

Return Service
Requested

December Newsletter



St. Olaf Lutheran Church
402 Meridian Street
Cranfills Gap, TX 76637

8:30AM CHILDREN AND
ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL
9:30AM WORSHIP



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Living in God's amazing grace

Office: 254-597-2738

Interim Pastor

Ryan Pederson

956-367-0334

Council President

Phyllis Rieser

254-652-0676

Office Secretary

Angela Roberson

254-597-2738

saintolaflutheran@gmail.com

[www. saintolaflutheran.org](http://www.saintolaflutheran.org)



To all,

This morning as I sat down to write my newsletter article, I got word that Buddy Enger had passed away. Maybe there is a reason that I procrastinated writing this. The news about Buddy has certainly helped me put things in perspective.

This weekend is Norwegian Country Christmas and I have been rushing around trying to insure that performers at the Rock Church were still on schedule, making sure I didn't forget to have the basement open for the tuba players, baking cookies, getting supplies for December table decorations, trying to get the Norwegian Society Booth set up and working at the café. I do have some wonderful people that have helped with all of this but I tend to carry a heavy mental burden (my mom in my brain) trying to remember everything that needs to get done. So this morning, Buddy made me step back from all this crazy activity.

Buddy was in my class through 12 years of school at Cranfills Gap. We were a small class and Buddy tried to keep up with everything going on. Everyone cared about each other. Through the years, Bill Henderson has faithfully kept in touch with Buddy, brought him to several reunions and visited him at the Sunset Home. Bill is just another wonderful example of my "Most People Are Good" philosophy.

So today Buddy, my day is going to be about the people in my life. Thank you for turning off the crazy in my brain. There are things still to be done but they will get done as life moves on.

So during December, please remember Buddy and especially his sister, Elaine. Elaine will need lots of friends in the coming months. St. Olaf has always been a part of the extended family that she and Buddy grew up with. Please take some time to let Elaine know that we still think of her and that she is still has family at St. Olaf.

I do hope that you all will have a blessed holiday season with your family and friends as we move through December. As always, I am looking forward to the candlelight service at the Rock Church. It is such a moving service that touches me every year.

Merry Christmas,

Phyllis Rieser





Saint Olaf Lutheran

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

at

St. Olaf Kirke (Rock Church)

December 24 at 4:30, 6:00, and 7:30

Christmas Eve worship at the Rock Church. Service times are 4:30pm, 6:00pm, and 7:30pm. The 4:30 service is especially for families with children and those needing assistance as it is dismissed before dark. All services will have Holy Communion. Bring a flash light and a blanket.



WELCA News

The WELCA met November 7th for a potluck luncheon and Thankoffering service. There were eight in attendance. Patricia Forsythe led the Thankoffering service. The Thankoffering and regular offerings were taken.

President Betty Tindall opened the meeting in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The minutes were read and approved. Treasurer, Charlene Tergerson, reported a balance of \$794.81 in the regular account and \$233.10 in the special account as of October 31. Patricia Forsythe made a motion, Charlene seconded, and the motion carried to accept the nominations of our last meeting for officers for 2019.

Yearbook planning will be in January. Next meeting will be February 6, 2019. We closed by all praying the Lord's Prayer.

Secretary, Elsie Phillips

Heritage of Faith books are still available!

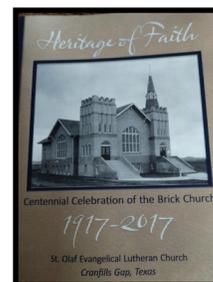
These would make great Christmas presents! The cost is \$25 (shipping is \$5).

To order contact Jeanne Bayless or send an email via the church email address.

Email: jeannehb53@gmail.com

Phone: (325) 829-6077

saintolaflutheran@gmail.com



Charlene Tergerson presents a gift from WELCA to Chris Lujan, our missionary to the Ukraine, during his recent visit to the US.





Mary Circle: Will meet December 12, Heckmann Hall at 2:00pm

Martha Circle: TBA

Ruth Circle: Will meet December 13, Katherine's House at NOON (Please bring a salad to chare.)

PRAYER LIST: Heather Christensen, Margret Turpin, Brady Warrick, Kathy Johnston, Ronnie Ogle, Cooper Brown, Martha & Helena McCormick, Dacey Patrick, Josh Wilhelm, Raymond Bailes, Larry Barger, Charles Osborn, Daniel Smith, Makayla Pierce, Rev. C. A. Mangham, Tom Pierce, Nikki Stone, Tracy Finstad, Henrietta Medina, Donna Boelter, Linda Thiele, Virginia Allen, Jerry Shiver, Ricky Petty, Cindy Olson, Kjersten Cockrell, Elaine Enger, Rosemary Trujillo, Geraldine Jenson, Bill Bronstad, Family of Buddy Enger, and **The Lutheran Church Sierra Leone, Persecuted Christians**
OUR MISSIONARY IN THE UKRAINE: Chris Lujan
SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN: Matthew Medina, Justin Barnes, and Kevin Moore

Ruth Circle

Ruth Circle met at Katherine's house November 8, at 2:00 pm with four members attending.

The lesson on Repentance of the church was led by Mary McGowen. Shirley Thompson treated us to a lovely array of goodies. Collection was \$20. Also attending were Donna Kersey and Betty Tindall. We missed Abby who was ill and Wanda who was on another trip! Hope to see them next month.

Ruth Circle will meet again at Katherine's house December 13 at NOON. Each member will bring a salad to share. Betty will provide a short holiday activity. Anyone is welcome to join us!

Advent Services will be on these Wednesdays at 6:00pm:



December 5 (Mary Circle providing meal)

December 12 (Chamber of Commerce Dinner)

December 19 (Ruth Circle providing meal)

Mary Circle

Mary's Bible Study met at Heckmann Hall on Wednesday, November 14 at 2:00.

Attending were Charlene, Patricia, Elsie, Maranna, Elsie, and Barbara. Maranna led the study. This is the last session for the "Turn, Turn, Turn" series for which we, as a study, are thankful. This was a deep study and was a challenge to understand most of it. Turning as the church turns to the world.

What was enlightening to us, in 1994, the ELCA Church Council voted to adopt and to publicly share the "Declaration of the Evangelical Lutheran in America to the Jewish Community" for the anti-Judaic writings of Martin Luther, such as "On the Jews and their Lies" which were filled with intense distrust and demonization of the Jewish people. This public recognition pledges renewed "cooperation and understanding between Lutheran Christians and the Jewish community."

Next meeting will be December 12 with Christmas hymns, refreshments brought by members, and fellowship.

Merry Christmas and the Lord's Blessings to you all!
 ~ Barbara Lee

Financial Report <i>Submitted by Gerald Nelson, Treasurer</i>	Receipts	Disbursements	Net
Budget through Oct 31, 2018	\$67,508.33	\$67,500.00	\$8.33
Actual through Oct 31, 2018	59,400.35	57,773.33	1,627.02



December 2018

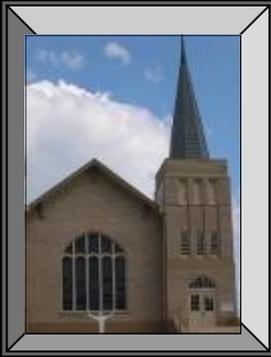


Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

Assisting Minister: Renee Barner
 Head Usher: Noble Chastain
 Altar Guild: Rita Hanson & Karen Hanson

2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1
Adult & Children's SS, 8:30am Worship, 9:30am			Advent Service, 6:00pm (Mary Circle serving meal)				
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
Adult & Children's SS, 8:30am Worship, 9:30am			12 Mary Circle, Heck Hall, 2pm; Advent Service, 6:00pm (Chamber dinner)	13 Ruth Circle, Katherine's House, Noon (Bring a salad to share)		15 Community Breakfast 8:00-9:30am	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	
Adult & Children's SS, 8:30am Worship, 9:30am			Advent Service, 6:00pm (Ruth Circle serving meal)				
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	
Adult & Children's SS, 8:30am Worship, 9:30am	24 Christmas Eve Candlelight at the Rock Church (4:30, 6:00 & 7:30)	25 Christmas Day					
30	31	Birthdays: Karen Hanson (2), Lucy Gary (5), Danny Rudd (9), Teresa Christensen (13), Signi Knudson (14), Charlene Tergerson (22), Jami Edwards (24), Iris Reiertson (25), James Bayless & Vernon Patrick (26), Marti Hanson & Cindy Wiese (31) Anniversaries: Harold & Preshie Wiese (17), Virgil & Betty Tindall (27)					
Adult & Children's SS, 8:30am Worship, 9:30am	New Year's Eve						





St. Olaf Lutheran Church

Worship, teach, nurture and
share Christ's love.



This past Thursday as I was driving from Waco to the Gap, I listened to a news story on the radio that was both striking and sad. According to this story, life expectancy in the United States declined in 2017 for the third year in a row. The reason this story is so striking is because we surely expect life expectancy to be on the rise, since every year there are developments in medical technology and innovations in treatment. The reason this story is so sad is because it appears the driver for this downward trend is what the researchers called "deaths of despair," that is deaths caused by drug overdoses, especially opioid related overdoses, and suicide. In the wake of this newly published information, people have been trying to understand why there seems to be this increase in lethal despair. One of the most common causes these commentators point to is a lack of economic opportunity and the diminishment of social connection. I guess I find these explanations believable, but I imagine that we will all hear more about this phenomenon and its possible causes as time passes, especially if the trend continues.

I bring up such a sobering topic because we are at the doorstep of the Advent season. It is tempting to think of Advent as little more than the warm-up to Christmas, and it is, in some ways, surely that. However, before it is a warm-up to Christmas, an early celebration of the light of Christ, Advent is an acknowledgement of the darkness. Our Sunday Gospel lessons for the season begin with Jesus warning his disciples that they, and the whole of the world, will experience distress, that people will faint from fear and foreboding. Even so, Jesus encourages them not to be weighed down, but to raise their heads because their redemption is drawing near. Our readings continue with two lessons featuring John the Baptist, the wild man howling out in the wilderness. He, too, acknowledges the darkness, saying that the ax is at the root of the tree, ready to take down the source of harm in the world. He calls his audience to turn toward goodness, with refreshingly practical suggestions, like sharing your spare coat and your extra food. The last Sunday before Christmas, we hear Mary's song, a song that celebrates the raising up of the lowly and the filling of the hungry with good things. Put concisely, Advent pairs an unflinching recognition of the darkness we experience with the buoyancy of the promise of light.

Now, I have to be careful with what I say. Though our faith provides us with rich resources, I don't want to give the impression that, when in the depths of despair, what uplifting words we may say about the promise of light has the power to shake off the darkness that some know too well. However, this is where wild John the Baptist's call strikes home; while it is good to speak of the promise of the light, it is perhaps more edifying to share our coats and meals, to forge the caring social bonds that our culture seems to be lacking at this particular moment. After all, the darkness that Advent knows tends to linger, but the kindling of the light of Christ in our lives is a lifelong project that lasts long after we put away our Merry Christmases, and continues bearing gifts long after the Magi return home.

~ Pastor Ryan

