



LCMC
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December 2024 Newsletter



In this Issue:

Pastor Ethan

[From the Pastor](#)

[Nominating Committee](#)

[Veterans Recognition Day](#)

Youth & Family

[Youth Christmas Cookie Decorating](#)

ALCW

[Shoebox Wrap-Up](#)

Choir

[Children's Choir](#)

Regular Features

[Mission Focus](#)

[Service Group](#)

[Birthdays and Anniversaries](#)

[Calendar](#)

From the Pastor....

THE WONDER OF CHRISTMAS

To you, the LORD's beloved people of American Lutheran Church,

The Christmas season is officially here, and so is all the busyness it brings. There's so much to do! I'm sure you're making a list in your head right now, and of course you're checking it twice, but let's stop for just a moment. No, seriously. Set this down and don't pick it back up until you've taken a nice deep breath.

Holidays are chaotic in the best of times, but this year might especially wild. Shopping lines are – as always – long, gift availability is limited, and the wobbly economy has prices raised to shocking highs. Then there's the general busyness of trying to make every party, celebration, and event. As for rest and recovery, well, that might have to wait until the New Year! There's so much hustle and bustle that it's hard to imagine having time to actually think about the meaning of Christmas, but here's your opportunity.

American folklorist and singer John Jacob Niles once visited the town of Murphy in Appalachian North Carolina. While attending a fundraising meeting held by evangelical Christians, Niles heard something that made him stop and *wonder* about Christmas. He said, "A girl had stepped out to the edge of the little platform attached to the automobile. She began to sing. Her clothes were unbelievable dirty and ragged, and she, too, was unwashed. Her ash-blond hair hung down in long skeins... But, best of all, she was beautiful, and in her untutored way, she could sing. She smiled as she sang, smiled rather sadly, and sang only a single line of a song."

From the Pastor (Continued)

The girl, named Annie Morgan, repeated the fragment seven times in exchange for a quarter per performance, and Niles left with “three lines of verse, a garbled fragment of melodic material, and a magnificent idea.” Based on that fragment, Niles composed the carol “I Wonder as I Wander” that we know today. The words to this song ask us to follow Niles’ example, to stop and contemplate the reason for the Christmas season:

*I wonder as I wander out under the sky,
How Jesus the Savior did come for to die.
For poor on’ry people like you and like I.
I wonder as I wander out under the sky.*

*When Mary birthed Jesus, ‘twas in a cow’s stall,
With wise men and farmers and shepherds and all.
But high from God’s Heaven a star’s light did fall,
And the promise of ages it then did recall.*

*If Jesus had wanted for any wee thing,
A star in the sky, or a bird on the wing,
Or all of God’s angels in Heav’n for to sing,
He surely could have it, ‘cause He was the King.*

Despite the hustle and bustle, may this year’s Christmas be a blessed one for you, a cherished pause to reflect on God coming to share His love with us as our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! He came, lived, died, and rose again to save you from sin, eternal death, and the powers of evil, and that mighty miracle began with the announcement of Christmas. Isn’t that wonder-full?

By grace, through faith, in Christ,
Pastor Ethan Fearing
320-874-0104



Message from Nominating Committee

Dear Congregation, “For God is working in you, giving you the DESIRE and the POWER to DO what pleases Him.” *Philippians 2:13*. Please, personally, consider this promise from God’s Word, if you are contacted by a member of the nominating committee for serving on a board or committee in 2025. **THANK YOU!**

Youth & Family

YOUTH DECORATING PARTY

CHRISTMAS *Cookies*

DECEMBER
01/2024

6:00 - 8:00

Come hang out at the church,
and help decorate cutout
cookies that will be served for
the Christmas program.



Children's Choir

SAVE THE DATE

We love to sing at American Lutheran Church!

Sunday School children are invited to sing songs during the 9:00am service. We will practice at 8:15am in the choir room.

Thanksgiving Singing

November 24th

9am Worship Service

Christmas Program Practice

December 1st

10:15am Sunday School

December 8th

10:15am Sunday School

Christmas Program Service

December 15th

9am Worship Service



Questions?

Call Alyssa Fearing 320-304-3691

Veterans Recognition Day



We were pleased to have had **Gary, Eugene and John** at worship on November 10th to represent the Armed Forces for Veterans Recognition Day. We celebrated with them with a “God Bless America” cake following worship.

I was born about one month before Peal Harbor. My dad was not able to participate in that war because of a medical condition, so he served by building Troup Gliders at Wold Chamberlain Air Force field! Citizens of our country have been proud to answer the needs of the USA in Europe, the Pacific, Korea, Viet Nam, and the Middle East.

I know many of our ALC members are my age or older, so they have many memories, as I do, of these various conflicts. As we move ahead, we **MUST** remember to thank the Lord for the multiple ways in which our country has been blessed. Each of us needs to instill in our children the importance of the service of our armed forces!

Blanche Tirk

Shoebox Wrap-Up – Page 1

741

If you have not heard the news this season - our exciting number is 741! Yes, we - YOU - filled and donated shipping/teaching/processing/distributing 741 Shoeboxes. 741 toddlers, adolescents and teens will learn of Jesus and how much God LOVES them, many for the very first time because of the pens, pencils, toothbrushes, hair brushes, toys and SO many other gifts you donated. If we put 20 items in 741 boxes - YOU do that math! How many thousands of individual pieces is that?

Included in your donations were the \$\$\$ to transport Shoeboxes to ALL THE WORLD, publishing "Greatest Journey" booklets in each child's language, training teachers in their countries - all the millions of details included in a project such as this.

Every gift, whether it be one stuffed animal or 500 pens, is now on its way! We have been told of so many ways in which these boxes bless a child. All of our friends who have helped with this project can share how THEY are blessed by serving "Around the World!"

Thank you ALL! I think in 2025 we should have a "Donation" accounting, not of HOW MUCH is given but how many of you gave! I would like to shake hands, say "thank you" personally to each one! Whether you are a wood worker, you sew, crochet, knit, shop - every item you brought is now filling a spot in a Shoebox on a journey of probably thousands of miles!

If you were not able to physically participate, share in the Shoebox experience by looking over the photos we have included here. We pray that maybe next year YOU will join in the fun and the blessing! Remember though, we are able to accept your gifts year round! Watch for after holiday or season sales for great Shoebox bargains. We have a storage room in which we can keep your gifts until 2025!

THANK YOU

THANK YOU

THANK YOU

THANK YOU

Shoebox Wrap-Up – Page 2

Shoebboxes take blessings around the world!



Talented
crochet-ers
made
hundreds of
dual-purpose
bags to
contain bars
of soap for
storage or
scrubbing!



Nearing 741 boxes packed.
Almost done – with a little
help from our FRIENDS!

"SEED" we have
stored for packing
2025
Shoebboxes! This is
to remind and
encourage you to
watch for Shoebox
bargains
throughout
the year! We
would love to have
our storeroom
packed FULL by
October 2025!



A little sugar will give us LOTS
of energy for box packing!



Children join Pastor in
blessing SHOEBBOXES
which will be sent around
the world.



Delivering
packed
shoebboxes to
River of Life!

Mission Focus



ABOUT US

Our Mission: Kidstown International cares for orphaned and neglected children by supporting children's homes that improve quality of life and educational opportunities in a Christ-centered environment, giving them hope for the future.

Our Vision: Kidstown is where every child is loved and equipped to impact the world.

OUR HISTORY

After traveling to Romania in the early 1990s, Mike Hollander established Kidstown Romania for the purpose of raising money to expand the Bethesda Home, a children's orphanage supporting abandoned children in Romania.

Over the next several years, Kidstown grew to support ten homes in Romania. Kidstown helped local orphanages provide for children's basic needs and give them opportunities for education.

In 2005, God began to open the doors in India and Nepal, where the challenge of abandoned, orphaned and children at risk is enormous. During the next ten years, Kidstown became aware of 40 additional homes that needed help to answer the call of caring for children.

As of 2020, Kidstown International is helping to care for nearly 1,000 children living in 49 orphanages in Romania, India, and Nepal.

Children across the world are lifting up prayers for something to change in their life. For some kids, everything has been taken away, and they are left with nothing but their prayers. For others, they have witnessed answers to their prayers, yet they face new challenges.



Service Group 6 – Nov - Dec

Service Group Responsibilities:

- Serve for funerals on a rotating basis every 7th Funeral.
- Serve for special events occurring during the two-month period.
- Call for Ushers during the two-month period.

Group 6 Leaders: **Martin, Gary & Betty**
 Alsleben, Larry & Bonnie

Group 6 Members:

Atkinson, Dave & Julie
Blumke, Sharon
Bruder, Al & Melinda
Durheim Delvin & Deb
Ellingson, Dale & Sue
Ellingson, Mark & Jody
Guse, Linda & Dols, Kimberly
Hedlund, Jammie
Helland, Stacy
Jacobsen, Russ & Jean
Kruzel, Bob
Marcyes, Heather
Parker, Jason & Amanda
Poegel ,Tom & Peggy
Prill, John & Sue
Schultes, Dean
Thompson, Carole

December

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

3rd Sandy Westerberg
4th Donovan Hanson
4th Marlyne Klinder
5th Larry Alsleben
6th Bonnie Alsleben
6th Evelyn Holman
9th Emma Lubbers
9th Helen Monson
11th Allison Coyer
11th Havyn Fearing
12th Brad Kircher
12th Joni Young
13th Blake Schultz
17th Nic Holman
22nd Kermit Goldenstein
24th Sue Prill
26th Phyllis Winters
28th Celeste Miller
30th Austin Evenson
31st Gavin Hasse

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

11th Gary & Pam Schneekloth
12th Mark & Jen Meagher



ALC CALENDAR DECEMBER 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:00am Worship Service with Communion  10:15am Sunday School Christmas Program Practice 6:00pm Youth Christmas Cookie Decorating	2 7:00pm Trustee Meeting	3 8:15am Staff Meeting	4 5:00pm Family Night Supper  6:00pm Youth Group Grades K-6 6:00pm Confirmation Class 7:00pm Group Grades 7-12 8:00pm Deacon Meeting	5	6	7
8 8:00 am Board of Education Meeting 9:00am Worship Service 10:15am Sunday School Christmas Program Practice	9 6:00pm Staff Meeting	10	11 9:30am Esther Circle 5:00pm Family Night Supper  6:00pm Youth Group Grades K-6 6:00pm Confirmation Class 6:30pm Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm Group Grades 7-12 8:00pm Church Council Meeting	12	13	14
15 8:15am Children's Choir Practice 9:00am Children's Christmas Program Worship Service "A Night Like No Other" 	16 6:15pm Sarah Circle Singing Christmas Carols and bringing Christmas Treats to Meadow Place 7:00pm Sarah Circle Bible Study	17 8:15am Staff Meeting	18 11:00am Newsletter Articles Due 5:00pm Family Night Supper  6:00pm Youth Group Grades K-6 6:00pm Confirmation Class 6:30pm Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm Group Grades 7-12	19	20	21
22 8:15am Choir Practice 9:00am Worship Service 10:15am Movie "Journey to Bethlehem" after Worship Service 	23	24 8:15am Staff Meeting 4:00pm Christmas Eve Worship Service "Hymns of Hope" with Communion  6:00pm Christmas Eve Worship Service "Carols by Candlelight" with Communion 	25 Office Closed for Christmas Day Holiday 10:00am Christmas Morning Worship Service "Merry Melodies" 11:30am Free Community Christmas Dinner 	26	27	28
29 9:00am Worship Service with Communion  10:00am Prayer at Altar after Service	30	31 8:15am Staff Meeting				