

THE EVANGEL
Gloria de Cristo Lutheran Church
11273 E. 40th Street
Yuma, Az.

December 2025
Volume 33, Issue 12



MISSION STATEMENT

Walking with Jesus to bring new life and hope to every person

THE NEWBORN KING

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6

This verse from the Book of Isaiah gives us the full essence of just who that baby is whom we celebrate through the Advent season. And as we come to the stable, to worship with the shepherds, we witness a miracle that is larger than we can comprehend, with love and sacrifice that is beyond our ability to fully understand. But we can embrace it and we can allow it to change us forever.

In John we read: “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.” (John 1:1). Jesus is none other than God’s light and life-giving Word. Jesus had no beginning and He will never end. Jesus is eternal. He was not created, but is One with the Father and he created all things; nothing was created that He did not create. Jesus Christ, though completely human, fully reveals the Father. Jesus allows us to see the eternal and unchanging God of love. That very God was willing, because he loves us and wishes to be loved in return, became one of us and made of Himself our flesh, suffering with us and dying for our sins.

Here is our Christmas gift: God came down. Salvation has entered into our flesh. Christmas is our hope for eternal life. Christmas is the ultimate price, paid by the Father, motivated by love alone. Christmas is the Creator, joining the Creation, the divine becoming human, not to just be among us, but to be one of us. Christmas is the unimaginable becoming reality.

There was no room at the inn, but there was room on the cross. Everyone is worthy. Everyone is invited to participate in God’s redeeming love. God loves us and delights in us and humbled himself so that He could walk beside us. And now, we have Christ in us. Who I am

(con’t.)

CHRIST WITH US (Con't.)

doesn't matter...all that matters is who I am in Christ. We're called to believe, to rejoice, to see Jesus in our neighbors, in the world around us and to allow ourselves to be freed from sin and death; simply believe!!! Welcome The Prince of Peace, find healing, find wholeness, be comforted and open your heart and mind to the infant Jesus who is God made man. Finally, let us do as the shepherds did and spread the good news. Let us walk with Jesus to bring new life and hope to every person.

Blessed Christmas!!

Heavenly Father, we give you thanks and praise for this Christmas and for the peace and joy of knowing that your love and mercy never cease. Although there was no room at the inn, open my heart and let me be yours to all eternity. Amen!

MESSAGE FROM PASTOR JACK

Friends in Christ,

We are immersed in the Advent season. These four weeks prepare us for the birth of Jesus and our Christmas celebration. Advent starts with **Anticipation**. Just like days of old we wait for the birth of the first child. God's children prepare for the birth of Jesus.

We scratch off the **Days** on the calendar. The people in Old Testament times waited centuries for the fulfillment of the promised Messiah. Each day causes us to **Venture** deeper into the Scriptures and the depth of God's love for us. Jesus was and is the fulfillment of God's promise of **Emmanuel**, God with us.

Jesus' promise of being with us strengthens us as our daily adventures challenge us. 2 Corinthians 5:17 explains that we are a **New Creation** in Christ Jesus. The transformation happens via faith in Christ Jesus.

Christmas is the **Timeless** gift of God's Son born, living, dying and rising again daily via the Holy Spirit calling and gathering us to enlighten us to the real meaning of Christmas. May the Spirit sanctify and preserve you in Christ in Christmas.

Alive in Christ
Pastor Jack



We have suddenly become very busy! It's thrilling to welcome all of our dear friends as you come back from your summer home to the sunshine of Yuma. We're celebrating three services; one on Saturday and two on Sunday and the calendar is full of meetings, gatherings, studies, and chances to gather together in fellowship. And we're in the season of Advent; a time of reflection and preparation while we wait for the birth of The King of Kings.

It can be really tempting to get caught up in all the hoopla that happens this time of year and we can become overwhelmed with preparations, buying, wrapping, decorating, card sending, baking, and doing all those holiday things that make up our tradition of "keeping the season". And there's certainly nothing wrong with any of the things that we love to do. But at the same time, we need to be sure that we don't become "The Inn" where there was no room for the family that needed shelter and for the Savior that was about to be born. We can't let the celebration smother the Baby.

During the next few weeks, set aside some time to breathe, and honor the Baby in the manger:

Set aside a specific time to pray and to meditate on "God With Us" **Or** Obtain and utilize an Advent devotional that helps focus on a daily time of worship or take home your Sunday (or Saturday) bulletin and worship through the liturgy each day for that week (singing the hymns, praying the prayers, reading the lessons, psalms and Gospel) **Or** go through your hymnal each day, singing or reading Advent hymns and Christmas Carols, praying and praising by lifting your voice. **Or** each day in Advent make a note of what blessed you that day or where you saw Jesus working in your life. Put those notes in a box, wrap it in Christmas wrapping paper and give it to yourself next year (or open it whenever things feel really tough) **Or** buy a Christian Advent Calendar and use it to mediate on it's message throughout the season **Or** choose a specific Bible Study for yourself and read one of the Gospels **Or** use a guide to find Jesus in the Old Testament to either remember Jesus' life and ministry **or** to reinforce the assurance that God keeps all of His promises **Or** If you are just "too busy", understand that you are really missing the point of Christmas... make a list of all that you are doing and pare that list so that you have at least 15 minutes per day to pray, praise and give thanks.

God loves you and it is not his will that you burn yourself out through "over service". God wants you to enjoy the birth of your Savior and to make this a season of worship and renewal!

Blessed Christmas from your Vicars!

From the desk of Dr. Shirley . . .



Advent is the Christian liturgical season of expectant waiting and preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of Jesus at Christmas. The term derives from the Latin, *adventus*, meaning "coming" or "arrival," and the season also anticipates Christ's anticipated second coming [1]. Marking the beginning of the Christian liturgical year, Advent spans the four weeks leading up to Christmas Day. It commences on the fourth Sunday prior to Christmas (the Sunday nearest November 30) and concludes on Christmas Eve. The season is characterized by themes of **hope, peace, joy, and love**.

Key traditions include the **Advent wreath**, an evergreen circle holding four candles—typically three violet and one rose [1]. One candle is lit each Sunday as the season progresses, symbolizing the growing light of Christ's arrival. The rose candle is lit on the third Sunday, *Gaudete* Sunday, a time for rejoicing. Many traditions also incorporate a central white "Christ candle," lit on Christmas [1].

Advent calendars are a popular countdown tool, typically featuring 24 doors to open daily from December 1st until Christmas Eve, often revealing a small treat or picture. Daily devotionals, special church services, and acts of charity are also common practices during this reflective season [1].

In a general sense, the word "advent" simply refers to the arrival of a notable person, event, or invention—for example, "the advent of the internet." The arrival of Jesus is certainly the arrival of a notable person! And angels heralded the event with a concert: truly heavenly music on earth!

When I came to Gloria de Cristo, I was instructed to keep Christmas carols to a minimum before Christmas and to emphasize Advent music—anticipating both Jesus' first coming and His anticipated second coming. What might be your favorite Advent Carol? One of mine is "Jesus Is Coming to Earth Again, What if It Were Today?"

One of my favorite Christmas Carols is "Oh, Holy Night." What is yours? It would be wonderful if you were to put your favorite on the back of a communion slip and turn it in. Please include your name so we can rejoice together!

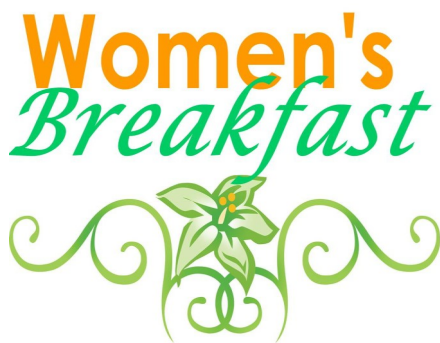
FROM THE PRESIDENT



It is hard to believe we will soon be celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ. I remember when I was young being told that as you get older time seems to move faster. It certainly seems to be true. Our congregation has seen many changes in the past year and hopefully we will see more changes and growth within the Gloria de Cristo congregation. Maybe even a Pastor to lead us into the future and opening a new chapter in our spiritual growth.

The Nominating Committee has been working to fill vacancies on our church council and at our Annual Meeting we will finish the task of setting the council for the upcoming church year. The Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 25, 2026 following the late service and will be held in the Fellowship Hall. Once again a light lunch will be available for those wishing to take part. A slip will be placed in the bulletin prior to meeting insuring an accurate count of lunches to be served.

Attending the annual meeting is an excellent way to recap what has taken place the past year and learning what our congregation might expect to accomplish in the future.



First Saturday of every month, 8:00 am, Izzy's on Foothills Blvd.

The next date is: January 3, 2026

Please come join us for great food, conversation, and fellowship!



EDUCATION

We are being blessed by all the teachers that have stepped up to teach. The Bible Classes are all up and running.

Old Testament is being taught by Jerry Randby on Thursdays at 4. He is teaching 2 Samuel .

New Testament is being taught by Jim and Sherrie Wehrer on Monday at 1. They are teaching the Gospel of John.

Coffee with Jesus started last week with Suzanne Haggett. She teaching about the Parables. She is teaching on Tuesday at 9.

Come and learn about our Bible from great teachers. Help enrich your knowledge of the Bible.

God Bless

Lynette, Education



Coffee Fellowship

FELLOWSHIP

MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL. May we celebrate with love and joy for all that is given to us. Son of God is born!! May we give praise.

We will be having our annual Christmas dinner on Christmas Day at noon. All are welcome to share friendships and meet new people. There is no cost to you, but a donation is greatly appreciated.

We wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a blessed NewYear.

Merrilee Kaiser



The Christmas Bazaar and Bake Sale will be held on December 6th in the Fellowship Hall from 8:00 am-12:00 Noon. Please mark your calendars and come see all the artistic, creative crafts that you won't find anywhere else. There is something for everyone. Find that something special for your RV or park model or for the caring neighbor or friend who has done so many nice things for you this year.

So many categories to choose from: Christmas items, Jewelry, Gardening, Clothing, Clearance, Baby/Children, Kitchen and Gifts.

Visit the Bake Sale and enjoy an assortment of inviting, delicious cookies, breads, pies, lefse, brownies, canned goods and much more.

Looking forward to seeing you there!!

GLORIOUS QUILTERS



Many more of our family have made the trip to their winter homes and we are sooo glad to see them back safe and sound.

December has come and there's a bit, I say BIT, of a slower pace for all these Ladies. Our Foster children, New Life Pregnancy, the throws for the farm workers and stocking caps for the homeless and drivers of the farm trucks have been taken care of for the most part. Least I forget our usual stops of Crossroads, Hospice of Yuma, Cancer resource, Amberly's, Safe House and some Day Care centers. We have quilts here for the shut-ins and any other need that may arise. So, if YOU know of someone that can just use a little lift, Text me PLEASE and we'll be there with a little warmth made from LOVE.

As this year nears the end, I think back to all those who gave to us, be it monetary, a scrap of fabric or cleaning our machines, and a pat on the back for what all these Ladies do. We would not be able to do what we do if it weren't you. We are truly blessed and to that I say GOD BLESS YOU.

No plea for your help this month just great full hearts saying Thank You
Carol Schock, Co-Coordinator



HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Health and Wellness Tips to Beat Holiday Stress

Are you aware that 64% of people with mental illness report the holidays make their conditions worse? High expectations, loneliness, and stress can lead to the “Holiday Blues” during the season from Thanksgiving to New Year’s. There is a tremendous need for people to reach out and watch out for each other in keeping with the spirit of the season.

Children and teens get the blues too. The highest rate for child psychiatric hospitalizations occurs in the winter. Older adults may find themselves filled with grief from losing long-time friends and loved ones. They find themselves remembering happier times in the past.

Have Reasonable Holiday Expectations

Don’t be filled with the idea that everything has to be perfect.

Take Time for Yourself

Taking time to breathe, relax, and care for your well-being can help reduce anxiety and stress during the holidays.

Focus on Gratitude

Write down the many things you are thankful for and refer to them often to keep your thoughts positive.

Be Charitable

If you are in a position to give financially to those in need, do so. Or make a difference by volunteering at a local charity. Helping others helps your mind, body, and spirit.

Take Care of Your Spirit

Your church community can provide much needed comfort at this time of year. **God is Good! All the Time!**

The Health and Wellness Team of Gloria de Cristo wishes all of you a very Merry Christmas and a safe and caring time with friends and family.

Committee members: Leader Robin Marlatt, Michelle Cegon, Jean Gerfen, Mike Rosenberg, Evie Trone, and Secretary Jeanie Volpe



PROPERTY



It is so nice to see that our winter family is returning to Gloris de Cristo to spend the winter. Praise God for your safe travels.

While you were away, we accomplished a few improvements. Irrigation, lighting and the RO system .

I found a major break in the zone west of the offices down by the willow trees. We were wasting a fair amount of water when that zone was running.

The RO system in the kitchen stopped working so I had it completely overhauled . Everything is new and it will now fill 12-to-15-gallon jugs at a time . The water quality is pure.

We replaced all of the old-style Florissant tubes with new LED tubes and removed all the old ballast; this will make a huge impact on reducing our electric bill.

I think Jerry is planning a clean- up day in the near future, so be on the lookout for time and date .

How about those Oleanders along the driveway, aren't they beautiful?

Gods Blessings be up on you and give you peace.

David Donaldson, Property committee member.



We are now into the season of preparation for the birth of our Savior. The Sanctuary will be done in blue, the color of Advent. Thank you to those that helped with that task. We will be changing over to red when it comes to Christmas.

Thank You to all those that have so graciously accepted the various duties that make our services flow smoothly.

May you and your family have a happy and healthy Christmas Season!!

Char Schomisch, Co-leader



SOCIAL CONCERNS

First, let me begin with a retraction. In November I said the average person eats 25 lbs. of food a day. Well, maybe that's just me! The real number per sir google is 4 to 5 pounds a day. The food bank delivery totals so far are:

Jan. 365 lbs. , Feb. 200 lbs., March 100 lbs. April 230 lbs. May. 250 lbs.
June 218lbs. July (scale broke 🤖) Aug. 150 lbs.. Sept.78, LBS. Oct. 118
Nov. 212 lbs.

Thank you for you continues and much needed generosity.

We will be asking for a special donation of canned chicken the weekend of 1/17 & 1/18/26. Since the government subsidies to food bank has been cut they do not have enough money to purchase protein products. So please add an extra can of chicken to your basket. The social concerns committee is planning a GO See tour to the food bank in January. Stay tuned for the date.

By now the foster children have received your gifts. Santa sure dropped his bag at Gloria De Cristo! A heartfelt thanks!

The Vicar's discretionary fun initialed by the social concerns committee and be administered by the Vicars is \$2860.00

Good Gifts offering for ELCA missions will begin 12/6 though 12 14. You have the opportunity to purchase an animal or other mission related item to benefit ELCA missions at home and abroad. Our committee meets the first Monday of each month at noon after quilting in the fellowship hall. You are welcome to join.

Hope you had a blessed thanksgiving and have a very Merry Christmas.

Blessings,
Evelyn Trone
928-210-8015

STEWARDSHIP

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP GATHERING:

A few of the social virtues of Gloria de Cristo that regularly seem to come to the forefront when describing our church are friendliness, warmth and family. All true!!!! However, because of personal commitments and convenience and perhaps the Lutheran blood flowing in our veins, we are also creatures of habit. With our 3 weekly services it becomes difficult to even recognize members attending the 2 services that we don't attend. Even attending the "coffee hour" you are likely to only meet people you already know.

Presently we are determining the interest in conducting at least a "one time" Men's Fellowship Dinner. I'm not sure if this has occurred back in the old days. Who knows, it may be successful and become an annual event. If sufficient interest prevails, it will be conducted on Thursday, January 8, 2026. All members and those who regularly attend services are welcome. You don't have to be a member to attend. Sorry, no guests for this. We regularly have 20~28 men attend the monthly breakfast. We should certainly be able to double that; it will be early evening probably around 4 or 5 PM instead of in the middle of the night at 8 AM. It is a perfect opportunity to meet and recognize those parishioners attending other services.

More information is in the "weekly" bulletin and will be forthcoming in the Evangel as plans evolve.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

As indicated in earlier Evangel, we will be preparing a new Directory in January 2026. Representatives and photographers of Universal Church Directories will be at Gloria de Cristo on Tuesday and Wednesday, January 13 and 14, 2026. Committee members will be present at the beginning and end of each service to assist you in scheduling your appointment. Dates for completing the schedules will be available in the weekly bulletins.

Everyone who participates in the program having their picture taken will receive 1 complimentary 8x10 color photograph as well as their own personal copy of the completed directory. Pretty much the same as in previous years, you are under NO obligation to purchase additional photo packages, however you will be offered that opportunity.

(con't)

STEWARDSHIP (con't)

The Church Directory is a valuable reference tool for all people attending the services provided at Gloria de Cristo. The last Directory was "photographed" in early 2022. There have been many additions and losses since that time. After making your appointment, please make every effort to complete the sitting. If you forget to schedule an appointment, committee members will call you to encourage your participation.

I will provide you with more details and suggestions in the next Evangel

GENEROSITY PROJECT

In early 2023, we (Gloria de Cristo Congregants and visitors) showed our generosity to those in need by helping Amberly's Place. For those who may be new to the area, Amberly's Place is the shelter for abused and displaced women (non-profit) in our community and other areas close to Yuma. I have been asked by many of our members to "do it again". So, as promised, we will try it again.

Donations for Amberly's Place is scheduled for February 21 - 22, Saturday and Sunday. prior to the regular worship services. Donations should be brought with you as you come to attend worship and I will be present to accept them.

NEEDS: In case you care to take part in black Friday specials or other specials over the holidays, here is a list of items: WOMEN: toiletries (deodorant, shampoo and probably conditioners) dental care, toothpaste and brushes.... feminine hygiene.... not sure, "above my pay grade".....for the children: diapers, diapers, diapers..all sizes...whatever goes with diapers.....

Please remember DO NOT BRING ANYTHING TO CHURCH UNTIL Feb 21-22 !!!!!!!

More information next month

Stewardship, Gary Raasch Any questions, please call 717.715.4009



1st Saturday of the month, 8:00 am
At Daybreakers. The next one is
January 3, 2026

All men of the congregation are invited and encouraged to join in.



CARE MINISTRIES



STEPHEN MINISTRY: The new Stephen Ministry classes started on November 5th with 4 people doing the 50-hours of training. On November 11th we conducted a Stephen Ministry supervisory and Continuing Education session in Fellowship Hall. We had 8 Stephen Ministers in attendance and 4 Stephen Leaders.

GRIEFSHARE: On November 15th the GriefShare leaders sponsored a seminar entitled “Surviving the Holidays”. This seminar is to help people who are grieving a loved one get through the upcoming holidays...Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years.

The 3 C's of grief include: Choose, Connect and Communicate. They serve as essential tools for navigating the complex emotions that accompany loss.

The GriefShare Program will commence again on November 23, 2025 in our Fellowship Hall and is open to anyone who has experienced the loss of a loved one.



YARD SALE



- Mark your calendars for the 2026 Yard Sale! We will set up the sale Monday, February 23 - Thursday, February 26. Sale will be Friday, February 27, 8 am - 2 pm, and Saturday, February 28, 8 am - Noon.
- Drop-off dates: December 13, January 10, 8am - 10am.
- Yard sale team meetings will be Thursday, January 15, 1pm, and Thursday, February 12, 1 pm in the Fellowship Hall.

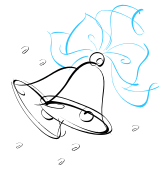
Michelle Cegon



- | | | | | | |
|---|----------------------|----|--------------------|----|-------------------|
| 2 | Chuck O'Reilly | 5 | Dorothy Pruett | 14 | Rick Bune |
| 2 | Evelyn Trone | 6 | Niki Duffy | 23 | Mona O'Reilly |
| 3 | Suzanne Hormann | 7 | Cheryl Preul | 25 | Virginia Reisnaur |
| 3 | Ralph Polk | 8 | Larry Munsterman | 27 | Isaac Timm |
| 4 | Margie Hollandsworth | 10 | Dennis Kasin | 29 | Harry Taylor |
| 4 | Billie Martin | 10 | Bonnie Munson | | |
| 4 | Glenn Van Winkle | 11 | Loretta Munsterman | | |



DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES



- | | | | |
|----|-----------------------|----|-----------------------|
| 4 | Alan & Becky Werner | 21 | Stan & Illa Goter |
| 19 | John & Jan Achen | 23 | Bert & Mikie Rinehart |
| 19 | Dave & Gwen Hubenthal | 28 | Duane & Fay Weeks |



FLOWERS FOR A DECEMBER

- 7 Mary Marsh in memory of husband Forrest
- 7 Cheryl Preul in memory of husband Robert
- 14 Jan Klipfel in memory of loved ones
- 21 Brigitte Arnio in memory of brother-in-law David Arnio
- 25 David Donaldson in memory of wife Lee
- 25 Char Schomisch in memory her mother Margaret
- 28 Larry Unger in memory of wife Rose Marie



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US POSTAGE PAID
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PERMIT NO. 190

December 2025

AUTHORIZED VICARS: Dr. Shirley Ehler Paula Pegues
Judy Zeiss Char Schomisch Jerry Randby

ORGANIST: Dr. Shirley Ehler

PIANISTS: Marie Ritten, Lorie Rapp,
Pam Carter, Suzanne Haggett

VIOLIN: Ami Gudjohnsen

Guitars: Paula Pegues, Randy Zieman

BELLS OF GLORY: Lorie Rapp

CHOIR: Dr. Shirley Ehler

CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS

PRESIDENT: John Arnold
VICE PRESIDENT: Sharon Merz
SECRETARY: Char Schomisch
TREASURER: Tammy Martin

Stephen Ministry Leaders

Jim & Sherrie Wehrer Niki Duffy
Michelle Cegon Sandy Corless
Robin Marlatt

GriefShare Leaders:

Ted & Nikki Duffy
Lisa Crayne
Mary Marsh

MINISTRY TEAM LEADERS:

CARE MINISTRY: Mary Marsh
EDUCATION: Lynette Layton
FELLOWSHIP: Merilee Kaiser
OUTREACH: Joe Johnson
PROPERTY: Jerry Randby
SOCIAL CONCERNS: Evelyn Trone
STEWARDSHIP: Gary Raasch
WORSHIP & MUSIC: Char Schomisch

Church Secretary: Char Schomisch