

# The *Celebration!* Connection

**Celebration Lutheran Church**

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**2024**



*Celebration is a part of the Southeast Michigan Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

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## Office Closed

The church office will be closed New Years Day,

January 1st .

**Have a safe and happy  
New Year!**

## From the Pastor

### Milestones.

Those markers along the way that help to denote where you are along life's journey.

For me, there will be a number of milestones, great and small, in my life. In February will have a "real" birthday since I was a leap year baby. Or, as my mother might say, "Jim turns 816 months old. Hasn't he gotten so big?". Heather and I will celebrate our 30<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, and I will celebrate my 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ordination, as well as some other personal milestones in my life that I will mention at a later time.

### Milestones.

Last year we celebrated a major milestone in the life of Celebration – our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a congregation. Many new congregations – even blended ones like ourselves – don't make it to the decade mark for various and sundry reasons, but because of Celebrations' welcoming attitude and incredible positive outreach to those who are in need, God has truly blessed this great congregation, showing that we are blessed in order to be a blessing to others!

Yes, we go into 2024 in joy and faithfulness.

But, we also go into 2024 with a few challenges.

For example, we continue to work toward paying down our remodeling loan, which, as you may know, was previously being paid on through the land contract monies we received by the congregation that purchased the 9300 Farmington Road property. Your response to my letter to you has been, in a word, **outstanding**, however, we still have far to go. So please continue to contribute to the loan retirement fund as you are able, in addition to your regular congregation support.

Owning a building always means keeping our beautiful property maintained. We play an ongoing game of whack-a-mole with our ever moving roof leaks, at some point in the near future the parking lot will need to be re-sealed, some of our HVAC units will need to be replaced, and of course other issues will come up as time goes by. Our outstanding property team will take care of things as needed and, of course, anything that would be a major expense would go to the congregation for approval.

I've made no secret of my continuing concern about how our overall attendance hasn't quite bounced back from Covid as I would like. Though attendance in regular worship is "decent," it is nowhere near what I believe this congregation, with its exceptional community reputation should be. Your council has attempted to contact those who have not attended or made a financial contribution of record over the last two years (and are, to the best of our knowledge, able to do so). A letter has been mailed to those who for whom contact has not been able to be established, encouraging them to return to this body of Christ.

You know, one of the great things about us as Christians, is our disposition to be

together with one another. On our mountaintops and in our valleys, we tend to seek and find the company of one another. On occasions of joy, we seldom celebrate alone - we are inclined to gather together for birthdays and weddings and the various happy milestones we pass along the way. And when sorrow comes - when there is grief or pain - we usually do not move through these times alone. People we know and love stand with us in our losses, sit with us through long, dark nights of loneliness or dread. It is a compliment to our humanity, I think, that in our joys we invite others to come and share them, and in our sorrows the others come and help us bear them. And, of course, for many other reasons and in many other ways, we human persons enter into the lives of one another.

And when Jesus came, he called some people together, saying: Come, be with me. And they came - from their fishing boats and their fields and their homes, and they were together with him. As about three years of time went by, Jesus summoned others - yes, indeed, he invited everyone. Those who came he called disciples, and the whole group of these he called the church, the Greek "ecclesia," meaning "the ones called out." Thus, the church of Jesus Christ is that number of persons who have been called out from wherever they were and have come to be together with him.

Again and again, in his teachings, Jesus promises always to be with his people. We get the impression that wherever one of his people is, the Lord Christ will be there also. In this passage, however, we have a most fascinating variation of this promise. Jesus says, "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Now, of course,

really don't think Jesus is saying that he will be with his people **only** when two or three are together. But I am very sure he is saying that, in their being together, his disciples do put themselves into position for some special blessing of his presence..

Oh, yes, **some** trees may grow in isolated grandeur, standing alone on a wide expanse of windswept plain; but not the Redwoods - mighty and mammoth as they are, they grow only in clusters, each together with all the others. So, in the Christian community, the individual is nurtured by the body.

Yes, despite differences in heritage, skin color, sexual orientation, or financial status, we Christians we are a people united - united with Christ and therefore with one another. And it is our being together that is our best help for living a Christian kind of life and in doing the work we are called to do in the world. To be together, with each other, with all others, and all of us with Christ - **these** are the dimensions of the relationship we enter into when we enter into Jesus Christ our Lord.

See all of you, in Church!

**Pastor Fogle**

*(This article partly serves as pastor's report to the congregation for the annual meeting January 28, 2024)*

**Heather and I would like to thank you all for your support, not only for us and our ministries, but for your generous gift this Christmas. It is such a joy and delight to serve this wonderful community of faith. You are all truly a blessing to us and to the world at large.**

**May God Bless You All Throughout 2024!**

**Pastor and Heather Fogle**

## Offering Envelopes

If you requested offering envelopes they are now available in your mailboxes. If you wish to give electronically, there are multiple options for you. Forms available on the book shelf below the monitor in the welcome area or in the office, you can also give by sending a text to 734-332-4928 or by utilizing the QR code below. Giving electronically gives you multiple options for where you wish to designate: General offerings, Loan retirement, Flowers, Streaming, and others..



Thank you for your generosity.

## Annual Meeting

The Congregational Annual Meeting is on **Sunday, January 28th** immediately after worship in the Sanctuary. Please plan on staying after church for this short meeting. Reminder to council members, please get your reports into Jodi as soon as possible.

The annual report will be ready to review by January 21 st .

## De-Decorating the Church!

Spread the good news! Christ was born! The Christmas season concludes with the feast of Epiphany on January 6th . As the Christmas season ends, we need help taking down the Christmas decorations after worship on **Sunday, January 7.**

# Women of the ELCA

## Women's Bible Study

Jesus regularly invokes nature in his teaching, drawing us into deeper relationship with the created world. But it's not just Jesus inviting us to see creation as teacher and kin. The scriptures themselves help us see the important role of the created world in God's story and saving work.

In January we will begin the four-session Bible study that explores how biblical stories of the natural world help us to grow our love for and commitment to God, other people and our beloved earth.

**Weather:** Powerful force for change. We can't control the weather, but we can learn from it. Storms, rain, drought and wind shape the lives of human and non-human beings, both in scripture and today. As we face catastrophic storms and the weird weather of climate change, biblical stories of extraordinary weather convict and humble us. They show us how to live faithfully, moving us to act even when we feel powerless.



The Women's Bible study group will meet on Wednesday, January 17th at 1:00 pm. If you do not get *Gather* magazine, copies of the Bible study

are available from the mailbox of Lauren Preston.

We are again collecting empty pill bottles for Matthew 25 Ministries. All pill bottles are accepted. They need to be cleaned out and the label removed. (Goo Gone might help with that) Place your donations in the big pill bottle container under the mailboxes.

## Cookie Ministry

### and General Meeting



Twenty-one tins of cookies were packed and will be delivered to cookie-deprived members of the congregation.

As part of our commitment to engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society and the world, the Women of the ELCA at Celebration is supporting the following ministries: Days for Girls, Pets for Vets and Samaritas.

Officers were elected for the coming year(s): Lauren Preston was elected president and Gloria Tapper was elected secretary; each for a two-year term. Chris Snowden (vice-president) and Carole Hakala (treasurer) will continue to serve this coming year.

The W/ELCA planning committee meets the second Monday of each month at 10:00 am. Anyone is welcome to attend. We would love to hear your ideas and opinions.

Days

For

Girls

We are again going to start collecting items for health-care kits: underwear (100% cotton, dark colors, in girls sizes 8, 10, 12 or 14), washcloths and hotel/motel soaps to be included in the kits. Please put your donations in the basket at the end of the mailboxes.

## Alcoholics Anonymous

The church continues to get busier and busier with all kinds of groups meeting in the building throughout the month. The newest group is A.A. which meets on Mondays and Fridays at 5:00 pm. It is a closed discussion meeting – only for alcoholics.

The meeting focuses on working the 12 steps and 12 traditions. Men and women are welcome. It is considered a “working meeting”. The meeting is run by Tony R. who is filled with enthusiasm about the direction of the meeting and how he would like to encourage people to make that first step and work the program.

A.A. has a solution. That isn't an empty promise. A.A. has been helping alcoholics recover for more than 80 years. A.A.'s program of recovery is built on the simple foundation of one alcoholic sharing with another. If your drinking is out of control, A.A. can help.

A.A. is more than a set of principles; it is a society of alcoholics in action. We must carry the message, or else we ourselves can wither and those who haven't been given the truth may die.

If you have questions about meetings, contact Tony R. at 248-303-2600.

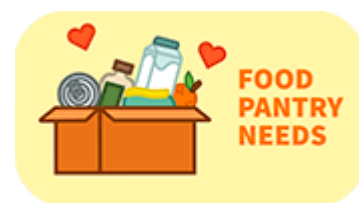


## A Time for Fellowship



Please stay after worship each and every Sunday for a time of conversation and treats! Also, please consider hosting Fellowship Hour on a Sunday. It is very easy to do. Bring in a variety of food to share with the congregation, set up and clean up. It's that simple. Just ask anyone who has hosted before. See the sign-up on the Communications Board near the front door.

*You need to be in fellowship of a church...If you separate a live coal from the others, it will soon die out. However, if you put a live coal in with other live coals, it will be a glow that will last for hours. -Billy Graham*



There are many, many families in Michigan who are experiencing food insecurity. You can help by donating non-perishable food items to the Good Hope Food Pantry. Bring your donations to church the second Sunday of each month (this month it is January 14th.) If you would like to make a monetary donation, make your checks out to “Good Hope Food Pantry”.

For more information about this ministry, please see Greg or Gloria Tapper at [getapper@yahoo.com](mailto:getapper@yahoo.com) or call 734-427-1142.



## Can You Jump In and Help Out?

You've heard the saying "It takes a village to raise a child", well the same can be said for running a Sunday worship. We need at least a minimum of 12 people to provide leadership every Sunday.

Every week we need people to help as:

Assisting ministers

Communion Assistants

Greeters

Ushers

Acolytes

Altar Guild

Flagon Bearers

Running the video and sound system

This is a great way to serve God and the Celebration community.

If you believe that God may be calling you to serve in one or more of these ministries, please contact the church office at 734-582-4112. If you are not sure, we can walk your through what is involved.

**THANK YOU!!!**

## Crafty Connections

Research has shown that crafting, regardless of the medium you use, can bolster mood, improve self-confidence, and reduce stress overall. In addition, crafting has also been shown to improve mental agility, improve both gross and fine motor movements, and also decrease cognitive decline.

Make it your New Year's Resolution to put

your mental health first. Come to Crafty Connections the second Monday of the month at **7:00pm, January 8th**, and/or the last Wednesday of the month at **10:00am, January 31st**.

Bring a project. We would like to see what you're working on!



## Prayers of the People

Each week we pray for members of the congregation on a rotating basis. This month we pray for:

### January 7

Eric, Joan, and Margaret Thompson  
Ciro, Megan, Teddy, and Reagan Troncoso  
Chuck and Tina Truskowski  
Bernie Vaughan

### January 14

Pat and Mike Villemure  
Loretta Wallace-Verda  
Ray Wickman

### January 21

Charlene and Bill Williams  
Karissa Williams  
Karol Williams  
Fred and Ericka Williamson

### January 28

Christopher, Kristine, Arne and Bruno Wommer  
Diane Yagerlener  
Emily, Jeff, Maxwell, and Levi Yandura  
Lois Zilka





Sign-up; on the Communication Board, call or email the office (officelc@celebrationlc.com), to sponsor a week of live-streaming. It's only \$15. Payment can be put into an envelope in the offering plate on Sunday, mailed directly to the church. This month's live streaming has been sponsored by:

- January 7: Jim and Susan Hardy
- January 14: Barb Heidmann
- January 21: Barb Heidmann
- January 28: Barb Heidmann

## Altar Flowers

The 2024 altar flower sign-up is on the Communications Board by the front door. It's \$23 to sponsor a vase. Payment can done online, placed into an offering envelope, on Sunday, or mailed to the church. This month's sponsors are:

### January 7

Tim and Debby Hepner in celebration of  
Ciro Troncoso's birthday

### January 14

Dave and Cheryl Evancho in celebration  
of Ashley's birthday

### January 21

Rick and Jodi Reed in memory of Bob  
Reed

Carole Hakala in celebration of Vi's  
birthday

### January 28

Available for Sponsorship

## January Birthdays

- 3 Ciro Troncoso
- 6 Shirley Ward  
Steve Hartsell
- 9 Ashley Evancho  
Justin Lair
- 11 Logan Svihra  
Levi Svihra
- 12 Sandy Reidenbaugh  
Charlene Tennant
- 13 Emily Yandura
- 16 Eric Thompson
- 19 Marge Flores
- 21 Vi Hakala
- 24 Sandy Albert
- 25 Susan Hardy
- 28 Laura Szczembara



## January Anniversaries

- 18 Judy and Gary Naumoff
- 25 Nathan and Emily (Jung) Hoste
- 26 Ed and Ruth Klosterhaus



# January Devotions

Monday, January 1

Numbers 6:22-27

Psalm 8

Galatians 4:4-7 *or* Philippians 2:5-11

Luke 2:15-21

Tuesday, January 2

Psalm 148

Proverbs 1:1-7

James 3:13-18

Wednesday, January 3

Psalm 110

Proverbs 1:20-33

James 4:1-10

Thursday, January 4

Psalm 110

Proverbs 3:1-12

James 4:11-17

Friday, January 5

Psalm 110

Proverbs 22:1-9

Luke 6:27-31

Saturday, January 6

Isaiah 60:1-6

Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

Ephesians 3:1-12

Matthew 2:1-12

**Sunday, January 7**

**Psalm 110**

**Exodus 1:22—2:10**

**Hebrews 11:23-26**

Monday, January 8

Psalm 110

Exodus 2:11-25

Hebrews 11:27-28

Tuesday, January 9

Psalm 110

Exodus 3:7-15

John 8:39-59

Wednesday, January 10

Psalm 69:1-5, 30-36

Isaiah 41:14-20

John 1:29-34

Thursday, January 11

Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18

Judges 2:6-15

2 Corinthians 10:1-11

Friday, January 12

Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18

Judges 2:16-23

Acts 13:16-25

Saturday, January 13

Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18

1 Samuel 2:21-25

Matthew 25:1-13

**Sunday, January 14**

**Genesis 1:1-5**

**Psalm 29**

**Acts 19:1-7**

**Mark 1:4-11**

Monday, January 15

Psalm 86

1 Samuel 9:27—10:8

2 Corinthians 6:14—7:1

Tuesday, January 16

Psalm 86

1 Samuel 15:10-31

Acts 5:1-11

Wednesday, January 17

Psalm 86

Genesis 16:1-14

Luke 18:15-17

Thursday, January 18

Psalm 62:5-12

Jeremiah 19:1-15

Revelation 18:11-20

Friday, January 19

Psalm 62:5-12

Jeremiah 20:7-13

2 Peter 3:1-7

Saturday, January 20

Psalm 62:5-12

Jeremiah 20:14-18

Luke 10:13-16

**Sunday, January 21**

**Jonah 3:1-5, 10**

**Psalm 62:5-12**

**1 Corinthians 7:29-31**

**Mark 1:14-20**

Monday, January 22

Psalm 46

Genesis 12:1-9

1 Corinthians 7:17-24

Tuesday, January 23

Psalm 46

Genesis 45:25—46:7

Acts 5:33-42

Wednesday, January 24

Psalm 46

Proverbs 8:1-21

Mark 3:13-19a

Thursday, January 25

Psalm 111

Deuteronomy 3:23-29

Romans 9:6-18

Friday, January 26

Psalm 111

Deuteronomy 12:28-32

Revelation 2:12-17

Saturday, January 27

Psalm 111

Deuteronomy 13:1-5

Matthew 8:28—9:1

**Sunday, January 28**

**Deuteronomy 18:15-20**

**Psalm 111**

**1 Corinthians 8:1-13**

**Mark 1:21-28**

Monday, January 29

Psalm 35:1-10

Numbers 22:1-21

Acts 21:17-26

Tuesday, January 30

Psalm 35:1-10

Numbers 22:22-28

1 Corinthians 7:32-40

Wednesday, January 31

Psalm 35:1-10

Jeremiah 29:1-14

Mark 5:1-20

