FOCUS GROWING TO SERVE



2024

Our Savior Lutheran Church 745 Front Street S Issaquah, WA 98027

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From the Desk of Pastor Vaswig

The Apostle Paul was not always thrilled with the congregations he was writing to. In fact, he is often rather harsh in his corrective language to the churches at Galatia or Corinth. However, there were the congregations at Philippi. The apostle is thrilled with the faithfulness of the same, even exuberant in his affirmation of the community. In chapter 1 of Philippians, verse 3, you can feel Paul's joy as an Apostle when in the form of a prayer he states: "I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you." The words of the Apostle echo in a very real way my feelings for the people of God at Our Savior; I thank my God in all my remembrance of you.

I thank God indeed for the privilege and pleasure of serving each of you over the last few years as your Transitional Pastor. I never liked the title much, but I guess it does define the work I was called to in your midst. And yes, transitions indeed. From a closure of Shepherd of the Hills to a merger of Our Savior and Shepherd to a congregation unified in the Spirit to do the work of the Kingdom of God. Yes, unified in the Spirit: one body, many members.

And oh, how I give thanks in every remembrance of each of you. I give thanks for the fellowship we have shared with one another. For meaningful worship, beautiful music, faithful prayers from God's people. I give thanks for the privilege of being invited into your lives in times of joy and times of loss and sorrow. For all these times and for your trust, I give thanks to God. And now as I depart, I do so with thanksgiving for you. I do so knowing you will continue to be faithful as you welcome the Baumann's into your midst. I do so with a full heart and a promise to continue to pray for you in all my remembrance of you.

God be with you as new possibilities take shape. God be with you and endow you with a Spirit of courage and hope as the journey unfolds. It is with the deepest of gratitude that I bid you farewell.

Pastor John L. Vaswig

Farewell Luncheon for Pr. Vaswig

Mark your calendars and plan to join us on January 14!

Pr. Vaswig's last Sunday at OSLC will be January 14. Following worship, come join us in Anderson Hall at 11 a.m. for a farewell luncheon in his honor. It's our chance to celebrate the time Pr. Vaswig has been with us during our transition and the many accomplishments he's helped us achieve, including our merger and knitting two congregations into one. Thank you!

FAREWELL LUNCH



New Pastors Start at OSLC on January 29

Rev. Kristin-Luana Baumann and Rev. Olaf Baumann will start their first day of work on Monday, January 29. Their first Sunday presiding will be February 4.

Pr. Bryon Hanson will preside on January 21 & 28 (the two Sundays before the Baumanns arrive).



2024 OSLC Council Members

John McDowell (Co-President)
Barbara Fetty-Solders (Co-President)
Connie Fletcher (Vice President)
Marilyn Carlson (Secretary)
Wendy Winslow (Treasurer)

Members at Large:

Jane Wuest Jeff Jewell Chris Anderson Anne Ellett Holly Heckler

The Council will be installed during worship on January 7. Thanks for your dedication to serve OSLC!

From the Council Co-President

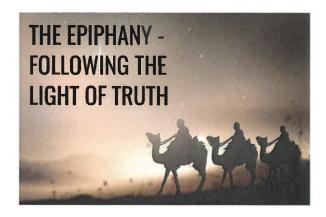
Epiphany at OSLC in 2024

Happy New Year to the members and friends of Our Savior Lutheran Church! As we begin the church new year, I pondered the meaning of the Epiphany. It is derived from the Greek word "epiphaneia" or appearance/manifestation, and it serves as a reminder of Jesus' manifestation to the Gentiles, and of God's acceptance of all people, regardless of their nationality or status. Also known as Three Kings' Day, it is a Christian feast day that celebrates the revelation of God, the Light of Truth, illuminated by the Star of Bethlehem. It is observed on January 6, marking the end of the Christmas season. The story of Epiphany is told in the Gospel of Matthew (2:1-12).

While the Epiphany may mark the end of the Magi's travel, it also brings to my mind new beginnings associated with the New Year. OSLC has many new beginnings coming this year. We have a talented group of members elected to the Church Council, and John McDowell and I are enthused to lead as Co-Presidents. We have a pastoral couple coming to lead us, Rev. Kristin-Luana Baumann and Rev. Olaf Baumann. We also acknowledge and thank Pastor John Vaswig who will transition to a new beginning after successfully guiding us through many changes in the past $2\frac{1}{2}$ years.

With new beginnings and change, sometimes a sense of uncertainty seeps in. This is good! We have the gift of the Holy Spirit to guide us, and God's Word provides the light we need (Psalm 119:05). And with uncertainty, creativity is often revealed. To quote Ted Lasso, "Taking on a challenge is a lot like riding a horse, isn't it? If you're comfortable while you're doing it, you're probably doing it wrong."

Barbara Fetty-Solders, Council Co-President



From the Parsonage Committee

Patch the Parsonage. A Home for the Baumann's. Patch the House. Fix the House. A Plan for the Parsonage. The Parsonage Plan. Raise the House. Prepare the Palace. Our last campaign was "Raze the Roof" which came from Debby Beck and Rick West for the Anderson Hall roof. The "Capital Campaign" just sounds kind of boring. Maybe somebody can come up with a better name.

Retrofitting the parsonage is how we can bring in two 2/3's time pastors and have it fit our budget. Our first three pastors at Our Savior Lutheran—Collard, Erickson, and Wendt—lived in the parsonage. We've had an associate pastor, a choir director, and a janitor live there, too. The building is over fifty years old. Ask Mary Fricke; her husband Jim designed it.

I read a recent article by Pastor Jason Kaspar from Mt. Calvary Lutheran in LaGrange, Texas. He lives in a parsonage, and he thinks it's time to fix up those unused parsonage many churches have. In the 1980's, most pastors went from using parsonages to buying their own homes. Interest rates were reasonable and house prices were within budgets. Neither of these is available for those moving to affluent areas. OSLC has provided a \$50,000 loan to two recent pastors to buy a home in Issaquah. That amount only gets you a 5% down on most moderate homes now.

We have \$100,000 coming from the Shepherd of the Hills Legacy Fund. The leadership wants to raise a matching amount of another \$100,000. The Parsonage Committee—Gary Hanson, Rick West, John McDowell, Cheryl Leiter, and I—think we can retrofit the house for between \$150,000 and \$175,000. Not included in the plan is taking down a big dead tree in the backyard, replacing a beat-up concrete patio, or bringing in new low-maintenance landscaping. There is also some thought to closing in the carport for more safety and security. If we raise more funds, we can do more.

As of December 31, we've received \$67,530. Matching funds (\$10,000) have arrived and have been matched. Cash and pledges are still coming in. Thank you for your generosity.

Chuck Bachman, Parsonage Committee



Treasurer's Update November 2023

We are five months into our current fiscal year (July 1-June 30).

M	That has	s happened	thi	s year:			Last year actual:
-		•		-	- 4		

In November we received contributions of:	\$21,833	\$28,204
In November we spent:	- <u>\$28,612</u>	\$30,310
We spent more than received:	-\$ 6,779	\$ 2,106

Compared to the budget for the month of November:

We are UNDER budgeted giving by:	\$ 4,417
We are UNDER budgeted spending by:	\$ 9,467

Our contributions for the month of November were UNDER last year by: \$6,371 Our contributions YTD for November were OVER last year by: \$17,728

Let's look at the numbers budget year-to-date:		Last year YTD:
Budgeted contributions YTD (July-November):	\$131,250	\$138,750
Actual contributions YTD (July-November):	\$127,446	\$109,718
UNDER budgeted contributions by:	\$ 3,804	\$ 29,032
Budgeted expense YTD (July-November):	\$190,395	\$157,550
Actual expenses YTD (July-November):	\$131,129	\$128,346
UNDER budgeted expense by:	\$ 59,266	\$ 29,204

That's a lot of numbers to read. I hope you can find the figures you are looking for. What were the contributions and expenses for the month of November? How did the contributions compare to what we budgeted? How good was our guess when we prepared the budget and how far over or under are we? How are we doing YTD (year-to-date) for contributions and expenses? How does it compare with where we were last year at this time? Are we where we need to be?

Last Spring when we prepared the budget which we adopted at the Annual Meeting in June 2023, a renovation of the parsonage building wasn't even on the radar. We had considered the possibility of some part-time staff to assist with some of our ministries, but a reno of the parsonage was beyond our comprehension. But, look at where we are today! We are investing in our asset (the parsonage) so it will work for us into the future.

Continued from page 5 . . .

I am so excited by the support and enthusiasm this congregation has shown towards this parsonage project—before the actual fundraising campaign has even officially started! You folks are the best! Cash in hand as of 12/31/2023 is \$67,530. Matching funds have arrived and have been matched. Can I say it again? You folks are the best!

Hmm. A renovation of the parsonage was not on our radar. What other dreams and ministries and missions and visions are bubbling below the surface? What will 2024 bring? Where is the Spirit leading and calling us?

In eager anticipation of new and exciting adventures,

Wendy Winslow, OSLC Treasurer

P.S. I'm glad you are all with me on this journey!



Thank You, Call Committee

Members of the Call Committee, thank you for your faithful commitment and dedicated service. We're grateful for the thoughtful work you've done throughout the call process and all you continue to do to ensure a smooth transition for Rev. Kristin-Luana Baumann and Rev. Olaf Baumann.

John McDowell, Chair
Barbara Fetty-Solders, Secretary
Phil Griffin
Gary Hanson
Marilyn Jewell
LaRue Nelson
Jen Winslow



Thank You from the Parish Administrator

Getting sick with COVID and missing two weeks of work during the busy season of Advent wasn't what I expected this December! I learned new lessons about the importance of taking care of myself, resting, seeking balance, and letting go. I want to thank Marilyn Carlson for stepping in to create worship bulletins, check emails, and keep the office running. Thank you to Wendy Winslow for answering the phone. Thanks to all who prayed for my health and offered emotional support. And thanks to those who left Christmas presents and cards on my desk for when I returned. I felt your care and support. I'm grateful to be here at OSLC, and I'm looking forward to 2024. Happy New Year! Cynthia Delaney, Parish Administrator

From the Community Outreach Committee

Thanks to the generous donations received over the time Tent City 4/Camp Roberson was at OLSC, we were able to provide Christmas dinner and gift bags to the residents. We were also able to provide lunch for them on their move day. Thank you to all of the congregation members who generously supported the camp over these last nine months with their time and donations. The camp will temporarily be at the Motel 6 in Kirkland and then move to a location in Woodinville. LIHI (Low Income Housing Institute) is looking for a permanent location for them. Godspeed to all the residents.





Women's Retreat 2024



Mark Your Calendars & Save the Date!

Our next Women's Retreat will be March 1-3, 2024 at the beautiful Rainbow Lodge in North Bend. If you haven't been there recently, you'll be impressed by the many upgrades to the lodge. Speaker and theme are under development now. More information to come, but get it on your calendar!

Retreat Planning Team



Come Worship with Us

Sundays in Epiphany

January 7: Baptism of Our Lord

January 14: Second Sunday after Epiphany

January 21: Third Sunday after Epiphany

January 28: Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

In Person: Our Savior's Executive Committee suggests attendees continue to wear masks in worship, principally because of singing. Please continue to stay home if feeling sick, and receive Holy Communion in a safe manner.

Online: Sunday worship services are live-streamed at 10:00 a.m. A link to the service is published in the weekly email (sent with the bulletin), or you can click here: **Worship Live**. If you try the link prior to 10:00 a.m. each Sunday, you may see the message "video unavailable."

Services are recorded and posted to the <u>Our Savior YouTube Channel</u>. If needed, pull down the menu under "Uploads," then click on "Past Live Streams," or go to our website at <u>www.oslcissaquah.org</u>.



Gather with us for fellowship and coffee hour each Sunday following worship. Coffee hour hosts are needed. You can sign up to bake/bring treats only, help with coffee, or sign up for both.

The sign-up sheet is located in Anderson Hall next to the kitchen pass-through window, and there are several folks happy to partner with you or walk you through the kitchen and teach you how it all works.



Northwest Washington Synod

The Spirit



Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee

From the Bishop:

I was listening to the news a few days ago when I heard that Israel had bombed Gaza using artificial intelligence called "The Gospel." I thought at first that I had misheard. Surely an AI program designed to bomb people is not named "gospel." But, horrifically, I had heard correctly. As Steve Inskeep from NPR's Morning Edition reports on December 14, "The system is called The Gospel. And basically, it takes an enormous quantity of surveillance data, crunches it all together and makes recommendations about where the military should strike."

Pause right here and read the above paragraph again. I mean it. Read it again.

A weapon of war is named The Gospel. Dear Beloveds of Christ, I cannot emphasize enough how bone-chilling and nauseous it makes me feel that a word designed to bring hope and love and peace and joy to this world—Gospel—is being used to kill.

I don't know who first named this system "gospel." I don't know what marketing expert or even what acronym "gospel" might mean in the AI world. I could not find the origin. But what I do know is that this system is now being used for something horrendous. This is so contrary to the first words from the gospel of Mark, "The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God."

As you might be aware, the word gospel is translated into English as "good news." When Martin Luther was struggling about the laws of God and feeling that he was a sinner beyond redemption, he recounts in many of his writings how his understanding of God changed as he read Paul's letter to the Romans. He suddenly realized that it was not up to him, but up to God. God was the one who redeemed. God was the one who forgave. Luther suddenly experienced what God through Jesus does for all of us: Through Jesus Christ, God provides comfort for the terrified, forgiveness for the sinner, and faith for the doubting. Martin Luther was overwhelmed with God's grace and was immersed in the Gospel.

Following this earth-shattering understanding of the Good News of Jesus, Luther taught, preached, and wrote about this insight every chance he got. In 1521, Philip Melanchthon condensed Luther's insight to this provocative sentence: "The gospel is a promise." To this day, Lutherans continue to bear witness to the whole church and world that the gospel is a promise, truly good news of God's mercy and love in Christ, received by faith alone.

Northwest Washington Synod

Continued from page 9...

In these days when words are manipulated by those in power, when evil seems to be gaining ground, when neighbor turns against neighbor, may we remember and experience God's grace. May we be enveloped in God's love. And, in response, may we, in our words and actions, move against the forces that are contrary to all that Jesus stands for.

For we are called, my dear Beloveds, through God's grace towards God's promise of wholeness and true peace. This is the Gospel.

As the prophet Isaiah proclaims of God in chapter 42, "I am the Lord, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness."

May it be so. May it be so.

We look towards 2024 in faith, holding God's promise of Gospel.

+Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee bishop@lutheransnw.org



FYI: The monthly "Faith and Everyday Life" articles written by the Lutheran Counseling Network are not yet available for 2024.

OSLC in Our Community

These are the community organizations that use our church building for meetings, rehearsals, and trainings:



















We remember in prayer . . .

Pr. John L. Vaswig, who will be leaving OSLC and retiring after 38 years in ministry; The Baumann's, for a smooth transition to ministry at OSLC; Bob Johnson, who is receiving treatment for cancer, and his family; Gary Hanson, for God's continued healing presence in his life; Dianne Tanner, for healing, strength, and peace through her ongoing treatment; Diane Murff, who is in a rehab center; Treasure Hinds, who is receiving chemotherapy treatment (daughter of Rowan and Barbara Hinds); Baby Jack, who is being treated for leukemia (nephew of Bill Suttmeier); Rawson Gomez, for healing and wholeness, and his family (14- year-old great-nephew of Sue Johnson); Greg Garling, facing heart surgery (family of Marilyn Carlson); Bobbie Jean McCullough, for healing (grandmother of Holly Heckler); For the health and wellbeing of the Inman Family; Cheryl Neeb, for the discernment of her doctors; Nico, who is struggling after moving into a new family home, and whose female partner recently died (father-in-law of Lisa DeVogel); Guests of the Community Meals Program; all affected by COVID-19.

We ask for peace and comfort for those mourning the death of their loved ones: John Hansen; Darlene Frahm; Jim Jewell (father of Jeff Jewell); Cathy, wife of Bob and mom to Dan and Erik (cousin of Lisa DeVogel).

Healing and peace of mind: Bob Beck; Lyle Lewis; Henrik & Patty Christopherson; Vern Lindquist; Jerry & Linda Nack; Marian James; Katie Moeller; Margot Inman; Dorothy Soland; Jeanne Kuipers; John Pass; Florence Kinnune; Bernice Jensen; Sandy Aldworth; Jen Winslow; Larry Pruitt.

<u>Undergoing cancer treatment:</u> Baby Jack (nephew of Bill Suttmeier); Treasure Hinds (daughter of Rowan and Barbara Hinds); Bob Johnson; Dianne Tanner; John Hill (Marilyn Carlson); Jim Fricke (son of Mary Fricke); Kirsten Olshausen; Scott Paine (Rowan Hinds); Kip Hauser (father of Cheryl Hauser); Roger Stanley (Alice Lewis); Larry Harbolt (Ray Harbolt); Richard (Debby Beck); Marilyn Pro (sister of Rick West).

Living with cancer: Mike (friend of Jane Wuest); Deborah (Marlice Gilmore); Gene Christianson (cousin of Duane Jacobson); My brother Roger (Alice Lewis); Chris Howe (brother of Mark Howe); Peggy Scalise (cousin of Mark Howe); Eileen Letts (cousin of Mark Howe); Sonja (Dianne Tanner); Gerald Welch (Vern and Jeannie Lindquist); Duane Jacobson; Mary Lewis (sister-in-law of Lyle and Alice Lewis); Suzanne Lewis (daughter-in-law of Lyle & Alice Lewis).

If you have any prayer requests to be included in this list (or if you or your loved ones no longer need to be included in this list), please reach out to office@oslcissaquah.org. Thank you.



January Worship Readings

Sunday, January 7 - Baptism of Our Lord

First Reading: Genesis 1:1-5

Psalm 29

Second Reading: Acts 19:1-7

Gospel: Mark 1:4-11

Sunday, January 14 – Second Sunday after Epiphany

First Reading: 1 Samuel 3:1-10 [11-20]

Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

Gospel: John 1:43-51

Sunday, January 21 – Third Sunday after Epiphany

First Reading: Jonah 3:1-5, 10

Psalm 62:5-12

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 7:29-31

Gospel: Mark 1:14-20

Sunday, January 28 – Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

First Reading: Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Psalm 111

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Gospel: Mark 1:21-28





Worship Assistants for January

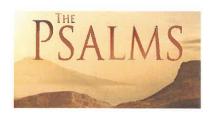
Sunday Service: 10:00 a.m.

Dates & Services	Assisting Minister	Usher	Altar Guild	Sound & Videography
January 7: Baptism of Our Lord	Lori Downey	Larry Thomas	Barbara Fetty-Solders	Jonathan Smith
January 14: Second Sunday after Epiphany	Connie Fletcher	Sang-Beom Shim	Barbara Fetty-Solders	Jonathan Smith
January 21: Third Sunday after Epiphany	Joan Friel	Bill Suttmeier	Stacy Smith	Jonathan Smith
January 28: Fourth Sunday after Epiphany	Anne Ellett	Don Robertson	Jean Pass & Delaney Cash	Jonathan Smith

Psalm Cantors

January 7: Dave Carlson

January 14: TBD January 21: TBD January 28: TBD



Volunteer Coordinators

We're thankful for all our volunteers and for those who coordinate them!

Altar Guild: Jane Wuest Ushers: Bill Suttmeier

Memorial Bells: Alice Lewis

Assisting Ministers: Cynthia Delaney Sound & Videography: Jonathan Smith



January Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

Anniversaries

1/4 Lisa Thomassen & David Gretch

- 1/1 Ginny Amphlett
- 1/4 Patty Christopherson
- 1/5 Margot Inman
- 1/7 Becky Brooks
- 1/10 Gary Hanson Paula Swanson
- 1/13 Judith Bergquist
- 1/16 Lena Schaper
- 1/18 Rick West
- 1/19 Ken DeCamp
- 1/22 David Gretch Wendy Winslow
- 1/24 Donald Rentschler
- 1/25 Bill Cash
 David Hersey
- 1/26 Jean Kampf
- 1/27 Barbara Fetty-Solders
- 1/28 LaRue Nelson
- 1/30 Jen Winslow





If your name is missing from the birthday or anniversary list, please contact the church office so we can update our records.

We want you to be included!

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January 2024	024			January 2024 Su Mo Tu We Th 1 2 3 17 14 15 18 9 10 11 21 25 23 24 25 28 29 30 31	Fr Sa Su Mo 5 6 4 5 12 13 14 5 19 20 18 19 26 27 18 25	February 2024 Tu We Th Fr Sa 6 7 8 9 10 2 13 14 15 16 17 5 27 28 29 23 24
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Dec 31	Jan 1, 24	2 7:45pm AA (Anderson Hall)	m	4 9:30am Mission Quilters (Anderson Hall) 10:00am Al-Anon (Ed Room)	72	9
7 9:30am SOP (Encompass Rm) 10:00am Worship (Sanctuary) 12:30pm New Creation	6:30pm Master Chorus Eastside (Sanctuary) 7:00pm Boy Scout Troop 676 Meeting (Anderson Hall)	9 1:00pm Community Meal Prep (Kitchen) 7:45pm AA (Anderson Hall)	10 10:00am Issaquah Garden Club (Anderson Hall, Kitchen)	1:00pm Autumn 11 9:30am Mission Quilters (Anderson Hall) 10:00am Al-Anon (Ed Room) 1:00pm Autumn	12	13
9:30am SOP (Encompass Rm) 10:00am WorshipPr. 11:00am Farewell Lunch 12:30pm New Creation	6:30pm Master Chorus Eastside (Sanctuary) 7:00pm Boy Scout Troop 676 Meeting (Anderson Hall)	7:00pm Church Council (Zoom) 7:45pm AA (Anderson Hall)	17	9:30am Mission Quilters 10:00am Al-Anon (Ed 1:00pm Community 7:00pm Boy Scout Troop 7:00pm Finance	19	20
9:30am SOP (Encompass Rm) 10:00am Worship (Pr. 12:30pm New Creation 1:00pm Talley Studios	10:00am Focus Newsletter Deadline 6:30pm Master Chorus Eastside (Sanctuary) 7:00pm Boy Scout Troop	23 7:45pm AA (Anderson Hall)	24	9:30am Mission Quilters (Anderson Hall) 10:00am Al-Anon (Ed Room)	26	11:30am Ordination of Steve King (Spirit of Peace member) (Sanctuary & Anderson Hall)
9:30am SOP (Encompass Rm) 10:00am Worship (Pr. 12:30pm New Creation 1:30pm Kim Blanchard's	6:30pm Master Chorus Eastside (Sanctuary) 7:00pm Boy Scout Troop 676 Meeting (Anderson Hall)	30 7.45pm AA (Anderson Hall)	31	Feb 1	2	m
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Our Savior Lutheran Church 745 Front Street South Issaquah, WA 98027 425-392-4169



Stay connected! www.oslcissaquah.org

All articles and announcements for the next *Focus* edition are due on the 22nd of the month.

Please email items to **office@oslcissaquah.org**.

OSLC STAFF DIRECTORY

Rev. John L. Vaswig	Transition Pastor (thru January 14)
253-677-4515 (cell)	jlvaswig@gmail.com
Cynthia Delaney	Parish Administrator
425-392-4169 (office)	office@oslcissaquah.org
Dr. Jiyoung Lee	Parish Organist
	jiyounglee23@outlook.com

Emergency Pastoral Care

For emergency pastoral care thru January 13, please contact OSLC Transition Pastor John L. Vaswig at 253-677-4515 (cell) or jlvaswig@gmail.com.

For emergency pastoral care from January 14–29, please contact Pr. Larry Thomas at 425-802-1212 or ledgarthomas@gmail.com.