Shelter and Community Connections."*

***Thanks! Your financial support keeps us strong!***

Offerings are received at our

\*Pine Creek site offering plate (8:30a worship)

\*Sand Creek site offering boxes (10a worship)

\*Website: [www.newhopespc.org](http://www.newhopespc.org)

\*Post mail: Po Bx 85, Sand Creek, WI 54765

## **HEAR OUR PRAYER**

*(People listed for 2 weeks. contact the office with updates)*

Becky (Berg) Schnacky, Wayne Christopherson, Arlys

Hoveland, Heather Irwin

**Barron Care/Rehab:** Bev Miller

**Colfax Sr. Living (Hospice):** Dorrene Knutson

**Home Care:** Astrid Sannes

**Military:** Capt. David E. Dahl, Jacob Messinger

**Community Care:** *For pastoral visit/call, contact church office, Pr. Michael or Joyce Gilberts. To join our visiting team, contact Pastor.*

*"Just when you think you know where your life is going and all the things you've planned will roll along, a surprise comes up—not always a wonderful surprise!"*

*Along with not so great surprises come many wonderful surprises. I was wrapped in many prayers and lots of caring. I received visits and many well wishes, even while impatient to get back on track! Thank you and bless you all!"*

*-Mary Peterson*

## Pine Creek Site W/ELCA

**Meeting:** 9:30a, Sunday, December 7th *Potluck*

**Sunday, December 14th:** *Host treats after Pageant*

**December 21st: Christmas Potluck**

## **Nursing Home/Assisted Living Christmas**

**Due December 7th**

Gifts, wrapping paper/bags for Colfax Sr. Living, Barron Care & Rehab and Monroe Manor.

## **School Drive (Due end of December)**

Hats, mittens, socks, underwear (Sm), sweatpants (Sm), and school supplies for Colfax, Prairie Farm & Ridgeland Schools.

## Sand Creek Site W/ELCA

**Offering:** Collecting, Monday, December 8th

**Circles** **Eve:** 6p/SC Wednesday, December 3rd

**Sophia:** 9:30a/SC Thursday, December 11th

## **Winter Hats & Mittens for Local Schools**

*Collection box in Sand Creek site narthex*

## Attention 2026 Graduates

In honor of your upcoming achievements, please provide the office with info for our New Hope Comforters to create quilts. Graduate Recognition to be determined in May or June. Provide school graduating from, future plans if known, favorite color, hobbies, interests, etc, as soon as you are able.

### **Our 2026 Graduates:**

*Luke Anderson, Katie Audorff, Samantha Lien, Sophia Martinson, Mason Mikl-Tio, Noah Nelson, Kyra North, Aspen Peterson. Alert the office of corrections/updates.*

## Men's Group Scholarships

### **Supporting our recent graduates continued education**

Application forms are available in the narthex or our church website at [www.newhopespc.org](http://www.newhopespc.org). Attach proof of registration with class schedule and submit to the church office.

### **Our 2025 Graduates:**

*Bryce Killoren, Jacob Messinger (U.S. Navy), Abbie Neilsen, Layne Peterson.*

## Luther Park Camp 2026

Registration opens December 1, 25. New Hope Lutheran Scholarship applications are due March 22, 26. **Must visit [www.lutherpark.org](http://www.lutherpark.org) to register online with \$175 initial deposit fee by March 31, 26.** Forms will be available in the narthex and on our church website.



## **DEVOTION: Christmas Blessings**

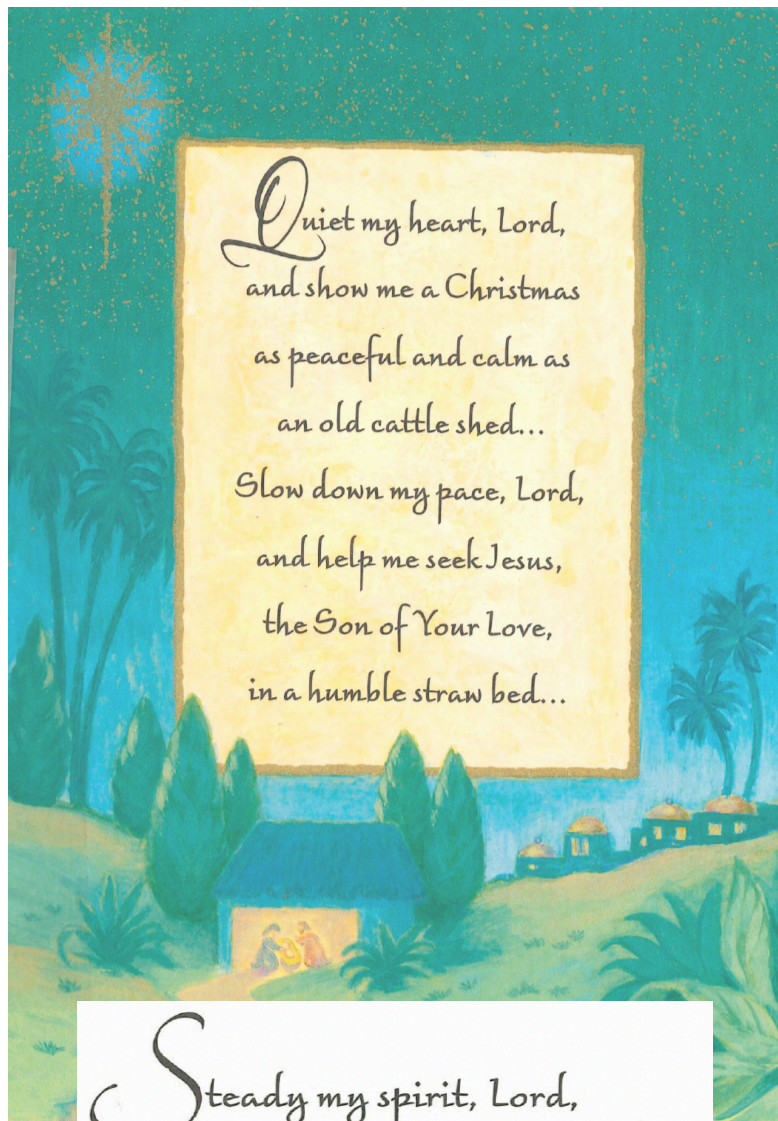
**“Be still, and know that I am God...”**

-Psalm 46: 10

*I received this greeting card from my older brother many years ago. It touched my heart and I hope it does yours.*

*I wish all of you the blessings of Christmas today and always. The gift of Baby Jesus is for a lifetime. Love and hold Him in your heart forever.*

-Sue Piotrowski



Steady my spirit, Lord,  
call me from chaos  
in simple surrender  
to pray and rejoice...  
Break through the busy,  
too-bright celebration,  
and whisper your message,  
“Be still...hear My voice...”

## **LOOK AHEAD**

### **JANUARY 2026**

**Sun. Jan. 4** reg. sch *Speaker: David Wendlandt*  
*Christian Hope in the Midst of Life's Losses*  
**Mon. Jan. 5** 8:30a/SC Comforters Quilting  
**Wed. Jan. 7** 6:30p/SC Confirmation  
**Sun. Jan. 11** reg. sch ***Baptism of Our Lord***  
**Mon. Jan. 12** 8:30a/SC Comforters Quilting  
**Wed. Jan. 14** 6:30p/SC Confirmation  
**Sun. Jan. 18** reg. sch  
**Mon. Jan. 19** 8:30a/SC Comforters Quilting

**Sun. Jan. 25** **1** service **10a/Pine Creek site**  
**9:20a Coffee Fellowship**  
**Annual Meeting after worship**

### **FEBRUARY**

**Sun. Feb. 1** reg sch *Speaker: Carol Anderson*  
**Mon. Feb. 2** 8:30a/SC Comforters Quilting  
**Wed. Feb. 4** 6:30p/SC Confirmation  
**Sun. Feb. 8** reg. sch *Speaker: Joyce Gilberts*  
**Mon. Feb. 9** 8:30a/SC Comforters Quilting  
**Wed. Feb. 11** 6:30p/SC Confirmation  
**Sun. Feb. 15** reg. sch *Speaker: Mark Gilberts*  
**Mon. Feb. 16** 8:30a/SC Comforters Quilting  
**Wed. Feb. 18** ***Ash Wednesday***  
**11:30a/SC Worship/noon lunch**  
**6p/PC Confirmation serves supper**  
**7p/PC Ash Wednesday Worship**

## **Veteran Quilt Recognition: January 2026**

Veterans please contact the church office so we may honor you with our sincere appreciation.



# New Hope Lutheran Church

E9085 County Road V

PO BX 85

Sand Creek, WI 54765

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



December 14th: 8:30a/Pine Creek site

December 21st: 10a/Sand Creek site

## Christmas Worship/Pine Creek

8:30a, Sunday, December 21st

Followed with Potluck fellowship

## Christmas Eve Worship/Sand Creek

5p, Wednesday, December 24th

### New Hope Council 2025

**President :** Linda Bilodeau  
**Secretary:** Marie Swanson

**Vice President:** Joyce Gilberts  
**Treasurer:** Joe Bilodeau

#### **Family Education**

Jesse Buhr	715-781-1860	<a href="mailto:lacey.buhr@gmail.com">lacey.buhr@gmail.com</a>
Samantha Goodremote	715-765-2209	<a href="mailto:sgoodremote@gmail.com">sgoodremote@gmail.com</a>
Kristi Welle	715-658-2303	<a href="mailto:kristi_welle@yahoo.com">kristi_welle@yahoo.com</a>
Stephani North	715-271-6275	<a href="mailto:stephaniomtvedt@yahoo.com">stephaniomtvedt@yahoo.com</a>

#### **Property & Management**

Mark Gilberts	847-650-9364	<a href="mailto:mark.gilberts4@gmail.com">mark.gilberts4@gmail.com</a>
Jerry Loftus	715-456-2163	<a href="mailto:lofty1@chibardun.net">lofty1@chibardun.net</a>
Joe Bilodeau	715-458-2479	<a href="mailto:j78bilodeau@gmail.com">j78bilodeau@gmail.com</a>
Lon Christopherson	715-949-1131	<a href="mailto:londo@chibardun.net">londo@chibardun.net</a>

#### **Outreach + Stewardship + Evangelism**

Pat Bechard	715-658-1014	<a href="mailto:paanbe@yahoo.com">paanbe@yahoo.com</a>
John Loy	715-658-1000	<a href="mailto:johnloy89g@gmail.com">johnloy89g@gmail.com</a>
Joyce Gilberts	715-933-4747	<a href="mailto:jlg@citizens-tel.net">jlg@citizens-tel.net</a>
Linda Bilodeau	715-458-2479	<a href="mailto:lbilodeau992@gmail.com">lbilodeau992@gmail.com</a>

#### **Worship & Music**

Roger Paulson	651-343-8877	<a href="mailto:roger.a.paulson@gmail.com">roger.a.paulson@gmail.com</a>
Lou Ann Gilberts	715-658-1317	<a href="mailto:louanngilberts@hotmail.com">louanngilberts@hotmail.com</a>
Marie Swanson	715-658-1208	<a href="mailto:mertmarie69@yahoo.com">mertmarie69@yahoo.com</a>
Dawn Kunkel	715-949-0065	<a href="mailto:dakunk13@gmail.com">dakunk13@gmail.com</a>



*A welcoming community of faith inspired  
by God's grace to love, grow & serve.*

**Pastor Michael D Sparby** 715-764-9779

Office Hours 9am-1pm 715-658-1470

Pine Creek Church 715-949-1750

Sand Creek Church

Website: [www.newhopescpc.org](http://www.newhopescpc.org)

[nhpastor@chibardun.net](mailto:nhpastor@chibardun.net)

[newhope@chibardun.net](mailto:newhope@chibardun.net)

E6698 Cty Rd V, Ridgeland

E9085 Cty Rd V, Sand Creek

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#### **WORSHIP**

**8:30 am/Pine Creek** 9:20a Coffee Fellowship + Sunday school

**10 am/Sand Creek** 9:20a Coffee Fellowship

Sunday school during worship (Sept.—May)

**Telephone Ministry** 1-534-444-4300

**FREE Live stream** <http://newhope.listentochurch.com>

**YouTube Link to View Streamed Services**

***New Hope on the Creeks***

***New Hope Lutheran Church of Sand Creek & Pine Creek***

**<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgsG8Jl-RdcdnKSnl48DyO>**

# New Hope Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes

*(Draft subject to approval)*

**Monday, October 20, 2025 / Sand Creek Site**

**PRESENT:** Pr. Michael Sparby, Jesse Buhr, Joe/Linda Bilodeau, Roger Paulson, Lou Ann Gilberts, Mark Gilberts, Pat Bechard, Marie Swanson, Jerry Loftus, Kristi Welle, Lon Christopherson, Stephani North, Samantha Goodremote.  
**Also present:** Becky Loftus, Parish Admin. **Absent:** Joyce Gilberts, Dawn Kunkel

**CALL TO ORDER:** 7p by Council President, Linda Bilodeau

**OPENING PRAYER:** Pr. Michael Sparby

**SECRETARY'S REPORT:** M/S/C (*Mark Gilberts/Joyce Gilberts*) approve August 18, 2025 minutes as printed.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Joe Bilodeau, Treasurer.

\*Parish balance today 10/20/25 = \$15,999.59

\*Last year's October offerings were down; improved this year with expenses remaining the same.

\*Propane Prepay for 5500 gallons is paid for 2025/26 season.

\*Church Mutual Insurance 7.75% increase = \$1,039/monthly payments.

\*Council Officers can meet to discuss current banking if needed. M/S/C (*Roger Paulson/Marie Swanson*) to accept report.

**PASTOR'S REPORT:** Printed copy disbursed.

\*1 more volunteer needed to share "*thankfulness*" for *Thanksgiving Eve* Worship.

\*Approve 2026 Housing Allowance; no changes. Recommend cost of living increase for other staff; not Pastor per request.  
M/S/C (*Mark Gilberts/Jerry Loftus*) to approve Pastor's 2026 Housing Allowance.

## PROPERTY/MANAGEMENT

**Pine Creek Site:** Nothing to report

### Sand Creek Site

\*Boiler furnace fall maintenance scheduled by Gene's Heating & Cooling/Bloomer, Thursday, November 23rd.

\*Lawnmower undercarriage broke; repair, buy new or hire? Still works to keep for snow removal. Mark Gilberts proposed hiring All Right Lawn Care, LLC (*Jerry Loftus*) next year with expense equivalent to maintenance, fuel, wages, etc.  
M/S/C (*Marie Swanson/Lon Christopherson*) to hire All Right Lawn Care LLC.

## WORSHIP/MUSIC

\*7p/SC Wednesday, November 26th *Thanksgiving Eve Worship* followed with traditional desserts + fellowship.

\*Purchasing Red Christmas Poinsettias from Costco/Sam's Club with a sign-up list. May "*bring your own*" and notify office to include memorials/honorariums in worship bulletins.

\*Christmas Pageants: December 14th/PC and December 21st/SC

\*Christmas Services: 8:30a/PC Sunday, Dec. 21st, 5p/SC Christmas Eve, Wed., Dec. 24th—none Christmas Day.

## OUTREACH *Ongoing Acts of Kindness*

\*CPR Class details forthcoming. Jerry Loftus & Joyce Gilberts are communicating with John Farrell from New Auburn.

## FAMILY ED

\*Christmas Pageants: December 14th/PC and December 21st/SC. Samantha Goodremote initiated SC program.

\*8 Confirmation students this fall; 5 (*1st yr*) and 3 (*2nd yr*), all from SC so all classes meet at SC except *Ash Wednesday* when students host 6p soup supper at PC prior 7p worship service.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None

**NEW BUSINESS:** Create a *Transition Task Force* to bring first report to December council meeting.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS:

\*Prep annual reports for Becky as soon as possible and submit to the office by Sunday, January 4th.

**NEXT MEETING: Monday, December 15, 2025 / SC Site**

**6p Budget Meeting**

**6:30p Committees if needed**

**7p Full Council**

**ADJOURN/LORD'S PRAYER** 7:42p M/S/C(*Jesse Buhr/Lou Ann Gilberts*)

-Marie Swanson, Council Sec. / Becky Loftus, Parish Admin.



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> 8:30a/SC Comforters	<b>2</b> 7p AA/SC	<b>3</b> 6p/SC Eve Circle 6:30p/SC Confirm <i>Stuff Stockings/Party</i>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> <i>Poinsettia Orders Due</i> 8:30a PC Worship 9:20a Fellowship-both sites SC: <i>Sophia Circle</i> 9:30a PC W/ELCA <i>Potluck</i> 10a SC Worship SC Choir practice follows 3p/SC Piano Lessons	<b>8</b> 8:30a/SC Comforters SC W/ELCA offering	<b>9</b> <i>4p Transition Task Force Meeting</i>  7p/SC AA	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> 9:30a/SC Sophia Circle	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> 8:30a PC Worship/ <i>Pageant</i> 9:20a Fellowship-both sites SC: <i>Sophia Circle</i> 10a SC Worship SC Choir practice follows 3p/SC Piano Lessons	<b>15</b> 8:30a/SC Comforters <i>6p/SC Budget Mtg</i> <i>7p/SC Council</i> Newsletter articles due	<b>16</b> 7p/SC AA	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> <i>8:30a PC Christmas Worship</i> 9:20a Fellowship-both sites PC: <i>Christmas Potluck</i> SC: <i>Men's Group</i> <i>10a SC Christmas Pageant</i> SC Choir practice follows 3p/SC Piano Lessons	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> 7p/SC AA	<b>24</b> <i>Christmas Eve</i> <i>5p/SC Worship</i>	<b>25</b> <i>Merry Christmas</i> (NO Services)	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> 8:30a PC Worship 9:20a Fellowship-both sites SC: <i>Eve Circle</i> 10a SC Worship <i>Baptism: Michael Riley Messenger</i>	<b>29</b> 8:30a/SC Comforters	<b>30</b> 7p/SC AA	<b>31</b> <i>New Year's Eve</i>			



Date	Lectors	SC Communion	SC Hospitality (Council)	Altar Guild
<b>7</b>	PC Dawn Kunkel SC Lou Ann Gilberts	Lou Ann Gilberts	<i>1st Sun.:</i> Marie Swanson / Samantha Goodremote	PC ?
<b>14</b>	PC ? SC Mark Gilberts	Mark Gilberts	<i>2nd Sun.:</i> Lou Ann Gilberts / Mark Gilberts	SC Lou Ann Gilberts Susan Paulson
<b>21</b>	PC Annette Mason SC Joyce Gilberts	Joyce Gilberts	<i>3rd Sun.:</i> Stephani North / Kristi Welle	
<b>24</b>	SC Alex Timm <i>Christmas Eve</i>			
<b>28</b>	PC Susan Christopherson SC John Loy	Sharon Nelson	<i>5th Sun.:</i> Jesse Buhr / Jerry Loftus	