

# ALMA LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

December 2018

## Finding home: No crib for a bed



Among the first Christmas hymns learned by children is the 19th-century text “Away in a Manger.” Whether one knows the earlier melody or prefers (as I do) a later arrangement by English composer Sir David Willcocks, the lyrics and music illustrate a hauntingly iconic image of the Christ child’s birth—far from home, in a manger stall meant for animals because there was no room anywhere else. There was *no crib for his bed*.

As a young child, I imagined this scenario by creating a manger in an old hollowed-out tree stump outside our home in Western Washington. In that soft cradle of leaves, moss and pine needles, I spent hours playing with my doll—making for her a bed and a home, a manger in a rotted stump. Even as a 3-year-old, there was some latent awareness of the pathos of *no crib for a bed*.

It’s not a stretch for us these days to picture fleeing families, young children and babies in tow and, yes, pregnant mothers, risking their lives as they seek safety, [asylum](#) and shelter for themselves and the people they love. Perhaps for the first time, the graphic images of [refugees and immigrants](#)—of children separated from their parents—have been seared into the collective psyche of many in our land, poignant reminders of fear and desperation most of us can’t begin to fathom.

As [Christmas](#) draws near, maybe we can challenge ourselves to stop the frenetic buying and frivolous preparations that too often have little to do with the coming of Christ. Maybe privileged, “first-world” Christians can consider what it means to make room in the inn, a soft place in the hay, shelter for all who flee oppression, persecution, tyranny. It’s a good time to stop and imagine how *we* might make room for the Christ child, how *we* might make a home where compassion and kindness and love create space for unconditional acceptance and grace.

Preparing for Christmas is, most of all, about seeing the face of God in all the forgotten faces and broken places, and hearing God’s heartbeat in our own.

Christmas is homecoming—making ready our own broken lives and preoccupation with ourselves; making room for a crib big enough to cradle the mystery of God, shown to us in a baby; putting aside all the distracting and befuddling obsessions of our culture; making space for the mystery of God, the very presence of Christ, to be born anew in us.

Preparing for Christmas is, most of all, about seeing the face of God in all the forgotten faces and broken places, and hearing God’s heartbeat in our own. It’s about making space—accommodations—for strangers, those who know no home, those with *no crib for a bed*. Christmas is a way of coming home, finding home, being home.

“The Word became flesh and lived among us” (John 1:14) means that God dwells in us. The living God is in our midst, making God’s home among us. Christ is our life and Christ is our home. Thanks be to God!

*Christ is the path and Christ is the door. Christ is the bread and welcome cup. Christ is the word and cleansing bath. Christ is the robe and Christ is the fire. Christ is the dawn and blazing sun. Christ is the light and Christ is the star. Christ is the beginning and the end. Christ is our life and Christ is our home*

—Samuel Torvend, professor of the history of Christianity, Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, Wash.

## ACTIVITIES

**Children's Sunday School** - 9:15am every Sunday except the 1st Sunday of the month. Ages 3 years old through 8th grade. Meets in the basement of the church. Contact Moriah Nygren for more information.

**Adult Bible Study** - Meets at 9:30am every Sunday except the first Sunday of the month. Meets in the room behind the altar. Contact Doug Gustafson for more information.

**Youth Group** - For 7th grade through 12th grade. Contact Megan and Weston Engel for more information.

**Hope Circle** - Meets the fourth Tuesday mornings of the month at 9:30am. Location varies. Contact Janice Gustafson for more information.

**Faith Circle (MGM)** - Meets the third Thursday at 1:30pm @ Bethlehem in Wahoo. Contact Angie Johnson for more information.

**Chat & Sew** - Meets the 1st Tuesday at 8:30am. Contact Sharon Hollst or Lana Krumpus for more information.

**Prayer Shawls** - Meet the second and fourth Saturday mornings from 9-11am. Contact Viki Miller for more information.

**Book Club** - Location and date varies. Contact Viki Miller for more information.



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## BUDGET

As of 12/7/18  
Income: \$70,560.11  
Expenses: \$56,355.03  
Balance: \$14,205.08  
World Hunger YTD: \$394.19

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Year End Financials

Please get all year end deposits to Jenna or the Bank of Mead by 12/31/18 in order to be entered for the 2018 year.

### Children's Christmas Program & Meal

At 5pm on Sunday, Dec. 16th, our youth will be having their annual Christmas program. Please invite your family and friends to join us as we celebrate the Christmas promise of the coming of Christ child, support our youth in their telling the story, and share in a wonderful meal and fellowship afterwards! This event is open to all the community. For details any additional information, please see Tracy or Moriah. All families are encouraged to bring either a salad or sandwich and a dessert.

### Snow Removal

The snow removal lists have been handed out. If you did not receive one, there are extra copies in the narthex and it is available on the website.

## ANNOUNCE. CONT.

### Alert Notifications

If you are able to receive text notifications and did not receive any in either of the last two weeks, please email

[almalutheran@gmail.com](mailto:almalutheran@gmail.com)

and request to be added. If you do not receive texts, emails or have social media, please notify Jess Miller how you would like to be contacted in emergencies or last minute worship changes.

### December Supply Pastor Schedule

Dec. 2: No pastor-advent decorating and brief lay service. No communion.

Dec. 9: Pastor Joyce Miller

Dec. 16: Pastor Russell Anderson

Dec. 23: Pastor Fred Anderson

Dec. 30: LeRoy Hoyer, PMA no communion



## INFORMATION

### Council Co-Chair Contact

Tyler Munter  
trmunter@gmail

Lana Krumpus  
klkrumpus@windstream.net

### Secretary's Email

almalutheran@gmail.com

**Website** - [almalutheran.com](http://almalutheran.com)

**Facebook** - Search for "Alma Lutheran Church" and "Alma Lutheran Educational Ministries"

## MISSION STATEMENT

Disciples by grace, Growing in faith, Living our hope, Sharing God's love.