

**The Lamp Lighter**  
**December 2018**  
**The Newsletter of Living Lord Lutheran Church**  
**Real God. Real Faith. Real Life.**  
**www.LLLC.org**

**SUNDAY WORSHIP AT 8:00 AND 10:30 AM**  
**ADULT FORUM & SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR AGES 13-18 9:00 AM**  
**SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR AGES 2-12 10:15 AM**

**CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICES**  
4:00 and 7:00 pm Candlelight Worship Service with Holy Communion

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**From Pastor William D. Leitch...**We begin the wait for Christmas, the coming of Christ, then Christmas comes and we remember that event for 12 days in our Church calendar. Perhaps all we remember of Christmases past is the effort we put into decorating, sharing gifts, preparing big meals, cleaning the house, and then taking it all down and storing it all away for next year. I pray that we all will be intentional about reading the Scriptures very carefully and witnessing how powerful they really are in proclaiming this Jesus, the Christ!

When I read about all the events leading up to Jesus’ birth and the events that occurred soon after, I think, “How could anyone not believe that Jesus is the Christ and that He is the Son of God?”

Come with me and hear again the incredible events and how they changed everyone then and why they should change us today.

Mary is a young teen, maybe even a pre-teen, like middle school. The angel Gabriel speaks to her, “Mary, you are pregnant!” In Catechism, we like to put our students in the shoes of our Biblical characters. Our female students this year gasped and said, “I am in so much trouble!” Yep, and so was Mary. First, Mary replied, “There is no way!” She knew where babies came from. If she was pregnant, and before she was married, she would have been an adulterer and that was punishable by death – by stoning. Yet, when Gabriel explained how this came about by the power of God, Mary not only believed, but accepted the mission with great joy. This was one incredibly brave girl!

Next, Joseph needs to get on board, but he could not on his own. Again, Gabriel pays a visit. Joseph stops all action to “dismiss her quietly”. Now, Mary and Joseph have the same “God Encounter”, God’s messenger, Gabriel. The confidence meter just went higher.

Next, Mary visits her pregnant cousin, Elizabeth, and Elizabeth’s fetus does a flip inside and Elizabeth declares that the Savior just walked in. What? Where did this come from? Mary had to be thinking, “Thank you God. It is good to have Elizabeth on the team. Whew!” The confidence meter just went up another notch. By the way, Elizabeth’s baby was John the Baptist. He proclaimed Jesus as God’s son thirty years later.

Then they go to Bethlehem and Jesus is born in a barn. By the way, the barn was not in the Yellow Pages as a publicly recognized hotel. Still, the three wise men from someplace else in the world find him without much trouble. An angel informs them to keep it to themselves as Herod wants to use them for no good. They obey,

leave town, and disregard all protocols to the “Big Shot”. Don’t think for a minute they made it into Bethlehem without everyone hearing about it. Folks have been talking about this for 2,000 years. I am sure Mary and Joseph were pretty amazed to have these gentlemen show up and proclaim their knowledge of the son of God’s birth. Wow! The whole world seems to know. Confidence going higher!

Stinky shepherds also get the message about Jesus’ birth from a whole choir of angels. Shepherds are not lazy. The angels said go and see. Usually, you would expect shepherds to say, “Sorry, we need to feed our sheep or we will have a drop in revenues. Can’t go.” But not so! They said, “Cool! Let’s go. NOW!” They show up in Bethlehem and tell Mary and Joseph all about their encounter with God’s angels. Confidence meter has got to be pegging now! But that’s not all. The shepherds tell everyone they see on the way home. They are pumped, excited, and cannot keep this good news in. The news is spreading like wildfire, and we know what wildfire is like. There is no one in this world who has not heard of this child’s birth. That is why we keep talking about it today. There were so many eyewitnesses to Jesus’ birth, and you know about eyewitnesses, right? You can accept or reject what they say, but you will never prove them wrong. And since there were so many eyewitnesses how could anyone in the world not believe.

Oh, and the witnesses go on. Simeon in the Temple in Jerusalem eight days after Jesus’ birth sees Jesus and thanks God that he has seen the Savior. Anna, a prophetess in the Temple, stumbles onto Mary and Joseph and proclaims who this Jesus is. Where does this end? God is informing everyone. The team is greater than anyone can count. The confidence meter is pegging on high!

So, what is the reading on your “Confidence Meter”? Come! Let us hear the witness of all the saints who have gone before us. Listen close to their encounter with God and God’s messengers. Hear how they received the same message in different places and at different times. Then let us be a witness to the world!

**Addresses Needed for Parish Directory...**Please provide the church office with your adult children’s current address, phone number, and email address. As their Pastor, I need to be able to make contact directly with them. If they are away at college, please provide that address so the Evangelism/Membership Committee can send them Christmas cards this month. These are our current young adult members we are trying to reach out to in order to have discussions about what they would like to see in worship, parish education, etc., to make them excited about coming to church and bringing their friends.

**Church Information...**Please remember that you can obtain church information from the monthly Lamplighter Newsletter, the Constant Contact emails you receive, on the church website ([www.lllc.org](http://www.lllc.org)), on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/Living-Lord-Lutheran-Church-493806727349110/>), and postings on the church bulletin board. Church Council Meeting minutes are posted on the bulletin board and sent out via Constant Contact. We would like to see a better “open rate” when we send information to you via Constant Contact so that we know you are being informed of the activities that are occurring at the church. If you have any other suggestions on how best to reach out to our parishioners, please see a Council member.

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**From the President, Bob McKinney...**I appreciate those who came out to our Fall on the Courtyard event. The weather did not cooperate for anything outside, but I think we all enjoyed the fellowship and good food. Our Halloween Bingo Party at Niles Shepherd of the Valley was another success. Judy and her gang do such a good job. It’s fun to dress up and bring some fun to the residents. I want to thank Pat Was for the Veteran information for our congregation and the map with the locations of each service man’s tour locations. Very nice job! The sermons Pastor is doing for our tithing responsibilities are right to the point. I think we, as a church, need to make the decision of what we are about. Will we be a church that pays salaries, utilities, and meet on Sundays to worship and that’s it? Or will we be a church of outreach, spreading the word of God in our

communities with funded committees doing their work? We are currently looking at passing a budget with several committees being completely defunded. We are talking about personnel raises. Should we do that at this time? Right now the budget has not been approved by Council to present to the congregation at our Annual Meeting, but that will happen in December. We are dangerously close to a financial meltdown here at Living Lord Lutheran Church. We need to start looking outside the box for creative ways of funding a realistic budget. Pastor wants to have every member conversations concerning our budget and tithing. I am certainly not opposed to that, but in my heart I do not think that will be the solution to our long-term problem. I have not said anything to Council about this column and I am sure this could upset some folks, but you need to hear this. Here are a few suggestions that I think could be pursued: (1) Cut the ELCA Benevolence line 1102 in the budget. We simply do not have the funds to sustain this level of giving. We probably will not meet that level of giving this year. (2) Look at changing the by-laws of the Fuchs Fund to allow a portion of the yearly interest to be used for the everyday running of the church. We have a large sum of money sitting in banks earning interest and every year the interest is used for property improvements, which are needed. But I think keeping the church open and viable is a reason to look at this fund. Now I know that these two items are like a sacred cow to some people in the church, but we are at a crossroads. And tough decisions need to be made. I would really like to have a church meeting between both services sometime in December to discuss all of this and get your concerns and comments before we recommend a budget for your passage at the Annual Meeting. Also, one last thing, I want to thank Pat Was again for stepping up and chairing the Finance Committee for the rest of this year. His knowledge has been very helpful.

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**From the Fellowship Committee Chairperson, Nancy Walters...**

**Fellowship in December...**Our next Fellowship will be on **Sunday, December 16**. There will be a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board for food items needed. We will have a breakfast that day held in Fellowship Hall. There will also be Fellowship on **Christmas Eve** following the 7:00 pm service. This will be hosted by Lynne Walters. Lynne has hosted these Christmas Eve Fellowships for as long as I can remember. I want to thank Lynne for all of her wonderful decorations for Fellowships this year. Awesome jobs Lynne! There is a Fellowship "wish list" posted on the bulletin board for items needed for upcoming Fellowships.

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**From the Finance Committee, Treasurer Dave Henderson...** The books are closed for October 2018. Receipts for October were \$9,608.17 and expenses were \$10,888.12, resulting in a loss of \$1,279.95 for October. So far, year-to-date through October 31, 2018, we have had receipts of \$118,092.09 and expenses of \$121,664.79 for a year-to-date loss of \$3,572.70. We started off the year as normal with a good winter and the summer months came and hit the giving hard and we fell behind. We had a good August as members helped us "Ketchup". Since September, we have not done so well. So let's see if moving forward in the last two months of 2018 we can continue to maintain our giving per our pledges and have a balanced budget month to month. If we can do that and have a good Christmas season, we will finish the year with positive cash flow.

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**From the Outreach Committee Chairperson, Judy Shaffer...**

**Thanksgiving Food Baskets Update...**The Outreach Committee would like to thank everyone who donated to the Thanksgiving Food Baskets. We were able to give out 12 food baskets to our local community.

**Angel Tree...**We can help make Christmas a special time for area children. Our Angel Tree will be up on **Sunday, December 9**. Stop by the tree, choose an angel, sign them out, and have fun shopping! We will have 20 children to buy for. All gifts must be returned UNWRAPPED by **Sunday, December 16, with the angel tag attached**. If you have any questions, please contact Tootie Rogers at 330-545-1135. If you are unable to be in church on December 9 and would like to participate, please call Tootie and she will mail you an angel.

**NSOV Annual Christmas Party...**The Outreach Committee will be hosting the annual Christmas Party at Niles Shepherd of the Valley on **Wednesday, December 12, 2018**, beginning at 12:00 pm. We will be collecting new gifts for this event. Also, we will need Christmas gift bags. Some gift suggestions are new gloves, hat, and scarf sets, lotion sets, jewelry sets, and gift sets. If you would like to donate money, we will do the shopping for you. Place your check, made payable to Living Lord Lutheran Church with the notation "NSOV Christmas Party" in the memo portion, in the offering plate or mail it to the church office. Please place your items in the basket under the bulletin board. If you have any questions, please contact Judy Shaffer at 330-856-3148.

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**From the Property Committee Chairperson, Rolland Walters...**As the Property Committee winds up its outside projects, we will be focusing on projects inside of the church. The outside projects recently completed were the cutting up and removal of a 50 foot pine tree on the back of the property that had blown down over the summer. We also cleared about 75% of the brush in the back of the property. We will complete the other 25% in the spring. We also took a day to remove all of the flowers and tilled the flower beds in preparation for the next spring planting. We hosted 3 precincts for Howland Township voting. Neal L'Amoureux and I set up the tables and my wife, Nancy, baked cookies and muffins and made coffee for the poll workers as they put in a long day. They were super appreciative of the treats. Neal and I had a big surprise waiting for us when we returned to put tables back after voting was over. The wind was blowing out of the west all day and blew all the leaves in the back door. The entire area from the door to the steps and halfway down the Education Wing was covered. It usually takes about 45 minutes to put the tables and chairs back, but this time it took us 2 hours. I have taken the church tractor home to change the oil and filters and to sharpen the blades. It will then be returned to the church shed for the winter. The kitchen will be painted and the new flooring installed as our first inside project. The materials for this job have already been donated. The Property Committee is always looking for new members. At this time, the Committee consists of all men over 68 years of age. This prohibits us from performing some of the jobs by ourselves. We really need some younger members to step up and help. Women are also encouraged to join.

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**From the Worship Committee Chairperson, Jan Was...**  
**Poinsettia Sale...**Poinsettias will be available to purchase for Christmas. These flowers will be used to decorate the Worship Space for Christmas. The flowers are to be paid for when placing your order. The cost is \$13.25 for one large plant. You may place your check made payable to Living Lord Lutheran Church and marked "Christmas Poinsettias" in the memo portion in the offering plate. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board. Deadline to sign up is **Sunday, December 9**.

**Un-hanging of the Greens...**What goes up must come down! We will be taking the Christmas decorations down on **Saturday, January 5**, at 9:00 am. Please come and help with this task.

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**Thank You...**Hello to All, This is really for all of you girls that participate in these wonderful cards and all you do. They give one a lift and nice to know you are not forgotten even if you don't get out. I must be cold today – can't even write a note. Also, thanks to pastor, who seems to care about everyone. My thanks go out to all of you. Marlys Johnson

Pastor & Members of Living Lord Lutheran Church, Thanks for your condolences and prayers the last three months in the loss of our brother-in-law, Donnie Burbick, brother-in-law, Arden Sauerwein, and sister-in-law, Martha Burbick. God bless our church and members. Lamar & Marge Shoemaker

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**2018 LIVING LORD LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL**

President – Robert McKinney

VP / Youth & Family Chairperson – Stacey Altieri

Secretary – Warner Taiclet

Finance Chairperson – Pat Was, Interim

Evangelism/Membership Chairperson – Arlene Barkan

Fellowship Chairperson- Nancy Walters

Later Life Chairperson – Lorraine Bell

Outreach Chairperson – Judy Shaffer

Parish Education Chairperson – Darlene Altieri

Property Chairperson – Rolland Walters

Worship Chairperson – Jan Was

Treasurer – Dave Henderson

Financial Secretary – Terry King

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**EVENTS IN DECEMBER**

Saturday, December 1, 8:30 am – Hanging of the Greens

Sunday, December 2 – Advent 1/**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**

Sunday, December 9 – Advent 2/Angel Tree Up

Monday, December 10, 6:00 pm – Council in Activity Room

Wednesday, December 12, 12:00 pm – NSOV Annual Christmas Party

Sunday, December 16 – Advent 3/Angel Gifts Due/Children’s Christmas Program

Sunday, December 23 – Advent 4

Monday, December 24 – Christmas Eve Worship Service 4:00 & 7:00 pm

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## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

### **Birthdays**

1 = Gianna Altieri & Jennifer Altieri  
2 = Margie Orinin  
6 = Hannah Miller  
8 = Judie Welter  
11 = Reginal Rooks  
12 = Kara Busefink  
16 = Brenda Jamison  
17 = Cheryl Lauka  
21 = Craig Henderson & Jeanne Zingale  
25 = Rich Baringer  
26 = Julie Taiclet  
27 = Jennifer Babinchak  
28 = Shelly Chopko  
29 = Wendy Clagett  
30 = Patricia Hinton & Meghan Miller  
31 = Tyler Hinton

### **Anniversaries**

18 = Taiclet, Warner & Norma  
19 = Walters, Rollie & Nancy



*Merry Christmas*  
*from the Staff and Council*  
*of Living Lord Lutheran Church*