



CHRIST THE SERVANT LUTHERAN

DECEMBER 2019

Happy Birthday

Jeanne Nicholson	Dec. 4
Haleigh Roberts	Dec. 8
Gabriel Olson (4)	Dec. 9
Sharon Boelman	Dec. 11
Don Knee	Dec. 14
Marilyn Woolard	Dec. 17
Shirley Theil	Dec. 19
Don Burke	Dec. 23
Marilyn Nickols	Dec. 25
Jeff Petersen	Dec. 28
Janet Hrouda, Rich Olson	Dec. 29

Happy Anniversary

Fern & Leonard Zechmann	Dec. 29
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PASTORAL ACTS

Baptisms (11-17-19)
 Wesley James Sarha
 Willow Marie Sarha

Warmth, Peace and Pajamas

The Salvation Army is again collecting new pajamas for the pajama project. Our greatest need is children's sizes 5 through Adult medium. Please consider making either a monetary donation or buying a new pair of pajamas so that all of Norfolk's children can sleep in warmth. Checks made payable to Norfolk Salvation Army Pajama Project can be dropped off or mailed to Salvation Army, 112 North 7th Street. New pajamas can be dropped off at Salvation Army or WJAG radio station. Deadline is Tuesday, Dec. 17.

Sign-up sheet for poinsettias on back table.

DECEMBER WORSHIP SERVANTS

Acolytes

1	Colin
8	Ethan
15	Delilah
22	Austin
29	Elizabeth

Coffee

1	Hoffarts
8	Jaegers
15	Koepes
22	Rogers
29	Mary Lund

Communion Assistants

1	Linda C., Louise S.
8	(no communion, pastor gone)
15	Bob L., Lonnie S.
22	Gary and Mary W.
29	Margaret S., Linda S.

Greeters

1	Broders family
8	Jessens
15	Kullboms
22	Wittes
29	Anderson family

Ushers

1	Wendell H., Warren B.
8	Steve M. and Jo R.
15	Finkrals
22	Rich & Deb Olson
29	Al B., Dallas P.

Lectors

1	Elizabeth
8	Emily
15	Richard H.
22	Emily
29	Judy C.

December 2019

Pastor out of office on Fridays
Office hours 8:30-4:30 Mon-Thurs.
Fri 8:30-12:30

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

1 <i>Advent 1 (B)</i> No Sunday school 10 traditional worship	2 3 WCTS winter gathering/ decorating	3 6 Bible study	4 5:30 Confirmation 6-6:30 meal 7 Advent service	5 9 Piecemakers 6:30 Journey	6 6:30 Girl Scouts	7 6 Rescue Mission meal
8 <i>Advent 2 (B)</i> 9 Sunday school 10 contemporary worship 11 potluck	9 5 Hospitality	10 4:30 Stewardship	11 5:30 Confirmation 6-6:30 meal 7 Advent service	12 9 Agape Circle 6:30 Journey	13	14
15 <i>Advent 3 (B)</i> 9 Sunday school 10 traditional worship Mission/Ministry	16 6:30 Council	17 6 Bible study	18 5:30 Confirmation 6-6:30 meal 7 Advent service	19 2 Card Club 6 MOPS	20 6:30 Girl Scouts	21 Fellowship hall reserved (Rogers)
22 <i>Advent 4 (B)</i> 9 Sunday school 10 contemporary worship/ S.S. Christmas program	23	24 5 and 11 p.m. Christmas Eve candlelight services	25 MERRY CHRISTMAS (office closed)	26	27 8P Girl Scouts overnighter @ CTS	28
29 <i>Christmas 1 (W)</i> No Sunday school 10 traditional worship	30	31	Jan. 1, 2020 HAPPY NEW YEAR (office closed)	2	3	4
----- PASTOR STEVE ON VACATION -----						

Membership Care Team: Deb Olson, Marsha Burke
Altar Guild: Linda Cyboron, Sharon Koeppe
Communion bread: Sharon K.
Paraments: B (blue), W (white)

My Letter to the Congregation

"From Inside Out"

Last year I wrote in the December letter that I was going to give every family unit a devotional entitled **Daily Texts** where each day you are given two scriptures to read followed by a written prayer. These texts were used by a religious community in Europe who used these texts to guide the community each day. These texts became a "watchword" that would shape their homes and conversations each day. I pray these daily watchwords from God's Word have guided your conversations this past year. Also, each day you were given a guide to read certain portions of scripture in addition to the two daily scriptures. In the back of the guide were appendixes and practical ways to further your time in the Word.

As we begin another New Year, I will be placing next year's Daily Texts in your church mailboxes. Like last year, I will be using the offerings I receive from the residents at The Meadows when I conduct a worship service with them on the first Sunday of each month at 2 p.m. They are so gracious, warm, generous, and great singers (I often tell them I wish I could bring them to Christ the Servant to sing for us once a month as a choir). I have been a big believer that if you immerse yourself in the Word and participate in the Sacraments, you will grow in your faith in ways unknown to you now but that will be evident in the days and years ahead. This year I would challenge you to continue to read these Daily Texts (and prayer) every day before you begin your activities of the day. You can read these daily texts in one minute or less. However, I would challenge you to reflect upon them throughout the day. The written prayer often gives you a directive or helpful way to carry the texts throughout the day.

Without the Word of God penetrating our every thought and deed, the world will mold and change us. The apostle Paul exhorts in Romans 12:1 that we are "to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God" which "is our true and proper worship." In other words, worship is not just something we do on Sunday mornings. Worship is how we live out our life after being in worship on Sundays and listening to the Word of God. So how can we make that happen in us more and more? Listen to what Paul says in Romans 12:2, "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will." Listen to how Eugene Peterson shares these same words of Paul in his Message Bible:

"So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you." (Romans 12:1-2)

As the people of God we are constantly being called by God into a personal relationship ("walking alongside") with Jesus. As we daily walk with Him, we will be transformed and changed from the inside out. Why the inside out? Because Jesus said so: "But the things that

come out of a person's mouth come from the heart, and these defile them." (Matthew 15:18) So transformation is simple. It must come from the heart and if our hearts are defiled (unclean), then someone or something will need to clean up our hearts. And that someone is Jesus and that something is the Word of God. And this is a daily process—a daily work. So thence the Daily Texts—a simple but powerful way to change from the inside out. As this transformation takes place (by the work of the Holy Spirit) we are able to serve others in the name of Jesus. (CTS = Called, Transformed, Sent)

Will you join me and the members of Christ the Servant in a humble but honest pledge to read these Daily Texts in the coming year of 2020? For those of you who will join us, your life will change and, more importantly, you will experience a change in your heart. You will experience the joy of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus on the day of the resurrection when Jesus joined them and explained in the scriptures why the Messiah had to die. And after Jesus had shared the Word and ate supper with them ("breaking of the bread" = communion), their eyes were opened (the eyes are the windows to the soul—Matthew 6:22) and they exclaimed: "Were not our hearts burning within us while He talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?" (Luke 24:32) There it is—Word and Sacrament.

Will you invite Jesus to join you along the road of your life using the Daily Texts as your guide? I am convinced if you do, Jesus will not only meet you on the road of life you travel every day but Jesus will "burn" within a peace and joy that you will never experience anywhere else in life!!!

Traveling down the road of life with you,

Pastor Steve

STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT

Giving imitates God. *"Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God" (Ephesians 5:1).* When we give, we mirror the nature of God. Through our faithful giving, we become more like him. *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).* Our Lord is a loving and giving God. As we imitate his compassion and giving in our stewardship lives, we give a clear witness to what is really important to us.

Sunday Worship – Advent/Christmas

A Season of Waiting and Celebration

Once again we begin another church calendar year with the season of Advent. Each year the church begins with another gospel to read for the coming year. This year we begin reading through the gospel of Matthew. Matthew's gospel was written to the Jews to prove that Jesus truly was the long-awaited Messiah. Matthew will divide his book in five teaching sections (parallel to the first five books of the Old Testament) which are credited to Moses. Matthew will show how Jesus has fulfilled all these prophetic Old Testament prophecies. As we worship and read Matthew's account of the life of Jesus, may we grow stronger in our faith and witness.

December 1 – (Matthew 24:36-44) **Advent 1**

The sudden coming of salvation

The church is decorated for the season of Advent/Christmas on Dec. 2

December 8 – (Matthew 3:1-12) **Advent 2**

Prepare the way of the Lord

Potluck Sunday – Emily Svitak will be bringing us the message

December 15 – (Matthew 11:2-11) **Advent 3**

The forerunner of Christ

December 22 – (Matthew 1:18-25) **Advent 4**

Our God near at hand

Sunday school Christmas program during worship

December 29 – (John 1:10-18) **Christmas 1**

God with us

Blake Olson will bring the message (preparing for seminary)

January 5 – (Matthew 2:1-12) **Epiphany of our Lord**

Christ revealed to the nations

Charlie Skoglund preaching

Midweek Advent Worship

Wednesdays (December 4, 11, 18), 7:00 p.m.

Our midweek Advent worship services will be held on the Wednesdays in December before Christmas. Our theme this year is **“Arise and Shine”** where we welcome the Christ child, who is the light of the world. Each week we will examine different ways we can shine the light of Christ for all the world to see. Each week will focus on a different aspect of the light of Christ and how we are enlightened by Him throughout our lives. The theme verse for the entire series is “Arise, shine, for your light has come.” (Isaiah 60:1). Our three guiding lights will be:

December 4 – **Rising Light** (Isaiah 60:1). Living in the light of Jesus, we prepare to celebrate His birth. Repenting of our sins, we put away the works of darkness in the armor of light.

December 11 – **Reflected Light** (Zechariah 9:16). During Advent we remember the birth of Jesus, the Light of the world. We reflect His light in our daily lives.

December 18 – **Healing Light** (Malachi 4:2). With repentant joy we anticipate the birth of our Savior. We listen to His Word and live according to it until He comes again.

Before each worship: Join us for a time of fellowship around a free-will offering soup supper each week. The soups will be served between 6:00 and 6:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall.

Following worship: Join us for coffee and refreshments in the fellowship hall.

Sunday School Christmas Program

Sunday, December 22, 10:00 a.m.

On Sunday, December 22, during our 10:00 worship service, the Sunday school will be sharing the Christmas story with us as we worship and prepare for Christmas with our family and friends. The Petersen family (Jeff, Connie, Lucas, Riley, Tate, Dagney and Rand) will lead us through the service as we visit them in a family room setting in front of the church. Steve Jessen and Gary Weich will be the commentators during the program as they will be "sitting in the theatre balcony" as the crotchety old men from the Muppets show (Statler and Waldorf). Slowly as the Christmas story is told by the Petersen family (and acted out by the Sunday school), Statler and Waldorf's hearts are changed by the birth and love of Jesus. It should be a production that will stir your hearts and minds as we re-live the birth of Jesus among us—not only in words and action, in our hearts and minds! Judy Carstens and Mary Lund (substitute: Linda Cyboron) are the teachers this year in our one-room classroom format. Please join us!

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

Tuesday, December 24 (5 p.m. and 11 p.m.)

Once again we will have two Christmas Eve candlelight services with communion on Tuesday, December 24. Our first service will be held at 5:00 p.m. and will be a traditional candlelight service with the singing of Christmas carols, scripture reading, prayers, and a short message. Our theme at 5 p.m. will be **Glorious Light**. The glory of the Lord filled the dark sky over Bethlehem. With angels and shepherds, we can share the good news—Christ is born! We will share the Lord's Supper and end our service with the lighting of individual candles as we sing "Silent Night." Join us with your family in a warm, traditional Christmas candlelight service.

Our second service will be held at 11:00 p.m. as a reflective candlelight service with Christmas carols, scripture, prayers, and a short meditation to end our day in anticipation of Christmas Day. Our theme at 11 p.m. will be **Shining Light**. Using the message of John 1:5 ("The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."), we will be invited to shine this eternal light in our dark world today! Again, we will share the Lord's Supper and light individual candles with the singing of "Silent Night."

HELP!

We are in real need of more people on our Membership Care Team. Now we each do it twice a year. We work in teams of two. If we have more people maybe once a year. If two people wish to work together, let me know. Cards are provided in our book.

1. We record in a book what we have done each month so the next month people can follow up on a particular need.
2. It is good to call Pastor Monday or Tuesday to see if we have any people that are sick or in need of attention.
3. We send cards to people over 75 for birthdays or anniversaries or any special occasion: have a baby, Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, etc.
4. We visit the shut-ins at least once a month.
5. If someone is ill or has lost a loved one we send a card, make a visit or take food.

Mainly, we just want everyone in our church to receive a little "special attention" when they need it most. **Doris Hoffart**

Volunteers Needed

Our Membership Care Team is looking for more members! Please contact Doris Hoffart to sign up or for more information.

Quilters News

Thanks to all of you who so generously "clanked the cans" to send our quilts to Minneapolis. We gave them \$89.25 and kept \$20 for batting for insides or tape to wrap the boxes. We worked some extra days so we could send more quilts this year.

We made 39 quilts total. 29 quilts went to Lutheran World Relief, two to the Norfolk Rescue Mission, two to the Orphan Grain Train, two to our 2019 seniors, two to our 2020 seniors, and kept two to maybe have people bid on for money for material for senior quilts.

WE COULD USE MANY more quilters as we have about 40 tops and backs that could be quilted and continue to make at least two a month. We quilt every first Thursday of the month from 9:00 to 12:00. The fellowship is great and we get at least two quilts done. The treats we bring, if we wish, are very good, too!

Student Recognition Sunday

Sunday, December 29

When I was attending college, the former ALC (American Lutheran Church) would recognize the college students who were home during Christmas vacation. My college peers would be involved in the entire service – ushers, lectors, greeters, and the message. Each year three college students would give the 3-point sermon (5-7 minutes each person) where each person would deliver one of the points. When I was in college I had the privilege to give one of those messages and when I was in seminary I was asked to give the message in Mary's mom's congregation in Valley Springs, South Dakota. Since we have a member who is currently attending Concordia College in Seward and is planning on attending a seminary after college to become an ordained pastor, I have asked Blake Olson to give the message on Sunday, December 29. He has agreed and will be here on December 29. Important note: If any parent has a college student home during Christmas, we would love to have them in worship on December 29 (participate if you notify the church office or Pastor Steve). During worship Pastor Steve would like to recognize your college student and have a brief interview with him/her. Questions like: what college you are attending, major, vocational plans, ways we can pray for you, etc.

Christ the Servant Council Meeting
November 18, 2019, 6:30 P.M.

Present: Pastor Steve, Emily Svitak, Sharon Koepp, Warren Bennett, Steve Jessen, Jan Puls, Steve Morton
Transition Team: Brian Anderson, Linda Sheppard, Linda Cyboron
Absent: Doug Witte, Steve Freese, Bob Lutz

-Warren Bennett opened the meeting with a devotion from 'Christ in Our Home' about trusting in the word of God and His truth from the start.

-Steve Jessen shared that meetings will more 'streamlined'. The hope is to keep meeting times to a maximum of 1.5 hours in order to respect everyone's time. Because reports are received by members prior to the meeting, reports will now simply be received with time given for any questions by members.

Reports

-Steve Morton stated that monthly offerings were down in October, and that it is important that we watch the next several months as we move into a new year with a new proposed budget. Pastor Steve asked to stop and take a minute to thank God for His provision.

Kitchen Remodel Discussion

-Members were given a report/letter about the subject of the kitchen remodel project that will be share about at the congregational meeting. The congregation will be presented with possible figures, and the aim is to find out whether the congregation is wanting to go forward with a large fundraising effort, do what updating could be done with the funds available, or to hold off on any remodel till a later time.

Transition Team

-Members of the transition team have been meeting with Pastor Don Brandt via conference calls in preparation for Pastor Steve's retirement. The team is recommending that we seek an intentional interim pastor for the time prior to finding a full-time permanent pastor. The hopes in seeking an interim pastor first would be to help the eventual permanent pastor have a greater chance of being successful.

-Different council members brought forward different questions about the transition and what could all be involved in having an interim. The council came to a consensus to move forward in the process of finding an interim. There will be a report on this during the congregational meeting on Sunday.

Committee Reports

-Each council member is meant to be a liaison to an area of ministry. Each month, reports/updates will be given pertaining to each area. More will come on this.

-Steve Morton moved to take the \$100 in the designated Disaster Relief fund and give it to the Red Cross. Jan Puls seconded the motion. Motion carried. Jan Puls will notify Greg Moen.

Filling the Open Council Position

-Al Boelman gave a letter of resignation from the church council, which the council received, and the open position needs to be filled. Discussion followed about who to appoint. Members came to a consensus, and decided who to approach with this opportunity.

-Steve Jessen noted that forming a call committee will not be happening immediately. Correspondence and guidance will continue with Don Brandt as we continue in preparing for this season of transition.

Steve Jessen closed the meeting with prayer.

Warren Bennett moved to adjourn the meeting. Sharon Koepp seconded. Motion passed.

Christ the Servant Lutheran Church
Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting
November 24, 2019, 11:30am

Present: 43 voting members

-Steve Jessen opened the meeting. Pastor Steve began with prayer.

2020 Proposed Budget

-All members were given a 2020 proposed budget.

-Greg Moen moved to approve the budget as presented. Millie Drey seconded.

-Greg Moen mentioned his appreciation of the local benevolence being upped from last year. He also challenged members to see where God is leading us and see where we would be able to do more next year.

-Millie Drey had a question about the janitorial wages from last year because it showed as \$0 appropriated for it. Last year there was an anonymous donation in order to pay the janitorial wages. Therefore it was put back into the budget this year. She also asked how the estimated giving was determined for the year. It was explained that the estimated giving is determined by balancing estimated expenses and then moving forward in faith in order to reach that.

-Richard Hillrichs asked about the \$212,000 budget amount from last year. It was a projected amount, rather than what actually came in throughout the year.

-Al Boelman mentioned that he believes the janitorial wage should be raised by 5% since the other staff wages were raised 5% as well. Greg Moen stated that he agreed upon the increase. Al Boelman moved to amend the proposed budget by increasing the janitorial wages by 5%. Dean Hoffart seconded. Motion carried.

-Conversation followed about the need to deep clean the church. Michelle Anderson suggested that this would happen two times a year, and could be headed up by the building and grounds committee.

-Doris Hoffart raised a question as to why the stewardship line item was raised from \$200 to \$500. Doug Witte shared that additional items may need to be purchased and this will give room for this to be done.

-Sheryl Hillrichs mentioned that there remains a line item for organists/accompanist, even though organists haven't taken that for some time. It was explained that this remains an item so that should it ever be needed, or should we ever need to hire an organist it would be there.

-Michelle Anderson raised the question as to why the line item for the Senior Dinner is at \$0. Nell Finkral moved to put \$500 on that line item under Discipleship. Michelle Anderson seconded. Motion carried.

-Mary Weich called the question of approving the budget with the amended items. Motion carried and was passed.

Approval of Memorial Fund By-Laws

- The by-laws for the Memorial Fund were handed out to members. These by-laws were previously approved by the council to be brought to the congregation. Doug Witte moved to approve the Memorial Fund By-Laws. Warren Bennett seconded.

- Charlie Skoglund raised a question about the 'Liability' section of the by-laws.

-The question was called. Motion carried and the by-laws will be added to the constitution.

Memorial Fund Committee Report

- Doug Witte shared about the Memorial Fund Committee. He stated that Al Boelman, Carol Olson, and he are the members on the committee. He shared about the roles of the committee members. There are four areas that have been suggested to the council: new signage, new tables, possible seating for handicap seating, and stained glass windows. This Memorial Fund is under the Designated Funds.

Transition Team Report

-Linda Sheppard shared a report from the transition team. They have been meeting regularly with Pastor Don Brandt as well as separately as a team. It has been recommended to move forward with the transition with an intentional interim pastor. The council has approved to post on the LCMC website that we are seeking to fill the

opening with an intentional interim pastor. Updates from the team will continue regularly as the process progresses.

Audit Committee Appointment

-The council is looking for a two individuals outside of the board to do our annual audit. Steve Jessen asked that members would prayerfully consider being a part of this. The commitment would be for two years. The audit is a review of the church books and making sure that everything adds up to the correct numbers for the financial reports.

Kitchen Remodel Report

-Steve Jessen mentioned that this report is not to decide what to do, but whether the congregation wants to move forward with the project, or in what capacity we would do so. Bob Lutz shared that Wanda Muhs and Michelle Anderson have done the ground work on looking at what the project would entail. The current amount in the account is roughly \$4,940. Bob mentioned the possible expense of an extensive project. The question put to the congregation is whether or not we moved forward with the plan to remodel.

-Wanda Muhs shared about her hopes for the remodel. She acknowledged that the process would not be a short one, but would take some time to raise funds and move forward.

-Millie Drey stated that although the idea is nice, with the upcoming transition, it would be a good idea to postpone moving forward with the project.

-Julie Freese mentioned the need of a remodel for the functionality of the kitchen and how much it would help the service that happens in it.

-Jan Puls mentioned that it would be important for the entire congregation be in on the conversation before making any decisions.

-Other discussion followed about how to move forward with the possible project.

-Charlie Skoglund suggested that we table the discussion, with the intent of reaching out to those who are not here and getting everyone involved with the conversation. Greg Moen challenged us to make sure we are seeking God on what his plan is.

-Steve Jessen closed the meeting with prayer.