

THE KING'S CROWN



December 2020

King of Kings Lutheran Church

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*Unto Us
a Child is Born*



January
Newsletter
Deadline is
December 15

Mission Statement

“Empowered by the grace and love of Jesus, we are committed to growing in faith with the community.”



From the Pastor's Desk

What Are We Waiting For?

“What are we waiting for?” As I took a walk to get a preview of “Light’s on the Lake” Holiday display at Onondaga Lake Park... I found myself in a theological quandary. In the liturgical church the season of Advent has not yet begun, but the carols of the Christmas Season have been broadcasting since Halloween. In stores you probably have seen the shift of decorations, lights, and the welcome of the holiday season. While in the church, we hold dedicated space for Advent – the 24 days leading into the season of Christmas that kicks off our new liturgical year; this year in particular the question, *“What are we waiting for?”*, lands differently for me.

There are many theological debates to retain the celebration of Advent, a special time of prayer focusing on the themes of God’s hope, love, peace and joy. This time is a space for cultivation of these themes, in real and tangible ways. And to be frank, I do not think that the early engagement in carols and Christmas lights presents a problem – but an opportunity to lift up hope, peace, joy and love.

Truth told, the holiday season in full, is one of varied historical and cultural perspectives. Advent and Christmas, as we know them in the church – came from ancient peoples’ celebration of the winter solstice, the shortest night, and the gradual reversal of long nights into the growth of longer days. This does not deflate or discourage the liturgical and religious importance of Christian engagement in Advent and Christmas; but gives space to consider

how celebration of this time, is an incredibly old tradition. The traditions of this time have shifted and changed over many generations.

So, when I hear battles over carols and the early putting up of Christmas trees, I think the church needs to take a perspective of grace and live into practices of hope, peace, joy, and love. In this unexpended and ever-changing year that we know as 2020, perhaps early carols and Christmas lights are the last thing to worry about? Instead of digging our theological heels in the ground and critiquing early Christmas engagement; what if we considered **why** people are in greater need (this year in particular) - for the joys of the Christmas season?

Instead of the question, “What are we waiting for?” being opportunity for debate over Advent vs. Commercial Christmas – what if it is a time to listen to the deep needs of our friends and family for warmth, connection and most of all hope.

So, as the carols are already playing, the lights on the lake are shining, and a tree may already be up and decorated in our home; perhaps we need an early engagement with Christmas AND an advent of hope, peace, joy and love – at the same time.

Luther loved both and statements – we are both sinner AND saint – law AND gospel. We may need in 2020, both Advent and Christmas bundled together. We are on a journey to the stable in Bethlehem. We know that Christ is coming. And we know that Christ is with us. These seeming contractions are the space with believe and hope in. We are waiting for Christ, while walking with the Holy Spirit. The good news of Jesus is not limited to the little boxes of Advent Calendars – but spans the depth,

width, and expanse of time, as we know it.

We are waiting for Christmas AND celebrating Advent. We are waiting for Christmas AND singing familiar carols in the car. We are waiting for Christmas AND decorating Christmas trees. This is a season of both/and. And I am thankful for the space for hope, peace, joy, and love to shine EVERYWHERE.

Blessings on the journey of both/and – Ad-

vent/Christmas – here/there. May peace, hope, joy, and love be the beacon that leads us forward.

“We will walk in the light, the beautiful light, by the dewdrops of mercy shine bright; light all around us by day and night – Jesus, the light of the world.

Pastor Tara Lamont Eastman ”



**The Annual Meeting will be held on
January 24th at 12:00 noon.**



Yes, we will be having an annual meeting even though we are still unsure how this will look. At this time, we are thinking it might be a Zoom meeting as we might not be able to have all of us together in one room. No matter what it looks like, we will need a quorum to be able to vote on some important issues. We will let you know more details as we get them.

At this time, we simply ask that you put this date on your calendar, Sunday January 24th at noon.

Thank you.

Yours in Christ; Barb Winkel

King of Kings Congregational Chairperson



Council Corner...

Highlights from this month's Council meeting include the following:

How are we doing when the congregation cannot gather together like we are used to? Apparently pretty well. Our Facebook page has had over 20,000 hits during the time period of September and October. It appears that outreach and connection is working via this method. Keep checking in and keeping in touch!

We have continued to work on the budget for next year. Many, but not all groups, have submitted their requests for funding for the upcoming year. If your group has not yet submitted your expected 2021 expenses, please submit them to Doug Keim (D.Keim001@gmail.com). If you have not submitted your pledge offering yet, it is not too late! Please do so as it will help us develop a more accurate budget. Please email your pledges to Scarlett Erdley (SErdley13@gmail.com).

Thank you, yes you! This last month we raised \$2,175 for the CROP Walk and, to date, over \$11,000 for the Rowe family. Your generosity at this time is most appreciated.

Advance Notice: For the congregational meeting (next year) there will be a motion to add the following to C11.02 in the Constitution.

"The Council Chair shall be eligible to serve no more than three full years consecutively. For purposes of the preceding sentence, a full year shall begin on the day when a person is elected as Council Chair by the elected membership of the council, which election occurs on the same day as the annual Congregational Meeting."

Doug Keim (Council Member)

Annual Reports

A simple reminder to everyone responsible to write an annual report that they are due in the church office **no later than January 1st**. Please email your reports to kingofkingsny@gmail.com. **The Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 24, 2020.** Thanks!



Christmas Greetings from the Staff:

As we walk into and through this season of Advent – into Christmas, may we live into hope, peace, joy and love. God’s blessings to you – far and wide – wherever you find yourself. God’s hope, peace, joy and love be with you. ~Pastor Tara

In the midst of your Advent and Christmas celebration:

May hope guide you into each new day.

May peace dwell within and bring you comfort.

May love spring forth from each experience.

May love deepen within your heart for God and neighbor.

And may you encounter the presence of the Christ child in each moment of this season and always. ~Deacon Nancy

I’d like to thank the congregation for welcoming me to KOK two years ago. It has been a privilege to provide inspirational service music and work with choir members and soloists. I thank each and every one of you for tuning in during Sunday’s virtual services and giving your financial support, your time, your talents, and your passion to the church and to God. There were several of you that stood up to a very unique challenge of ‘going into the world’ when Covid-19 was at its worst, and assisting with technology, with the services, sanitizing and decorating the church, providing alternative worship opportunities, organizing food drives, overseeing digital copyrights, and making sure that our church complied with various Covid-19 regulations. Everyone involved plays an essential role in making this church an active part of the community regardless of the circumstances.

~Kristina Vernyi

From “The Work of Christmas” by Howard Thurman

May the work of Christmas begin with us: “To find the lost, heal the broken, feed the hungry, release the prisoner, rebuild the nations, bring peace to others, and to make music in the heart.” May the eternal love of Emmanuel - “God with us” - burn brightly in our hearts and be our guiding light. Oh come, let us adore Him! ~

Beth Colbert

May the magic and the wonder of the holiday season be with you throughout the coming year! ~ Joan Boyle



From the Deacon's Desk

For this month's article I am highlighting a service ministry opportunity for the congregation. The service ministry team is heading up the project, which is providing *Interfaith Works Holiday Gift Baskets for New American Families*.

We hope you will consider participating in this effort to provide some Holiday cheer to our neighbors who have resettled their lives in America. This is what we will be doing:

King of Kings will be providing gift baskets for families from the Center for New Americans. If you would like to participate we ask that you contact the office. We will give you the name, age, gender and country from which the family resettled. We have been given 20 names, with 9 adults, 1 teen and 10 children. The families are from Ukraine, Syria and Congo. You may choose to provide gifts for one or more people.

Once you have a name, we ask that you provide a gift(s) valuing between \$20-25. Please wrap the gift(s) and put the person's name on the package. Please bring the gifts to the church office by December 20 so we can deliver them to Interfaith Works in time for Christmas.

Interfaith Works has provided some suggestions for gifts:

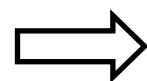
For a family:

Gift cards, (TOPS is walkable on the Northside)
Small blankets for cuddling
Board games and family puzzles
Have your children and grandchildren draw cards and enclose pictures.

For children and youth:

Warm, water-proof mittens and gloves for fun in the snow!
BOOKS! BOOKS! BOOKS!
Big hair clips, bracelets/ankle/wrist, bracelets with words.
Crazy socks, P J's, cars, trucks, fire engines,
Arts and crafts, coloring books for youth and adults, pencil by numbers, creativity kits
Stuffed animals, journals, puzzles
Building blocks, fancy pencils and erasers, sunglasses
Mugs, anything sports related, games, earmuffs, piggy banks, decorative empty boxes
Teens love soccer and sports

continued



For Parents and Grandparents

Warm and cozy socks, PJ's, mugs, teas, biscuits, scarfs, jams, chocolates

Consider the ages of the children. If you provide gifts for infants or toddlers kindly avoid small pieces in the gifts for the older children.

If you have any questions, please contact me at koklayministries@gmail.com.

The Service Ministry Team thanks you in advance for sharing your talents to serve our neighbors.

Peace, Deacon Nancy

Schedule for December

Slideshow Creation Team

9:30 am

12/6	Kurt Richardson
12/13	Jacob Sousou
12/20	Keith Gatling
12/24	Deanna Pavlacka

Worship Assistants

12/6	Jeff Swanson
12/13	Keith Gatling
12/20	Bob Lebel
12/27	Peter Pavlacka

Counters

12/6	Steve Erdley / Dave Allen
12/13	Bob Kolch / Lorraine Savidge
12/20	Doug Keim / Pat Lebel
12/25	Bob Kolch / Joanne Kolch
12/27	Kurt Richardson / Sue Tierney

People News...



Our sympathy and prayers are extended to **Lisa Clark** on the recent passing of her brother, **Kevin Rolf**. May God's love and many good memories bring you comfort and peace.

We recognize with much gratitude the work of **Joanne Keim** and thank her for her long and faithful service with our KCY.

Lee Savidge, a member of the Syracuse Veterans Writing Group, participated in the Group's special Veterans Day Reading Zoom event.

We are **grateful to all** who contributed food items for the Feed 500 Initiative, sponsored by our Women's Group, and for the Thanksgiving collection, sponsored by our Sunday School, and to all who contributed financial gifts and volunteered their service for the King of Kings' Thanksgiving Dinner Distribution.

King of Kings is now listed as a charitable organization on Amazon Smile! You shop, Amazon gives. No cost to you. Same products, same prices, same service.



Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible Amazon Smile purchases to King of Kings.

Register at <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/16-0921739>.



CONFIRMATION CONNECTIONS

Welcome to another great year of KCY! We will start the year with a study of the Old Testament, and finish with a beginning look at the New Testament and life of Jesus. Because of the current social distancing requirements, we will be holding online ZOOM classes until we are told it is safe to meet in person. However, even with this adjustment, we will still have many of the favorite program elements including: music, lifeline guests, and of course...quizzes! Look for information in the coming weeks about this year's schedule. Thanks, and look forward to seeing you!

Pastor Tara/ Deacon Nancy / Mrs. Sousou / Mr. Richardson

KING OF KINGS' QUILT GROUP



Just when I thought we could turn the calendar to a new year and start to expand our activities, we are placed in the "Yellow Zone". We can lament about quarantining, wearing masks, social distancing and being sequestered at home. Or we can see the bright sunlight. We have learned to Zoom. Even my parents in their mid to late eighties can participate! Instead of reading an email or listening to a voice on the phone, we get to see the faces and smiles of our friends and families. We have time to create. Whether it be writing a note to a friend, sitting down to paint, do needlework, scrapbook, see an old movie on TV, or pick up a book, these times give us the opportunity to be calm. Yellow is warm, cheerful and positive. Let's incorporate some yellow in our lives. Wear a yellow mask. Add yellow to your next project. Incorporate yellow into your home's décor. And if nothing else? Use that yellow smiley face.



Merry Christmas and here's to a Happy New Year!

Donna Huberty



Sunday School Update...

We continue to meet for Sunday School on Sunday mornings via Zoom. During the month of November, we sent out and Advent craft and devotional to Sunday School students to be completed at home with their families. We hope to see and share the kids' projects once complete with photos on Facebook. We also spent time in November working on a Christmas pageant. Yes, we are hoping that we will have a Christmas pageant to share with you on December 20th during worship. It may be the most unique pageant that King of Kings' has seen yet! I owe a huge thank you to **Deacon Nancy** and **Lynn Weeks** who have done the majority of the work for these two projects as I "supervised" from quarantine. We also would like to thank **Steve Kemp** for his help recording audio and helping to put the whole show together. We hope you enjoy the show!

In January we will celebrate Epiphany and would like to repeat the Epiphany project that we did last year. We will be applying for a Thriven card to purchase diapers to donate to the Food Pantry. We are asking for **donations of children's board books** to go in the diaper packs. Books can be new or gently used. We appreciate any and all contributions of books for this project. We will leave a box in the Narthex if you have books to donate. More details will follow regarding how we will actually assemble the diaper packs in a safe and socially distanced manner in January.

Sue Tierney



Christmas is the season to be merry and thankful! Please try to find little things to be happy about and grateful for. It is hard to appreciate life and all it has to offer when we keep grudges, letting go of which is not an easy task. Recently, someone shared a story with me about an older gentleman who was going through difficult times with his physical and emotional health. This gentleman tried reaching out to his only daughter to see if she could come and visit with her children, or if she would simply talk over the phone. The daughter never answered any of those calls. A few weeks later, this older gentleman passed away from health complications at a nursing home. What a sad and tragic story. However, there are plenty of stories like this. You hear of siblings, parents, best friends, sons and daughters shutting doors on each other. I know we all have our reasons to be mad and hold a grudge. Some reasons are more excusable than others. However, in the long run, no one benefits from that. You will be always left with the void that is hard to fill and the hurt that is very hard to heal. So, next time you feel anger and resentment building inside of you, please take a deep breath, turn on your favorite music, and think of how much Jesus has forgiven those who persecuted him. Let go of what is brewing inside of you. Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, and God Bless!

God Bless, *Kristina V.*

IN NEED OF

If anyone has a working freezer that they would like to donate to King of Kings, please let Joan know at the office. We're pretty sure we can get some strong men to move it.



Why you ask? Yes, we already have one that is used to store food and cookies for our shut-ins. But we have learned that our drive-up meals require a huge amount of space to freeze and store. There are two full freezers stuffed (one off-site) along with the freezer part of the refrigerator in the kitchen. Since this might become an on-going outreach program for us, more space is required at the church.

Thanks for your consideration!



Ladies Group Update...

We continue to participate in social ministry opportunities. In four days, we collected over 500 food items for the Pantry and thank all of you for your generous donations. Here is a note from **Jennifer Coan-Mahmood, Thrivent Engagement Specialist:**

*Your Thrivent Action Team's efforts on behalf of the food pantry partner at **Brown Memorial UMC** have earned that organization a \$500 donation from the Northeast Thrivent Member Network. Food Pantries are in desperate need of supplies, especially given the economic impact of the Coronavirus. You and other Thrivent members from across the Northeast have collectively donated a considerable amount of volunteer hours to gather thousands of food and care items for those in need. The way you and your team have chosen to Live Generously is such an inspiration!*

And from **Quincy Stockton, Westside Food Center:**

We all here at The Westside Food Center appreciate all the work and donations that King of Kings has given us. This time of year can be stressful, and with the added challenge of the pandemic, people are in more need than ever. We truly love the relationship between King of Kings and The Westside Food Center.

To continue to meet Westside Food Center's needs, we are sponsoring a **Holiday Sock Drive**. Socks cover fingers and toes! Please drop off new men's, women's or children's socks in the red bin located in the front door area of the church from now till December 15th.

We plan to send **holiday gift cards** to our military, **valentine** greetings to college students and continue to serve the needs of Brown Memorial Food Pantry. If you have interest in contributing to or buying a new edition of the **KoK cookbook**, please contact Dawnelle Jager (dajager@syr.edu). We will be happy to collect recipes as our quarantine project. IF there is enough interest, we will look to the ELCA for publishing assistance.

Social gatherings are placed on hold and we pray for your safety. We look forward to meeting with all of you someday. May we continue to seek God's guidance as we navigate change and celebrate the joys and blessings of the season.

Dawnelle, Lynn and Jennifer

Church Council

Barb Winkel, Chair
Pat Lebel, Vice Chair
Scarlett Erdley, Financial Secretary
Elena Margrey, Recording Secretary
Carl Bastedo, Treasurer
Alicia Francis, Council Member
Greg Yoder, Council Member
Doug Keim, Council Member
Niel Zuern, Council Member
Rev. Tara Lamont Eastman
Deacon Nancy Wagner

Ministry Teams

Finance, Doug Keim
Property, Niel Zuern
Service Ministry Team, Deacon Nancy
Stewardship, _____
Worship & Music, Deanna Pavlacka
Children's Ministry, Sue Tierney
Young Families, Jen Hepburn
Mutual Ministry Committee, Jerry Foor
Parish Nurse, Health Ministry Team, Carol Genalo
Fellowship, Shari Murray
Transition Team, Anita Leitgeb
Hospitality, Cathy Miller
PALMS, Weta Hayden
Stephen Leader: Marcy Grundner
Stephen Leader: Lynn Myers
Quilters: Donna Huberty
Women's Group: Dawnelle Jager
Women's Group: Jennifer Foor
Women's Group: Lynn Weeks

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