



Grace and peace you,

A new year is upon us as is the season of Epiphany in our church calendar. This is the season we remember that, the gifts Jesus brings, are gifts for all people of all nations. The wisemen who come to visit represent the known world at the time of Jesus. These wisemen are shown the way by the star in the sky, meet Jesus and worship him. As we read we are reminded that the message of Jesus is not meant to remain with us alone—but is intended to be shared far and wide—with everyone—everywhere.

As we enter a new year there lingers an idea that there is space for a fresh start, a new beginning. A new year allows us, mentally, to close one chapter of life and begin another, if we wish to or need to. Likewise, Epiphany ushers in a new chapter and a fresh start for God’s people. It is a season of light, stars, hope and expectation for the new thing God is up to in Jesus.

It is my prayer as we enter this new year that the groundwork we laid during the 2022 discernment / mission priority process will bear fruit that blesses the Snoqualmie Valley and our faith community.

It is my prayer as we enter this new year that every member of this faith community would prayerfully consider what this community means to them and in what ways the Holy Spirit is inviting you to partner in new and/or familiar ways.

It is my prayer as we enter this new year that God be at the center of your life. As we re-set, look forward and re-imagine our lives in the new year, I pray you might consider Jesus in the vision. I pray you trust that the Spirit is with you in all you do. I pray you trust that Jesus is by your side in all you do. I pray you know that God’s love is pouring out over you in all you do.

It is my prayer as we enter this new year that you take deep breaths and remember that the source of life desires to be part of your life—to fill you with grace upon grace.

It is my prayer as we enter this new year that you experience deep joy and the strength of fellowship through any sorrow. Please know you are not alone.

It is my prayer as we enter this new year that you know, deep in your heart, that you are a beloved child of God right now and always. May God’s love for you spill out into the lives of those around you.

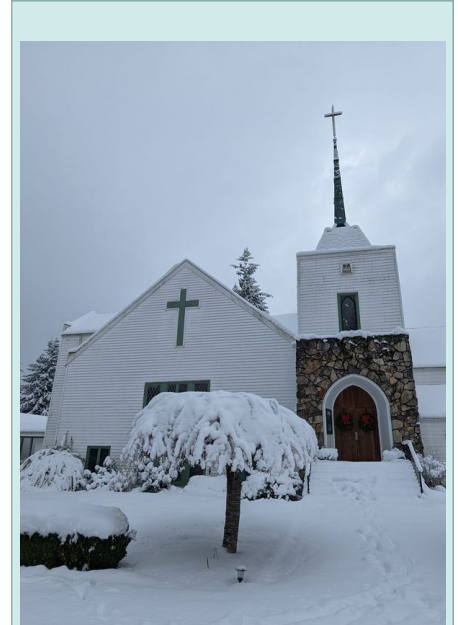
It is my prayer as we enter this new year that Mt Si Lutheran be a light in our community through Spirit led mission and ministry.

I give thanks to God for each and every one of you.

Thank you for being here and being there for one another.

I would humbly ask for your prayer for each of our leaders on council, on teams and committees and on staff. This is a challenging and exciting time to lead. Please pray we support and uplift one another as best we can. Please pray we listen and are open to the Spirit’s leading. Thank you.

Peace  
Pastor Krista



**INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

Bible Studies .....2  
Blood Drive .....2  
Council Report.....3  
Ways to Give .....3  
Faith Formation.....4 & 5  
Birthdays .....6  
Chalking the door.....7  
Sunday Lessons.....7

**SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST**

- Bishop’s Letter on last page—*great read!*
- Council Report pg. 3
- Upcoming Events for Families pgs. 4 & 5

**Note for January. I will be out of town Jan 6-20.**  
**You can contact Pastor Lara Forbes for any pastoral emergency.**  
**Her number is 425-505-5590**

## RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE



**March 14th**  
**10-3pm**

Blood Drive registration

is live for signups

at [www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org)

[Donate Blood, Platelets or Plasma. Give Life](#)

The drive is open to the public and a spot can be reserved using the code: MtSiLutheran. If you are interested in helping with this blood drive please reach out to Rick Rodriguez.

## Mt Si Financial Summary

Jan-Nov Budget =

**\$189,984**

Jan-Nov Expense =

**\$171,375**

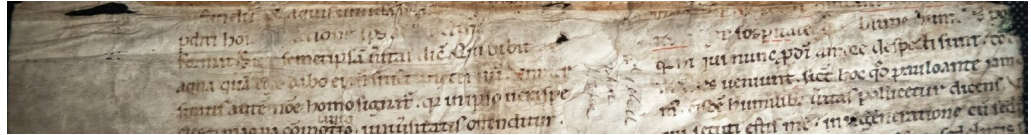
Jan-Nov Income =

**\$159,219**

Overall =

**\$-12,156**

\*since we print the newsletter prior to the end of the current month, the newsletter reporting will always be one month behind.



*We seek to offer a range of education opportunities for all ages. If you any questions about these offerings please talk to Pr. Krista.*

## SUNDY EDUCATION

We will meet for adult ed on Jan 8 and Jan 15. We will have special guest speakers for these two weeks. Pr. Paul Benz on the 8th and Pr. Kristy Daniels on the 15th. Jan 22 is our annual meeting. We will meet again on the 29th. Children and Youth are welcome to a special education time on Jan 8 following worship.

## WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

All ladies are welcome to participate. The Bible Study meets in the Fellowship Hall each Monday at 12:30pm. They are studying the book of Joshua. If you have any questions, please reach out to Vivian Waid.

## MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Each Saturday @ 9am the men gather at Little Si Restaurant in North Bend for breakfast and Bible Study. The Study focuses on the readings for the upcoming Sunday worship. Reach out to Dave Spurling or Ed Benson for details.

## MID-WEEK DESSERT & STUDY: MATTHEW

This is an adult study group that will meet to discuss both books on certain topics and books of the Bible. Each study will be 4-5 weeks in length with breaks in-between. We will meet each Wednesday night in January from 6-7:30pm. Our focus will be the Book of Matthew. All are welcome!

## CONFIRMATION & FAMILY DINNER

Our confirmands gather Thursday evenings. In December class will meet on January 5, 12, 19 and 26. We will share in dinner together from 5:30-6pm and then enter our study from 6-7pm. On Jan 5 we will have a special family worship from 6:30-7pm.

Please hold our confirmands in prayer. Participating in confirmation are: Austin Hall, Toren Rhyne, Kaelynn Sampson and Judah Tiongson.

## COUNCIL REPORT

Greetings from your council.

We had a busy advent season. On November 27 we had our annual advent festival. We made advent wreaths. We also had Christmas oriented crafts and lots of homemade treats. It was well attended and everyone seemed to have a good time. On December 3 we had a booth at the annual North Bend Holly Days event. We provided crafts for kids and hot chocolate and hot cider. The weather was cold and very windy, so we were unable to assemble the craft items there. Instead, we gave the kids the materials and had them take them home to assemble. Even with the cold windy conditions we had over fifty kids take crafts and many more people of all ages enjoyed the hot chocolate and hot cider.

At our December council meeting we elected officers for 2023. The council chose to keep the 2022 executive team for another year. For 2023 the officers will be President, Jack Boller, Vice President, Ed Benson, Secretary, Dave Spurling. We still have a council member vacancy we can fill. If you are interested in serving on the council, let one of us know. Our annual year end congregational meeting will be on January 22 following our service. One of the things we hope to do at this meeting is approve a change to the constitution that sets a quorum at 30% of the active membership instead of a straight number of 40. We currently have 85 voting members. 30% would bring a quorum to 26 ppl.

We will be holding a council retreat on January 21. We will be developing plans for 2023. One of the things we will decide is how we are going to move forward in pursuing the three areas of focus that came out of the discernment process. These are, assure the safety and wellbeing of community youth, assure the safety and wellbeing of community elderly, and increase our evangelism in the community.

In 2023 we will continue our involvement with East King County cluster to look for ways we can collaborate and share resources with other churches in the cluster. We will be focusing on executive management, finances, music, and youth programs.

Jack Boller

### **JANUARY 22 CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

The second half of our annual meeting with Ministry Reports, Year End Financials, etc will be on Jan 22nd following worship. This meeting will be offered in-person and via Zoom

## Ways to Give



### **If you purchase from Amazon:**

1. Set up Amazon Smile
2. Select Mount Si Lutheran as a beneficiary.

We will receive a percentage as a donation from Amazon to Mt Si. *See our website for links and more info.*

### **Make a gift online through our website:**

[www.mtsilutheran.org/onlinegiving](http://www.mtsilutheran.org/onlinegiving)

Thank you for your continued generosity.

-Treasurer

*“You show me  
the path of  
life. In your  
presence  
there is full-  
ness of joy”  
Ps. 16*

**Holly Days** may have felt like Hurricane Days at times this year, but it was a great way to show community support! We provided an opportunity to make Christmas ornaments up of glass and plastic bulbs. We also had some hot cocoa! We served over 150 cups and approximately 60 kids made ornaments in between gusts of wind. A huge thanks to the volunteers who helped make this outreach a success, we are a light in this community!



### GIRL SCOUTS

The Girl Scouts Leaders meet at the church on the third Thursday of each month from 6:30-8:30pm

### AA

AA meets every Thursday evening from 7:00pm to 9:00pm

## COMMUNITY NEWS



### Women's Christmas Brunch

Thank you to all who made this year's Women's Christmas Brunch such a joy! About 35 women gathered for fellowship, food, games, devotion and joy.

### The Advent Festival was such fun!

Thank you to Courtney and Inge who helped pull this event together for us! And to the Faith Formation team for providing the food.



## Cluster Events

As Mt. Si Lutheran continues to connect with other churches in our region of the NWWA Synod, youth events for grades 6-12 are scheduled periodically.

November's opportunities included a virtual Minecraft gaming night, as well as a "Sock Samurai" event at St. Andrew's, with Pastor Krista's husband, Doug, as the leading Ninja!

Leaders will be meeting in early December to discuss future opportunities for this group, so stay tuned for more events coming soon!

## CHILDREN AND YOUTH EDUCATION

**Sunday School**  
**1st Sunday of each month**  
 following the Fellowship Hour

Children and youth are invited for the monthly Sunday School sessions on **Sunday, January 8. (please note date change for January)** Teachers are also available on all other Sundays for any children who would like to stay beyond the Fellowship Hour.

## FAITH FORMATION



### Happy New year!

The Faith Formation Team is working on plans for activities like ice skating in February, spring gatherings, and summer events. We are putting together a survey to determine some parameters for events such as dates for VBS. Your feedback will help us to determine what the children, youth, and family ministry looks like.

### Thursday Children and Youth Activities

**Thursday evenings** are a time for our youth to join in on fellowship, food, fun, and learning! Each week we have Family Dinner from 5:30-6PM, and Confirmation 6-7PM.

**Once a month on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday** we have F.A.M.S. which is one of our children's ministry for K-5<sup>th</sup> grade. This month it will be on January 19, 4:30-5:30PM. Come join in the fun!



### Confirmation Youth and YOU

Thursday evening Confirmation has provided opportunities for 4 of our youth to meet and reflect on the core of our Lutheran beliefs. These weekly meetings provide fellowship with families (beginning with a shared meal), learning the 10 Commandments, and learning about Worship in a smaller setting. It also includes "homework" to discuss topics with members of the Congregation, so YOU may be approached with questions! Thanks in advance for supporting these Confirmands!

### Summer Family Camp



This summer we have an opportunity to partner with Sammamish Hills Lutheran Church youth ministry on a family camping trip to Lutherhaven's Shoshone Base Camp August 3-6<sup>th</sup>.

They are inviting families of all ages and sizes to join the Middle School, High School, and College students at Shoshone Base Camp. In the past it has been a wonderful camp for their older students, and it is exciting to be offered the chance for our families to join in the experience it as well. More information will come soon, make sure to Save-the-Date NOW!

If you have any questions or want more details regarding the Children, youth, and family ministries of Mt. Si Lutheran feel free to reach out to John Grebe at (360) 920-5876 or email him at [cyf@mtsilutheran.org](mailto:cyf@mtsilutheran.org).

*Updates to events are communicated through Constant Contact and an email list of families and friends, if you are not on this list but would like to be included please let John Grebe know.*

## JANUARY BIRTHDAYS



Peggy Halferty 4th

Brent Koukol 7th

Michael Hanson 10th

Lisa Sampson 10th

Eleanor Haycox 13th

Rachel Flanagan 14th

Joe Stone 14th

Vicki Wallentine 14th

Mary Abrahamson 16th

Brett Imsland 16

Leslie Hatling 18

Nancy Flanagan 24

Dana Koukol 25

Judy Stoddard 29

*If we missed your birthday or anniversary, please reach out to the office so we can make the correction.*

Send content for our weekly News from the Pews to Kathleen at: [mtsi.assistant@gmail.com](mailto:mtsi.assistant@gmail.com)

## WORSHIP NEWS—GUEST PREACHER BIOS

### January 8

**Rev. Paul Benz** the Younger is serving Seattle's Unhoused and Destitute in a Call to Operation Nightwatch and the staff, patients and families at Harborview Medical Center where he was a Resident Spiritual Care Provider in the height of the Covid 19 pandemic. As a Mental Health, Addiction, Grief and Trauma Chaplain of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Rev Benz is honored to bring Word and Sacrament to the streets, rooms of healing, and those who feel forgotten. Pastor Paul served communities in Arizona, the San Francisco Bay, Uganda and Taiwan prior to his call with Nightwatch. He lives with his beloved wife and daughter on Mercer Island.

Operation Nightwatch reduces the impact of poverty and homelessness, in keeping with Jesus' teaching to love our neighbors. Website: [www.seattlenightwatch.org](http://www.seattlenightwatch.org).

### Jan 15

**Pr. Kristy** serves at Church of Steadfast Love a bilingual congregation of the ELCA made up of Adults from all walks of life, that meets in Compass Housing Alliance, Pioneer Square, Seattle. The congregation appreciates worship, mission trips, and celebrations with cake!

**Pastor Krista will be out of town Jan 6th-Jan 20th.** Please reach out to Pr. Lara Forbes, 425-505-5590, for pastoral emergencies. Pr. Paul Benz will be preaching and presiding on Jan 8th. He serves Seattle Night Watch, a ministry that offers a wide range of services for folks living in poverty or homelessness. He will share about this ministry during Adult Ed time following worship. Pr. Kristy Daniels from Encompass Housing will be preaching and presiding on Jan. 15th She will also lead the adult hour and share about the work and ministry of Compass Housing and the Church of Steadfast Love. We are blessed to have these two gifted pastors share the Gospel with us and share about their unique ministry settings.

## WORSHIP NEWS—EPIPHANY SEASON

### Epiphany CHALKING THE DOOR

Chalking the door is a Faith @ Home practice you can use to invite Christ's blessing upon your home and those who live there in the New Year.

20 + C + M + B + 23

The letters have two meanings

1. The initial given to each Magi — Caspar, Malchior, and Balthazar — who came to visit Jesus in his first home.

2. An abbreviation of the Latin phrase for "MAY CHRIST BLESS THE HOUSE."

The "+" signs represent the cross, and the "20" at the beginning and the "23" at the end mark the year.

YOU MAY CHALK YOUR DOOR AND PRAY  
BRING PEACE TO THIS HOUSE AND TO ALL WHO DWELL HERE

WWW.EVERYDAYSANCTUARY.COM



Epiphany is the second-oldest festival of the Christian church (only Easter is an older observance). Originally, Epiphany celebrated four different events, all on one day: the birth of Jesus, his Baptism, his first miracle, and the visit of the Wise Men. Each of these is a revelation of God to humanity.

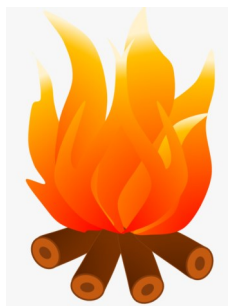
Eventually, the celebration of Christ's birth was separated out and became Christmas, twelve days earlier, so that the season of Christmas began with the revelation of Christ to Israel (represented by the shepherds at Bethlehem) and ended with the revelation of Christ to the Gentiles (represented by the Wise Men). Epiphany is therefore sometimes called "The Gentiles' Christmas."

Over the centuries, the other two celebrations were also separated. The celebration of Jesus' Baptism moved to the first Sunday after Epiphany and the commemoration of his miracle at the wedding at Cana moved to the second Sunday after Epiphany.

By: Aaron Ferkenstad

### January 8th

**Epiphany Bonfire at the Burnside Home** following education hour at church. Gather at the Burnside's around 12:30pm, bring your Christmas Tree to add to the bonfire! Leftover Christmas cookies to share are also welcome!



## JANUARY SUNDAY LESSONS

### January 1st

First Lesson: n/a  
Narrative Text:  
Matthew 2:1-12

### January 8th

First Lesson:  
Psalm 18:1-6, 28-31  
Narrative Text:  
Matthew 3:1-17

### January 15th

First Lesson: Psalm 91:1-11  
Narrative Text:  
Matthew 4:1-17

### January 22nd

First Lesson: Psalm 67  
Narrative Text:  
Matthew 5:1-10

### January 29th

First Lesson: Psalm 34:1-8  
Narrative Text:  
Matthew 6:7-21

**The Sunday  
flower chart is  
in the  
Fellowship Hall  
outside of the  
library.**

You are welcome to sign-up for a Sunday to provide one vase of flowers for the altar.

# BISHOP'S LETTER

January 2023



More than twenty years ago now, when I was serving in a congregation, I sat with a woman who was dying. I loved this woman. Her name was Bobbie. She was fierce and funny. She was smart. She could be a little intimidating. She was a tall, big woman who pounded her cane into the ground as she walked. Throughout her life, like most people, she knew grief and joy. Disappointment and surprise. I was honored to hold her hand and sit with her as she took her last breaths.

As pastor, I have had the opportunity to sit with many people as they are dying. It is one of the most holy things a person can do. There is truly a thinness between what is and what is to come. While there are many things I love and miss as a congregational pastor, one of the top absences is being invited into people's lives as they leave this world and enter into God's presence in the company of all the saints.

Recently I attended a three-day retreat with several bishops and leaders from the western part of the United States. Most of what we talked about and discerned was what it means to be church today. Included in the conversation was how to journey and accompany congregations that are dying. This retreat wasn't a "how-to manual" of what to do. Instead, the intentional prayer, singing, worship, and community led us to sit in the same "thinness" feeling that I mentioned above: what is and what is to come.

As we sat in both the grief of some of our congregations closing and in the anticipation of what God is calling us towards, one person made the comment, "There is Spirit-led death and then there is just death." I've been pondering about this statement since it was said. What does it mean to have a Spirit-led death? What does it mean to just die?

Perhaps we can use Bobbie's death as a guide.

I think back to Bobbie who I met with many times before she died. She made it clear to me what her wishes were for her funeral. She talked many times about how thrilled she would be to see her husband again. (Her husband died when he was twenty-eight leaving her with two small sons.) She was looking forward to resting. She wanted to make sure that I knew how glad she was to not be a burden any more to her sons. She had hopes for the assets she was leaving behind and how they would be used to further her passions. Most of all, she was excited about what was next for her – she talked quite frequently about the questions she was ready to ask Jesus.

In the weeks before Bobbie died, her sons called me to ask if I would be available to sit with Bobbie when she died. They lived far away and knew that they might not make it to her bedside in time. I, of course, said yes. When the nurse called me, I went.

In Bobbie's last hours on earth, I was with her. I felt God's holy presence as I held her hand, sang hymns, prayed the Lord's prayer, shed tears, sat in silence, loved her, and was present with her and Jesus in the thin place between life and death and resurrection.

Going back to the retreat that I was at and the questions that arose, I wonder how we can have language to talk about some congregations having Spirit-led deaths. While I hope and pray that all congregations thrive and grow, I also know that there is a life cycle for all things. And I want to be able to live in the thinness between life and death and resurrection with all of us in the Northwest Washington Synod. I want to have the hard, deep conversations that need to happen. I want us to talk about looking beyond survival and instead talk about death and resurrection. How can we do this in meaningful ways? How can we do this before there is a sudden death? How can we do this acknowledging the pain and heartache and also living in faith and hope?

We in the synod office want to journey with you in these conversations. It is not easy and it is not wanted. But it is a time that can be holy and where God's presence is made known. As this new year begins, may we walk together in the Spirit – placing our hope in God through Jesus. May we journey as resurrection people.

+ Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee