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# Anacortes Lutheran Church Newsletter

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February 2024

Members and Friends of Anacortes Lutheran Church,

The month of February has always been one of my favorite months. Why is that you ask? Groundhog Day? Nope. Valentine's Day? Nope. Yukon Heritage Day? Closer...

Maybe it is my Lutheran upbringing, but it is Ash Wednesday! That day when we are reminded of our mortality and begin our pilgrimage into the season of Lent. The day when ashes are placed upon our forehead as a sign. The day when we put away the "alleluias" and turn our hearts toward repentance. The day when it seems the music all goes into a minor key.

I hear some of you saying, "Wow, you must be fun at parties." (It turns out I am) But I have found that by accepting mortality as a reality of our lives frees me to actually live better. In our Western society we spend an awful lot of time and energy to distract us away from death and dying. We spend millions and billions of dollars to keep ourselves 'young', or at least looking that way, thinking that we may just cheat death and win it all. The truth, however, is that none of us make it out of life alive.

Very early in our lives, at least if we have grown up in a church that does infant baptisms, we were joined to the "death and resurrection of Christ" as those waters cascaded down upon our heads. Yes, resurrection is part of the story, but death is the factor that we cannot miss. In baptism we 'die' to ourselves and are reborn children of God. Death is an integral part of who we are as followers of Jesus. And death is a very sacred reality. I have been at the bedside of a number of people as they took their last breath. It is a moment when the presence of God is tangible, and the silence brings peace that surpasses all understanding. Yes, it is also filled with grief and sadness, but the presence of God makes even the tears falling down our cheeks into droplets of holy water.

For many the beginning of Lent brings up feelings of trepidation and even fear. We are called to come face to face with our mortality and to even embrace it. But by accepting our mortality we are free to embrace the abundant life that we are given in Christ even more. We are freed to enter the season of Lent and grab on to the gift of repentance and forgiveness. We may find beauty in the sound of a hymn in a minor key. We may be filled with anticipation at the return of "Alleluia!" to our lips. We may find in the ashes on our foreheads a promise of palms being waved in celebration of Jesus in our lives. We may even find the power of resurrection breaking into our daily lives as we share the gift of love with our neighbors. And may we all find blessings in returning to God in each moment knowing that we are loved.

May the coming season bless you in your pilgrimage toward the Cross!

Pastor Scott



### From the Bishop:

Today as I write this, I am acutely aware that I am home.

You see, I was supposed to be on a plane today – traveling to the Holy Land – with thirty people from this synod. We were going to see holy sites: the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem, Galilee, Jerusalem, and so much more.

Besides visiting these holy sites, we were going to be with our Lutheran siblings in Palestine and Israel. We were going to visit with and learn from Bishop Azar, the pastors, and the laypeople of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL). We were going to visit our Lutheran schools in Bethlehem, Beit Sahour, Ramallah, and Beit Jala. We were going to visit the only liberal arts university in Palestine – Dar Al-Kalima University in Bethlehem. We were going to visit the Lutheran hospital, Augusta Victoria Hospital. And we were going to visit our Jewish siblings who work for justice and peace.

Today as I write this, I am acutely aware that today is the one hundredth day since fighting began in the Holy Land. On October 7, 2023 Hamas killed around 1,200 people and kidnapped over two hundred. It was a horrible and horrendous attack on women, children, and the elderly.

Following this attack, Israel began striking with guns, bombs, and other devices of war. At this moment, the death toll in Gaza is 24,100 dead with 61,000 others wounded. It is estimated that two-thirds of those killed in Gaza so far are women and children –all non-combatants. Almost the entire population of Gaza is now displaced, and starvation and disease are rampant.

By anyone’s estimate, these are horrifying statistics, and they cannot, at all, begin to acknowledge the pain and anguish from all sides.

Now, I am not an expert of the Holy Land or the Israel-Palestinian conflict. I cannot begin to parse out all that happens in this area of the world – especially in such a short article as this. But as a baptized child of God, pastor, and your bishop, I know that this war is not God’s way. I know that God calls us to advocate for those whose voices have been silenced. I know that God calls not for a pretend cease fire but true dialogue. I know that God calls us to a just peace where all people are recognized as human.

As many of you know, I was part of a group of seventeen ELCA bishops who went to the Holy Land last year. While we were there, we visited the ELCJHL schools in Palestine and Israel. We saw Muslim and Christian children learning together. We saw dancing and singing. We listened to their stories and we rejoiced at the hope we saw there. When we visited Augusta Victoria Hospital during this same visit, we saw Muslim doctors treating Christian patients and vice versa. When we visited with an Israeli non-profit dedicated to justice for the Palestinians, we saw Jews and Muslims, Israelis and Palestinians, working together for peace and justice.

Dear Beloveds in Christ, please take to heart what our brother in Christ, ELCJHL Bishop Sani Ibrahim Azar, said on Reformation Day 2023 while speaking at the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in Jerusalem:

“It is very hard to speak about hope here in Jerusalem ... As Palestinian Christians, we have been here for many years, not recognized, but calling for reconciliation. We are serving people’s needs and we are working for the future of the whole human family...The priority right now is to end the war, to stop the killing of women and men, children and the elderly ... We hope that our Christian brothers and sisters elsewhere in the world are praying for us, praying for Christians in the Holy Land and for the rights of Palestinians to exist here.”

As we are privileged to be in our homes – and as millions have been displaced from their homes – let us pray for true peace, work for justice, and speak out against hatred.

*Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it... The Lord is near to the broken-hearted, and saves the crushed in spirit.* Psalm 34:14, 18

+ Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee / [bishop@lutheransnw.org](mailto:bishop@lutheransnw.org)

## **Let's Go Together: The Courage to Grow from Us to Trust**

We're excited to kick off a new program called "Let's Go Together." It's all about bringing folks from different cultures and backgrounds in Skagit County together. We want to get to know each other! Why are we doing this? Well, it turns out a lot of people (over 70% of Americans!) are worried that people don't trust each other much these days. We think local communities, like ours, can help fix this.

"Let's Go Together" is run by Paths to Understanding (PTU). This non-profit organization has been around since the 1960s, starting as Camp Brotherhood and then becoming the Treacy Levine Center. Terry Kylo, the director at PTU, has been talking with lots of leaders from different traditions and cultures. They all agree that making friends locally helps us see that we're all human and all want to trust each other.

A few of our own group members are getting involved in three fun gatherings this spring. Each one's got something different going on:

1. **Food and Story Sharing:** Who doesn't love good food and great stories?
2. **Service Project:** Let's roll up our sleeves and help out together.
3. **Public Solidarity Event:** This one's open to everyone. Come join us!

After these gatherings, our members who participated will come talk about their experiences with the rest of us. They'll also help us find ways to connect with our neighbors here in Skagit County. You can join, too! Meet your neighbors, lend a hand when someone needs help, and remember, a simple smile or 'hello' can make someone's day. Plus, let's share the positive stories – the news might focus on the scary stuff, but we have the power to spread hope and joy.

Together, we can build the world we want for ourselves and the next generation. Let's make it happen!

Learn more at [www.pathstounderstanding.org](http://www.pathstounderstanding.org)

## **Worship Committee**

Members of the Worship Committee wishes to extend our thanks to all who volunteered their time in so many different ways during our Advent and Christmas seasons. We are especially grateful for the leadership of Pastor Scott. Now we look forward to the Lenten season. Blessings to all!

### **HYMNAL CART**

Lutheran congregations have always had a tradition of singing and we jokingly say that we were born to sing in 4-part harmony! There is nothing like attending a Lutheran gathering and hearing so many sing in harmony – an audio image of heaven, I believe! We are losing some of our heritage in that new hymnals don't always have the harmonies written and just use a melody line. Although easier, the use of projected lyrics on a screen takes more of that heritage away. There are so many beautiful new hymns and liturgies in other hymnals that would be great to use – however, the cost of new hymnals in large quantities is extremely high. So, we have created a Hymnal Cart which is in the entrance to the narthex, where the ushers stand each Sunday. When we use a hymn or a liturgy not in the ELW (our current red hymnal), that cart will be out, and I encourage everyone to take a hymnal and use it! Sing in harmony, praise the Lord with your voice! We are hoping that if you see the cart out, you will know to grab a hymnal. Please return hymnals to the cart at the end of the service! God gave us music to sing and play His praises!

### **SIX HARPS TO PLAY AT ANACORTES LUTHERAN**

We are in for an incredible treat when the Cara Harp Ensemble will be at ALC on Sunday, February 18, 2024. They will be playing for us throughout the entire service including prelude, special music, offering, communion and postlude! They are from the Lake Stevens area, and I am so excited to hear them. Some of the songs they will be playing are:

Abide With Me, For The Beauty of The Earth, Amazing Grace, Dona Nobis Pacem and Be Thou My Vision. 6 harps! All playing together! Share the news and invite your neighbors and friends. They will have a “show off the harps time” after the postlude to any who wants to come up and touch the harps and even try to play them!!

## **ALC SENIOR ADULT MINISTRY PRIME TIMERS™**

— Retirees gathering together for Fun, Food, and Fellowship.

### **GET-TOGETHER - CLUSTER OF CRISP**

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 9, at 10:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall.**

The theme is: "*Guest Speaker - Mayor Matt Miller*".

*Please sign up at the Opportunity Desk or call, text, or email Julie before Wednesday prior to the event.*

### **BINGO IN THE MORNING**

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17, AT 10:00 A.M. in Conference Room #2.**

*No sign-up required - just come and have fun. Snacks are provided. Please bring a drink.*

*Have a great winter, stay safe, and be happy. We look forward to seeing you soon.*

*Paul - Julie Dusenbury*

## **Fellowship Committee**

**Soup Suppers for Lent** – Fellowship is coordinating Soup Suppers for Lent and we have created a sign-up sheet for volunteers to provide soup, clean up, and dishwashing. The dates are February 21<sup>st</sup> and the following four Wednesdays for soup on 2/28, 3/6, 3/13, and 3/20. Dinners are from 5:30 – 6:30 pm in the fellowship hall followed by a short Lenten service. A coordinator from different groups on the church will be reaching out to volunteers.

**Church Directory Updates** – Fellowship will post dates in the scoop soon for upcoming dates to get your photos taken to add as a supplement to our 2023 in-house church photo directory. We are asking that only people who did not get their photos done in the 2023 edition to sign-up to be added. This is not an opportunity to do a new photo. It is a good time for everyone to update their contact information with the church office if you have a new email address, phone number, etc. We will look forward to producing the supplement during the spring.

**FAST Team Service** – We have sign-up sheets at the Opportunity Desk for February and March to find volunteers to greet, read, serve communion, host in the kitchen, and bring treats. Please sign-up to help out. It takes about ten volunteers a week to complete the tasks.

# DATES TO CELEBRATE

## In February

### Birthday Blessings

01 Laura Sullivan  
02 Jeaneen Brogan  
02 Roman Sturgul  
02 Janice Sullivan  
03 Howard Partch  
04 Justin Lust  
05 Bev Landgraf  
06 Della Reinbold  
07 Wendy Atterberry  
07 Mason Bakke  
07 Julia Rogers  
08 Brianna Trafton  
08 Hillary Young  
09 Hope Anderson  
09 Enid Oates  
10 Jenny Remmerden  
11 Carol Olsen  
13 Corey Nibarger  
14 Dennis Giddings  
15 Chris Anderson  
16 Steve Fosso  
16 Erin Roux  
17 Garrett Kennedy  
18 Ian Anderson  
18 Paul Dusenbury  
18 Vera Harvey  
18 Sabrina Poor  
19 Tom Paul  
19 Julia Soes  
20 Owen Pierce  
23 Victoria Eckardt  
25 Carin Fors  
25 Christy Giddings  
25 Patricia Rasar  
26 Sadie Lust  
26 Glenn Sullivan  
27 Vance Frerichs  
27 Ann Knutsen  
27 Phil Latendresse  
27 MarvBeth Pollard

### Wedding Anniversaries

03 John & Denise Lowrie  
06 Paul & Lane Phelan  
08 Steve & Linda Anderson  
08 Daniel & Jennifer Elling  
18 Ed & Marcia Berg  
20 Fred & Susan Wintermantel  
21 William LeDuc & Dorothy Engom  
22 Rob & Alice Harstad



HAPPY  
BIRTHDAY

# Youth Group Activities!

We are picking up speed with our Youth Groups this coming month to set a pace for the rest of the year.

We are hosting a fundraiser with **Johnny Picasso's** to help them out and our youth at the same time. Johnny Picasso's is a big part of our community and has started and participated in a lot of community service events to help Anacortes and our local community thrive in times of need. Let's come together and help them out in return.

Our Youth is making and delivering Valentine Day cookies as a fundraiser for our youth groups' Winter Retreat, and hopefully to get bibles for our Youth group as well. Orders can be made at the opportunity desk by the Fellowship Hall, or email [Youth@anacorteslutheran.org](mailto:Youth@anacorteslutheran.org). Donations can be made at the opportunity desk or in the Youth mailbox by the front office.

The Elementary Youth Group and Elementary Play Group (Parents Date Night) will be resuming this month. The Middle and High school Youth Group will continue to meet and discuss what it means to **Walk in Faith** and be '**In the world**' but not '**Of the world**'.

Our Middle and High schoolers have the opportunity to go on our Winter Retreat to Mt. Baker over Presidents Day weekend. We will have fun in fellowship with one another and talk about what it takes to '**Be a Minister**' in our everyday life. Permission slips are available by the front office, or by email upon request. Email us at [Youth@anacorteslutheran.org](mailto:Youth@anacorteslutheran.org). We are asking for a \$35.00 admission fee to help with the cost of the retreat.

If you are interested in Volunteering with the Youth programs, we can always use more help. Especially with the Elementary Groups. Please email us at [Youth@anacorteslutherna.org](mailto:Youth@anacorteslutherna.org) if you are interested in volunteering with any of our upcoming events and activities this coming month!

Thank you in advance!!!



## Youth Group Fundraising



### **MUG PAINTING FUNDRAISER**

February 4th at 12:00pm, Johnny Picasso will be set up in the Youth room with mugs and bowls and an assortment of colors. Join us for coffee, hot cocoa and mug painting.

This fundraiser will be in support of the Youth program and Johnny Picasso's!! The shop is a beloved part of our community, lets help support him as he is helping support our youth and our community. See you there!!



## **VALENTINES COOKIE DELIVERY FUNDRAISER**

The Youth is making and delivering heart shaped cookies and cards for your Valentine Place your order for your Valentine cookies and/or card delivery at the opportunity desk or email in to [youth@Anacorteslutheran.org](mailto:youth@Anacorteslutheran.org), we will do single cookie or 3 cookie orders, with fun little cards. Please include name and address of the recipient and your name (if you want it known), and if you want 1 or 3 cookies sent to your valentine. We will be excepting orders now till Feb 6<sup>th</sup>. There will be donations boxes set up with the order form on the opportunity desk, and in the Youth mailbox by the office. Send something sweet to your loved ones!! Order today!!





# Youth Calendar

# FEBRUARY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4 Johnny Picasso's fundraiser 12:00pm HS and MS Youth group 6:30pm	5	6 <i>Valentine</i> <i>Cookie Orders</i> <i>Due</i>	7 Youth Dynamics Drop in 1:45-3:00pm	8	9 Elementary Play Group 5:30pm-8:30pm	10 Valentine Cookie baking @ Kathy Parker's home 11:00am-2:pm
11 Youth Valentine Cookie fundraiser delivery After church.	12	13	14 <b>VALENTINES DAY</b> Youth Dynamics Drop in 1:45-3:00pm	15	16 <b>YOUTH</b>	17 <b>WINTER</b>
18 <b>RETREAT</b>	19	20	21 Youth Dynamics Drop in 1:45-3:00pm	22	23 Elementary Youth Group 5:30pm-7:30pm	24
25	26	27	28 Youth Dynamics Drop in 1:45-3:00pm	29		



# FEBRUARY 2024

SUN      MON      TUE      WED      THU      FRI      SAT



<p><b>4 FAMILY &amp; PRAISE SUNDAY</b></p> <p>EDUCATION Time 9:00a          WORSHIP 10:00a          Fellowship Hour 11:00a          MS &amp; HS Youth Night 6:30p</p> <p><b>ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING 11:15 am in F.H.</b></p>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>O.A 10:00a          EDU. COMM 5:00p          Girl SCOUTS 5:30p          SCOUT B 7:00p          WORSHIP Comm 7:00p</p>	<p><b>6</b></p> <p>Sewing 9:00a          SCOUTS G 7:00p</p>	<p><b>7</b></p> <p>Staff Meeting 9:30a          Preschool Chapel 10:45a          CUB Pack 6:00p          CHOIR Rehearsal 6:30p</p>	<p><b>8</b></p> <p>Men's Bible Study 7:00a          Preschool Chapel 10:45a          BIBLE Study 11:00a          CHURCH COUNCIL 6:30p          SCOUT B Leader 7:00p</p>	<p><b>1</b></p> <p>Men's Bible Study 7:00a          Preschool Chapel 10:45a          BIBLE Study 11:00a          Praise Team 1:00p</p>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p>WELCA Board 10:00a</p>	<p><b>3</b></p>
<p><b>11 Transfiguration of Our Lord</b></p> <p><b>SCOUT SUNDAY</b></p> <p>EDUCATION Time 9:00a          WORSHIP 10:00a          Fellowship Hour 11:00a</p>	<p><b>12</b></p> <p>O.A 10:00a          DAISY Troop 5:30p          SCOUT B 7:00p</p>	<p><b>13</b></p> <p>WOMEN'S Bible Studies 10:00a          WOMEN'S Bible Study 4:00p          SCOUTS G 7:00p</p>	<p><b>14</b></p> <p>Staff Meeting 9:30a          Preschool Chapel 10:45a          Valentines Day  <b>ASH WEDNESDAY</b>  <b>IMPOSITION OF ASHES 12-Noon &amp; 7:00 pm</b></p>	<p><b>15</b></p> <p>Men's Bible Study 7:00a          Preschool Chapel 10:45a          BIBLE Study 11:00a          Children's Hosp Guild 11:00a          SCOUT G Leader 7:00p</p>	<p><b>16</b></p>	<p><b>17</b></p> <p><i>Prime Timers</i>          BINGO 10:00a</p>	
<p><b>18 1st Sunday in Lent</b></p> <p>EDUCATION Time 9:00a          WORSHIP 10:00a          Fellowship Hour 11:00a          MS &amp; HS Youth Night 6:30p</p>	<p><b>19</b></p> <p>O.A 10:00a          LMR Knitting 1:00p          Girl SCOUTS 5:30p          SCOUT B 7:00p</p>	<p><b>20</b></p> <p>Sewing 9:00a          SCOUTS G 7:00p</p>	<p><b>21</b></p> <p>Staff Meeting 9:30a          Preschool Chapel 10:45a          LENT Dinner 5:30p          CUB Pack 6:00p          Service 6:30p          CHOIR Rehearsal 7:00p</p>	<p><b>22</b></p> <p>Men's Bible Study 7:00a          Preschool Chapel 10:45a          BIBLE Study 11:00a          Praise Team 1:00p          SCOUT G PLC 1:00p</p>	<p><b>23</b></p>	<p><b>24</b></p>	
<p><b>25 2nd Sunday in Lent</b></p> <p>EDUCATION Time 9:00a          WORSHIP 10:00a          Fellowship Hour 11:00a          SCOUT B PLC 7:00p</p>	<p><b>26</b></p> <p>O.A 10:00a          ALTAR Guild 10:30a          DAISY Troop 5:30p          SCOUT B 6:00p          Court of Honor 7:00p</p>	<p><b>27</b></p> <p>WELCA General Mng 1:00p          SCOUTS G 7:00p</p>	<p><b>28</b></p> <p>Staff Meeting 9:30a          Preschool Chapel 10:45a          LENT Dinner 5:30p          Service 6:30p          CHOIR Rehearsal 7:00p</p>	<p><b>29</b></p> <p>Praise Team 1:00p</p>			