



PASTOR'S LETTER

We start a new year and we pray that it will be a much better year. 2020 was difficult on so many levels. No one was left untouched by the pandemic. Many lost jobs, or had their income cut, and suffered all that goes along with that. Others took seriously the need to self-isolate, which has increased loneliness, decreased activity, and taught us to get our essential items in new ways. Some businesses have thrived and others have not, and many have had to close. Even charities have seen a significant decrease in charitable giving. In some ways, this pandemic has just sped up what was already beginning to happen in our society.

The church has not gone untouched either. Obviously, we had to cease in-person worship and gatherings, where many of our members found friendship and growth in their life. Online worship has been a blessing, but also does not meet the need to be physically together. And just like other charities, our giving has been down, and most of our renters were not using the building. We were blessed that a few continued to donate what they would have given us if they were using the building, but not all could.

The Council through all of this hoped like so many others that the pandemic would not last this long. But at our December meeting, we finally had to cut some of the church staff salaries until we have the income again. I believe that we will feel the financial impact of this pandemic for a while, but I also believe that we can come back from it as well. I thank all of you who have continued to give your offerings.

As we enter 2021, we have the hope that the new vaccines will provide safety. I don't know when everyone will feel safe being in worship together again, but it will happen – just hold on to that hope and to your hope in God. I also ask that you consider what you can financially give to the church in 2021. I don't ask this lightly. I know many are on limited incomes, and I thank you for what you can and will do, but if you have the ability to increase your giving, even by \$5 or \$10 a month, that will go a long way to getting us back to where we ought to be.

I do not like writing these kinds of articles, but you need to know as well. We will get through this – as individuals, a nation, a world and as a church. And God is with us every step of the way. May you, your family, and our world find that 2021 will be a blessed year.

Blessings,
Pastor Sandra

Pastor's Letter 1

Announcements 2

News 3

Information 4

Calendar 5



A most heartfelt THANK YOU to all who gave gifts to our staff this year. God bless you and happy new year!





JANUARY
CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays:

Dick Thackston, 1/14
Lisa Moutria, 1/22

Anniversaries:

DeWitt and Frieda Atkinson, 1/31

JANUARY WORSHIP

We will continue to worship remotely at least until the first council meeting of 2021 on February 21.

INTERN CORNER

Seeing the Christ Child in the Least of Us

As part of my internship this year I have been blessed to be able to work with the Interfaith Welcome Coalition, a San Antonio organization you probably recognize whose goal is to assist immigrants and refugees seeking asylum to the US. They have done this in the past by providing assistance to families who are en route to various places in the US at the bus station and airport, as well as providing temporary shelter. Sometimes families end up staying here longer than is expected. For example, I am helping a family who gave birth to twins after arriving here from Angola. The twins, who were premature, are at very healthy weight now, except one of them is still in the hospital recovering from gastro-intestinal surgery. This family has a very strong Christian faith, and every time I go over to see them, I'm so amazed at how much care and attention they put into nurturing their child. They also have a 10-year-old daughter. I have also been amazed at the different organizations and people who have helped this family on their journey, whether it was been hospital staff, the school which the 10-year-old is attending, the churches which have provided supplies and lodging, or the taxi service that takes them back and forth every single day to the hospital. As we welcome Jesus into the world, I am reminded of what a wonderful gift we have been given in the Christ child, the importance of community, and I am humbled by the gifts that God continues to bestow on us every day that are all around us.

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL STARTING SUNDAY, JANUARY 10TH

Our Assistant Deacon Lisa Diana will be starting a Zoom Bible Hour at 11 a.m. on Sundays!

In January, Deacon Intern Lisa Diana will begin leading an adult bible study using the book, *Finding your Voice in the Psalms: An Invitation to Honest Prayer*, by Elizabeth J. Canham, an Episcopal priest and retreat leader. In it, she “combines biblical scholarship, pastoral experience, and spiritual wisdom in this exploration of seven themes found throughout the Psalms—including anger and disappointment, resting in God’s faithfulness, and learning to praise. Each chapter concludes with a psalm prayer, suggestion for reflection, and a prompt for writing an original psalm.”

While it is not required to purchase the book, there will be copies available in the office for \$12.00. Also, a journal or loose leaf notebook is recommended. Zoom links will be sent out with worship links. Feel free to call the church if you have any questions. You can also email Lisa at lisa.diana1968@gmail.com.



A MESSAGE FROM DEACON INTERN LISA DIANA

Lutheran World Relief Personal Care Kits Project for January

This year for our Service Project we will be putting together personal care kits for Lutheran World Relief. Lutheran World Relief sends these kits to communities around the world who are suffering from disaster, conflict, and poverty. Creating these kits is a tangible way that we as a church can offer our support, and give those who are receiving them a certain amount of dignity and hope in such dire situations. It is one way that we can serve as the hands and body of Christ to those who are in need around the world. In January, the House of Prayer Ministry and Mission Team will be providing more information and instructions for putting these kits together from your home. Please consider participating in this vital ministry.

Thank you, Lisa Diana, Deacon Intern.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Frieda Atkinson, DeWitt Atkinson, Bob French, Donald Leonard, Edna Hacker, Alice Little, Marion Schroeder, Karen French, Kathy Harlan, Faye Randow, Jolanda Wood, Francis Laubach, Anita Carroll, Janelle Kinsel, Marta Yanez, and Our Military, particularly Michael Foglio, Jordan Bielfeldt, and all of our veterans.

WELCOME NEW COUNCIL MEMBERS!

Starting on January 1, 2021, our new and our new Vice-President will be Marcus Trejo, and our new Member-at-Large will be Shirley Vasquez. The Election of Nominating Committee for 2021 is Gloria Bielfeldt, Linda Johnson, Roberta Hanes, and Dick Thackston



The Ninth Annual Gift of Faith Gala will be raising funds for our Campership program and to keep camp affordable for all.

Mark your calendars for March 13, 2021 so you don't miss out on an opportunity to participate in making camp happen for generations to come!

More information about the Gift of Faith Gala will be coming out in the following weeks so be on the look out!

If you would be interested in helping to underwrite or sponsor the event, please contact Jessica at jessica@crosstrails.org



JANUARY 2021

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
					NEW YEAR'S DAY OFFICE CLOSED	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Worship: At 6 a.m., a link will be sent to the virtual service.				FELLOWSHIP HAPPY HOUR 6:30 PM		
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Worship: At 6 a.m., a link will be sent to the virtual service. 11:00 Adult Bible Study via Zoom						
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Worship: At 6 a.m., a link will be sent to the virtual service. 11:00 Adult Bible Study via Zoom				FELLOWSHIP HAPPY HOUR 6:30 PM		
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Worship: At 6 a.m., a link will be sent to the virtual service. 11:00 Adult Bible Study via Zoom						
31						
Worship: At 6 a.m., a link will be sent to the virtual service. 11:00 Adult Bible Study via Zoom						



ARE YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW INTERESTED IN HELPING CHILDREN?

Upbring Foster in Texas is working to create a brighter future for thousands of children across Texas. Our foster families open their hearts and homes because they believe that all children deserve to have a safe, loving, childhood.

- Upbring New Life Children’s Center is a residential treatment center in Canyon Lake, Texas for girls ages 11 to 17 who have experienced severe trauma. Our girls are warriors who are overcoming extraordinary traumatic circumstances.
- Upbring BeREAL walks alongside young adults aging out of foster care into independence.

4 Ways to Make a Direct Impact

- Individual Giving
- Volunteer
- Become a Foster Parent
- Prayer

Thank you for the support and prayers! Please email Amanda.Angell@upbring.org or visit Upbring.org/ChurchPartners to join Upbring’s mission and directly impact the families we serve.

Upbring’s San Antonio Area Programs

Upbring Foster In Texas is working to create a brighter future for thousands of children across Texas. Our foster families open their hearts and homes because they believe that all children deserve to have a safe, loving childhood.

Upbring New Life Children’s Center is a residential treatment center in Canyon Lake, Texas for girls ages 11 to 17 who have experienced severe trauma. Our girls are warriors who are overcoming extraordinarily traumatic circumstances.

Upbring BeREAL walks alongside young adults aging out of foster care into independence.

4 Ways to Make a Direct Impact:



Thank you for your support and your prayers! Please email ChurchPartners@Upbring.org or visit Upbring.org/ChurchPartners to join Upbring’s mission and directly impact the children and families we serve.

Upbring.org/ChurchPartners

THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD



*A Worship service led by the
ELCA bishops elected in 2019*

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

8pm Eastern | 7pm Central

**LIVE on synodical Facebook pages
and websites across the ELCA**

Watch on the Southwest Synod Facebook Page
<https://www.facebook.com/swtsynod>

JANUARY’S
FELLOWSHIP
HAPPY HOURS:

THURSDAY, JANUARY 7
AT 6:30 P.M.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 9
AT 6:30 P.M.



HOUSE OF PRAYER
houseofprayerlutheranchurch@gmail.com
<https://www.facebook.com/hoplcsa/>
www.hoplcsa.org
(210) 696-1194

Worship depends on quarantine restrictions and can be viewed on our website. Office hours are Tuesday through Friday, from 3:00 – 5:30 p.m.; for emergencies, please call Pastor Sandra at 210-248-7837.

Reverend Sandra Leifeste
Dick Thackston, Congregation President
Marcus Trejo, Vice President
Jenifer Larson, Treasurer
Shirley Vasquez, Member @ Large
Dave Johnson, Personnel
Julie Rowe, TBD
Kirsten Mangin, Emmie Lou Schwarzer
Eva Poblano, Fellowship
Roberta Hanes, Stewardship
Bob French, Property
Jennifer Alaniz, CIELO Ministries

A MESSAGE FROM CHRISTIAN
ASSISTANCE MINISTRIES
CAM would like to thank
everybody for the wonderful gifts
that were donated for children in
December.

The toy drive and “Christmas Store”
helped make the holiday better for
so many!

The usual donations for January are
toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo
and soap.

HOUSE OF PRAYER LUTHERAN CHURCH
10226 IRONSIDE
SAN ANTONIO TX 78230

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

DATED MATERIAL
PLEASE DELIVER PROMPTLY