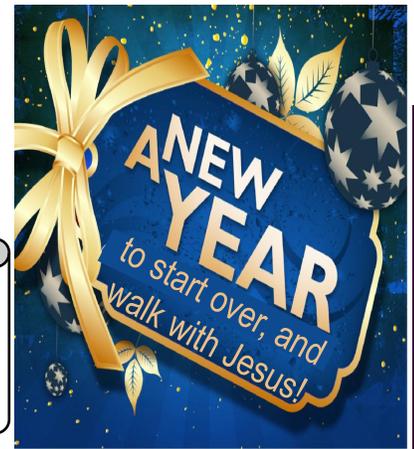


# January 2023 The Oakleaves



**SHERMAN OAKS LUTHERAN CHURCH** The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod  
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**KFUO Radio**, the broadcast voice of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, shares Christ for you anytime, anywhere on **KFUO.org** via worship services, Bible and theology studies, practical talk programs, and sacred music. Find programs on demand at [kfu.org](http://kfu.org) and wherever you get your podcasts! Find us on social: @KFUOradio on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

**CHRIST FOR YOU** this week on **KFUO.org**: Merry Christmas! Enjoy the Twelve Days of Christmas through January 8, and hear special Christmas programming during this time. Regular programming resumes January 9!

**SOLC has our own  
Christmas Radio station.  
Check it out LIVE 365**



[https://live365.com/  
station/SOLC-  
Christmas-Radio-  
a81477](https://live365.com/station/SOLC-Christmas-Radio-a81477)

*Thank you,  
Mike!*

**Christmas Worship Services:**  
Christmas Eve—7 p.m.  
Christmas Day—10 a.m.  
New Year's Eve service—6 p.m.  
party to follow 'til 9 pm (NYC New Year's).  
(no 5pm Saturday service on Christmas Eve  
or New Years Eve.)  
New Year's Day—10 a.m.



**New Year's Eve  
Saturday night,  
Dec. 31  
worship at  
6:00 p.m.**

Followed by our traditional  
**New Year's Eve party until 9:30 pm!**

Potluck with dessert and champagne provided.

Toast in the New Year, New York City time,  
(9:00 p.m.) with Champagne/sparking cider.

Remember to bring your **wrapped white elephant gift** (worth \$10-\$20) for a roaring game of passing off that "white elephant!" (ie ugly Christmas sweater, cast off Christmas present, something from the back of your closet, or a real white elephant...be creative!)

## Mary & Martha Guild

Mary & Martha Guild (LWML) will meet on **Saturday, January 14** at 10 am. We will discuss monetary distributions to our charities and whether to continue the Cookie Walk. All women are encouraged to attend!



*I SAID TO THE MAN* who stood at the gate of the Year, 'Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.' And he replied, 'Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.'



## Children's Center

by Kimberly Ogas, Director

Happy New Year! We hope everyone will have a wonderful holiday season filled with God's blessings. The preschool will be on break for 2 weeks and we will miss our little learners.



Looking back at our last month of the year, the highlight was definitely our Christmas Performance when the students acted out "The Christmas Story." The children performed beautifully and sang their hearts out for all of the families who attended.

We want to **thank everyone who participated in our fundraisers** and charitable activities in December. We raised \$4,295.00 from our Silent Auction. Thank you to everyone who placed bids! We also thank those who donated items to our Angel Tree (lots of kids will have a gift for Christmas) and to everyone who purchased See's candy. All of our collected funds will be used to increase the security and safety of our school.

The month of January, all of our students will be learning about winter, snow, and winter animals. They will also be celebrating **Lutheran Schools Week**. We will commemorate the week by showing our school spirit in a variety of ways, including wearing our SOLCC t-shirts, making classroom "I LOVE MY SCHOOL" banners, creating cross-shaped baked goods, and making appreciation cards for our church staff.



We pray for health and happiness to all in this upcoming year. We are looking forward to building many more blessed memories with our church and school families.

**Happy New Year from the Preschool students, parents, and staff!**

## FEET - Families Equipping and Encouraging Together

Our families gathered in November to discuss and practice the faith building power of a home centered around hospitality. We practiced hospitality by serving one another our own special contributions to our Thanksgiving meal at the parsonage.



For December, FEET were on a mission to spread the JOY of the season by making Christmas cookies (at church) and cards for our shut-ins. We want to be JOY seekers putting:

**Jesus first,**  
**Others and then,**  
**You (ourselves) last.**



Our January FEET time will be on **Sun., January 15,** with a focus of faith conversations in the home.

# Stewardship

## Year-End Note from the Stewardship Committee

by Andréa  
Vasilo

It's a busy and exciting time at Sherman Oaks Lutheran Church as we all prepare for the celebration of Jesus' birth. The Stewardship Committee hopes that members and visitors alike were delighted with the church's Christmas card this year, featuring our sanctuary's stunning stained-glass cross.

We created and distributed these cards knowing that our SOLC family is full of generous hearts, so we could count on you to prayerfully consider making an extra end-of-year gift to the church. As Christian stewards, we remember that everything we have comes from God, and we should use these gifts to further God's kingdom.

*"Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name. 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 29:12-14).

We will report the results of these year-end gifts when we have them, but in the meantime, SOLC has upcoming events that would welcome your support. Keep in mind that stewardship does not only come in the form of monetary contributions (**treasures**), but **time** and **talents** as well!

### Upcoming Events for your attention:

- Living Nativity is Sunday, December 18, from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. Walk through
- The final Advent soup supper and service is next Wed., Dec. 21, beginning at 6 p.m.
- A series of holiday worship services is just around the corner:
  - ♥ Christmas Eve at 7 p.m.
  - ♥ Christmas Day at 10 a.m.
  - ♥ New Year's Eve at 6 p.m. (followed by a party until 9 p.m.)
  - ♥ New Year's Day at 10 a.m.

Thank you for giving your time, talents and treasures to SOLC and its mission, which is *to receive and be transformed by God's grace, faith in Jesus, and Holy Scripture to: reach UP in worship to God, reach DOWN in service to others, reach INTO God's Word to grow as disciples, reach OUT with the good news of Jesus Christ, and reach AROUND in fellowship as the Body of Christ.*

We look forward to continuing this journey of stewardship with you in the new year as we grow our church community and give glory to God!



In Jesus' Name,  
Andréa, Brei &  
Laura

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).



### The Preschool needs Our Help!

The week prior to Christmas, Dec. 19 & 22, new flooring will be installed on the first floor classrooms. **All the furniture needs to be moved out on Monday morning, Dec. 19.**

Then the furniture needs to be **moved back into the classrooms on Thurs., Dec. 22** when the floors are finished.

If you can help please sign up in the Narthex or email the school office at: [sochildrenscenter@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sochildrenscenter@sbcglobal.net) with your name and dates/times you are available. *Thank you!*



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



### Birthdays:

		Craig Peterson	1/14
Carissa Lee	1/4	Tristan Holland	1/18
Leslie O'Byrne	1/5	Heather Wolter	1/18
Florence Tankou	1/8	Dick Poliak	1/24
Ava Pan	1/10	Adam Yenser	1/25
Jordan Cleary	1/11	Richard Holland	1/26
Caleb Gordon	1/14	Miriam Sweet	1/30
Ashley O'Byrne	1/14	Tenise Holland	1/31

### Anniversary:

(Congratulations on number of years!)

Andy & Madde Carpaic (53 yrs) 1/25

## January 2023

### Calendar for Sherman Oaks Lutheran Church

All dates and times are subject to change

**Mon, Dec 19 & Thurs, Dec 22—Help needed at the Preschool moving furniture.**

Wed, Dec 21	Advent Soup Supper, 6:00 p.m.	Advent Worship, 7:00 p.m.
Sat, Dec 24	Christmas Eve Worship, 7:00 p.m.	(No Saturday night 5 p.m. worship)
Sun, Dec 25	Christmas Day Worship, 10:00 a.m.	

### Offices/School Closed Dec 26-Jan 3

Sat, Dec 31 New Year's Eve Worship, 6 p.m. New York New Year's party to follow until 9:30 p.m.

Sun, Jan 1 New Year's Worship, 10:00 a.m.

Tues, Jan 3 School & Office open Youth group, loft, 6:30 p.m.

Thurs, Jan 5 Bible Study, 7:00 p.m. *in person & via Zoom*

Sat, Jan 7 Contemporary Worship, 5 p.m. Bible Study, 6:30 p.m.

Sun, Jan 8 Bible Study, 9:00 a.m. Worship, 10:00 a.m.

Tues, Jan. 10 School Board, 6:00 p.m. Elders, 7:00 p.m.

Thurs, Jan 12 Bible Study, 7:00 p.m. *in person & via Zoom*

Sat, Jan 14 Contemporary Worship, 5 p.m. Bible Study, 6:30 p.m.

Sun, Jan 15 Bible Study *OR* New Member Class, 9 a.m. Worship, 10:00 a.m. FEET gathering, noon

### Mon, Jan 16 Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration-Offices and School Closed

Tues, Jan. 17 Council, 7:00 p.m. *in person*

Thurs, Jan 19 Bible Study, 7:00 p.m. *in person & via Zoom*

Sat, Jan 21 Contemporary Worship, 5:00 p.m. Bible Study, 6:30 p.m.

Sun, Jan 22 Bible Study, 9:00 a.m. Worship, 10:00 a.m.

**Tues, Jan 24 The Oakleaves Articles Due, noon in Liz's "in box"**

Thurs, Jan 26 Bible Study, 7:00 p.m. *in person & via Zoom*

Sat, Jan 28 Contemporary Worship, 5:00 p.m. Bible Study, 6:30 p.m.

Sun, Jan 29 Bible Study *OR* New Member Class, 9:00 a.m. Worship, 10:00 a.m.



**Merry Christmas**  
and  
**Happy New Year**  
from your Church  
Staff: **Pastor, Liz,**  
**Mike & Asmik.**



## Refill our Mercy Packs

### Items Needed for the Mercy Packs:

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.

Remember to include gloves and beanies to our bins. Thank you to those who continue to faithfully give to this mission. Your generosity touches many!

## Special Ed teacher needed



Lutheran Special Education Ministries is looking for a part-time resource room teacher position at **First Lutheran School in Torrance, California.**

Applicants must hold a current California Teaching License and have a special education certification/endorsement. Interested applicants looking for more information or wishing to submit a resume are asked to contact Richard Schumacher at (734) 748-5253 or email him at [rschumacher@luthsped.org](mailto:rschumacher@luthsped.org).

## The Preschool has a

### NEW WEBSITE!

**DON'T MONKEY AROUND.**

**Check it out online!**

**New website name is:**

**Solpreschool.com**



## Called to *Serve* Thank you!

by Breilyn Brantley

*"May the LORD repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge."*

Ruth 2:12

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

- ☺ the wonderful people who volunteered and provided soup for the Advent Soup Supers: Jim & Inga Windsor, Murcott family & Hanna family, Faus family.
- ☺ Emily Craig and to all who helped decorate the church for Christmas.
- ☺ Jim Windsor and all who put up tables and put them away many times this month.
- ☺ all those who made the Christmas Concert so beautiful: singers, instrumentalists, & Mike Renneker.
- ☺ Sonia and Lorrie for creating a beautiful space for fellowship and treats after the concert. Sorry we forgot to thank you publicly on the night of the event.
- ☺ Larry (and Cindy) Hanna for the thought provoking Acres of Diamonds book study.
- ☺ all who helped with the Living Nativity.
- ☺ those who bought toys for the angel tree.
- ☺ those who donated to the mercy packs and 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.

*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).*



# Abbreviated Council highlights ~ Nov. 15, 2022 mtg in person!

by Ann McClung, Council Secretary

The Messianic Jewish Congregation, Beth Ariel will use our parking lot on Saturdays from 9 am-3 pm beginning in January.

There is still concern with our financial situation since we are withdrawing from our savings account almost each month. There are some facility upkeep projects that are going to need to be addressed in the near future, i.e. bathroom remodel, heating system in the Fellowship Hall. Adding students to the Preschool would help increase their tithe.

The Sunday School program is considering breaking into age groups. Confirmation classes should be starting soon, as well as, a New Member's class.

The Street Fair and Pumpkin Carving Festival were great outreach events.

We will have our annual Christmas Concert Dec. 13 and the Living Nativity on Dec. 18. **Hope you will join us!**

Dear Sherman Oaks Lutheran Church:

The Kroger Co. Family of Stores is committed to bringing hope and help to the local neighborhoods we call home. Our stores are on a mission to not just part of, but to help create a stronger community. We recognize that every community has unique causes that need support. Thank you for being such an important organization in our community.

We encourage you to ask your supporters to link their rewards card to your organization. Community Rewards is easy to use, the more your supporters shop with us, the more money your organization will earn!



From Sept 1, 2022 through Nov 30, 2022, **11 households, had \$76.71 in total donations to SOLC.** Thank You!

We are committed to carefully protecting our customer's personal information. In order to meet their expectation of privacy, we have adopted a simple policy to never share a customer's personal information. Our privacy policy applies to Community Rewards participation as well.

Thank you for being such an important organization in our community,

Community Rewards Staff 12/12/2022



Thank you to all who baked for the Christmas Concert Reception!

Yummy! 😊

Christmas Concert Hot Chocolate Bar

## New member class starts in January

Have you considered making the step of becoming a member of Sherman Oaks Lutheran? **A new member class will meet starting either on Sunday, January 15 or 22 at 9:00 a.m., and will last four weeks.** During that time we will go over the foundations of what we believe, what it looks like to really join as part of our church family, and how you can join our church *in her mission*.

If you have any questions, or to sign up for the class, just talk to Pastor Utecht or send him a text (818-730-7955).

## A Message from Pastor...

by Pastor Titus A. Utecht

# Getting Your ~~Heart~~ Feet in the Right Place this New Year

Every New Year, many people take the time to attempt what I call “lining up their feet with their heart.” What do I mean by that? Well, many people have their *heart* set on being active and fit, but their *feet* spend a lot more time on the recliner than they do at the gym. So they will resolve to get their feet in the place the heart desires. Or maybe they hold a relationship with grandma dear to their *heart*, but their *feet* seldom walk into grandma’s house to visit. Getting our feet in line with our heart is really about living according to our priorities.

This is an especially important practice for us as Christians because we hold Jesus as Lord in our *hearts*, but often it is hard to get our *feet* to walk in his ways. I see all around me (and often in me!) people with a heart that wants to follow God, but feet that just don’t seem to get around to taking those steps. I see and hear many a heart’s desire to come to church, do devotions, take serious steps to change ungodly behavior, serve more in God’s kingdom, etc., but the feet won’t follow.

On one hand, this is quite understandable. Life is very good at upsetting our priorities. We have the best of intentions, but demanding work schedules, illnesses in the family, last minute invites, and more overthrow the plans our hearts had intended. We want to make the church service a priority, but Sunday morning (which used to be a protected time for church) is often scheduled with birthday parties, work days, sporting events, or at very least it is a rare opportunity to sleep in. It’s easy to have the heart intent on making church and faith a priority but have the feet get tripped up by these countless obstacles.

Yet as easy as it is to *understand* how our Godly priorities don’t get lived out, that doesn’t make it any less of a problem. If your feet are waiting for life to get out of the way so they can catch up to your heart, it won’t happen. As far as I’ve been able to tell, the only real way to overcome this problem is to seek God’s strength and make some hard decisions and sacrifices. Real priorities require real sacrifices.

I recently was encouraged to hear the story of one of our members who truly did this. He’s a hard-working man, and one of his hard-working managers expected him to be willing to work at any time, including Sunday mornings. But he decided to take a stand and say that he was protecting that time so he could attend church. The result? His manager didn’t like that and gave him grief because of it. Eventually she did apologize and respected the decision, but the point remains: It’s not easy to actually prioritize God with your feet and not just in your heart—it requires real sacrifice.

Perhaps this shouldn’t surprise us, because being a Christian wasn’t meant to be easy. Jesus said **“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”** (Mt. 16:24) Following Jesus requires real sacrifice. But he also promises that the sacrifice is worth it: **“For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”** As we make the sacrifices to truly prioritize Jesus in our life, it’s not easy, but it is far more rewarding. Indeed that’s what this member of our congregation told me: It wasn’t easy or fun to tell his manager he wouldn’t be working Sunday mornings, but he knew it was what he wanted most for his life and his family.

So this New Year, I pray that you take some time to not only reflect in your heart on your

“...take some time to not only reflect in your heart on your priorities, but also consider what some of the hard decisions and sacrifices you might make to get not just your heart, but also your feet...”

priorities, but also consider what some of the hard decisions and sacrifices you might make to get not just your heart, but also your feet, in line with prioritizing faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

-Pastor Utecht