

JOIN US FOR THE  
*Christmas Season*

DECEMBER 6TH

6PM Holiday Parade

DECEMBER 8TH

10:30AM Bethany Youth Service

DECEMBER 8TH

5PM Hospice Memorial Service

DECEMBER 11TH

7PM Older Youth Led Service

DECEMBER 15TH

2PM Glenn Henriksen Concert

CHRISTMAS EVE

5pm Service w/ Communion

10:30pm Service w/ Communion

CHRISTMAS DAY

10am Service w/ Communion at Lost Island

*Youth Led Christmas Service*

THE NEW STAR

DECEMBER 8TH  
10:30AM

COFFEE CONNECT AT 10AM

Poinsettias to decorate the church are always welcome. If you would like to share one, please put your name on it so that it may be returned to you. Please write it on the sheet outside the church office if you are giving a plant as a memorial of a loved one so we can acknowledge it in the bulletin. **If you would like to share a poinsettia of yours with us, you can bring those to the Churches anytime after the 18th and pick them up from the church on or after December 29th.** Thank You!



Willow Tree is willing to deliver your poinsettia to the church. Willow Tree- 852-8073

*Prayer Tree*

Elevator Room off the Sanctuary

We are going to do the "Prayer Tree" again this year at Bethany. This tree is located in the elevator room. If you would like to, you can tie a ribbon to one of the branches of the tree and think about a prayer request that you have. God knows who, what, why someone ties a ribbon.

All are welcome to pray over the ribbons tied on the tree during this Christmas Season.

CONNECTIONS DECEMBER 2024

A Monthly Newsletter Linking the Ministries of Bethany Lutheran and Lost Island Lutheran Churches



Pastor F. Peter Morlock  
Secretary: Diane Clasing-Steger  
Financial Secretary: Michael Jacobson  
Youth Director: Kristin Rienhardt  
Bethany Organist: Tim Nielsen, Temp  
Lost Island Organist: Tim Nielsen



**O Lord, how shall I meet you, how welcome you aright?** (ELW #241)

We enter once again into the winter season, which also heralds the seasons of Advent and Christmas. We dive deeply once again into preparation, anticipation, wonder and mystery. For some, this is a joyous time. For others, not so much for a variety of reasons. The season comes, bringing with it One who meets us where we are. This is both the central mystery, and the central promise of our faith...

**"The Word became flesh, and encamps in the midst of His people"** (John 1)

At this end of history, we are somewhere in the middle; a liminal space where we remember and celebrate Christ's coming and all that comes with it, even as we join with the throngs of disciples who since that time, await His coming again. More often than not these spaces are not comfortable; they come with questions, doubts, fears, anxiety and a whole host of other feelings. At such times, it is easy to get discouraged; easy to yearn for restoration of our community of faith, and for ourselves. We yearn for solutions to those problems and challenges that vex us, draining our spirits. It is for times such as this that these liturgical seasons exist. The ancient texts, prayers and hymns call us to remember exactly where and in whom our hope lies. They also remind us again, because we tend to lose sight of it all too often; that the One for whom we yearn is still in our midst, moving and shaping the communities He calls into being, the individuals He claims, and the world around us. The Hope spoken during these seasons is not an empty one, for it lies in the One who defeated death itself! The One who does not and will not forget His people! The One who Loves us!

*Pastor Peter*



Bethany Lutheran Church: [bethanylutheranemmetsburg.com](http://bethanylutheranemmetsburg.com)  
Fb: [Bethany/Lostislandparish](https://www.facebook.com/Bethany/Lostislandparish)  
Lost Island Lutheran Church [www.lostislandlutheranchurch.com](http://www.lostislandlutheranchurch.com)  
Office Email: [offsecr@gmail.com](mailto:offsecr@gmail.com) Financial Email: [bethanyfinance20@gmail.com](mailto:bethanyfinance20@gmail.com)  
Office hours: Mon, Wed & Thurs 9 AM -3pm Office phone: 712-852-4450

**SCANDINAVIAN BAKE SALE**

Wednesday,  
December 4th  
1-3:30 PM

Bethany Lutheran Church  
703 Broadway  
Emmetsburg

Items for sale include Krumkake, Potato Lefse, Flour Lefse, Rosettes, and Christmas Goodies GALORE!







# Coffee Connection.

**December 8th  
10:00am-10:30am**

Held every 2nd Sunday of the month.

**We invite ALL to join us for fellowship in the Overflow Room.**

A social time of fellowship to connect with others & enjoy some treats and beverages.

**Coffee. Treats. Conversation.**

The Group that has signed up to cover the December Coffee Connection is the Board of Education. Please make sure and thank them for doing this.

We would like to thank the Leuer Family (Aaron, Jackie, Lahnee & Cody) for sponsoring the Coffee in November.

The Sign-Up Sheet for those people who would like to do this forward is on the table in the back of the Sanctuary. The church provides the Coffee, Paper products and flatware if needed. You just need to provide the goodies to go with them. Funds are available for your expenses.

**The Volunteer Assignments (USHER, COMMUNION ASSISTANTS, LECTOR AND GREETERS) will be sent out during the month of December for the upcoming 2025 year.** If you find that you are unable to do your assignment, please let Diane know immediately. That way she can get someone else assigned to that given Sunday.

Thank you!



## End of the Year GIVING

*AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE: Any financial matters from offerings, donations, and memorials to expenses need to be into the church office by December 29th to allow adequate amount of time for the financial secretary to get records recorded.*

# New Offering Envelopes



1. If you have signed up for giving envelopes in the past, they will look different in 2025.
2. You will get a stack of 10 envelopes and some special envelopes with your giving number on them.
3. When you need more you can stop by the office or use a plain envelope and write your number on it.

These will be available for pickup in the middle of December.

## Thank you for giving!

# January 2025 Monthly Newsletter.

## New Look. New Format.



**Reminder:** Starting January 2025, The Monthly Newsletters will be emailed out to all those that have provided that information to the office. If you want to make sure you get this please let the office know so that you can be added.

The Monthly Newsletters are also available on both the Bethany and Lost Island Websites.

Printed copies will be available for pick up at the church.



# Youth Led Service

**December 11th  
7pm**

## OKOBOJI OUTREACH NIGHT

**December 8**

**5:00-8:00pm**  
**\$5 per person**  
6th-12th graders

**CHRISTMAS MYSTERY**

RSVP at [www.okoboji.org/outreach](http://www.okoboji.org/outreach) by 4pm on Dec. 5th  
Want to come early for a service project? Let us know.

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**Thank you!**  
Your generosity makes a difference!

Name \_\_\_\_\_ # \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Budget supports the daily work of the church \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Missions supports the mission work of the church \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Deferred Maintenance supports the big maintenance upkeep \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Other- Please Specify) \_\_\_\_\_ Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

giving Options: By Mail \_\_\_\_\_ In Person \_\_\_\_\_ Vanced App \_\_\_\_\_  
Online at [www.bethanylutheranmemetsburg.com/giving](http://www.bethanylutheranmemetsburg.com/giving)

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## January 2025

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# GET INVOLVED.



### Quilters:

**Morning Quilting**  
Mondays- 9 AM weekly  
**Night Quilters**  
December 3rd @ 6 pm  
December 10th @ 6 pm

### Women's Circles:

**\*Tabitha Circle:**  
Dec. ??t at 6:50 pm @  
Alaire's  
**\*Sarah Circle:**  
Dec 11th -6 pm Potluck at  
Elaine's house  
**\*Mary Martha Circle:**  
Dec. 18th at 11:30 am at  
Sandi Chapman's home

### Men's Bible Study

Wednesdays @ Noon

### Adult Bible Study

TBD

### Help with worship



### Join A Board

### Help with Youth Programs

### Worship Services

SUNDAYS

Lost Island at 8:45am

Bethany at 10:30am

### Stay Connected

Bethany/Lost Island Parish  
Lost Island Lutheran Church

@bethanyemetsburg

Bethany Worship  
Lost Island Lutheran Church

HOW CAN WE  
**PRAY**  
FOR YOU?

Prayer is such an important piece in the life of a Christian. Not only do we pray to God individually, but as a body of Christ, we pray for our neighbors, the world, and we trust that God will do His will in those prayers. Need prayer? Want to intentionally pray for others? Let us know!

### We remember those in special need of God's love and care including:

Linda Gjerde, Nolyn Johnson, (Nephew of Kathy Mehan), Pam Rouse, Bridget Johnson, David Stephens, Jon Sorenson, Kylee Hill, Carol Walker, Omundson Family, Mike Hermansen, Shirley Knutson, Eric & Lana Kropf, Jim & Carol Krause, Jessie McCune, Rick Rienhardt, Dave Smith, Lon Twait, Robert Mortenson, Jr., and those we name in our hearts.

**\*Our Sympathy:** to Bob Christensen's family and friends on his passing in Nov.

**\*Our Military Members:** Thomas Crocoll and Logan Murray

**\*Our companion synods:** The Southern Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania-Yakobi Parish companion with Lost Island and the Evangelical Lutheran Church Laz-Paz Parish in Chile, companion with Bethany.



# YOUTH NEWS

Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love are words we hear a lot this time of year. These words are the definition of each week in Advent. It is what we prepare for as we await Jesus' birth. Life has its way of "snuffing" out those things that God promises in our lives. Often times, we fall into the experience life wants us to have and hope, peace, joy and love have no place in it.

This fall has been a rather interesting one and yet apart from things that have happened one thing remains: Love. The greatest of them all. As I look back on the last few weeks with the youth of Bethany, I am constantly reminded of the hope, peace, joy, and love the kids bring, in their own way of course.

We recently wrote cards to those that can't leave their homes or we know would appreciate a little note. As we were writing these many kids asked, "who is that again?" I would often respond with a memory we have had with that person. As the kids remembered who that person was they often said, "oh yes, I remember, she /he was funny, or they made us cookies, or they always were in the hallway because their room was getting cleaned, or my personal favorite was when referring to a member whom every time we visited was playing Bingo.

These moments in time, remind me of the love these kids have for one another but also as we look to this month of advent how they portray each attribute that defines our preparation in waiting for the Newborn King.

## Upcoming events/schedule:

**December 4th-**  
Shopping for UDM  
**December 6th-**  
Lighted Parade- 6-7:15pm  
**December 8th-**  
10:30am Youth Led Christmas Service  
5-8pm Outreach Night at Okoboji (6th-12th graders)

**December 11th-** Youth Led Service at 7pm  
**December 18th-**  
All youth groups, Annual Christmas Parties. Wear your favorite Christmas PJ's or sweaters!



## NOISY OFFERING Dec-

Youth Chosen Mission

## SUNDAY SCHOOL OFFERING

YOUTH VS CONGREGATION

SEPTEMBER THROUGH DECEMBER  
**PENNY WAR**

CLAY COUNTY DISASTER RECOVERY FUND

GOAL : \$300  
CURRENT AMOUNT RAISED AS OF 11/24/24:  
\$255.48



**WILLING TO HELP?**  
SUPPORT, DRIVE,  
DONATE, TEACH?

CONTACT KRISTIN



Kristin Rienhardt  
Kristin.rienhardt@blc.edu  
712-790-6470

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## Prayer Tree

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BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH  
703 BROADWAY  
EMMETSBURG, IA 50536  
*Change Service Requested*

NON PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
EMMETSBURG, IOWA 50536  
PERMIT #2

label

## LOST ISLAND NEWS



Just a reminder that all are welcome to join us on Dec. 21st as we do some caroling—first in Ruthven and then in Emmetsburg. We will begin at 9 am and gather at the Assisted Living (Villa) area in Ruthven and then visit the nursing homes in Emmetsburg.



### ***The Festival of Lessons and Carols***

will be held in Spencer on Sunday,  
December 8th at 3 p.m. at  
Grace United Methodist Church.

The community is invited to this annual program of music and the Christmas story.

For more Information, visit "Spencer Messiah" on Facebook.

Friends of Sharing the Dream in Guatemala is a volunteer-based fair trade organization that works to reduce poverty in Guatemala through collaborative partnerships with Guatemalans. We offer Guatemalan crafts including hand-made beaded jewelry, handwoven scarves, baskets from all natural materials and much, much, more. Shop online at [www.sharingthedream.org](http://www.sharingthedream.org), visit one of the stores in Vermillion, Sioux Falls or at Lost Island Lutheran Church. If you are interested in learning more contact Karyn Leininger.



### **Note to all Board Chairpersons**

Bethany's Annual Meeting will be 1/19/25

Lost Island's Annual Meeting will be 1/26/25

Please have all reports, apart from financial reports, in to the office by  
**December 27th** to put the Annual Report together.

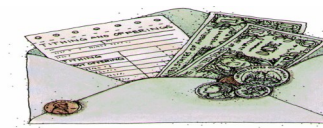
## THANK YOU

- Thank you to all who have been involved in worship on Sundays to bring us the Good News of God!
- Thank you to all that have continued to give your monetary donations!
- Thank you to Mark Saxton's family for preparing the Church yard for winter and for the mowing of the grass this past summer..
- Thank you to Funeral Group C for serving at Bob Christensen's funeral.
- Thank you to Buhrow Construction for repairing the bell tower and roof.
- Thank you to the those of the church who cleaned from top to bottom, inside and out, the basement of the church and did other touch-ups around the building.
- Thank you for the donations to our Trinity Garden. We now have our benches.

# DECEMBER

SUN	MON	TUE
<b>1 HANGING OF THE GREENS</b> <i>Wear your Church Shirt Day</i> <b>8:45 am</b> Lost Island Worship <b>9:30 am</b> Bethany SS <b>10:30 am</b> Bethany Worship	<b>2</b> <b>9 AM</b> Quilting  <b>6 PM</b> Quilting	<b>3</b>
<b>8 SS CHRISTMAS SERVICE</b> <b>8:45 am</b> Lost Island Worship <b>9:00 am</b> Bethany SS <b>10 am</b> Coffee Connection (Brd of Ed) <b>10:30 am</b> <i>SS Christmas Service</i> <b>11:30am</b> – Nominating Committee <b>5pm</b> –Hospice Memorial Service, Bethany Lutheran <b>5-8 pm</b> Outreach at Okoboji	<b>9</b> <b>9 AM</b> Quilting  <b>6 PM</b> Quilting	<b>10</b> <b>6 pm</b> Sarah Circle Meets at Elaine’s home  <b>6:30 pm</b> Cub Scouts
<b>15 COMMUNION SUNDAY</b> <b>8:45 am</b> Lost Island Worship <b>10:30 am</b> Bethany Worship  <b>2pm</b> Glenn Henriksen Concert	<b>16</b> <b>NO Quilting</b>  <b>WIC here from 9-3 pm</b>	<b>17</b> <b>7 pm</b> Bethany Council Mtg
<b>22</b> <b>8:45 am</b> LI Worship <b>10:30 am</b> Bethany Worship	<b>23</b> <b>NO Quilting</b>	<b>24</b> <b>5 pm</b> Christmas Eve Service @ Bethany <b>10:30 pm</b> Christmas Eve Service @ Bethany
<b>29 LESSONS &amp; CAROLS</b> <b>8:45 am</b> Lost Island Worship <b>10:30 am</b> Bethany Worship  <b>Cut off for all financial transactions</b>	<b>30</b> <b>NO Quilting</b>	<b>31</b>

OCTOBER 2024 Bethany Lutheran Church Treasurer’s Report	
Attendance average: 61	
MONTHLY BUDGET NEEDS FROM OFFERINGS: \$13,750.00	
	MONTHLY BEGINNING BALANCE (14,534.70)
<b>INCOME</b>	
Offerings	10,148.93
Transfers from other Funds Lost Island	0.00 10,425.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>20,573.93</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Personnel Expenses	12,127.53
Program Expenses	21.16
Office Expenses	237.01
Property Expenses	2,079.41
Western IA Synod Other Donations	473.72 0.00
Damascus Road	50.00
NO ELCA Donations	0.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>	<b>14,988.83</b>
Income Less Expenses	5,585.10
<b>GENERAL FUND BALANCE</b>	<b>(8,949.60)</b>



Bethany would like to encourage online monetary offerings. The local Emmetsburg banks each provide a FREE online bill pay service which can arrange recurring weekly or monthly payments. If you need more information, contact your local Emmetsburg bank at your earliest convenience.

If you have any financial questions, please email Michael at [bethanyfinance20@gmail.com](mailto:bethanyfinance20@gmail.com) and he can answer any questions.



**COUNCIL MEMBERS:**

Do you have questions? Need assistance? Contact your council members and they will get you connected with the right people!

**BETHANY**

Joe Neary (P) 712-260-8871  
 Mark Evans (VP) 712-260-5651  
 Angie Hetrick (T) 712-298-0331  
 Diane Clasing-Steger, (S) 712-298-1003  
 Dianne Hough 712-852-2169  
 Chuck Duhn 712-298-1027  
 Barb Haack 712-260-3408  
 Elaine Sidles 712-298-2559

**LOST ISLAND**

Troy Leininger – President  
 Tim Nielsen - Treasurer  
 Kyle Norris – Secretary  
 Craig Thu & Steve Pitt – Trustees  
 Alan Oppedal & Charles Henningsen – Deacons



This is just a quick update financially. As of November 17, the church is in the negative of approximately \$13,000. This is better than the negative of approximately \$16,000 last month. We can do better. **Please consider giving generously and consider the importance of the gifts you receive and give.**

As we celebrate the birth of Christ, let’s reflect on the ultimate gift we’ve received and how we, in turn, can give generously to support the work of God’s kingdom.

Proverbs 11:24-25 beautifully illustrates how the world of the generous expands while the world of the stingy shrinks: “

*The world of the generous gets larger and larger;  
 the world of the stingy gets smaller and smaller.  
 The one who blesses others is abundantly blessed;  
 those who help others are helped.”*

If you’ve watched “The Christmas Carol,” you’ll see what happens when Scrooge turns from a miserable self-centered banker sitting alone to count his money, to the exact opposite; a grateful and generous giver who starts seeing the needs of those around him. He went from living a small stingy life to living a wide-open, generous one overnight. Generosity is the key to a wide open spacious life – it gets you thinking outside yourself and brings real freedom and joy.


So whether it be with your finances, your time or your energy – start saying yes to being generous and endless possibilities will open up and your world will indeed get bigger.

*STEWARDSHIP PRAYER: Gracious and loving God, you call us to be stewards of your abundance, the caretakes of all you have entrusted to us. Help us always to use your gifts wisely and teach us to share them generously. Send the Holy Spirit to work through us, bringing your message to those we serve.*

**Blessings to you this holiday season!**

**-Stewardship**

**BER 2024**

WED	THU	FRI	SAT
4 <b>Noon Men’s Bible Study</b> <b>1-3:30pm Scandinavian Bake Sale</b> <b>3:30-5 PM SACK</b> <b>7 - 8 PM Connect</b> <b>7:30-9:00 PM LIFE</b>	5	6 <b>6 pm Lighted Holiday Parade</b>	7
11 <b>Noon Men’s Bible Study</b> <b>3:30-5 PM SACK</b> <b>5:30 PM Board of Youth Mtg</b> <b>7pm– Youth Led Worship</b> <b>7–8 PM Connect</b> <b>7:30–9 PM LIFE</b>	12	13	14
18 <b>Noon Men’s Bible Study</b> <b>11:30 am Mary Martha meets At Sandi Chapman’s home</b> <b>Youth Christmas Parties</b> <b>3:30-5 PM SACK</b> <b>7:00-8:00pm Connect</b> <b>7:30-9:00 PM LIFE</b>	19	20	21 <b>9 am Caroling in Ruthven &amp; E’burg</b>
25  <b>10 am Lost Island Christmas Day Worship With Commun.</b>	26	27 <b>January Items are due today for the Newsletter</b> <b>Annual Reports Due to Office</b>	28

## Memorial Gifts Given

In Memory of **Bob Christensen** for *Trinity Garden, Missions and General Fund*  
In Memory of **Becky Hanson** given by *Frank & Marit Veltri* for the *Scholarship Fund*



*We hope that you all have a wonderful Christmas Season this year!*

*A lot has happened during this past year—floods, drought, passing of loved ones. But there is always one constant—and that is the LOVE of Jesus, the Son of God!*

*Please keep your loved ones, your friends, your neighbors and your church in your prayers. Everyone can always use a little prayer.*

*Merry Christmas from  
Bethany and Lost Island Lutheran!*

### BETHANY FUNERAL SERVERS- GROUP A

**Diane Clasing-Steger, Barb Haack, Chairpersons**

Dianne & Randy Hough  
Becky Walker  
Bernie & Linda Janssen  
Dale Evans  
Leroy Walker  
Roger & Carol Walker  
Ed & Jen Meyer  
Mark & Nicole Evans  
Danny Umbrell  
Joel & Haily Hoyman

Tim & Molly Rodemeyer  
Jason & Diane Jacobson  
Dan & Michelle Theesfeld  
Bill & Sharolyn Dickey  
Chuck & Therese Duhn  
Mike & Betty Naig  
Kyle & Kayla Hagen  
Sharon Omundson  
Shirleen & Clayton Helgeson

Dave & Judy Cole  
Joe & Jennifer Boevers  
Shawn & Jen Connelly  
Troy & Sarah Krug  
Brian & Amy Malm  
Allen & Beth Will  
Mitch & Kim Hohensee  
Richard & Melinda Ayers  
Sam & Melissa Will

## Ways to Give

By Mail



In Person



Online



Questions on Online Giving? Ask Kristin

Make every gift count. Big or small.

## VOLUNTEERS

### BETHANY

#### MUSICIANS at BETHANY

Dec. 1 Tim Nielsen    Dec. 15 Tim Nielsen  
Dec. 8 SS Program    Dec. 22 Holly Sidles  
Dec. 24 (5 pm & 10:30 pm)    Dec. 29 ????

### LOST ISLAND

ORGANIST: Tim Nielsen

#### ALTAR GUILD—DECEMBER

Alaire Nielsen, Susan Geiger

#### READERS

Dec. 1 Hanging of the Greens  
Dec. 8 Kyle Norris  
Dec. 15 Troy Leininger  
Dec. 22 Jeff Geiger  
Dec. 25 Alaire Nielsen  
Dec. 29 Troy Leininger

#### ACOLYTES

Dec. 1 Lily Rohan  
Dec. 8 Hannah Geiger  
Dec. 15 Bethany Geiger  
Dec. 25 Zac Sorenson  
Dec. 29 Lily Rohan

#### COMMUNION ASSISTANTS

Dec. 1 Craig Thu  
Dec. 15 Karyn Leininger  
Dec. 25 Troy Leininger

ALTAR GUILD—DECEMBER Kathy Mehan

#### LECTORS

Dec. 1 Hanging of the Greens  
Dec. 8 SS Program  
Dec. 15 Matt Malm  
Dec. 22 Sydney Martini  
Dec. 24 (5 pm) Volunteer  
(10:30 pm) Diane Clasing-Steger  
Dec. 29 Laure Miller

#### USHERS

Dec. 1 Terry Rouse, Joel Saxton  
Dec. 8 Joe Neary, Kyle Hagen  
Dec. 15 Charles Noble, Bob Steger  
Dec. 22 Lonnie Naig, Joel Saxton  
Dec. 24 (5 pm) Mark Saxton & ???  
(10:30 pm) Kyle Hagen & ???  
Dec. 29 Mark Evans, ????

#### GREETERS

Dec. 1 Elaine Naus, Diane Steger  
Dec. 8 Joe & Jen Boevers  
Dec. 15 Mark & Darca Saxton  
Dec. 22 Greg & Rachel Haack  
Dec. 24 (5 pm) Volunteers  
(10:30 pm) Dave & Judy Cole  
Dec. 29 Lori Forry & Dianne Hough

#### ACOLYTES

Dec. 3 Hanging of the Greens—Brett Saxton  
Dec. 8 SS Program—Jayce Ayers  
Dec. 15 Carter Reinders  
Dec. 22 Ava Hagen  
Dec. 24 (5 pm) Zoey Reinders  
(10:30 pm) Caitlyn Cole  
Dec. 29 Owen Thoren

#### COMMUNION ASSISTANTS

Dec. 15 Marla Noble, Diane Steger  
Angie Hetrick, Marit Veltri  
Dec. 24 (5 pm) 4 Volunteers  
Dec. 24 (10:30 pm) 4 Volunteers