

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



HARBOR BEACON

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January 2023

OAK HARBOR LUTHERAN CHURCH

a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)
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IN THIS ISSUE:

The God algorithm,
pg. 2

Semi-annual meeting
considers 2020 budget,
pg. 3

Celebrate Epiphany with
a potluck and worship,
pg. 3

Pokémon, cookies, and
a tent for Jesus,
pg. 5

January's focus is
Stephen Ministry,
pg. 7

Loving our neighbors by
keeping Christmas,
pg. 9



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**Click on these links
for the January 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/2022/12/15/10/30/44/bfa8cbaa-4981-426f-a782-55b8d8b7967d/January%202023%20Spirit.pdf>

OHLC's website:

www.oakharborlutheran.org

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PASTOR'S PAGE: The God Algorithm

"Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."

Deuteronomy 6:6-9

"If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

John 8:31-32

"Let us not neglect to meet together, as is the habit of some."

Hebrews 10:25

In the new book, *The Chaos Machine*, author Max Fisher describes the enormous impact of social media on individuals and society.

Particularly powerful has been the introduction of algorithms, those unseen programs which note your clicks and even how long you look at specific media and use this information to deliver more content it thinks you will like and interact with. Every social media platform and web browser uses these algorithms. This is what makes our screens so addictive, and it is shaping us in ways we are only beginning to understand. Fisher writes:

"The early conventional wisdom, that social media promotes sensationalism and outrage, while accurate, turned out to drastically understate things. An ever-growing pool of evidence, gathered by dozens of academics, reporters, whistleblowers, and concerned citizens, suggests that its impact is far more profound. This technology exerts such a powerful pull on our psychology and our identity, and is so pervasive in our lives, that it changes how we think, behave, and relate to one another. The effect, multiplied across billions of users, has been to change society itself."

The Chaos Machine, pg. 11, emphasis added



There are many implications of these algorithms which could be discussed, from groupthink and the information silos in which people increasingly live, to the exacerbation of political extremism (left and right), to social contagions impacting our youth. What I'd like to focus

on here, however, is the simple observation noted above that the words, images, and ideas which surround us have a powerful impact on our identity, influencing how we think, behave, and relate to one another.

God knows this, of course. Long before computer-generated algorithms God commanded his people to keep his word in their hearts, hands, foreheads, doorposts, and gates. God's word was to be discussed at home and outside of the home, and especially with children. The point is that they were to marinate in God's word, letting its words, images, and ideas shape their identity and influence their behavior. Call it *the God algorithm*.

Jesus echoed this call to let his word be pervasive in our lives when he said, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." To abide in Jesus' word is to immerse ourselves in it in every way he gives it to us: in worship, in the Lord's Supper, in Bible study with other Christians, in regular personal devotions at home. This is the algorithm God has given us to shape us as his people, to steep us in the truth which sets us free.

Social media and online information algorithms aren't going anywhere. Perhaps the work Fisher and others are doing will help mitigate some of its worst impacts, but its insidious influence will likely remain. As Christians we don't need to throw away our phones or pile up our computers and set them on fire. However, we should be mindful of what is influencing our worldview, our behavior, our sense of identity. We should steep ourselves in the God algorithm by not neglecting to meet together (Hebrews 10:25). We should attend worship and receive communion frequently. Every member should be in at least one of the five group Bible studies we offer at OHLC. Daily devotions should be as regular and habitual as checking the notifications on our devices.

That's a lot of "shoulds," and Lutherans sometimes have a knee-jerk negative reaction to being told what they should do. But these "shoulds" are not ways to earn points towards salvation. They are not ways to earn God's favor. The God algorithm is simply and solely about letting God influence us, letting God define us, letting God shape our thoughts, our behavior, and the way we relate to one another. This influence will only happen if we abide in the word. Given the other algorithms out there, this takes more diligence and discipline than ever before. Which algorithm is going to influence you?

- Pastor Jeffrey R. Spencer

JANUARY EVENTS

Beginning January 8: Bible study in First Peter *New Birth, Living Hope*

Kick off the new year right by joining us for a four-session study of First Peter. This class will be taught in the church library both on Sunday mornings from 9:15-10:15 AM, and again on Wednesday evenings from 7:00 PM-8:00 PM. Bring your Bibles and learn what it means to be given a new birth into a living hope!

Please note the 4 sessions are spread over 5 weeks, since the semi-annual congregational meeting is held on Jan. 22, and there will not be a class on that following Wednesday, Jan. 25.

Jan. 8/11	1 Peter 1, <i>Living Hope and Holy Living</i>
Jan. 15/18	1 Peter 2, <i>The Living Stone and a Chosen People</i>
(Jan. 22/25 No class – Semi-annual Congregational Meeting, 1/22)	
Jan. 29/Feb. 1	1 Peter 3, <i>Marriage, Discipleship, Baptism</i>
Feb. 5/8	1 Peter 4-5, <i>Stewards of God's Grace</i>

Semi-annual meeting set for January 22, 9:15 AM

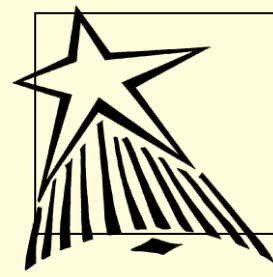


CONGREGATIONAL
MEETING

Mark your calendars for our semi-annual meeting! All voting members of Oak Harbor Lutheran are encouraged to attend as we consider our congregational budget for 2023 and attend to other items of business, including an update of our congregational constitution. An agenda for the meeting will be made available on Sunday, January 15.

New Member Class set for January 15, noon

Those interesting in joining OHLC as members, or even those just curious to know more about Lutheran Christianity and our congregation, are invited to attend the new member class held on Sunday, January 15 from noon to 1:30 PM. Lunch will be provided. RSVP to Pastor Spencer at pastor@oakharborlutheran.org or make a note on a bulletin insert *Connection Card*.



FRIDAY, JANUARY 6

EPIPHANY

POTLUCK & WORSHIP SERVICE



We are celebrating Epiphany this year with a special gathering on Friday, January 6. Join us for an evening of food, fellowship, and worship.

5:00-7:00 PM: Social time, entertainment, and potluck. Please bring a casserole, salad, and/or dessert to share.

7:00 PM: Worship, with Holy Communion, celebrating the visit of the Magi.

Invite a friend, neighbor, or co-worker to join you!

All are welcome!



GROWING & LEARNING

Regular schedules pick up again this month:

❄️ **Welcome Wednesday**, OHLC's outreach to OHHS students on early-release Wednesdays, resumes January 4.

❄️ **Sunday School** has been on break, but begins again at 9:15 AM on Sunday, January 8, with classes for 3-year-olds on up through adults.

Quest Club: Adventurers wanted!

Quest Club is open to youth of all skill levels, age 12 and up. **Our adventure begins**

January 6, 3:00-5:00 PM. We will meet twice a month on the 1st & 3rd Fridays, from 3:00 to 5:00 PM in the education wing. Do you have the courage to embark on a quest where the stakes are nothing less than the fate of the entire world?

For more information, contact Beth Stephens, bethasteph@gmail.com.



Youth & Family Game Night January 29, 6:00-7:30 PM

Enjoy a fun night of board games and snacks with us! Board games will be available, but feel free to bring one to share. All ages are welcome!

Mark your calendars for February fun!

OHLC's **Second Annual Youth Indoor Snowball Fight** will be held next month, so watch for details! Middle School youth and above are invited to compete to claim the coveted [but not in a breaking-the-commandments kind of way] Snow Globe Award.



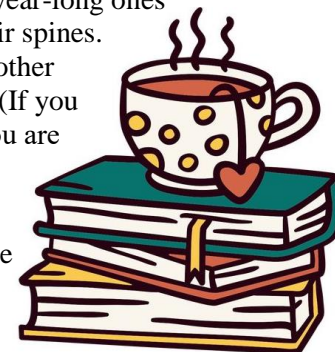
LIBRARY NOTES

FROM KARED, KATHY & COLLEEN

January finds your library with many new books to lend. We recently added the first six books in the *Imagination Station* series, recommended for young readers age 7 and up. This series combines history, adventure, and practical application of Christian values, as young cousins Beth and Patrick travel in time on a variety of missions to help others.

Based on reader input, we have also purchased a pair of books for Christians who are interested in current social justice issues, two more books by N.T. Wright, and works of historical fiction by well-known author Orson Scott Card – one focusing on Sarah and one on sisters Rachel and Leah. Check out the display/check-out table to your right as you enter the library!

The beginning of a new year is a great time to commit to spending regular time with God, and your library has a wide selection of devotional books available to borrow. These are located in the DE section to the right of the fireplace, and the year-long ones can be easily identified by green dots on their spines. While they need to be checked out like any other book, they may be kept for the whole year. (If you try one and don't find yourself reading it, you are encouraged to return it early!)



To avoid confusion when checking out books, please follow the directions on the display/check out table. If you haven't already left us a Borrower Information card, please fill one out. Be sure to date and sign each Book Card from inside the front cover, and leave those cards in the back of the "Rooster" box on the table. The colored cards with due dates can help you remember when to return your books. Except for the one-year devotionals, most books are due the end of the following month from when they are checked out.

A member of the congregation has donated some really nice homemade bookmarks to the library. Please help yourself to one!

Happy reading!

HIS KIDS PRESCHOOL

A MINISTRY OF OAK HARBOR LUTHERAN CHURCH

December was a short month in the classroom, but still a very busy time for learning about the letter **J** and our big word for the month – **Advent**. The children learned that Advent means a time to wait for Christmas. We made Advent wreaths from paper plates, with tissue paper greenery and paper candles; the green circle reminds us that “God’s love never ends.” There are four blue candles, one for each week in Advent, and we light one more blue candle each week. As the fourth candle was “lit” with a yellow paper flame, we knew that Christmas was near!



The students made handmade ornaments to take home as a surprise gift for their families, and they also colored and hung up *Good News* ornaments which open to show the Baby Jesus in the manger. They painted large paper Christmas trees and decorated them with fancy ornaments, decorated painted bells with glitter, and they even learned to lace Christmas stockings. Each of those projects were hung up on the walls inside the classroom to add to the festive decorations.

During the month, the preschoolers brought in winter hats, gloves and socks to add to the Giving Tree in the narthex. They brought in a total of 20 pairs of gloves, 12 hats and 5 pairs of socks! Thank you to our families who gave to this cause.

As we learned about the letter **J**, the students discovered how candy canes can make the letter **J** for Jesus. They made angels out of paper plates with cutouts of each student’s hand-prints for the wings. These were sprinkled with glitter and have come to rest on the bulletin board in the education wing. The students made a manger scene picture to take home for them to decorate there.



A fun and popular part of December is singing Christmas songs and ringing bells during circle time. It’s fun to overhear them in the hallways of the church this time of year!

Wednesday, Dec. 14, was our last day in class before Christmas break. It was a very busy day! We had our *Happy Birthday, Jesus* party with a surprise visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus (OHLCLC’s own Dusty Rhodes & Judy Fantauzzi)! They brought the children oranges and peppermint candy canes. The children proudly showed them that if you turn the peppermint candy cane upside down it turns into a “J” for Jesus!

Santa and Mrs. Claus ended their visit with the children by singing a few Christmas songs, one of which was “Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer,” and a 3-point buck sauntered past the windows right at the most opportune time! Lastly, families of our preschoolers were invited to attend a special chapel gathering in the sanctuary, where the students sang songs and each received their own story Bible gifted to them by the preschool.

Here’s what our students said they’d like to give as a Christmas gift for Jesus:

Dean: love	Leslie: a Nerf gun
Julian: a cookie	Samara: a tent
Ried: a birthday cake	Steven: a toy jet
Asher: a candy cane	Cecily: a cookie
Lona: a crib	Everett: my Pokémon Evie
Selah: some candy	Victoria: a paper heart
Julianna: a candy cane	
Celia: a stuffed animal that makes sound	

Judy, Dusty (& Lola), were also on hand that day for Welcome Wednesday with the students from Oak Harbor High School.



Whew, it’s time to take a deep breath! We’re writing this article in the last days of Advent, moving frantically about to finish the last few details for the Christmas season! By the time you read this, we hope things have begun to calm down. Whatever the circumstances, though, we ask that you take a moment (*and we’re hoping you give it more than just a moment*) to reflect the on the quiet beauty of Christ’s birth and the peace that it brings to your heart.

May God’s peace be with you all,
Now and throughout the new year.
Ms. Elva, Ms. Michelle, Ms. Gaye and Ms. Sara

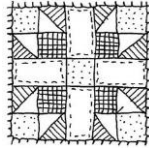


OHLC Women

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FELLOWSHIP, STUDY & SERVICE

Blanket Workshop

The volunteers of OHLC's Blanket Workshop are making a quick start on service in the new year with 2 mornings of work on tied quilts for Lutheran World Relief.



You're invited to join them, **Tuesday & Wednesday, Jan. 3&4, 9:30 AM in the fellowship hall.** Sewing experience isn't a requirement, and new helpers are always appreciated. Questions? Contact Leona McKee, bcmac68@comcast.net, 360-675-5712.

Circles at OHLC

Women's circles meet regularly for Bible study, fellowship, and various service projects and opportunities. If you've made a New Year's resolution to do more Bible study, consider joining one of our circles! Newcomers are always welcome.



Deborah Circle will meet every Thursday in January at 1:00 PM in the church library. ALL are welcome! Contact Gaye Rodriguey for more information, gaye@tobysuds.com.

We'll begin a study on the 10 Commandments, written by ELCA pastor and Bible study author Christa von Zychlin. Get ready to explore old and new interpretations of God's laws, using Luther's Small and Large Catechisms and other resources.

Session one, *Dancing the Decalogue*, (Commandments 1&2): Psalm 19 states, "The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul." Joy and romance may not be the first images that come to mind when we think of the Ten Commandments. However, a close reading of the first several commandments opens us to a fresh encounter with the God of fierce, freeing love.

Lydia Circle will meet Monday, January 16, 6:00 PM in the education wing, to begin study in *Advent of the Savior*, part of the *LifeGuides Bible Studies*, Cindy Bunch, editor.

In February, we'll return to our 1st & 3rd Monday meeting schedule.

IN SYMPATHY



Our hearts go out to those in our church family who have suffered the recent loss of loved ones, including **Bruce Holroyd and family**, following the death of his uncle, Howard Holroyd.

We also offer prayers for comfort for **family and friends of Sue Christensen**, who died in early December. Sue's in-laws were Henning & Dorothy Christensen, part of OHLC's founding Christensen family.

Last month's newsletter noted the loss of Erwin (*Dugie*) Dugin in November, and now we have the sad news of announcing the death of **Roberta (Bobbi) Dugin**, just a month later. Both were 81 and had been dealing with a number of serious health issues. Bobbi, a member of OHLC since 1984, was one of the original members and leaders of Deborah Circle and sang in the Women's Choir. Please keep their son Mike and his family in your prayers.



Bobbi & Dugie Dugin

Donna Rieb joined our congregation in 2003, and while Stan never became a member, he has always been in solid support of her involvement in the life of OHLC. The Riebs were some of our snowbirds, spending the winters in Torrance, CA, before returning to their summertime perch on Pennington Hill in Coupeville.

Donna's increasingly difficult health problems caused their permanent move to California a few years ago. A longtime member of Deborah Circle, she was able to continue her connection with OHLC and participation in circle meetings via Zoom as long as her health permitted. We received word that Donna died on Dec. 21, a day before what would have been her 80th birthday. She will be missed.



Stan & Donna Rieb

COMPASSION MINISTRY

MINISTRY OF THE MONTH: STEPHEN MINISTRY

In January, we're highlighting our congregation's **Stephen Ministry**. There will be an informational bulletin board in the narthex, and we're working on a coffee hour fellowship event. Although we hope the **Stephen Ministry** name is becoming familiar, especially among our newsletter readers, the actual work of Stephen Ministers is behind the scenes.

Some history:

Stephen Ministry began in 1975 when the Rev. Kenneth C. Haugk, PhD, a pastor and clinical psychologist, trained 9 members of his St. Louis church to assist him in providing Christian care and support to people – both in the congregation and the community – who were experiencing life difficulties. These first Stephen Ministers were so excited by the ministry that they encouraged Dr. Haugk to offer Stephen Ministry to more congregations.

On Nov. 3, 1975, Dr. Haugk and his wife, Joan, founded Stephen Ministries in St. Louis as a non-profit organization. At first, Dr. Haugk traveled to other congregations to train their Stephen Ministers himself. However, due to the ministry's rapid growth, in 1978 Stephen Ministries began holding Leader's Training Courses to equip Stephen Leaders, congregation representatives who would then train and supervise their own congregations' Stephen Ministers. Since then, Stephen Ministries St. Louis has used this "train the trainers" model to empower thousands of congregations and other organizations to begin and grow Stephen Ministry.

Stephen Ministries St. Louis is a not-for-profit, independent Christian educational organization. The St. Louis-based staff provides training and support for congregations using Stephen Ministry, as well as developing books, courses, and other resources on a wide range of caregiving topics. Dr. Kenneth C. Haugk serves as the organization's Executive Director.

The logo consists of a cross and circle, together with a broken person and a whole person. The broken person behind the cross symbolizes the brokenness in our lives, while the whole person in front of the cross symbolizes how we are made whole again through the cross of Jesus. The circle represents both the wholeness we receive through Christ and God's unending love for us.



Important notes:

Stephen Ministers are not counselors. They are trained to be lay Christian caregivers. Their role is to listen and care, not to counsel or advise. Please do not refer to them as counselors.

Stephen Ministry is a supervised ministry. Stephen Ministers engage in monthly supervision, led by their Stephen Leaders, to ensure they are providing the best Christian care they can.

Stephen Ministry is a confidential ministry. What a care receiver tells a Stephen Minister stays between the two of them. Even in supervision, the names of care receivers and specific details are never discussed.

Are you being called by God to serve our congregation and community as a Stephen Minister?

Stephen Minister training is beginning soon! Please contact Gaye Rodriguey or Gail Dobbyn if God is calling you to serve this vital ministry of our church.

This month's Stephen Ministry meeting is Thursday, Jan. 12, at 4:00 PM in the church library.

Gaye Rodriguey, gaye@tobysuds.com

Gail Dobbyn, zayan.kanjo@gmail.com

Pastor Spencer, pastor@oakharborlutheran.org

Sharing Tree bears a bumper crop!

A big THANK YOU to everyone who participated in the Sharing Tree this year, and a special thanks to the OHLC preschool for the many hats and gloves they donated. It was another great year of sharing with our brothers and sisters in our community and other places such as El Camino de Emaus Lutheran Church in the Skagit Valley and Josephine Caring Community in Stanwood.

It was wonderful to see all those gifts spreading out from under the tree, ready to bring joy to so many. You are truly a gift to us and to many others.

Happy New Year 2023, as we begin another year of sharing and caring!

Joyfully, The Sharing Tree Committee



...more from Compassion Ministry

Bloodworks Northwest returns in January

In what's becoming a long-term relationship with OHLC, the good people of Bloodworks Northwest will use our fellowship hall for two pop-up blood donation clinics:

- ♥ Monday, January 16, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM
- ♥ Tuesday, January 31, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Please note that donations are being made through scheduled appointments. Call 800-398-7888 or follow this link: <https://schedule.bloodworksnw.org/DonorPortal/GroupLanding.aspx?s=531B>.

NEWS FROM CAMP

LUTHERWOOD CAMP & RETREAT CENTER
BELLINGHAM



Save the date for the Annual Meeting:

We will gather at the camp
February 4, 2023
10 a.m.

1185 Roy Rd, Bellingham, WA 98229

Find more information on the website:
<https://www.camplutherwood.org/>

Contact OHLC's own
Mike Dilley
for more info on
Lutherwood,
mikedilley@comcast.net,
425-641-2995.

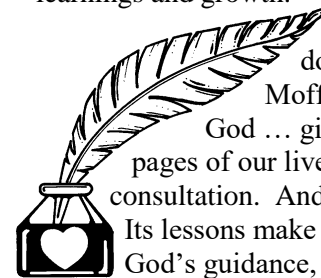


A THOUGHT FOR THE NEW YEAR

Writing our life — with God's help

A journalist once said you can measure the quality of a piece of writing by the quality of what has been cut. No matter how beautiful or interesting a phrase or sentence is, the piece may be stronger without it.

Rabbi Evan Moffic applies this wisdom to life in general. Too often we refuse to let something — a habit, a memory, a process — go, even when it no longer serves us. Thinking of our life as a book, we can cut out, edit or rearrange some pages or sentences to reflect our new learnings and growth.



This is not always easy, but we don't have to do it alone. "God is our 'editor-in-chief,'" says Moffic, "and we are part of God's story. [While] God ... gives us free will to decide what to write on the pages of our lives, ... God is always there for conversation and consultation. And God left us a great guidebook called the Bible. Its lessons make our writing shine with truth and beauty." With God's guidance, what will you "write" in the new year?

*Communication Resources,
Published in: January 2023*



Included in this newsletter are *Prayer Ventures* and *The Spirit* for January.

The deadline for articles for the February newsletter is Friday, Jan. 20.

OHLC's men's study & fellowship group, The Brotherhood of St. Bernard (a.k.a. *The Old Dogs*) meets Tuesdays, January 10 & 24 at noon in the fellowship hall for lunch and Bible study. For more info, contact Tom Piper, tomreflexpiper@gmail.com, 360-675-4739.

Statements of giving for 2022 will be mailed in early January and should be received by the end of the month. **If you haven't received yours by that time, or if you feel there is an error in your giving statement,** contact Rekann in the church office, 360-679-1561, office@oakharborlutheran.org.

LOVING OUR NEIGHBORS

- WITH GAYE RODRIGUEY

Keeping Christmas

For the person who observes one day as especially sacred does it to honor the Lord.
Romans 14:6a, *The Passion Translation*

It is a good thing to observe Christmas Day. The mere marking of time and seasons, when people agree to stop work and make merry together, is a wise and wholesome custom. It helps one to feel the supremacy of the common life over the individual life. It reminds us to set our own little watch now and then, by the great clock of humanity which runs on sun time.

But there is a better thing than the observance of Christmas Day, and that is, keeping Christmas.

Are you willing to forget what you have done for other people, and remember what other people have done for you; to ignore what the world owes you and to think what you owe the world; to put your rights in the background, and your duties in the middle distance, and your chances to do a little more than your duty in the foreground; to see that your neighbors are just as real as you are, and try to look behind their faces to their hearts, hungry for joy; to own that probably the only good reason for your existence is not what you are going to get out of life, but what you are going to give life; to close your book on complaints against the management of the universe, and look around you for a place where you can sow a few seeds of happiness – are you willing to do these things even for a day?

Then you can keep Christmas.

Are you willing to stoop down and consider the needs and the desires of little children; to remember the weaknesses and loneliness of the people who are growing old; to stop asking how much your friends love you, and ask yourself whether you love them enough; to bear in mind the things that other people have to bear on their hearts; to try to understand what those who live in the same house with you really want, without waiting for them to tell you; to trim your lamp that it might give more light and less smoke, and to carry in front so your shadow will fall behind you; to make a grave for your ugly thoughts, and a garden for your kindly feelings, with the gate open – are you willing to do these things for even one day?

Then you can keep Christmas.

Are you willing to believe that love is the strongest thing in the world – stronger than hate, stronger than evil, stronger than death – and that the blessed life which began in Bethlehem more than two thousand years ago is the image and brightness of the Eternal Love?

Then you can keep Christmas.

And if you can keep it for a day, why not always?

But you can never keep it alone.



Henry van Dyke

*1852-1933; American author, educator, clergyman
The text has been slightly updated.*

Note: This is a reprint from an Advent devotional booklet prepared in 1969 by the women's group – which included my mom, Emily Clark – of St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Bellevue, WA.

Shalom, Gaye

IN THE COMMUNITY



Whidbey Island Nordic Lodge
63 Jacobs Road, Coupeville

Lutefisk & Meatball Dinner and
Scandinavian bake sale

Saturday, January 28

Serving at 12:00 noon, 2:00 PM, 4:00 PM
Dine in or take out - - - - Open to the public

Tickets:

Adult Members, \$30; Non-members \$33
Age 10-15, \$15; Under 10, free

To purchase tickets, visit <https://www.whidbeyislandnordiclodge.com>

E-mail: whidbeyislandnordiclodge@gmail.com

Phone: Brian Petersen, 360-678-5197

No ticket sales after January 10



IN APPRECIATION

Thank you to all my friends and family at OHLC for the cards, meals, and continued prayers for healing. They have sustained me with a warm fuzzy feeling of love and kindness, and mean so much.

I got Covid in August and because of underlying conditions it has become Long Covid. One day is never the same as the day before. I haven't been able to send out birthday and anniversary cards to the congregation as usual because of a new problem in my arm. Hopefully it will continue to work itself out and I can start up again soon!

I look forward to coming back to church and picking up my volunteer activities. In the meantime, I wish everyone a beautiful 2023. Get vaccinated and boosted and be safe!

Peg Fosnaugh

Peg also sends thanks to...

...the volunteers who filled the Little Lutheran bags in 2022 for our youngest worshipers, and especially to those who have already signed up to help out in 2023. Volunteers typically sign up for a month's

service at a time. The first few months of the new year are covered; check your Sunday bulletin insert Connection Card for a note about which months are still open.



It's an easy and fun task and takes about half an hour each week to clear out the old supplies and fill them with fresh coloring sheets and new, unbent pipe

cleaners. All supplies are provided. Training is available, and substitutes can step in if you're unable to do one of your weeks. Need more info? Call Peg, 360-675-2821 or 360-929-1653.

...everyone who sponsored chancel and/or organ flowers for 2022.

Our sanctuary was adorned with colorful beauty to God's glory, thanks to your gifts.

The flower chart for 2023 is posted in the hall beside Pastor Jeff's office door. Find a Sunday, jot down your name, and Peg will contact you for details on your choice of flowers and the text for the Sunday bulletin. Chancel flowers are \$45; flowers on the organ are \$35, and OHLC makes these purchases through our local Greenhouse Florist.

Flowers may go home with you after the 10:30 AM service, or share them with someone else. Each month's sign-ups are closed on the 3rd full week; if you have a late sign-up, call Peg ASAP, 360-675-2821 or 360-929-1653.

Sunday School Christmas program follow-up:

Thank you to all who helped out with the Christmas program, presented as a part of our 4:00 PM worship service on Christmas Eve!



In numbers, this year's cast was small but mighty, including **John & Kale Totten** as our outstanding narrators (who also helped move the scenery), **Abby Gray & Isaac Gibbons** as Mary & Joseph, **Logan & Lucas Stone** as Roman soldiers, **Natalie Stone** as the angel Gabriel, **Matthew, Anna & Elizabeth Richards, Aubrey Gibbons & Cora Jones** as the heavenly host, **Garret Gibbons & Dylan Totten** as shepherds, with **Molly Jones & Alice Gray** as sheep. **Verna Morgan** was our accompanist, stage manager **Steve Ellis** kept the production (and the director) on track, and **Mary Brock, Beth Stephens, Debbie Reetz & Fran Leukhardt** made sure entrances and exits were right on cue. Thank you, too, to those who helped the kids get into costumes, including **Laurie Johnson** and "stage moms" (*but in a really good way!*) **Kendall Gibbons, Kaitlin Gray & Angela Stone.**

Peace,
Martha Ellis



The following note came with a Christmas card from Tony Polubinski, currently incarcerated at Stafford Creek Corrections Center, Aberdeen, WA. He has

deep roots with OHLC and is continuing to receive regular mailings with the newsletters, Sunday bulletins and sermons.

Members of OHLC,

Well, this year has been very uneventful. After 3 rounds of Covid lockdowns in the first 6 months of the year, I had my second case of Covid, very minor. There is finally light at the end of this pandemic. The DOC is lifting restrictions slowly, and life in prison is getting back to the "new" normal.

I'm still in Stafford Creek and still praying to get back to Monroe.

Thanks for all the prayers.

Yours in Christ,
Tony Polubinski

Worship Assistants		
January 1		
<i>ONE service!</i> 10:30 AM	Assisting Minister: M. Bartrand	Computer: Anders Spencer Organ/Piano: Jan Ernst
January 8		
8:00 AM	Assisting Minister: Paul Senness Communion Asst: Wendy Wilson Healing Prayer: M. Stroud	Computer: Norman family Organ/Piano: Verna Morgan
10:30 AM	Assisting Minister: Carol Reafs Communion Asst: Laurie Johnson Healing Prayer: C. Reafs	Computer: Bruce Holroyd Organ/Piano: Verna Morgan
January 15		
8:00 AM	Assisting Minister: Jeff Margraf Communion Asst: Tracey Tomlin	Computer: Lisa Margraf Organ/Piano: Verna Morgan
10:30 AM	Assisting Minister: Carol Fitzgerald Communion Asst: Gisela Hawley	Computer: John Totten Organ/Piano: Verna Morgan
January 22		
8:00 AM	Assisting Minister: Tom Carey Communion Asst: Stone family	Computer: M. Ackerman Organ/Piano: Sue Stroud
10:30 AM	Assisting Minister: Leslie Improta Communion Asst: Kerri Totten	Computer: Kale Totten Organ/Piano: Sue Stroud
January 29		
8:00 AM	Assisting Minister: Communion Asst:	Computer: Sam Richards Organ/Piano: Sue Stroud
10:30 AM	Assisting Minister: Kathy Holroyd Communion Asst: Bobbi Miller	Computer: Anders Spencer Organ/Piano: Sue Stroud

Little Lutheran bags in January: Sheila Ryan

This month's decorative font is **SNOW CUPS CAPS**,
with the assistance of PATERDOSTER AH.

FINANCIAL REPORT

NOVEMBER

	<i>November</i>	<i>Year to date</i>
Income	\$ 31,360	\$ 391,437
Outgo	<u>35,513</u>	<u>401,026</u>
	\$ (4,178)	\$ (10,026)

Worship Attendance

DECEMBER

Date	8:00 AM	10:30 AM
Dec. 4	55	95
Dec. 11	68	85
Dec. 18	48	78
Dec. 25	<i>no service</i>	46
Avg. Att.	57	76

Average Sunday attendance: 133

Midweek Advent worship. 12:00 PM 6:00 PM:

Nov. 30	27	34
Dec. 7	33	47
Dec. 14	29	56
Dec. 21	28	53

Christmas Eve worship, Dec. 24

4:00 PM - 107
7:00 PM - 116
10:00 PM - 56




LESSER FESTIVALS COMMEMORATIONS

JANUARY

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 THE NAME OF JESUS | 19 Henry, Bishop of Uppsala, martyr, 1156 |
| 2 Johann Konrad Wilhelm Loehe, renewer of the church, 1872 | 21 Agnes, martyr, 304 |
| 6 EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD | 25 The Conversion of St. Paul
<i>Week of Prayer for Christian Unity ends</i> |
| 8 BAPTISM OF OUR LORD | 26 Timothy, Titus, and Silas, missionaries |
| 15 Martin Luther King, Jr., renewer of society, martyr, 1968 | 27 Lydia, Dorcas, and Phoebe witnesses to the faith |
| 17 Antony of Egypt, 356, Pachomius, 343, renewers of the church | 28 Thomas Aquinas, 1274, teacher |
| 18 The Confession of St. Peter
<i>Week of Prayer for Christian Unity begins</i> | |

JANUARY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Christmas 2 New Year's Day Worship 10:30 <i>Livestreamed on Facebook</i> CA/library 7:30	2 Church office closed 5:00 Brass rehearsal 7:00 North Whidbey NA, library	3 9:30 Blanket Workshop	4 9:30 Blanket Workshop 11:30 OHLC Staff 12:30 W.W. set-up 1:30 Welcome Wednesday 4:00 Chancel Choir	5 1:00 Deborah Circle 5:00 Jubilate Ringers 7:00 NA, fellowship hall	6 The Day of Epiphany 3:00 Quest Club 5:00 Epiphany potluck 7:00 Epiphany worship	7
8 Worship 8:00 Sunday School 9:15 Adult Ed/1 Peter 9:15 Worship 10:30 <i>Livestreamed on Facebook</i> Confirmation 6:00 CA/library 7:30	9 5:00 Brass rehearsal 7:00 North Whidbey NA, library	10 10:00 Church Mice Stampers 12:00 Brotherhood of St. Bernard 5:30 Al Anon 6:30 Cub Scouts 7:00 Boy Scouts	11 11:30 OHLC Staff 12:30 W.W. set-up 1:30 Welcome Wednesday 4:00 Chancel Choir 7:00 Adult Ed/1 Peter	12 1:00 Deborah Circle 4:00 Stephen Ministry 5:00 Jubilate Ringers 7:00 Council 7:00 NA, fellowship hall	13	14
15 Worship 8:00 Sunday School 9:15 Adult Ed/1 Peter 9:15 Worship 10:30 <i>Livestreamed on Facebook</i> New Member Class 12:00 CA/library 7:30	16 M.L. King Jr. Church office closed Bloodworks Northwest, 10 AM-4 PM, by appt. only 5:00 Brass rehearsal 6:00 Lydia Circle 7:00 North Whidbey NA, library	17 5:30 Al Anon 6:30 Cub Scouts 7:00 Boy Scouts	18 11:30 OHLC Staff 12:30 W.W. set-up 1:30 Welcome Wednesday 4:00 Chancel Choir 7:00 Adult Ed/1 Peter	19 1:00 Deborah Circle 5:00 Jubilate Ringers 7:00 NA, fellowship hall	20 Newsletter Deadline 3:00 Quest Club	21
22 Worship 8:00 Sunday School 9:15 Semi-annual mtg. 9:15 Worship 10:30 <i>Livestreamed on Facebook</i> Brass rehearsal 1:00 CA/library 7:30	23 5:00 Brass rehearsal 7:00 North Whidbey NA, library	24 10:00 Church Mice Stampers 12:00 Brotherhood of St. Bernard 5:30 Al Anon 6:30 Cub Scouts 7:00 Boy Scouts	25 11:30 OHLC Staff 12:30 W.W. set-up 1:30 Welcome Wednesday 4:00 Chancel Choir	26 1:00 Deborah Circle 5:00 Jubilate Ringers 7:00 NA, fellowship hall	27	28 Lutefisk & meatball dinner, Whidbey Island Nordic Lodge <i>(no ticket sales after Jan. 10)</i>
29 Worship 8:00 Sunday School 9:15 Adult Ed/1 Peter 9:15 Worship 10:30 <i>Livestreamed on Facebook</i> Youth & Family Night 6:00 CA/library 7:30	30 6:00 North Whidbey NA, fellowship hall	31 Bloodworks NW, fellow- ship hall, 10 AM – 4 PM 5:30 Al Anon 6:30 Cub Scouts				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 <i>No classes on Jan. 17</i>