A Note from the Pastor...

The Glow of Christmas?

Most of you are probably familiar with the work of Norman Rockwell. Perhaps some of you have a few Norman Rockwell plates or prints or even a Norman Rockwell coffee table book (we do – not even real sure where we got that). He was born in the late 1800’s and as an author, painter and illustrator his works enjoyed a broad appeal in the United States for their reflection of American culture. He died in 1972. For many years, he did the cover of the “Saturday Evening Post.” He is the one who created “Rosie the Riveter” which highlighted the important role that women played as we were in need of workers during World War II. He had a 64-year relationship with the Boy Scouts of America and produced covers for their magazine and calendars. The picture to the right is entitled, “Freedom from Want” and certainly captures a great truth that we have all known in our country.

For all their appeal, the works of Norman Rockwell are not without criticism. Notice how intently the man and woman stare at the bird with rosy cheeks. Notice the perfection of the bird. Notice how none of the children are fighting. Notice that everyone has a smile on their face (even the guy who is looking right at us in the corner of the picture). Isn’t there something “unreal” about this picture?

I sense that sometimes we Rockwellize our understanding of the birth of Jesus. Many pictures of Mary and Joseph staring at the infant Jesus, with the Shepherds and some pictures will mistakenly include the Magi (wisemen) who really didn’t come until two years later – all kneeling in front of Him. And just as there many times is an unrealistic glow around some of the Rockwell illustrations, so I think we can easily put an unrealistic glow around the birth of Christ and our celebration of Christmas.

Please understand that I have just spent a couple of days chasing some cows and calves around in a corral. I have a pair of shoes that many might squirm about putting on their feet, yet those “darlings” are always in our nativity scenes. I loaded three donkeys in a trailer and was thankful for the steel sides of the trailer that protected me from the bite of their teeth and the kick of their hooves. A straw-filled feeding trough for a bed? A stable for a shelter? Smelly shepherds for witnesses? An over-crowded town with no room in the inn? And we think this is pretty and cute?

Still, we relish the view, don’t we? This is none other than the Promised One of God, sent to save people from their sins. Hidden in the midst of those truly awful circumstances is the love God which will be shown to each of us through the suffering and death of His Son and hope given us to us in His resurrection from the dead. Our celebration of Christmas is real because our sins are real and His forgiveness is real, sealed through the real blood that He shed and the real death that He died. So He beckoned the disciples to, “Put your finger here…” (in His wounds) because flesh and blood are real.

There is a glow around Christmas that the realities of this world cannot snatch from us.

Pastor Brandt
In December at Preschool

As the Christmas Advent season is upon us, we begin to prepare our homes and hearts for the coming of Christ. God prepared the people long ago for this special season, and preschool is busy with many fun projects for this special time too.

In December, the children will be hearing all about the Christmas story. Preschoolers learn how Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem and baby Jesus is born; how angels appeared to announce His coming to the shepherds and how the star led the Wise men to visit Jesus! Once again, the dramatic play area turns into the stable where Jesus was born. Children take turns being Mary or Joseph, a sheep, donkey, cow, or shepherds and angels; let the celebration begin!

“The Angels Bring Good News

“Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.”

Luke 2:10-11

Birthday Party for Jesus!

Let’s all welcome in the 2016 Christmas season and celebrate the Birth of our Lord and Savior with snacks, craft, storytelling, singing, and birthday cupcakes!

Saturday, December 3rd
9:30 to 11:00 a.m.
Living Savior Fellowship Hall
For all: Preschool & Sunday School children Siblings Parents Grandparents
RSVP: dhornberger@livingsavior-preschool.org

A big thank you goes out to all who bought pies for our preschool fundraiser. We hope you have been enjoying them through this holiday season. You helped the preschool earn $4600! As always we appreciate your support in prayer and fundraising!

We pray for a joyful Christmas season for everyone!
Merry Christmas
From Denice & the Preschool Staff

December Devotion

Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!
2 Corinthians 9:15

What do you want for Christmas? What can I get you for Christmas? What do you need for Christmas? Do you hear these questions about this time of year? Have you asked someone a question similar to these? We always want to give a gift that is appreciated, don’t we?

Some families have a tradition of writing out a list of what each member wants for Christmas. This always seems a little picky to me. And then when it is time to open gifts, it is a matter of which of the things I requested am I going to get? On the other hand, you are not giving someone a gift that is totally unneeded or unwanted.

But perhaps the problem is the definition of the word gift. Here is what the dictionary says:

noun
1. something given voluntarily without payment in return, as to show favor toward someone, honor an occasion, or make a gesture of assistance; present.
2. the act of giving.
3. something bestowed or acquired without any particular effort by the recipient or without its being earned.

There doesn’t seem to be any mention of requesting what you want or need.

On the other hand, our Father in heaven knows what we need without our asking. He sent the perfect gift for all the world. He gave the perfect gift for someone who has nothing and needs everything.

God put his Son into the manger, giving us everything we need for forgiveness. The blood of Jesus washes away our sins. The Prince of Peace gives us the peace we need with God to bring us back to a blessed relationship with the Father. The mighty Lord defeated Satan in the wilderness and on the cross. He gives us power against sin.

We need comfort in life’s sorrows. He gave us the living Savior who wipes away our tears. We need assurance at the time of death. He gave us Jesus as our risen Savior.

We had nothing, but with the gift of Jesus, God gave us everything we need. So we are able to say, Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!

This gift is so lavish, so undeserved, that the word indescribable fits perfectly. The gift of Jesus means that those who are called by the Holy Spirit to faith in Him are blessed beyond measure.

Bible Gateway has 63 entries for the word “gifts” beginning in Genesis and ending with 6 references in the New Testament book of Hebrews. And 118 references to the word “gift” ending with 1 Peter 4:10: As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace. We are saved by God’s grace and are to reflect this love from God in service to one another.

How can we serve one others this Christmas season? Our giving may be in the form of serving someone else rather than buying a present.

The Advent/Christmas season is a great opportunity to do word study of the words gift and/or gifts, and perhaps focus on the gift we’ve received from God rather than on what to purchase for someone else.

We remember that in His great love, God gave everything He had so that we might have everything we need.

Thanks be to God for HIS indescribable love!

The Meaning of Christmas

Thanks be to God for His indescribable love!
Would you like to have more fun parenting your teen?

Parenting Teens with Love & Logic™ Book Study

Hosted & funded in part by Living Savior Lutheran Church
8740 SW Sagert Street
Tualatin, OR 97062

6 sessions on Wednesdays
Jan. 11 - Feb. 15
7 - 8:30 pm

REGISTER by December 30
Held Frank, DCE
503-692-3490
HFrank@Living-Savior.org

Facilitated by Kate Kalleher, retired teacher and school counselor facilitate one of America’s most practical and refreshing parent trainings.

RESERVE YOUR SEAT TODAY

Your name ____________________________
Phone ____________________________ Email ____________________________
How many attending? ____________________________

Please submit this form and $30 to the church office by Dec. 30.

$30 fee includes TEXTBOOK

DECEMBER
SUN, DEC 4
PROGRESSIVE CHRISTMAS PARTY (12:15-4:30 pm) White Elephant exchange!

WED, DEC 7
SERVICE: YOUTH LEADERSHIP AT ADVENT WORSHIP

SUN, DEC 11
PROGRESSIVE CHRISTMAS PARTY (12:15 - 4:00 pm) With “Blessing Bag” Project!

The 3rd-5th Grade Sunday School Class is going Christmas caroling and … all are welcome to join us!

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21
5:45 - 6:50 PM
Meet at Soup Supper before caroling.

Questions? Contact Church Office

LIBRARY

Come Check Us Out!

Holiday DVD’s and books are plentiful in our church library. Please take a minute to browse through our inventory. The library is located on the second floor, next to the Upper Room (arched entries). There is self-check out.

DECEMBER SCRIP DATES
SUNDAYS
DECEMBER 4, 11 & 18
Scrip (gift cards) makes wonderful gifts to give with a wide range of products to choose from. Don’t wait to stock up for the holidays.
DECEMBER AT LIVING SAVIOR

### Advent Worship
Services each Wednesday through December 21, 7:15pm.

### Children’s Worship Service
Sunday, December 18, 10:00am, One Service

### Christmas Eve
Sat. Dec. 24 — 3:00pm + 7:15pm + 10:00pm

### Christmas Day
Sunday, December 25 — 10:00am (One Service)

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**DECEMBER EVENTS**

**Thursday, December 1, 2016, 1:00pm**
Regular meeting in the Fellowship Hall with Pastor Brandt.

**Christmas Lunch**
Friday, December 9, 2016
12:00 Noon

Ham, rolls and beverages will be furnished. Bring your favorite salad, main dish or dessert. There is a signup list to volunteer to bring soup, rolls or a dessert, or to set up or help with clean up.

Soup Suppers begin at 5:45pm and Worship at 7:15pm.

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**Angel Tree Ministry**

Angel Tree is looking for families to **select a tag off the tree** in the church Narthex which represents a child with one or both parents in prison. We are working to build a bridge from the parent to the child.

We need the unwrapped gifts back ASAP so our wrapping crew can make the gifts ready to get to these precious children. With each tag you select, we ask you to write on our clipboard the information about the tag #, your name and email or best phone # to reach you. **Thank you so much Living Savior Family for helping us be God’s hand extended to our Community!** Questions? Contact the Church office.

Angel Tree is a Prison Fellowship program that connects parents in prison with their children through the delivery of Christmas gifts.

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**Men’s Breakfast Bible Study**

Schedule Change
One meeting in December Saturday, December 10 7:00am

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**Dinners of Eight**

Dinners of Eight, January through March, returns in 2017!
Our first of three dinners will be Sunday, January 8, 5:00-7:00 pm. You may sign up on the “chef” poster in the church narthex until January 1, 2017. Each month you are asked to sign up. You will be contacted the week of the dinner by the host with the host’s address and a request for a side dish.

**WHAT:** What are Dinners of Eight? They are dinners for about eight participants, to be held at a host’s home. Multiple suppers will be going on at various locations on the same day. The host will generally provide the main entrée with other diners bringing a side dish, salad or dessert.

**WHY:** This is an opportunity to spend more time getting to know each other, renewing friendships, and just having time to talk and enjoy each other’s company.

**HOSTS NEEDED:** Please check the host column on the sign-up sheets in the narthex or contact the Church office if you can be a host.

**FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN:** There has also been interest in full family participation in the Dinners of Eight. Families who would like their children to participate in these events at the church in the Fellowship Hall or in a home, please sign the sheet labeled “Families with Children” and indicate if you would be willing to host. A host will call/email others to participate in the pool. Also indicate the number of children.

**DINNER DATES:** Sundays, Jan. 8, Feb. 12, March 12, 5:00-7:00 pm.

*This is a month by month commitment only. Don’t miss this wonderful opportunity!*

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**GREETING CARD COLLECTION**

So often residents in assisted living facilities are unable to easily get out and purchase greeting cards. We are beginning to collect unused greeting cards for all occasions to offer to people in these facilities. Many of us have an overabundance of greeting cards that never get mailed and we don’t know what to do with them. Some of you may frequent estate and garage sales that may have them for sale for very little money. As we approach the holidays, you may have Christmas cards left over from previous years. There is a box in the narthex marked **GREETING CARDS** that you may drop your donated cards.

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**Mission Mites**

Update from national LWML mite offerings.

**Grant Amount:** $32,500
To assist in supplementing the expenses of six Saint Paul Lutheran High School (boarding school) students from impoverished countries who intend to return to their homes as pastors, teachers, missionaries or in other areas of church work.

A large Mite Box is located on the bookshelf by the outer doors of the narthex. You may empty your personal mite box into the large box, or just place your mite box into the large one and take a new box home.

Remember that as we drop our coins into the mite box, we are encouraged to offer a prayer for one or more of the grants for the year.

A list of LWML Mission Grants for the 2015-2017 Biennium is posted on the back of the bookcase.
**Fellowship & Outreach Committees**

Have you served on the Fellowship or Outreach Committee previously and would like to continue? Would you like to join either of these committees to help shape what activities Living Savior provides for the Congregation or how we can connect with our community as a whole? If so, then please sign up on one of the sheets on the Narthex bulletin board. Or contact the Church office.

Thank you in advance for volunteering.

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**New from the Church Kitchen**

- Are you missing an 8 1/2 x 11 Pyrex baking pan? Or a punch bowl with cups? Or storage containers? Many items have been left in the church kitchen which have gone unclaimed. This collection of goodies is now in the hallway leading outside from the kitchen. Unclaimed items will be donated to the Community Warehouse in January.

- Also note, that our kitchen is now well stocked for our needs. If you wish to make a donation to the church, please check with the church office to see if the item is needed. We are running out of storage spaces.

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**Rebate Program**

- Investing in our church’s ministry
- Extending the Gospel message

Did you know that investing with Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) will help our congregation earn a rebate on our loan? LCEF will refund a portion of the interest paid, calculated on the remaining principal balance and the number of communicants who invest. LCEF investors will be refunded a portion of that interest, calculated on the remaining principal balance and the number of communicants who are LCEF investors. For more information, visit www.lcef.org or speak with the Church office.

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**December Grief**

The holidays can be a difficult time of the year for someone who has experienced a death of a loved one, a divorce or a separation from friends and family due to relocation. Instead of being a time of togetherness, sharing and thanksgiving, holidays can bring feelings of sadness, loss, and emptiness. Since love doesn’t end with a death or divorce, holidays may cause a renewed sense of personal grief. We are encouraged to join in the holiday festivities but everything seems to trigger painful memories.

Dr. Alan D. Wolfelt, PHD in his book, *A Decembered Grief*, suggests the following:

- Talk about your grief.
- Be tolerant of your physical and psychological limits.
- Eliminate unnecessary stress.
- Be with supportive, comforting people.
- Talk about the person who has died or divorce.
- Do what is right for you.
- Plan ahead for family gatherings.
- Embrace your treasure of memories.
- Renew your resources for living.
- Express your faith

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**SUPPORT GROUP AT LIVING SAVIOR**

We invite you to connect with others at Living Savior who are giving care or have given care to a loved one. Those who are in the midst of care giving could greatly benefit from those who have gone before them. We meet the third Saturday of the month, 9:00 am to share resources, encourage one another and fill our spiritual cup.

Please join us! Friends of Living Savior Lutheran are welcome to join us as well. You may know someone in the work place or community who would benefit from our group. Questions? Contact the Church office.

**Saturday, December 17, 9:00am**

**Board Room**

**Living Savior Lutheran**
**Notes from Bethesda**

**Group Home Christmas**

Mission Statement:

Our Mission is to share the Love of our Lord with our Group Home Friends and the people who care for them.

This year we will have our Annual Christmas Service and Luncheon on Sunday, December 3, from 12:00 noon until 2:30 pm. We will need help with food preparation, setting up cleaning up and spending time with our friends.

When the homes were first started many of our friends came from various institutions all over the state. They did not have much family involvement. In the past, everyone in our church has been very supportive with wonderful Christmas gifts. Again, this year there will be will be tags for some gifts for our friends and the homes on the Christmas Tree or Wish List Wreath. We would also like to do something special for the staff who work at and for our Group Home Friends. They have had to work extra long hours and extra days. We will be giving gift cards of $10.00 and are seeking donations. You can buy the cards from scrip which would also benefit our church. There are many stores with cards for $10.00. Or you may make a cash donation. The gifts will be put in Christmas cards with a note from our church, wishing them a Merry Christmas and thanking them for all their hard work and care. It will be a nice way to put our Mission Statement into action.

- Kathye G. and the Mission Board

**Bethesda Auxiliary**

ALL people – that is what our ministry is about! We as God’s people, sharing the love of Jesus with God’s people who are so often overlooked and under-served because of the developmental disability they have.

Thank you for your faithful prayers: the most important part of our ministry. Prayers for Bethesda’s staff and the people they support, as well as for our Auxiliary. And thank you for your financial support – both for Bethesda and Bethesda Auxiliary. Since funds Bethesda receives from the government to care for each person cannot be used to support their faith-life, Bethesda Auxiliary selects programs and projects which do just that, - help the Religious Life staff – in connecting congregations and recruiting volunteers – to share the love of Jesus in Word and Deed.

You are part of sharing Jesus’ love by your prayers, fundraising, and volunteering. Yes, volunteering through Bethesda’s Home Heroes program. Check it out at: www.BethesdaLutheranCommunities.org/HomeHeroes.

If you live near any of Bethesda’s programs you can be of service in the home, apartments or day programs helping staff or interacting with one or more of the people supported. Thank you all for your continued prayers and support of the Auxiliary. And thank you for your financial support.

Our Mission Statement:

We as God’s people, sharing the love of Jesus with ALL people – that is what our ministry is about! We as God’s people, sharing the love of Jesus with God’s people who are so often overlooked and under-served because of the developmental disability they have.

**CANCER: A DISCUSSION**

Most of us have encountered cancer, personally or via loved ones, friends, etc. We will be discussing an extremely interesting book Saturday, January 14, 10:00 am in the upstairs community room. Mukherjee, a hematology/oncology fellow at Massachusetts General Hospital has written The Emperor of All Maladies, a book about cancer, from its first identification 4,600 years ago by the Egyptians to present research. The book was a response to a patient of Mukherjee’s who said: “I’m willing to go on fighting, but I need to know what it is that I’m battling.” People who have already read the book state that it is written very informative. Please join us in discussing this fascinating book.

We meet the second Saturday of each month, 10:00-11:30 am, September-May. A lively discussion of the book occurs, fellowship is shared and we are refreshed with morning goodies, coffee and tea. Please consider joining the group when you can and invite a friend! There is no obligation to attend every month and no pressure to have the right answers because there are NO right answers. The following is a listing of the books that will be read and discussed:

| Jan. 14 | The Emperor of All Maladies: A Biography of Cancer | S. Mukherjee, M.D. |
| Feb. 11 | The Wright Brothers | David McCullough |
| Mar. 11 | Thirty Girls | Susan Minot |
| Apr. 8 | The Map Maker’s Daughter | Laurel Corona |
| May 13 | The Plum Tree | Ellen Marie Wiseman |

**Shut in Ministry**

“You are those who have stood by me in my trials.”


Living Savior has an active team of people who have a heart for those who are unable to attend church because of illness or disabilities. As a visitor to shut ins, they have an opportunity to make a positive difference in someone’s life by visiting and bringing to them fellowship and love from the congregation.

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO VISIT SHUT INS?**

Volunteers are trained for this ministry. If you would like to be a part of this ministry or have questions, please contact the Church office.

**DO YOU KNOW OF SOMEONE WE CAN VISIT?**

Contact the Church office.

**Red Cross**

Friday, December 30
12:00 to 5:00 pm
at Living Savior

To register to donate blood, please call 503-284-4040 or access redcrossblood.org/makeadonation.

**Children’s Christmas Service**

Sunday, December 18, 10:00 am
(one service only)

Rehearsals —
Saturdays, December 10 and 17, at 9:00 am