



GABRIEL'S GAZETTE

DECEMBER 2025

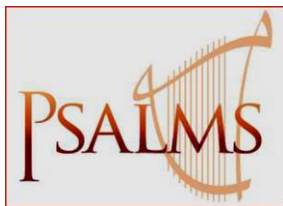


*"Loving, Sharing, Serving
Jesus with you."*

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The Divine Service: The Introit

Since the opening hymn and corporate confession were not originally a part of the Divine Service, the **Introit** marked the actual beginning of the service. The Introit is typically taken from the Psalms or is an entire Psalm. The Psalms have been the hymnbook of the church from the time of King David till today. From the Magnificat of Mary (though primarily drawn from the song of Hannah) to the Benedictus of Zechariah, to the "Hosannas" of the crowd on Palm Sunday, it is clear that the Psalms were an integral part of the worship life of Israel. And when Christ our Lord said that the Psalms are fulfilled in Him (Luke 24:44), the Christian Church picked them up and read them through the lens of the New Testament, seeing them all as speaking of Christ and His Church.

An Introit has been used in the church going back at least to the 5th or 6th century A.D. It was sung as the pastor or pastors made their way in procession to the **chancel** (the area around the altar) from the **sacristy** (where vestments and communion vessels are kept). The Introit would signal to the gathered Christians that the service was beginning and to make way for the procession. Remember, before the Reformation, there were no pews in churches. People stood in a crowd in the **nave** of the church (the "nave" is the place where our pews are). Today, I use the Introit to

proceed the short space from outside the altar rail, into the chancel.

In introduction of the **Lesser Gloria** (the "Glory be to the Father...") at the end of a Psalm was introduced also around the 5th century. It probably was introduced to combat Arianism, the heresy that denied the Trinity. We have kept this tradition today, only omitting during the even more ancient practice of Passiontide (the week before Holy Week) and Holy Week. The Lesser Gloria reminds us that all the Psalms are prayers which belong to the Christian Church and speak of our Triune God's saving work.

The Introit is chosen to introduce the theme of the day's **propers** (the parts of the service which change from week to week). The Introit, Bible readings, hymns (especially the Hymn of the Day), collect, and sermon are all meant to fit a certain theme within the church year. When you first come in and are waiting for the service to begin, glance through these propers and try and see how these all fit together. That can help your heart and mind to prepare to take in the message of God's Word for the day.

Pastor



Prepare ye
the way of the Lord

Advent Midweek Services

Wednesdays, 11:00 a.m. & 6:30 p.m.

Dec. 3 & 10

Come for supper at 5:30 p.m.

Sunday School Christmas Service

Wednesday, Dec. 17, 6:30 p.m.

Christmas Week Services

Saturday, December 20

6:00 p.m. Worship Service with Communion

Sunday, December 21

10:00 a.m. Worship Service with Communion

Wednesday, December 24

6:00 p.m. Lessons and Carols Service

11:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
with Communion

Thursday, December 25

9:00 a.m. Christmas Day Service
with Communion

Saturday, December 27

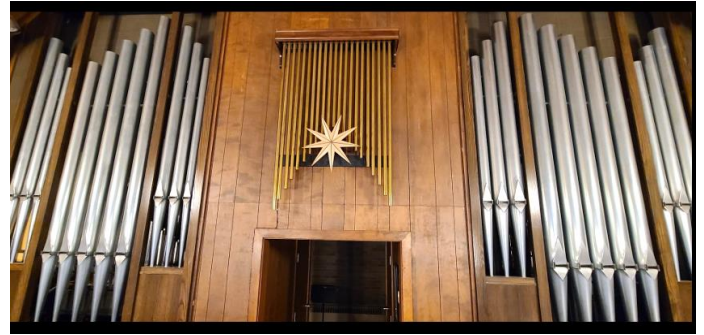
6:00 p.m. Holden Evening Prayer

Sunday, December 28

10:00 a.m. Worship Service with Communion

Wednesday, December 31

6:00 p.m. New Year's Eve Service
with Communion



Organ Anniversary Service

Join us for a service of Evening Prayer for the 40th anniversary of our organ on Friday, **December 19, at 6:30 p.m.** The service will feature Immanuel musicians and Dr. Steven Wentz, cantor at First St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Chicago and distinguished professor of music emeritus at Concordia University Chicago, where he continues to teach organ and serve as organist of the chapel. We will also be dedicating our newly-installed zimbelstern. A free will offering will be collected for LCMS Disaster Response.



2026 Offering Envelopes

The 2026 offering envelopes are out and ready for pickup! There are a few ways you can get your envelopes:

1. Pick them up when you come to worship;
2. Pick them up during the week;
3. Have a family member pick them up for you.

We tried our best to make sure that everyone who would need a box of envelopes received one. If we did not assign you a box and you would like one, please call the office and we will make sure you receive it right away. Please do not use these envelopes until 2026. And for the first month, please write your last name on the back of the envelope for us. Thanks for your help!



**CONGREGATIONAL QUARTERLY
VOTERS MEETING**

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9

7:00 PM

This is an important voters meeting for all members. We will be electing new officers for 2026 and voting upon the budget for the coming year.



LCMS Stewardship Ministry

"We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves" (1 Thess. 5:12-13).

Have you finished your Christmas shopping yet? Do you have a person or two on your list that you just don't know what to give them? While I know you are running short of ideas...dad doesn't really want another tie, and your kid's teacher doesn't need another coffee mug. It can be nothing short of maddening to try to figure things out in the middle of this busy season!

As stewards of all of life and life's resources, we know that life is more than giving gifts. We stewards never want to take anything the Lord provides for granted. During this season of Advent and Christmas, it is a great idea to do whatever you can to be a faithful steward of your pastor. Even more so than the rest of the year, the demands on their time, their presence, and their stewardship of the Gospel in the congregation become heightened.

The demands on pastors can wear them down and wear them out. How does the steward in the congregation

serve as a faithful steward of the treasure that is their pastor? Here are a few ideas:

- Put them at the top of your prayer list. – Pray that the Lord guards them against the weariness that makes them susceptible to the work of the devil.
- Make worship a priority – St. Paul admonishes the Thessalonians and us to respect those who labor among us. There is no greater way to steward your pastor than to respect him enough to show up and receive what he has been sent to offer in the proclamation of the Gospel and administration of the Holy Sacraments.
- Be receptive to his work – If your pastor is tasked with calling you to repentance or encouraging you to be in worship, know that he is only caring for your soul.
- Esteem him highly – Take the time to thank him for his faithful service to Christ, the congregation, and your family.
- Be at peace – This is an easy time for even minor annoyances to get blown out of proportion and become full-blown conflict. This not only spoils the season of Advent and Christmas, but it also spoils our stewardship of the Gospel and those who serve us in that Gospel. Remember that Jesus came into the world to be the Prince of Peace. This is an act of grace and mercy. The steward seeks to reflect this toward their pastor and their brothers and sisters in Christ.

Stewardship at Christmas can be a challenge. Stewardship of your pastor during this time of the year is critical to our shared stewardship of the Gospel at a time of year when many are more open to hear and receive it.

**- LCMS Stewardship Ministry Newsletter Article
December 2025**



Come one and all!

**"Soup & Song"
Christmas Caroling
to our shut-ins
& older members.
Sunday, Dec. 17**



Meet at church at **4:00 p.m.** When we are finished caroling, we will come back for soup at Simeon Square. A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board.

REVERENDFUN.COM COPYRIGHT BIBLE GATEWAY



Thanks to Wilma Melendez (See Luke 2:1-16) 12-24-2010
THIS IS LIKE TOTALLY THE COOLEST THING THAT HAS EVEN HAPPENED IN THIS STABLE!



Shepherds & Lambs

The Sunday School Newsletter

December 2025

Plan to join us at church Wednesday, Dec 17, at 6:30 p.m. when the Sunday School children will share the story of Jesus birth. Our service is entitled *Spreading the Good News to the Four Corners*. Practices will be:



- PRACTICE & CHRISTMAS PARTY with pizza & games – Friday, Dec. 5, 4:30-7:30 p.m.
- PRACTICE – Saturday, Dec 13, 10 a.m. – Noon

On the 17TH, students need to be at church at 6:00 p.m. Please help your children practice their parts and songs. We are hoping that all our students will participate.

We will be overseeing the collection of hats, mittens, & socks for our folks in need.

These items can be for adults or children. They will be distributed locally to those in need of winter warmth. Just put them on or under the Christmas tree in the Gathering Place.



We will also help provide Christmas gifts for a family in the community. You can select a Christmas tree ornament from the Gathering Place tree, which includes a specific item requested by a family in need. Unwrapped gifts should be placed under the tree by December 21. Thank you!



Two years ago, we made Mary, Joseph, and Jesus figures to be our Christian "elf on the shelf."

I hope each family saved theirs to use again this Christmas season. Start on the 1st day of Advent, Nov. 30. Parents hide Mary and Joseph somewhere. Where are Mary and Joseph?? Children will look each day for them until Christmas Day when we find Baby Jesus and join Him with His parents. If you don't have these figures, perhaps you can hide a replacement of some sort to help wait for and prepare for the Savior's birth!



We have started memorizing Bible passages that the students can keep close to their hearts for the rest of their lives. We have a different one each month. We're hoping to make the scriptures more familiar to the children. Those saying the verses to their teachers will get a little treat! Help them learn these verses. Maybe you'll find yourself learning them or just refreshing your memory! May these scriptures be a blessing to your family!



Our Samaritan's Purse OPERATION SHOE BOX was successful thanks to many. After collecting items all year long, we packed 103 boxes! Thanks to all who helped in any way! We're going to make this Christmas a happier one for a lot of children!



In 2026, we will again be gathering items each month for the Operation Christmas Child boxes. For January, we are collecting:

- Small Plush Animals
- Small/Travel Size Toys

For more information, please see Kelli Kalvaitis or contact the office.



We're wishing you a Blessed Christmas and a God-filled happy New Year!!

Lynette Johnston-Martin
Sunday School Superintendent

★
For
God so
loved the
world He gave
His one and only
Son that whoever
believes in Him shall not
perish but have eternal life
John
3:16



Christmas season concerts . . .

MICHIGAN CITY COMMUNITY CHORUS

You are invited to the Michigan City Community Chorus' Christmas Concert on **Sunday, Dec. 7th**, at **2:00 p.m.** in Immanuel's Fellowship Hall.



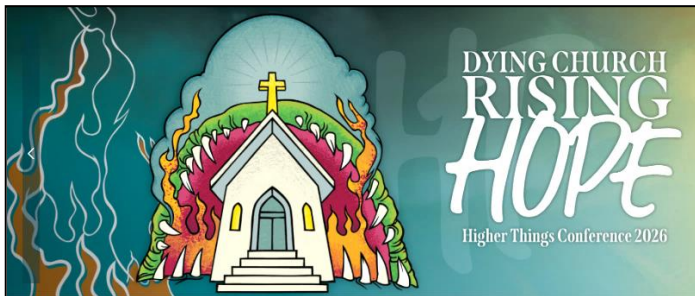
Handel's "Messiah"

Michigan City Messiah will present its annual performance of G. F. Handel's timeless masterpiece, "The Messiah," on **Saturday, Dec. 13 @ 7:00 p.m.** and **Sunday, Dec. 14 @ 2:00 p.m.** The concert will be held at St. Mary the Immaculate Conception Church, 400 W. 10th Street, Michigan City, IN. As always, the concerts are free and require no advance ticket reservations.



2026

- Saturday, Jan. 3 – Epiphany Service & Installation of 2026 Officers
- Sunday, Jan. 4 – Epiphany Service & Installation of 2026 Officers
- Monday, Jan. 5 – Deadline for submitting news for the February Gazette
- Tuesday, Jan. 6 – First Council Meeting of the New Year
- Sunday, Jan. 11 – Baptism Birthday & New Member Potluck Lunch



JUNE 23-26, 2026

Washington University, St. Louis, MO

The church feels like it's falling apart—empty pews, fading influence, and more questions than answers. However, it's not about numbers or nostalgia—it's about being near to Jesus.

Join us in 2026!

So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. (Romans 6:11)



Looking ahead . . .

When you get your 2026 calendars, be sure to mark the date of our **Vacation Bible School, June 29-July 3**. As you make your plans for the new year, you can save that date and plan to enroll your children (*and friends!*) or be a volunteer to help us make a difference in those young lives.



PLEASE NOTE: There will not be a January edition of *Gabriel's Gazette*. Watch your mailboxes and weekly bulletin for information about January activities.

JOY
to the world

