

December 2018

Greetings from Pastor Matthew

Cold December Flies Away



I am sitting on the low cement wall outside the entrance to Calvary Lutheran Church basking in winter sunshine. With shrubs and trees and the last remnants of crocus, amaryllis, and daffodils now dormant underground, it feels like spring is right around the corner. I feel this way because of the sunshine, but also, because time has been flying like a peregrine falcon. (I looked it up. “The **Peregrine Falcon** can reach speeds of up to 240 miles per hour while diving!”). I got off my sabbatical (for which I am forever grateful) and hit the ground flying, and here we are in December.

There is a Christmas Carol in Lutheran hymnals that we never sing at Christmas, “Cold December Flies Away.” I like the title though and just looked up the hymn on-line. It is beautiful as a performance piece, but still I don’t recommend it for congregational worship. What intrigues me are the lyrics.

*“Cold December flies away at the rose-red splendor.
April’s crowning glory breaks while the whole world wonders.*

It is a poetic hymn which does not mention Jesus, or Christmas, or God, or Mary. I wonder why the hymn writer and lyricist chose to use symbolic images rather than naming Joseph and Mary and the birth of Jesus. I also find it interesting that in these two lines, the narration flies from December, Jesus’ birth, to April, the month in which Holy Week and Easter fall.

The “rose-red splendor,” as I have read, symbolizes Mary and later in the poem a flower seems to represent Jesus. The listener, though, might hear the lyrics without knowing the biblical references.

You might think it is just a song about gardening.

We live in a secular world, a world in which even long time Christians wonder if our faith is relevant in this world. Perhaps we will find our faith to be extremely relevant when we engage with the world around us. We will find the good news of Jesus liberating and uplifting in these times. All we need to do is get out and listen. We will hear cries of loneliness, oppression, worry, and despair, and our presence and listening will let people know someone is there. We will also hear surprising expressions of faith by people who maybe have never darkened the door of a church. I wonder if the writer of this Christmas hymn hoped to engage the listener through symbolic poetry and un-churchy lyrics, and truly beautiful music. So, here I am, sitting on a cement wall basking in the sunshine in the middle of winter. We go out and live our lives always aware of signs of the Holy Spirit, Jesus in the face of strangers, God’s presence inside of you that calms your fears and opens your hearts to the world and its people, and by “people” I mean sparrows, crows, salmon, otters, ravens, doves, and dogs and cats, as well as all sorts of humans. As the sun shines on you, even on cloudy days, so also let the light in you shine on others. Be in Christ. Be yourself. “Share God’s love,” St. Francis said, “if necessary, use words.”

God’s Peace,

Pastor Matthew

CALVARY LUTHERAN CHURCH
937 NE JACKSON SCHOOL RD
HILLSBORO OR 97124

Crossways



Advent & Christmas Time at Calvary

“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace...”

Decorate our Church

On Sunday, December 2nd, all are invited to help decorate the church for the season.

Advent Services & Posada

Mid-Week Advent Services using **Holden Evening Prayer** will be offered on Wednesday, December 5th and December 12th at 7:00 pm. Come and prepare your hearts for the coming of Christ.

On Wednesday, December 19th, we will host a **Posada at Calvary!** Come and learn another way to celebrate the season.



2018 Holiday Season Adopt-A-Refugee Family

Please wrap your gifts, and bring them to church by Sunday, December 9th. John and Michele Cage will deliver them.

Christmas Eve Services

Monday, December 24th
at 7:00 pm and 10:00 pm



Pledge News at Calvary

Jesus said, *“I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.”*
John 10:10

Dear Christian Friends,

Thank you! Calvary Lutheran Church held a pledge in-gathering on Sunday, November 18th and many of you responded with generosity! We **received 29 pledges, totaling \$115,516**, with more pledges expected. Thanks be to God!

If you haven't pledged yet, there is still time to support the mission and ministry of Calvary Lutheran Church. Your council is asking you to prayerfully consider how you may be able to help. If you choose to pledge, you can drop a pledge card in the offering basket on Sunday or mail it to the church. Your pledge will be kept confidential. If you choose not to make a pledge, we trust that you will continue your faithful giving to the Glory of God and the mission of Calvary.

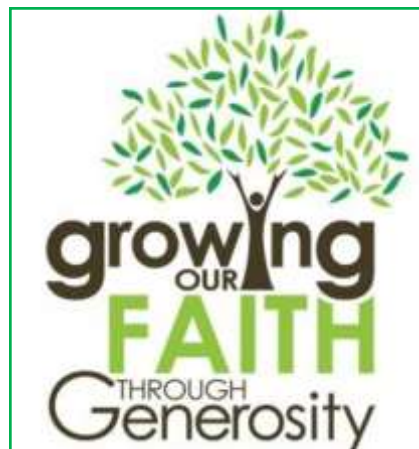
Excerpts from the stewardship letter you all received in October...

- As you consider your offering for 2019, consider the good things that God has done for us at Calvary. We have two thriving Bible studies, a full confirmation class, a dedicated high school youth group, various kinds of service such as Family Promise and the food bank, and several kinds of advocacy for justice and peace. We have a dedicated altar guild, various kinds of worship and great music. We have a faithful church president, a dedicated council. I had a terrific sabbatical (thank you!) and came back to find a spirit of friendship and joy at Calvary. I am eager to keep moving us forward with God's help and guidance.
- God has given us all these things and more. God sent Jesus into the world to give us life abundantly. Jesus was not talking about riches. He was talking about relationship, that we would be one in Jesus just as Jesus is one with God and the Holy Spirit. I believe that the Holy Spirit is leading us into deeper relationship, stronger faith, and an outpouring of love in Christ for each other and our neighbors.

We have confidence in the abundance of God's love and the spirit of this congregation. We give thanks for all of you and for the gift of Christian community that we share together in Christ.

God's Peace,

Pr. Matthew



December Fellowship Opportunities



Calvary Book Club

All are invited to gather at the home of Michele Cage on Tuesday, **December 4th** at 144 NW Lenox. We will be choosing our books for the next year. Everyone can bring up to 2 book suggestions and we will be voting on which books we will read. Bringing a snack is welcomed but optional.



A Note from Betty Adams, Council President

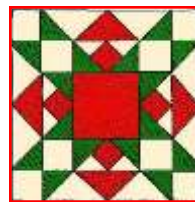
“At Christmas, we at Calvary take up a thank-you collection to show extra appreciation for our staff. To join in on this tradition of generosity, please contact either Betty Adams or Michele Cage.”



December Lunch Bunch Christmas Gathering

The group will go to lunch on Wednesday, December 12th at 11:30 am at the Vintage Room Restaurant at The Reserve Vineyards & Golf Club. The address is 4805 SW 229th Ave., Aloha OR 97007.

All are welcome! It will be beautifully decorated for Christmas.



Quilting and Knitting

The group will meet on Saturday, December 1st at 9:00 am to create beautiful quilts and prayer shawls.



Men's and Women's Bible Study

The men meet every Wednesday at 10:30am and the women meet every Wednesday at 1:00pm.

Come and listen, learn and inwardly digest...

From the Eco-Faith Committee:

Have a Very Merry Eco-Friendly Christmas!

Americans generate almost 25 million tons of trash between Thanksgiving and New Year's. Here are a few tips to reduce your waste this holiday season:

Instead of buying new decorations, shop at reuse stores like Habitat for Humanity Restore, Scrap PDX, St Vincent dePaul, or your neighborhood thrift store.

Try creative alternatives to gift-wrapping. Use colorful comics or magazine pages, wrap gifts in a reusable scarf or tea towel, put small gifts in a basket, tin or even socks...there are lots of fun ideas. Be creative!

Consider gifting durable, reusable items that will encourage others to reduce waste like a reusable coffee mug, canvas tote bag, collapsible take-out container, or to-go utensil set made from metal or bamboo. You can also give gifts of time or experiences, like tickets to a museum.

Food is always a big part of the holiday season. Cut back on your food waste by finding recipes that use up leftovers. The website at www.savethefood.com/planning has a Guest-imator tool to plan holiday meals based on how many guests you expect. Check out Washington County's Solid Waste and Recycling website: www.co.washington.or.us for the Eat Smart, Waste Less challenge for more tips on reducing food waste.

*~this article was hijacked from the Washington County Recycling Up
11-16-18*

Bring your recycling to church...

The EcoFaith and Social Ministry Committees will collect the following items for recycling between January 2 and January 6th.

- **Used batteries - alkaline and rechargeable batteries (e.g., AA and AAA batteries)
- **Hard styrofoam
- **Packing peanuts
- **Soft foam packing
- **Plain bubble wrap (doesn't include bubble wrap mailers)
- **Air pillow packing



If you have any questions, please contact Joanne Rice at 503-648-9599 or rice9048@gmail.com.

NO MEETING IN DECEMBER.

Our next Eco-Faith meeting is Wednesday, January 16th at 3:15 pm at church.



Calvary Women of the ELCA (WELCA)

Judy Britton and Anita Oberhelman, Co-Chairs
Kayse Durgan, Treasurer—Leslie Mayfield, Secretary
All women of Calvary belong to Calvary WELCA

WELCA Meeting

November 17, 2018

Refreshments: Thanks to Sally and Judy B. for the wonderful continental breakfast!

Business Meeting

Team Reports: The Thrivent food drive challenge is going well. They will donate \$500 to the food bank, if we collect 500 food or hygiene items.

The treasurer's report was presented.

Ministry Reports: Cradle Roll: We have five Spark Family magazines to distribute. Eva received the first year cradle roll packet. Inge knitted the baptism cloth for her.

Kitchen: The new coffee pot works great. Thanks!

Quilting and Knitting: Twenty-two purple hats were delivered to Emanuel Hospital. The quilts made in the past year and some shawls will be displayed November 18 at the Thank Offering Service. Recent donations included a sewing machine, yarn, quilts, a quilt rack, and more. We just received an additional large donation of yarn. Anita will look into the possibility of prayer shawl ministry donations to nearby adult foster homes.

Book club meets December 4 to pick books for 2019 at Michele Cage's home. Participants may choose to bring a snack to share.

God's Family Reports: Care team reported that twelve cards were sent recently. Bonnie Brown passed away on Tuesday morning, November 27th.

Sister congregations: Invitations to our Christmas party were sent to Emanuel (Cornelius) and ChristChurch (Hillsboro). Kayse will follow up with Emanuel.

We were invited to a crafting open house at ChristChurch on November 30 and December 1.

Events:

November 18 is Thank Offering Sunday with quilts and shawls displayed. Cathie and Sally will do readings. WELCA thank offerings will be collected at the same time as 2019 church pledges.

Our Christmas party on December 15 will include a brunch potluck, singing, devotions, and fellowship. Michele is making gifts for the guests. Anita, Marteen, and Judy B. will help set up.

The December second Thursday Art Share from 2-4 pm will be paper stars with guest artist Inge.

Bible Study: Thanks to Judy B. for a powerful, informative Bible study.

Everyone is invited to:

WELCA Christmas Party

Saturday, December 15 @ 9:30 am



Potluck brunch, singing, devotions, and fellowship; please bring a brunch item to share. Guests are welcome.

Thrivent Food Pantry Challenge



The Women of Calvary accepted the challenge to collect 500 items for our local food pantry between November 1 and November 30, and Thrivent will give our local food pantry – St. Vincent de Paul - \$500.

The entire congregation joined in this venture. The first Sunday of the challenge Debra Peña spoke to the needs of our local food pantry. Besides food they are in great need of hygiene products.

Pictures of the food were taken to send to Thrivent. Joanne Rice and Michele Cage were very active in this ministry, and Merle Kind was our designated delivery person.

Also, an anonymous donor has offered to raise such a challenge in the middle of 2019.

Thank you to all who helped us exceed the Thrivent Food Drive Challenge!

Sincere thanks to everyone who brought food and hygiene items for the food bank. We did it! Thrivent will donate \$500 to our food bank. We truly appreciate all the extra efforts. As of the newsletter press date, Calvary collected over

1000 items!



Family Promise Homeless Program

Calvary will be hosting Family Promise beginning on December 2nd. Why not make a resolution to give of ourselves by serving others! What a wonderfully fulfilling way for a Christian to kick off the New Year!

Thank you and God's Peace,

Julie Perger

Volunteer Coordinator

Calvary/Family Promise

503-347-9917

julieperger@gmail.com



Preschool News

November flew by this year! We enjoyed learning new songs, reading fall stories, and making decorations and food for a Thanksgiving Feast. Now we are in the middle of Christmas preparations. The kids will spend the few weeks before Christmas break learning songs for our Christmas program and making gifts for their families.

The preschool staff wishes to express to all of you their gratitude for your support and we wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

-Maggie



Alternative Gift Catalogue at Church

ELCA Good Gifts—*Gifts that grow the church, fight hunger and transform lives.*



1. Choose your gift

Browse and choose the gifts that mean the most to you, or choose gifts to give in honor of friends and loved ones.

There are three ways to give:

Online [ELCA.org/goodgifts](https://www.elca.org/goodgifts)

Phone 800-638-3522

Mail Send a check to:

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
P.O. Box 1809
Merrifield, VA 22116-8009



2. Get a card

If your gift is in honor of a friend or loved one, it's easy to tell them about it.

Give online and you may personalize free, printed cards to be sent directly to your loved ones. You may also select to send the cards to yourself, print them at home, or have them delivered via email. Card options will be available after checkout. *Note: These options are only available when you give online.*



3. Where your money goes

Every project in every community starts with listening. We believe that our congregations, companion churches and partners know their communities best. That's why *they* identify the needs and priorities in their communities, as well as the solutions they believe will make the biggest impact.

The items in our catalog are real examples from projects currently supported through different church-wide ministries. The projects have been planned by our partners – meaning that each community receives exactly the kind of support they need and none of what they don't.

Your donation will be used where it is needed most within the wider category of each gift you've selected. (For example, a gift of vaccinations may be used to support other health care initiatives.) This allows our church to stay adaptive, flexible and effective in the work that we do. Because we seek to honor your generosity and keep administrative costs low, we do not track individual financial gifts to specific families or locations in the U.S. or abroad.

From Bishop Dave: Congregational Health and Vitality



Dear Oregon Synod People,

Ready for Phase II?! (*Ah, what was "Phase I?"*)

Last April/May the synod sponsored six regional Gatherings around the state. These Gatherings brought us all into conversation around congregation health and vitality here in Oregon. Our Gatherings were amazingly well attended, and feedback was off the chart. Thank you to all who participated. Many congregations brought several lay leaders along with council people and their pastor. This is the church we want to be!

That was "Phase I." Having a sense of who we are all together, the opportunities and challenges that face congregations, knowing that we're not alone in whatever it is that we're experiencing . . . We are now ready to look more deeply into the specific dynamics of your congregation based on your data and local wisdom. That's the amazing part of this work. We have specific data that you have shared with us. We have some insights into your story. You know more. Let's talk.

How? Well, you are invited to a synod-wide process of vitalization. Together we'll focus on the strength of congregations working together for the sake of the Gospel. Phase II will bring congregations together in regional groups three times over the next 9-12 months. Each of these three gatherings will have a focus that builds on the gathering before. Come one, come all, as we grow together in vitality and strength.

Phase II Gatherings will be at the same locations we used for Phase I. A few dates are in process, but most are already set. Mark your calendars now for Meeting #1:

- **February 2** – two Portland area meetings. Westside – St. Andrews, Beaverton. Eastside – West Lynn Lutheran, West Lynn.
- **February 16** – Grace Lutheran, Corvallis.
- **March 2** – Peace Lutheran, Pendleton.
- **TBD** – Nativity Lutheran, Bend
- **TBD** – Cater Lake area gathering

Remember, you are welcome at any event you wish to attend. And, you may bring as many people as you wish. We're getting this information out to you now so your leadership has time to build a strong team. An introductory video will be out to you by Christmas so you can have it ready for your January Annual Meeting.

Meeting 1 is designed to fulfill a promise we all made to each other in our Gatherings last Spring – and that promise was to get your specific data back to you. You may remember in Phase I we looked at Vitality Surveys, Word Clouds, Visitation feedback and ELCA Trend Reports. Our goal is to allow you to support each other in understanding this data. We'll equip your leaders to report back to your members. We'll create an action plan for next steps. You'll build relationships with others, reducing isolation and increasing effectiveness for ministry.

Meetings 2 and 3 will be shaped and scheduled according to your needs. However, the general goal will be to work on "How to increase vitality and sustainability for your church." in Meeting 2, and "Learning how to take action rooted in prayer, scripture and deep listening." in Meeting 3.

Now, this is especially important!!

1. If didn't participate in Phase 1 that's okay. Jump in now. We'll see that you get caught up on what you missed, and that you're raring to go.
2. The Vitality Survey is a great tool for this work. If you haven't taken a congregational Vitality Survey, or it's been a few years and you want to do it again, we have time to get this done if you act soon! Contact Katy Rustvold now @ katyrustvold@me.com to get set up.
3. This work continues to be about you, your ministry and your data. It's not about "synod stuff." **You** are the hands, feet and lips of the Gospel here in Oregon. Your Synod Council, however, is making this work a core initiative going forward. We have set aside a significant amount of money for this work and asked Katy Rustvold and Bonnie Beadles-Bohling to be Project Managers.
4. Watch for more "Phase II" communications in the weeks and months to come – and get on board now. This is going to be amazing!!

Joy,
Bp. Dave Brauer-Rieke
Oregon Synod—ELCA



In Our Prayers



Family of Bonnie Brown, Jeff Wolkenhauer, Don Tangen, Walter Toperzer, Clara Blakely, Brenda & Family, Pam Dixon, Sue Bosshardt, Sharon Janzen, Baby Alice Crume, Judy Reed, John Hartner, Jon Lewis (Air Force) and Ermine Todd (Army) and all the members of our military, Tomi Deveraux, Mary Crandall, Sharon Schmadeke, Dick Highhouse

Happy Birthday to You!



| | |
|-------------|-------------------|
| December 2 | Mary Crandall |
| December 3 | John Hartner |
| December 5 | Ermine Todd IV |
| December 6 | Brent Young |
| December 7 | Merle Kind |
| December 9 | Margaret Deveraux |
| December 12 | Joanne Rice |
| December 15 | Frank Hiebel |
| December 25 | Jesus |
| | Carol Chase |
| December 29 | Sophia Earl |

December Calendar

| | |
|--------|--|
| Dec 1 | Quilting & Knitting, 9am |
| Dec 2 | Sunday Worship, 10am Family Promise Week |
| Dec 4 | Book Club, 7pm |
| Dec 5 | Men's Bible Study, 10:30am Women's Bible Study, 1pm Advent Holden Service, 7pm |
| Dec 9 | Sunday Worship, 10am Council Meeting |
| Dec 11 | Blood Drive, 1:30pm |
| Dec 12 | Men's Bible Study, 10:30am Lunch Bunch, 11:30am Bible Study, 1pm Advent Holden Service, 7pm |
| Dec 13 | ArtShare, 2pm |
| Dec 15 | WELCA, 9:30am |
| Dec 16 | Sunday Worship, 10am |
| Dec 18 | Care Committee, 2pm |
| Dec 19 | Men's Bible Study, 10:30am Women's Bible Study, 1pm POSADA |
| Dec 23 | Sunday Worship, 10am |
| Dec 24 | Christmas Eve, 7 and 10 pm |
| Dec 30 | Sunday Worship, 10am |

