

From Pastor David

“What Child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?”

The Christmas carol asks perhaps the most important question of Christmas: “What Child Is This?”

This question is asked by Mary, Joseph, and all those involved in that first Christmas.

This question continued to be asked about this Jesus when He grew up. The leaders of Jesus’ home town, when Jesus began to preach, asked, “Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary?” (Mark 6:3a) John the Baptist, Jesus’ cousin and herald, asked, “Are you the One who is to come?” (Luke 7:19b) The disciples He called, when they saw Him calm the storm, asked, “Who then is this?” (Luke 8:25b) The crowds asked this: in John 25a the people ask, “Who are you?” and when Jesus rode into Jerusalem they asked, “Who is this?” (Matt. 21:10b) When Jesus was on trial in Jerusalem, Herod the Tetrarch asked, “Who, then, is this I hear such things about?” (Luke 9:9)

This is the most important question of Christmas. It is the question that our wider culture is asking. Why Christmas? What is this really about? Why is this important...and why should I care?

It is the key question of history. And it is the key question of our lives, too.

What Child Is This?

Be careful. Your answer could change everything!

Christmas asks the question. But in order to celebrate Christmas, we must answer. You see, celebrating Christmas is not about the decorations, the food, the gatherings, the shows. It is about answering this question. How we answer changes how we celebrate Christmas. It can change our Christmas from celebrations to worship.

To help us wrestle with this, our Advent message series is asking, “Who Is Jesus?” Before Christmas we will look back through the Old Testament and discover that it shows that the Baby born in Bethlehem is “The Original Light,” “The One Foretold,” and “The Eternal King.” On Christmas we will hear the answer that this Child is “The Light of the World” and “Emmanuel.” Finally, on Epiphany, we will hear the testimony that Jesus is indeed God but also a real person: “Mary’s Son!”

Don’t pass over this question too quickly. Let it cut across your Christmas. As you decorate, as you attend events, as you eat, as you celebrate: hear the question calling out to you through it all. Not only will this transform your Christmas, its answer will transform you. Then, through you, the startling answer will also bring transformation in our world. “What Child Is This?”

“This, this is Christ, the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing!
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
The Babe, the Son of Mary!”

Merry Christmas!
Pastor David



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Sign Up to Light the Advent Candle This Season

Families are encouraged to participate in a Sun. morning service between Dec. 1 through Dec. 24 to light the Advent candle. Join in to celebrate the birth of our Savior! Sign up in the lobby or contact the church office.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service “Readings and Carols” - Wed., Dec. 24

2:30pm Candlelight Service with carols, choir & Children's Message (live-streamed)

4:30pm Candlelight Service with carols, choir & Children's Message

6:30pm Candlelight Service with carols, choir & Children's Message

11:30pm Candlelight Service. acapella carols

**The Church Office will be closed
Thurs., Dec. 25 & Fri., Dec. 26**

2025 Christmas Offering: Good Samaritan Community Benevolence Fund

Beginning Sun., Dec. 14 through Sun., Jan. 4, 100% of your gift will go directly to fund qualified emergency needs in the Rochester area.

Contribution Statements Available

If at any time before the end of the year you would like to receive a year-to-date statement of your 2025 contributions, please contact Financial Secretary, Brian Nass, at 507-923-8542; bdnass@icloud.com. Everyone will receive a full-year contributions statement for tax purposes after the first of the year.

Giving Envelopes for 2026

Envelope boxes for 2026 will be available at church starting Sun., Dec. 14. For those of you who don't normally receive/use envelope boxes but who would like to start doing so, please contact Brian Nass at (see above) to be added to the list of envelope box recipients.

Financial Summary of Church Operations Through October 2025

The 2026 budget has been discussed and a draft has been approved by Finance. It will be presented to Church Council at the December meeting. For questions or for more information – contact Arlene Morris, chair of the finance committee, at vammorris@gmail.com.

We currently (year to date) have \$26,929 more expenses than income. Committee is not overly concerned and plan to cover this deficit with surplus dollars. We continue to monitor our finances monthly.

	YTD: Jan.– Oct. 2025
Income from Church Congregational Giving	\$ 476,652
Other operating Income	\$ 94,617
Total Income from Operations	\$ 571,269
Total Expense from Operations	\$ 598,198
Net Income/(Loss) from Operations	\$ (26,929)

United Methodist Women

Sewing Circle..... Mondays throughout December in Room 223 (1pm on Dec. 1, Dec. 8 & Dec. 15;
NO meetings on Dec. 22 or 29)

Women's Gathering..... Thurs., Dec. 18 at 1:00pm in the Lobby. ALL women are invited.

If you have any questions, contact Becky Pierce at 507-289-6802.

Rochester Area Handbells Concert

Friday, December 19 at 7:00 PM · Sanctuary

The Rochester Area Handbells (RAH) will be performing their Winter Concert at Evangel. This year's program features a delightful mix of folk songs, carols, and hymns from the ol' motherland—along with a few non-English tunes that may sneak in as well, because the English know a good thing when they hear it. The performance will showcase RAH's signature blend of musicality and technical mastery, highlighted by their unparalleled range of instruments.

A Message from Rebecca Snapp of the Salvation Army

Thank you so much for sending such a generous donation in support of our programs here in Rochester. Evangel has been, and continues to be, such an incredible partner to the Salvation Army, and we are grateful for your faith in our mission. As we head into a season of celebration and joy, please know that this gift will be used to provide for the many needs of our neighbors that become more challenging in the winter months. Know that there are people in this town who are healthier, warmer, safer and closer to the light of God because of all that you do.

Blessings, Rebecca Snapp

Evangel is a regular supporter of the Salvation Army to help those in need within our community.

EvangelCares Volunteer Update



The EvangelCares Ministry Team extends a heartfelt thanks to the 29 volunteers who attended the first two training sessions led by Pastor David in November. These sessions are an important step toward commissioning volunteers to serve in this ministry. If you have not yet attended a training session, additional opportunities will be available. Please contact Pastor David for more information. If you feel called to volunteer with EvangelCares, we encourage you to complete the EvangelCares survey. Paper surveys are available in a basket near the church entrance or an online version can be found here: [EvangelCares Survey Link](#). The next phase for EvangelCares is launching our needs-request process so that individuals in need can begin submitting requests for help. We are hopeful that this next step will be ready in early 2026. Stay tuned!

New Sanctuary Cross Lighting

Evangel Trustees Roger Barsness, Lou Zitnay & James White installed backlights to the Sanctuary cross. Shine Jesus Shine!



Cookies for the Homebound

A gathering of wonderful ladies baked 27 containers of cookies for our homebound on Nov. 15.



Wednesday Night Meals

Every Wednesday at 5pm in the Dinette

Menu for December

Dec. 3
Beef roast,
carrots & potatoes

Dec. 10
Spaghetti, salad
& garlic bread



Dec. 17
Chicken wild rice/
potato soup &
sandwiches

**NO MEAL ON
DEC. 24
& DEC. 31**

All meals come with a dessert

Jim Klepper, Director of Connections & Growth: jklepper@evangelum.org
 Clancy Craven, Assoc. Dir. of Connections & Growth: ccraven@evangelum.org

Connections and Growth Calendar for October

Every Sunday.....	Sunday School for all ages at 9:30am
Every Sunday	Children's Church at 8:30am and 10:30am
Every Thursday.....	Bible Storytime for Children's Center kids
Tuesday, December 9.....	Connections and Growth Team
Sunday, December 14.....	The Giving Tree Gifts Due back 4 th Annual Intergenerational Christmas Program & Activities All-Church Christmas Caroling
Wednesday, December 24.....	Christmas Eve worship at 2:30p, 4:30p, 6:30p & 11:30p
Sunday December 28.....	No Sunday School

The 2025 Giving Tree Is Underway

Help us reach out to others during this season of Advent and Christmas. Your generosity can make a lasting impact this season.

This year, we're offering **(2) easy ways to participate** in the Giving Tree:



Option 1: In-Person

Stop by the Giving Tree located in the Evangel lobby.

- Choose a gift tag from the tree
- Purchase the gift described
- Wrap the gift and attach the original tag on top
- Return the gift and place under the tree or give to one of the Evangel staff. You may stop by during the day, on select evenings, or Sunday mornings.

Option 2: Monetary donation (turn into the office)

- Check: Make out to Evangel UMC and designated "Giving Tree" on the memo line.
- If donating with cash, place in an envelope labeled "Evangel Giving Tree"

Gifts are due back to the church by Sunday, December 14

All gifts will be distributed by the Connections & Growth Team to the children and families they were selected for. If all tags are taken, you can still help by donating unwrapped toys, scarves, mittens, socks, or gloves. These will be delivered to the **Women's Shelter** or **Christmas Anonymous**.

The Giving Tree is a beautiful part of Evangel's outreach and mission. Thank you for being the hands and feet of Christ this holiday season.

Preschool and Elementary Students Continue to Grow with GROW!

Our Pre-K and elementary Sunday School classes continue to thrive using our new GROW curriculum! Each Sunday, children participate in two engaging parts of the Sunday School hour.

Large Group Time:

Children begin together in Room 224 for a 5–10 minute opening that includes music countdowns, art projects, and activities tied to the weekly Bible story. Jim Klepper and Clancy Craven, along with several Evangel youth, lead this energetic start each week. December's theme is "Follow the Star."

Small Group Classroom Time:

After Large Group, children move to age-based classrooms with their Sunday School teachers. This time reinforces the Bible story through questions and polls, personal stories, GROW videos, object lessons, hands-on activities, reflection moments, and prayer.

Children's Church Runs Every Sunday at 8:30am and 10:30am

All children from Pre-K through Grade 6 are invited to Children's Church every Sunday during both the 8:30 and 10:30 worship services. Children's Church is an additional Sunday morning option alongside the Sunday School hour, providing meaningful, age-appropriate faith experiences throughout the morning. Children's Church meets in Room 225 (the Children's Library) from 8:30–9:30 and 10:30–11:30. The ministry is led by Jim Klepper, Clancy Craven, Nora Day, Becca Steel, Gavin Homerding, and others. We look forward to welcoming your children each Sunday!

No Children's Church on Sunday, December 14

4th Annual Intergenerational Christmas Program Is On Sunday, December 14

Evangel is committed to Intergenerational ministries. We are better together as we learn from each other across the generations! Please take a look at what's in store this year for our 4th Annual Evangel Intergenerational Christmas Program coming Sunday, December 14.

10:30am Intergenerational Worship: We will only have one worship service on December 14 so our church family, relatives and friends can be all together- across the generations! The Worship service will include: The Good News Worship Team, congregational singing of Christmas Carols, Senior Choir, Handbell Choir, Youth Choir, readings, scripture lessons, our 2025 Children's Christmas Pantomime, multi-level staging, stunning visual images, lighting of the Advent Candles, and more!

11:30am Dinner In the Multi-purpose Room: After worship, please be sure to join in for lasagna and other great food provided by our kitchen crew. Its all you can eat!

12:00pm Creation Stations: After dinner, Creation Stations will be set up around the church in which we will mix intergenerationally to hear the Christmas story, decorate cookies, wrap presents for "The Giving Tree", make Christmas crafts and more! This will be a time of awesome fun and creativity!

1:00pm Christmas Caroling: The day will conclude with Christmas Caroling to Evangel shut in's and homebound. All ages will spread out all across our city to individual homes as well as care facilities. There is nothing more touching and inspiring than sharing the carols of Christmas with those who cannot travel to church for Christmas; young and old voices singing together to proclaim Jesus' birth!

To help our Evangel Intergenerational Christmas Program Day run smoothly, we have created a schedule to help all participants prepare for the day:



Photo by [Jeremy Thomas](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Intergenerational Christmas Program Schedule for Dec. 14, 2025:

8:00 am	Praise Team rehearsal (sanctuary)
8:30 am	Youth Choir rehearsal (sanctuary)
8:45 am	Youth Handbell Choir rehearsal (sanctuary)
9:00 am	Children get into costumes for pantomime rehearsal (Sunday School rooms)
9:15 am	Children & Sunday School teachers rehearse pantomime (sanctuary)
10:00 am	Senior Choir rehearsal (downstairs room)
10:30 am	Intergenerational Worship Service
11:30 am	All-church lunch (multi-purpose room)
12:00 pm	Intergenerational Creation Stations (various rooms)
1:00 pm	All-church Christmas caroling around town (optional)

(check out the poster on page 7)

Special Children's Moment & Gift During Christmas Eve Services

We will be offering a special Children's Moment at our 2:30pm, 4:30pm & 6:30pm Christmas Eve services. Spread the word and invite friends! A special Christmas gift will be included for the children. This is a cherished Christmas tradition at Evangel!

No Sunday School or Children's Church December 28

There will be no Sunday School on December 28 so our faithful teachers and students can spend time at home with their own families during the holiday season. Sunday School will resume on January 4.

Rummage Sale

This year was one of our best with almost \$15,000 raised for Connections and Growth and Youth Ministries.



“Weathering the Storm” Mental Health Forum: Light Attendance, Powerful Impact

On Nov. 12, Evangel's mental health forums returned with “Weathering the Storm,” where we addressed the anxiety and concern felt by children & families as violence in schools, places of worship, and community spaces continues to rise. Valuable resources were shared by our community liaison and a professional panel offered profound wisdom, insight, and expertise. KTTC TV covered the event from start to finish.

Although attendance was lighter than hoped for (despite extensive outreach) our disappointment shifted to inspiration as the evening unfolded. The conversations were meaningful & the time we shared together was truly compelling.

We are now entering a period of evaluation and discernment regarding future Evangel Mental Health Forums. We will seek the Lord's guidance as we strive to be a light in the darkness. At this point, we do not believe our work is finished. If God continues to call us to this ministry, we will answer. If not, we will remain open to whatever new direction He provides.





Evangel's 4th Annual Intergenerational Christmas Program

You are warmly invited to join your church family as we celebrate the arrival of Jesus into our world!

December 14, 2025
10:30AM – 2:30PM

A one-service Intergenerational worship at 10:30 am featuring:

The "Good News" Worship Band

A Children's Pantomime of the Christmas Story

The Evangel Senior Choir, Youth Choir & Handbell Choir

Stunning Visuals & More!

11:30am – Dinner (with lasagna) in the Multi-purpose Room

12:00 pm – Intergenerational Creation stations with cookie decorating, storytelling, crafts & Christmas wrapping for the Giving Tree

1:00 pm – Christmas caroling to sing the good news to Evangel Shut Ins!



"We're so excited to celebrate this joyful Christmas season together!"

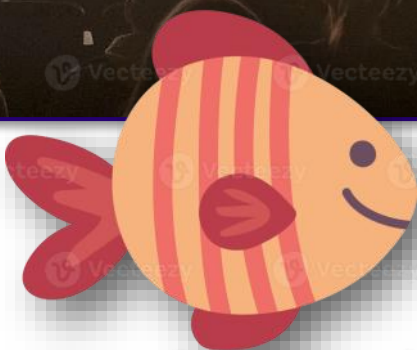
Unite@ Leaf Raking for Seniors

Evangel was on a mission this November and raked 4 yards for seniors. Thank you to our Intergenerational Team!



Unite@ at "The Little Mermaid" in Dover-Eyota

We traveled to Dover-Eyota to and went "under the sea" for a performance of "The Little Mermaid"



CROSSFIRE NEWS

Stephanie Mettler, Youth Minister
507-289-4817; smettler@evangelum.org

Hello, church family!

Thank you—*many times over*—for your support of our youth during the all-church rummage sale in November. Our youth worked long, joy-filled shifts, and the Youth Café stayed wonderfully busy throughout the event. We are so grateful for all who encouraged, volunteered, donated, or stopped by. Your support means so much.

Over the past month in our Bible studies, we've been talking about grace. It is such a foundational part of our faith, yet often one of the hardest gifts to fully understand and accept. Please continue praying for our youth and leaders as we learn to experience and internalize God's grace more deeply. As we move into December, we'll begin mapping out our life stories and looking for moments where we can recognize God's presence along the way.

Lastly, thank you for the warm welcome you've extended to me and my family. We have truly enjoyed becoming part of the life of this church—getting to know many of you, learning more names each week, and even having the opportunity to preach for the first time. We are grateful to be here.

—Stephanie



Youth Calendar

Sunday School: Every Sunday from 9:30–10:25am

Nov 30	No Sunday School (all ages)
Dec 5	Youth Small Group, 7–9 PM
Dec 12	Youth Late Night, 7–11 PM
Dec 14	Christmas Program during worship
Jan 9	Youth Small Group, 7–9 PM
Jan 30	Youth Late Night, 7–11 PM

Calling Adult Volunteers

We're always looking to grow our team—especially anyone with a passion for leading music during our gatherings. If you're interested in helping out in any way, please reach out to Youth Director Stephanie Mettler or a member of the Youth Leadership Team. Your support makes a huge difference!

Youth Leadership Team

Stephanie Mettler, Lane & Anita Hermanson, Mandi Ellenbaum, Peter Kroneman,
Jim Klepper & Pastor David Werner

Mission Team Update

The Mission Team met November 12 and allocated funding for Lori Braatz of World Gospel Mission, Nathan and Shelly Snodgrass of World Venture, Joel and Julie Workman of Greater Europe Missions, Randy and Susan Roberts of Frontier Missions, and Midwest Missions.

Lori Braatz will be visiting Evangel on Sunday, December 28 for both services. Lori will be deploying as a fulltime missionary in Honduras beginning in January 2025. She will be presenting in the Drop-In Classroom between services. This is a great opportunity to hear her story and ask questions.

This is a list of the Missionaries and Organizations that have been supported financially by the Evangel Missions Team for 2025. The 2025 Budget for the Missions Team was \$35,000. An additional \$6000 was allocated from the 2nd Mile Gifts received. Please contact Becky Pierce or Roger Guderian if you have any questions.

Name	Location	Mission	2025 Donation
Drs. Niles & Rachel Batdorf	Kenya	Currently serving in the mission field in Kenya	\$2,500
Lori Braatz	Honduras	Full time missionary in Honduras working with short term missionary teams and volunteers.	\$2,500
Rev. Judith Gaimi	Sierra Leone	Judith is the superintendent of (3) churches in Sierra Leone. Through OC Ministries, Judith will equip a newly constructed secondary school with teaching expertise, teaching materials, technology, and small class sizes. This school is to be a "model school" in Baiwalla, Sierra Leone, West Africa.	\$3,500
Tyler & Shayne Hartmann	Twin Cities	Serving with Family Life within CRU to reach families with the gospel.	\$2,500
Chuck & Kathy Hohnbaum	Ireland	A ministry to establish churches and transform communities in Ireland.	\$2,500
Trevor & Cassie Long	Twin Cities	Ministry to college students at the U of M Twin Cities Campus; to help others know Christ and spread his word.	\$2,500
Dick & Mary Martin	Indonesia	Sharing the love of Jesus Christ through aviation and technology so that isolated people may be transformed physically and spiritually.	\$2,500
Abby Miles	Middle East	Abby is a CRU Intern doing a 10 month internship in the Middle East. She is the granddaughter of Kay Hess and Bob & Ruth Ann Miles.	\$1,000
Randy & Susan Roberts	Jordan	With love and respect, inviting all Muslim peoples to follow Jesus.	\$4,500
Scott & Vicky Satre	Serving from Texas	Translating the Bible for those around the world.	\$2,500
Nathan & Shelly Snodgrass	Kazakhstan	Our passion is to see Central Asian families transformed by Christ into having a biblical worldview that changes not only their own lives but society. We seek to help others know and love Jesus through education, music, and hospitality.	\$4,500
Joel & Julie Workman	Europe	Ignite and renew the European area's love of Christ by starting more churches and outreaches.	\$2,500
Midwest Mission	Worldwide	Compassionately help God's people in need locally, nationally, and around the world. Offer a center to fulfill the call for service to our neighbors in Christ's name.	\$5,500
Society of St. Andrew	Worldwide	Gleaning America's fields to help feed America's hungry.	\$2,000
Total 2025 Missions Giving			\$41,000



You Can Give to the General Mission Fund By:

1. CHECK: Write 2nd Mile Gift on the memo line and turn it into the Church Office or place in the Sunday offering.
2. ONLINE: Click [Give \(elexiogiving.com\)](http://elexiogiving.com) and select Missions—2nd Mile.
3. QR Code: Scan this QR code with your cellphone and select Missions—2nd Mile.

The Missions Team, with the guidance of Church Council, will distribute the funding.

Posted on the Mission Team Bulletin Board (across from room 223) is recent news of the missionaries and missions we support.

The Mission Team won't meet in December, but will meet on January 14, 2026, at 4:00pm in the Fireside Room. Zoom will be available. If you have questions, ideas or want to be involved with the Team, contact any member of the Mission Team: Becky Pierce, Bev Morgan, Linda Gregg, Carol Madsen, Colleen Stacey, Roger Guderian, or Pastor David Werner.



December



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	1p Sewing Circle	6:30p SPRT	5p Connect Group Design Team 5p Wed. Night Meal 6:15p Board Games 6:15p Praise Team 6:15p Confirmation 7:30p Handbells	9a Bible Storytime 6p Ten Women of the Bible 6pm Meal hosting at Dorothy Day house 7p Choir	11a Older Folders 7p Youth Group	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
8:15a Prayer for Worship 8:30a Traditional Service 9:30a Sunday School 10:30a Contemporary Service 11:45a Youth Leadership Team	1p Sewing Circle	6:30p Connections and Growth Team	5p Wed. Night Meal 6:15p Board Games 6:15p Praise Team 6:15p Confirmation 7:30p Handbells	9a Bible Storytime 6p Ten Women of the Bible 7p Choir	11a Older Folders 7p Youth Group	11a Sharon Copeman memorial service
14 Giving Tree Gifts Due Back	15	16	17	18	19	20
10:30a Christmas Program 11:30a Christmas Dinner 12:00p Creation Stations 1:00p Christmas Caroling	1p Sewing Circle 6:30p Church Council	6:15p Praise Team 7p Trustees	5p Wed. Night Meal 6:15p Board Games 6:15p Praise Team 6:15p Confirmation 7:30p Handbells	9a Bible Storytime 1pm Women's Gathering 7p Choir	11a Older Folders	
21	22	23	24	25 Office Closed	26 Office Closed	27
8:15a Prayer for Worship 8:30a Traditional Service 9:30a Sunday School 10:30a Contemporary Service			Christmas Eve Candlelight Services: 2:30pm 4:30pm 6:30pm 11:30pm	Merry Christmas 		
28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve			
8:15a Prayer for Worship 8:30a Traditional Service 10:30a Contemporary Service			11a Older Folders 5p Connect Group Design Team 6:15p Praise Team			

Evangel United Methodist Church
2645 North Broadway
Rochester, MN 55906

(Address Service Requested)

Evangel Church exists to love God, love others, and be
Christ's hands and feet in the world.



Intergenerational Christmas Program

Sunday, December 14, 2025

10:30am-2:30pm

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

“Readings and Carols”

Wednesday, December 24, 2025

2:30pm, 4:30pm, 6:30pm & 11:30pm



Wherever you are on your journey, you are welcome here!