

THE
CRESTVIEW LUTHERAN
NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2024

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The people who walk in darkness
Will see a great light;
Those who live in a dark land,
The light will shine on them.
You will multiply the nation,
You will increase their joy;
They will rejoice in Your presence
As with the joy of harvest,
As people rejoice when they divide the spoils.
For You will break the yoke of their burden and the staff on their shoulders,
The rod of their oppressor, as at the battle of Midian.
For every boot of the marching warrior in the roar of battle,
And cloak rolled in blood, will be for burning, fuel for the fire.
For a Child will be born to us, a Son will be given to us;
And the government will rest on His shoulders;
And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:2-6





FROM THE PASTOR

Editor's Note: This was Pastor's sermon for Thanksgiving Eve. It's message is relevant for the upcoming Advent Season where we await Christ and the hope which He gives us in all circumstances on this earth and for eternal life.

✠ ✠ ✠Jesu Juva ✠ ✠ ✠

The Eve Before the National Day of Thanksgiving

Text: Philippians 4:6-20; St. Luke 17:11-19

In the Name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

“Oh give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.” It is easy to be thankful for food, job, children, home, and spouse. It is easy to be thankful for good health and a long, successful, and fruitful life. It is easy to be thankful for caring friends and a loving family. It is very easy to be thankful when things all seem to be going your way.

On the flip side, it is not so easy to give thanks when you are hungry, when you have lost your job, when your children rebel and seemingly cast aside all you have taught them,

when your home is about to be repossessed and you have nowhere else to go, or when your spouse has run off looking for a “new life.”

Nor is it easy to be thankful when the doctor sits you down with a note of concern in his or her voice. And what if you have no real friends and your family is full of less than desirable characters that could not care any less about you or anything that you hold dear; could you be thankful then? For what do you give thanks when life comes crashing down, seemingly handing you one bad break after another?

As we heard in St. Paul's epistle to the Christians in Philippi, “I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content.” Still, not many of us would consider ourselves to be as strong as St. Paul. he was, after all, an Apostle, was he not? Even so, his apostleship brought him many afflictions and hardships.

As Paul writes, “Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was ship-

wrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers; in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches.” At the end of his life, Paul was imprisoned in Rome and would lose his head.

Yet, St. Paul learned to be content in all things; to give thanks to God no matter what his circumstance may have been. He did not lament losing his worldly goods and position. Instead, he counted them all as so much rubbish.

Why? Hear again the words of St. Paul. “But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in

order that I may gain Christ and be found in Him....” Do you suppose that St. Paul may have understood something that you and I have yet to discern?

St. Paul knew that “to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” He understood that all things are good, even suffering, yes even death, if Christ is at the

center. So, it is, that he writes, “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds

“So, we feast, we give thanks, not simply for the things of this life, but for our life in Christ Jesus, now, and in the life to come”

through Christ Jesus.”

Paul is not saying that God will act like some sort of divine vending machine in the sky, endeavoring to please your every whim and desire. What he is saying is that placing your faith in the will and love of God, even if you do not understand it, even if you never understand His purpose, will bring you peace no matter what the outcome of your suffering may be. St. Paul compared all things to the suffering and death on the Cross

of the one who died for him—and for you and me. He saw everything in light of Jesus’ victory over sin, Satan, and the grave. In light of this he counted everything else as rubbish.

Ah, but there is the rub. There is the hurdle that is so hard for us to overcome. We see everything in light of worldly success and happiness (whatever they may entail). We tend to measure happiness against things and momentous events. We tend to define life like the old bumper sticker, “Life is a contest. Whoever dies with the most toys wins.”

But what if you have no “toys”? What then? Does that mean that God does not love you? What if the momentous event in your life was the suffering and death of a loved one? Has God then rejected you? What if you suffer from depression and cannot seem to find joy in life? Has God turned His back on you? Is God a liar? He has promised, “A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench.” But you often feel crushed beneath the weight of pain and suffering in this life. Has God, then, abandoned you?

Repent! Do you not know that your life is not to be measured by health, wealth, and happiness? When did

you forget “that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord”? Your life is not to be measured by what you possess. Rather, it is to be measured by who possesses you.

When you are possessed by the gifts you receive in this life instead of being possessed by God, the Giver of all things, you are tempted to forget God, to become more concerned about the flesh and worldly pleasures and possessions. Your mind becomes troubled about many things and you are consumed when they are lost. Your vision of Christ is blurred and in danger of being blotted out altogether.

But if you want to be possessed by God, if you want to see the true nature of God, then you must first be possessed by Christ and His Cross. There, at the foot of the Cross, looking up into the bloody face of God, the true love of God is revealed in the stark reality of Jesus’ suffering and death. There, you must look up into the face of Jesus as He hangs dying. There, you must look up and see in His suffering, your suffering, in His death, your death. Then look into His empty tomb and know that in His resurrection is your resurrection. In His life, is your life. There, on Calvary and

in the empty tomb, all things pale in comparison; everything else is nothing more than rubbish!

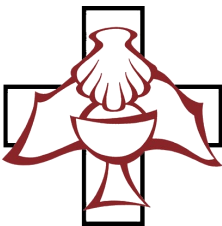
For it was upon the Cross that Jesus won for you your greatest possession—the forgiveness of all your sins. With Baptism, Jesus' places His Cross on you. It is a divine exchange. In His Baptism, Jesus received the sins of the world—your sins and mine. He carried those sins to the Cross where they took His life. Yet, in killing Jesus, ours sins too, were put to death.

Jesus' innocent death is our victory, for in His death He conquered sin, death, and the devil. As proof of this, three days later He arose from His grave. Jesus' death was deemed an acceptable sacrifice, a pleasing aroma to God, our Father in Heaven. The Cross that had been an instrument of torture and death has become for us, through Jesus' innocent suffering and death, the Tree of Life.

So, we feast, we give thanks, not simply for the things of this life, but for our life in Christ Jesus, now, and in the life to come. We come and kneel before the throne and altar of God confessing that we are poor miserable sinners, that nothing within us merits


the life and death of God's one and only Son. But we rise and rejoice, having been fed on the very Body and Blood that saved us. We rise forgiven, having been fed on the Bread of Life and the Medicine of Immortality.

We give thanks to God this day and every day, for food, home, job, children, and spouse, and all the blessings that God so richly bestows upon us, for His mercies are new every morning, and He abundantly provides every day for all our wants of body and soul.



Like the leper, we give thanks knowing that God has not deserted us, but comes to us in a very real, Flesh and Blood way, in His glorious Word, and His blessed Sacraments.

So come now and give thanks. Come, eat and be made full, then you shall bless the Lord your God and hear Him say, "I forgive you all your sins."

In the Name of the Father, and of the  Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

   Soli Deo Gloria   

Rev. Raymond D. Parent II

Sunday Readings (Lectionary)

Date	Old Testament	Epistle	Gospel
Dec. 1	Jeremiah 23:5-8	Romans 13:11-14	Matthew 21:1-9
Dec. 8	Malachi 4:1-6	Romans 15:4-13	Luke 21:25-36
Dec. 15	Isaiah 40:1-8	1 Corinthians 4:1-5	Matthew 11:2-10
Dec. 22	Deuteronomy 18:15-19	Philippians 4:4-7	John 1:19-28
Dec. 29	Isaiah 63:7-16	Galatians 4:1-7	Luke 2:33-40

FROM THE PRESIDENT

A very big "Thank You", "Vielen Danke", and "Muchas Gracias" to everyone who was recently elected to the church council! I look forward to serving the congregation together with you and hope our united experience is both positive and fruitful. For those who have

not yet served on the council, please don't fret...it's only 11 months to the next election and there's still room for you! See you Sunday morning, and Wednesday evening!

Blessings, Alex

COFFEE WITH PASTOR



Coffee with Pastor begins with Matins at 9:00 a.m.

followed by time with Pastor to get to know him and for him to get to know his flock!

Men's Group

7:00 pm, Tuesday, December 17th

Pastor Parent's house.

Birthdays:

- Josh Stapp 12/20
- Annalise Stapp 12/9
- Mary Quarrier 12/11
- Brad Bien 12/15
- Lupe Franco 12/15
- Sue Cadenhead 12/22
- Mahon Haunschild 12/26
- Sally Romersberger 12/26

FROM THE BOARD OF SOCIAL MINISTRY

Happy December everyone!

There isn't too much on the calendar for Social Ministry this month. But we are having our first annual Christmas Party!

This is a potluck style party complete with a white elephant gift exchange, ugly sweater contest, and more! See the attached invitation for more details and sign up for the potluck in the Fellowship Hall!

Adding on to what I said at the Voters' Meeting, thank you all so much for hitting the ground running with me when I was elected

to the Board of Social Ministry. I have had so much fun this year working with all of you. Social Ministry only happens when people show up to the events that are planned, so I could not do this without any of you.

I look forward to what the new year brings, and I wish you all a very merry Christmas this year!

Clare

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

Duck Eggs For Sale

I have duck eggs for sale, they are \$8.00 a dozen. Duck eggs are wonderful for baking a eating. I prefer to eat and bake with duck eggs. French chefs use them for back, and baking season is here! People who have trouble digesting chicken eggs can usually tolerate duck eggs. Julie, Deb an Mahlon, and Linda Urda can provide references for my eggs. If you would like to sample or want to order a dozen please see me. If you have any questions please ask.



Dee Ann Tech



*You are cordially invited
to the first annual
Our Savior Evangelical
Lutheran Church
Christmas party!*



*When:
Saturday December 14, starting
at 11 am*

*Where:
The Fellowship Hall*

*What:
A fun Christmas party with a
White Elephant gift exchange,
ugly sweater contest,
and more*



FROM LWML

Serve the Lord with Gladness! Psalm 100:2

As Lutheran Women in Mission, we joyfully proclaim Christ, support missions, and equip women to honor God by serving others.

Mites donations: Oct: \$33.00, Nov: \$12.49

Mite box Sunday is the first Sunday of each month. You may bring the mite box any Sunday. If you prefer to donate by check, please make it payable to Our Savior LWML.

Mite donations are sent monthly to the Gulf States District LWML to fund mission grants and district expenses and national mission grants.

As the Bible reminds us, even small offerings can make an enormous impact. The Mite Box is intended for regular contributions of “mites” — offerings above and beyond the support given to congregations and the LCMS. Combined, these mites amount to millions of dollars for funding mission grants and providing ongoing support for various Lutheran Women in Mission programs.

23 of 31 mission grants are fully funded and 4 are partially funded.

Thanks to all who donated diapers, pull-ups, wipes and cash for the Emerald Coast Zone LWML Fall Rally Gifts from the Heart. Your generous donations helped many struggling single parent families and grandparents raising grandchildren. Jehovah Lutheran Church, Pensacola coordinated with the recipient, The Village Hands of Pensacola to pick up the items. They are very appreciative.

Poinsettias are on sale for \$10.00 from Dec 1-15. You may take your poinsettia home after the Christmas service. See Linda Urda to order.

The Lutheran Woman's Quarterly Winter 2024 issue is available from the magazine rack in the Narthex. This issue has details about the upcoming convention in Omaha, NE next June.

<http://www.lwml.org>

<http://www.lwmlgulfstates.org>

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Emerald Coast Zone Christian Growth Workshop, Date/Location TBD

LWML 41st Biennial LWML Convention, June 26-29, 2025, Omaha, NE, “Growing in God's Grace” 2 Peter 3:18

Gulf States District LWML Convention, April 24-26, 2026, Gulfport, MS

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Urda

LWML President



Our Savior Evangelical Lutheran Church
 Council Meeting Minutes (In-Person)
 November 13, 2024
 President – Alex Franco
 Vice-President- Brad Bien



1. Attendance: Alex Franco, Brad Bien, Dcs Heather Bien, Brian Hull, Mahlon Haunschild, Julie Blaylock, Linda Urda, Alan Widner, Clare Jones, Emily Bien, Jennifer Currid
2. Alex opened the meeting in prayer at 6:37.
3. The previous council minutes were approved (Clare/Mahlon).
4. Reports:
 - a) Pastor's Report (Fr Parent) – No report.
 - b) Deaconess Report (Dcs Bien) - See attached.
 - c) Financial Report (Mahlon) - See attached.
 - d) Treasurer (Brian)- See attached. Brian needs the total number of Lutheran Witness subscriptions by Dec. 31.
 - e) Board of Security (Julie) – No recent security incidents to report. On Sunday Alex/Julie will ask who in the congregation wants an alert whistle.
 - f) LWML (Linda) – Mites for November were \$12.49. Poinsettias will go on sale from Dec. 1-15 for \$10 each. The Gulf State Convention will be held April 24-26, 2026, in Gulfport, MS. Linda is asking for a logo for the convention PR. Nineteen of thirty-one national grants have been fully funded. The Gulf Shores District LWML is looking for YWRC (Young Woman Representative) for the 2025 national convention to be held in Omaha, Nebraska the end of June 2025. Ages for YWR is 22-35. See Linda for the form and information sheet. She needs the name sof those interested by Jan. 31, 2025. They cannot have been a YWR previously.
 - g) Board of Education (Cindy) – No report.
 - h) Board of Youth (Emily) - The Fall Ball is scheduled for Nov.16 from 1:30-4:00. The school supply drive has found a deserving recipient, Baker School second grade. Emily is planning a time for cookie baking, Cookies for Cops.
 - i) Board of Elders (Alan) – The membership scrub continues.
 - j) Board of Trustees (Brian) - See attached. A motion was made and passed to sell the chest freezer to the Hulls for \$1.00 (Brad/Julie). Brad is going to re-advertise the furniture in the Fellowship hallway.
 - k) Board of Social Ministry (Clare) - See attached. Alex is the back-up administrator for Signal and Youth Instagram.
 - l)Board of Evangelism (Alex) – The photos from the Trunk or Treat are on the website. Alex sends a text to visitors who sign the guest book and who leave their phone number thanking them for joining us for worship and encouraging to return.
5. Unfinished Business:
 - a) Replacement green chasuble set, follow-up- Julie will remove the stitching; Cincy will do the repairs. The emblem on the back needs to be replaced.
 - b) Security whistles- See above item E.
 - c) Byrna liability insurance (note: we have no “designated” defender for any given Sunday)

6. New Business:

- a) Veteran Secular Outreach (BoCL)- Carlene Kamradt shared information about this program with Alex.
- b) Fall Ball Plan (BoY)- See above item H.
- c) Election Slate (Nominating Committee)- See attached. We have someone slated for every position. Some people are serving in two positions. We hope one day to have more volunteers to serve as officers and board chairs.
- d) Proposed OSELC 2025 Budget (Treasurer)- See attached.

7. A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 8:39 (Brad/Mahon). Alex led the council in the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Jennifer Currid

Our Savior Evangelical Lutheran Church



Voters' Assembly
November 24, 2024



President – Alex Franco
Vice-President- Brad Bien

- 1. Attendance – See sign-in sheet.
- 2. Alex called the meeting to order at 12:00 with Pastor Milas opening the meeting with prayer.
- 3. The previous council minutes were approved (Mahlon/Rich).
- 4. Reports:
 - a) Pastor's Report (Fr Parent) - Before he left for his hunting trip, Pastor met with the council to let them know that he has completed catechesis classes with the Stapp family.
 - b) Deaconess Report (Dcs Bien) - Heather thanked the congregation for their donations to the CTSFW Co-Op Marketplace. Total dollars donated to be announced.
 - c) Financial Report (Mahlon) - See attached.
 - d) Treasurer (Brian)- Brian reviewed the Ops Income vs Expenditures chart he created to visually depict our past and current financial situation along with a prediction of future income and expenditures.
 - e) Board of Security (Julie) – Julie explained where the air horns are located in the sanctuary and Fellowship Hall. She also reminded us that the church front doors are locked at the beginning of the service and monitored through our security system throughout the service. Alert whistles are available for those who want them.
 - f) LWML (Linda) – Linda reported that the mites for November were \$12.49. Twenty-three of 31 national grants are fully funded. Poinsettias will be on sale from Dec. 1-15 for \$10 each. The new LWML Quarterly is available in the narthex.
 - g) Board of Education (Cindy) - No report.
 - h) Board of Youth (Emily) - Emily related that school supply donations are gratefully accepted through Dec. 15 She is looking for those church members who want to participate in youth activities and is still looking for a name for the older youth group. She is planning a cookie baking session to give cookies to the local police and nurs-

ing home staffs.

- i) Board of Elders (Alan) – No report.
- j) Board of Trustees (Brian) – A work day is planned for Dec. 14.
- k) Board of Social Ministry (Clare) – See attached. Clare reviewed the year's activities and previewed plans for 2025. She pointed out the sign-up sheets for the Dec. 14 Christmas Party and Wednesday Advent soup and sandwich meal.
- l) Board of Evangelism (Alex) – Our church website has been renewed through 2027.

5. Unfinished Business: None

6. New Business:

- a) New members – The Stapp family – A motion was made and approved to welcome the Stapp family into membership. Adults: William (Joe), Mary, Joshua, Isaac, Micah (Shane); children: Eliana, Gabriel, Analise, Elijah, Abigail, Isaiah, Eden, Gideon, and Stevy (Hayhurst-Stapp).
- b) Pastor's housing allowance – After Brian explained how the housing allowance impacts Pastor's income taxes, a motion was made and passed to approve \$32,000 for his 2025 housing allowance (Bruce/Clare).
- c) Accountability Reimbursement Plan – A motion was made and passed to approve \$1,700 for reimbursement of 2025 expenses for our pastor and deaconess (Rich/Bruce).
- d) OSELC 2025 budget – See attached. After Brian presented the big picture for the 2025 budget, a motion was made to approved the 2025 budget for the use of God's money.
- e) Hiring policy and working with minors policy – See attached. Alex announced that the council had approved these two new policies governing hiring procedures and working with minors.
- f) Voting for Group B officers and council positions (plus one Group A position) – A motion was made to unanimously accept the slate as presented: Vice-President Alan Widner, treasurer Brian Hull, Board of Elders Alan Widner, Board of Evangelism Melania Ruef, Board of Security Julie Blaylock, Board of Trustees Brian Hull, Board of Youth Ministry Emily Bien, Board of Christian Life Linda Urda (Bruce/Julie).
- g) Dissolution of nominating committee – A motion was made to dissolve the 2024 nominate ing committee as its job was complete (Mahlon/Julie).

7. A motion was made and passed to adjourn the meeting at 12:54 (Brian/Rich). To close the meet ing, Alex led us in the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Currid



← Follow the Youth Group on Instagram!

**OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN
EVANGELICAL CHURCH**

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Council President: Alex Franco

Council Vice-President: Brad Bien

Secretary: Jennifer Currid

Treasurer: Brian Hull

Financial Secretary: Mahlon Haunschild

Board of Elders: Alan Widener

Board of Christian Life:

Board of Trustees: Brian Hull

Board of Education: Cindy Parent

Board of Youth: Emily Bien

Board of Evangelism: Alex Franco

Board of Social Ministry: Clare Jones

Board of Security: Julie Blaylock

LWML: Linda Urda

Library: Jennifer Currid

Usher Director: Julie Blaylock

Organist and Kantor: Brian Hull

Office Administrator: Trish Hull

Newsletter Editor: Dcs. Bien

Pastor Raymond Parent · Deaconess Heather Bien