



# Schwarzwald Lutheran Church

Serving and Loving Christ since 1737

The people of Schwarzwald - Ministers  
The Rev. Jim Farnsworth, Designated Pastor  
The Rev. David Blicht, Visitation Pastor  
Mrs. Kathy Snyder - Director of Music  
Ms. Diane V. Hafer - Office Administrator  
Mrs. Crystal Jordan - Christian Ed. Director  
Mrs. Melissa Kerber—Sexton

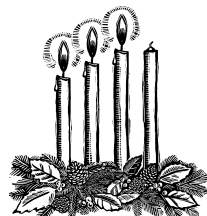
**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT    DECEMBER 14, 2025    10:45 A.M.**

**HYMNS ON THE CARILLON**

**CALL TO WORSHIP—RINGING THE BELLS**

**PRELUDE** *From Heaven Above to Earth I Come . . . . .* Engel

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**



**WELCOME** Leader: This is the day that the LORD has made!  
**Congregation: Let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

*Please stand.*

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

**P** Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C Amen.**

**P** Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

**P** Most merciful God,

**C** we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.

**C Amen.**

**P** In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C Amen.**

**GATHERING HYMN** #239 *Hark, the Glad Sound!*

## **GREETING**

**P** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C** And also with you.

## **ADVENT HYMN**

ELW #257 *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* — stanzas 5 and 6

## **LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

**A** Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe. Your prophets spoke of a day when the desert would blossom and waters would break forth in the wilderness. Bless us as we light the candles on this wreath. Strengthen our hearts as we prepare for the coming of the Lord. May he give water to all who thirst, for he is our light and our salvation. Blessed be God forever.

**C** Amen.

*The third candle is lit.*

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**P** Let us pray. Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

*Please be seated.*

## **FIRST READING Isaiah 35:1-10**

<sup>1</sup> The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;  
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;  
like the crocus <sup>2</sup> it shall blossom abundantly  
and rejoice with joy and shouting.

The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,  
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.

They shall see the glory of the Lord,  
the majesty of our God.]]

<sup>3</sup> Strengthen the weak hands  
and make firm the feeble knees.

<sup>4</sup> Say to those who are of a fearful heart,  
“Be strong, do not fear!

Here is your God.

He will come with vengeance,  
with terrible recompense.

He will come and save you.”

<sup>5</sup> Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,  
and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;

<sup>6</sup> then the lame shall leap like a deer,  
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness  
 and streams in the desert;  
<sup>7</sup> the burning sand shall become a pool  
 and the thirsty ground springs of water;  
 the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp;  
 the grass shall become reeds and rushes.  
<sup>8</sup> A highway shall be there,  
 and it shall be called the Holy Way;  
 the unclean shall not travel on it,  
 but it shall be for God's people;  
 no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.  
<sup>9</sup> No lion shall be there,  
 nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;  
 they shall not be found there,  
 but the redeemed shall walk there.  
<sup>10</sup> And the ransomed of the Lord shall return  
 and come to Zion with singing;  
 everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;  
 they shall obtain joy and gladness,  
 and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

A The word of the Lord.  
 C **Thanks be to God.**

## SECOND READING James 5:7-10

<sup>7</sup> Be patient, therefore, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. <sup>8</sup> You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. <sup>9</sup> Brothers and sisters, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! <sup>10</sup> As an example of suffering and patience, brothers and sisters, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

A The word of the Lord.  
 C **Thanks be to God.**

*Please stand.*

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the  
 words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew.

C **Glory to you, O Lord.**

### **HOLY GOSPEL Matthew 11:2-11**

<sup>2</sup>When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples <sup>3</sup>and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” <sup>4</sup>Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: <sup>5</sup>the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. <sup>6</sup>And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.”

<sup>7</sup>As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? <sup>8</sup>What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. <sup>9</sup>What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. <sup>10</sup>This is the one about whom it is written,

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,  
who will prepare your way before you.’

<sup>11</sup>“Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to you, O Christ.**

*Please be seated.*

## **Schwarzwald’s Christmas Pageant 2025**

**Director—Crystal Jordan**

We are glad so many of our children are able to perform with us in the pageant. The names listed are those who we expected to participate in the pageant. We know many children are unable to attend due to situations out of their control. We look forward to seeing them again in the new year!

### Cast

Mary – Tenley Shaak

Joseph – Tyler Thompson

Gabriel – Scarlet Jordan

Star – John Gibson

Camel - Jack Murphy & Sean Livingood

Wiseman #1 – Romeo Wesseh

Wiseman # 2 – Eli Gibney

Wiseman # 3 – AJ Batzel

Head Shepherd – Annalynne Thompson

Narrator #1 – Nolan Fayewicz

Narrator #2 – Seth Moyer

Narrator #3 – Layla Gibney

Narrator #4 – Zachary Werner

Silent Night soloists – Jr. & Sr. High Class

### Dancers

Colette Jordan & Karley Seidel

### Mary Did You Know Vocalist

Kailey Batzel

### Shepherds & Sheep

Codey Fayewicz

Charlotte Bryant

Charlie Gibney

Quinn Robinson

Zayn Schaeffer

Karley Seidel

### Animals

Whitney Fayewicz

Greyson Fronina

Weston Hoch

Kenton Shaak

### Angels

George Gibson

Arabella Ninni

Francesca Ninni

Giovanna Ninni

Abigail Thren

Dylan Thren

### Chorus (Jr. & Sr. High students)

Kailey Batzel

Miles Brumbaugh

Vincent D'Angelo

Emma Dickerson

Cara Dobbins

Nolan Fayewicz

Layla Gibney

Kolsen Guziak

Colette Jordan

Jeremy Kerber

Joshua Kerber

Seth Moyer

Shane Moyer

Joshua Nase

Zoe Schmaldinst

Trevor Seidel

Juryl Sele

Cadence Werner

Zachary Werner

Hailey Wheeler

A special thank you to all of the teachers who helped prepare their children for the pageant:

Lauren Batzel  
Christy D'Angelo  
Julie Dickerson  
Jeff Dobbins  
Jenny Dobbins  
Shelley Fayewicz  
Ellen Focht  
Sarah Gibney  
Sarah Gibson  
Beth Guziak  
Mike Jordan  
Jennifer Reinert  
Dave Scalese  
Linda Strain  
Christopher Thompson  
Melissa Thompson  
Matt Thren

An additional thank you to all of the people who worked behind the scenes to make costumes, prepare cue cards, move props, and more:

Diane Hafer  
Lori Seidel  
Carolyn Woodford

*Please stand.*

## **Joy to the World**

Joy to the World, the Lord is come. Let earth receive her King.

Let every heart prepare Him room,

And Heaven and nature sing, and Heaven and nature sing, and Heaven, and Heaven, and nature sing.

Joy to the World, the Savior reigns! Let men their songs employ.

While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains,

Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy, repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove,

The glor-ies of His righteousness,

And wonders of His love, and wonders of His love, and wonders, wonders, of His love.

**APOSTLES' CREED**

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.  
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

*Please be seated.*

**OFFERING /ANTHEM** *Breath of Heaven . . . . .* Bober

*Please stand.*

**OFFERTORY RESPONSE**



Let the vine - yards be fruit - ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of



bless - ing. Gath - er a har - vest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be



fed with the bread of life. Gath - er the hopes and the dreams of all; u -



nite them with the prayers we of - fer now. Grace our ta - ble with your



pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

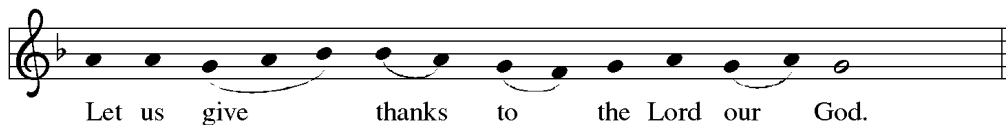
## OFFERTORY PRAYER

A Nourishing God,

you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert.  
Through this meal, satisfy our parched places,  
that we may rejoice and be for the world  
signs of your kingdom come.

C Amen.

## GREAT THANKSGIVING

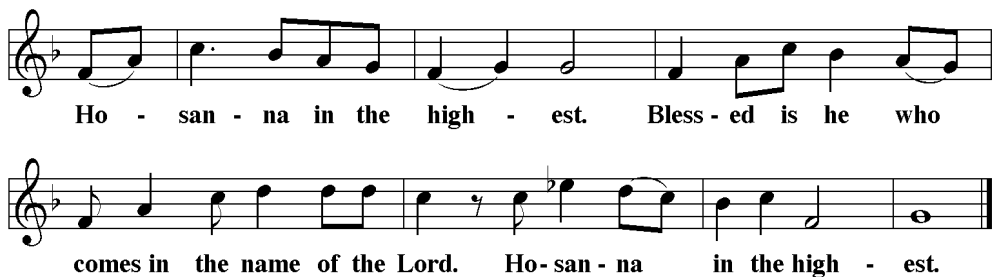


P It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,  
that we should at all times and in all places  
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,  
through our Savior Jesus Christ.  
You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,  
through whom you will also make all things new  
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.  
And so, with all the choirs of angels,  
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

## HOLY, HOLY, HOLY







## WORDS OF INSTITUTION

P In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread,  
and gave thanks; broke it,  
and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup,  
gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people  
for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power,  
and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

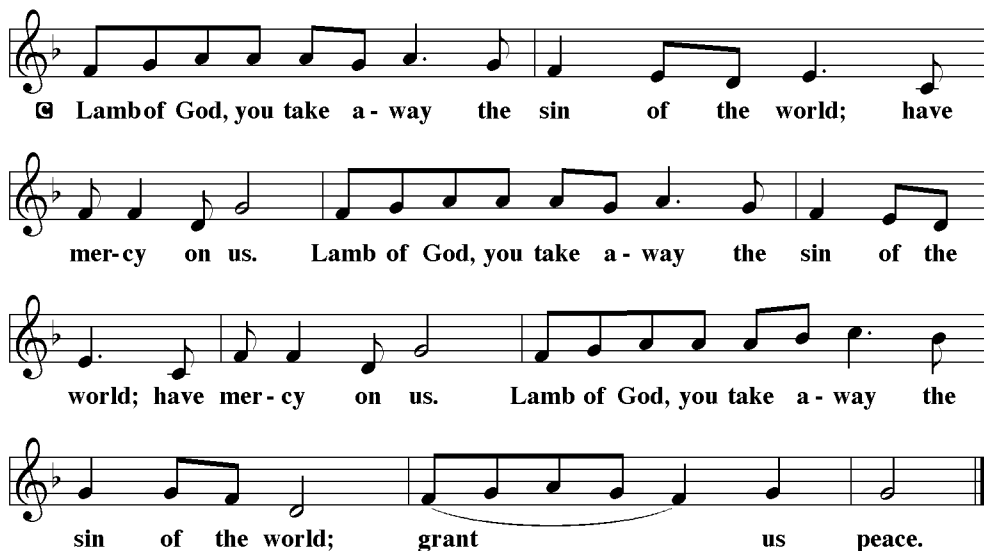
*A Word of Welcome: The Sacrament of Holy Communion is the meal of the Church. All are welcome to the Lord's Table to receive the gift of His body and blood. Children who have not yet received instruction for First Holy Communion are welcome to come to the altar to receive a special blessing. If you are unable to come forward, please let the ushers know, and you will be served in the pew.*

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P Come to the table of grace. Receive the gift of new life.

C Thanks be to God.

## LAMB OF GOD



☐ Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have  
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the  
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the  
sin of the world; grant us peace.

*Please be seated.*

## DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

*Continuous Communion*

*When directed by the usher, proceed to the altar by way of the center aisle.*

*If preferred, grape juice is available at the top of the steps.*

*For gluten free wafers, please ask the Communion Assistant.*

*After receiving communion, please return to your seat by the way of the side ramps.*

## HYMN SUNG DURING DISTRIBUTION #638 *Blessed Assurance*

*Please stand.*

## POST COMMUNION BLESSING

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ  
strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C Amen.

## POST COMMUNION PRAYER

A God our host,  
at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness.  
Send us forth, eager to share the feast,  
welcome the stranger,  
and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.

C Amen.

**BLESSING**

**P** May God who comes among us,  
Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit,  
grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness,  
and good news to share today and always.

**C** Amen.

**SENDING HYMN** #253 *He Came Down*

**DISMISSAL**

**A** Go in peace. Keep awake.  
**C** Thanks be to God.

**POSTLUDE** *Hail to the Lord’s Anointed* . . . . . Burkhardt

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**Please be advised** that all of our worship services are broadcast live via Zoom  
to anyone who possesses the meeting passcode as well as recorded for subsequent distribution via email  
to members of the congregation and posted on the church's Facebook page.

**SERVING AT WORSHIP**

Joshua Kerber . . . . . Assisting Minister  
Kevin Kennedy . . . . . Usher Team Captain  
Emma Dickerson . . . . . Acolyte  
Joshua Kerber, Doris Jaeger, Susan Johns . . . . . Communion Assistants  
Sally Kennedy, Judy Ney, Emma Dickerson, Ian Carr . . . . . Carillonners  
Kevin Kennedy . . . . . Zoom Master

**Schwarzwald Lutheran Church**  
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**The Rev. David Blitch, Visitation Pastor:**  
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**Website** www.schwarzwaldlutheran.org  
**Office e-mail** administrator@schwarzwaldlutheran.org  
**Director of Music** 484-794-1214 (text)  
**Emergency** 610-914-8257

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**If you are a visitor**, a special welcome to you, and if you are without a church home, we invite you to join our fellowship. You are also encouraged to sign our guest register with your preferred contact information. If you do not have a Bible at home, please take one from the welcome table. Visitors who are communing members of other Christian congregations are cordially invited to receive the Sacrament with us. Welcome to the Lord's table where we are one with Christ!

The **altar flowers** are presented to the glory of God and sponsored by the Gibson Family in honor of Sarah and Andrew's wedding anniversary.

The **bulletins** are presented to the glory of God and sponsored by Bill and Doris Jaeger in celebration of their grandchildren.

**Large print bulletins and hearing receivers** are available in the Narthex. Please see an usher for assistance.

**Children's toys, games, puzzles and books** can be found in the Narthex.

**Church-time Nursery** is available downstairs in the "Parent and Me" room with plenty of toys and books for toddlers and youngsters.

**Altar flower (\$25) and bulletin sponsors (\$14)** are needed for the remainder of December and all of January. Please use the sign-up sheets in the Narthex.

**Today is the deadline** for getting solo/music information to Kathy for Christmas Eve. If you don't have a piece of music selected but want to perform, please let her know that as well.

### Rehearsals:

Wednesday, 12/17   6:00p Youth Chorus (alternate) rehearsal  
                              6:30p Adult Bell Choir

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**The Exeter Township Senior High School**  
**Eagleaires, Chamber Strings, & Brass Ensemble**  
are proud to present:

*Christmas at Schwarzwald*

**Friday, December 19 at 7:00**

**WAYS TO HELP OUR NEIGHBORS**  
**DEALING WITH FOOD INSECURITY**

**HERE AT SLC: PLACE YOUR NON-PERISHABLE FOOD DONATIONS IN THE SHOPPING CART IN THE NARTHEX.**

**DONATED ITEMS WILL STOCK OUR “LITTLE FREE PANTRY.”**

**OR WRITE A CHECK TO SLC, MARKED “LITTLE FREE PANTRY,”  
AND WE WILL PURCHASE FOOD.**

**IN THE COMMUNITY: DONATE FOOD TO THE EXETER AREA FOOD PANTRY. ITEMS CAN BE BROUGHT TO CHURCH IN A BAG MARKED “EAFP.” WE WILL DELIVER THEM.**

**OR WRITE A CHECK FOR THE PANTRY TO PURCHASE NEEDED ITEMS.  
THE CHECK SHOULD BE PAYABLE TO REFORMATION LUTHERAN  
CHURCH (they disperse the funds to the Pantry) AND MAIL TO:  
REFORMATION LUTHERAN CHURCH  
3670 PERKIOMEN AVENUE, READING, PA 19606**

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# Caregiver Support Group

Providing care for a family member is an honor, but it can also feel overwhelming at times. Have you ever wished that you could talk with someone who would fully understand what you are experiencing?

This new group might be just what you are looking for.

If you are interested in being a part of our  
Caregiver Support Group,

please call Barry Hoover at 610-582-5684.

Please leave a message and he will get back to you.

## PARLOR COFFEE CAFÉ

Scan the QR code or use the Sign-Up Genius link to sign-up to bring a baked good for the coffee café on Sunday mornings:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050C4FA9AD2FA7FD0-60582416-schwarzwald>



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### DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

#### **Sunday, December 14—The Third Sunday of Advent**

11:45 a.m.—Cookie Exchange

5:00 p.m.—Outside Advent Wreath Lighting at 5:00 p.m.

#### **Friday, December 19 (please note date change)**

7:00 p.m.—Exeter Sr. High School Christmas Concert in our Sanctuary

#### **Sunday, December 21—The Fourth Sunday of Advent**

10:45 a.m.—Worship Service

5:00 p.m.—Outside Advent Wreath Lighting

#### **Wednesday, December 24—Christmas Eve**

2:30 p.m.—Special Music

3:00 p.m.—Worship Service

6:30 p.m.—Special Music

7:00 p.m.—Worship Service



#### **Sunday, December 28—The First Sunday of Christmas**

10:45 a.m.—Worship Service of Lessons and Carols

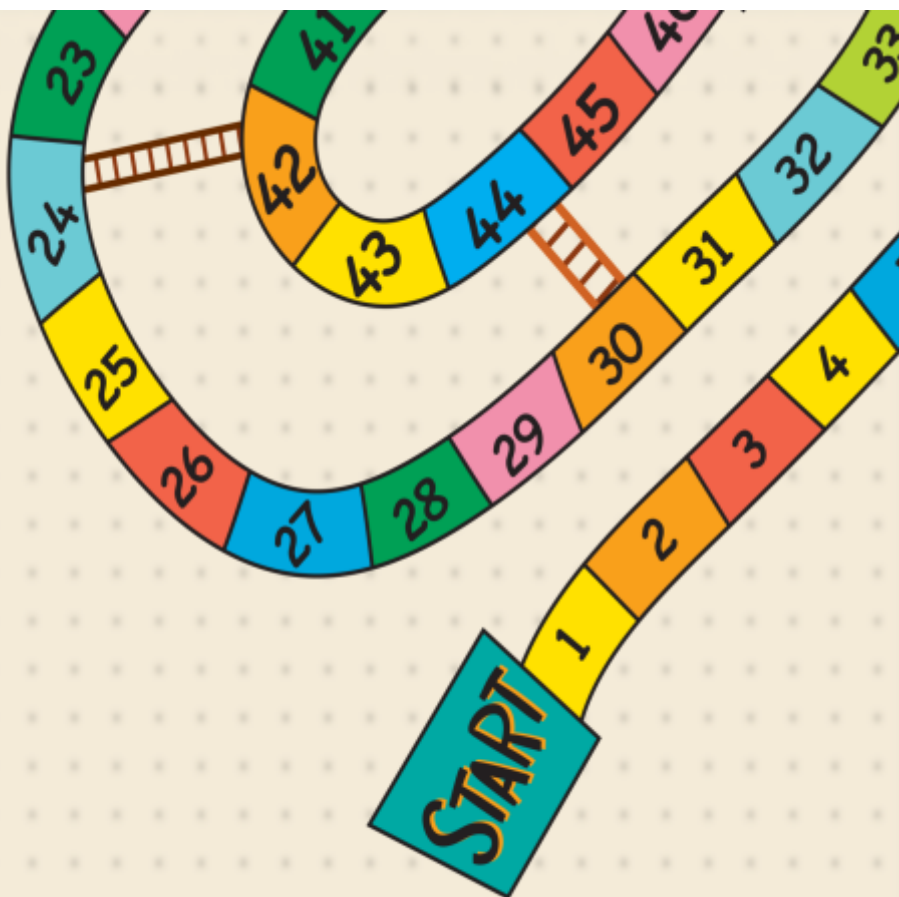
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### LOOKING AHEAD

## ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

**Sunday, January 25, 2026**

Immediately following the worship service,  
lunch will be served in Fellowship Hall.  
The congregational meeting will begin after lunch.



CHURCH FAMILY

# Game Day!

JOIN US FOR A FUN-FILLED AFTERNOON OF STRATEGY,  
LAUGHTER & FRIENDLY COMPETITION.  
BRING YOUR FAVORITE BOARD GAMES.  
SNACKS & GOOD TIMES ARE GUARANTEED!

DEC 28TH, 2PM - 5:30PM

ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH | BIRDSBORO, PA

**POINSETTIAS  
TO BEAUTIFY THE SANCTUARY**



Please fill out the order form below. Please place the completed form and your payment in one of the green “special” envelopes in your packet or use one of the envelopes in the pew pocket and mark it “seasonal flowers.” Please place the envelope in the offering plate.

**TODAY is the deadline for ordering poinsettias!**

Plants may be picked up on Sunday, December 28, after the worship service.

\_\_\_\_\_ (cut) \_\_\_\_\_

**Poinsettia Order Form**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(as you wish it to appear in the bulletin—names only, please)

6 ½" pot - \$10.00 each \_\_\_\_\_  
#

8" pot - \$30.00 each \_\_\_\_\_  
#

Amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Envelope # \_\_\_\_\_

