

# E-Weekly

December 19, 2025

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PUBLICATION OF BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH  
GRAND MARAIS, MINNESOTA



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AAOBAAYe AAABCAAA  
CAAYBCAAAMAAAZC AACMAAACAMAAAZ  
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## Christmas Poinsettias



*This year, we are doing  
things differently:*

*Thanks to Jacob & Crystal at Johnson's  
Foods for donating all of the poinsettias  
to Bethlehem this year!*

We are requesting donations to support  
our **Grocery Card Ministry**.

Plants are **free** to anyone and may be  
picked up after 5:00pm service  
on **Christmas Eve**.

Please fill out this form with your  
donation and return to the office by  
**Monday December 22<sup>nd</sup>**



Sunday December 21<sup>st</sup>  
Worship and Sunday  
School  
at 10:00am

Live stream at:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?  
v=IMBcFFyaMQI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMBcFFyaMQI)





WORSHIP

*with us!*

CANDLELIGHT  
SERVICE

Christmas Eve,

December 24

3:00 & 5:00 pm

Bring your family!

Invite your friends and neighbors!



## This Week at Bethlehem:

Sun Dec 21	8:40 AM	Choir practice
	10:00 AM	Worship Service
	&	Sunday School
	2:00 PM	Worship at
		Care Center
Mon Dec 22	3:30 PM	Girl Scouts
Tues Dec 23	8:30 AM	Staff meeting
Wed Dec 24	3:00 PM	Worship
	5:00 PM	Worship
Thurs Dec 25		Christmas Day
Fri Dec 26		Office closed
Sun Dec 28	8:40AM	Choir practice
	10:00AM	Worship Service

The Season of

# Advent

## READING PLAN

*Hope*

- ◊ Day 1: Jeremiah 29:10-14
- ◊ Day 2: Romans 15:8-13
- ◊ Day 3: 1 Peter 1:3-12
- ◊ Day 4: Hebrews 10:19-39
- ◊ Day 5: Psalm 33
- ◊ Day 6: Titus 2:11-3:8

*Joy*

- ◊ Day 13: Philippians 4:4-9
- ◊ Day 14: Psalm 16
- ◊ Day 15: James 1:2-18
- ◊ Day 16: Psalm 30
- ◊ Day 17: Luke 2:8-20
- ◊ Day 18: John 15:1-11

*Peace*

- ◊ Day 7: Isaiah 9:1-7
- ◊ Day 8: John 14:1-7, 25-31
- ◊ Day 9: John 16:25-33
- ◊ Day 10: Romans 5:1-11
- ◊ Day 11: Ephesians 2:11-22
- ◊ Day 12: Colossians 3:1-17

*Love*

- ◊ Day 19: Micah 7:18-20
- ◊ Day 20: Romans 8:31-39
- ◊ Day 21: John 3:16-21
- ◊ Day 22: 1 John 4:7-21
- ◊ Day 23: Philippians 2:1-11
- ◊ Day 24: 2 Thessalonians 2:13-3:5
- ◊ Day 25: Ephesians 2:1-10



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## SUNDAY SCHOOL HOLIDAY BREAK:

NO SUNDAY SCHOOL ON  
DEC. 28 & JAN. 4

CLASSES RESUME JAN. 11



# ANNUAL Committee REPORTS

Annual Reports from all  
council members, staff, groups,  
and committee chairs are due to  
the office **NO LATER THAN**  
**JANUARY 5, 2026** ←

# PRAYER list...

Healing prayers are requested for:

Karen Shannon & Brad Shannon Family;  
Linda Zenk; Lois Johnson; Jane Gellner;  
Luke Gulstrand; Sarah, Cam, Barb & Paul  
Coe; Lynn & Craig Schulte; Butch Schulte;  
Christy Buetow; Clayton Koss; Patty  
Nelson; Annalisa Winje; Joan Bieber; Gene  
& Barbara Erickson; Bruce & Stacey  
Johnson; Paulina Backstrom; Shae  
Lindholm; Rhonda Schulte; Char Anderson;  
Betty Jones; Stacey Schulte; Hank  
Ferland; Ramiro Acero; Margaret Dahl;  
Katrina Crouse; Tom Christiansen,

This week we lift up these members  
living in the Care Center  
& Assisted Living Facilities:

Joan Bieber; Char Anderson; Linda  
Johnson; Emily Ulhorn; Janet Elmquist;  
Joyce Hagen, Joyce Drouillar, Anita Gavic;  
and Sally Arntsen. *May God walk with  
these Faithful Friends in their Advent  
Journey.*

Need  
PRAYER?

Contact:

Pastor Calvin 763-226-5425  
or Laura Popkes, Prayer Chain Leader  
218-370-0721

Church in Society announces December's

## Mission Of the Month

  
**DamianoCenter**  
*serving people in need*

206 W 4th St. Duluth, MN 55806  
[info@damianocenter.org](mailto:info@damianocenter.org) 218-722-8708

The December Mission of the Month will support the Damiano Center in Duluth.

The Damiano Center "welcomes people in need and serves them without judgment" as the largest emergency meal provider in our region and a source for comprehensive services including clothing, health realization, hygiene access, and more.

## Member Challenge

In addition to financial support, please contribute winter wear to the hat and mitten tree in the narthex. Donations will be delivered to the Damiano Center!





# Confirmation Food Drive



**Wednesday night the Confirmation youth went door to door in Grand Marais collecting nonperishable food for the Food Shelf. They collected over 200 items.**

**If they did not make it to your house and you have items for the food shelf, please bring them to church on Sunday and place them in the bags or shopping cart.**

**We will get the food to the Food Shelf on Monday.**

**Please remember to bring mittens, hats, scarfs, etc. for the Giving Tree collection for the Damiano Center.**

**Thanks all**

To all the wonderful people at  
Bethlehem Lutheran Church.

Thank you for the wonderful  
generous gift to Care Partners!

Your donation will help us care  
for Seniors here in Cook County.

Right now we are putting together  
Christmas packages including a food  
card and some treats!

Thank you for being a part of our  
effort!

Beth Kennedy.  
Board Member



pageborders.org

**Generous God of grace,**  
grant us the fullness of  
hope, peace, joy and love  
this Advent. Guide us to  
speak and live in a way  
that expresses true hope in  
your ongoing work of  
reconciliation and healing  
in this life, as well as the  
life to come. Give us the  
strength to work for peace  
in our homes, in our faith  
communities and across  
the world.

I long for the power of  
eternal joy within my heart  
and mind. Such a treasure  
will sustain me, providing a  
firm foundation through all  
the difficulties of this  
season and this life. The  
joy that comes from you,  
deeper than momentary  
happiness, offers an  
abiding awareness of your  
presence and providence  
in all situations. Make me  
deeply aware that your  
arms of love support and  
hold me. Help me to see  
those same arms around  
others. I want to perceive  
them as recipients of the  
same overflowing grace  
and eternal love that I  
receive, so I may act  
accordingly toward them.

*This message is excerpted  
from "Comfort now your  
people" by Julia Seymour  
in the November/  
December*

**First & Second Thrift Store**  
is once again requesting  
clothing for **displaced people**  
**in Ukraine**, both adults and  
children. They need **warm**  
**outdoor clothing**. Drop items  
off at First & Second any day  
--10 to 4.





Sunday December 21, 2025

## Scripture Readings

Isaiah 7:10-16

*The sign of Immanuel*

Psalms 80:1-7, 17-19

Let your face shine upon us,  
and we shall be saved.

Romans 1:1-7

*Paul's greeting to the church  
at Rome*

Matthew 1:18-25

*A God near at hand*

Livestream link:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?  
v=1MBcFFyaMQI](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1MBcFFyaMQI)

Upcoming  
DEADLINES

**Monday December 22:**  
January Newsletter Articles, Events,  
etc.

**Monday January 5:**  
Annual Reports!! From ALL committees,  
groups and teams...

## “For what shall we pray?”

*This is from a weekly post inviting individuals, groups, and congregations to lift up our world in prayer. This resource is prepared by a variety of leaders in the ELCA.*

### Prayer prompts:

For an end to war, conflict, and violence especially in Gaza, South Sudan, Myanmar, Ukraine, Eastern Congo, and Pakistan/Afghanistan...

For all victims of violence, threats of violence, and communities grieving gun violence, including the Brown University and MIT campuses, Stewartville High School, and victims of the Bondi Beach violence in Sydney, Australia...

For immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and all who travel...

For those facing extreme weather, especially blizzard and high wind threats in the Northwestern United States...

For the community of Holden Village in this season of evacuation and evaluation...

For children and families who face increased food insecurity during school breaks...

For accessible and affordable health care...

For those living with seasonal affective disorder...

For all who seek shelter...

### Events and observances:

December Observances: Universal Human Rights Month, World AIDS/HIV Awareness Month, Spiritual Literacy Month

Hanukkah (Judaism, Dec 14-22)

Las Posadas (Dec 16-24)

Katharina von Bora Luther, renewer of the church, died 1552 (Dec 20)

Nativity of Our Lord (Dec 24 and Dec 25)

Stephen, Deacon and Martyr (Dec 26)

John, Apostle and Evangelist (Dec 27)

The Holy Innocents, Martyrs (transferred, Dec 29)

### **A prayer for peace between nations** (ELW)

Gracious God, grant peace among nations. Cleanse from our own hearts the seeds of strife: greed and envy, harsh misunderstandings and ill will, fear and desire for revenge. Make us quick to welcome ventures in cooperation among the peoples of the world, so that there may be woven the fabric of a common good too strong to be torn by the evil hands of war. In the time of opportunity, make us be diligent; and in the time of peril, let not our courage fail; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **A prayer before travel** (ELW)

O God, our beginning and our end, you kept Abraham and Sarah in safety throughout the days of their pilgrimage, you led the children of Israel through the midst of the sea, and by a star you led the magi to the infant Jesus. Protect and guide us now as we set out to travel. Make our ways safe and our homecomings joyful, and bring us at last to our heavenly home, where you dwell in glory with our Lord Jesus Christ and the life-giving Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

A note from Phyllis Olson:

She sent this after her Birthday weekend, November 15-16, in Grand Marais. Denise forgot to include it in earlier publications.



To My BLC Family of Long Standing:

Thank you all for the wonderful service Bethlehem, and for the warmth we felt there. I'll treasure the card that was signed by so many of you. This note is a thank you from my heart.

It was joyful to see new members and many young children in church. It was heartwarming to see and hear the choir and Karina, where I sang also.

New leaders have joined familiar leaders. Pastor Calvin is a gift as succeeding pastor. Pastor Mark and Janet Ditmanson were at my birthday event on Saturday. Many of you were there also. I was as happy on those two days, as I was when I still lived in Grand Marais.

Love, Phyllis Olson.



Join us at the Care Center on  
Sunday, December 21

at 2:00 pm

for a **Christmas Celebration**  
Service with our friends at the  
Care Center.

All are welcome!

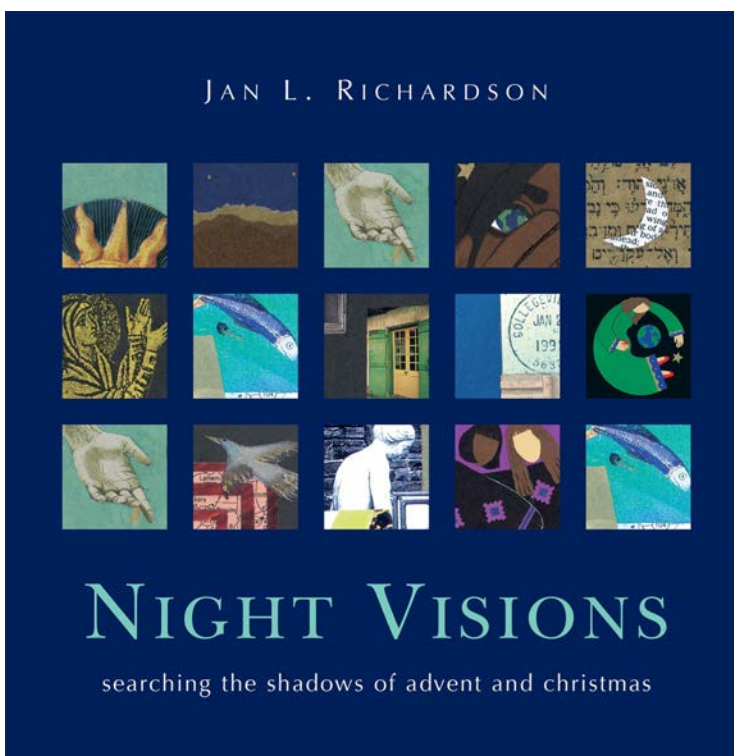




It's poetry time! This is from my favorite poet & artist Jan Richardson.  
This poem is taken from her book "Night Visions" - Week 3: Preparing a Space.  
(Below is information on her book.)

These days bathe us in images  
of abundance and happiness,  
but we pray for those  
who do not find in this time  
a season of goodness  
and light.

Give us eyes to see  
into the shadows  
cast by the millions of  
blinking lights;  
ears to listen  
beyond the carols  
to hear  
the anguished weeping;  
and hearts that long  
for the liberation  
your advent truly brings.



## **Night Visions: Searching the Shadows of Advent and Christmas**

**By Jan L. Richardson**

Jan's original artwork, reflections, poetry, and prayers accompany the reader from the beginning of Advent through Epiphany Day, inviting us to encounter the God who dwells in darkness as well as in daylight. Treasured by readers who return to it each Advent, *Night Visions* makes a beautiful gift for yourself and others.