
Agapegram

December 2020



ETERNAL SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Owning What's Coming



“Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.” Galatians 6:1 EHV

Whatever comes, we must own it as our own.

I'm writing after our November 3rd election and before the December 14th meeting of the Electoral College. There are many claims and accusations of fraud, both large and small, including theories of rigged computer software and criminal schemes. As the lawsuits are filed and the commentators defend or decry the politicians, the American people are left waiting to see what comes. Is all this activity the beginning of a great reversal or just the final cries of a poorly run campaign? We don't know yet. It certainly matters to the American people – or it should. On the one hand, this could be an issue of a lame duck administration being a thorn in the side of the incoming president and hamstringing his reasonable and lawful preparations. On the other hand, if the allegations of widespread fraud prove true, it could mean that this grand nation guarding rights and freedoms for almost two and half centuries may have finally fallen - on *our* watch. If the votes of the people are erased by the manipulations of a few, then our Democratic Republic is an illusion and we are servants of an oligarchy imagining ourselves to have a voice in this nation's future. Whichever the case truly is, it is our fault.

Let's investigate that thought. Whatever the truth is about the depth of fraud in our national election, we do know there is some fraud. Widespread? Maybe. Enough to sway an election? We have our theories, but we don't actually *know*. Nevertheless, some fraud has not only been identified, but we all know that it happens. In fact, anyone who has spent time in Philadelphia, New York, Chicago, Detroit, or any number of our major cities knows stories of fraud or rampant corruption. It's so common, we even give it names like “Chicago politics” and joke about it. Everyone knows and, yet, we let it continue. Why? Maybe we are uncertain of the hard evidence. Maybe we feel powerless. Or, maybe it's just our guy, so we look the other way. But, whatever the reason, it is wrong. It is a failure of justice and it is sin. The Lord says through St. James, “So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin” (4:17). God is clear throughout Holy Scripture that sin must not be allowed to flourish. St. Paul writes, “Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them” (Eph. 5:11). We are to shine the light of truth on corruption and sin, not allow it to fester and grow. God repeatedly told the Israelites to “purge the evil from among you” (Deut. 13:5, 17:7, 17:12, 19:19, 22:21, 22:22, 22:24, 24:7). Our version of this is maintaining true justice through our legal system. Instead, we have turned a blind eye to sin. We have allowed it to grow and to spread throughout our land. We will pay a price for our failure to speak to truth and it is our own fault. We own it.

Have we let such sin go too far? Is it beyond fixing? Only time will tell. Certainly, the root problem of sin that led both to the corruption and to our failures to defend righteousness is ever present among us.

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We are failing our nation, ourselves, and our descendants. In the face of such darkness, a light dawns. Thanks be to God for the brightening hope of Advent. In the face of our failure to speak, the one who is the Truth comes into the world. "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." (John 1:17) Jesus brings truth and empowers us to speak it and stand up for it. More importantly, he brings grace, which we so desperately need. We have sinned through inaction, but God sends his Son who takes action to work the grace of forgiveness for complicit sinners. Jesus comes to save his people from their sins (Mt. 1:21) and because of this, we sinners are called saints and also called to defend truth and justice.

We own it. It's who we are now, for Jesus' sake.

"To you who fear my name the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings."
Malachi 4:2 NKJV

--Pastor David



Eternal Shepherd Lutheran Church

*Christmas Eve Services
Thursday, December 24th
Service times to be announced*



Deaconess' Musings

Never Me.

“It’s not about you.”

Words that, while perhaps a bit blunt, are a daily necessity. And in reality...it’s quite true.

It’s not about me. It’s never been about me. It’s never going to be about me.... or you.

It’s all about *Jesus*.

What does it say that “it’s all about Jesus” change for us, in us, and from us?

(I’ll give you a hint, but it should be quite obvious.) *Only everything changes.*

I think, as good Christians within the Lutheran tradition, we are quite confident in saying Jesus did it all for me (or you) and that we bring nothing to the “table” in terms of deserving/earning salvation and forgiveness. On account of Christ’s death and resurrection, we now stand fully forgiven and made right in the sight of God our Creator. Eternal life was granted to us through the waters of our baptisms and we now live in the full hope of the world and age to come.

So, what? What’s the big deal about all of this?

It’s no longer about us (it never was about us to begin with, being dead in our sins and all – Romans 6:23), but about what Jesus did *for* us. And now we live our lives...*for others*.

So, what? What about others?

Your life – actions, words, behaviors – now becomes a witness to the world around you. This world, full of sorrow, pain, brokenness, confusion, anger, apathy, does not know the Jesus that set you free. This world sees no need for the Christ who paid the steep price for its very sin. This world does not understand why. They see evil and call it good. They see the good and call it evil.

But you, dear brother and sister, know why. You have seen the difference Jesus makes. You know and rejoice in the Lord who will one day wipe away every tear and make all things new (Revelation 7:15ff). You rest in the blessed assurance that your sins are forgiven.

Show them. Show the cold, unbelieving world that this Jesus, whom has claimed you and whose name you claim, makes a difference in your life. Show them that this Christ, the God made Man who dared to love the world that He *died* for it. That He did not stay dead, but rose back to life for *them*.

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Not just you. Not just your family. Not just your church. *For the world.*

It's not about you. And that's ok. It's about *Jesus* for you and for you to show to the world.

While we yet breathe, we have work to do. Confident in our Savior's saving forgiveness, we turn to a world lost within its own self and proclaim Jesus in our words and in our daily actions.

May it always be all about Jesus and never me...or you. Blessed Advent to All.



~Deaconess Holly

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:11

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS - The poinsettia sign-up sheet is on display in the Narthex. Please take a moment to fill it in remembering to fill out an individual line for each plant. There may not be enough plants for everyone to take one home so please be aware that they are on a "first come, first serve" basis. The price remains at \$10.00 per plant this year. *Thank you!*



2021 SUNDAY FLOWER CHART - sign-up chart is on the Bulletin Board in the Narthex. Tiger Lily of Clemson has continued to do a beautiful job with their arrangements without raising the price which will remain at \$25.00 per vase. You can sign up for as many Sundays as you want during the whole year for the dates that have special meanings for you and your family. Directions are posted above the chart.

What a Year

Michele da Piazza, the Sicilian, Franciscan chronicler describes in *Historia Secula ab anno 1337 ad annum 1361* the arrival of the “Black Death” in Europe: “It so happened that in the month of October in the year of our Lord 1347, around the first of that month, twelve Genoese galleys, fleeing our Lord's wrath which came down upon them for their misdeed, put in at the port in the city of Messina. They brought with them a plague that they carried down to the very marrow of their bones, so that if anyone so much as spoke to them, he was infected with a mortal sickness which brought on an immediate death that he could in no way avoid.”

Bubonic Plague would ravage Europe in repeated waves. It swept across Europe again in the summer of 1527, arriving in Wittenberg in August. Elector John of Saxony ordered the faculty of the University of Wittenberg to flee, but Martin Luther refused, staying behind to minister to and otherwise care for the sick and dying. By the end of the year, the plague subsided, but Luther was criticized by friends in the church and in government for being reckless, and ignoring the order to leave. Catholic opponents, on the other hand, accused Luther's followers generally for abandoning their flock. Society, then as now, was polarized.

Luther responded to the critics in an open letter entitled, “Whether One may Flee from a Deadly Plague.” In his letter Luther reminds us that we are commanded to love our neighbors, to care for them when they are in need. But he also warns against tempting God: “Others sin on the right hand. They are much too rash and reckless, tempting God and disregarding everything which might counteract death and the plague. They disdain the use of medicines; they do not avoid places and persons infected by the plague, but lightheartedly make sport of it and wish to prove how independent they are. They say that it is God's punishment; if He wants to protect them He can do so without medicines or our carefulness. That is not trusting God, but tempting him.”

Does any of this sound familiar as we enter the tenth month of the Covid-19 pandemic? In his letter, Luther goes on to urge people to take medicine that might help, to keep clean, and to avoid places where one might become infected in order to avoid infecting others. But Luther also writes, “If my neighbor needs me, however, I shall not avoid place or person but will go freely, as stated above. See, this is such a God-fearing faith because it is neither brash nor foolhardy and does not tempt God.”

Very little is new. Christian believers have been in situations like ours before. We are hardly the first to experience difficulties. But today, much more is known about the present pandemic than was known about the Black Death in Luther's time. The Covid-19 virus spreads through close contact. So, wash your hands frequently, practice social distancing, and wear a mask (properly, covering both mouth and nose) when you must encounter people outside your household. When a vaccine becomes available, take it. Do these things to protect not only yourself, but to protect your neighbors. These are acts of love. Do not spend too much time reading about conspiracies. Help your neighbor if your neighbor needs help. As Pastor Hammer advised earlier this year, keep your eyes on Jesus.

On a personal note, it has been my pleasure to serve as your Head Elder at ESLC this year. Dan Arkfeld will serve as Head Elder in 2021. I have a lot of confidence in my friend, but please pray for him anyway; ask God to guide him and help him lead effectively. While you are doing this, please pray for all of our Elders; ask God to help them be a blessing to our congregation. All of you, please be careful, stay healthy, and nourish your faith by reading God's word.

--Paul Wilson, ESLC Head Elder

December Council Update

This month's update contains items from our Annual Congregation Meeting held on November 15th:

Safety Committee Phase 1 Recommendation Approved by the Congregation: The Committee's Phase 1 recommendation of installing film laminate to all ground level windows and an external church video monitoring system costing \$24,600, was presented to the Congregation, and approved unanimously. The ordering of equipment/materials and then installation with our contractors will begin immediately. Special thanks again to the entire Safety Committee. Committee members are Dan Arkfeld (Co-Lead) Tom Eckersley (Co-Lead), Nicole Beattie, Pastor David, Sam Hamrick, Woo Wagner, Cecil Murray (Technical Consultant) and I.

Outgoing 2020 Council Chairs:

10 Council member's terms are ending this December. *Thank you all for your contributions, dedication, and service!*

Rev. Phil McLain (Vice President) Debbie Krueger (Secretary) Shannon Cox (Treasurer) Lois Helland (Altar Care) Janet Walker (Christian Ed.)	Bob Massa (Finance) Cecil Murray (Outreach) Roberta Port (Little Lambs) Wayne Gugel (Property Mgmt.) Paul Wilson (Head Elder)
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Welcome New 2021 Council Members:

The Congregation unanimously approved the 2021 Elder and Council Chair slates. Blessings to Dan Arkfeld as he was selected to be the 2021 Head Elder by the Elder Team. *Congratulations to all the following new 2021 Elders and Council Chairs!*

Gene Kunkel (Elder) Bob Massa (Elder) Doug Zirbel (Vice President) Susan Tyner (Secretary) Bill Smith (Treasurer) Tracy Cochell (Altar Care)	Amy Rebholz (Christian Ed.) Jim Zwahlen (Finance) Elain Rich (Outreach) Jane Fireovid (Little Lambs) Monty Moore (Property Mgmt.)
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2021 Budget Approved by the Congregation:

Special thanks to the Finance Committee for creating the 2021 budget which the voters approved unanimously! Finance Committee members are: Bob Massa (Chair), Shannon Cox (ESLC Treasurer), Deek Decker, Jim Randles, Grover Stewart (ESLC Financial Secretary), Jacquie Wilson and James Zwahlen

Lastly, thanks to all 74 members who attended the November 15th Congregation Meeting either in-person or remotely. God's work could not continue at Eternal Shepherd without our member's continued support and His blessings.



*In His service,
John Cochell*

GLORIA SHEALY CARD MINISTRY: One of our sweet and caring saints, Gloria Shealy, recently passed away. She loved sending cards to all of us for our birthdays, anniversaries, illnesses, etc. We will miss her sweet, heartfelt cards & messages. Gloria's daughter, Julie Gambrell and I, Sara Gugel, want to see Gloria's card ministry continued, so we will try our best, as a team, to carry this on. The "Gloria Shealy Card Ministry" will be handled by Julie Gambrell & Sara Gugel. *We pray God will bless us so we may bless all of you.*



ESLC MEMBER AND AUTHOR Mary Coffman's updated version of her book **Uncle Lightfoot Flip that Switch** is now available on Amazon. This book is a handbook for children who are afraid of the dark and for their parents. It is beautifully done and is being used by professionals in various areas. This book would make a nice Christmas gift for children or grandchildren who suffer with this fear. You can visit Mary's website to learn more at UncleLightfoot.org

ISRAEL 2021 TRIP INFORMATIONAL MEETING: Are you interested in going to Israel? Are you praying about possibly joining this trip? Would like to know a little more about this spiritual adventure following the Good Shepherd? If so, please join us virtually (via Zoom) or in person **December 1st at 7:00 p.m.** The in-person portion will be in our home unless we have more than ten people attending, otherwise the meeting will be in the fellowship hall. Please let me know if you are interested. **Contact Phil McLain via email, text, or phone: philmclain@gmail.com; 615-396-7559.** Please indicate whether you plan to attend virtually or in-person. Shalom, Phil



SPECIAL THANK YOU'S: Our family cannot thank you enough for how well you loved and served our mother (and daddy) since they began attending Eternal Shepherd many years ago. Mother loved her church and she loved each of you. Thank you for all the many meals provided for us during her recent decline so that we were able to devote our full attention to her care. One of her greatest gifts and ministries was sending cards. Thank you for all that you did as a church to support her ministry through the years. Sending cards was a hobby that brought her much joy and we hope that each time you send a card, you will remember her and the impact a handwritten note has. Thank you for your continued prayers for our family as we continue our lives without her by our side. ~*The Gloria Shealy Family*

FROM THE BOARD OF HOSPITALITY:

Thank you to Tracy Cochell for assisting with set up & clean up for the congregation meeting on 11/15. Thank you to Doug & Denise Zirbel for delivering the delicious food from Your Pie in Clemson. *Wishing everyone a blessed Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year.* ~*Susie Williams*

Set Apart

by Kerry Blount

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice—holy and pleasing to God—which is your appropriate worship. Also, do not continue to conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, so that you test and approve what is the will of God—what is good, pleasing, and perfect.” (Romans 12:1-2 EHV)

Do you get the same chills I do when you hear or read the great words of praise “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty?” The longer I have sought to know God, the more insistently I have been (and am) called to raise my hands and bow my head in response to those words of worship. I have come to believe He is holy beyond all measure and all telling. He is worthy of praise, and honor, and blessing, and glory beyond all measure and all telling. He is the Almighty, from everlasting to everlasting, the source of love and justice, mercy and forgiveness, the very source of all holiness. Indeed, all creation is filled with His Majesty and Holiness.

I am none of those things. And yet He, the Author of all that is holy in this world and the next, calls me to be holy, too. (*I Peter 1:15-16*) My heart cries out with Isaiah’s: I am ruined! (*Isaiah 6:5*) Like Isaiah, I have said and done unholy things, and I have chosen not to separate myself from the deeds of unholy people. How can I be what God calls me to be? Holy how?

The one whom the Holy Spirit selected to tell Jesus’ disciples (including me) to be holy was a man who knew firsthand what it meant to be unholy. A man who chose deliberately to distance himself with curses from the holy suffering of the Anointed Son of God: “I do not know the man!” And yet just weeks after that unholy act, that same Holy Son that Simon Peter had rejected chose to set him apart for His purposes over breakfast on the shores of Galilee. Jesus called Peter to be holy once again, and it was his task to remain in that state of holiness, set apart for the work to which Jesus had called him. “Feed My sheep,” Jesus told him. And with the help of the Holy Spirit within him, Peter “fed His lambs” for the rest of his life. In the face of challenges, setbacks, and failures he submitted himself to the purpose for which his God had set him apart, and was therefore holy. Is our brother Peter therefore worthy of worship? God forbid! His set-apart holiness is entirely derivative, for its source is submission to serve the holy purposes of a transcendently Holy God, though his example is assuredly worth emulating.

I believe that God in His love for me wants me to be holy. I believe that through Christ He called me out of darkness into His marvelous light, cleansed me with my Savior’s blood, and set me apart for purposes that He had in mind before I was ever created. In baptism He bequeathed to me the holiness of His Son and imparted His indwelling Holy Spirit to guide me and empower me to fulfill the purposes for which He created me. It is now my constant task to “make myself available” for the opportunities He puts before me to serve, praise, worship, and to magnify His Holy Name. When I do that, He delights to regard me as holy, a vessel fitting the service for which He has set me apart. When I do that, I am aligned with His purposes, and become a “partaker” of His Holiness. In this life, that may include challenges, setbacks, and failures, at least in the eyes of the world. In the life to come, it will result in inexpressible joy.

“Just as the one who called you is holy, so also be holy in everything you do. For it is written, ‘Be holy, because I am holy.’” (I Peter 1:15-16 EHV)

FINANCE BOARD

As we close out the calendar year and start a new church year we are thankful for the generosity of this congregation's saints. Despite regular worship services, Sunday School, Bible Studies, and organization meetings being interrupted your gifts continued to flow in and allowed us to meet our obligations and finish the year on budget or better. Thanks be to God for each of you and your stewardship. Eternal Shepherd is blessed. As we look to 2021 and pray for relief from Covid-19, we anticipate some major expenditures other than the safety improvements approved by the voters. The additional estimated expenditures include air handler replacements, parking lot upgrades, and grounds maintenance are reflected in the 2021 budget approved by the voters.

As we enter the Advent season, continue to pray for Pastor, Deaconess, the church staff and volunteers but especially, give thanks for the many gifts God continues to bestow upon Eternal Shepherd and its congregation.

Merry Christmas and a better, safer New Year! ~Bob Massa

Comfort Dog News

HOWL-LE-LU-YA Dog Biscuit Sale and More!

To raise funds for the Comfort Dog Ministry
and to benefit the Oconee County Animal Shelter (10% of proceeds)



Sale Dates: December 13 after services under the Fellowship Hall portico
December 20 after services under the Fellowship Hall portico
OR

We will deliver to your home for those who aren't attending church at this time

\$5 bag of dog biscuits (12 small or 5 large)

\$15 Seth Stuffie

\$8 Seth mug (limited supply)

The dog biscuits will be healthy, all natural and made with love! Seth Stuffie is soft and cuddly, perfect for the kids! A Seth mug is a great gift for that coffee or tea drinker! This year we will be taking orders for any of these gifts although we will make extra dog biscuits in limited supply. Please indicate which date you would like to either pick up your order or have it delivered. Checks are welcomed – please make out to Eternal Shepherd with Comfort Dog Ministry in the memo line. Contact Jean Dombi via email cdombi32@gmail.com or call/text at 440-479-5785 for your order. *Thank you!*

Haiti Missions

I am in Canada for the birth of my daughter Sarah. She is 6 days old.



UPDATE ON NEWS FROM HAITI

I was very surprised to get the note and picture from Pastor Walta. As busy as he has been, he keeps us posted on the schools of Pas Bonbon and Rocky Road. This last week, the Principle at Pas Bonbon said they are starting a 6th grade. The attendance is now at 217. The Restrooms and everything needed to get potable water is currently getting started at Rocky Road. The gardens are growing and expanding. The students and staff remain healthy. We at Eternal Shepherd sent a check to Trinity HOPE for the lunch program at both schools, and a wire transfer for the start of construction on the restrooms. Both were in the amount of \$2,500.00. *The parents, students, and staff thank you Eternal Shepherd, for making a tremendous difference in their lives.*

– *Brothers and Sisters in Christ.*

Honduras Mission News:

HONDURAS NEWS: URGENT HELP IS NEEDED!!! – In last month’s “Gram” we asked for help for the people of Honduras because of the pandemic. Since that time TWO hurricanes have caused widespread destruction throughout the country, including the capital, Tegucigala, where our mission host is located. Hurricane Iota, following just two weeks after Eta, wreaked havoc to the country. Iota brought widespread flooding and mudslides to the already saturated ground, causing evacuation of many communities and crowding people together in evacuation centers at a time when distancing is much needed. WGO had already established a Care Pay program to combat the pandemic and now have expanded that to include two hurricanes. Simply stated, our friends in Honduras need our help. From their headquarters in Tegucigalpa the WGO staff plus several missionaries are diligently working to bring food and medicine to the people. Many of you have helped in the past as we prepared for our mission trip and we thank you for that. Since we will not be traveling in February 2021 we are asking for financial help for the people we would normally see. Please make checks out to ESLC and mark Honduras Mission/Care Pay on the memo line. This would provide funds to the staff to purchase food and medicine.

Finally, please pray for the people of Honduras and for all people who were in the paths of these Hurricanes. As always we thank you for your support. ~ Rev. Ray Ramsburg

FOOD BANK NEWS: Please help us in collecting preferred needed canned, or boxed grocery items each month to help restock the Golden Corner Food Pantry’s shelves. **December’s** preferred product is **“Stewed Tomato’s or Tomato Sauce”** (Please place items in one of the trash cans marked Food Bank down by the main Fellowship Hall). *~Thank you for your generosity and support.*



Hospitality Happenings for December

No in house hospitality happenings at this time due to current restrictions.

As always we thank you for your support and look forward to the day we can once again join together at ESLC in fellowship.

Thinking about joining the hospitality board? Please see myself or Marlene Bell with any questions. *In his service, Sue Williams*



We wish you a Merry Christmas!

Scrip Cards are available and make *great Christmas gifts* as well as earn money for **Eternal Shepherd** at the same time. For orders please contact Beckie Rau by phone 944-6096; or by email at cbrau@charter.net. After the order is received one of the Scrip ladies will contact you to make arrangements for delivery. Scrip Card Team: **Beckie Rau, Libby Dunlap, Elisabeth Baker & Sue Hauser.** ~Thank you for your support.



December Birthdays

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1 – Libby Dunlap | 18 – Beth Cornine |
| 2 – Berniece Richards | 20 – Al Roeder |
| Brad Schneider | 22 - Richard Hull |
| 4 – Deek Decker | 25 - Jeanne Arkfeld |
| 5 – Evie Hammer | Jennifer Raasch |
| Jon Tyner | 26 – John Beattie |
| 9 – Colleen Hesemann | Mary Fireovid |
| 10 - Harriet Murphy | 27 - Heather Ray |
| 11 – Edric Griffin | 29 – Beckie Rau |
| Jim Randles | 30 – Marge Heintz |
| Anderson Scott | 31 - Rich Hesemann |
| 15– Fred Massa | |
| 16 – Joan Kan | |
| Tom Markley | |
| Elaine Randles | |
| Jon Wilken | |



December Anniversaries

- 9 – Scott & Andrea Toussaint
- 22 – Chuck & Beckie Rau
- 24 – Lars & Lois Helland
- 27 – Ken & Katharine Dunlap
- 28 – Don & Monica Del Priore
- Rev. Phil & Margi McLain
- 31 – Paul & Scottie Fredrickson



SPECIAL GIFTS/MEMORIALS

In October the following gifts were given:

In loving memory of *Craig Bergeson's Mother*
the Elders Fund received a gift of \$48.39



In loving memory of *Gloria Shealy*
the Comfort Dog Ministry received gifts of \$585.00,
and the Mission Quilt Sewers Ministry received gifts of \$250.00

In loving memory of *Ralph Milz*
the Choir Music Fund received a gift of \$50.00,
and the Comfort Dog Ministry Fund received a gift of \$25.00

Other Gifts:

The Church Bus Fund received a gift of \$97.02

The Comfort Dog Ministry Fund received gifts of \$405.00

The Debt Reduction Fund received a gift of \$450.00,
and a gift of \$600.00 from CCCF Grant

The Disaster Response Team Fund received gifts of \$400.00

The Elders Fund received a gift of \$100.00

The Haiti Missions Fund received gifts of 400.00

The Honduras Mission Fund received a gift of \$100.00,
and the Helping Hands for Honduras Missions received a gift of \$1,000.00

The Operation Christmas Child Fund received gifts of \$1,022.58

The Property Board received a gift of \$10.00

The Special Missions Fund received gifts of \$110.00

The Toys for God's Kids Fund received a gift of \$10.00

The ESLC Zoom Subscription Fund received a gift of \$200.00

Little Lambs Tales

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given..... And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" Isaiah 9:6

We end the month of November with thankful hearts! Our Thanksgiving Parade was such a big success! You probably noticed the children's names written large in sidewalk chalk as you drove around the church building the end of November. We had a sunny warm day! All of our parents were here with lots of spirit as the children paraded down the "parade route". We even had the honor of Seth, the comfort dog, bringing up the rear of the parade! Such fun for all!

And now we are entering the month of December which is very hard to believe. Imagine being able to experience the season of Christmas through the eyes of a child. The wonder and awe! The anticipation of the birth of baby Jesus! The excitement and joy awaiting Santa and the presents under the Christmas tree!

What an absolute blessing it is to be here at Little Lambs Preschool and participate in this season through the eyes of our beautiful children. Our Christmas celebration will begin on December 9th with our annual candy house making. This event will be held on two different days this year to accommodate the 3's and 4's classes and will be held in our preschool. We will gather with the parents and grandparents where they will be able to spend time with their child creating a beautiful candy house masterpiece made out of candy and frosting!

On December 16th the children will share their musical gifts during our Christmas Program. This program will be held in the Sanctuary at 11:00am.

We will be out of school from December 21st through January 3rd for our Christmas vacation. The students will return to school on January 4th.

Thank you for all your support for our preschool ministry! And for all your prayers as we continue to navigate through the many challenges Covid-19 places in front of us.

May Peace and Happiness reign in your home this Christmas and may the New Year be loaded with blessings for you and your family.



***Hark! the herald angels sing, -
"Glory to the newborn King!
Peace on earth, and mercy mild,
God and sinners reconciled."***

Merry Christmas!

*In Christ,
Gina*

Countdown of Giving

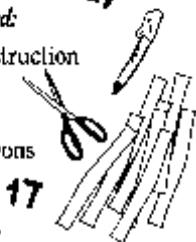
25 24 23

As people remember the gift of Christ, let's remember those around us with little acts of giving.

Make an Advent paper chain to count down the days until Christmas.

What you will need:

- 5 sheets of construction paper (8" x 11")
- scissors
- markers or crayons
- tape or glue



Here's what to do:

1. Cut the construction paper into 1" x 11" strips (You will need 25 strips but you will have extra.)

2. Have fun thinking of 25 different acts of giving you can do for others. (Here are just a few suggestions: Make and send a card; draw a picture; make an ornament; give a hug or a smile; have a cheerful attitude (all day); call someone you haven't seen for awhile or send the person an e-mail; bake cookies to share. The possibilities are endless!)

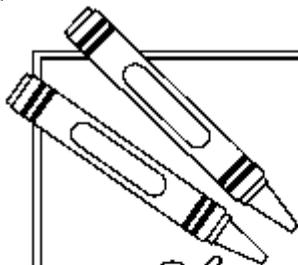
3. Number each strip with one number, numbering them 1-25.

4. Write one giving idea on each strip. You can repeat some.

5. Tape or glue strips into a paper chain, with number 25 first, counting backwards to 1.

6. Start on December 1 and give the gift on link 25. The next day give gift 24. Continue until you reach gift 1 on Christmas!

7. When you give your gifts, remember God's greatest gift to us — His Son Jesus.



Just for

KIDS

The Son of the Highest

A new baby brings joy and the anticipation of what he or she will grow up to become. Jesus' birth was miraculous, but His life was prophesied and planned by God.

Unscramble the words below, matching them to their correct spelling. Then use the numbers to fill in the correct words to complete Luke 1:32-33 (NIV).

- | | | | |
|-----------|--------|------------|---------|
| 12. taerg | he | 2. noS | forever |
| 8. eh | Jacob | 11. seouh | end |
| 13. gHhi | father | 5. northe | Son |
| 7. aDvid | give | 1. roevefr | house |
| 10. bocJa | great | 6. dingmok | throne |
| 3. reafth | High | 9. den | kingdom |
| 4. vieg | David | | |

"He will be _____ and will be called the _____

of the Most _____ . The Lord God will _____

him the _____ of his _____ ,

and _____ will reign over the _____

of _____ ; his _____ will

never _____ "

Luke 1:32-33, NIV

Answers: 1. forever 2. Son 3. father 4. give 5. throne 6. kingdom 7. David 8. the 9. end 10. Jacob 11. house 12. great 13. High

SERVICE TIMES

8:30 a.m. Worship Service
(Communion 2nd & 4th Sundays)

9:45 a.m. Sunday School
& Adult Bible Study

11:00 a.m. Worship Service
(Communion 1st & 3rd Sundays)



THOSE WHO SERVE

Pastor: David Hammer

Deaconess: Holly Lustila

Secretary: Celeste Entrekin

Preschool Director: Gina Cote

Choir Director: Rick Schmidt

Choir Accompanist: Michelle Rowland

Organist: David Phillips

MISSIONARIES

Joanna Johnson, Taiwan

Nate Esala, Lutheran Bible Translators

David & Dr. Arianna Shirk, Kenya

S.E.D. Missionaries to Peru

Eternal Shepherd Lutheran Church
220 Carson Rd.
Seneca, SC 29678



Merry Christmas!