

# American Lutheran Church

December, 2017

## Pastor's Letter

Dear Friends in Christ,

This past year, we've been celebrating the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation. These celebrations are not only happening in the church. This past month, the Billings Symphony Chorale gave a concert called *Luther's Legacy*. This concert celebrated Luther's love of music, a tradition that continues in Lutheran churches and colleges to this day. As well as all his theological writing, Luther composed hymns, both the music and the words. One of them is a Christmas hymn called *From Heaven Above*, 268 in our hymnal. As the hymn has 14 verses, I will share with you only three of them. In these verses, he speaks of the hope of the Christ child:

*From heav'n above to earth I come  
To bear good news to ev'ry home!  
Glad tidings of great joy I bring  
To all the world, and gladly sing*

*My heart for very joy now leaps;  
my voice no longer silence keeps;  
I too must sing with joyful tongue  
The sweetest ancient cradle song*

*Glory to God in the highest heav'n,  
Who unto us the Son has giv'n.  
With angels sing in pious mirth  
A glad new year to all the earth!*

If you are ever looking to a good way to do devotions, pick up a hymnal and just read the words of our hymns. There are great spiritual nuggets in those words that we sing. I invite you to the following opportunities to contemplate the wonders of this child:



## Fridays, December 1,8,15

Advent Recitals at noon (info elsewhere in this newsletter)

## Sunday, December 17

Service of Advent Lessons and Carols, 8:30 and 11:00 a.m.

## Sunday, December 24

10:00 a.m. 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent service

4:00 p.m. Family Service

6:00 & 9:00 p.m. Services of Carols, Candlelight, and Communion

## Christmas Day

10:00 a.m. Service of Carols and Communion

## Sunday, December 31

10:00 a.m. 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the Christmas Season

(This year, both Christmas and New Year's Eve are on a Sunday. Morning services on both days will be at 10:00 a.m.)

Celebrating the birth of Christ with you,

*Pastor Tim*

## Adult Forums

### December 3

After having technology issues in October, we'll finish watching the **PBS presentation** entitled, *Martin Luther: The Idea that Changed the World*, as we continue in our celebration of the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation.

### December 10

**Demystifying Dementia:** Whether with family members, friends, or members of our congregation, we will all face the issue of dementia. A team from Highgate Senior Living will be with us to lead us through both an experience of and a discussion regarding this difficult issue. This forum will include a catered breakfast.

### December 17

Join us for a lighthearted discussion about different Christmas traditions. This will be an interesting time to share our own stories of this holiday.

## The Giving Tree

at American Lutheran is a great way to share the real meaning of Christmas with those in need in our community. For many members of our congregation, this is the most meaningful of their holiday traditions. For the recipients of these gifts, many times they are the only Christmas presents they receive.

Watch for the tree to be set up just before Thanksgiving in the lobby area of ALC. Take a tag or two from the tree, purchase and wrap the gifts listed, reattach the tags, and bring the gifts back to American Lutheran by Wednesday, December 13th. This year's gifts benefit people served by these agencies: Young Families, High School Pantry, Area 2 Agency on Aging, and Tumbleweed.



## Advent Recital Series

American Lutheran Church continues its strong mission of music with the Advent Recital Series.



This outreach is to our members and the whole community. Invite a friend! The three recitals are held on **Fridays in December** at 12:05 p.m. in the sanctuary. The recitals are followed by a soup luncheon with a free will offering.

Mark your calendars! Performances are by very talented and professional community musicians.

December 1 Arle Lohof- organ  
December 8 Renee Tostengard- viola  
December 16 Elise Dye, soprano

This ministry also requires soup makers and kitchen help. Contact Carmen Galt at 259-3476, if this ministry fits your schedule.

## Youth Schedule



Here's our schedule for the month of December. Please email

[rochelle@amluth.org](mailto:rochelle@amluth.org) if you have any questions.

### December 3<sup>rd</sup>

9:45 – 10:45 Sunday school (Opening in the chapel)

### December 6<sup>th</sup>

5:00 Kid's Club

6:00 Meal

6:30 Confirmation and Youth Group Caroling

### December 10<sup>th</sup>

9:45 – 10:45 Sunday school (Opening in the chapel)

### December 13<sup>th</sup>

5:00 – 8:30 Mom's Night Out of Free Babysitting

### December 17<sup>th</sup>

9:45 – 10:45 Sunday school (Big Group – Christmas craft and movie upstairs)

**\*\* Lessons and Carols – ALC kids will participate in reading some of the lessons and singing carols during the 8:30 and 11:00 church services. \*\***

### December 20<sup>th</sup>

NO Wednesday night activities – Christmas Break

### December 24<sup>th</sup>

NO Sunday school – Christmas Break

### December 27<sup>th</sup>

NO Wednesday night activities – Christmas Break

### December 31<sup>st</sup>

NO Sunday school – Christmas Break

### January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018

NO Wednesday night activities – Christmas Break

**\*\* Sunday school and Wednesday night activities will resume during the week of January 7, 2018. \*\***

## Parents and Families with Small Children:

Nursery services will be **unavailable** on the following dates: Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup> (4:00, 6:00 and 9:00 pm services), Monday, December 25<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, December 31<sup>st</sup>. Our

nursery attendants have been given these days off to spend with their families. However, the nursery will be unlocked if parents wish to sit in there with their children

during these church services. **We ask that children are not left unattended in the nursery.** If you have any questions, please contact Rochelle at

[rochelle@amluth.org](mailto:rochelle@amluth.org).



## Attention all Moms, Dads, and Anyone with Young Children



It's time for ALC's annual Night of FREE babysitting! If you need a night to run errands, get some shopping done, or just have a quiet evening

alone, please bring your child to a fun night of babysitting at ALC. This event will be held on Wednesday, December 13<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 – 8:30. Our confirmation and youth group kids will help us entertain your children with music, games, baking, crafts and a movie. This is always a fun event, and we would love to have your children join us. Please feel free to contact Rochelle if you have any questions. Also, if your child will be attending, please email Rochelle at [rochelle@amluth.org](mailto:rochelle@amluth.org).

### Success

We would like to give a HUGE, heartfelt thank you to everyone that participated in the Dress-A-Child bake sale. If you brought baked goods, purchased baked goods, or even just made a donation – **THANK YOU!** Due to our congregation's enormous generosity, we were able to collect over \$ 2,000.00! Outstanding! I would also like to give additional thanks to our quilters, who were able to collect and donate an additional \$ 300.00+ to be used to dress less fortunate children in the Billings area. We are always amazed at the never-ending generosity that our congregation always shows. Our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade confirmation students will be meeting on Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup> to purchase clothing for 10 children, as well as diapers, sweat pants and socks for Warm the Manger. Thank you everyone!



### Stewardship Matters: *Being* Christian

"The service has ended, now let the service begin" reads the sign on the way out the door of many churches. Other congregations use the standard dismissal "Go in peace, serve the Lord." Both are

reminders that to be Christian is to be a servant of Christ, to serve as Christ to one another. Servants are stewards and stewards are caretakers, plain and simple. To serve is to care – it's missional. Our mission as Christians is to serve God's whole creation – a daunting mission if ever there was one. So how do we as individuals ever accomplish the mission? By joining together as one body of Christ, serving wherever we can. How do we serve as the body of Christ together at American Lutheran? We feed the hungry literally with the sandwich ministry, food & fellowship opportunities and figuratively through worship and Holy Communion. We clothe the poor with Dress a Child, Warm the Manger, giving trees and coat drives. We shelter the lost by hosting Family Promise. We provide sanctuary to weary minds and souls. We minister to the sick, the lonely and the grief stricken through our prayers, visits and services of healing.



We are servants to one another in God's creation when we are good stewards to American Lutheran. As you take time to reflect upon the Christ child this Christmas season, let us remember His mission to be a servant to all and Light to the world. "The service has ended, now let the service begin." In other words, go be Christian!

### Scandinavian Baking Night at ALC

Wednesday, December 6, beginning at 4:00



-Join us in the church kitchen to bake for our members who are shut-in  
-Bring batches of dough for your favorite goodies, as well as luse irons and

other equipment

-Seasoned professionals, as well as those of all ages who want to learn, are welcome!  
-Baked items will be delivered by our caroling kids later that evening

## Congratulations, Ted Rist

for being named as this year's recipient of American Lutheran's Time for Service award! Whether it's through his leadership on committees and projects, or his hands-on work barbecuing hamburgers and leading kitchen crews, Ted is a committed, willing and reliable volunteer. Thank you, Ted, for all you do at ALC and across our community!!



## Deck the Halls...



Our large Christmas tree will be set up in the church sanctuary on Wednesday, December 6th at 6:30pm. Lots of helping hands are needed to assemble and decorate the tree. Please sign up on the sheet, or contact the church office, if you can assist.

## Christmas Schedule:

Mark your calendars as we celebrate the birth of the Christ child:

### **Sunday, December 17**

Service of Advent Lessons and Carols and the Sunday School Christmas Program at both services.

### **Christmas Eve**

10:00 a.m.: 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

4:00 p.m.: Family Service

6:00 & 9:00 p.m.: Services of Carols, Candlelight, and Communion

### **Christmas Day**

10:00 a.m.: Service of Carols and Communion

### **New Year's Eve**

10:00 a.m.: 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the Christmas Season

(This year, both Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve are on a Sunday. Please note there will be one service on both those days.)



## Financial Update

The balance on the line of credit borrowed from the bank at the end of October was \$7,157.

Year-to-date, net loss of \$(14,883) is behind budget and \$10,223 ahead of last year through October.

	Income	Expense	Net
Month of October 2017	\$ 51,998	\$ 48,681	\$ 3,317
2017 YTD Actual	\$ 433,220	\$ 448,103	\$ (14,883)
2017 YTD Budget	\$ 458,333	\$ 458,333	\$ -
Variance YTD	\$ (25,113)	\$ 10,230	\$ (14,883)

You can now make a contribution to American Lutheran Church with a quick text message from your cell phone!

Simply send a text to **406-221-1343** with the amount you would like to contribute. Choose your dollar amount along with the word for which fund you want that contribution to go towards.

GEN = General Fund

SKY = Be the Light-



Skylights

For example: You would like to donate \$100.00 to the skylight fund. Text 100 [space] SKY to the number noted above.

Within a few minutes, you'll be sent a text with a link to register. Click on the link and enter your cardholder name and credit or debit card information. (Note: for the expiration date no slash is needed. Example: Nov 2017 would be entered 1117). Once your registration is complete, you will receive a text verification and a receipt via email. For future giving, simply send a text with the amount and word you wish to give, and it will process automatically! It's as simple as that. Throughout the year we will introduce other words your text giving can support. *Any questions, feel free to contact the church office.*

## Poinsettias



Poinsettias will again decorate our sanctuary this Christmas. You may donate one or more in honor of someone, in memory of someone, or just as a way to share

the joy of Christmas. Donors' names will be listed in the Christmas bulletin. Sign up at the reception desk. The poinsettias are \$15.

## Radio Broadcast and Altar Flower Charts

The 2018 radio broadcast and altar flower sponsor charts are displayed on a bulletin board along the ramp leading to the sanctuary. Sign up for one, two, or several dates in the coming year to sponsor these important aspects of our worship together. Each radio broadcast is \$70, and flowers are \$25. No need to arrange delivery of flowers, fresh arrangements are automatically delivered to the church each week.

Worship recordings of the 8:30 a.m. service are broadcast at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings on KURL 93.3FM. Checks may be made to American Lutheran Church with either "Radio Broadcast" or "Altar Flowers" in the memo line.



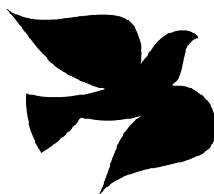
## 2018 Offering Envelopes



Pick up your 2018 offering envelopes in the narthex. If you can't find yours, or have any questions, contact the church office.

## November Pastoral Acts

Funeral: Smitty Whitbeck



## Listening team outcome

On behalf of the Council at American Lutheran, thank you to all who participated in our August listening team sessions. The report has been received by the council and they have acted making decisions about involvement in music leadership at ALC. We are thankful to be moving forward in healthy and rejuvenated ways, trusting always the Spirit's presence in our worship and praise.

## Christikon Clips

December 2017

*Information for our Congregations*



During this holiday season we celebrate the Christikon family, spread across the country and world. Our community continues to grow both in numbers and in faithfulness to our God. Bring your family to

Christikon next summer and experience its rich tradition and strength of connection to one another. Blessings to you and yours this Advent and Christmas.

**It is the mission of Christikon to awaken and nurture faith in Christ— exploring God's creation and the adventure of life together.**

**CHRISTIKON** • 1108 24<sup>th</sup> Street West • Billings, MT 59102  
406 656-1969 • [secretary@christikon.org](mailto:secretary@christikon.org) •  
[www.christikon.org](http://www.christikon.org)

## New Addresses:

Following are the new addresses for a couple of our members who have recently moved:

Charles Jerabek  
600 Chaska Rd., Apt. 331  
Shorewood, MN 55331

Shirley Houghland  
1550 Cherry St., #274  
Wenatchee, WA 9880

