



## GLORIA DEI LUTHERAN CHURCH

Organized in 1927 as St. Johns Lutheran Church  
A part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
2600 Pontiac Road  
Auburn Hills, MI 48326

First Class Mail

**Christmas Eve Worship: December 24 at 4:00 PM**

# DeiMinder

*Christmas Eve Worship - 4:00 PM*



## GLORIA DEI LUTHERAN CHURCH

83 Years of Celebrating the Glory of God • December 2009 Newsletter

# GLORIA DEI LUTHERAN CHURCH

Please see page 11 for contact information

## Worship Schedule

**Sunday Worship with Holy Communion: 10:30 AM**

**Children's Sunday School: 10:30 AM**

**Adult Bible Study: 9:15 AM**

**W**elcome to Gloria Dei Lutheran Church! You're invited to join us in worship each Sunday at 10:30 AM. Those who are interested in learning more about our congregation, or would be considering about becoming a member of our congregation, please speak with Gene Steensma, our council president, 248-332-9647 or email [gene.steensma@gloriadei.cc](mailto:gene.steensma@gloriadei.cc)



*The calendar and worship assistant list is now on a handy insert included with this newsletter. Additional copies are available at church or it can be downloaded at [www.GloriaDei.cc](http://www.GloriaDei.cc).*

## Remember all those in need of prayer...

Please remember in prayer all those who are sick, hospitalized, homebound, or recovering -- including Geri Allen, Marcia Altheon, Patti Amshay, Rhonda Chilkott, Carrie Cook, Vocloe Edds, Jeffrey Gorecki, Vickie Edds, Debbie K. Hunt, Nancy Kelly, Barb Lucas, Pearl Pennybacker, Family of Robert Spencer, Don Steensma, Emma Vidlund, Peter Vidlund, Jamie Williams, and Donna Williamson.

## Dining out with Gloria is December 17



Join us for an evening of fun, food and fellowship at Dining out with Gloria on Thursday, December 17 at 7:00 PM. We'll be meeting at Macaroni Grill restaurant on Squirrel Road, south of Walton, in Auburn Hills. Remember to invite FRAN (Friends, Relatives, Associates and Neighbors) to join us!

**GLORIA DEI LUTHERAN CHURCH**

## Christmas Eve

**S**urrounded by the darkness around us and haunted by the shadows within, we gather on Christmas Eve to celebrate the birth of a child. Hearing the wonderful story of Luke once again, we know why we gather each year to hear again this story we know so well. Into lives with darkness around and shadows within, God has given us a gift of good news and great joy - Jesus the Messiah is born.



Before the glory of the Lord stops shining this night, we understand that this child is God with us, among us, one of us, and that this child is the crucified and risen Lord.

Before the singing of the heavenly host is drowned out by a new year, we understand this story as a matter of life and death. On Christmas Eve there is more than enough life to go around. There is more than enough life to center our lives. More than enough life to embrace the tragedies that beset us. There is more than enough life to breathe new life into us at the beginning of every day. Christmas Eve is about The Word Before Dawn. Our Schedule is as follows:

**December 24: 4:00pm** - Christmas Eve Holy Communion Service

*Please note that we will not be having an 11:00 PM service this year.*



*Merry Christmas and  
Happy New Year  
from the Gloria Dei  
Lutheran Church Staff*

*Eleanor Beaver · Scott Johnson · Terry Rajala*

## From the Council President

Friends in Christ,

May the Peace of the Lord be with you at Christmas and always.

“Merry Christmas” and “God Jul” are just two ways of acknowledging the wonderful event of the birth of the Christ-child. We attend advent and Christmas services, celebrate with family, friends and community in many different ways enjoying the spirit of the Yule season.

Christmas also is the time of year when we focus on the need for increased charity. It should be a year-long commitment but people seem to be more aware during this time of year of the needs of those less fortunate. An ad caught my eye in the U.S.A. Today newspaper recently. It was from Macy's Department Stores. It was an invitation to send a letter addressed to Santa Claus (in stamped envelope) and depositing it in the Santa letterbox at a Macy's Dept. Store. Macy's will send \$1 for each letter received to the MAKE A WISH FOUNDATION. M.A.W.F. is especially close to my heart as my great-nephew Brendan (Steensma) Thompson of Utah was a recipient of a M.A.W.F. grant before he died of leukemia at age 5.

*If you would like to be a part of this project, just write a letter to:*

SANTA AT THE NORTH POLE

Either take it to a Macy's Department Store or bring it to the church and I will see that it gets in Santa's letterbox at Macy's.

If you would like more information visit online: [macys.com/believe](http://macys.com/believe)

Delores and I wish all of you a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Yours in Christ,  
Gene Steensma  
Congregation Council President

**GLORIA DEI LUTHERAN CHURCH**



## Advent Midweek Worship Schedule

Join us for weekday worship during Advent. Services will be held at 7:00 PM. You're also invited to potluck suppers, held before the evening worship services, at 6:00 PM. If you are able, please bring a dish or dessert to pass. We're sure there will be plenty for all!

|                    |         |   |
|--------------------|---------|---|
| Wednesday, Dec. 2  | 6:00 PM | Advent Potluck Supper                       |
|                    | 7:00 PM | Evening Advent Prayer Service               |
| Wednesday, Dec. 9  | 6:00 PM | Advent Potluck Supper                       |
|                    | 7:00 PM | Advent Service w/ "Sissel" DVD Presentation |
| Wednesday, Dec. 16 | 6:00 PM | Advent Potluck Supper                       |
|                    | 7:00 PM | Evening Advent Service w/Band Ensemble      |

## Entertainment books are still available!

Once again this year our congregation is selling Entertainment Coupon Books to help raise money for our church. The books are \$20 each and include coupons for restaurants, fast food, pizza, subs, dry cleaning, travel and more. Use the book just twice and most likely it'll pay for itself! Please see Scott Johnson if you are interested. If you would like to sell the books at your job, please ask Scott for a fundraiser poster.



## The Mitten Tree

The mitten trees are now up in the narthex, and are waiting for handmade or store-bought mittens, hats and gloves, which will be distributed to local needy children.



# Christmas Poinsettias

Poinsettias decorating the chancel on Christmas Eve has been one of the favorite traditions of members and friends of Gloria Dei for generations. Once again this year, we are offering poinsettias for you to purchase in memory or in honor of loved ones, which will be used to decorate the chancel. Following the worship service on Christmas Eve, you may take your plant(s) home to enjoy.



The cost is \$8 per plant; orders must be placed by Wednesday, December 16. Please make checks payable to Gloria Dei and indicate "poinsettia" in the memo section. You can place your order and payment in the offering plate on Sunday, or mail back to the church.

Thank you for your order!  
The Gloria Dei Altar Guild

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## GLORIA DEI LUTHERAN CHURCH Poinsettia Order Form

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of plants: \_\_\_\_\_ Total amount (\$8 per plant): \_\_\_\_\_

**Example** Memory Honor of: Jack and Gunda Frost

Plant #1 Memory Honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

Plant #2 Memory Honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

Plant #3 Memory Honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

Please clip this order form out on the line and place in the offering plate with your payment on Sunday or mail back to the church. Thank you!

## Worship & Pastoral News

We are pleased to announce that Mr. Carl Bloom will be leading worship starting on Sunday, December 6. We bid a fond farewell to Pastor Bud Miller, who has served as our interim pastor since May. Pastor Bud and his wife Barbara returned to Florida on November 30.

The Gloria Dei choir will be rehearsing during Advent on Sunday mornings at 9:30 AM.



Speak to one another  
with Psalms, Hymns  
and Spiritual Songs.  
Sing and make music  
in your heart to the LORD.



Decorate  
the church!

**Stay after the worship service on Sunday, December 6 to decorate the church for Christmas! We'll have snacks and a lot of fun!**

## Gloria Dei Commemorative Mugs

We still have several Gloria Dei 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary commemorative travel mugs available for sale for \$5.00, which is half-off their original price. If you regularly use travel mugs, upgrade your worn-out ones today for our stainless steel and lucite model! You still have the chance to own one (or more!) of these great looking mugs – the sleek, contemporary design is identical to those sold at the Hard Rock Café gift store – except ours have the even niftier Gloria Dei logo and our unique 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary insignia! Please contact Scott Johnson or Gene Steensma if you are interested.



# Advent Home Devotions

Do you want to incorporate personal devotions in your everyday life? Are you not sure how to do that? Advent is a wonderful time to begin, or begin again. Below is a format suggested by Dr. Fred Niedner, professor of Theology, of Valparaiso University.

## A Format for Advent Devotions

Verse: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
Response: Amen

*Someone lights the candle(s) on the Advent wreath*



Verse: The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

Response: Joy to the world, the Lord is come.

Verse: In him is light and life. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot overcome it.

Response: Joy to the world, the Lord is come.

Verse: You come to us and through us, O Christ, with wonders of your love.

Response: Joy to the world, the Lord is come.

*Read the Scripture for the day  
Read the devotion and prayer of the day*

Final Prayer:

Bless our home this night and day,  
As we work and sleep and play,  
In what we do and what we say,  
Surround us with Christ's love and way. Amen.



Check out the daily prayers featured on our website – [www.gloriadei.cc](http://www.gloriadei.cc) -- they are updated daily. Choose "Daily Prayers," which includes prayers and daily Bible readings and verses.

## Mostly about people

Come to church on Wednesday evenings during advent! We have three special worship services planned! On Wed., Dec. 2 there will be a special prayer service; on Wed., Dec. 9 we will be showing the "Sissel" performance on our projection TV, and on Wed., Dec. 16, Carl Bloom has arranged for a special musical band performance. Hope you can make it! The Wednesday evening services start at 7:00 PM and a potluck supper will be held at 6:00 PM before worship. Carl Bloom will be officiating at these services.....Please note that the last day to make an offering for the 2009 calendar year is Sunday, December 27. All offerings received after this date will be processed as 2010 offerings. We thank you for your understanding.....Contribution statements of offerings will be mailed out in early January.....2010 Offering Envelopes will be available mid-month in the east hallway across from the library; please also help yourself to 2010 calendars and devotional guides on the same table.....Coffee Hour Hosts and Flower Donors are needed for several upcoming Sundays; if you are able to volunteer or donate, please sign up on the bulletin board in the east hallway, across from the library..... Please invite friends, relatives, associates and neighbors (FRAN) to our Christmas Eve worship service on Thursday, December 24 at 4:00 PM. Also, please note that there will **not** be a Christmas Eve worship service at 11:00 PM this year.....Interested in purchasing a poinsettia for Christmas? Once again this year you may purchase poinsettias, which will be used to decorate the chancel on Christmas Eve. The plants can be taken home following the 4:00 PM worship service. If you are interested, the cost is \$8.00 per plant; simply fill out the form on page 6 and return with payment to the church (checks made payable to Gloria Dei). The due date is Wed., Dec. 16.....We'll be decorating the church for Christmas on Sun., Dec. 6 following the worship service – hope you can make it!.....Please consider recycling this newsletter once you are finished reading it – you can give it to someone who might enjoy also reading it, or include it with the rest of your recyclables. The DeiMinder, as well as the Sunday worship booklets are being printed on 100% recycled paper, which was generously donated to our congregation.....

## The history of Chrismons, which adorn the Gloria Dei Christmas Tree



Chrismons are handmade Christmas tree ornaments with various symbols of Christianity. The name Chrismon comes from a combination of CHRISt and MONogram. Some of the traditional symbols of Christianity are monograms composed of various combinations of letters of the name Christ or titles for Jesus. They are sometimes called Christograms. An early example is the Chi-Rho monogram, composed of the first two letters in Greek of the word Christos (Gk: chi, X = ch; rho, P = r).

These monograms and other symbols, such as the sign of the fish, were in use early in the church as secret symbols of Christianity. However, they became popular in the fourth century AD when the Roman emperor Constantine, after his conversion to Christianity, adapted the Chi-Rho monogram as his military ensign.

Chrismons are a recent innovative way to use these ancient symbols at Christmas. They originated from Mrs. Frances Spencer, who began making Christmas decorations from a variety of materials and left-over Christmas paper and decorations in the late 1940s. Since she had become proficient in ornament making, her church, Ascension Lutheran Church in Danville, Virginia, asked her to decorate the church's Christmas tree. Rather than making the typical secular styles of ornaments, she decided to use the traditional symbols of Christianity in the main liturgical colors of Christmas, white and gold. In 1957 she coined the term Chrismons for her creations and began the Chrismon ministry that is continued today by Ascension Lutheran Church. The practice of using Chrismons has spread and is becoming an increasingly popular way for churches and families to retain a sense of the sacred amid the secularization of this important Christian holiday.

In order to preserve the heritage of Mrs. Spencer's understanding of the nature of Chrismons they should not be bought or sold, so there will not be a rack of Chrismons in a store (although some companies have begun making and selling them). To preserve the spirit of Chrismons they should only be made by hand and given as gifts. Also, to preserve the tradition of what Chrismons represent, the primary colors should be the liturgical colors of Christmas, white (or silver) and gold (see The Colors of the Church Year). Beyond that, they can be made from a variety of materials with a range of traditional Christian symbols limited only by the creativity of the person making them.

Source: CRI Voice Institute



# GLORIA DEI LUTHERAN CHURCH

*Sharing the peace of God's Grace with the World*

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