

ELM GROVE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
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Fourth Sunday in Advent
Sunday, December 21, 2025 – Volume 77, Number 12.3
The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

Elm Grove Evangelical Lutheran Church Calendar

S	9:00 a.m. Divine Service	7:00 a.m. Committee of Elders (228)
	10:30 a.m. Bible Study	W Christmas Eve
	10:30 a.m. Confirmation/Sunday School	Office Closed
	11:30 a.m. Family Christmas Party (YC)	5:00 p.m. Lessons and Carols
	7:00 p.m. AA Meeting (FH)	8:00 p.m. Lessons and Carols
M	4:45 p.m. Intrada Ringers (Church)	T Christmas Day
	6:00 p.m. Empower Volleyball (Gym)	Office Closed
T	7:00 a.m. Men's Bible Study (228)	10:00 a.m. Divine Service
	4:45 p.m. Exultate Ringers (Church)	F Office Closed
	6:00 p.m. Empower Volleyball (Gym)	

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Friday 7:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

IN THE LORD'S HOUSE: There were **185** people that attended services last week in person and **81** households streamed the services for a total of **266**. "And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."

FAMILY CHRISTMAS PARTY: Cookies are begging for frosting, pizza's ready to disappear, and the gym's calling for chaos – and EGL Youth Ministry is making it all happen today right after Bible study/Sunday School (11:30 a.m.) in the Youth Center. Expect Christmas music, a short Christmas devotion, cookie decorating and eating, and space to hang out. Come celebrate the joy of Christ's birth, enjoy lunch together, and make some lasting memories!

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE SIGNAGE PROJECT: EGL is preparing to enhance signage throughout our campus to better welcome visitors, provide clear direction, and reflect our identity in Christ. Our goal is to raise **\$75,000** to fund new monument signs, updated lettering, directional signage, and necessary electrical work. The Foundation is providing a matching gift of \$1 for

every \$2 raised to support this effort. Graphic boards showing the proposed signs and locations are in the back of the church. "Let your light shine before others..." (Matthew 5:16)

CHRISTMAS EVE/DAY SERVICES: Our Advent services of eagerly anticipating our Lord's return have come to their conclusion this year with the yearly celebration of our Lord's incarnation. This coming week we offer two Christmas Eve services at 5:00 and 8:00 on Wednesday, Dec 24, and one on Christmas Day at 10:00. Both Christmas Eve services will follow the Lessons & Carols format, as we hear familiar Bible passages and hymns mixed with short devotions and prayer. The Christmas Day Divine Service will connect us via Word and Sacrament with the first pillar of the Christian faith -- that God became man in order to save us. See you soon!

AFRICAN PASTOR: This past summer EGL welcomed Pr Bienfait Safari-Romeo in person as we heard during the adult Bible study hour about his journey from war refugee to Lutheran pastor. He was here as he prepared for studies at Concordia Theological Seminary in Ft Wayne.

Bienfait is finishing up his first semester of studies and will be traveling back to WI to visit with Pr Senkbeil. While here on his break, he will preach for us on Sunday, Dec 28. You may have noticed that we included him in public prayers last week as we prayed for peace in a place called Uvira, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This is Bienfait's hometown and it has seen renewed warfare recently, resulting in the death of many, including relatives of Bienfait.

THE WORD OF THE LORD GROWS: As we anticipate a new year, we also anticipate a new topic for our Sunday morning Bible study! Join us as we explore the world of the Old Testament prophets. God used these men in the course of the Old Testament to be watchmen for His people, standing at their posts with words of judgment and promise. We'll spend some time with these prophets each week to explore their context, personality, respective books, and message to God's people then and even today. This study will begin on Sunday, January 4.

EGL TOWNHALL: We're almost six months into our new governance model. One of the features is that we don't have nearly as many Voters Assemblies because you have entrusted your elected Board of Directors with the direction of the Church. However, in an effort to keep the membership informed, we are scheduling a townhall meeting for Sunday, Jan 11, right after worship to update the congregation on developments and to solicit input.

SUNDAY SCHOOL: There will not be Sunday school on December 28. I encourage all of you to rejoice in church with your family in the precious gift of God's son. Blessings, Linda Hoffmann

THANK YOU: Thank you to everyone who contributed to our Thanksgiving offering. A total gift of \$5,120.00 was collected and will be donated to the Persian Project to support the work of the Lutheran Church in Germany as it proclaims the Gospel to Iranian and Afghan refugees throughout Germany. If you would still like to contribute to the work among the Persian Immigrants you may do so at this link, <https://www.lcms.org/givenow/germany-foro>. If you are interested in reading more about

the growth of Christianity in Iran and thus within the Persian community, consider this article by our own Dr Lamont and Kathryn Colucci, who wrote this piece for Newsmax in late 2019: <https://lamontcolucci.org/2019/11/07/newsmax-documentary-offers-news-perspective-on-international-relations-with-iran/>.

LADIES PM STUDY: The Story of Esther follows the story of a young orphan girl starting with a six-month long feast, to her becoming queen, and finally risking her life to save the lives of her people. Join the "She Shed" gals as we dig into this beautiful story together, with LWML speaker Donna Pyle-Snow. She will show us how the story of Esther applies to our lives today. The Ladies PM Bible Study will take up the eight-week study of "Chosen – A Study of Esther" starting on Wednesday evenings January 21, 2026 through February 11, 2026, 5:30-6:45 p.m., in the BAAC, then shift to Thursday evenings for the next four weeks during Lent (February 19 through March 12). Contact Nancy Wolck or Susan Schmalzer with questions.

MIDWEEK BIBLE STUDIES: With the exception of the men's study on Tuesdays at 7:00 am, which will continue meeting over the next couple of weeks, the midweek Bible studies are on a break. Pr Teggatz's study of the Psalms will resume on Epiphany, Jan 6, at 10:00 a.m. Pr Skovgaard's Wednesday 10:00 a.m. study will launch into the Book of Romans on Wednesday, Jan 14.

SOUP AND COOKIE JARS are still available! You are not too late! They will be in the lower lobby today.

SERMON NOTES

Matthew 1:20-21: ²⁰But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, **do not fear** to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

Luke 1:13: ¹³But the angel said to him, "**Do not be afraid**, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John.

Luke 1:30-31: ³⁰And the angel said to her, "**Do not be afraid**, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.

Luke 2:9-11: ⁹And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. ¹⁰And the angel said to them, "**Fear not**, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

Matthew 14:27: ²⁷But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Take heart; it is I. **Do not be afraid.**"

Matthew 17:7: ⁷But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and **have no fear.**"

John 12:15: ¹⁵"**Fear not**, daughter of Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on a donkey's colt!"

Matthew 28:5,10: ⁵But the angel said to the women, "**Do not be afraid**, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. ¹⁰Then Jesus said to them, "**Do not be afraid**; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me."

John 20:19: ¹⁹On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "**Peace be with you.**"

Revelation 1:17-18: ¹⁷When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "**Fear not**, I am the first and the last, ¹⁸and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.

