



The Messenger

Our Savior Lutheran Church
The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod
Paradise, California

December 2014

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Rev. Brandon Merrick
Pastor

Jean Orsborn
Office Manager

Cheryl Mock
Day Care Director

Marc Grosso
President

John Hantelman
Chairman Board of Elders

Esther Tiedemann
Choir Director

Doris Bardon
Organist

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From Pastor Merrick

“The only constant in life is change.” This is a quote by Heraclitus of Ephesus who was a Greek philosopher and I can’t think of a more appropriate statement for this Advent season. I can’t imagine it is a mere coincidence that at this, the beginning of the church year, I find myself changing homes, changing church families and changing locales. And it’s not just me, but you too find yourselves changing pastors and all of the familiarity and comfort that came from the blessing of being served by the same shepherd for over thirty two years.

While there are like a zillion unknowns and I have been asked a plethora of questions over the last month from my kids that I simply can’t answer, I can answer the most important and central question of why. Why are we changing homes and friends and schools? Because Paradise is where God is calling us to be. I have always taught my kids and anyone else willing to listen that above all, we are redeemed by God through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We are redeemed by God and are called to follow Him and walk the path He calls us down.

Advent and the new church year is a time to prepare for the single greatest act of love in the history of the world. The birth of Jesus was more than just a miracle. The vulnerable baby in the manger was the first time in over 400 years that God was once again, present with His people. Jesus was truly “God with us” and through Him, we have the fulfilled promise of the Father that He would come to be the Shepherd of His flock. Through the Christ, we have a Savior, a champion and a constant in ever-changing world.

Preparing for the Christ-child is nothing more than recognizing that we need Him. John the Baptist testifies to this. The message of the voice of the one calling from the wilderness was a simple one: repent. Before faith leads us to the cross and the victory Christ wins on our behalf, it calls us to take a long hard look in the mirror in order to illuminate our baggage. In recognizing the sin that keeps us from growing and changing for the sake of loving others we carry around, the freedom God gives is the freedom to follow where He leads. So as we pack up our things and prepare for Paradise to be our new home, my family and I are excited about many things. We are excited to be a part of your family, we are excited to make new friends and we are excited to follow God. We can be excited because we know that He not only goes with us, but because He has been here all along. God has been preparing you just as He has been preparing us. This Advent begins a new church year, new ministries and new relationships. While change will be a part of our world until the time Christ comes again, let us embrace the One constant in our lives and always seek Him.

Pastor Brandon Merrick



**Wednesday,
December 3rd**

11:00 a.m. Worship
Soup and Dessert Lunch

**Wednesday,
December 10th**

11:00 a.m. Worship
Soup & Dessert Lunch

5:30 p.m.

Day Care - Preschool
Christmas Program

**Thursday,
December 11th**

5:30 p.m.

Day Care - School Age
Christmas Program

**Wednesday,
December 17th**

no morning worship
7:00 p.m.

Evening Worship Service

**Christmas Eve
December 24th**

7:00 p.m.
Worship Service

**Christmas Day
December 25th**

10:00 a.m.
Worship Service



This time of year there are many calls upon your generosity and we want you to know that it is deeply appreciated. Recently you have been asked for Help 4 People, Pantry Party, gifts for Bethesda Home residents, assist with a Memorial Service, Pastor's retirement etc.

You are to be commended for your generosity of heart and the love and support you share with the church and its staff. May the Lord truly bless you for your ongoing gifts.

Mission Opportunity

A new model to fund mission in the CNH district is to seek out mission minded congregations and individuals that are willing to go above and beyond their normal giving and support a specific project.

One such mission is the restart of ministry at Chester and Greenville under the leadership of pastor Tyrel Bramwell. Mission Executive Mike Lange of CNH has noted our interest in this mission and offers us the opportunity to match a grant given by another individual who put up \$10,000 that he will donate if matched by a congregation or individual. Pastor Lange is hoping to find several individuals who might be willing to make a one time gift

that would then be "doubled" by the donor.

Pastor Lange is also seeking individuals with whom he could talk about this opportunity or the opportunity to support other missions in the district. He feels it is his job to challenge and ask and it is the job of the Holy Spirit to find people who want to support mission work beyond their ongoing giving to their own congregation.

If you are interested you can contact Pastor Mike Lange at mike@cnh.org.



Because you asked:

Contact Information
California
Mark & Susan Stenbeck
1905 Crandall Way
Paradise, CA 95969
(Mandi's address)

Georgia
92 Hampshire Court
Avondale Estates, GA 30002

We can't offer you bedroom space in California because dad's mobile is full of our stored furniture, but if you are passing through Georgia when we are there the guest bedroom is open and ready for visitors.

Our cell phones and Georgia address are listed in the new picture directory.

Mizpah and Thanks

A recent email from CNH President Dr Robert Newton arrived from Bangladesh. Pastor Newton answered a few questions about authorizing the installation of Pastor Merrick and then he commended me for the way I have guided you as a congregation through the Call process. He then added his admonition that I be sure to stay away from Our Savior for some months to come. He stated that transition after a long ministry like mine has been is difficult and that you as a congregation and Pastor Merrick need time to make that transition.

So as we had already discussed I will be spending some time in Georgia and even when in California I won't be worshiping with you for awhile. Long range I am sure Pastor Merrick will find opportunity to have me cover for him when he goes on vacation or is away at conference etc.

I will be with you for the Installation Service on December 21st. Shortly after Christmas Susan and I will be driving to Nebraska to visit my mother, to St. Louis to see my brother and then on to Georgia.

No definite plans for 2015 other than to go to Spring Baseball Training with my brother and nephew, be in Nebraska as needed to be with mom and my sister and to relax. Our return to California will find

us settling into a California dwelling. In California we hope to get Susan to Yosemite, the north coast and redwoods, visit Orange County relatives and perhaps get to do our San Diego visit. And of course, time with grandkids is high on the list.

How can I thank you for your "Farewell" Sunday for Susan and I. Once again you have been so extremely generous with us. It was a great Sunday of worship, food, and fellowship and I rejoice in the relationship we have built together since 1982. Truly *"may the Lord watch between you and me while we are apart one from the other."*

Pastor Mark

Day Care

As I sit her looking out the window, I thank God for our much needed rain we have all been praying for.

Our Pre-K class had a lot of fun preparing for their Thanksgiving feast and program they put on for their parents. The children cut up potatoes, carrots, onions and various other vegetables for their harvest stew. They made cornbread and Miss Lois made her famous apple dessert. The parents enjoyed the children's singing and finger plays and the feast was enjoyed by all.

The morning Pre-School class has been enjoying many activities under the direction of Miss Suzette, Miss Elaine, Miss Rita, and Miss Sarah for the

Thanksgiving Holidays. The afternoon classes are under the direction of Miss Debi and Miss Katy. They are providing many learning activities for the children and are following through with some of the morning activities as some children only come in the afternoon.

As some of you have heard, we are sprucing up our classrooms. We received our area rugs for the Pre-School and Pre-K class rooms. Our daycare has done well financially and the board approved new cubbies for our classrooms. I want to thank everyone who helped put them together. Stop by and take a look!

The children are already working on their Christmas program as it is coming up quickly. The Pre-School program is on Wednesday, December 10th at 5:30 PM and the School Age program is on Thursday December 11th at 5:30 PM.



A very happy Thanksgiving to everyone. We have so much to be thankful for.

♥ In Christ,
Miss Cheryl



The meeting was called to order by Bev Knaak.

Bev led us in our continuing study of the Fruits of the Spirit. This study was on "Peacemakers".

In reviewing the Treasurer's Report as of October 2014, there is \$3,474.93 in rummage sale funds for the Christmas-giving program. It was noted that some funds may be held in reserve for use during 2015. The Christmas Giving Committee was appointed and their recommendations will be announced at the December 6 Christmas luncheon.

The positions of President and Secretary were up for election for a two-year term. Cyndi Eiler and Bonnie Weber will be co-presidents for the coming term. The position of secretary remains open.

Highlights from the Zone 12 Fall Rally "Panning Nuggets of the Bible" hosted by Brownsville Lutheran Church in Brownsville were shared by those who attended.

The second half of our meeting was a workshop for the Craft and Bake Sale on Sunday, November 16, 2014. Thank you to Bonnie Weber for organizing the craft project. Proceeds from the sale go to the Bethesda Lutheran Communities Northern California Area. Over \$700 was

raised for Bethesda on Sunday. Thank you to all you who baked, crafted, set up, purchased and/or donated.

The annual Christmas lunch will be held on Saturday, December 6, in Luther Hall at noon. A sign up sheet will be on the church patio or in the church office. The Christmas Giving Committee will make their recommendations at the luncheon. All those attending should bring plates of cookies or other baked goodies which will be decoratively wrapped for delivery to members who are in retirement/convalescent homes or recovering from illnesses. All ladies of the congregation are invited to join us.

The Phebians - Serving the Lord with Gladness

Christmas Gifts for Bethesda

There are gift suggestions for Bethesda Homes residents for Christmas. On the easel you will find sticky notes with a name and gift idea.

1. Pick a gift you can give
2. Take the sticky note (save it)
3. Write your name beneath the sticky note-on the blue paper
4. Buy the gift
5. Do not wrap it
6. Put the sticky note on the gift
7. Bring the gift to church by December 14.
8. If you have questions, call John Hantelman at 877-3102

Thank you for helping.

Our Large Print Operation -Annual Report-

Since moving from Braille to our Large Print operation last February, things have been going well.

We have a dedicated core of about 12 people, not all of whom participate in our LP operation at each session. Due to our new commercial type printer which we run by computer, we have become proficient to the point where we meet every other week. We print in an eighteen point font. We are meeting on Mondays and Tuesdays, usually each day for a little over an hour. One may ask why meet two days during a week when the same amount of work could be turned out by working on one day a week. The simple answer is that we enjoy the fellowship and the task is more enjoyable since we don't have the pressure atmosphere we had when it took 3 people just to operate our Braille press. We currently print about 70 books a month and ship 30 cartons of books each month. Each box usually contains two books: The Old Testament books of Joshua and the combined books of Judges and Ruth. Ninety five percent of our shipments are addressed to domestic address and the rest are sent to countries in Africa and Asia. We continually hear of the appreciation of our work by people who never before could read The Bible and learn about Jesus. It's an enjoyable experience for us, too. If you know someone who would like a large print book or books of the Bible, we can arrange it for them.

Roger Klaves,
LP leader

Phebian's

-Annual Report-

Phebian's meet on the first Monday of each month at 9:30 a.m. We have a core group of ladies in attendance and always welcome newcomers. All ladies of the congregation are Phebian members and are welcome to attend any or all of our activities.



The CNH District Mission Grant Goal for 2014-2016 is \$125,000 with a total Mission Goal of \$250,000. Of the 20 Mission Grants for the biennium, 6 have been funded and we are currently partially funded on #7-Safe Place to Play for Children/Families Outreach Ministry, Hayward.

Thank you to Roger Klaves who continues to raise mites by recycling the plastic, glass and aluminum brought to our monthly meetings.

Guest Speakers at this year's meetings included a continuation of our "We all have a Story" Series with special guests Jan Wade and Susan Stenbeck. Martha Dubke told us about her short-term mission trips to Poland and Jamaica with Pastor Dubke. Another guest speaker was Stephanie Gregorino of SHOR and Dianne Wilkinson for the Deaf Youth Ministry in Texas. Bev Knaak led Bible studies on the "Fruits of the Spirit". We held our September meeting at Feather Canyon Retirement Center where several of our members are residents. In

June we went to Anderson to Exodus Farms to hear about their mission of healing broken horses and broken children.

Two workshops were also held to tie lap blankets that were then donated to Valley Oak Children's Services and Torres Community Shelter.

The Phebian's continue to be active in the Zone and many attended the Spring Rally in Yuba City and the Fall Rally in Brownsville. The LWML CNH Convention was held at the McClellan Convention Center near Sacramento this year with our Church being well represented. In August our Zone hosted a Mission Festival "Lift High the Cross" at Redeemer Lutheran in Chico. Bible study was led by Pastor Bramwell of Chester and our guest speaker was Lynnette Campbell, LWML CNH President who spoke about the many short-term mission trips she and her husband Kent have participated in through MOST Ministries.

Monthly Human Care ingatherings have included HELP 4 People, Angel Blankets, SHOR, Exodus Farms, Oroville Rescue Mission, Brownsville Church Quilt Guild, Railroad Restoration Group, Westside Domestic Violence Shelter, and cookies for our homebound members.

Other activities include our annual rummage sale which raised over \$3,400 plus matching funds from the Morlock Trust. Proceeds fund our Christmas giving program, the Smiles Luncheon served 63 guests, and the Craft and Bake sale proceeds

of over \$700 goes to Bethesda Lutheran Communities-North California Area.

The Phebian's continue to host Victory Celebrations as requested.

Members of Our Savior continue to be active in the LWML on the local, zone and district levels. Jean Orsborn is serving on the Christian Life Committee of the District LWML, and Kathy Richardson is Financial Secretary.

We thank the congregation for their continuing support of our outreach projects.


Phebian's - "Serving the Lord with Gladness"



*For the grace of
God has appeared,
bringing salvation
for all people.*

Titus 2:11, ESV

December 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 Circuit Pastors' Conference 6:00 Church Council	3 11:00 Advent Svc 11:45 Lunch 1:00 Bd-Outreach	4 10:00 In Home Bible Study 11:00 C.S.S -"Social" Melissa Bergstrom 5:00 Choir	5	6 Noon - Phebians Christmas Lunch
7	8 9:30 Large Print Workshop	9 9:30 Large Print Workshop	10 11:00 Advent Svc 11:45 Lunch 5:30 Preschool Christmas Program	11 10:00 In Home Bible Study 5:00 Choir 5:30 School Age Christmas Program	12	13 10:00 Altar Guild Meeting
14	15 9:30 Large Print Workshop	16 9:30 Large Print Workshop	17 12:15 Board-Elders 7:00 Advent Svc. Christmas Songs	18 10:00 In Home Bible Study 5:00 Choir	19	20
21 4:00 Installation Service	22 Newsletter Deadline	23	24 7:00 Christmas Eve Service	25 10:00 Christmas Day Service Holy Communion	26	27
28	29	30	31	Our Savior Lutheran Church 6404 Pentz Road Paradise, CA 95969 530-877-7321		

December

2014

Happy December Birthday to:

Marlene Bess	12/4
Nancy Schatz	12/4
Bob Hallstrom	12/5
Irene Witherwax	12/11
Bonnie Weber	12/16
Major Price	12/19
Pat Gilbert	12/22
Edie Fahl	12/25
Samuel Houston	12/25
Tammy Lange	12/26
Judy Joksch	12/29

Happy December Anniversary to:

King♥Loree Fillmore	12/07
56 years together	
Gary♥Bonnie Covert	12/11
7 years together	

Elders:
 December 14: John Hantelman and Dan Hall
 December 28: Lee Bess and Carl Johnson

Ushers:
 December 7 8:00 Lee Bess, Mike Kemp, and Mike Lange
 10:30 Curt & Ryan Eiler
 December 14 8:00 Cal Richardson and Ernie Weber
 10:30 Larry & Jacque Bonesio
 December 21 8:00 Ken Scott and Bob Steinecke
 10:30 Chuck & Hilary Fleischmann
 December 24 7:00P
 December 25 10:00
 December 28 8:00 John & Michael Diefenderfer, Don & Chris Long
 10:30 Dan and Kerry Hall and Del Wade

Acolytes:
 December 7 8:00 Jacob Abel
 10:30 Tim Steffenson
 December 14 8:00 Jacob Abel
 10:30 Brady Steffenson
 December 21 8:00 Jacob Abel
 10:30 Jason Berg
 December 24 7:00P Jacob Abel
 December 25 10:00 Brady Steffenson
 December 28 8:00 Jacob Abel
 10:30 Chris Hall

Altar Guild: Kerry Hall, Bev Knaak and Kathy Richardson