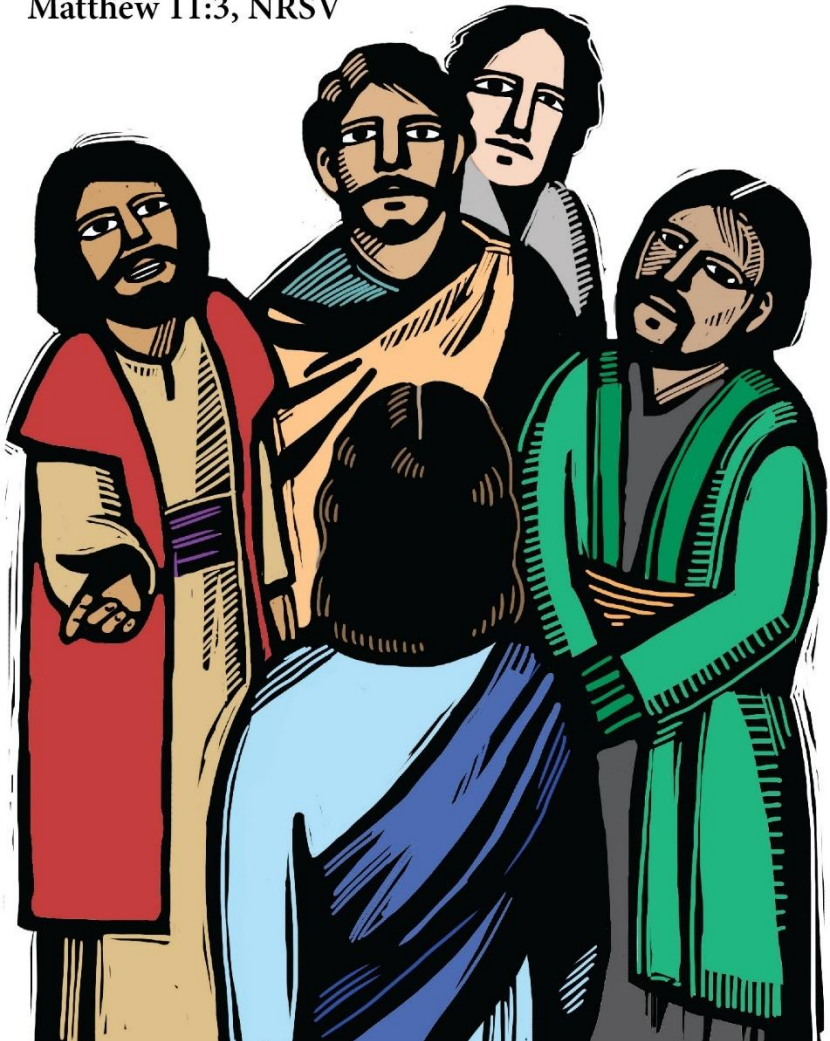


***Sunday, December 14, 2025***

**"Are you the one who is to come,  
or are we to wait for another?"**

Matthew 11:3, NRSV



***Christ's Lutheran Church  
Murrysville, Pennsylvania***

# **“A Place to Believe, Belong, and Become”**



**Christ's Lutheran Church is a Christ-centered and welcoming, Christian community committed to encouraging faith-filled living, deepening friendships, and life-changing discipleship.**

Welcome! If you are new to worship in a Lutheran church, this introduction will help guide you through our worship service. The prayers, responses, and service music are printed in this bulletin. You will need to use the red Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW) hymnals to sing the hymns. Our Sunday morning service is livestreamed on YouTube and your image may appear.

**Communion** - All baptized Christians are welcome to receive the gift of Holy Communion. Children who haven't received Holy Communion may also come forward for a blessing. You can either kneel or remain standing when you come to the altar. We offer both wheat and gluten-free wafers, and both wine and grape juice. If you would like to receive grape juice, please take a glass from the tray that has already been filled when you come forward. If you would like to receive a gluten-free wafer, please let the Pastor know when he gives you the bread.

**Children are always welcome!** Please feel free to walk around in the rear area of our worship space if your child becomes restless. Rest rooms (with diaper decks) are located in the hallway to the right of the entryway. You can find cloth bags containing activities for children aged 3 and older in the back of our worship space. We ask you to please return the cloth bags and their contents (minus any artwork your child creates while you are worshipping) at the end of today's service.

**CHRIST'S LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**5330 Old Logan Ferry Road, Murrysville, PA 15668**  
**Office: 412-795-1212**  
**Church Office email: [office@christsmurrysville.org](mailto:office@christsmurrysville.org)**  
**Website: [www.christsmurrysville.org](http://www.christsmurrysville.org)**  
**App: Christ's Lutheran (ELCA)**

# **The Third Sunday of Advent**

*(Please silence your electronic devices)*

## **PRELUDE**

*Instrumental*

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND SHARING OF CONCERNS**

### **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

L: Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, whose home is heaven and earth, whose salvation is sure.

**C: Amen.**

L: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection*

L: Long-expected God,

**C: we confess that we look to ourselves for the peace and security only you can provide. We reach for swords and spears, reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war. We become impatient while waiting and weary of keeping awake. Free us from self-reliance, and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors. Increase our trust in God's timing, and awaken us to your advent among us, that we may abound in the hope you have promised. Amen.**

L: God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God's own righteousness. ☩ You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior.

**C: Amen.**

### **GATHERING HYMN**

*"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (vs 1, 4, 5, 7)*

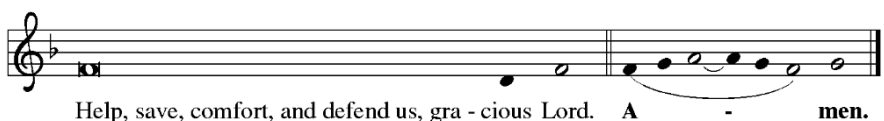
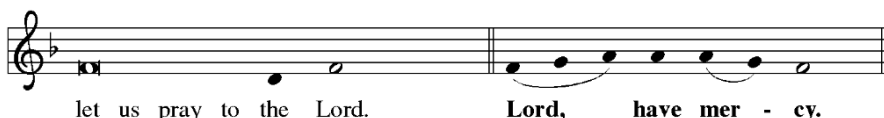
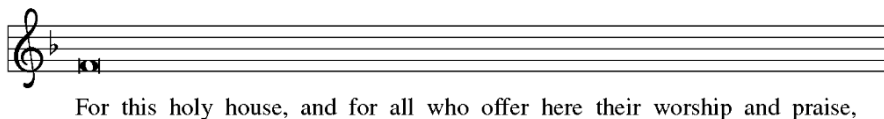
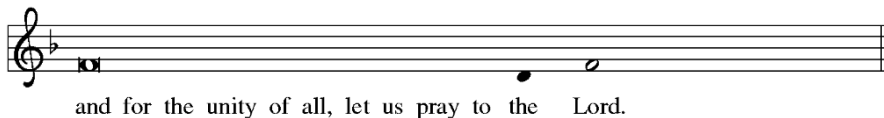
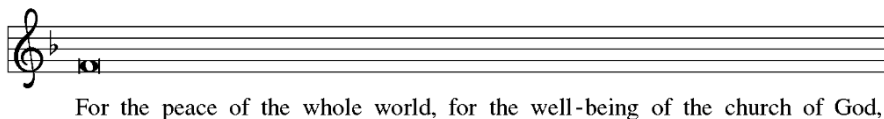
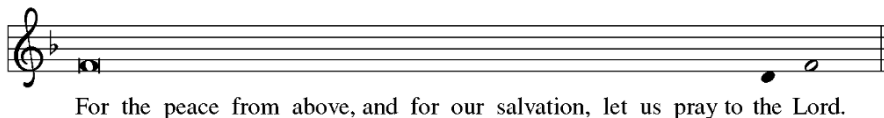
*ELW #257*

## GREETING

**L:** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C:** And also with you.

## KYRIE



## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**L:** Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

## **FIRST READING: ISAIAH 35:1-10**

The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon; they will see the glory of the LORD, the splendor of our God. Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way; say to those with fearful hearts, "Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you. Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. In the haunts where jackals once lay, grass and reeds and papyrus will grow. And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness; it will be for those who walk on that Way. The unclean will not journey on it; wicked fools will not go about on it. No lion will be there, nor any ravenous beast; they will not be found there. But only the redeemed will walk there, and those the LORD has rescued will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

## **LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH**

**L:** We light three candles and know the time of holy birth draws near, whether we are ready or not. We welcome you, Emmanuel, God with us, and pray for our loving presence to stay with us.

**C: Amen.**

## **RESPONSE:** (vs 1, 2, 3)

### Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah



1 Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.  
2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.  
3 Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.  
4 Light four can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra-el, God ful - fills the prom - ise.  
He shall feed the flock like a shep-herd, gent - ly lead them home-ward.  
Lift your heads and lift high the gate-way for the King of glo - ry.  
He is com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights be shin - ing!

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954

Music: TIF IN VELDELE, Yiddish folk tune

Text © 1984 Fortress Press, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

## **SECOND READING: JAMES 5:7-10**

Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. Don't grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door! Brothers and sisters, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

## **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the



words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

L: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the eleventh chapter.

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

### **GOSPEL: MATTHEW 11:2-11**

When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples to ask him, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?" Jesus replied, "Go back and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me." As John's disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swayed by the wind? If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings' palaces. Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written: "'I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

L: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

### **SERMON**

Jennifer Schaefer

*(please be seated)*

### **HYMN OF THE DAY**

*"Blessed Be the God of Israel"*

*ELW #250*

### **THE PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

L: In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation.

God of power and mercy, we praise you for Jesus and his acts of healing and liberation. Lead us to proclaim the good news from generation to generation, that all may place their hope in you. Lord in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: When lands are parched and dry, bring rain and snow; where wilderness is barren, sow seeds of life. Fill the lands with trees that grow, plants that flower, and creatures that thrive, as nature proclaims the wonder of your works. Lord in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: When there is injustice or corruption among nations and leaders, root it out. Turn their attention to inequity and the cries of the poor. Instill a deeper sense of compassion and care in all who govern. Lord in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: When bodies weaken and hearts grow fearful, speak your blessing. In uncertain times, remind us of the promise spoken to our ancestors in faith. Lord in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

L: When people are imprisoned or held captive, break the chains and offer release. Strengthen the work of the church in restorative justice, breaking cycles of poverty, and welcoming the immigrant. Lord in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

**TODAY, WE ARE INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING  
PEOPLE IN OUR PRAYERS:**

Nancy Fydler, Larry Karl, Marlene Karl, Lisa Lehman,  
John Magnus, Derwood Montgomery, and Betty  
Reagan







## **PRAYING FOR OUR MISSION PARTNERS AND FRIENDS:**

Debra Saula

Linda Saville

Jim & Tammy Scanga and Family

Pastor Bob Schaefer

## **PLEASE REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS THIS WEEK:**

Joann Hauger, Peggy Henry, Evan Pavloff, Paul Rizzo, Ron Spagna, Marianne Trainor and Sue Werner



**L:** As we await your coming, we give thanks for the faithful who have lived and died in faith. May their boldness of faith inspire our witness and work. Lord in your mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

**L:** Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

**C: Amen.**

## **THE PEACE**

**L:** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C:** And also with you.

*The congregation greets one another in the name of the Lord.*

## **OFFERING**

**To Support God's Work in Our Church and Beyond**

*This is a time in our service that we use to remember that all that we are, all that we have, and all that we do, is an offering to God.*

*You can place your offering in the offering plate that is passed at this time in our service,*

*You can scan this QR code to go to our online giving page,*



*You can use our app to send your offering,*

*or mail your offering to the church:*

*Christ's Lutheran Church  
5330 Old Logan Ferry Road  
Murrysville, PA 15668*

## **OFFERTORY**

*Instrumental*

## **OFFERTORY RESPONSE**



Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right



spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your pres - ence, and take



not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store to me the joy of



your sal - va - tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

## **OFFERING PRAYER**

**A:** Nourishing God, you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Through this meal, satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come.

**C: Amen.**

## **AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM**

L: God, who is rich in mercy and love, gives us a new birth into a living hope through the sacrament of Holy Baptism. By water and the word God delivers us from sin and death and raises us to new life in Jesus Christ. We are united with all the baptized in the one body of Christ, anointed with the Holy Spirit, and joined in God's mission for the life of the world.

Let us pray: Merciful God, we thank you for those who are gathered here – people whom you have made your own by water and the word in Baptism. You have called them to yourself, enlightened them with the gifts of your Spirit, and nourished them in this community of faith. Uphold us in the gifts and promises of baptism and unite our hearts in love and service. We ask this in the name of Christ.

**C: Amen**

L: I ask you to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, reject sin, and confess the faith of the Church.

L: Do you renounce the devil and all the forces that defy God?

**C: I renounce them.**

L: Do you renounce the powers of this world that rebel against God?

**C: I renounce them.**

L: Do you renounce the ways of sin that draw you from God?

**C: I renounce them.**

L: Do you believe in God the Father?

**C: I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

L: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

**C: I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,**

born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day, he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

L: Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**C: I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen**

L: You have made public profession of your faith. Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in Holy Baptism:

to live among God's faithful people,  
to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper,  
to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word  
and deed,  
to serve all people, following the example of Jesus,  
and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?

**C: I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.**

L: We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give us new birth, cleanse us from sin, and raise us to eternal life. Stir up in all of your people the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence, both now and forever.

**C: Amen**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory, forever and ever.  
Amen.

## **THE BLESSING**

L: May God who comes among us, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit,  
grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness, and good  
news to share today and always.

C: Amen.

## **SENDING HYMN**

*"Prepare the Royal Highway"*

*ELW #264*

## **THE DISMISSAL**

A: Go in peace. Keep awake.

C: Thanks be to God.

## **POSTLUDE**

*Instrumental*

Pastor Emeritus  
Organist  
Pianist  
Parish Administrator

Rev. Steven J. Myers  
Joshua Beck  
Nancy Finke Sheehan  
Laura Vincenti

# **ANNOUNCEMENTS**



**December 14th at 11:00 am**

- Council elections
- Discuss and approve the 2026 budget

## ***Weekend Worship Team***



A Big Thank you to our worship assistants, greeters, ushers, all who set up and clean up for the services, reconcilers, and the tech team who offer their time and talents to make our worship services go smoothly.

We are looking for a few more Helpers for our weekend services. If you would like more information, please contact the office, or talk to one of our faithful helpers. To share your talents as part of Weekend Worship Team, you can sign up using the app:

Click on "Join a Weekend Worship Team."

Or using the following QR code or link.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0e48afac2ea0ffc25-clcservice1#/>



***Thank you to all who help to make our weekend worship services possible!***

## ***Toy Drive A Success!***

Your generous support enabled us to purchase and donate 12 \$25 gift cards for the children served by the Plum Food Pantry. Thanks for your generosity -- Judy Bernardini



## **CHRIST'S LITTLE PANTRY Weekend**

**December 13 & 14**

*Are you, or someone you know, experiencing food insecurity?*

*If you need food, "Take what you need."*

*If you have extra food to share, please "Leave what you can."*

THANK YOU – THANK YOU – THANK YOU ... to everyone who has been contributing to the success of our Little Pantry. We're so grateful to all who continue to donate. The food in the pantry goes quickly. We have been attempting to replenish the pantry daily.

As food insecurity continues, variety is important in choosing the items that people can find in the Little Pantry. We are asking you to focus on cereal and other breakfast items, complete pancake mixes (made with water), syrup, peanut butter, jelly, soup, tuna & other canned meats, fruit (canned or in individual packs), lunchbox foods and baby food. Please remember, when you bring your donations to the church, you can put your items directly into the Little Pantry or leave them in the grocery cart in our entryway.



You can also support the Little Pantry with a cash donation that's clearly marked, "Little Pantry."

NOTE: We recently learned that we need to have special permits from the State and Health Department if we want to put any type of fresh food (fruit, veggies, eggs, potatoes, etc.) into the pantry. Your generous gifts of canned and boxed items continue to change the lives of individuals and families in our community. Thank you!

Please remember that our Little Pantry may provide the only food a family has to meet its needs — protein is very important.

Please continue to support this ministry, knowing that your generosity will help families right here in the Plum & Murrys ville area.

**Let's work together to keep our Little Pantry full every week!**

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO RING THE BELL  
FOR THE SALVATION ARMY**

***A CHRIST'S LUTHERAN CHURCH CHRISTMAS TRADITION***

Saturday, December 20, 2025

Eight one-hour shifts - 9:00am-5:00pm

380 Auction Discount Warehouse

4320 Fairview Drive

Murrysville, PA 15668

*(one mile from the church)*



- Help our neighbors in need.
- Spread Christmas cheer and God's love.
- Fun for the whole family.
- No set up! No clean up!
- Just show up and ring the bell for an hour!
- A great way for young people to earn an hour of service credit.

**Please sign up for a one-hour shift**

The sign-up sheet is on the table in the Entryway.

Please call/text Rob Carnahan with any questions 412-913-8402

~~~~~



***Hanging of the Greens***

Please join us as we decorate the church for Christmas. We will meet Sunday, December 21, following the 10 AM church service.

~~~~~

***No Ladies' Brunch in December***

We look forward to seeing you all again on

**Saturday, January 24<sup>th</sup>!**







CLC is working with Pastor Linda Theophilus **who is proving pastoral services to members** who request them.

To reach out to Pastor Linda, contact the church office at [office@christsmurrysville.org](mailto:office@christsmurrysville.org) or call (412) 795-1212.

~~~~~  
Submissions for the January 2026 Newsletter must be in the office by:

**Saturday, December 20<sup>th</sup>**

Email your article to [office@christsmurrysville.org](mailto:office@christsmurrysville.org) or drop off at the office.

Newsletter  
**DEADLINE**

~~~~~  
**Stitched With Love**

If you enjoy knitting and crocheting, or would like to learn, our stitching group meets Tuesdays from 9 to 11 am in the downstairs social hall.



We make hats for cancer patients, baby blankets, prayer shawls, and other needed items. Or bring your own project to work on. It's a time to be creative & enjoy one another's fellowship. For information, contact Leslie Sill at [nonnasill@comcast.net](mailto:nonnasill@comcast.net).

~~~~~  
We're collecting aluminum tabs for Ronald McDonald House. Working with a local recycler, pop tabs from soda cans, soup cans, pet food, and other canned goods are turned into money to support RMHC's mission.



That money helps RMHC provide comfort, care and support for families with children who are sick. You can help by depositing tabs you collect in the container in the church Entryway.



~~~~~  
**REMINDER:**

***Our church's exterior doors are locked at the beginning of services.***



For children and adults. New class members always welcome!

A big **CONGRATULATIONS** and **THANK YOU** for recycling your plastic bags! We have reached our 1000 lb goal three months early and we've already received our new bench – it's currently located in the foyer outside of the upstairs social hall. It is **fantastic** that we are doing our part to be good stewards by keeping plastic out of the landfills.



To continue this effort, we will now begin to collect plastic bags for our sister congregation, Trinity Lutheran on the Northside. We will have a year to recycle another 1000 lbs of plastic so that they can receive their own bench.

As a reminder, here is a chart of acceptable **clean and dry** plastic bags (no plastic containers): All plastic must be clean, dry, and free of food residue.



Grocery bags



Bread bags



Bubble wrap



Dry cleaning bags



Newspaper sleeves



Ice bags



Plastic shipping envelopes



Ziploc & other reclosable food storage bags



Cereal bags



Case overwrap



Salt bags



Pallet wrap & stretch film



Wood pellet bags



Produce bags

**Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCD's)**

Did you know those over age 70 1/2 can withdraw funds federally tax free from retirement accounts, such as IRAs, through a Qualified Charitable Distribution.

The withdrawal is made payable directly to the qualified charity by the IRA custodian and counts toward any federal annual Required Minimum Distribution. **Contributions made through QCD's are an available vehicle to support Christ's Lutheran Church's mission** while reducing personal income subject to federal taxes.



Talk with your financial planner to learn more.



**Our church office is open** on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9:00 am - 12:00 pm *and* 12:30 pm - 2:30 pm. Please call before coming to the church to be sure someone is available to help.

[office@christsmurrysville.org](mailto:office@christsmurrysville.org)      412-795-1212



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## WEEKLY CALENDAR

December 14<sup>th</sup> - December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025

*Keep our Ministry and Community in Your Prayers Each Day This Week*

### Sunday 12/14

9:00 am

9:00 am

10:00 am

11:00 am

7:30 pm

### ***Our congregation and leaders***

Sunday School

Birthday Party for Jesus

Sunday Morning Worship

Congregational Meeting

Narcotics Anonymous

### Monday 12/15

5:00 pm

8:00 pm

### ***The ministry of Alcoholics Anonymous***

Kindermusik

Alcoholics Anonymous

### Tuesday 12/16

9:00 am

9:30 am

10:00 am

5:00 pm

### ***Those receiving the handmade prayer shawls, baby blankets, etc. from our yarn stitching group***

Stitched With Love

Kindermusik

Congregational Life Committee meeting

Kindermusik

### Wednesday 12/17

10:00 am

### ***Kiara, the young person we sponsor through Compassion International***

Kindermusik

### Thursday 12/18

9:30 am

6:30pm

### ***Those who struggle with depression and mental illness***

Kindermusik

Council Meeting

### Friday 12/19

### ***Doctors, nurses and all in the healthcare field***

### Saturday 12/20

6:00 pm

### ***Pastor Ed Sheehan, as he prepares for and leads services in our church***

Saturday Evening Worship

### Sunday 12/21

9:00 am

10:00 am

7:30 pm

### ***All who faithfully serve our congregation***

Sunday School

Sunday Morning Worship

Narcotics Anonymous