

GRAPEVINE NEWSLETTER

December 2020

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Pastor's Ponderings--

Blessings of Christmas hope and joy!

How are you in your household, experiencing Advent hope and creating space for Christmas joy this strangest of years? This year may have its challenges (understatement!) but it also is made up of familiar rhythms and cycles that carry on regardless of the chaos in the world. Underlying all, too, is a certainty of God's grace and mercy behind assurances that we are never left alone nor separated from God's love, even if we might at times despair that it is so. We can trust and hold fast to these reassurances from the gospel of John:

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

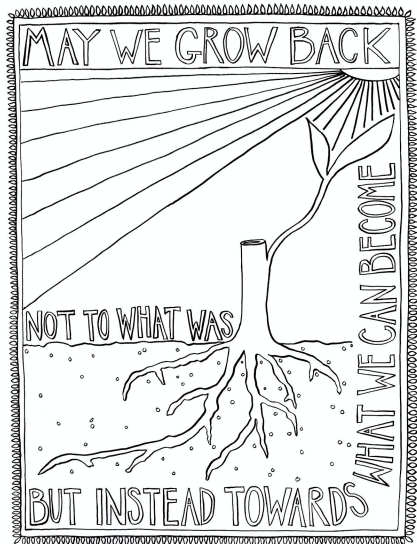
The light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it. New life is born from darkness--think of any creature born, seeds in the ground.... As Psalm 139 also reminds us, we have been intimately known from our time in the darkness before our birth into earth life and known throughout our lives and as we enter new life after our earthly ending. Along our lives' pathways we all enter times when certainty and assurance are hidden in shadows, but as we persevere in faith, we find new strength and insight is often born in us--new aspects of life, so to speak, are born. New life born out of darkness is true of us collectively as well as individually.

What new life is God creating within us collectively, to be born into the light in 2021? We wait in Advent for the revelation of life's transformation though one born in a manger, celebrated by lowly shepherds--a revelation that turns upside down power structures and expectations. We trust in the coming again of the one who suffered the worst of humanity's pain before overcoming death so that all who believe may live fully in the presence of God in Jesus Christ--barriers between Creator and created forever torn open.

And as hope grows brighter with vaccine promises along with increasing daylight in 2021, let us remind ourselves that as Church we've never been closed nor have any of us been alone. Our hope is always best grounded in Jesus, who connects us with all of God's love and glory and joins us as believers together in the Body of Christ. We've never lost our purpose nor our calling even as we have been physically apart; God has continuing intentions for us going forward--admittedly with some of aspects hidden in darkness, but moving and growing nonetheless.

To take next steps in the work of discernment to reveal what we are being called to become beyond what we have been, and what we are called to do beyond what we have done, we're going to start the year using the virtual gathering expertise we've been gaining this past year, to meet in small groups. Beginning in January, council members will host zoom circles of conversation (and when again possible, with those unable to participate virtually, in person). Let the Executive Committee or me know if you want to be among the first gatherings, or if you want to host one yourself! We will use the same questions to guide conversations so all groups will be the same in that way. You will also have the opportunity to ask questions. Notetakers will gather input to help shape a more targeted discernment process that will come in the spring, if all stays according to plan.

To set the stage for the shared conversations to come, I ask you to start now using



paper/journal/Onenote or other favorite recording tool, to jot down where you have experienced God's presence through BSLC's ministry and where you are seeing God at work out in the world, even in these days? You might also generate four lists of the strengths/assets, weaknesses/growth areas particular to BSLC and the opportunities and threats or challenges generated because of our mission context (these being informed by our location, "our times", society, etc.). This will help you provide input and shape the conversations you will be invited into.

I so look forward to learning from you, and seeing your faces! Until then--may your Christmas and transition into the New Year be blessed in ways you never imagined!

Advent Blessings,
Pastor Jean

(If you are interested in coloring as you think toward the future, let me know and I'll send you a copy of the coloring sheet above to use during your discernment. What dreams and insights might you write in its sunrays?)

From Kirsten, Our Director of Youth and Family Ministry

"Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, oh Israel."

Growing up, nightly devotions were a staple of my family's Advent traditions. We took turns reading from a devotional book published by Aid Association for Lutherans, which came with a pack of ornaments printed with symbols to hang on our tree each day. I still remember how the first devotion starts: "Extra! Extra! Read all about it!" – that day's symbol was a newspaper, and the devotion talked about how news of Jesus' birth would have been publicized 2,000 years ago (certainly not in a newspaper!). We gathered around our dinner table, turned off all the lights in the house, lit our Advent wreath, read by flashlight, and concluded by singing "O come, O come, Emmanuel", adding a new verse each week. We had devotions most nights a week, and it is of my favorite holiday memories.

I hope to bring some of that same spirit to BSLC's weekly devotions this Advent. Though we will be in our separate homes, we will be able to see and hear each other on Zoom. We will light candles, read, listen, discuss, pray, sing, and dream together about what Jesus' birth means for us in 2020. We'll use some of the materials in the Advent at Home Kit (pick yours up at church!), but it's not

required to participate. If you're looking for a new Advent tradition, consider joining this 30-minute devotion time for all ages, for individuals and families.

Zoom meeting ID 864 6863 3521. Password – contact youthdirector@beautifulsaviorlutheran.com or check the private Facebook group.

Meals needed for BSLC Winter Shelter!

The BSLC winter overflow shelter is open this season without our usual volunteers. Due to Covid restrictions, *Outsiders Inn* staff is operating the shelter at Beautiful Savior, and we will be open on a more consistent schedule, Sunday - Tuesday nights, beginning on December 6. *Jn| 'aZju by(tj) l ZZXZE*A warm evening meal is always appreciated so our congregation will provide one crock pot sized meal per night. We will have 15 guests each evening. Please sign up to provide a meal at:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b0849a4a623a2fc1-bslc3> You are asked deliver the meal to the front entrance of Beautiful Savior between 6:30 PM and 7:00 PM. Everyone must wear a mask and sign in. You can bring the meal in a disposable container to save a trip or bring it in your crock pot, which you may pick up Sunday -- Tuesday @ 6:30-7 PM or by appointment. Thank you for your continuing support of the BSLC winter overflow shelter. Your help is much appreciated.



Musical Meditation for Advent

December 17, 2020

Stephen Janzen, Organ and Baritone

Meditations will be pre-recorded and we will share the link with you when the video has been uploaded.



Opportunity to Share Your Generosity with Two Families ...

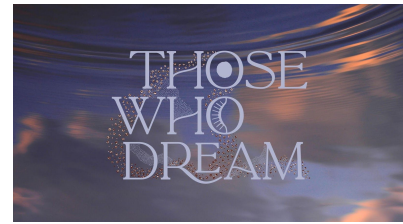


BSLC Member Support: As you may have heard, one of our members was lost to the effects of COVID. A father of two young daughters and a devoted spouse, Andrew H. is the real person behind one of the statistics. His workplace and a friend have established a Venmo account to help Drew's family with their unexpected loss. Information about how to make a contribution is available from Kirsten or Pastor Jean, or in BSLC's private Facebook group.

Community Support: Adopt a Family This year you are invited to share generosity with a family as part of your celebration of Christmas. In consultation with the Council for the Homeless, we are sponsoring a family of two--a mother and a five year old boy. They just moved into an apartment after a time of homelessness. Cheryl P. and Kirsten L. created a way to sign up for possible gift items. Check it out at: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0d4da9a92ea3fec70-giving>
Thank you for helping to brighten this family's life and helping them as they seek self sufficiency.

ADVENT 2020 is underway!

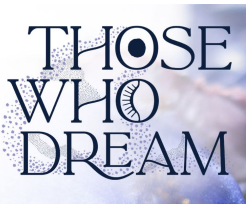
Our theme, “*AanyZ’H an ž xZM*”, is for the dreamer in all of us--but most especially those who dream of a deeper connection with God or dream of a better world. It’s also for those who dream of comfort *and* for those who have given up on their dreams. It’s for those whose dreams have been crushed and for those who show us that dreams take time. Join worship this Advent as we dream alongside prophets and angels, Mary and the Magi. Join us as we seek and sow God’s dreams for our world.



In addition to morning worship at 10:00 on FaceBook (YouTube postings happen between 11:30-12:00), we also have the following to enrich this Advent season:

Advent Evening Worship - grounded in Holden Evening Prayer. Published at 5 PM on Sundays on Facebook and YouTube. Images are used for *Visio Divina* reflection (using imagery to stir faith reflections) within the familiar liturgy.

Mid-week Advent Devotions on Zoom with Kirsten - Wednesdays at 6:30 pm. A half hour time of devotion with music, scripture, candle-lighting, and prayer for all ages! Zoom link sent out in the e-blast, or request at youthdirector@beautifulsaviorlutheran.com.



1nl` Zy`3b a{ H nxyabu`1` Monday, **Dec 21 at 5 PM** - offered virtually

This year there is much to grieve and “mark as lost”. Whatever is hurting your heart, mind, and soul this year, whatever is weighing you down, this worship opportunity provides a shared time to pray and lament and mourn whatever you grieve this year. We do not have to put on a “brave face” for this worship, but instead can as we need, let the tears flow for the hurting places in our own lives,

as well as for our country and our world. Known also as “Blue Christmas,” the intention is to provide safe, shared, sacred space (time) in which to name anguish, plead with God to remember us, pray for justice and restoration, and even to hope against hope, through our doubts and tears and fears, that “God will set things right all over the earth.” This year more than most, we need this.



Christmas Eve Opportunities!

- **Worship with Children’s Program**, virtual.
 - Posted on Facebook and YouTube at 3:00 PM
- **Worship with Holy Communion, Carols and Candle-lighting**, virtual.
 - Posted on Facebook and YouTube at 5:00 PM. If you need candles for worship, let us know and we can arrange a time for you to pick some up.
- **5/ {Xnnx Silent Night Vigil (in-person!) at 4 PM**, Rain or shine! 20 minutes or less. Gather with others to hear scripture, a brief message, and participate in candle-lighting and the singing of *Silent Night* together. *H Z,, lji XxZyy`nx{aZ,, ZMlaZxS,, ZMk Mji ySMIX xZfZj`b` {aZ` b{ n` LZb` {n` Z{aZxb` uZxnl` nl` {abyanjt` l` b` a{`a`*

Year End Giving Update

To date we have **62 Statements of Intent in** for 2021. Five more are “pending”. (To compare: for 2020 giving, Pledge Cards were submitted). 14 represent new commitments. 24 others reflect increases in generosity. Thank you all who made the extra effort this year requires to get your commitments in!



Among other things, the pandemic has taught us that there is tremendous need right now--in our congregation, in the community around us, across the United States, and around the world. Every expression of generosity made through BSLC helps to strengthen our shared ministries to nurture faith, care for our community, and share God’s Good News throughout the world. Thank you for giving toward the ministry we do mutually.

Year End Giving Updates

2020 CARES Act Tax Deduction Available



You may not have noticed but a special tax advantage was included in the CARES Act Congress passed last March, which allows those who do not itemize their taxes to deduct up to \$300 of charitable giving on their taxes for this year. Many of you have already given \$300 and more to Beautiful Savior and for that the Stewardship Committee and Council are grateful. If others want to take advantage of this 2020-specific deduction, please have your contribution in by December 31.

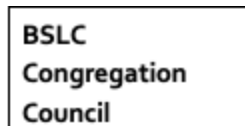
Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD)

Lynda H. shared the following information with the Finance Committee and it might be pertinent to you so we’re sharing it: Individuals who have a traditional IRA and are 70 1/2 and older may be eligible for the Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) tax break. This tax break allows the donor to take up to \$100,000 from their IRA for charitable purposes and avoid income tax on the distribution without itemizing their deductions. The IRS requires the QCD be paid directly to the charity by the investment firm and it is allowed to be counted toward any minimum distribution requirement for the year. It is a tax-efficient strategy.

Also, for the year 2020 only, the Cares Act makes it so that individuals who are 70 1/2 and older do not have to take a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from their IRA. For individuals who are not required to take a RMD, it would be wise to compare the QCD to donating appreciated long-term assets to a charity from a non-retirement account.

COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS – November 2020

PRESENT: Sue Calvert, Leslie Quigley, Mark Leed, Stacey Benson, Linda Anglin, Bert Alvaro, Ann Giles, Karen Cleveland, Kirsten Larsen, Pastor Jean, Charlie Heiserman, Ray Smith, Laura Snyder, Mary Allred
ABSENT: Heide Maize



DEVOTIONS & OPENING PRAYER: Stacey Benson. Stacey shared a devotion on thanking God even when times are hard and shared “A Prayer for a Thankful Heart”.

CALL TO ORDER: 6:47pm **APPROVAL OF OCTOBER MINUTES:** Motion to approve. 1st Charlie. 2nd. Mary. Minutes approved.

TREASURER’S REPORT - While we were a little short on our income for October, it was up from September. We did receive \$600 for StARs.

2021 BUDGET DRAFT – Information only. The proposed 2021 Budget was approved at our Council Check-In October 27, 2020. The 2021 Budget is a little more conservative than it has been in the past due to uncertain times but we are optimistic that we will be able to exceed the 2021 Budget.

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY'S REPORT –. The Youth are looking for doors for their God's Doors Project. Ann & Charlie have doors to donate.

OTHER: Charlie brought up that we need to be thinking of ways to reach out to our congregation during the holidays. Maybe a video "card" to the congregation from council? RETURN TO

BYLAWS – The Proposed Bylaws were completed and are ready for the annual meeting. . **ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA** – The agenda for the annual meeting was reviewed & discussed.

NEW BUSINESS – Boy Scouts of America Bankruptcy Informational Document. We are looking for a bankruptcy lawyer to file a claim form for us.

2 OPEN BUSINESS - 2020 • Sewer Project • StARs – Ann Giles (part of Annual Meeting) • Social Media/Web Present Audit - Ann/Pastor/Kirsten

OPEN BUSINESS -

2021 • Covenant of Conduct - Pastor • Committee Chair Tools • Background Checks • Photo Directory • CPR Training Class (will also need AED training) – Mary • Insurance Presentation to Council – to understand our coverage (future meeting)

CLOSING PRAYER: Next Council Meeting – December 8th– 6:30pm Devotions – Sue Calvert



Greetings in the name of Christ!

My name is Chelsea Globe and I'm the newly called pastor for Lutheran Campus Ministry to the University of Washington community. After more than a year of intentional time off while navigating much transition and change, or what we are calling a "fallow year" (in reference to Exodus 23:11's advice for a fertile harvest), this ministry is looking forward to new growth. The fertile ground of our ministry is now well-rested and ready to produce a bountiful harvest once again!

How do we rebuild a campus ministry in the middle of a pandemic? The same way you would any other time – connections! We want to connect with YOU! If you are or are related to a UW student, (undergraduate or graduate), let us know! If you are a UW faculty or staff member, let us know! If you are a UW alumnus, let us know! Heck, even if you are just a fan of Husky sports, or care about the spiritual development of college students, let us know! As the new pastor trying to get this ministry up and running again, I want to hear from anyone and everyone who has any connection to both UW and Lutheranism.

While the opportunities to meet physically are limited this year, there are still so many ways that we can be supportive of students and staff at the University of Washington. Right now, I'm primarily seeking to connect with individuals at UW to introduce myself and let them know that the ELCA is here for them. I am also focusing on increasing our presence within our region's ELCA congregations so that everyone knows we are back up and running! And of course, you always have the opportunity to support this vital ministry with your prayers, thoughts, and donations.

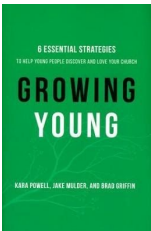
I hope to keep in regular contact with you and your congregations. If you want to stay connected, [click here](#) to sign up for our email newsletters. You can also keep up with us on our

[website](#), [Facebook page](#), or [Instagram](#). And if you have a UW student to refer to campus ministry, you can use this [Google Form](#) to do so or email me directly.

Thank you for supporting this important ministry as we show God's grace and unconditional love to the UW community!

Blessings, Pastor Chelsea Globe,
pastor@uwlutherans.org
206-590-0857 www.uwlutherans.org

BOOK STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

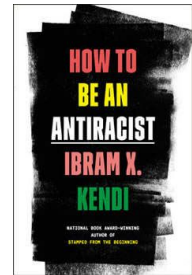


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A leadership book study on 3rd Thursdays at 6:30 PM on Zoom. All are welcome to join the discussion at any time. Request a zoom link at youthdirector@beautifulsaviorlutheran.com

) n, {nUZM` I {BMy **Sundays 3:00-4:30 PM via Zoom**

Let Pastor Jean know if you are interested in joining the conversation, so that she may send you the zoom link. pastorjean@beautifulsaviorlutheran.com Note: we divide into small conversation groups after a very brief prayer and check in, reconvening about 4:15 to share small group highlights.



Bible Studies through BSLC

Wednesday Bible Study with Pastor Jean meets via Zoom at **10:30 AM**.

Through the end of the year they discuss the text assigned for the upcoming Sunday. In January they will delve into a study of Genesis. For the Zoom link email Pastor Jean at pastorjean@beautifulsaviorlutheran.com

Thursday Gather Bible Study meets on Zoom at 10:00 AM. For more information contact Nancy K. (her contact information is available through the church office).

END NOTE:

Thank you for understanding and your forgiveness about the later than anticipated arrival of this newsletter. I (Pastor Jean) fell a bit behind in November. Don't blame Mariellen as she was ready to go on time!

Thank you, too, for your prayers, kindness, and understanding as I accompanied my mother in her final two weeks. It was an important time for both of us, I believe, and my intimate experience of that time will help me be a better pastor for you at times of life transition and letting go.

*Advent Blessings!
Pastor Jean*