

Our Savior's Lutheran Church

Newsletter

December 2021

www.oursaviorschurch.info

HEAR IT, FEEL IT, LIVE IT, SHARE IT – GOD'S LOVE

Dear siblings in Christ,

Like a lot of y'all, after Thanksgiving was over, we started getting our house decorated for the Christmas season. Granted, we could only get so much done with a one-month-old and a toddler, but we tried our best! One new thing that we did was to resurrect an old tradition I had growing up, making a gingerbread house. Now, when I was a kid, our "gingerbread" house was really one of those school milk cartons with Graham crackers glued to it with icing. This time, though, we got actual gingerbread with a plan and everything!

The thing is, as y'all with children know, toddlers are not known for following complicated directions very well. I expected as much with Hazel, so I made sure to put the walls and roof all together first, showing her how it was done. Then, with everything finished, we could decorate. And that's the other thing about toddlers. Their idea of "decorating" a gingerbread house doesn't quite line up with what an adult might think of as "decorating."

Random splotches of green, yellow, or red icing. Candy lights and holly leaves pasted in the middle of walls, no relation discernible with the windows or doors—or any other line for that matter. And of course, the inevitable distraction of discovering that icing is, in fact, *very* sweet and delicious and is as much fun to scrape off and eat as it is to apply to the gingerbread house. It took a lot of patience, and honestly the house still isn't done. But she's been having fun.

For some reason making this haphazard gingerbread house with my almost-three-year-old made me think of how we often get distracted, or follow a plan that we think is good, even though it has no connection to what things could or should look like, ideally. And I wonder how God reacts to the ways we metaphorically put just a huge splotch of green icing in the middle of the wall, rather than following the clearly marked lines. How does God smile at the ways we are so pleased with ourselves? How much does God just love sitting with us, letting us do the unimportant things however we really want to, because it means God gets to sit with us more?

If you're anything like me, you get a little focused on doing something "right." A line is there to be followed, so a random splotch of icing in the middle of the wall is not my idea of doing it correctly. But that's not what building a gingerbread house with my daughter is about, is it? Any more than doing everything "right" with God is what it's about. It's the joy of spending time together, of bonding in the imperfections, of discovering joy in the unexpected viewpoint of someone else.

Maybe that's something to try out this Advent season. Do something with God that brings you joy, even (and maybe especially) when you have no skill in whatsoever. Be silly and get distracted. Get focused on one part of some Bible verse or song or prayer or piece of art and ask God to sit with you in it as you dwell. And invite others to be in it with you, as you make your Christmas cookies or decorate the tree, or when you come up with gifts or games to play when family comes over for Christmas celebrations. There is some kind of joy that can be found when we don't get caught up in doing things "right." As long as we're spending time with God and with one another, that's really what's important.

In Christ,
Pastor Lucas



[Psalm 137:4](#) *How can we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?*

Christmas Message to the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin

In 1926, my maternal grandmother left Germany and immigrated to the United States. One of my earliest memories is singing *Silent Night (Stille Nacht)* in German by the Christmas tree in her small house in Jackson, MN. I wonder what it was like for her to move to a foreign land not speaking the language. I wonder how difficult it must have been for her to sing her song in a foreign land.

Last Christmas most of us couldn't gather inside our church buildings to sing *Silent Night* on Christmas Eve. Some of us sang to our computer screens, some sang in their cars in the parking lot, some sang with masks. We were all trying to sing the Lord's song in a foreign land, the land of COVID. It has been difficult. Our song has been muted.

Psalm 137 is a lament Psalm. The writer of Psalm 137 is describing the pain of the people who were forced to live in a foreign land after witnessing the destruction of their homeland and their temple. They are grieving the losses, lamenting, crying, and finding it impossible to "sing the Lord's song in a foreign land."

My heart goes out to the Afghan Refugees who are experiencing their first winter at Fort McCoy. I wonder how difficult it will be for them to sing their songs of faith in a foreign land. Many know that they will never go home again.

In Luke 1 Mary sings her song in unknown territory. She has received the message from Gabriel that she will bear God's son and his name is to be Jesus, and he will reign as king forever. This incomprehensible message is confirmed by her relative Elizabeth and changes Mary's life's circumstances. Mary is asked to do what no one has ever done before. This is uncharted and foreign territory for a young girl. She sings her song in a foreign land like her sisters before her Miriam, Ruth, and Hannah. She sings a song of courage, faith, hope, and love.

Luke 1:46-49 And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

This Advent/Christmas/Epiphany season I invite you to reflect on Mary's song as an old song sung in new circumstances. Many of us and our churches find ourselves dealing with circumstances we might not have chosen for ourselves and wish were different, circumstances that might cause us to lament and grieve. We are here now. Sing. Join Mary and the faithful of every time and place, that great cloud of witnesses, and sing of courage, faith, hope, and love. Sing. Sing an old song of trust in unfamiliar territory, and sing a new song of hope in a new land. We are here now.

May the Hope of Advent, Joy of Christmas and Light of Epiphany bring you Peace. Bishop Laurie

For more information about helping Afghan refugees

Volunteering at Fort McCoy contact Wisconsin Council of Churches volunteer@wichurches.org.

Resettling families contact LSSWI [Refugee Resettlement - Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan \(lsswis.org\)](#). Sarah Halstad

Donations contact Catholic Charities in La Crosse <https://cclse.org/afghanistan-refugee-assistance/>

Our Savior's Council Meeting Minutes

November 2, 2021

Call Meeting to Order: President Randy Winger at 7:00 PM

Attending: Randy Winger, Bob Winger, Dan Place, Mary Straub, Sharon Seibel, Debbi Pittman, Ann Young, Patricia Peterson, Lanette Place

Absent: Pastor Lucas (Baby Eden arrived just 4 days ago), Gabe Feuerhelm, Jill Rosenberry

Opening Devotions: Sharon Seibel Thanksgiving: 1st Chron.16 & Psalm 107 "Give thanks to the Lord for he is good."

New Business:

November money counters: Dan Place, Gabe Feuerhelm

December Devotions: Randy Winger

Snow Removal: Paul Frandsen has been plowing the lot, Randy will contact him about this upcoming year.

Custodian job description includes snow maintenance for sidewalks and entryways. They will be contacted.

Funeral accounts: Bob and Cheryl Mercord have contacted us about setting up a fund for helping members in financial need to help pay for funeral expenses. Debbi will invite the Mercords to attend our Dec. meeting to help set the parameters for this generous donation.

Vacuum Cleaner: Dan advised that the backpack vacuum needs to be replaced. Our custodian and property committee have researched and determined cost to be approx. \$300. Patricia made the motion seconded by Bob to purchase this item. MC

Old Business:

Elevator Repairs: The elevator is working again, but apparently the elevator phone does not work. Property cmte is waiting to learn from Arrow Lift exactly what that problem is.

Sunday School Teachers: Patricia will check with education cmte to get an update. We do need a piano player for the Christmas program.

Lutefisk Supper: Do not have a financial report yet, but all the orders were filled and picked up last week. One of our members tested positive for Covid 19, the day after working here at church. All close contacts were notified.

Worship Service Technology: We had problems with both the cameras and the sound during last Sunday's service. For the past several weeks we have experienced various issues with internet, sound, computer etc. Council had lengthy discussion concerning these ongoing live streaming issues. Patricia is meeting with a software engineer tomorrow who is familiar with the OSB program we currently use.

Secretary's Report: Dan moved to approve as printed, seconded by Lanette, and carried.

Treasurer's Report: None – Bank online glitch. Debbi with email ASAP

Pastor's Report: Printed report was reviewed with somber discussion for the number of funerals he presided over.

Youth Report: The printed report was summarized by Patricia. She will be making another plea to congregation for a male chaperone for the 2022 ELCA Youth Gathering in Mpls. Ann made approval motion, Bob 2nd, MC.

MIM: Will be invited to an upcoming council meeting to present details for potential ballpark upgrades. Congregation approval is required for expenditures of \$10,000 or more.

Committee Reports:

Endowment: Met last week. Two of the students selected for scholarships are no longer eligible so those will be given to the two alternates: Desi Peterson and Nadia Thurmes. Cmte treasurer will issue a check to OS general fund for all the disbursements approved at the annual meeting. Debbi will then finalize that gifting. Cmte is meeting again this Sunday to consolidate all documentation & reports into the records room here at church.

Property: Fireproof door for records room is in Dan's garage, after painting it will be installed. There was discussion about the peeled paint siding and possible need to freshen up north side of bldg.

Conflict Detection: Last person leaving the church building should **always check all outside doors** to ensure they are properly closed/latched and locked. Also, check lights in restrooms, hallways, etc.

Adjourn: Motion by Dan, seconded by Bob to adjourn at 8:35PM

Next Council Meeting December 7, 2021.

Respectfully submitted by Lanette Place



A Christmas Message

During the holiday season, we extend a warm welcome to our members, their visiting families and friends, and to all our guests joining us in person or virtually.

No matter where you live, how frequently you attend services or where your religious roots are, your donations during the holiday season to this congregation are needed and greatly appreciated.

We offer convenient eGiving options that help you make donations on a one-time or recurring basis, including texting your donation to 833-506-0632 then following the instructions on your phone, or online at oursaviorschurch.info under the “give” tab. We highly recommend this method of giving for anyone who wishes to support the church. We also welcome mailing or bringing your donation to the church.

Thank you for your generosity, and Merry Christmas from all of us!

THANK YOU

Dear Our Savior’s Lutheran Church of Beldenville, Your Generous donation in the third quarter of 2021 is accepted with sincere appreciation. Your support makes it possible for the e ministry of Luther Point Bible Camp to continue to be a place where youth and families are nurtured and empowered for “Forming Faith, Pointing to Christ”. Thank you for your love and partnership in outdoor ministry. With your support we are able to spread the gospel and provide real and meaningful encounters with the divine.

Sincerely, Sam Campeau Executive Director.



Thank You! to all of the church members who made it possible for me to deliver 97 shoeboxes to the drop of spot for Operation Christmas Child, also I would like to wish the members a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year! Peggy Hoyer

God calls us to the waters of baptism, and as we enter the months ahead, keep in mind the following dates that are open for baptisms.

**December 19, January 23, February 27, April 16 (Vigil),
May 15, June 19, July 17, August 14**

Call the Office if any of these dates would work for your family. 715-273-4570

OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT & SERVE

St Paul's U.C. C.
Cookie Walk
9am-2pm Saturday December 11th
W5706 St Rd 72, Ellsworth



**Zion Senior Choir Christmas Concert
&
Candlelit Kaffe Kallas**



**4pm
Sunday December 12th
Zion Lutheran Church
221N Lockwood St.
Woodville WI**



The ornaments for the two families we are sponsoring this year have all been taken from the tree. You can still help with this program, by donating gift cards or cash. The gift card or cash box is on the table near the elevator off of the Sanctuary.

We will collect gift cards or cash until December 12th.

All Gifts need to be returned by **Sunday December 5th**. When you return the gifts, **PLEASE**, have the ornament attached to the corresponding gift. You may wrap the gifts if you want, if not, we will wrap them. It is **VERY IMPORTANT THAT THE ORNAMENT IS RETURNED WITH THE GIFT.**

We thank you for your continued support for this program.

If you have any questions please contact, Sharon Peterson, Heather Johnson or Pauline Laughnan.



Candy/Cookie Walk Fundraiser: I am teaming up with Patricia again this year to raise money for the College kits and help with continued improvements at the ball field. We are going to have the Candy & Cookie Walk on **Saturday Dec.18th from 9 am to 2 pm.**

We are asking for your help to make homemade Candy, Cookies and maybe some Norwegian treats. We would love to see up to 20 dozen of one item. Please have the treats to the Church before or on set-up day Friday December 17th.

We are also asking for crafts - if you are crafty and not a baker that works too. The Silent Auction Youth Fundraiser will also be set up for all to bid on.

The cost for the walk will be \$8.00 per pound and any specialty items will be priced individually.

Please help us with our fundraiser - we are excited and hope the community will be as well. If you have any questions – Donna Constant 715-307-0451



FAIR TRADE COFFEE:

We have just received a new shipment of Equal Exchange Fair Trade coffee in regular grind and whole bean. Also we are trying their new products of organic semi-sweet chocolate chips for your holiday baking and herbal tea of ginger and turmeric. These items will be in the basement for sale.

December

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Altar Guilds: Rhoda Foley Belinda Foley Money Counters: Randy Winger Gabe Feuerhelm			1 7-8pm Confirmation	2	3	4
5 Cinnamon Rolls 9am Live Stream Worship 9am In-person 10am Fellowship Hour 9:45am SS Hour Silent Auction Starts	6	7 7pm Council Meeting	8 7-8pm Confirmation	9	10	11 8am MIM Meeting
12 9am Live Stream Worship 9am In-person 10am Fellowship Hour 9:45am SS Hour	13	14	15 4-6pm SOS Kids Crew Christmas Caroling 7-8pm Youth Night	16	17	18 Candy & Cookie Walk 9am-2pm
19 9am Live Stream Worship 9am In-person 10am SS Christmas Program Candy & Cookie Walk Silent Auction Ends	20	21	22 No Quilting No Confirmation	23	24 Christmas Eve Services 4pm 9pm	25 Merry Christmas
26 10am Live Stream Worship 10am In-person 10am Fellowship Hour NO SS hour	27	28	29 No Confirmation	30	Happy New Year!	

Assist. Minister: Dec. 5 - Ann, Dec. 12- Lanette, Dec. 19 - Donald, Dec 24 4pm TBD, Dec. 24 9pm TBD, Dec. 26 - TBD

In Need of Prayer!



Dianne Hedrick, Sharon Dingrando, Peggy Roach, Elee,
 Carol Lewis, Ashley Hinrichs, Dylan, Larry Young, Michelle Bartkey, Eldon Schellfeffer,
 Norma Taplin, Mary Jo Bjork, Herb Nelson, Scott Kiefer, Dave Radatz, Jim Hauschildt,
 Calvin Boe, Shirley Nickel, Della Larson, Mark Kiefer, Tom Dachel, Anna Walentowski,
 and Kristen Anderson.

If you know of anyone that should be on our prayer list please contact the office.

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