

Sundays and Beyond

December 2023
East Koshkonong Lutheran Church
ELCA



Friends in Christ,

A few years ago, I went to a Walmart to buy some groceries and some things for the house. When I walked in, I noticed that there was a sign counting down the number of days until “Christmas”. I thought this was a little odd because it was only October, a little early don’t you think? Honestly, that sign was there to try and influence people to buy more presents, decorations, and food for the upcoming “Christmas” season. Really that is the same point behind most “Christmas” advertising in this country, and it’s working. In fact, did you know that in US people spend over \$450 billion every year on stuff for “Christmas”? That’s a lot of money!

The reason I’ve put the word Christmas in quotation marks up to this point is because so far I’ve only used it to describe the way that corporations and stores have hijacked the word to use in their marketing, which is really much more about consumerism than it is about Christmas. Christmas is about how God in Christ came to dwell among us as a human being to save this broken world (John 1). Jesus never mentioned anything about buying stuff to celebrate this good news. In fact, Jesus had many teachings that warned against the dangers of greed and consumerism (Luke 12:33-34, 14:33, Mark 10:17-31, ect). Instead, Jesus reminded humanity that our calling is to have faith in God and love our neighbors as ourselves (Luke 10:27) by feeding the hungry, caring for the sick, welcoming the foreigner, and so on (Matthew 25:31-46). What might it look like to focus our celebration of Christmas away from the mentality of buying stuff and instead make Jesus’s gospel message the focus?

I don’t have all of the answers to that question, but there’s a few changes that my family’s made to try and make the gospel the center of our Christmas celebration that I’d like to share. First, rather than buying countless presents for each other that we really don’t need, we instead just take some of the money that we’d use for them and tithe it to organizations that participate in God’s work of peace and justice. Second, instead of throwing big parties with more food than anyone needs and all kinds of party supplies, we just meet with our friends and families to share a simple meal and enjoy each other’s company. Finally, we’ve adapted a very simple approach to decorating where we don’t really buy any new decorations, instead we just stick the few we already have and we’ve discovered that it’s always enough to make things festive. I must say these changes have actually removed some stress from the season because there’s less shopping, cooking, and decorating to do ☐. Now don’t mishear me, I’m not saying not to have fun, throw parties, decorate your homes, or give gifts to each other during this season; after all Christmas is a time to celebrate! However, I think we can do all of those things in a ways that honor what the good news of Jesus Christ is really about.

When the gospel becomes central to our celebration of Christmas, I believe that it will not only make our lives less stressful, but that it will also help usher in the kind of world and life God envisioned for us all. To illustrate that point, I’d like to share that the estimated cost of creating a clean water supply for the entire world which God loves would be around \$20 billion a year, that is only about 5% of what we spend on “Christmas” stuff in this country each year. Thus, if everyone just took just 5% of the money we spend on presents, parties, food, and decorations each year and instead donated it to good organizations and charities working to build clean water supplies across the world, then we could eliminate one of the leading causes of preventable deaths today. Just imagine what else could be accomplished when we celebrate the good of Jesus Christ during the Christmas season in this way; poverty, hunger, homelessness and so many other injustices could all be made history in Jesus’s name. Thankfully we don’t have to only imagine that, because God calls and empowers us as the church to go out and do it in Jesus’s name, not only during the Christmas season but throughout our entire life together as the Church.

Shalom to you in Christ,
Pastor Eric.

A message from the President

Greetings Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

As the holidays are upon us, there is so much to be thankful and grateful for! I am thankful for my family and friends! And I am thankful for all that everyone does at our church. To everyone that does something – **even if it's something small** – it is appreciated!! All of the magic that happens to make a service go smoothly – you know who you are, and I know what you do! A heartfelt THANK YOU to you all!!! I am grateful for all of you and all that you give! You are the reason we are so strong!

Change is a constant these days, and many question the changes that have happened. Everything that is done, is done to better the church. There is nothing to fear. Our church will be celebrating 180 years next year. **You don't get to be 180 years old without changes taking place. Change is the one thing that is continuous in this world. As stated in Joshua 1:9, "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." We are a strong church! We are a courageous church! With the strength of God, all things are possible!**

I have enjoyed being the EKLC Church Council President this year. It was a change, but I wasn't scared. I embraced the challenge and appreciate all that have helped me along the way. It hasn't been easy, and I'm not done, but when I think about the future of our church – it excites me!

Our Sunday School kids are doing a different Christmas program this year. It's a change! They are not scared, but are SO excited to perform it for you!! We hope to see you all in church (or you see us online) on Sunday, December 17th.

I want to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Peace and love,

Denise Rockney



For many who are grieving loss, the holiday season is one of the toughest parts of the year. There will be a Blue Christmas service at East Koshkonong at noon on December 17 as a show of support for anyone experiencing loss during this holiday season as a reminder **that they aren't alone**. Please spread the word to those you know who are grieving and invite them to attend.

Pastor Eric will be out of the office December 25-January 1.



You may make a secure offering/donation to EKLC by following the directions below. All donations are secured through Vanco. Thank you for your generous offering in this way! Online giving directions: With all of these options, you may set up recurring donations or make a one-time donation.

Option 1: Go to www.eastkoshkonong.org and click on Donate. Create a profile through this secure website, if you haven't already, and complete the form on the website.

Option 2: Scan this QR code with your smartphone. Create a profile through this secure website, if you haven't already, and complete the form on the website.

Option 3: Download the GivePlus app on your smartphone for either Android or iOS. If needed, create an account with your email address. Sign into your account and search for "East Koshkonong Lutheran Church." Select the plus "+" sign and complete the form.

If you don't have online access for this giving option, you are welcome to fill out a form from the church office:

608-423-3017 or eastkoshkononglutheranchurch@gmail.com
OFFERINGS ARE ALSO ALWAYS APPRECIATED BY MAILING TO: EAST KOSHKONONG LUTHERAN CHURCH, 454 EAST CHURCH ROAD, CAMBRIDGE, WI 53523



Our Sunday School Christmas Program will be December 17 at 9 am

Bring in your Piggly Wiggly Receipts!
The CAMBRIDGE Piggly Wiggly donates a percentage of Piggly Wiggly dollars to EKLC from your receipts collected in the Church Narthex.

November Council Meeting:
Monday December, 18th @ 6:00pm

2023 COUNCIL

PRESIDENT: Denise Rockney

VICE-PRESIDENT: Oren Hammes

SECRETARY: Linda Hanson

TREASURER: Don Amundson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Hal Schuh

If you need to speak to a council member please call the church office to leave a message and they will return your call.

Treasurer's Report

October 2023 Income: \$23,548.38

Expense: \$17,456.07

October 2022 Income: \$22,755.30

Expense: \$16,409.34

YTD 2023 Income: \$228,998.48

Expense: \$244,017.06

YTD 2022 Income: \$194,390.24

Expense: \$188,395.90



Our sympathies to the families of Lowell Severson and Denise Veley who passed away.

The Church is looking for help on Sundays after worship to help count the offering money. If you are interested, please contact the church office or Joy Graffin.



ADVENT
& CHRISTMAS
WORSHIP SERVICES

LOWER CHURCH
17TH @ 9AM - CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM
17TH @ 12PM - BLUE CHRISTMAS
24TH @ 3PM - CHRISTMAS EVE
24TH @ 6PM - CHRISTMAS EVE

UPPER CHURCH
24TH @ 9AM - 4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
24TH @ 1PM - CHRISTMAS EVE

DECEMBER 25TH - CHRISTMAS DAY - NO SERVICE



Greetings from the church basement

Pondering the events of this year, I must again be thankful for the church basement. We just love having our own space where we can work on the quilts and kits without having to put everything away when we finish and take it out again to work the next time. If you go there, you may think it looks like a mess, but we know where everything is, and we love having it there. Thank you to the East congregation for giving us this space. We do try to represent the church in useful and needed ways.

Our December Pin and Sew will be held on Thursday, December 7, beginning at 8 AM. We break for coffee and business meeting at 9:30, and finish around noon. This year our Christmas event will be a Christmas Coffee on December 31 after service. The latest Fun and Done quilt will be raffled. Please plan to join us, and bring your family and weekend visitors along. Our hosts are Joy and Light Circles. Thanks to them for this fun time, and thanks to Light Circle for duties and December, and to Joy Circle for serving us in November. Thanks to the women who are participating in these groups. If there is someone who would like to participate in a Circle, please let me know and we will get you into one of the groups.

Thanks to all of you who put in so much time to keep our congregation going year after year. It takes a village!!!

Thanks to our dedicated Meals on Wheels deliverers. I am putting the schedule in a separate place hoping no one misses it. Advent greetings to all. Let's not get so busy that we forget to plan for the coming of the Saviour!

Communicator Carolyn

EKLC Homebound Members

Melissa Anderson

279 Hwy A, Cambridge, WI 53523

Bea Householder ~ Home Again

308 England St., Cambridge, WI 53523

Gary Johnson ~ Home Again

308 England St, Cambridge, WI 53523

Arlen Lund~ Home Again

308 England St., Cambridge, WI 53523

Wilma Furseth

1000 Ridge St 3B Stoughton, WI 53589

Betsy Calhoun

10702 W Hwy 14 Evansville, WI 53536

Belva Anderson

201 W Madison St Cambridge, WI 53523

Joan Volenberg

2315 Hwy W Cambridge, WI 53523

Edward & Linda Melton

1316 Vennevoll Dr Stoughton, WI 53589

Recipe Books Still Available

We had a very good response to our recipe book sale this year. We still have about 15 books left.

If you are interested in purchasing a book, please contact Marilyn Gunderson (423-3876). The cost

is \$15.00. If you write a check for payment, please write it to WELCA.

Worship Helpers for December 2023

In-Person and Virtual Worship Every Sunday at 9:00am with communion

If you are unable to serve on a date you are scheduled please make every effort to find a replacement. If you have any questions or concerns please communicate with the appropriate contact person.

Thank you!

Organist~

Judy Rusch

Assisting Ministers~ (Contact Person: Joy Graffin)

12/3 ~

12/10 ~

12/17 ~

12/24 9am Upper Church ~

1pm Upper Church ~

12/24 3pm Lower Church ~

6pm Lower Church ~

12/31 ~

Lay Readers~ (Contact Person: Bobbie Stach)

12/3 ~ Jane Furseth

12/10 ~ Anders Amundson

12/17 ~ Carolyn Lien

12/24 9am Upper Church ~ Trudy Spike

1pm Upper Church ~ Holly Loomis

12/24 3pm Lower Church ~ Vicki Schuh

6pm Lower Church ~ Beverly Lien

12/31 ~

Acolytes ~ (Contact: Bobbie Stach / Pastor Eric)

12/3 ~

12/10 ~

12/17 ~

12/24 9am Upper Church ~

1pm Upper Church ~

12/24 3pm Lower Church ~

6pm Lower Church ~

12/31 ~

Greeters~ (Contact Person: Judy Rusch)

12/3 ~ Barb & Curt Klemp

12/10 ~ Gloria Fruit

12/17 ~ Tom & Trudy Spike

12/24 9am Upper Church ~ Diane Luginbuhl

1pm Upper Church ~ Marilyn Gunderson

12/24 3pm Lower Church ~ Don & Eileen Hoehn

6pm Lower Church ~ Franklin & Beverly Lien

12/31 ~ Terland Family

Ushers~ (Contact Person: Vicki Schuh)

12/3 ~ Terland Family

12/10 ~ Hal Schuh

12/17 ~ Henry Furseth

12/24 9am Upper Church ~ Barb & Curt Klemp

1pm Upper Church ~ Amundson Family

12/24 3pm Lower Church ~ Eileen & Don Hoehn

6pm Lower Church ~ Lane & Judy Taylor

12/31 ~ Hal & Vicki Schuh

Communion Set-up/Take-down~

(Contact Person: Marge Stach)

Altar Guild

Offering Counters~

(Contact Person: Joy Graffin)

12/3 ~ Brenda Schroeder & Leila Carl

12/10 ~ Joy Graffin & Eric & Cheryl Nuenthel

12/17 ~ Joy Graffin & Gloria Fruit

12/24 9am ~ Brenda Schroeder & Lelia Carl

12/31 ~ Jean Lehr & Eric & Cheryl Nuenthel

Coffee Hour~ (Contact: Sign-up in Kitchen)

12/3 ~

12/10 ~ Choir

12/17 ~ Sunday School

12/31 ~ Light & Joy Circle

Church Lock up~

(Contact Person: Holly Loomis)

12/3 ~ Gloria Fruit

12/10 ~ Vicki Schuh

12/17 ~ Carolyn Lien

12/24 9am Upper Church ~ Holly Loomis

12/31 ~ Gloria Fruit

December 2023

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

					1 Office Closed	2
3 9:00am Worship 9:40 coffee fellowship	4	5 9:00am Staff Meeting 6:00pm Worship meeting	6 5:30 Worship 6:30 Confirmation	7 Pin & Sew 8am	8 Office Closed	9
10 9:00am Worship 9:40 coffee fellowship	11	12 9:00am Staff Meeting	13 5:30 Worship 6:30 Confirmation	14	15 Office Closed	16
17 9:00am Christmas Program 9:40 coffee fellowship 12pm Blue Christmas	18 6:00pm Council Meeting	19 9:00am Staff Meeting	20 5:30 Worship	21	22 Office Closed	23
24 9:00am Worship 1:00pm Christmas Eve Worship	25 Merry Christmas!	26 9:00am Staff Meeting	27	28	29	30
31 9:00am Worship 9:40 Christmas Coffee						

Sunday School Calendar 2023-2024	
12/3/2023	Christmas Program Rehearsal
12/10/2023	Christmas Program Rehearsal
12/17/2023	Christmas Program - host coffee hour
12/24/2023	<i>No Class - Merry Christmas</i>
12/31/2023	<i>No Class - Happy New Year</i>
1/7/2024	Sunday school
1/14/2024	Sunday school
1/21/2024	Sunday school
1/28/2024	Sunday school
2/4/2024	Kids sing during worship - host coffee hour & service project

Just wanted to get a reminder of the Sunday School calendar for the rest of the year.

The Christmas Program is coming up fast! We've handed out the parts and are working to bring the BEST program ever! The kids are pretty excited about it!

Like last year, we're planning on having pizza and going caroling on Sunday, December 10th after the program rehearsal.

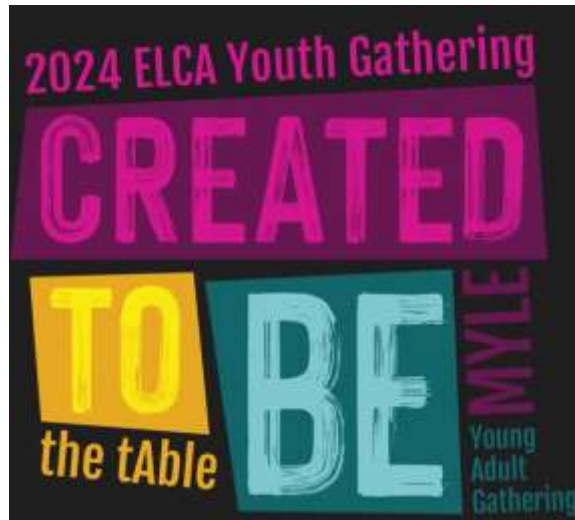
Something different from last year, we'll be hosting the coffee hour after the Christmas Program on December 17th.

Lots of fun ahead! Hope to see you all there!!

In God's Peace,
Denise & Erica



A special Christmas Coffee is being planned for after service on Sunday December 31. Joy and Light circles will be our hosts for this time together. This year's quilt will be given away at this time. Tickets for that quilt will be sold in advance. The proceeds go to finance our stewardship work, such as quilts and kits for Lutheran World Relief. Everyone (members, guests, friends) is invited to join in the celebration. We celebrate until Epiphany, so please come, and celebrate.



The 2024 National Youth Convention registration is now open!

The 2024 National Youth Convention will be July 16-20, 2024, in New Orleans, LA. Information can be found on the website www.elca.org/youthgathering.

The cost for a youth has been discounted by EKLC, as the rest will be covered by fundraising events.

Reach out to Pastor Eric or Denise Rockney by 12/31/23 if you are interested!

There will be no Wednesday night service on December 27, we'll resume them again on January 3.



There will be no Confirmation classes December 20, 27, or January 3. Classes will resume on January 10 at 6:30pm.

- Meals on Wheels Delivery Schedule for December
- Monday and Tuesday, December 4 & 5 - Donand Eileen Hoehn
- Wednesday, Dec 6 and Friday Dec 8 - Linda and Duane Dieckoff
- Thursday, Dec 7 - Carolyn Lien
- Monday and Tuesday, Dec 11&12 - Sheryl Hensel
- Wednesday and Thursday, December 13&14 - Ron and Shawn Anderson
- Friday, Dec 15 - Jeff Notstad

East Koshkonong Lutheran Church

454 East Church Road
Cambridge, WI 53523

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Tel: 608-423-3017

E-mail: eastkoshkononglutheranchurch@gmail.com

Website: www.eastkoshkonong.org

WORSHIP WITH US

AT 9:00AM

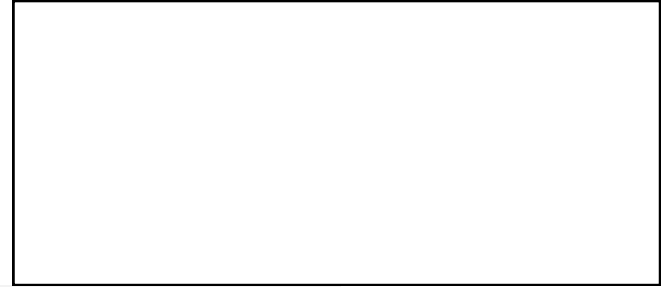
SUNDAY MORNINGS

- ⇒ IN-PERSON
- ⇒ YOUTUBE
- ⇒ FACEBOOK

In person at 5:30pm Wednesdays

TO WATCH WORSHIP ON YOUTUBE or FACEBOOK:

YOUTUBE: Go to East Koshkonong Lutheran Church" or the email eastkoshkononglutheranchurch@gmail.com.



OFFICE HOURS
Monday - Thursday
8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

YOUTUBE: Go to East Koshkonong Lutheran Church" or the email eastkoshkononglutheranchurch@gmail.com.

Remember to like the videos and subscribe to the channel! <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChUv6MDQV54yCWz6oIGWezw>

FACEBOOK PAGE – Please "Like" us on East Koshkonong Lutheran Church Facebook!

In case of severe weather, you may contact the following resources to learn about cancellations at East Koshkonong

- church office @ 423-3017 (A message will be left on the office answering system as soon as a cancellation is made)
- web site, www.eastkoshkonong.org