HOLY SPIRIT HAPPENINGS

Holy Spirit Lutheran Church
A Welcoming Christ-Centered Community

December 2026

(780) 434-4012
church@holyspiritlutheran.ca
11223 - 51 Ave NW
Edmonton, AB T5H 0L5
Holy Spirit Lutheran Church

OFFICE HOURS
Mon - Thurs 9 am - 3 pm
Fridays 9 am - 1 pm
Church Office Closed:
December 25 - January 1

STAFF
Pastor: **Liz Bell**
Office Admin: **Lori Zeiner**
Communications & Admin Assistant**:**
Janette Chambers

WORSHIP TIME
Sunday Mornings at 10:00 am
In-person & live-streamed
on YouTube

ALL ARE WELCOME!
HSLC is an affirming and inclusive community, sharing together the joy and work of God's Love

Upcoming Meetings
Dec 1, 6:30 pm - Council Meeting
Dec 3, 1:00 pm - Worship Committee
Dec 7, 7:00 pm - Administration Meeting
Dec 8, 1:00 pm - Communications
Dec 8, 3:00 pm - Community Engagement
Dec 10, 6:30 pm - Lifelong Learning Mtg
Dec 14, 1 pm - Ministry Meeting

UPCOMING EVENTS

Dec 2, 12:00 pm - Yesterday's Youth Catered Lunch
A catered Christmas Lunch will be enjoyed by those who purchased a ticket. Carol singing with Herb following lunch.

Wednesday at 7:00 pm - Travelling Advent
Come and take some time for peaceful reflection in a busy season as we travel through Advent and get ready for Christmas. Every Wednesday, a different congregation takes a turn hosting a brief, reflective worship service followed by treats, coffee, and informal conversation. All are welcome!

- Dec 2, join us at Ansgar (9554 - 108a Ave.)
- Dec 9, join us at Holy Spirit
- Dec 16, join us at Trinity Lutheran (10014 - 81 Ave)

Dec 6, 10:00 am - A Colombian Christmas
Our Sunday school has a special presentation for our worship service on Sunday, Dec 6. Bring cookies to share in the 'cookie potluck' following worship. We have partnered with a Sunday school in El Cocuy, Colombia and will be fundraising to help supportthe school there. Designate offerings to "Colombia"



Dec 7, 7:00 pm - Malmo Christmas Choir Concert
A night of festive singing with our local community Christmas choir here at Holy Spirit Lutheran Church. Free admission



Dec 10, 9:30 am - 11 amBible Study
All are welcome to our Thursday morning Bible Study to socialize and to discuss the upcoming Sunday's lectionary.

Dec 24, 5 & 7 pm - Christmas Eve Services
All are welcome to Christmas Eve Candle-light Services:
5 pm, Candle-light Service with HSLC Choir
7 pm, Candle-light Service
Note: the 5 pm service will also be live-streamed on our YouTube channel.



PASTOR'S MESSAGE

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered–Luke 2:1

Rome, Jerusalem, Nazareth, and Bethlehem – all of these places lead us into the Christmas Story.

This December, you are invited to explore the stories and places that wove together to create the need for a manger to become a cradle for God-With-Us, Jesus.

Our first stop is Rome, center of the world (at least in their own eyes and the eyes of people for thousands of kilometers all around). Here, Caesar Augustus reigned. Hailed as a god. Named son of god. As his empire expanded so did his expenses. He needed money to feed the armies and infrastructure on war: Roman roads, aqueducts, and rule. That meant more taxes.

Not unlike the building of the Vatican's St. Peter Cathedral whose fundraising efforts started the Reformation 1500 years later. This Roman building project prompted Caesar Augustus to decree a census be taken. A census which would re-calculate taxation and income. A census that sent Mary, pregnant with Jesus, and Joseph on a 129-161 km journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, roughly a ten-day trek. This same census meant that the inns and family homes were overfull and there was no room for Mary to give birth apart from the manger that would become the cradle for Christ.

While the mighty made decrees from Rome, in Jerusalem a priest's prayers were being answered. Zechariah, the priest in question, with his wife Elizabeth, had ached for a child. Had prayed fervently for years for a child. Those prayers turned to whispers of hope as age took hold and having a child with Elizabeth was no longer possible. Yet. With God. All things are possible. Zechariah was speechless for all the months of Elizabeth's unexpected pregnancy until finally John was born. John, the baptizer, who prepared the way in the wilderness for Jesus to begin his own ministry.

Meanwhile, when Elizabeth was well into her pregnancy, in Nazareth an angel spoke to Mary to tell her of her own miraculous pregnancy. Mary, the soon-to-be mother of God. Nazareth had none of the great power of Rome or the religious significance of Jerusalem. Archaeologists estimate that the population of Nazareth ranged from 200-480 people. A village in the hill country in Galilee. Simple, hard, and far from fancy. A young girl, vulnerable and exposed – who can hide a pregnancy in a village of 400? A good man dedicated to doing the right thing, betrothed to Mary, was also visited by an angel who gave God's blessing on Mary, the child, and Joseph.

Unremarkable Nazareth, in this moment, became a village where the cosmos converged and angels visited and the true, one and only, son of GOD was conceived. A stark contrast to Ceasar Augustus called son of god, born to privilege and power, but who now is all but forgotten except for his small part in Jesus' story.

Hundreds of kilometers apart, an emperor's decree, an old prayer answered, and an angel's visit weave into a pregnant journey to Bethlehem that led to the birth of Jesus, saviour of the world.

As you consider the people, the stories, and the places which form and shape the first Christmas – whose story catches you this year? Where do you pause to imagine the sights, sounds, and smells? What might the Holy Spirit be revealing to you through these ancient lives and places? How might this story enrich this Christmas season, enrich you?

As we go on the way to Bethlehem, may you be blessed with fresh insight, renewed joy, and steadfast love!

Blessed Advent & Merry Christmas!

— Pastor Liz Bell



COUNCIL UPDATE

Most of us begin preparations for Christmas long before we begin to see lights twinkling or bells jingling. Preparations for Christmas at Holy Spirit have been well underway by many committees for quite a while! Everything from another hugely successful and beautiful Christmas Market (THANK YOU, Community Engagement and Stewardship!!), to Colombian Christmas, to The Giving Tree, to Traveling Advent, and all the Christmas Services - it takes an army to plan and do all this - and our army of volunteers have been doing so much for us at Holy Spirit and for our community so we can savour the beauty and joy and spirit of Christmas and celebrating the birth of Christ!

Less spiritual and exciting - but still important! - is news about our Constitution. Our proposed changes and questions have received an initial review by the Congregational Constitution Review Committe of the Synod of Alberta and the Territories. They have offered informal approval of many of our changes to the New Model Constitution and we have also provided several recommendations. We will share the proposed Constitution with Holy Spirit members for feedback prior to bringing this to our Annual General Meeting (AGM) in February for the first round of approval.

It is also the time of year when we start thinking forward to the new year ... and even to new members on council. Some of our current members will finish their terms in February. Please let any council member know if you, or someone you know would be interested in joining the Congregational Council!

Merry Christmas and Joy of the season be with you and your families and friends!

Congregational Council



TREASURER'S UPDATE

TREASURER'S REPORT 2026

	Income	Expense	+/-
January	26,528	31,853	-5,325
February	29,118	32,661	-3,543
March	33,359	35,507	-2,148
April	36,175	33,739	2,436
May	25,350	27,209	-1,859
June	25,313	33,798	-8,485
July	33,854	40,892	-7,038
August	38,338	28,367	9,971
September	24,781	20,273	4,509
October	35,167	34,842	325
Total	**307,983**	**319,140**	**-11,157**

Monthly Budget $38,341

BUDGET ACCOUNT POSITION
AS AT OCTOBER 31, 2026

Budget Surplus as of Dec 31, 2025	$2,718
Current Year Surplus (Deficit) as of October 31, 2026	($11,157)
Total Surplus (Deficit)	**($8,439)**

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Our 5th Annual Christmas Market was a huge success. Thank you to all who contributed time, baking, and to those who came out to support our vendors! We raised over $4000 in the raffle, bake sale and vendor table rentals. This money will be put towards our Building Fund.



STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

Thank you to all who were able to support our latest Coffee Fundraiser. We purchased one order of 48 bags of coffee and almost sold them all the first Sunday! We placed a second order of 45 bags which included the Christmas Blend. After the Christmas Market, we have 5 bags left. Just over $1000 will go towards the 'Building Fund' from this fundraiser. And bonus, the office smelled so good while the coffee was being stored.





December 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 **General Office Hours** 9 am - 3 pm Monday - Thursday 9 am - 1 pm Fridays Call: 780-434-4012 email: church@holyspiritlutheran.ca		1 9:30 am Tai Chi 4 Food Depot 6:30 pm Council Meeting 7 pm UnLeesh Kickboxing	2 9:30 am ICANSA 9:30 am Tai Chi 12:00 pm Yesterday's Youth Lunch 7 pm Travelling Advent @ Ansgar	3 9:30 am ICANSA 1 pm Worship Committee Mtg 6:30 pm Scouts 7:30 pm AL-ANON	4 9 am ESL Class 1 pm ICANSA	5 MYELOMA CANADA 10 am Myeloma Allberta Support Society
6 **Advent 2** 10 am Service of Holy Communion and Sunday School program 11:30 am HSLC Choir practice 7 pm Pickleball	7 9 am ESL Class 6:30 pm Beavers 7 pm Admin Mtg 7 pm Malmo Choir Concert	8 9:30 am Tai Chi 1 pm Communication Mtg 3 pm Community Engagement Mtg 4 Food Depot 7 pm UnLeesh Kickboxing	9 9:30 am ICANSA 9:30 am Tai Chi 7 pm Travelling Advent @ HSLC	10  9:30 am Bible Study 9:30 am ICANSA 6:30 pm Scouts 6:30 pm Lifelong Learning Mtg 7:30 pm AL-ANON	11 9 am ESL Class 9 am RCM Theory Exams	12 9 am RCM Theory Exams
13 **Advent 3** 10 am Service of Holy Communion 11:30 am HSLC Choir practice 1 pm Rental 7 pm Pickleball	14 9 am ESL Class 1 pm Ministry Committee Mtg 6:30 pm Beavers	15 9:30 am Tai Chi 4 Food Depot 7 pm UnLeesh Kickboxing	16 9:30 am ICANSA 9:30 am Tai Chi 7 pm Travelling Advent @ Trinity	 9:30 am ICANSA 6:30 pm Scouts 7:30 pm AL-ANON	18  9 am ESL Class 1 pm ICANSA	19
20 **Advent 4** 10 am Service of Holy Communion with songs & stories 11:30 am HSLC Choir practice 7 pm Pickleball	21 9 am ESL Class	22 9:30 am Tai Chi 4 Food Depot 7 pm UnLeesh Kickboxing	23 9:30 am ICANSA 9:30 am Tai Chi	24 **Christmas Eve** 5 pm Candlelight Service with HSLC Choir 7 pm Candlelight Service	25 **Christmas Day** Church Office Closed 	26 **Boxing Day**
27 **Christmas 1** 10 am Service of Holy Communion 11:30 am Potluck and games 	28 9 am ESL Class	29 **Church office closed**	30	31 **New Year's Eve**		