

**Sunday,
Dec 14th,
2025**

Volga Christian Reformed Church
Pastor: Joshua Carpenter - Phone: 269-271-8603
Sunday, Dec 14th, 2025

Morning Worship 9:30 AM: Worship Leader: Pastor Joshua Carpenter
Praise Band

Prelude

Advent Candle Lighting - **JOY**
2nd/3rd Grade & Ashley Triebwasser

Welcome & Call to Worship - Ps. 97
Silent Prayer of Preparation
Song - PH 624 Hear our Prayer, O Lord

***Song - Birthday of a King (Screen)**

*God's Greeting
*We Greet Each Other

Communion Prep

Song - O Holy Night (Screen)

Congregational Prayer
Offering: Option 1 & Budget
Children's Message

***Song - Speak, O Lord (Screen)**

Scripture Lesson: **Matthew 2:1-12**
Text: **Matthew 2:1-12**
Message: **Rejoice!**

Prayer
***Song - Joy to the World (Screen)**
*Apostles' Creed
*God's Blessing

***Doxology: My Friends May You Grow in Grace (Screen)**

Postlude

* Please stand if you are able

WELCOME: Luke 2:10: The angels' message to the shepherds: "I bring you good news of great joy". Today, on this third Sunday of Advent, we reflect on how the coming of Jesus brings a profound, unshakeable joy to sustain our hope. Please stay for coffee and fellowship following this morning's service.

Ushers for December: Jacob Post, Jerry Runia; Alternate: Gerald Feikema
Elevator Attendant for December: Brenda Volkers

Calendar:

Today: 9:30 AM Morning Worship
10:45 AM Pre K - 12th Grade Program Prep
4:00 PM Church Christmas Program
Wed: 2:00 PM Women's Bible Study
7:00 PM Senior High Youth Group

This week is preparatory with a view to celebrating the Lord's supper together next Sunday.

Prayer Concerns:

- We want to rejoice with **Carolyn Hieb**, her niece **Andrea**, and the rest of the family as Andrea was able to come home from the hospital this past week. There is still a bit of recovery that lays before her, so please continue to pray for strength and healing for her.
- Please continue to keep **Carla, Claudia Tofte's sister**, in your prayers as she will be having surgery on her heart just before Christmas.

Announcements:

- **Sunday School classes (Pre K – 12th grade)** will be spending their class time preparing for the Christmas program today after the worship service.
- **Church Christmas Program – This afternoon**, at **4:00 PM**, we will have our church Christmas program, followed by a candlelight service and a time of refreshments and fellowship.
- **Women's Bible Study** meets this week **Wednesday** at 2 PM in the church basement. Pastor Josh will lead the next lesson, Lesson 12: Laws about Leadership. Come and enjoy spending time in God's Word and food and fellowship afterward. This week we'll have our annual Christmas party following the lesson!
- **Senior High Youth Group** will meet this week Wednesday at **First Reformed Church** at **7 PM**. Bring a friend!
- **Unfading Truth Daily Bible Reading 2026:** Read the Bible with our congregation in 2026! Read or listen at a pace you can absorb each weekday, and dig deeper into what it all means with pastors you know and trust! The 2026 season begins on January 5. Sign up now for your daily reading reminder at UnfadingTruth.com.

Looking Ahead:

- **Christmas Day Service** - On **Thursday, December 25th at 9:30 AM**, we will gather together to worship our Great God, reflecting on and celebrating the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who came in order to forgive, redeem, and reconcile us, the greatest gift we could ever receive!
- **New Year's Day Service** - To ring in the new year, we'll join together on **New Year's Day at 10:30 AM** to worship the Lord, praying for His grace and strength for the year ahead, and being refreshed in His Word.
- **Note from the Algoods:** we are hosting a **baby shower** for Nathaniel and Lydia in anticipation of Baby Girl Algood. We invite you to join us in celebrating the upcoming birth at **Innovation Village** Community Room on **Saturday, January 3rd, at 11:00 AM**. We hope you are able to join us!

Advance:

- **Dakota Sun Ministry for January 4th:**
 - In charge: Dan & Tiffany Runia / Vonda Bjorklund (Musician)
 - To visit: Samantha Algood, Jane Algood, VanNorden's

*If you are unable to attend your assigned day, please find someone to go in your place

Offering Schedule:

- Dec 14th: Option 1 & Budget
- Dec 21st: Sunshine Bible & Budget
- Dec 28th: Building Project & Budget
- Jan 4th: VCS & Budget

Nursery Schedule:

- Dec 14th: Triebwasser Family
- Dec 21st: Post Family
- Dec 28th: Davis Family
- Jan 4th: Family

Our Council: Pastor Joshua Carpenter

- Elders: Ashton Fey, Dale Algood, Doug Post, Larry Top
- Deacons: Connor Gross, Keith Tofte, Ryan Van Norden, Will Davis
- **e-mail address for council:** volgacrcouncil@gmail.com

This Week's Unfading Truth: Grace is NOT a license to sin! Fight temptation by reading the Bible with us each weekday at UnfadingTruth.com

December 14, 2025 | Rejoice! | Matthew 2:1-12

Theme: _____ in Christ.

1. _____:

2. _____:

3. _____:

Weekly Reflection: What about Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection gives you great joy? May the Lord refresh us every day in the awe and wonder of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Sermon Resources Used For Further Study:

- *An Introduction to the New Testament* by D.A. Carson & Douglas J. Moo
- *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke* by John Calvin
- *Matthew & Mark* by Mark L. Strauss
- *Matthew - All Authority in Heaven and on Earth* by Douglas Sean O' Donnell
- *Matthew Vol. 1 & 2* by Daniel Doriani
- *The NIV Application Commentary: Matthew* by Michael J. Wilkins

“Matthew makes our decision rather easy, doesn't he? Do you want a madman or the Messiah? Do you want a man who would order the massacre of innocent children (v. 16) or a man who would open his arms to children and lay down his life for the less-than-innocent of the world? Do you want a ruler who rules by force, aggression, and cruelty or a ruler who rules by love, compassion, and the cross of his own sufferings? Do you want a man who slaughtered the last remnants of the dynasty that ruled before him, put to death half of the Sanhedrin, killed 300 court officers, executed his wife and mother-in-law and three sons, and as he lay dying arranged for all the notable men of Jerusalem to be assembled in the Hippodrome and killed as soon as his own death was announced, so the people might weep instead of rejoice on the day of his death? Do you want him for king? Or do you want the One who when reviled did not revile in return, who when he suffered did not threaten but rather bore our sins in his body on the tree (see 1 Peter 2:21–25)? Whom do you want? Do you want the Big Bad Wolf or the Good Shepherd—a “shepherd king” like David, one who would finally and perfectly, as verse 6b puts it, “shepherd my people Israel” (cf. 2 Samuel. 5:2; Ezekiel 34)?” - Douglas O'Donnell

“At first I was surprised by such hostility. I thought to myself, If God doesn't exist or if Jesus wasn't the Son of God, why make a big fuss? Why write a book against religion? People believe in far crazier things than our religion. Why attack Christianity? Why do these scientists, as many of them are, attack the faith that has thus far produced the world's greatest scientists and mathematicians, the likes of Newton and Pascal? But then I remembered that an intelligent person only attacks what he knows to be a real threat to his way of thinking and, more importantly, his way of living. And Jesus is such a threat. Jesus was a real threat to Herod because, as Lawrence W. Farris writes, Herod grasped what was “at stake in the birth of Jesus.” If Herod didn't think Jesus was actually born, if he didn't think Jesus might indeed be a king—the king—if he didn't think this new king, though now just a child, could in fact dethrone him, rule over him, take allegiance from him, he would not have done what he did.” Douglas O'Donnell

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