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TABLE TALK



PASTOR'S LETTER

Happy New Year!

Advent is here. God's incarnation is near. The new church year has begun. Happy New Year! That's all we need right now. Happiness and Newness, a new beginning for our weary bodies and souls.

Advent is here. In a way that always means that the end of the year is close. 2020 is about to end and I doubt that anybody is sad about that. It's been quite a year. Advent is here. God is close!

In our house, Advent is always a special time of cuddling up on the couch at night, reading Advent stories, opening Advent calendars, drinking hot chocolate, baking cookies, caroling. So, when I told the kids on Sunday that it was first of Advent, they were overly excited. "But where is our Advent wreath?", they asked. "Well, we haven't made one yet, we just came back from camping (yes, it was horribly cold, thanks for asking!)." My kids' eyes teared up. I quickly lit another candle and began singing our traditional Advent hymn. It helped a bit.

Then, I texted Kris. "May Toni and I please come to your Advent wreath workshop today?" She replied yes and our day was saved. A couple of hours later we met in Kris' backyard and started working. Well, Toni



worked, I talked 😊. It took her about an hour to fix us a beautiful wreath. An hour, that filled my heart with Advent feelings and seasonal emotions. God will come. Soon. No matter whether we are ready or not. God is used to his people not being ready. And comes anyway.

At night, we lit our first candle, sang our hymn and felt it: Advent is here. God is near. Happy New Year!

Love, Pastor Tia!

Council President's Corner



Many thanks to Pastor Adisa Armand joining us to lead our worship for her first time via Zoom live (!) on November 29th while Pastor Tia was on vacation. She did a wonderful job – talk about a trooper! We have also been very fortunate to be able to have great YouTube sermons thanks to our neighbors, Pastors Tim Huff and Barbara Caine – wonderful team work. And of course, to Pastor Tia for all she does for us. It has been quite the year to be President of the Congregation – I thank all of you for your patience, support and flexibility. May the year 2021 be a little less challenging for us all!

Yours in Christ, *Peggy Claassen, President*

Advent wreaths!



Thanks to Kris Adams for planning and organizing CTK's Advent Wreath Making event this year!

This past week, CTK crafters were busy making advent wreaths. Thirteen wreaths were constructed. Three families came to the in-person workshop in the Adams' backyard on a sunny day and the rest watched an instructional video on the CTK website hosted by Kris Adams and built their wreaths at home. Special thanks also to Christy Bauer, Alan Claassen and Steve Adams! We had 3 guest participants that are not members of our church; maybe they'll want to join us again for something! Wreaths will be featured in our Zoom Worship services throughout the Advent season. *Kris Adams*



Special Holiday Music Events



Advent is when the air is filled with music. No shopping without Rudolf or Santa Claus coming to town. Advent is the time when we sing many of our most beloved carols. The ones with the beautiful melodies and heartfelt words. About joy to the world, about silent nights and herald angels.

This year, a small group of people from CTK decided to bring carols to you and your neighbors. We will be masked and socially distanced, of course! **On Dec 13th** (if it rains we will postpone for a week) **you can invite us to spend 10-15 minutes in front of your house and sing for you!** Please use this [sign-up](#) (click here) to indicate which time slots might work for you between **3 and 5:30 pm**.

On Dec 20th, at 6:00 pm our wonderfully gifted musicians Barney and Jason will offer a “Zoom Carol-Along” for Christmas Carols. You can wish for your favorites and listen to new ones. Open your hymnal or borrow one from church during our office hours (8:30-12:30, m-th) – please call ahead (510) 797-3724.



OUTDOOR CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICE - SURVEY

The Worship & Music/Praise Committee has been discussing options for an in-person Christmas Eve patio service (in addition to Zoom) on December 24th. The outdoor service does require more planning and work for the committee which they are more than willing to do; however, it would be helpful to identify if there is sufficient interest and preference for a time.

Pastor has prepared a very brief survey for those who might be interested in attending service **in-person** for that day. (Note: do not fill out the survey if you do not plan on attending **in-person**). To complete survey, click on link below and follow directions:

https://doodle.com/poll/m4rcwpm8i292wvmb?utm_source=poll&utm_medium=link

What does an outdoor socially distanced patio service look like???



11/1/2020





Sunday, December 13

THE BEST CHRISTMAS PAGEANT EVER!

by Barbara Robinson

Also showing:

Christmas Eve & Christmas Day

Thursday, December 24 & Christmas Day

Invite your friends for a viewing party!!! Starring, among others, **Theo and Toni and Pastor Tia!**

We will send out the YouTube link shortly before the events.

Pastor Barbara Caine, Holy Redeemer Lutheran Church, Director!

“Laughs abound in this bestselling Christmas classic by Barbara Robinson! The Best Christmas Pageant Ever follows the outrageous shenanigans of the Herdman siblings, or ‘the worst kids in the history of the world.’ The siblings take over the annual Christmas pageant in a hilarious yet heartwarming tale involving the Three Wise Men, a ham, scared shepherds, and six rowdy kids.”

A NEW LOOK AT STEWARDSHIP, Currency of Gracious Leadership

This month, we’re going to introduce you to the Currency of Gracious Leadership which seems fitting with the congregation electing new council members at the upcoming annual congregation meeting.

Gracious leaders know how to generate and use Holy Currencies. They are conscious of how currencies flow through their personal lives, within the church and beyond to the community. They use the Cycle of Blessings to discern which currencies are their strengths and weaknesses then seek ways to share their gifts and develop those lacking.

Gracious leaders keep the Cycle of Blessings in mind to analyze how resources recirculate within the church community and in the wider neighborhood, the nation, and the world. They use their talents to build relationships and assist communities to discover the truth and where currencies are not flowing. Their skills help people recognize how they can take part in unblocking the flow of resources, mobilizing resources that generate movement in the Cycle of Blessing toward greater wellness.

Gracious leaders not only regenerate and rejuvenate the currencies, but they also expand and develop more currencies and know how to do more with less.

The ability to use skills, tools, models and processes to create mutually respectful relationships and the discernment of the truth across differences can be built internally, among existing members, and externally with non-members.



Differences can be racial/ethnic, age, gender, sexual orientation, income, political affiliation amongst church members and people throughout the community.

In the coming months, the stewardship committee will collaborate with council to identify opportunities to allow leaders to develop their knowledge of the Holy Currencies. We will also conduct a leadership inventory amongst all CTK members and in conjunction with council, identify opportunities to further use our talents and develop skills to achieve a culture of gracious leadership attuned to the Cycle of Blessings.

The Stewardship Team:

– *Melinda Kufeld (Chair), Kris Adams, Cam Bauer, Alan Claassen, Linda Paschal, Pr. Pelz, Debbie Pollak*

Donation REQUEST FROM SAVE (Safe Alternatives to Violent Environments):

ADOPT A FAMILY GIFT CARDS

You can help SAVE deliver holiday cheer to survivors and their families by participating in SAVE's Holiday Gift Card Drive. In holidays past, our community generously supported survivors by donating new toys, books, games, and other gifts which we then distributed to our families in need. This year will be a little different. In light of COVID-19, we intend to deliver gift cards to our survivors. Deepthi, our Housing First Manager, and I shared why your donation would be very meaningful for survivors this year.

Your gift card donation will **enable families to purchase exactly what they need most for the holiday and empower them to celebrate in their unique way.** For some, that will be **the special toy their child wishes to receive; for others,** it could mean **tasty treats for a holiday meal or essential items for their household.**

SAVE is supporting 100 survivor families through this holiday season. A donation of \$125 will help a mom and her child this year. However, gift cards in any denomination are appreciated and will be combined and distributed.

From now to **December 15th**, please consider donating gift cards and participating in our virtual Adopt-A-Family Drive.

The gift cards most needed/wanted by our survivors are from the following retailers:

- Amazon
- Target
- Visa
- Walmart
- Safeway

There are three ways you can donate:

1. Make a monetary donation on the SAVE [website](#). Let us know your donation is to support SAVE families, and we will buy the gift cards.
2. Drop off or mail the gift cards to our Empowerment Center:

SAVE Empowerment Center
1900 Mowry Ave. Suite 201
Fremont, CA 94587

3. Email electronic gift cards to at chaol@save-dv.org.

When sending or dropping off gift cards, please be sure to include your name and address so that we may acknowledge your generosity. **On behalf of all of us here at SAVE, we sincerely thank you for your continued support. Happy Holidays!**

UPCOMING/ANNOUNCEMENTS

BACKPACK PROJECT: Social Ministry continues to work with Compassion Network to identify needs where CTK can help in this extraordinary year of coronavirus and distance learning. Financial donations will be needed throughout the year. Please send checks to CTK 1301 Mowry, Fremont, CA 94538. We hope to have an online donation option soon.

BIBLE STUDY Update: **Thursdays, 10:30 – 11:30 am** via Zoom (will continue through the end of the year). Each week, the focus is on the upcoming Gospel or scripture identified by Pastor Tia. The Bible study format follows our **Stewardship365** program (Kaleidoscope Institute) which focuses on beginning with prayer, reading and discussing the selected text. If you have any questions or would like to be added to our email distribution, please contact Pastor Tia or Patricia Bauer, cell 510-825-8547 or bauerin83@gmail.com.

BOOK CLUB: Will resume in January.

CTK ANNUAL CONGREGATION MEETING: **Sunday, December 6th at 11:15 am** via Zoom, after Worship Service. Agenda includes adoption of Budget for fiscal year 2021 and election of Council members. All congregation members are eligible to vote.

CTK COUNCIL MEETING: **Tuesday, December 8th at 7:15 pm** via Zoom.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING: **December 13th between 3:00 and 5:30 pm.** Please sign-up (see page 2 for link).

CHRISTMAS ZOOM “CAROL-ALONG”: **December 20th at 6:00 pm** via Zoom.

DEVOTIONS: Pastor Tia, Pastor Barbara (Holy Redeemer Lutheran Church, Newark), Pastor Tim (Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Fremont) and Vicar Anand (Good Shepherd, Fremont) will be sharing devotional messages on Tuesdays and Thursdays via e-mail.

GET TOGETHER AND DEVOTIONS WITH BETHESDA: Join on Zoom **Fridays from 2:30 – 3:00 pm.** for a lively half an hour. Catch up with our friends, sing, dance, listen to a biblical story and pray. All are welcome! Pastor Tia to facilitate.

LUNCH BUNCH: **Wednesday, December 9th, at 1:00 pm** via Zoom. BYOLB! (Bring you own lunch and beverage!)

SEWING BEES: Donations of material, money and vounteers are still needed and welcome as the demands for masks continues. Please contact Linda Pearson to donate time or money to this worthwhile project.

SOCIAL HOUR: Bring your own beverage of choice, snacks or dinner, sign in to Zoom and join us for a relaxing social hour in your own home on **Wednesdays (12/2, 12/16, 12/23 and 12/30) at 7:00 pm.** All are welcome!

SOCIAL MINISTRY MEETING: **Monday, December 7th, at 6:00 pm** via Zoom.

Thrivent Choice

Thrivent members, please remember to make your **Choices**. We appreciate the contributions made this year. You have until March 31, 2021 to make use of this year's funds. - *Laurel King, Financial Secretary*

TRI-CITY VOLUNTEERS FOOD BANK: Tuesday – Friday, 9:00–3:00 pm, drop-off times for urgently needed brown paper grocery bags used for food distribution, canned goods (undented and not expired), and packaged food goods (no glass and not expired) @ 37350 Joseph Street, Fremont. Financial donations always welcome! For more information: <http://tri-cityvolunteers.org>

ZOOM CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICE: 12/24 - Stay tuned- time to be announced!!!

ZOOM WORSHIP: Total attendance for the respective Sundays in November was: 41, 39, 41, 33 and 40 attendees. Zoom service will continue to be **10:15 am on Sundays**. Reach out to friends and neighbors as a safe and easy way to share in worship, separate but together.

IN OUR THOUGHTS & PRAYERS

Eli Adams, Austin Alaniz, Rose Archibald, Ruth Carpizo, Judy Castro, Randy and Sheila Cooper, Cori (Pastor Tia's close friend), Roger Fajman, Hank & Sylvia Hanson, Nikki Jackson, Renee Johnson, Fred Kemp, Don D. Ketcham III, Christi Loveland, America Manspeaker, Jacob Montoya, Gail Queenan, Terry Queenan, Clare Nielsen, Doug Sepeda, and **MaryJo Strain** (sister of Pat Cote).

Continued prayers for all victims of natural disasters as well as victims of violence, hatred and oppression throughout the world.



December Birthdays

12/01 Betty Wargo
12/03 Jan Kerbel
12/07 Cam Bauer

12/11 Kevin Bauer
12/15 Ina Ketcham

12/17 Dave Dubel
12/27 Nikki Jackson
12/27 Veronica Pang

2020 CONGREGATION COUNCIL

Peggy Claassen, *President*
Bob Kufeld, *Vice-President*
Jay Graham, *Treasurer*
Joe Allen, *Secretary*
Kris Adams
Patricia Bauer
Elena Bryant
Laurel King, *Financial Secretary*
Melinda Kufeld
Terry Pearson

CTK STAFF

Pastor Dr. Tia Pelz (510) 859-5672
pelztia@gmail.com
Barney Tiller, *Music Director*
Christina Bauer, *Webmaster/Designer*
Patricia Bauer, *Interim Office Administrator*

CTK OFFICE HOURS:

Monday thru Thursday 8:30 am – 12:30 pm