

AMERICAN LUTHERAN NEWS

DECEMBER 2024

American Lutheran Church, 500 Church Drive, Rantoul, IL 61866

Church Phone: (217) 893-4550 www.alc-rantoul.org



A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Greetings in the name of our God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—as we look forward to the celebration of our Lord’s birth at Christmas and His glorious and victorious return when the Father will call us all home to be with Him forever.

The purpose of this letter is to thank you for your ministry and for your partnership in the work of the Gospel. It is my deepest and most sincere desire and prayer that this Christmas season will be one in which we offer a strong and encouraging word of hope to a world that is in desperate need of what only our Lord Jesus can give.

As you may know, there are more personal messages sent during the Christmas season than any other time of the year. More than 2 billion Christmas cards will be sent in North America alone. There is something about Christmas that encourages people to stay in touch with those they love. There’s also a built-in opportunity for us, during the Christmas season, to share the message of what God has done and accomplished for us in Jesus.

The Bible says, “In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son” (Hebrews 1:1-2). The message of Christmas is a word spoken directly to us from God. It is also a word that offers and promises stability and hope, when so much of the world is hopeless and unstable.

It is mind boggling how fast our world is changing. Just a little more than a generation ago, when we needed to know something we pulled out our encyclopedias and looked it up. Now, you just google it and there it is. What’s fascinating is that with this advance in technology we also have access to more relationships with more people than was ever before possible. It used to be that your friends were those who lived next door or down the street. You went to the same school or the same church and those were your friends. Today, you can have friends on the other side of the world. You can have relationships with people who live in places you’ve never been and with whom you’ve never met.

Do you know what else is fascinating, almost frightening? In this world where there’s more information available and accessible than ever before, and where it’s now possible to have more friends in more places and have more contact with them than we’ve ever before had, there’s also a growing number of people in our world, individuals in this connected and friend-filled society, who are feeling less-connected and more de-friended than they have ever been. Recent studies show that for many there’s more anxiety over losing a phone than there is over losing a friend. For many,

their best friend has become their phone. And their phones are the main and the primary connection they have with their best friends.

It's not surprising that some of the same studies have also shown that there's a longing in our society, like never before, for connections and communities that actually care for each other. In this increasingly more-connected-than-ever world, there's a longing for more connections that are truly real.

On that first Christmas, God was careful and intentional in making the connection He did when He sent His Son into our world. And He was personal in doing it because He was doing it in the person of Jesus Christ. He was connecting with us, so we could connect with Him. He was becoming a person with us, so we could begin to see Him and know Him in a personal way.

As challenging as it is for us in our society today to reach the hearts of people for Jesus, let us not forget that the relationship we have with God, in Christ, is the kind of relationship people are longing to find. God came into our world to make an incarnate and in-person connection with us. It was also the reason, and still is, that God has called us together in the Church. Let us not forget or neglect the importance of gathering together as the Body of Christ.

As we proclaim the name of Jesus this Christmas, and as we bear witness to the relationship God has established with us in His Son, do so with boldness and confidence that the Holy Spirit is working through our proclamation to connect with and draw people to Christ. Do it also with a sincere desire and prayer that God will open new doors for new relationships to be established with those for whom our Lord Jesus was born.

Thank you for your faithful witness. Thank you for work you do and the partnership we share. Have a blessed and a hope-filled Christmas, as we celebrate Jesus.

Excerpts taken from (then) Bishop Dan Selbo, December 2022.

DECEMBER PULPIT SCHEDULE:



December 1st - Dennis Albers

December 8th - Pastor Jim Lehmann (Communion)

December 15th - Children's Christmas Program

December 22nd - Neal White

December 24th - 4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service -
Pastor Jim Lehmann (Communion)

December 25th - 9:00 a.m. Christmas Day Service - Neal White

December 29th - TBA

ANNOUNCEMENTS



CONGREGATIONAL MEETING will be held on Sunday, December 1st, immediately following the 9:00 a.m. Worship Service to vote on extending a call to Aaron Dawson to be the Pastor of the American Lutheran Church. All eligible voting members should have received a letter in the mail regarding this meeting.

CHRISTMAS DECORATING will take place on Sunday, December 1st, immediately following the Congregational Meeting. Please plan to help if you can.

CHRISTMAS QUILTS will be on sale starting on Sunday, December 1st, at a cost of \$40.



TOY DRIVE is being conducted by the NALC Disaster Response for children ages infant to 18 years old who are victims of Hurricane Helene. Gifts should be new and unwrapped and brought to ALC, attention Terry Doyle, no later than December 3rd. Amazon gift cards, particularly for the teens, may either be brought to church or shipped directly to the NALC National Disaster Response Warehouse c/o Mary Bates, 16500 Noble Ave., Caldwell, OH, 43724. Please contact Terry Doyle with any questions (815-258-8474).

MIDWEEK BIBLE STUDY The midweek Advent Bible Study is The Light of Grace. It will begin at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 4th. The lessons begin with a study on hope and peace, followed by peace and joy, and finally love. Since there are four lessons and only three Wednesdays, we will do one and a half lessons on the first two Wednesdays. Prior to the Bible study, a light meal will be served beginning at 5:15 p.m. in the Youth Hall.

2025 OFFERING ENVELOPES will be available to pick-up in the Narthex starting Sunday, December 15th. Please DO NOT start using these envelopes until January of 2025. If you would like envelopes and none have been provided, please contact Judy Peck in the office.

MERRY Christmas **CHURCH OFFICE** will be closed on Tuesday, December 24th, Wednesday, December 25th, and Tuesday, December 31st.

YEAR-END CONTRIBUTIONS If you wish to make a year-end contribution in the church office, it must be received no later than noon on Monday, December 30th. Any offerings received in the church office after this time will be credited to your 2025 Contributions.

QUILTERS will not meet this month. They will resume meeting on Monday, January 6th, 2025.

PORTALS OF PRAYER The first quarter Portals of Prayer (January-March) will be available to pick up in the Narthex and outside of the church office on Friday, December 13th.

*Thank
you*

FROM: Jim & Pam Cheek... To our Church family, we would like to thank you for your support and kind words during the untimely passing of our daughter Michelle. You have been amazing and caring. God Bless you all and Merry Christmas!

AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH PRESCHOOL



close we have been discussing for. The children have had fun arts and crafts, and of course their favorite projects showcasing what they are proud of in the preschool hallway, if you would like to take a closer look. The children have also disguised many turkeys. This is an art project that they take home to work on with their families. We had a lot of fun talking about what we were going to do with our turkeys. We are looking forward to spending some extra time with our families for Thanksgiving and we are so very thankful to have each and every one of you. One of our preschool rooms was able to get a smart board. We have enjoyed finding new ways to learn and teach using it. This has been a great addition to our preschooler's education and we would not have been able to get it without the support we have received.

Our preschoolers have been working very hard to sell lots of delicious Butter Braids. The preschool board will be selling them Sunday, December 1st. All orders have to be submitted by December 2nd so remember to place your orders as soon as possible. Orders will be delivered December 16th and will need to be picked up promptly. Thank you in advance for any and all support for our preschoolers.



December is a very busy month. We will be practicing for our Christmas program quite a bit. We will be having our Christmas program on Thursday, December 19th, at 6 pm. We hope to see you there! Our preschoolers are very excited to learn the story of Jesus' Birth. We have begun talking about this in chapel and are looking forward to exploring more and learning all about Jesus' love for us all. We hope that your holidays are filled with lots of joy and love.



It's time to order your poinsettias.
They will be placed around the church by
Sunday, December 8th.

If you wish to order a Poinsettia plant, please fill out the form below
and place in the offering plate.

The cost for each plant is \$17.50. You may place the money in an envelope
in the offering plate. Please mark on the outside of the envelope,
“Poinsettia”, and include your name.

ORDER DEADLINE — Thursday, December 5th

YES, I WOULD LIKE TO ORDER A POINSETTIA PLANT
AT A COST OF \$17.50 A PLANT.

(Please write your name below as you would like it to appear in the bulletin.)

NAME _____

PRAYERS TO THOSE SERVING IN THE MILITARY



Jon Stiebner (son/Synda Miller); Alex Short; Brandon Elrod (grandson/Elfrieda West); Kasey Fenimore (nephew/Bill & Jody Schlueter); Brian Griswold (son/Phillip Griswold); Levi Loschen (grandson/Luella Loschen); Ryan Falletti; Riley Falletti.


SYMPATHY IS EXTENDED TO:

...LouAnn Baugher and family for the loss of her husband, Shorty, on November 2nd.

...the family & friends of Marla Osterbur who passed away on November 15th.

...Anita Valentine & family for the loss of her husband, Ted, on November 23rd.



 **STUDENT CLOTHING DONATIONS** We are collecting gently used clothing, new socks, underwear and shoes for children ages Kindergarten through 5th Grade -size 5T to Men's & Women's size small for Northview Grade School. Donations are to be placed in the tub located in the Narthex.



Glory to God
in the highest.
and on earth peace,
good will toward men.

Luke 2:14, KJV

PRAYER list...

Dave Howe (brother/Ron Howe); Pen Pendleton; Denny Doyle; Pastor Barb Busboom; Rodney Larkin (husband/Kaylee (Sleigh) Larkin); Rich Friemel; Geraldine Gorecki (sister/Joyce Williamson); Lee Briggs (friend/Reggie & Mary Peters); Debbi Dietz; Carla Adkins (friend/Joyce Williamson); Kim Wyre; Jessica Hawn (daughter/Rob & Kim Wyre); Earl Smith; Cindy Williams (sister/Scott James); Gabbi Reynolds (friend/Tome's); Ben Moser; William Benton (father/Phillip Benton); Steve Ritchie (friend/J.R. & Sondra Sipes); Sharon Loeh (friend/Paul & Linda Keith); Mary Mallicoat (mother-in-law/Earl Smith); Nick Shepherd (brother/Rhonda Keith); Joyce Keith; Bob & Jenny Hobby (cousins/Keith Family); Merrill Wattjes; Michael Markarian (brother/Joyce Williamson); Joan Percival; Joyce Williamson.

NURSING HOMES/ASSISTED LIVING:

Bridle Brook: Keith Dohleman. Gilman Heritage Health: Dave & Loretta Overholt. Goldwater Care (Gibson City): Ruth Lutz. Holly Brook (Gibson City): Joyce Higgins. Holly Brook (Rantoul): Genet Dixon; Joan Mathis. Piatt Co. Nursing Home (Monticello): Rita Buenting.



Liam Hall	12/2	DeAnn McMorris	12/11	Juri Rasor	12/18
Kennedy Carico	12/3	Char Sons	12/11	Dennis Albers	12/19
Cheryl Freese	12/3	Caleb Riley	12/13	Jacob Dailey	12/19
Leon Freese	12/3	Teresa Hethke	12/14	Steve Schluter	12/25
Rita Gates	12/6	Sherry Johnson	12/15	Ann Price	12/26
Kari Briggs	12/7	Kerry Hanson	12/16	Kevin Johnson	12/27
Jamie Hamby	12/8	Earl Smith	12/16	Kalvin Albers	12/28
Chris Douglas	12/10	Mary Edwards	12/17	Amy Cheek	12/31
Phyllis Colwell	12/11	Joyce Borchers	12/18	Lindalou Hauersperger	12/31



Travis & Nikky Flesner	12/20
Jim & Sherry Johnson	12/21
Brian & Debbi Dietz	12/24
Gene & Loretta Elliott	12/28

AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH
500 Church Drive
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NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Rantoul, IL 61866

Return Service Requested

Permit No. 17

TO:

December



Youtube Channel: Rantoul, IL - American
Lutheran Church (ALC)

Nikki Foss

Office Manager - (217) 893-4550
amluthoffice@gmail.com

Logan Bushman

Preschool Director - (217) 893-8773
preschoolatalc@gmail.com

Worship Service -
Sunday Mornings at 9:00 a.m.
followed by Sunday School
and Women's Bible Study.

**ALC is Christ-centered by emphasizing teaching, worship and prayer
as we strive toward spiritual growth.**