



2023

News And Views

Pastoral Perspective

"What do we need to do?" That's a question that's asked a lot these coming weeks in preparation for Christmas. Maybe there are cards to be filled out and sent, presents to be bought and wrapped, trees to be decorated, baking to be done. All of these things are well and good, but by themselves they don't really get us ready for Christmas.

Paul, in his letter to the Philippians, shares what he believes we need to do to get ready for the Lord's coming. He begins chapter 4 of his letter telling us we need to rejoice. Why are we to rejoice? We are to rejoice because the Lord is at hand. As Christians, we know in our hearts that God loved us so much He gave His only Son to be born into the world and become God with us. We can rejoice when we consider God's great plan fulfilled in the Babe of Bethlehem.

What else do we need to do to be ready for the celebration of the Lord's coming? Paul continues his encouragement of the Philippians and us by writing that we need to, "Let our reasonableness be known to everyone." What do you think would happen if the basis of all we said and did was reasonableness? Children would reply to a request from parents, "Sure, that's a reasonable thing to ask. I'll be glad to do it." Family members would really listen to one another and always be reasonable in their responses. What a change it would make in being prepared for celebrating Christmas.

Paul goes on with his letter, "The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." We need to not let worries or upsets stifle our joy in the salvation that Christmas proclaims. We need to not let anxieties that the holiday time can bring derail our celebration. Instead, we need to go to the Lord in prayer, giving thanks for His great gift of love, and letting Him know what help we need from Him. He is at hand every time we fold our hands in prayer.

Finally, Paul writes about what happens when we rejoice in the Lord's coming, let our reasonableness be known to everyone, and go to the Lord with thanksgiving in our hearts. He lets us know that "The peace of God which surpasses all understanding, will guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." God's peace will establish protecting care in our lives. No one fully understands how this works, but we recognize it when the restive heart finds rest in the Lord. We recognize it when insatiable desires give way to contentment in the Lord. We recognize it when nervous fear dissolves into quiet trust in the Lord.

What do we need to do to prepare for Christmas? I trust you see it's not perhaps what you would expect. It doesn't really have to do with what we do at all. It has to do with our attitude and how we go about doing whatever we do. If we rejoice, are reasonable and keep in thankful contact with the Lord, we will have a truly peace-filled Christmas. That is my prayer for us all. May God bless our preparation and celebration of God's life giving gift of love.

Spreading, Serving and Sharing with You,

Pastor Carl



Message from Council President

It is hard to imagine we are coming to the end of the year 2023. As we recap our journey for 2023, there were a few setbacks, but overall, with God's blessing we have moved forward with positive results serving the Lord and our community.

I want to recognize a few of our church members' "behind the scenes" work for St. Luke's Church day-to-day operations and processes:

Finance Board – Making sure our church is fiscal solvent and preparing our 2024 annual budget. Special thanks to Bob Behr, Kirsten Ireton and Jack Fenske for the many hours they put in throughout the year.

Property Board - The many hours that Jack Fenske and Clarence Korhonen put in securing a \$30,000.00 grant for security of our church. Additional hours are needed to finalize new fencing. Bruce Kiser works throughout the week maintaining our church parking area, rose garden and many interior repairs.

Church Volunteers – Thanks to everyone who participated in the Annual Fireworks Sales, Annual Fall Festival, Potlucks, and many other activities this year.

Many thanks to Pastor Carl, our Term Pastor for coming out of retirement to lead us back to normalcy with our processes and procedures. Our Call Committee will be working hard to secure a new pastor in the new year 2024.

I look forward to seeing you all at our annual congregational meeting and potluck on December 10th following the morning service.

Wishing you ALL a safe and blessed Holiday Season.

Peace be with you!
Chet Madison,
Council President



CALL COMMITTEE

Update – “St Luke’s Call Committee”

The Call Committee met on November 15, 2023. There were no updates from Pastor Manda Truchinski (Synod) at the time of the meeting. It was determined that our MSP (Ministry Site Profile) needs to be updated with the name of our Council President and, possibly our 2024 budget. We are contacting the Sierra Pacific Synod website technician with current data so that St Luke MSP can be updated.

Revised guidelines for “The Interview Process for Call Committee” was reviewed by St Luke Call Committee. Other processes were reviewed as well to ensure all members are well prepared securing a new pastor for St Luke Lutheran Church.

There probably will not be any real activity of the Call Committee until the first of the year due to the upcoming holidays.

Please continue to pray for us as we move forward to pursue a pastor for St Luke Church.

Chet Madison – Chair
Peggy Moser
Rachel Kiser
Paul Maki
Phil Karlstad
Faith Thomas
Brenda Sulzmann



the joy of
h o l i d a y
giving

**Christmas Gift Drive
Stanford Sierra Youth & Families**

Stanford Sierra Youth & Families (SSYAF) has been selected as the recipient of our annual Christmas gift drive this year. SSYAF's mission is transforming lives by nurturing permanent connections and empowering families to solve challenges together, so every young person can thrive. SSYAF has been serving youth and families in our community for over 123 years and annually serves approximately 6,000 children and families in Sacramento, Placer, El Dorado, Nevada, Yolo, Napa, Solano, and San Joaquin counties.

SSYAF provides a variety of community-based trauma informed care and services to youth and families to overcome challenges together and connects youth in care to permanent loving families. Comprehensive support and services are extended to siblings and caregivers of youth in care. SSYAF's services include family advocacy and peer support; behavioral and mental health services; substance use prevention and treatment; juvenile justice intervention; mentoring; foster care, adoption services, and pre- and post- adoption services.

During the holiday season SSYAF offers a Holiday Store to the families its serves so that caregivers can "shop" at no cost to them and select appropriate and meaningful gifts for the children in their care. Our contributions will help stock the Holiday Store and provide special moments of holiday connection for these families. If you would like to participate, please bring your unwrapped gifts, and place them under the tree at the back of the sanctuary by December 10. **Please see the suggestions below:**

**Holiday Gift List
Stanford Sierra Youth & Families**

7 - 9 Years: Stuffed Toys, Barbies, Action Figures, Toy Cars, Educational Games, Puzzles, Board Games, Movie Tickets, Scooters, Bikes, Helmets, Pop Its, Surprise Toys, Lego Sets



10 - 12 Years: Wireless Earphones, Gift Cards, Roblox, Minecraft Games, Bath Bombs, Scooters, Bikes, Helmets, Roller Skates, Tablet, Slime Kits, Lego Sets, Gingerbread House Kits, Cozy Blankets, Throws



13 - 15 Years: Press on Nails, Nail Polish, Lotion and Body Wash Sets, Fragrance Sets, Scented Candles, Journal Sets, Books, Wireless Ear Buds, Video Games, Fortnite/Roblox Gift Cards, Scooters, Bikes, Roller Skates, Helmets, Skateboards, Tablets, Science Kits, Anime Posters, Clothing, Pajamas.

16 Years and up: Wireless Ear Buds, Bath and Body Fragrance Sets, Bath and Body Scented Candles, Art Sets, Board Games, Gift Cards, Video Games, Xbox/Playstation/Steam Gift Cards, Gaming Accessories (Headsets/Controllers/Steering Wheels), Smart Watches, Skateboards, Roller Skates, Helmets, Nail Sets (Press on Nails and Polish), Graphic Tees, Hoodies, Sweatshirts (Zumiez/Journeys/Pacsun), Clothing, Pajamas.

Congregational Meeting and Potluck December 10th



The Evangelism Board will coordinate the Congregational Potluck on December 10, 2023. Part of our congregational meeting is sharing with each other and enjoying a delicious potluck. Please plan to come and be sure to add your name to the sign-up sheet on the Opportunity table so we will be sure to have enough seating for everyone.



Epiphany Breakfast Saturday, January 6, 2024 9:30



Please join us in Schultz Hall for our Epiphany Breakfast. Pastor Carl will share the importance of celebrating Epiphany. The Evangelism Board will provide breakfast casseroles, coffee and juice. Those coming are encouraged to bring fruit, muffins, coffee cake or breakfast breads to share as well as nativity sets to display on the tables. Please sign up on the opportunity table in the narthex so that we will know how many plan to attend.

Thank you, *Carole Vance*



WORSHIP & MUSIC BOARD

Christmas Season – the wonderful celebration of the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, begins December 3rd which is the first Sunday of Advent. Advent devotionals are available on the tables in the back of the Sanctuary. There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex for Advent readers and candle lighters for the Sundays in December, and also for the Christmas Eve service which will be held at 7:00 pm. Please consider participating!

The Christmas card exchange box is set up in the Narthex. Please use this box to send Christmas cards to fellow church members, rather than mailing them. It is a great way to save on postage.

Decorating the Christmas tree and the Sanctuary will take place on **Saturday, December 9th** following the W-ELCA luncheon. Estimated time is 1:30 pm. If you are interested in helping, please let me or a member of the Worship & Music Board know. Members are Carolyn Andrews, Marlene Kiser, Peggy Moser, Punky Dias, Karen Linfor, Jacob Wilson, and Shirley Prouty.

Poinsettias have been ordered and will be displayed in the Sanctuary. If you are interested in purchasing a Poinsettia in memory of, or honor of someone, they will be available for purchase for \$15.00 each and can be picked up after the Christmas Eve service on Sunday, December 24th. A sign-up sheet will be available in the Sunday Bulletin.

Please remember that our **Choir's annual Cantata** will be **Sunday, December 17th**. Our Choir Director and Organist, Jane Fanucci, and the Choir have been working on this musical presentation since September. You already know how wonderful our Choir is! You don't want to miss it!

The Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will be held **Sunday, December 24th at 7:00 pm.** Please join us as we celebrate and give thanks for the birth of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

On a personal note, my term as Chair of the Worship & Music Board ends this month. I owe a huge **Thank You** to my fellow Board members and countless others who have been so very supportive of me. There are many activities that are accomplished both "behind the scenes" and during the service each week to ensure that all goes smoothly. I know I say this often, but there are many ways to serve at St. Luke's. Communion Servers, Readers & Prayer Leaders, Acolytes, and assistance with Ushering are just a few. Please consider signing up to help. "God's Work, Our Hands."

In Christ's Love,
Shirley Prouty, Chair



W-ELCA will be having their Annual Christmas Luncheon on Saturday, December 9th at 11:30AM in the Schultz Hall. The luncheon will be provided by W-ELCA and will include Pasta, Salad, Garlic/Cheese Bread, and a dessert.

If you are planning to attend, please be sure to sign up on the W-ELCA Christmas Luncheon Sign Up Sheet in the church narthex so we know how many of you will be there.

Our luncheon program will include a Devotional, short W-ELCA meeting, singing Christmas songs and a “gift exchange game” for those who would like to participate. (If you would like to participate, please bring a wrapped gift under \$10.00 so you can join the fun).

We will be collecting gift cards for \$5.00 from stores like Dollar Tree, Fast Food or like stores to give to “City of Refuge Sacramento” for our December W-ELCA Mission. If you have any questions about this organization, please reach out to any of the women of W-ELCA or Kelly Boyer who has worked with this organization.

We would love to see all of you come and celebrate with us that “Jesus is the reason for the Season”.

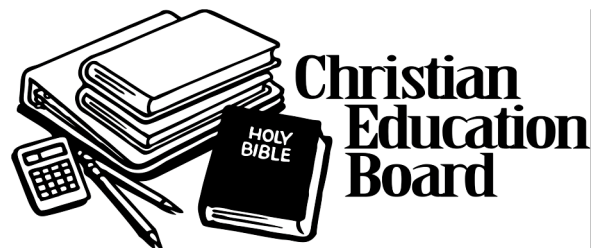
Connie Reule & Marlene Kiser
Co-chair of the Annual W-ELCA Christmas Party



Christmas Boutique

***Come shop December 3 and
December 10, following service,
to help raise funds for St. Luke's
100th Anniversary celebration.***

***Thanks for your support,
Karen Kiser and
Brenda Sulzmann***



There will be no Sunday school on December 17th due to the Christmas Cantata.

Laura Tice



In September we began our "Friends & Family Sunday" on the first Sunday of each month. Let's continue to invite and welcome friends, family, neighbors, coworkers to visit St. Luke Lutheran Church throughout the months, especially on our first Sundays of each month. We look forward to meeting new faces and renewing past friendships.

~Sarah Madison

Sunday Worship Attendance in November

In person attendance

Nov. 5th	55
Nov. 12th	55
Nov. 19th	60
Nov 26th	58

YouTube views

Nov. 5th	24
Nov. 12th	20
Nov. 19th	23
Nov 26th	30





Alanna Olmeda	December 01
Carole Vance	December 03
Faith Harper	December 03
Kim Fenske	December 04
Benjamin Iniguez	December 05
Jared Kiser	December 05
Lauren Richey	December 09
Betty Englund	December 14
Chet Madison	December 16
Sylvia Kohler	December 21
Triss Hoppman	December 25
Robert Harrison	December 26
Deanna Dockter	December 27
Adalyn Kiser	December 31



ALTAR FLOWERS

Dec. 3rd	<i>Christiana Wilson- For my birthday - To the glory of God for another year of blessings and love.</i>
Dec. 10th	<i>Currently available</i>
Dec. 17th	<i>Currently available</i>
Dec. 24th	<i>Currently available</i>
Dec. 31st	<i>Bruce & Karen Kiser - In celebration of Jacobs 14th birthday and Adalyn's 10th birthday</i>

DECEMBER WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Sunday, December 3rd

Gail Weber	Altar Care
Sarah Madison	Reader
Laura Tice	Prayer Leader

Sunday, December 10th

Faith Thomas	Altar Care
Phillip Petersen	Reader
Lydia Toloy	Prayer Leader

Sunday, December 17th

Kelly Boyer	Altar Care
Shirley Prouty	Reader
Howard Triebwasser	Prayer Leader



Sunday, December 24th

Carol Carney	Altar Care
Faith Thomas	Reader
Andrew Weber	Prayer Leader

Sunday, December 31st

Connie Reule	Altar Care
Laura Tice	Reader
Gail Weber	Prayer Leader



**FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT
October 2023**

General Fund Contributions (only):

Data	This Month	Year to Date
Total Contributions	\$22,878	\$157,025
Compared to Budget	\$9,540	\$23,649
	71.5%	17.7%
No. of Contributors	58	56 aver.

Note: Plus, values are above Budget; minus values are below.

Comments:

October contributions surpassed all expectations; helped, in part, by a five-Sundays month, several one-time offerings, and quarterly offerings (October is the first month of the last quarter).

Historically, this October contribution total is one of the best monthly contributions for St. Luke.

Congratulations to all.

Please Note: If you are 70 years or older and have IRAs, please consult with your Financial Adviser or tax preparer regarding "Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD)". There are some real opportunities for tax savings through QCDs.

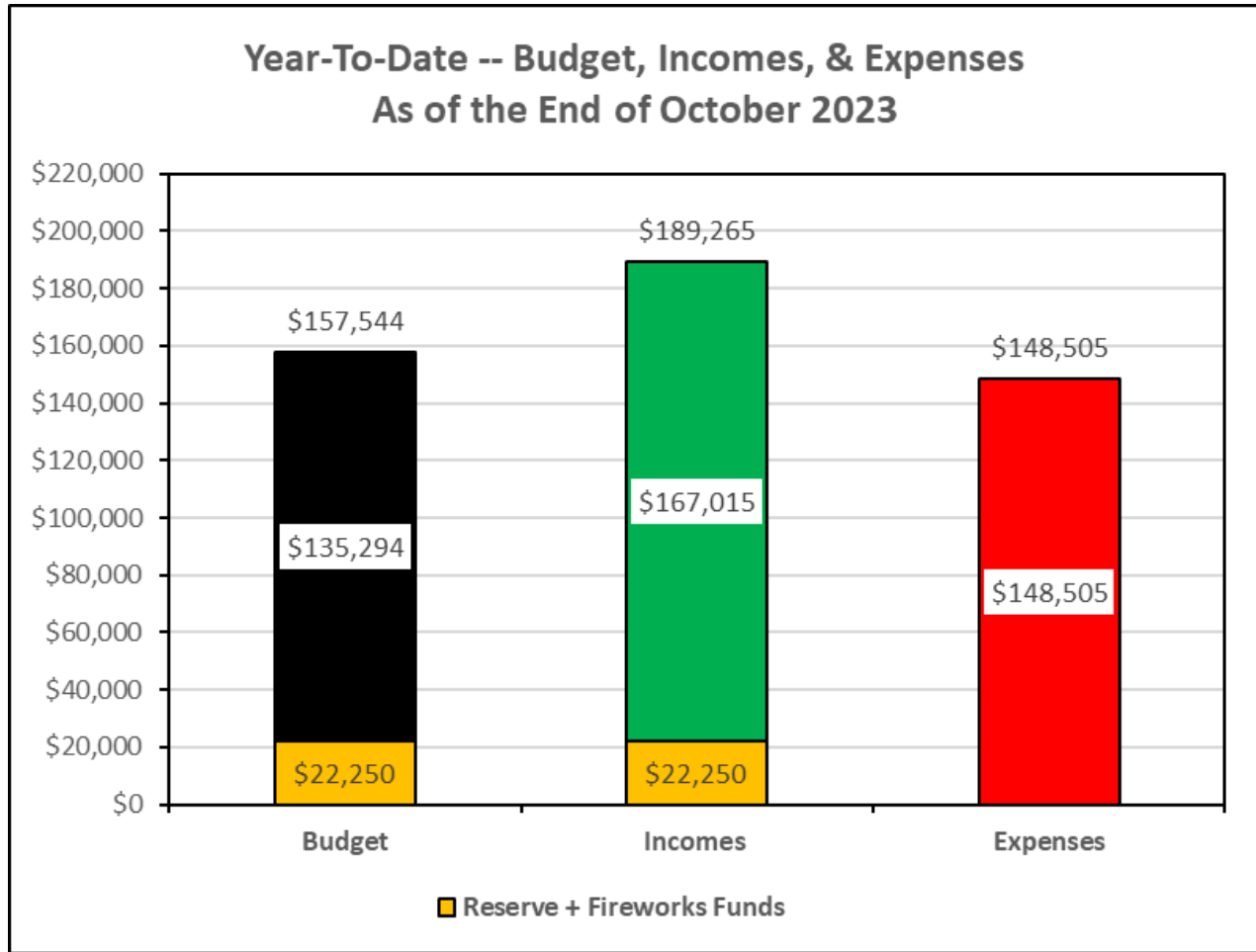
Need offering envelopes. If you need offering envelopes, please contact me either by email or telephone or simply put a note in the offering plate.

[Jack Fenske 916-714-3626, LRFenske@comcast.net](mailto:JRFenske@comcast.net)

St. Luke's Financial Secretary

cc: Council members, Finance Board members, Special Fund Recorder

FINANCES TO DATE



To supplement the Financial Secretary's report on contributions, the Finance Board provides the graph above that compares the year-to-date figures for the Budget, Incomes, and Expenses, as of the end of October 2023. As shown, the Incomes without the Reserve and Fireworks supplement (\$167,015) exceed the Expenses (\$148,505) by about \$18,500 which is up about \$12,000 from what was reported for September. The "rosy" financial status is mostly due to St. Luke not having a permanent pastor.

"Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." 2 Corinthians 9:7 (ESV)

FINANCE BOARD

JOIN US THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON!

W-ELCA CHRISTMAS
GATHERING -
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9TH
AT 11:30AM



& TREE DECORATING
AT 1:30PM



SUNDAY
DECEMBER 10TH
FOLLOWING WORSHIP SERVICE



SUNDAY
DECEMBER 17TH
10:30AM



SUNDAY
DECEMBER 24TH
7:00PM