

Parish Rebuilder

St. Luke's Lutheran Church - 5150 Wilson Street, La Mesa, CA 91942

www.st-lukes-la-mesa.org

December 2025
Monthly Newsletter
Volume 25 Issue 12

We invite you to attend

St. Luke's Lutheran Church

Please contact Lupita in the office to discuss
a visit or to arrange an appointment with
Pastor Mark:

619-463-6633 or office-sllc@att.net

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Christmas Seeds

Christianity has entered the Advent and Christmas season. The first Sunday in Advent, this year 30 November, marks the beginning of the church year. Perhaps we should have held a New Year's Eve party on 29 November. Being just two days off Thanksgiving, however, that might have been a bit much for most people to handle. In that vein, some turkeys have been advocating the replacement of Thanksgiving with a Church New Year's Eve party. As unlikely as such a holiday substitution might be, some of this year's turkey progeny are already planning to propagate their cause next year.

Sadly, but not unexpectedly, this year's turkey holiday supplanting supporters were sacrificed for thousands of grateful Americans wittingly or unwittingly celebrating the Pilgrims' survival in the New World in search of religious freedom. When considering the Pilgrims' plight, would you leave your homeland with a handful of travelers, venture to Europe, and then sail across a vast ocean to an unknown continent just to escape English religious oppression? Since most of us find it difficult, if not impossible, to leave the comfort of our beds on Sunday morning to battle minimal traffic to land in a padded pew at our local parish, risking life and limb for the sake of free worship is probably out of the question.

In that light, how much more unlikely is the story of the promise given to Adam and Eve that Eve's "seed" would conquer the forces of evil and would rescue humanity from the powers of sin and death? To think that God, instead of punishing Adam and Eve for falling into unbelief and following the serpent's temptations, forgave them their trespass and then promised them that one of their progeny, one of Eve's seed, would be sacrificed to effect the

forgiveness of sin for all humanity, seems highly unlikely at best.

If we follow the story, this promise was given to one family, and they passed the promise to one of their progeny. That son started his own family in order to communicate the promise to another generation. In all the history of the people of Israel, this is how the promise of the Messiah was propagated. Although the tribes of Israel grew into various kingdoms, were conquered and exiled because of their rampant sinfulness, eventually some of them were freed to return to their homeland, a chided and chastened people, to propagate the promise. With Jerusalem rebuilt, would God now send his Messiah to restore the glory of the Davidic monarchy?

God would restore Israel's royal lineage, but the means and method in so doing resembled more the situation of Adam and Eve. God would speak to Mary, a young woman betrothed to a man named Joseph, "And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end" (Luke 1:31-33). In Mary, Eve's promised seed would come to fruition.

We generally take it for granted when we read the biblical stories that the story of the promised seed necessarily weaves and winds its way safely and assuredly through history. From our vantage point, we view viewing biblical happenings and progress as secret spectators, knowing that, of course, it all had to happen that way because it is in the Bible. Viewed from our every day perspective, how unlikely is a promise given to one newly sinful couple to be realized generations later in a newly betrothed pair, who from an outsiders perspective, would appear to be "living in sin"?

The seed of Christ promised by the Holy Spirit to Mary would be planted by Jesus in the hearts of

many people in his day. That seed would then be put to death on the tree of the cross and buried in the ground. God's promises, however, do not die. They are the source of life in the face of death, of forgiveness in the midst of vengeance, and of grace when surrounded by murderous hate.

By virtue of Christ's resurrection, the promised seed made incarnate at that first Christmas is still given from one person to another, particularly from individual couples to their children. Likewise, church families in their various forms of teaching, preaching, praying, and praising plant the same seeds of Christ's gospel in the hearts and minds of each new church generation. In that sense, the first Sunday in Advent is an ideal Day of Thanksgiving for all us pilgrims, venturing through our world of sin and sorrow, yet buoyed by Christ's promises, to celebrate the freedom from sin and death given to all humanity in Christ Jesus, our one and only Lord.

German Christmas Carol Service

Again, St. Luke's plans to hold its annual German Christmas Carol Service, scheduled for Sunday, 21 December, at 6:00 pm. This year the House of Germany Choir and Children's Choir will present a brief nativity play as part of the service. Even if you do not plan to attend yourself, please feel free to invite potentially interested folks to the service.

As usual, a Christmas reception with light refreshments will follow the service in the Lower Level. If you would like to help with the reception, please contact Pastor Mark.





Christmas Tree Decorating Party

You, your family, and select friends are invited to St. Luke's Christmas tree decorating party to be held on Friday, 05 December 2025, at 6:00 pm. The party includes snacks and a meal, and thereafter features dynamic tree decorating through daredevil ornament hanging accomplished with fearless stunts performed by adorable ecclesial acro-bats who live in the belfry. If the bats have bailed, the human decorating party attendees will need to adorn the tree. So, please mark your calendars to attend. Please also RSVP with the church office.

- Pastor Mark Menacher

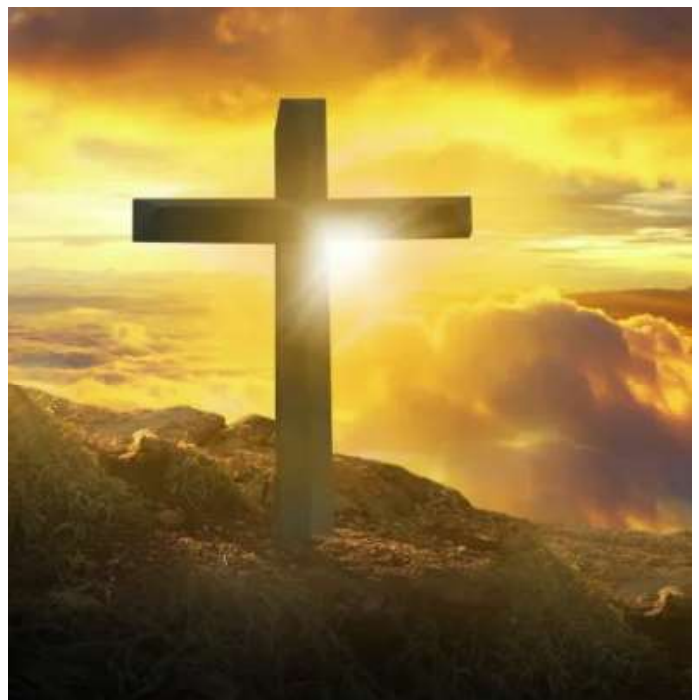
Definition of a PARAPRODOKIAN: A figured of speech in which the latter part of a sentence or phrase is surprising or unexpected (for instance: "Where there's a will, I want to be in it")

A few more:

- If I agree with you, we'd both be wrong.
- We never really grow up, we only learn how to act in public.
- Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit. Wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad.
- To steal ideas from one person is plagiarism. To steal from many is research.
- I didn't say it was your fault, I said I was blaming you.
- A clear conscience is a sign of a fuzzy memory.
- Money can't buy happiness, but it sure makes misery easier to live with.
- Nostalgia isn't what it used to be.

Can you believe how fast this year has gone? The first retreats we've had in ten years has come.

- At the request of Diane Svensson



Dear Women of St. Luke's,

Since I was a young girl in Sunday School, when December arrived and the anticipation of Christmas grew day by day, I have always found my thoughts pondering Mary – the young woman whom the angel Gabriel said was “... highly favored. The Lord is with you” (Luke 1:28).

I have always agreed whole-heartedly with her first response – “Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be” (Luke 1:29); greatly troubled – INDEED! First of all, an angel named Gabriel approached her and spoke to her. Mighty startling! And he addressed her personally – apparently knowing her. Wow! I’ve always tried to imagine the feelings and thoughts Mary had in that moment. How her heart must have been beating rapidly and her thoughts racing to comprehend those words!

Then, Gabriel goes on to tell her not to be afraid – to assure her that she was found favor with God – and will conceive and give birth to a son whom she is to call “Jesus.” Gabriel tells her that “He will be great – the Son of the Most High” (Luke 1:30-33). Again, I’ve always felt deeply Mary’s response, “How will this be since I am a virgin?” (Luke 1:34). Over the years, I have thought so much about Mary’s dumbfounded question - “How will this be?” This made no logical or rational sense. She knew she was just a young woman and was pledged to marry Joseph. How was all of this angel’s declaration going to take place, and how was it going to impact her life as she knew it? How would others respond? How would Joseph respond? These are such huge and important questions.

To this question of “How?” the angel answered explaining, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:35). Absolutely incredible! This is God’s calling – God’s love – and God’s work! To this, Mary replies, “I am the Lord’s servant. May your word to me be fulfilled” (Luke 1:38). With all her questions and concerns, Mary responded out of faith and trust. She agreed to carry Jesus, God’s Son, into the world, yielding to His word from the angel and welcoming the fulfillment by God’s love and grace and power. Absolutely awesome!



Friends, aren’t each of us, as Christians, asked by God to carry Jesus to our world? Oh, that you and I might respond to God’s call as Mary did – “I am the Lord’s servant. May your word to me be fulfilled.” Lord, help us to hear Your call to carry Jesus to our world, to our families, our friends, our fellow church members, our neighbors, and our communities. Help us to welcome your love and grace and power into our lives to empower each of us to be used for Your honor and our world’s blessing. May it be so.

Merry CHRISTmas!

In His service,

Laurie



storytelling

jesus



jesus

WARRIORS
FOUNDATION

Midweek Communion & Scriptural Dialogue Service



Take a midweek pause to be nourished —
both spiritually and through fellowship.
Our time together includes communion, reflection,
and open dialogue centered on God's Word.

The gatherings to share are so enriching in God's Word, and it is a delight to
be together.

Come experience the joy of community and the depth of Scripture in a
welcoming, prayerful setting.

Date: Every Wednesday at 7 p.m. **Place:** St. Luke's Fireside Room

All are welcome.

Come as you are — leave refreshed and renewed.

WE LOVE OUR VOLUNTEERS!!

Coffee Hour Hosts for December

December 7th — Cheryl Gray & Jennifer Killion

December 14th — Hans & Monique Peterson

December 21st — Brown Family

December 28th — Host pending

DECEMBER WORSHIP TEXTS

Second Sunday in Advent

— December 7, 2025

First Lesson — Isaiah 11:1–10

Psalm 72:1–7

Second Lesson — Romans 15:4–13

Gospel — Matthew 3:1–12

happy
birthday

Third Sunday in Advent

— December 14, 2025

First Lesson — Isaiah 35:1–10

Psalm 146

Second Lesson — James 5:7–11

Gospel — Matthew 11:2–15

Joseph Makowski	12/1
Cheri Murrell	12/6
Debbie Parks	12/6
Timothy Smith	12/8
Patricia Kettler	12/9
Raymond Yerger	12/13
Calvin Borchardt	12/14
Elizabeth Dunnigan	12/17
Mario Salas	12/18
Kim Emerson	12/25
Donald Smith	12/30

Fourth Sunday in Advent

— December 21, 2025

First Lesson — Isaiah 7:10–17

Psalm 24

Second Lesson — Romans 1:1–7

Gospel — Matthew 1:18–25

First Sunday after Christmas

— December 28, 2025

First Lesson — Isaiah 63:7–14

Psalm 111

Second Lesson — Galatians 4:4–7

Gospel — Matthew 2:13–23

Happy
Anniversary

Robin & Roy Wheeler 12/2

PRAYER CALENDAR

“Come Thou Long Expected Jesus”

1	Isaiah 9:6-7
2	Isaiah 11:1-9
3	Isaiah 61:1-3
4	Isaiah 40:1-5
5	Matthew 12:1-8
6	Luke 1:26-33
7	Luke 2:8-14
8	John 1:9-18
9	Psalms 116:5-9
10	I Peter 1:20-25
11	Titus 2:11-14
12	Titus 3:4-7
13	Psalms 33:1-9
14	John 1:9-14
15	Ephesians 1:7-10
16	Psalms 59:16-17
17	Galatians 4:1-7
18	Psalms 103:1-5
19	Philippians 4:4-7
20	Proverbs 3:5-8
21	Psalms 37:1-7
22	Psalms 91:1-7
23	Colossians 1:15-22
24	I Thessalonians 5:23-24
25	Psalms 25:1-10
26	Ephesians 2:4-7
27	Psalms 107:1-9
28	Luke 4:16-19
29	Psalms 98:1-9
30	I Thessalonians 4:13-18
31	Revelation 1:4-8

*Come Thou Long Expected Jesus.
 Born to set thy people free;
 From our years and sins release us,
 Let us find our rest in Thee
 Israel's strength and consolation,
 Hope of all the earth Thou art the
 Desire of every nation,
 Joy of every longing heart.*

*Born Thy people to deliver,
 Born a child and yet a king!
 Born to reign in us forever,
 Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.
 By Thine own eternal Spirit
 Rule in all our hearts alone;
 By Thine all-sufficient merit
 Raise us to Thy glorious throne*

*Lutheran Service Book
 Hymn 338*

DECEMBER'S WORSHIP TEAMS

	Reader(s)	<i>Jennifer Killion</i>
	Altar Guild	<i>Whitney Utley</i>
7th	Communion Assistant —bread	<i>Bob Urich</i>
	Communion Assistants—wine	<i>Jennifer Killion & Terry East</i>
	Greeter	<i>Randy Engel</i>
	Prayers of the People	<i>Pastor Mark Menacher</i>
	Projectionist	<i>Judi Cole</i>
	Usher Team	<i>Bob & Cheryl Gray</i>
	Acolytes	<i>Stasha Raschtschenia & Giuliana Salas</i>
	Sound Tech	<i>Kendrick Jennings</i>
14th	Communion Assistant —bread	<i>Gleason Snashall</i>
	Communion Assistants—wine	<i>Terry East & Jillian Barnard</i>
	Greeter	<i>JoAnn Hendrickson</i>
	Prayers of the People	<i>Laurie Floren</i>
	Projectionist	<i>Shirley Carrington</i>
	Usher Team	<i>Randy Engel & Carol Prior</i>
	Acolytes	<i>Jocelyn Sollenberger & Charlotte Utley</i>
	Sound Tech	<i>Kendrick Jennings</i>
21st	Communion Assistant —bread	<i>Terry East</i>
	Communion Assistants—wine	<i>Laurie Floren & Randy Engel</i>
	Greeter	<i>Laurie Floren</i>
	Prayers of the People	<i>Jillian Barnard</i>
	Projectionist	<i>Judi Cole</i>
	Usher Team	<i>Kim & David Emerson</i>
	Acolytes	<i>Audrey Utley & Giuliana Salas</i>
	Sound Tech	<i>Kendrick Jennings</i>
28th	Communion Assistant —bread	<i>Judi Cole</i>
	Communion Assistants—wine	<i>Cheri Murrell & Terry East</i>
	Greeter	<i>Randy Engel</i>
	Prayers of the People	<i>Terry East</i>
	Projectionist	<i>Shirley Carrington</i>
	Usher Team	<i>Kim & David Emerson</i>
	Acolytes	<i>Charlotte Utley & Jocelyn Sollenberger</i>
	Sound Tech	<i>Kendrick Jennings</i>

December 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 8:00 am Tai Chi 9:30 am Project Day: Cookies, Cards & Gift wrapping	3 10:00 am WSL Bible Study 11:00 am Staff 5:30 pm Choir 7:00 pm Service	4 8:00 am Tai Chi 5:00 pm Catechism 6:30 pm Al-Anon	5 5:00 pm Tree Decorating party	6 8:00 am JOY 10:00 am WSL Story Telling Saturday
7 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Sunday School 5:00 pm Al-Anon	8 9:00 am Counters 5:00 pm Al-Anon 6:30 pm AA	9 8:00 am Tai Chi 9:30 am Project Day	10 11:00 am Staff 5:30 pm Choir 7:00 pm Service	11 8:00 am Tai Chi 5:00 pm Catechism 6:30 pm Al-Anon	12	13 8:00 am JOY
14 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Sunday School 5:00 pm Al-Anon	15 9:00 am Counters 5:00 pm Al-Anon 6:30 pm AA	16 8:00 am Tai Chi 9:30 am Project Day	17 10:00 am WSL Bible Study 11:00 am Staff 5:30 pm Choir 7:00 pm Service	18 8:00 am Tai Chi 6:30 pm Al-Anon 6:00 pm Council mtg	19	20 8:00 am JOY 10:00 am WSL Story Telling Saturday
21 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Sunday School 5:00 pm Al-Anon 6:00 pm German Service	22 9:00 am Counters 5:00 pm Al-Anon 6:30 pm AA	23 8:00 am Tai Chi 9:30 am Project Day	24 11:00 am Staff 6:00 pm Christmas Eve Service		26	27 8:00 am JOY
28 9:00 am Worship 10:30 am Sunday School 5:00 pm Al-Anon	29 9:00 am Counters 5:00 pm Al-Anon 6:30 pm AA	30 8:00 am Tai Chi 9:30 am Project Day	31			

ST. LUKE'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

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LA MESA, CA 91942

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Dated Material
December 2025

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

A WARM WELCOME TO ALL

- Sunday Worship: 9:00 am in the Sanctuary
- Sunday School: 10:30 am in the Lower Level
- Wednesday Choir Practice: 5:30 pm in the Fireside Room (Lower Level)
- Wednesday Pericope / Communion Service: 7:00 pm in the Fireside Room

St. Luke's Mission Statement:

We are called as a community of Christians saved by grace

—through faith alone in Jesus Christ—

to spread the Holy Gospel in word, sacrament, and action

solī deo gloria.