



Lifetimes

From the Pastor



Pastor Kai Nilsen



Our Advent/Christmas theme this year is ***From Generation to Generation***. In the words of the Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman, “it reminds us of the ways our lives, histories, actions, and stories are interconnected and woven together. The work of God is always unfolding—in and through us. This Advent, may you remember that you belong—to a story etched into the wrinkles of time, to generations that have come before and will come after, to a love that won’t let you go.”

Each of the weekly services and the special events will press into a portion of that larger theme. The Sunday themes include:

- December 1: *There’s Room for Every Story*
- December 8: *God Meets Us in Our Fear*
- December 15: *We can Choose a Better Way*
- December 22: *We See God in Each Other*

There are a few special events/services this season;

Advent Wednesday Worship **December 4, 11, 18 — 7:15–7:45 p.m.**

The Holden Evening Prayer service frames each Advent Wednesday service—a quiet, reflective gathering with music and brief meditations by our staff.

Worship for the Weary **December 8 — 4:00 p.m.**

There are many reasons to be joyful this season. For some, they are carrying a heavy load of grief or

sadness or loneliness or weariness. If so, please join us for a short service of readings, candle lighting, and being present with one another as we take a common journey.

Copper Street Brass **December 15 — 4:00 p.m.**

We’re looking forward to a performance by Copper Street Brass, a renowned, nationally touring brass band.

Christmas Eve Worship, December 24: *In Our Generation* is the theme.

- 1:00 p.m.: Family Christmas Celebration (candle lighting is kid appropriate)
- 3:00 p.m., 5:00 p.m., 7:00 p.m.: Christmas Celebrations with stirring music and candlelighting.

Christmas Day, December 25 — 10:00 a.m.

A service of Lessons and Carols

In the words of Fr. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, “The future belongs to those who give the next generation reason for hope.”

We’ll see you throughout the season. And... Bring a Friend!

Peace, Kai



Tracy Strantz
Council President

On November 3, the Council hosted our 4th Quarter Discussion Forum. We provided year-in-review updates on all three pillars of our Three-Year Plan, including facilities updates. Lydia Holden joined us to share updates on Children and Family Ministry.

Mike Sell, along with three high school students; Daniel Tyler, Nolan Sander, and Sam Wahlberg, shared their experiences with High School Ministry. They did a great job! Thank you to our guest speakers and thank you to everyone who joined us for the discussion. In case you missed it, I'm sharing some highlights below and the link to the discussion materials (https://www.incarnationmn.org/wp-content/uploads/Cong-Mtg-11-24-2024-3.0_Council-Synod-Endowment-Approvals.pdf).

The year-in-review provided progress reports on the Council 2024 Priorities, including the focus areas for the Council Communication Committee. We have made significant progress on all of our 2024 focus areas and the momentum will continue into 2025. We recognized the resiliency demonstrated by the staff and the congregation as we navigated numerous changes this year. We appreciate the contributions and collaborations between staff, the Council, our Human Resources Committee, the Call Committee, and our congregation members for sharing feedback and support throughout the process.

Thank you for the well wishes and prayers extended to departing staff members in 2024; Pastor Joel Vander Wal, Rebecca Christiansen, Denise Floe, and Danette Griffith. Their farewell receptions were very well attended and we continue to wish them the best with their new adventures. We also appreciate your warm welcome to new staff members Marina Nyberg (Communications Director), Lydia Holden (Children & Family Ministry Director), Pastor Joy McDonald Coltvet (Pastor for Faith Formation), and Brad Solberg (Interim Incarnation Administrator).

As 2024 comes to a close, I want to thank four Council members who are concluding their time on Council: Greta Grosch, Katy Gibbs, Gil Hartley, and Bev Ogren. In addition to their generous time commitment serving on the Council, they have each

served in additional capacities and supported various events throughout the year. Greta, Katy, Gil, and Bev, it has been my pleasure serving on the Council with all of you and we thank you for your service to this community.

We look forward to welcoming our new Council members who will be officially installed in January following congregation approval in November. This is a very exciting time to serve on the Council as we continue to invest in and launch our Three-Year Plan. That is only made possible with the support of our congregation. To our entire Incarnation Community, we thank you very much and wish you and your families a blessed holiday season!

If you have questions or feedback, you may connect with us through email at council@incarnationmn.org or come visit us in person at the Welcome Kiosk in the Atrium after Sunday worship services.



Greta Grosch



Katy Gibbs



Gil Hartley



Bev Ogren



COPPER STREET BRASS

DECEMBER 15, 2024, 4 PM

Freewill offering will be taken

"There's no better time for brass than the holidays! Our popular holiday concert celebrates the stories and sounds of the season performed with passion, humor, and virtuosity. Hear music ranging from classical to carols, childhood movies to rock and pop, and much more."

Incarnation Lutheran Church
4880 Hodgson Rd, Shoreview, MN 55126
www.incarnationmn.org

INCARNATION
MUSIC SERIES



Kairos sessions will be held at 10:15 a.m. in the Fireside Room.

December 1:

Let's Sing Christmas Carols!

Amy Maakestad, ILC Director of Traditional Worship



Christmas carols are fascinating. As we sing through the selections in our hymnal, we'll learn about their history, enjoy their beauty, and maybe discover a new favorite. Maakestad, Director of Traditional Worship at Incarnation, is a graduate of Luther Seminary's Master of Sacred Music program. She serves Incarnation Lutheran Church as organist, directs four handbell choirs, accompanies vocal choirs and administers the Incarnation Music Series. She loves leading congregational songs and is happy to be responsible for hymn

selections at the 9 a.m. worship service. Recently marking 30 years in music ministry and fueled by the Master of Sacred Music program at Luther Seminary, Maakestad's enthusiasm for hymn singing only continues to grow.

December 8:

Connecting with Inner Peace

Sharon Trahan, Certified Teacher and Healer with the Modern Mystery School, Intl.



Jesus often withdrew from people to pray and listen to God. Research is validating a wide variety of health benefits associated with meditation. At Kairos we will have a conversation about meditation and experience a "Max Meditation," a practice that is accessible to beginners while also offering a profound opportunity for deep connection to those who practice regularly. Trahan, longtime Incarnation member, is a certified teacher and healer with The Modern Mystery School, Int'l.

December 15:

Handel's Messiah

Paul Westermeyer, Professor Emeriti of Church Music, Luther Seminary



George Frederic Handel wrote Messiah in 1741 in 24 days. In 1750 it became a staple of his annual Spring concert season and has been performed every year since then. We typically perform it in concerts during Advent and Christmas, but it was originally performed in March and April in association with Lent and Easter.

Retired after 23 years as Professor of Church Music at Luther Seminary, for 22 years before that he was Professor of Church Music at Elmhurst College in Elmhurst, Ill. Every December there he directed a performance of Handel's Messiah with the Elmhurst College Choir and the Elmhurst Park District Chorus.



Sean Turner

Minister of Worship,
Music & the Arts

I am so grateful for the wonderful month of music we have just experienced! Is there anything better than seeing all of our children's groups leading in worship? The Joyful Noise Choir expertly led by Kathleen Johnson and the multiple bell choirs directed by Amy Maakestad give our young musicians an

opportunity to learn and grow in faith as well as have fun making music together. The importance of this foundational experience cannot be overstated. Music as a vehicle for faith formation, can be a foundational experience that keeps our youth connected to their spiritual life far into adulthood. Our Senior Choir, ILC Brass Ensemble, and community guest musicians for Reformation and All Saints Sunday have given us much to be inspired by and thankful for.

Speaking of being thankful, I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to those of you who were able to

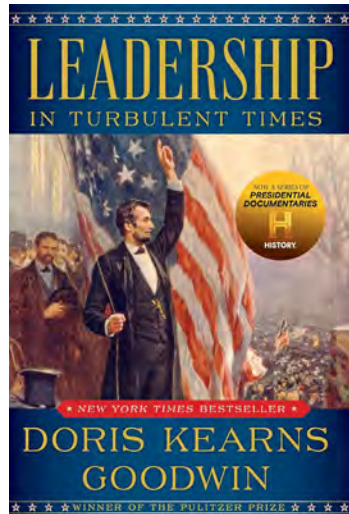
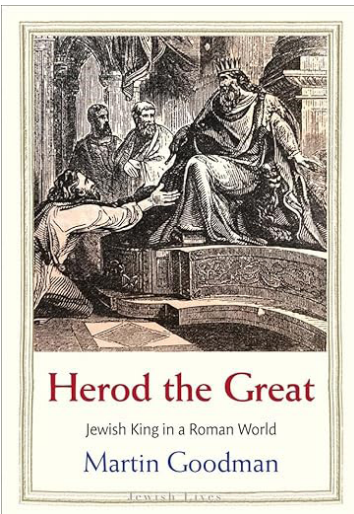
attend the concert on Sunday, November 17 given by the Glee Club from Wingspan. Wingspan Life Resources is a non-profit organization that offers residential care in group homes and in-home programs for adults with developmental disabilities. They were so excited and proud to sing for all of you! I am thrilled that we could host their concert at Incarnation. Thank you for your support of these beautiful souls singing their hearts out, it meant the world to them!

Here comes the Christmas season! Please refer to the calendar of events in this newsletter for the times of the various services offered. December will be filled with many uplifting as well as poignant moments. It is my sincere hope that the music we present in support of the overall worship experience this season will bring you joy and peace.

See you in worship!

— Sean

Men's History Book Group



The Men's History Group meets the first and third Tuesdays at 9 a.m. in Bethany Lounge to discuss a non-fiction history book selected by one of the members. Anyone interested in the subject is invited to attend any session even if you have not read the book of that month. Here are the next books:

DECEMBER — “Herod the Great: Jewish King in a Roman World” by Martin Goodman. An astonishing record of public adventures and successes, and of private melodramas and disasters.

JANUARY — “Leadership in Turbulent Times” by Doris Kearns Goodwin. An illuminating exploration of the early development, growth, and exercise of leadership of four presidents of the United States.

Thank You and Looking Ahead

As 2024 comes to a close, the Feed My Starving Children Action Group at Incarnation would like to say thank you to the Incarnation community for all the support during the past year. Together, we packed meals during monthly events at the FMSC permanent site in Coon Rapids, hosted a soup supper fundraiser, volunteered at Food Truck Festivals during the summer months and welcomed over 2,000 volunteers to the 2024 All Hands on Hope MobilePack™ in April. We could not have fed so many of God’s precious children without the volunteer and financial support of so many faithful servants.

We look forward to another exciting year in 2025, including the 18th All Hands on Hope MobilePack™



from April 30–May 4, 2025 at Incarnation. More information will be available through the Incarnation weekly emails and Lifetimes newsletters, as well as our FMSC Ministry Partner web page.

Until All Are Fed!

2025-26 Preschool Registration

Give your preschooler a wonderful school experience in a safe and loving environment! Registration opens in early January for Incarnation Preschool! Registration packets for 2025-26 school year are available for pick up at the Preschool or Incarnation office. Forms may also be downloaded from the ILC website shortly. Call Kirsten Henry at 651-766-0723 for more information, to schedule a tour or to have a packet mailed to you.

Thursday, January 3

Open enrollment period for currently enrolled children.

Wednesday, January 8

Processing begins for forms received from returning/previously enrolled families and NEW children from Incarnation member families.

Friday, January 10

Processing begins for forms from the general public.

2025-26 Preschool Registration

Registration opens in early January!

- Children ages 3-5
- Class options ranging from 2.5-4 hours in length
- Play-based and faith-based
- Enrichment opportunities (Spanish, music, parent groups, etc...)
- 8 to 1 teacher-child ratio
- Entering our 28th year!
- Contact Kirsten Henry at khenry@incarnationmn.org for a tour and/or registration packet

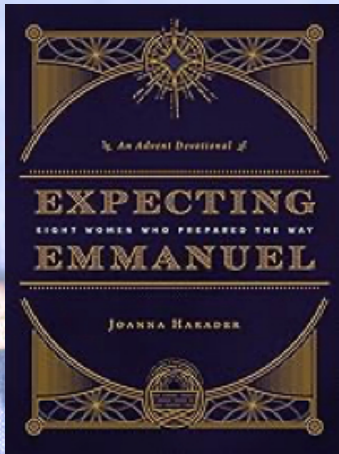


Forms/fees may be submitted early but will be date/time stamped and held for processing on the appropriate date listed above. Confirmation of enrollment status will be mailed within two days of processing.

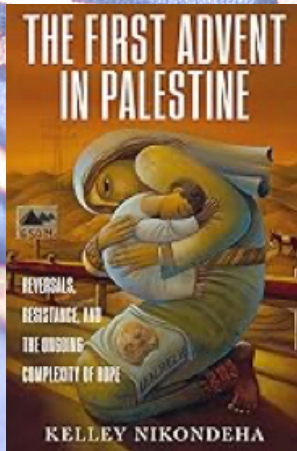
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Three Books for the Advent and Christmas Seasons

By Joanna Harader, Kelly Nikondeha and Nikki Grimes



An Advent devotional that leads us through biblical accounts of Jesus’ female ancestors is *Expecting Emmanuel: Eight Women Who Prepared the Way* by Joanna Harader. With invitational spiritual practices and reflections, this daily devotional centers the stories of five women in Jesus’ genealogy—Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba, and Mary—plus three additional female figures connected to Jesus’ early life in the days leading up to Epiphany. There are resources for exploring the lives of these women in worship, small group, and retreat settings. Lovely original artwork by Michelle Burkholder.



The First Advent in Palestine: Reversals, Resistance, and the Ongoing Complexity of Hope by Kelley Nikondeha, Kelley is a harmonized gospel version that lifts the Advent story out of its context—those who experienced the first Advent had to travel through great darkness to reach the hope that shining star announced. Nikondeha takes us back, to where the landscape of Palestine is once again the geographic, socioeconomic, and political backdrop for the Advent story. We bear witness to the economic hardship of Nazareth, Bethlehem, and the many villages in between—concerns about daily bread, crushing debt, land loss, and dispossession that ring a familiar echo to our modern ears. This thought-provoking examination invites us into a season of discovery, one that is realistic and honest, and that still wonders at the goodness of God's grace.



With glittering poetry and stunning watercolor artwork, *Lullaby for the King* by Nikki Grimes takes us into the awe and wonder of the Christmas story. Animals from across the ancient Palestinian landscape lumber, gambol, crawl, fly, and parade toward Bethlehem with gifts worthy of the newborn King. Rare ebony wood, a finely tuned harp, mustard and saffron, a zither, apricot cakes, and other treasures are carried to the manger. The animals bow low and join the music of the angels in a welcoming lullaby. This is an unforgettable Nativity retelling—and has the music for the lullaby, too.

— The Library Group



Welcome to the Creation Care Corner, which has information from the Creation Care Action Group. We believe that as Christians we are called to care for God's creation as an integral part of our Christian faith and identity. The Creation Care

Action Group is dedicated to embracing this calling. We hope to keep you informed about Creation Care projects at Incarnation and provide ideas and resources for your own journey in creating a more sustainable world. We hope you find this information helpful. If you have questions or suggestions, please contact Nancy Stutzman at nancystutzman@comcast.net or Mike Vant at mjvant@gmail.com

Today's Topic:

A Million Small Steps Includes Your Money

The issue of climate change often seems overwhelming. But just as there are many issues there are many solutions. While it can seem like your own small

actions do not make a difference they do. Keeping our earth habitable will take steps from all of us. One of those steps can include an awareness of where your money is invested. Burning fossil fuels accounts for a large portion of the greenhouse gases emitted every year. If you are concerned that your investment dollars are supporting an industry that contributes significantly to the climate crisis there are some tools at your disposal. <https://fossilfreefunds.org> is a website that helps you find out if your mutual funds and ETFs are invested in fossil fuel companies. You can also search your 401k and IRA for fossil fuel holdings. This could be more than just a good move for the world but also for your pocketbook. Many experts believe we may have reached the time of peak oil investment returns and that green energy investments will soon show a greater return. If we are investing our money for the future, our own and future generations, we should do all we can to make sure that the future is worth living.

Resources:

<https://www.clientearth.org/latest/news/fossil-fuels-and-climate-change-the-facts/>

<https://yaleclimateconnections.org/2024/03/your-401k-might-be-feeding-the-climate-crisis/>

Join Us for PrimeTimers



"Star of Bethlehem"

Thursday, December 19, 10:30 a.m.

Dr. Terrance Flower, Professor Emeritus of Mathematics and Physics at St. Catherine's University ties together the magic of the Christmas season and his knowledge of astronomy. What may have happened in the sky on that glorious first Christmas?

Join us on **Thursday, December 19!** Doors open at 10:00 a.m., with the program starting at 10:30 a.m. After the presentation, stay for a delicious lunch at 11:30 a.m., all for \$10, payable at the door.

Please reserve your lunch spot by calling the church office by Monday, December 16, at 651-484-7213. We hope to see you there!

PUBLIC PRAYER CONCERNS: Barb Davis; LeAnn Sullivan; Judy Wicks; Anna Thorstad; Mike Branch; Kara, Jackson, Michael & Kaitlyn Genia; Jon Nelson; Kate Tollefson & family; June Fischer; Kirsten Blaseck; Wayne Quehl; Carol Beckerleg; Gene Lindholm; Marian Ness; Lowell Odland, Linda Hudepohl, Diane Betterley's mother; Kyle Hoecke's mother; Mary Cooper's father; Tom Henk's brother; Deb Rykken's brother; Larrie Reese's brother Douglas & sister-in-law Marion; Sue Bernlohr's mother; Lana Bergin's brother; Nicole & Troy Heller's brother-in-law; Mike Wielenberg's mother; Al and Carolyn Ek's son; Mike & Kara Johnson's friend, Jenny; Kim Wielenberg's friend, Cindy; Dede Mattison's friends, Linda and Yvonne; all the people affected by the hurricanes

SYMPATHY TO: the family of Julie Zibell on her death; Mary Cooper & family on the death of her mother; Marlys M. Nelson & family on the death of her sister; the family of Lori Green on her death; Diane Gilbertson & family on the death of her father; Mike Wielenberg & family on the death of his father; the family of Julie Zibell on her death; Elaine McGillivray & family on the death of her brother; Peter McGillivray & family on the death of his sister

RECENTLY CONFIRMED: Jackson Curtis Ballman, Sophia Rose Christopher, Stephen Daniel Christopher, Anna Evelyn Douglass, Brooklyn Ann Erickson, Madison Elizabeth Erickson, Edward Fred Ferguson, Casey Joshua Fields, Savannah Elle Hastreiter, Jordan Thomas Heath, Ahnna Katharine Johansen, Noah Michael Johnson, Oliver Cash Kovarik, Sylvia Rose Kovarik, Lucia Anne Mahrt, Lillian Florence Maietta, Mira Rose McQuay, Peter Earl McVean, Teagan Lloyd Mortenson, Erin Marie Murray, Jenna Anne Murray, Grace Estelle Olson, Michaela Dorothy Osland, Constance Jana-Marie Phillips, Addison Kay Poppler, Tiffany Lynn Qureshi, Kellen John Salek, Nolan Frederic Sander, Kaeden John Saunders, Jacob Lewis Skiwiot, Lily Jasmine Speckel, Jacob Brian Steinhorst, Lacey Kay Straka, Henry Michael Strauss, Abigail Carly Swenson, William Andrew Tollefson, Rylan James Ulvenes, Samuel Bruce Wahlberg, Reese Clementine Wahlstrand

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS: Gayland and Carolyn Bender, David Buendiger, Teresa Douglass, Debra Hartley, Brent and Kathleen Johnson, Abby and Eric Larsen, JP and Heather Lucas, Bill and Jeanine Olson, Douglas and Wendy Quammen, Fred and Donna Resler, Cindy and John Ridge, Steve and Karen Rudd, John and Glenda Thors

Welcoming Our New Members on October 27, 2024





FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION...

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

Sundays in Advent, December 1, 8, 15, 22 | 9:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

We follow our usual schedule on Sundays in December.

**Wednesdays in Advent Worship
December 4, 11, 18 | 7:15–7:45 p.m.**

Holden Evening Prayer. Services will be live-streamed.

**Worship for the Weary
December 8 | 4:00 p.m.**

A short, quiet service of readings, candle lighting, and being present with one another for those feeling a little blue or weary.

**Copper Street Brass
December 15 | 4:00 p.m.**

Copper Street Brass, a renowned, nationally touring brass band performs for free as part of the Incarnation Music Series.

Christmas Eve Worship, December 24 | 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, and 7:00 p.m.

1:00 pm: Family Christmas Celebration (candle lighting is kid appropriate)

3:00 pm, 5:00 pm, 7:00 pm: Christmas Celebrations with music and candlelighting.

Christmas Day, December 25 | 10:00 a.m.

A service of Lessons and Carols

First Sunday of Christmas, December 29 | 10:00 a.m.

One service at 10:00 a.m.

We honor the memory of loved ones in the memorial gifts given below:

Date Range: 10/19/24 to 11/17/24

Donor	Fund Name	In Memory of:
Marlys M. Nelson	Memorial – Ralph Reeder Food Shelf	Doris Anfinson (Marlys’ Sister)
Grant & Deb Rykken	Memorial – Feed My Starving Children	Rita Chamerlik (Mary Cooper’s Mother)
Family & Friends	Memorial – Quilters	Charles Knox
Family & Friends	Memorial – Building for Our Future (Organ)	Charles Knox
Jim & Carol Fruehling	Memorial – Esther Circle	Jan Johnson
Dale & Vernita Kennen	Memorial – ELCA - World Hunger	Jan Johnson
Jack & Karen Ruff	Memorial – Worship & Music	Jan Johnson
Muriel Seltz	Memorial – Mortgage	Jan Johnson
Dave & Cindi Ellison	Memorial – Quilters	Duane Nelson
Jim & Carol Fruehling	Memorial – Habitat for Humanity	Harlan Stoehr
Dale & Vernita Kennen	Memorial – ELCA - World Hunger	Harlan Stoehr
Paul & Ruth Tillquist	Memorial – Endowment	Harlan Stoehr
Andrea Johnson	Memorial – ELCA - World Hunger	Pat Nyman’s sister

The list above reflects the donations that were made payable (or endorsed/transferred) to Incarnation Lutheran Church in memory of someone. Memorials are applied to whatever fund the donor designates. If not designated, sometimes the family requests what fund they would like the memorials designated to.

Note: If a memorial gift is received and the check isn't written out to Incarnation Lutheran Church, it will be forwarded directly to the organization that the check was made payable to. Those memorials are typically acknowledged by the organization that receives the donation.

Finance Report

Finance Report October 2024

Actual October Operating Giving	\$175,315	YTD Operating Giving	\$1,814,098	YTD Operating Giving Budget	\$2,104,093
Actual October Operating Expense	\$174,176	YTD Operating Expense	\$1,884,420	YTD Operating Expense Budget	\$2,094,377
TOTALS	\$1,139		-\$70,322		\$9,716

Actual October Mortgage Giving	\$44,339	YTD Mortgage Giving	\$245,661	YTD Mortgage Giving Budget	\$271,500
Actual October Mortgage Expense	\$20,675	YTD Mortgage Expense	\$244,250	YTD Mortgage Expense Budget	\$244,250
TOTALS	\$23,664		\$1,411		\$27,250