



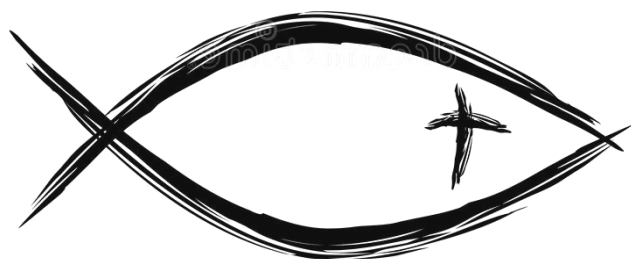
# February 2023

## The Oakleaves



**SHERMAN OAKS LUTHERAN CHURCH** The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod  
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### First Day of Lent



Ash Wednesday,  
 February 22  
 Worship at 7 pm

Remember that You are Dust, and to Dust You Shall Return

( Ecclesiastes 3:20 )

### New Members ~ Sunday, Feb. 19

Pastor has been leading a new members class for the past 2 weeks and has 2 weeks to go. Those who desire to be a new member of SOLC will be received on Sunday, February 19 during the 10:00 a.m. worship service. There will be about 16 people joining us.

Be sure to attend worship that Sunday to **meet and welcome these new members** into our SOLC family. You'll be glad you did!

**Time to gather together and get to know one another over soup! 6-12 soup makers are needed in March—could it be you?**

As part of our Lenten tradition, before we attend worship we have a small soup supper made by various SOLC attenders. This will happen all **Wednesdays in March** at 6:00 p.m. with worship following at 7:00 p.m. If you are eager to make soup, bring crackers or rolls, sign up on the bulletin board. It is always nice to have at least 2 singles/couples making soup and cleaning up. You are a **Souper Hero** for considering this. Make the soup at church or bring it in a crock pot.



### 2022 Giving Statements

are in the church mailboxes for those who are members or regular attenders.

Please contact the church office with questions or if you think there needs to be corrections.

**Thank you for your gifts for SOLC's continuing ministries.**

Mary & Martha Guild

Cookie Walk

Sunday, February 12 ~ after worship.

**All members are requested to bake cookies and bring them to the church kitchen before the 10 am service, Feb. 12.**

Thank you, in advance, for your support.

## Mary & Martha Guild

Mary & Martha held our business meeting on January 14, 2023. Six members attended! We voted to distribute funds to: Food for the Poor, Orphan Grain Train (Lancaster area), Chicago Hope Church, Central Lutheran Church, and Elizabeth House.



Our **"Cookie Walk" will be Sunday, February 12** after the worship service. To ensure our success for this fundraiser, we ask **all members to bake cookies** and **bring them** to the church kitchen by Feb.12 before the 10 am service. Thank you in advance for your support.

**Saturday, February 11 at 9:00 am we will resume our Women's Bible Study.** All women are invited to join us. Afterward, some of us will bake cookies and set up for the Cookie Walk. There will be **no M & M business meeting in February.**

We are looking for a date to reschedule our Women's breakfast outing. We'll keep you updated. FYI-at the end of our M & M meetings we close in prayer. If you have any prayer requests, let one of us know, and we will include you.



**Happy Valentine's Day! God Loves You!**



## Zoo News from the Children's Center

by Kimberly Ogas,  
Director

If you've been wondering where the wild things are, they're in our preschool! We have added 11 more children to our rosters and have 9 more on the wait list for 2023. The growth is a true blessing from God!

After returning from our Christmas break, we extended a warm and welcoming "hello" to all of our new families, while giving a joyful "welcome back" to our returning families. Everyone is settling in nicely and making new friends.



In February, we will be learning about Community Helpers, Love, and Valentine's Day. Out of curiosity I decided to ask our little ones **"What is love?"** Here are some of their adorable answers:

*"Kissing me when mommy drops me off."*

*"Love is loving."*

*"It makes you feel good."*

*"It's a word with an 'L'."*

*"I love my Elmo. He makes me feel better."*

*"Giving hugs."*

*"When my daddy comes back."*

*"That means you love yourself."*

*"I show them my heart."*

*"Babies."*

*"Love is when mommy brings me a mango." "Love means your heart."*

*"I love them if they love me."*

*"I love my lunch."*

*"God loves me."*



We are looking forward to having classroom Valentine's Day parties where we will express our love through exchanged Valentine cards and snacks.

In the meantime, we send each of you our love and gratitude for your continuous prayers and support.

**Please remember  
to check out our  
new website:  
Solpre-  
school.com**



It was a COLD night but you can't tell from the joy on all these beautiful faces who showed up to share the Good News of Jesus, Emmanuel, with our community!

Thanks to the countless volunteers, who touched this event through prayer, preparation, promoting, purchasing, participation, packing back up and even planning for next year! Praise God for the **145 plus souls who joined** the “walk through only” event, lasting 2 1/2 hours. Let’s pray that each heart was moved to a response that lasts far beyond the time spent with us.

We invite your feedback, input and vision as we prayerfully look ahead to Christmas 2023! PLEASE email your thoughts to [shermanoakslutheran@yahoo.com](mailto:shermanoakslutheran@yahoo.com) with Outreach-Living Nativity in the subject line, to be shared with the Outreach Committee.

Prayerfully consider YOUR involvement in preparing and leading this event with us. If you are excited to step in further, reach out to Chris Gordon any time in the next 10.5 months!

## Children's Christmas Service





# Stewardship

## #givinggoals

by Andréa Vasilio

*"For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he does not have." (2 Corinthians 8:12)*

During the holiday season, it's understandable that most of us experience additional strains on our finances. From traveling and buying presents to preparing meals and extra gifts to the church, it's not surprising that our weekly offerings weren't as consistent over those couple of months.

*"But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able thus to offer willingly? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you." (1 Chronicles 29:14)*

**Refill our Mercy Packs** We are low on everything and have no packed bags currently. We need to restock supplies before we can have a packing party. **We need:**

Cases of water (small bottles) or juice bags; cups of fruit or apple sauce, fruit bars & granola bars; *pop tops*: tuna fish, spam or Spagettios; packets of tuna, peanut butter (or plain) cracker packs; *hygiene items*: body wash, small bars of soap, conditioners, women's menstrual products, toothpaste (travel size), and small brushes and combs.

With a new year upon us, the Stewardship Com. would like to encourage you to set a giving goal and then stick with it. While this may sound intimidating, it can be accomplished in a number of ways! Not only by placing money in the offering plate.



As a reminder, the **Ralphs Community Contribution Program** and **Amazon Smile** are great ways to give back to

Sherman Oaks Lutheran Church by Ralphs using funds from shopping that you're already doing. If you haven't signed up yet, there's no time like the present!

Unfortunately, after nearly a decade, **Amazon Smile is winding down**. However, it has pledged to provide a one-time donation to SOLC, equivalent to three months of what we earned in 2022 through the program. And, we still have until February 20 to accrue additional donations, so be sure to enroll and shop before then.

*"A gift opens the way and ushers the giver into the presence of the great." (Proverbs 18:16)*

Don't forget: if you are not yet comfortable attending in-person worship services, you can still support SOLC by mailing offerings to the church, the Vanco app, the Tithe.ly app, online "bill pay" through your bank, or giving online at [www.shermanoakslutheran.org](http://www.shermanoakslutheran.org).

## FEET (Families Equipping and Encouraging Together) Update



During our January gathering, the parents had great conversations about how to weave faith talk into daily interactions with our children. The children made drawings of what their faith means to them. Then we gathered for lunch and practiced having conversations about what the children drew.

Some really practical tips were generated to encourage ways to create spaces for

intentional and organic spiritual conversations. We landed on the importance of our own spiritual, daily walk with the Lord and how being connected, results in a natural overflow of faith that pours directly into our children.

We will dive deeper in our February meeting and explore ways to develop personal quiet time in a busy world.

All are welcome to join the conversation on **Sunday, February 26** from **11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.** **Please RSVP for the lunch count.**



See Sunday School News on page 6, top left.



*Join us in wishing God's blessings on those celebrating their birthday or anniversary this month:*

## Birthdays:

Larry Hanna 2/7 Inga Windsor 2/18  
Dennis Werner 2/20

## Anniversary:

(Congratulations on number of years!)

Chasom & Vanh Zayabouth (53 yrs) 2/20  
Mark & Liz Rickertsen (33 yrs) 2/24



# February 2023

*All dates and times are subject to change*

## Calendar for Sherman Oaks Lutheran Church

Sat, Jan 28	Contemporary Worship, 5:00 p.m.	Bible Study, 6:30 p.m.	
Sun, Jan 29	New Member Class, 9:00 a.m.	Bible Study, 9:00 a.m.	Worship, 10:00 a.m.
Wed, Feb 1	Christian Education <b>Meet &amp; Greet</b> , 3:00 p.m. SOLCC		
Thurs, Feb 2	Bible Study, 7:00 p.m. <i>in person &amp; via Zoom</i>		
Sat, Feb 4	Contemporary Worship, 5:00 p.m.	Bible Study, 6:30 p.m.	
Sun, Feb 5	New Member Class, 9:00 a.m.	Bible Study, 9:00 a.m.	Worship, 10:00 a.m.
Tues, Feb 7	Youth group, loft, 6:30 p.m.		
Thurs, Feb 9	Bible Study, 7:00 p.m. <i>in person &amp; via Zoom</i>		
Sat, Feb 11	Women's Bible Study, 9:00 a.m.	Contemporary Worship, 5 p.m.	Bible Study, 6:30 p.m.
Sun, Feb 12	New Member Class, 9 a.m.	Bible Study, 9 a.m.	Worship, 10:00 a.m. <b>Cookie Walk</b>
 Tues, Feb 14 <b>Valentine's Day</b>	School Board, 6:00 p.m.	Elders, 7:00 p.m.	
Thurs, Feb 16	Bible Study, 7:00 p.m. <i>in person &amp; via Zoom</i>		
Sat, Feb 18	Contemporary Worship, 5 p.m.	Bible Study, 6:30 p.m.	
Sun, Feb 19	Bible Study, 9:00 a.m.	Worship <b>receive new members</b> , 10 a.m.	
<b>Mon, Feb 20</b>	<b>President's Day—Offices and School Closed</b>		
Tues, Feb 21	<del>The Oakleaves</del> <b>Articles Due</b> , noon in Liz's "in box"	Council, 7:00 p.m.	<i>in person</i>
<b>Wed, Feb 22</b>	<b>Ash Wednesday worship, 7:00 p.m.</b>		
Thurs, Feb 23	Bible Study, 7:00 p.m. <i>in person &amp; via Zoom</i>		
Sat, Feb 25	Contemporary Worship, 5:00 p.m.	Bible Study, 6:30 p.m.	
Sun, Feb 26	Bible Study, 9:00 a.m.	Worship, 10:00 a.m.	FEET gathering, 11:45 a.m.
Wed, March 1	Soup supper, 6:15 p.m.	Lenten Worship, 7:00 p.m.	
Thurs, March 2	Bible Study, 7:00 p.m. <i>in person &amp; via Zoom</i>		
Sat, March 4	Contemporary Worship, 5 p.m.	Bible Study, 6:30 p.m.	
Sun, March 5	Bible Study, 9:00 a.m.	Worship, 10:00 a.m.	
Tues, March 7	Youth group, loft, 6:30 p.m.		
Wed, March 8	Soup supper, 6:15 p.m.	Lenten Worship, 7:00 p.m.	
Thurs, March 9	Bible Study, 7:00 p.m. <i>in person &amp; via Zoom</i>		
Sat, March 11	Mary & Martha Guild, 10 a.m.	Contemporary Worship, 5 p.m.	Bible Study, 6:30 p.m.
Sun, March 12	Bible Study, 9:00 a.m.	Worship, 10:00 a.m.	







## Sunday School News!

We were excited to start up our 9am Sunday School time again to coincide with the New Member's class and adult bible study on Sunday mornings! Ms. Rianne and Ms. Anne welcomed 9 children! Our optional Sermon Lesson time will continue at the 10am Sunday service and Ms. Sonia will manage nursery services in the Cheetah classroom for any littles under 3 years old. Our Christian Education committee is ALWAYS looking for volunteers who feel called to teach or just assist in any of these spaces. Reach out to any of us if interested in chatting about what we do and possibly just observing as a first step.

Thank you to our SOLCC Preschool for donating a changing table to the church. It is located for use in the downstairs, girls preschool bathroom.

**Lutheran Schools Week** is being celebrated here at SOLCC the week of January 30. The theme is "Making Disciples for Life." **Your Christian Ed Team will be hosting a meet and greet on Wed, February 1 at 3pm with Starbucks and treats from Portos for our parents and staff, in honor of their sacrifice and commitment to raise their children in the Lutheran faith.**

### Cabaret & Cabernet

February 25, 2023

Canyon Country  
Community Center,  
Santa Clarita, CA

February 25, 2023, 5 p.m.



The Santa Clarita Master Chorale invites you to Jukebox Sat. Night, a delightful evening of food, wine, and song at their annual benefit event. The proceeds will help offset the costs of the orchestras for their three annual concerts. The evening includes appetizers and a no-host bar during the silent auction. Then enjoy entertainment brought to you by members of the Chorale and a live Big Band, celebrating the music of the 1940s. As we sing, you'll enjoy a tantalizing meal provided by Piccolo Trattoria...and of course, plenty of Cabernet! A live auction and dessert served to your table. Tickets and information are available thru Elaine Werner (818) 367-0681, or thru the website, [www.sccmasterchorale.org](http://www.sccmasterchorale.org). If you have any dietary restrictions, please contact [info@sccmasterchorale.org](mailto:info@sccmasterchorale.org). If you are purchasing a table for 10, please email [info@sccmasterchorale.org](mailto:info@sccmasterchorale.org) with your guests' name and their meal preference.



Pacem is a new work by our Artistic Director Allan Petker that focuses on social

Sunday, March 12, 2023 at 4 p.m. at the Santa Clarita Performing Arts Center of College of the Canyons. The Santa Clarita Master Chorale invites you to an afternoon of worship and comfort and peace. Two works will be featured at our Classical Concert accompanied by the orchestra. The Dona Nobis

Called to *Serve* Thank you!  
by Breilyn Brantley

"Praise the LORD, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. Praise the LORD, my soul, and forget not all his benefits." Psalms 103: 1-2

Let's **give thanks** to those who have given their time and talents here at SOLC in **January to:**

- ☺ all who helped take down Christmas decorations.
- ☺ those who helped with New Year's Eve celebration.
- ☺ those who donated to the mercy packs, **remember you still can through Amazon.**
- ☺ all the great Sunday School teachers.
- ☺ those who volunteer their time to help with all the goings on at the church.
- ☺ Leslie and Michael O'Byrne, Tiffany Hegg, Diane Nixon and Inga Windsor for using your Thrivent Action Team funds toward the Living Nativity.
- ☺ Windsors and Robertsons for covering the costs of the searchlight for the Living Nativity. It brought many to the true Light of the World!
- ☺ True's financial support.
- ☺ Jim Windsor for building our new directional sign for Bethlehem and his willingness to be available for anything that was needed. Thanks for feeding our hungry crew too!
- ☺ A Special *Thank you* to Larry Hanna for leading the **Acres of Diamonds** Bible Study on Sunday mornings. It was a terrific study and a great reminder of all the valuable "diamonds" we have right here at SOLC. You are a treasured diamond, Larry! *Thanks, again!* -The Elders.

*If there is anyone out there you feel deserves thanks for giving their time and talents to the church, please email me at [brei04@hotmail.com](mailto:brei04@hotmail.com).*

justice and peace. The beautiful Mozart Requiem will also be performed. It may be the most well-known setting of the Requiem text. They will be joined by the Valencia High School Concert Choir. Together these works offer a concert of justice, peace, and comfort. Tickets are \$10 for kids thru age 17; \$28 for Students 18+, Seniors, and First Responders; and \$35 for General admission. They can be purchased through [www.scmasterchorale.org](http://www.scmasterchorale.org). Call Elaine Werner at (818)367-0681 for information.

### Ushers for February

Feb 5	Dennis Werner	Christian Hinrichs
Feb 12	Jamie Cleary	Laura Murcott
Feb 19	Heather Wolter	Robert True
Ash Wed Feb 22	Dennis Werner & Inga Windsor	
Feb 26	Charlene Irwin	Anna Booher



## Council highlights ~ Jan. 17, 2023 mtg in person!

by Ann McClung, Council Secretary

♦ **Pastor's Report:** Pastor Utecht is excited to start a new member class Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m.

♦ **President's Report:** David Seaver stated that in order to make council meetings more effective, we should allow individual committees to make decisions for their respective areas. The council would step in only if there were any controversial or financial considerations.

♦ **Vice President's Report:** Dick Robertson reviewed the progress of the update to our phone system. We gathered information to decide whether to go with Spectrum or stay with AT&T. He is meeting with the Preschool Board and Director to discuss improving the entrance to the school to make it more welcoming, as well as the security. Dennis Werner is now coordinating the Usher program under direction of Dick as the Elder representative.

♦ **Elder's Report:** Luigi Uwanawich stated that each congregation family is assigned an Elder, and they are updating the list. Since many people don't know who their Elder is, it was suggested that Elder pictures be put up on the bulletin board. Dorene noted that the Caregivers could use more direction in working alongside the Elders.

♦ **Mary & Martha Report:** Dorene Rubin reported on their distribution of funds: Food for the Poor, Orphan Grain Train, Chicago Hope Church, Central Lutheran Church and Elizabeth House. The Cookie Walk will be held Sun., Feb. 12, so start baking now! The Women's Bible Study resumes Sat., Feb. 11.

♦ **Trustee Report:** Larry Hanna informed us of a bid of \$20,000 for Heating/AC work that needs to be done. There are a number of projects in the works, whenever our financial situation gets better.

♦ **Christian Education Report:** Chris Gordon represented the Christian Education/Sunday School. Sunday School will be at 9:00 a.m. to accommodate those attending the New Member class. There is a small staff that covers all the programs supporting our children and their families, including the FEET program. Chris is requesting feedback from the Living Nativity event and is hoping more leaders will get involved next year.

♦ **Outreach Committee Report:** Rhonda shared they are creating a Holy Saturday service.

♦ **School Board Report:** Dorene Rubin reported on the increased School enrollment, 10 students, with 6 on the waiting list (not old enough yet to start). New floors were installed, a colorful new sign was put up on the Kester side fence, and lead testing is completed. The budget is still in the red, but doing better. Security issues were discussed, such as needing to change the gate code, programming the fobs, and responding to people who come up to the gate when children are present.

♦ **Stewardship Committee Report:** Laura Murcott was happy with the Christmas card they sent out to the congregation and regular attenders. Laura will work on getting a more complete list through Servant Keeper in the future.

♦ **Treasurer's & Financial Secretary's Reports:** Leslie & Heather shared that the financial reports still paint a picture that there is not enough money being received to cover the bills. Leslie and Heather provided the current financial reports. We have assets of \$150,800 in BofA savings (which includes several designated funds), \$10,500 in checking, and \$50,600 in the Lutheran Extension Fund. December's general fund contributions were \$18,400, with expenses being \$29,600. We have cut down on our spending as much as possible. More revenue is needed to stop dipping into savings each month. Council decided to cease special offering requests until we are better situated. We realize that many of our members are also financially strapped and are doing the best they can.

♦ **New Business: A nominating committee** was named for the next fiscal year. Larry and Rhonda will ask 3 members to be a part of the 5 person committee. A congregation survey will be created to get their perspectives of our church, including why or why not they attend in person.

There was a motion approved to give temporary veto power to the President on any **expenses over \$1,000** until the end of the fiscal year (June). There is a lot of concern with our financial situation.

Heather and Leslie will investigate how we can use Servant Keeper to create a new **church directory**. We will add pictures provided by the members or pictures will be taken at events.

President David and Pastor will represent SOLC in voting on LCMS matters.

## A Message from Pastor...

by Pastor  
Titus A. Utecht

## What Is Church Membership?

### *The Three C's of Membership*

As I was recently preparing for our new members class, this thought struck me: ***Have you ever realized just how many different types of "memberships" there are in our world?*** You can be a member of a grocery store, family, country club, gang, gym, political party, flight crew, cult, etc. "Membership" has all sorts of different meanings! So what in the world does it mean to be a member of the church?

After some reflection, I boiled it down to what I call "the three C's" of membership: confession, community, and crew. I pray that you take some time to consider each of these and reflect upon what it means that you are a member of this church.

**Confession.** To be a member of a church is to make a *confession* that you believe what the church teaches. We occasionally have visitors at our service who find Christianity to be a good and interesting cultural phenomenon, but they would not confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God and their Savior. Accordingly, they certainly wouldn't become members, because to do so would be to signal that they personally subscribe to what our church teaches. Yet making this confession is important. In fact, the opening lines from the rite of new membership starts off with Jesus' words about confession: "Whoever *confesses* me before men, I will also *confess* before my Father who is in heaven." (Matt. 10:32) From there, the candidates are asked questions about whether they believe in Jesus, our church's teaching, and if they will be faithful to Jesus "even to death." Most of you have probably answered these questions, either as a youth at confirmation or more recently. It was a serious and important confession, and it is really the central aspect of church membership.

**Community.** The second aspect of membership is that it means that you are part of this community. God has desired that His children not live as isolated Christians, but that they become part of a body of believers who meet together and encourage one another (Heb. 10:24-25), to love and care for each other (John 13:35, 1 Pet. 2:17), to worship together and receive the Lord's Supper together (Acts 2:42, 1 Cor. 11:17-34), and more. Each of these blessings is something that God has designed for His children to receive in community, and so being a member of this church means that you are committed to being part of this community and receiving those blessings together with us.

**Crew.** The last aspect of membership is that it means to become part of our church "crew" and work in carrying out the work and mission of the church. I once heard it said that if the church were a boat, there would be no passengers, only *crew members*. The work of the church is carried out and supported by the people of God who give their time, resources, skills, donations, and more. Literally every single bit of carrying out the work of the kingdom at SOLC and beyond happens through the people of God working as part of the "crew." This is not just the work that a select handful do, but all of us. Ultimately it is God who carries out the work of the kingdom, but God always chooses to work through God's people. To be a member of this church is to say with Isaiah....

***"Here am I! Send me."*** (Is. 6:8)

-Pastor Utecht