



OUR SAVIOUR LUTHERAN CHURCH  
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# Our Saviour's Good News

Volume XV, Issue XII

December 2020

## MISSION STATEMENT

*Our Saviour Lutheran Church welcomes all people to a safe place to grow in faith and serve the Lord Jesus Christ*

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Advent is here. And not soon enough! Come, Lord Jesus, come!

While we have had a very busy and yet challenging year and let's face it, we were not alone.

We have had our share of setbacks – January started out quiet enough, but then right at the beginning of Lent, COVID 19 crept into our country and we were ordered by the governor to not congregate. We had to come up with some creative ways to abiding by those orders and yet still be faithful in worship. Fortunately, we were able to overcome that and various technical issues and did “drive in” services and we were able to successfully have worship and communion in a safe and legal manner.

We had to deal with a break in and damage at our church, and although upsetting, nothing was stolen and no significant damage was done, and we were able to regroup and move forward.

But the most significant losses this year was Betty Ratchford and Bud Penley. Both were devoted members of our congregation and brought so much cheer and joy to us. I personally will miss Betty's corn salad and Bud's corny jokes (yes, I am all about food and laughter!). I know I can speak for the whole congregation by saying we miss them dearly.

But Advent is about beginnings and not ends; of birth not death. The beginning of Christ's rein over what sin has broken, the beginning of the reclamation of creation and the beginning of a new era where Christ has final victory over death. It is so important to understand that whatever is going on around us regardless of elections, the contagious spread of the virus, the losses we have, none of that can take away what Christ has started. This is so important that Paul mentions death in a positive light 28 times in his letter to the Romans. Twenty-eight times!!!! If that is not enough to get his point across, I am not sure what else will do it! The final crescendo concerning death in his letter is this:

For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. – Romans 8:38-39

So let's enter into Advent with a spirit of joy, of hope, and of anticipation. Even though 2020 had not been kind to anyone in our world, we know with certainty what Christ promised us – His love, He will never forget us and He will return! Let's use that joy, hope and anticipation to continue to grow in faith, to worship God and to do His work for His Kingdom here and now!

Merry Christmas!

*Pastor Pete*

## "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day"

is a Christmas carol based on the 1863 poem "Christmas Bells" by American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. The song tells of the narrator's despair, upon hearing Christmas bells during the American Civil War, that "hate is strong and mocks the song of peace on earth, good will to men". The carol concludes with the bells carrying renewed hope for peace among men.

In 1861, two years before writing this poem, Longfellow's personal peace was shaken when his second wife of 18 years, to whom he was very devoted, was fatally burned in an accidental fire. Then in 1863, during the American Civil War, Longfellow's oldest son, Charles Appleton Longfellow, joined the Union Army without his father's blessing. Longfellow was informed by a letter dated March 14, 1863, after Charles had left. "I have tried hard to resist the temptation of going without your leave but I cannot any longer", he wrote. "I feel it to be my first duty to do what I can for my country and I would willingly lay down my life for it if it would be of any good. "Charles was soon appointed as a lieutenant but, in November, he was severely wounded! in the Battle of Mine Run. Charles eventually recovered, but his time as a soldier was finished.

Longfellow wrote the poem on Christmas Day in 1863. "Christmas Bells" was first published in February 1865, in *Our Young Folks*, a juvenile magazine published by Ticknor and Fields. References to the Civil War are prevalent in some of the verses that are not commonly sung. The refrain "peace on Earth, goodwill to men" is a reference to the King James Version of Luke 2:14.

### Lyrics (edit)

The following are the original words of Longfellow's poem:

I heard the bells on Christmas Day  
Their old, familiar carols play,  
and wild and sweet  
The words repeat  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And thought how, as the day had come,  
The belfries of all Christendom  
Had rolled along  
The unbroken song  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Till ringing, singing on its way,  
The world revolved from night to day,  
A voice, a chime,  
A chant sublime  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Then from each black, accursed mouth  
The cannon thundered in the South,  
And with the sound  
The carols drowned  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

It was as if an earthquake rent  
The hearth-stones of a continent,  
And made forlorn  
The households born  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And in despair I bowed my head;  
"There is no peace on earth," I said;  
"For hate is strong,  
And mocks the song  
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!"

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:  
"God is not dead, nor doth He sleep;  
The Wrong shall fail,  
The Right prevail,  
With peace on earth, good-will to men."



## The Real Meaning Of Christmas

It's that time of year again. December has come and with it all the joys of Christmas. But what is the real meaning of Christmas? Is it the gifts under the tree, the lights in the windows, the cards in the mail, turkey dinners with family and friends, snow in the yard, stockings hanging in the living room, and shouts of "Merry Christmas" to those who pass us in the streets? Is this really Christmas?

For many people, Christmas is a time of sorrow. They don't have the extra money to buy presents for their children, family, and friends. Many are saddened at Christmastime when they think of their loved ones who will not be able to come home for various reasons. Turkey dinners may be only a wish and not a reality for some.

Yet, Christmas can be a season of great joy. It is a time of God showing His great love for us. It can be a time of healing and renewed strength. You see, Christmas is when we celebrate the birth of the Christ child. God sent His Son, Jesus, into the world to be born. His birth brought great joy to the world. Shepherds, wise men, and angels all shared in the excitement of knowing about this great event. They knew this was no ordinary baby. The prophets had told of His coming hundreds of years before. The star stopped over Bethlehem just to mark the way for those who were looking for this special child.

Luke 2:4-19 says:

"So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart." (NIV)

Why did He come? Why did God send His son to this sometimes cruel and hard world? He sent Jesus to us so that one day, He would grow up to become a very important part of history. His story (history) is one of truth, love, and hope. It brought salvation to all of us. Without Jesus, we would all die in our sins.

Jesus was born so one day the price could be paid for the things we have done that are wrong. The Bible says that all have sinned. We are all born with a sin nature. We do things that do not please God. Through the sins of Adam and Eve, we have all inherited that sin nature. We need to have that removed. The only way is through Jesus. Jesus came so He could die on the cross for ALL of our sins. If we believe that Jesus died for our sins, we can ask Him to come into our hearts and forgive us. Then, we are clean and made whole. We can know that heaven is a place where we can go to when this life is over.

"But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness." 1 John 1:9 (NLT)

We can truly be happy at Christmas! No matter what may be happening, we can know that we are His children. We then become sons and daughters of God. Heaven will be our home one day.

Look at Christmas in a new way this year. This is the year to invite Jesus into your heart. You will then have a "Merry Christmas." The joy and peace you will receive will last all year as you look to God for all your needs to be met.



REJOICE

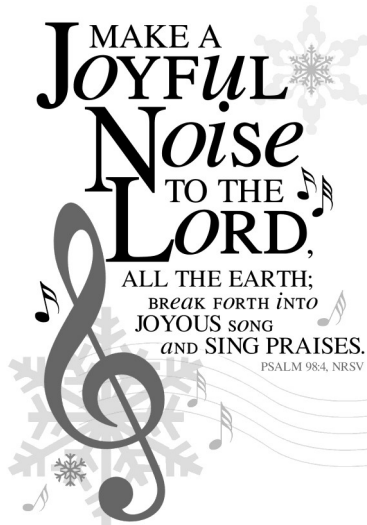


### The Meaning of the Christmas Tree

Each part of the Christmas tree celebrates Christ's birth and tells the story of how God sent His Son to earth. The wood reminds us of the manger where He lay and of the rugged cross where He gave His life one day. The evergreen shows the eternal life Christ gives – anyone who believes in Him forever live!

The decorations represent blessings from above and inspire us to thank the Lord for His tender love. The shining lights show us how we're to do the same, as we share His grace and seek to glorify His name. So may each beautiful tree bring honor to our King, and may we celebrate Christ's love in everything!

Holley Gerth



Take the mas off of Christmas  
and  
you have your answer

## The Joys of Christmas

Poet: Julie Hebert, © 2011

How beautiful are the houses,  
Decorated in red and green.  
I love to see so many lights,  
On the Christmas scene.

Tinsel, garland and presents,  
Are some of my favorite things.  
The feeling I get during Christmas,  
Is something that everyone brings.

I love Christmas dinner,  
Especially the big pumpkin pie.  
Eggnog, fruitcake and candy canes,  
Are also a big Christmas high!

Turkey and veggies are great,  
But my favorite is Christmas dessert.  
I think my favorite is the cookies,  
Made only by the Christmas expert!

The laughter and love that family bring  
The gifts and presents for everyone  
Fills my heart with all good things  
The day is full of lots of fun.

For the children, Christmas brings lots of toys  
Excitement and giggles is all they can say  
For the adults, we love the feeling of joy  
Cherish the moments, enjoy the day!

### Once More

Poet: Grinnell Willis

Once more at home, at Christmas time,  
We gather at thy call,  
Thy children and grandchildren,  
We are coming, one and all.

From East and West we're coming,  
A joyous, happy throng.  
Our hearts are glad, and on our lips  
The merry Christmas song.

We've had our own Saint Nicholas,  
Our merry Christmas tree,  
But better far than all of these.  
We're coming home to thee.

Thy presence is our beacon light.  
Our star by day, our guide by night.  
God bless you both, your children pray,  
And keep you safe for many a day.

**Our Saviour Lutheran Church**  
**Anna Lowery, President**  
**October 19, 2020 Council Minutes**



**Devotions:** Melinda White

Meeting called to order by President, Anna Lowery

**Members present:** Alice Vlaservich, Anna Lowery, Melinda White, Robbie Wooten, Teri Trudnak;

**Members Absent:** Joe Finger, Denise Traveria, Becky Messick and Jeff White.

**Minutes:** September 21, 2020 minutes were reviewed.; Robbie Wooten made the motion to approve the minutes and Alice Vlaservich seconded the motion.

**Reception of Petitions and Communications:** None.

**Report of the Pastor:** The report was reviewed by the Council. Pastor Feige will be out of town on 1/24/2021 and 1/31/2021. A supply pastor will be provided. Alice Vlaservich made a motion we accept the report and Anna Lowery seconded that motion.

**Report of the Treasurer:** Report was reviewed, and a motion was made by Melinda White to accept the Treasurer Report and seconded by Teri Trudnak.

**Report of the Ministries:**

- a. Property: A water leak in the parking lot was repaired; light bulbs were replaced in Activity Building. Thank you to Will Trudnak and Jack Lowery.
- b. Stewardship and Finance: No report
- c. Worship & Music: No report
- d. Youth Team: No report this month
- e. Witness: Cards and prayers continue to be sent to shut in's
- f. Christian Education Team: Operation Christmas Child is here! Fill a shoe box for a child and help spread the Gospel. Deadline for turning in shoe boxes is 11/22/2020.

**Report of Auxiliaries:**

- a. CLW/Racheal Group met at the home of Betty Clemmer. The November meeting will be at the home of Shirlee Marazza.
- b. The Prayer Group will continue to meet the third Tuesday of each month at 1 pm.

**Old and/or Unfinished Business:**

- a. Met with Park Gillespie from Burden Commercial Enterprise and Roofing. Found some shingles had lost the bond and sealant was applied. We will continue to monitor for any further leaks.
- b. This is normally the time of year we elect new Council members, but the current Council decided it was in the best interest of the church to keep the approved 9 seats and the current Council members will remain the same. All Council members that were in attendance agreed with this decision. The decision was based on the low membership of the congregation. If a congregation member is interested in serving on the Council, please let Anna Lowery, Council President know.

**New Business:**

- a. The approval of 2021 Annual budget will be presented at the next council meeting. A letter will be mailed to the congregation, after council approves the proposed budget. A Congregational Meeting will be held on December 6 to approve it.
- b. Two new Christmas trees need to be purchased. Follow up with Becky Messick/Julie Digh.

**General Information:**

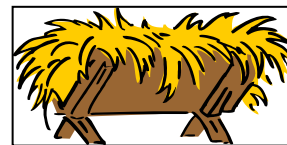
- a. Attendance
- b. Laszlo Mission (Kids International) Report
- c. Had to purchase a new computer on 10/6/2020. It was over 10 years old.

The Council meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

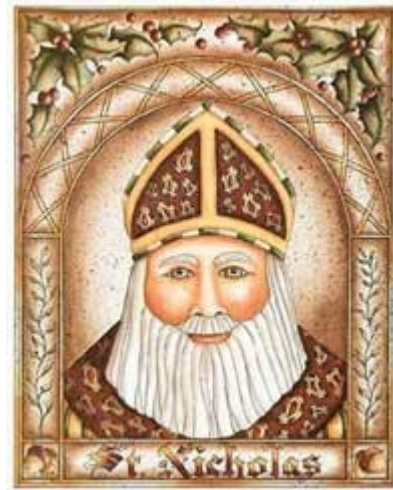
Next meeting is November 16, 2020 at 7pm

Devotions: Anna Lowery

**The Original King-Sized Bed!!**



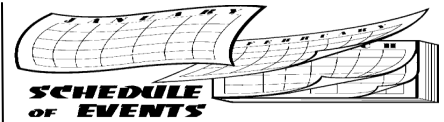
**Thank God for that bed and The Baby who slept there**



# December 2020



Sunday School: 9:45 am Sunday  
Church Service: 11:00 am Sunday



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Food Collection		1	2	3	4	5
6 Second Sunday OF ADVENT	7 Team Mtg.	8 Prayer Group	9	10	11	12
13 Third Sunday OF ADVENT	14	15	16 Bd Mtg. CLW/Rachel Group	17	18	19
20 Fourth Sunday OF ADVENT	21 Council Mtg.	22	23	24 Candlelight Service	25 	26
27 1st Sun. after Christmas	28	29	30	31 		

- Dec. 6— 2nd Sunday of Advent  
Congregational Meeting (Approving 2120 Budget)
- Dec. 7— Team Meetings 7:00 pm  
Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day (see p 7)
- Dec. 8— Prayer Group will meet at Home of Shirlee Marazza at 1:00 pm
- Dec. 13— 3rd Sunday of Advent
- Dec. 16— Board Meeting 7:00 pm
- Dec. 20— 4th Sunday of Advent
- Dec. 21— Winter begins  
Council Meeting 7:00 pm
- Dec. 24— \*Christmas Eve Candle Light Service\* Communion
- Dec. 25— The Birth of Jesus Christ
- Dec. 27— 1st Sunday after Christmas
- Dec. 31— New Year's Eve.

FOOD FOR THE MONTH: Green Peas, Crackers, Peanut Butter

Choir practice each Wednesday at 4:00 pm unless otherwise announced in the bulletin



**Holy Communion Schedule:**

All Sundays and  
Dec. 24: Christmas Eve



**Worship Service Assistance:**

- Acolyte: OSLC Member  
Communion Asst: OSLC Member  
Lay Reader: Teri Trudnak  
Worship Asst: Teri Trudnak  
Greeters: OSLC Members  
Ushers: OSLC Members
- Collection: Melinda White



***Birthdays***

- |    |               |               |
|----|---------------|---------------|
| 2  | Pastor Pete   | Bryan Petzold |
| 3  | Mary Feige    | Jerry Mullen  |
| 6  | Kaitlyn Feige | Katie White   |
| 6  | Tiffany Cobb  | Robbie Wooten |
| 7  | Jeff White    |               |
| 10 | Bryan Petzold |               |
| 12 | Doyle Clemmer |               |
| 25 | Kathy Trudnak |               |
| 26 | Julie Digh    |               |

Board Devotions: Dec. 16. Alice Vlaservich

## FLOWERS

**Flower Schedule:**

- Dec. 6 Brady & Betty Ratchford  
Dec. 13 Poinsettias\*  
Dec. 20 Poinsettias\*  
Dec. 27

\*Wayne Ann Penley

Please sign up to place flowers on the altar in the glory of God and in honor or memory of your love ones for 2021





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**OUTREACH MISSION**

**SHUT-INS**  
**NURSING HOME RESIDENTS**

Please remember our church members who are shut-ins or reside in a nursing home\* and visit them.

**Marilyn Finger**

1150 Meadow Way Dr., Dallas

**Jerri Presley**

Alexandra Place  
1770 Oak Hollow Rd., Gastonia, NC 28054

(If others, please let the church office know)



**Agape/Kure Beach**

**Contact Camp Agapé:**

Telephone: 919-552-9421

e-mail: [agape@agapekurebeach.org](mailto:agape@agapekurebeach.org)

**Contact Kure Beach Lutheran:**

Telephone 910-458-0783

e-mail: [kurebreach@agapekurebeach.org](mailto:kurebreach@agapekurebeach.org)

**Web site:** [www.agapekurebeach.org](http://www.agapekurebeach.org)

**Directions to Camp Agapé are on the web site.**

Please see calendars and other information on the bulletin board or go on-line

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*“Want to keep Christ in Christmas? Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, forgive the guilty, welcome the unwanted, care for the ill, love your enemies, and do unto others as you would have done unto you.”*

*Steve Maraboli*



***That's Not My JOB!"***

This is a story about four people named **Everybody**, **Somebody**, **Anybody** and **Nobody**. There was an important job to be done and **Everybody** was sure that **Somebody** would do it. **Anybody** could have done it, but **Nobody** did it. **Somebody** got angry about that, because it was **Everybody's** job. Everyone thought **Anybody** could do it, but **Nobody** realized that **Everybody** wouldn't do it. It ended up that **Everybody** blamed **Somebody** when **Nobody** did what **Anybody** could have.

Author Unknown.



**GO OUT ON A LIMB**  
**GET INVOLVED**  
**BE A WORSHIP ASSISTANT**

A positions are still open. Participate in the service of the Lord and sign up.

Sign up sheets for the 2020 calendar year are on the

=====

**2021 Church Envelops are  
On table in hallway.**



**For two Sundays in January**

## A Stewardship Minute

A question we hear often these days is "What do you want for Christmas?"

Isn't that question out of order? Unless we were born on December 25th, it is not our birthday we should focus on. It is the birth of Jesus Christ, of course. It is Christ who should receive our gifts, our love and obedience.

According to Matthew 25, Christ says, "Feed the hungry. Give them water. Welcome strangers. Find clothes for those in need. Care for the sick. Then he said that if we helped those in need, we were really honoring

him. "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you have done it to me." (Matthew 25:34-46) In showing Jesus love by following his directive, we can truly celebrate Christmas.

I heard of a Christian woman who went on a tour of Israel. When she walked with friends along the crowded streets, every once in awhile she would see a person dressed in rags obviously needing help. She would stop, take a bit of money and hand it to the beggar. She was celebrating Christmas!

There is a true story of a minister who was helping a group feed a large

gathering of indigents in Phoenix. It was Christmas Eve, therefore, the pastor greeted warmly each man with a hearty "Merry Christmas!" One stopped and having seen the pastor serving poor people before, said to him, "I know you. I recognize your face." The pastor thought he would tease the fellow and answered "Yes! You've seen me on television, right?" The minister had never been on television. But the indigent was quick-witted. "Yes!," he answered. "On America's Most Wanted." The pastor roared with laughter.

**Prayer:** Whatever we do, Lord, don't let us miss the real Christmas, which comes through glorifying Christ with our stewardship. **Amen**



## National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day Proclamation

On a serene Sunday morning 76 years ago, the skies above Pearl Harbor were darkened by the bombs of Japanese forces in a surprise attack that tested the resilience of our Armed Forces and the will of our Nation. As explosions sounded and battleships burned, brave service members fought back fiercely with everything they could find. Unbeknownst to these selfless individuals, the sacrifices endured on that infamous day would galvanize America and come to symbolize the mettle of a generation.

In the wake of the bombing of our harbor and the crippling of our Pacific Fleet, there were those who declared the United States had been reduced to a third-class power. But rather than break the spirit of our Nation, the attack brought Americans together and fortified our resolve. Patriots across our country answered the call to defend our way of life at home and abroad. They crossed oceans and stormed beaches, freeing millions from the grip of tyranny and proving that our military is the greatest force for liberty and security the world has ever known. On the home front, dedicated civilians supported the war effort by repairing wrecked battleships, working in factories, and joining civilian defense organizations to help with salvage programs and plant Victory gardens. At this time of great strife, we reminded the world there is no challenge we cannot meet; there is no challenge we cannot overcome.

On National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, we honor the more than 3,500 Americans killed or wounded during that deadly attack and pay tribute to the heroes whose courage ensured our Nation would recover from this vicious blow. Their tenacity helped define the Greatest Generation and their valor fortified all who served during World War II. As a Nation, we look to December 7, 1941, to draw strength from the example set by these patriots and to honor all who have sacrificed for our freedoms. The Congress, by Public Law 103-308, as amended, has designated December 7 of each year as "National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day."

## When Christ Was Born

Poet: Florence Earle Coates

On that divine all-hallowed morn  
When Christ in Bethlehem was born.  
How lone did Mary seem to be,  
The kindly beasts for company!

But when she saw her infant's face -  
Fair with the soul's unfading grace.  
Softly she wept for love's excess.  
For painless ease and happiness.

She pressed her treasure to her heart -  
A lowly mother, set apart  
In the dear way that mothers are.  
And heaven seemed high, and earth afar:

And when grave kings in sumptuous guise  
Adored her babe, she knew them wise;  
For at his touch her sense grew dim -  
So all her being worshipped him.

A nimbus seemed to crown the head  
Low-nestled in that manger-bed.  
And Mary's forehead, to our sight,  
Wears ever something of its light;

And still the heart - poor pensioner!  
In its affliction turns to her -  
Best love of all, best understood.  
The type of selfless motherhood!







## Serve Him Well

Poet: Greta Zwaan, © 2004

Before you serve you must obey, you cannot walk at will,  
There's guidance for your daily walk, the Voice says, "Peace, be still."

You must discern the truth of God and recognize your sin,  
Be willing to release its hold before God enters in.

You must relinquish all the claims you've held so firm and dear,  
That independent will of yours will have to disappear.  
You must regard the will of God superior to your own,  
Remove the idols that you have, let God be God alone.

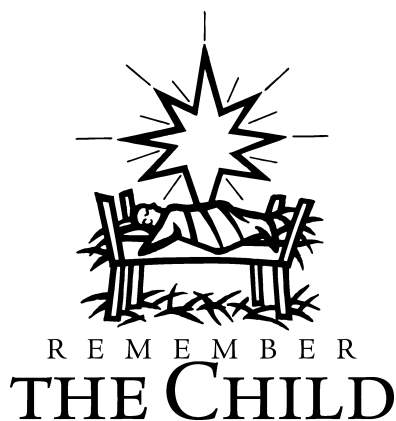
Don't use Him as a Sunday crutch, don't serve Him just one hour,  
For every weekday too is His, He claims it through His power.  
But God will not distort your plans, you must come willingly;  
He'll never press a soul to change, you have to hear His plea.

Commit your way unto the Lord, He calls, He waits, He hears;  
There is no sin He can't erase amid this vale of tears.  
When you are willing to obey, the past is cast aside,  
The slate is cleaned by Jesus' blood, no sinner is denied.

When wholly cleansed, completely clean, no errors to confess,  
Then Jesus says, "Come serve with Me and watch how I will bless."

Complete denial of worldly lusts, a willingness to go;  
Committed to the cause of Christ, His strength He will bestow.

You have no power of your own, but through Him you'll acquire,  
The faith that brings you to your knees, refined as if by fire.  
A vessel for the Master's use, a tool within His hand;  
You are equipped to serve Him well, on any foreign land.



If you need a Pastor, please contact Pastor Pete Feige at 704-516-2805 or our office at 704-922-4648. Check out our website at [oslc-nc.org](http://oslc-nc.org) or email us at [oslcdallas@aol.com](mailto:oslcdallas@aol.com).



### CLWRACHEL GROUP

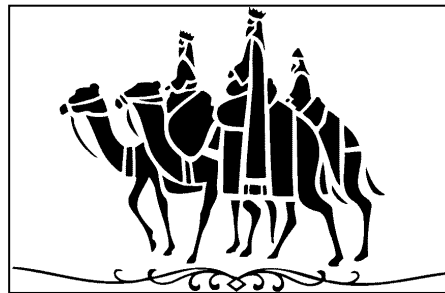
will meet at the home of TBA

"Christmas Luncheon"

**LET US PRAY...** "Are any among you suffering? They should pray...The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up." (James 5:13-15)



SUSAN Aderholt, SETH Alexander, AMANDA (friend of the Penley's), MARVIS Anderson, WHITNEY Auten (breast cancer), KELLY Ballard (friend of Shana Dease), BRAXTON Bearden (friend of the Locketts), ADDISON Blanton (friend of Dease's), KATHY Bohanan (cancer), KAREN Brady, SYLVIA Cloninger (friend of Nick Vlaservich), MIKE Coffey (Robbie Wooten's uncle), STEVE Digh (cancer), RENEE Falkenberg (broken ribs), HARDY Feige (Pete's dad – chronic back pain), NANCY Friday, JAMES Goudelock (cancer), JASON Hames (friend of the White's), DANA Kirshman (friend of Robbie Wooten-cancer), FRANCIS McAllister (broken hip), CHRIS Messick (recovering back surgery), ELLEN & ED Pfeiffer (Keenan Gordy's Parents – Heart issues), GARY Neal, (friend of Caleb Dease), SONDRAL Phillips (friend of Melinda White), JERRIE Presley, TERI Trudnak, GARY Turner (father of Jason Murray), JOE White (stroke), NANCY Wilson.



## Annual Report

With the year end close in sight it will be here before we can say Happy New Year.



Please start working on your Annual Reports, Scheduled for Team Meeting dates, and Looking Ahead activities, such as: Group Meeting, VBS, Conventions, etc. Please submit by Jan. 15, 2021.

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## THE GIFTS OF THE MAGI

by  
Marilyn Sharpe



Several years ago in my parenting group, one woman offered the way she and her family keep Christmas gift giving sane. They focus on giving three gifts: a gift for the Christ child, a gift for the family, and a gift for the soul.

This month's column is filled with family activities that may change forever how you celebrate Advent and Christmas. Worth a try? Read on.

### A GIFT FOR THE CHRIST CHILD

When the Magi, the three wise men, came to visit the Christ child, they came bearing three gifts – gold, frankincense, and myrrh, gifts that celebrated both the royalty and divinity of Jesus and his suffering and death on our behalf. What are the gifts we could give the Christ child this Christmas season?

Favorite Christmas stories offer some ideas. In *The Littlest Angel*, the youngest of the angels goes back to earth to retrieve his favorite toys and offer them to baby Jesus. In *The Clown of God*, the aged clown, returned home to die, has nothing to offer Jesus but his gift for juggling. Both gift givers have given the Christ child exactly what he wants – a gift of themselves. In O'Henry's short story, *The Gift of the Magi*, a poor young couple sells their most prized possessions to purchase a gift for the other, only to discover that the greatest gift they gave was their selfless love. In Matthew 25, Jesus speaks to this kind of gift:

*...I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.*

What might you and your family do this season for "one of the least of these who are members of my family"? Might you serve a meal at a soup kitchen, visit a nursing home, buy a toy for a child in need, bring a meal to someone who is ill or shut in, invite a neighbor over for dinner, sit with a single person in worship, sing Christmas carols in your neighborhood, write a letter to someone with whom you've lost touch, sit with a person who has lost a loved one this year? Look around at the need ... and fill one need with the love and light of Christ. Talk to your children about why you do this – because God first gave us the greatest gift of all, the gift of Jesus Christ.

### A GIFT FOR YOUR FAMILY

Most of us long for more time. This season, plan a gift of time for your family. It can be as simple as family devotions by the light of an Advent wreath, a picnic dinner on the family room floor, a favorite holiday movie with popcorn, a game night, or a walk under a starlit sky, with cocoa to warm hands afterward. Whatever warms the hearts of your family, whatever gives you the gift of time to share, whatever reminds you how much you love one another is this gift.

### A GIFT FOR YOUR SOUL

Consider an Advent retreat, daily devotions with a fragrant candle lit, simplifying your gift giving, spending time with a nutritious friend, listening to Christmas carols, attending a Christmas pageant, choosing to leave your fresh tree untrimmed, just soaking in the woodland fragrance. Do something this season that feeds your soul, helps you rest in God's presence, and come away refreshed. This may be choosing NOT to do something that is stressful and that distracts you from the joy of this season.

May the Prince of Peace bring that gift to your life this Advent seasons. I wish you and yours all the blessings of this holy time.

*Candlelight  
Service*



*Thursday, December 24  
at  
7:00 pm*

## Daily Bible reading guide from NALC, LCMS and LCC

*Reading the Word of God*, a daily Bible reading guide, has been prepared for Lutherans to use over the next three years.

The North American Lutheran Church has joined with the Lutheran Church-Canada and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod to compile a three-year plan of *daily* Bible readings and a year-long series of *weekly* readings on Martin Luther's approach to the Scriptures.

### Daily readings

The daily readings are listed on calendars for **2020**. The plan provides a guide that will take the reader through the entire Old Testament one time in three years, with the exception of Psalms, which are read twice each year. The New Testament will be read twice in the three years.

A reading from the Old Testament, a psalm (or portion of a psalm) and a reading from the New Testament are assigned for each day. Certain church festivals - Christmas, Easter, Pentecost and so forth - have readings appointed for the specific occasion.

# December

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		<i>1</i> <i>Neh. 7:66-72</i> <i>Ps. 122</i> <i>Rev. 2:12-17</i>	<i>2</i> <i>Neh. 8:1-12</i> <i>Ps. 123</i> <i>Rev. 2:18-29</i>	<i>3</i> <i>Neh. 8:13-18</i> <i>Ps. 124</i> <i>Rev. 3:1-6</i>	<i>4</i> <i>Neh. 9:1-15</i> <i>Ps. 125</i> <i>Rev. 3:7-13</i>	<i>5</i> <i>Neh. 9:16-38</i> <i>Ps. 126</i> <i>Rev. 3:13-22</i>
<i>6</i> <i>Neh. 10:1-39</i> <i>Ps. 127</i> <i>Rev. 4:1-11</i>	<i>7</i> <i>Neh. 11:1-36</i> <i>Ps. 128</i> <i>Rev. 5:1-14</i>	<i>8</i> <i>Neh. 12:1-43</i> <i>Ps. 129</i> <i>Rev. 6:1-17</i>	<i>9</i> <i>Neh. 14:44-13:30</i> <i>Ps. 130</i> <i>Rev. 7:1-8</i>	<i>10</i> <i>Hag. 1</i> <i>Ps. 131</i> <i>Rev. 7:9-17</i>	<i>11</i> <i>Hag. 2</i> <i>Ps. 132</i> <i>Rev. 8:1-13</i>	<i>12</i> <i>Zech. 1</i> <i>Ps. 133</i> <i>Rev. 9:1-21</i>
<i>13</i> <i>Zech. 2</i> <i>Ps. 134</i> <i>Rev. 10:1-11</i>	<i>14</i> <i>Zech. 3</i> <i>Ps. 135</i> <i>Rev. 11:1-19</i>	<i>15</i> <i>Zech. 4</i> <i>Ps. 136</i> <i>Rev. 12:1-17</i>	<i>16</i> <i>Zech. 5</i> <i>Ps. 137</i> <i>Rev. 13:1-10</i>	<i>17</i> <i>Zech. 6</i> <i>Ps. 138</i> <i>Rev. 13:11-18</i>	<i>18</i> <i>Zech. 7</i> <i>Ps. 139</i> <i>Rev. 14:1-20</i>	<i>19</i> <i>Zech. 8</i> <i>Ps. 140</i> <i>Rev. 15:1-18</i>
<i>20</i> <i>Zech. 9</i> <i>Ps. 141</i> <i>Rev. 16:1-21</i>	<i>21</i> <i>Zech. 10</i> <i>Ps. 142</i> <i>Rev. 17:1-18</i>	<i>22</i> <i>Zech. 11</i> <i>Ps. 143</i> <i>Rev. 18:1-24</i>	<i>23</i> <i>Zech. 12</i> <i>Ps. 144</i> <i>Rev. 19:1-21</i>	<i>24 Christmas Eve</i> <i>Isaiah 7:10-14</i> <i>Ps. 110:1-4</i> <i>1 John 4:7-16</i> <i>Matt 1:18-25</i>	<i>25 Christmas Day</i> <i>Isaiah 52:7-10</i> <i>Ps. 2</i> <i>Hebrew 1:1-6</i> <i>John 1:1-14</i>	<i>26</i> <i>Zech. 13</i> <i>Ps. 145</i> <i>Acts 6:8-10</i>
<i>27</i> <i>Zech. 14</i> <i>Ps. 146</i> <i>Luke 2:22-40</i>	<i>28</i> <i>Mal. 1</i> <i>Ps. 147</i> <i>Rev. 20:1-10</i>	<i>29</i> <i>Mal. 2</i> <i>Ps. 148</i> <i>Rev. 20:11-21:8</i>	<i>30</i> <i>Mal. 3</i> <i>Ps. 149</i> <i>Rev. 21:9-22:5</i>	<i>31</i> <i>Mal. 4</i> <i>Ps. 150</i> <i>Rev. 22:6-21</i>	<b>NEW YEAR'S DAY</b>	



Our Saviour Lutheran Church  
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*“The child to be born  
 will be holy;  
 he will be called  
 Son of God.”*

Luke 1:35, NRSV



# Christmas Worship Schedule

Dec. 6..... 2nd Sunday of Advent... .11:00 am

Dec. 13..... 3rd Sunday of Advent.....11:00 am

Dec. 20..... 4th Sunday of Advent.....11:00 am

Dec. 24.....Christmas Eve  
 Candle Light Service.... 7:00 pm  
 Holy Communion

Dec. 25.....Christmas Day .....*Merry Christmas*

De-  
 cember  
 2020