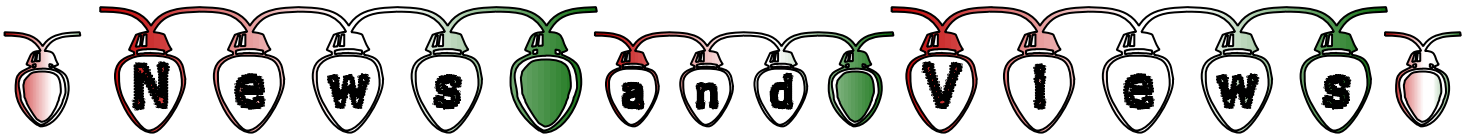




St. Luke's Lutheran Church
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Pastor Carl Hoppman
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Pastoral Perspective



“And when he comes, he will open the eyes of the blind and unplug the ears of the deaf. The lame will leap like a deer and those who cannot speak will sing for joy! Springs will gush forth in the wilderness, and streams will water the wasteland...And a great road will go through the once deserted land. It will be named the Highway of Holiness.”—Isaiah 35:5-6, 8

There is such a hopeful and positive outlook in this passage from Isaiah. With expectation and belief the prophet looks forward to the coming of the Messiah to the world and to the lives of God's people. It is pictured as a time when things will be put right. Isaiah sees the Messiah coming like a force of nature, restoring things to a state of balance. Furthermore, a 'Highway of Holiness' will be opened. It will be the path of the faithful.

This was a powerful prophecy at the time it was given, hundreds of years before Jesus was born. God's people pretty miserable. There were massive uncertainties and terrifying areas of darkness. They were also wavering in their religious convictions. God's people didn't have a strong sense of knowing the Lord and being under His care. They were wondering what could possibly be the purpose of all that was going on. They were wondering what God had to do with them at all.

Up against this situation came the promise from God that He would provide wholeness for people, nourish the parched world, and provide a true pathway to Him. This was something to grab hold of. This was a hope in which to be established.

Much later, John the Baptizer sent messengers from his prison cell to ask Jesus, “Are you the Messiah we've been expecting or should we keep looking for someone else?” Jesus told them, ‘Go back to John and tell him what you have heard and seen—the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, and the good News is being preached to the poor.’—Matthew 11:3-5. Things were being set right through Jesus just as Isaiah had prophesied. Jesus is the true path to God. Blessed are those who believe in Him.

Today the world spins wildly on. We might well feel as though we are once more in a dark and terrifying place. We yearn for the light of God to shine on us and the world. What we desperately need is to focus on God and His promises. That is where wholeness is to be found. So, instead of wondering if you will even have a Christmas this year, ask Jesus with high hopes, “Are you the Messiah, the One who sets things right, the One who is the 'Highway of Holiness' to God?”

The answer will come back, “Yes, I am the one. I make people whole. I nourish the parched world. I provide the pathway to God. Expect me to be in

your life, making you whole.” With this expectation, the light of the Lord’s love will shine in you and through you. The anticipation and belief that God will be here with you and the world at Christmas with His love, regardless of the circumstances and situation, will be what you are focusing on and reflecting during this season. Get caught up in this spirit of the season. And then you will realize He really has come to be with you and the world with His love. That realization will allow you to have a truly blessed Christmas.

Merry Christmas,
Pastor Carl



Dear Congregation:

Our Annual Meeting date, December 13, 2020, is fast approaching. This year, due to the health crisis, we will not be able to meet in-person. Therefore, Council voted to have our annual meeting via mail.

You will be receiving in the mail, a copy of the proposed 2021 Budget, a ballot for the election of Officers/Board Chairs and ratification of the revised Constitution/Bylaws, and a return envelope.

We are asking that you review the proposed budget, and if you have questions please contact Paul Maki, Finance Board Chair or Bob Behr, Treasurer.

PLEASE RETURN YOUR BALLOT NO LATER THAN, December 20, 2020.

Thank you,

Carolyn Andrews
Council President



I am sure we all remember, before Covid 19 changed all of our lives in some unfortunate way, seeing on the church calendar, twice each month: 2:00pm – Soul Stickers. These generous, loving, caring ladies have reached out with their beautiful homemade items - example masks, knitted hats, socks, blankets and many other most appreciated items basically for the health providers to share. Between all of them they made somewhere close to 1000 masks when they were most needed at the beginning of the Epidemic and continue on, to this day, for their friends and loved ones. No matter what is needed they will figure out a way to make it!

I would like to mention names but there are so many that I don’t want to miss anyone, but you ladies know who you are so please know how very much you are appreciated.

As a side note – for now they continue as part of the “Soul Sisters” of which many of us interact with and are so blessed and in awe of their continued giving each and every day. Also, there are other wonderful members of our congregation who we know are reaching out to others in some loving way as well.

Also we must thank Linda Duffek and Cathy Davis for continuing with the Community Concerns board and arranging ways of reaching out to the less fortunate. Thank you for the opportunity to share in this most important way.

May God bless all of you until we can all be together again!

Carol Carney



Even in these times of social distancing, we are still the body of Christ together.

The fire season in Northern California was horrific. Over 9,000 fires have burned almost 4.5 million acres making 2020 the largest wildfire season recorded in California's modern history. The loss of wineries and other businesses means many are out of work and need assistance. We have donated \$500.00 to the Lutheran Disaster Response to support wildfire survivors. Please continue to pray that God will bring comfort to those who mourn and strength to those fighting diligently to contain the fires.



We are continuing to collect socks for Loaves & Fishes and Union Gospel Ministry. Socks are the most needed and the least donated item to shelters.

New socks can be dropped off during Sunday's Drive-through Prayer or contact Merle Zbrog for pick up.



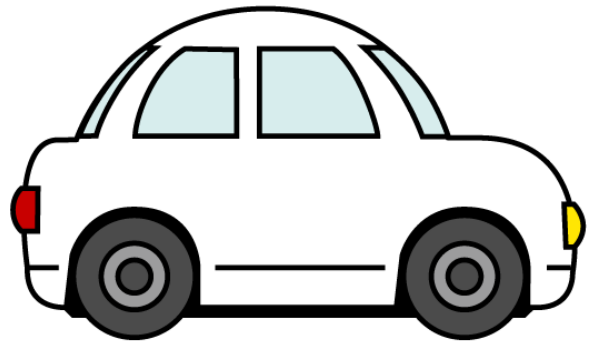
Due to the current pandemic, we had to rethink our usual holiday giving. This year, we are collecting \$5.00 gift cards from fast food chains. The gift cards will be distributed to those in need in our local community. You can bring cards as you attend Sunday's Drive-through Prayer, you can drop them in the mail slot at the church, or you can call to arrange a pickup. Please have the cards at the church no later than December 13, 2020.

Need an elf to help? Contact Linda Duffek, Cathy Davis, or Merle Zbrog.

Would you like to participate in the distribution of the cards? Contact Linda Duffek or Cathy Davis and we will add you to our group.



Thank you for your generous support.



**Join us for Drive through Prayer!
We are in the church parking lot
from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. every
Sunday.**

Dear Friends in Christ,

Below is a copy of Pastor Carl's letter announcing his retirement, effective December 31, 2020. The Church Council accepted this letter at its September 15, 2020 meeting.

Pastor Carl, Triss and Holly have truly been a blessing to our congregation, and we pray we have also been a blessing to them. Over 27 years ago, the congregation forged a strong loving bond with Pastor Carl and his family, one that is going to be hard to break. We want to say, "Thank You" and wish them well as their journey continues.

Due to the current health crisis, COVID-19, we are not be able to have an in-person proper send-off for our Pastoral Family, but there are plans to celebrate them as soon as this crisis is over. If you would like to personally thank them, please feel free to offer your individual appreciation.

Grace and Peace to you,
Carolyn Andrews
Council President

"...You have been my partners in spreading the Good News about Christ..."--Philippians 1:5

These words of Paul to the Philippian church express how I feel about you as I give thanks for the privilege of serving as your pastor for the last twenty-seven years. From the time we came to St. Luke's, Triss, Holly, and I have felt as though we have been a part of a congregation of folks wanting to "spread the Good News about Christ, serve those in need, and share the victory of Jesus." We have never felt we were doing those things simply on behalf of the congregation but together as a group who, "by the power of the Holy Spirit, accept the call" to be about God's work in the world. The Lord has used us mightily for His work. He will continue to do that through you as Triss, Holly, and I end our affiliation with St. Luke's on December 31st of this year.

At the age of seventy, after forty-three years as an ordained minister, I have decided it is time to retire. As you may know, when a pastor retires, he or she no longer is affiliated with the congregation he or she has served. That means, beginning January 1, 2021 I will not be available for pastoral acts such as baptisms, confirmations, weddings, or funerals. I will also not be available to provide pastoral care in situations of need. An interim pastor will serve the congregation in these ways from the time of my retirement until a new pastor is called. It is vital that a good transition from one pastor to another is made. That is why the retired pastor is expected to refrain from a pastoral presence in his or her former congregation. This will be particularly challenging for us as we have been together for so long in such a loving relationship. It is, however, for the best so that St. Luke's continues to grow and flourish in God's work in the world, and that Triss, Holly, and I are able to go forth into the next chapter of our lives. We would still love to share with you in the future, but that needs to be simply as friends.

Triss, Holly, and I will be affiliating with another congregation in the new year. We will be excited to hear how St. Luke's makes a great transition to a new pastor. Let's keep one another in prayer as we go forward in the Lord's love.

Spreading, Serving, and Sharing with You,
Pastor Carl



FINANCIAL SECRETARY REPORT

October 2020

(Note: Normal church worship services and other activities were suspended beginning March 18, which significantly affected the data in this report.)

- a. October was a four-Sunday month. There will be five Sundays in November.
- b. October offerings are much like last month. The coronavirus epidemic and the resulting reduction in contributors are continuing to have a substantial impact on St. Luke's offerings.
- c. You can now make contributions electronically (online), in addition to the conventional means. For details, go to St. Luke's website www.slelca.org and click on the "Giving" heading for details.
- d. If you have any questions or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Jack Fenske
 St. Luke's Financial Secretary
 916-714-3626
LRFenske@comcast.net

General Fund (Only) Contributions		
Data	This Month	Year to Date
Total Contributions	\$14,178	\$155,823
Compared to Budget	-\$5,291	-\$24,543
	-27.2%	-13.6%
Compared to 2019	\$2,459	-\$21,352
	21.0%	-12.1%
No. of Contributors		
2020 (Current Year)	51	61 avg.
2019 (Last Year)	60	75 avg.
Other Contributions		
Special Gift (Dumpster Fees)		\$200

Note: Plus values are above Budget/Last Year; minus values are below.





Alanna Olmeda	December 01
Faith Harper	December 03
Carole Vance	December 03
Kim Fenske	December 04
Benjamin Iniguez	December 05
Jared Kiser	December 05
Lauren Richey	December 09
Elizabeth Korhonen	December 12
Betty Englund	December 14
Chet Madison	December 16
Kristine Felgenhauer	December 17
Marilyn Dorr	December 18
Sylvia Kohler	December 21
Triss Hoppman	December 25
Robert Harrison	December 26
Deanna Dockter	December 27
Adalyn Kiser	December 31



Elizabeth Korhonen died and passed into the nearer presence of her Lord on November 15th. Join in giving thanks for the loving and caring life she lived among us and the new life she has with her Savior Jesus for eternity. Please pray for Clarence and the family as they grieve that they are held closely in the love of the Lord.

Elizabeth Korhonen's funeral will be a small family service due to COVID-19 restrictions, please remember her and give thanks for her life here and in heaven on Wednesday December 2nd.



St. Luke's Lutheran Church
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