



Pastor's Note...

Grace and peace to you,

We find ourselves once again in the Advent season of the church year. This is a season of waiting, anticipating and hearing again the story of Jesus' birth.

You will notice many opportunities to participate in gatherings outside of Sunday worship this month. Some of these are at Mt Si and others are hosted by local Lutheran churches in our cluster. It can be easy to over fill our schedules with all the wonderful opportunities to celebrate the holidays, but once again, I encourage you to take the time you need to rest, take a break when you need it and to step back from the hustle and bustle to remember Emmanuel - God with us - God with you - now and always.

On Sundays we will enjoy a special worship and education series called, "On the Way to Bethlehem." The Faith Formation and Worship & Music team hope it is a blessing to you this season.

In addition to Sunday worship you two devotional books are available to you in the Fellowship

Hall or Narthex. One of these goes along with our "On the Way to Bethlehem" theme and the other was written by the clergy in our cluster. I hope you enjoy both offerings. Both will also be available electronically through NFTP and on the front page of the website before December 1.

We will again offer a Blue Christmas worship on Wednesday, December 18, 7pm in the sanctuary. This is a service for those who need space to lament, mourn, grieve or for any reason struggle during the holidays. if you know of someone who would find this service a blessing, please invite them.

On Christmas Eve we will offer two services at Mt Si - 7pm and 10pm. If you are looking for an earlier service, Sammamish Hills is offering one at 1pm and 4pm. Sammamish Hills also offer a lovely Christmas Day worship at 10am.

I pray this season brings you ever closer to the God who loves you.

- Peace, P. K.

In this newsletter you will find:

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ON THE WAY TO BETHLEHEM

Advent Worship & Education Focus

We are excited to introduce our special Advent Worship & Education series called, On the Way to Bethlehem. Each week we will explore important Biblical cities including Rome, Jerusalem, Nazareth and Bethlehem. The author of this worship and education series, Dr. Marcia McFee, writes, “Places shape us and shape our stories, even if we simply journey to and through them for a little while.

We are changed as their narratives become part of ours. By focusing on the places that shaped the path of Jesus’ birth narrative, we learn more about why his life, ministry, and death became one of the most significant narratives of human history.” The materials are based on the book, On the Way to Bethlehem by Rob Fuquay.



Blue Christmas

Blue Christmas Worship
Wednesday, December 18
7pm @ MSLC

This is a gentle, contemplative worship service for those who are carrying pain or loss during this season of celebration.
If you are struggling this holiday season, you are not alone.



Christmas Eve

Christmas Eve Candlelight
Worship
7pm & 10pm

We hope you and your loved ones will gather with us to celebrate the birth of Jesus, the Messiah, on Tuesday, December 24th here at Mt Si.
Come let us worship our God!

Special Events in December



Advent Festival December 1

You are invited to stay after worship to celebrate the beginning of Advent on Sunday, December 1.

Enjoy a special coffee hour, create your own Advent wreath to take home, make special ornaments and pick up your Advent devotionals!



CYF Christmas Party @ OSLC December 8

Children & youth are invited to build graham cracker houses, play games and eat yummy holiday treats. Invite a friend or two! Please sign-up via link sent through our weekly e-news or reach out to Pr. Krista
Location: Our Savior Lutheran Church, Issaquah
Time: 3-5pm



Advent Vespers @ SHLC, December 1

Enjoy this new Advent Vespers setting created, in part, by Pr. Mark Griffith.

5pm Preview Session

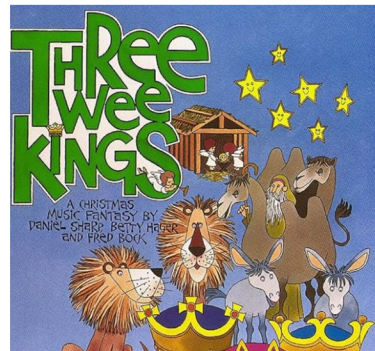
with the writers

6pm Worship

6:30pm Treats & Fellowship

Location: Sammamish Hills

Lutheran Church



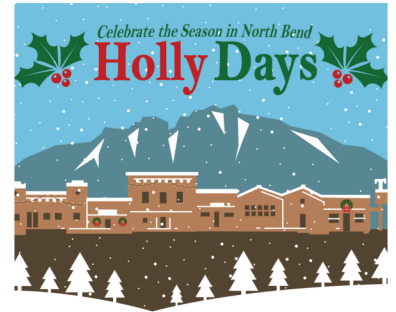
Three Wee Kings Christmas Pageant December 15

Are you ready to see camels, donkeys, kings, angels stars and more explore the good news of the coming Messiah?

Join our youth and adults as they tell of Jesus' birth in this humorous and music filled Christmas Pageant.

Location: MSLC

Time: After worship



— Downtown Community Celebration —

NB Holly Days December 7

We are once again hosting free crafts and handing out free hot chocolate at the North Bend Downtown Holly Days Event.

Can you help serve hot chocolate, guide a craft or hand out invitations to Christmas Eve? Please sign-up in the Fellowship Hall

Location: Main St. in NB

Time: 5-8pm



Christmas Choir Concert @ SHLC December 15

Enjoy the beauty of singers from several Lutheran Congregations, including Mt Si at this Christmas Concert.

Location: Sammamish Hills

Lutheran

Time: 3pm

Living our Mission...Growing in Grace



MSLC Winter Retreat

All are invited to gather at MSLC in early February for a special afternoon of fellowship, prayer & study. This mini-retreat is for all ages! Come enjoy a time of building relationships and re-centering, together, on Jesus. Details coming soon!



Wondering & Wandering with God Retreat

The annual women's retreat organized by several churches in our cluster is here!
Dates: March 7-9
Location: Rainbow Lodge
Registration forms coming soon!



House of Hope Holiday Giving

This year we are once again collecting gift cards for: Amazon, Target, Walmart or Safeway for the families at House of Hope. We are also collecting Shampoo, Conditioner & Body Wash for the mothers. Drop off in the Fellowship Hall before **December 10**. Want to donate cash? Look for the special envelopes.



Recap: Youth Retreat @ Camp Casey

100 youth and adults gathered at Camp Casey to build relationships, play, worship and grow in our faith together. It was such a joy to be there and see so many youth engaged in the retreat!



Garden of Giving

Thank you to all our amazing Garden of Giving Volunteers. For 2024 our final donation number was: 465.2lbs!!
THANK YOU!!



Epiphany Bonfire January 12

Following worship on January 12, you are welcome to the Burnside residence to enjoy a bonfire of Christmas trees and church papers! Details to come!

Supporting one another in faith.....



Sunday Readings & Weekday Education Opportunities

Sunday Readings for December

December 1

First Lesson: Romans 8:18-25

Gospel Lesson: Luke 2:1-3

December 8

First Lesson: Romans 12:9-18

Gospel Lesson: Luke 1:5-17

December 15

First Lesson: Romans 15:12-13

Gospel Lesson: Luke 1:26-38

December 22

First Lesson: Romans 13:8-11

Gospel Lesson: Luke 2:1-14

December 29

First Lesson: Psalm 148

Gospel Lesson: Matthew 2:1-12

Education Opportunities in December

Men's Bible Study Saturdays, 9am @ Little Si Restaurant.

Women's Bible Study - Mondays starting at 12:30pm. New study in New Testament starting soon! Talk to Sue Oster for details

Confirmation - Mondays from 5-6pm. Dec. 2, 9 & 16. No class on Dec. 23 or 30.

Sunday after Worship - On the Way to Bethlehem video series!

HAPPY
Birthday

December Birthdays

Lauralee Ritzenthaler 4th
Joshua Stone 12th
Ed Benson 14th
Zowie Karren 14th
Jack Boller 20th
Kay Boyle 22nd
Michael Harding 22nd
Christopher Sampson 24th
Don Oster 26th
Haley Chase 30th
Nate Chase 30th

HAPPY
Anniversary!

December Anniversaries

Michael & Rosemary Hanson 15th
Abe & Mary Abrahamson 22nd

Flower Chart Sign-ups

Please consider signing up to bring flowers for our altar on Sunday morning. This can be in honor or memory of a loved one or event in your life or just because you enjoy flowers!
The flower chart is in the Fellowship Hall hallway. Thank you for your offering!

Key Partnership Updates...Reaching Out



WHAT IS THE EASTSIDE LUTHERAN FELLOWSHIP? (ELF)

The Eastside Lutheran Fellowship (ELF) is a gathering of youth directors and lay leadership from seven local Lutheran churches seeking to plan shared children, youth and family ministry offerings. Examples of this ministry so far are the monthly community game nights, VBS and the upcoming Graham Cracker House Building Contest. Our aim is to build relationships and deepen faith. Want to know more? Talk to Pr. Krista

What is the Eastside Lutheran Church Community? (ELCC)

After two years of conversations among lay and clergy leaders in our cluster a name was chosen for the activities and efforts of our collaborative ministry. The name Eastside Lutheran Church Community was chosen as an umbrella title for congregations participating in cluster collaboration efforts. These congregations include: St. Andrew's, St. Luke's, Cross of Christ, Our Savior, Sammamish Hills and Mt Si.

Some of our efforts have included outdoor worship together, the support Mt Si received while I was on sabbatical, the Belize mission trip and more. Leaders are now exploring how we could work together in some cost saving ways and in ways to free up congregations to focus on ministry and share in our care for some of the business/administrative side of being church. We don't know what this looks like yet - but ideas are forming. A presentation of current ideas is being shared on November 24 during the annual meeting. Questions? Talk to Pastor

MSLC Council Report

Council met on the 17th. Our agenda included winter preparations, Synod Cluster activities, finances and preparation for our annual meeting. For the parsonage, Council approved installation of insulation in the crawl space, and repairs to the bathroom floor upstairs after a leak from the toilet caused mold to grow under the flooring.

The Synod Cluster, now renamed the Eastside Lutheran Church Community, or ELCC, met on Saturday. ELCC includes several work groups to help with the common ministries of our churches. Pastor will provide a presentation of this in our November Congregational meeting.

Finances: Our October income was \$16,542 and expenses \$15,724 Net Income is \$819 for the month and \$1,657 in 2024. Financial statements will be shared in our Congregational meeting.

Serving in Christ's grace, Dave Spurling



MSLC Finance Update

Income for the first 10
months: \$161,153

Expenses for the first 10
months: \$161,498

Net income/loss: \$1,657

Thank you for your
continued generosity!

2025 Budget Snapshot

Projected income for 2025

Member Offerings:
\$178,000
Building Use Income:
\$12,000
Total: \$190,000

Projected expense for 2025:
\$200,260.00

Projected deficit for 2025:
-\$9,500



Northwest Washington Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Bishop's Letter

Dear Beloveds,

This is but the beginning of the birth pangs ... Mark 13:8.

There are a lot of stories about women and pregnancy and motherhood in the Bible. To list some of these women off the top of my head, and in no particular order: Hannah, Sarah, Elizabeth, Mary, Eve, Hagar, Rebekah, Jochebed, Rachel, Tamar, Bathsheba, Ruth, and all those unnamed women - Manoah's wife, the Shunammite woman, the widow of Zarephath, and more, I'm sure.

I think that there is a tendency to over-spiritualize these women's stories – or, honestly, to just pass over them because we know the outcome of their pregnancies (and so often we memorize their sons' stories instead of theirs). We know Hannah had Samuel the prophet ... but we might forget she fiercely prayed and wrestled with God for a child. We know that Jochebed had Moses ... but we might forget how she gave him away (actually placed him in a basket and sailed him down a river) to save him and then pretended to be someone else in order to raise him. We know that Bathsheba had Solomon ... but we might forget the messiness and horror that came before his birth – how she became pregnant with her first son and how he died early in life and later how she maneuvered to get Solomon on the throne.

And then there are the two pregnancies in Advent:

- Elizabeth. Old menopausal wrinkled-up Elizabeth who is surprisingly with child. Elizabeth who gets both startled and assured when her baby kicks for the first time as she greets expectant Mary on her doorstep.

- Mary. Young Mary who is so often depicted in art and literature and even theology as being passive and demure. As being above such things as having spinach between her teeth or toilet paper stuck to her shoe or anything that goes along with being human.

We don't hear of her having cravings or swollen ankles or heartburn or a growing belly. But, surely, she did. How could she not as she carried our Savior within her?

As I write this, the 2024 election happened a week ago. For half of the country, the outcome was devastating. For the other half, it was welcomed. Personally, I am trying to understand what this means for so many. Truly, I am concerned and broken-hearted when I think of the campaign promises that were made and the potential actions to so many vulnerable communities. The possible scenarios can make you stop and weep and fall on your knees exhausted.

But here's the thing: Regardless of the outcome of the election, we are an Advent people. Like Hannah, we pray to God.

Like Jochebed, we act to save those whose very lives are at risk. Like Bathsheba, we name and work for the well-being of those we love. Like Elizabeth, we clasp our bellies and feel the Spirit moving within us. Like Mary, we lift our heads high and we cry out against injustice and tyranny and we lift up those who are marginalized, hated, and oppressed. In this Advent / Pregnant / Gestation time, as we wait and act, grow and stretch, move and expect, as we deeply yearn for this new life that is coming, may these women's stories fill us with fortitude and courage, and may Jesus – the Word made flesh, Emmanuel, God With Us – bring the promises of hope, peace, joy, and love to completion in this beautiful and broken world. May these birth pangs bring a new world into being.

+Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee

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Mount Si Lutheran Church

To Serve
To Reach Out
To Grow In Grace