

The light shines in the darkness... John 1:5



HARBOR BEACON

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OAK HARBOR LUTHERAN CHURCH

a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

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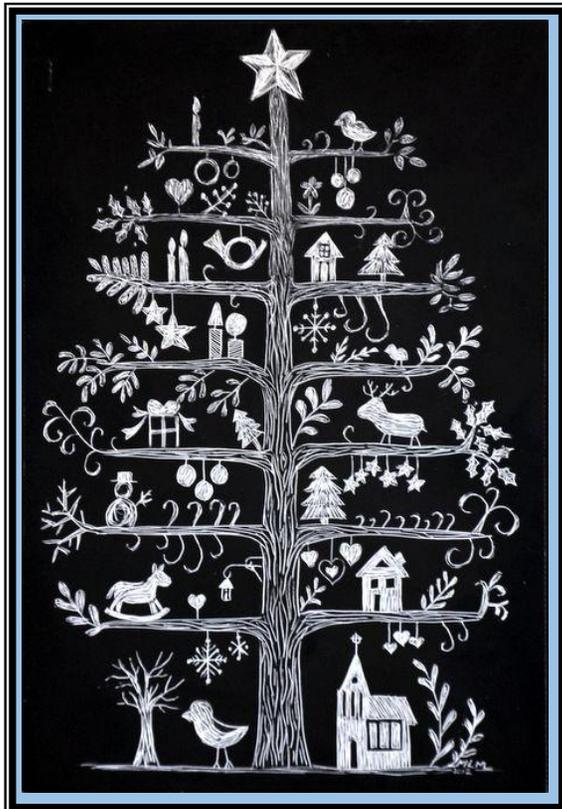
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**Click on these links
for the December newsletter inserts:**

The ELCA's monthly *Prayer Ventures*:

<http://www.elca.org/en/Resources/Prayer-Ventures>

The Northwest Washington Synod's insert, *The Spirit*:

<https://dq5pwpq1q8ru0.cloudfront.net/2021/11/17/13/31/03/d2bee077-32ca-4ed7-a1da-ad54e85a875c/December%202021%20Spirit.pdf>

OHLC's website:

www.oakharborlutheran.org

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Pastor's Page Come home for Christmas

“And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

Hebrews 10:24-25

“And the Word became flesh and lived among us.”

John 1:14

My oldest son turned twenty last month, and so this will be my twenty-first Christmas as a dad. I've been thinking lately about how the joys of Christmas have changed over the course of those years. Of course, celebrating the birth of Jesus has always been central, but the specific delights marking this celebration have changed quite a bit over the years. When my boys were little, it was so much fun to fill their stockings and set out gifts and see their eyes light up on Christmas morning. When they got a little older, the special foods we enjoy on Christmas seemed to surpass gifts as the main attraction. Now that two of my three boys are away in college, more than anything else I am simply looking forward to them being home. The greatest Christmas joy for me this year – far greater than gifts or food – will be the joy of having them physically present with us when they come home for Christmas.

I've experienced a similar joy in recent weeks at church as more and more people have started to return to in-person worship. We still aren't back to the worship attendance we had before the pandemic started, but we are slowly getting closer. What a joy to have so many of our people back in our sanctuary again!

And yet, I'm concerned. I'm concerned that twenty months of pandemic have undone the holy habits of weekly worship attendance for a number of people. I'm concerned that people have come to think that listening to a sermon online is just as good as, or maybe even better than, being physically present for worship. I'm concerned that Christian worship has become for many people as consumable as a podcast or a TV show, and that Christian community has come to be seen as optional.

I understand completely the reluctance of those who are immunocompromised or caring for someone who is. I'm not talking about you. I'm talking about those who have become comfortable with what was only ever supposed to be a temporary measure in a time of public health emergency. I'm talking about those whose anger about

government mask mandates have kept them away. I'm talking about those whose risk-assessment related to COVID is skewed or outdated and is still keeping them home.

Your physical presence in worship means so much. It is so missed. Having other Christians physically present as we pray and listen to God's Word is encouraging. Hearing other human voices sing the liturgy and the hymns emboldens our own voices and strengthens our faith. Joining others in line to receive the Body and Blood of Christ reminds us of our common need for God's grace and binds us together as brothers and sisters in Christ. Ours is an embodied faith. Being present with and for one another matters.

I'm not overly romantic about community. Believe me, I know it can be hard too. For some of us, human contact, even when it is nice in the moment, is draining of our energy, and learning to socialize again will be an adjustment. For all of us, there are disagreements, conflicting personality types, and human failures like grumpiness or cliquishness that make community a challenge at times. But sacrificial love is at the heart of Christianity. Forgiveness and bearing with one another are how we live out the love we have received from Christ. You cannot love Jesus while willfully ignoring or isolating yourself from his people.

And so I make this simple plea: For those of you who are not immunocompromised but haven't yet returned to worship with us, come home for Christmas. Come home to your church. There will be no judgement over your absence, only joy in having you home. The risk in joining us is not zero, but it never has been, and never will be. Your physical presence with us in worship is not merely about getting our numbers up again, it is about the very definition of what it means to be part of the church. The Biblical word for church is *ecclesia*, which literally means, “the assembly.”

At Christmas we celebrate that the Word became flesh and lived among us. As we celebrate that God became physically present for us in Jesus, we long for your physical presence with us too. So come home for Christmas. Come home to your church.



*Come home
for Christmas*

- Pastor Jeffrey R. Spencer

Advent & Christmas at OHLC

Midweek Advent services and fellowship meals begin Dec. 1

“O CHRISMON TREE”

Beginning Wednesday, Dec. 1, we will be gathering for midweek Advent services at noon and 6 PM, with meals of soup and bread offered afterwards.

The theme for our services will be *O Chrismon Tree*. Each week we will look at two chrismons and consider how these symbols point us to Christ.

Please sign up to bring soup and/or bread using the sign-up sheets in the narthex. Midweek services and soup suppers will continue on Wednesdays through Dec. 22.



Worship schedule for Christmas Eve:



- 4:00 PM: Family Worship Service (nursery provided)
- 7:00 PM: Traditional Service (nursery provided)
- 10:00 PM: Traditional Service (no nursery available)

The 4:00 PM and 7:00 PM services will be livestreamed. Please note that since Christmas falls on a Saturday this year, we will not be having a Christmas day service. Join us Sunday, December 26 as we continue to celebrate Christ's birth!

Poinsettia orders

We look forward to adorning our sanctuary with poinsettias this Christmas season! Large plants in 6" pots will be ordered through our local Greenhouse Florist. If you're interested in contributing to the poinsettia fund which helps defray the cost of plants, donations will be accepted through Sunday, Dec. 12. **Although donations may be in any amount, the suggested donation per plant is \$25.**

Poinsettias may be taken home following services on Sunday, Dec. 26 for your enjoyment during the remainder of the Christmas season.

Advent & Christmas outreach:

Learning and sharing the Christmas story

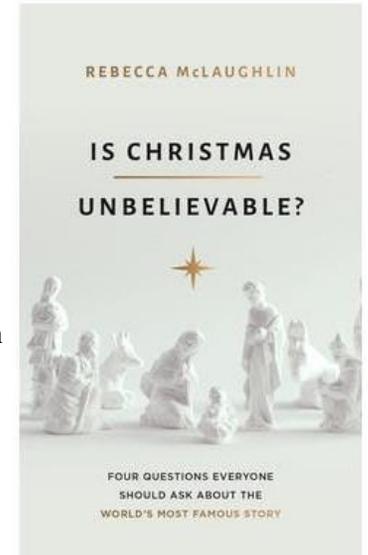
Through a generous donation from OHLC's Lydia Circle, we have purchased 150 copies of a little book called *Is Christmas Unbelievable?* by Rebecca McLaughlin. These books are being given out to OHLC households with a two-fold mission.

First, you are encouraged to read it! This little book can be read in a sitting and will help you learn or re-learn some basic teachings about the birth of Jesus and its significance. This is important for your own faith, and also gives you the language to address the questions and doubts of non-Christian friends and neighbors.

Second, after you have read it you will be invited to give the book away! We will have our church information on a sticker on the inside cover, as well as an invitation to our Sunday and Christmastime worship services. Give it to an unchurched friend, a doubting family member, an inactive church member who seems to have fallen away from faith, your barista, your dentist, whomever!

Let's prepare for Christmas by boning up on the Christmas story, and then by flooding Oak Harbor with this fantastic little book and an invitation to "come and see!"

Books are now available in the narthex. Pick one up before they're gone!



Wanted: Shepherds, angels, and more!

This year's Sunday School Christmas program will be presented as a part of the family worship service at 4:00 PM on Christmas Eve. We'll be handing out parts and holding rehearsals during the SS hour on Dec. 7, 14 & 22. For more information, contact Martha Ellis in the church office, 360-679-1561, martha@oakharborlutheran.org.



Oak Harbor High School Christmas Choir Concert

A special invitation for OHLC members!

December 17, 12:00 Noon, OHHS Stadium



CHRISTMAS
CONCERT

The Oak Harbor High School choirs will be performing their annual Christmas concert at Wildcat Stadium on December 17 at noon.

Attendance is by invitation only, and includes Oak Harbor Rotary, Sunrise Rotary, Soroptimist International of Oak Harbor, and members of Oak Harbor Lutheran Church!

Since school will be in session and parking at the high school will be limited, attendees will be using our church parking lot. Wildcat Catering will have treats and hot chocolate for the first 125 people. Dress warmly, as seating will be outdoors on metal bleachers. The concert is expected to last 45-60 minutes. What a wonderful opportunity to enjoy some Christmas music!

Confirmation class meets December 12

Confirmation class will meet from 5:00 to 7:00 PM on Sunday, December 12 for dinner, a rousing game of CateQuizm, and prayer. Please bring a brown bag dinner. At least one parent/guardian is expected to attend with their student. Mark your calendars and be sure and complete sessions 7-10 in your workbooks before we gather!

Young Life Mondays!

Hey high schoolers! Did you know that Young Life events are held for high school students just about every Monday night at 7 PM? These events are held at various locations around Oak Harbor – sometimes at churches (including OHLC), sometimes in homes, sometimes even at Toppins Frozen Yogurt. Find the Oak Harbor Young Life Facebook and/or Instagram pages to keep up with the latest opportunities for fun and fellowship with fellow Christians!



Please take note!

Adult Education on hiatus until January



We will be taking a break from Sunday morning and Tuesday night adult education for December and will resume classes in January with a study of Proverbs. Watch for more information coming in the January newsletter.

The Coupeville service is ending on December 26



Waning attendance and fewer leaders to call upon for worship leadership have led us to conclude that it is time to bring the Coupeville evening worship service to an end. Many thanks to **Carol Reafs, the Bruland family, and Jay & Trudy Decker**, who kept it going for so many years. The last Coupeville Vespers service will be held on December 26.

Year-end giving



In order for offerings to count towards your giving for 2021, they **MUST** be received in the office by 11:30 AM on Sunday, December 26. That will allow the Sunday counters to process them with the rest of the deposit. Any offerings that arrive after the 26th will be gratefully received (*please don't doubt that*) and will be credited to you for 2022.

Offerings in 2022: Contact Rekann with your preferences!



Boxed sets of numbered, paper envelopes will be available for the coming year's giving. **If you give regularly to OHLC using cash or checks**, these envelopes are extremely helpful for our offering counters ensuring that your gifts go where you intend – for example towards the general fund or for a specific designated account or monthly emphasis – and for Rekann Brannon, OHLC's financial secretary, who records your giving for your coming year's tax records. Please let her know if you'd like us to reserve a set of envelopes for you!

Are you doing your giving online or through your bank?

Please contact Rekann in the office. She'll make sure you're assigned an offering number to reflect that method of giving, which will also ensure accuracy in your copy of the year-end report.

Book Marks

OHLC Library News: Thank you, Kathy!!

Bruce & Kathy Holroyd started attending worship at OHLC's "parking lot services," back in the early days of the pandemic. They were officially transferred into membership earlier this year. Now that we're getting the life of our church back on an even keel, Kathy has been spending quite a bit of time in the church library to get things cleaned up and in better order for use.



Our library has a great selection of nonfiction, Bible study helps and devotionals, reference materials, history and commentaries, Lutheran heritage, and much more. There are sections for books on health, death & dying, and caregiving. Our many shelves of fiction include classics and current authors, and there's a designated bookcase for large print. Yes, we have children's books as well, for a wide range of ages and reading abilities.

Be sure to stop by and check out Kathy's displays of Advent & Christmas books! There's also a display on a separate table with new additions to the library, including *The Simple Faith of Mister Rogers*; *God's Hand in the Himalayas and other Short Stories*, and a new copy of Roland Bainton's classic *Here I Stand, a Life of Martin Luther*, replacing the 'vintage' copy that was falling apart.

It's easy to check out one book or an armful – write your name and the day's date on the card inside the front cover and deposit the card in the little green box in the bookcase over near the sink counter. File it under the author's last name. You'll notice there's a cliffhanger message on the top; right now it reads "Books due in" . . . with no further information. Use your best judgment (4 weeks, perhaps?) There's a clearly-marked box just inside the door for returned books.

If you're interested in volunteering to help keep our church library in good order, please contact Kathy Holroyd, holroydkathy@gmail.com, or call the church office for more information, 360-679-1561.

There never yet have been, nor are there now, too many good books.
~ Martin Luther

Coupeville Book Group

The Coupeville Book Group meets Tuesday, December 14 via Zoom. Margaret Anderson will lead the group in discussing *Commonwealth*, by Ann Patchett. All are welcome! If you're not already on her e-mailing list for the Zoom link and would like to participate, contact Gaye Rodriguey, gaye@tobysuds.com.

One Sunday afternoon in Southern California, Bert Cousins shows up at Franny Keating's christening party uninvited. Before evening falls, he has kissed Franny's mother, Beverly, thus setting in motion the dissolution of their marriages and the joining of two families.

Spanning five decades, *Commonwealth* explores how this chance encounter reverberates through the lives of four parents and six children. Spending summers together in Virginia, the Keating and Cousins children forge a lasting bond based on shared disillusionment with their parents and the strange affection that grows among them.

Told with equal measures of humor and heartbreak, *Commonwealth* is a meditation on inspiration, interpretation, and the ownership of stories. It is a brilliant and tender tale of the far-reaching ties of love and responsibility that bind us together.

Fiction, 322 pages

Available in hardback, paperback,
ebook, downloadable audiobook and audiobook CD.

While waiting...

Advent does not lead to nervous tension stemming from expectation of something spectacular about to happen. On the contrary, it leads to a growing inner stillness and joy allowing me to realize that he for whom I am waiting has already arrived and speaks to me in the silence of my heart. Just as a mother feels the child grow in her and is not surprised on the day of the birth, but joyfully receives the one she learned to know during her waiting, so Jesus can be born in my life slowly and steadily and be received as the one I learned to know while waiting.



Henri J.M. Nouwen, *The Genesee Diary*

In Memory

Tom Coe Sr., a member of OHLC since 2014, died at home on the night of Nov. 2, a month and a few days shy of his 92nd birthday. Failing health and challenges of the pandemic meant he hadn't been physically present with us at church for a while, but he was a regular recipient of the Sunday bulletin and sermon mailings. We remember him fondly for his presence in his usual pew on Sunday mornings as well as his delight in interacting weekly with the Oak Harbor High School students in the pre-pandemic days when our Munchy Monday program was underway. He was also a regular participant in Brotherhood of St. Bernard fellowship and Bible study. We give thanks for the blessing that he was to us as a part of our congregation. Since Sunday morning coffee hour was one of Tom's favorite things, he was celebrated following both services on Nov. 21.



Our hearts also go out to Pastor Jeff Spencer and his family, following the death of his mother, **Vicki Missal**, in Edmonds. See below for his note in that regard.

✠ *Peace be to their memory.* ✠

A note of gratitude from Pastor Jeff

Thank you so much for the kindness and sympathy you have shown following the sudden death of my mother on November 13. It has been surreal being on the other side of an experience I have walked through with others so many times over the years. I have often told people grief needs to be worked through, and it really does. Memories, emotions, and issues come up and need to be processed, and it is exhausting.

I will add to my pastoral care repertoire a bit about how being next of kin after a death is almost like taking on a part-time job with all the paperwork, phone calls, and other logistical arrangements. I have had to drop and/or rearrange some things recently to manage it all, and I appreciate your patience. Some of you have reached out to me during this difficult time, while others have given me space. Both have been needed at different times, and the Spirit seemed to be guiding you to know when was when. Thank you. I am still grieving, but not as one without hope. (1 Thessalonians 4:13) +Pastor Jeff

Loving our Neighbors

Strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

Matthew 6:33

This month I've been called to share with all of you "A Prayer of Forgiveness" from Latasha Morrison's book, *Be the Bridge, Pursuing God's Heart for Racial Reconciliation*.



"A Prayer of Forgiveness" by April Thomas

God, I thank you for your Word and everlasting love. Thank you for providing us a clear path to reconciliation, one that builds bridges, closes gaps, and showcases your plan for all of us.

There is so much strife and conflict attempting to distract us from who you are, closing our minds and hardening our hearts against one another. I pray we are loosened from the chains of unforgiveness and that our hearts are softened toward one another so our journey forward together as your children will be victorious. Help us to see your love in one another and strengthen our desire for community and oneness in you. Open our ears to listen to the stories of those around us so that we may better understand one another. Help us to release negative thoughts and ideas about others, even if there are past hurts, and to forgive.

Thank you for forgiving us and fiercely loving us even when we have chosen to turn our backs on you. It is only by your grace we are able to walk this path.

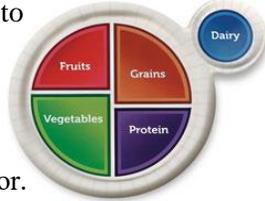
In your name, amen.

Shalom, Gaye

His Kids Preschool

A ministry of Oak Harbor Lutheran Church

The month of November was all about nutrition! We learned about the 5 food groups while making our art projects – easel-painted large turkeys for protein, chocolate pudding finger-painting for the dairy group, and marker-colored, cutout paper items for cornucopias to illustrate the fruit and vegetable groups. You can see our colorful cornucopias on the education wing hallway bulletin board! We made paper pizzas and cut out paper slices of bread to remind us that Jesus is the bread of life. Cutout items glued to ‘My Nutrition’ paper plates helped us focus on the letter N. For the letter G, we colored paper geese and glued on tissue paper feathers. We painted our hands and made small turkey pictures to take home, and then we drew pictures of things we’re thankful for.



Thankfulness and **caring** for those around us were other themes for the month. We read a new story every day about being thankful for the things we had, and we brought in food items to share with our local food bank, Help House. We’re so thankful for our preschool families’ generosity! As of our count on November 23, **318 items** had been collected! Our students had fun separating everything into the proper food groups in preparation to its being delivered to Help House.

We visited Grocery Outlet for our field trip, where Jesse and Miguel hosted us and helped us learn more about food groups and where things are located in grocery stores. They were very generous with our visits and gave the students individual goodie bags with fruits and other treats. Our friend Susan from Haggen also put together a generous goodie bag for each student, including fruit, a toy and a sticker as well as either a kitchen utensil, a measuring cup and measuring spoons, or a cutting board from their kids cooking club. The generosity of our community and the willingness to make our preschool feel special continues to overwhelm us!



We ended November with our Thanksgiving feast, where we snacked and discussed which food group each item came from. After Thanksgiving break, we’ll start in on our Advent season activities!

Please keep Ms. Elva in your prayers as she continues to recuperate from a small, cancer-related surgery she underwent in mid-November. She plans to be back in the classroom again in December. Ms. Gaye and Ms. Debbie have been filling in where needed during her November absence, and we hope she’s been feeling the prayers, love, and healing thoughts being sent her way.

Here’s how our students finished the sentence, “**My heart is thankful for...**”

AM class

Lona: my little puppy and my big puppy

Cecily: my family and my mom

Alice G: my family

Kamila: playing with my sister

Chelsie: the cat that ran by the preschool

James: my mom and dad

Poppy: my teachers

Lila: turkey and my mom and my dog and my brother and my dad

Alice D: the moon

Victoria: my dad

Julianna: kid toys

Kinsley: my grandma

Ryan: my tiny camper

Violet: my dad

Natalee: my brother

Claire: God

PM class

Nate: my toy phone

Katarina: my mommy and daddy

Savannah: the outside and toys

Dean: my cool car and my cool house

Camilla: my daddy and mom and my puppy

Jenna: my mom and my toys

Keyara: my sister, my baby brother, my cat, and my fish

Tristan: my grandma

Wyatt: my house

Roslyn: our house

Eddie: my dog

Sophia: my family

God’s peace,
Ms. Michelle, Ms. Gaye, Ms. Debbie, Ms. Elva, Ms. Sara



Included in this newsletter
are *Prayer Ventures* & *The Spirit*.

The deadline for articles
for the (*gasp!*) January 2022 newsletter
is Monday, Dec. 20.



OHL Women

Opportunities for fellowship, study & service

Blanket Workshop

Blanket Workshop meets Tuesday & Wednesday, December 7 & 8 in the fellowship hall beginning at 9:30 AM to work on tied quilts for Lutheran World Relief. You don't have to know how to sew in order to participate! We're working on rebuilding our group of volunteers as the various restrictions are lifted, and we'd love to have more helpers! For more information, contact Leona McKee, 360-675-5712, bcmac68@comcast.net.

Circles in December

Deborah Circle

Beginning on Thursday, December 2, Deborah Circle will resume meeting *in-person* at 1:00 PM in the library/fireside room at church. On that Thursday, we will share in Bible study and prepare holiday cards of hope and encouragement for our immigrant neighbors. Contact Gaye Rodriguey at gaye@tobysuds.com for more information about that particular project. **All are welcome!** Here are the Bible study topics for the month:



- Dec. 2 *The Book of Isaiah*, Lesson 11, "The Suffering Servant," pgs. 160-180, Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12.
- Dec. 9 Lesson 12, "Repentance, Blessing, and Restoration," pgs. 181-209.
- Dec. 16 November/December 2021 *Gather* magazine, "Women of Advent."
- Dec. 23 *Merry Christmas!*
- Dec. 30 *Happy New Year!*

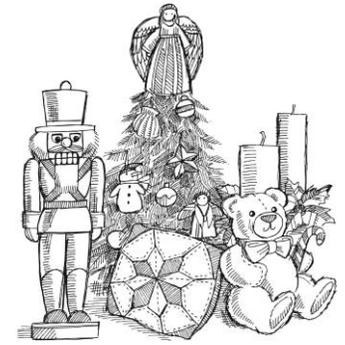
Lydia Circle

- Dec. 6 Bible study, prayer room, 6:00 PM
- Dec. 20 Christmas potluck, fellowship hall, 5:30 PM

Highlights from the bazaar

Dear fellow parishioners,

You are awesome! Pat yourselves on the back. You helped make Lydia Circle's 9th annual Christmas bazaar a huge success! Thank you so much for your donations of time, talent, craft items, and treasures for Granny's Attic! We were overwhelmed by your generosity.



Many were disappointed by the absence of baked goods once again (So were we!). It was *almost* a go, but then came another mask mandate and other restrictions. There were quite a few groans from the shoppers when they heard the news. But I know you also felt as we do, that safety is a top priority. If all goes well, *next* year we'll be asking our many talented bakers for your yummy donations. (We expressed that hope to the disappointed shoppers and were met with a round of cheers!)

God blessed us with cooperative weather – okay, there were intermittent rain showers, but those didn't hold us back. We were told that ours is the best bazaar and our local shoppers always look forward to it. So thank you for helping to make it "the best" once again.

Of course we couldn't do it without our behind-the-scenes helpers, including the Stone family, our hubbies, and God's watchful care, making sure we followed safety guidelines. We also appreciated Michelle and Miria who brought us soup and sandwiches.

This coming January, whenever you start packing away your Christmas decorations for another year, you may find a few that you're ready to part with. Remember to set those aside for Granny's Attic in November 2022!

Peg Fosnaugh,
for the ladies of Lydia



Update: Lutheran World Relief

Thank you to Mike Dilley, ably assisted by co-pilot Marc Stroud, who delivered OHLC's boxes of quilts and school kits to the fall ingathering in Seattle for Lutheran World Relief. We were delighted to be able to take the boxes again this year from Concordia Lutheran Church as well. OHLC's total was 433 pounds, which included 172 school kits and 25 quilts.

Reaching out at Christmas



Our annual Sharing Tree has gone up in the narthex! Tags on the tree list gift requests for residents of Josephine Caring Ministries in Stanwood, for El Camino de Emaus Lutheran Church in Burlington, and for some local concerns.

You're invited to take one or more tags, purchase the gift/s or gift cards listed there, and then return them to the church by Sunday, December 20. Please take note of the directions included with each tag (such as using tissue paper and a gift bag for wrapping, or where to bring a gift card). *As always, please remember to attach the original tag from the tree!*

Josephine tags will list 3 items for a particular resident. You may purchase 1, 2, or all 3 items. Walmart gift cards are being requested for El Camino families, which will be used for groceries or specific items family members may need. These cards will be distributed by their team, based on family size and need.

Consider including a Christmas card with a greeting from you with your gift or gift card!

If you don't feel comfortable shopping in person, you may take any tag from the tree and return it to the church office with cash or a check to cover the cost and a purchase will be made on your behalf. ***Checks should be made out to OHLC; remember to include the designation Sharing Tree – Josephine or Sharing Tree – El Camino for checks and cash gifts for this purpose!***

Keeping warm

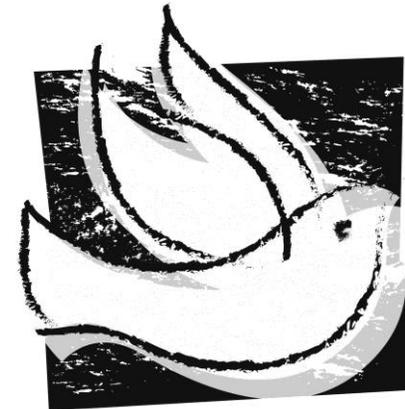
Thank you for the generous response to our October coat drive! Contributions of hats, gloves and new socks are still welcome and will be included with our Sharing Tree gifts.

Judy Lycksell

Sharing love, especially through coffee and good things to eat

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who cheerfully answer our calls for food donations for funeral or memorial service receptions and meals for families in times of need. It means so much to have the love of our congregation shown in such a tangible (and delicious) way! The food you provide helps bring a little sunshine into what may be a grief-filled or otherwise anxious time. You are truly a blessing, both to our congregation and to the community.

Peg Fosnaugh & Judy Lycksell
Reception coordinators



A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.

Casa del Afarero (*The Potter's House*)

Nick & Shannon Kraft, Peru

In the same way, there is more joy in heaven over one lost sinner who repents and returns to God than over ninety-nine others who are righteous and haven't strayed away! Luke 14:7

A few weeks ago we went to a family gathering of some old friends. They weren't just friends, they were disciples, people who we worshipped with, and more; people who we had lived with and done ministry together. We continued the walk, and they turned back.

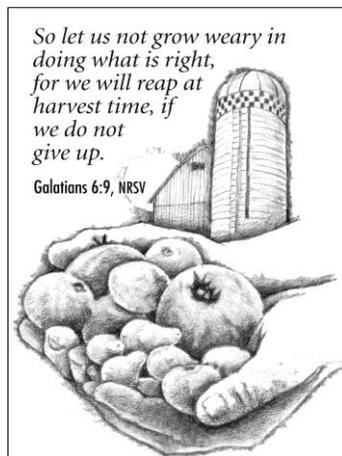
I spent a week really frustrated, thinking what went wrong. They're not living well. As the gathering continued, we could clearly see they really had turned back, to old traditions and old cultural patterns. You name it – idolatry, infidelity, disunity, poverty... I was praying, "Lord, we really spent a lot of years in this, not just time but money, and now they're choosing old ways instead of the new ones that were taught to them."

Matthew 12:43-45 says, *When an evil spirit leaves a person, it goes into the desert seeking rest but finding none. Then it says, "I'll return to the person I came from." So it returns and finds its former home empty, swept and in order. Then the spirit finds seven other spirits more evil than itself and they all enter the person and live there. And so that person is worse off than before. That will be the experience of this evil generation.*

So I was praying and pondering all week. Finally I heard the Lord say, "It's not over 'til it's over," and then – by arrangement of the Lord – one of the family members contacted us to see if Madison could help her mother with her back. They came, and while Maddy gave the mom a massage, I was getting an earful of bad decisions, bad attitudes, ungratefulness, infidelity and the lot.

I blurted out, "Repent."

That's a word Christians don't use much any more, lest we offend, but I



couldn't help it. I began boldly saying the only way is repentance. Start there, and then things will turn around. She began with, "But..." (Don't we all?) I said, "It doesn't matter about anyone else. Just you. You repent."

And to my surprise, SHE DID.

It's only been a week, but in one week she went to a counseling appointment with a local pastor, came to our women's retreat, and on Sunday she went to church. At the women's retreat, she shared, "It's a miracle that I'm here, but in this short half day, my hope is restored. I don't have to keep living this way. I can turn around."

So right about the time that I told my friend to repent, SO DID I. I repented from Unbelief. Judgment. Apathy.

Those are the sins of the righteous. We begin to forget about the lost. We begin to count the cost and declare, "It's not my problem!"

Nick always reminds me about a coworker who once told him that the world would be a better place if everyone just minded their own business.

Really? Would the world be better?

As Christians we have a responsibility to the lost and broken and those who have gone astray, at least to invite them. At least to offer oil for their wounds.

Help us not to grow weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we don't give up. (Galatians 6:9)

Shannon Kraft

*from two e-mails, received at OHLC
on Nov. 16 & Nov. 23*



OHLC-sponsored missionaries Nick & Shannon Kraft serve as **Go Missions International**, centered at their still-new facility, The Potter's House, in Peru. Visit their website at <https://www.gomissionsinternational.com/>.

Please join us in offering prayers of thanksgiving that they suffered no injury during the 7.5 earthquake on Nov. 28. Shannon says it was "quite a shake." The epicenter was about 334 miles away.

<i>Worship assistants</i>		
December 5		
8:00 AM	Assisting Minister: Sheila Ryan Usher: Dave Fosnaugh	Computer: Connor Norman Organ/Piano: Jan Ernst
10:30 AM	Assisting Minister: Rita Cline	Computer: Anders Spencer Organ/Piano: Jan Ernst
6:30 PM	Presider: Pastor Jay Decker Assisting Min.:	Cantor: Carol Reafs Keyboard: Kris Bruland
December 12		
8:00 AM	Assisting Minister: Peg Fosnaugh Usher: Jeff Margraf	Computer: Donna Aspery Organ/Piano: Sue Stroud
10:30 AM	Assisting Minister: Trudy Decker	Computer: Ted Smith Organ/Piano: Jan Ernst
6:30 PM	Presider: Pastor Jay Decker Assisting Min.:	Cantor: Carol Reafs Keyboard: Kris Bruland
December 19		
8:00 AM	Assisting Minister: Jeff Margraf Ushers: Steve & Martha Ellis	Computer: Lisa Margraf Organ/Piano: Sue Stroud
10:30 AM	Assisting Minister: Craig Pedlar	Computer: Bruce Holroyd Organ/Piano: Jan Ernst
6:30 PM	Presider: Pastor Jeffrey Spencer Assisting Min.:	Cantor: Pastor Spencer Keyboard: Kris Bruland
December 24		
4:00 PM	Ushers: Steve & Martha Ellis	Computer: Organ/Piano: Kris Bruland
7:00 PM	Assisting Minister: Carol Fitzgerald Ushers:	Computer: Organ/Piano: Jan Ernst
10:00 PM	Assisting Minister: Sheila Ryan Ushers:	Computer: Organ/Piano: Jan Ernst
December 26		
8:00 AM	Assisting Minister: Tom Carey	Computer: Kerrick Norman Organ/Piano: Jan Ernst
10:30 AM	Assisting Minister:	Computer: Organ/Piano: Jan Ernst
6:30 PM	Assisting Min.:	Keyboard: Kris Bruland

Financial Report

October

	<i>October</i>	<i>Year to date</i>
Income	\$ 33,454	\$ 363,188
Outgo	<u>37,632</u>	<u>380,977</u>
	\$ <u>(4,178)</u>	\$ <u>(17,789)</u>

Worship Attendance

November

Date	8:00 AM	10:30 AM	Coupeville
Oct. 31	48	71	12
Nov. 7	53	53	7
Nov. 14	49	56	7
Nov. 21	45	60	<i>no service</i>
Avg. Att.	49	55	8

November 29 will be included in next month's statistics.

Average Sunday attendance: 112

Lesser Festivals & Commemorations

December

- | | |
|--|---|
| 3 Francis Xavier, missionary to Asia, 1552 | 14 John of the Cross, renewer of the church, 1591 |
| 4 John of Damascus, theologian, hymnwriter, c. 749 | 20 Katharina von Bora Luther, renewer of the church, 1552 |
| 6 Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, c. 342 | 26 Stephen, Deacon and Martyr |
| 7 Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, 397 | 27 John, Apostle and Evangelist |
| 13 Lucy, martyr, 304 | 28 The Holy Innocents, martyrs |

This month's decorative font is

Great Vibes



DECEMBER



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 12:00 Midweek Worship 12:30 Soup & bread 6:00 Midweek Worship 6:30 Soup & bread	2 1:00 Deborah Circle 6:00 Knitting Group 7:00 North Whidbey NA	3 7:15 Is. Co. Sheriff's Dept. assessment exercise	4
5 Advent 2 Worship 8:00 <i>Livestreamed on Facebook</i> Sunday School 9:15 Worship 10:30 Girl Scouts 3:00 Piano Recital 6:30 Vespers/Coupeville 6:30	6 5:00 Brass rehearsal 6:00 Lydia Circle Bible study 7:00 North Whidbey NA/ library	7 9:30 Blanket Workshop 5:30 Al Anon 6:30 Cub Scouts 7:00 Boy Scouts	8 9:30 Blanket Workshop 12:00 Midweek Worship 12:30 Soup & bread 6:00 Midweek Worship 6:30 Soup & bread	9 1:00 Deborah Circle 4:00 Stephen Ministry, via Zoom 6:00 Knitting Group 7:00 North Whidbey NA	10 6:00 Council Christmas party	11 12:00 Al Anon Christmas gathering
12 Advent 3 Worship 8:00 <i>Livestreamed on Facebook</i> Sunday School 9:15 Worship 10:30 Girl Scouts 3:00 Confirmation 5:00 Vespers/Coupeville 6:30	13 5:00 Brass rehearsal 7:00 Concert: Harbor Brass & Penn Cove Brass 7:00 North Whidbey NA/ library	14 10:00 Church Mice Stampers 12:00 Brotherhood of St. Bernard 5:30 Al Anon 6:30 Cub Scouts 7:00 Boy Scouts 7:00 Cplv Book Gr./Zoom	15 12:00 Midweek Worship 12:30 Soup & bread 6:00 Midweek Worship 6:30 Soup & bread	16 1:00 Whidbey Island Genealogical Searchers 1:00 Deborah Circle 6:00 Knitting Group 7:00 North Whidbey NA	17 12:00 OHHS Christmas Concert, Wildcat Stadium – <i>congregation is invited;</i> <i>church parking lot will be</i> <i>in use</i>	18
19 Advent 4 Deadline <i>for Sharing Tree gifts</i> Worship 8:00 <i>Livestreamed on Facebook</i> Sunday School 9:15 Worship 10:30 Girl Scouts 3:00 Vespers/Coupeville 6:30	20 Newsletter Deadline 5:30 Lydia Circle Christmas potluck 7:00 North Whidbey NA/ library	21 5:30 Al Anon 6:30 Cub Scouts 7:00 Boy Scouts	22 12:00 Midweek Worship 12:30 Soup & bread 6:00 Midweek Worship 6:30 Soup & bread	23 7:00 North Whidbey NA	24 Christmas Eve Church office closed Christmas Eve worship 4:00: Candlelight & the Christmas program 7:00: Candlelight & Communion 10:00: Candlelight & Communion	25 Christmas Day (No worship service) <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;">NA: Christmas Eve to Christmas, library</div>
26 Christmas 1 Deadline for offerings to count as 2021 giving Worship 8:00 <i>livestreamed on Facebook</i> Worship 10:30 Vespers/Coupeville 6:30	27 7:00 North Whidbey NA/ fellowship hall	28 10:00 Church Mice Stampers 12:00 Brotherhood of St. Bernard 5:30 Al Anon 6:30 Cub Scouts 7:00 Boy Scouts	29	30 7:00 North Whidbey NA	31 7:00 NA New Year's fellowship, fellowship hall	HIS KIDS PRESCHOOL M, T, W: 8:45-11:45 AM 1-4 PM Pre-K Readiness Class, Th, F: 9:30 AM – 12:30 PM Christmas Break: 12/20 - 1/2