

Calamus Lutheran Parish
Faith & Our Savior's Lutheran Churches
P.O. Box 116
Calamus, Iowa 52729-0116

Pastor Leah Holloway-Nilsen.....262.914.9392



8:00 AM Sunday Worship

Faith Lutheran Church

505 Second Street, Calamus IA 52729



9:30 AM Sunday School, Adult Study

Our Savior's Lutheran Church

2589 – 190th Avenue, Calamus, IA 52729



10:30 AM Sunday Worship

Our Savior's Lutheran Church

2589 – 190th Avenue, Calamus IA 52729

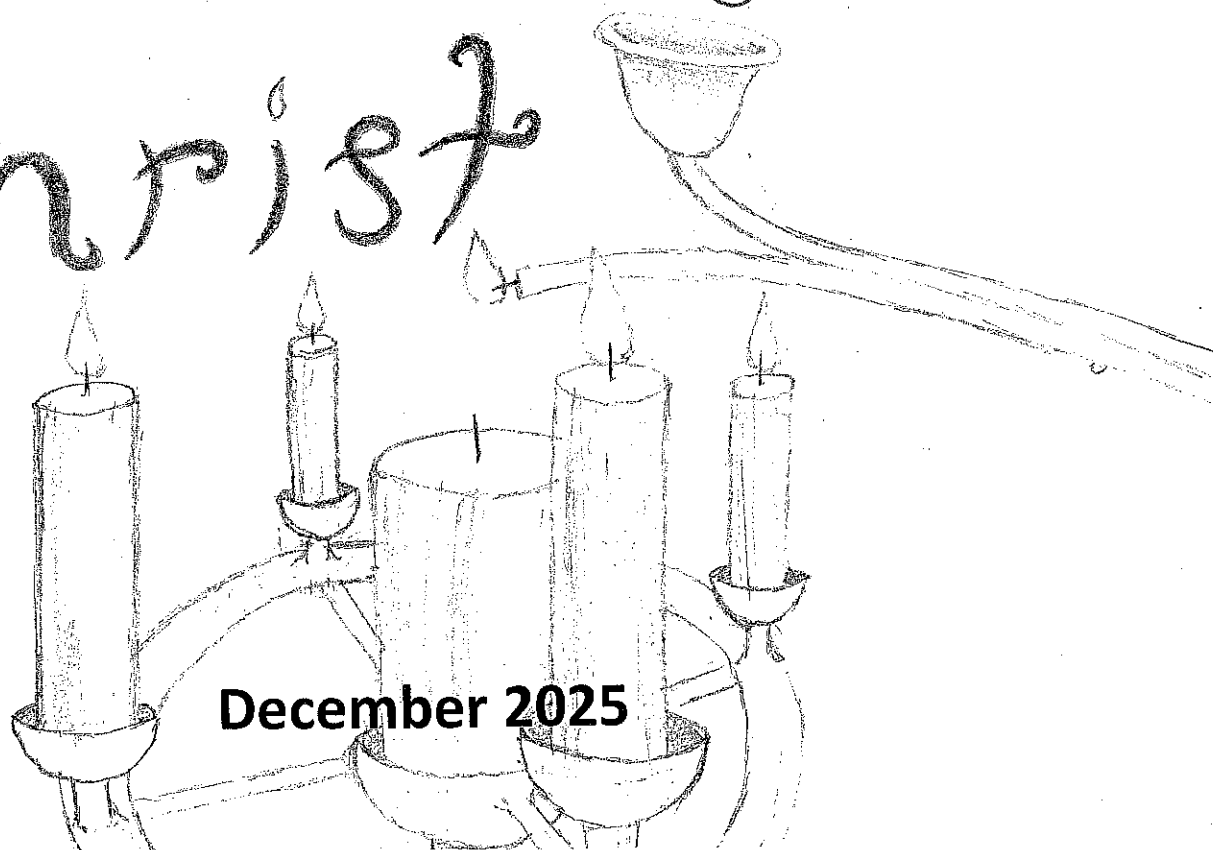
Church Office.....563.246.2622

Pastor's Office.....563.246.2558

Church email address.....clparish@fbcom.net

Church Website.....www.clparish.org

We are waiting for
Christ



December 2025



*Faith
Lutheran Church
505 2nd Street
Calamus, IA 52729*

Faith and Our Savior's Lutheran Churches (ELCA)

Calamus Lutheran Parish

P.O. Box 116, Calamus, IA 52729

Phone: 563-246-2622

Email: clparish@fbcom.net

Website: www.clparish.org

Pastor: Rev. Leah Holloway-Nilsen



*Our Savior's
Lutheran Church
2589 190th Avenue
Calamus, IA 52729*

Volume 38

December 2025

Number 12

Pastor's View

Dear Siblings in Christ,

As we journey through this Advent season, I share this blessing with you from Kate Bowler and her book *Have a Beautiful Terrible Day*. May we always know the power of hope, and how it changes the world even when things are their most dim.

In Christ's Peace,

Pastor Leah

For Hope

There is a story you are telling, Lord,
about the way that time itself
bends towards you.

How a baby being born shone a light
that set wise men on their course
and kings wringing their hands
and calling for blood.

You are changing the world.

But first we must understand that
our hope is a force

set in motion at the dawn of time itself.

It was you who began that long descent
from the heights of heaven
as creator, as love, as a promise
come down to us at Christmas.

You are an improbable blaze of glory

that was one tiny infant,

to become one of us

in all human sense and feeling,

and become for us our sure

and certain hope

that one day, all sadness and sorrow

will flee away,

and death will be no more.

Come, Jesus.

We are ready to learn hope.

We want to be told, once again, that

before light was separated from darkness

and mud shaped into life

you've been waiting to say: "I am here."



December Cover Letter – Art Work

Thank you for the wonderful artwork for the December Cover Page!

Midweek Advent Worship Schedule



In addition to Sunday worship, there will be midweek Advent services on Wednesday evenings.

Wednesday, December 3, at Faith

5:45 PM Program Practice
6:15 PM Meal
7:00 PM Worship
7:30 PM Bible Jam

Wednesday, December 10, at Faith

5:45 PM Program Practice
6:15 PM Meal
7:00 PM Worship
7:30 PM Bible Jam

Wednesday, December 17, at Our Savior's

6:15 PM Meal
7:00 PM Worship
7:30 PM God Squad Christmas Party

Children's Christmas Program

The Sunday School Children present:
"Twas the Night Before Christmas"



10:30 AM

Sunday, December 14th, at Our Savior's

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Wednesday, December 24
9:00 PM at Our Savior's Lutheran Church



Christmas Day Worship

Thursday, December 25
9:00 AM at Faith Lutheran Church

Naomi Circle Bible Study

Wednesday, December 10th
10:00 a.m. at Marsha Witte's home



Special Collection of Warm Clothing

During the weeks of Advent and Christmas, the parish will be collecting winter wear. Please bring new (or very gently used) winter coats, hats, gloves and mittens to Faith and Our Savior's. The items will be given to the Carroll Assistance Center in Wheatland for distribution to those who need something warm to wear this winter.



Ministry Volunteers

The Worship Committee is organizing the 2026 Ministry List for each congregation – Acolyte, Lector, Altar Minister, Communion Assistant, and Usher. Specific instructions for each of these roles are available. If you are willing to serve in any of these roles, please contact a member of the Worship Committee or inform Nicole in the parish office, 563-246-2622. Assistance will be given to anyone interested in learning these ministry tasks.

Thank you to everyone who served in 2025.

2025 Worship Committee Members

Our Savior's: Jason Bousselot*, Dan Burke*, and Linda Whitman.

Faith: Brittany Hoffmann*, Andrea Shelton, and Terri Bousselot*.

*Denotes Council Member



God Squad would like to Thank the church members who have provided Wednesday night meals, we appreciate the love!



Bible Jam for the month of December:

Wednesday, December 3rd
7:30 PM – 8:30 PM at Our Savior's.

Wednesday, December 10th
7:30 – 8:30 PM at Our Savior's.

Wednesday, December 17th
God Squad's Christmas Party
7:30 PM – 8:30 PM at Faith.

Meals for Youth attending Bible Jam

Do you enjoy cooking or have a favorite meal you would like to share with our youth? We are looking for volunteers to help prepare meals on Wednesday nights.

Contact Heather Grau at 563-424-0507 for more information or to sign up.



Naomi Circle Bible Study

The women of **Naomi Circle** meet monthly for Bible study. They use the studies in *Gather*; a magazine printed for Women of the ELCA. The group meets at 10:00 a.m. on the second Wednesday of the month in someone's home. Women of the parish are invited to join the five current attenders: Jeannene, Leah, Marsha, Ruth, and Shirley.

December is a good month to give circle a try! The devotional "Practicing Advent Imagination: Matthew's Dreamers and Isaiah's Vision" by Rev. Sara Olson-Smith will be led by Jeannene at Marsha's home on Wednesday, December 10, at 10:00 a.m. Bring your own lunch to eat following the lesson. Call any woman of Naomi Circle and they will print a copy of the study for you.

A subscription to *Gather* magazine is \$19.95 for four issues per year (call 1-844-409-0576). It is a great magazine for your own inspiration.

The **2026 Bible study plan** is as follows:

January – February

"Embodied Prayer"

(2-part study by Rev. Liv Larson Andrews)

March – April – May

"I AM: God's Holy Name and Promise"

(3-part study by Rev. Dr. Hannah Hawkinson)

June – July – August

"I Am Worthy"

(3-part study by Rev. Sara Olson-Smith)

September – October – November

"Bold Faith on an Unexpected Journey"

(3-part study by Rev. Tiffany Chaney)

December – Advent devotional

NOTE: The **Women of the ELCA Triennial**

Gathering is in Des Moines July 16-18, 2026! The Gathering theme is "I Am Worthy." SE IA Synod Bishop Amy Current will preach and preside at opening worship.

Worship Committee

The Worship Committee of the Calamus Lutheran Parish meets monthly to plan Sunday worship services and festival services held during Advent, Lent, and Holy Week. This process includes collaboration with the Joint, Our Savior's, and Faith Church Councils. Pastor Leah provides guidance to ensure the content of the services aligns with synod guidelines and liturgical settings.

The committee reviews new materials, observes overall participation by members during services, and responds to feedback provided by parishioners. The committee invites and welcomes church members to share ideas and feedback regarding worship services. This input allows each congregation to meet the needs of their members and provides opportunities for new and fresh ideas to be incorporated into worship.

The committee also creates ministry lists for each congregation - Acolyte, Lector, Altar Minister, Communion Assistant, and Usher. Specific instructions for each of these roles are available. If you are willing to serve in any of these roles, please contact a member of the Worship Committee or inform the parish office, 246-2622. Assistance will be given to anyone interested in learning these ministry tasks.

2025 Worship Committee Members

Our Savior's: Jason Bousselot*, Dan Burke*, Deb Detlefs*, Linda Whitman

Faith: Brittnay Hoffmann*, Andrea Shelton, Terri Bousselot*

*Denotes council member



**All reports for Faith and Our Savior's
Annual Reports are due in the church office
by Monday, December 15th.**

These reports include: Pastor, Council Presidents,
God Squad, Feeding the Children,
Memorials and Gifts, Our Savior's Cemetery,
Faith Property and Management, and all
Parish Committees
(Education, Christian Outreach, Worship).

**Please have financial reports, budgets
and audit reports in the church office by
Monday, January 12, 2026.**

Please submit **January newsletter items**
to the church office (clparish@fbcom.net)
by Monday, December 15th.

Thank you for your cooperation!

Parental Leave Information

While Pastor Leah is on Parental Leave please
contact the following Pastors.

Pastor Dennis Rodenberg will cover all
emergencies and funerals, if he is unavailable
Pastor Roberta can be contacted as a back up to
him.

Pastor Dennis Rodenberg at 563-880-5345 or
email at pastorzion@netins.net
If he is unavailable by phone please contact

Pastor Roberta Pierce at 406-478-9518 or email at
prrmbp10@gmail.com



Church Office Closed

The church office will be closed
December 24th – January 5th.

2027 ELCA Youth Gathering

Location: Minneapolis

Dates of Gathering: June 28th- July 2nd, 2027

Who can Attend: Youth 8th to 12th Grade in 2026

The ELCA Youth Gathering is an amazing
opportunity to see and experience your youth faith
community. Watch for upcoming announcements
about informational meetings.

Let Heather or Pastor Leah know if you have any
questions or are interested in attending!

Confirmation and Bible Jam resumes
on January 7th, 2026 at their usual
times at Faith.

To contact **Pastor Leah**,
please use her cell phone number:
(262) 914-9392



November Meetings

~ ~ Our Savior's Council ~ ~

Date: November 13, 2025

Present: Dan, Amy, Jason, and Joe.

Old Business

- Piano Tuning
 - Will be tuned in the Sanctuary and basement on the 24th.
- Renter
 - Have had inquires asking for details.
 - Walked through the house. Bathroom downstairs needs some help with mold, but flooring looked good.
 - Discussed rent. Considered raising to \$1000 since we pay for water softening and market rates. Renters are responsible for utilities (electric and propane) and internet. Motion by Jason to raise the rent to \$1000 and seconded by Joe. Motion carried unanimously.
 - No appliances are included.
 - Snow removal and lawn care are renter's responsibility.
 - Pets are considered on a case-by-case basis.
 - Will find an application form and get it prepared for possible interest.

New Business

- Feeding the Children
 - Motion by Dan to approve additional \$250 for Feeding the Children and seconded by Joe. Motion carried unanimously.
 - Amy will make an announcement at service on Sunday.
- Advent Meal
 - Will do a congregational signup sheet.
 - Date TBD by God's Squad's choice.

~ ~ Faith Council ~ ~

Date: November 13, 2025

Present: Mitch Christensen, Mark Witte, Brian Tulley, and Brittany Hoffmann.

Treasurer's Report:

- Motion by Tulley to approve the October Report as printed. Christensen seconded. Motion carried.

Financial Secretary's Report:

- Motion by Tulley to approve the October report as printed. Hoffmann seconded. Motion carried.

Old Business:

- Ceiling Repair
 - Joe Morrissey to do the framing and plaster work.
- Paint for Sanctuary
 - Pam is no longer interested, will need to ask around and get bids from companies that may be able to complete the painting.

New Business

- Advent Meal
 - Held at Faith on 12/17. Meal will be provided by Faith Council, planning for soups.
- Feeding the Children
 - There is a need to add four additional families from the school for Feeding the Children. Tulley made a motion to contribute \$250 from Faith towards Feeding the Children program, seconded by Hoffmann. Motion carried.



November Meetings

~~ Joint Council ~~

Date: November 13, 2025

Present: Our Saviors: Dan, Jason, Amy, and Joe; **Faith:** Brittany, Mark, Mitch and Brian

Pastor's Report

- No Report

Old Business:

- None

New Business:

- Theisen's grant
 - Did not get the grant this year.
 - Will apply again next year.
- F & B Bill
 - Nicole researched phone bill for Parsonage and Church and found cost savings
 - At Parsonage we saved \$15/monthly by bundling services.
 - Church – we can bundle internet and phone, lowered bill by \$8.00/monthly and also includes Caller ID services. Nicole found we have been paying for a fax line, and will close the line down.
 - Total savings is about \$27/monthly
 - Motion by Dan and seconded Joe to approve changes. Motion carried unanimously.
- Feeding the Children
 - Found out last week that there are 4 more children needing bags.
 - Would request another \$500 in total to cover additional cost.
 - Currently at -\$126 in the account, but additional funds would cover the entire year.
 - Motion by Brittany and seconded by Amy to accept the 4 additional children.
 - Will announce to congregations the addition and let people know we can make it through the calendar year.

➤ PCC

- Met to discuss and recommend 2026 salaries for Pastor and Nicole
 - Pastor's salary guidelines come from Synod office.
 - Recommended \$2000 raise for Pastor, \$1000 from each congregation.
 - Motion on Pastor from Dan, seconded by Brian. Motion carried unanimously.
 - Recommended \$1/hour raise for Nicole; about \$500 from each congregation.
 - Motion by Brian and seconded by Joe to approve Nicole's raise. Motion carried unanimously.
- ### ➤ Advent Meal
- First two are at OS, last one is at Faith.
 - Will ask God Squad to do one at Our Savior's; they can pick the meal they want.

Worship Committee

Date: November 13, 2025

Present: Dan, Andrea, Brittany, Jason and Linda

- Thanksgiving Eve Service
 - Reviewed last year's order; will use booklets but have half sheet for congregation to have page numbers and order on.
 - Hymns will be the same as last year.
 - Still need a leader and lector.
- Christ the King Service
 - Reviewed proposed bulletin
 - No youth sermon
 - Will ask Diane to do a short homily if she would like.
 - Will substitute Psalm with current one in lectionary.
- Advent Bulletin
 - Using Holden Evening Prayer.
 - Will use different hymn each week.
 - Will recruit non-confirmation leaders at services.
- Children's Program
 - Education Committee is planning.
- Leader Bulletin
 - Will ask Nicole to print the post-offering prayer in full.

Christian Outreach Committee

- Finalizing plans for Thanksgiving evening service.

God Squad

Old Business:

- Halloween Fun Night, we had 41 in attendance (down slightly from last year). Everyone had a great time and special Thank You to everyone that provided food. We raised \$455 for the 2025 Angel Tree Project, which is about 5 Angels.

New Business:

- Angel Tree Project
 - We have \$455 for about 5 Angels at \$80 per Angel. Heather will reach out to the Carroll Assistance Center on status of Angels. Years past we have received closer to 10.
- Thanksgiving Pie & Treats Bake Sale
 - Youth are planning a bake sale, same day as the Thanksgiving Worship, to raise money for the 2025 Angel Tree Project. They will be selling pies, treats and breads – Free will donation.
- Advent Meal
 - Started planning for the meal and looking to donate a portion of the proceeds raised to the Lutheran Disaster Relief – Jamaica Hurricane.
- Annual Christmas Party
 - Planning for Wednesday, December 17th, 7:30 pm at Faith. We will have games, treats, activities and presents.

Education Committee

Date: November 12, 2025

Present: Rebecca Shorter, Cindy Burke, and Eric Hoffmann.

- Christmas Program – “Twas the Night Before Christmas” from One Rehearsal Christmas Program book - Chapter 3.
- Rehearsal Schedule -
 - Dec. 3rd – before Advent Service 5:45 pm
 - Dec. 10th – before Advent Service 5:45 pm
 - Dec. 13th – Dress Rehearsal at 9:30 am
 - Dec. 14th – Sunday School hour final rehearsal/dressing/prep for program, perform for worship.
- Reviewed who we wanted for the speaking parts and discussed needed props.
- Will give copy of program to Marsha to review songs – 4 songs suggested in program but open to other suggestions.
- Treat bags for kids – Planning for 20 to 25.
 - Eric – Fruit (cuties) and juice
 - Rebecca – Chocolate candies
 - Cindy – Candy Canes and something else.
- Sunday School
 - No Sunday School on Dec. 21st or Dec. 28th. (Break from after Christmas program until new year. Will be consistent with Confirmation and God Squad break.) Begin again on January 4th.

****Next Meetings Scheduled****

Joint Council

Date: December 10th, 2025

Time: 7:30 pm

Where: Our Savior's

Education Committee Meeting

Date: January 14th, 2025

Time: 7:00 pm

Where: Faith

Worship Committee Meeting

Date: December 10th, 2025

Time: 6:30 pm

Where: Our Savior's

MINSTERS for December 2025

If you cannot do your task on the day assigned, it is your responsibility to trade with someone or to find your own substitute and notify the church office of the change.

FEEDING THE CHILDREN: Andrea Shelton

Preparing and delivering twelve bags of food to Cal-Wheat Elementary on Friday mornings.

FAITH CHURCH

Ushers:

Dirk Braet & Brian Tulley

Acolyte:

Emily Grau

Communion Assistant:

Peyton Grau

Lectors:

December 7: Heather Whitman

December 14: Brian Tulley

December 21: Alan Lee

December 25: Shelley Witt- Gentile

December 28: Heather Grau

Altar Ministry:

Marsha & Mark Witte

OUR SAVIOR'S CHURCH

Usher:

Rachel Burke

Acolyte:

Wyatt Easterday

Communion Assistant:

David Burke

Lectors:

December 7: David Burke

December 14: Marcia Edens

December 21: Deb Detlefs

December 28: Neil Holmquist

Cleaner:

Amy Glover

December 2025 Calamus Lutheran Parish

NOTE: Check the website www.clparish.org for more information.

OS = Our Savior's Church ** The regular schedule resumes on Sunday, January 4th: 8:00 am worship at Faith, 9:25 am Sunday School at Our Savior's,
F = Faith Church 10:30 am worship at Our Savior's. January 4th Sunday School resumes at Our Savior's. **

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3 Advent Worship at Our Savior's 5:45 pm Program Practice 6:15 pm Meal 7:00 pm Worship Bible Jam 7:30 pm at Our Savior's	4	5	6
7 Advent 2 8:00 Worship – F 9:30 Sunday School OS 10:30 Worship - OS	8	9 “Meet and Eat” Noon at Buck's Corner in Calamus	10 Naomi Circle 10:00 am Marsha Witte's home Advent Worship at Our Savior's 5:45 pm Program Practice 6:15 pm Meal 7:00 pm Worship Bible Jam 7:30 pm at Our Savior's Joint Council 7:30 pm at OS Worship Committee 6:30 pm at Our Savior's	11	12	13 9:30 am Dress Rehearsal Christmas Program at Our Savior's
14 Advent 3 9:30 Dress Rehearsal at Our Savior's Children's Program at Our Savior's One Service Only at OS 10:30 am	15 Annual Reports of all committees are due in the church office. January newsletter items are due.	16	17 Advent Worship at Faith 6:15 pm Meal 7:00 pm Worship God Squad Christmas Party 7:30 pm at Faith	18	19	20
21 Advent 4 Noisy Offering 8:00 Worship – F 10:30 Worship - OS	22	23	24 9:00 pm Worship at Our Savior's Christmas Eve	25 9:00 am Worship at Faith Christmas Day	26 Church office closed	27
28 One Service Only at Faith 8:00 am	29 Church office closed	30 Church office closed	31 Church office closed New Year's Eve			