



December 22, 2020

Speak Your Love

If you are feeling behind in your Christmas preparations, remember this: you cannot put a bow on the best gifts that are to be given to the world. These are the kind of gifts that probably won't make Christmas lists. These gifts cost very little, if anything at all – other than time, perhaps. When these gifts are given, they embody the spirit of Christmas.

I don't know the author of these suggestions, but I believe that at the end of this challenging year, these are the gifts that will restore the world, and in doing so, will restore us, too. This Christmas...

End a quarrel. Seek out a forgotten friend. Dismiss suspicion, and replace it with trust. Write a love letter. Share some treasure. Give a soft answer. Keep a promise. Find the time. Forego a grudge. Forgive an enemy. Listen. Apologize if you were wrong. Try to understand. Examine your demands on others. Think of someone else first. Be kind; be gentle. Appreciate. Laugh a little. Laugh a little more. Express your gratitude. Gladden the heart of a child. Welcome a stranger. Take pleasure in the beauty and wonder of the Earth. Speak your love. Speak it again. Speak it yet once again.

The Christmas Day gospel reminds us that the gift of God to us at Christmas time is not worldly power or material treasure; instead, the gift of God is *light in the darkness* and *grace upon grace* and the promise of God's *presence* with us, always. The most beautiful gift: Immanuel. Merry Christmas, dear church.

Pr. Jenn

One Time Volunteers Needed for Warming Center

The Warming Center is in need of volunteers for **Friday, December 25- Christmas Day**. There are two jobs that will be done from the **6:00 pm-9:00 pm** hours:

1. Taking temperatures and asking questions on the COVID-19 Questionare. Ruth Poutanen will be about six feet away to assist as well as the team leader.
2. Handing out nighttime materials for guests such as t-shirts, towels, laundry baskets, socks, underwear, etc. as needed. Two volunteers will be needed side-by-side working together with supervision close by.

While it is understandable that volunteering might be tough to consider during this time, please remember those in need. Please contact Ruth Poutanen with any questions via email or call/text at repoutanen@aol.com or 715-409-0674 .

Shine Your Light Prayer Vigil

Join our community in a prayer vigil for our local health care heroes and those who are seriously ill with COVID-19 on **Tuesday, December 22 from 6:30pm-7:15pm**. The prayer vigil will take place at both hospitals, Aspirus Wausau Hospital and Marshfield Medical Center (formerly St. Clares). At Aspirus, please park in the west half of the Plaza Drive parking lot. At MMC-Weston please park on Ministry Parkway. Those attending are asked to park facing the hospital following every other in parking spaces, turn on emergency flashers, stay in vehicles, and tune your radio to 89Q. At 7pm local pastors will lead a group prayer on 89Q, participants will sing two Christmas Carols, and end with a "honk of hope" for the staff and patients.

Please help spread the word by inviting friends and family to attend this night of hope as our community comes together to shine our light! Feel free to contact Stephanie Birchler at stephmbirchler@gmail.com with any questions.

Advent Resources

To help engage in and dive deeper into Advent this year, we have a variety of resources and programs available:

Illustrated Devotion - a self-guided devotion for individuals or small groups that includes readings and discussion questions. Download the full devotional [here](#).

Advent for Families - weekly devotional with readings, discussion questions, a craft or activity, and an advent calendar. Download the full resource [here](#).

Adult Advent Study - Join this virtual study group via Zoom which allows for deeper discussion of the Advent readings on ***Tuesday evenings from 8:00-9:00 pm starting December 1.*** Week 3, December 15 at 8:00 pm: Come and ponder the Nativity story in Luke 2 and the theme "Do not be afraid to choose love."

Join the Zoom Advent Study:

<https://bit.ly/3lsePcm>

Meeting ID: 821 9324 7765

Passcode: 640272

Participate in Christmas at Saint Andrew

Visit the Christmas Page at salc-wausau.org/Christmas for more information about what SALC is doing for Christmas this year and ways to safely participate with activities such as:

Christmas To Go Bags- Christmas To Go Bags will be available for pick up will be available to be picked up until **4:30 pm on December 23**. If contactless delivery is necessary please call the church and we can make arrangements to bring them to you.

Centered in the gospel story from Luke 2, four diverse opportunities will be shared through the Saint Andrew live stream between Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Following a virtual Christmas pageant at 4:00 pm, led by over 22 individuals and family units, the following three worship services will include the chance to commune and experience different leadership, sermons, and worship content.

In addition to the livestream, **Communion** will be available to be received following the 6:30 pm worship service from 7:30 pm-8:30 pm by driving up to the north Chapel doors. Simply remain in your car and Pr. Jenn, Pr. Justin, or a communion assistant will bring communion to your car and share words of blessing.

You can access worship through Saint Andrew's Facebook page: www.facebook.com/salcwausau. While you do not need to have a Facebook account to watch along, it helps if you do have one to follow the page which will allow for you to get alerts and updates. Each livestream, with exception to the 4:00 pm service, will begin approximately fifteen minutes prior to the scheduled time to allow for people to gather.

Christmas Statement

In keeping with our current criteria, the task force recommended the following statement that was then approved and adopted by council on November 19:

In the spirit of Love, born to us in the Christ child, the pastors and staff, the Plan to Gather Task Force, and the Church Council at Saint Andrew Lutheran Church are committed to sharing the gospel safely and abundantly in these difficult times. As a large congregation with over 3000 members, we are partners in public health and have set the goal that Saint Andrew will not be a source of community spread. We recognize we cannot fulfill our mission to be "open to all" if the vulnerable and the visitor is not fully welcome in worship among us. We are equipped to support members in their life-long faith journeys through virtual and innovative means. Therefore this Christmas, we will worship together in our homes as a sign of love for the community we have been called to serve.

"I'll Be Home for Christmas - Online Worship" will take place at www.facebook.com/salcwausau on Christmas Eve at 6:30 and 10:30 pm (note that this is a corrected time which was previously printed as 9:30 pm) and on Christmas Day at 9:00 am.



SAINT ANDREW LUTHERAN CHURCH

I'll Be Home For
CHRISTMAS

Online Christmas Worship
[Facebook.com/salcwausau](https://www.facebook.com/salcwausau)

December 24
6:30 PM
10:30 PM
December 25
9:00 AM

Advent and Christmas Office Hours

The Saint Andrew staff intend that the office will be open as usual **8:30 am-4:30 pm** Monday through Friday. Because of quarantines and the need to stay flexible, you may find the door locked and some staff working from home. If you are met with a locked door you can either ring the doorbell to the left of the doors or call the church from a cell phone to be greeted by someone on staff.

The church phone system allows us to receive calls and voicemail off site. Whether staff is at home or in the office, we are here to support you during this Advent season. We expect the need for this kind of flexibility in the coming weeks. Thank you for your understanding.

The office will be closed on December 24 & 25 and January 1

New Member Orientation to Take Place Virtually

Sunday, January 31, 2021 at 1-3pm via Zoom

Membership is about naming a deeper connection of relationship to a community of faith. The benefits of membership include the ability to give voice and vote at congregational meetings, serve in leadership through ministry or council leadership, and assurance of pastoral care for the valleys and mountaintops of life.

New Member Orientation tackles the basics of what it means to be a Lutheran Christian, the history and mission of Saint Andrew, and ways to integrate more deeply through worship, learning, witness, and service. It also gives members a chance to connect to others and begin building relationships. Led virtually for the first time, those interested in membership will be given a link through the free platform, zoom. If you're interested in participating, call the office or e-mail joy@salc-wausau.org with the subject "New Member" and she will reply with the steps to register.

If you are hesitant to participate virtually and would rather schedule a one-on-one socially distant in-person conversation with the pastors, simply call the office to schedule an appointment, indicating interest in membership.

Plan to Gather Weekly Update: 12/16/2020

For now, Saint Andrew remains in Phase One of the

Plan to Gather.

SALC COVID-19 UPDATE

As of 12/16/2020

Date	Burden #	Trajectory	Burden Status
11/25	1444.3	Shrinking	Critically High
12/2	1094.1	Shrinking	Critically High
12/9	974.5	No Change	Very High
12/16	853.5	Shrinking	Very High

Current SALC Status: Phase One

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[Contact Us](#)

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