



The Shiloh Informer

December
2016

Shiloh Lutheran Church
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In This Issue:

- 1: Pastor's message
- 2: message
 - Continued
 - In Our Prayers
 - LCAP
 - OCC
- Announcements:
 - Mark the Date
 - Advent Holden Services
 - OCC
 - Good Gifts
- 3: Cont :
 - Annual Reports
 - Crocheting Group
 - What Makes Christmas?
- 4:back page

Pastor John's Message: Adapted from Marilyn Sharpe Ministries, LLC

WORDS MATTER

A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger – Proverbs 15:1

Words, words, words. We speak them, hear them, listen to them, ignore them, all day, every day. Words are the way we communicate ideas or shut down learning. We build others up with our words or we tear them down. They are the way we express our feelings or repress the feelings that are denied. They are the ways in which we build bridges of reconciliation to one another or build impenetrable walls between us.

When I was a child, kids chanted, "Sticks and stones can break my bones, but words can never hurt me." It wasn't true then and it isn't true now. Words have incredible power to wound. Because they are so pervasive, we often accept them and believe them, even when they are unkind, untrue, and unhelpful. Sometimes we let them in, knowing that they will inflict damage on us. Sometimes we hurl them at others, knowing they will wound.

This has been a particularly vicious season of political rhetoric, tolerating and repeating words that my parents would never have allowed in our home when I was growing up. Words we didn't let go unchallenged and uncorrected in the family we raised. Words not tolerated in the families my children and friends are raising today.

How can we - in home and congregation - be healers? (On November 9), we need to find a way to come together as one big national family that can disagree, without being disagreeable. We need to reach out beyond national borders and recognize all of God's children as our brothers and sisters, created in the image of God.

FOR OUR CONGREGATIONS

We are a people of the Word. Jesus! the Word made flesh! who came to reconcile and heal and bring us together. We gather around the words that give life! and that abundantly. Listen to the words of Ephesians 2: 14 - 22: *For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, and might reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it. So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; for through him both of us have*

access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.

What would it take for us to be "built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God?" Consider the following messages and behaviors:

- All are welcome ... it is more than a hymn or a slogan. We live it every day in every interaction, inviting, welcoming, connecting, supporting, affirming each and every person as one who belongs.
- Words are used with care. Some words simply are not to be used.
- Correction is delivered with clarity and grace and kindness, giving time to reflect and an opportunity to say it more kindly.
- Apologies flow freely and authentically to those we have hurt with our words. Repentance is lived, as words and behaviors change. Forgiveness is offered. Trust is rebuilt.
- We are patient, creating space and opportunity for change.
- Take it home and out into the world and practice it there every single day.

FOR OUR FAMILIES

From the youngest to the oldest, let home be

- *Sanctuary*, where all are safe from hurled invectives, cruel name calling, and labels that diminish.
- Ringed with *role models*. We are surrounded by those who use words in generous, appreciative, caring ways and who make that contagious.

(message continues on next page)

- Where words are *never used as weapons*.
- The place we are taught to *test words before we speak* them by answering three questions: Is it TRUE? Is it KIND? Is it HELPFUL?
- Filled with *second chances* to do it right and to make it right.
- A place of *affirmation*.
- Filled with *deep listening and attentive presence*.
- A space to *discover our gifts* and hear others name them.
- Suffused with *unconditional/ove*, shown and spoken.
- The place we *practice* all we learn in our congregation.

In Our Prayers: Mayo & Betty Dull, Calvin Dull, Leasa Cooper, Michael Dull, Joyce Wilson, Brenda Mann Jones, Bill & Frances Lefler, Ginny Bird (Pat Komars' sister-in-law), Dorinda Witty, Pat McKinney, David Rhinehard, Debbie Kepley, Philip O'Toole, Maureen O'Toole, Joe Youngblood, Peggy Norris, Kanaan, Tim Chandler



Lewisville Community Assistance Program (LCAP): items for this month are mustard and jellies.

Operation Christmas Child: as you shop for Christmas gifts please pick up extra items for 2017 shoeboxes. Look for items of the month in upcoming newsletter, bulletins and OCC bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall.

Advent Holden Services

On Sunday evening during our Advent Season, November 27-December 18, Christ Lutheran will host the Holden Prayer services in their sanctuary located 3205 South Main Street in Winston-Salem. Members from Shiloh will be participating in the service of music, liturgy, and scripture. Refreshments of coffee, hot cider, cakes, cookies, and doughnuts will be provided at 6:30 pm prior to the service. Also Shiloh will provide light refreshments on December 4 and December 18.

If you need transportation, please see Janet Hutchens.. Again, please check with Janet if you can provide a snack item.



Operation Christmas Child (OCC)

Thanks to everyone who participated in the Operation Christmas Child shoebox program for 2016.

We delivered 27 gift-filled shoeboxes to the collection Drop-off church at River Oaks Community Church on Lewisville-Clemmons Road. We had 20 shoeboxes last year.

As you shop during this Christmas season and after Christmas, please look for items for 2017 shoebox campaign. The OCC collection box is in the Fellowship hall near the kitchen. Look for "Follow your Box" to see where Shiloh's shoeboxes were sent for 2016.

Thanks to an anonymous donation to Operation Christmas Child earlier in the year, there were sufficient funds to cover shipping with funds left over to be used in future shipping or purchase extra items for the shoeboxes.

Announcements continue on next page

A n n o u n c e m e n t s

Mark the Date

Plan to attend the annual Congregational meeting on Sunday, December 4, following the 10:45 am morning worship service. Election of new council representatives for the upcoming year and approval of the 2017 budget are on the agenda

The newly elected council representatives will be installed on the following Sunday, December 11.

On December 18, the joint choirs of Baltimore United Methodist Church and Shiloh Lutheran will present their annual Christmas cantata. The cantata will be presented at both churches, early that morning at Baltimore and then at Shiloh at our regular service time of 10:45. The December council meeting will be following the Christmas Cantata. The newly elected council representative are encouraged to attend the December council meeting as Council Officers and committee council representatives will be decided.

Good Gifts Christmas Tree

Please be sure to visit the Good Gifts Christmas display found in the hallway of the Fellowship Hall. If you would like to help it's as easy as 1,2,3! 1. Decide on the gift you would like to give from the Christmas balls on the tree (remember some of the larger gifts could come from an extended family, your workplace, or a group of friends).

2. Pick up an order form and envelope found next to the tree.

3. Mark accordingly and send it off with your donation.

Be sure to keep your Christmas ball as a reminder of the wonderful things the ELCA can do with your help! Our goal is to have an empty tree by Christmas!

Crocheting Group

The crocheting group will meet on Tuesday, December 6, in the Fellowship Hall. They will take a break and resume meeting on Tuesday, January 3. The Group has been busy making granny squares to complete an afghan to be donated to Brenner's Children's Hospital. The first afghan has now been completed.

Annual Reports Due January 8

Year-end reports from committee chairpersons, officers, and group leaders and any other information to be included in the Annual Reports should be turned in to Ruth Miller by January 8. Also please give any updates to addresses, emails, or contact numbers so this information can be corrected prior to having the Annual Reports/Directory printed. If you are aware of contact information corrections for other members and friends to be included, notify Ruth Miller or Gail Dull.

Congregation Meeting will be scheduled at a later date to approve the Annual reports/Directory once they have been completed and printed.

WHAT MAKES CHRISTMAS?

"Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord". (Luke 2: 10,11)

What makes Christmas?

Is it a beautifully decorated tree with it's many lights,

reminding us that Christ is the light of the world?

Is it the gifts beneath the tree,

reminding us of God's greatest gift to us - *Christ!*

Christ was born into a poor world, yet He brought the greatest riches we can know

(His life and our salvation), giving them as a free gift to all who would accept Him.

Is it the star on top, leading us to Christ as a star led the wisemen to Him,

where we can give the gift of our greatest treasure-our lives to Christ?

Is it the old familiar songs we love to hear and sing,

telling the wonderful story of love and salvation, adoration and worship?

Is it being with family and/friends, sharing and giving? It's no wonder that we think

of Christmas in connection with love and gifts! God set the example by giving us Christ.

When we know and love Christ, we love even the most needy and helpless,

with whom we can share our treasures.

*And so we thank God for His Son,
For all the wondrous things He's done,
And for His love that leaves out none;
It's Christmas time again. (J T Bolding)*



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

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Worship Schedule

Sunday School: 09:30 am

Worship Service:10:45 am

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Christmas Eve
Candlelight Service with
Holy Communion
at 11 pm
Christmas Day Worship
Service at 10:45 am
Lessons & Carols

The Shiloh Informer

is distributed the first Sunday of every month. Information is due the **20th** of each month to Gail Dull at: mdull@windstream.net

Announcements for each Sunday's bulletin should be sent to Ruth Miller by **4 pm Thursdays** at millerrc55@gmail.com

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