

The Shepherd's *staff*

THE NEWSLETTER OF HOLY SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH
THANKSGIVING 2020 — ORINDA, CALIFORNIA

On Being Thank-Full!



At a Preschool chapel gathering early in the month of November, we started getting ready for Thanksgiving! We sang Pastor John's favorite turkey song ("If God can Love Turkeys, Then God Can Love You!") We read the old familiar story about that time Jesus healed ten people who were sick with a horrible illness, and how only one came back to say 'thank you'. And we had a wonderful conversation about what it means to say 'thank You' and why saying 'thank you' is so important.

Thankfulness is at the very heart of what it means to live as people of God. When we express gratitude to others, we remind ourselves (and others) that life is NOT lived in isolation but in community, and that our lives are enriched (and made possible!) by the efforts of and interactions with others. When we express gratitude to God, we remind ourselves that life itself would not be possible without the constant provision of the Lord our God. But when we forget to express gratitude to others, we're tempted to start thinking that life is only to be lived for me, myself and I, and that everyone else exists solely to do good things for me. Likewise, when we forget to express gratitude to God, we're tempted to start thinking that all of life's daily blessings are things we should just take for granted.

As our national "Day of Thanksgiving" for the year 2020 approaches, I've noted that some are saying there's not so much to be thankful for this year. They're complaining that the global pandemic has made a turkey out of Thanksgiving this year — because we can't get together with families and friends, because we can't go to Target at midnight for the Black Friday sales, etc. But from the perspective of faith, the only one that can make a turkey out of Thanksgiving is you — by not being thankful. Regardless of how your Thanksgiving Day plans are changed from those of years past, don't make a turkey out of Thanksgiving. For as people of God and people of faith, we KNOW that there is much for which we can only say "Thank you!"

In love and thankfulness — for God and for you! Pastor John

EVENTS SCHEDULE

We encourage you to stay connected with our community by participating in one or more of the following events

Every Sunday at 9:30 am — Our weekly Facebook '**Worship Video Watch Party**' hosted by our pastors @HSLCORinda.

Every Sunday at 9:30 am — Our '**Weekly Worship Video**' is released on our webpage at www.holyshepherd.org.

Every Sunday at 10:30 am — Our popular "**Zoom Coffee Fellowship**" allows you to connect with others. The Zoom Meeting ID is 823 6201 2420.

Third Sundays from noon to 1pm — Our Sanctuary is open for socially-distanced Holy Communion. (*Join us on December 20th for our next gathering!*)

Every Tuesday at 7pm — Our weekly 'Adult Ed.' class happens online each Tuesday night at 7pm. Our Sun/Tuesday School Zoom Meeting ID # is 882 9062 7131.

Mission Partner Update: **Chaplain's Wings**

Even as our "Thanksgiving" newsletter goes to press, our "Chaplain's Wings" ministry program is gearing up to send 'Christmas Care Packages' to military chaplains embedded with units half a world away! Under the ever-faithful leadership of Pete Schmitt, a group of HSLC members will be gathering (socially-distanced and masked, of course!) to ship off an assortment of letters and treats and Christmas cards as a tangible expression of support and encouragement to those who find themselves in harm's way. Care packages include items such as protein bars, small packages of nuts, chewing gum and personal hygiene items (the shaving cream we send is MUCH appreciated!)

A note from one of our chaplains makes clear what a difference we can make: *"Dear Friends at HSLC, Greetings from Afghanistan! We are redeploying soon, but I sure want to say thanks to all of you for the generous support you've given to me and our troops in Task Force Geronimo. I can tell that all you have done for us is a labor of love, and that we are truly grateful. Your support, your prayers and your encouragement help me to speak the gospel into the lives of those with whom I serve. Thanks!"*



What is Chaplain's Wings?



Our Chaplain's Wings program seeks to serve active-duty U.S. service members by supporting military chaplains embedded with units serving overseas. We provide letters of encouragement for those who stand in harm's way as a way to let them know that they are not forgotten. We seasonally send care packages to chaplains abroad to help them help those whom they serve.

Last fiscal year, we contributed \$1790 to chaplaincy ministry support — both through our budgeted 'Giving Beyond Ourselves' commitment and additional gifts from congregation members.

We Remember in Prayer

Prayers for Healing

- Marilyn Nor.
- Gloria and Bert Ens.
- Doug and DoLoris Tim.
- Mary Helene Wag.
- Yvonne Tsc.
- Dr. Bob and Carole Wey.
- Susie Mor.
- Bruce Neu.
- Jeff Kli.
- Henry and Carol Kra.

Prayers for Comfort

- Harry How.
- Rolf Ben.
- Marilyn and Kristi Lin.
- Marian McG.
- DeLane Riv.

Prayers for Those Serving

- Megan How.
- Brian Hen.
- Peter Kle.

November Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

- 4th Catherine Dem.
- 5th Caroline Sch.
- 7th Judy Btl.
- 11th Tom Gil.
- 11th Susie Koe.
- 12th Bob Fle.
- 14th Donna Ben.

Birthdays (cont.)

- 16th Alta Ste.
- 24th Joyce Hur.
- 27th Reagan Sha.

Anniversaries

- 18th Marla & Fred Schr.

Life Transitions

It is with a heavy heart that we share with you the news of Ann Brohm's passing on November 16. Ann had struggled with a recurrence of her breast cancer in recent months, and the toll of the chemo she was on (and the aggressiveness of the cancer itself) proved too



much for her. She passed peacefully while at John Muir Hospital in Walnut Creek, where Pastor John had (finally!) been able to visit her after nearly 8 months of isolation due to COVID-19.

Ann was an ever-faithful part of our Sunday School teaching team for years and years, as well as a Kindergarten aide at Del Rey School in Orinda. She cherished you (her Holy Shepherd community) and was truly a prayer-warrior for all whom she knew. In death she is reunited with her beloved daughter Laura (who died in a tragic accident in her teens), as well as her sister Martha, who passed away earlier this year.



Every day — as I read the East Bay Times on the computer — one section I review is the Coronavirus Daily Tracker. The State is color coded into 4 tiers for a “Blueprint for a Safer Economy.” The lighter the color equals less restrictions. Being able to move to red (Substantial) tier for Contra Costa, allows for loosening restrictions for places of worship.

My wife and I had the privilege to attend the socially-distanced Communion service from noon to 1pm in our Sanctuary in the middle of October. There was a steady stream of participants before and after we entered — both new and familiar faces! We were handed instructions on how to share in the Communion and best comply with the County Health Regulations in keeping our community safe. Typically, instructions are read after assembling equipment. Somehow when there are a few extra parts left over, or the equipment didn't turn out as expected, then and only then are instructions read.

Being our first time, we skimmed through the instructions quickly and relied on what others were doing. The signage on the pews (Sit Here!) reminded me of work. Being in an open office environment, the desks have similar signage.

The beautiful organ music provided a familiar service sound and feeling of belonging. Being waived up to take communion by the Pastor, donned in both mask and gloves, one went up the center aisle and the other on the side. The personalized Communion and the ability to have time for reflection was divine. There was sanitization at the altar rail after each Sacrament. After completion, one went to dispose of the paper towel and cups in the trash and headed out the back door. The other went out the front entrance. (Of course, we referred back to the instructions for who was right and make sure it is done properly next time!)

We look forward to doing it again next month and feel blessed in being able to participate in Communion once again. However, it may take us a few more times before we are able to follow instructions!

By *Dave Lausch*

Ministry Update

At a meeting on Thursday evening, November 19th, our Church Council took action to approve an operational budget for our congregation for Fiscal Year 2020/21. Normally, approval of the budget would require action by the congregation at a congregational meeting, but the current pandemic precludes our meeting in that way. The Council — meeting via Zoom teleconference — reviewed the budget proposal offered by Treasurer Steve Swanback, who also share insights garnered at the online ‘Listening Post’ event held in mid-October.

Treasurer Swanback highlighted the challenge we are currently facing with our budget due to the realities of the pandemic. Both the Preschool and the LARC Program normally contribute funds each month to support facilities maintenance and operational expenses, but the congregation is needing to carry those expenses until such time as our community-ministry partnerships can regain their financial footing.

The 2020/21 Budget key items include:

- A significant reduction in music and office staff time and compensation until such time as we can return to regular programming.
- A continuance of a 10% commitment of offerings to “Giving Beyond Ourselves” — with a reapportionment to aid ministry partners most dramatically effected by the pandemic.
- Mission Support to the ELCA has been reduced to 2.5% of total budgeted receipts.
- Pastoral and staff compensation comprise nearly 70% of our total congregational budget.

Without your consistent and generous giving, our financial reserves will be sorely stretched as we strive to ‘make ends meet’ during these days of COVID-19..

A Thankful Reflection

Gratitude takes three forms: A feeling in the heart, an expression in words, and a giving in return.

John Wanamaker (1838 – 1922)

The 35th United States Postmaster General

SAVE TWO FUN AND IMPORTANT DATES!



DECEMBER 7TH at 6:00pm

In lieu of our annual 'Hanging of the Greens' party, you're invited to join our Stewardship Team in inviting you to be part of a "Tree Lighting" celebration in our church parking lot! Come and see how we can share the hope and light of Christ even in a dark and dreary world!



DECEMBER 20TH at 6:00pm

Invite a friend or neighbor and join us for a fun evening of Christmas Caroling — with music lead by Tom Henry and Marc Levine! We'll be singing carols and Christmas songs, sharing a few laughs and enjoying the spirit of the season in a socially-distanced way!

HOLY SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH
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