

Our Family

Hope Lutheran Monthly Newsletter

November/December 2025

Volume 15 No. 06

Pastor's Message

Possibly the most famous star in scripture is the star of Bethlehem. That would be the one everyone readily remembers. But can you think about all the different stars that come up in the Bible? As a general hint: it's a lot.

The first whiff of stars we get in scripture appears in creation, as you would expect. Here stars are mentioned to fill the expanse of space for the purpose of ordering the seasons of the world but also to give signs (Gen 1:14). The task of the stars in God's creation is to direct the universe through the natural shifts of our environment and to signal different things in God's design. Of the latter, we know this could be something as generic that a new day has dawned when the sun creeps over the horizon. Yet, there can be a far more drastic signal such as proclaiming the coming of the world's Saviour in Bethlehem.

Promises are a common theme tied in with stars. Not only is the Messiah promised as a star coming from the people of Israel (Num 24:17), but the multiplication of God's people themselves is a promise connected with the stars. God declared to Abraham that He shall bless Abraham so that his descendants will be as numerous as the stars in the heavens (Gen 22:17). This was partially fulfilled when the Israelites were fruitful and multiplied to around two million in number so that they might inhabit the Promised Land (Deut 10:22). Why is this only a partial fulfilment? Because we know that those who are descendants of Abraham are reckoned not by biology but by faith (Rom 9:6-8). We in the modern day are children of Abraham when we have

the same faith as Abraham (Gal 3:9), believing in the Messiah and his promised resurrection.

Although we might be counted as stars in God's sight, the brightest star of all is Jesus himself. Jesus proclaims he is the bright Morning Star that heralds the new light before it dawns (Rev 22:16). By his resurrection, he signals a reversal of death into life before we ourselves are raised from dust at the end of the age. And as the Light of the World, Christ will illuminate our path unto the end by his Word and righteousness. All creatures heralded as stars—whether human believers or angels in heaven—are reflecting a light our Lord shines for our Lord is the Light who has created us (John 1:4-6).

As you can see, there is a lot that can be said for stars in Christianity. I'll be exploring this as we approach Christmas in the midweek Advent services, preaching a sermon series on stars that continues into Christmas Day. Hope to see you in worship or, if you can't make it in person, you can always join us online.

God bless,
Pastor Adam Chandler



So, "may God bless you and keep you and give you peace that passes all understanding and keep your hearts and minds in Christ", this Christmas and in the coming year. May your prayers for others be answered with blessings from God.

Blessed Christmas,
Your Sister in Christ,
Louise

Some Thoughts on Charity

Charity, defined (in Webster's) as "generosity and helpfulness especially towards the needy and suffering", describes the characteristic Christian behaviour otherwise known as "Love thy neighbour as yourself", mentioned in the bible several times (for instance at Matthew 19:19, Mark 12:31, Galatians 5:14). While this exhortation is not directly one of the Ten Commandments, it is in fact the "second greatest commandment God has given us right after the first" which is: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind" (Luke 10:25) followed by "your neighbour as yourself". Or, as Paul writes to the Romans (13:9): "If there is any other commandments, it is summed up in this saying: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself".

A tall order indeed, which throws up two basic questions: first, Who is our neighbour? and second: How can we love him/her?

The first is easily answered: Everybody! Regardless of race, gender, occupation or class – whoever is in need.

The second is more difficult – how should/can we interact with that proverbial neighbour? James (1:19) says "be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger". Not always easy, but good advice for daily use, especially when dealing with strangers. Helping your neighbour (anybody) may be a simple greeting to a street cleaner, a coffee for a beggar, or a ride for someone with heavy luggage, apart from headline-grabbing life-saving help in a fire or accident. Even just holding someone's hands and a few reassuring words may do wonders, quite apart from substantial aid like food and shelter. Jesus related the ideal in His famous story of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:33) as a guide how we are expected to react in an emergency.

Then there is a second, newer meaning of the word charity (also in Webster's): "An institution engaged in relief of the poor", such as CARE, the Red Cross, or the various societies for diseases like cancer, etc. We have over 18,000 registered charities in Canada – ample opportunities for making donations for good causes, which all help your neighbour. Thus even the people who would want to help their proverbial neighbour but see no way to do so in their daily lives, can in fact help their well-being by donations – and the government helps you in turn by giving tax rebates (15% on the first \$100, 29% on anything above). Unfortunately, CRA figures show that only some five percent of tax-filers claim any donation, and only a tiny portion gives substantial sums. Well, times are tough and, understandably, charity begins at home for family needs. Still, we ought to keep an eye out for our neighbour, who may be worse off.

As Christians we have the advantage of knowing that God is taking care of us as He knows best – we are "not to worry about

tomorrow" (Matthew 6:34). And we can always find help and understanding in our congregations – bless them!

Paul

Circuit Convocation

On Saturday, November 22, a Circuit Convocation is planned to be held at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Nanaimo from 9 am to 3:30 pm. You are invited to gather together with members of all the LCC congregations of Vancouver Island for a time of worship, instruction, discussion, and fellowship. Rev. Jacob Quast, LCC Director of Domestic Missions, will be with us to encourage us, through preaching and teaching, to actively participate in our Lord's mission within our congregations, communities, and circuit.

Mustard Seed Donations



Blessings for the Food Bank

\$1,495.00 so far, in 2025, has been donated to the Mustard Seed Food Bank by the Hope congregation. Thanks be to God for your continued generosity to people without food security and hygiene products to families and individuals.

Games Night

Come join us for games at 4:00 pm on November 15th at 4:00 pm with potluck supper to follow. Bring your favourite game..

On December 13th, come help us decorate the church for Christmas and join us after for games night and supper.

Church Anniversary

We will be celebrating Hope's 80th Anniversary in February 2026. Stay tuned for further information.



The season of Advent is coming starting November 30th. Invite family and friends to join us in fellowship and celebration of the season.

- November 30th – 1st Sunday in Advent, 10:30 am
- December 3rd – Soup Supper, 6:00 pm
Midweek Service, Advent 1, 7:00pm
- December 7th – 2nd Sunday in Advent, 10:30 am
- December 10th - Soup Supper, 6:00 pm
Midweek Service, Advent 2, 7:00 pm
- December 14th – 3rd Sunday in Advent, 10:30 am
- December 17th - Soup Supper, 6:00 pm
Midweek Service, Advent 3, 7:00pm
- December 21st – 4th Sunday in Advent, 10:30 am
- December 24th – Christmas Eve Service, TBA
- December 25th – Christmas Day Service, 10:30 am

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LWML News

Paul reminds us in Romans 12: 4-8 “For as in on members ...so we, through many are one body in Christ...having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us.

Each of us has been entrusted with gifts that find their full meaning when brought together in harmony. No role is greater than another, all are vital to God’s work; each month our desire in Lunch and Learn is to study God’s word thereby stirring our hearts and spirit to serve God’s people.

On November 1st we gathered together for our first prayer retreat. Under the leadership of Pastor Stern from Edmonton we examine bible examples of women who faithfully served our Lords. This thought provoking study reminded many of us of the women who mentored, encouraged and guided us into our roles within LWML and our commitment to God’s work. With the blessing of technology we were united in spirit and one in purpose.



As we look forward to Advent and Christmas let us prepare our hearts for the Lord’s coming. Please join us in our Christmas project of providing a message of hope and comfort to God’s homeless people with gifts of toques, mittens, scarves, socks, and gift cards for coffee or food items such as Tim Horton’s or Save on Foods.

Our sisters in Christ from Peace, Sidney have invited us to attend their annual Advent Luncheon beginning at noon on December 5th. This is a



special afternoon of fellowship and learning. Plan now to attend! Car-pooling will be available. Speak to Theo or myself. Such activities serve as reminders of how the Holy Spirit lives within us.

Blessings to all for unto us a Saviour is born
Deborah

Webinar Cancelled

The webinar with Adrianna Blitterswyk Youth Director from Trinity and Killarney Lutheran Churches scheduled on November 22nd has been cancelled. Watch for future webinar information.

Soldiering on!

November is the month we especially remember and honor those who have served our country in the past, as well as those who are currently serving in our armed forces. Being a soldier is a demanding job, and takes a lot of dedication. The job often takes them away from their families for an extended period of time, and also can put them in harm’s way. It is a very honorable profession and we should respect those who choose to serve to protect us.

David was a shepherd turned soldier when he volunteered to fight Goliath. David also led his army against Saul who was persecuting him, and later when he became King he led his army into battle many times. By reading the Psalms that David wrote, we can see the difficult and anxious times he had as a leader. David called upon and trusted God to deliver him as a soldier in his times of need.

As Christians, we have the Bible to help us fight our battles and can find comfort in some of the passages that have encouraged others who have also fought battles. In Joshua 1:9 God tells Joshua “Be strong and courageous. Do not be

terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.” 2 Chronicles 20:15 also reminds us to “Not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God’s.” God fights for us, and with us whenever we need him. In Psalm 24: 8 David asks, “Who is this King of glory?” His answer is: “The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.” David knew and trusted that God was with him in every battle he fought.

We may not be soldiers, but we all have our own battles to conquer. Hebrews 13:5 tells us that God has said: “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.” That is God’s promise to all of us when we face the battles of life, as we all “Soldier on.”

Written by Christian Growth Committee
Member Pauline H.
scriptures are NIV

Family Favourite

This **Chicken Stuffing Casserole** is perfect for any occasion. It is wonderfully adaptable; replace the chicken with turkey or even a plant-based alternative. Try different cream soups like celery or potato. For lower fat option replace sour cream with Greek yogurt. Customize the vegetable medley with your favourites. Use Gluten-free stuffing mix and other ingredients that comply with dietary restrictions. Wondering what to do with the leftover turkey and stuffing after Thanksgiving dinner? Try them in this recipe.



Ingredients

1 ½ cups Chicken Broth
¼ cup Butter
1 6oz Package Stuffing Mix
1 10.5 oz can Cream of Chicken soup
½ 10.5 oz Cream of Mushroom soup
½ cup Sour Cream
1/3 cup Milk
½ tsp Salt
¼ tsp Black Pepper
3 cups Shredded Cooked Chicken
1 cup Frozen Mixed Vegetables, thawed
Fresh Parsley (for garnish), optional

Instructions

- Preheat oven to 375°F. Grease 9x13 baking pan.
- Prepare Stuffing: in a medium pot combine chicken broth and butter and bring to a boil; once boiling, add stuffing mix and stir; take off from heat and let stand for 5 minutes.
- Chicken base: in a large bowl combine cream soups, sour cream, milk, salt and pepper and mix well; fold in chicken and mix vegetable and mix until they are evenly distributed throughout the cream base.
- Assemble the casserole: spread half of the stuffing into the greased pan; over this pour the chicken and vegetable mix and spread evenly; top with the remaining stuffing spreading it to cover the chicken mixture.
- Bake for 40-45 minutes, top should be golden brown and edges bubbling when ready.
- Serve: after removing from oven, cool slightly, garnish with parsley if desired.
- Note: busy schedule? No problem, it can be assembled a day in advance, cover with saran wrap and bake when you need it.

Enjoy!

Thank you

Thank you to all who attended and contributed to the Reformation Potluck lunch! Great food and great fellowship was had by all as you can see in these pictures.



2025 Advent Devotions

If you are looking for a devotional booklet to use during this Advent season, both Lutheran Laymen's League of Canada (LLL-Canada) and Lutheran Association of Missionaries and Pilots (LAMP) have each released their annual Advent devotionals online

You can subscribe to LAMP's 2025 Advent Devotions by email or download the devotional booklet to print from their website: <https://www.lampministry.org/#/news-devotions/>

LLL-Canada has two devotionals this year: *Born to You...A Saviour* for adults and *A Gift For the Heart* for families. These can be read online or printed as a booklet from their website: <https://lll.ca/advent/>

In addition to the devotionals, LLL-Canada will have weekly colouring pages and Advent activities so please check their website during the Advent Season to access these resources.





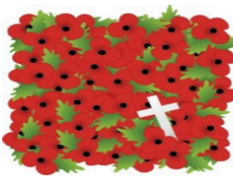
Advent Devotions

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November 2025 Prayer Calendar



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 Lord be with us daily as we begin a new month, praising You.
2 Father help us to listen and learn from your word today.	3 We pray that you will be with us each hour of each day this week.	4 Lord we ask you to be with all teachers and school children this week.	5 Lord, please bless Rev. D.J. Kim's outreach Street Ministry in Regina	6 We pray Lord, help us to tell others about you today.	7 Lord we pray you will be with all who travel on land sea or air today.	8 Father God, be with us and help us to enjoy our leisure time today.
9 Lord bless all who preach the true word of God today.	10 "Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the Lord." PS. 31:24 NIV	11 Remembrance Day – Lord, please protect those who serve our country. 	12 God, please bless our LCC Seminaries in Edmonton and St. Catharines	13 "O Lord my God, I will give you thanks forever." PS. 30:12b	14 Heavenly Father, lead guide and direct all government leaders.	15 Thank you God for the family and friends you have blessed us with.
16 God, please bless all those congregations who are without a pastor.	17 Please be with us this week as we seek to do your will.	18 Lord, please watch over the homeless and those who have addictions.	19 Lord, bless the pastors and volunteers of Lutheran Hospital Ministries.	20 "O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!" PS 8:1	21 Dear God help me to look to you for the answers I need today.	22 Lord help us to praise you as we enjoy your world today.
23 Dear God, strengthen and sustain all pastors and missionaries today.	24 Lord, be with us and guide us as we go about our daily tasks.	25 "Search me, O God, and know my heart;" PS 139:23	26 Lord, be with the Deaconesses of the Cambodia Lutheran Church.	27 Lord help us to tell others about your saving Grace.	28 Lord help us to tell others about your saving Grace.	29 Father God help me to always show love to those who are not always lovable.
30 Lord God Thank you for being with us this month, go with us into December.						

This calendar has been prepared for your use by the Christian Growth Committee of Lutheran Women's Missionary League–Canada

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 Reformation Sunday Worship 10:30 am	27	28 Bible Study 10:00 am	29	30 Chimes Rehearsal 2:00 pm Belle Voci 3:00 pm	31	1 LWML Morning Prayer Retreat 8:30 am
2 All Saints' Sunday Worship 10:30 am Lunch with Pastor	3  Julia Theim	4 Bible Study 10:00 am	5 Lunch & Learn 12 pm	6 Belle Voci 3:00 pm Chimes Rehearsal 4:00 pm  Shane Johnson	7	8
9 22 nd Sunday a. Pentecost Worship 10:30 am	10	11 Bible Study 10:00 am  REMEMBRANCE DAY <i>lest We Forget</i>	12	13 Chimes Rehearsal 2:00pm Belle Voci 3:00 pm	14	15 Amica Prayer Service 2:30 pm Games Night 4:00 pm
16 23 rd Sunday a. Pentecost Worship 10:30 am	17	18 Bible Study 10:00 am	19  Ken Dill →	20 Sewing Circle (Heart Pillows) 1:00 pm Chimes Rehearsal 2:00pm Belle Voci 3:00 pm PPC Meeting 6:00 pm	21	22 Circuit Convocation, Nanaimo  Ashley Marie Fitterer
23 Last Sunday of the Church Year Worship 10:30 am	24	25 Bible Study 10:00 am	26	27 Chimes Rehearsal 2:00pm Belle Voci 3:00 pm	28  Mark Russell	29 Repose Recital 3:00 pm 'Spirituals'
30 1 st Sunday in Advent <i>Congregation Meeting</i> 	Notes	ELDER: Michael Rumsch (250-588-0776)		Altar Guild: Deborah Gruben Jade Russell Laura Frandsen Louise Rushton Theodora Henry		

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 1 st Sunday in Advent Worship 10:30 am 	1	2 Bible Study 10:00 am	3 Lunch & Learn 12 noon Soup Supper 6:00 pm Advent 1 Mid-week Service 7:00 pm	4 Chimes Rehearsal 3:00 pm	5 Advent Luncheon 12 pm Peace Lutheran Church, Sidney  Gaylyn Smale Sterling Johnson	6
7 2 nd Sunday in Advent Worship 10:30 am Lunch with Pastor 	8	9 Bible Study 10:00 am  Gloria Cardinal Rachel, Emily, & Jade Russell	10 Soup Supper 6:00 pm Advent 1 Mid-week Service 7:00 pm	11 Chimes Rehearsal 3:00 pm	12	13 Christmas Decorating/ Games night and Potluck 4:00 pm
14 3 rd Sunday in Advent Worship 10:30 am 	15  Makayla McIntyre	16 Bible Study 10:00 am	17 Soup Supper 6:00 pm Advent 1 Mid-week Service 7:00 pm  Laura Plante	18 Chimes Rehearsal 3:00pm	19	20 Amica Prayer Service 2:30 pm
21 4 th Sunday in Advent Worship 10:30 am 	22	23 Bible Study 10:00 am	24 Christmas Eve Service 7:00 pm 	25 Christmas Day Service 10:30 am   Bert Weiss David Lind	26 	27
28 The Holy Innocents/1 st Sunday of Christmas Worship 10:30 am 	29	30 Bible Study 10:00 am	31	1 	2	3
Notes	ELDER: Michael Rumsch (250-588-0776)		Altar Guild: Deborah Gruben Jade Russell Laura Frandsen Louise Rushton Theodora Henry			