

ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH

Hope for Christmas



Christmas from home...but not alone!

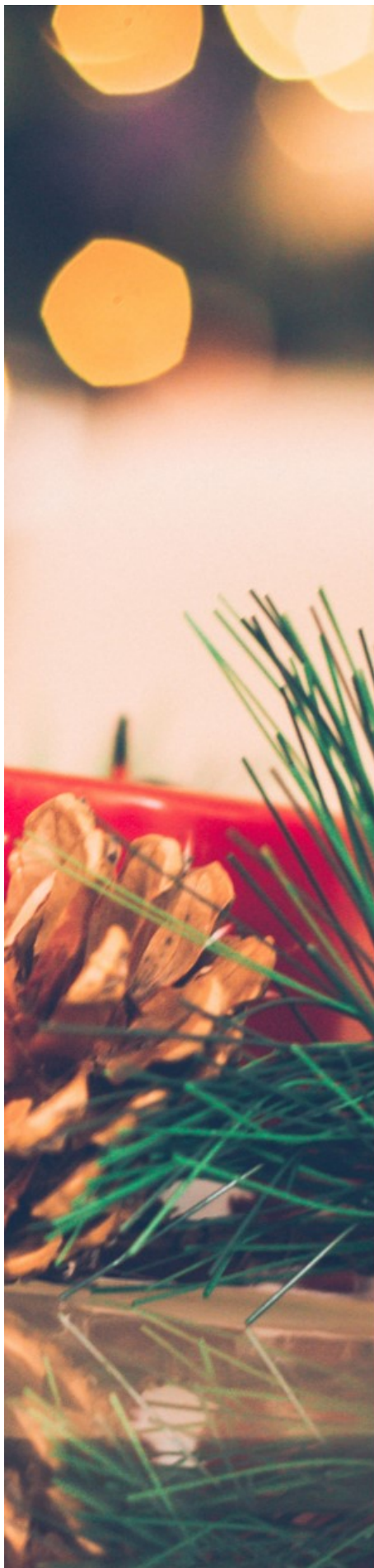
DECEMBER 24, 2020

2 PM CANDLELIGHT WORSHIP
LIVE ON ZOOM:
(SILENT NIGHT SING ALONG!)

4 PM CANDLELIGHT WORSHIP
LIVE ON FACEBOOK

9 PM CANDLELIGHT WORSHIP
PREMIERE ON FACEBOOK

Or watch a replay anytime after services!





ADVENT SERMON SERIES

Join us the Sundays of Advent, Nov. 29-Dec. 20, as we prepare for the coming Christ child!

Nov. 29 Prepare for the Journey

Dec. 6 Prepare for Arrival

Dec. 13 Prepare the Pathway

Dec. 20 Prepare for Jesus

**Those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength,
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,
they shall run and not be weary,
they shall walk and not faint. Isaiah 40:31**

Greetings Church!

Happy Advent! On November 29, 2020 we entered the four weeks of Advent- a time when we wait for the coming of our Lord. As I talked about in a recent sermon, waiting is hard. Our society doesn't like to wait. I'm reminded of this each year when, even though Christmas music starts playing on the radio in early November, I tend to wait to listen to it until Christmas Eve with hopes to keep listening through the 12 days of Christmas. Of course, I'm always disappointed because the music is pulled from the radio by midnight on the 25th of December. The church calendar may say Christmas starts on Dec. 25, but society can't wait that long, so by Dec. 26, after weeks of Christmas music and decorations, our secular culture is ready for it to be over.

The verse from Isaiah 40:31 says those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength and mount up with wings like eagles... In this time of CoVID, when so many of us are feeling so weary, having our strength restored sounds exactly like what we all need. It has been a HARD year in so many ways-we need our Lord's strength now more than ever.

Speaking of waiting, aside from a few of our parking lot worship services, we've all been fasting from Holy Communion since March on the guidance of the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA. But with this fast lasting much longer than we all initially expected, a growing number of clergy including myself, feel we must rethink the theological reasons to not do communion "virtually." So, in this newsletter, you will find a home liturgy for Holy Communion. You can use this on your own but more ideally if you are able to watch our online services, have some bread (or plain crackers in a pinch) and wine or juice ready on Sunday morning, and take communion at the point in the service where we all share the meal together, beginning on Dec. 6. Additionally, sometime in the coming weeks, I will also offer pre-packaged wine/juice cups and wafers for pick up from church to those who are interested and doorstep delivery to our shut-ins. I'm also considering to a drive-up communion as well- stay tuned.

May you all find some rest and strength in this Advent season as we **PREPARE** for Jesus to come again. Then, later this month as we, like Mary and Joseph ~2000 years ago, celebrate the birth of Christ at Christmas, may you feel the **JOY** that we have because of the One who entered the world to bring light into our darkness and who continues to be our Light, even now. That's why we have **HOPE** this Christmas, even though we will worship from home. God bless you all and give you **PEACE!**



In loving service,

Pastor Jeff

Let's Connect Through Photos & Videos This Advent & Christmas!

We need volunteers to send us the photos and videos below to help us all stay connected and learn more about one another this Advent and Christmas season. See below for ways YOU can contribute to or enjoy these projects!



TUESDAYS in December: Favorite Christmas Traditions

Four households (or more) will share on Facebook a 2 minute or less video of their favorite Christmas tradition along with a verse of scripture selected by Pastor Jeff.



THURSDAYS in December: Favorite Christmas Carols/Hymns

Four households (or more) will share on Facebook a 2 minute or less video of what their favorite Christmas song is along with a verse of scripture selected by Pastor Jeff.



SUNDAYS in December: Manger/Nativity Scenes

Every household is invited to email a photo of their indoor or outdoor manger/nativity scenes to share with the congregation on Facebook and possibly our website.



CHRISTMAS EVE: Family Photos

Every household is invited to email a "Christmas Portrait" (ideally by your Christmas tree or decorations inside or outside your home) of themselves/their family to be included as part of a slideshow in our Facebook services on Christmas Eve.

Please contact Trina ASAP at office@englishlutheranchurch.org to submit a photo or to sign up to share a video of your favorite tradition or Christmas carol/hymn. Note: Videos can be recorded from home and shared via email or Google Drive for Trina or Pastor Jeff to share.

Christmas Eve Worship Details:

CHOOSE THE BEST SERVICE FOR YOU!

The 2 pm service will broadcast live from church on Zoom. The link to access Zoom will be available by email, Facebook, and our church website. Worshipping on Zoom will allow us to SEE our fellow worshippers (who opt to be on camera), including while singing Silent Night together. Have a candle or flashlight ready! This candlelight service will include an interactive children's message, carols, special music, and the story of Christ's birth.

The 4 pm service will broadcast live from church on our ELC Facebook Page (If you don't have Facebook, you can link to the service through our website: www.englishlutheranchurch.org) The service will be a traditional candlelight Christmas Eve service with lots of carols, special music and the story of Christ's birth.

The 9 pm service will be a candlelight service that will "premiere" on Facebook, just as our normal Sunday services do. Being pre-recorded will allow for more special music and less chances for technical difficulties. This service will be the most like a "normal" Christmas Eve service, aside from not being in-person, and will include carols and the story of Christ's birth.

Christmas 2020

Dear Church Family,

As we approach Advent and Christmas we wanted to provide an update on English Lutheran's plans for the holiday season. Our Covid-19 Task Force has been meeting weekly to discuss when and how we can gather as a congregation, drawing on information from *Pierce County Public Health*, our Bishop, the *Wisconsin Council of Churches* and a range of other resources. After carefully considering the current Covid-19 situation in Pierce County, recommendations from our Bishop and other sources, our Covid-19 Task Force and the Church Council have decided it will not be possible to gather safely in-person for Advent or Christmas Services. We completely understand that gathering as a congregation for the holiday season is a treasured tradition and is important to all of us, but we need to do everything we can to keep our congregation and community safe. In the meantime, the Worship and Music Committee and our staff are hard at work coming up with alternative Advent and Christmas events to help bring us together in new ways this holiday season. Stay tuned for updates on these events, many of which are included in this newsletter. We continue to pray that we all can get this pandemic under control so we can once again gather together for in-person worship and ministry.

Your partners in ministry,

Pastor Jeff Smith
Council President Peter Carr
ELC Council Members
ELC CoVID Task Force Members



Wednesdays in Advent

As we anticipate the upcoming Advent season, we'd like to share a series of videos from our synod as we contemplate the hope and joy of the birth of Christ.

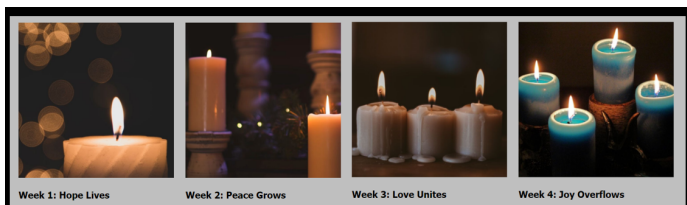
Watch Facebook ~ Wednesdays @ 7:00 pm

Dec. 2 - Week 1: Hope Lives

Dec. 9 - Week 2: Peace Grows

Dec. 16 - Week 3: Love Unites

Dec. 23 - Week 4: Joy Overflows



Christmas Tree of Spirit

There are many within our community who are in need of help. Please consider joining our effort to share the spirit of generosity this Christmas season with many local families.

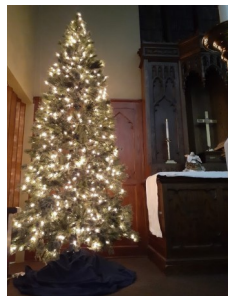
This year we will join the Stewardship Anniversary gift campaign (see more information about this on the following page). In honor of our 100 year anniversary, we are asking you to join us in supporting our community.

Thank you for sharing the Christmas message of generosity!

This year we will be supporting the following programs with our monetary gifts:

- 1) School Lunch Program
- 2) Ellsworth Food Pantry
- 3) ARC (Assistance & Resource Center)

You can donate by mailing a check to the church or by using our e-giving online, text, or mobile app. Visit our website for details.



Christmas Luminaria

Shine Christ's Light and Pray

December 21 and 24
(Dec. 21 is the Winter Solstice – the longest night)

This Christmas, the Youth of English Lutheran are building a display of Light dedicated to all our English Lutheran families to remind us all that God's love can shine even on the darkest of days.



A bag luminaire will be created for each family at ELC. A tea light will be placed in each bag and a prayer will be said for the family. All the bags will be lined up on the retaining wall for the whole town to see.

During past Christmas Eve services at English Lutheran we have a tradition of passing the Christ Light. We are all encircled in the darkened sanctuary and the Christ Light is passed around to each individual candle hand in our hands. We see the bright light of the Christ candle grow as it is passed from one candle to another until all are lit. The glow of the candles illumines the darkness. We sing Silent Night and our voices are lifting up the light so that the light becomes even brighter. As we leave the church, we take the light of Christ out into the darkness of the Christmas night. We will continue this tradition but instead of lighting our candles inside the church building, we will light a luminaire outside our walls for all to see.

The light of Christ within us is not to be hidden, but to be shared with all who cross our path. You may feel that you are "just one person" but together we grow the light to illuminate our world around us. Your light makes a difference!



*You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden.
Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl.
Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.
In the same way, let your light shine before others,
that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.
Matthew 5:14-16*

Fall Stewardship: Together Through the Pandemic

In this challenging and uncertain time your faithful stewardship is an encouraging sign. Thank you for your participation in this year's ELC TOGETHER Stewardship Campaign for 2021. Your commitments ensure that our ministries will continue to be able to meet the many needs that are served. Your generosity allows ELC to do God's work in spite of the impact that this pandemic has had on all of us. To allow maximum participation by our church family, when you receive this newsletter and still haven't made your stewardship commitment for 2021 you can still do so and are encouraged to make your commitment before year end. You can do this by using the online tool located on our website in the Happenings tab or you can print out a copy of the online commitment form in the Give tab, or contact the church office.



Another aspect of this year's stewardship "TOGETHER" campaign is the opportunity to give a \$100 gift before year end to celebrate and commemorate our 100 Year Anniversary in the Ellsworth Community. We are pleased to let you know that as of this publication we have received \$1,400 in anniversary gifts from you, our members. Please know that your gifts will be used to help those in our community most in need. We will distribute these wonderful gifts to three areas (1/3 each), Ellsworth School Lunch Program, Ellsworth Food Pantry and to ARC (Assistance & Resource Center). The plan is to distribute your gifts before year end, so you still have time to make your special anniversary gift knowing it is helping the Ellsworth community that has supported us for the past 100 years.

Please know that although we can't be physically together because of COVID, we are TOGETHER spiritually and TOGETHER in the purpose of serving GOD by serving those in need.

Thank You ~ Your Stewardship Committee

Worship Service Notes

We continue to hold our online worship services on Sunday mornings at 9:15 am on our Facebook page. You can also link to the service through our church website.



www.englishlutheranchurch.org

Music Director Update!

Pastor Jeff and members of Personnel and Worship & Music have completed interviews with Music Director candidates and are in the last steps with a final candidate. We are excited to introduce him to you very soon!



Thank You Notes



Thank you to our Music and Worship Committee for decorating our sanctuary and outdoors for Christmas and Advent!

Thank you to our Stewardship Committee for organizing our annual Stewardship drive and 100 year Anniversary giving.

Thank you to all for your donations to our Thanksgiving Turkey Basket program! We were able to receive our matching gift from the ELCA Daily Bread grant. With your donations we were able to provide meals to over 40 families in our community!

Thank you to the Community Missions team for shopping for the Thanksgiving Turkey meals and for handing out the meals!

Thank you for the cards, texts, and calls after our mother died.

~ Paul & Jon Tonsager Families

Youth House Appliances

The fire department will be using the youth house for training, so we are cleaning it out. There are a few appliances that are available. We would ask that you make a donation to the church.

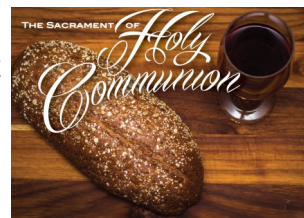
- Electric range
- Commercial chest freezer
- Hot water heater (electric, 2yrs old)

Contact Mark Groen with the Property Committee if you are interested in these appliances.
farmergroen@gmail.com

Holy Communion & First Communion

One of the aspects of worship we haven't had during the pandemic, aside from a couple of the parking lot worship services, is holy communion. The ELCA advised congregations to fast from the sacrament as opposed to offering it online. That was seven months ago. Pastor Jeff, in consultation with other clergy, is considering ways to offer communion to members in a safe and theologically sound way given the ongoing nature of this pandemic and the isolation of members it has created. See the last 4 pages of this newsletter and join us on Sunday mornings for online worship, receive communion in your home. Watch for updates on how you might be able to receive communion at church.

Also, if you have not received your First Communion, please let Pastor Jeff or the church office know and we will add you to our list for an upcoming Zoom class.



Quilts

Graduate quilting group did not meet in November due to high covid numbers. It looks like December will be the same... we will continue to watch for good news and hopefully meet after the first of the year. ~ Judy and Tammy



SUMMER 2021 YOUTH TRIP UPDATE

The Children, Youth & Family Team, after conducting a survey of our youth, are looking at doing either a combined week of backpacking and whitewater kayaking/canoeing OR a weekend backpack and a weekend whitewater trip next summer. This trip would be planned and led by English Lutheran staff and volunteers. Dates, costs, and details to be worked out in the coming weeks. Look to the January newsletter for more details!



Confirmation Classes

Confirmation classes are being held online.

Please register, if you have not yet done so. Forms and documents are available online in the Youth Ministry section of our website or you can email Pastor Jeff for information and documents or with any questions.



Sunday School @ Home

With all of the uncertainty around gathering in-person in our world today, we are sharing Sunday school with our Sunday school children in their own homes!

Mailing Kits

Each month, we're sending out a Sunday school kit to each child enrolled in Sunday school. The kits includes activities, figurines, lessons, outreach for the kids, and a reading/booklet for the story.

Zoom

We are holding monthly zoom classes for the children. The class is at 9:00 am, immediately before the church worship service online, **December's call is on December 13.** See you then!

In-Person Sunday School

We are not ruling out in-person Sunday school and would still love to see the children in church, however with the changes in Covid in our community, we want to be sure the kids can still count on getting Sunday school every month, regardless of the current situation with in-person classes and our families' comfort level gathering with others.

Registration

If you wish to have your children receive the Sunday School @ Home kits, please register your child on our website in the Children's Ministry tab.

Free!

There is no cost at all! This is FREE to all! We have been blessed with funding for our program and are excited to bring Sunday school right to your door at no cost to you.

Please contact us with any questions you may have. We look forward to engaging with your family in this new opportunity!

PRAYERS

Special Prayers:

~ Prayers for the family of Hazel Wegerer who died in November.

Healing:

Ron Wegerer, brother of Darla Moquin

~ Medical Issues

Harlen Gilbertson, friend of Frank & Linda During

~ Covid and infections

Greg Place ~ Heart Issues

Martha Pronk, Mark Groen's Aunt ~ Cancer

Julie Fern, Sister-in-law of Melanie Johnson

~ Medical Issues

Jim Hines ~ Heart Issues

Nancy Hove ~ Brain Cancer

Mike Hince, Cousin of Darla Moquin

~ cancer on his palate

Long-term:

Burt & Lila Larson

Sherry York

Debbie Kannel-Howard

Terry Wegerer, Brother of Darla Moquin

~ Stage 4 Lung Cancer

Karen McAdams, Linda & Gary Onan's Daughter

~ Multiple System Atrophy

Deb Pierce, Trina Groen's Mom ~ Alzheimer's

Joyce Geister, Julie Baggenstoss &

Carol Melstrom's Mother

Mackenzie Marks, Connie Gossett's Granddaughter

Tomi Erlandson ~ Seizures & Health

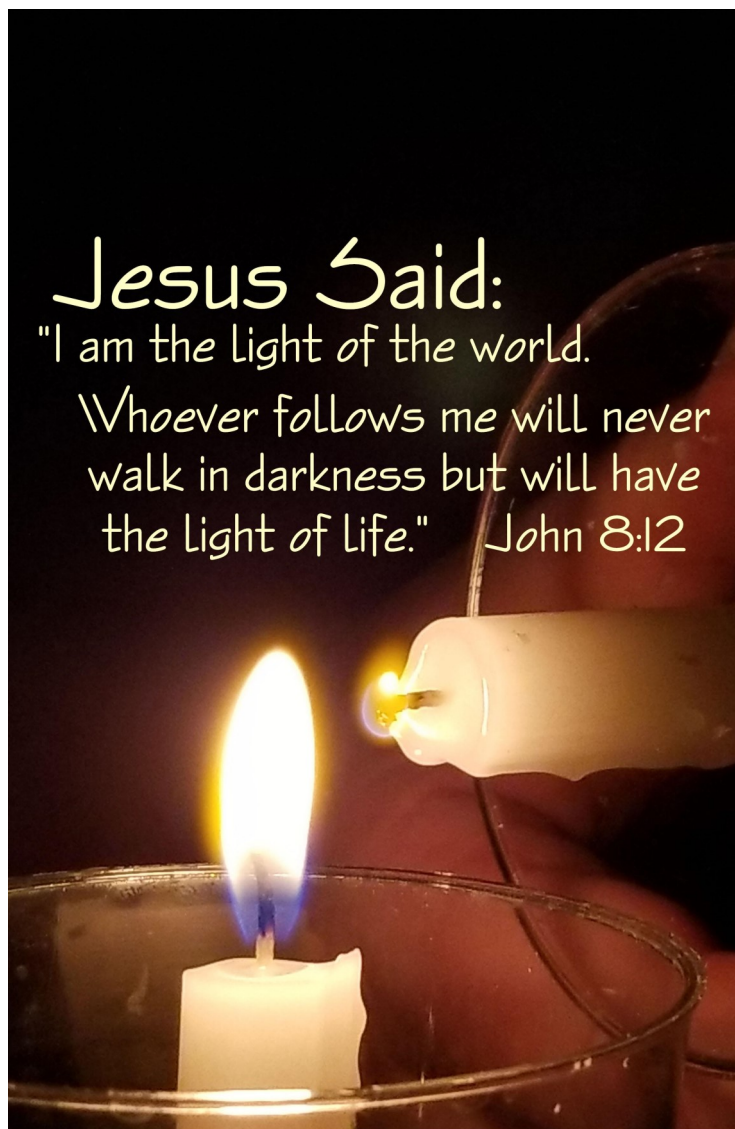
Dale & Marianne Melstrom

Mary Dee Prokop, Mother of Eileen Mewes

Wendy Wegerer ~ Health Issues

Military service:

Cody Tschida & Johnathan Bergman



Deaconess

The role of the Deaconess consists of sending thoughts, well wishes, and congratulations to members of our church to let them know we are thinking of them. Please notify the church office or any deaconess worker with any prayers.

Deaconess for December ~ Vicki Nelson

In Memory

Clint Olson died October 29, 2020. A private family funeral service was held on November 7, 2020. Remember his family and friends in your prayers. The funeral service was recorded and can be viewed on our Facebook page.



CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES & FINANCIAL UPDATE

November Council

- † **Covid Task Force update.**—In person worship: Continue to follow PCPH department guidelines. No more than 10 people indoors. ELC will delay indoor worship until up to 25 people are allowed indoors.
- † Annual Meeting. TBD. Can be held virtually according to the constitution.
- † Online worship software update- waiting for bids/ estimates on options from Brickhouse and a company in Bloomington.
- † Work with the Property Committee on remodeling projects.



Council Notes

2020 General Fund

Month	Actual Monthly Income	Actual Monthly Expense	Actual YTD Income	Actual YTD Expenses
Aug	14,211.33	14,737.40	128,415.27	161,381.13
Sept	12,881.72	16,095.96	141,296.99	177,477.09
Oct.	14,864.81	16,070.31	156,161.80	193,547.40

Cash Balances at October 2020 month end:

Total = \$185,692.59
General Fund = \$43,266.05
Dedicated Fund = \$70,653.86
Thrivent = \$71,772.68

Notes:

~ The large difference in year to date expenses and income is due, in large part, to moving \$28,000 from our General checking account to a Thrivent investment account. With that transfer of money excluded from expenses, we've actually spent \$8,180.01 more than income year to date.

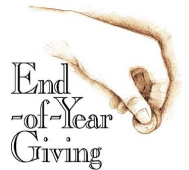
~ *English Lutheran Church* received a potentially forgivable loan through the *Paycheck Protection Plan* through the *Small Business Administration*. We have used \$28,200 for our payroll and utility expenses.



End of Year Deadline

Donations intended for 2020 must be **received** at the church office by December 31, 2020. Please remember, if you plan to drop off your donation, that our church office hours are limited at this time and may be further limited over the holidays and timing of our mail may also be impacted by the holidays.

Donations can also be made electronically, visit our website Giving page.



2020 Charitable Giving

Most taxpayers take advantage of the standard deduction when they are filing their Federal Income Tax Returns. The CARES Act provides an additional, "above-the-line" charitable deduction on top of the standard deduction for these taxpayers.

Taxpayers who do not itemize their deductions can take a one-time deduction of up to \$300 for charitable giving. The deduction applies **ONLY** for gifts of cash made in the calendar year 2020.

If you are not itemizing on your 2020 taxes, you can claim this new deduction.

Consult your tax advisor for details.



2020 Annual Report

All committee chairpersons and ministry team leaders should begin thinking about their Annual Reports. This is your chance to acquaint *English Lutheran Church* members and friends with the work of your group.

Please provide the following details:

- † Team member roster
- † Name of member submitting the report
- † Ministry purpose or mission statement
- † Highlights and accomplishments from 2020
- † Goals for 2021
- † Acknowledgments

Please submit your written report to the church office no later than Tues., January 5.



BISHOP'S CHRISTMAS LETTER



The CRISIS of CHRISTMAS¹

Dear Members and Friends of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin,

Christmas 2020 will occur while we are living through of a series of crises. Here's the list: the pandemic, economic losses, protests against racial injustices, an ongoing climate crisis, and a divided country following a contentious presidential election. I'm not going to lie, it's been stressful for me, and I imagine it has been for you, too. As Christians, we have been moving through these crisis-

filled days with the expectation that God is present and God's promises are true. We move forward with hope.

The two Chinese characters for the word “**crisis**,” 危机, have often been translated as “danger” and “opportunity.” Others say that a better translation is “danger” and “change point.” What dangers do you see as your congregation moves toward celebrating the Birth of our Savior – Christmas - in a totally new way? What “opportunities” or “change points” do you see that could propel your church forward in a positive way into God's future?

Mary experienced a theological crisis when the angel Gabriel revealed to her God's plan to enter this world by the baby in her womb. Mary's body was the center of a theological crisis² - much like the theological crisis caused by a virus that has invaded the bodies of our loved ones, and the theological crisis of abused and broken black and brown bodies, and the theological crisis experienced in the misuse of this planet on which all bodies live. Where is God in the crisis? What does this mean?

In a crisis, God comes to us. John 1:1,14 *In the beginning was the Word... and the Word was God...And the Word became flesh and lived among us.* Jesus is God, divine *and* human. God took up residence and moved into our neighborhood. God goes where God's people go and is who the people are.³ This is the theological promise of John's gospel. God is present with us in our times of crisis and suffering. This is the foundation of Luther's theology of the cross.

God is revealed through the crisis of Mary's pregnancy and Jesus' untimely birth in a Bethlehem barn. God is revealed in the crucifixion; through the body of Jesus, hanging on a cross. God is revealed through the risen body of Jesus on Easter Morning.

No matter how different Christmas is for you this year, no matter what crisis arises, God is there, present as promised, in the WORD made flesh. May the story of Jesus' birth bring you much needed joy and hope this holiday season and may the presence of God comfort you in the new year.

AMEN

¹Photo credit: Design by Artist Paul Johnson for the 2019 Concordia College Christmas Concert Mural

²Thank you to Dr. Karoline Lewis for her thought provoking presentation to NWSWI on 11/7/2020 that inspired this article.

³Dr. Karoline Lewis, Working Preacher.org, Dec. 2016

12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS GIVEAWAY

#ShopEllsworthWI

Shop Ellsworth

A message from our **Ellsworth Chamber of Commerce**:

Support local businesses and win 12 days of prizes! It's our 12 Days of Christmas Giveaway!!

It's simple to earn entries...

November 28 - December 11 with each purchase you earn entries. Just post a photo to your Facebook profile of your purchase (or you at an area merchant). Give the business a shout-out and include the hashtag #ShopEllsworthWI.

Every purchase made at an Ellsworth Chamber of Commerce member business qualifies. Your Facebook post must be set to public and include the official hashtag so we can see your entry.

Watch the Ellsworth Chamber Facebook page December 12 - December 23 as we announce winners!! Winners will be drawn at random. Prizes are donated by local retailers and valued at \$25-\$50 each.



Saturday, December 12th



9 AM to 2 PM

Our Savior's
Candy & Cookie,
Walk!
Huge
assortments!

**LET US HELP YOU WITH
YOUR HOLIDAY TREATS!**

Homemade candy & Cookies
will be sold at \$6 per pound
(less than 1/2 the price of area
stores!) Specialty items sold
separately. Homemade crafts
will also be for sale.

Join us!

Our Savior's Lutheran Church
N6450 530th Street
Beldenville, WI 54003
1 mile east of Hwy 63 & Co Rd N
Pierce County, WI

**Questions?
Contact Donna Constant
at 715-273-4697**

Ellsworth Bucks

Give a gift that supports our local businesses and economy! Loved by all, Ellsworth Bucks can be redeemed like cash at participating Ellsworth area merchants. They are available in a variety of denominations, making them ideal for gift giving.

Purchase Ellsworth Bucks by visiting the Ellsworth Chamber website.





English Lutheran Church
229 West Main Street
Ellsworth, Wisconsin
Phone: 715-273-4617
Church website:
<http://www.englishlutheranchurch.org>
Find us on Facebook!

Staff

Pastor, Jeff Smith

pastor@englishlutheranchurch.org
Office: 715-273-4617
Cell: 651-235-7204 (preferably 9 am-9 pm)
Call or text any time for urgent pastoral care.

**Communications Coordinator &
Finance Administrator, Trina Groen**
office@englishlutheranchurch.org

Custodian, Julie Baggenstoss

Music Director, Steve Lienen
music@englishlutheranchurch.org

Church Office Hours

Wednesdays Noon to 8 pm
Pastor Jeff

Thursdays 9 am to 3 pm
Trina



Congregational Council

President: Peter Carr
Vice President: Dennis Boettcher
Treasurer: Gary Brown
Secretary: Julie Davis
Jen Abbas
Denise Hager
Melba Smith
Paul Tonsager
Eric Van Nocker



Our Mission:

To share Christ's unconditional love,
inspiring us all for service to others.

Cross Beams



Published monthly by:
English Lutheran Church
Ellsworth, Wisconsin.

Email:
office@englishlutheranchurch.org



Cross Beams

December 2020 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	30	Dec 1	2	3	4	5
		Facebook Family Traditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6:30pm Confirmation Class Online 7pm Online Synod Mid-Week Message 	Facebook Holiday Music Favs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12pm Faith Leaders COVID Call with Public H 		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Manger Scenes online 9:15am Online Worship 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facebook Family Traditions 6:30pm Finance Meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6:30pm Confirmation Class Online 7pm Online Synod Mid-Week Message 	Facebook Holiday Music Favs		
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Manger Scenes online 9am Sunday School Monthly Zoom 9:15am Online Worship 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facebook Family Traditions 6:30pm Church Council Meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7pm Online Synod Mid-Week Message 	Facebook Holiday Music Favs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12pm Faith Leaders COVID Call with Public H 		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Manger Scenes online 9:15am Online Worship 		Facebook Family Traditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7pm Online Synod Mid-Week Message 	Facebook Holiday Music Favs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christmas Eve 2pm Live Zoom Candlelight Worship 4pm Live on Facebook Candlelight Worship 9pm Candlelight Worship on Facebook 	Christmas Day	
27	28	29	30	31	Jan 1	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Manger Scenes online 9:15am Online Worship 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Year's Eve 12pm Faith Leaders COVID Call with Public H 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Year's Day 	

HEARTS @ HOME

ENGLISH LUTHERAN AT HOME HOLY COMMUNION LITURGY

CREATING AN ALTAR TABLE AT HOME

- + **Add liturgical color to your space**
 - Advent=Blue; Christmas/Baptism of our Lord=White; Epiphany=Green
- + **Small bowl with water** - This is a reminder of our baptism.
- + **Candle to light as you worship** - This is a reminder of the light of Christ.
- + **Small cross to the space**
- + **Prepare your table for a meal** - You could include special dishes or decorations; include some **wine or grape juice** and **bread or in a pinch plain crackers** (homemade, easy bread recipe found at the end of this document – prepare in advance)
- + **If you are a household of two or more** invite each person to share in some aspect of this liturgy, and be sure to include all who are able to share in this meal; together, you are connected to the whole body of Christ.
- + **If you are a household of one** Christ promises to come to us through the word and sacrament, and you are connected to the whole body of Christ when you speak these words and share in this meal.

A NOTE ABOUT WORSHIP + HOLY COMMUNION

The church is anywhere people gather in Jesus' name. When we cannot meet in a church building, God continues to be present in the creative and intentional ways we gather for worship. Therefore, when you gather in Jesus' name, your home is church, too.

We've fasted from Communion for most of the pandemic, not knowing how long our fast would be! This liturgy provides a way to receive communion until we can safely do pastoral visits and gather again in church. The bread and wine are mysteriously the real presence of Jesus Christ, and we trust that Jesus is really with us in this meal. While we can't gather for this meal it is acceptable to either:

- + **1.) Continue fasting from Holy Communion OR**
- + **2.) Use the liturgy in this worship service to celebrate Holy Communion in your home as part of our online worship if possible, or on its own if not.**

LITURGY

+ SCRIPTURE + (Read the scripture assigned for the day)

+ REFLECTION ON GOD'S WORD + (Reflect on God's Word, or watch your pastor's video sermon)

+ CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS +

When the church gathers for Holy Communion with all the saints from every time and place, we hear again the story of God's power and the love shown to us through Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

We share this word of life, and this bread and cup of blessing, that we may receive these same gifts and be strengthened by the whole Christian community.

Hear us, O God, and help us as we confess our sins.

God of mercy, we have failed and become broken in more than one way; we are quick and careless with our words, instead of speaking with truth and kindness; we have been irresponsible with your creation, neglectful of our neighbors, and selfish with what you have provided. We dwell in fear of the unknown and anxiety about the future, instead of trusting your faithfulness and love for us. Please forgive us, fill us with your abundant mercy, and guide us toward a life of healing and wholeness.

God loves us unconditionally, at all time and in all places. By grace we have been saved.

In the name of Jesus Christ, our sins are forgiven. **AMEN**

+ WORDS OF INSTITUTION +

(Holding the bread) In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body, given for you Do this for the remembrance of me."

(Holding the cup) Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this in remembrance of me."

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

COMMUNION

+ LORD'S PRAYER +

Our Father, who art heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory,
forever and forever. **AMEN**



+ SHARING THE MEAL +

- + When giving the bread say, "The body of Christ, given for you."
- + When giving the wine/grape juice say, "The blood of Christ, shed for you."

+ PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION +

In the mystery of Christ's resurrection, you shine light into the darkness, provide water that brings new life, and give bread that nourishes your people and frees us from our fear. Help us be witnesses of the resurrection and empower us to show your glory to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord. **AMEN**

+ BLESSING EACH OTHER +

Using your thumb make the sign of the cross on one another's foreheads or the back of their hand saying, "**You are a beloved child of God.**"
Take turns until each household member has been blessed.

+ CLOSING WORDS +

Called to be the body of Christ, let us abide with one another in peace.

Thanks be to God.

Communion Bread Recipe

From Luther Seminary to your table

Sift dry ingredients together **three times**: (important!)

2 c whole wheat flour
1 c white flour
1 & 1/4 tsp baking powder
1 & 1/4 tsp salt

Stir in 4 tsp oil. Set aside.

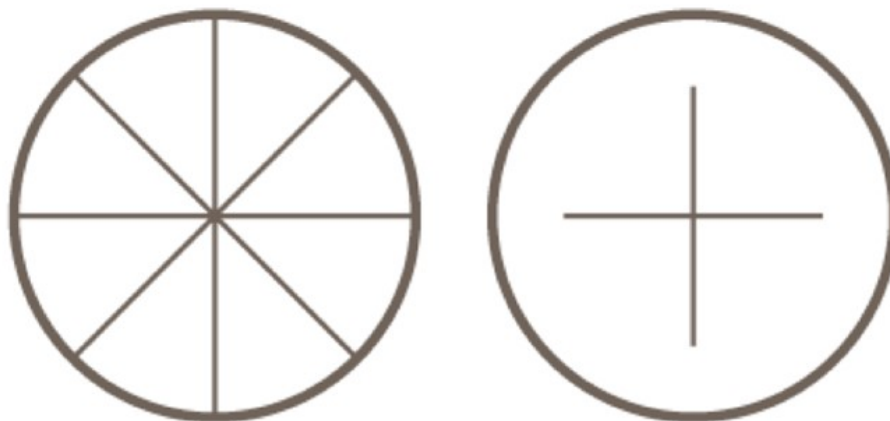
Mix wet ingredients together until dissolved:

3/4 cup + 2 Tbsp very hot water (minimum of 180 degrees F)
3 Tbsp honey
3 Tbsp molasses

Add wet ingredients to dry ingredients and mix well. Dough should be slightly sticky. Do not knead.

Divide into four balls and flatten each into a 1/4 inch thick disk.

With a knife, score the top of each loaf into eight pie-shaped sections, so that the sections can be more easily broken off while serving. Alternatively, you could score a cross onto the loaf.



Lay the loaves on a baking sheet. Bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes. Remove from oven and brush the tops of the loaves with oil. Bake an additional 5-8 minutes. Let cool.

Yield: four 8 oz. loaves. Each loaf serves 60-70 people, depending upon the size of the piece given. The loaves freeze well.

