



Living Lord Lutheran Church

Make disciples, Serve selflessly, Live faithfully

The Voice



December 2023 Issue



Dear friends in Christ: Some say this is the biggest holiday of the year. It certainly takes on the look of the biggest. The stores started putting out decorations this year in September, or earlier. I have avoided listening to Christmas music when I could but that is not always possible. I get grumpy sometimes about the early start to Christmas. I remember picking out Christmas trees the week before Christmas. Christmas seems to come earlier each year.

Unfortunately, the reason for it being so big is not the reason for the season. It is so big because it makes so much money for the economy of the U.S. You and I know the real importance of Christmas is the first 6 letters. Jesus being born is so much bigger than money; it is the salvation of the world. Each decoration, each tree, each greeting, each present is a reminder that God has given us Christmas to bring joy to the world. Often for those who do not believe.

So, let us ungrump this year about how early the season started, and rejoice for the joy it brings to people. Remember as you celebrate the love Christ gives you this season and always, is the reason for the season for all!

May the Christ child bless you this season with every good gift.

Read Luke 2:1-20 and rejoice!!

In Christ's love:
Pastor Ed

A **Big Thank You** to everyone who donated to the children of the Angel Tree! And Thank you to Sue Copeland and Mary Torke for leading this Outreach project for Living Lord this year!



Sunday mornings, 10:05 – 10:50 am

4th – 6th Grade: The older elementary/middle school students are using Connect Curriculum and will complete an in-depth study of the Old Testament this school year. Class meets in Conference Room.

High School: The high school youth will be using Faith Lens weekly blog from the ELCA. Class meets in the Youth Room.

Adults: The adult class will begin on October 1. They will be studying either the Psalm or Epistle lesson each week. Roger Raddatz will be the leader. Class meets in the Activities Hall.

“Plant your roots in Christ and let him be the foundation for your life. Be strong in your faith, just as you were taught. And be grateful.”
(Colossians 2:7, CEV)

PRAYER REQUESTS

Theo Bullington	Josh Myers Behler
Rob Babel	Chris Mork
Kristine Mylett	Shirley Smith
Susanna Scott	Cason Pope
Gordy Havey	Will
Janet Castner	Ivory Anderson
Liz Howell	Nan Fisher
Wyly Pope	Calvin
Sue Pinkerton	Gene Rahn
Linda Henkelmann	Tony Zubricky
Jacob Rodriguez	Joe Kitchie
Suzanne Dietzel	Rade Mallkovich
Cleo Neynaber	Sharlene Jones
Nancy Woodworth	Shirley Kitsmiller
June Hartlieb	Linda Couch
Bill and Janet Burkman	Jim Pinto
Ron Silver	Ray Rankl
Andrew Catanese	Sophia Sahr
Family of Roger Masch	Lori Rapp
Laura Apeathy	Jim and Sandy Kudrin
Frankie Vasquez	Becky Berka
Family of Dick Bernard	Debbie Skelly
Nayda Rivera	Jim Morrison
Family of Susan Stodghill	Jeanne Thum
Elaine Truitt	Valerie Walden
Ralph Hanson	Peggy Smith
Family of Gloria Depas	Lynn Echols
Steve Pyeatt	Family of Lowell Welke
Bob Ready	Tracy Allen
Brian Brockschmidt	Jeff Shaw
Family of Brian Schmidt	Dawn Schaeffer
Denny Gilpin	Family of Katherine Hoth
Kathy Rodd	Tom Bowles
Rich Jones	John Saum
Clifford Finholdt	Family of Marty Smith
Doug Holst	Family of Dick Gross
Terrie Dale	Leroy Hurst
Jill and Amy	Dan
Schrand Family	Family of Tom Widmann
Mary	Olivia and Barb Sahr



It is hard to believe that Thanksgiving has already come and gone. It is always an important time for our teachers to teach our students the true meaning of the holiday. It is also a time for us to reflect on the many blessings that we have and give thanks for our task as educators. AGC has been full of beautiful fall decorations crafted by all of our students. The classes also had Thanksgiving feasts with their friends and talked about what they are thankful for!



AGC also participated in The Magic of the Mittens project this past month. This is a magical organization that helps provide Christmas gifts to local families in Manatee County. Our AGC families donated over 40 presents to children and single Moms, helping bring holiday joy to eight families. It was overwhelming to see the generosity and kindness our community brought to this project.



AGC also took part in our 13th annual St. Jude Children's Research Hospital Trike-A-Thon. This is an event that everyone looks forward to as it is a day for the children to get outside and ride their bikes with their classmates. As they ride, they are raising money for St. Jude so that the families never have to receive a bill for the care of their loved ones. We had our families come and cheer on their student with signs, pom-poms, and fun music. It was a beautiful day for all of us. The best part was that our Trike-A-Thon has raised \$2340.00 which is double the amount we raised last year. What a wonderful way to show our students how to give back to others and why it is important to be kind and a good friend. Our students did such a great job and everyone truly had a fun day. I want to thank all of our AGC families that came out to support our racers. We are looking forward to a joyful December!



From your Faith Community Nurses

Lights sparkle in the night sky. Prettily wrapped packages lie under the tree. Familiar scents fill our homes from homemade treats and confections. We hear the sounds of bells and familiar carols. Excited children count down the days until the 25th.

Christmas is nearly here.

When most people think of Christmas, they think of a sweet little baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger. Images of sheep and donkeys; wisemen and angels; songs and joyous laughter come to mind when we think of this time of year. As one song goes, "It's the most wonderful time of the year..."

Why does Christmas equal joy in our mind? Especially for those of us who are Christ followers?

It's more than just the presents and time spent with family. The joy of Christmas goes deeper than the sweet taste of gingerbread, the happiness on a child's face, and the beautiful lights wrapped around the tree. The joy of Christmas comes from why Jesus was born in the first place. It comes from what Jesus came to do. He didn't come simply

to be a precious baby for us to ooh and ahh over. He didn't come to remain a child. He came to be our Messiah, our Savior. He came to bring us forgiveness for our sins.

This is good news that ought to fill our hearts with awe and wonder. Like the shepherds in the fields, we ought to rejoice at the announcement the multitude of angels brought, "I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11). Like Mary, when we think of the joy and excitement about a baby born in a stable, we ought to ponder all these things in our heart.

Let us consider and ponder what this joy means. At Christmastime, let us consider Jesus, God made flesh, and may our hearts focus on why he came to earth. Let us focus on what it means for God to take on skin and bones that would one day be pierced and broken for us. As we sing our songs of joy, may we ponder in our hearts the marvelous truth that the Son of God would enter our sinful and broken world to free us from our prisons of sin and shame. Let us consider that this baby Jesus, whose birth we celebrate at Christmas, was born for the purpose of our redemption and forgiveness of sins.

This is the joy of Christmas.

"In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace." Ephesians 1:7

Source: The Real Joy of Christmas (ibelieve.com)

LUNCH BUNCH INVITATION

The lunch bunch will be meeting on Thursday, December 14th at Beef O'Brady's. The restaurant is located at 1795 Lakewood Ranch Blvd near SR 64. The new time is 11:30. The luncheon is open to all who wish to attend. The signup sheet is posted in the narthex. If you have any questions, please contact Dawn this month at 817-614-8201.

**Living Lord Lutheran Church
Treasurer's Report as of October 31, 2023**

OVERVIEW YEAR TO DATE 2023	Jan - Oct 2023 Actuals	Jan -Oct 2023 Budget	Favorable/ (Unfavorable)
Church General Fund Receipts	330,595.98	343,004.00	(12,408.02)
Church General Fund Disbursements	368,876.99	358,674.98	(10,202.01)
Net Church General Fund	(38,281.01)	(15,670.98)	(22,610.03)
Church Restricted Receipts	11,912.18		
Facility Fundraiser (Scrip)	1,537.13		
Youth Group Fundraiser	2,340.36		
Forward in Faith Receipts	129,773.37		
Church Restricted Disbursements	22,108.49		
Forward in Faith Capital Disbursements	264,210.80		
Forward in Faith Fundraising Disb	644.48		
Net Church Financial Position	<u>(179,681.74)</u>		
AGC General Fund Receipts	228,110.78	208,800.00	19,310.78
AGC General Fund Disbursements	200,772.26	210,729.26	9,957.00
Net AGC General Fund	27,338.52	(1,929.26)	29,267.78
AGC Restricted Receipts	81,011.80		
AGC Fundraisers	11,577.16		
AGC Restricted Disbursements	75,684.72		
Net AGC Financial Position	<u>44,242.76</u>		
Total LLLC General Fund Receipts	558,706.76	551,804.00	6,902.76
Total LLLC General Fund Disbursements	569,649.25	569,404.24	(245.01)
Net LLLC General Fund	(10,942.49)	(17,600.24)	6,657.75
Fundraising Balances	15,454.65		
Total LLLC Restricted Receipts	222,697.35		
Total LLLC Restricted Disbursements	362,648.49		
Net Total LLLC Financial Position(includes restricted)	<u>(135,438.98)</u>		
	Jan - Oct 2023 Actuals	Jan - Oct 2022 Actuals	Favorable/ (Unfavorable)
YEAR TO DATE COMPARISON 2023 VS 2022			
Church General Fund Receipts	330,595.98	324,843.24	5,752.74
Church General Fund Disbursements	368,876.99	338,505.58	(30,371.41)
Net Church General Fund	(38,281.01)	(13,662.34)	(24,618.67)
AGC General Fund Receipts	228,110.78	196,195.55	31,915.23
AGC General Fund Disbursements	200,772.26	176,675.80	(24,096.46)
Net AGC General Fund	27,338.52	19,519.75	7,818.77
Total LLLC General Fund Receipts	558,706.76	521,038.79	37,667.97
Total LLLC General Fund Disbursements	569,649.25	515,181.38	(54,467.87)
Net LLLC General Fund	(10,942.49)	5,857.41	(16,799.90)

Church general fund receipts through October are \$57 more than last year and \$12,000 less than budget. Expenses are \$10,000 more than budget. Our disbursements are \$38,000 more than receipts. AGC receipts are \$27,000 favorable to disbursements.



Lynn Fisher, bookkeeper

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE OCTOBER 2023

	Online People Reached	In-Person Attendance	Total
1-Oct	448	121	569
8-Oct	406	118	524
15-Oct	363	132	495
22-Oct	498	115	613
29-Oct	600	98	698



Ask The Weatherman

By: Bill Mork

How warm was October? The October 2023 global surface temperature was 1.34C (2.41F) above the 20th -century average of 14.9C (57.1F), making it the warmest Oct on record. This was 0.24C (0.43F) above the previous record from Oct 2015. Oct 2023 marked the 47th consecutive Oct and 536th consecutive month with temps at least nominally above the 20th -century average. Oct saw a record high monthly global ocean surface temp for the 7th consecutive month. The contiguous U.S. had its 18th warmest Oct in the 129-year record. For the second year in a row, the Mississippi River dropped to record lows, causing barges to run aground during one of the busiest times of the year to ship grain. A total of 25 separate billion-dollar U.S. weather and climate disasters have been confirmed this year, most events on record during a calendar year.

Does the drought continue? Using the 21 Nov U.S. Drought Monitor, Extreme Drought (D3) continues along the coast of Manatee and Sarasota Counties with Severe Drought elsewhere in our counties. SRQ rainfall in 2023 through 27 Nov is 23.51 inches, 50% of normal, deficit of 23.08 inches. Parrish rainfall in 2023 through 27 Nov is 34.41 inches, 66% of normal, deficit of 17.63 inches. Extremes continue along the Tamiami Trail. Naples 2023 rainfall through 27 Nov is 23.42 inches, 52% of normal, deficit 24.72 inches. Fort Lauderdale 2023 rainfall through 27 Nov is 109.06 inches, 188% of normal, surplus of 51.09 inches. This is the wettest year on record in Fort Lauderdale. Heavy rains Nov 14-16 left 13.31 inches at Lauderdale-By-The Sea. Too much westerly flow from El Nino in our wet season favors dry FL west coast, wet FL east coast.

What is our winter outlook? This year, El Nino is in place heading into winter for the first time in four years. And it looks like a strong El Nino with weather influence through the winter and spring. For West Central FL, the general outlook is for near normal temperatures and above normal rainfall as the subtropical jet stream should be stronger and further south. But a wet winter is not a slam dunk for us. The strong El Nino of 1997-98 gave Parrish 42.79 inches of rain Nov-Mar for 356% of normal for the wettest winter season we know of. However, the strong El Nino of 1982-83 gave Parrish 16.75 inches of rain Nov-Mar for 139% of normal. And the strong El Nino of 2015-16 gave Parrish 13.29 inches of rain Nov-Mar for 110% of normal.

How much snow has fallen lately? Anchorage AK had their snowiest November on record with 39.3 inches of snow as of 28 Nov. The Mayor of Anchorage declared a snow emergency as crews worked around the clock to plow streets with 20.8 inches of snow 8-10 Nov. Snowfall records were broken on 23-24 Nov with 22.9 inches at Lander WY and 17.7 inches at Riverton WY. Storm totals were as high as 27.5 inches at a location 6 miles southwest of Lander. Wichita KS had a record snowfall of 7.8 inches on 25 Nov for the 2nd greatest one day Nov snowfall on record. I recall a similar heavy Nov snowfall in Wichita in 1952. Heaviest snowfall on 25 Nov was 14.1 inches at Marion KS, northeast of Wichita. Lake effect snow 27-28 Nov dropped 42.7 inches of snow on Constableville NY, 40 miles north of Utica, downwind from Lake Ontario.

What happened to Death Valley? Two months after Hurricane Hillary's epic rainfall, parts of the national park looked more oasis than desert. Hillary unloaded a year's worth of rain, 2.2 inches on Death Valley in 24 hours on 20 Aug, wettest day in park's history. Until then, the park never recorded more than 2 inches in a single day. Flash flooding washed away trails. Visitors could see floodwater pooled in many locations and wildflowers blooming in remote areas.

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A congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



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