



# People Need Light

Without light, the human eye is a worthless organ, unable to discern shape, color, depth, or size. Without light, we might as well be blind, because we can see nothing. The presence of light alters everything for us.

Just as the sun illumines our world and allows us to see, so too Jesus, the “Sun of Righteousness,” illumines the events of our lives and enables us to “see” in a spiritual way.

Without Jesus, human beings are selfish creatures, living in fear and spiritual darkness, unable to help anyone but themselves. Jesus reveals the power of love, models a life of service, and enables us to become inheritors of God’s gracious gifts while we still live. The fruit of the Spirit are the gifts of spiritual sightedness: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Galatians 5:22).

The season of Epiphany is the season of the “Sun of Righteousness.” Epiphany is a celebration of “revelations” or “sightings” of the Lord Jesus in our midst. He is revealed as God’s Son at his baptism; displays his power at the wedding at Cana; is transfigured in glory in front of James, Peter, and John. Jesus walks on water, heals people, prays, and teaches about God’s love. He models the way of peace for us.

Let us pray, during this season of Epiphany, for revelation to us. Let us pray for our own transformation, for the abrupt “Aha!” that alters our life simply by presenting itself, illuminating our path, and revealing a hidden truth to us.

Let us pray for our new council (to be elected in early February), for everyone in leadership, and for the strength of our families, that the Sun of Righteousness may dawn for us all.

Peace is yours,  
Pastor Laura



*ps. Has Jesus illuminated your life? Given you an aha! ? Revealed the power of love? Have you seen Jesus? I’d love to hear about it!*



# A glance at January Ministry Happenings....



- January 1 - Sandwich Making - 7:30 am
- January 5 - Twelfth Night Party & potluck - following worship
- January 7 - Faith Formation - "Don't Sing Songs to a Heavy Heart" - 5 pm -
- January 7 - Confirmation - 5 pm
- January 8 - Bible Study - 9:30 am
- January 8 - Council Meeting - 7 pm

- January 9 - Quilting - 9 am
- January 10 - First Contact - Screening #3 - 7 pm
- January 12 - Congregational Town Hall Meeting
- January 13 - DUE DATE FOR ANNUAL REPORTS
- January 14 - Faith Formation & Confirmation - 5 pm
- January 14- Courage/Compassion/Connection - 7 pm
- January 18 - Men's Breakfast - 8 am
- January 18 - Women's Ministry - 10 am
- January 25 - Way of Christ Team Building - 8:30 am - 4 pm
- January 26 - Centering Team - following worship
- January 27 - Social Ministry Mtg. - 7 pm



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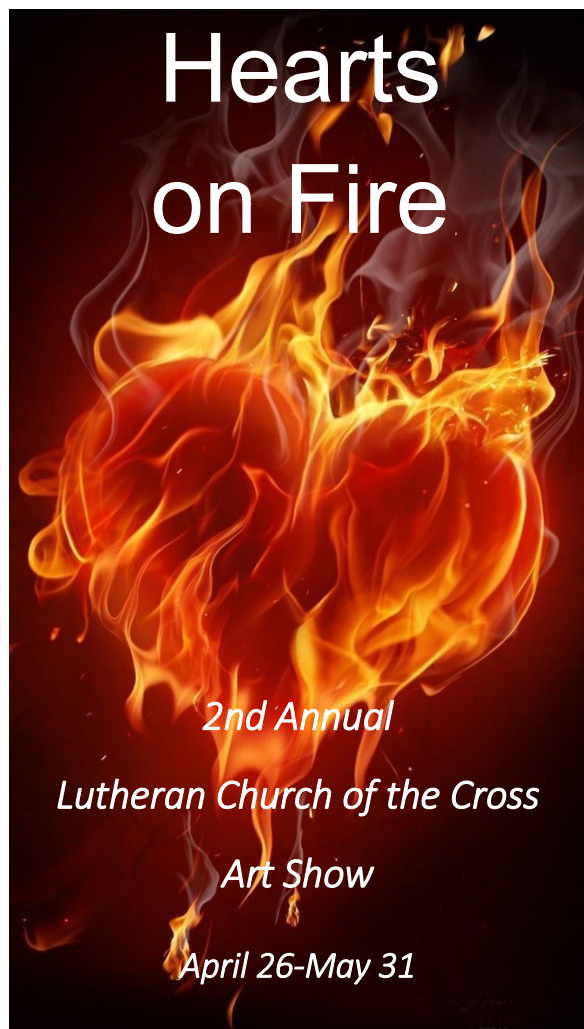
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**Mission**  
 Gathered by God to worship and grow.  
 Empowered by Spirit to love and care for each other  
 Living Christ's love by witnessing to all.

**Vision**

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Church of the Cross Art Show

### *Call for submissions*



On Easter Sunday, Jesus rose triumphant from the grave. He conquered sin, violence, and death, proving LOVE cannot be killed. On Saturday his friends thought they would never see him again, but on Sunday he met them on the road to Emmaus and their hearts were set on fire.

*See the full story in Luke 24:13-35.*

• As you create art for our annual show, engage these questions:

- *What do you love about your church?*
- *What do you love about your life?*
- *How has God set your heart on fire?*
- *How is love changing your world?*

Parents, help your kids think about how Jesus living in our hearts changes everything...and talk to them about what they might create for the show.

#### **Submission guidelines**

All art is due in the office by Sunday April 19

Label the back (or underside) with your name

Are you under 18? *Submit no more than 5 pieces*

Are you 18 or older? *Submit 1 piece only*

**Show opening: April 26    Show closing: May 31**



On the last day of Christmas, come to church and celebrate with frivolity. As we remind ourselves once again that we are called to follow "*God's fool*" (Jesus the revolutionary presence of God in weakness, humility, and self-sacrifice), we "act the fool" too. The last day of Christmas is about experiencing power topsy-turvy, worshipping the God who "levels the playing field," and celebrating the wonder and joy of life together in the kingdom of God, where all things have been made new by the God who came as a little baby to lie in a pile of straw. Some of the activities of Twelfth Night:

- Mega-sized mini-golf (snow permitting)
- Annual Crokinole Tournament, complete with prizes for the losers
- Ice luminarias
- Outdoor fire
- Hotdog roasts & smores
- Epiphany verse hunt for the kids
- Photo booth where you can be Herod, Pilate, Caesar, or another sort of "king"
- Conversations about crazy things that cause community and creative ways of self-sacrifice
- Festive Twelfth Night food and drink, including King's Cake

Come in costume, if you like. Twelfth Night is the traditional night to dress as your alter-ego, or to reverse roles with someone who has either more or less social or political power than you. The crazier and more satirical the better! If you'd like to dress up when you arrive, the costumes in ACTS 2 will be available.

**Our Twelfth Night celebration will immediately follow Sunday worship on January 5.**

Bring a finger food to share and **sign up for the Crokinole Tournament any time in December by calling the office.** Don't have a partner for Crokinole? We'll find you one!

## Hallgrímskirkja Gingerbread Church

A local person of Icelandic descent created a gingerbread sculpture of Hallgrímskirkja, the Viking Church in Reykjavik for a baking competition. It is 2 feet high, 2 feet wide and 4 feet in length mounted on the board. It will be on display at church until the Twelfth Night party on January 5.



Hallgrímskirkja Church is a Lutheran parish in Reykjavík, Iceland. At 74.5 metres high, it is the largest church in Iceland and among the tallest structures in the country. The church is named after the Icelandic poet and clergyman Hallgrímur Pétursson, author of the Passion Hymns. It was built by State Architect Guðjón Samúelsson (1887-1950). His design of was commissioned in 1937; construction started in 1945 and was completed in 1986, just in time for the 200-year anniversary of Reykjavík.

# LEAD ... love God with all your heart



You are invited to join Faith Formation **Tuesdays 5-7pm - January 7,14,21,28**. Please bring potluck to share

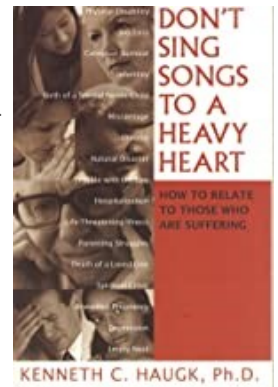
Following our meal together we will study “Don’t Sing Songs to a Heavy Heart” by Kenneth Haugk.

A pastor wrote: “We are all called to care. This book provides the tools and understanding we need to be a help and comfort to others. A must read for everyone.”

Please register with Dianne in the office or give me a call.

*No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. 1 John 4:1-2*

Wendy McCulloch # 403-208-6747



## Cause of the month for January

### In Mission With El Salvador with Pastor Brian Rude

Thank you to everyone who supported our Christmas project – ‘stuff a pair of socks’ for the Mustard Seed. We were able to send 2 boxes of stuffed socks. Also, thank you for donations to Families In Need in support of members and friends of our congregation during this Christmas Season.

Our next meeting will be on **Monday, January 27, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.**

# LEAD ... love God with all your soul

## Plans work or they don't. Love always works. Go with the sure thing.

The entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command:

“Love your neighbor as yourself.”

Galatians 5:14

What is it about January 1 and making New Year's resolution? I think they're terrific because they get people inspired to move toward the person they want to be. Later in January, I go around asking people if they made any resolutions – it gives you a window into what their hopes and dreams are. One predictable recurring theme is friends who want to go to the gym on a regular basis. They say their gyms are like ghost towns in November and December, then January hits and they get as busy as a New York City subway. They also say the crowds begin to trickle down as the month goes on and by February they're back to the familiar faces they see throughout the year. If only we could make our commitments surefire bets, right? Here's the thing. Plans are a toss-up: sometimes they work out and sometimes they wither. Love always works. What if we simply commit to love?

Don't plan on doing it or make a resolution to do it the way people hope to go to the gym. Just do it. No plan, no agenda. Just Jesus leaking out through you into the world. Our lives are a series of positive experiences and more than a few negative ones. Make your life about people and you won't regret it. There's no gym to join, no pounds to lose. Our hours and minutes are what make up our lives, and God never intended relationships to be an afterthought. Make this year about people. We won't give our friends the love they deserve if we try to work them in when our lives slow down. We'll wake up one day and realize we never really got to know the people we bump into every day, even if they're the ones who sit across the dinner table from us each night. If you have to choose between your plans and your loved ones, go with the sure thing and choose love.

Bob Goff

## Give from your heart

We are nearing the time in our life together when we will pass the church budget.

Balanced budgets require two great duties: 1) Fiscal responsibility and 2) Generous giving.

The Church staff and council have been working since October to present to most responsible budget we can. Every line item has been considered and discussed so that the budget we present represents our best estimate of the costs of ministry in 2020. That's the fiscal responsibility part.

But what about generous giving?

Did you know that the church relies upon your growing generosity? The budget items are actually funded by your generous monetary offerings. Your volunteering, goodwill and prayers are not enough to meet the church's budgetary needs.

Have you done the spiritual work of determining your yearly offering to God and church? Believe it or not, giving money is a spiritual discipline. It teaches us to set priorities, make hard choices, focus our attention, and align our hearts with God's. Giving forms us as vessels for God's Holy Spirit to be at work in the world. God is creating a congregation of generous people in our midst, people focused on joining God in the work of re-creation. God is leading us on a journey to make all things new; and God is using our resources to make it possible.

What can you give?

What are you giving?

What will you give?

*Work it out with fear and trembling.... (see Philippians 2)*



# LEAD ... love God with all your soul

## AFFIRMING MINISTRY TEAM

### AFFIRMING FAITH

By now many of you have noticed the round table with a beautiful array of books as you exit the door at the south end of the sanctuary. There is likely to be a member of the Affirming Faith Team hovering over the table or close by.



**Several people have told us they had assumed we were selling books. No. This is our LCOC LENDING LIBRARY.**

We have story books for young children, novels for young adults and adults, as well as memoir and non-fiction. We have also been offered a collection of comic books which will be on the table soon. We currently have about twenty-five books and about half of them are out on LOAN. Like old-school libraries our books have cards in them which we ask you to sign with your name and phone number or email address and leave in the small box on the table. Like old-school libraries we have a three week loan period, but no stern enforcement. We know where to find you!

We would love to keep expanding our collection, and to that purpose we have a wish list at <https://tinyurl.com/y48reony>. The link is on Amazon.com, but we are not promoting Amazon.com. Most of our books are current and are available on site or by order at our local independent bookstores which we encourage you to use. Chapters Indigo Calgary stores also have copies of most of the books or can order them.

Elisabeth Hegerat created this list and continues to add to it. Betty Jane's daughter, she is a librarian with a special interest in books for children and young adults and an active member of the Lethbridge Pride committee. A number of the books are Elisabeth's donations.

If you can donate a book, have a look at the list. If you are aware of other books that speak to affirmation and inclusiveness please let us know. If you would like to donate the cost, we will purchase a book for you.

Our next Crossbeams will include short reviews of some of the books, and we welcome other readers to offer their reviews as well. We also hope there will be the opportunity for some book discussion groups.

Most important, though —please browse and borrow.

## SAVE THE DATE

National Affirming Day!

Celebrate PIE Day! on

**March 15, 2020**

Public, Intentional, Explicit



Affirming PIE Day!



[www.pieday.ca](http://www.pieday.ca)



Workshops are stand alone - \$50 each  
 Introductory Session - \$10  
 Tuesdays 7:00 til 9:30  
 Purchased as a bundle today for \$225 save \$25

Hosted and sponsored by The Lutheran Church of the Cross 10620 Elbow Dr SW, Calgary, AB Calgary, Alberta  
 Questions? Contact Deanna 403-680-3060  
 Register on Eventbrite today look for the link below or search on the event name.

<p><b>November 10, 2019</b>                  Finding Courage to Create the Life You Want                  \$10</p>	<p><i>Every day we face uncertainty, risk and emotional exposure. This is the reality of our lives. We have regarded this as a necessary evil, but what if it is the opportunity to access our inherent courage? Where would you like to be more brave? Lecture and introduction to the series of 5 workshops.</i>  <a href="https://www.eventbrite.com/e/76235216585">https://www.eventbrite.com/e/76235216585</a></p>
<p><b>December 10, 2019</b>                  Cultivating Authenticity and Letting Go of Who People Think We Are                  \$50</p>	<p><i>Every day we are inundated with messages about how we are supposed to act, what we are supposed to look like, and who we are supposed to be. Come free yourself from the constraints of the authentic self and let go of the expectations of others. Don't just think.</i>  <a href="https://www.eventbrite.com/e/79297704569">https://www.eventbrite.com/e/79297704569</a></p>
<p><b>January 14, 2020</b>                  Cultivating Creativity and Letting Go of Comparison                  \$50</p>	<p><i>So many of us have been harmed by the lie that we are not creative people or by the belief that our creations don't measure up. Come light the spark of your own creativity, recognize what you uniquely bring to the world, and release harmful patterns of comparison that douse your internal flame.</i>  <a href="https://www.eventbrite.com/e/79298364543">https://www.eventbrite.com/e/79298364543</a></p>

## One who sees and hears God: The role of Hagar in the Abraham story

Join Seminarian Kate Zaiser on two Wednesday mornings as she shares her thesis project centered on the story of Hagar.

You may recall that Hagar was Sarah's handmaid and became the mother of Ishmael. Sarah later demanded her



expulsion from the family and she and Ishmael struggled for survival in the desert.

Kate will lead two sessions on her learning and wisdom from this ancient story on **Wednesday mornings, January 8 & 15, 9:30-11:30 in the North Meeting Room. You are welcome to attend and to bring a friend!**

In the Spring, Kate will defend her thesis on this

topic at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Saskatoon in preparation for graduation.

Sarah, Hagar, Abraham and Ishmael are prominent figures in

*Farewell to Ishmael*, George Segal 1987

Permanent collection of the Pérez Art Museum, Miami



### **First Contact at Church of the Cross**

**November 1, 7-8:30 pm**

Episode 1: "You Don't Know Me Until You've Met Me"

**November 29, 7-8:30 pm**

Episode 2: "Changing the Lens"

**January 10, 7-8:30 pm**

Episode 3: "Bridging the Divide"

### **Women's Ministry**

**Saturday, January 18th - 10 am**

Please come to discuss the future ministry of this group.

Your input will be extremely valuable.

### **Men's Breakfast**

**Saturday, January 18th - 8 am**

**First meeting of 2020**

Upcoming Congregational meetings:

**Sunday, January 12th** - following worship to review the 2018 financial reports

**Sunday, Feb. 2nd** - following worship Annual General Meeting

"On the Road Again"



January 2020 Message for Congregations and Lay and Rostered Leaders

Dear Beloved of God –

Christmas has come and gone for another year. The music that filled our ears for weeks on end is now hushed. For many the decorations have been stored away for another year.

As the story of the nativity with its shepherds, and the couple and the newborn baby was unfolding, another story was developing. The Magi came from the east and began to ask questions around town: “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? We have followed his rising star and we have come to give him honor.”

King Herod, shaken up by it all, works at getting the Magi to help him locate the child. Indeed, the strange foreigners find the child and are so overwhelmed by what they find that they fall upon their knees in worship and praise and adoration. Like the shepherds on the hillside, they begin to realize that something is changing in their world, that a new thing is happening, that a new world is being born.

It is a wonderful story, full of emotion and intrigue. It provides the inspiration for art and music, for poetry and song. Few stories told through the centuries are so familiar, so beloved, so rich with pathos and delight.

This gospel according to Matthew is telling the story of the birth of Jesus for new Christians, for new followers of the Way. And even in so young a church it seems that their vision was limited. The boundaries of their community were already closing tightly around them. The gospel writer could see already that the new believing community was too easily settling into the idea that this new life in Christ was for them; they were already getting too comfortable with themselves and too easily willing to put others outside.

Matthew shocks his readers right from the first verse of this gospel by recounting the genealogy of Jesus. He does so in a way that must have confounded those who first read it. A genealogy in those days was traced through the male lineage, but Matthews breaks from tradition and includes four women in his list of the ancestors of Jesus. And they were not just any four women. They were women whose lives bore the scars of prostitution and incest, of adultery and murder. Matthew is laying the groundwork, even in his seemingly boring list of names of folks long dead, that the new day that is dawning is quite different from anything one might be expecting.

And this gospel writer keeps up the theme when he introduces the Magi. We often call them wise men. Some have suggested they were philosophers; others have called them astrologers because of their fascination with the stars. But whoever they were and wherever they were

from, Matthew's point is that they are not from here; these are not hometown folk, with hometown values, and hometown upbringing. These were odd folk from some foreign land. Not our kind.

The gospel writer unfolds the rest of the story of Jesus by reminding his readers – and he continues to remind us – that the saving word of God, the death and resurrection of Jesus, is not for some, but for all. Not for men only, but also for women. Not for the apparently perfect only, but for those whose lives bear the scars of unmentionable human pain. Not for the hometown crowd only, but for those on the other side of the tracks. Not for those who believe exactly as we do, but also for those who are struggling to believe anything at all, or those who have lost their faith.

The star comes and rests over the place where the infant Jesus is born. Keep your eyes on it. Gaze at the star. Focus on it. Fix it firmly in your mind. Because in time you will discover that the points of the star will stretch themselves into the form of a cross, and it will no longer rest over the place where the child lay, but will come to rest over your life and the world you inhabit.

Some years ago, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York plastered the city with posters of the altar of St. Patrick's Cathedral lavishly decorated for Christmas. It was a warm and inviting sight. The poster's caption was simple: "Come home."

This Epiphany, "come home." That is the invitation implicit throughout the season. No matter where you've been or what you've been up to, or how long you may have been away, "come home."

This home is for everyone. For wise folk from the east who seek out the child, and the home for the Christ Child in every heart that will have it so.

In Christ Jesus –  
Shalom,  
+Bishop Larry Kochendorfer

*"The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." (Romans 15:13)*



**Synod of Alberta and the Territories**  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

# January 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <b>Cause of the Month</b>            In Mission with El Salvador         </div>						
			<b>1</b> Sandwich Making - 7:30 am <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	<b>2</b> <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	<b>3</b> <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>  SWCG—7 pm	<b>4</b>  SWCG - 4 pm
<b>5</b> Worship - 10 am 12th Night Party - following worship SWCG - 1 - 3 pm	<b>6</b> Kodaly - 9:15 am AA - noon Staff Mtg. - 10:15 am Kodaly - 4 pm Cantare Children's Choir - 6-9	<b>7</b> Coffee @ Tim Hortons - 10 am Confirmation - 5 pm Caring Conversation - 5 pm	<b>8</b> Bible Study - 9:30 am AA - noon -1 AHS Caregivers - 1:30 Cantare Children's Choir - 6-9 SWCG—7 pm Council Mtg. - 7 pm	<b>9</b> Quilting - 9 am Kodaly - 10 am - 2:45 pm Endowment Mtg. - 7 pm Choir - 7:15 pm	<b>10</b> <b>Office Closed</b> First Contact #3 - 7 pm Cantare - 6 - 10:30 pm - F.H. SWCG—7 pm	<b>11</b>  SWCG - 4 pm
<b>12</b> Bible Study - 9 am Worship - 10 am Town Hall Mtg. BLAST SWCG - 1 - 3 pm	<b>13</b> Kodaly - 9:15 am AA - noon Staff Mtg. - 10:15 am Kodaly - 4 pm Cantare Children's Choir - 6-9	<b>14</b> Coffee @ Tim Hortons - 10 am Confirmation - 5 pm Caring Conversation - 5 pm Courage/Conversation - 7 pm	<b>15</b> AA - noon -1 Cantare Children's Choir - 6-9 SWCG—7 pm	<b>16</b> Quilting - 9 am Kodaly - 10 am - 2:45 pm  Choir - 7:15 pm	<b>17</b> <b>Office Closed</b>  SWCG—7 pm	<b>18</b> <b>Women's Ministry - 10 am</b>  SWCG - 4 pm
<b>19</b> Bible Study - 9 am Worship - 10 am BLAST SWCG - 1 - 3 pm	<b>20</b> Kodaly - 9:15 am AA - noon Staff Mtg. - 10:15 am Kodaly - 4 pm Cantare Children's Choir - 6-9	<b>21</b> Coffee @ Tim Hortons - 10 am Confirmation - 5 pm Caring Conversation - 5 pm	<b>22</b> Bible Study - 9:30 am AA - noon -1 Cantare Children's Choir - 6-9 SWCG—7 pm	<b>23</b> Quilting - 9 am Kodaly - 10 am - 2:45 pm  Choir - 7:15 pm	<b>24</b> <b>Office Closed</b>  SWCG—7 pm	<b>25</b> Way of Christ Training - 8:30 am - 4 pm SWCG - 4 pm
<b>26</b> Bible Study - 9 am Worship - 10 am BLAST Showcase Centering Team - 11:30 - 2 pm SWCG - 1 - 4 pm	<b>27</b> Kodaly - 9:15 am AA - noon Staff Mtg. - 10:15 am Kodaly - 4 pm Cantare Children's Choir - 6-9 Social Ministry - 7 pm	<b>28</b> Coffee @ Tim Hortons - 10 am Confirmation - 5 pm Caring Conversation - 5 pm	<b>29</b> Bible Study - 9:30 am AA - noon -1 Cantare Children's Choir - 6-9 SWCG—7 pm	<b>30</b> Quilting - 9 am Kodaly - 10 am - 2:45 pm  Choir - 7:15 pm	<b>31</b> <b>Office Closed</b>  SWCG—7 pm	