



SHARING THE LIGHT

The mission of First Lutheran Church is to grow together in Christ through Prayer, Worship, and Education and to spread the love of Christ to our community.

December 2019

Publication of **FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH**

Christmas – A Fresh Start

Christmas means a million things to a million different people, but one thing it means to me is that we are given a fresh start. Babies are just starting out in life – they are full of potential and possibilities – and our annual celebration of Jesus’ birth is a reminder that because of Christ we have become “children of God” (John 1:12-13). In Christ, we are full of potential and possibilities – no matter what our age – and we are given a fresh start on the things that really matter in our lives.

*I am
a Child
of
God*



New Year’s Day is usually thought of as the time to do new things. We make “new year’s resolutions”. We turn over a “new leaf”, resolve to improve ourselves, tackle old problems with fresh determination. All of which is well and good, except that it usually doesn’t work, because these are things we do on our own, and our human power is limited.

But “with God all things are possible” (Matthew 19:26), and when we do things with him, real change can happen! God’s power accomplishes things we never could: we find new solutions to old problems; we see new possibilities where before there were only dead ends. As St. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:17, “Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!” In other words, we are given a fresh start.

What Paul wrote is true of every day, of course, but I think it comes home to us even more at Christmas. As a baby in Bethlehem Jesus starts out in life, and with his power we can start out the New Year with the confidence that things really will be different this year. Jesus is Immanuel – “God with us” – which means his power, wisdom, and love will be with us to make new things happen. With all its beauty, peace, music, and joy, Christmas means a million things to a million different people, and I pray that this year – by the grace of God – it means that you and I and everyone we love will be given a fresh start in the year that lies ahead!

Emmanuel
GOD WITH US



Merry Christmas!
Pastor Ken Frese



**First Lutheran Church
SONshine House Preschool**

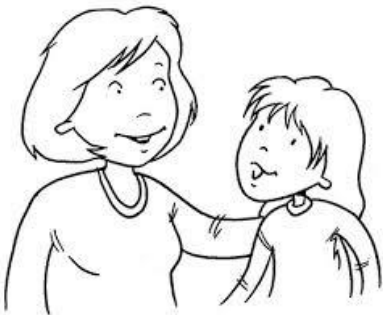
December Newsletter 2019

Dear Church Family,

“Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One, give thanks because He’s given Jesus Christ, His Son” lyrics by Henry Smith

I love this worship song especially during this time of year because truly we have so much to be thankful for! Our Lord sent His Son so that we can live a privileged life of salvation. One of my parents shared with me that she made friends with her neighbor who is not a Christian and she has been sharing the gospel with her. I am so blessed by the intentionality of our parents who are obedient to the call of; “Go and make disciples of All nations.” During each season and all times lets be bold in accepting of our brothers and sisters, be intentional in connecting with anyone we meet so that we too can be obedient, impacting lives, so they are transformed in Christ!

*Give
Thanks
With a
grateful
Heart*



Last month I had the pleasure of sharing about one of our staff and as we enter a new month I’d like to continue with this recognition. This will give you an insight to who is serving in the Preschool ministry and it also gives you a glimpse of who our teachers are.

Ms. Enedina has been working at SONshine House Preschool since late 2016, she started as a substitute and later that summer I asked if she would join our team full time. She has been the lead toddler for the past 3 years. What makes Ms. Enedina so special is; she is committed! Ms. Enedina travels by bus and she is the one staff member that is never late! She also has a very sweet nature and refers to her students as “Beautiful” a gentle and endearing expression. Her students are very attached to her and that is no surprise. Whether a good or bad day Ms. Enedina always has smiles and hugs to give away. We are so blessed to have such an amazing, gifted, dedicated and loving teacher. Please keep Ms. Enedina in prayer as she continues to make Jesus present in her class every day!

We invite all our Parish Family to our Advent Service on Wednesday, December 18. Our children will be performing our Annual Christmas program. The fun part of this program is that it requires audience participation. We look forward to worship with you as we celebrate our Lord Jesus Christ’s birth!



Blessings to you all during this most Thankful Season!

Christ’s Servant,

Jill A. Vidal
Director

Come let us
Adore
Him



December



Ushers: Craig Boehne, Dave Lassanske, Don Lammerts

Altar Guild: Renee Errickson, Sharon Corey

Greeters:

December 1	Hazel Benscoter
December 8	Jean Hyland, Betty Nelson
December 15	Connie Kean
December 22	Norma Boehne
December 29	Jo Tschopp

Worship Times:

First Lutheran Church English Worship 8:30; Bible Class & Sunday School 9:45-10:45

Grace Lutheran Church: Taiwanese Worship 11:00

Banner Church 10:00-3:00

Generations Church 10:15-2:15

Gatherings:

Board of Directors, Sunday, December 1, 11:00

Major Leaguers, Thursday, December 12, 1:00

Mission Development Team, Sunday, December 15, 11:00

SONshine House Preschool Dec. 18 congregational/school soup & sandwich 5 PM, Program 6 PM

Christmas Eve Worship December 24, 7:30PM, cookies & hot cocoa in the Fellowship Room

Load the van for Friends in Deed Thursday, January 2, 10:45

SONshine House Preschool Chapel each Wednesday at 10:00 a.m.

Saturday Prayer Group, 9:00-10:00 a.m. contact Jo Tschopp for location



December 7 Regina Li-Armijo
December 11 Dave Lassanske
December 20 Erich Armbrust
December 24 Betty Nelson
December 28 Judy Gunther, Sharon Corey

Not receiving email special announcements and/or prayer requests?? If you are currently not receiving emails and would like to be included please share your email address with Jo Tschopp at jo@tschopp.org or (626)355-9433. If you would like to be a member of the Prayer Chain & commit to pray for the requests contact Jo.

Pastoral Care: Please contact Pastor Ken Frese (310) 398-3741; or Board of Directors, Jo Tschopp (626) 355-9433.

Be Informed:

If you are interested in what is happening at the monthly Directors' Meetings, the monthly financial reports, the reports from SONshine House, the Round Table and other congregational activities you can find the reports in a binder located in the church office. The notebook is updated monthly. Kathy Janetzke or Jo Tschopp can direct you to it.

YULETIDE CHEER BEGINS HERE.... in the gaily decorated Fellowship Room on Thursday, Dec. 12th, 1 p.m. Dig out your most Christmassy duds and come with a big appetite for the catered lunch, winning a profusion of prizes at Bingo, and the opportunity for stimulating conversations with fellow members and friends. A wonderful way to begin the Christmas season, don't you agree?



Friends in Deed

Our super team of volunteers continues to work every fourth Saturday at the Friends in Deed Food Pantry in Pasadena. The team currently consists of Dave Lassanske, Don Lammerts, Norma Boehne, Sharon Corey, Brett Ottem, Judy Gunther, and Kathy Janetzke. They always welcome others who want to join them. I recently delivered, in the rain, 463 pounds of grocery items to the Pasadena Pantry. Tim, the director, again told me how he looks forward to our team coming because they know what to do and have fun doing it. The November delivery brings the yearly total to 4229 pounds since January. If you can't volunteer for the team toss a few items into your shopping cart and bring them to church to add to the collection. Your contributions especially help senior citizens on fixed incomes living



in rentals.

Thrivent Choice Dollars

Recently \$119 was deposited into the church bank account from Thrivent Choice Dollars. Members who have Thrivent products can designate First Lutheran to receive their Choice Dollars. Since January 2011 First Lutheran has received \$40,611. If you need further information please call your Thrivent agent, Thrivent's home office, or Jo Tschopp.



Little Free Library

Our Little Free Library is once again stocked with a variety of books for adults and children. Recently Rachel Witcher donated more than 40 newly purchased children's books to be placed in the Little Library. Neighbors are also leaving books. Check out the varied selection, you might find something you would like to read. Read it and then return it to take another book. The Little Free Library is an international organization dedicated to promoting literacy and neighborhoods.



Tuesday Bible Study

This group has been studying the Old Testament book of First Samuel. We have learned about the miraculous birth of Samuel and how God used him to help establish the nation of Israel. So many of the challenges that we face today, as people of God and as a nation, were experienced by these people of long ago times. This group is taking a December break and will resume January 7, at 11:00. No previous Bible knowledge is needed, just a desire to know more about God. For further information call Oscar Tschopp 626 355-9433.





Mission Development Team

The Mission Development Team has been busy planning the November 30 celebration and striving to be “Faithful for the Future.” At least four pastors will be in attendance as well as travelers from the Midwest and east coast. It has been wonderful re-connecting with people from the past. Our database is growing; please continue to supply contact information for former members, staff, and students. The newly revised website has been launched. Check out the

home page, you will be welcomed with the banner “Faithful for the Future, Celebrating 75 Years, Ready For More!” You can visit the site at www.firstlutherantc.org.

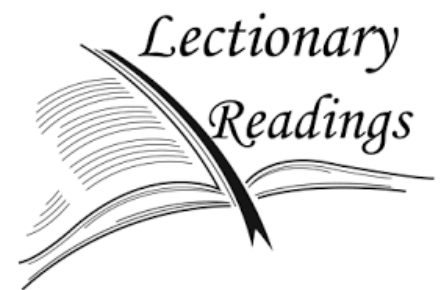
Some people, who could not be present for the celebration on Saturday, attended the December 1 worship service. The Mission Development Team is also helping with the December 18 SONshine House Christmas program. A soup and sandwich supper will be held at 5:00 with the program at 6:00. Please help us to greet the preschool families and provide a time of food and fellowship at the supper.

Burn the Mortgage!

We were able to make an additional principal payment of \$375 towards mortgage reduction. That, along with our monthly payment, brings our current loan balance to \$250,839.22. We recently received a check for \$50 from a non-member who wanted the funds to be used for the mortgage. We thank God for gifts large and small. As the end of 2019 draws to a close perhaps you have some extra cash you would like to contribute towards this effort. If so, please mark your contributions mortgage principal.

Reading the Lectionaries

Notice that the Old Testament readings wander through Isaiah, all of them foretelling future events, and the most important event of all history, the birth of Jesus, the Son of God. The Gospel readings from Matthew get us ready for the Christmas message, and then we come to the Christmas Eve account of the birth of Christ taken from Luke. All the readings are treasures waiting to be read, studied and internalized into our hearts and minds.



	<u>Old Testament</u>
Dec. 1	Isaiah 2:1-5
Dec. 8	Isaiah 11:1-10
Dec. 15	Isaiah 35:1-10
Dec. 22	Isaiah 7:10-17
Dec. 24	Isaiah 9:2-7
Dec. 29	Isaiah 63:7-14

<u>Epistle</u>
Philippians 3:10-14
Romans 15:4-13
James 5:7-11
Romans 1:1-7
Titus 2:11-14
Galatians 4:4-7

<u>Gospel</u>
Matthew 24:36-44
Matthew 3:1-12
Matthew 11:2-1
Matthew 1:18-25
Luke 2:1-20
Matthew 2:13-23