

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

THE LIGHT



Pastor's Notes

December 2024

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
10:15 am in person
YouTube Worship on the Web

Office Hours
Please contact the church office for
current hours

Newsletter Editor &
Bulletin Announcements
Margaret Everling

Church Council
Meg Eaton Cheri Crouch
Laura Hollister Brian Jaekel
Sarah Schmalz Wietse Schaafsma
Al Wheeler

"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 : #llesignsofgrace

"For we need a little Christmas, right this very minute"

If you are trying to avoid Christmas songs this far before Christmas, my apologies. Of course we will still be singing some of the great Advent hymns on Sundays. And have potluck dinner and evening prayer of Advent Wednesdays. And Candles, Carols and Communion on Christmas eve itself (7 pm).

But when this song from the musical Aunt Mame comes over your radio, or Spotify or store loudspeaker, stop. Pay attention to this one, even though you've heard it a million times before. Listen to it, whether it's the Johnny Mathis version, or Pentatonix, of the Angela Lansbury original, and see if it doesn't speak to you the same way it did to me this year.

"We need a little Christmas, for I've grown a little leaner,
Grown a little colder, grown a little sadder, grown a little older,
And I need a little angel sitting on my shoulder."

"For we need a little music, need a little laughter,
Need a little singing, ringing through the rafter.
We need a little Christmas now."

Mame sings this in the musical when she realizes that she and everyone she knows have just lost everything in the 1929 Crash, the Great Depression.

We will take her advice – we will sing:

"Rejoice, rejoice, take heart in the night, though dark the winter
and cheerless, The rising Son shall crown you with light; be
strong and loving a fearless.
Love be our song and love our prayer, and love our endless story.
May God fill every day we share and bring us (at last!) into glory."
(ELW 242)

Perhaps you have taken on new expressions, new activities, new associations to work out the hope that is in you in this season. That is good.

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"Here is born in the faces of children, it rises on the shoulders of the

December 2024
Fund of the Month

 **Music**



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 1-800-273TALK.org
www.co.muskegon.mi.us/cmh/suicide_prevention

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

The Trevor Project 1-866-488-7386

The Trevor Project is the world's largest suicide prevention and crisis intervention organization for LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning) young people.

Volunteers needed to help with the monthly newsletter!

If you have a spare hour at the end of each month to help label, stamp and mail the Light, please let the church office know.

If several people have the spare time, it will be finished quickly.

Thank you,
Margaret Everling



Election Anxiety ~ Bishop's Newsletter

I write this as we prepare for Election Day and the aftermath of a presidential election. I expect the election is all we will be talking about for the next few weeks. I find wisdom in contributing to the conversation prior to knowing the outcome of the election.

In my fairytale imagination, the anxiety many of us felt over politics disappeared with the relentless run of political ads. The outcome of the election was undeniable and resulted in a quick concession speech. As a result, in the week after the election, our nation united behind our next president, whomever it is. As I said, my fairytale imagination.

In my honest imagination, I wonder how long we will wait after Election Day to learn the results and how rigorously those results will be challenged and discredited. I worry about how long we will live under the threat of political violence and how we will respond if and when political violence occurs. On this side of Election Day, I pray for the safety of poll workers and those who certify elections. I pray that the vote will not in any way be suppressed. I pray for a peaceful transition of power. Mostly I look to God for help because I am afraid of what this election will reveal about us as a nation.

I find hope in an image that Pastor Zachariah Shipman of University Lutheran Church in East Lansing offered his congregation. Picture a blue donkey on the left and a red elephant on the right. Above them reigns a white lamb. The message is clear. On the day after the election, as on the day before, God is still God. Jesus loves and reigns in the world. The Holy Spirit is at work among us and in our country.

In the weeks after the election, perhaps more than anything else, we need Jesus to save us from division. We are divided in our politics. We are divided over what constitutes the truth. Common ground appears impossible to find; compromise is regarded as anathema. Polarization and tribalism are the norm. We have lost our ability and our appetite to overcome our division.

Jesus gives us a new identity we can embrace, a future we can live into, and power to do both. Jesus unites us as God's children: "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28). Christ empowers us to strive to overcome rather than contribute to division by claiming this identity for ourselves and regarding others, first and foremost, as also one with us in Christ. We regard no one from a human point of view. For "if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us" (2 Corinthians 5:16-19).

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Bishop's Newsletter continued from page 3

This is not a fairytale. This is the gospel, the good news our nation needs the church to bring today. As children of God and disciples of the Lord Jesus who are empowered by the Holy Spirit, our vocation is to hang onto this hope and to share this hope with others. By virtue of our baptism into Christ's death and resurrection, we are to be both a "prophetic presence" and a "reconciling and healing presence" in the world, both denouncing sin and mediating conflicts to serve the common good (Church in Society, pp. 3-4). We are to take up and participate in the essential work of repairing a divided nation, work that is just beginning. We are to remain steadfast in pursuing God's call to care for others and be united in Christ.

But for today, perhaps the best we can do is to heed words of Jesus: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid" (John 14:27). We can be of strong heart and good courage because, no matter who wins in the battle of the elephant and the donkey, the lamb will forever reign.

With you in Christ,
The Rev. Craig Alan Satterlee, Ph.D., Bishop

Pastor's Notes - Continued from Page 1

"Hope is born in the faces of children, it rises on the shoulders of the aged as they walk into their sunsets. Hope spreads around the earth, brightening all things, Even hate which crouches, breeding in dark corridors.

"In our joy we think we hear a whisper; at first it is too soft. Then only half heard. We listen carefully as it gathers strength; we hear its sweetness. The word is Peace. It is loud now. It is louder. Louder than the explosion of bombs.

"It is what we have hungered for."

This poem is by Dr. Maya Angelou, called Amazing Peace: a Christmas poem.

"It is what we have hungered for," with people all around the world, we have this hope in common. We will therefore feast on it together, nurture the hope that is in us; I know we will. We will tell each other of Christ at Christmas.

Be strong. And loving. And fearless.

Pastor Ogden

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:



Prayers for those who are homebound:

Our Minister

Helen Bartlett, at daughter Carol Roods' home now. 95337 W. McMillan, N. Muskegon 49445
Mary Bernhardt, at Robinswood Assisted Living #115 (Kay Snell) 2650 Ruddiman, N. Muskegon 49445
Jane Blyth, 28801 Jefferson Ave., Apt. 332; Saint Clair Shores, MI 48081
Chris Claus, American House - 17383 174th Avenue, Spring Lake, MI 49456
Karl & Shirley Glass, with health concerns, 3232 Richmond NW, Walker, MI 49534
Marlene Holmstrom, at home. 2643 Benston Road, Whitehall, 49461
Ken & Sandy Kolb, with health issues - 6755 W. Old Channel Trail; Montague 49437
Elaine Liska, Sunrise Senior Living—Sunrise of Troy; 6870 Crooks Road, Troy, MI 48098-1704.
Elaine Liska—Room 130.
Phyllis Monte, at Legacy of Caring - Whitehall—1302 Warner Street, Whitehall 49461
Ruth Nurmi, with health concerns—308 E. Dayton Street, Fremont, 49412
Barb Smith, at Legacy of Caring - Whitehall—1302 Warner Street, Whitehall 49461

Special Prayer Concerns:

Brianne Beekman, (Terry & Mary Beekman's granddaughter) diagnosed with multiple brain tumors.
Lucas Carlson, (Terry and Mary Beekmans grandson) for new treatment.
Sheila Fretty, re-occurring cancer.
Elin Frietsch, diagnosed with Lymphoma
Margaret Fountain, (Mary Koenen's sister) diagnosed with multiple myeloma
Lon Grover, (Lucinda Grover's brother) with health concerns.
Frank Hollister, for continued healing
Dottie Holmblade, (Brian Holmblade's sister) for no side effects from chemotherapy restarted for cancer diagnosis
Karen Jarvis, (family friend of the Beekmans & Parks), diagnosed with colon cancer. (surgery scheduled in October).
Dwight Mead (Paula Moreau's brother-in-law), non-hodgkin lymphoma mantel type (stage four).
Pastor Sarah Samuelson, at home, diagnosed with colorectal cancer
Paul Vos, (Ken and Sandy Kolb's son-in-law) hearing issues
For families dealing with dementia
For our partners in faith, our companion synods in Salud para la Vida in San Pedro Sula, Honduras for their mission and ministry in their place as we fulfill our mission in our place; for all the churches of the Lutheran World Federation, for people of the gospel throughout the world



Worship Notes

Sunday, December 1 - Advent 1
Worship - 10:15am

Color: Blue

Musician:
Monica Ogden

Readings

Jeremiah 33:14-16
Psalm 25:1-10
1 Thessalonians 3:9-13
Luke 21:25-36

Today we pray for:
Lance & Linda Decker

Prayer of the Day

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection alert us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and redeem us for your life of justice, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Sunday, December 8 - Advent 2
Worship - 10:15am

Color: Blue

Musician:
Monica Ogden

Readings

Malachi 3:1-4
Luke 1:68-79
Philippians 1:3-11
Luke 3:1-6

Today we pray for:
Tim & Virginia DeMumbrum

Prayer of the Day

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming give to all the people of the world knowledge of your salvation; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Sunday, December 15 - Advent 3
Worship - 10:15am

Color: Blue

Readings

Musician:
Monica Ogden

Zephaniah 3:14-20
Isaiah 12:2-6
Philippians 4:4-7
Luke 3:7-18

Today we pray for:
Michael & Anna DeNicolo Gaiser
Nora & Ellis

Prayer of the Day

Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the preaching of John, that, rejoicing in your salvation, we may bring forth the fruits of repentance, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Sunday, December 22 - Advent 4
Worship - 10:15 am

Color: Blue

Readings

Musician:
Monica Ogden

Micah 5:2-5a
Luke 1:46b-55
Hebrews 10:5-10
Luke 1:39-45 [46-55]

Today we pray for:
Shawn Erwin

Prayer of the Day

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Sunday, December 29 - Christmas 1
Worship - 10:15 am

Color: White

Readings

Musician:
Monica Ogden

1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26
Psalm 148
Colossians 3:12-17
Luke 2:41-52

Today we pray for:
Margaret Everling

Prayer of the Day

Shine into our hearts the light of your wisdom, O God, and open our minds to the knowledge of your word, that in all things we may think and act accordingly to your good will and may live continually in the light of your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Birthdays



12/1	Fransica Holmblade	12/21	Joni Will
12/1	David Hosticka	12/22	Bradley Carlson
12/2	Amy DeBolt	12/22	Robin Peters
12/3	Michaelanne Hendrixon	12/24	Timothy Kesteloot
12/4	Jerry Lewallen	12/25	Lisa Tallarico
12/7	Jacob Brackmann	12/25	Alan Stevens
12/10	Gary Holmstrom	12/25	Sharon Gribas
12/11	Jon DeMumbrum	12/27	Ray Lathrop
12/11	Gretchen Lane	12/27	Sue Plewka
12/14	Holli Nichols	12/27	Dean Roesler
12/15	Scott Keller	12/28	Holly Hughes
12/15	Abigail Bartlett	12/28	Monica Szczerbinski
12/15	Melanie Schaafsma	12/29	Mardi Otto
12/16	Ellis Gaiser	12/29	Molly Thompson
12/19	David Hendrixon	12/29	Katherine Thompson
12/19	Courtney Mares	12/31	Elly Hendrixon
12/20	Ruth Ann Nurmi		
12/20	Hannah Romain		
12/21	Hilda Branstrom		
12/21	Celia Vihtelic		



12/27/68	Art & Sue Plewka
12/29/73	John & Chris Parman



Beginning January 3, 2025, the church office will be closed on Fridays.

Margaret will be "semi" retiring.

Please plan accordingly for any items needing to be in the weekly inserts or newsletters.

Baptism Anniversaries



12/1 Kara Jaekel	12/18 Karen Hosticka Bruder	12/25 Elaine Stevens
12/3 Tom Foster	12/19 Logan Montgomery	12/26 Bill Hosticka
12/3 Mary Bernhardt	12/20 Bob Ackerman	12/26 Hilda Branstrom
12/4 Jodi Emms	12/21 Emma Stanhope	12/26 Katie (Stacy) Vandebunte
12/4 Jennie Shalifoe	12/23 Curt Crouch	12/26 Becky (Stacy) Chynoweth
12/11 Dustin King	12/23 Jon DeMumbrum	12/27 Jeff Holmstrom
12/12 Patti Ferguson	12/24 Hannah Berry	12/27 Julie Tyler
12/14 Sandra Morris	12/24 Brian Hosticka	12/27 Dustin Roesler
12/15 Kathy Scarbrough	12/24 Sophia Walters	12/28 George Stanhope
12/15 Stephen Ogden	12/25 David Civis	12/29 Diane Eastman
12/15 Terry Kesteloot	12/25 Jeffrey Civis	12/29 Jed Emms
12/15 Tim Kesteloot	12/25 David Hosticka	
12/17 Randy Diehm	12/25 Mary Ellen Larson	
12/17 Tylor Raymond Ramsey	12/25 Linda Schenten	

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



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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.



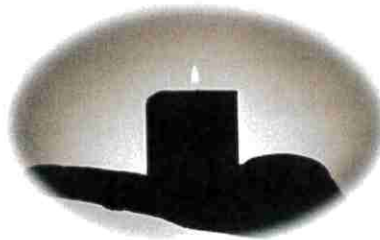
Advent Vespers
 December 4, 11, @ 7:15 pm
 December 18 - Game Night
 Potluck December 4, 11, 18 @ 6:00 pm

Christmas Eve Worship

Worship will be held 12/24/2024 at: 7:00 pm

Annual Reports are due to the church office by December 13th!

Submissions must be emailed or typed please!



Candlelight Yoga ~ Hope Scarves

December 19, 2024
6:00 pm to 7:00 pm

At Lebanon Lutheran Church
1101 S. Mears Avenue, Whitehall, MI 49461

Merry Christmas from Marci Bentz – Thrivent Whitehall Office

It's so easy to overspend during the holidays, and I'm not just talking about money. Between the gatherings and traveling and school programs and wish lists – not to mention the grocery bills and extra hours that come with adding those yummy family recipes to your table – it may feel impossible not to overspend both your money and your capacity. **So, if I can leave you with one idea this season, it is to figure out *what* and *how* to hold onto what you value most this time of year and release yourself from everything else.**

Want something a little more concrete? My friends at Roots & Wings have a quick and easy online [Values Exercise](#) that will help you name your Top 5 Values. **Naming these have had a profound effect on so many people, and I know that this 5-minute exercise could really give you the gift of clarity this season.** Check it out: www.rootsandwingslegacy.org/assessment

I'm hiring!

If you or someone you know is interested in applying to join my team, reach out to Sue at susan.carpenter@thrivent.com for the job description and application.

For any financial questions, needs or concerns, please call Marci Bentz at the Whitehall Office at 231-894-8886, Cell 231-760-8246, or email whitehalloffice@thrivent.com.



Thank you to everyone who took a gift tag for the White Lake Giving Tree or brought in a gift to drop into the Toys For Tots box.

Because of your caring, our community children and families will have a merrier Christmas this year!



Please join Alexys Nevitt on

**Saturday, December 14, 2024
at Lebanon Lutheran
6:00 pm**

For a Choral Concert featuring several community members.

A freewill donation will be accepted at the door.



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*)



December

**The Church Office will be closed on the
Following dates:**

Wednesday, December 25 - * No Pantry

Thursday, December 26

Wednesday, January 1, 2025 - *No Pantry