

TO BRING GOD'S GRACE AND LOVE TO EACH OTHER,
AND TO THE WORLD

THE LIGHT



Pastor's Notes

January 2022

Lebanon Evangelical Lutheran Church

*A Congregation of the North/West Lower
Michigan Synod, of the ELCA
Craig Satterlee, Bishop
Elizabeth Eaton, Presiding Bishop*

1101 S. Mears Avenue
Whitehall, MI 49461
(231) 893-5745

Rev. Douglas M. Ogden

**Sunday Morning Worship
Worship on the Web**

Office Hours

Please contact the church office for
current hours

**Newsletter Editor &
Bulletin Announcements**
Margaret Bverling

Church Council

Meg Eaton	Cheri Crouch
Brian Jaekel	Scott Keller
Alan Hinks	Wietze Schaafsma
Sarah Schmalz	

**"We are baptized members of God's
Church, forgiven and set free by grace
through faith.**

www.lebanonlutheranchurch.com

**Facebook: Lebanon Lutheran Church
(ELCA)**

Instagram—Twitter : #llcsignsofgrace

In the year of our Lord 2022:

The pandemic is still with us. But we have plans for Lebanon's 150th anniversary, celebrating throughout the year. This virus is not something to be afraid of, it is something to be careful with. Your mask protects me, my mask protects you

Wednesday, February 9 we have a night of ice skating, cross country skiing and lugeing at the Muskegon Luge Adventure Sports Park. For members our anniversary fund will cover the costs Rentals and trail passes and luge fee. There will be advance registrations after the New Year

In April we will raise a gift for ELCA World Hunger. Each years these past several we have raised \$1000 for a pair of oxen and allow somewhere in the world. We will do it again !

At the May synod assembly Lebanon will be recognized along with all congregations celebrating milestone anniversaries

On June 5, the actually anniversary date of our founding we welcome Synod Bishop Craig Satterlee for worship

In July, if the pandemic permits, we will celebrate a special smorgasbord dinner together

We will also celebrate the successful completion of our Capital Campaign, which began will repainting inside and out and has ended with the installation of new furnaces, a new virus air filter and new lounge carpet

We have also updated our christian education plan to include the 30 young people listed on the new chart in the narthex

As the year goes on we will add celebrations. Once the lounge is put back together we have a new members class to offer.

The best thing about anniversaries is looking back in order to look forward, to model the grace-filled life we cherish and to welcome others into these good and God-filled things.

Pastor Ogden

DONATE RIGHT FROM YOUR SMARTPHONE

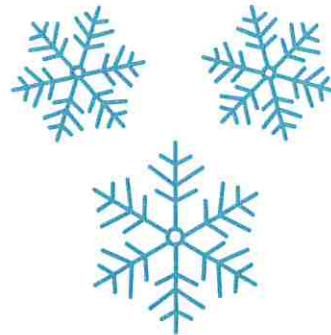
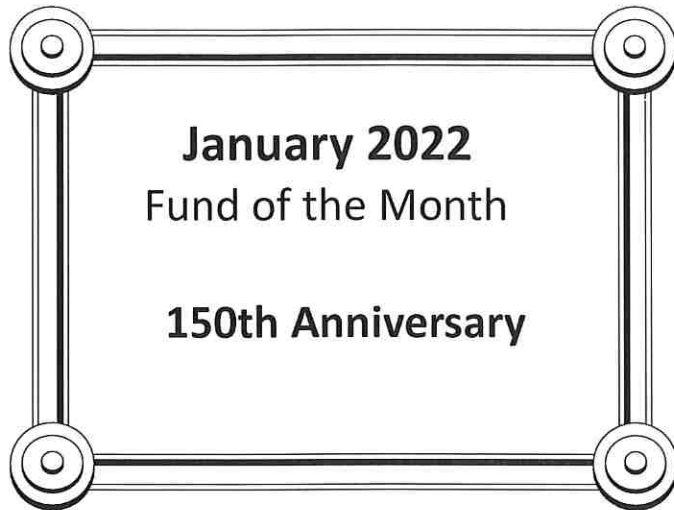
Giving through our Vanco Mobile app is an easy and convenient way to donate to our church. It only takes a moment to set up and account:

1. Download the free Vanco Mobile app from the App store or Google Play.
2. Find our Church by searching for our Church name:
Lebanon Lutheran Church
3. Donate: to the General Fund

Thank you for your generosity

This is the new version of the GivePlus app, and must be downloaded again from your App Store.





Websites of Interest

www.lebanonlutheranchurch.com

www.mittensynod.org

www.elca.org

www.whitelakescouting.com

www.whitelakechorale.com

www.hopescarves.org

LivingLutheran.org.

www.samaritas.org

Suicide Hotline 1-800-SUICIDE.org
www.co.muskegon.mi.us/cmh/suicide_prevention

Every Woman's Place
231-722-3333 or www.everywomansplace.org



Prayer Concerns

It is an important part of our ministry to be praying constantly for one another.
We add names to the prayer list with consent in order to maintain privacy and confidentiality. This month in your prayers, please remember:



Helen Bartlett, at home
Mary Bernhardt, at Robinswood Assisted Living #115 (Kay Snell)
Marlene Holmstrom, at home
Elaine Liska, at White Lake Assisted Living - Whitehall
Ruth Nurmi, with health concerns
Nancy Peterson, at Heartland , Room #405 B
Bernie Weidner, at Sanctuary of the Oaks. (Danielle Jacobs)
Marty Windbacher, at home

Special Prayer Concerns:

Steve Albert, with health concerns
Tracey Allen, (Roger Silk's cousin) diagnosed with terminal brain cancer
Jennifer Snowden Bossi, 34, (Ardy Bulthouse's granddaughter) diagnosed with a rare form of cancer.
Lucas Carlson, (Terry and Mary Beekmans grandson) for new treatment.
Tom Doran, (Margaret Everling's uncle) with health concerns
Diane, (friend of Cheri Crouch) diagnosed with cancer.
Dan Girvan, with health issues
Cora Hendrick, (Curt Crouch's mother) diagnosed with cancer
Terri Hissong, (Margaret Everling's sister) health concerns
Paul Honoré, recently diagnosed with cancer
Lauren Kerkstra, (Darrel and Jeanette Otto's granddaughter), recovering slowly, able to walk and take commands. Remains non-verbal .
Donna Knoth, with heart issues.
Jeff Knoth, recently diagnosed with cancer
Amy Jean Knorr, (Brian Holmblades aunt in Tucson) turning 105 years old on November 28.
Lara MacGregor, Cancer is aggressive, progressing and life threatening.
Mary, (Meg Eatons mother) with health concerns after a fall.
Dwight Mead (Paula Moreau's brother-in-law), non-hodgkin lymphoma mantel type (stage four).
Irene Parks, recuperating from heart valve replacement surgery, 12/16
Shirley, (friend of Barb Aardema) recently diagnosed with cancer.
Tammy, (daughter of Wietse and Melanie Schaafsma) with brain cancer & diabetic. At home.
Jen, (Tammy's sister) suffered aneurysm, at home.
Harry and Yolanta Swiatek, home recuperating from surgery complications - prayers for continued healing.



North/West Lower
Michigan Synod

2900 N. Waverly Rd.
Lansing, MI 48906

517-321-5066
mittensynod.org

In this Issue:

Advent Disappointment

Sabbatical Reflections

Racial Justice

Upcoming Events

Congregations in Transition

Advent Disappointment

If you follow my Take One videos, perhaps you've gleaned that I am disappointed in the imagery of Advent. Jeremiah promises "a righteous Branch to spring up for David" (33:15). With all that is happening in my life and the lives of the pastors I speak with every day, with all that is happening in our church, and especially in our society and the world, I want more than a branch. I want an 80-foot-tall tree of righteousness; I want a forest of 80-foot-tall trees of righteousness. A branch is disappointing.

I am energized by Malachi's image of a messenger of the Lord who "is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap" (3:2). We can all name someone who needs a purifying scrub! Yet, how often we feel like the one God is content to sear and to scour. Everyone else, it seems, gets a bubble bath.

And I don't think I'm the only one who really needs the fulfillment of Zephaniah's promise of "a warrior who gives a victory," a warrior who takes away judgments against us, turns away our enemies, removes disaster, and deals with all our oppressors (3:17-19). But this is not what I experience. All around we see defeat, judgment, enemies gaining the upper hand, disaster looming large, and oppressors growing stronger.

And on Christmas, when John declares, "The light shines in the darkness," I want to hear, "and the darkness is banished." I want a flood light, or at least a bat signal. But we don't get that. We get, "and the darkness did not overcome it" (1:5). John's image of "darkness" remains thick and bleak and pervasive, save for a tiny bit of light. Even the image itself reveals how foreboding things are.

Rather than an 80-foot-tall tree, a warrior, or a flood light, we get "a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger" (Luke 2:12). This vulnerable baby will live a vulnerable life that leads to a cross. There Jesus will deal with our oppressors and turn away our enemies by embracing them. Malachi's refiner's fire and fullers' soap turns out to be Zephaniah's promise that the LORD our God rejoices over us with gladness, renews us in love, exults over us with loud singing (3:17). The victory is not that God instantly takes all that threatens and burdens us away. The victory is that the LORD our God is in our midst, with us in everything we face. And this is true not just for us but for everyone; this is true for the cosmos, for all of creation.

Perhaps the reason we are so invested in making especially this Christmas celebration so big and so spectacular and so "normal" is that, faced with all we are faced with, the Christmas message seems small and powerless and disappointing. Desperate for a tree, a warrior, and a flood light, we are underwhelmed by a baby, a manger, and a cross. So, we prop up the Christmas message with our celebration and take it upon ourselves to do everything we can not to further disappoint anyone.

Well, let us be clear. First, taking it upon ourselves to save Christmas is a recipe for disaster. So maybe we need to take a deep breath. More important, even when the imagery of Advent and Christmas are justifiably disappointing, even when the message of Advent and Christmas feels small and powerless, especially when the darkness is thick and bleak and pervasive, biblical hope, Christian hope, our hope is the conviction that God will provide a future.

Continued on Page 9



Worship Notes

Sunday, January 2 - Christmas 2
Worship - 10:15am

Musician:

Readings

Jeremiah 31:7-14
Psalm 147:12-20
Ephesians 1:3-14
John 1:[1-9] 10-18

Color: White

Today we pray for:
Ted & Sharon Gribas

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Sunday, January 9 - Baptism of our Lord
Worship - 10:15am

Musician:

Readings

Isaiah 43:1-7
Psalm 29
Acts 8:14-17
Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

Color: White

Today we pray for:
Bill & Ruth Baxter

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you anointed Jesus at this baptism with the Holy Spirit and revealed him as your beloved Son. Keep all who are born of water and the Spirit faithful in your service, that we may rejoice to be called children of God, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Sunday, January 16 - Epiphany 2
Worship - 10:15am

Color: Green

Readings

Musician:

Isaiah 62:1-5
Psalm 36:5-10
1 Corinthians 12:1-11
John 2:1-11

Today we pray for:
Sharon Harris

Prayer of the Day

Lord God, source of every blessing, you showed forth your glory and led many to faith by the works of your Son, who brought gladness and salvation to his people. Transform us by the spirit of his love, that we may find our life together in him, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Friday, January 23 - Epiphany 3
Worship -

Color: Green

Readings

Musician:

Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10
Psalm 19
1 Corinthians 12:12-31a
Luke 4:14-21

Today we pray for:
Doug & Barb Aardema

Prayer of the Day

Blessed Lord God, you have caused the holy scriptures to be written for the nourishment of your people. Grant that we may hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that, comforted by your promises, we may embrace and forever hold fast to the hope of eternal life, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Sunday, January 30
Worship - 10:15 am

Color: Green

Readings

Musician :

Jeremiah 1:4-10
Psalm 71:1-6
1 Corinthians 13:1-13
Luke 4:21-30

Today we pray for:
Mary Bernhardt

Prayer of the Day

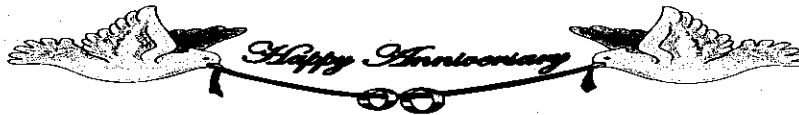
Almighty and ever-living God, increase in us the gifts of faith, hope and love; and that we may obtain what you promise, make us love what you command, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

January



1/1 Julie Johnson
1/2 John Parks
1/3 Marsha Hulce
1/3 Barbara Brooks
1/4 Jacob R. Brooks
1/5 Robert Eklund
1/5 Laura Hollister
1/5 Katherine Lathrop
1/5 Luke Thompson
1/6 John Lathrop
1/6 Scott Veeder
1/7 John Lundell
1/8 Stephanie Larson
1/9 Glenn Eaton
1/10 Alexandra Kesteloot
1/10 Ann Nessa
1/10 Sarah O'Donnell
1/11 Lynda Lauterberg
1/11 Randy Nurmi
1/13 Kerry Fretty
1/14 Jone Benedict
1/14 Steve Albert
1/16 Jeffrey Baker
1/16 Jennifer Stanhope
1/16 Al Wheeler
1/17 JoAnnie Silk

1/18 Linda Decker
1/19 Mary Bernhardt
1/20 John Hildebrandt
1/20 Doug Ogden
1/20 Kathy Scarbrough
1/22 Helen Bartlett
1/22 Richard Carlson
1/22 Nancy Dahl
1/23 Gabe DeMumbrum
1/23 Laura Schnepf
1/25 Virginia Foster
1/25 Traci Murphy
1/26 Ann Snow
1/27 Taylor Hughes
1/27 Erin Wendell
1/28 Barb Aardema
1/28 Bill Cloutier, Jr.
1/29 Cory Wyatt
1/30 Joel Newsted
1/30 Dwight Roesler



1/19/02 Michael & Kathleen Palmer

Baptism Anniversaries



1/1 Diane Eastman	1/9 Joshua Cloutier	1/23 Tyler Grover
1/1 Wiestse Schaafsma	1/9 Scott Lamiman	1/24 Kristin Wolffis
1/1 Melanie Schaafsma	1/10 Mitch Foster	1/25 Lisa Holmblade
1/1 Gretchen Lane	1/11 Donna Jensen	1/27 David Pearson
1/2 Carley Smercina	1/18 Dawn Baker	1/30 Gary Holmstrom
1/3 James Will	1/18 Nathan Parker	
1/7 Matthew Ferguson	1/20 Oliver Wyatt	

Celebrate your baptism anniversary with a candle a meal or this prayer:

“Stir up within me the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and joy, on this day when I give thanks for my baptism in to Christ.”

God will provide a future. Trusting in this conviction, we can express our disappointment, name our loss, acknowledge our fear, exercise our grief, and give voice to our resignation and despair without abandoning our hope.

God will provide a future. As I express my disappointment, sadness, resignation, fear, and despair, I hang on to hope by carrying around and clinging to a quotation a friend sent me in the days before Advent began: "Advent is a whisper, rather than a shout. Not a blazing fire, but a candle in the darkness."

"Advent is a whisper, rather than a shout. Not a blazing fire, but a candle in the darkness." This quote is right. Especially this season, shouting strikes me as forced, even inauthentic. And blazing light can hide reality. The big, spectacular, "normal" celebration we strive for may turn out to be the greatest disappointment of all.

So, let's do something else. Trusting that God is providing a future, let's express our disappointment, name our loss, acknowledge our fear, exercise our grief, and give voice to our resignation and despair. God-With-Us, grant us a whisper of promise and a flicker of hope and the grace to express our disappointment in the confidence that You are providing a future. In the Name of Jesus. Amen

The Rev. Craig Alan Satterlee, Ph.D., Bishop



HOW TO DIRECT THRIVENT CHOICE DOLLARS®

Online

1. Visit Thrivent.com/thriventchoice.
2. In the "GET STARTED" section on the right, click **Direct Thrivent Choice Dollars®**.
3. Log in by entering your user ID and password. (If you haven't yet registered on Thrivent.com, click "Register for account access.")
4. Choose the organization to which you want to direct Choice Dollars:
 - a. To direct to a previous organization:
 - Click "Direct Now" next to the organization's name, or
 - Click on the "View activity history" link, scroll down and click on the name of the desired organization.
 - b. To direct to a new organization, enter keyword(s) like organization name, ZIP code, cause, etc. Click "Search."
5. Choose "Direct All" or enter a specific number and click "Direct Now." Follow the prompts on the confirmation page to direct Choice Dollars.

By phone

1. Call 800-847-4836 and when prompted, say "Thrivent Choice."
2. Press 1 to direct Choice Dollars or 2 to hear Thrivent Choice Dollars® program Terms and Conditions. (If prompted, say or enter your phone number and date of birth.)
3. A representative will work with you to direct Choice Dollars.

**You have the power to recommend where
Thrivent gives back!**

WANT TO MAKE AN EVEN BIGGER IMPACT?

Make a personal donation.



The Thrivent Choice® charitable grant program engages Thrivent members and Thrivent Member Networks in providing grants that support charitable activities, furthering Thrivent's mission and its purposes under state law. All grant decisions, including grant recipients and amounts, are made at the sole discretion of Thrivent. Directing Choice Dollars® is subject to the program's Terms and Conditions available at Thrivent.com/thriventchoice.

26087 R12-18

PRODUCTION JOB FAIR!

Saturday, January 8, 2022
8:00 AM - Noon

Howmet Aerospace, Whitehall Operations Plant 1
919 Lakeview Street
Whitehall, MI 49461

Applications will be accepted for immediate openings for Production, Technician and Skilled Trades positions.

- High School Diploma or GED required
- Two years continuous work history OR 6 months manufacturing experience, post high school.
- Must be available to work any shift
- Bring a resume
- COVID protocols will be observed (masks will be required)
- Equal Opportunity Employer
- Apply online at www.howmet.com/joinus

Howmet requires newly hired employees to be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 to the extent permitted under federal, state, and local law. Requests for reasonable accommodations on the basis of a disability, medical condition, or sincerely held religious beliefs or legally recognized exemptions will be considered.



Where Your Career Takes Flight



HAPPY NEW YEAR from your Thrivent Whitehall Office !!

Charitable Contributions from IRAs

Did you know that, if you are at least 70 ½ years old, you can make tax-free charitable donations directly from your IRA? By making what's called a qualified charitable distribution (QCD), you can benefit your favorite charity (for example your church) while excluding up to \$100,000 annually from gross income. These gifts, also known as "charitable IRA rollovers," would otherwise be taxable IRA distributions

How do I make a Qualified Charitable Distribution?

In order to make a QCD, you simply instruct your IRA trustee to make a distribution directly from your IRA (other than SEP and SIMPLE IRAs) to a qualified charity. The distribution must be one that would otherwise be taxable to you. It must go directly from your IRA to your charity of choice.

***To learn more about Charitable IRA Contributions and how QCDs work, contact the Thrivent Whitehall office at 231-894-8886 or email whitehalloffice@thrivent.com
Marci Bentz and Tony DeNicolo, your Thrivent Financial Advisors***



Lebanon Lutheran Church

1101 South Mears Avenue
Whitehall, MI 49461

Living in God's Amazing Grace

The Light is published monthly by Lebanon Lutheran Church, 1101 S. Mears Avenue, Whitehall, MI 49461. Submissions are accepted through the 15th of each month. Submissions MUST include your name and a way to contact you in case of questions.

2 ways to submit your information:

- yellow folder in Margaret's office
(*better*)
- office@lebanonlutheranchurch.com
(*best*)

