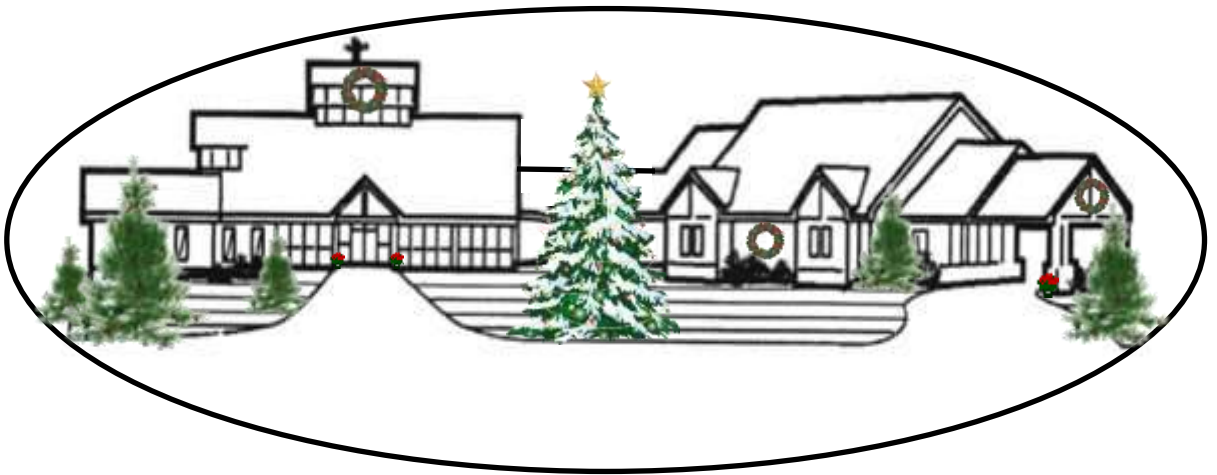


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# Agapegram

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December 2024



ETERNAL SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

220 Carson Road

Seneca, South Carolina 29678

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## Is Christmas a Pagan Day?

Just the other week in Sunday Bible class, we mentioned the articles I've shared over the years about the false claims of Halloween, Easter, and Christmas being pagan celebrations co-opted by Christians. It was 7 years ago that I shared this article on Christmas and with so many new members in recent years it may be worth reprinting.

We've all heard that Christmas is really just the old Roman Saturnalia or a Winter Solstice celebration overlain with a veneer of Jesus. But is this accurate? Historian and researcher, Rev. Joe Abrahamson writes:

*... [T]he Politically Correct way we are told to understand Christmas is that the Romans celebrated the "rebirth of the sun" on December 25th. Then, Christianity... wanted to eliminate the pagan elements and claimed that Christ was born on this same day to pervert the pagan holiday into a Christian Holy Day.*

*[To clarify the facts of history] Three main questions [can be asked]:*

**1) When did the Romans celebrate the winter solstice?** *It was the shortest day of the year, in our calendar, December 21 or 22. The Romans didn't use our modern calendar... and... the winter solstice hardly ever occurred on December 25. The **months** were for watching the **Moon**. The winter solstice would occur on a different day each year because it was based on the Sun.*

*It is important for us to notice that none of the early Christian writers pointed to the winter solstice as an important religious date. And it is just as important to notice that those early Christian writers wrote that Christ was conceived on what is March 25th in our modern calendar. Nine months later is December 25th.*

*The winter solstice was not an issue for the Christians of the first four centuries in our calendar. Christ's conception and birth was. December 25th was celebrated in the early church **because it was nine months after** Christ's conception.*

**2) When did the earliest Christians celebrate Christmas?** *... Around the year 200 A.D. the Church Father Hippolytus in his Commentary on Daniel 4.23.3 says: "For the first advent of our Lord in the flesh, when he was born in Bethlehem, eight days before the kalends of January [December 25th], the 4th day of the week [Wednesday], while Augustus was in his forty-second year, [2 or 3BC]"*

*Clement of Alexandria, who wrote 193-215 AD, in his work entitled "Stromata" writes: "From the birth of Christ, therefore, to the death of Commodus are, in all, 194 years, 1 month, 13 days. And there are those who have determined not only the year of our Savior's genesis, but even the day, which they say took place in the twenty-eighth year of Augustus on the 25th of Pachon..."*

*Christ's genesis, or conception on the 25th of Pachon was in what our calendar would equate with March 25th. The celebration of Christ's birth would be nine months later: December 25th, in our calendar.*

*continued on next page...*

*I want to emphasize that I'm not trying to pin down which day Christ was actually born, but to point out when the earliest Christians actually celebrated the birth of Christ. I am also showing that the choice of that date had nothing to do with any pagan celebration of the winter solstice in Rome.*

*It was not until much much later that scholars and others would begin to claim that Christians tried to mingle the celebration of Christ's birth with the celebration of the winter solstice.*

**3) When was Christmas associated with the pagan winter solstice?** *In the 18th and 19th centuries some scholars found a manuscript from the 12th century in a marginal note of the writings of the Syriac biblical commentator Dionysius bar-Salibi conjectured that in ancient times the Christmas holiday was actually shifted from January 6 to December 25 so that it fell on the same date as the pagan winter solstice.*

...  
*Dionysius did not understand why January 6th was chosen nor did he understand why December 25th was chosen. He just wrote what he thought. From that conjecture a great number of unbelieving academics have woven a fictionalized "history" of Christmas and its relationship to the pagan winter solstice.*

*Neo-paganism reared its head in the late 1960s in Europe and the United States. And the myth of the winter solstice being the source of Christmas has been preached from college professors to four generations of students trying to comply so they could earn their degrees.*

...  
*Christmas is not a pagan holiday. December 25th is not a day stolen by the Christian Church from pagans. It is the day nine months after the early Christians understood when Christ was conceived according to Scripture.*

A blessed Advent & a Merry Christmas as we celebrate our Savior's birth!

*Pastor David*



***ETERNAL SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH***  
***O' Come Let Us Adore Him!***

***Midweek Advent Services***

**Wednesday Nights, Dec. 4th, 11th & 18th at 7:00 pm**

***Christmas Eve Family Service***

**Tuesday, Dec. 24th at 4:00 pm**

***Christmas Eve Candlelight Service***

**Tuesday, Dec. 24th at 7:00 pm**

***Christmas Day Service w/Communion***

**Wednesday, Dec. 25th at 10: 00am**

***New Year's Eve Service w/Communion***

**Tuesday, Dec. 31st at 7:00 pm**





# *Christmas Concert*

*Sunday, December 15th at 3:00 pm  
at Eternal Shepherd Lutheran Church*



*Featuring  
Michelle Rowland & David Phillips*

## **CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS**

**The poinsettia sign-up sheet will be on display in the Narthex in December 1st.** Please sign your name and take a moment to fill it in remembering to fill out an individual line for each plant. Sign how many you want and if you will pay check or cash. The price is \$10.00 per plant. Any questions please contact Julie Moore at (618) 246-8151. ~*Thank you!*

**Also please note the 2025 Altar Flower Chart is on the bulletin board.**



## **A Big Thank You** by **Scott Krueger, Head Elder**

For the past year it has been my pleasure to serve as your Head Elder. All the Elders do much more than just assisting the Pastor. Worshiping with you, sharing your spiritual journey, and caring for ESLC members' physical needs has been a rewarding and heart warming part of my life. I cannot count the number of times I have been brought to tears on the phone with you, praying for you, or helping one of our members. Tears brought from knowing the love of Christ is in us and at work in us.

None of this could have been accomplished without the help of a terrific and dedicated Board of Elders. We have the most involved, hands on Elders of any church my wife and I have been members of. 3 new Elders have been elected by the congregation, Tony Alford, Norm Dukes, and returning Elder, Fred Massa. There is no doubt they will serve ESLC well. Please welcome them when they call on you. Be open about your needs and prayer requests. It will enhance the quality of your spiritual life. If you have physical needs, the Elders will move mountains (usually mountains of furniture) to care for you. They are connected in every mission and out-reach program. Seek their guidance when you are ready to dive in. If you need transportation, call them.

**1 Timothy 3:14 states:** *“For those who serve well as Elders gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ.”* The Apostle Paul meant this to be a pat on the back, and an encouragement. I thank him for that. I pray that I have served you well. I know that confidence in my faith has grown for having served as an Elder. I thank you for that.

Debbie and I are so looking forward to being with you for Advent and Christmas. *God Bless You and Merry Christmas!*

### **Eternal Shepherd Lutheran Church Advent Workshop**

**Sunday, December 1st  
at 9:45 am in room #300**

**All children and Youth ages 2 and up  
are invited to our Advent kick-off.**

**We will make an Advent wreath for your home,  
decorate (and eat) a birthday cake for Jesus,  
and enjoy fellowship!**



AN

ADVENT

EVENT

Mark your calendars for **An Advent Event at 5:00 pm on Wednesday, December 18, 2025. All are invited!**

A live musical presentation of **Daniel's Ballad** will be offered in the Fellowship Hall prior to the Wednesday Advent Service. Ellen Sheppard (Scottie's sister) has written a lively and entertaining score for Scottie's lyrics concerning the challenges facing Daniel and his friends Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego as recorded in Chapters 1-6 of the Old Testament book of **Daniel**.

Sometimes toe-tapping, sometimes emotionally dark, the historical events of the Judean exiles are interspersed with the Gospel message to further illustrate God's plan for His children.

Following the presentation, a "Delightful Daniel's Dinner" is offered, hosted by the Youth Group. (Reference Daniel 1:16)

Donations are encouraged! All proceeds from **An Advent Event** will help send our **ESLC Youth to the national youth gathering in New Orleans this summer with the goal to assist them in becoming "versed in every branch of wisdom, well-informed, discerning, suitable for service..." (Daniel 1:4)**

Please join us at this **Advent Event** as we prepare for the arrival of the Christ Child!

*"...Daniel always ends all his visions and dreams, however terrible, with joy, namely with Christ's kingdom and advent." ~ Martin Luther ~ As quoted p. 1394  
The Lutheran Study Bible*

## YOU'RE INVITED!

**BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR JESUS.** Open House Saturday, **December 7 from Noon - 4:00PM** w/ Light Lunch at the Bluhm's @ 910 Sanders Cove, Fair Play. **Gifts: To benefit Miracle Hill Ministries.** RSVP: (440) 382-6322



## *Comfort Dog News*

As we round out the year, we reflect on the goodness of God and how He has seen us through another year working alongside Seth sharing His love in our community. The people we met, the encounters we have had and the prayers we have prayed have been a blessing indeed. We are so grateful for all of you who support us with encouraging words, financial gifts and prayers.

And now, a few updates:

Seth, Jean Dombi and Bob Massa were deployed to Asheville the week of November 4 to offer comfort and love to this hurting community following Hurricane Helene. They were joined by LCC Comfort Dog teams from Hilton Head, SC (Zoara), Hickory, NC (Faith), and Orlando, FL (Peace). The teams visited Emmanuel Lutheran School, a displaced Veterans facility, a Women and Children's Shelter, a fire station, and two separate visits with individuals who just needed some "golden love". At each visit, people shared their experiences of the hurricane and its aftermath. We pray that talking about what happened enabled healing and restoration to begin. Please see Jean or Bob and thank them for giving up their personal time to deploy with Seth.

Our Lutheran Towers visit in Atlanta is always a blessing to us. This year we brought 100 bags filled with personal care items for the residents. Seth and his team were joined by Hope Comfort Dog from Marietta, GA and her team. We witnessed many smiles from not only the residents' faces but also the staff's as well. The residents at Lutheran Towers were very grateful for these gifts of love! Thank you to those who contributed to this endeavor.

Two Top Dog Informational Meetings have been held so far as we pray and think about pursuing a second Comfort Dog as Seth ages and eventually retires so we can continue this ministry into the future. To move forward, we need someone to step up and volunteer to be the Top Dog (aka coordinator) for the next dog/team. Please see me if this is something you might be interested in. I will be happy to share with you the responsibilities as well as the enormous blessings of being the Top Dog. I will also be available to guide you in the process.

Our annual "Howl-Lu-Ya Dog Biscuit Sale" will take place December 15 and 22 before and after each service. The price is \$5 a bag of homemade dog biscuits (5 large or 12 small). The dog biscuits will make great gifts for the special pup in your life!

My heart overflows with thanksgiving to our Lord for entrusting me to lead this ministry. I never expected to be blessed as much as I have from those we visit, from Seth's team and from all of you who uplift me with your kind words and encouragement. Thank you, my dear Eternal Shepherd family, for loving and supporting Seth, the team, the ministry and me! *Merry and Blessed Christmas!*

continued on next page....





**Asheville Deployment with Peace, Seth, Zoara, Faith Comfort Dog Teams  
and LCC CEO Rev. Chris Singer (center)**

To God be the Glory,  
*Kyra Carbone*

**SAVE THE DATES FOR THESE SPECIAL UPCOMING EVENTS  
FROM THE BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION:**

**EPIPHANY WALK for children and youth 2 years old  
and up. January 5, 2025, 9:45am during the Sunday  
school hour. Journey to meet the three Wise Men and  
King Herod as they search for Jesus.**

**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL June 9-13, 2025.**

*Merry Christmas!*



# Youth CHRISTMAS PARTY

FUN AND FELLOWSHIP FOR ALL!

December 23rd - Details TBA

## December's Ministry of the Month is the Prayer Shawl Ministry

- Have you heard of it?
- What do you know about it?
- What is the purpose?
- What is a prayer shawl? Are there different kinds?
- Who makes these prayer shawls?
- Who has received these prayer shawls?
- Where can I find these prayer shawls?
- How long has this ministry been at ESLC?
- Can I be a part of this ministry even if I can't crochet or knit to help make them?
- What can I do to help?

Check the Ministry of the Month Bulletin Board to find answers to all these questions  
Contact Sue Hauser.

*Wrapped in Love*   
PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

## Honduras Team 2025 News

We are presently coming up on three months to our mission trip to Honduras. The team is set and busy preparing for the ministry we will conduct while there. You probably saw some of them handing out the gardening gloves for the fundraiser for the supplies we will need. We are thankful for all of the gloves that were taken and would like to say an advanced thank you for your support. If you missed getting a glove there are more in the basket at the Helping Hands display near the mailboxes. That is also where the tub for the return of gloves is located.

We are excited to be part of the re-building that World Gospel Outreach is going through since the pandemic. A new CEO has been called and has just returned from visiting both Honduras and Belize, WGO's two ministry locations. He has previously served in several countries including Honduras and after the trip he shared that he was, "struck anew during this experience with World Gospel Outreach by the purpose and power of the Body of Christ working together to advance the gospel globally." Therein lies the reason that so many missionaries return year after year to serve. Eighty-five percent of our team of twenty are returning to Honduras after previously serving there. Thank you for supporting ESLC's ministry to the people of Honduras.

*Dios te bendiga (God Bless You), Your Honduras Mission Team*

**Toys for God's Kids:** In case you did not know, Toys for God's Kids is a group of folks here at ESLC who come together to make toy wooden cars for the children of the world. Of the 3500 cars assembled this year about 80 percent went into Samaritan's Purse shoeboxes in Oconee & Pickens counties. The remaining cars went out with mission teams or were distributed locally. Our ESLC group is just a small part of a nationwide group of folks whose purpose is to bring smiles to the faces of children everywhere and as such the members are known as Smilemakers. TFGK national has the saying "Build the cars as if you were building them for your grandchildren." We embrace that thought and rejoice in the smiles we bring to children, this possibly being the only toy they have.

Thankfully our numbers are growing here at ESLC and the number of cars we can distribute is only limited by how many we can cut out to assemble. We have just 3 people cutting out the cars and it would be helpful to have more. If you are interested and have equipment please contact Pastor Ray or Mike Hauser for more information. May we bring smiles to the children of the world.



## Operation Christmas Child Update

A HUGE THANK YOU goes out to all of you that volunteered your time to assembly days, packing shoeboxes, and also staffing our Community Drop-off Location during National Collection Week!! This ministry simply does not happen without many hands and hearts that share the vision of seeing the Gospel go out across the world and into the hands of children everywhere. We more than doubled our shoebox intake from last year!



The following is a story with ties to one of our own:

Kijabe Hospital in Kenya (Where Phil & Margi McLain's daughter works) has hosted many World Medical Mission doctors over the years, and Samaritan's Purse has trained chaplains there in evangelism. This partnership recently opened new doors for ministry through Operation Christmas Child as more than 90 children received shoebox gifts and heard the Good News! The chaplains explained the Gospel in a child-friendly way, gift-filled shoeboxes were handed out, and boys and girls were told, "Yesu anakupenda." That's Swahili for "Jesus loves you." When an invitation was given, many of the children and parents prayed to accept Jesus Christ. A young girl named Ramisa could not attend the group event because she had just been through surgery. She was born with one leg much shorter than the other, and local treatments only led to serious infections. As she grew worse, her mother and brother drove her 10 hours from their home to Kijabe for emergency surgery. Even though she and her family are from a Muslim community, they listened intently as a chaplain shared the Good News when he brought a gift box to her hospital bed. Her mother was grateful and welcomed prayer for her little girl's recovery. One of our staff members said that after Ramisa gently lifted each gift from her shoebox, she "looked up and smiled the sweet smile of a child who knows she is loved." Seeds were planted that day; let's pray this family comes to know the Lord.

We want more boys and girls to hear the Gospel and receive a shoebox gift from Samaritan's Purse. We praise God that millions receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior each year as Operation Christmas Child is at work in more than 100 countries. Many also grow in faith through our follow-up discipleship course, The Greatest Journey.

**Because interest in OCC has overwhelmingly increased, an Operation Christmas Child Committee will be forming soon. If you'd like to be involved, in any capacity, please watch the announcements for the first meeting, coming in January of 2025. Any and all who are interested in helping, should plan to be there. There are even jobs available that can be completed by those who are home bound and wishing to be more involved. If that includes you, please let your Elder know, and we'll be sure to add your name to the list of those interested in helping! The fields are ripe for harvest, and many hands make light work!**



**Thank you all for your support!  
Terri Baumann**

## 320 students at Pas Bonbon Haiti Singing the Apostles Creed



Below is the 8 member staff of Pas Bonbon we support each month. (Pastor Walter near the center) Since the school has grown so much, we will be ordering additional Bibles in both French and Creole. We will also order more Luther's Small Catechism also in French and Creole. The church is in fellowship with the LCMS and children often teach their parents what they learned at school. Each child receives a meal at noon, through Trinity Hope at 28 cents per meal. For many it is the only meal they have for the day. This mission is an ESLC blessing, carrying out Christ's commission of making disciples of others through education, stewardship, service, and fellowship. We are blessed to be a blessing! Thank You for your support.  
~Lars Helland, Mission Committee Chair.



**Hospitality** continues as an important ministry in our church since our church believes that fellowship with other Christians is vital. We always remain committed to our church and are always looking for new members. We are increasingly utilizing this ministry more and more with each passing day. We would love to have more people involved: This requires as LITTLE or as MUCH as you would like to help with: providing food, set-up, serving and clean-up at certain functions. All these are helpful and needed. If you are interested in joining our ministry, please contact Colleen Hesemann.



*Merry Christmas!*

On Sundays, we are involved with treats for Bible study between 1<sup>st</sup>. and 2<sup>nd</sup>. services. This again can be as MUCH or as LITTLE as you want, having the coffee made and any treats that can be homemade, store bought or packaged: Emphasis being put on amount...it need not be large quantities...working with other families is often helpful. If you sign up and are not sure how to proceed, just let Colleen Hesemann know and she will help you learn the ropes (which is not difficult). It will allow you to get to know more people and is great fun. The pumper pots are now color coated...matching color to color and they will work.

Hospitality has worked to "organize" the kitchen. Items have been removed and they are currently in the basement. If you feel that any of these items be returned, please let hospitality know. Many of these items have taken up shelving space and have not been used for the last two years.

Thanks to all who do so much to further our "hospitality" ministry.  
Blessings, Colleen



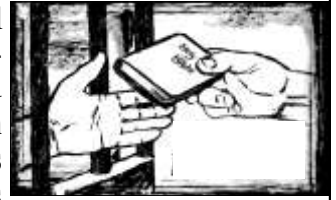
**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:** Habitat For Humanity is in need of volunteers throughout the organization. There are jobs for men and women in all areas. Please consider helping in this worthwhile organization. Find out more about serving with us at <https://www.oconeehabitat.org>.

**Scrip Cards** are available and make *great Christmas gifts* as well as earn money **for Eternal Shepherd** at the same time.

Please note we have Publix, Ingles and Walmart gift cards available. For orders pick up an order form from the Scrip Box or please contact **Beckie Rau** at (864) 944-6096. After the order is received one of the Scrip ladies will contact you to make arrangements for delivery. Scrip Card Team: **Beckie Rau, Libby Dunlap, Elisabeth Baker & Sue Hauser**. ~Thank you for your support.



**NEXT PRISON MINISTRY:** The next prison ministry will be at 11am on December 13 and 14<sup>th</sup> at the Oconee County Detention Center in Walhalla. Life Reference Bibles will be handed out on Friday. **Attention Cookie Bakers:** As in



the past we would like to provide the inmates with a bag of 4 cookies along with devotions on Saturday. As of the last head count provided there were 92 inmates at the prison. **This would require 30 dozen cookies.** If you can help out, please

let Ann Miller (8646378353) know along with how many cookies you plan to make. **They will need to be bagged in baggies with 4 cookies each.** All cookies will need to be at the Church no later than 10:30am on Saturday December 14<sup>th</sup>. *Thank you so much for your help and your support of this ministry.* If you are



interested in serving our Lord in the important ministry, or have any questions please contact Ann Miller at (864) 637-8353 or [asjohn315@gmail.com](mailto:asjohn315@gmail.com). ~*Thank you*

**FOOD BANK NEWS:** Please help us in collecting preferred needed canned, or boxed grocery items each month to help restock the Golden Corner Food Pantry's shelves. **December's** preferred product is **"Stewed Tomatoes or Tomato Sauce"** (Please place your items in the containers marked Food Bank down by the Fellowship Hall). ~*Thank you for your generosity and support.*



**ON-LINE GIVING** Remember you can give on-line. Just go to our church website at [www.eternalshepherd.org](http://www.eternalshepherd.org) and click on the On-line Giving bar in the top right corner on the homepage. ~*Thank you for your faithful support.*



## **ESLC CARD CART**

**Come check out our new assortment of cards.**

If you have a chance, stop by the **Card Cart Ministry Display in the Fellowship Hall.** You might find a card that is just perfect for someone you know! There is a wide variety for all kinds of occasions and the price is perfect!!! \$.50 for all cards and \$5.00 for a box of 12 found on the bottom of the cart.



## Hospitality Happenings for December

12/1 — ???

12/8 — Mike & Sue Hauser, Janet Walker & Debbie Bell

12/15 — ???

12/22 — ???

12/29 — ???



Hospitality is going full speed. We provide for Memorial Services and Sunday Bible Study. We always remain committed to our church and are always looking for new members. This requires as little or as much as you would like to help with: providing food, set-up, serving and clean-up. All these are helpful and needed.

If you are interested in any of these, please contact me at 864-784-0421 and I will gladly help. ~Colleen Hesemann

### December Birthdays

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 – Libby Dunlap<br>Lee Smith                                     | 16 – Joan Kan<br>Tom Markley                              |
| 2 – Berniece Richards<br>Brad Schneider                           | Elaine Randles<br>Gary Smith                              |
| 4 – Deek Decker<br>Ann Mitchell                                   | Jon Wilken  |
| 5 – Evie Hammer<br>Jon Tyner                                      | 18 – Beth Cornine   |
| 8 - Steve Alexander   | 20 – Al Roeder  |
| 10 - Harriet Murphy   | 25 - Jeanne Arkfeld                                       |
| 11 – Edric Griffin<br>Jim Randles<br>Anderson Scott<br>Donna Tisi | 26 – John Beattie<br>Mary Fireovid                        |
| 15– Fred Massa  | 27 - Heather Ray<br>29 – Beckie Rau<br>31 - Rich Hesemann |



### December Anniversaries

- 9 – Scott & Andrea Toussaint  
19—Griffin & Julianne Eslinger  
22 – Chuck & Beckie Rau  
24 – Lars & Lois Helland  
27 – Ken & Katharine Dunlap  
28 – Don & Monica Del Priore  
Rev. Phil & Margi McLain  
31 – Paul & Scottie Fredrickson





## **SPECIAL GIFTS/MEMORIALS**

**In October the following gifts were given:**

**In loving memory of *Michael*  
the Disaster Response Team Fund received a gift of \$20.00**

**In loving memory of *Ed Seeley*  
the Memorial Fund received a gift of \$1,000.00**

**In loving memory of *Joann Smith*  
the Comfort Dog Ministry received gifts of \$262.12**

**In honor of *Elisabeth Baker's 90th birthday*  
the Little Lambs Preschool Fund received a gift of \$50.00**

**In honor of the *Joshua Kirchner/Isabella Rodriguez Wedding*  
the General Fund received a gift of \$100.00**

### **Other Gifts:**

**The Comfort Dog Ministry Fund received gifts of \$165.33**

**The Disaster Response Team Fund received gifts of \$2,229.24**

**The Elders Fund received gifts of \$400.00**

**The Food Bank Fund received gifts of \$147.90**

**The FCC (Foothills Care Center) Fund received a gift of \$400.00**

**The General Fund received a gift of \$800.00 from Blessings Shared Grant**

**The Haiti Mission Fund received gifts of \$700.00**

**The Honduras Mission Fund received a gift of \$500.00,  
and gifts of \$16,450.67 from team members for Team 2025 travel**

**The Little Lambs Preschool Fund received a gift of \$96.71**

**The LWML Fund received gifts of \$625.00**

**The Mission Quilters Fund received a gift of \$250.00**

**The Operation Christmas Child Fund received gifts of \$500.00**

**The Property Contingency Fund received a gift of \$750.00**

**The Safety Committee Fund received a gift of \$78.13**

**The Special Missions Fund received gifts of \$5,746.08 from the 40th Anniversary  
Celebration for Startup Mission Church in Spartanburg, SC**

**The Toys for God's Kids Fund received a gift of \$20.00**

**The Wheel Chair Ramps Fund received gifts of \$900.00**

**The Youth Gathering Fund received gifts of \$945.00**

# Little Lambs Tales

*"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given..... And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" Isaiah 9:6*

We just ended our wonderful month of November where we spent time in thanksgiving for all our many blessings! We gathered with over 175 of our Little Lambs family in the Fellowship Hall for a delicious Thanksgiving Feast! How fortunate we are to be a part of this amazing community where we can share Fellowship and Food with one another.

And now we are beginning one of our favorite times of the year as we prepare for Christmas. Imagine being able to experience the season of Christmas through the eyes of a child. The wonder and awe! The anticipation of the birth of baby Jesus! The excitement and joy awaiting Santa and the presents under the Christmas tree!

We here at Little Lambs Preschool are fortunate to be able to participate in this season through the eyes of our beautiful children. Our Christmas celebration begins on December 4<sup>th</sup> with our annual candy house making. This event will be held downstairs in the big playroom of the preschool where the parents and grandparents will spend time with their child creating a beautiful candy house masterpiece made from candy and frosting! This will certainly put all of us into the Christmas Spirit!

**On December 19<sup>th</sup> the children will share their musical gifts during our Christmas Program. This program will be held in the Sanctuary at 9 am. We will have a time of Fellowship following our program with cookies and treats in the Fellowship Hall.**

**We will be out of school from December 23rd through January 6th for our Christmas vacation. The students return to school on January 7<sup>th</sup>.**

Thank you for all your support for our preschool ministry! May Peace and Happiness reign in your home this Christmas and may the New Year be loaded with blessings for you and your family.

In Christ,  
Gina



***Merry Christmas!***

## STAINED-GLASS STAR COOKIES

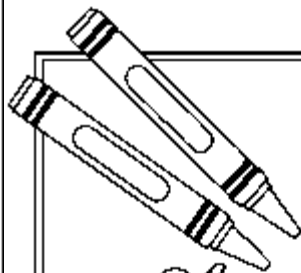
These star cookies will remind you of the star that led the Magi, or wise men, to our Lord Jesus. Enjoy these treats for yourself or give them as gifts.

### What you need:

- An adult to help
- 3 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup (2 sticks) margarine or butter, softened
- 2 eggs
- 1½ teaspoons vanilla extract
- Plastic wrap
- Hard candy such as Life Savers in assorted colors
- Zippered baggies
- Rolling pin
- 2 star cookie cutters, one much smaller than the other
- Aluminum foil

### What you do:

1. Mix the flour, baking powder and salt together.
2. Cream the sugar and butter. Add the eggs and vanilla.
3. Add the flour mixture and beat until well blended.
4. Divide the dough into four equal pieces. Wrap each piece in plastic wrap and refrigerate for about 30 minutes.
5. Separate candies by color and place each color in a sealed, zippered baggie. With a rolling pin, crush candy into small pieces (not a fine powder).
6. One at a time, roll out each chilled dough piece on a well-floured surface.
7. Use the large cookie cutter to make stars, and then place them on a foil-lined cookie sheet. Then press the small star cookie cutter into each large star and remove the small piece of star-shaped dough.
8. Place some crushed candy in each star-shaped hole.
9. Bake at 350 degrees for 10-12 minutes or until golden brown. (The candy will melt and be translucent when cooled, like a stained-glass window.)



Just for **KIDS**

## The Son of the Highest

A new baby brings joy and the anticipation of what he or she will grow up to become. Jesus' birth was miraculous, but His life was prophesied and planned by God.

Unscramble the words below, matching them to their correct spelling. Then use the numbers to fill in the correct words to complete Luke 1:32-33 (NIV).

- |           |        |            |         |
|-----------|--------|------------|---------|
| 12. taerg | he     | 2. noS     | forever |
| 8. eh     | Jacob  | 11. seouh  | end     |
| 13. gHhi  | father | 5. northe  | Son     |
| 7. aDvid  | give   | 1. roevefr | house   |
| 10. bocla | great  | 6. dingmok | throne  |
| 3. reafth | High   | 9. den     | kingdom |
| 4. vieg   | David  |            |         |

"He will be \_\_\_\_\_ and will be called the \_\_\_\_\_  
12 2

of the Most \_\_\_\_\_ . The Lord God will \_\_\_\_\_  
13 4

him the \_\_\_\_\_ of his \_\_\_\_\_ ,  
5 3 7

and \_\_\_\_\_ will reign over the \_\_\_\_\_  
8 11

of \_\_\_\_\_ ; his \_\_\_\_\_ will  
10 1 6

never \_\_\_\_\_."  
9

*Luke 1:32-33, NIV*

Answers: 1. forever 2. Son 3. Father 4. give 5. throne 6. kingdom 7. David 8. the 9. end 10. Jacob 11. house 12. great 13. High

## **SERVICE TIMES**

8:30 a.m. Worship Service  
(Communion 2nd & 4th Sundays)

9:45 a.m. Sunday School  
& Adult Bible Study

11:00 a.m. Worship Service  
(Communion 1st & 3rd Sundays)



## **THOSE WHO SERVE**

Pastor: David Hammer

Deaconess: Holly Cox

Secretary: Celeste Entrekin

Preschool Director: Gina Cote

Choir Director: Rick Schmidt

Choir Accompanist: Michelle Rowland

Organist: David Phillips

## **MISSIONARIES**

Joanna Johnson, Taiwan

Nate Esala, Lutheran Bible Translators

David & Dr. Arianna Shirk, Kenya

S.E.D. Missionaries to Peru

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Seneca, SC 29678



***“For God so loved the world.” John 3:16  
Merry Christmas!***