

# Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd

December 2020 Newsletter

## *Advent and Christmas 2020*

The depth of our Advent preparation determines the height of our Christmas celebration. In this year of pandemic my depths have been lower and my highs have been higher than ever. Thankfully, we know that God is with us in all of the times and places of our lives. In a year like no other, I offer the following suggestions for how to nurture your spirit this Advent.

### **Participate in online worship.**

Each of the weeks of Advent offers a unique curriculum of spiritual preparation.

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent: November 29

We pray “stir up your power, O Lord, and come!” We are invited to live “today” fully by “keeping awake” (Mark 13) in light of the return of Christ at the end of history.

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent: December 6

We pray “stir up our hearts” and experience that stirring through confession and forgiveness.

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent December 13

We pray “open our ears” to your Word, and hear John the Baptist witnessing to Jesus, the true light.

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent: December 20

We remember the announcement of Jesus’ birth and personalize the prayer of Mary: “Here I am, the servant of the Lord, let it be with me according to your Word.”

### **Read and pray the Daily Lectionary.**

The daily readings extend the Sunday Gospel to each day of the week. In daily Bible study and prayer our hearts are stirred. Even if we are alone, we join the community of God’s people and the whole creation in listening to the voice of God.

### **Be part of the “Lament Psalms” Bible study.**

The Psalms of lament in Advent give voice to our deepest pain and longing, opening our hearts to healing and joy. You are invited to join our Zoom Bible study at 4 pm each Thursday by sending me ([dmesner@lcsduluth.org](mailto:dmesner@lcsduluth.org)) your email, and I will send you the Zoom invitation. We will read, discuss and pray together the lectionary Psalm for each week of Advent:

#### December 3: Psalm 80

How long? Why?

Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.

#### December 10: Psalm 85

Restore us again, O God of our salvation.

Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet,

Righteousness and peace will kiss each other.

#### December 17: Psalm 126

May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.

May “God with us!” touch your soul this Advent and Christmas!

-Pastor Dave



# Christmas Giving to CHUM & Honduras

One of our special Christmas traditions at Good Shepherd is to be able to love our neighbor locally and globally by giving a gift in honor of or in memory of our loved ones. We have valued partners in our mission to reach out locally (**CHUM**) and globally (**the Lutheran Church in Honduras**). Christmas 2020 presents profound challenges for these partners in ministry. Please consider honoring your loved ones by making a generous gift this Christmas. *(All gifts will be equally divided between both partner organizations).*

Please send this form to the church office before **Wednesday, December 16**. Gifts may be mailed or given online (<https://onrealm.org/LCGSDuluth/-/give/now>) to the "Honduras/CHUM Christmas Giving" fund.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount of money enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate what you would like your notation to say:  
...given in loving memory of: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_   
...given in honor (or other similar notation) of: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_   
\_\_\_\_\_   
...given by: \_\_\_\_\_

**Christ in our Home** is available. They are available at the communion service or in the box outside of the church by the office doors. Our office manager Christine will mail it to anyone who is unable to pick on up, just let her know if you need the regular or large print addition. 525-1922

## **Salvation Army Bell Ringing - December 5th & 12th**

Are you looking for a way you can do ministry during the holidays? One easy way is ringing bells for the Salvation Army. Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd members, families and friends have the opportunity to donate one or two (or more) hours of time to assist with this critical work. We will cover two full days of bell ringing at one location: Cub Foods on Central Entrance (inside!). The dates are Saturday, December 5th and 12th, from 10:00 AM to 8:00 PM. The Salvation Army of Duluth is asking for our help to rescue Christmas. Based on the increase in services they have already provided in response to the pandemic, they could serve up to 155% more people this year with Christmas assistance, including putting food on the table, keeping the heat on, providing housing, and helping place gifts under the tree.



The Salvation Army has COVID-19 safety protocols in place for this Red Kettle season - wear an appropriate mask at all times, wear winter or disposable gloves at all times, sanitize the bell prior to ringing with the provided sanitizer, utilize provided hand sanitizer when appropriate, maintain at least six feet of safe social distancing when a donation is being made (if you need to step back, please do). Do NOT volunteer if you are experiencing any of the following symptoms - fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea.

Please call Marcia Semerau at 576-5531 and sign up to offer your help for one or two hours for this worthwhile cause. THANK YOU!

## Estimates of Giving Help Church Plan for 2021

Thank you to all the households who have submitted their Estimates of Giving for 2021. Your commitment and generosity to the ministry of this church is appreciated, especially during these uncertain times. These estimates will then be reviewed by the Finance Task Force, Resource Development Team and the Vision Council in the coming weeks as they prepare the 2021 Operational Budget for approval at the 2021 Annual Meeting of the congregation in early February.



If you have not yet submitted your estimate, there is still time to do so. 2021 Estimates of Giving can now be submitted online at [www.lcgsduluth.org](http://www.lcgsduluth.org). If your household uses Simply Giving or other online automated giving, it is helpful if you also submit an Estimate of Giving to indicate your intention for continued support in 2021. If you have any questions or concerns, contact Christine Whitcomb, Financial Secretary at [office@lcgsduluth.org](mailto:office@lcgsduluth.org) or 525-1992.

## Invitation to Give a Christmas Offering

*"Do not be afraid;  
for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy  
for all the people. To you is born this day in the city of David  
a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord." Luke 2:10-11*

As we celebrate the season of the birth of our Savior, we are thinking about and praying for all our members. While this has been a year of difficult challenges, these seasons of Advent and Christmas provide a time to slow down and reflect on our blessings, priorities, and financial resources.

Even as our church has, out of necessity, been out of our building for many months, we have been deeply encouraged by the continued financial generosity of our members. We are thankful for the innovations and creativity of pastors, staff and lay leaders in continuing our mission and ministry in new ways despite challenging times.

To complete a year of generous support for the mission and ministry of the church, we invite you to consider a Christmas offering, in addition to your pledged gifts. Since we will not be worshipping in person, your gift may be made online at [www.lcgsduluth.org/give](http://www.lcgsduluth.org/give), using the Christmas giving envelope or mailed to the church office at 1325 North 45<sup>th</sup> Avenue East, Duluth, MN 55804.

Your faithful partnership in ministry is deeply appreciated. May the birth of our Lord and Savior bring you hope and great joy during this blessed season.

Stewardship Committee

Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd,

Thank you for your contribution of \$73.00 to CHUM's Backpack drive and \$50.00 to CHUM's Food Shelf.

Your support means so much to us in times like these. Our essential services continue, and the health and safety of our clients, staff and volunteers is our top priority. Together we will continue to advocate for a just and compassionate community and work to make a dent in homelessness and food insecurity in Duluth with strength and unity.

CHUM is proud to be a diverse community that celebrates together, welcomes all comers, stands in solidarity with our neighbors, demonstrates generosity, practices fellowship, and spreads love in the world. Thank you for being part of that community.

Sincerely,

Lee Stuart

Executive Director



Dear friends from Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd,

Thank you for your in-kind donation of 114 face masks for COVID-19 relief efforts to Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota.

Your gift will be greatly appreciated by our clients and your generosity helps us further realize our vision that "All people have the opportunity to live and work in community with dignity, safety and hope."

You have many choices about where to direct your gifts. We are grateful that you have placed LSS among your charitable priorities.

Sincerely,

Christianne Pease

Volunteer Services Manager

## Sunday School Open House: Christmas Program and Advent Workshop

-- **Sunday, December 6 or Sunday, December 13**

Please Sign Up for a Timeslot Online

Two of our favorite Sunday School traditions are the Christmas Program and the Advent Workshop. We hope to recreate these experiences – safely – in a Sunday

School Open House. Please sign up for a timeslot online. Our website is [www.lcgsduluth.org](http://www.lcgsduluth.org) or go straight to:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040A4CACA72CAB9-sunday1>

Each family will have at least 15 minutes in the Sanctuary

and 15 minutes at a craft table before the next family arrives. In the Sanctuary, kids will hear the Christmas Story and put on the Christmas Program costumes. Then, we will record your child(ren) saying their “big lines” for the program. Pastor Tim will incorporate these photos and videos in our online

Christmas Eve worship service. Before you go, stop by a craft table to

preview our Advent Workshop Crafts. Hopefully, you’ll be able to do at least one craft here before taking the rest of the crafts home.



### Outdoor Walk Through Christmas Light Display:

Starting December 1 – Come Any Evening

Our Confirmation Students have created an outdoor Christmas Light display for you to walk through at church. There will be a story to read as you walk, and at the end of the walk you can take home a copy of the book.

### Confirmation Families,

Here is the new plan for Confirmation in December: Secret Santa with a connection to Life House here in Duluth. (Full disclosure: this email got a little long, so here is a link to a youtube video that explains everything:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nSJPH3Db5Yo>

I know some of your teenagers are more likely to watch a video than read a long email...)

- By this coming Monday (Nov. 30) let me know if you'd like to participate in Confirmation Secret Santa.

- By Wednesday (Dec. 2) I will mix up the names and let you know who you are shopping for.

- By Wednesday (Dec. 9) drop off your gift here at church. Please spend less than \$10 and please shop at SuperOne, Target, Walmart, or Walgreens (more on that below...)

- By Wednesday, Dec. 16, pick up your gift. We will all open gifts together on Zoom that Wednesday night.

Why \$10 and why those stores? Life House is an amazing organization here in Duluth that reaches out to teenagers experiencing homelessness. Life House is always looking for \$10 gift cards to SuperOne, Target, Walmart, or Walgreens so that they can "treat" the youth that they are working with. Yes, this is a "treat" - a big treat - to these teenagers. So hopefully this Secret Santa shopping can also be an eye opening experience to what life is like for other teenagers right here in Duluth. If you are willing/able, pick up a \$10 gift card while you are shopping, and drop it off at church with your gift. As a church, we will donate all those gift cards to Life House.

I know this is not what we originally planned (no in person Campfire Christmas Parties right now...) but hopefully this will be a fun way to stay connected this December and support Life House and the amazing work they are doing this year.

Thanks!



Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd (ELCA)

1325 North 45th Avenue East, Duluth MN 55804-1507



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US Postage

PAID

Permit No 28

Duluth, MN

Place address label here.

(new postal regulations)

The church building is currently closed due to Covid-19, but ministry continues!

Find us at [www.lcgsduluth.org](http://www.lcgsduluth.org) for online worship and information about what we are up to! Sign-up on the homepage for weekly e-mails!

Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd

Currently Closed due to COVID-19

Phone: 218-525-1922 •

Website: [www.lcgsduluth.org](http://www.lcgsduluth.org)

## MEET THE STAFF

Pastor Dave Mesner, Lead Pastor  
(home) 218-529-9715  
email: [dmesner@lcgsduluth.org](mailto:dmesner@lcgsduluth.org)

Pastor Tim Berdahl, Pastor  
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Katie Rich, Director of Youth & Family Ministry  
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Amie Abenth, Communications Coordinator  
email: [communications@lcgsduluth.org](mailto:communications@lcgsduluth.org)

Stef Regenold, custodian  
Greg Susens, custodian

Sydney Fischer, Nursery Director

### Music Team:

Linda Turpening, Organist email:  
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Debbie Sanders, Good Shepherd Choir Director  
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