

January 7, 2023- Volume 4 - Edition 1

THE NEXT TWO WEEKS

Sunday, January 7

9:30 AM – Worship, Sanctuary
 10:00 AM – Resident Worship, Julian Estates
 10:45 AM – Coffee Hour, Fellowship Hall
 11:00 AM – Choir Rehearsal
 1:30 PM – Resident Worship, Bonaventure
 5:00 PM* –Worship, YouTube

Tuesday, January 9

9:30 AM – Church Board (new time!)
 10:00 AM – Women’s Ministry Board

Wednesday, January 10

10:00 AM – Living Way Bible Study
 1:00 PM – Cutoff for Lifeline Information

Saturday, January 13

9:00 AM – Men’s Breakfast

Sunday, January 14

9:30 AM – Worship, Sanctuary
 10:00 AM – Resident Worship, Julian Estates
 10:45 AM – Coffee Hour, Fellowship Hall
 11:00 AM – Choir Rehearsal
 11:30 AM – Confirmation Class
 1:30 PM – Resident Worship, Bonaventure
 5:00 PM* –Worship, YouTube

Wednesday, January 17

10:00 AM – Living Way Bible Study
 1:00 PM – Cutoff for Lifeline Information

253-846-1276 – office@LivingWordLutheranChurch.org
<https://LivingWordLutheranChurch.org>

Office Hours: 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM Monday-Thursday
 10515 269th Street East, Graham, WA 98338

***Always the goal, but may be impacted by technology issues beyond our control**

Full Lectionary for January 7, 2024; 1st Sunday after Epiphany, Baptism of our Lord; Year B

First Reading	Genesis 1:1-5	Lord; Year B
Psalm	Psalm 29	
Second Reading	Acts 19:1-7	
Gospel	Mark 1:4-11	Parament Color: White

Full Lectionary for January 14, 2024; 2nd Sunday after Epiphany; Year B

First Reading	1 Samuel 3:1-10[11-20]
Psalm	Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18
Second Reading	1 Corinthians 6:12-20
Gospel	John 1:43-51 Parament Color: Green

Women's Breakfast

If you are reading this before 9:00AM Saturday morning, January 6, there is still time to attend the Women's Breakfast! Naomi Lundberg is our speaker.

Men's Breakfast



Plan now to attend the Men's Breakfast on Saturday, January 13 at 9:00 AM.

CHILDREN'S SERMON



There is a signup sheet on the table in the Narthex if you are interested in giving a children's message or in assisting.

FLOWERS



With a new year there are many empty slots for the chancel flowers. You don't need a special occasion (or spend a lot of money) to bring flowers. Please sign up on the chart in the narthex or email or call the office 253 846-1276 if you want to fill one (or more) of those empty slots. Thank you.

YEAR END GIVING STATEMENTS

Sharlene Parker has been working hard on the year-end giving statements and they are ready. Those who requested paper copies may pick them up at the church this Sunday.

'Tis the Season ... for a Wedding

After Christmas our family headed out of town to attend a wedding. The groom is a friend of our sons and we have gotten to know him and his family fairly well. He also asked both of them to be groomsmen. Also, the bride had nine bridesmaids and so the groom needed to follow along. But who schedules a wedding between Christmas and New Years? I blame the bride. And I was irritated at first. Visions of bad weather, flight delays and cancellations, being stranded in a snowbank in a rental car along a freeway, crammed into airports and airplanes alongside fellow travelers – it seemed like a recipe for disaster.

But we arrived in Denver, a place frosted with the fringe of a blizzard that mostly hit Nebraska, but here a little snow conveniently plowed and melted off the roads. After waiting in the cold wind wondering if the car rental place would even be open, our shuttle arrived. The rental car counter had one man handling the desk at 2:00 that morning. One customer ahead of us was turned away after a long dispute with the agent. Another returned after some problem with their newly rented car. My lack of sleep lowered my inhibitions which allowed the counter agent to talk me into the additional insurance and a vehicle upgrade because the sedan I requested just looked like it wasn't going to work with all the large suitcases stuffed with tuxes and suits. It seemed reasonable at the time, but as I left the rental desk I realized I did not know how much exactly this was going to cost. On the third try we got a car that existed in the lot and that would start. It turned out we would, at times, be using all the six seats available.

We arrived at the hotel check in and I proudly announced we were with the wedding party (which had set aside rooms for out-of-town guests). The agent asked "which one? We have four wedding parties here this week" So that is the answer – a *lot* of people schedule weddings for the time between Christmas and New Years.

The rehearsal was at a Catholic church, a modern building with an altar right in the middle of its square (not rectangular or cross-shaped) space. Poinsettias and a manger scene surrounded the front of the altar platform. Very festive, but there was not a lot of room for a priest and wedding party amongst the 1/3 scale nativity set. The wedding coordinators suggested removing the Christmas decorations. The priest was suspiciously absent, apparently having taken a vacation day to find some snow on which to ski in the otherwise bare mountains of this El Nino year. And who can blame him - he didn't need to rehearse.

The next day, the big day, found the wise men still there presenting their gifts to baby Jesus in the manger, hiding amongst the poinsettia undergrowth. I guess the priest nixed the idea of removing them. And I pondered why. Why do more traditional churches leave their nativity sets up after Christmas? Lack of volunteers willing to do this right after Christmas? I am reminded every year that yes, decorations can stay up until Epiphany, an ancient celebration (third after Easter and Christmas according to the Encyclopedia Britannica). Some branches of Christianity even used to celebrate Christmas and Epiphany on the same day back long ago. Epiphany used to always confuse me, though. I have to look it up just about every year. It is the celebration of introducing Jesus to the world, a mixture of events including his honoring by the Magi (representing the gentile world), his baptism; and his first miracle of changing water into wine at the wedding in Cana.

If you think about it, even if Jesus' birth and the visit by the Magi were separated by two years (see Matthew 2), that is really close together from a view 2000 years away. Plus, Epiphany book-ends with Christmas Day the Christmas season if one is following the liturgical calendar (and who doesn't?). December 25 and January 6 mark the 12 days of the Christmas season. And then bam! Jesus is a grown man being baptized by John in the Jordan River, beginning his ministry, and facing the cross on Good Friday. (Who is responsible for this calendar?)

So why the wise men at the manger? 1) It works with the church calendar, 2) we don't really know when the wise men got there, and 3) it is close enough. So okay, maybe there wasn't some pagan influence or lack of scriptural understanding after all. So I will continue to put the wise men up around the manger scene each Christmas and finally take them down on Valentine's day because that is when usually finally to get around to it.

PRAYER ROOM

“Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise.”
James 3:18 (ESV)

Watch over those who put themselves in harm’s way to protect us and grant peace of mind to the families who love and miss them. We praise you for continuing to protect:

Andrew Thompson (Griswold)
Josh Jepsen, USAF Jordan
Richy Vollmer (Vollmer)
Evan Gregory Blodgett
Devlin Durkin (McKenzie)
Elijah Lundberg, USMC Yuma, AZ

Seth Hearl
Michael Elliott
Chris Berentson
Ivan Daubenspeck, USMC Okinawa (Owen)
Owen Daubenspeck, USAF Qatar (Owen)

Comfort those who are bereaved, having lost loved ones recently:

Family and friends of Carole Williams (we do not have any further details)
Al Auge and family of Al’s uncle, Jim Catt
The family of Christine Tangvald.

Relieve pain for all who suffer in any way and restore them to good health of body, mind, and spirit. Encourage them and strengthen their caregivers:

Maurice Hedlund
Jon Zavadil
Steve Vonderau
Al Auge

Harold Lawrence
Debbi Zavadil
Al Luberts

Rosalynn Gallagher
Toni Sherman
Amy Cruver

Grant discernment, wisdom, and courage to leaders within the church and world. Raise servants to accomplish Your will. May Your will be evident in all decisions and actions.

Living Word Members
Victims of War in Ukraine and Israel

Living Word Leaders
Elected Government Officials

Persecuted Christians

Praise for healing and continued recovery:

Katie
Diego Huber
Errol Lynne Marsh

Carolyn Martin
Dick Sims
Ryan

Amy Braafladt
Rachel Harder

Darlene Luberts
Savvy

Thank you, LORD, for hearing and answering our prayers – even when you do so differently than we would prefer. We pray in the holy and mighty name of Jesus, our LORD. Amen

Names in Bold are new additions. Please let the office know if you wish your request to remain on the list otherwise requests are removed after a month.
