

JANUARY 2024

FAITH | ALIVE

WELCOME TO FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWS

Dear Friends,

As we begin a new year, as we begin these next two years with a deep focus on our **ALL IN** discipleship together, **let it begin with prayer.**

Each year we are reminded to begin the year with three days with our fellow LCMC congregations. This reflects the life of the early church, who “devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and **the prayers.**” (Acts 2:42 ESV). Over the course of three days we will pray prayers of confession, petitions for our needs, and for the vision God has for us.

At <https://www.lcmc.net/three-days-of-prayer> you will find links for individuals, for the whole family, for children, and for groups with resources to devote time **Jan. 2-4, 2024** for three days of prayer.

Our LCMC service coordinator Mike Bradley reminds us that these three days of prayer remind us to be ready for revival. At our last LCMC gathering, speaker Dr. Ed Stetzer noted that the last two revivals in the United States followed a pandemic. The best way to be ready for what God is calling us to do is to pray. Pastor Bradley reminds us that in Martin Luther's *A Simple Way to Pray*, he writes: “We must see to it that we do not lose the habit of prayer and deceive ourselves into thinking that other kinds of things are more important, when they are not.”

I pray we notice the opportunity for evangelism God has placed before us. May the Holy Spirit open doors for Gospel impact and lead us to walk through them. Let's begin the year by coming together as a whole church to pray.



DR. JERRY WATTS, SENIOR PASTOR



It's Still Christmas

BY PASTOR MARK BEHENNA

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ;

I pray that you are having a blessed and merry Christmas! I know, I know, it's past December 25th and you are worn out from all the shopping, traveling, celebrating, and decorating (and perhaps you've already packed away your decorations too). For most of us, it's now time for a long winter's nap.

But it's still Christmas! This blessed church season is twelve days long and extends from Christmas Eve right through January 6th when we celebrate the Epiphany of our Lord.

Christmas has a meaning that is much more important than our favorite music, twinkling lights and ornaments on trees, or great sales we can turn into wonderful gifts for our loved ones. Christmas demands that our focus be placed on that one special child who was laid in a manger. That child was special because He is truly God with us—Emmanuel.

How surprising was it that God came to save us as a helpless baby, born to unremarkable parents in meager circumstances, without any of the trappings of earthly power? How could God be present and act through the life of this newborn to change the world and give hope to all of His people? Christmas, all twelve days of it, gives us a beautiful look at the answers to these questions.

Here's a thought that Christmas ought to bring to our mind more often: If God came to us as a child 2,000 years ago, how will Christ appear to us when he comes again?

It's certainly possible that Christ will arrive as a child once more. If that comes to pass, then we will likely have the same difficulty as those long ago trying to recognize Emmanuel as a child. Think about it. We have a growing number of young children who come to worship and participate in Christian education and activities designed for them. What if one of these little ones is the embodiment of God among us, the Christ child growing up in God's house? Shouldn't we be doing all we can to support parents to raise their children to know God's Word? Of course we should, after all that's what we promised to do as each child was baptized. Admittedly, that's sometimes a difficult promise to keep because we have to exert effort and occasionally be tolerant of a crying or restless child.

On the other hand, what if God chooses to come to us in a different form when Christ comes again? God has used varying ways to touch His people in the past—the original creation story had Adam and Eve, while His recreation story centered on Noah's grown family. And remember also the many ways God delivered his eternal covenant.

So, if God can come to us in a new way, what if Christ were to appear next as one of our elders? Might it be that a person who has been among us for quite some time is actually the font of God's wisdom? This is not too far-fetched. With God, all things are possible. This possibility means that it is important for all of us to respect our elders and be considerate of their worship among us. This prompts us to pray for them, visit them when their mobility is limited or they are ill, and be sensitive to accommodate their needs as members of our worshipping community.

continued on the next page

It's Still Christmas *cont.*

BY PASTOR MARK BEHENNA

What God among us—Emmanuel—inspires in us during the Christmas season is a sense that every person we encounter—young, old, or anywhere in-between—may be God incarnate. Our love for people ought to be just like our love for God Himself. Jesus taught us this during His adult ministry when He said that the greatest commandment of all is that we love God and love one another.

As you make your Christmas resolutions this year (yeah, I know, but January 1st falls during the Christmas season) let us all resolve to find God's face and God's love in everyone we encounter, especially at church. May we be motivated to be kind, considerate, and loving to all. In this way, Christmas becomes much more than a twelve-day-long season; instead, Christmas changes us in an important, permanent way.

Christmas blessings to you now and always,
Pr. Mark Behenna



January Birthdays

PREPARED BY DIANE WILDER, CHURCH OFFICE

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 Joey Larson, Ron Lohrding, Andyma Dean | 16 Shelly Haase, Peggy Kelly, Derek Limke, Jacqueline |
| 2 Jessica Bonzon, Jan Christensen, Christopher Golden, Oswald | |
| Jerry May, Tony Mortensen, Shahina Naz | 17 Ashley Anderson, Emily Anderson, Nancy Brunson, |
| 3 Mary Lou Crichton, Alia Dean | Kawish Din, Adam Herrera, Dar Johnson, Nancy |
| 4 Melanie Thomas | Schneider |
| 5 Kent Dahlinger, Hunter Gear, Austen Wilson | 18 Gregory Archuleta, Dominic Schesser, Terry Spear |
| 6 Jennifer Bohnhoff, Bob Hall, Steve Marsh, Priscilla | 19 Nancy Easley, Matthew Gwyn, Joe Patterson, |
| Weaver, Pam Zimmerman | Merrilee Weideman |
| 7 Grace Gehlert, Elizabeth Jensen, John Myers, Julia | 20 No birthdays |
| Krzyzanowski, Mary Joyce May | 21 Jon Grant, Mary Walker |
| 8 Mike Hansen, Sophia Webb, Jennifer Wilson | 22 Lynne Benson, Evelyn Wilson |
| 9 Emilie Archuleta, Brenda Furber, Larry Furber, | 23 Everett Dix, Danny Levison, Elise Orell, Susan Puls |
| Michelle Rasmussen | 24 Timothy Hoffman, Janet Lardy |
| 10 No Birthdays | 25 Cynthia Bolt, Annika Irvine, Pr., Jerry Watts |
| 11 Tonya Burger, Sam Elder, Erik Erben, Carol Prewitt | 26 Leon Schaub |
| 12 Lynnae Benson, Rick Johnson, Edward Kist, | 27 Lisa Platzbecker |
| Sam Schaub | 28 Laurel Jarecki |
| 13 Julie Roeseberg, Norb Siska | 29 Eddy Bielejec, Kathy Edwards |
| 14 Audrey Dunlap, Will Wenté | 30 Paige Blomker, Madeline Cook, Deb Buterbaugh, |
| 15 Janice Canales, Mike Hall, Kala Saroea, Naseem | Lee Ann Gibbs, Joseph Volza |
| Saroea | 31 Lisa Burrell |

JANUARY 2024

Family Respite Night

WRITTEN BY PASTOR SCOTT STRACHAN

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In mid-December our disability ministry, A Place at the Table, hosted our first ever Family Respite Night. Families from all over Albuquerque were invited to come and enjoy a warm meal and a time of respite. We had four families represented with over 12 kids in attendance. Parents were invited to stay after dinner for fellowship and were invited to wrap Christmas gifts if they wanted to. Also, parents were able to drop off kids after dinner so that they could simply take a break. The kids, which included kids living with disabilities as well as their siblings, were able to have a fun night of games, crafts, cookie decorating, and a movie. What made it special was that adults and teens were buddied up with these kids so they had someone at their side the whole time. Thank you to everyone who supported the event and I encourage you to keep an eye on our calendar to see more upcoming events!

In Christ,

Dr. Scott Strachan



Mission Corner

PREPARED BY GINNI WEBB AND MISSION & SERVICE MINISTRY TEAM

"GO INTO ALL THE WORLD AND PROCLAIM THE GOOD NEWS TO THE WHOLE CREATION. -MARK 16:15

Your Mission & Service Ministry Team recently made distributions of **November 2023 Mission Offerings** as follows:

\$830.00 to Common Hope: Where there is hope, there is a way forward. In partnership with Guatemalan families, Common Hope strives to provide the means and opportunities essential for a better life. They believe there's more to an education than supplies, so from healthcare to housing, becoming more starts with doing more. Our congregation sponsors the education of two students in Guatemala. This payment is for the sponsorship of 11-year-old Tania Estefania Patzan Coj. She and her family will be supported with education, health care, housing and Family Development for the 2024 school year. commonhope.org

\$450.00 to Meals On Wheels: With 141,000 meals or more delivered each year, clients receive needed nutrition with a friendly face and wellness check. Financial Support and hundreds of volunteers who help staff different sites in Albuquerque, participate in fundraising activities, work in the Meals on Wheels New Mexico kitchen or office, or deliver meals to clients, help make this happen. mow-nm.org

\$350.00 to Cuidando Los Ninos: Homelessness in our community affects us all. The mission of Cuidando Los Niños is to break the cycle of homelessness for children and families, by providing high-quality early childhood education and care, case management, supportive housing, and parent education. Children are our future. clnabq.org

\$350.00 to Saranam: For families experiencing homelessness in New Mexico, success starts at Saranam. Their proven, two-year program provides everything they need to break the cycle of generational homelessness and achieve long-term stability and independence, offering housing, food, education, and training as well as a place of refuge, a supportive community, help healing, and hope for a brighter future for themselves and generations to come. It remains their plan to welcome their first 10 families into the new westside campus homes in spring 2024. About 20 families are currently at the eastside campus. saranamabq.org

As A Giving Congregation, You Made A Huge Difference To So Many This Christmas Season!



"We are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works." Eph. 2:10

Many, many needy children and families were blessed this Christmas through the generosity of our Faith Congregation including our Sunday School.

Operation Christmas Child reached out to children worldwide with gifts and hopeful messages of life with Jesus as our Savior.

An abundance of wonderful toys headed to Salvation Army to be distributed to needy families in our community.

The Mission & Service Team, as a group, made donations of new clothing to 12 very needy Seniors at the Standing Rock Community Center, along with toys and basic clothing items for grandchildren in their care. The Faith Quilters and Dorcas Group pitched in with beautiful handmade quilts and many knitted items such as hats and scarves.

Happy New Year

Thank You

Pastor Behenna,

I received the care package today and it brought me a smile. I told LT Burrell it was very generous of you guys. I'm very appreciative and thankful for those back in the States who don't forget about us over here. May God bless you and your congregation and tell them "thank you."

SSG Barker, Ashley



Dear Faith Lutheran Church,

Thanks to your most recent donation of \$500, our work has changed people's lives.

The NM Legislative Finance Committee recently found that homelessness in New Mexico increased almost 50% from 2022. And now, with nearly three quarters of extremely low-income renters utilizing more than half of their income on rent, too many people are just a bad day away from homelessness.

We don't believe that anybody should have to make that choice. And we know you do too. That's why we provide wrap-around healthcare and supportive services to treat the whole person. Our campus is a diverse network of amazing programs and resources that uplift people out of homelessness.

Homelessness is unacceptable and solvable. With nearly 40 years of experience serving this community, we know how to end homelessness. We work towards it every day. As a volunteer and fellow supporter, I write to you to ask you to join me in donating to make an impact as we stand together, against homelessness.

Sincerely,

Fabian Armijo

Albuquerque Health Care for the Homeless Board Member



Dear Friends,

Thank you for your gift of \$300 to Roadrunner Food Bank. As the holiday season gets into full swing, Roadrunner Food Bank is deeply thankful that you have chosen to ensure that your neighbors experiencing hunger have nourishing food to share with their loved ones.

We just held three large mobile food distributions prior to Thanksgiving week and distributed over 418,000 pounds of food to more than 4,600 families. So many of our neighbors were able to put beautiful and nutritious food on the table of their families because of you.

Your contributions extend far beyond the provision of meals; they are sustaining families', seniors', and others' senses of security and dignity; promoting health and well-being among those we serve; and ultimately fostering healthier and more vibrant communities throughout our state.

In this season of joy and generosity, we extend our deepest gratitude to each and every one of you who make our mission possible.

In gratitude this holiday season,

Dana Yost

President and CEO, Roadrunner Food Bank

Thank You *cont.*

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your gift to the ministry of Samaritan's Purse towards the Israel Projects and Ukraine Response. We praise God that through the gifts and prayers of people like you, we are able to provide this aid to disaster victims at home and abroad as well as collect millions of Operation Christmas Child gifts for children in need. "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you" (Philippians 1:3). Thank you and God bless you.

Sincerely,
Franklin Graham
 President Samaritan's Purse

Notes from Faith Lutheran sponsored children with Common Hope:

Hello sponsors, I want to wish you a merry Christmas and happy New Year. Sending you many hugs and hope you enjoy the time with your loved ones. My mom makes a warm fruit punch for the holidays, and I love to drink it.

Tania Estefania Patzán Coj

Hello! Through this letter I want to wish you a Merry Christmas! Also, that you have happy days and holidays with all your family. Merry Christmas and I hope you have a night full of blessings and fun.

Juan Daniel Hernández Flores

December 2023 Council Meeting Summary

Items of interest this month included a report from Amber Webb Otero, Director of Operations, that November was the best month of giving in years and puts us at 104% of our projected 2023 budget. The new councilors received their orientation to Council. This was the final meeting for Matt Meyer, President, as well as a few councilors and appreciation was expressed for all of their work on the Council.

Did you know you can read the full minutes of each Council meeting? Once the minutes from the previous month's meeting are approved, they are placed in a binder that is kept in a drawer of the curved counter in the Centrum. You are free to access it at your convenience.

Your 2024 Church Council

Stanley "Buzz" Busboom, President	Jessica Anderson	Bill Dennis
Doug Dederman, Vice President	Rachel Archer	Brady Gear
	Hank Bohnhoff	Kaiya Phillips
	Jim Burrell	Jennifer Wilson

Financials

2023	Month of November	Year-To-Date as of 11/30/23	Year-To-Date Comparison of Offerings
offerings	\$232,256	\$1,493,682	
budget	\$141,286	\$1,554,114	(\$60,432)
expenses	\$120,533	\$1,488,852	\$4,830

Please note: Expenses are subject to change pending the Annual Financial review.

Events & Announcements

Revelation class with Pastor Mark Behenna

- Sundays, Jan. 7, 14, 21, 28
9:30 & 11am
- Wednesdays, Jan. 10, 17, 24, 31
6:30pm

MIDWEEK RESUMES January 10

Military Mission Support Packing January 8, 5:30pm

Men's Bible & Brew January 2, 16

"The Chosen" Season 3 study January 17, 24, 31

Lunch & Learn January 18, 11am

Dorcas Needlework January 8, 22

January menu

for Wednesday nights

10

TACO SALAD &
CHEESE QUESADILLAS

17

PIZZA



24

BREAKFAST FOR
SUPPER

31

HOT DOGS AND
MACARONI & CHEESE

Lunch and Learn

Thursday January 18, 2024 @ 11:00



Dianne Campbell,
Director of
Development,
will be our guest
speaker

Please come out and show **your support** for one of the organizations **Faith supports!**

Military Prayer List

SUPPORTING OUR MEN & WOMEN OF THE UNITED STATES MILITARY THROUGH PRAYER,
SHARING THE WORD OF GOD, AND ENCOURAGING THEIR MORALE & WELFARE.

For changes/additions to this list, please contact Pr Mark Behenna or the church office at 505-296-0762.



Ainsley Burrell

Leah Gallegos

James Hansen

Chris Hinnerichs

Alec Kainer

Joshua Fanning

Liam Fink

Logan Nebl

Faun O'Brien

Joseph O'Brien

Jason F. Ruetschilling

Courtney Werth

William Werth

Patrick Winkels

General News

Recent Deaths:

- Doug Morgan, father of Ross Morgan
- Earl Gale on December 10
- Lisa Skocypec's father
- Rodney, brother of Hal Lewin

Help Us Stay Up-To-Date!

If you've moved, changed your cell phone number, gotten rid of your landline, changed your email address, etc. - Don't forget to let your church know! You can contact Diane Wilder at 505-296-0762 or dwilder@faithabq.org to update your records.

Prayer Chain

Volunteers for this ministry respond to all prayer requests by praying for the names they receive. All requests are confidential. To notify us of a prayer need, contact the church office at 505.296.0762.

Listen to Church with your Landline

Listening to Services Over the Phone
Please dial 1.833.531.1980

Hospital & Home Visits

Please call the church office to let us know of hospitalizations, illnesses, and situations of need and we will make every effort to be present with you or your loved one. Our prayers continue for all those in need of healing, comfort, and peace.

LCMC (lcmc.net)

Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ is an association of independent, evangelical and mission driven congregations grounded in the Scriptures and working together to fulfill Christ's Great Commission to go and make disciples of all nations.

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Current Resident or...

Thank you Lord for:

