

# Tidings

St. Philip's Lutheran Church December/January 2020/21

## A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

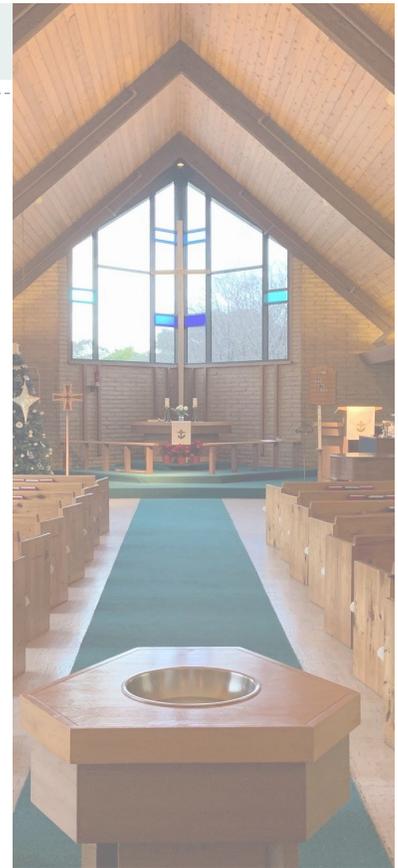
Merry Christmas! Oh, how good it feels to say that, finally! What a year it has been. I would have never imagined that when your Church Council and I moved forward with canceling in person activities due to COVID-19 that we would still be following those restrictions in December and into the new year. However, here we are. This year has been a year of great challenges to say the least, but I also find myself extremely grateful for our community here at St. Philips.

Frist, I want to recognize the generosity of our community which has kept us going financially throughout the pandemic, this is not the reality for many congregations and so I say thank you! Along with being able to keep paying our bills and our staff we have continued to give our quarterly benevolence to the Sierra Pacific Synod as well as a number of Non-Profits locally including the Monterey County Food Bank, I-Help, and Mt. Cross Lutheran Camp.

We have continued to meet for Bible Study just online instead of in person, and through a partnership with St. Timothy Lutheran have welcomed new regular attendees to the group. The Worship and Communications Committees have continued to meet over Zoom to tend to their respective responsibilities which continue as we continue to be a community of faith meeting in different ways. Then there is the Church Council, of which 3 of the 5 members are new for the 2020 year. I am extremely thankful for their continued willingness to serve especially faced with the challenges of the Pandemic. The Council and I continue to meet monthly on Zoom to address the administrative needs of the church.

I also want to acknowledge the many different property projects that have continued throughout this year. Just because we aren't able to use the building doesn't mean the need for maintenance stops. It has been a busy year despite the pandemic, and I take that as a good sign that we aren't letting the challenges get in our way as we continue to be an active community of faith. I look to 2021 with hope and anticipation.

*Grace and Peace Pastor Tony*



### **WEEKLY SCHEDULE:**

**Tuesdays @ 6:30pm**  
Adult Ed. Class

**Wednesdays @ 2pm**  
for Bible Study

**Sundays @ 11am** for  
Adult Forum co-lead  
between Pr. Tony and  
Pr. Clark.



happy  
birthday

### BIRTHDAYS

#### December:

4<sup>th</sup> Jamie Eisinger

9<sup>th</sup> Ashlee Eisinger

21<sup>st</sup> Fred Watson

#### January:

13<sup>th</sup> Pr. Tony Rhodes

17<sup>th</sup> Lowell Battcher

21<sup>st</sup> Anna Watson &  
Rebecca Berry

## A NOTE OF THANKS FROM YOUR CHURCH COUNCIL.

The St. Philip's council would like to thank all of you for your continued support of the church during this difficult pandemic. We are very grateful to all of you who made year-end financial gifts to support the ongoing work of the church.

We are also very grateful to those of you who have contributed your time and talents to the congregation and community. A shout out to the amazing gardeners, brush haulers, gutter cleaners, bathroom leak fixers, mowers, assisting ministers, weekly deposit makers, community builders, food bank volunteers, worship committee, the Adopt a Highway team, Christmas tree doners, and poinsettia doners. We are truly blessed to have a congregation where everyone pitches in, with many volunteering as assisting ministers and readers, and others contributing to the sense of community through their participation in the Tuesday evening zoom classes or prayer, Wednesday afternoon Bible Study, or Sunday morning forums.

We are particularly grateful to Pastor Tony for his outstanding leadership in sustaining a sense of community and purpose during the pandemic, when we cannot worship in the same space. His stellar technical skills and his attention to detail have produced wonderful YouTube videos of each week's service. People may not be aware of how much extra time it takes to produce a quality video, particularly when he is weaving in all the different videos (shot at different times to preserve social distancing) of readers, assisting ministers, Justice's BEAUTIFUL music with the words to the hymns on the video.

We are also grateful to Pastor Tony and Pastor Clark Brown for the awesome partnership that created the

additional learning, prayer, and reflection opportunities via zoom with St. Timothy's.

Justice has provided AMAZING music that greatly enhances our worship experience- the hymns are so much more worshipful with your strong voice singing them, and the organ postludes are amazing and inspiring.

We are also extremely fortunate to have Carolyn Berry as our five-star administrative assistant. The council cannot overstate Carolyn's contributions to keeping St. Philip's running smoothly, and her ability to anticipate needs before they arise. Paying bills, making deposits, keeping accurate records, preparing the bulletins, organizing worship leaders.. thank you!

*Submitted by Sharon Anderson*

## **TUESDAY EVENING ADULT EDUCATION**

On Tuesday evenings at 6:30, a group of St. Philip's and St. Timothy's join together for an hour of learning, discussion. Earlier discussion included the study of the book by Lenny Duncan, "Dear Church" and work by Mark Allen Powell, "How Lutherans Read the Bible". This fall, we looked at the writings of the Franciscan priest, Richard Rohr and his book *The Divine Dance*, exploring the idea of the Trinity and our relationship with God. Throughout Advent, Pastor Clark from St Timothy's is leading us in Advent devotional with music and reviewing artwork. It is an opportunity to meet and share ideas with each other. If you are interested in joining, let Pastor Tony know so he can forward the Zoom link to you. *Submitted by Mary Kramer*

## **LIVING LUTHERAN MAGAZINE**

Did you know that our denomination, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has a monthly magazine? Well it does, and you are encouraged to give it a look. In recent years it under went a name change from *The Lutheran* to now *The Living Lutheran*.

The magazine is available on line or via mail at [www.livinglutheran.org](http://www.livinglutheran.org)

## **I-HELP UPDATE**

**Men's program** - There are 8 guys currently staying at Unitarian Universalist Church. Showers are taken at First Presbyterian still and laundry done at Suds & Duds. They will continue to shelter there for the time being and according to Rev. Elaine Gehrmann, from the Unitarian Universalist Church, things are going well. St. Philip's continues it months meals on the second Tuesday of each month by bringing the food to the Unitarian Universalist Church, If you would like to help contact Carolyn Barry or Mary Kramer.

**Women's program** - 4 women are staying at St. John's Chapel. They have tried to bring in other women but they have not been able to tolerate the quarantine time. They shower at Gathering for Women. New people will be admitted to the programs if they are Covid free and can meet the other eligibility requirements and can adjust to the shelter in place.

Staffing for the program is full. There are 2 coordinators (John Nichols for the men and Dolly Pope for the women) 2 monitors for the men, 1 for the women, and drivers. All the vehicles have passed the CHP inspection.

A new member has joined the board of I-Help. Pastor Angel Rivero from Marina Methodist Church. I-Help has recently received a grant from Community Foundation of Monterey County from the fund for homeless women.

I-Help is a part of Monterey County Gives again this year. Donations can be made to I-Help through December 31 at [www.montereycountyweekly.com](http://www.montereycountyweekly.com) or at [www.ihelpmontereybay.org](http://www.ihelpmontereybay.org).

*Submitted by Mary Kramer*

## LOOKING AHEAD

Since we haven't been able to gather for book club, movie nights, or social dinners, we need to communicate activities & interests in other ways. For fun, let us know of any interesting books you've read, movies or TV programs you've binged on (Netflix, Disney +, etc.), projects you've completed... Please email these to Mary Kramer, who will compile for the next Tidings.

Another thought to plan for in 2021 is another food collection for the Thomas Carmen Pantry in Marina.

As we approach 2021, plans have begun for the Annual Meeting on February 7th via Zoom Video Conference and Ash Wednesday, February 17th. Keep in touch with neighbors & friends of St. Philip's, checking up on each other.—Submitted by Barbra Battcher

## CHRISTMAS SEASON DRIVE THRU A SUCCESS!

Sunday, December 20th, was our most recent drive thru at St Philips. We were thrilled to have 16 families represented. It was fun to guess the arrivals based on the vehicle and not the faces with masks in place. Mary Kramer, Mary Murray, the Battchers and the Berrys contributed to the contents of the bags along with candles, bulletins for the Candlelight service, and next year's envelopes were passed out. We look forward to another "drive thru" next year. Merry Christmas to everyone.- Submitted by Carolyn Berry



## **ABRAHAM'S TENT SOUP KITCHEN**

JCM, Jews Christians Muslims United, is an organization founded a few years ago on the Peninsula brings together people of the Abrahamic traditions to build understanding among the communities and to be a service to the greater community. One of ways to do this was to serve food to those in need. This project started with providing meals twice a month and now weekly on Thursdays. The dinners are prepared by volunteers led by Agha Bilel (a excellent cook). They are packaged to hand out to those who come by Bethel Missionary Baptist Church in Seaside. 150 meals are prepared each week. More information can be found at [www.jcmunited.org](http://www.jcmunited.org).

Submitted by Mary Kramer

## **WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY**

The Wednesday afternoon Bible study has continued to meet via Zoom at 2pm. Pastor Tony has been leading us as we look at the Bible readings for the following Sunday. Pastor Clark with St Timothy's has also participated lending his own perspective to our discussions. There has been as many as 14 participants not including the two pastors. It is really interesting to hear all of the unique perspectives of the participants and to have a new take on readings that may or may not be familiar. Please consider joining the group in the coming year.— Submitted by Carolyn Berry

## **FOOD BANK UPDATE**

St. Philip's continues to participate in the activities of the Food Bank for Monterey County with the weekly Friday donations. Each week, there are approximately 50 families that receive food for up to 180 individuals. According to the website of the Food Bank, there has been 400% increase in the need for food in the county since the start of shelter-in-place in March, serving 60,000 families a month. The food that we distribute each week varies. Of late the boxes have included milk, cheese, eggs, potatoes, and a meat. Almost every week, some good samaritan has left bags of food that we add to the food provided by the Food Bank. Pastor Tony recently discovered that the abundant supply of apples that were left at the door had been left for All Saint's School. The distribution will be closed December 25 and January 1 and resume January 8. Thanks to the volunteers from Granite Construction, Carol Erickson and her friends from the Socie-

ty of Friends, and Y, a former recipient. Their help is greatly appreciated. If you would like more information contact Mary Kramer. [foodbankformontereycounty.org](http://foodbankformontereycounty.org)

Submitted by Mary Kramer

## **SUNDAY ADULT FORUMS**

The joint St. Philip's/St. Timothy's Adult Forums on Zoom at 11 am on Sundays has been led by Pastor Tony and Pastor Clark, open to members/friends of both churches. Many interesting topics have been discussed, including the following: Looking at the ELCA social statements; How we as Lutherans can respond to racial injustices; What Advent means to us & how each church is preparing for it; Martin Luther's thoughts on the virgin birth (in an article in the Living Lutheran). Suggestions for future discussions were always welcomed. In addition to thought-provoking conversations, these forums have been opportunities for both church communities to get to know each other better in a comfortable setting in our individual homes, via zoom.—Submitted by Mary Kramer

## **INTERFAITH OUTREACH OF CARMEL**

Interfaith Outreach of Carmel and Joining Hands celebrated the 10th Anniversary of the benefit shop in October with a re-blessing of the shop by Pastor Holly Hudson-Louis and an art sale on the sidewalk. The staff thanks everyone who has donated and who purchased. The proceeds from all sales at Joining Hands go to support housing needs on the Monterey Peninsula and grants totaling \$60,000 by the end of the year to organizations that work with those housing needs. Through the 10 years of Interfaith Outreach of Carmel, the grants given totals \$384,306. At the November board meeting 5 new board members were elected to join 2 reelected board members and 2 currently serving. Seven of the board members are from the faith communities represented in Interfaith Outreach of Carmel. This will mark the end of founder and board president, Nancy Jones term in office. She has been a driving force behind the organization and its work. The benefit shop will be closed December 24 to January 2 to allow for the completion of the remodel project and some rest for the busy volunteers. For more information, the website is <http://www.ifaithcarmel.org>.—Submitted by Mary Kramer