NEW LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

SIGNS OF NEW LIFE



HOLIDAY WORSHIP *SCHEDULE*

CHRISTMAS EVE - SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24 4:00 PM, 7:00 PM

CHRISTMAS DAY - SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25 9:30 AM

NEW YEAR'S DAY - SUNDAY, JANUARY 1 9:30 AM

As we journey our way through Advent, we are preparing for a joyful Christmas celebration! Make plans to join us for worship on Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24 with two services at 4:00 and 7:00 PM. The following two holiday Sundays will have only one combined service at 9:30 AM. Encourage your family and neighbors to join us!

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Walk in Newness of Life Pastor Clayton Faulkner

Once we turn the corner of Thanksgiving and head into the final weeks of the calendar year, I always find myself in a reflective mood. It's a season of evaluation for me. I think this naturally happens in lots of places through year-end reviews and reporting. But it's also a good time to do this personally.

One resource I found encourages a "life audit." Doing a life audit can help you pinpoint where you need to make adjustments in your life and facilitate changes you hope to see in the new year. This life audit recommends evaluating eight different areas of life: health, finances, personal development, career, relationships, self-care, home life, and free time. What changes would make the biggest impact in your life for each area?

Another set of questions I found valuable are from therapist Nedra Tawwab. She poses 10 questions to process before you wrap up 2022:

- 1. What did 2022 teach me about myself?
- 2. Who showed up for me, and how can I nurture those relationships?
- 3. What do I need to accept about myself and the other people in my life?
- 4. How did I cope with uncomfortable feelings?
- 5. How can I better manage my reaction to my feelings?
- 6. In what ways will I take better care of myself in 2023?
- 7. What has been a barrier to me completing my goals, and how will I remove the barrier in 2023?
- 8. What limiting beliefs do I need to release?
- 9. What do I need to practice doing more or less of?
- 10.What one boundary do I need to implement to improve my peace in 2023?

Hopefully these questions will give you something to chew on as the year closes out and a new one begins. Perhaps it is the season of waiting during Advent that causes me to be so reflective. It takes some of the passivity out of it. Advent is not meant to be a season of unresponsive thumb-twiddling. It is a time of preparation. Like John the Baptizer we are called to prepare the way for something deeper and more profound that is arriving.

That is why we don't jump headfirst into Christmas. Even if the culture of commercialized Christmas is putting up the decorations before Halloween, as the church we know that celebrating too early misses the point. It's like eating a stew that hasn't had time to simmer. It tastes thinner, less robust. Christmas needs Advent so that we can taste the flavors more fully.

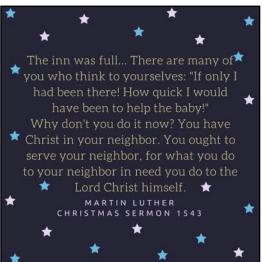
We also don't jump headfirst into Christmas because the weight is too heavy. Distracted by parties, presents, and preparation, Advent slows us down to recognize the enormity of the incarnation. "And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). This eternal Word "did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death - even death on a cross" (Philippians 2:6-8). God becomes a human through the partnership and humility of young Mary who recognized that God was helping "his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever" (Luke 1:54-55).

At Christmas we remember that God did something enormous through the smallest means possible: a human infant. God still does enormous things through small means. We witness this every time we share our resources, when we give without expecting return, and when we gather around modest portions of bread and wine on Sunday. God reaches out and grasps us in love through the smallest, most ordinary things.

Advent is here. Christmas is coming. Christ is being

born. Prepare some space in the inn of your heart for him. Reflect on how the year went and your hopes for the year to come. If your neighbor is going to experience the love of Jesus in their life, it will be because of Jesus *in you*.

God bless you and your families during this season of joy and hope.





Church Council News Aimee Castillo, Church Council

Happy New Year! I always look forward to the new year. It's a chance to start anew, and another year we have been allowed to live on this Earth. Our new year, or Advent, is special. Not only are we starting over on our liturgical calendar, but we are also taking the next four weeks to prepare for the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is easy to rush through Advent, as many people are trying to get through the hustle and bustle for Christmas. But if we slow down and recognize the importance of Advent, we will remember that it's the most wonderful time of the year! "For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6).

We as humans do not have many chances to know what happens next. But Advent tells us of what is to come. Advent is the promise that our Messiah is coming. And not just a baby born in a manger, but the assurance that our Lord and Savior will have His Second Coming. Hallelujah! As Advent means coming, we must also remember our Gregorian calendar of leaving during this time of year.

From January 2020-December 2022, I have served on Church Council. I do love New Life very much; it in every sense of the word has given my family "new life," but it is time for me to explore other ways to serve our church. Like we say, all good things must come to an end, but we also know that every new beginning comes from some other beginning's end.

And on that note, I would like to take this time to welcome our new incoming Church Council members. I know God has led every one of our members on this path for New Life, and I have no doubt what an amazing church they will lead for us. Please remember to always pray for our Church Council, as they have the weight of the church on their shoulders. But the Lord promises in Jeremiah 29:11, "'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'"

So whether it be coming or going, starting anew or continuing, the Lord promises that He will take care us. And He will take care of our church. Amen.

ELCA Church Council welcomes new vice president and 18 new members

The Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) met at the Lutheran Center in Chicago, Nov. 10–Nov. 13. The council welcomed ELCA Vice President Imran Siddiqui and 18 new members, elected by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly. The council serves as the ELCA churchwide organization's board of directors and interim legislative authority between meetings of the Churchwide Assembly.

In her report to the council, ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton drew attention to the substantial work charged to the council by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly. Eaton said the work will "have a significant effect on this church as we listen to God's call and try as best as we can and as faithfully as we can to remain true to the gospel, but somehow find a way to speak and act in the cultural vernacular." Eaton said one of Martin Luther's gifts was his translation of the Bible into German so that people could receive it in their own language. She emphasized to the council how the work set before them could impact those who are presently not in church but may come in five or ten years.

In key action, the council approved a nomination process for the Commission on a Renewed Lutheran Church. The commission will consist of up to 35 voting members, to include at least 25% people of color or whose primary language is other than English and a goal of at least 20% youth or young adults. Nominations will be received from synod councils or synod executive committees as well as through an open nomination process. The Church Council's executive committee will present a slate of nominees at the council's April 2023 meeting. This action is in response to the 2022 Churchwide Assembly call for the council to establish the Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church to consider statements of purpose for the church and its organizational structure and to present its findings and recommendations to the 2025 Churchwide Assembly in preparation for a possible reconstituting convention. The council also referred to the commission the question of changing the denomination's name.

In other action, the council:

- Authorized the engagement of a firm to conduct a comprehensive audit for diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility of the Constitutions, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the ELCA (CBCR), the Roster Manual, the Church Council Governance Policy Manual and "Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline." A report will be presented at the fall 2023 Church Council meeting.
- Scheduled for 2024 the initiation of a task force for reconsideration of the social statement *<u>Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust</u>*.
- Amended the Churchwide Organization Personnel Policies to include a provision concerning nondisclosure agreements as requested by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly memorial on separation agreements.
- Revised the 2023 fiscal year current spending authorization from \$68,814,000 to \$68,429,562 and revised the 2023 World Hunger spending authorization from \$22,869,000 to \$25,250,000.



ELCA News Continued



- Deferred questions on the development of social messages on U.S. national gun policy and child abuse and protection and the revision of the social message "<u>Homelessness</u>" until the spring 2023 Church Council meeting.
- Adopted a continuing resolution establishing council advisory members to include the presidents — or designee — of the ELCA ethnic associations and a representative of Reconciling Works. The council also approved revisions to the ELCA Church Council Governance Policy Manual to include reference to advisory members.
- Repealed the 2003 Policy on Criteria for Synodically Authorized Worshiping Communities and directed consideration of a new policy.
- Encouraged the task force addressing disciplinary concerns of leaders of color to continue conversation regarding the position of a racial justice ombudsperson.
- Received a report on research work related to discriminatory treatment within the call process and inequitable compensation of rostered ministers of color, and called for interaction with and among the Christian Community and Leadership home area, the Leadership Committee of the Conference of Bishops, and the Candidacy and Leadership Development Working Group.
- Closed the special appeal for the COVID-19 Response Fund, which raised \$2,112,429.
- Approved amendments to three corporate social responsibility issue papers and a new Privatized Immigration Detention Social Criteria Investment Screen.
- Received a progress report regarding the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and urged actions to increase awareness of the confession in advance of the 500th anniversary in 2030.
- Elected members of the advisory board of Trinity Lutheran Seminary at Capital University and boards of directors of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, Wartburg Theological Seminary, the Mission Investment Fund, and National Lutheran Campus Ministry, and elected a member of the Committee of Hearing Officers.
- Approved amendments to the bylaws of Portico, Lenoir-Rhyne University and United Lutheran Seminary.

The Church Council received/engaged in the following:

- Reports from the church's secretary, treasurer and vice president, from the ELCA Conference of Bishops, from the Church Council Youth and Young Adult working group and from the churchwide office home areas.
- Progress reports on synod diversity goals and from the Candidacy and Leadership Development working group.
- Debrief of the 2022 Churchwide Assembly.
- Education on gender and racial justice.
- Greetings from ecumenical partners.





Sunday School 4th-6th Grade Class

Youth and Family Announcements



Christmas Events for Youth and Family

Children's Community

Christmas

Party!





December 10th @ 11am

New Life Lutheran Church 3521 E. Orange St. Pearland TX 77581

Crafts Pizza/Snacks Games Bingo Prizes

Special Guest!

This Event is FREE! A food collection for Christian Helping Hands will be welcome. Questions? Call 281-481-1818

The **Children's Christmas Pageant** is on Sunday, December 11 at 9:15 AM. Rehearsals on Sunday, December 4 at 9:15 AM and Saturday, December 10 at 9:30 AM (before the Christmas party). We need children and youth of all ages to participate in our presentation. Parent helpers needed for costumes and organizing. See Aimee Castillo for details.

Neighborhood **Christmas Caroling** will be on Friday, December 23 at 7:00 PM. Bring your family and spread the joy!

Quilters

New Life Quilters are still hard at work creating quilts to sell and to send to Lutheran World



Relief. They meet every Tuesday at 9:30 AM in the Fellowship Hall and all are welcome to help make quilts and have fellowship with the ladies.

Quilting is a year-round activity and once the quilts are sent to LWR, the work of creating more for next year begins.



Meals on Wheels Ministry at New Life

Our next delivery date is December 12-16.

DATES FOR 2023: Feb 6-10 Apr 3-7* May 29*-Jun 2 Jul 24-28 Sep 18-22 Nov 13-17 *No Delivery on Fri, Apr 7 or Mon, May 29

Mark your calendars

If you (or someone you know) would like to help with this important ministry, please call Barbara Flowers at 713-817-1012.

If you know someone who might benefit from this program, you can call Pearland Meals on Wheels at 281-485-5081 for information. BEAR provides children in Harris County in Child Protective Services with basic needs, support, and dignity.

We Are Hosting a BEAR Toy Drive through December 11

Gifts can be purchased for children newborn – 17 years old. NEW gifts only, no used items. No candy, food items, or clothing (these resources are provided through BEAR's year round program). If a gift requires batteries, please include them. Do not gift wrap gifts/toys (donations of wrapping paper or gift bags are always appreciated for caregivers, though!).



Thank You! From Church Council and Staff

- To Pastor Clayton for leading a Bible Discovery Class for our students.
- To the Quilters, a team of women who volunteer every Tuesday morning. They made 132 quilts to be sent out into the world through the work of Lutheran World Relief. They had a successful sale raising \$860. The funds are used to replenish batting, material, thread, and other supplies.
- To Judy Foucheaux and all volunteers who helped box and load the quilts for shipping. Every person volunteering makes the work go faster.
- To John and Colleen Gestl and Karen Cheney for taking the quilts for shipment.
- To Linda Stavinoha for the Halloween Community Party organization and the many volunteers it takes to make this such a fun event. Linda would like to thank everyone who helped by filling candy bags, helping to organize, working the tables, serving food, the two bingo callers, and the setup and clean up. A special thanks to Korie, Logan, and Rylynn.
- To Elizabeth White for the toys, crafts, stuffed animals, and clothing. We were able to distribute the coats and jackets to others in the church.
- To Pastor Clayton for the Halloween Pet Blessing held Halloween night. He said it was fun and would do again; he didn't get bitten.
- To New Life Senior Lunch group who donated \$300+ for hurricane relief in Florida.
- To Aimee Castillo for leading our BEAR Toy Drive that will help children in CPS.
- To Rudy Moreno for advising the Council of Wind/Hail Insurance history.
- To Rudy Moreno for clarification of facilities contracts.

We appreciate you ALL so much!



Thank you to Elizabeth White for helping with the LWR Ingathering. 102 quilts in 11 boxes and 238 school kits in 22 boxes were shipped.



Signs of New Life

Advent and Christmas Decorating

We had a great team to help us decorate the sanctuary on Saturday, November 26. Many thanks for all the help.



Lutherhill Summer Camp Registration is Open!



Visit us at: lutherhill.org

LYLE 2 | Completed LYLE 1, 10th or 11th Grade



Sunday School Classes will Resume on January 15

Most of our Sunday School classes are pausing to take a break for Advent and Christmas. The children and youth will prepare for their Christmas Pageant during the break (scheduled for December 11 at 9:15 AM).

Combined ELCA High School Events

The high school students in our synod's conference (the Coastal Bay Conference) are joining together for events once a month. This month we are gathering for The Bethlehem Walk at South Main Baptist Church. See flyer below for details.

CCY Youth Group Presents:

A Christmas Gathering

The Bethlehem Walk – an Interactive Experience for High Schoolers

December 10, 2022, at 5:00 pm South Main Baptist Church 4300 E Sam Houston Pkwy, Pasadena TX Then Fellowship at Peace Lutheran Church 6435 Fairmont Parkway, Pasadena TX

RSVP by December 5 ~ Youth Mem1@gmail.com



Advent and Christmas Decorating





Upcoming Events

Midweek Advent Worship: Begins on Wednesday, November 30 at 7:00 PM. We will gather to sing Holden Evening Prayer and hear a message. A community dinner in the Fellowship Hall will happen beforehand at 5:45 PM. Choir rehearsal is at 6:15 PM.

Senior Adult Luncheon: Wednesday, December 7 at Noon. Please donate items for Seafarers (shaving cream, toothbrush, toothpaste, etc.).

Women's Christmas Party: Friday, December 9 at 6:00 PM. We will be featuring "Angels Among Us" and collecting funds for the ELCA's "Katie's Fund." "Katie's Fund is an endowment that supports ministry in three areas: leadership development, global connections, and living theology. It was established in 1997 to honor the legacy of Katharina von Bora Luther, raise up bold leaders for the women's organization and support bold and creative ministry for generations to come." Dinner will be provided, but if you would like to bring a dessert to share that would be great. Also, we will be doing a gift exchange. For those who want to participate, please bring a wrapped gift (up to \$25). Participation is not required. Please RSVP to Karen at splash326@yahoo.com or text at 972-841-2600.

Family Christmas Party: Saturday, December 10 at 11:00 AM.

Christmas Pageant: We need children and youth of all ages to participate in our presentation on Sunday, December 11 at 9:15 AM. Rehearsals on Sunday, December 4 at 9:15 AM and Saturday, December 10 at 9:30 AM. Parent helpers needed, too.

BEAR Toy Drive through December 11: Gifts can be purchased for children newborn – 17 years old. NEW gifts only, no used items. See page 10 for details.

Blue Christmas Service: Wednesday, December 21 at 7:00 PM. A service that acknowledges grief during the holidays.

Christmas Caroling: Friday, December 23 at 7:00 PM.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship Services: Saturday, December 24 at 4:00 and 7:00 PM.

Christmas Day Worship Service: Sunday, December 25 at 9:30 AM.

New Year's Day Worship Service: Sunday, January 1 at 9:30 AM.

Seafarer Box Donation List - N (We try to put this in every box)	leeds	Boxes		ll be packing ecember 7th
Shaving Cream Large Soap Razors (3 per box) Washcloth Deodorant Hairbrush/Comb ToothBrush Pens ToothPaste Pencils Nail Clippers Pencil Sharpeners	Pocket Sized Notebooks Gum/Hard Candy Shampoo Conditioner Lotion Playing Cards Ball Car Misc Toys	Bandaids Dental Floss Kleenex Gold Bond Powder KeyChain	e have them) Word Search Sudoku Coloring Book Flashlight w/ Batteries Texas Souveniers Earbuds/Headphones Lip Balm Sewing Kit	Fillers (for larger boxes) TShirts (New) BaseBall Caps Ski Cap Gloves Socks Puzzles Magazines Books

New Life has been packing 100+ Christmas shoeboxes for the Seafarers out of the Port of Houston for many years.

Collections are made all year around and the New Life Seniors pack these boxes at their Luncheon in December. The wrapped shoeboxes, books, magazines, puzzles and many more bulk items are taken to the Port of Houston, International Seafarers Center during the month of December for distribution to the ships that come in to port.

Items above will be collected in the Fellowship Hall until the December packing.

Financial Snapshot

 Giving in November 2022 (through Nov 27) = \$21,931.78 (82.7%)

 Giving needed per month
 = \$26,519.00

 Giving January—November 2022
 = \$237,729.71 (81.5%)

 Giving needed January—November 2022
 = \$291,709.00



New Life Lutheran Church

3521 E Orange St. Pearland, TX 77581 Phone: (281) 485-1818 Website: NewLifeLutheran.com Facebook: Facebook.com/NewLifePearland

Church Staff

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Clayton Faulkner (pastor@newlifelutheran.com) Director of Music: Johnny Salvesen (music@newlifelutheran.com)

Church Council

Vice-President: Vanessa Rincones Secretary: Mary Ann Marcha Treasurer: John Garrett Financial Secretary: Nancy Bryars At Large: Lisa Weber, Aimee Castillo Helping Hands in Worship for December 2022

	4-Dec	11-Dec	18-Dec	December 25 (9:30am) ONE Service this Sunday
Assisting 8:00 Minister	Helen Beckman	Elna Ritter	Nancy Bryars	
Assisting 10:30 Minister	Aimee Castillo	Aimee Castillo	Lisa Weber	Cheryl Robinson
Communion 8:00 Assistant	Vince Gottlieb	Cheryl Robinson	Doug Barron	
Communion 8:00 Assistant	Robin Gottlieb	Lynn Barron	Lynn Barron	
Communion 10:30 Assistant	Linda Hudgens	Merideth Oliver	Merideth Oliver	
Communion 10:30 Assistant	Barbara Flowers			
Ushers 8:00	Charlie Gaevert	Vince and Robin Gottlieb	Charlie Gaevert	
Ushers 10:30	Cathy Scott	Jenaro & Max Castillo	Cathy Scott, Jocelyn & Emily Weber	Cathy Scott
Altar Flowers	Art & Tiffany Pineda 13th Wedding Anniversary	Karen Sweet-Cheney Memory of Dad, Pete Sweets Birthday on 13th	Flicks in honor of Ryan Flicks Birthday	Linda Stavinoha - Korie Williams 18th Birthday

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