

## In this issue

Transition Team P2  
PATHWAYS P2  
Christmas Tree Event P2  
Service & Outreach P3  
Thrivent Action Grants P3  
Education P3  
Book of the Month P3  
Christmas Party P3  
Advent Cantata P4



## How Does a Weary World Rejoice?

*I would guess  
soul by soul  
and day by day.*

*But if you ask me,  
I bet most of it counts.*

For the season of Advent through the Baptism of our Lord, January 7, 2024, we will engage learning and worship materials centered around the theme, *How Does a Weary World Rejoice?* from Sanctified Art. It is a narrative-driven departure from the Revised Common Lectionary (the three year standard plan we normally use).

"In this series, we pay close attention to how the Gospel of Luke begins the story of Jesus: by interweaving Christ's birth with the parallel story of Elizabeth, Zechariah, and John the Baptist. As we look closely at both of these birth narratives told side by side, we see the full scope of human emotions: isolation, fear, disbelief, as well as connection, trust, and joy. We acknowledge that the Christmas season is often an emotionally-charged time when we feel many things deeply—sometimes all at once. Many experience emotional dissonance in the midst of joy-filled festivities.

As we studied the scriptures, we asked out loud, "What is the message we will need to hear this season?" Sarah Speed, one of Sanctified Arts' (sic) founding creative partners, referenced a poem she had written a few years ago titled, "How does a weary world rejoice?" In it, she lists many seemingly mundane actions that fill our days: stretching your body awake, looking at the night sky, making room on the subway, helping a neighbor on the street, and so on. Sarah's concluding stanza is the verse above. (Our) texts bring us into a space of possibility; in them, we find rhythms for rejoicing, even in the midst of difficult circumstances." *The Sanctified Art Team*

Even as we acknowledge the weariness of our world, may we celebrate God's closeness with great joy!

*Pastor Carol*



## Christmas Worship



### Sunday, December 24

**9:30 am** — one service only; a celebration of the fourth Sunday in Advent with the Christmas Cantata, *The Rose of Bethlehem*, presented by the Spirit Singers and Spirit Ringers (see page 4).

**4 pm & 6 pm** Christmas Eve Candlelight with Holy Communion Worship

### Sunday, December 31

**9:30 am** — one service only featuring the Lessons and Carols of Christmas along with Holy Communion.

# PATHWAYS Offerings

Our upcoming workshop is a perfect way to spend a thoughtful afternoon during the busy holiday season.

## CHANTING WORKSHOP & VESPERS SERVICE



### Saturday, December 2

*Chanting Workshop and Vespers Service*

Gather with us to learn the history and instruction of chants. We will then immerse ourselves in liturgy expressed through the melodic strains of chant in a Vespers service. Deacon Marti Bein leads our time together beginning at 4 pm. Join us for this spiritual and educational offering. Registration encouraged; sign up online ([seekthepath.org](http://seekthepath.org)) or in the gathering space.

## Transition Team Update

Thanks to all who attended our Historical Timeline Event on November 5. We had lively and spirited conversations around each of the pastoral era tables set up in the West Wing. It is clear that we love being together and enjoy opportunities for conversation! When the Team meets again in the new year, it will summarize the information gathered. Please plan to attend the follow-up event, *Historical Timeline Take Two*, when it is scheduled to hear summary information and continue conversations. The Team is ready to take a look at the sample Ministry Site Profile in January. CLC Church Council will hold a special meeting early this month to engage in a discernment process to identify call committee members. Thank you all for your continued prayers for both the Transition Team and Church Council.

## Advent Devotionals

A *Sanctified Art* Advent devotional will be available starting November 26. It will echo what we hear and experience in worship on Sunday mornings. Because the fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve fall on the same day, the devotional booklet starts Monday, November 27, the week *before* Advent, leading up to the first Sunday in Advent (December 3). The booklet goes through the season of Christmas and ends on Baptism of Our Lord (January 7). Pick up your devotional booklet now! (Large print copies are available).

## poinsettias

We are receiving orders for poinsettia plants to be displayed during Advent and Christmas. Cost is \$12 per plant; orders due December 10. Forms can be found in the gathering space.



## Congregational Christmas Tree...plus a new event

Our large congregational Christmas tree that adorns the gathering space needs the help of everyone. On Sunday, December 10 at 9:30 am, we will host an intergenerational crafting event led by Deacon Jennifer Fox to create new ornaments to decorate the tree. Together we will learn about the history and symbolism of the Chrismon ornaments as we create fresh ornaments to adorn our tree. All crafting supplies will be provided. All ages are welcome and no artistic experience is needed! Come enjoy some cookies (bring some to share!), learning, fellowship and creativity as we decorate our tree together.



### December 3

Isaiah 64:1-9  
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19  
1 Corinthians 1:3-9  
Mark 13:24-37

### December 10

Isaiah 40:1-11  
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13  
2 Peter 3:8-15a  
Mark 1:1-8

### December 17

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11  
Psalm 126  
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24  
John 1:6-8, 19-28

### December 24

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16  
Luke 1:46b-55  
Romans 16:25-27  
Luke 1:26-38

### December 31

Isaiah 61:10-62:3  
Psalm 148  
Galatians 4:4-7  
Luke 2:22-40

## Service & Outreach

**THANK YOU** to everyone who helped support the Thanksgiving pies for Rockford Rescue Mission and Meal-in-a-Bag for Empower Boone. With your help, we were able to purchase 53 pies from Costco for the Thanksgiving banquet. We were also able to donate over \$1,300 to Empower Boone, which will sponsor their purchase of over \$10,000 worth of food. WOW!

### Hope for the Holidays

It's not too late to provide a gift for a foster child through our LSSI Angel Tree. We are also taking donations for Christmas stockings for Mosaic clients. Deadline for both is Sunday, December 3. See Deacon Laura with any questions.



### Blood Drive

The blood drive that was scheduled for December 12 has been cancelled.

## Thrivent Action Grants

Are you a Thrivent member? If so, did you know you can apply for two grants up to \$250 per member annually? Christ Lutheran uses these grants to help support many different programs: Vacation Bible School, Confirmation, Service & Outreach ministry projects, book studies, and much more! If you are a Thrivent member, please fill out our [Thrivent survey](#) so that our records can be the most up-to-date for this important ministry. Hard copies of this survey are available in the gathering space.

## Sunday Morning Education

Adult Forum in December will focus on sacred art. Join us December 3 & 17 for exploration. Godly Play will meet December 3 this month, and we strongly encourage all of our friends to join us December 10 for tree decorating.

## Christ in Literature

Join us December 4 at 3 pm as we discuss Heather Morris' book *The Tattooist of Auschwitz*. It is a re-creation of the experiences of Lale Sokolov who was forced to tattoo his fellow prisoners at Auschwitz-Birkenau and falls in love with a woman whose arm he tattoos with her prisoner number. All are welcome!

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS: January 8

Christ in Literature invites all to its annual January movie and popcorn event. Join us at 3 pm in the West Wing to view *The Case for Christ*, an American Christian drama based on a true story authored by Lee Strobel. The one hour, 53 minute movie follows Strobel, avowed atheist investigative journalist, and his attempt to prove that Jesus' death and resurrection are just legend.

## Christmas Party

### Men of Christ

(We had you at party, didn't we?)

The annual Men of Christ Christmas Party is set for Saturday, December 9. The merriment commences at 6 pm at the American Legion Post in Belvidere (900 W. Chrysler Drive). The main course and beverages will be provided. Those wishing to bring an appetizer or dessert to share may do so.

Look for the display and sign-up sheet in the gathering space. Don't miss this festive holiday gathering with friends, food, and good cheer!

## Book of the Month (staff pick): *The Music Shop - A Novel* by Rachel Joyce

While I usually tend to gravitate towards historical fiction to read, the title of this novel intrigued me.

Set in 1988 London on a dead-end street in a run-down suburb, we find Frank owning a music shop that only sells vinyl records. The shop is filled with every genre of music from chant, classical, jazz, rock, punk and everything in between. The shop attracts the lonely, the sleepless, the hurting, those needing comfort, and Frank has a way of connecting his customers with just the piece of music they need. How the author, through Frank, describes the music to the listener/reader is accurate and very thought-provoking. I gained a new perspective on music that I have enjoyed and played forever.

Into the story walks a mysterious woman. Their journey speaks to the healing power of music, friendship and love as they fill their souls with music.

submitted by Deacon Jennifer




# Christ Lutheran

425 Riverside Road / Belvidere, IL 61008

Phone: 815-885-2522

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

 [facebook.com/Christ.Belvidere](https://facebook.com/Christ.Belvidere)

Also on Facebook, search:

*Pathways: A Center for Spiritual Renewal*

† **Worship:** Sundays 8:00 & 10:30 am\*

**\*Sunday, Dec. 24 @ 9:30 am (Cantata) / 4 pm & 6 pm**

**\*Sunday, Dec. 31 @ 9:30 am (Lessons and Carols)**

## RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

### *Our Council*

Al Francik	President
Lee Blackburn	Vice President
Sue Hunter	Secretary
Jeff Bieck	Treasurer
Jenny Campbell	Council Member
Tari Flack	Council Member
John Herring	Council Member
Peter Hightower	Council Member
Lori Murphy	Council Member
Syd Nolan	Council Member
Denise Rindels	Council Member
Dave Swanson	Council Member

### *Our Staff*

Rev. Carol Baumgartner	Transition Minister
Deacon Laura Gorton	Associate Minister
Deacon Jennifer Fox	Minister for Worship & Music
Katie Belinson	Dir. of Outreach & Communications
Dagny Brandt	Church Musician
Michelle Nelson	Finance & Office Administrator
Chris Parkinson	Church Musician

Non-Profit Org.

U.S. Postage

**PAID**

Rockford, IL

Permit No. 521

# c a n t a t a

## The Rose of Bethlehem

*December 24*

The Spirit Ringers and Singers will present the cantata, "The Rose of Bethlehem," on the fourth Sunday of Advent, December 24 at 9:30 am. Please join us as we focus on the theme of Jesus, our Christmas Rose, who was born in a nondescript stable and brought to us a fragrance of hope. His petals were crushed on the cross, but like the Christmas Rose blooming in the snow, He rose again to bring us the promise of salvation. He continues to plant himself in our hearts and is "e'er blooming." Anthems and hymns old and new will help us prepare our hearts for the Rose of Bethlehem.

This is a wonderful opportunity to invite a friend to this one service at 9:30 am.

