

Christ Lutheran Church
700 County Highway B
Stoughton, WI 53589

December 2025

CHRIST LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

Christmas Eve Wednesday, December 24

3:30 p.m.—A Children's Christmas Eve
Service with Special Music, Joseph, Mary,
Baby Jesus, lots of Critters
Holy Communion and Candle Lighting

5:00 p.m.—Christmas Eve Worship
with Special Music, Joseph, Mary, Baby
Jesus and lots of Critters
Holy Communion and Candle Lighting

6:30 p.m.—Christmas Eve Worship
Special Music, Communion and Candle
Lighting



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Anyone who wants to support Christ Lutheran Church can make a donation using the website or Q.R Code below.



<https://clcstoughton.org/giving/donate/>

Sunday Worship is available to Livestream on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/ChristLutheraChurchStoughton>

DECEMBER WORSHIP NEWS



December at Christ Lutheran

**On Sunday, December 7 and 14 Traditional Worship at 8:00
Worship Express at 9:15 a.m.**

On Sunday, December 21 and 28 one service at 9:00 a.m.

Sunday, December 7: The Second Sunday of Advent - Worship with Holy Communion

This year our gospel readings will come from Matthew's gospel. In chapter 3 of Matthew we encounter John the Baptist, calling people to mend their ways and speaking of a powerful one who is to come.

Preacher: Pastor Paula Geister-Jones

Special Music: Mike Meyers

Sunday, December 14: The Third Sunday of Advent - Worship

In the gospel reading for today John is in prison wondering if Jesus is indeed the one to come. He has his doubts. His message was one of judgement while Jesus' spends his time giving sight back to the blind, healing the lame, cleansing the lepers, opening up the ears of the deaf, raising the dead, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. Not exactly what John expected.

Preacher: Pastor Paula Geister-Jones



9:15 a.m. - Sunday School Christmas Program

Christmas would not be Christmas without a Sunday School Christmas Program. All are invited to come and enjoy! This year's program is entitled, "***The Animals' Tale***".

To make the day even more festive let's all wear **Christmas Sweaters**. Following the program Egg Bake and Christmas Goodies will be served in the Manna Café.



Sunday, December 21: The Fourth Sunday of Advent - Worship with Holy Communion

In today's gospel reading Joseph discovers Mary is with child. What will he do? The answer comes to him in a dream.

Preacher: Pastor Paula Geister-Jones

Special Music: Karen Warwick on Dulcimer

On the Fourth Sunday of Advent we celebrate the fact that soon God will be among us in flesh and blood. A birthday party for Jesus is being planned for the Sunday school children and the congregation. The party begins at 10:00 a.m.



Sunday, December 28 – Worship with a Christmas Carol Hymn Sing

Christmas music is off the radio the day after Christmas, but the church celebrates the season until January 6, Epiphany. 10 days after Christmas tradition says the Wise Men finally showed up in Bethlehem to worship the newborn king.



Stewardship 2026 Join the Journey

*"Trust in God from the bottom of your heart;
don't try to figure out everything on your own.
Listen for God's voice in everything you do,
everywhere you go." Proverbs 3:4-6*



2026 Pledge Update

Operations

82 Pledges - \$211,343

Capital Improvements

30 Pledges - \$20,004

Pastor's Discretionary

1 Pledge - \$1200

We are still accepting Pledges. Our goal was 125. If you have not yet pledged, consider making a commitment.



December Stewardship Update

We are behind in our budget. We passed a \$68,000 deficit budget and without your help, we could end the year close to that amount. If you are at all able, please put Christ Lutheran on your Christmas list.

Ushers Needed



Mark your calendars! We will have a welcome informational meeting for all ushers and those who might be interested in ushering on **Sunday, December 7th** following the 9:15 worship service. Grab a refreshment and a snack from the café and we will meet in the **Conference Room next to the Sanctuary**. You do not need to have experience in ushering, nor do you have to join a team. We welcome anyone who would be interested in ushering! We will discuss teams, alternates, what we do during worship service, and most importantly, get to know each other. Looking forward to seeing everyone!

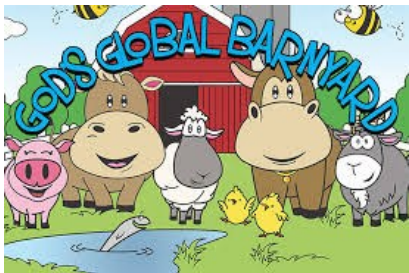
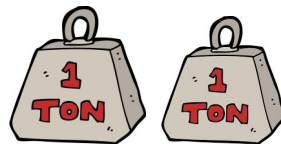


New Names for Senior Events

Senior Outings and Senior Luncheons have been rebranded **"Ageless Adventures"** and **"Meals and Memories."** Those names are so much more fun. Thank you! Cody Smith and Eileen Stacey for your creative minds.



Christ Lutheran begins collecting food for the Stoughton Food Pantry and continues collecting through Fat Tuesday, February 17th. We have less time than usual to meet our goal, so get ready. Let's be God's hand and feet in this world and start bringing groceries or making financial donations on Sunday, January 4th. Thrivent will help us reach our goal by donating 2 - \$250 Seed Actions Grants. On one Sunday during the month, 5th - 8th Graders will make their yearly grocery run to Wal Mart during the Sunday school hour to see who can purchase the heaviest groceries. With less time to donate, our goal is 2 tons or 4000 pounds, but that doesn't mean we can't collect more. Each dollar donating equals 1 pound of food.

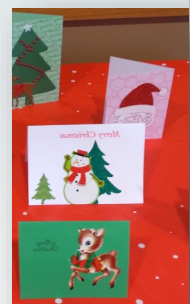


During Epiphany we focused on feeding people in our community. During Lent we raise funds for the **ELCA's God's Global Barnyard** and feed people who are part of our global community. Let's see how many cows, goats, sheep, pigs, chickens and bees we can buy. When you give a family chickens they not only eat, but have a means of producing an income that will send their children to school and give them hope for tomorrow.

Bethel Circle Fundraiser

Bethel Circle will be selling dish cloths on **Sunday, December 7th** and **Sunday, December 14th** in the Narthex. The dish cloths are \$2 each or 3 for \$5. All Proceeds will be donated to either the CLC Scholarship Fund or the Pastor's Discretionary Fund. In addition, check out the Christmas Cards on for sale in the Narthex. These are beautiful handmade cards done by Sandy Grant and at \$3.00 each are a steal. Custom Cards are also available on request.

Contact Sandy Grant for more information at tipitime@yahoo.com.



GO AND TELL BY ROGER SLACK

This is about a visit I had recently with a 1st cousin of mine that her brother had let me know, her family had moved her into assisted living as her Dementia had progressed to the point they could not take care of her in her home. She is 84. It was a Sunday afternoon that I had nothing going on, so on the spur of the moment decided to make the trip up to Viroqua to see her as I hadn't seen her at the last family reunion. I had no idea of what to expect, if she would know me, if I would be interrupting her afternoon nap and she want me to go. I just didn't know. As it turned out, her daughter and granddaughter were also there visiting, so it was good and I'm glad they were. There were some comical moments as her granddaughter was adjusting her grandmother's hearing aids so she could better hear what we were talking about.

As I kind of expected, she knew I was a cousin, but asked me to tell her which one. We both laughed and then again twice more during the time I was there. Her short term memory had taken a hit from the disease, but as we talked, I began to realize she still had memories from the past she could draw from. I'm thankful her granddaughter was there as she provided questions and allowed me to explain the intertwining of the family trees of the Slacks, Kolstads and Gardners as there are some interesting branches that crossover. This was in my cousins realm of long term memories and allowed her to remember names and things that even I had forgotten. It was fun for all of us to witness her having a good afternoon. Her brother called me that evening, as he heard I had visited her and was glad she had a good day for me to remember her with. Apparently that isn't always the case. He also told me that she couldn't remember who it was that visited her, but she was going to get a guest register to have people sign and date so she can look at it to remember who and when people came to see her. Coming from her, I thought that was a great idea. "Why didn't we think of that." Lol!

If you ever find yourself in a similar situation, you might want to try directing the conversation to things from the past. This may be where their memories are the strongest and give them a chance to be a part of the conversation.

Hymn Nerds December



"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (Latin: "Veni, veni, Emmanuel") is a Christian hymn for Advent. The text was originally written in Latin and is a metrical paraphrase of the "O Antiphons", a series of plainchant antiphons or liturgical songs sung the final days before Christmas.

The hymn has its origins over 1,200 years ago in monastic life in the 8th or 9th century. Seven days before Christmas Eve monasteries would sing the "O antiphons" in anticipation of Christmas Eve. This makes this one of the oldest hymns we still sing today.

The 1851 translation by John Mason Neale is the most prominent in the English-speaking world and the one that was first combined with the tune called "Veni Emmanuel" This is the version we use each year in this congregation.



CELEBRATE
JESUS'
BIRTHDAY!



Christmas Program 2025- "The Animal's Tale"

This year the Sunday School Kids will be telling the story of Jesus' Birth through the stories passed down by the animals that were present at Jesus' Birth. Do you ever wonder what the animals would say?

On **Sunday, December 7th**, all kids will be part of the dress rehearsal from **10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.** This will mostly take place during our normally scheduled Sunday School time.

On Sunday, **December 14th**, the Christmas Program will take place at the **9:15 a.m. Worship Express service**. Please make sure that your child is here no later than **8:30 a.m.** There will not be a Sunday School Class that day

and we will have an egg bake and Norwegian treats and our normal refreshments in the Café to celebrate.

The following **Sunday, December 21st** we will have an **all school class** celebrating the birth of Jesus with **Jesus' Birthday Party** during Sunday School from **10:00 a.m. to 10:45 a.m.** All children in Pre-K through 8th Grade are welcome even if you are not enrolled in Sunday School!



Looking for a few kids to **dress up as animals for the Christmas Eve Services**. If you are planning to attend and your child would like to dress up and be a part of the service please let us know. We have three services one at **3:30 p.m.** one at **5:00 p.m.** and one at **6:30 p.m.** Email Jenny at JennyH@clcstoughton.org. If they have a specific animal that they are interested in being please let us know. We have donkey's, sheep, camels, a goat, some chickens, and an owl.

Sunday School and Confirmation: Important Schedules Notes for the Month of December:



Instead of a Sunday School class on **Sunday December 14th** the kids will celebrate their Christmas Program in the **Café**. We will have an egg bake and Norwegian treats and refreshments. The kids will receive a gift for their participation in the program. Parents, family and friends are invited to attend.

There will be **No Sunday School** on **Sunday, December 28th**. That day we will have one service at 9:00 a.m. that is a Christmas Hymn Sing. We also are encouraging everyone to wear their comfy and cozy clothes that day. Sunday school will resume on Sunday January 4th at 10:00 a.m.

There will be no Confirmation classes, God and Games or Wednesday Night meals on December 24th and 31st. **We will resume Confirmation and all Wednesday night activities on Wednesday, January 7th.**

Open Gym here at CLC - Coffee, Chaos and Community.

(Families with little ones, we will also have the nursery open and staffed)

What: Free Open Gym for kids and families

When: Thursday, December 12th, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Who: This is open for kids from birth through Pre-K. Nursery is available

We have snacks including coffee and treats for the parents/grandparents/caregivers. We read a story, do a craft and play games in the gym. Perfect opportunity for your kids to get some exercise and playtime in a new environment with new toys and new friends. Our Theme this month is: Snowmen!





**Food and Fellowship
Wednesday Evenings
5:30 – 6:30 p.m.**

A minimum donation of \$8.00 is requested to help cover the cost of food. **This year all meals will have a gluten-free option.** Confirmation students and their families, God and Game participants and their families, Seniors, Chancel Choir, Uke Fellowship, Bell Choir Members, really – anyone and everyone – is invited to sit down and break bread together. Enjoy a hour of good food and fellowship.

Wednesday, December 3

Pigs in the Blanket, Chips, Scalloped Potatoes and Ham – **gluten-free option**,
Fresh Veggies and Dip, Brownies and Ice Cream
Coffee, White or Chocolate Milk and Apple Juice

Wednesday, December 10

Homemade Mac and Cheese or Beef Stew - **gluten-free option**
Homemade Apple Sauce, Swedish Rye Bread
Ice Cream with Raspberry Sauce (great with the Apple Sauce too)
Coffee, White and Chocolate Milk, Apple Juice

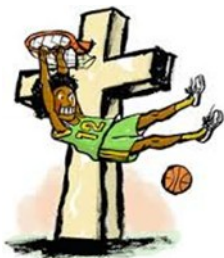
Wednesday, December 17

Chicken Alfredo (thickened with cornstarch) with Vegetables or Spaghetti **with gluten and gluten-free Noodles**, Green Salad, Garlic Bread
Cookies and Ice Cream
Coffee, White or Chocolate Milk, Apple Juice

Looking for More Cooks



Do you like to cook? Do you appreciate a challenge. Jen and Pastor Paula are looking for about 6 people who would help us with Food and Fellowship meal prep. The plan is to divide into two groups – Jen's Group and Paula's Group and prep the meal every other Wednesday. We would meet in the kitchen at 2:30 p.m. and prep the meal. At 5:15- 5:30 p.m. the calvary arrives (parents of confirmation students) and you would be free to enjoy Food and Fellowship.



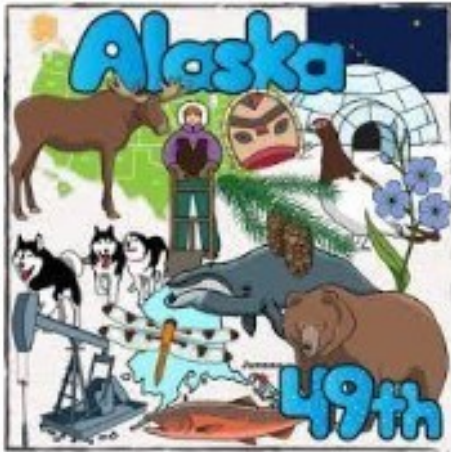
God and Games on Wednesday nights , December 3, 10 and 17th. .

6:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Grades 3rd – 6th

It doesn't matter if you are a regular or not, you are always welcome. Alani Estervig and Libby Conant would both love to meet you. The evening starts out with a short devotional and continues with fun and games.

Mission Trip 2026 for Youth 8th Grade - Adults



Mission Trip 2026 Youth 8th Grade - Adults Alaska – South of Anchorage Friday, June 19 – Sunday, June 28

Breakdown of Cost...

\$1,000 for flight to Anchorage. Group rates are always about \$200 more than for an individual.

\$800 for six nights of lodging and food. (We will sleep in a church on the floor with air mattresses.)

\$300 for two adventures – hiking a Glacier, kayaking in the ocean, etc. We will decide as a group which adventures interest us the most.

\$200 – van rental and gas per person

\$200 – additional food and lodging

DO NOT LET THE COST SCARE YOU. There are numerous opportunities in the coming year to bring your cost down a big chunk (Mail Order Bake Sale, Garage Sale, Lenten Luncheons, etc.) and we have some extra funds in the youth account for people who work hard to help raise the funds and there are people in the congregation who will help you pay for your trip.

We are just beginning to work out the details of the trip, I have talked to Justin, our mission trip consultant with Praying Pelican. For the next 6 months we will be in conversation discussing possibilities.

What do I know? I have told Justin we would like a mission trip that gives the group a variety of work to do because we will be bringing a group of people with a variety of gifts. So we discussed children's ministry, repair work, building, food pantry, soup kitchen, etc. We are expected at the sight between 2 and 5 p.m. on Saturday, June 20. If we catch the flight from Madison to Anchorage on Friday, June 19th we will have time to explore the city. Hopefully we will have the energy. We leave from Madison at 6:00 a.m. and arrive at 11:30 a.m. but have actually been traveling for 8 ½ hours (1 ½ hour layover in Minneapolis). We leave our sight on Friday, so we have Saturday to add another adventure to our trip. How many times are you going to go to Alaska. We need to do this.

YOU HAVE UNTIL THE END OF DECEMBER TO REGISTER. THERE IS STILL PLENTY OF TIME TO FUND RAISE. We still have Mardi Gras, Lenten Suppers, GARAGE SALE, Easter Breakfast and Syttende Mai.

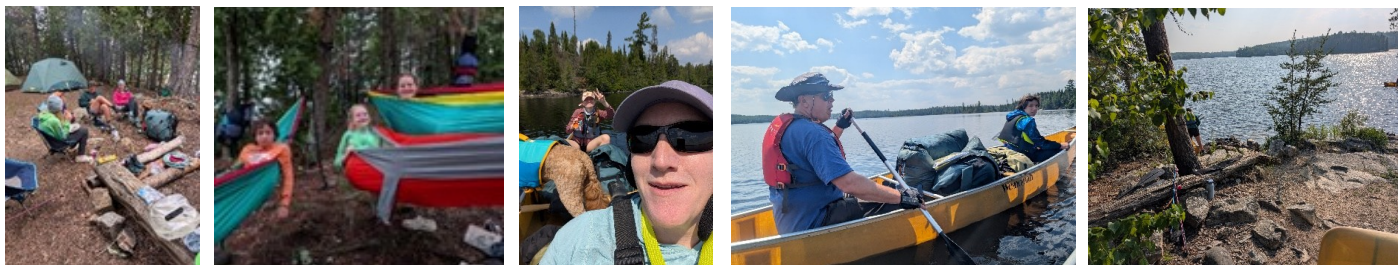


High School Open Gym Sunday December 7th

First Sunday of the Month – 10:45 a.m. - Noon

Here is a chance for our high school students to enjoy the gym or just hangout. Enjoy yourself! The space is yours.





Boundary Waters Canoe Trip 2026
Monday, July 20 – July 26
Youth in Grades 7-12 and ALL INTERESTED ADULTS
Cost: \$500 \$450 after \$50 campership

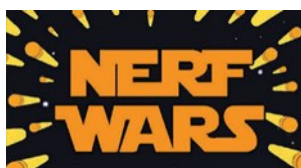
The trip is in late July. We will be home before football starts.

As always, to keep our costs down, we pack out our own food and tents and provide as many of our own Duluth packs as possible. We have 15. The Outfitter provides the canoes, paddles, life jackets, a few Duluth packs, bunkhouse accommodations for Monday, July 20, breakfast the following morning and a shower when we come off trails.

We leave early Monday, July 20. By early I mean at 6:00 a.m. That means you need to be at the church by 5:30 a.m. to pack. Why so early? We have 500 miles to travel. Bring food to snack on in the vehicles. We stop at Duluth harbor for lunch. Bring a packed lunch if you like, but food MAY be purchased there. We arrive in Grand Marais around 4:00 p.m. We hang out for a while and have pizza at Ole and Lena' around 5:30 p.m. After eating we finish the trip up the Gunflint to Voyageur Outfitters. The cost of that meal is part of the trip.

What do you do in the Boundary Waters? You paddle, portage, cook your meals over an open fire, swim, fish, enjoy the wilderness and the people you are with. Bring a book to read and some small portable games. We come off the water between 7 - 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, shower, pack up and leave for home. The cost of the trip also covers breakfast/lunch at the Mid Trail Cafe about 30 miles south of the Outfitters on the way home. We usually arrive home about 10:00 p.m. For youth who can drive, parents may want to leave a car in the church parking lot. Once you have signed up, we will share with you a list of items that you will need to pack.

REGISTRATION FORMS ARE ON THE INFORMATION DESK



Middle School Lock-In for
Grades 5-8
Friday, December 19 –
Saturday, December 20
9:00 p.m. – 7:00 a.m.
Cost \$20



Come join the fun! Activities will include Cosmic Bowling at Viking Lanes with fries and cheese curds, games and food at the church and a Nerf War! *Sleep is optional BUT, BRING A SLEEPING BAG AND PILLOW.* Breakfast will be served at 6:30 a.m. Parent pickup at 7:00 a.m. **BRING A FRIEND!**

SENIOR PROGRAMMING FOR DECEMBER



Meals and Memories:

Tuesday, December 16

11:30 a.m.

Program: Madrigal Singers

Cost: \$12.00

This has become a tradition at CLC. They have been singing for us for over ten years. The Madrigal Singers have provided us with wonderful programs in the past. I am sure they will do the same this year. Come, sit back and listen to some beautiful Christmas music.

Menu

Meatballs with Mashed Potatoes and Gravy, Green Beans, Raspberry Jell-o with Raspberries, Bananas and Whipped Cream, Krumkake, Lefse and Swedish Rye Bread, Rommegrot and Christmas Cookies, Coffee and Milk

Elizabeth Circle News

After our October meeting we contacted Pastor Kristin Engstrom regarding her safety because the news told us of ongoing protests in Madagascar. The following is her reply:

I can assure you that I am 100% safe. The protests have finished and the transitional government has gone to work to reform many of the problems and unhelpful government systems in Madagascar. We did have about 2 weeks of protests, especially by the young adults, that led up to the transition in government and the previous president fleeing the country. They were well coordinated and announced where they were going to protest ahead of time, so I mostly stayed home or ventured out when necessary on days they

said there would be a pause in protesting.

One thing that was interesting is that the foreign press (BBC, US stations, etc) made the situation look more frightening than reality, especially by calling the transition a "military coup." When in reality, the president and his big supporters fled the country when they couldn't use force to stop the protests, and then some military leaders stepped up to lead, and their leadership then received a vote of support from the legislature and the Supreme Court.

The "reformation" president, as he is calling himself, is a faithful Lutheran leader. He is said to be honest, strong, a good listener, and wise. Please keep him and the additional new leaders of Madagascar in your prayer.

I am actually currently travelling in Nigeria, which may also bring fear given Pres. Trump's recent tweets about Nigeria. Two days ago we visited some communities that are experiencing the violence Trump tweeted about, though it is more nuanced than his tweet would make you believe. (It seems the conflict is more about land - one ethnic group who are predominately Muslim and nomadic herdsman, want to live on and have control of the land lived on by another ethnic group who are farmers and primarily Christian.)

The stories are horrific and people and leaders are living with great burdens. The ELCA is working through a partner organization to provide short-term and economic development relief. Please also keep the local traditional leaders and local government leaders of north-eastern / north-central Nigeria in your prayers, as they are the primary people trying to respond to a very difficult situation.

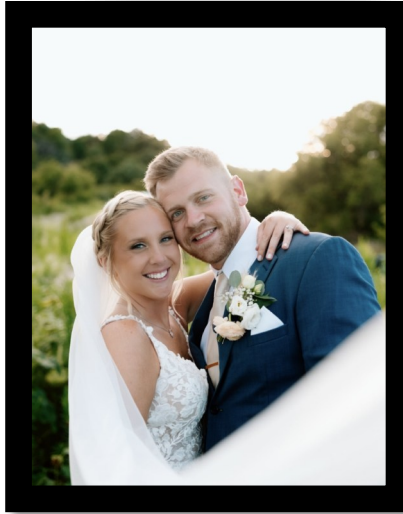
God be with you!

Pastor Kristin Engstrom

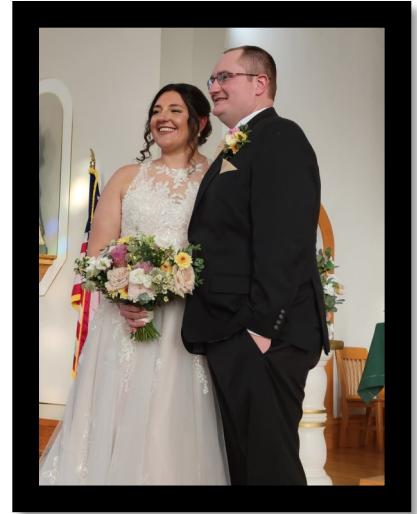
With
this Ring...



August 16: Avery and Anthony Kanable.

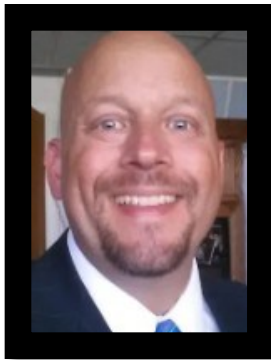


August 23: Bella and Alex Zacharias at the Bowery Barn in Rubicon, WI.



November 15: Cassie and Ben Lehr.

*In Christian
Sympathy*



November 10: Rick Segebrecht



Eliza, Katie, Nate and Hans Schlotthauer



**Nikki Schnoor
And Jean Schnoor**

*Gifts &
Memorials*

Given by:

John & Althea Ballweg

In Memory of:

Vicki Ballweg



Paige Swatek

"So we are
ambassadors for
Christ..." -

2 Corinthians 5:20



TAKE OUT BAKE SALE



to benefit Christ Lutheran Youth Mission Trip

*Meatballs & Gravy • Lefse
Frozen Pies Ready to Bake
Swedish Rye Bread
Fudge • Norwegian Goodies
Fall & Christmas Cut Out Cookies
Homemade Jams & Applesauce*



Order forms are online at www.clcstoughton.org, at Nordic Nook downtown, or on the Information Desk at church (700 County Rd. B). You can drop them off or mail them in to the church.

Submit forms by Friday, Nov. 21st for pick up on Monday or Tuesday, Nov. 24 or 25. For Dec. pick-up, submit your forms by Friday, Dec. 19th for pick up on Monday or Tuesday, Dec. 22 and 23.

700 County Road B. Stoughton • 608-873-9353
www.facebook.com/ChristLutheranChurchStoughton

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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