

A blue-toned illustration of a nativity scene. In the foreground, a manger is visible with a baby lying in it. A woman, likely Mary, is kneeling beside the manger. In the background, there are silhouettes of camels and palm trees under a dark sky with a bright light source, possibly the sun or moon, creating a glow over the scene.

# Our Family

Hope Lutheran Monthly Newsletter

December 2023

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## *From the Pastor*

Genealogies are interesting tools for helping us understand ourselves through historical family members. For Israelites, genealogies were used more for knowing your inheritance from God. Christ's genealogy in Matt 1:1-16 more or less combines both these things (which I will bring up in my Advent sermon series looking to lesser-known figures of Jesus' genealogy).

Matthew's account of Jesus' heritage starts with Abraham; the reason being, Abraham received the promises of God, which would define the identity of God's people throughout all generations. The promises were: nations/Gentiles will be blessed, land will be possessed, and an everlasting inheritance will be received (Gen 12:1-3). We still look to these promises today through faith; we desire to be blessed with salvation, to possess the promised land of heaven, and to be given eternal life. And these things come to us by way of Christ. But Jesus' genealogy reveals many people undeserving of these promises.

Starting with Abraham himself, we see a person who doubted God's promise of a son to justify having a child by another woman and even lying multiple times about his wife being his wife. Next up is Isaac, Abraham's son, who followed in his father's footsteps by lying about his wife being his wife only for her to be taken for a time into another man's household. Following that was Isaac's son, Jacob, who played the part of a trickster much of his early life.

There are many other figures, most of whom are lesser known, in Jesus' line who are no less sinners than these famous forebears.

Our family lines are not different insofar as we are sinners who are descendants of sinners who are born of sinners, a lineage that goes back to the original sinners, Adam and Eve. But this is why Christ came in human flesh: to redeem our flesh from sin that we might receive the promises of God.

Jesus did not step into his genealogy because it was perfect but because it was sinful. That way he could lift up the people of the same flesh and blood through faith. But this, of course, was not intended only for the genetic descendants of Abraham. Christ taking on human flesh means he takes on all human flesh—all human descendants from all time. In Adam, all humanity fell into sin and death, but by the death to sin by the man Jesus Christ comes forgiveness and life to all humans who believe (Rom 5:15-18).

Heb 2:14 Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,<sup>15</sup> and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery. <sup>16</sup>For surely it is not angels that he helps, but he helps the offspring of Abraham.

God bless,  
Pastor Adam Chandler

## Congregation Update

*Bringing you the latest news from our November 26th Congregation Meeting*

### In the Spotlight: Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church 2024 Budget

We are pleased to announce the approval of our 2024 budget, reflecting the dedication and generosity of our congregation. While we will have a deficit, it's heartening to note that current member giving, through pledges and estimates, has increased by \$10,000 compared to last year. For details, please refer to the Congregation Meeting minutes.

### Hope-full Future Progress Update

Our journey toward a hopeful future involves ongoing discussions with All Saints of Alaska, exploring a potential one-year lease rental and rent-to-own options. Additionally, a thorough exploration of Redeemer has been completed and research is underway for the creation of a Developer Package for Proposals.

Get ready to mark your calendars for a special Congregation Meeting in January, where the Parish Planning Council will unveil our latest findings and present recommendations that will influence the shaping of our collective future. Stay tuned for the official date announcement – you won't want to miss this!

### Our Furnace: A Matter of Warmth

Our furnace has been inspected. At 30 years old, it has surpassed its typical lifespan of 20 years. We're currently investigating the availability of a part to address the issue to

ensure the warmth of our sacred space continues. Please pray that a part will be found!

### Upcoming Activities to Celebrate Together

**1. Tree Trimming:** Join the Youth Group on *December 2nd at 1:30pm* as they adorn the Christmas tree. Your helping hands are welcome!

**2. Repose:** On *December 2nd at 3:00pm*, enjoy a delightful recital by the Chimers and Belle Voci, followed by refreshments in the narthex.

**3. Midweek Advent Services:** Commencing on *December 6th at 7:00pm*, our first Advent Midweek Service invites everyone to join in the spirit of the season. Don't forget to bring a friend!

**4. Street Hope Victoria Initiative:** As we celebrate the gifts received through Jesus Christ, we're contributing drawstring bag gifts through Street Hope Victoria this Christmas. Please consider donating items by *December 3rd, 2023*, including Christmas cards, snacks, toiletries, warm clothing, and more.

In closing, we remain steadfast in our commitment to serving the Lord and fostering a sense of community within our congregation. Your ongoing support and dedication are the pillars that uphold our vibrant and compassionate Church Family.

In Service to the Lord,  
Your Parish Planning Council



## Musical Notes



The month of December starts with our 5<sup>th</sup> **Repose Recital**, Saturday, Dec 2<sup>nd</sup> at 3 pm. This time, we will listen to our Chime Choir and the Belle Voci Choir ringing and singing the sounds of Advent – 30 minutes of meditative music for you to:

- *take a pause in your busy day*
- *bring a friend to your church*
- *socialize with others*
- *be inspired to celebrate the hopeful season of Advent, and*
- *reach out and introduce yourself to a choir member that you do not know and thank them for their music.*

The **Chime Choir** was formed years ago when our congregation decided to purchase chimes after borrowing a set from the BC Handbell Guild, which I belong to. I have led several hand bell and hand chime choirs in the past and am so pleased with the musical creativity and dedication of our chimers here at Hope. We are fortunate to have these beautiful chimes ringing most Sundays, for special services, and for recitals. Many, many thanks go to the chimers.

**Belle Voci** was formed a year ago, inspired when Heidi Morgan called me to ask if I could have a ladies' choir sing for her funeral. We did not have a choir at that moment due to members moving away, but the Holy Spirit was indeed responsible for connecting people who then became this lovely choir, and on time to sing for Heidi's funeral service. My goal is that we build our membership from 'out there'... from people who are not necessarily members of Hope. What we all have in common is the love of music, and we have grown to have much more in common. This is how the Holy Spirit works. Belle Voci is an

outreach program, through music, that is mutually beneficial to our congregation as well as to the choir members themselves.

We recently received a significant financial contribution towards our church music programs. We are blessed, and we will make use of these funds towards the continuation of our music programs and the maintenance of our instruments.

All music programs at Hope welcome new members with open arms.

Barbara



## Christmas Day Potluck



There will be a Christmas potluck luncheon on December 25th, 12:00pm, right after Christmas worship service for people of Hope Lutheran and Living Hope church. Everyone is invited to join in fellowship with one another! Please bring food to share. If you're able to help with set-up, etc., please contact Louise Rushton. God's blessings for the Christmas season!

## Busy Bees

On the third Thursday of each month the sewing group gets together with Carol Connelly from First Open Heart Society of BC to sew heart pillows. With no exception, on November 23rd the group sewed 60 heart pillows!





There is no job too small; we have pinners, sewers, and trimmers. After sewing, Carol takes the pillows home and stuffs them, then passes them on to Gail to sew up the opening. The pillows are then individually packaged with a Society brochure and are distributed by the Hospice Visitors Team to heart patients. If you have some time and would like to help, our next meeting will be in January after a short break in December.



Theodora

## LWML-C News



*“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.” Matt. 5:14-16*

As women of the Word and servants of Christ, we continue to joyfully grow in faith, share God’s Son, and serve God’s people, being a light so that they may see our good works and give glory to our Father in heaven.

“We just wanted to send a very belated thank you for the knitted hats you and Hope Lutheran Church donated for our sweet babies. The babies and their families love them!

Thanks again for your donation.” —from the NICU team at VGH hospital.

Local outreach continues with a number of handmade toques, mittens and socks being distributed in December to a variety of local groups.



As part of LWML Canada, we rejoice with our sisters in Christ as two more mission projects are completed. With the end of the triennium fast approaching on March 31, 2024, we continue to thank God for faithful mite offerings.

**Bakers Wanted!** As is our custom, LWML ladies will assemble and deliver Christmas cheer baskets to congregational shut-ins. If you would like to participate in this Cookie Walk, bake a dozen cookies and leave them at the church office marked LWML by 13 December. We will do the rest and ensure they are delivered before Christmas.



We invite all women to join in our monthly meetings. God has blessed us richly with fellowship in His name and Word. Our next meeting will be December 14<sup>th</sup>, at noon: an Advent Luncheon with the Great Cookie Walk and devotion.

A Blessed Advent and Christmas.

In His Service  
Deborah

## *Jesus: Lamb and Shepherd*

"Unto us a child is born..." Our relationship with Jesus is complex. He is our Saviour, King, Lord, our source of forgiveness, love, and hope, and so much more! In the beautiful Christmas song, "Mary, Did You Know?", Jesus is referred to as both Mary's child and her Lord in the line, "when you kiss your little baby, you kiss the face of God." He is an infant born of man, but also the Son of our Father in heaven, given to be our Saviour.

He is our sacrificial Lamb to die, to save us from all our sins and to rise again to be with us always to the end of the age. Christ is also the Shepherd of us, His sheep. We belong to Him.



When I had the privilege of traveling on a bus tour in Greece a few years ago, I had a fleeting glimpse of a shepherd near the side of the road. He had herded his flock of 10 or 15 sheep into the shade of an ancient aqueduct to protect them from the heat of the noonday sun. The sheep were not fenced in; they were settled in close around

their master. Likewise, Jesus wants us to stay close and feel safe with Him. The shepherd had a crook; he wasn't using it though because his sheep trusted him to care for them. Jesus wants us to trust Him and stay within His fold.

During Christmas each year, we are reunited with the baby Jesus knowing that this child, pure and holy, will grow up to be our Shepherd, and that we will be the sheep in His pasture. Lord, help us to truly accept that this

infant Jesus, the Lamb of God born long ago, is our Shepherd, our All in All.

Thanks be to God!

Louise

## *Stuff Those Mailboxes!*

A supporter of the postal system reminded me that receiving a card or letter in the mail is wonderful, like a special gift. The card can be displayed, re-read, and physically held, a present, from a friend who cared enough to send it. Jesus tells us to love one another, and what a lovely way to do that by sending a greeting and a favourite Bible verse wrapped up in a Christmas card to family and friends. People in our congregation are our family too, and many of them are not able to



get to church often, or at all, to greet each other. This season of Advent, as we wait to celebrate the birth of our Lord, perhaps take some time to choose half a dozen names from the church directory and share the joy of the reason for Christmas with them! Your simple message can be:

"Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy... for unto you is born a Saviour." Luke 2:10-11

## *Mustard Seed Donations Update*

From Linda Russell: "Our congregation has generously donated \$655 this year to the Mustard Seed Food Bank, of which \$575 was donated in October."



God bless you for hosting an extra plate at your table, so to speak, and for having a positive effect on our community. On behalf of the food bank recipients, thank you!



YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN

# A CHRISTMAS WORSHIP CELEBRATION

*A Thrill of*  
**HOPE**

SUNDAY

17  
DEC

1:30PM

1924 Carrick St. Victoria, BC  
Living Hope Christian Church Victoria

RSVP: 250-686-8828





# Children's Corner and For Those Young at Heart

## What is The Festival of the Nativity of our Lord?

The Festival of the Nativity of our Lord is the traditional way of saying Christmas Day. December 25 is one of the most important festival days in the Church Year. This is the day that we celebrate the birth of our Saviour Jesus!



## Why do we do the things we do at Christmas?

Many of the things that we do at Christmas have their beginnings with the Romans. Early Christians soon saw some of these things as outward reminders of Christmas and began to use them in their own celebrations. For example, when we give and receive presents, we can remember the greatest gift that has ever been given, our Lord Jesus! After all, today we celebrate Jesus' birthday, and He is the real reason for the season!



He is the real reason for the season!



What a great way to spend Christmas! Thanks be to God that you have brought your children to hear the wonderful Good News of Jesus [today]! When you go home, be sure to remind your children that Jesus is the best present we could ever have. He gave up His life so that we might have eternal life. What a great message to share!

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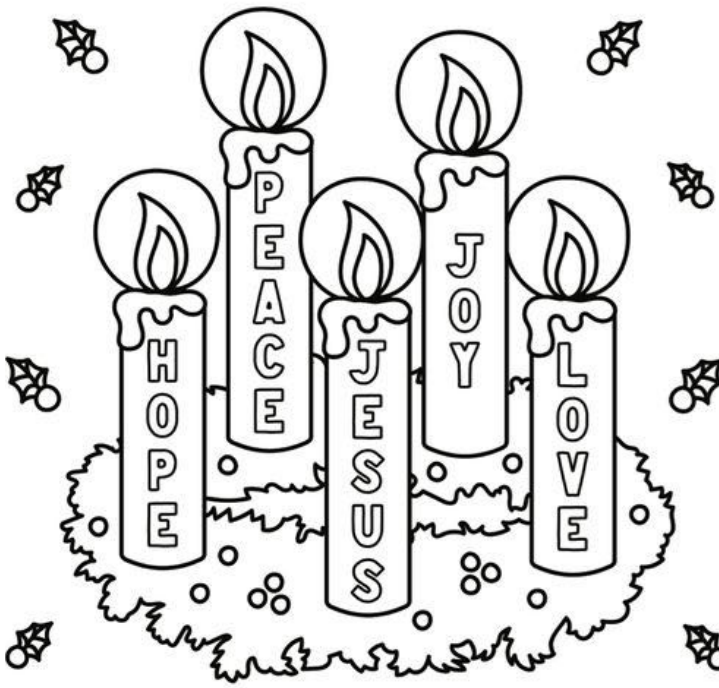
**O HOLY NIGHT**

A	D	N	H	P	W	P	J	Q	B	T	G	F	F	S	Q	V
Y	D	M	Q	M	I	A	A	S	T	A	R	R	L	G	F	R
F	X	F	A	G	R	D	O	N	K	E	Y	A	S	Q	L	J
F	S	B	U	G	S	A	V	I	O	R	M	N	F	W	U	W
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N	J	C	U	R	Z	X	E	F	T	O	N	O	M	N	G	L
B	K	Y	M	W	I	H	F	R	A	P	E	A	C	E	G	W

ANGEL	GIFTS	MYRRH
ANIMALS	GOLD	PEACE
BABY	JESUS	SAVIOR
BETHELEHEM	JOSEPH	SHEPHERD
DONKEY	MANGER	STAR
FRANKINCENSE	MARY	WISE MEN





**GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND ON EARTH  
PEACE, GOOD-WILL TOWARD MEN!  
LUKE 2:14**

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.
<b>26</b> Last Sunday of the Church Year Worship 10:30am	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> 10:00 am Bible Study	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> 1:00 pm Sewing Group 3:00pm Belle Voci	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> 1:30pm Tree Trimming 3:00 pm "Repose"
<b>3</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday in Advent Worship 10:30am	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> 10:00 am Bible Study   Gaylyn Smale Sterling Johnson	<b>6</b> 7:00pm Advent Service 1    Christina Gustafson	<b>7</b> 1:00 pm Sewing Group 3:00pm Belle Voci	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> 10:00am Confirmation 3:00pm Chimes Practice   Gloria Cardinal Rachel, Emily, & Jade Russell
<b>10</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Advent Worship 10:30am   Robert Gustafson	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 10:00 am Bible Study	<b>13</b> 7:00pm Advent Service 2  	<b>14</b> 12:00pm LWML Lunch and Cookie Walk	<b>15</b>   Makayla McIntyre	<b>16</b> 10:00am Confirmation 3:00pm Chimes Practice   Rose Krueter
<b>17</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Advent Worship 10:30am   Laura Plante	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 7:00pm Advent Service 3  	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b> 3:00pm Chimes Practice
<b>24</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent Worship 10:30am   Christmas Eve 5:00pm Service	<b>25</b>  <b>Christmas Day</b> 10:30am Service Potluck To Follow   Bert Weiss David Lind	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> 10:00am Confirmation   Doris Kinnersley Sonja Silden
<b>31</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday a. Christmas Worship 10:30am  New Year's Eve   Nancy Starling	<b>Notes</b>	<b>ELDERS:</b> Michael Rumsch (250-588-0776) Bert Weiss (250-382-2612) Fred Smale (250-652-9396) <b>Elder of the Month:</b> Bert Weiss		<b>Altar Guild:</b> Deborah Gruben Theodora Henry Eleanor Murdoch Louise Rushton		