



Mailing address:
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Pastor Tom Vanderbilt
pastor@mt-calvary.com

Colleen DeLanoit
Office Administrator
office@mt-calvary.com

Office hours
M–F 8:00am—12:00 pm
www.mt-calvary.com

Up Coming events! !

Dec 6 - Church Decorating
9:00 am

Advent Services
Dec 3, 10, 17 7:00 pm

Dec 21 Cookie Exchange

Christmas Eve 5:30 pm

Christmas Day 10:00 am



Living in the **Shadow of the Cross**

Vol. 46 No. 12

December 2025



**From the
Pastor's Desk**

Coming Home for Christmas: An Advent Journey

The book of *Isaiah* spans one of the most turbulent periods in Israel's history. Isaiah prophesied during the 8th century B.C., a time when the once-unified kingdom of Israel had divided into the northern kingdom (Israel) and the southern kingdom (Judah). As Assyria's power surged across the ancient Near East, the northern kingdom fell to its armies in 722. Meanwhile, Judah watched anxiously as the threat of foreign domination grew.

Isaiah's ministry in the capital of Judah, Jerusalem, spanned the reigns of several kings, including Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah (Isa. 1:1). He warned Judah about the consequences of their idolatry, injustice, and misplaced trust in political alliances rather than in the Lord. His early prophecies focus on coming judgment, yet they are also laced with hope, most famously in the promise of *Immanuel*, "God with us" (Isa. 7:14).

The later chapters of Isaiah reflect a shift in tone and timeline, addressing a people either in exile or anticipating it. By then, Assyria had waned, and Babylon had risen to dominate the region, eventually conquering Jerusalem and carrying many Judeans into exile in 586 B.C. These later chapters speak with extraordinary hope about God's power to redeem, restore, and bring his people home through this Immanuel, his one and only son, Jesus.

It is Jesus, the incarnation of the living God, who Isaiah promised would come as a child born, a son given (Isa. 9:7). Jesus, the holy seed (Isa. 6:13) from the root of Jesse (Isa. 11:10), who would go to the cross for our sake: "being despised and rejected" and "pierced for our transgressions; crushed for our iniquities" (Isa. 53:3,5). In the midst of exile, Isaiah prophesied only one way home to our God: through the arrival of the God-man, Jesus.

As Pastor Matt Popovits writes in this series, "What becomes plain [through the book of Isaiah] is this: when Jesus comes, he brings with him a Kingdom. A reign. A Home and haven under God's care that is very, very good."

Continue

For this year's Advent Sermon series, we'll focus on five passages in Isaiah where the promises of God - fulfilled in either Jesus' arrival or his second coming - proclaim to us that while we long to find peace, belonging, and comfort this time of year, our ultimate Christmas gift is our citizenship in his kingdom. For he is the Home who has come to win us back from exile, keep us safe in his embrace, and promises that we will someday reside with him forever.

In Christ,

Pastor Tom

Pastor Tom Vanderbilt



DECK THE HALLS!!

Please mark your calendars.
Saturday, December 6 , 9:00 AM
Come one Come All
Help us decorate our church
for Christmas!
Everyone welcome!
The more the merrier!!

Rite of Confirmation

Isabella Allen, Noah Allen,
Sydney Jackson, Hunter Koenig,
Ethan Loux, Kenna Roan,
Rachel Sickles, Carson Vail



JUNIOR YOUTH GATHERING 2025



Junior Youth Gathering -
October 2025

Sara Vanderbilt,
Finn Koenig,
Sophie Helgeson,
Anna Sickels,
Kira Cawthorn,
Riley (friend of Kira's)



SENIOR YOUTH GATHERING 2025



Youth and Chaperones

Hunter Koenig
Pastor Tom
Jonah Cawthorn
Isaac Tague
Sara Vanderbilt



Connecting with the Church



DIRECTORY UPDATES:

No new updates

Connie Boettcher	2-Dec
Chad Kuehl	2-Dec
Brent Matthias	2-Dec
Bridget Sickles	3-Dec
Kira Matthias	4-Dec
Laney Bohannon	5-Dec
Zane Koenig	6-Dec
Sherrie Engel	9-Dec
Judy Reamon	10-Dec
Maxine Bohannon	10-Dec
Wendy Hauser	11-Dec
Linda Norton	13-Dec
Quinn Jacobs	17-Dec
Mike Olson	19-Dec
RJ Priebe	21-Dec
Bud Bohannon	26-Dec
Joan Parker	30-Dec
Barb Gould	31-Dec



HELPING HAND SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FOOD PANTRY

Dish Soap
Mac & Cheese
Canned Ravioli
Hamburger Helper
Canned Soup
Cereal
Ramen Noodles
Chili Beans
Peanut Butter

Please notify the church office of updates or changes to your address or contact information or any corrections to the

Church Directory at office@mt-calvary.com

or call 515-961-4321.

THANK YOU!

Colleen DeLanoit
Office Administrator

Office Hours:

Monday-Friday

8:00 am - 12:00 pm

**This month Mt. Calvary
Delivered
grocery items to support
the Food Pantry.
Thank you for your
continued support!**

Opportunities to Serve



Available dates to donate flowers for the altar on Sunday.

Dec. 7 – Connie Boettcher

Dec. 14 - Available

Dec. 21 – Mike & Jen Olson

Dec. 28 - Available

Jan. 4 - Available

Altar Flowers – Needed: Individuals can sign up to place flowers for the altar or to donate to the “Flower Fund.” Place checks/cash in the offering and mark “Flowers” or you can use the online option to donate. You may sign up for a specific week on the flower calendar located on the Pillar. If you have a special occasion and would like flowers ordered for you and placed on the altar, contact Sherrie Engel. We need two arrangements for the altar total cost \$50.00. Contact Sherrie Engel, 515-490-2333 for more information. There are plenty of Sundays available.



Available dates to host Sunday Morning Treats

If no one signs up..... no treats!! ☹️

Dec. 7 –

Dec. 14 -

Dec. 21 –

Dec. 28 -



Available dates to Host a Mid-Week Meal

Dec. 3 – LWML

Dec. 10 – Worship Board

Dec. 17 – Board of Education

Dec. 24 - NO MEAL

Dec. 31 - NO MEAL

Jan. 7 - Available

We are needing help preparing our Wednesday night, Midweek meals. If you are willing to help please sign up on the signup sheet on the pillar in the fellowship hall. We offer financial assistance to anyone willing to prepare the meal. Everyone is welcome to attend our Wednesday night meals!



*Bring your favorite Cookies or
Candy's and take some home!*

When: Dec 21nd 9:15-10:15

Where: Fellowship Area

How: Use your container or we will have some to fill.

Take Home and Enjoy!!!

Merry Christmas!

Mission Central



Thank you for your ongoing
support of our mission projects!

Bake Sale

Thank you to everyone that helped make the LWML bake sale a success! With the proceeds from the bake sale, the fellowship time donuts and other funds donated throughout the year, we were able to donate money to the following:

Operation Christmas
Heal House of Warren County
Lutheran Bible Translators
the Mock Family missionaries
Hope Ministries
Harvest Academy

We are blessed to be able to donate these funds to these wonderful organizations and charities.



Upcoming Events:

LWML Quarterly meeting, Saturday, January 24th at 9:30 am. Please bring a brunch item to share. (*Weather reschedule date if needed, is Saturday, February 7th*)

All women are invited and encouraged to attend the meeting. See you there!

Merry Christmas!

Opportunities to Serve

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We are in great need of Volunteers to step up and help with our MidWeek Meals on Wednesday nights. We have guests that come every week expecting a meal as well as Heal House guests and our church member students that attend our education classes. If we have no volunteers, our Discipleship group members have been stepping up to make sure there is a meal. Our Discipleship group cannot continue to make every meal. If we do not have volunteers to prepare meals, there will be no meals. So find a couple friends and create your own group to help with a meal. Discipleship is willing to purchase ingredients the weekend before if you cannot afford to buy the ingredients but would be willing to make a meal. If you would like to purchase the ingredients and be reimbursed you need to fill out a reimbursement form found in the kitchen cabinet. If you don't know how much food to make for the meal (we serve between 40-50 each week), we can help you with the amounts needed. Contact Ed & JoAnn Chapman @ 515-250-3847 or djchapman@chapmanhome.tech.



OTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE:

Talk to the church office about becoming a Reader in Worship.

Talk to an Elder about becoming an Usher at either service.

Volunteer to be a song leader at our 10:30 am Sunday service.

Sunday Morning treats – Volunteers needed to host at Sunday morning coffee time.
A sign up sheet is on the pillar in the fellowship hall.

Altar Flowers – Needed: Individuals to sign up to place flowers for the altar or to donate to the “Flower Fund.” Check out the flower chart on the pillar in the fellowship hall.

Worship Board

☞ Serve Your Church: Join the Memorial Gift Committee ☞

Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church is seeking enthusiastic members to join a newly forming and vital group: the Memorial Gift Committee.

This dedicated committee will be responsible for the thoughtful and effective management of memorial gifts given to the church. Memorial gifts are a lasting testament to the faith and life of departed loved ones, and this committee will ensure those gifts are utilized in ways that honor their memory and benefit our congregation.

What the Committee Will Do:

- * Reviewing and acknowledging memorial gifts.
- * Discussing and recommending appropriate projects or purchases for the gifts.
- * Ensuring transparency and respect in the stewardship of these special donations.

This is a meaningful way to contribute to the legacy and future of Mt. Calvary. If you have a heart for stewardship and would like to help manage these important gifts, we invite you to express your interest!

To Learn More or Express Interest:

Please contact Jennifer Olson at (515) 490-8010. We look forward to your involvement!



HEAL House
(Homeless Empowerment And Love)

Needs: Coffee pods
Powdered Coffee
Microwaveable Oatmeal
Laundry Detergent

DONATION DRIVE

for

THE HELPING HAND OF WARREN COUNTY!

*With your help,
we can make a difference in the lives of
families in our community by donating
Personal Care Items!*

Soap/shower gel	Lip balm
Shampoo, conditioner	Lotion
Razors, shave cream	Sunscreen
Toothbrushes & paste	Nail clippers/tweezers
Mouthwash	Cotton balls/Swabs
Dental floss	Wipes
Deodorant	Feminine hygiene items
Hand soap	First aid items
Combs & Brushes	Bandages
Hair ties/clips	Antibiotic ointment
Styling products	Thermometers



MISSION CENTRAL

LCMS Mission Advancement

40718 County Highway E-16

Mapleton, Iowa 51034

www.missioncentral.us



Missionary Gary Thies, *Director and Mission Development Counselor*

Rev. Steve Schulz, *Mission Advocate and Pastoral Advisor*

Mr. Jim Schroeder, *Gift and Estate Planning Counselor*

Gary.Thies@lcms.org (712) 251-1264

Steve.Schulz@lcms.org (712) 882-1029

Jim.Schroeder@lcms.org (515) 490-7371

November, 2025

Joy and peace to you, dearly loved members of our Mission Central family.

As these special seasons of Thanksgiving and Christmas approach, we rejoice in God's wonderful gift of salvation through Jesus! We also thank God for YOU and the work He has accomplished through you.

Because you have helped to send and support missionaries, last Christmas Eve 120 people on a beach in **the Cayman Islands** heard the true meaning of Christmas; and a 77-year-old man in **Belize** was invited to church for the very first time in his life; and unchurched people in **Panama** learned of Jesus in Vacation Bible School; and 54 ostracized albino children no longer live in a **Tanzanian** government institution with 500 others, but in a family-like group setting where they experience the love of Christ. Also, 110 participants from all over **Cambodia** (a nation that is only 2% Christian) received and studied their very own Bibles at our first ever national youth gathering there. Pray for these youth to be powerful witnesses to their Buddhist families. And more than 2,000 middle school students in Chiayi, **Taiwan** were taught Bible stories at Concordia Middle School. Only 1% of these students are Christian when they enroll, but over 10% are Christian when they graduate. One day these very children will celebrate with us around the throne of Jesus.

As we listen to these and other stories of our missionaries, we realize that there is a worldwide famine of God's truth. In some places, Christianity is completely unknown. In others, it is violently suppressed or mixed with pagan religious practices. In many, God's truth is distorted by false prophets adding requirements to God's forgiveness, or denying clear counter-cultural teachings of Scripture, or even preaching a fabricated gospel of earthly riches. Friends, we have the truth of God's Word and through your generosity our missionaries are proclaiming that truth—all over the world! As we send you this **one and only** annual mailing, we are deeply grateful to God for you in helping to make this vital work possible!

As one of our missionaries with tears in his eyes told our barn full of supporters, "We know that for many of you, supporting us missionaries on the field requires sacrifice. Sometimes you decide to go without, so that we can do what we do. Please know that we are humbled and grateful!"

We, too, are thankful for your past support, and should the Lord provide the means and desire to send an additional gift this year for the work of the Gospel, enclosed is an opportunity for you to prayerfully consider. Be assured that **100%** of your gift will go to support our mission efforts to spread the Good News about Jesus! Also enclosed are a few pictures to share with you some of the many ways that God has blessed us this past year.

One of those blessings is Jim Schroeder, our new staff member. So many people have asked us how they can support our LCMS missionaries through their estate plan, and now we have Jim to help. After retiring from 36 years with the LCMS Foundation, Jim is offering his estate planning expertise as a **free** service to our Mission Central family. If you would like to arrange a visit with him, please contact us. We thank God for the gifts and talents Jim brings to this important work.

Please know how much you are loved and appreciated by all of us out here in the hills of western Iowa! We pray that God would continue to richly bless you and your family and fill your lives with His presence and His peace.

Gary, Steve, Jim, and Sonya

Dear Friend of Camp Okoboji,

Memories . .

Close your eyes for a moment and think about a favorite memory from Camp Okoboji. Maybe it's a sunrise over the lake, laughter echoing from the dining hall, the sound of campfire songs under the stars, or a quiet moment of prayer where you felt God's presence in a powerful way.

Those memories are treasures — reminders of the ways God works through Camp Okoboji to connect His people with Him, with creation, and with one another.

Every summer, new memories are made here. Children discover what it means to be rooted in Christ. Families find rest and renewal. Volunteers and staff share their faith in countless ways. The legacy of faith, friendship, and transformation continues — because of faithful supporters like you.

As this year draws to a close, I invite you to help ensure that future generations will continue to make their own Camp Okoboji memories. Your gift to the Annual Fund provides the daily support that keeps camp thriving — maintaining facilities, supporting ministry staff, and making camp experiences possible for everyone.

Thank you for being part of the Camp Okoboji story — past, present, and future.

As we enter the most generous time of year, I ask you to consider a gift to support Camp Okoboji's Annual Fund. As we participate in **Giving Tuesday** this year, I am thankful to share we have a matching gift! Your donation on or before December 2nd, 2025, will be matched \$1 for every \$2 raised up to \$10,000!

Support our ministry as we fulfill our vision of refreshing body and spirit for all those we serve. Please prayerfully consider making a gift today.

In Christ,

Adam Hengeveld
Executive Director

P.S. Each gift — no matter the size — helps create lasting memories and life-changing moments at Camp Okoboji. Please consider making your annual fund gift today.



This [Giving Tuesday](#), (which is celebrated each year on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving), we invite you to share the love of Christ with those around the world who have not yet heard the Good News! With global outreach through Gospel sharing resources from Lutheran Hour Ministries and your financial support, you can join us in *Bringing Christ to the Nations—and the Nations to the Church*. Generous supporters of LHM have come together this Giving Tuesday to double your gifts up to \$50,000, taking your donation twice as far! Plus, we have made the opportunities to donate easier than ever. For you to take full advantage, we have outlined all the ways you can share Christ's love around the world this [Giving Tuesday](#) 2025!

1. Visit lhm.org/giving-tuesday

LHM needs your support this Giving Tuesday to give the hope of Christ to individuals around the world. Through your financial support and the use of our resources, you enable us to equip individuals and communities both in the U.S and abroad to share the love of Christ with the nations.

2. Call 1-800-876-9880

You can always grab the phone and give us a call to make your gift! This day of giving goes beyond its social media roots and celebrates your gift, no matter the medium!

3. Mail your donation to:

Lutheran Hour Ministries
Attn: GivingTuesday
660 Mason Ridge Center Drive
St. Louis MO, 63141

**Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church
Council Meeting
October 20, 2025**

Attendance: Pastor Vanderbilt, Ken Tague, Jake Hermanson, David Cormeny, Ed Chapman, JoAnn Chapman, Mary Barkley, Terry Pauling, Jen Olson, Linda Norton, Natasha Cooper

Ken called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM.

Jake motioned to approve September 2025's council minutes. Mary seconded the motion. Motion carried with unanimous vote.

Pastor Report- (See Email Attachment)

“Bridging the Gap”, October 4th with Keith Haney

-Where Are We?

-Who is in our community?

-How do we bridge the gap?

Pastor would like to give this presentation at the Congregational meeting. Please see his attachment.

Elder's Report- Jake (See Email Attachment)

-The new candelabras are too high for the acolytes. The elders' plan to build a step box for them.

Financial Report- Linda (See Email Attachment)

-David motioned to approve September 2025's Financial Report. Terry seconded the motion. The motion carried with unanimous vote.

Treasurer's Report- Mary Barkley (See Email Attachment)

-Choir director's pay is now coming out of LCEF.

-Natasha motioned to approve September 2025's Treasurer's Report. Linda seconded the motion.

The motion was carried with a unanimous vote.

Education Report- N/A

Evangelism Report- N/A

Discipleship Report- Ed and JoAnn Chapman (See Email Attachments)

Worship Report- Jen Olson (See Email Attachment)

Youth Report- Natasha Cooper (See Email Attachments)

Records Report- David Cormeny (See Email Attachments)

Stewardship Report-N/A (See Email Attachments)

Property Report- Terry Pauling (See Email Attachments)

-Parking lines will be painted on Thursday

-The walking path and firepit are ready by the pond. Firewood is available.

Terry motioned that we donate \$20,000 to the WeLift Compassion Fund. Jen seconded the motion.

-Pastor Tom had concerns that we may be doing good works but not uplifting Christ in our donations. Terry withdrew his motion.

Council discussed options for our \$50,000 local mission donation.

-Pastor Tom suggested a new service from Lutheran Services. Donating money to cover the cost of adoption into Lutheran families.

-Ken suggested Nancy's Place. This organization helps handicapped people get housing with handicapped access.

-Council decided to table the discussion until December. More time is needed for additional thoughts and ideas.

Church council discussed the five organizations that would be giving donations to in 2026.

-Terry motioned that organizations remain the same except that Hope Foundation would be replaced by WeLift Compassion Fund. Jen seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Jake motioned that the 2026 Mt. Calvary Church Council Budget be approved. Natasha seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Jake motioned that we take the \$25,000 from the endowment fund into our general budget. Terry seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

New Business

-JoAnn needs volunteers for Wednesday meals. We will bring this to the congregation at November's meeting. We will also add it to Calvary's Current.

Having no further business, a motion to adjourn was offered by Jake, a second by Jen. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,
David Cormeny



ELDER CARE LIST

If your last name begins

With the letter:

Your Elder is

A – D	Brad Rodemeyer	515-669-3108
E – H	David Cooper	515-971-3197
I – L	Steve Smith	641-414-2704
M – Q	Mike Oeffner	712-579-2586
R – U	David Jordan	515-371-3360
V – Z	Jake Hermanson	515-205-9117

		SERVING IN WORSHIP				
Date	Accolytes	Greeters	Ushers	Elders	Readers	Counters
3-Dec	Sophie Cormeny &					
Advent	Gia Bingham	Laurel Cogswell	Kyle Wiese &	Mike Oeffner	X	
7-Dec	E: Blake Bingham	M. Meyer & L. Norton	Bud Bohannon & Terry Pauling	David Cooper	Caroline Koenig	
	L: Anna Sickels	Kyle & Lisa Wiese	Becky Hammar & Anita Blonigan	Mike Oeffner	Erin DeJong	Gene & Melinda Grimm
10-Dec	Sophie & Penny					
Advent	Helgeson	Mark & Diane Johnson	Bill Engel &	Jake Hermanson	X	
14-Dec	E: Finn & Zane Koenig	Jo Pulse & Jean Schroeder	Slade & Hunter Koenig	Steve Smith	Jeret Koenig	
	L: Kira Cawthorn	Nancy Hauge	Steve Hauge &	Jake Hermanson	Bill Engel	Dave & Julie Jordan
17-Dec	Kade & Kori					
Advent	Roan	Steve & Karla Roush	Steve Roush	Dave Jordan	X	
21-Dec	E William Griffith, Sr.	Barb Gould & Marilyn Groth	Paul Ophus & Bill Sponsler	Brad Rodemeyer	Linda Norton	
	L Jocelyn Cawthorn	Julie Jordan	Kraig & Julie Daugherty	Dave Jordan	Jill Sickels	Jen & Mike Olson
24-Dec	Blake & Gia				X	
	Bingham	Brad & Nancy Rodemeyer	Jerry Ohnemus & Steve Hauge	Jake Hermanson	X	
25-Dec	William Griffith, Sr.	M. Meyer & L. Norton	Andy Bakke & Terry Pauling	Steve Smith		
28-Dec	E Sophie Cormeny	Laurel Cogswell	Mark & Diane Johnson	David Cooper	Jean Schroeder	
	L Anna Sickels	Dave & Judy Zwanziger	Kyle Wiese &	Mike Oeffner	Charlotte Weaklend	Mike & Emily Oeffner
2026						
4-Jan	E Kade & Kori Roan	Jo Pulse & Jean Schroeder	Steve Roush & Bill Sponsler	Steve Smith	Terry Pauling	
	L Kira Cawthorn	Kyle & Lisa Wiese	Becky Hammar & Anita Blonigan	Jake Hermanson	Erin DeJong	Gene & Melinda Grimm
	Thank you for serving. If you are unable to serve please find someone who can!					



A prayer

*that your Christmas is
filled with good things
like laughter and love
and the joy that it brings.*

*A prayer that your
Christmas is great
from the start,
bringing memories
that linger
and never depart.*

December 2025

December 2025							January 2026						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
7	1	2	3	4	5	6	4	5	6	7	1	2	3
14	8	9	10	11	12	13	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
21	15	16	17	18	19	20	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
28	22	23	24	25	26	27	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Nov 30	Dec 1	2	3	4	5	6
	12:00pm Men's Bible Study 6:00pm Worship Board Meeting 6:00pm Discipleship	9:00am Textile Tuesday	10:30am Advent mid-day Service 5:30pm Midweek Meal 6:00pm L.I.F.E. Classes 7:00pm Advent Service			9:00am Church Christmas Decorating
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
8:00am Traditional 9:15am Sunday School and Bible Class 10:30am Blended	12:00pm Men's Bible Study 6:00pm Board of Educa. Mtg. 7:00pm 4-H Meeting	9:00am Textile Tuesday	10:30am Advent mid-day Service 5:30pm Midweek Meal 6:00pm L.I.F.E. Classes 7:00pm Advent Service			
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
8:00am Traditional 9:15am Sunday School and Bible Class 10:30am Blended	12:00pm Men's Bible Study 6:00pm Church Council Meeting	9:00am Textile Tuesday	10:30am Advent mid-day Service 5:30pm Midweek Meal 6:00pm L.I.F.E. Classes 7:00pm Advent Service			
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
8:00am Traditional 9:15am Sunday School and Bible Class 10:30am Blended	8:00am 12:00pm Men's Bible Study 6:00pm Elders Meeting		School Winter Break 5:30pm NO Meal; NO Classes 5:30pm Christmas Eve Service	Church Office closed 10:00am Christmas Day Service	5:00pm Church Office closed	
28	29	30	31	Jan 1, 26	2	3
8:00am Traditional 9:15am Sunday School and Bible Class 10:30am Blended	8:00am 12:00pm Men's Bible Study	School Winter Break	5:30pm NO Meal; NO Classes			