

Anacortes Lutheran Church

A message from Pastor Scott Peterson

Revelation 21:1–6

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.” And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” And he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment.”

What does it mean to start something new? I was always struck by the deep wisdom of a certain lyric of the song *Closing Time* by the band, Semisonic, “every new beginning comes from some other beginning’s end.” As I investigated it further, I found that the quote goes all the way back to the philosopher, Seneca, and the exploration of beginnings and endings is something that has been an integral part of our experience of life since the first beginning. As we enter this new year, we are called to reflect on what has been and also look forward to what is yet to come.

We have now walked this path of ministry for over 4 years now. I can’t believe how fast it has gone. Looking back, I reflect on the infants who have come to be baptized, the teens who have affirmed their baptisms in Confirmation, the community members and agencies that we have supported through our benevolence dollars, and those we have said farewell to as they were welcomed into life eternal and into the waiting arms of their Savior. We have laughed, cried, made missteps, forgiven one another. We have even raised our hands in praise and danced a bit as the music filled out hearts and souls. We have seen new friends join us on this path and have seen friends move away to begin a new chapter in their lives.

We have also become aware of challenges throughout society around us. We have stood across the corner from those who believe differently than we do. We have supported one another through conversation toward understanding. But most of all, we have striven to fulfill what Jesus has called us to do, “love God and love our neighbor”.

What will 2026 hold for us? That is yet to be seen. We will know more about that in January of 2027. But for now, the possibilities of 2026 lie before us. We can dream and imagine, pray and contemplate, and then do the work to make the possibilities into realities. With God’s leading, we are called to be the church in the world today. Not the world 10 or 15 years ago, or the world 20 years in the future, but rather to live into the time that is now. We have 525,600 minutes to be the church in our world over this next year. May 2026 will be a season of love as we live our lives as the Body of Christ.

Let us relax into endings and beginnings as we remember Christ as our Alpha and Omega!

Blessings in this new year!

Pastor Scott

JANUARY 2026 NEWSLETTER



Church Council Minutes from December 11, 2025

Attendees: Pastor Scott, Don Devine, Julie Jacobson, Bill LeDuc, Lane Phelan, Bruce Rolfe, Pat Carrie Smith, Rosemary Walter, Claude Woodall

The meeting was called to order and Don opened with prayer.

November minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report: A written report was submitted.

Pastor's Report: A written report was submitted.

Youth & Education: A written summary was submitted. The swim party is scheduled for January 11.

Worship: A written report was submitted. Horizon will soon complete hooking up all of the lines. Pat-Carrie compliments Jobin on the job he is doing with the new system.

Finance: A written report was submitted.

Properties: A written report was submitted.

Outreach: Dave White submitted a written report.

Personnel: They are in process of meeting.

New Business:

- The estate of Helen Hearon left ALC 0.87 acres of mineral rights in ND. Bill made a motion to maintain our ownership rather than to sell the rights, all were in favor and motion passed.
- 2026 Proposed Budget - includes a 2.7% increase in salaries. Bill noted that he is working on getting inspectors in to approve the ability for the preschool to also become a daycare. The proposed budget was discussed - any other questions or comments should be addressed to Bill in the next couple of weeks. Julie made a motion to approve the 2026 Proposed Budget as written, all were in favor and motion passed.
- Three new council members are needed for our June Congregational meeting to replace outgoing members Don, Steve and Lane.
- Don will coordinate repair work on the kitchen roof after the holidays.

Bill made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Our next regular council meeting will be held January 8 at 4:00 pm. Please have committee reports in to Julie no later than midnight on Tuesday, January 6. No Executive Committee meeting in January.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Jacobson, Council Secretary

PRAY FOR OUR 2026 CHURCH COUNCIL & COMMITTEES

President:	Don Devine	Fellowship :	
Vice-President:	Bill LeDuc	Education:	Rosemary Walter
Secretary:	Julie Jacobson	Youth:	Rosemary Walter
Treasurer:	Lane Phelan	Preschool:	Lane Phelan
Stewardship:	Bill LeDuc	Properties:	Steve Anderson
Outreach:	Julie Jacobson	Worship:	Pat Carrie Smith
Personnel:	Jeaneen Brogan	WELCA :	Rachel Devine
Josephine Delegates:	Pastor Peterson, Linda Millo	Legacy Endowment:	Wayne Olsen, Rod Odegaard
Finance:	Lane Phelan, Bill LeDuc	Synod Assy Delegates:	Julie Jacobson
	Linda Millo		Pastor Peterson, Lois Cassidy
Finance Secretary:	Linda Millo		Linda Millo
Camp Lutherwood Rep:	Kenny Holzemer		

Friends and Family Pool Party

January 11, 2026 will be a pool party at Fidalgo Pool from 3:30-5:30 pm. This is a canned food drive so please bring a non-perishable food item.

THANK YOU!!

As I write this, Christmas is still a few days away. We are looking forward to another busy Christmas Day as we feed our community and provide a place to be of service. A place for all. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the success of this outreach.

Anne Barry & Don Devine

Christmas Dinner Coordinators

I would like to especially thank Roger Peckman, Judy Holmes, Melanie Sahnow, and Don Devine for stepping up when I needed extra help. Without you Dinner would not have happened this year. God bless. Anne

A note from the office...

As the new year sets on us, I am looking for a couple volunteers to work in the office answering phones and assisting any visitors that might stop by. Volunteers will be needed to fill in for me during time off. If you are interested please contact the office at 360-293-9586 or email at info@anacorteslutheran.org

Properties 12/22/2025

The preschool furnace filters had to be changed just after 3 weeks since last change. All the accumulated dust probably came from the disconnected clothes dryer vent hose.

The two Church outside hose faucets still leak water when used.

Front of the church, above the building house numbers the security light does not work.

Steve Anderson

ALC SENIOR ADULT MINISTRY **PRIME TIMERS**

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

A SPECIAL THANK YOU to the volunteers who graciously hosted the monthly get-togethers in 2025.

2026 will bring changes – events will be held quarterly on the 2nd Friday or Saturday. The schedule is as follows: March 13 – Bingo, June 12 – Out to Lunch, September 11 or 12 - Day Outing planned by Paul and Julie, and December 11 – Get Together in the Fellowship Hall.

If you have an idea for the day outing or if you are interested in hosting an event, please call, text, or email Julie.

Have a warm winter, stay safe, and be happy.



Paul - Julie Dusenbury

Sewing News

Happy New Year!! The holidays are over and {maybe} all the decorations are put away. The sewing ladies are happy to return after a mini break. And we are excited to begin assembling items for the kits we send. During January, February and March we will concentrate on **Personal Care Kits**. Last year we sent 174 kits. This year we have set a goal of 250. Can we do that? Yes, with your help. So, reach for your shopping list and add something from the supplies list below. Thank you for supporting this ministry. And thank you to the person who brought in a large box filled with boxes of crayons. You can put your donations on the large storage box in the fellowship hall. Sewing dates in January are 6, 20 & 27.

Personal Care Kits Supply List

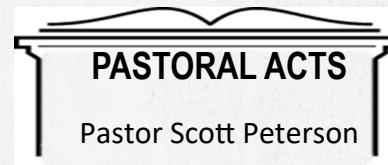
- 1 large bath towel, dark color preferred (no bath sheet)
- Toothbrush
- Comb
- Nail clippers
- 2 bars of soap

Dates to Celebrate in January

Birthdays			
03	Kai Frerichs	21	Mira Knowles
04	Pat Carrie Smith	21	Arthur Phelan
05	Ole Hanen	23	Kenny Smith
05	Jerry Knutsen	24	Diane Brosten
07	Persephone Pestar	24	Shannon Woodall
11	Don Devine	26	Dave White
11	Danielle Long	27	Donna Anderson
12	Renie Hofferth	27	Jean Rogers
14	Kenny Holzemer	28	Madelyn Case
14	Carleen Oldham	28	Sharon Fisher
14	Carol Hanneman	28	Jill Hixson
16	Joseph Pestar III	28	Taylor Phelan
17	Billie Melton	30	Regan Franulovich

Anniversaries

12 Warner & Diane Berglund



MEMORIAL

December 13, 2025

Carol Kirby

BAPTISMS

December 21, 2025

Elena West

Parents: Kenneth & Erica West

Worship Attendance

Date	Events	In-Person	Nursery	Live-Stream
Nov 23	Christ the King/ Pie Sunday	101	2	25
Nov 30	1st Sunday in Advent	94	3	29
Dec 7	2nd Sunday in Advent	136	5	32
Dec 14	Children's Play	124	4	33
Dec 21	4th Sunday in Advent	150	5	38
Dec 24	Christmas Eve 3 pm	112	0	**
	Christmas Eve 5 pm	161	0	**
	Christmas Eve 10 pm	42	0	**
Dec 28	1st Sunday after Christmas	82	3	**

**** Not available at time of printing**





From the Bishop:

January 2026

Several years ago, when I was a young pastor serving in a congregation, a member came to tell me he was leaving the church for another one. When I asked why, he said, "I don't like all the lovey-dovey stuff." I was caught off guard and didn't have a very good response in the moment. Now I wish I had said something like, "When you say 'lovey, dove'y' are you referring to the Sermon on the Mount when Jesus says we are to love even our enemies? Or when Jesus says his new command is that we love one another as he has loved us? Or when Jesus, hanging on the cross, says, 'Father, forgive them?' Or when the risen Jesus shows up on the shore, feeds his friends, and asks Peter – three times – 'Do you love me?' Or, maybe you mean Paul, who says that you can have all kinds of gifts and accomplishments, but without love, you are nothing. Or when Paul writes that out of faith, hope, and love, love is the greatest or ...". You get the idea. But I didn't have those words that day.

Now, several years later, I wish I could answer him again. Because as much as he thought he was rejecting something weak, living into God's expansive love is anything but. It can be beautiful and life-giving, yes – but it is also demanding and hard. Especially when that love calls us to care for people we don't particularly like, let alone agree with.

Today, in this fractured time, in this fractured world, how do we live into being 'lovey-dovey' in the way God first shows us through Jesus? How do we love when we're afraid? How do we love those who are causing real harm? How do we love people with whom we feel uncomfortable or "icky?" How do we love those we would rather avoid? How do we love those we despise?

First, we have to be honest with ourselves. As clearly as we may see the sin of others, we also must acknowledge our own. We fall short time and time again. We cannot justify ourselves out of sin, nor can we place ourselves above anyone else. God is the one who comes in Jesus to bring wholeness, reconciliation, and salvation – not just to some, but to the whole world (John 3:16-17).

Second, every person is made in the image of God. Every person is a small miracle. God formed each person with care and intention. Every person, all eight billion of us on this planet, are a wonder and a joy to God. God loves each person beyond measure. God loves those fleeing countries (like Moses and the holy family). God loves those tangled up in messes of their own making (like David). God loves those who are trying their very best (like Martha). God even loves those who would rather scroll on their phones than engage (well ... for a scriptural reference perhaps this could be those churches in Revelation who are neither hot nor cold). God loves us all. Thank God!

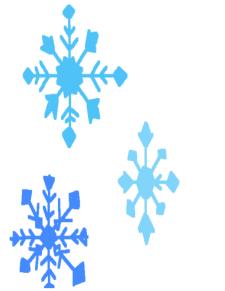
And because of God's amazing love, we are called to listen to one another and open our hearts to one another. This, of course, also means speaking up when there is injustice or harm – not out of hatred but out of love. Love rooted in Christ requires us to name and resist when harmful decisions made by those in power damage lives, especially when those decisions fall hardest on people who have been marginalized, silenced or erased. Love rooted in Christ pushes us to advocate for policies and practices that move people and systems toward equity and inclusion – whether we are talking about immigrants or farmers, children or grandmothers, those with homes and those without – neighbors all.

Third, we cannot love as God calls us to love on our own (see #1 above). We need the Holy Spirit and we need community. We need one another for accountability, and we need each other to help us journey forward together – beyond fear, beyond hatred, beyond the walls that we so easily build. Love cannot remain theoretical and abstract. No. Love is gritty and fleshed.

As we begin 2026, I pray that, through the Holy Spirit, we love God and one another in our words and our actions. I pray that we practice loving all – even our enemies. And I pray that in this new year, others will look at us and say, "Wow. They are fiercely 'lovely-dovey.'"

Following the Way of Jesus, may it be so.

Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee | bishop@lutheransnw.org



January 2026



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 New Year's Day OFFICE CLOSED	2	3
4 FAMILY & PRAISE SUNDAY WORSHIP 10:00a Fellowship Hour 11:00a Unhanging of Greens 11:00a	5 O.A. 10:00a SCOUT B 7:00p	6 Epiphany of Our Lord Sewing 9:00a SCOUT G 7:00p	7 Staff Meeting 9:30a PreK Chapel 10:45a WORSHIP Comm 11:00a	8 Men's Bible Study 7:00a PreK Chapel 10:45a CHURCHCOUNCIL 4:00p SCOUT B Leader 7:00p	9	10
11 Baptism of Our Lord EDUCATION Time 9:00a WORSHIP 10:00a Fellowship Hour 11:00a Friends & Family Pool Party 3:30-5:30p	12 O.A. 10:00a SCOUT B 7:00p	13 WOMEN'S BIBLE 10:00a WOMEN'S BIBLE 3:30p SCOUT G 7:00p	14 Staff Meeting 9:30a PreK Chapel 10:45a A-Town Ctg. Mtg 12:30p CHOIR Rehearsal 6:30p	15 Men's Bible Study 7:00a PreK Chapel 10:45a	16 Cub Pack Rain Gutter Race	17 Cub Pack Rain Gutter Race
18 EPIPHANY Education Time 9:00a WORSHIP 10:00a Fellowship Hour 11:00a	19 MLK Day O.A. 10:00a LWR Knitting 1:00p SCOUT B 7:00p OFFICE CLOSED	20 Sewing 9:00a SCOUT G Leader 6:00p YOUTH Comm 6:30p SCOUT G 7:00p	21 Staff Meeting 9:30a PreK Chapel 10:45a CUB Pack 6:00p CHOIR Rehearsal 6:30p	22 Men's Bible Study 7:00a PreK Chapel 10:45a Praise Team 1:00p	23	24
25 EPIPHANY Education Time 9:00a WORSHIP 10:00a Fellowship Hour 11:00a	26 O.A. 10:00a ALTAR Guild 11:00a SCOUT B 7:00p	27 Sewing 9:00a SCOUT G 7:00p	28 Staff Meeting 9:30a PreK Chapel 10:45a CHOIR Rehearsal 6:30p	29 Men's Bible Study 7:00a PreK Chapel 10:45a Praise Team 1:00p	30	31

