



SHEPHERD'S STAFF

SHEPHERD OF THE VALLEY LUTHERAN CHURCH
A CONGREGATION OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

Volume 62 Issue 1

JANUARY 2020

Two Holidays, One Radiant Grace

Christmas and Epiphany are both great festivals of the Christian year. In Christmas, which is approaching as I write to you, we celebrate how the Word of God became flesh and was born to the Virgin Mary. Epiphany celebrates how Jesus' light shone forth to others, from the wise men who followed the star to his baptism and first miracle turning water into wine. Both holidays show us how the Holy Spirit spreads grace.

Christmas reminds us that God works grace through human beings. The Son of God could have awed the world with conspicuous might, but Christ chose to become part of humanity, bearing our flesh, knowing our weaknesses, God with us fully. The Holy Spirit can blow any way she or he wants, but the Spirit chose ordinary, lowly people like Mary and Joseph to nurture God's incarnate grace.

As the season of light, Epiphany shows how God's grace shines outward. Light a candle in the dark and see how light from the tiny flame streams outward to illuminate the room. So it is that Jesus, from the moment of his birth, makes an impact that spreads. The shepherds returned glorifying God after seeing the child. The wise men returned to the East to tell the news of the king they saw. And no doubt the wedding guests at Cana went home and told their neighbors what happened when the wedding was running out of wine.

As you refresh your faith with these great festivals, remember also what they mean for your calling as servants of God. All things are possible for God, yet in our baptism the one born in Bethlehem chose plain old flesh-and-blood you and me to nurture his humble love for all creation. God's love is everywhere, yet God chooses you to make that love visible in your life. Even now, someone near you, someone in your circles of life, needs to know that love. When you show them that they matter to you, you're showing them that they matter to God. And that grace, radiating like light from human being to human being, is what Christmas and Epiphany are all about.

Pastor Scott

† IN OUR PRAYERS †

Intercessions: **Neva Abel, Nevagay Abel, Robert Aken, Karl Anderson, Ruth Anderson, Jackie Anderson, Charlie Carter, Elizabeth David, Doris Dohlen, Cheri Eagleson, Scott Francis, Betty Hart, Stu Hoffman, Al Johnson, Jerry Lofquist, Kaitlyn Owens, Kevin Persaud, Ron Rice, Alice Schaefer, Sally Schrader, Carline Talmadge, Jessie Tolodxi, Don Wiese, Marcia Woodman, Connie Blake** (Bob Black's mother), **Brad Carpenter** (brother of Brian Carpenter), **Brian** (Betty Hart's nephew), **Pat K.** (Robert Aken's sister), **Scott K.** (husband of Karl Anderson's niece), **Pastor Jane McChesney, Pastor Lynn Morrow** (friend of Deaconess Cheryl Erdmann), **Jennifer Peterson** (Pastor Gerald & Lois Peterson's daughter-in-law), **Carol Repsher** (Neva Abel's sister-in-law), **Donna** (friend of Ron Rice), **Howard Sand** (Kay Brindle's father), **David Simon** (Loretta Stofferahn's brother), **Jean Soberg** (Loretta Stofferahn's sister-in-law), **Stacey** (Sally Schrader's daughter), **Trey** (Sally Schrader's grandson), **Erik Wilberg** (friend of Don & Kay Brindle), **Angel** (co-worker of Mark Pellant), **Karen** (Judy Smith's niece), **Mary** (friend of Mark & Laurie Pellant), and the people of **Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria.**



(Please pray with this list and let either Pastor Scott or the church office know when a name can be removed).



**Living Vine
(Women's Bible Study)**

Join the women of Shepherd of the Valley on the third Monday of the month at 9:30 a.m. for a women's bible study. We are using the bible study from the Gather magazine.

Mark your calendars for the following dates:

January 20
February 17

Cover Girls



The Cover Girls are back at it beginning Monday, September 9, 2019, at 9:30 a.m. Also mark your calendars for
January 13
February 10

**Keeping Shepherd of the Valley
Up to date**

Please be sure to let the office of Shepherd of the Valley know when you have a change in address, phone number or e-mail.



All men are invited to join the men of Shepherd of the Valley at 8:30 a.m. on the first Thursday of the month at Cherry Valley Café, 216 East State St., Cherry Valley, for breakfast and fellowship. No reservations needed.



Please let the church office or Pastor Scott know if there are items you would like to see in the newsletter.



**Kids at Heart
Mark your
calendars**

Kids At Heart meet on the last Tuesday, of the month. Watch the kiosk for information and a sign up sheet.

Follow us on Facebook

New items are posted frequently. See what your Synod or the ELCA is doing. www.facebook.com/Shepherd-of-the-Valley-Lutheran-Church-ELCA



FINANCIAL REPORTS

Financial results as of November 30, 2019 and year to date totals

	C&B Actual	C&B Budget	C&B YTD Actual	C&B YTD Budget
Income	\$ 12,838.26	\$ 12,875.00	\$ 172,862.21	\$ 170,625.00
Expense	\$ 15,200.12	\$ 15,796.69	\$ 212,827.27	\$ 184,608.78
Subtotal	\$ (2,361.86)	\$ (2,921.69)	\$ (39,965.06)	\$ (13,983.78)
offsets	\$ 388.96	\$ 372.90	\$ 40,930.97	\$ 9,362.00
Net Income	\$ (1,972.90)	\$ (2,548.79)	\$ 965.91	\$ (4,621.78)
		11/30/2019	10/31/2019	
C&B Balance		\$ 5,398.80	\$ 7,371.70	
	Bld Actual	Bld Budget	Bld YTD Actual	Bld YTD Budget
Income	\$ 1,397.00	\$ 2,027.00	\$ 21,938.65	\$ 24,601.00
Expense	\$ 2,220.00	\$ 2,220.00	\$ 24,915.00	\$ 24,420.00
Net inc/exp	\$ (823.00)	\$ (193.00)	\$ (2,976.35)	\$ 181.00
		11/30/2019	10/31/2019	
Building Fund Balance		\$12,573.10	\$13,396.10	
Please note: Financials run one month behind in the newsletter				
Balance on our mortgage:	\$255,672.59			



We will be on Christmas vacation from December 23rd through January 1st.

When we return the classes will be bringing their favorite Christmas present to share with the class.

We are looking forward to what we have planned for the new year.

We hope everyone has a happy and healthy new year.





Christian Education

Every Sunday after worship, Kindergarten through 5th graders learn about God's love with "Whirl" Sunday school! Adults can get involved, too: see Pastor Scott to become a teacher or helper.



Youth (Middle & High school) meet on the 1st and 3rd Sundays after worship.

TED Talks

On most first Sundays of the month we will start a new journey in our learning time for adults. We will gather in Shepherd Hall after worship for what we hope will help us connect some of the great minds of our time with the Bible, our lives today and the greatest teacher of ALL time.

Utilizing the library of knowledge available from TED (you can learn more at www.ted.com), matching it with a Scripture lesson and some probing questions for discussion, we will try to come to a deeper understanding of what it means to serve Christ in a changing world.

On other Sundays we will be discussing articles from last months Living Lutheran and have a Q & A time with Pastor Scott.



In January we will be collecting gloves for Carley's Place and Carpenter's Place. Watch for more information. We will be looking for medium to heavy gloves to keep hands warm in the winter months.

Mark your calendars



Annual Congregational Meeting

The annual congregational meeting of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church will be Sunday, January 26 after worship. We will be discussing the business of our church and voting on church council members. Your input and ideas are needed.



You're Invited!

bork, bork, bork . . .

**Swedish Pancake Fundraising Breakfast
Saturday, January 18**

9 am - noon

Katie's Cup

502 Seventh Street

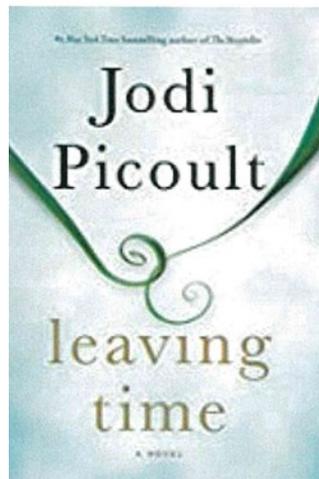
featuring Swedish pancakes, sausage,
lingonberries, coffee, butter, syrup. - yoo betcha!



\$10 Adult, \$5 Children
No reservations needed
Questions? 815.968.0628

**Katie's Choice
Book Club**

Thursday
January 9
10 am



Leaving Time

by Jodi Picoult

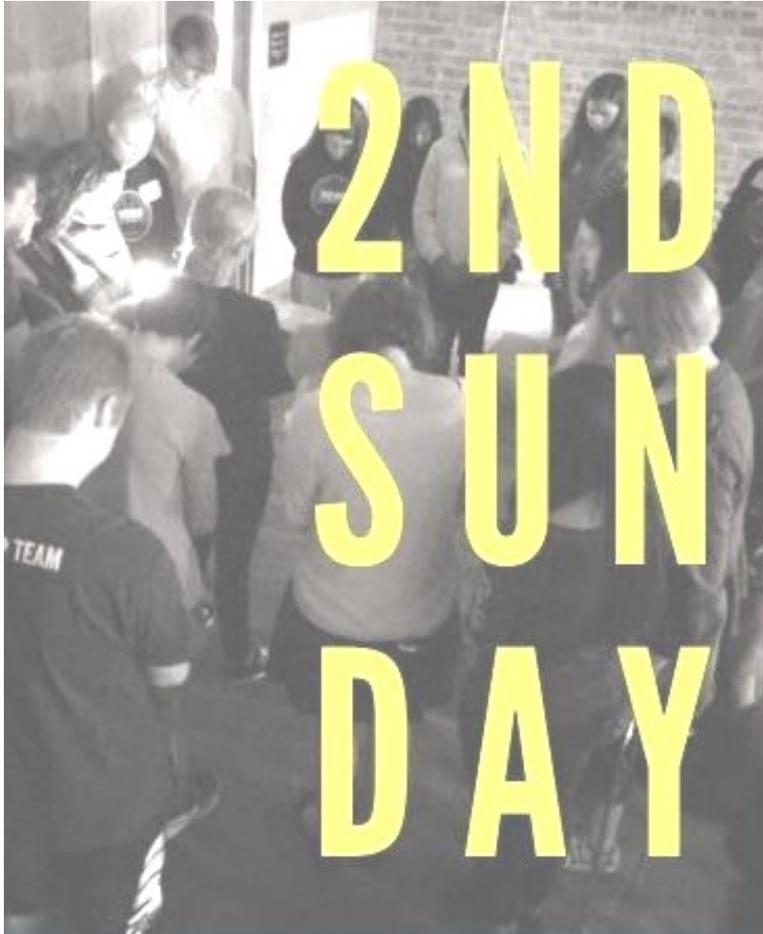
For more than a decade, Jenna Metcalf has never stopped thinking about her mother, Alice, who mysteriously disappeared in the wake of a tragic accident. Jenna searches for her mother regularly online and pores over the pages of her old journals. While Alice wrote mostly of her research among the animals she loved, Jenna hopes the entries will provide a clue to her mother's whereabouts. Desperate to find the truth, Jenna enlists two unlikely allies in her quest. The first is Serenity Jones, a psychic who rose to fame finding missing persons - only to later doubt her gifts. The second is Virgil Stanhope, a jaded private detective who originally investigated Alice's case along with the strange, possibly linked death of one of her colleagues. As the three work together to uncover what happened to Alice, they realize that in asking hard questions, they'll have to face even harder answers.

Katie's Cup coffeebar

Corner of 7th Street and 4th Avenue

No reservations necessary.

All are invited as we engage in conversations about books of interest to you!
Books available for purchase at Katie's Cup or bring your own copy.



7-8:30 PM

Katie's Cup
Rockford

A night of worship, music, games, and more
for high schoolers, led by high schoolers

**KATIE'S CUP
502 7TH STREET
ROCKFORD, IL**

**JANUARY 12
FEBRUARY 9**

**7:00-8:30 P.M.
NO RESERVATIONS NEEDED
JUST SHOW UP**



Ignite 2020

Mark your calendars now and plan to spark a fire in the hearts of your High School youth with Ignite – June 12-14 at LOMC!

The NIS Light high school youth leadership team is excited to invite your high school youth groups to its first Ignite Synod Youth Event on June 12-14, 2020, at Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center in Oregon, IL.

Special Guests will be Rachel Kurtz and Bishop Jeffrey Clements!

Watch for more details and registration information!

It's never too early to start planning to attend the Youth Gathering.



ELCA Youth Gathering

June 29-July 3, 2021 Minneapolis, MN

Every three years, 30,000 high school youth and their adult leaders from across the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America gather for a week of faith formation known as the ELCA Youth Gathering. Through days spent in interactive learning, worship, Bible study, service and fellowship, young people grow in faith and are challenged and inspired to live their faith in their daily lives.

An important part of the Gathering's ministry are the two pre-events, the Multicultural Youth Leadership Event (MYLE), a faith formation and leadership development event primarily for youth of color, and the tAble, a gathering that gathers, blesses and empowers youth with disabilities.

The ELCA Youth Gathering team announces the theme of the 2021 Gathering, "boundless: God beyond measure," based on Ephesians 3:19 CEV.

"I want you to know all about Christ's love, although it is too wonderful to be measured. Then your lives will be filled with all that God is."



Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church (ELCA)
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On The Web: www.shep61.org.
Office Hours, Monday - Thursday, 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

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RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED

**DEADLINE FOR THE
FEBRUARY 2020
NEWSLETTER IS
JANUARY 9, 2020**

Officers of the Congregation

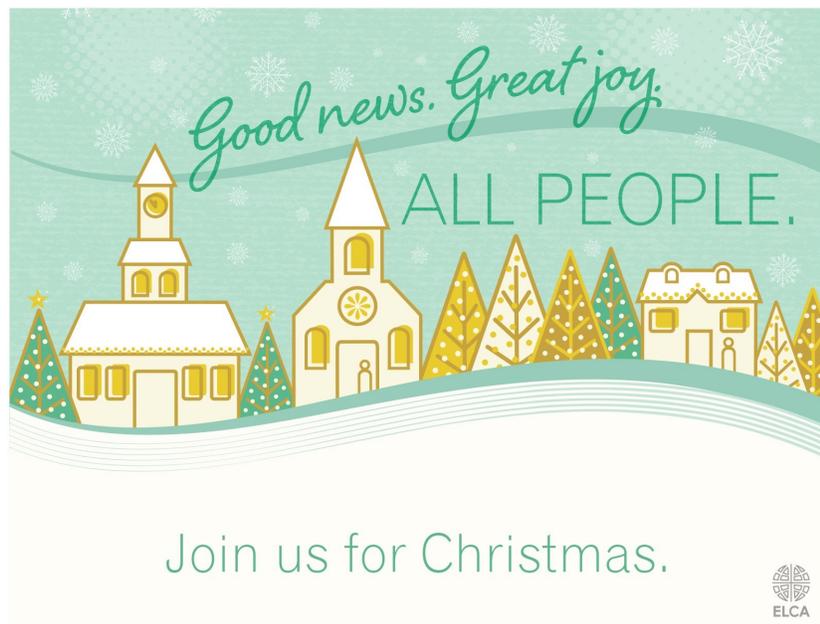
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Vice-President - Rhoda Fox
Secretary - Vicki Nitz
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Brian Carpenter
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Sherry Scheider
Bob Tukker
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Staff

The Rev. Scott Benolkin, Pastor
Judi Fields, Secretary
Linda Longardner, Organist
Phil Smalley, Treasurer
Susie Smalley, Music Coordinator
Anita Ralston, Custodian



Christmas Eve
Music Prelude 4:30 p.m.
Worship with Holy Communion 5:00 p.m.