

The Epistle

December 2017

Sharing God's Love
Together



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Awareness and Darkness

Our lives can be so busy and in the midst of all that busy-ness we sometimes lose track of the big picture. We may forget that life and time keeps moving along. Where did 2017 go? How did I let another year go by without accomplishing...? (You fill in the blank.) I know that I fill my days so full with things to do that sometimes I am simply overwhelmed and feel like throwing up my hands.

But now the season of short days and long nights is upon us. This season forces me first to plan more carefully how I use those daylight hours. If I need to work outside or exercise outside, I had better set aside that time early in the day or I might miss the opportunity altogether.

In this season of increased darkness we enter the time of preparation in the church, Advent. This season is not just about getting ready for Christmas, but getting ourselves ready for life in Christ. Our texts call us to stay awake, to prepare the way, and to return to God. Most of all, our texts call us to trust; to remember that God is faithful, always faithful, to us, especially in times of trouble and doubt.

So I invite all of us to pause and consider: what are we doing with the time that makes up our lives? Are we investing it in the things that are most important to us? Are we investing this precious resource that is our lives in the things that God calls us to? Are we investing it in loving one another? In caring and protecting the creation? Are we doing the things that make our hearts sing or just things that occupy our attention? Has

what seems to be urgent, that which keeps us busy, displaced what is truly important?

We begin a new year hearing the call afresh: wake up! Christ is coming! Christ is here! Christ empowers you to life!

In the grace and peace of Christ,

Pastor Clark



ST. TIMOTHY LUTHERAN CHURCH FINANCES

UPCOMING EVENTS

October 2017	Actual	Budgeted	Diff
Income			
Offerings	\$10,278	\$9,681	\$597
Building Use	\$3,585	\$3,542	\$43
Faith Giving	\$1,175	\$667	\$508
Misc Income	\$3,132	\$750	\$2,382
Special Donation	\$2,083	\$2,083	\$0
Total Income	\$20,253	\$16,723	\$3,530
Expenses			
Loan Principal	\$576	\$576	\$0
October Net	(\$5,090)	\$762	(\$4,328)
YTD 2017	Actual	Budgeted	Diff
Income			
Offerings	\$99,299	\$96,842	\$2,457
Building Use	\$36,528	\$35,417	\$1,111
Faith Giving	\$6,920	\$6,667	\$253
Special Donation	\$20,833	\$20,833	\$0
Misc Income	\$8,381	\$7,500	\$881
Total Income	\$171,961	\$167,259	\$4,702
Expenses			
Loan Principal	\$5,702	\$5,702	\$0
YTD Net	\$9,640	\$11,890	\$2,250

December 10th—Bring Cookies for the Home Bound and “Nancy’s Project” (bring wrapped toys and shoes for migrant workers’ families.)
Plus Coloring “Peace “Advent Poster before and after service.

December 10th—Making of Chrismons at 4:30 pm. Soup and supplies will be provided.

December 12th—Altar Guild Luncheon at noon.at Hyatt Regency.

December 17th —Coloring of “Joy” poster before and after service.

December 19th—WELCA Holiday Tea at 1:00pm hosted by Carolyn Hawes.

December 20th—Longest Night Service at 5:30pm.

December 24th—Coloring “Love” Advent poster before & after service.

December 24th—Christmas Eve Service at 5:30pm.

December 25th—Christmas Day



SERVICE COMMISSION

Many opportunities to help others this season. Food barrels, I-Help, ELCA Good Gifts, LWR catalogs. December I-Help is full thank you. Your next chance is Wednesday, January 3rd.

Merry Christmas everyone! .
Your Service Commission

Connie Dallmann, Lucille Snyder-Pires, Dee Holland, Barbara Grace, and Ida Barber

WELCA QUILTS THANK YOU

Thanks for all the help at the many quilting session. On October 22 we delivered 22 quilts for LWR to the Advent Lutheran Church in Morgan Hill. This would not have happened if we did not have all the help. Thank you ladies.



October 27, 2017

Delinda Holland
1767 San Miguel Cyn Rd
Royal Oaks CA 95076-9134

Dear Mrs. Holland,

Thank you for your generous gift to Lutheran World Relief's Quilt & Kit Shipping Fund! Your donation ensures that LWR Quilts and Kits get into the hands of people who need it most.

Last spring, a shipment of Quilts, School Kits, Personal Care Kits, Baby Care Kits and Fabric Kits traveled to Peru. LWR staff and our partner, CARITAS, distributed the quilts and kits to 30,600 women, men and children all across the country. Mountain-dwelling families especially welcomed the warmth of quilts as winter temperatures began to set in, hitting average lows in the 30s in July and August.

The blessing of your gift doesn't end there! In our long-term projects in Peru, students receive Personal Care Kits that help their families learn better hygiene, which also helps strengthen their dairy and cheese livelihoods.

To learn more about how your gift makes a difference, and specifically about this community in Peru, watch our brand new quilt and kit video at lwr.org/videos/quilt-kit-pipeline. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or the LWR staff at 800.597.5972 or lwr@lwr.org.

On behalf of LWR, our partners and those we serve together, please accept my heartfelt thanks once more for your gift and all that it will do.

Warm Regards,

Daniel V. Speckhard
President and CEO

CHRISTMAS GIVING

COOKIES FOR SHUT-INS

On December 10th, please bring a dozen or so cookies to share at fellowship time after church and to pack up and deliver to our shut-ins.



TOYS & SHOES FOR MIGRANT WORKERS

Also bring your donations of toys and shoes for the Nancy Costello Migrant Workers Organization. If you wrap your toys, please note whether it's for a boy or a girl.



1 Give thanks for the work of Lutheran Disaster Response, through the Sierra Pacific Synod and Luther Social Services of Northern California, helping address the needs of those affected by recent widespread wildfires in California. Pray all those suffering loss and distress find hope and support throughout their recovery, rebuilding and healing.

2 We continue to pray for people and communities recovering from the devastation and loss caused by recent hurricanes – especially in Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and other locations in the Caribbean, and Gulf Coast and Southeastern states – that they not lose hope, will receive ongoing support and assistance, and will be strengthened and encouraged by our caring for one another.

3 *First Sunday of Advent* Pray to be alert in faith and life in grateful response for the gift of Jesus Christ breaking into the darkness of the world with love and mercy and for the promised return of our Lord.

4 We remember in our prayers the Rev. Kirsten Fryer, Justin Kolb and Dr. Michael Parker, ELCA missionaries serving in Egypt alongside companion churches proclaiming the gospel, developing future leaders and strengthening parish ministry.

5 When we grow weary, discouraged or compelled to give up, we pray as the psalmist prayed, “Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved.”

6 For the sake of doing God’s work in the world, pray God will shape our words to inspire, comfort, give hope, hold each other accountable and invite our neighbor to know God’s mercy and love; enlighten our actions through the word of God, conversations, relationships and encounters with people rather than acting on what we believe is best for them.

7 During this season of sharing gifts, pray we are mindful of and generous with our neighbors, especially those who live in poverty and hunger, immigrants and refugees, people who feel isolated and long for relationships and community, and families without homes or safe shelter.

8 Pray daily for God’s mercy and patience, asking forgiveness for our shortcomings and failures, that through God’s renewing love and the cleansing of our baptism we are set back on paths of righteousness and compassion.

9 In the face of heartbreaking, daunting gun violence, we pray God’s Spirit will stir in us a sense of self-sacrifice and humility that we might reconsider how we exercise our freedoms and live together for the well-being and safety of all people and that we will be wise and courageous in conceiving and embracing effective changes in our lives and laws, even when met with uneasiness or resistance.

10 Give thanks daily for our baptism into the body of Christ that prepares, renews and moves us to be faithful, compelling messengers of the good news.

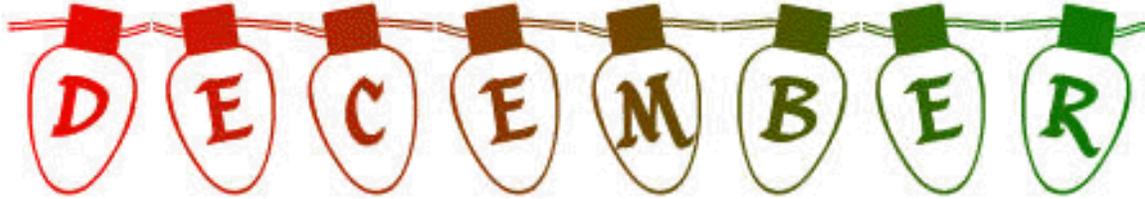
11 Ask God to bless the continuing work and impact of *Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA*, and give thanks for the many ways in which the campaign is helping cultivate and strengthen relationships, leaders and ministries locally and globally.

12 Pray for a spirit of peace to fill us and inspire our lives through knowing God is patient and forgiving with us and our salvation is certain through faith in Jesus Christ.

13 The mesmerizing light of Advent candles reminds us of the welcome, unfaltering light God shines into the world and our lives through Jesus Christ. Pray our lives are guided by the gospel and reflect the light of Jesus Christ in all we do and say.

14 Remember in prayer men and women living in prisons, jails and correctional facilities across our country, that the Spirit of God will fill their lives with faith and hope and that we are moved to show them – as Jesus has shown us – sincere mercy, love, respect and support.

- 15** Praise God for dwelling in our world – in us – and causing peace, mercy, goodness and hope to spring up where we might be inclined to give up in the face of darkness, despair and overwhelming difficulties.
- 16** God knows the quirks, insecurities and needs of our human nature and being. Lift up prayers of thanks and praise to God for meeting us where we are in the human form of Jesus Christ and for giving us something living, real, tangible and engaging to capture our attention and faith.
- 17** Just as John the Baptist was tireless in testifying to the one true light of Jesus, pray we too will be bold witnesses in today's world busied with sharing the good news and inviting people to believe and be baptized into the body of Christ for lives of faith, service and witness.
- 18** We remember in our prayers people who labor and serve throughout the holidays, giving thanks and recognition for their work and long hours. Pray they find time for rest, renewal, connecting with family and friends, and reflecting on the meaning of the holidays.
- 19** Stirred by the ever-present Spirit of God, give thanks and rejoice always in prayer, worship and moments of reflection.
- 20** *Katharina von Bora Luther, died 1552* Give thanks to God for women of faith throughout history who have witnessed to the good news, pursued justice and peace in the world, helped form the faith of others and served as examples and mentors for us.
- 21** The ELCA and The Episcopal Church are committed to prayer, fasting and advocacy addressing cuts to public programs that are vital to hungry people who are living in poverty. Remember to pray for these concerns, our leaders and people in need on the 21st of each month through December 2018.
- 22** With child-like anticipation and excitement, we tell and hear the Christmas story over and over again, sharing the news of the life-changing gift and impact of Jesus' birth; we pray we are always open to this good news inspiring and reshaping our traditions, celebrations and consumer habits.
- 23** Laugh, rejoice and shout for joy for God has done great things and restores our spirits.
- 24** As we remember and retell the story of the world anticipating the promised birth of Jesus, the true Messiah, pray we not take for granted the gifts we long for and have received in the son of God, our savior – forgiveness, hope and redemption.
- 25** *Christmas Day* On this great day, we give glory to God for the birth of Jesus, the incarnation of God among us, an undeserved gift bringing light to the darkness and life for all people.
- 26** With joyful hearts we give praise for what God has done for us and for revealing to us daily God's continuing activity in the world and – through our baptism – the diverse ways in which we are called to join with one another in serving our neighbor and proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ.
- 27** Pray for students, teachers and school staff on break during the holidays that they are renewed and strengthened through spending time with family, friends and their communities.
- 28** We remember in our prayers parents grieving the loss of infants or children, and pray we learn to be attentive, supportive, patient and caring, especially when we struggle awkwardly to find words and actions that are appropriate and helpful throughout their grieving and healing.
- 29** Lift up humble prayers of gratitude for God's undeserved, awesome and surprising saving grace.
- 30** We continue to pray for refugees and immigrants, especially in the Middle East and Europe, asking God to grant them hope, safety, welcoming communities in which to rebuild their lives and resilience; pray we never lose empathy and active concern for their struggles, suffering and losses.
- 31** Everywhere we turn and look we see the wondrous, amazing creative hand of God. Praise the Lord, and give thanks!



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 Worship Service 10:00am	4	5	6 I-Help-5:30pm	7 Christ in Our Home noon	8	9
10 Worship Service 10:00am Cookies and Nancy's Project	11	12 Altar Guild Luncheon-noon	13 Council 10:00am	14 Property 9:30am Christ in Our Home noon	15	16 Men's Breakfast 8:30am
17 Worship Service 10:00am	18	19 WELCA Holiday Tea-1:00pm Food Bank 4:00-7:00pm	20 Prayer Service 5:30pm	21 Christ in Our Home noon	22	23 Workday 8:30am
24 Worship Service 10:00am Christmas Eve Service 5:30pm	25 	26	27	28 Christ in Our Home noon	29	30
31 Worship Service 10:00am						

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

John Knight 12/3
 Bob Johannsen 12/19
 June Pedranti 12/29