

# Nazareth Lutheran

## FEED THE HUNGRY

*35 "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me." 36 "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink?' 37 "And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing?" 38 "And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?" 39 "And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'"*

There is a member of Nazareth who takes this command from Jesus to "feed the hungry" very seriously. Ever since I have been here, over 27 years, she has worked tirelessly at the food pantry making sure there is food for those who need to be fed. I have had numerous conversations filled with passion of how important that those working at the local pantry not judge and fulfill this command given to each of us out of love and care. I have learned so much about generosity and care of those who are in need. I give thanks for her and all those who give their time and energy

to the food pantry sponsored by Cambridge UMC and Nazareth Lutheran.

Just in the past year I have been open to the need in our community and how we can help fill that need of feeding the hungry. There are those who are hungry in our midst including the children in our community. The snack program started with a member of the church who was listening to her grandchildren talking about

### CONTENTS

FROM THE PASTOR	1
SYMBOLISM OF THE CANDY CANE	2
BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE	3
CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES	3
CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE	4
THE WISHING TREE	5
HELPING OUR COMMUNITY	5
HUXLEY HOLLY DAYS	5
DO YOU NEED TO TAKE AN RMD	6
LECTIONERY AND MUSIC	7
PUZZLES	8

## FROM THE PASTOR CONTINUED

2

their friends who when they got home from school didn't have any food to snack on. Grandma listened and brought the idea to the church council. Now the idea wasn't ours for the Methodist Church in town had been providing snacks for children getting off the buses at their church stop. Blessings to those Methodist brothers and sisters who listened to the need in our community. We are in our second year of providing for the children who get off our bus stops in Cambridge.

The third program that I wish to share is the Ballard Summer Meal program. It started around the table at the church council with one voice who saw a need to provide food in the summer. This woman had done research and saw that Ballard was the only school district that did not provide summer meals. She then spoke asking for support which was enthusiastically supported by the church council. This woman worked tirelessly to meet a need in our community. I am so pleased that we as a church were able to support this program with volunteers and to seek financial money.

Thinking of these programs that the church has been able to support and pray for has opened my eyes to the need but also a sharing of the gifts that Jesus has helped us to see in our daily life as disciples of Christ. Wouldn't it be great if our little church could be known as the people who feed the hungry. I pray that it be from our lips to God's ears.

Another program that has burst with support and yes I would say they are feeding the hungry. Our blessed Nazareth Bakers who have become rather famous for "feeding" the Norwegians in our community and beyond. Who knew these Norwegians could be so hungry and wanting Lefsa, Kringla, and Krumkauka so much that our Bakers are in the kitchen every Saturday in October and November. Now some of this is said with tongue in cheek but it is a ministry that reaches so many in our community and beyond. Jesus told us not only to feed the hungry but *"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."* Matthew 28:19-20.

So let us answer the call to share the good news and also to feed the hungry. Whatever that may look like for you and your family. Thank you all for supporting the many and various ministries at God's church. Blessings during this holiday season of thanks and giving.

Pastor Marcia

## SYMBOLISM OF THE CANDY CANE

Candy canes are a Christian symbol that represent the following: The hard candy reminds us that Jesus is our rock. The cane shape reminds us of a shepherd's staff and the shepherds that came to worship Jesus. It also reminds us of how Jesus came into the world to be a shepherd of his people. Candy canes were created as Christian symbols representing the blood and purity of Jesus. The cane was shaped like a "J" for "Jesus" and the red-and-white stripes represented Christ's blood and purity. The three red stripes were also said to symbolize the Holy Trinity.



# MERRY CHRISTMAS

# A BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE?

You've heard of having a Merry Christmas and a White Christmas and most Christmas decorations feature Green and Red as their dominant colors---so why a Blue Christmas Service?

For those who have lost loved ones, Christmas can be a difficult time as JOY and CELEBRATING are strong and appropriate themes of the season. This time can also heighten our sense of loss when the loved one, with whom we have celebrated Christmas for many years, is no longer with us. The feelings of grief can be especially overwhelming if a death occurred near Christmas.

A Blue Christmas is designed to be a service which acknowledges that people may be feeling "Blue" or Sad at this time. A Blue Christmas service calls us to gather with others who understand and to join in worship in ways that recognize this special need and also focus on our God who knows us and deeply cares for us. Our God is present with us as we worship. The Holy Spirit is called The Comforter, Counselor or Advocate (John 14:16) and is sent by the Father to be with us and in us always. In worship, in day-to-day living and especially in our moments of greatest grief, He is our very present help.

The Blue Christmas Service is sponsored by the Ballard Minister's Association and will be held Thursday, December 11th at 7pm at the Trinity UMC in Huxley. Area Pastors will be helping with the service, and Pastor Bobb will be providing the Message.

## NAZARETH LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2025

Meeting of the Nazareth Lutheran Church council was called to order at 11:46 AM by President Mark Lewis following fellowship. Present for the meeting were Mark Lewis, Vince Tomlinson, John Egeland, Dave Lewis, Pastor Marcia, Joyce Allen, and Church Administrator Eileen Lewis. Minutes from the October 19 meeting were approved as read.

**FINANCIAL REPORT:** Deposits and disbursements were almost equal this month. Offering totaled \$3779.00, and kringla/lefsa sales brought in \$375.00. The drive-through dinner raised \$535.00, and donations and gifts were given in the amount of \$33.00. So, \$4,722.00 was added to the opening balance of \$23,820.90, \$4,718.21 was disbursed, leaving a closing balance of \$23,824.69. SCRIP opened with \$2,392.05. \$900 was deposited, nothing was disbursed, thus closing with \$3,292.05.

**PASTOR'S REPORT:** Confirmation is going extremely well, Pastor is pleased to report. Mava was hoping to interview Jane regarding her faith journey, but trying to find a time on a Sunday proved to be problematic. So, Jane came to Mava's confirmation class where they had a very nice discussion. John will meet with her next Wednesday. The script for the Christmas play has been finished. It was adapted from a story in a book Pastor Marcia found, entitled "Voices Like Thunder." We have the perfect Mary and Joseph – Winter and Chris – since Winter is expecting. Mava and her friend, Emyrson, will be narrators, Gavin is cast as the innkeeper, and most others will be angels or shepherds. Monthly Bible study has been going great with about six participants last Thursday. And sadly, Joann and Steve are not available for Christmas Eve service. However, Ellen is going to play organ for a regular service. Lastly, visitation for Claire Bartleson Knapp will be at the Rasmusson-Ryan Funeral Home in Nevada on November 18, where Pastor Marcia is honored to preside. Please keep them in your prayers.

# COUNCIL MINUTES CONTINUED



## COMMITTEE REPORTS:

**PROPERTY:** John suggested furnace and their filters might need to be checked with the cold weather coming on

**CHRISTIAN ED:** As above

**STEWARDSHIP:** Happy to report \$725 in Kringla/Lefsa sales to date!

**INREACH / OUTREACH:** Nothing to report

**MUSIC:** Good through December. A new song will be sung during communion after the first of the year, and a new Benediction will be learned for Advent.

**OLD BUSINESS:** Nothing to report

**NEW BUSINESS:** Our Harvest of Blessings worship will be next week (Nov 23) followed by lunch. The baptism of Pat Bartleson's great-great granddaughter will be celebrated as well. A special offering will be taken, either monetary or non-perishable food items for the food bank. Discussion then turned to Pastor Marcia's insurance. She is now paid up. She met with an insurance representative at the library and decided to just let her present insurance ride for now, then may meet with someone with Portico for next year. Last point of business regarded after school snacks. Plenty is available for this week and next, but suggestions for perhaps including extra for Thanksgiving, such as stuffing, mashed potatoes, canned goods, etc?

There being no further business, meeting was adjourned at 12:14 and closed with The Lord's Prayer. Respectfully submitted by Joyce Allen, Council Secretary.

## CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

Our Christmas Candlelight service will be Wednesday, December 24, 7:00pm. You will hear the familiar Christmas scriptures, sing the beloved carols, and be lifted by special music and message. On Christmas Eve all the rushing and busyness of the season is over and a holy hush all about us as we come to church. In the beauty and quietness of the night, we will celebrate the birth of our Lord once again.

You are invited to join with millions of Christians around the world as we meet for this traditional candlelight service. Come and bring your family and friends to celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.



# THE WISHING TREE

This year the Wishing Tree gift lists will be available at church on Sunday December 7<sup>th</sup>. The gifts need to be returned by the 13<sup>th</sup>. If you would like more time to shop, gift lists will be available for pick up at the church from Eileen on Thursday, the 4<sup>th</sup>. If you don't have time or don't like to shop, but would like to support this project, you can make a monetary donation, and Santa's elves will shop for you!

Please have any donations to the church by December 3<sup>rd</sup>. If you have questions or need help getting a list, you can contact Robin Isaacson or Kathy Parmenter.

Thank you for giving some children in our community a happy Christmas!

# HELPING OUR COMMUNITY

Trinity UMC has put together Thanksgiving Baskets that we have delivered to the needy residents of our community. This year Trinity and Fjeldberg Lutheran worked together to make the Thanksgiving boxes. The boxes were distributed on Nov. 24 & 26. With the donations from both churches and the community we were able to put together and deliver 75 boxes. These boxes went to 61 families and will feed 234 people.

Nazareth Lutheran in Cambridge put together 51 Chicken Alfredo meals that were distributed to Cambridge area families. The meals included a can of cooked chicken, pasta, a jar of alfredo sauce and a can of green beans.

I'm sure there were other acts of kindness performed during the Thanksgiving Holidays.

Please remember that due to the increased need of the residents of our communities, please consider giving extra help by bringing food or designated monetary donations to the church. All donations will be delivered to our area food pantries during this holiday season.



# Huxley Holly-Days

December 4 - 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025

## Thursday 4-7PM

Large Ornament Light Display  
Sip & Stroll the Shops  
@ The Plaza

## Saturday 10-2PM

A Very Merry Library Christmas 10-11AM  
Santa & Kids activities 11-2PM  
@ The Landing

## Friday 4-8PM

Golf Cart Holiday Light Parade  
down Main Street  
Caroling on Heart of Iowa Bike Trail  
@ Old Main

## Sunday 10-2PM

Reindeer 10-12PM  
Small Business Vendor Fair  
@ 1850 Homestead



# DO YOU HAVE TO TAKE AN RMD?

If you have an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) and are age seventy (or getting close), you should know about a way you can give to your local church that will strengthen the church's ministry and produce tax savings for you! Here are some important facts you should know.

1. Individual Retirement Accounts - people have been putting money away without having to pay federal taxes on it. (That part is important.)

2. The understanding was that those folks could access that money without a penalty as early as when they turned fifty-nine and a half, but when they reached seventy and a half, they were required to start taking at least a minimum amount out each year—"required minimum distributions" or RMDs. In response to the coronavirus pandemic, the age for these RMDs was gradually raised: now it is seventy-three. Since participants didn't pay tax on the money when they put it in their IRAs, they are required to pay tax on it when money comes out. RMDs can push some people into a higher tax bracket. That can be avoided.

3. To Avoid Paying Taxes. In 2006, pension protection legislation allowed for tax-free use of RMDs for charitable contributions, saving the tax that people would have had to pay when they took this money out of their IRA accounts. These are called "qualified charitable distributions" or QCDs.

There's an important distinction: these are NOT tax deductions. They do not provide a charitable deduction they exclude the donated distribution from taxable income!

Here's an example: If you were planning to give \$1000 per month to your church, you don't qualify for more than the standard deduction amount, and you are at the 12% tax bracket—giving that amount from your IRA (as a QCD) will save you \$1,440 in taxes! If you are in the 22% tax bracket, the savings will be \$2,640!

4. From Ira to "My UMC"—Never In My Pocket! With a qualified charitable distribution (QCD), a check goes directly from your IRA to your church or the charity you select. Many people who are facing RMDs that will have tax implications could pay all their annual tithe or offering at one time, or fund a repair project, through their QCD and never have to show it as income.

5. You Don't Have to Wait For 73 to Do the QCD! QCDs can happen for anyone who has reached the age of seventy and a half. Retirees who are over that age and want to continue to be generous to their local church should consider a qualified charitable distribution.

6. Most Taxpayers No Longer Get a Tax Break for Charitable Giving. The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act that went into effect in 2019 included an increase in the standard deduction—it nearly doubled. It left many people better off, but with 90% of taxpayers taking the standard deduction, it eliminated a tax-incentive regarding charitable donations for most of us. Inviting retirees in the seventy plus group (who use the standard deduction) to consider using the qualifying charitable distribution may reduce or eliminate the tax that they might have to pay on RMDs. Yet many will not know of this option unless your church makes the invitation!

**We encourage everyone to discuss this with a financial planner, tax consultant, or attorney—and be sure to let your family know! It could be a savings for you and a blessing to your local church!**

# DECEMBER LECTONERY AND MUSIC



## **Second Sunday of Advent December 7**

Isaiah 11:1-10

Psalms 72:1-7, 18-19

Romans 15:4-13

Matthew 3:1-12

Prayer of the Day

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

This Little Light of Mine #677

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry #249

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel vs 1 & 2 #257

We Are Called #720

## **Third Sunday of Advent December 14**

Children's Christmas Pageant

## **Fourth Sunday of Advent December 21**

Isaiah 7:10-16

Psalms 80:1-7, 17-19

Romans 1:1-7

Matthew 1:18-25

Prayer of the Day

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

This Little Light of Mine #677

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel vs 1 & 2 #257

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear #282

Let There Be Peace on Earth (insert)

## **Christmas Eve December 24**

Isaiah 9:2-7

Psalms 96

Titus 2:11-14

Luke 2:1-14, (15-20)

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

O Little Town of Bethlehem #279

What Child Is This #296

O Come, All Ye Faithful #283

The First Noel #300

Silent Night #281

## **First Sunday after Christmas December 28**

Isaiah 63:7-9

Psalms 148

Hebrews 2:10-18

Matthew 2:13-23

Prayer of the Day

O Lord God, you know that we cannot place our trust in our own powers. As you protected the infant Jesus, so defend us and all the needy from harm and adversity, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, Now and forever.

Lift Every Voice and Sing #841

What Child Is This #296

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing #270

Silent Night #281

Blest Be the Tie That Binds #656

4 Letter Words  
BELL  
SNOW

5 Letter Words  
ANGEL  
COCOA  
ELVES  
HOLLY

6 Letter Words  
LIGHTS  
SLEIGH  
TINSEL  
WINTER  
WREATH

7 Letter Words  
CHIMNEY  
GARLAND  
PAGEANT  
RUDOLPH  
SNOWMAN

8 Letter Words  
CAROLING  
DECEMBER  
EXCHANGE  
ORNAMENT  
PRESENTS  
REINDEER  
WRAPPING

9 Letter Words  
CHESTNUTS  
CHRISTMAS  
EVERGREEN  
FRUITCAKE  
MISTLETOE  
NORTH POLE

10 Letter Words  
POINSETTIA  
SANTA CLAUS

11 Letter Word  
GINGERBREAD

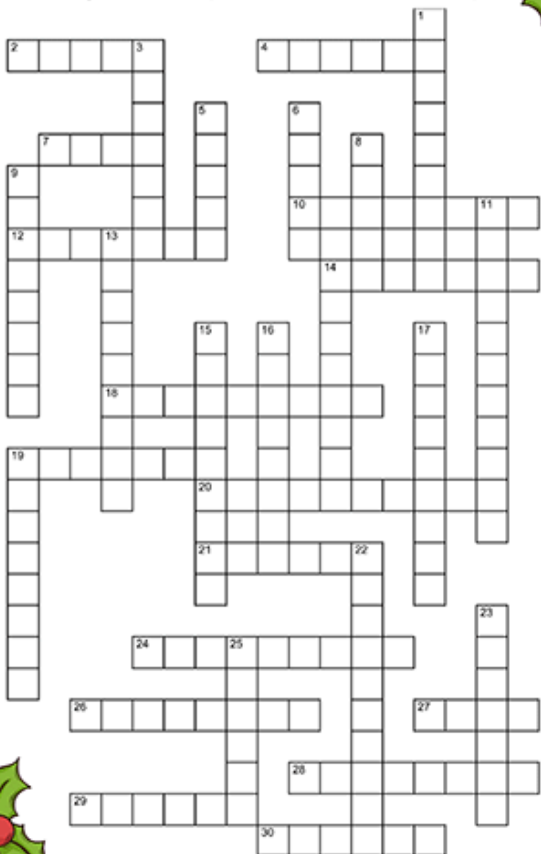
# Christmas Joy

## PUZZLES

# Christmas Word Scramble



DIRECTIONS: Fill in the crossword grid with the provided words.



HCSSAMTRI \_\_\_\_\_  
 SMTEILEOT \_\_\_\_\_  
 APOSETTNI \_\_\_\_\_  
 MOWNASN \_\_\_\_\_  
 HERAWT \_\_\_\_\_  
 RRGBIEADRGE \_\_\_\_\_  
 HAOIDLY \_\_\_\_\_  
 RFYTOS \_\_\_\_\_  
 GHLISE \_\_\_\_\_  
 IPALFEECR \_\_\_\_\_  
 SEERTSPN \_\_\_\_\_  
 CTAODINSERO \_\_\_\_\_

LEICCI \_\_\_\_\_  
 ENERERDI \_\_\_\_\_  
 WEKSFALON \_\_\_\_\_  
 NASAT \_\_\_\_\_  
 NIELST \_\_\_\_\_  
 TIEWNR \_\_\_\_\_  
 NNMTAERO \_\_\_\_\_  
 AHKHKUNA \_\_\_\_\_  
 AORCL \_\_\_\_\_  
 EOGNG \_\_\_\_\_  
 ISOGKCTN \_\_\_\_\_  
 CLADNE \_\_\_\_\_

Word list: Candle, Carol, Christmas, Decorations, Eggnog, Fireplace, Frosty, Gingerbread, Hannukah, Holiday, Icicle, Mistletoe, Ornament, Poinsettia, Presents, Reindeer, Santa, Sleigh, Snowflake, Snowman, Stocking, Tinsel, Winter, and Wreath

# RELIGIOUS CHRISTMAS

WORD FIND

E H L E A R S I Q Y V C G Q C W B B K G W R G  
 D U G X R H I I J S H J N C L E I R B A G E P  
 V W Y I P V B W L W M E Y R T W T Q W D A K A  
 L X Y L O H M V I W L S M K Y O I H W A U I E  
 J Y C W A N D F N T C U N Q J H X P D Y D N T  
 B J P O I H A P P Y J S U V G J S Q D J T G K  
 E R G U C N B X P H B M Q Y W X H T R I B Y I  
 T S N O I T I D A R T P Z W E Y K S T D D T V  
 H S H Y L P R U O I V A S Y X E Z X R O V I D  
 L A G C C H I M N E Y G E N E R O S I T Y V R  
 E M S G N I M A E L G H P E S O J X F B V I E  
 H E B F R F A M I L Y J H C J E J C Y D C T U  
 E C L U E M A F N Z X G Q K L I V V M Q S A W  
 M E D G L G A R L A N D G F G B N W H X X N E  
 C A R O L S S D F Z L Q K N D F Y J K F P J X  
 K H E W S J O Z G E P M Y Z J L Z W B Y T S S

GENEROSITY  
 TRADITIONS  
 BETHLEHEM  
 GLEAMING  
 NATIVITY  
 SAVIOUR  
 GABRIEL  
 GARLAND  
 FAMILY  
 CAROLS  
 ISRAEL  
 JOSEPH  
 HAPPY  
 JESUS  
 HOLY  
 KING  
 CHIMNEY  
 BIRTH