



December 2023



Pastor Ron Dahle

GOOD NEWS

From Pastor Ron Dahle

Advent Season Celebrations!
We celebrate the beginning of a new Church year with the Advent season. We celebrate the four Sundays before Christmas by concentrating on how God comes to us. As we study the Bible, we realize that God has always come to His people, to lead them and guide them on the right paths of life. Of course, God has a goal in mind for us – heaven. We are to use our time on earth to prepare us for where we are to spend eternity. God created us to choose to live in relationship with Him, but that comes with the option to choose to live independently from God. This choice, of course, comes with tragic consequences.

Advent by definition means arrival, appearance or coming. During this advent season we prepare our hearts to receive the coming of Jesus, the Messiah of God, who comes to us as the 'Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.' See John 1:36.

We celebrate this coming as Christmas when Jesus is born into the world as both God and man. This coming is the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham, see Genesis 12:1-3. The entire Old Testament is the story of how God guided a sometimes reluctant people, the descendants of Abraham, to fulfill the promise. The story is brought to completion with the Birth of Jesus.

As we celebrate Advent, we should always remember that God comes to us every day when we Worship God, and when we read God's Word, and pray. In Worship, God comes to us through the proclamation of the Good News, the Gospel of God, where God comes to us where we live. God also comes to us through the Sacraments, where God promises to be with us to the close of the age, and comes to us using outward and visible signs to demonstrate His grace by atoning for our sins. This is done through the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus. When we come to faith God gives us the gift of faith and other gifts as God chooses, to be used as a blessing to others!

(continued on page 4)

EVENTS

***Office Closed December 25

Merry Christmas



Sunday, December 3
Advent Family Fun Night
4:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 10
Christmas Carol Sing-along
2:00 p.m.

Friday, December 15
Pinochle Night
2:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 17
Christmas Movie Matinee
3:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 24
4th Sunday of Advent Worship
9:30 a.m.

Sunday, December 24
Christmas Eve Services
4:00 & 10:00 p.m.

Executive Director of Ministries Doug Leet

“...and to the end of the earth.”

As recorded in Acts 1:7-8, the last words of Jesus to his disciples before his ascension were, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” He was responding to their question in verse 6, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” And just as they were witnessing this glorious event, “two men in white robes” confirmed to them that Jesus would come again “in the same way you saw him go” (verses 10-11- all ESV).

As stated in Charity’s Mission and Vision statements, the Holy Spirit does a “transforming work” in us as disciples, as we are “gifted and empowered...and released to serve” in ministry and missions in our community and the world. Charity has a long history in its relatively young life (44 years) in supporting missions. It’s in our DNA. In the last 13 years alone (my frame of reference from being on staff), Charity has distributed over \$1,600,000 to missions (including close to \$60,000 through the third quarter of this year), through its Benevolence Committee. That is an understatement of Charity’s witness of Christ in the world, since Charity members have supported other efforts over the years too, e.g., Wellspring, One More One Less, etc.

The dollars that become available to distribute quarterly through the Benevolence Committee are budgeted for, and currently represent twelve percent of Charity’s general fund revenue through



Doug Leet

contributions (offering/gifts). Ten percent of that twelve percent (ex. if the twelve percent totaled \$100, then ten percent of that would be \$10) goes towards contributing to LCMC, with the remaining ninety percent going directly to missions. At the 2014 Voter’s assembly meeting, it was decided that the percentage of general fund contributions be raised from ten percent to twelve percent, with the additional two percent (of quarterly offering/gifts) specifically going to help in financially supporting the Surprise Church plant for a period of time. When our three-year commitment to Surprise Church was fulfilled, the commitment was shifted to Surprise Mandan for an additional three years as that church was just being launched.

Charity disciples continue to make an impact in witnessing to “...the end of the earth” not only in financial offerings, but in “the going” to the Ukraine and to Estonia this past year. Many Charity disciples look for ways to serve in our own community, and in doing ministry to build up the Body of Christ.

Check out the “Missions” article in this newsletter submitted by LAMP (Lutheran Association of Missionary Pilots); and look back at their article from last December (found on Charity’s website) as an example of opportunities for us “to go.”

Financial Report

Oct. Actual Income	\$59,462
Oct. Budgeted Income	\$73,849
Difference	\$14,387

Oct. Actual Income	\$59,462
Oct. Actual Expenses	\$41,365
Difference	\$18,097

YTD Actual Income	\$533,613
YTD Budgeted Income	\$738,491
Difference	\$204,878

YTD Actual Income	\$533,613
YTD Actual Expenses	\$514,032
Difference	\$19,581

Memorials & Gifts

Trust Fund:

In Memory of Darrel Swanson by Norlyn & Patty Swenson
Arnold & Nancy Leno

GriefShare:

In Memory of Chuck Reiser and Irene Wise
by Lorri Mittleider

LAMP Advent devotionals are available for Charity members again this year and can be picked up at the welcome desk in the fellowship area.

**Sunday, January 7, 2024
after the 9:30 a.m. service**



VOTERS' ASSEMBLY

Vision Council Update

Greetings from the Vision Council. What a beautiful November it has been. I was a little anxious the way October was finishing and not looking forward to another long winter of moving snow. Sooner or later, we will have to have some winter, but I have always hoped for later.

The primary focus for the November Vision council meeting was finishing up the 2024 budget. With all the challenges of the last year or two I have to say I was a bit surprised at what a pleasure it was to be involved in the 2024 budget development. It's not that it was particularly easy or didn't require a lot of effort from staff and the treasurer but that it was a much more positive experience. The previous year's budget seemed to have so much more anxiety and uncertainty involved in the process. Even though the 2024 budget is smaller it just seems to have less anxiety and worry wrapped up in it. It reflects the beginnings of a church that has been focused inward sorting itself out to a church focusing outward. Building on a solid foundation ministry for outreach, healthy and intentional church planting, and mission work both locally and globally. What I have experienced in my small involvement developing this budget is what I also feel about Charity as a whole now which is of one mind serving to grow His Kingdom.

What all these ministries look like is going to depend heavily on input from the congregation. Staff and leadership have tried to build funding into the budget, but the vision will come from any one of us. As we work through the budget approval for next year, we will be talking about that more. As members bring forth a vision or proposal for outreach, staff and leadership after determining it fits with our mission and core values, can serve to provide resources and focus in implementing it.

We also had a very encouraging update from the Call Committee. I will let them fill in the details of that in their article and the December 3rd Budget Forum. The Youth Coordinator job description was also revisited in anticipation of reposting.

With that I will close again by inviting any and all to the Tuesday evening prayer service. God does answer prayer requests and showers us with his mercy and blessing when we faithfully stay in prayer. Our prayers all go to His glory and our spiritual growth. Happy Thanksgiving to everyone for we have much to be thankful for.

God Bless
Mike Fluharty
Vision Council President

Vision Council questions can be emailed to:
vision.council@charitylutheran.org

Corporate Prayer

Corporate Prayer will be held Tuesday nights from 6:30-7:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. We would love to fill the sanctuary with those coming to pray, however even two is good because Matthew 18:20 states "*For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.*"

**No Corporate Prayer on Tuesday,
December 26.**



From Pastor Ron Dahle

(continued from page 1)

The other aspect of Advent is the coming of Jesus in power and great glory when the day of the Lord arrives. We are told that on that day all who believe will be caught up to live in the presence of God. It is also a day of judgment for those who refused the invitation of God to live in relationship with Him in this life.

We will celebrate the Advent of our Lord each Sunday by lighting a candle in the Advent Wreath. We will talk a little about that each of the four Sundays of Advent. You may also do this at home if you wish when you have your devotions. We hope that the Advent season will be a blessing for you.

Remember, Jesus came into the world because He loves you. Look at John 3:16, where Jesus says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." God desires everyone to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth! Advent is for you and for us all!

We wish you all a happy Advent Season, and a Merry Christmas. Allow Jesus into your hearts, and praise God for all the wonders of the Season!

-Pastor Ron Dahle

Charity Call Committee Report

The Call Committee met twice in November. Following a second Zoom interview, we have invited Pastor Jon Aamodt to be the guest preacher at our Dec. 3 service. He, his wife, and some adult children will also be visiting. We are looking forward to meeting him and his family and showing them around Charity and the Bismarck-Mandan area.

Melissa Hill has stepped down from the Call Committee after being on since it was formed. Please give her a big thanks for all she has done next time you see her.

Andrea Collin will give a Call Committee update at the open forum on the 2024 budget after the service on Dec. 3.

As always, we ask for your continued prayers for God's guidance as we move ahead with this process. Please reach out with any questions, comments or concerns at callcommittee@charitylutheran.org.

Call Committee members - Sarah Erickson, Clark Johnson, Laura Kourajian, Scott Carter, and Andrea Collin.

Call Committee questions can be emailed to:
callcommittee@charitylutheran.org

December Events

Charity Lutheran Budget Forum Meeting Sunday, December 3 at 10:45 a.m.

The budget will be the primary focus of this forum.

Amazing Grays

The Amazing Grays **DO NOT** meet in December. The next gathering will be Tuesday, January 9.

Pinochle Group

The Pinochle Group will meet Friday, December 15 at 6:00 p.m. Reserve a spot by texting John Seedorf at 701-426-9768. **January 19 is the next evening.**



Quilting Group

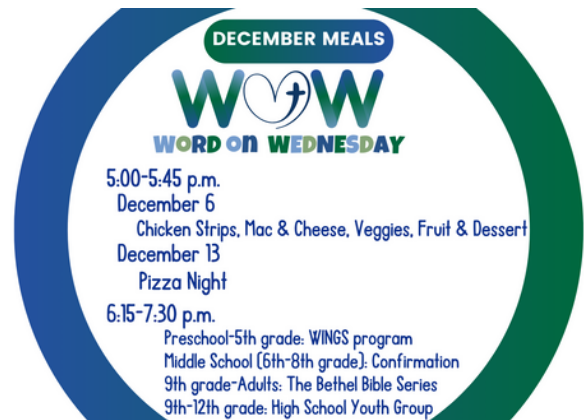
The Quilting Group **DOES NOT** meet in December. The next gathering will be Saturday, January 27.

Other Dates to Remember:

- December 13 - Winter WOW Finale.
- December 10 - Last Day of Sunday School before Christmas.



Come one, come all and get together for a Christmas Family Movie Matinee at Charity, where we will watch "The Star"; an animated movie about the first Christmas through the eyes of the animals. This movie is sure to prepare your hearts for Christmas. All ages welcome. Popcorn and treats will be provided. Doors open at 2:30 p.m. and will take place in the New Youth Room.



Upcoming Office Closures



Confirmation

Confirmation Sunday



Please join us in celebrating all of our Confirmands as they affirm their baptisms and profess their faith.

Nathan Farley
Ana Dendy
Rupa Kindel
Ian Schlecht
Ethan Schlecht
Faith Schlecht



Congratulations to all our Confirmands who were confirmed on October 29 and November 5.



Reformation Banner



Original Banner

The Reformation Banner on the left was recreated from an old photo (shown above). The idea for the original banner came from Karen Nordvall and it was made by Deb Schuler. Thank you to ALL the Charity quilters who spent countless hours recreating this banner!

Pictured from L to R are Rose Gitter, Faye Wangen, Liz Landis, Karen Swanson, and Jan Greenstein. Not pictured is Jane Schulz and Stephanie Kuhn.

Introducing the



Plant a single potato, give it time to grow and it will produce multiple potatoes. So it is with any memorial, honorarium, donation or gift to the TRUST FUND. It grows and lasts forever while producing earnings for gifting. With a single donation become a SPUD CLUB MEMBER for 2023. Donate now and your name will remain on this list for the year!!

2023 Spud Club Members

- Mark & Lisa Aamodt
- Duane & Darlene Bentz
- Scott & Connie Carter
- Alvina Fueller
- Ken & Connie Geiger
- Jeff & Rose Gitter
- Donavon Hatzenbuhler
- Dave & Nancy Jensen
- Matt & Penny Kaldor
- Georgia Kingsbury
- Chad & Laura Kourajian
- Mark & Liz Landis
- Dave & Barb Lee
- Doug & Rhonda Leet
- Wayne & Marie Levang
- Craig & Sandra Lohstreter
- Brad & Pam Miller
- Don & Kathy Nordquist
- Ken & Julie Slag
- John & Sandy Seedorf
- Norlyn & Patty Swenson
- Jerry & Renee Walz
- Kathy Wermager

LAMP Ministry Inc.

Catherine Williams, LAMP Executive Assistant

Some of you may be familiar with LAMP and its cross-cultural ministry. But for those who don't know, it all began in northern Alberta (Canada) in the 1960s when bush pilot Rev. Les Stahlke (formerly of Michigan) flew into remote villages to support his mission work. He met Indigenous people who had lived off the land for generations, The people in the North prayed for pastors to come and minister to them. His heart ached for a people he had come to love, who were like sheep without a Shepherd.

LAMP was born in 1970 when the International Lutheran Women's Missionary League, churches, and faithful saints from the US and Canada supported the vision of pastor pilots taking the gospel message to Canada's northern frontier. Our headquarters are in Edmonton, Alberta with the US arm, LAMP Ministry Inc. (incorporated in 2003) in New Haven, Michigan.

The Indigenous population in northern Canada has rapidly grown with about half being under the age of 14. At the same time, the number of local clergy and missionaries has declined dramatically. Sunday school, Christian youth programs, and regular worship services are rarely available. LAMP is often the most significant source of gospel proclamation, Christian education, and spiritual witness in the North.

Fast forward the years to 2023. It was a historic summer where we served the most northern communities since pre-COVID-19. For many of our 28 teams, it was their first time being back in four years!

"It was amazing to see how the community responded to our being back after four years. The chief stopped by and donated freezies and drinks, another resident donated bananas and watermelon. We were invited to community events. I was asked to preach at the community worship service on Sunday. They thanked us for being in the community and being there for the kids. You never know if you are making a difference, so it was nice to hear the words of encouragement." ~Pastor Brett serving Muskrat Dam, ON

"As we walked around town, people would stop us and say, "You're back! We're so glad to see you again!" I reconnected with over ten children I've known since they were little and now are in high school and beyond. They were all smiles to see us and were eager to share what's new in their lives as they reminisced about their favorite parts of Bible school." ~Hannah serving Brochet, MB

After returning, our mission teams were pleasantly surprised by the warm welcomes, dispelling concerns of lost momentum. The children anxiously waited for the doors to open where we served, and attendance was high in most locations.

And it wasn't just the kids who were excited. It was great to be welcomed by the teenagers and young adults also. Not only did they participate, but they told us how important it was for us to return because where we go, happiness follows. While some credited LAMP volunteers regarding their coming to the faith, others felt safe enough to tell us they had strayed and wanted to come back to faith.

"Pastor Jake of the Anglican church ensured we understood how welcomed we were and how much he supported us. He asked us to pray for him and his work at Weagamow. We could tell how much our support meant to him. How joyful for our team when past students came up and wanted to share what they were doing now since the last time the team was in the community. Stories of challenges some students had given the experienced team members in the past were answered by God in that those now young adults came up and told us what jobs they have and that they were baptized. God was taking good care of them." ~Doris serving Weagamow Lake, ON



(continued on page 10)



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

December 1
Chad Kourajian

December 2
Lisa Aamodt

December 3
Mavis Mikkelsen
Jerry Walz

December 4
El Rita Nelson

December 5
Liz Landis

December 9
Steve Miller

December 10
Alvin Jaeger

December 11
Caroline Murray

December 13
Genevieve Murray
Russell Senske

December 17
Kristen Faragher

December 18
Sue Hagen

December 19
Maris Bergrud
Ethan Oakland

December 20
Beverly Anderson
Ana Dendy
Lexis Orn
Carol Simenson

December 23
Samson Parnell

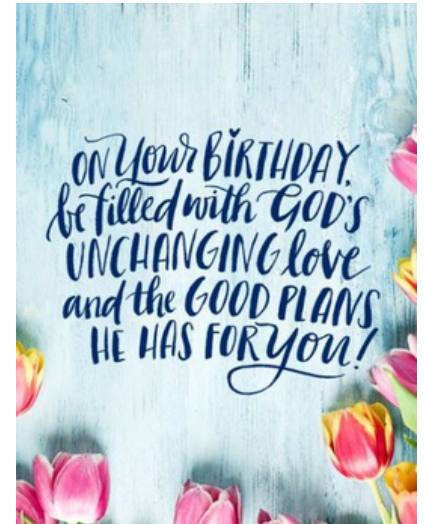
December 24
Emily Hershey
Tom Oakland

December 28
Sharon Rosenvold
Sara Schwarz

December 29
Kassidy Kaldor
Edwina Njos

December 30
Shelby Custer
Deb Uline

December 31
Audrey Liudahl
Alvin Schmierer
Sharon Zimmerman

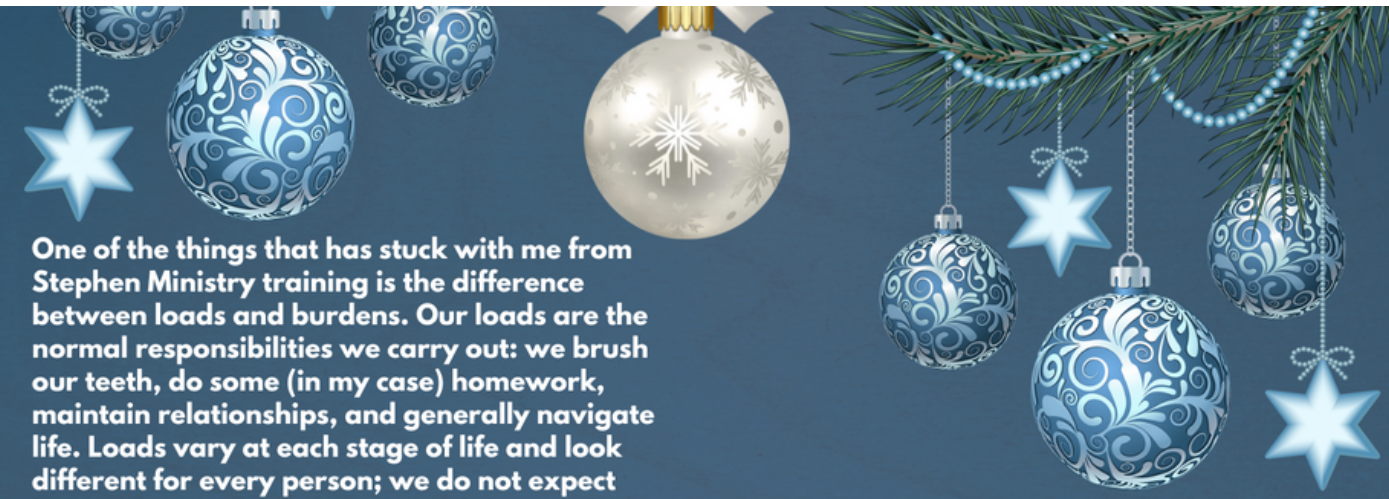


Those who
remain
in love
remain
in God
and
God
remains
in them.
1 JOHN 4:16



December 5 - Dave and Barb Lee
December 8 - Jim and Jennifer Skjod
December 10 - Arlan and Linda Okerson
December 17 - Tom and Angela Oakland
December 19 - Ken and Connie Geiger
December 20 - Thomas and Karen Swanson
December 28 - John and Stephanie Kuhn





One of the things that has stuck with me from Stephen Ministry training is the difference between loads and burdens. Our loads are the normal responsibilities we carry out: we brush our teeth, do some (in my case) homework, maintain relationships, and generally navigate life. Loads vary at each stage of life and look different for every person; we do not expect kids to carry the same load as adults; we do not expect the elderly to shoulder as much as younger people. Of course, we all experience overload, either by our own overzealous 'yes' saying or out of true necessity. But overall, our loads are fair, and they usually balance out.


Burdens, however, are different. Burdens are problems with no "easy" button: loss of a loved one, health problems, fractured relationships, financial crises, gnawing guilt or anxiety. Added to the loads listed above, it is fair to expect people to carry their own loads, but burdens should never be carried alone. Unfortunately, people will say they are fine, especially during the holidays when "merry" seems to reign. People try to go it alone, hiding their burdens, toughing it out, and no one wants to be a downer and ruin someone else's "merry" during the Christmas season, especially Christmas Day. Unfortunately, this gives burdens even more power to rob us of health, peace, or even our faith, if we carry this burden too long alone.

I found this quote from Karen Salmansohn, "Sometimes you just need to talk about something-not to get sympathy or referred to get counseling help, but just to kill its (the burden's) power by allowing the truth of things to hit the air."

Thanksgiving is behind us, and Christmas is quickly approaching. Are you feeling the weight of a burden you just cannot carry alone anymore, and would like someone to talk to about it? Please consider a Stephen Minister to listen and pray with you, to help you carry that burden and hand it over to God. Call the church office, 258-1228 and ask for a Stephen Minister today.

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL OUR CHARITY FAMILIES AND STAFF FROM YOUR CHARITY STEPHEN MINISTERS.
NO ONE SHOULD HURT ALONE. THAT IS WHY OUR STEPHEN MINISTRY TEAM IS HERE FOR YOU!
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT IN OUR MINISTRY!

Edwina, John, Sandy, Jennifer, Marian, Mike, Macel, Ray, Monica, Amber,
Ken, Connie, Scott, and Connie



LAMP Ministry Inc.

(continued from page 7)

Community leaders also invited teams to participate in local events or the teams received gifts of appreciation. Local clergy who serve year-round thanked us for our special week of outreach (read more in LAMP's fall newsletter, page six, written by Peter, a Kingfisher Lake team member.)

Our staff and volunteers have done a phenomenal job despite facing increased challenges. It was particularly encouraging to hear how vital our ministry is. LAMP has had a positive impact for decades and across generations. The communities we serve recognize LAMP as an integral part of their lives, and it is evident that something important is missing when LAMP is not present.

"Over the years, we've stopped at the band office to say thank you or ask a question, but I never got past the person at the front desk. This time, I specifically set out to see Chief Jonas Sewap and was led into a meeting room where he was with other male community leaders. Gary and I had homemade jam and a thank you note. We expressed our gratitude for the VBS meeting space and especially for the joy of working with the children. Jonas introduced us to his "elder councillor", who said, "You are welcome in our community anytime." Those welcoming words of affirmation from the leadership meant so much to us! After four years of absence, we had many more words of affirmation from so many people this year. We wondered how it would be post-pandemic, but it was better than we could have imagined." ~ Ellen serving Brochet, MB

Sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ, through long-lasting relationships, with an eternal impact is truly a gift worth giving. We extend our thanks to the Charity Lutheran Church community because, without your prayers and generosity, we would not be able to carry out this ministry. Please pray with us for more willing hearts to share the gospel in the North!

Your servant in Christ,
Catherine Williams, LAMP executive assistant



Christmas Carol Sing-Along

Sunday, December 10

2:00 p.m.

Charity Lutheran Church

Event is open to anyone who loves to sing along or hear Christmas carols and holiday music! Words are projected up on screen. Led by Fueller sisters, Lorri Mittleider and Christie Neumiller. Please feel free to bring Christmas goodies to share during coffee fellowship. The offering taken is for Heaven's Helpers Soup Café.

 A decorative graphic featuring colorful lines in red, green, and white, radiating from the bottom center. There are also stylized stars and snowflakes scattered throughout the design.


**CHRISTMAS MUSIC
SING-ALONG**
Sunday, December 10
2:00 p.m.
Contact Lorri Mittleider at (701) 400-1849 for more
information.

Bring or invite your family and friends for a fun hour of song!

Youth Ski Trip

BOTTINEAU SKI TRIP

ENJOY WINTER WITH US




19-21 JANUARY, 2024

WE WILL BE STAYING AT LAKE METIGOSHE CHRISTIAN CENTER. BREAKFAST AND DINNER WILL BE PROVIDED. YOUTH WILL NEED LUNCH AND SNACK MONEY.

**MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO CHARITY LUTHERAN
COST IS \$180 DUE 12/15/23**

CHARITY YOUTH 4TH -12TH GRADE



**SCAN QR CODE
TO REGISTER!**

We are looking forward to a youth ski trip for Charity youth in grades 4-12 in January! If you have a child who would like to go on the ski trip, please scan the QR code to fill out the form. The cost of the trip is \$180.00 and checks are payable to Charity Lutheran. Payments are due by December 15.




**Scan QR Code
to RSVP**

Advent Family Fun Night

**Sunday, December 3
4:00-6:30 p.m.**

<p>4:00-5:30 p.m. cookie decorating, lefse-making stations, Christmas card decorating, creating Advent Candle logs</p>	<p>5:30-6:30 p.m. Light Fellowship Supper, concluding with prayer.</p>
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All ages will want to attend this event, but especially families with kids. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

For the purpose of activities and food preparation, please RSVP by scanning the QR code above or sign up at the welcome desk.



CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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120 Aspen Avenue, Bismarck, ND 58503

Phone: 701-258-1228 or Fax: 701-258-4398

Email: contact@charitylutheran.org

www.charitylutheran.org

PLEASE JOIN US FOR

CHRISTMAS

Worship

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT 9:30AM

CHRISTMAS EVE 4:00PM & 10:00PM

BOTH CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES
WITH CANDLELIGHT & COMMUNION

