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TABLE TALK



PASTOR'S LETTER

Dear Stars!

Just before Christmas we got to witness something quite spectacular. Jupiter and Saturn formed the “star of Bethlehem.” At least, that’s what many called it. As we leave the old year 2020 behind (hopefully) and look hopeful into a brighter future, I want to tell you an old legend.

When the wise men from the Orient left Bethlehem again, they looked once more back at the city from a hill. Then they witnessed a wonderful spectacle: The star that had led them to the manger shattered into thousands and thousands little stars that rose above all over the world.

But the wise men did not know what that meant. On their way they came to a crossroad. They asked a stranger for directions. He kindly gave them helpful information. And some bread and water for their travels. Then they saw a small shiny star above the stranger's head.

Hours later, one of the three wise men fell and injured his leg. A woman who lived nearby and happened to walk by, hurried back to her house, got ointment and bandages and treated the bleeding wound. Then they saw a small star shining above the woman's head.

The wise men continued their journey. When it got dark, they rested near a farm to get some sleep. Then it started to rain heavily. The farmer came outside and asked the wise men into his house, entertained them and gave them a dry place to sleep. And again, they saw a small star shining above the farmer's head.

And eventually the three wise men understood the spectacle they had witnessed from the hill above Bethlehem.



I have met all of these little stars in my life. Strangers have given me food in many parts of this world. When I fell off my bike on an icy day the owner of a little shop took me in, gave me band aids and a cup of coffee. And I even got invited to sleep in a warm house several times in Romania when traveling with friends. These stars are among us and I am sure you have encountered many yourself. And I am sure you have been a star to countless people.

May 2021 be a year of stars silently shining through the dark. May you light other people’s hearts and souls. And may you meet stars at every corner!

Blessings, Pastor Tia!

Council President's Corner

CTK's Annual Congregation Meeting was held on December 6th via Zoom – another first for us! Thirty-four members were in attendance at the meeting. Debbie Ward and Jim Sepeda were voted in as new Council members for 2021 and I will continue on Council for a second term. The Council will be installed during the 1/10 worship service and the positions of President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer will be voted on by the Council members at the 1/12 Council meeting. The congregation adopted a balanced budget (\$223,361) for fiscal year 2021 as proposed and recommended by Council.

A copy of the Annual Report highlighting the past year's activities and accomplishments as well as the budget was distributed to all members of the Congregation prior to the meeting via e-mail. If you have not already done so, I would encourage you to read the report. While we have been significantly impacted by the fire of last year as well as coronavirus, it still is amazing what has been accomplished and improvements made as we continue to move forward. Thanks to the many who give of their time as well as financial donations so that we can continue in service.

We also want to especially thank outgoing Council members Bob Kufeld and Melinda Kufeld for their service on Council and their continuing service to CTK moving forward on various committees, ministries and other volunteer efforts. They have been an inspiration!

January is a time of new beginnings: the fire repair construction is anticipated to be complete by the end of January/mid-February. The insulation inspection will be this next week followed by drywall installation. We can start the replacement of office furnishings damaged or destroyed by the fire and unpacking (and debulking!) of the storage containers that have become a fixture in the CTK parking lot this past year. We are also looking to remove the temporary sheds adjacent to our back-property line and resurfacing the parking lot during summer. We will continue to strengthen relationships with our neighbor ELCA churches, Bethesda and the community through our ministries.

And, we look forward to Pastor Tia's installation as CTK's Pastor in 2021, in the newly repaired sanctuary when we are able to meet and worship in person safely once again!

Yours in Christ, *Peggy Claassen, President*



Advent and Christmas Highlights

While we were not able to celebrate in person in the Sanctuary this year during the Advent and Christmas season, the Worship Committee made the season very special and festive with our Zoom services. A variety of music filled our gatherings thanks to many talented people.

Worship Services



Barney Tiller & Jason Tiller Christmas Eve



Jim Sepeda – “Celebrate the Lord of Love” – 12/27

Candy Montalvo and husband, Bob, shared a YouTube video of “Mary Did You Know?” performed and recorded special for our 12/20 Worship Service.



Pat Cote & former member Candy Montalvo - 9:30
“Magnificat – All That I Am” – Christmas Eve
(recorded 12/20/2013)



Pastor Tia & Carolers at the Lawrence's



Goodies!



Caroling - 12/19

On December 19th, a small group of CTK members and friends went caroling to some of our congregation members. The caroling group included a family from Good Shepherd!

And it was wonderful, so much fun and joy to spread the Christmas spirit in a safe and loving way! Thanks to Jim, Karen and Bunny to come along and to Bonnie, Joan, Roseanne and Bob, Elena and Don, and Judy for hosting. There were quite some neighbors who stood out in the streets or peeked out of their windows! Next year, we will hopefully be able to host a great caroling event!

At Joan's



At Elena's



THANK YOU also to Jason and Barney for a great Zoom-Carol-Sing-Along on the fourth Sunday of Advent (12/20)! This was a very popular event. It filled many houses with music and voices happily singing together but apart (on mute, of course!)

Good Shepherd Asian Ministry



We continue to grow together as Lutheran congregations in the Tri-City area. Pastor Tia "hops on" Zoom with Good Shepherd Asian Ministry on a regular basis after our Sunday worship service to celebrate Communion with our siblings in Christ. Their beautiful voices and colorful dresses are just marvelous and it's an honor to be with them.

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.



BETHESDA GET TOGETHER AND DEVOTIONS: 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.

We continue to have a lot of fun on Fridays with our members and friends who live at Bethesda. In December, we mostly sang Carols and Pastor got introduced to funny songs like "Jingle Bell Rock" and "Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer." It was hilarious and the others cracked up laughing over Pastor cracking up laughing. God is good and fun. That's for sure!

BOOK CLUB/ BIBLE STUDY: The Book Club will resume on **Thursdays** starting **January 7th, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm** via Zoom. The new book will be: **"For All Who Hunger" by Emily M. D. Scott.** Jacob Slichter, author of *So You Want to be a Rock & Roll Star*, describes the book as follows:

"While church leaders were asking 'How can we get our message out into the world?' Emily M. D. Scott went out into the world and asked 'How can I bring

this back into church?' Her haunting memoir, *For All Who Hunger*, tells the story of how she created a place for those who never felt at home in church and how her unlikely congregation, in turn, helped her rediscover the heart of her own faith. This powerful and illuminating book is a must-read for those interested in how communities of faith can learn, grow, and reclaim their vital purpose."

If you have any questions about the Book Club or would like to be added to the email distribution, please contact Pastor Tia or Debbie Pollak, 510-825-4816 or bartpollak@gmail.com.

CTK COUNCIL MEETING: **Tuesday, January 12th at 7:15 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 continue sharing devotional messages on Tuesdays and Thursdays via e-mail.

LUNCH BUNCH: **Wednesday, January 13th, 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. Over 5,200 masks made thanks to the Sewing Bees' efforts!!!

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 (1/6, 1/20 and 1/27) at 7:00 pm**. All are welcome!

SOCIAL JUSTICE MEETING: **Wednesday, January 13th, at 10:30 am** via Zoom.

SOCIAL MINISTRY MEETING: **Monday, January 4th, at 6:00 pm** via Zoom.

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 WORSHIP: Total attendance for the respective Sundays in December were: **40, 43, 49, and 41** attendees. Christmas Eve 6:00 pm attendance was **39** and the 9:30 pm service was **35**. 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, **Roxie Banks** (friend of Debbie Pollak), Ruth Carpizo, Judy Castro, Randy and Sheila Cooper, **Hank Cote**, **Bob Dubel** (Bunny's brother-in-law), Cori (Pastor Tia's close friend), Roger Fajman, Hank & Sylvia Hanson, Renee Johnson, Fred Kemp, **Jan Kerbel**, Don D. Ketcham III, **Bob Lawrence** (recovering from broken ribs), Christi Loveland, America Manspeaker, Jacob Montoya, Clare Nielsen, and Doug Sepeda.

Continued prayers for all victims of Covid-19 and of natural disasters as well as victims of violence, hatred and oppression throughout the world.



Chemo-Care Bags

Many thanks to **Gail Queenan** for her continued involvement in this ministry.

Gail recently made and delivered these beautiful Chemo-Care Bags for HERS Breast Cancer Foundation as well as pillow cases for SAVE.

January Birthdays

1/13 Becky Shaffer
1/15 Bob Kufeld
1/23 Gail Nelson
1/27 Edith Perakis



Table Talk Articles – Contributor Deadlines

The Table Talk Newsletter will continue to be published and distributed on the first of every month via e-mail. If you have an article or information that you would like to have included in the Table Talk, please send it directly to me no later than two days prior to the end of the month. Pictures are welcome as well!

Peggy Claassen

2021 CONGREGATION COUNCIL

Kris Adams

Joe Allen

Patricia Bauer

Elena Bryant

Peggy Claassen

Jay Graham, *Treasurer*

Laurel King, *Financial Secretary*

Terry Pearson

Jim Sepeda

Debbie Ward

(officers for 2021 will be voted on at the January Council meeting)

CTK STAFF

Pastor Dr. Tia Pelz (510) 859-5672

pelztia@gmail.com

Barney Tiller, *Music Director*

Patricia Bauer, *Interim Office Administrator*

Christina Bauer, *Webmaster/Designer*

CTK OFFICE HOURS:

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