

The Promise

The People of Covenant are called to:
gather, grow and go serve with Gods Love!



December 2022 The Monthly Newsletter of Covenant Lutheran Church, ELCA

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In this season of Advent, we wait in Holy Darkness for the One who is to come. We're not waiting for a baby in a manger—that baby was born, grew up, and died on a cross, over two thousand years ago. We're waiting for Christ to come again.

Advent calls us to a waiting full of anticipation, a waiting filled with urgency of God's purpose and the power of God's love. A waiting in the holy darkness like a bulb buried in the dark earth and packed with life, germinating in the dark that it needs for growth, and being prepared to send its shoots into the light.

God created in holy darkness. God saved Israel in holy darkness. God called Samuel in the holy dark of night. God appeared to the shepherds bringing good news in darkness. On the cross, Jesus saved us in holy darkness from noon to 3:00 on Good Friday.

This pattern of God creating, healing, loving and providing in holy darkness continues still. In holy darkness, we are broken open to God's own shalom, God's wholeness and healing. Through our own vulnerability, we learn trust.

In this Advent waiting, the Spirit works in us to turn us toward the hope of God in the coming of Jesus Christ.

May it be so. May it be so.

Blessings, Pastor Wendy

A very
Merry Christmas
to You!



Gentle Reminder



As we gather in this season of sickness,
please be mindful of not sharing too much!



Please Remember
Services are offered
LIVE on YouTube!

ACHOO

God Bless
You!



If you are not feeling well,
we kindly request that you stay home,
rest, watch online if you're able and
let us know if we can be helpful as you recover!



Thank you for sharing LOVE & not Germs!

Photo by Melissa Butler licensed under CC BY NC

Thank You!



We are in the Advent season.

This season is a time of reflection, waiting and preparation leading us to the observance of the “advent” or “coming” of Jesus Christ.

Many of us have our own ways of preparing for Christmas and have our own treasured traditions that we look forward to every year.

The Advent Wreath is one of my favorites.

The Advent Wreath has four candles representing the four weeks prior to Christmas. The wreath’s circle represents the eternity and the oneness of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The circle also represents God’s unending love. Each candle has a name: Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. The candles are purple or blue in color except the “joy” candle which is pink. A single candle is lit on the first Sunday of Advent. Two are lit on the second Sunday, three on the third and finally, all four are lit on the fourth Sunday. The light increases as Christmas draws near. While the candles are being lit, we are reminded of the significance of each advent candle.

In the center of the wreath is a single white candle, the Christ Candle, symbolizing the life found in Christ and Christ as the light that has dawned in our darkness. This candle is lit on Christmas.

*During this Advent and
Christmas Season,
I am praying that you and
your families would be
blessed and you would
be reminded of the
HOPE, PEACE, JOY and
LOVE found in Christ.*



Volunteer Schedule

Sunday Worship 2022

| Role | Dec 11 | Dec 18 | Dec 25 |
|---------------------|--|---|--|
| Assistant Minister | Sime, Jean | Nelson, Thomas P. | Thompson, Ingrid |
| Lector | Currie, Kimberly | Chose, Philayne | Tarpinian, Gary |
| Usher Team Leader | Nissler, Karl | Westrand, Tamarine | Sime, Norm |
| Ushers | Anderson, Thor Eversoll, Mike Grefsheim, Larry Olson, Larry E | Heil, Matthew Heil, Judy Tarpinian, Gary Vodak, Greg | Christian, Thomas Peterson, Stephen V. Seamonson, Mark Sime, Jean |
| Communion Assistant | Unzicker, Christy | Proper, Meghann | Chose, Philayne |
| Altar Guild | Sime, Jean | Sime, Jean | Sime, Jean |

**We have some additional Special Worship Services
Volunteer Opportunities this month including:**

- 17th at 7pm for The Longest Night/Blue Christmas
- 24th Christmas Eve at 4pm for Worship with the Bell Choir
- 24th Christmas Eve at 7pm for Service with the Vocal Choir

Please let the office know if you'd like to help with these services!

Also please let the office know if you are unable to make your scheduled date or if you are interested in changing the way you are currently being scheduled. Amanda will be happy to get you on the volunteer schedule as your time allows!





We have some so many Thank You's to extend!!

Covenant,

Your heart is HUGE and your kindness UNENDING!

There are numerous individuals and families in Stoughton and surrounding areas that feel blessed, Loved, IMPORTANT and SAFE because of YOU!!!

THANK YOU Covenant for being YOU, you are a Blessing!



HOST A FAMILY



Invited to Connect

The Longest Night Service

The Holiday season is hard for those whose hearts are hurting.

You are not alone.

Longest Night is a gentle, contemplative service for those who are carrying pain or loss during this season of celebration.

Join us for this service of comfort and hope.

Saturday, December 17th

4:00-5:00 pm

Covenant Lutheran Church

1525 N Van Buren St. Stoughton, WI 53589

(608) 873-7494

We want to invite the congregation and Stoughton community to our *Longest Night* service sometimes known as *Blue Christmas*.

Don't be afraid to reach out now or in any season talk to a new or beloved member, neighbor or friend, invite them to worship, a conversation or just send a note of thoughtfulness.

**In this season and always Covenant, you make
a World of Difference!!**

Wednesday Evening Bible Study



Join Wednesdays @ 7pm in-person in the Gateway Room or via zoom!

[Click here to Join the Zoom Meeting](#)



Have extra time? Care to cook for members?

Marijo Vols is organizing a group to provide meals to members returning home after a hospital or rehab visit.

The idea is to prepare easily frozen meal and dessert items, in the kitchen at Covenant as a group. To be delivered to members as needed. If you are interested in helping with this ministry group please contact Marijo Vols!

Email: d vols1@charter.net or 608-873-0622

Marijo will set a date to meet and discuss!

Thank you for your kindness!





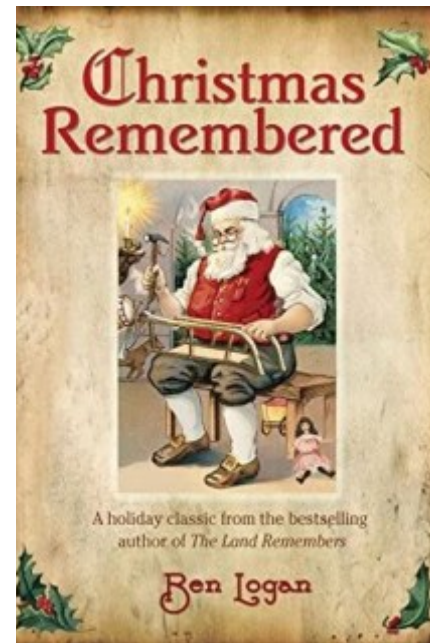
Covenant Lutheran Book Club

Discussing:
Christmas Remembered
by Ben Logan

Meeting: Thursday, December 15, at 1pm

At the Carlson's home.

We Encourage Everyone to Join,
contact the office for more information!



New Year, New Hospitality!

Fellowship following worship service is a time for our church family to gather for conversation and light refreshments. It's a tradition that is valued and treasured. Starting in January 2023, we're simplifying how hospitality is served. A new sign-up sheet will be displayed in the Narthex. Simply put your name on a week to provide refreshments and clean-up afterwards. It would be ideal to have two people or family's sign-up each week. Coffee will always be served even on those Sundays where no one has signed up to bring refreshments. Many thanks to Karen Lapidakis and Team December for finishing out hospitality this year.



The Vocal Choir

has a new name, come sing with us!



As you look at your bulletin or read the information projected on the screen during worship, you may notice that the Senior Choir is now called the *Vocal Choir*. Why the name change?

"Senior" was a useful designation in the days when congregations had Senior, Junior, and Children's (or Cherub) Choirs.

Today, however, it has a different connotation.

We want to make it clear that all singers, high school age and up, are welcome. You don't need to be a senior in high school or college or a senior citizen to add your voice to the chorus!

We rehearse at 8:15 on Sunday mornings in the music room (next to the columbarium) **please join us!** For more information, contact Beth Gardner (bethgardner5678@gmail.com or 608-873-9426) or talk to any choir member.



Invited to Connect



Requesting 3 volunteers to prepare and serve food
10:30am-1:30pm, the second Friday of each month
(December 9th) **at St. Marks in Madison**

If you are able to help please contact Pat Johnson at
608-535-0441 or johnson.pat.skip@gmail.com.



Lunch Bunch is at it again!

December 7th at 11:30am
at
The Green Lantern Restaurant
in McFarland

RSVP to the church office
608-873-7494 or

Ann Nelson: 608-873-6077(H)
608-575-7179(C)



Looking for an **Easy, Stress Free** way
to **Get Involved** at Covenant Lutheran Church?

We have opportunities for you!!

Is it a weekly, monthly or seldom commitment you are looking for?

We have many ways to get involved!

Sunday Worship Service Assistants

Weekday Service Prep

Church Committees

Sunday School

& Much More!

Contact the office if you're interested in information
on our current Volunteer Opportunities!



Education Information



The hustle and bustle of the season are descending on the church. The Family Centered Worship will not be happening on the second Sunday of this month. Instead, the Christmas Program will be happening on December 18th during the service. Expect lots of angels!



There will also be a basket for any spare change to go to the ELCA Good Gifts animals to help families. If your family makes donations as a Christmas gift, you might want to check out the different ways to help on their [website](#).



Cow

One dairy cow can produce a few gallons of calcium-packed milk each day. A family can receive the nutrition they need and also start a small business selling extra milk, cheese and more. With food, funds and fertilizer, the gift of a cow has got it all.

Thank you for your help with this special project!

There will be no Sunday School on December 25th or January 1st. January 8th will be a Family Centered Worship. The kids did a wonderful job with the pictures to help illustrate the Gospel in November. Many of the poses were their ideas. With this quick turnaround between Christmas and the next Family Service, we are trying another idea for kids' participation in the Gospel. Thanks for how welcoming all of you are to the participation of the youngest members in the service.

Care to help connect with High School Youth? We'd love your help!!

We would like to begin offering some activities for high school youth.
We have some ideas for November and December.

We would love some extra adults involved, especially a few males!

**Please prayerfully discern if this is an area you could try out
and see if it's a good fit for you.**

Contact Pastor Wendy if interested or
to suggest someone you think would be good with youth.

Do you remember Sunday School?

There are many opportunities
to lend a hand and help create
great memories for the current
children of Covenant.

**No commitment is too
small, we only ask that you
practice radical acceptance
of all of our children!**



Social Action Invitation



**Meeting Hybrid by Zoom and in the
Gateway room**

December 19th at 6:30 pm

**Scan the QR code below to join the zoom
meeting.**



You can also click [Here](#) to Join the Zoom Meeting!



Clothing Center



Stoughton Clothing Center helps everyone!



The Stoughton Clothing Center receives daily requests for winter jackets, snow pants, insulated mittens/gloves and boots. If you have gently used winter outerwear especially in children's sizes we can get them into the hands of families who need them!

Everyone is welcome
Come shop the Stoughton Clothing Center!
No referral or identification is needed!

Our current schedule is posted on our website (www.stoughtonclothingcenter.com). We are also open by appointment via email at contact@stoughtonclothingcenter.com or message us through our Facebook page The Clothing Center.

The Stoughton Clothing Center is located at the back entrance of Covenant Lutheran Church. Typical weekly hours are Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 10 am – noon, and Thursdays from 10 am – 5:30 pm.

The Clothing Center is extremely appreciative for the partnership with Covenant as they work to serve a need in our community day after day.



Together we are building a Supportive and Safe Community!



Thank you to our
**Members, Volunteers, Friends, Neighbors,
Musicians, Pastor and Staff!**

Covenant Lutheran Church **SURVIVES** on the
DEDICATION & LOVE you **SHARE!**

The world is blessed by your generosity
Blessings to you as you continue to bless others
May God's Grace and Love Surround you always!



Gratitude



Dear Members of Covenant Lutheran Church + Staff,
Thank you so very much for the recent monetary support for the Stoughton Affordable Transportation Program. The Board + Staff of ATP are so appreciative of your support + loyalty to help keep ATP a sustainable program for helping people in need of reliable transportation.

Thank you Again!

Best,
Staff, Volunteers + Customers
of ATP



SToughton Area Resource Team - START

135 W Main St, Suite 102
Stoughton, WI 53589
STARTstoughton.org

November 11, 2022

Dear Covenant Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your support of SToughton Area Resource Team Inc. (START) through your recent donation of \$77.62. Your generous gift will help Stoughton Area School District residents experiencing hardship or crisis. It will allow us to link families with community resources and provide support in case management, housing, utilities, health, employment, education, and all other areas of basic needs. Please know that your contribution truly makes a difference.

Thank you again for your generosity, and feel free to contact me if you have any questions or suggestions. I can be reached at 608-577-5650 or lbraund@startstoughton.org.

With gratitude,
Executive Director

Laura Braund

START is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and donations are tax deductible as allowed by law.



Gratitude



Everyday our
faith grows!



November 7, 2022

Skaalen Retirement Services • 400 North Morris Street • Stoughton, WI 53589
www.skaalen.com • 608.873.5651 • Fax: 608.873.5748
Affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Dear Friends of Covenant Lutheran Church;

Skaalen Nursing & Rehabilitation Center gratefully acknowledges your gift of \$2823.

Thank you for this gift that will help us care for all who reside here for years to come.

Sincerely,

Kris Krentz
President/CEO

Everyday we have another chance to help others faith grow too!



Thank You!

November 9, 2022

Dear Covenant Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your generous \$100.00 emergency gift to help the people of Ukraine, who are enduring unimaginable hardship and suffering. Please continue to lift them up in your prayers.

Your gift is being put to use immediately to deliver emergency food, shelter, Personal Care Kits, Baby Care Kits, medicines and other critically needed items for children and their families who are trying to survive the horrifying fighting ... or are being forced to flee their homeland with a few meager belongings.

Your willingness to share your blessings during a global crisis like this is a godsend to your neighbors in Ukraine who are hurting. They can feel your love and are deeply grateful to know you are keeping them in your thoughts and prayers.

If you have any questions regarding your donation, please feel free to reach out to us anytime at 800 597 5972 or via email at lwr@lwr.org. You'll also find inspiring stories of the life-changing work you make possible at lwr.org. And if you haven't already, be sure to subscribe to our e-newsletter to receive bi-weekly updates on the impact of your generosity.

Thank you again, and God bless you!

Warm Regards,

Ambassador Daniel V. Speckhard (ret.)
President and CEO



Gratitude



November 19, 2022

Dear Covenant Lutheran Church Endowment,

Thank you, Covenant Lutheran Church, for your gracious donation to Host a Family. We will use your donation to help several local families have a happy and joyous holiday season. In these unprecedented times, your donation means more than ever. We are so grateful for your generosity that allows us to help families in the school districts of Stoughton, Oregon, and McFarland, WI during this holiday season.

With your gift we can help provide a small bit of holiday delight for the children in local families that are struggling in these difficult times and perhaps a little extra food and other necessities for the families we serve. Your donation also provides hope for struggling families by knowing that members of the community care. We are ever so grateful for your support of the Host A family program especially with the changes we had to enact this year because of the pandemic.

The Host a Family Board

*Thanks again for your generous donation. It will help make it a happy holiday for many families.
The HAF board.*



BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

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Director of Finance & Administration
- John Schrick
Warehouse Manager/
Volunteer Coordinator
- Michelle Hallart
Office Manager
- Dan Seaburg
Manager of Waste to Revenue
- Ashley Rabemahaja
Social Media Coordinator
- Global Health Ministries
7832 Hickory Street NE
Minneapolis, MN 55432
Phone: 763-586-9590
Email: office@ghm.org



Global Health Ministries

Helping the hands that heal

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your partnership in making health for all more than a slogan. Your support has helped make it possible for Global Health Ministries (GHM) to ship life-changing medical equipment and supplies around the globe to benefit some of the most vulnerable people on earth. Jeremie in Cameroon, who coordinates the receipt and distribution of supplies, wrote recently, "OSEELC is blessed once again with the arrival of 20,000 KG of materials and medical equipment from GHM. Yes we did it together! Praise God! Please know that we're so grateful for this shipment and opportunity of this wonderful partnership for the best care of our patients. They will feel Jesus Christ's blessings in their life. Be blessed again!"

Your gifts also help GHM reach into 13 low- and middle-income countries to partner with leaders like Besty in northern Nigeria. Besty trains village health workers (VHWs) who teach their neighbors practical ways to avoid diseases like malaria and typhoid, how to check for malnutrition in their babies, and how to provide the most nutritious food for their children. Lessons like these are improving life for about 58,000 villagers every year, in an area plagued by poverty and persistently in the shadow of Boko Haram.



Through scholarships, program costs, shipping, and consulting with these brothers and sisters in Christ around the globe, your partnership is making a difference.

Together in Christ,

Doug Cox
Executive Director

Gratitude



Recently, Pastor Wendy became a member of the *Stoughton Chamber of Commerce*.



Here is a thank you to Covenant and its members for all of the good work you do throughout the Stoughton Community

A SPECIAL NOTE ...

**STOUGHTON
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
& VISITOR SERVICES**

Thankful
FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO
THE STOUGHTON COMMUNITY
& THE CHAMBER



From your Ambassadors

Amie Edgington
Janet Ebert
Jessica Pharo
Tom Veal
Justin Hume
Zachary Muff
Calvin Jarvis
John A. [unclear]
Yuhua



Treasurer's Report

October 2022



| INCOME | Current Month Actual | Same Month Last Year Actual | YTD Actual | YTD Budget | YTD Last Year |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Contributed Income | 16,650.54 | 13,667.00 | 188,882.06 | 212,500.02 | 167,857.81 |
| Misc. Benevolence | 740.00 | - | 8,330.00 | 666.66 | - |
| Other Income | 4,902.84 | 2,003.78 | 22,793.36 | 38,248.34 | 24,608.04 |
| TOTAL INCOME | 22,293.38 | 15,670.78 | 220,005.42 | 251,415.02 | 192,465.85 |
| EXPENSE | | | | | |
| Mission Partners | 2,027.44 | - | 25,050.41 | 21,250.82 | 17,599.67 |
| Staff | 17,522.46 | 17,250.76 | 154,416.36 | 158,193.36 | 106,874.72 |
| Education | 325.65 | 719.99 | 6,467.03 | 5,500.00 | 1,505.78 |
| Stewardship | 209.07 | - | 209.07 | 583.34 | 233.5 |
| Congregational Life | - | - | 578.26 | 625.02 | 394.94 |
| Social Action | 400.16 | 100.00 | 640.04 | 833.34 | 408.00 |
| Worship & Music | 548.89 | 662.32 | 8,286.16 | 6,083.34 | 3,528.04 |
| Office Administration | 2,532.02 | 1,944.09 | 23,978.18 | 22,887.52 | 18,796.40 |
| Occupancy | 6,144.64 | 1,185.83 | 36,569.43 | 35,458.34 | 28,596.99 |
| TOTAL EXPENSE | 29,194.21 | 21,862.99 | 256,194.94 | 251,415.08 | 177,938.04 |
| INCOME – EXPENSE | -6,900.83 | -6,192.21 | -36,189.52 | -0.06 | 14,527.81 |

I hereby submit financials for October as approved by council. Per usual, we are fairly on target with our overall budget total; however, expenses continue to exceed total income. Thank you for your continued support. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.



Donna Tarpinian, Treasurer

Tips for every day of the holiday season



1. Water
 - a. Start the day with a 6 to 8 ounce glass of water
 - b. Drink 4 to 5 glasses of water throughout each day
2. Walk/be active as often as possible
 - a. Try to walk 10 to 15 minutes after the largest meal of the day
 - b. Plan a walk/outdoor activity with family/friends as part of a gathering
3. Self-care
 - a. Strive for adequate & quality sleep every night
 - b. Be grateful—thinking about gratefulness is healthful for the brain
 - c. Feel your feelings (rather than eating or drinking them)
 - d. Embrace the moment
 - i. Take a short “time out” to consider what you are seeing, touching, hearing, smelling, and tasting at that very moment
 - ii. Inhale slowly to a count of 4 or 5 then exhale slowly

Events and Parties

- Have a healthful snack before you leave home
- “Be the life of the party” (so you don’t focus on the food as much)
- Offer fresh fruit, veggies & dip, nuts, baked/grilled meats
- Serve 2 different vegetables (such as a salad and steamed carrots)
- Wait 10 minutes after finishing a plate of food before getting seconds
- Spend calories wisely on foods you enjoy the most
- Drink water or fruit-flavored seltzer instead of or between other beverages
- Avoid alcohol on an empty stomach

In faith and health, Denise Pigarelli

Resources: Harvard Health Blog, National Diabetes Education Program, psychologytoday.com

Stoughton Festival Choir & Stoughton City Band

We
Need
a Little
Christmas

December 11, 2022

4:00 pm



Stoughton Opera House
381 E. Main Street, Stoughton, WI

The Promise - December 2022

The monthly newsletter of Covenant Lutheran Church—ELCA

Covenant Lutheran Church
1525 N. Van Buren St.
Stoughton, WI 53589



Phone: (608) 873-7494
Email: covlutheran@covluth.org
Website: www.covluth.org



Like us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#)

The next issue of "The Promise" will be published in January 2023.

*The deadline for submitting items for the **January** newsletter is **Monday, December 26.***

Please submit to form [here](#) or to covlutheran@covluth.org.

Thank you!

Covenant Lutheran Church
1525 N. Van Buren St.
Stoughton, WI 53589

