



The Shepherd's *staff*

THE NEWSLETTER OF HOLY SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH — ADVENT / EARLY DECEMBER 2022

433 MORAGA WAY, ORINDA, CALIFORNIA — WWW.HOLYSHEPHERD.ORG — (925)254-3422



As you make your plans to celebrate the Christmas holiday, we invite you to join us for worship and to keep in mind the One who is truly 'The Reason for the Season'.

December 24 / Christmas Eve Worship at 4pm — Led by SpiritBorne (our acoustic praise Worship Team), we'll sing out the Good News that is joy to all the world — that Jesus Christ is born! Our 4pm service will include both Holy Communion and a traditional time of candle-lighting.

December 24 / Christmas Eve Worship at 6pm — Led by Canticle (our traditionally-styled Worship Team), we'll recall how — on a silent night in a little town far away — the angels announced glad tidings of great joy for all the world! Our 6pm service will include both Holy Communion and a traditional time of candle-lighting.

December 25 / Christmas Day Worship at 9:30am — Once every seven years or so, Christmas Day falls on a Sunday. What better way to keep the Christ-Child at the center of your celebrating than to join us for worship that Christmas Sunday morning? Our Christmas Day service will include Holy Communion and a hearty Christmas Day Coffee Fellowship opportunity for those who wish to share.

WEEKLY EVENTS SCHEDULE

We encourage you to join in!

Sundays at 9:30 am — Our weekly in-person worship opportunity with Holy Communion in our Sanctuary

Sundays at 9:30 am — Our in-person worship services are "Live-Streamed" via our Facebook page @HSLCOrinda.

Sundays at 10am — Kids' Sunday School happens twice-monthly following KidTalk. (Next class dates are Dec. 11 and Jan. 15)

Sundays at 10:30 am — Coffee Fellowship takes place following our in-person worship service.

Sundays at noon — Our weekly 'Worship Video' is up at www.holyshepherd.org or on our Facebook page @HSLCOrinda.

Tuesdays at 7 pm — Our weekly 'Adult Ed' class meets online via Zoom.

*Zoom Meeting ID: 861 5874 8710
Zoom Passcode: 94563*

(Note that there will be NO Adult Ed. class on December 20th or 27th)

Social Ministry Update: Christmas Gifting Opportunities

This year — as we look toward Christmas gifting opportunities — we're reminded of the on-going challenges our Ministry Partners continue to face due to global events beyond their control. The Loaves and Fishes soup kitchen in Pittsburg still faces challenges due to pandemic restrictions on indoor dining. International Health Partners and the New Life Band (both based in Tanzania) have had to curtail activities due to travel restrictions both locally and internationally because of COVID-19. And the crisis in Ukraine has meant that much charitable support has been redirected to Eastern Europe to the detriment of other worthy recipients.

With that in mind, this year's Christmas gifting opportunities are linked to our congregation's primary ministry partners. Some are domestic, some are foreign. Some provide medical care, some provide a hot meal, some provide meaning to life. But ALL of them do God's work with their hands. Extra Gifts to our ministry partners will make a difference for good in the lives of needful people: including:

- ◆ A \$25 gift to Loaves & Fishes could purchase three cases of bottled water for hungry neighbors
- ◆ A \$30 gift to Lutheran Social Service could purchase essentials for a one-time foster child
- ◆ A \$35 gift to Rancho Santa Marta could purchase two pairs of new shoes for Ranch kids
- ◆ A \$40 gift to IHP could purchase a post-surgical care kit for a recent patient
- ◆ A \$50 gift to the New Life Band could pay a full week's salary for an outreach team member

You can give a Christmas Gift by mailing a check to the church office or putting a check in the offering plate in the Narthex on Sunday morning, clearly indicating which program(s) you select to support. Even easier, you can go to our website at www.holyshepherd.org and click on the Givelify tab for our online giving portal. There you can use your credit card and identify specifically which organizations YOU would like to make a difference in this Advent / Christmas season.



Holy Shepherd is hosting a Community Blood Drive on Thursday, December 29th in our Center for Ministry Building. If you're able to donate blood, know that community blood supplies regularly dwindle this time of year and that your donation would be much appreciated. If you're able to donate your time (but not your blood), we're in need of clinic volunteers that day as well.

In either event, contact Karen Rose Kalvass for more information at (925)285-4669

For Healing

Yvonne G.
Gloria E.
Donna Z.
DoLoris & Doug T.
MaryHelene W.
Carole W.
Suzi M.
Judy B.
Bill K.
Mark Z.

For Peace

Bob & Kristi L.
Marian McG.
DeLane R.
Marilyn N.
Diana N.
Igor & Rita S.

For Those Serving

Meghan and Brian P.
Peter K.



DECEMBER



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|-------------------------|---|
| <u>Birthdays</u> | 22nd Abigail Gar. |
| 1st Howard Rod. (97!) | 22nd Lisa Mer. |
| 4th Henry Cho. | 24th Bill Hun. |
| 5th Karen Heu. | 24th. Marla Schr. |
| 12th Gretchen Ste. | 25th Michael Ste. |
| 13th Paul Heu. | 27th Diana Neu. |
| 13th Bob Schw. | 29th Russ Bli. (97!) |
| 13th John Sha. | 30th Mary How. |
| 14th Solveig Law. | <u>Anniversaries</u> |
| 15th Terry Ham. | 13th Pastor Pam Schaefer
and John Daw. |
| 19th Dorelle Kem. | |

FOR ALL THE SAINTS



Our sister **Donna Gamel** passed away on Friday, November 4th — amid the days leading up to All Saints' Sunday. Donna was born in Canada and was proud of her Canadian heritage and her ever-constant companion Klaus (a pet cockatiel.) She was an accomplished artist who fondly recalled the mission trip she was able to take to Rancho Santa Marta, where she shared her crafty artistry with many of the Ranch kids. Donna will be remembered at a private memorial celebration early in the new year. Thanks be to God for the lives of all God's saints and servants!

Preschool Ministry Update

Please join us for an important special meeting of the congregation on Sunday, December 4th at 10:45am in the Center for Ministry.

Congregational Vice-President Joan Kiekhaefer reported in last month's newsletter that there has been a VERY significant development in our congregation's Preschool. In order to consider this substantive change to our preschool (and to authorize necessary campus alterations if approved), the Church Council called a special meeting of the congregation on Sunday, December 4th at 10:45am in the Center for Ministry. The following series of questions and answers is designed to help you better understand the decisions which we face.

Q: What is this opportunity we have to grow our Preschool?

A: St. Mark's Nursery School, established 50 years ago and operated by St. Mark's Methodist Church (just on the other side of the Fire House) will be closing at the end of their current school year, May 31, 2023. The program provides a valuable service to the Lamorinda Community and is an integral provider of Preschool programming to the area. It is supported by a strong group of current families and past alumni families. The parent community, current Director and staff would like to find a way to continue the program. We have been asked if we would be interested in a strategic combination of our two schools.

Q: What caused the closure of St. Mark's Preschool?

A: There has been a disagreement between the local Orinda St. Mark's congregation and the regional United Methodist Church. A lawsuit was filed and the outcome was that the local congregation has been dissolved. They have conducted their last worship service. The UMC is in the process of taking possession of the property and is allowing the Preschool to use their space only until the end of the current school year, May 31, 2023. At that time, the Preschool must vacate its campus.

Q: Why would HSCP consider combining with SM's?

A: Combining the programs will provide HSLC the opportunity to serve and connect with a much larger piece of the younger-family population in Lamorinda. This is a great chance to grow our impact on younger families. We minister to the older population of our community with the LARC program and with this we have the chance to be more impactful to families at the other end of the age spectrum. The St. Mark's Preschool is 3+ times the size of the current HSCP (with approximately 45 children). Additionally, SM is strong financially and could contribute significantly toward our long-term fiscal stability.

Q: Will a combined Preschool program still be a ministry of HSLC?

A: Absolutely! Our Preschool will continue to be a key ministry of HSLC. We will continue to emphasize values-development among our students, and offer chapel to all students on a weekly basis.

Q: What might a combined Preschool program look like?

A: HSCP currently operates a partial day program — with a morning program and an optional Noon-2pm Lunch Bunch. SM's operates a full day program with a menu of schedule options for families. A combined program will operate based on the SM schedule. There appears to also be an opportunity to offer a Toddler program (18Months) in the future, as our local public schools begin offering a public Preschool option.

Q: What would this mean for the families of HSCP?

A: The combined Preschools would offer a larger and longer daily program than HSCP currently offers. The families can take advantage of the same or all of the new offerings, but more options will be available. HSCP children would experience more programming, new and expanded physical space and additional experienced staff, all significantly enhancing their preschool experience.

Q: What would this mean for the families of St. Mark's?

A: A new combined Preschool will provide continuity of care both for existing and legacy St. Mark's families. By combining the SM's staff

with that of HSCP the SM families will continue their relationships with familiar teachers in a new environment located nearly next door to their former Preschool. Parents will not have to change their daily "route planning" for drop off and pick ups because the new location will be almost next door. The values and teaching strategies are very similar so the St. Mark's families will be welcomed into a familiar nurturing environment.

Q: How would this combination impact our school's staff?

A: While the opportunity for leadership of a much larger Preschool program was not contemplated when we hired Ms. Amy in August, 2022, this will be a significant opportunity to learn, grow and increase her experience. She will have the benefit of doing this expanded job side by side with the current SM Director, Claire Peterson, as her mentor. Claire (who will be transitioning toward retirement) has had experience growing the SM program significantly in her 8 year tenure and running an admired and successful program.

Q: What is the timing of this combination?

A: The St. Mark's program has to close in its current location May 31, 2023. If this combination is approved, we would work to offer a combined Summer School program beginning in June 2023 followed by a combined full school year program in August 2023.

Q: Would we have to modify our space to expand our Preschool?

A: Yes! State Preschool licensing requirements are quite clear about things like toilets and handwashing stations, classroom space and indoor and outdoor play areas. We have had initial conversation with both the architect and the contractor who served us so well in our recent LARC remodel / upgrade — and believe that create a space that accommodates up to 60 children in/under the current Gregersen Hall building footprint.

Q: What will this cost and how will we finance the project?

A: We are working with the ELCA Mission in Ministry Fund for an interim short term loan to finance the construction. The loan will be paid back from a combination of excess cash flow from the combined Preschool and Fundraising.

Q: How would this combination impact HSLC's financial condition?

A: The combination would strengthen HSLC's financial condition. The current St. Mark's Preschool has generated positive operating income for each of the past three years.

Q: How would an enlarged Preschool impact the LARC program?

A: We will take steps to insure that there is no detrimental impact on the LARC program. The starting and ending times of the LARC program are at different times than when the Preschool day begins and ends so parking lot usage should not overlap. We have requested the architect to design the entry/exit of the Preschool at the side of Gregersen Hall so that the children/parents do not use the front door to Gregersen Hall which is used by the LARC participants. We also anticipate that there could be increased opportunity for targeted intergenerational activities.

Q: How would this expansion impact Gregersen Hall?

A: With this expansion and along with the expansion of the LARC program over the last few years, we will dedicate the use of Gregersen Hall during the week to our two ministries: LARC and the Preschool. The assembly space in the center of Gregersen Hall will be reduced, but available when the Preschool and LARC are not operating. The kitchen will not be changed and available as it is now for congregational gatherings.

Q: Will the name of the Preschool be changed?

A: Yes, the name will be changed to reflect the combination and more coverage to the entire Lamorinda community. A new name is under discussion and has not been decided.

Q: Why do we need to have a meeting to do this?

A: We will asking the Congregation for approval to move forward with combining the two preschools. This includes the potential of borrowing funds and spending monies to rework portions of Gregersen Hall to facilitate the larger Preschool program. Our constitution requires a congregational meeting for decisions of this gravity.

ADVENT OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND!

Sanctuary Decorating

Advent begins on the Sunday after Thanksgiving and that means it's time for us to start getting ready for Christmas! Our annual 'Hanging of the Greens' event will see us decorating both inside our Sanctuary and out-and-about on our campus at 3pm on Sunday, December 4. There may be no better way to get into the spirit of the Season!



December 4th @ 3pm

The Merlin Family Christmas Fest

Chris and Lisa Merlin cordially invite you to their annual wine and heavy appetizer party on Saturday, December 17th from 5 pm to 7 pm. Please join them in celebrating Christmas together after a two-year hiatus, at their home at 1124 Larch Ave. in Moraga!

RSVP to merlinfmly@aol.com, call (510) 506-2061 or catch Lisa or Chris at worship.

December 17th / 5-7pm



Cookie Exchange

Christmas cookies have long been at the heart of celebrations around the world. Join Cristi Chow and friends in the Center for Ministry Building on Saturday, December 17th from 1 pm to 3pm. You'll want to bring a dozen cookies to share and a dozen cookies to 'trade'.



Cookie Exchange

December 17th / 1-3pm

Here We Come a'Caroling

Steve & Nina Berchtold invite you to join them for a caroling party on the evening of December 19th! We'll meet up at Holy Shepherd — and head out to share the songs of the Christmas season. Afterwards, we'll stop at a member home for a bit of Christmas cheer!



December 19th @ 6:30pm

Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church
433 Moraga Way
Orinda, CA 94563