



# Lifetimes

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December 11, 2016

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### ADVENT WORSHIP & SUNDAY THEMES

Wednesday, December 14 at 7:00 p.m.

*The 2016 Sunday theme is "People of Promise"*

December 18: God with Us

### CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICES, DECEMBER 24

**1:00 & 3:00 p.m.** For Young Families.

**5:00 p.m.** With Communion and led by Worship Band.

Nursery available.

**7:00 p.m.** With Communion and led by Worship Band.

**9:00 & 11:00 p.m.** With Communion and led by Organ and Choirs.

### CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP SERVICE, DECEMBER 25

**10:00 a.m.** Lessons and Carols with Communion.

### NEW YEAR'S DAY WORSHIP SERVICES, JANUARY 1

**10:05 a.m.** Sunday Worship with Blessing of the Households and Communion. Nursery available.

**6:00 p.m.** Sunday Worship with Blessing of the Households and Communion. Nursery available.

## From The Staff

**Jeanne Hartfield**

Pastor for Adult Learning & Spiritual Formation



I love the Advent season, these four weeks leading up to Christmas. Surprisingly, for my line of work, December is actually quieter for me and this is a gift for which I am profoundly grateful every year. It is a lull between the hubbub of fall and when Adult Learning programs start again in January.

One of my favorite parts of the season is Midweek Advent Worship. We gather as a community and worship by candlelight. Each week we sing through Holden Evening Prayer, which so beautifully captures this season's mood of hope and anticipation of God fulfilling God's promises of love, forgiveness, justice, and making all things new. It is a service that celebrates the light of Jesus that shines in the darkness of this world. It is a time that fuels me, and others, for living as People of Promise in this world that God loves.

Recently I read a blog post by Dr. David Lose, one of my preaching professors in seminary, where he talked about reclaiming repentance in the season of Advent. He talked about repentance as something more than saying "I'm sorry" for whatever we've done wrong. He said:

"The heart of the word repentance means turning around, starting over, taking another direction, choosing another course. All of those actions by their nature call into question the value or rightness of one's current behavior, but the emphasis is less on what is wrong with what we're doing now and what is right and important and necessary about what we will do differently.

Repentance also underscores that change isn't necessary for change's sake, but rather that change is necessary because we've become aware that our actions are out of step with God's deep desire for peace and equity for all God's people and - taking Isaiah's vivid imagery in [Isaiah 11] seriously - for the whole of creation. Repentance, in short, is realizing that God is pointing you one way, that you've been traveling another way, and changing course."

I have been thinking a lot lately about our national culture and how we see (or don't see) and interact (or don't interact) with people who are different from us. I think about God's words to Abraham and Sarah in Genesis when God promises this childless couple that their descendents will be more numerous

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# Thank you from Solid Ground

The coat drive for the families at Solid Ground was a HUGE success! People from Incarnation generously donated over 800 coats, boots, hats, scarves and gloves to help keep the families at Solid Ground warm this winter. We received more new and like-new items than ever before. Many volunteers enjoyed the opportunity to participate in a variety of ways. Groups of volunteers sorted coats at Incarnation, transported the donations to Solid Ground and set-up the winter wear shop in preparation for distribution. Volunteers also worked with Solid Ground parents and children to help find items needed for each family member. What an awesome experience!

The families were so grateful for all the donations and appreciative of the time and kindness of volunteers. There were many smiles, hugs and joyful moments throughout the day. One young man at Solid Ground was excited to find a “cool” coat as he searched through the donated coats on display. He said, “I’m in high school now, I need to look good!” Thanks to our generous donors, this young man is looking good . . . and keeping warm.

May all those who received coats, boots, hats, scarves and gloves feel God’s presence and peace as they journey off to school and work in their new winter wear. Thank you to all the volunteers and donors who made this possible. A big thanks to Claire Gilbert who led the way again this year in organizing and planning the coat drive.

# Advent Worship Banner

The Worship Arts Committee has created new Advent banners for the sanctuary and Incarnation Hall. Both banners feature candles, which symbolize the light of God coming into the world through the birth of His son. Four candles represent the period of waiting the four Sundays of the Advent season and the focus on four virtues: Hope, Love, Joy and Peace. The background color of both banners is blue, the liturgical color of hope, a theme of Advent.

The Sanctuary banner includes three purple candles, a rose candle and a white candle. Purple historically was the primary color of Advent; purple symbolizes royalty and preparation for the King. The Third Sunday of Advent is called Gaudete (Rejoice) Sunday. It marks a shift from the more solemn tone of the first two Sundays of Advent that focus on preparation to a more joyous atmosphere of anticipation. The candle for that Sunday is rose, a liturgical color that signifies joy. The large white candle is called the Christ candle and represents the birth of Jesus. The color white represents purity.

The banner in Incarnation Hall features four candles. Three candles are blue, the color signifying hope. The third candle is rose to symbolize joy at the coming birth of Jesus. The flames of the candles remind us that Jesus is the light of the world.

The colors of Advent candles vary with different traditions among churches, but the candles always represent an aspect of the spiritual preparation for the coming Savior.



# A Note from Lynda Thompson

Incarnation has been my faith home for 30 years. Thanks to all of you for the work we have done together for so many years. It has been a humbling experience to go from being a volunteer to being on staff and finally to being called as one of your pastors. I have loved getting to know so many of you, serving with you and sharing the journey of faith with all of its joys and sorrows. I have learned much from you and I leave with an abundance of gratitude for our ministry together on behalf of those in our community and in the wider world. Incarnation has been an important part of my life and my prayer for you is that God will continue to challenge you to do more to help bring about the kingdom of God in this place and to richly bless your efforts.

# Giving from Your Individual Retirement Account

Many members of Incarnation Lutheran Church have discovered the opportunity to make contributions directly from an IRA. You may make a gift of up to \$100,000 directly to Incarnation without having to pay income taxes. Who can take advantage of this opportunity? You must be 70 ½ or older. If you have not taken your required minimum distribution for the year (RMD) your IRA gift can satisfy all or part of that requirement. You may make the transfer from your IRA in addition to any other charitable giving you have done this year. Because the charitable rollover is not included in taxable income, it does not count against the usual percentage limitations on using charitable deductions.

Contact your financial advisor soon to arrange for the transfer since there will be many individuals choosing this powerful tool to make a tax-wise gift. Your gift will give you the satisfaction of enhancing the ministry of Incarnation through the Incarnation Lutheran Church Endowment. Remember that the check must be made out to Incarnation Lutheran Church Endowment and not to you as the owner of the IRA in order to take advantage of the benefits of the IRA charitable rollover.

*From the Staff, continued from pg. 1*

than the stars in the heavens and that they will be blessed to be a blessing to the nations. I think about Jesus’ command to “love one another as I have loved you” and I think about how hard that is, especially when we humans tend to react with fear when something is unfamiliar or dramatically different from what we know.

As I think about all these things, these words from David Lose resonate for me: “Change is necessary because we’ve become aware that our actions are out of step with God’s deep desire for peace and equity for all God’s people.” For me a first step toward changing our national culture is listening and learning. This is why Incarnation is offering the course “My Neighbor is Muslim” on four Tuesdays in January. I will be facilitating the course, but we will be learning together from some of our Muslim brothers and sisters here in the Twin Cities who will be guest speakers. I hope you will join me so that with open minds and hearts we too might be light that shines in the darkness.



**INCARNATION LUTHERAN CHURCH  
GENERAL FUND - INCOME & EXPENSE REPORT  
FOR THE MONTH ENDING OCTOBER, 2016**

REVENUE	YTD ACTUAL	YTD BUDGET	YTD VARIANCE
Member Envelopes/Loose	1,391,770	\$1,443,175	(\$51,405)
Special Env./Misc.	\$25,877	\$38,480	(\$12,603)
<b>Total Offering</b>	<b>\$1,417,646</b>	<b>\$1,481,655</b>	<b>(\$64,009)</b>
Other Income	\$9,260	\$10,682	(\$1,422)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$1,426,906</b>	<b>\$1,492,337</b>	<b>(\$65,431)</b>
EXPENSES	YTD ACTUAL	YTD BUDGET	YTD VARIANCE
Missions	\$186,760	\$187,167	(\$407)
Salaries/Wages	\$1,090,292	\$1,145,833	(\$55,541)
Ministries	\$62,445	\$89,458	(\$27,013)
Administration	\$52,180	\$61,250	(\$9,070)
Building	\$138,485	\$165,458	(\$26,974)
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,530,162</b>	<b>\$1,649,167</b>	<b>(\$119,005)</b>
<b>Net Income (loss)</b>	<b>(\$103,256)</b>	<b>(\$156,830)</b>	<b>\$53,573</b>

**CAPITAL CAMPAIGN**

Beginning of the Month balance	\$129,500
Net Income for the month	\$29,785
Mortgage Payment	(28,540)
Other Capital Expenses	(123)
<b>Monthly Ending Balance</b>	<b>\$130,622</b>

Thank you for supporting the ministries, missions, and programs of Incarnation with your continued contributions. Your gifts are greatly appreciated.

**ON-LINE CONTRIBUTIONS**

Want to make contributing easier? Visit Incarnation's website ([incarnationmn.org](http://incarnationmn.org)), click on "Online Donations & Payments," to see a brief description of the donation categories. Click on "access the donation/payment form [here](#)" and enter the correct amount in the appropriate category or categories. Payment can be made from a checking or savings account, a credit card or a debit card. Choose the donation frequency (weekly or monthly donation schedule or a one time donation). The final step is to receive the confirmation number and the option to print the donation page for your records. Gifts are processed the date they are received and will appear on your quarterly statements with your other contributions to Incarnation.



# Incarnation Lutheran Church

## Worship, Prayer & Among the Congregation

**Those hospitalized:** Millie Gustafson; Doug Oliver; Dean Brynjulson; Don Boelter.

**Sympathy to:** Pat Miller and family on the death of her brother; Ruth Tillquist and family on the death of her mother; Marshall Stone and family on the death of his mother; the family of Gene Stilwell on his death; Geri Rule and family on the death of her brother; the family of Bridget Giere on her death.

**Congratulations to:** Michael and Lindsay Tomsche on the birth of their son, Vincent Martin.

**Advent Coloring Activity for All Ages**

Contribute to a community wide art project that will be displayed in both worship spaces after Christmas. People of all ages are invited to color on the giant Advent coloring posters. Coloring stations will be set up around the building and will have prompts for prayer and holy conversation. Check monitors for locations. When: Now - December 24, when the building is open.

**An Illustrated Advent for Families - Devotional**

The complete devotional and personal size coloring sheets for "An Illustrated Advent for Families" is available for download online. Visit [incarnationmn.org/advent](http://incarnationmn.org/advent) and use the password "Incarnation" to access the materials and print for your own use.

## Ministry Focus

**ELCA Good Gifts**

Make a donation to ELCA Good Gifts that will purchase livestock or other life-giving items for people across the world and receive an ornament in return. This is a great way to honor someone and save lives of those you will never meet. When: Now through Advent.

## Connect and Grow

**My Neighbor Is Muslim**

Using curriculum developed by Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota, participants will learn more about Islam and how it is lived out in the Muslim faith. Facilitated by Pastor Jeanne Hartfield, the course will include guest speakers and a taste of Somali cuisine. Cost: \$15. Sign up in the Incarnation Office by January 5. When: Tuesdays, January 10, 17, 24 & 31; 7 - 9:00 p.m.

**Faith & Work: Sacred Conversations**

Join Pastor Gary Medin and others for four gatherings which are intended to give you a safe and sacred setting where you can reflect and discuss with others on the meaning, satisfactions, and challenges of your work. Topics for each session are at [incarnationmn.org/adults/faith-and-work](http://incarnationmn.org/adults/faith-and-work). Registration is due Friday, January 6 at 4:30 p.m. by emailing Becky Benson at [bbenson@incarnationmn.org](mailto:bbenson@incarnationmn.org). When: Thursdays, January 12, 26, February 9, and 23, 7 - 8:30 p.m.

**Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University**

Are you interested in discovering financial freedom? Would you like to create some healthier money habits? Do you want to jumpstart your financial goals in 2017? Sign up for Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University at Incarnation and learn how. Cost: \$75 for the first 12 individuals/couples. Childcare available. When: Sundays, January 8 - March 5 (not February 5), 4 - 5:30 p.m.

## Children, Youth and Family

**Family Compass Small Group**

Connect with other parents to read and talk about the book, *Your Family Compass*, in a small group led by Pastor Joel Vander Wal. Chart a course for your family, by identifying guiding values and learning family faith practices. Parents are encouraged to attend together, if possible. There will be family activities and readings to do between gatherings. Suggested contribution: \$10. Nursery/child care is available for children (infants to age 10), for an additional cost, with pre-registration by January 15. Register: [dfloe@incarnationmn.org](mailto:dfloe@incarnationmn.org). When: Once/month on Sundays, 4 - 5:15 p.m., January - April.

**Faith in Action - Christmas Ornament Decoration**

Come to the Gathering Space to decorate Christmas ornaments that will be delivered during hospital and shut-in visits. This is a drop-in service opportunity for the whole family! When: Wednesday, December 14, 5 - 6:30 p.m.



## Congregational Business

### Stock Gifts to Incarnation

The transfer of stock, to qualify for a 2016 charitable contribution deduction, must be completed before December 31, 2016. Incarnation's policy to all brokers is to sell the stock immediately, but because of the volume of stock transfers the last week of the year, it often takes a number of days to complete the transaction. If you are making a stock gift, please do it in November or as early in December as possible and let Kelsey MacKereth, Incarnation's Financial Secretary, ([kmackereth@incarnationmn.org](mailto:kmackereth@incarnationmn.org)) know what your intentions are for the gift. Thank you!

### End of Year Reminder

Checks and cash that are placed in the offering plates, paid on line or delivered to the Incarnation Office on or before Saturday, December 31, will be credited to your 2016 giving statement and may be claimed as a charitable contribution deduction for 2016. Contributions received on Sunday, January 1 will be counted as 2017 contributions. Mailed gifts must be postmarked on or before December 31. Thank you for your support!



Incarnation Lutheran Church Office: 651-484-7213

Web Site: [www.incarnationmn.org](http://www.incarnationmn.org) - If registering online, most major debit and credit cards accepted  
If payments are made at the Incarnation Office, Visa and Mastercard are accepted for payment.

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