



Connections

Newsletter of Ascension Lutheran Church • El Paso, Texas • December 2019

“CONNECTING THE COMMUNITY TO CHRIST!”

Pastor's Desk

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Much of what keeps us busy during the month of December is not really Christmas but “Santamas” instead. A lot of that is harmless fun—cookies and spiced eggnog, green and red decorations, office parties, white elephant gifts, and lit reindeer on your front lawn.

But when you actually pay attention to the Bible's account of the real Christmas, you are confronted with a game-changing story: a virgin named Mary conceives through the direct intervention of the Holy Spirit and then gives birth in a barnyard birthing room. But that's not even the biggest part of this big deal. The real miracle is that on Christmas Eve it was revealed to mankind that the Son of God had permanently taken on human flesh and dwelt among us.

It was the most significant day since creation. Emmanuel Himself came in person as our Substitute to relive our lives for us—*perfectly*. But to accomplish that He needed to be not merely *like* us; He needed to *be* us. Every Christmas gift you've ever given, even the biggest one (you know, from Mercedes-Benz or Jared), pales in comparison with the gift the Father gave you—His Son, wrapped in strips of cloth and lying, of all places, in a manger. And later, on a tree, not under a tree.

His birth makes your immortality possible: “The wages of sin is death,” Paul declares, “but the *gift of God* is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 6:23). That's how valuable God thinks you are. That's how much He loves you. So, let your vocal chords ring out:

Joy to the world, the Lord is come!
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room
and heaven and nature sing.

Nobody would have expected the great King of Kings to arrive in such a way. All the royalty in Grimm's Fairy Tales arrive in carriages drawn by a team of white horses. Can you believe that our Mighty God arrived on earth through the birth process of a Judean handmaiden? And our Prince of Peace had nothing to wear but strips of fabric? And our Wonderful Counselor was laid in an animal's filthy



feed trough?

Does the humility of His divine entrance disappoint you? Discourage you? Offend you? Were you expecting thundering trumpets? Armies? Silks, ermine, golden mace, a jewel-studded crown? If you were near Bethlehem's manger that night, would you too have bowed down in worship?

Yes, perhaps we would have! If God helped frantic parents and shocked shepherds and wealthy Magi from the East to see their Messiah in the Baby, He would have found a way to turn on the lights in our hearts and brains as well. People of earth, receive your King! Each Christmas is practice for the moment of Christ's second coming, when every knee will bend—either in worship or terror.

Prepare a place for Christ in your heart this season. Don't get swept up and distracted by all the “Santamas.” Come and worship the real Reason for the season. Bring a friend or two with you. Let everyone in your world know that you are rejoicing that Jesus came all that way just to claim . . . YOU! Along with heavens heralds, cry out: “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to men on whom His favor rests” (Luke 2:14). Merry Christmas! ✚

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Upcoming Events and News You Need to Know!



Arch Books

With all the wonderful offering gifts in the Sunday School from the children, we have been able to purchase a stack of Spanish Arch books for Lutheran congregations right across the boarder! (Arch books are Bible storybooks for children set to rhyme. They are published at Concordia Publishing House in St. Louis, Missouri—hence the name “arch” books.) This is a wonderful blessing! Parents are doing a great job helping their children learn about monetary giving to the church to help spread the Good News about Jesus! We will continue our gifts for Jesus in this way into the New Year.

Advent Devotionals for Children

The children of Ascension will be given amazing and colorful Advent devotionals to read each day throughout the season preparing for Christmas. They will also be given two extra booklets to share with two friends. Along with this gift will come an invitation to hand out for joining us for the Family Christmas Worship Service, December 15. Our prayer is that the children, with the help of their parents, will invite their friends to attend Ascension and celebrate the birth of Jesus, our Savior. Please pray that the Lord

will guide these families on who to invite and come along side to share Jesus. This is a great opportunity!

And, time to once again dig out and use the hard cover Advent devotional book distributed two years ago, *Advent Devotionals for Kids*, published by Concordia Publishing House and sponsored by Thrivent! If you are new to Ascension, please see Kim Besti-

an to get your family copy! Remember to use your family home devotional Advent wreath, too! It makes a lasting impression on your children when used along with your family devotions each night. Come, prepare your hearts and make room for Jesus!

O Christmas Tree – You Point the Way to Jesus!

The Family Christmas Worship Service will be held on Sunday, December 15 at 10:00 a.m. Dress rehearsal will be held the day before, **Saturday, December 14, at 2:00** in the afternoon. It is important that ALL participants be there for the dress rehearsal—that includes all children, Sunday School teachers, teens, and adult readers! The Interpretative Liturgical Dancers will hold a special practice at 3:00 p.m. following the dress rehearsal.

The Family Bible Hour will be held earlier that morning at 8:45 following refreshments at 8:30 a.m. If you have children participating in the service, please be sure they are in their classrooms with their pajamas or nightgowns on and teddy bear or doll in hand by 8:45 a.m. Thank you! Following the Family Christmas Worship Service, a birthday celebration for Jesus will be held in the Fel-

lowship Hall, complete with cookies and hot chocolate! Invite your friends!

A big thank you to all the children, teens, parents, Sunday School teachers and helpers, and other volunteers who helped make this special Christmas worship service possible. Thank you to the Board of Children's Ministry for all their support and blessings upon the children's ministry of Ascension! All glory be to God!

Kid's Corner

There are many children's Christian books in our church library just waiting to be checked out. There are lots of Christmas themes, as well as other resources. Come on up to Ascension during the winter break and check some out! Library hours are Tuesday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. and Sunday mornings.

Family Photos

Next to the Children's Ministry bulletin board, in the hallway, you will notice a large grouping of family photos. Have a look and enjoy learning the names of these special brothers and sisters in Christ. We pray for these families that God would send His blessing upon them as they continue to grow in Christ together. Please offer up special prayers for the *Kahre family* as they will be moving to Georgia soon. They will greatly be missed, but we send them off with God's love and thank Him for the time they were with us here at Ascension!

*A Very Merry Christmas to
you and your family!
God's blessings in the New
Year 2020!*

FAMILY CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERVICE

O CHRISTMAS TREE:

you point
the way to
JESUS!



DECEMBER 15, 2019

WORSHIP • 10:00 a.m.

FAMILY BIBLE HOUR • 8:45 a.m.

Come celebrate the birth of our Savior!



Ascension
LUTHERAN CHURCH

6520 Loma de Cristo Drive • El Paso, Texas 79912 • www.ALConnect.faiht



The God Who Stays

You're going to mess up. It's a foregone conclusion. You will make bad decisions. You will go along with a friend or a crowd, even though you know their actions are wrong. You will say words meant to hurt and you will do it on purpose. You will let your anger and jealousy get the best of you. You will give your pride first dibs on how you react to other people.

I tell you this not to make you feel bad but to remind you, once again, that God never changes. Never, ever, will He leave or forsake you. So when you do mess up, when your mouth gets away from your better sense, when your choices lead to struggles and painful consequences, run to Him. He won't turn you away. Nothing you do will make Him love you less, will make Him walk away. There's nothing you can do, nothing on this earth, nothing beyond this earth, seen or unseen, that can separate you from the One you belong to.

"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

~Romans 8:38

If there's a Bible verse we should memorize for the times we mess up, it is Paul's assurance that nothing, absolutely nothing, can separate us from God's love. There are so many people out there who avoid going to church, who won't open their Bibles, who won't pray, because they've messed up so bad, surely God won't take them back. It saddens me because, if God the Son, in human

flesh, hung on a cross, and used His last breaths to request forgiveness for the very people who put Him up on that cross (that is, us), then what could they possibly have done for God to withhold His love and forgiveness from them?

Nothing! Because, once again, there is nothing that can separate us from God.

Does this mean we can go about doing anything we want? No! God's forgiveness is not permission to go out and purposely mess up throughout the week then come to church on Sunday and ask for forgiveness, just to do the same thing all over again. See, we belong to God, which means we are no longer the same messed up person we were.

What does that mean for us? It means we live lives dedicated to bringing glory to God. We cannot be perfect—that's already been established—but what we can do is follow God as closely as we can. Here's another verse you need to memorize, one that can help guide you in how to live a life for God.

"And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

~Micah 6:8

Notice how it says to act justly, not perfect. This means to remember to treat others as God has treated us—



with kindness, compassion and love. It is not our place to judge. Pay attention to love others with mercy. Forgive them when they hurt you, don't hurt back. Walk humbly with your God...and you do that by staying with Him, seeking Him in the Scripture, in worship, in service, in fellowship.

If there's anything I want you to remember, it is this: when the world you follow walks away from you, the God who loves you is still by your side, with arms open wide, because He never changes—He is the God who stays.



December 2019 Youth Happenings

Family Christmas Service

Practice for **ALL YOUTH**

Saturday, December 14

2:00 pm



Christmas Youth Project

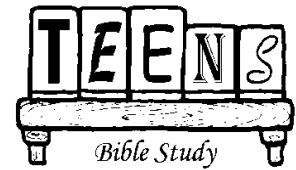
Blank Cards will be given to the youth on November 24 to draw or decorate and add an encouraging Christmas message for soldiers, veterans and First Responders.

All completed cards to be returned on December 15.

Advent Youth Project

This Advent season, the youth will be tying fleece blankets to give to our homebound church family members.

Youth will meet in the Library on Advent Wednesdays at 5:30 PM for a short devotion and blanket shenanigans.



Sundays

9:15 -10:15 AM

Continue

The Case for Christ

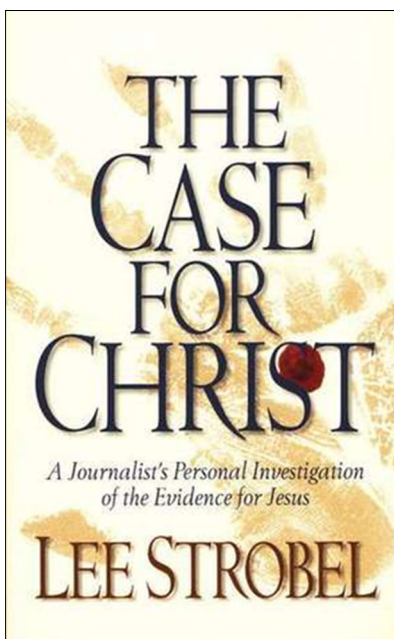
December 1

December 8

December 22

December 29

All junior and senior youth will be meeting downstairs in the YOUTH ROOM for Sunday Morning Bible Study



Is Jesus of Nazareth Really the Son of God?

Together, we will use the Student Guide for Lee Strobel's *The Case for Christ*, to go on a riveting quest to discover the truth about history's most compelling figure.

This new Youth Bible Study meets in the Youth Room downstairs.

Don't miss the opportunity to explore the hard questions many Christians aren't willing to ask and can't answer!

Contact Information

Luz M. Soto, DYM

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Board of Christian Education Thank You

Dear Board of Christian Education and members of Ascension Lutheran Church,

I hope this letter finds you all well and in high spirits! What a busy and wonderful year this has been so far! I am currently finishing up my last semester at Concordia University Texas where I will be receiving my degree in Secondary Education, History, and also receiving my Lutheran Teacher Diploma. I am finishing strong with a 3.9 GPA and graduating with honors (Magna cum Laude).

These past few years studying education, history, and religion at Concordia University Texas in Austin, have been full of all kinds of amazing experiences! This is my final semester of schooling as I complete my two student teaching placements in Houston. My first student teaching placement was at Pearland High School in which I taught 10th grade AP European history! During my time there, it just so happened that the curriculum units that needed to be covered were over the Reformation and the Religious Wars; how awesome is God's timing! I had a blast being able to teach the kids about Martin Luther fighting the good fight while working within the frame of a public-school setting! I

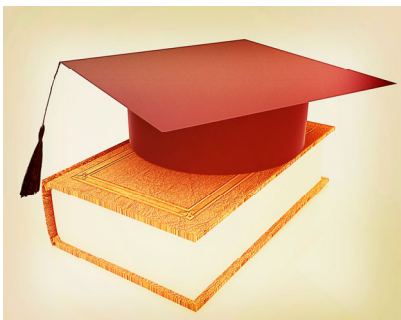
just started my second student teaching placement at Saint Mark's Lutheran Church's middle school. I am currently teaching Religion, United States History, Civics, Texas History, and Engineering to 7th and 8th graders. In the upcoming weeks I am going to be accompanying the 7th grade Texas history class on a 3-day field trip to the Alamo in San Antonio and also the Bullock Texas History Museum in Austin where I have been able to spend countless hours in admiration studying the amazing history of our great state these past few years in my free time outside of class. As I finish up my last few weeks of my final semester before my graduation in December, I wanted to take a moment to write you all this letter.

Words cannot begin to describe the amount of gratitude I have towards you for financially supporting my education. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for being so generous. Due to your help and funding for my education I have successfully finished another school semester with straight A's, and also successfully got straight A's in my summer courses before I began my student teaching this semester. I thank God for giving you all such a generous heart and the means to help others.

You all are an outstanding example of Christian love and leadership. This is an exciting time for me as I am about to embark on my vocation after my many years of schooling that have prepared me for this day. I truly cannot wait to finish my last placement this semester at Concordia University and embark on my vocation as a history teacher in our Lutheran schools. They are in dire need of more educators! I praise God for putting you all in my life and helping me along the way. It has been a very long and trying journey, but I have persevered, and I am so glad because it is so worth it! Due to your generosity you have taken some of the financial burden off of my shoulders. I have been working very hard during my breaks off from my studies doing construction work to pay for my education. Your gifts of love have been greatly appreciated. Thank you all again so much. I keep the Ascension family in my daily prayers (as I hope you all will keep me in yours as I embark on this new journey in life)! Please know that you all mean the world to me! I am looking forward to coming home to visit and seeing you all again! God's richest blessings!

**Your brother in Christ,
Isaak Bestian**

Graduation Recognition



We, as the Board of Christian Education, have been honored to support Isaak Bestian with a small tuition scholarship from the Ascension Professional Church Worker's Scholarship Fund for the past few years. Isaak is graduating from Concordia University-Texas on December 7, 2019, with his Lutheran Teacher Diploma. We are proud and thankful to God for allowing one

of our sons of the congregation to be called into full-time church work for the furthering of the Gospel. We know it is very expensive to attend LCMS Concordia Universities. As a result, many called professional church workers incur a sizable debt by the time they graduate, as in Isaak's case. We invite those at Ascension, who would like to give a card and/or monetary gift to Isaak, to place it in a designated box. They will be delivered to Isaak at his graduation. Thank you! May we continue to pray for our church workers, both those in the field and those preparing for the work of the Lord in this service.

2019 Midweek Advent & Christmas Services

Arise & Shine

December 4
RISING
LIGHT

December 11
REFLECTED
LIGHT

December 18
HEALING
LIGHT

December 22
ETERNAL
LIGHT

December 24
GLORIOUS
LIGHT

December 25
SHINING
LIGHT

“Arise, shine, for your light has come” (Isaiah 60:1).

We welcome the Christ Child, who is the Light of the World, arising in our lives this season. In celebration, we, in turn, shine with the light of Christ in various ways for all the world to see the brightness of His love. Each week will focus on a different aspect of the light of Christ and how we are enlightened by Him throughout our lives.

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

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December Preschool News



The children in our preschool are eagerly preparing for their annual Christmas program to be held on Friday, December 13 at 6:00 p.m. It is a real treat to watch these little ones anxiously awaiting their turn to get on stage and show off their talents. Everyone is invited to attend!

We will have many new faces in our preschool in January! Because of the number of children on our waiting list, the Preschool Board has approved the opening of another 2-year-old class. The lead teacher will be Pamela Olivas who is moving from the aide position in the 3-year-old class. Pamela is a certified early childhood educator. Her aide will be Paola Cesena who has been substituting at the school since September. We are excited to be welcoming the new students and staff members in January.

It is with sadden hearts that we announce the departure of Adriana Diaz, our Enrichment teacher. She will be leaving us at the end of the year to join her husband who has been transferred to Atlanta, Georgia. Adriana has been around for quite some time, having put three of her children through our school. She will be sorely missed, and we wish her God's blessings as she prepares to relocate. The school will be closed for the Christmas holidays from December 20 – January 8, 2020.

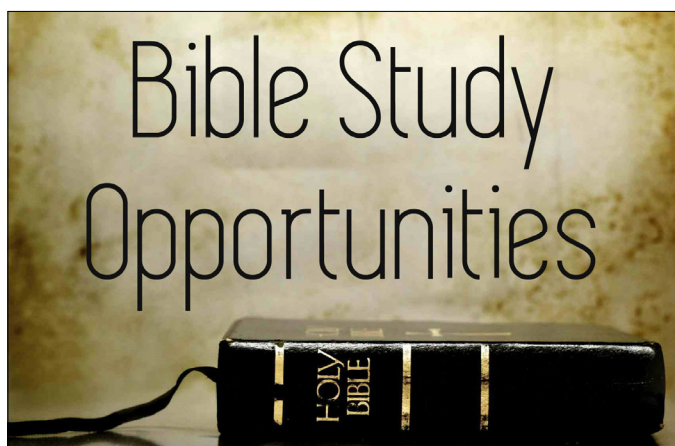
Treasurer's Report



Finance Update

Approved Council Minutes are sent to Ascension members with the Friday e-mail when they are received by the Church Office. Please call 833-1009 to request a copy of the minutes.

		October	YTD	Budget
Income:	Offerings	\$ 19,049.65	\$ 239,676.32	\$ 250,250.00
	Other Income	\$ 4,553.97	\$ 47,692.87	\$ 42,135.10
	Total	\$ 23,603.62	\$ 287,369.19	\$ 292,385.10
Expense:		\$ 31,960.97	\$ 316,227.90	\$ 320,812.90
	Raise The Roof			
	Donations - 2019	\$ 1,160.00	\$ 45,078.46	
	Total 2017-2018		\$ 124,992.00	
	Other receipts		\$ 7,656.30	



Sunday Morning Bible Study

Family Bible Hour:

Pastor Bestian will continue the study on the Book of Acts in the Fellowship Hall. All members & friends of Ascension are encouraged to attend!

Men's Bible Study

Men's Saturday Breakfast and Bible Study: This group meets every Saturday at 8:00 a.m. at the church through December 14.

Tuesday Night: This group meets every Tuesday at the church at 6:30 p.m. Their study is called "Stuff They Didn't Teach Me in Sunday School."

Women's Bible Study

Woman-to-Woman: This group meets Tuesday mornings at 10:00 a.m. at the church through December 17.

Tuesday Evening: This women's Bible study will meet again in the new year. Please call or text Anita Werner at (915) 494-2335 with any questions.

Thursday Morning: The Thursday a.m. Bible study group is doing a study of James. They meet at 9:45 a.m. at the Schlak home through December 19.

Please call the office if you need additional information for a Bible study.

Another resource available to you can be found at www.lhm.org.

You will find the Lutheran Hour daily devotions at this website.

PrayerTime



PrayerTime takes place on the first Sunday of each month. Please join us as we silently pray for the many prayers received in the church. You may come to the altar or pray in the pew as well. **Next PrayerTime dates are: December 1 & January 5 from 5:00 - 6:00 p.m.**



The Christmas Story You Thought You Knew—Scripture or Pop Culture?



Test your knowledge of the Christmas Story with this quiz from the Lutheran Hour Ministries website.

- 1. Jesus was born on December 25.**
True
False
- 2. On the night Jesus was born, a star shone to mark the place.**
True
False
- 3. We don't know how many wise men there were.**
True
False
- 4. Mary and Joseph were turned away from the inn.**
True
False
- 5. Jesus was born sometime between 6 B.C. and 4 B.C.**
True
False

Answers can be found on page 15.

Stewardship Minute—One Thing is Needed

Advent is upon us—that wonderful period of time before Christmas during which our hearts are prepared for Christmas. But it isn't always so wonderful, is it? Too many people are exasperated and frustrated by the activities that go along with Christmas: the planning, the shopping, the buying, the wrapping, the sending. Then there's the baking, the eating, the partying, and the staying-up-too-late. Instead of taking time for our daily devotions, time for focusing on God's Word and communing with Him in prayer; we're focusing on the outward while neglecting the inward.

Why is it that we make this poor choice year after year? Is it because these outward preparations are visible? What will the neighbors think if we don't put our lights up? Won't I feel guilty if I don't take cookies to every December event?

And all the while, our spirits are languishing inside from lack of nourishment. All the while, our relationship with the One Who is the Reason for all this preparation grows cold, as we push Him off into some dark corner while we tend to those outward preparations.

What was it Jesus said to Martha? *"You are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed"* (Luke 10:41-42). Jesus' tender rebuke of Martha is one intended for those of us, too, who get caught up in busy-mess.

The best way to celebrate God's gift of His' Son to us is to give ourselves back



to Him as we worship Him, honor Him, put Him first, giving Him our gifts of time and effort and goods. Then we can be witnesses to our Lord just as Mary was as she *"sat at [His] feet listening to what He said"* (Luke 10: 39).




December

At-a-Glance Church Calendar of Events

Sun, Dec 1—First Sunday in Advent

11:30 am Board of Youth Ministry
5:00 pm PrayerTime

Tue, Dec 3

8:30 am Pastors' Conference

Wed, Dec 4

12:30 pm Board of Preschool
6:00 pm Advent Meal
6:45 pm Midweek Advent Service 1

Thu, Dec 5

7:00 pm Board of Elders

Sat, December 7

10:00 am LWML Ornament Exchange

Sun, Dec 8—Second Sunday in Advent

9:00 am Board of Christian Service
11:30 am Board of Evangelism

Wed, Dec 11

6:00 pm Advent Meal
6:45 pm Midweek Advent Service 2

Fri, Dec 13

6:00 pm Preschool Christmas Program

Sat, Dec 14

2:00 pm Family Christmas Worship Rehearsal
3:00 pm Liturgical Dance Practice

Sun, Dec 15—Family Christmas Service

ONE SERVICE ONLY
8:30 am Fellowship
8:45 am Family Bible Hour
10:00 am Worship w/ Communion

Tue, Dec 17

10:00 am Woman-to-Woman Bible Study Kitchen
Towel Exchange

Wed, Dec 18

6:00 pm Advent Meal
6:45 pm Midweek Advent Service 3

Thu, Dec 19

Preschool Christmas Break Break (Dec. 23—Jan 6)
3:00 pm Jan. calendar updates & newsletter
articles due in office

Sun, Dec 22—Fourth Sunday in Advent

ONE SERVICE ONLY
8:30 am Fellowship
8:45 am Family Bible Hour
10:00 am Worship

Tue, Dec 24—Christmas Eve

5:00 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
7:00 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Wed, Dec 25—Christmas Day

10:00 am Christmas Day Communion Service

Sun, Dec 29

ONE SERVICE ONLY
8:30 am Fellowship
8:45 am Family Bible Hour
10:00 am Christmas Carol Service

Tue, Dec 31—New Year's Eve

5:00 pm New Year's Eve Communion Service

December Weekly Events

Sun: 8:00 & 10:30 am | Worship
(Communion 1st & 3rd Sundays)
9:15 am | Family Bible Hour
11:45 am | Confirmation Class (1st 3 Sundays)
11:45 am | Liturgical Dance Practice (1st Sunday)

Tue: 10:00 am | Woman-to-Woman Bible Study (3rd & 17th)
6:45 pm | Boy Scouts

Wed: 8:45 am | Preschool Chapel
10:00 am | Weight Watchers Meeting
11:15 am | Sit & Sew

Thu: 9:45 am | Women's Bible Study (5th, 12th, 19th)
7:00 pm | Choir Rehearsal



December Serving Schedule



Greeters

Readers

	8:00	10:30		8:00	10:30
Sun, Dec 1	Kaiser	Spott		Lauren Hannemann	Steve Behl
Wed, Dec 4	Jan Schlak	(6:45)		Jan Schlak	(6:45)
Sun, Dec 8	DeWitt	Burchfield		Russ DeWitt	Ruthy Pople
Wed, Dec 11	Porter	(6:45)		Porter	(6:45)
Sun, Dec 15	Kiphart	(10:00)		Luz Soto	(10:00)
Wed, Dec 18	Barkalow	(6:45)		Rachel Witty	(6:45)
Sun, Dec 22	Switzer	(10:00)		Sheila Vakselis	(10:00)
Tue, Dec 24	Meitler (5:00)	Barkalow (7:00)		Kristal Wade (5:00)	Diane Barkalow (7:00)
Wed, Dec 25	Switzer	(10:00)		Rachel Witty	(10:00)
Sun, Dec 29	Porter	(10:00)		Mariann Porter	(10:00)
Tue, Dec 31	Meitler	(5:00)		Paul Vakselis	(5:00)

Acolytes


Elders

	8:00	10:30		8:00	10:30
Sun, Dec 1	Mary Witty	Emma Morales		Witty/Dave E.	Dave T./Richardson
Wed, Dec 4	Bella Montgomery	(6:45)		Dave D.	(6:45)
Sun, Dec 8	Bella Montgomery	Kyle Kelly		Wiegert	Melendez
Wed, Dec 11	Emma Morales	(6:45)		Dave E.	(6:45)
Sun, Dec 15	Bella Montgomery	(10:00)		Dave E./Dave T./Wiegert	(10:00)
Wed, Dec 18	Mary Witty	(6:45)		Dave D.	(6:45)
Sun, Dec 22	Haley Walker	(10:00)		Witty	(10:00)
Tue, Dec 24	Stephen Kaiser(5:00)	Montgomery (7:00)		Dave E. (5:00)	Witty (7:00)
Wed, Dec 25	Mary Witty	(10:00)		Dave T./Wiegert	(10:00)
Sun, Dec 29	Bella Montgomery	(10:00)		Dave E.	(10:00)
Tue, Dec 31	Bella Montgomery	(10:00)		Wiegert	(5:00)

Trustees

Ushers

	8:00	10:30		8:00	10:30
Sun, Dec 1	Lichon	Kaiser		Lichon	Wilmeth/Morales
Wed, Dec 4	Werner	(6:45)		Radach/Moravec	(6:45)
Sun, Dec 8	Wiegert	DeWitt		DeWitt/Wade	Voge
Wed, Dec 11	Lichon	(6:45)		Wiegert/Porter	(6:45)
Sun, Dec 15	Radach/Kaiser	(10:00)		Wiegert/Porter	Maki
Wed, Dec 18	DeWitt	(6:45)		DeWitt/Moravec	(6:45)
Sun, Dec 22	Switzer/Werner	(10:00)		Lichon	Wilmeth/Morales
Tue, Dec 24	Lichon (5:00)	Lichon (7:00)		(5:00)	(7:00)
Wed, Dec 25	Switzer	(10:00)		Radach/Moravec	(10:00)
Sun, Dec 29	DeWitt/Behl	(10:00)		DeWitt/Wade	(10:00)
Tue, Dec 31	Werner	(5:00)		Wiegert/Porter	(5:00)



Jeff Howell
Brett Moravec
John Witty

Please contact the office if you would like to assist in this very important ministry.



December Altar Care

8:00 am: Gisela Lichon/Kathy Kiphart
10:30 am: Melendez Family/Cheryl Botello

Instructions for When to Arrive When Serving

Greeters:

Please arrive 20 minutes before service begins in order to greet those who arrive early.

Readers:

Please arrive 10 minutes before service so the Elder of the Day knows you are present.

Acolytes:

Please arrive 15 minutes before service begins in order to robe up and light the candles in a timely manner.

Elders:

Please arrive 20 minutes before service begins in order to make sure all those who serve are present.

Ushers:

Please arrive 20 minutes before service begins to hand out service folders.

Trustees:

Please arrive early enough to open church doors.

These are just reminders that are in addition to the checklist items for each group.

Thank you everyone for your service to our Lord!



All Women of
Ascension Lutheran Church
are cordially invited to the
LWML Christmas Party
Saturday, December 7, 2019

10 a.m. to Noon

At the home of
Mariann Porter
6200 Los Bancos
Phone 584-3381

*Please bring a plate of your
favorite brunch goodies
to share with everyone*

**InGathering for
Ysleta Food Bank**

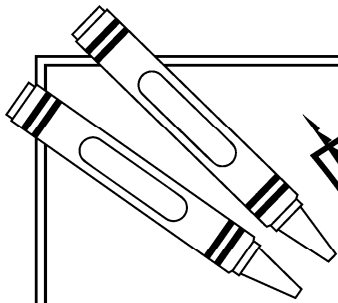
- Canned vegetables
- Canned fruit
- Sugar
- Flour
- Salt

Join us for
FOOD!
FUN!
FELLOWSHIP!

Ornament Exchange

Wrapped Please!
*(Bring something you
would like to receive)*



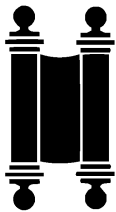


PUZZLE

Grandparents of the Old Testament

Can you name these biblical grandparents? If you get stuck, find an Old Testament family tree in your Bible or online.

Directions: After filling in the crossword, unscramble the circled letters to complete Psalm 145:4, NIV.

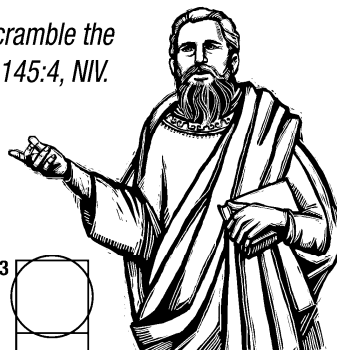


ACROSS

- David's grandfather
- Jacob's grandfather
- Esau's grandmother

DOWN

- Judah's grandmother
- Joseph's grandfather
- Solomon's grandfather
- Jesse's grandmother



One G _ N _ _ _ _ N commends your works to another; they tell of your mighty acts. Psalm 145:4, NIV

Answers: ACROSS 2. Obed, 5. Abraham, 6. Sarah; DOWN: 1. Rebekah, 3. Isaac, 4. Jesse, 7. Ruth. Generation

The Christmas Story Quiz Answers:

1. False. While December 25 is the traditional date to celebrate Christ's birth in the Western church, it's more likely that Jesus was born in the spring (during lambing season, when shepherds would have been watching their flocks by night on the hillsides). So how did we get to December 25? It may have been an attempt by the church to create a holiday during the dark mid-winter. More likely, however, it's counting forward nine months from March 25, the traditional date of Christ's crucifixion (an old tradition held that Christ was conceived and crucified on the same day of the year).

2. False. The Bible does not mention a star shining on the night Jesus was born. The star is first mentioned in relation to the Wise Men, who may have arrived as much as two years after Jesus' actual birth. While it's possible the star was there, the angels did not mention it to the shepherds as a sign to look for; they were told to look for a child in a manger.

3. True. Nearly every Nativity set comes with three Wise Men (even though the actual Wise Men didn't arrive until well after Christ's birth). Over the years, they've been given names, nationalities, and stories of their own. But in reality, the Bible simply says that Jesus was visited by a *group* of Wise Men. The tradition of *three* comes from the three gifts they brought: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Maybe there were actually eight, ten, or even more!

4. False. While the mean innkeeper is a fixture of Nativity plays, the Greek word *kataluma* is better translated as "the place where they were staying" rather than "the inn." Joseph is more likely to have looked for a place to stay with relatives. With the town full for the census, you can imagine those relatives squeezing them in to any small space available—a space not large enough to have a baby. So Mary probably gave birth in the main room of a relative's home, a place where domestic animals would be brought in at night for safety and warmth—hence the manger.

5. True. Since B.C. stands for "Before Christ" and A.D. stands for "Anno Domini," "in the year of our Lord," it seems obvious that Jesus would be born in 0 A.D. But the date of 0 A.D. is based on an early miscalculation. We know that Herod the Great, who plays such a role in the Christmas story, died around 4 B.C., giving us the last possible year in which Jesus could have been born (dates B.C. are counted backwards, so 6 B.C. comes before 4 B.C.).

CONNECTING THE COMMUNITY TO
CHRIST!

Our Staff

Pastor:

Rev. Brian R. Bestian

Director of Children's Ministry:

Kim Bestian

Director of Youth Ministry:

Luz Soto

Preschool Director:

Marhel Cueva

Music Director/Organist:

Ruth Ann Ostergren

Office Administrator:

Lynn Burchfield

Tender Care Nursery Attendant:

Haleigh Gonzales

Custodian:

Lorena Rodriguez



Articles for the
December
newsletter are due
**Monday,
December 16**



Our Sunday Schedule

Worship: 8:00 & 10:30 a.m.

Coffee Fellowship: 9:00 a.m.

Family Bible Hour: 9:15 a.m.