

THE KING'S CROWN



December 2023



King of Kings Lutheran Church

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UPCOMING EVENTS

December 10th—Poinsettia Orders Due

December 13th @ 1:00 pm—Quilt Group

*December 17th—Sunday School Pageant
Church Greening*

December 20th @ 7:30 pm—Blue Christmas Service

December 24th @ 9:30 am, 4:30 pm, 7:30 pm—Christmas Services

December 31st—Ugly Christmas Sweater Sunday

Caregiver Support Group—Wednesdays Dec 6th & Dec 13th @ 9:15 am

Men's Bible Study—Fridays Dec 8th & 22nd @ 6:00 am

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 Desk of Pastor Rebecca

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)

With Advent upon us, the season when we anticipate the birth of the savior we call Prince of Peace, it is impossible to ignore how deeply mired in violence and conflict our world is. Any mentions of specific incidents would likely be outdated by the time this reaches you, but the list is long.

The current crisis in Israel and Gaza is only the most recent piece of a heartbreakingly evergreen tragedy. As painful and overwhelming as the conflict is, Advent calls us to direct our attention to the Holy Land in which Jesus Christ was born, and to pray deeply and work steadfastly for justice and peace. The “little town of Bethlehem” we will sing of sits in the occupied West Bank of Palestine.

For nearly 20 years, our denomination’s engagement in Palestine and Israel has been guided by a program called Peace Not Walls. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) is a long-standing, beloved partner in sharing the gospel and witnessing for peace. The Christian community in Palestine has roots all the way back to Jesus and the disciples. It was a coincidence that the flare-up of violence in October accompanied the release of a report 18-months in the making which reviewed how to renew this campaign and recommended updating its name and focus to SUMUD: For Justice in Palestine and Israel.

Sumud is an Arabic word meaning “steadfastness.” Our holy scriptures tell of God’s steadfast love over and over again. “Be mindful of your mercy, O LORD, and of your steadfast love, for they have been from of old,” says Psalm 25:6. Resisting injustice, interrupting violence, and working for peace require sumud, steadfastness. Advent and Christmas are seasons to center ourselves in this simultaneous promise and vocation which we receive in our baptisms.

More details about Peace Not Walls and SUMUD are available on the ELCA’s website. If you are seeking a way to share financial gifts toward peace and recovery, Lutheran Disaster Response supports hospitals and churches in the area. In the cries of the children of the region, we can hear the cries of the baby Jesus. May we also hear the cries of a new world being born, one in which hunger and war and forced migration will not be known.

With enduring hope,

Pastor Rebecca



December moves us through the longing, the waiting, the anticipation of the Advent season to the joy and wonder of Christmas. December is the darkest month - and we, here in the Northeast, can surely attest to that! What with the cold, dark days, the strife and conflict throughout the world, the anxiety and rush of the season - it can be easy to feel down, disillusioned and discouraged. But the hope and the joy of Christmas is that God comes to us and is with us - Emmanuel - in very real ways.

Through the music of the season, we will once again hear the story of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem, of Jesus' birth in a stable where the animals were kept, of the angels pronouncement to the lowly shepherds - of the shepherd's joy as they ran to tell the good news to others.

But let us not lose sight of the magnitude of this event - that God of the universe and all things chose to come to us as a child born in the humblest of circumstances so that we may be close to Him in very real ways. Christian writer Richard Rohr states it beautifully: "God is manifest in the ordinary, in the actual, in the daily, in the now - in the concrete incarnations of life." It's not just the Christmas "story" - it is the ongoing fact that God is with us always!

Come hear the lessons and the music of Advent and Christmas this month!

Dec. 3 - the Hand Bell Choir will be playing 2 pieces.

Dec. 10th - the Son-Light Choir will be singing songs of the Advent season.

Dec. 17th - The Sunday School Christmas Pageant will be at the 9:30 a.m. service.

Wednesday, Dec. 20th - At 7:30 p.m. will be the "Blue Christmas" service - Steve Kemp will be singing at this service for those struggling with sadness, hardship or loss.

Dec. 24th - the Son-Light Choir will be singing at the **9:30 a.m. service**. At the **7:30 p.m. service** the Hand Bell Choir and the Brass Ensemble will be playing. **All three services** on Dec. 24th will have candle-lighting while we sing "Silent Night".

December 31st - "Lessons and Carols" service at which we'll be singing songs of the joy of Christmas.

Once again, I encourage you to go to "Youtube" and listen to "O Magnum Mysterium" by M. Lauridsen, performed by the Nordic Chamber Choir. Find a quiet time in this busy season to light a candle, sit and just let this gorgeous music wash over you. May you be filled with the awe and wonder of Christ's birth as you listen - it is a true gift of music.

So - "Come, let us adore Him!" as we move through this season of light in darkness, hope in difficult times, and love beyond all measure.

See you in church!

Beth Colbert

Director of Music



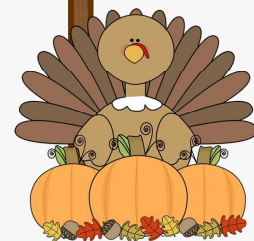
Ugly Christmas Sweater Sunday

Here is one more chance to wear your Ugly Christmas Sweaters for the year! On Sunday Dec. 31st come and sing carols and listen to lessons in your finest of ugly Christmas sweaters. Laughter and fun are bound to ensue.

A FANTASTIC THANKSGIVING FOOD DRIVE

The SUV was absolutely packed with bags and bags of assorted foods for a tasty side dishes. In addition, a check for over \$700 was given to our Food Pantry partners at Brown Memorial. Once again, many families were able to enjoy a traditional Thanksgiving meal. Please know that sincere thanks and prayers come from the staff and volunteers at the Pantry.

We are
Thankful for
YOU!



Reconciling In Christ (RIC)



Ephesians 2:14 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility

These are some more frequently asked questions of the Reconciling Works Organization.

When was the RIC program started and why?

Since 1983, the Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Program has been a public way for faith communities to see, name, celebrate, and advocate for people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions in the Lutheran church. The RIC Program is made up of congregations, synods, colleges, seminaries, outdoor ministries, and other Lutheran organizations. Every ministry setting begins this journey from their own unique context and Reconciling Works is here to help you create an authentic welcome journey that is customized to your community. The purpose of the RIC Program is to ensure the welcome, inclusion, celebration, and advocacy for people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions; work for racial equity and commit to anti-racist work and support the national program.

What happens when a community becomes RIC?

1. Communities are listed on the national public website found at www.ReconcilingWorks.org/FindRIC
2. Through a public partnership with Reconciling Works, your community will continue to set milestones to deepen and expand your welcome
3. RIC partners have access to additional resources tailored to support their ministry.

What is the relationship between Reconciling Works, the ELCA, and the ELCIC?

Reconciling Works is an independently organized 501(c)(3) organization. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC) formally recognize Reconciling Works as an "Independent Lutheran Organization," affirming our collaborative work in reaching out to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual/aromantic people. We advocate for change within institutional churches to ensure that all rites, sacraments, and ministries of the Church are open to all.

If you have other questions, please feel free to contact Barb Winkel or Sarah Richardson.

2024 Envelopes are here!

The 2024 envelopes are available in the Narthex. Please pick yours up soon. If you are still watching from home, please make arrangements with the office for you come and pick them up during the week. If you see a box for someone you are planning on visiting, please feel free to take the envelopes to them.

If there is not a box of envelopes with your name on it, and you would like one, please contact Barb Winkel and she will make arrangements to do so.



Thank you.

Your Financial Secretary

Barb Winkel

People News...

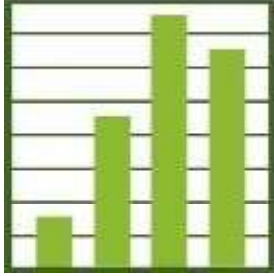
Our sympathy and prayers are extended to Keith Gatling on the passing of his mother, Elsie Gatling, and to Deacon Nancy Wagner on the passing of her father, Richard Chrisfield. May God's love and promise of eternal life bring you comfort and peace.



Congratulations and all good wishes to Kyle and Nicole Miller, who were recently married! Kyle's parents are Steve and Cathy Miller.

The Liverpool High School marching band placed second in the National Class category during the Marching Bank Championships at the JMA Wireless Dome. Emilie Sousou is a member of the marching band. Congratulations!

Thank you to everyone who submitted photos for our photo board during the past year, as we transitioned to welcoming Pastor Rebecca. It sure helps her and Rachel to connect faces with names. As we have started to resume past and new activities, it will also help all of us make better connections with our fellow members. Check it out, the next time you walk past it!



With the busy holiday season upon us, we wanted to remind you that Annual Meeting reports are due to Rachel in the church office by Tuesday January 2nd.

Please email to
kokchurchsecretary@gmail.com

COUNCIL CORNER

Council welcomed Pastor Rebecca Truland to her first meeting. Pastor described progress relocating to our community and getting to know congregation members through the first of the small group events, and through individual outreach efforts to shut-ins.

Council discussed clarifications to the job description for the vacant Faith Formation position to further clarify benefits and expectations. Posting for this position is expected after the holidays, in order to give Pastor time to observe office workflow and to avoid interfering with seasonal worship planning.

Efforts are underway to recruit members into the Building & Grounds committee, with seven (7) folks currently committed. Upon assembling a core group of knowledgeable and/or interested persons, the committee will meet a few times yearly to identify opportunities for participation in maintenance and operations activities. You're invited to call Neil Zuern for further information. (Note: there is a whiteboard of church facility projects to be accomplished, posted in the mechanical room).

Council plans to review the proposed 2024 budget at the December 14 meeting.

Sunday School & Stepping Stones News for Families from Sue

December Schedule:

Dec 10 Class: Rehearsal for Pageant & Lesson Craft The Magi

Dec 17 The Pageant (during church) & Craft for Greening of the Church "Peace Crane" tree & Pizza Lunch

Dec 24 No Class/Activity Christmas Eve Day

Dec 31 Activity Station - New Year

Sue Evans and Pastor Truland will be meeting soon to discuss the schedule for the rest of the year. We will be seeking Sowers of Faith and a new sign up sheet will be posted on the Narthex bulletin board. Future lessons will include Abraham's family tree and include lessons learning about Rebekah & Isaac, Jacob & Esau, and Joseph.

If you have any questions, please email or call the office, or reach out to Sue Evans at Sunday School.

2023 Contribution Deadline

Please have all 2023 contributions into the office by 12:00 noon on Dec. 29th. Any contributions received after this time will be placed under your 2024 contributions.

Thank you for your continued support in the ministries at King of Kings.

Barb Winkel, King of Kings Financial Secretary



Konnections

If you've been in church or watched online at all during the past few weeks, you may have heard me talk about this thing called **Konnections**, with a K. If you haven't heard for one reason or another, let me tell you about it now.

Konnections is designed as a fun way for different families at King of Kings, who may not know each other to get together once a month for three or four months at each other's homes for a simple meal and friendly conversation.

And the K in Konnections is for King of Kings, of course!

How would we do this? When would we do this?

Well not to worry, we won't try to start it during the busy holiday season. That would be Krazy. We're looking to start this in January, but the sign up sheet may already be up by the time you see this.

How does it work? Well, when you sign up you put how many people are in your household that you want to take part (that's right...children are welcome too), and then we'll try to work to put together groups of three or four households to do a meal a month rotating through the different households.

Now don't worry if you don't live in a McMansion. Cheryl and I did this in a small second floor city flat.

And don't worry that you're not the greatest cook in the world. At our house you'll probably get spaghetti.

And don't worry that your home isn't up to Better Homes & Gardens standards. In our family we see having company over as a incentive for cleaning up!

What we want is for us to all get to know each other better, and to make...
Konnections!

So look for that sign up list, and get your names on it!

KING OF KINGS QUILT GROUP

"Let it snow, let it snow, let it snow." "Walking in a Winter Wonderland." "Baby, it's cold outside." "Snowflakes that stay on my nose and eyelashes." "The cold never bothered me anyway."

Come on, admit it, you were singing these lyrics in your head as you read them, weren't you? Snow and cold, this is only the beginning. And whether you love it or hate it, it is coming. But other than hibernating for months, curling up next to the fireplace with a cup of hot chocolate, or going south for the winter, we will have to face it.



With a pair of hand warmers to slip in your mittens or pockets, a winter walk could be a nicer experience. When your hands are warm, you are marveling at God's wonders instead of wondering when you will be able to get back inside!

The quilt group meets the second Tuesday every month at 1 p.m. in the Sunday School Wing. Join us for a simple sewing class (no quilting, I promise) to make a pair of hand warmers for yourself, or for friends and family on Tuesday, December 12. For what to bring, contact Donna Huberty.

"Sleigh bells ring, are you listening,
In the lane, snow is glistening,
A beautiful sight,
We're happy tonight,
Walking in a winter wonderland." (With our hand warmers, of course!)

Schedules for December

Usher

12/3 Hollie Zimmerman/Karen Wild
 12/10 Carl Bastedo/Bob Hickman
 12/17 Darren/Mary Moyer
 12/20 _____
 12/24 9:30am Bob Hickman
 4:30pm Rick/Kathy Sampson
 7:30pm Greg/Julie Yoder
 12/31 Dan/Patti Weingarten

Lector

Kurt Richardson
 Doug Keim
 Beth Head

 Colleen Richardson

 Stephany Richardson

Worship Assistant:

12/3 Bob Lebel/Michele Hayes
 12/10 Jeff Swanson/Weta Hayden
 12/17 Lauren Seiter/Kathy Sampson
 12/20 Bob Lebel/Michele Hayes
 12/24 9:30am Cheryl Gatling
 Michele Hayes/Keith Gatling/Lauren Seiter
 4:30pm WA _____
 Michele Hayes/_____/_____
 7:30pm WA _____
 Michele Hayes/_____/_____
 12/31 Peter Pavlacka/Bob Hickman

Counters

Jenna Wysokowski/Cathy Miller
 Niel Zuern/Steve Salem
 Doug Keim/Lorraine Savidge
 n/a
 Blitzen/Dasher

 Barb Winkel/Weta Hayden

Tech Booth:

12/3 Howie Mansfield/Don Spoerke
 12/10 Dave Krause/Don Spoerke
 12/17 Jacob Sousou/Dave Krause
 12/20 Dave Krause/Pat Lebel
 12/24 9:30am Howie Mansfield/Francis Ngumbi
 4:30pm Dave Krause
 7:30pm Barb Winkel
 12/31 Dave Krause

Altar Guild for December:

Peg Gosch/Cathy Miller

****For any questions or changes to the schedules, please reach out to the person who coordinates volunteers for your role and then let Rachel know of any changes.*

King of Kings Lutheran Church
8278 Oswego Road
Liverpool, NY 13090

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