

MAGNIFICENT

gifts

*Sheridan Lutheran Church
Advent Devotional and
Giving Guide*



Join us for Worship & Special Events

Sheridan Lutheran Church encourages you to invite friends and neighbors to worship as we celebrate the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. We worship each weekend on **Saturday at 5:30pm and Sunday morning at 8:30, 9:45 or 11am**. We also gather for worship on **Wednesdays in September through April at 6pm**.

Wednesdays @ the Well in Advent

Dec. 4, 11, 18; 6pm

Christmas Memories

Sat., Dec. 21; 5:30pm

Christmas Eve at Sheridan Lutheran Church

Celebration Worship: 2:30pm, 4pm & 5:30pm

Candlelight Worship: 7:30pm & 11pm

Advent Event

Sun., Dec. 1; 10:45am-1pm

This is an event for the entire family. Make an Advent wreath and experience the stories of Advent through crafts and activities. Enjoy fellowship at a soup lunch in the Family Life Center.

Lessons & Carols Worship

Sat., Dec. 7; 5:30pm

Don't miss this worship focused around scripture and your favorite carols! Bring your families and sing your praises to the newborn King.

Christmas Cantata

Sun., Dec. 8; 8:30, 9:45 & 11am

During worship, the choir will be joined by scripture readers, narrators and a chamber orchestra to present a Christmas cantata called Tapestry of Light by Joseph Martin.

Come, celebrate and hear the story of Jesus' birth in a new and joyous way.

Children's Christmas Programs

Sun., Dec. 15; 2-6pm

Come and listen to children tell the story of Christ's birth through one of the many Christmas programs. Find the full schedule on the Sheridan website.

Advent is a season of waiting. Sheridan Lutheran Church believes worship is important and our hope is to have you experience worship and special events during Advent. Invite neighbors and friends to join you.

Advent Wreath Devotion Helpful Hints

The following are suggested readings and spiritual practices for the season of Advent and Christmas. They are meant to connect you closer to God through the worship and community experience at Sheridan. These devotions are meant to center your heart and focus on the circle of light that is the Advent wreath.

- Take time each day, circle around your Advent wreath and light the prescribed candles for the week. *If you don't have a wreath, light candles of your choosing.*
- Have a Bible ready for readings.
- Close each devotional time with the Lord's Prayer or your own prayer.

**Circle up to enjoy and savor the blessings
of light this season as people of faith!**

ALSO IN THIS DEVOTIONAL YOU'LL FIND THE STORIES OF OUR MINISTRY PARTNERS. Prayerfully consider a Magnificent Gift to these ministries. This is the season where we raise awareness and offerings for the coming year, 2020.

**YOUR SUPPORT MAKES THESE
MINISTRIES POSSIBLE.**

Week 1

light one candle for Hope

Saturday & Sunday, Nov. 30/Dec. 1

READ MARK 1:1-3

Share memories of your favorite Christmas preparations. How will you prepare for the coming Christ-child this year? How do your preparations announce Jesus' coming? Schedule out your worship plans for the season, making worship a priority this Advent. Tell the stories of your favorite Christmas traditions.

Monday, Dec. 2

READ MARK 1:4-5

John the Baptist welcomed all into forgiveness through baptism. Baptism is God's way of promising eternal love and forgiveness to us. Share stories of baptism. Share how you honor and care for your body. How do you care for others? Share a common meal together, preparing foods that are healthy and nutritious, with some Christmas baked goods too!

Tuesday, Dec. 3

READ MARK 1:6-8

John the Baptist proclaimed that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit. Through this, we know the Spirit guides us daily, especially in our prayers. Pray for all in our congregation who are preparing for music ministries this season. Listen to your favorite Christmas music today.

Wednesday, Dec. 4

READ MATTHEW 1:17

Many generations passed for Jesus to come into the world. How do you celebrate Christmas with people different than your own age group? Elders? Small children? Teens? Adults? Our Angel Tree Ministry gift giving blesses families of all ages, pray for these families. Some of these families have loved ones incarcerated. Many of the families are from Barnabas Community. Pray for all families this season. Reach out to someone today and learn how they celebrate Christmas.

Thursday, Dec. 5

READ MATTHEW 1:18-20

Joseph listened to the angel's announcement about Mary and baby Jesus. As you gather around your wreath, reflect on how you listen to the Spirit in your life, especially during this busy season, with so many distractions of gift buying and overeating. How does this change the way you live in the world? Like Mary and Joseph, pray for all parents by giving thanks to God for their commitment to their children.

Friday, Dec. 6

READ MATTHEW 1:21-22

Jesus' name celebrates life. He has come for us, giving us forgiveness. What a gift for Christmas! Take time today to share the stories and meanings behind your name. Pray for our new mission partners, Pine Ridge Reconciliation Center in Pine Ridge, South Dakota. Especially pray for the children who come to Kid's Time at the Center.

*As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,
"See, I am sending my messenger
ahead of you,
who will prepare your way:
the voice of one crying out in the
wilderness:
Prepare the way of the Lord,
make his paths straight,"*
Mark 1:2-3

Week 2

light two candles for Hope & Peace

Saturday & Sunday, Dec. 7 & 8

READ LUKE 1:26-28

An angel visits Mary announcing that the Lord is with her. Make plans to attend worship, hearing beautiful music through the musical cantata, "Tapestry of Light." Rest in the blessed sounds of the season!

Monday, Dec. 9

READ LUKE 1:29-33

Mary is troubled at Gabriel's visit; but Gabriel assures Mary not to be afraid, she has found favor with God. Share with someone how you work through your fear. How does faith comfort you? Do something today that brings you comfort and joy and see it as a gift from God.

Tuesday, Dec. 10

READ LUKE 1:34-38

The Holy Spirit promises life; creating Jesus, the Son of God within Mary's womb. God comes to earth in the form of a precious child, carried by a human mother. Pray for the children who receive Bibles in Tanzania through Magnificent Gifts. God help their faith grow.

Wednesday, Dec. 11

READ LUKE 1:46-47

Mary sings of God choosing her, a humble servant to bring Jesus into the world. Angel Tree gifts are delivered tonight by our Confirmation students. Pray for our students visiting children in our community of Lincoln. Pray for all children receiving Angel Tree gifts that they would know of God's love in special ways this season. God make their families strong.

Thursday, Dec. 12

READ LUKE 1:48

Mary sings of God remembering her, as a faithful and humble young woman. How can you live humbly as Mary did? Pray for all Christians in their walk with Jesus, keeping all of us humble as we seek to serve as Jesus calls us.

Friday, Dec. 13

READ LUKE 1:49

God's power has been passed to Mary as she carries baby Jesus. Pray for all children growing in faith this season, for their parents making commitments to share faith, for our church as we share God's story with the youngest among us. Make plans to attend worship this weekend along with Sunday afternoon Christmas programs.

*And he came to her and said,
"Greetings, favored one!
The Lord is with you."*

Luke 1:28

Week 3

light three candles for Hope, Peace & Love

Saturday & Sunday, Dec. 14/15

READ JOHN 1:1-5

Jesus was present with God since the beginning of time. How do you rest on the sabbath? Remember after creation time in Genesis, God rested. If God needed rest, we do too. Rest brings light as our bodies are rejuvenated; just as darkness of night gives way to the break of dawn and sunlight. Rest and savor the gifts of children singing of the Christmas story today!

Monday, Dec. 16

READ JOHN 1:3

We see Jesus in and through all of creation - in love, beauty, even pain and sorrow. Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us. God chose to come to us in a tiny child, enfleshed in a human body. How can you care for somebody today? How can you show love, care or friendship in a special way?

Tuesday, Dec. 17

READ JOHN 1:4-5

Jesus promises life for all people. All means all. Pray for our ministries of Barnabas Community; that all who receive services know of God's love. Pray especially for our worshipping community as we share faith together.

Wednesday, Dec. 18

READ MARK 4:21-23

Jesus proclaims light from a lamp is a gift in times of darkness. Let your light shine! Pray for Pine Ridge Reconciliation Center, the staff and volunteers who are committed to reaching out to the children in the town of Pine Ridge. Let their light shine brightly!

Thursday, Dec. 19

READ JOHN 8:12

Jesus gives light to the world. Do people ever notice that you are 'different' because you are part of a faith community? What is that like for you? Sometimes the way we live and serve in this world is very different than how others live. How can you bring the light of Christ into a dark situation? Pray for each other, that God gives you strength in your faith journey.

Friday, Dec. 20

READ PSALM 18:28

Our light comes from God. Jesus is our strength. Have you ever had a moment where you felt the power of God in your life; a strength beyond your own? Our light indeed comes from God! If weather allows, take a look at the stars tonight. Have a sense of awe and wonder at the power of God that surrounds us. If skies are overcast, search images on the internet from space or Hubble space telescope.

*In the beginning was the Word, and
The Word was with God,
and the Word was God.
He was in the beginning with God.
John 1:1-2*

Week 4

light four candles for Hope, Peace, Love & Joy

Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 21/22

READ ISAIAH 9:2

Light shines in the darkness! Saturday at 10:19pm, the winter solstice occurs. Our part of the world experiences the greatest distance from the sun. How we need to hear these words from Isaiah! Find light wherever you can this weekend - at your Advent wreath, the starry sky at night, the streetlights that light your way. Take time this sabbath to rest, bathe in light, be with family and friends, and worship our God of love.

Monday, Dec. 23

READ ISAIAH 9:2 - 7

Prophet Isaiah speaks of the baby Jesus being Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace. What beautiful promises to us who believe! How do you experience Jesus as these titles name the Christ child? As you surround your advent wreath, receive the gift of peace in the midst of the busy Christmas season. How can you care for someone who is stressed by the season?

Tuesday, Dec. 24: Christmas Eve

READ LUKE 2:1-7

Celebrations surely begin this day as our worship services begin mid-afternoon and close at midnight tonight. Scripture tells us about the census that called Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem where Jesus was born. Take a 'census' of your family this day. How is everyone doing? Have you told them how much you love them? Share hugs around your Advent Wreath and Christmas tree today! Pray for each other!

Wednesday, Dec. 25: Merry Christmas!

READ LUKE 2:8-14

Today we find Jesus wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger. We join the angels singing, "Glory to God!" Jesus brought the community of heaven and earth together at his birth. Pray for heaven and earth to come together this Christmas time as we remember Jesus birth. Pray for peace, love, unity, civility to come to our communities.

Thursday, Dec. 26

READ LUKE 2:15 -20

Shepherds visit Mary and Joseph and they share the story of the angels proclamation. Mary treasures these words. How are your holiday celebrations going? Hopefully you've had many good visits. Take time to send a message or text of thanks to someone who you enjoyed spending time with this Christmas.

Friday, Dec. 27

READ LUKE 2:22-26

Jesus is presented at the temple for a dedication to God. Simeon recognizes that Jesus is the Messiah. Who are the elders in your life this Christmas time? Who has passed away that you miss at these gatherings? Recall stories about those who have gone before us. What were holidays like when they were with you? Celebrate their lives in a special way. Share these stories with a loved one.

The people who have walked in
darkness
have seen a great light;
Those who lived in land of deep
darkness--
on them light has shined.

Mark 1:2-3

Week 5

Saturday & Sunday, Dec. 28/29

READ LUKE 2:27-32

Simeon sings that his life is fulfilled now that he has seen Jesus. Jesus is named as a light to the Gentiles (non-Jews) and for the people of Israel. As you worship and rest this sabbath, pray for all people.

Monday, Dec. 30

READ LUKE 2:29-32

Simeon mentions being dismissed in peace. His life is fulfilled. How have you experienced fulfillment this Christmas? Was it at worship, or a family gathering? How has this strengthened you? Pray for all those in our community who struggle this time of year, the sick and hospitalized, those grieving, the homeless, those with mental illness.

Tuesday, Dec. 31

READ LUKE 2:33-38

Mary and Joseph are amazed at their child Jesus. He will do great things with his life for all people. Looking back on 2019, where have you been amazed at God's work in your life? How can you practice good habits, caring for body, mind and soul in this new year 2020? Do you have any New Year's resolutions?

Wednesday, Jan 1: Happy New Year!

READ JOHN 1:14

Jesus is God's very presence with us. As the New Year begins, pray for all our ministry partners and our Sheridan faith community whom we lifted in prayer this Advent and Christmas. May Christmas blessings and peace be with us all as we seek to serve the newborn King, Jesus!

Simeon took him in his arms and
praised God, saying,
"Master, now you are dismissing your
servant in peace,
according to your word;
for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the
presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel."

Luke 2:27-32

You are needed to make a difference through Magnificent Gifts.

2019 Magnificent Gifts Giving Goals

Barnabas Community - \$60,000

Pine Ridge Reconciliation Center - \$8,000

Greater Church Partnerships - \$8,000

***All undesignated Magnificent Gifts will
benefit Barnabas Community.***

How to support Magnificent Gifts

- 1. Give with cash or check. *Make checks payable to Sheridan Lutheran Church.***
- 2. Visit sheridanlutheran.org/advent-giving to contribute electronically.**
- 3. Pray for our ministry partners.**

Ministry Partners for Magnificent Gifts

Barnabas Community

Goal: \$60,000

Barnabas Community got its start in the fall of 2008. Through our free store, we offer clothing, books, toys, household goods and hospitality to all. Barnabas serves two meals per week and gathers weekly for worship. Your Magnificent Gift benefits the ongoing ministry of Barnabas Community.



Pine Ridge Reconciliation Center-New Ministry Partner

Goal: \$8,000

The ministry of the Pine Ridge Reconciliation Center, located in the heart of Pine Ridge, South Dakota, fosters mutual trust, respect, and understanding, while addressing the deep poverty that exists on the reservation. The Center provides morning coffee and lunch sandwiches, quilt and hygiene kit distribution every weekday. In the afternoons, children ages 9-12 attend Kid's Time. Kid's Time offers time for play, reading, and learning Christian curriculum along with traditional Lakota practices. The Lutheran Lakota Job Corps provides job training in construction and home repairs. The Center also hosts groups coming to visit, offering the chance to learn more about our Lakota brothers and sisters, the work of the church, and the history of our nation. Your Magnificent Gift will benefit the ongoing ministry of the Reconciliation Center.



Greater Church Partnerships

Goal: \$8,000

Through Magnificent Gifts, you provide Bibles for confirmation students and worship song books for our sister congregation in Tanzania. Your gift also supports Clinic with a Heart, a local Lincoln free health clinic that serves the uninsured and under. These gifts also help to provide for special needs as they arise with our outreach partners.





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