

# Voices of the Valley

The Monthly Newsletter of Lord of the Valley Lutheran Church

*"That We May Know, Live, and Share the Love of Christ."*

December 2019

Volume 23, Number 12

## ALL ARE WELCOME

As a community of the people of God, the people of Lord of the Valley Lutheran Church are called to welcome all people, regardless of age, economic status, ethnic background, gender, physical or mental ability, race or sexual orientation. We affirm that in Christ *"there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female."* - Galatians 3:28

### Lord of the Valley Lutheran Church

PO Box 843 Granby, CO 80446 (970) 887-9252

Email: [lotvoffice@lordofthevalley.org](mailto:lotvoffice@lordofthevalley.org) website: [lordofthevalley.org](http://lordofthevalley.org)

Church Office Hours – Monday – Thursday 9:00 AM – 3:30 PM

Rev. Brian Bergum – Pastor (970-531-4312)

[pastorb@lordofthevalley.org](mailto:pastorb@lordofthevalley.org)

Kris Kuhnel - Newsletter Editor / Office Administrator

Church Council Members:

John Price 970-409-9200

Susan Odneal 816-210-4792

Chris Tinkum 725-3440

Pat Edwards 970-406-8108

Jane Fisher 970-302-9067

Linda Behlen 720-289-1422

Pete Roehrs 218-355-1144

Raymond Covington 970-846-9187

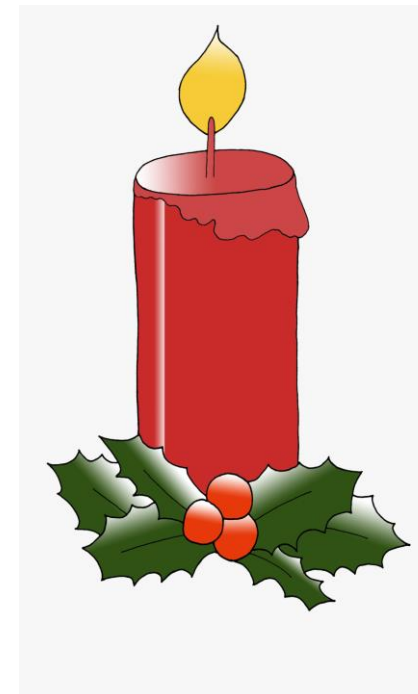
Suzanne Gerhart 970-887-3956

Greg Orzech 720-810-4966

Alicia Scott 303-946-2180

The church council meets the second Monday of each month. All church council meetings throughout the year are open to anyone. If you have something that you would like to present in front of the church council, or an item of concern please contact one of the church council members listed above.

**The next Church Council Meeting is on Monday, December 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:45 pm.**



## Advent and Christmas Season Worship Schedule

### Sunday Worship

December 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>  
9:30 am

### Christmas Eve Worship

Tuesday, December 24<sup>th</sup>  
5:00 pm – 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm

### Christmas Day Worship

Wednesday, December 25<sup>th</sup>  
10:00 am



We will decorate our sanctuary on the first Sunday in Advent, following worship, December 1<sup>st</sup>. Advent is a season of preparation. So this year we all are invited to help prepare our worship space for the seasons of Advent and Christmas. There is more to prepare than just the worship space. There is the space in our lives of faith too. Decorating the sanctuary is an outward action that reminds us of God’s presence in our hearts and minds; and in our relationships with family and neighbors. Advent is a time to bring some attention to this space too.

Perhaps you have an Advent Calendar that you work through each year, with a daily thought, scripture reading, acts of love, or suggestion of generosity. Maybe you bring out an annual devotional book, or simply read from Matthew or Luke about the birth of Jesus and the events that preceded it. Do you decorate the house on Thanksgiving weekend and get it over with? Or have you considered doing a little at a time, over the course of the four weeks of Advent and reflect on each decoration, where it came from, the story that might be attached to it or the meaning behind it.

You might consider putting up the nativity set but not completely. Maybe you could move the various pieces through the house as a remembrance of the travelers in this story. Then have Mary and Joseph arrive at the stable on Christmas Eve, Jesus on Christmas Day and the Magi on January 6<sup>th</sup>, Epiphany.

You might share stories of your past Christmas celebrations and experiences. Recall the emotions that were part of these memories.

You are also welcome to consider serving in the larger community, volunteering your time and energy. Helping a neighbor that you have noticed may be in need of some attention. Do you have someone nearby for whom picking up the morning newspaper is difficult or even dangerous in the winter ice and snow? Maybe you would feel comfortable tossing it up to their door. Do you have a friend or acquaintance who will be alone again, or for the first time, this Christmas? Perhaps a cup of coffee or tea shared together would be especially welcome during these weeks.

There are many ways we can observe Advent that will prepare us for the Christmas celebration to follow. And not simply prepare ourselves but also our neighbors and friends. As you can see, not all or even most need take place within our congregation’s building.

A blessed and meaningful Advent and Christmas time be to you (and your neighbors)!

Pastor Brian Bergum

## Looking For a Way to Deepen Your Worship Experience?

For many people, looking at the Bible readings before Sunday helps put the message in context of their lives. As you read the lessons, ask yourself: Is there anything in the readings that relate to your life right now? Is there anything that surprises you in the readings? Disturbs you? Try doing this for a couple of weeks, see if following this on a weekly basis strengthens your personal faith life, and deepens your worship experience.

## The Lessons for Worship in December

These are the Bible readings that we will hear during our worship services this month. They are provided that you might use them for personal devotion and meditation.

### December 1<sup>st</sup> – First Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 2: 1-5  
Romans 13: 11-14  
Mathew 24: 36-44

### December 8<sup>th</sup> –22<sup>nd</sup> Second Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 11: 1-10  
Romans 15: 4-13  
Matthew 3: 1-12

### December 15<sup>th</sup> – Third Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 35: 1-10  
James 5: 7-10  
Matthew 11: 2-11

### December 22<sup>nd</sup>– Fourth Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 7: 10-16  
Romans 1: 1-7  
Matthew 1: 18-25

### December 29<sup>th</sup> – First Sunday of Christmas

Isaiah 63: 7-9  
Hebrews 2: 10-18  
Matthew 2: 13-23

## Ministers of Worship in December

### December 1

**Communion Prep** – Julie Anderson  
**Greeters** – Dan and Alicia Scott Family  
**Ushers** – John Price, Jerry Anderson  
**Readers** –Robin Donner, Don Anderson  
**Communion Assistant** –Jerry A., Robin D., Alicia S.  
**Acolyte** –Mackenzie Moyer

### December 15

**CP** – Ron and Judy Servis  
**G-** Phil and Joanne Kluge  
**U** – Paul Gerhart, Steve Peters  
**R** – Chris Tinkum, Ron Servis  
**CA** –Chris Tinkum, Suzanne Gerhart, Judy Servis  
**A** – Gunnar Bjerken

### December 29

**CP** – Rich and Ann Klingner  
**G-** Geoff and Yolanda Jurgensen Family  
**U** – Geoff Jurgensen, Bill Tetlow  
**R** – Ann Klingner, Bill Tetlow  
**CA** –Rich Klingner, Yolanda Jurgensen, Charlene Heins  
**A** – Ally Jurgensen

### December 8

**CP** –Carolyn Stahl  
**G** –Greg and Lori Orzech  
**U** –Greg Orzech, Bob Means  
**R** – Lori Orzech, Kathy Means  
**CA** – Carolyn Stahl, Charlene Heins, Kathy Means  
**A** – Conner Burns

### December 22

**CP** – Gary and Linda Behlen  
**G** – Pete and Shana Roehrs Family  
**U** – Steve Gall, Gary Behlen  
**R** –Auggie Roehrs, Linda Behlen  
**CA** – Kris Kuhnel, Marla Gall, Linda Behlen  
**A** –Auggie Roehrs

***If you are unable to help be a worship minister on the particular day, please try and find a replacement to take your place or to switch days with you. Thank you for sharing in the ministry of Lord of the Valley.***

- Pace yourself; drink water or seltzer between drinks. The more you drink, the more the temptation to snack increases.
- Try ice water with lemon or non-caffeinated soft drinks.
- Consume mixed drinks with diet soda, club soda or tonic when possible.

**Enjoy the holidays...**

Don't abandon health habits or feel pressured to eat and drink more than usual just because of the holidays. Make sure you get plenty of sleep, exercise, and plan your meals ahead of time; you will make it through the holidays feeling satisfied and in control.



**Monthly Blood Pressure Checks**

Don't forget we offer free blood pressure checks following our worship service once a month. The next free blood pressure check will be on Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup>.

**Christmas Poinsettias**

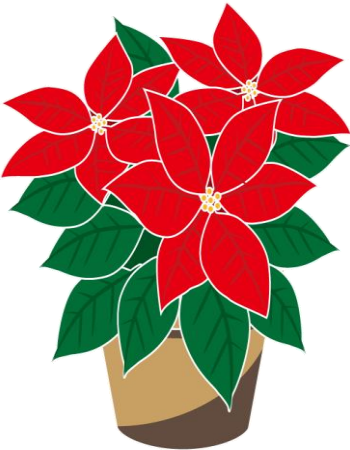
We will once again be adorning our worship space with poinsettia plants during our Christmas services. You are invited to donate a poinsettia plant in honor or in memory of a special person or loved one in your life. Each plant costs \$15. A portion of the proceeds will be used to assist our children and youth ministry activities. Orders need to be received by Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup>. Plants with no designation will be given "to the Glory of God". Plants may be taken home, or given to someone you know as a way of sharing the joy of Christmas following our Christmas Day worship service on Wednesday, December 25<sup>th</sup>.

NAME (s): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Plants: \_\_\_\_\_ (\$15 Each)

I/We donate the poinsettia in **(Circle One)** HONOR /  
MEMORY of:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



**Christmas Day Dinner**

For those who may not have family gathering for Christmas this year we will once again have a Christmas Day Dinner at Lord of the Valley. Carolyn Stahl has volunteered to help coordinate this year's Christmas dinner. Please sign up or call the church office to add your name to the list and share what part of the meal you might wish to bring. The feast will be served at noon.



**Christmas Program**

Our intergenerational Christmas Program will be coordinated by Becky Nance and presented on Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup>. We are looking for 10 – 15 players (or more). There are speaking parts, non-speaking parts and stage hand parts as well. If you are interested in helping please see the signup sheet at the back of the sanctuary or talk with Becky Nance or Pastor Brian.

**Mountain Family Center Holiday Project**

It is that time of the year when Lord of the Valley sponsors a Family by providing Christmas gifts. Thank you to Cathy Childress for organizing this project for LOTV and to all the generous members who have picked an "ornament" from the Christmas tree with an item from the family's wish list. The unwrapped gifts may be delivered to LOTV by Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup>. The Sunday School children will wrap the gifts during Sunday School. If you have any questions please call the church office 970-887-9252. Thank you for helping a family in need!

**Second Sunday Special Offering / December 8<sup>th</sup>**

With the help of our children we invite members and friends to bring nonperishable food items to church on the Second Sunday each month to support the food pantry at Mountain Family Center. We will have our green wagon in the back of the sanctuary and our children will be invited to bring these items forward during worship. Thank you!!



*The Women's Bible Study sessions continue in December on Tuesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am. All women of LOTV are invited for a time of sharing, study and support while enjoying a light lunch. For more information please call Pat Edwards at 970-406-8108, Carolyn Stahl 887-9352 or Mary Mulholland 303-898-6743.*

## Men's Ministry

On Wednesday mornings at 7:00 am we have a group of men who gather at Lord of the Valley for breakfast, conversation, prayer and study. This group welcomes men to join them whether for a week or two, a season or year round. They take turns providing breakfast for each other. Sometimes the conversations linger, but they understand if some need to leave earlier. They seek to offer an encouraging, supportive time together. Everyone is invited to participate.

## Home Devotions / Living Lutheran Magazine

Located on the table at the back of the sanctuary are home devotionals you are invited to take and use at home. They are free, and they are a simple way to spend a few minutes each day focusing on your relationship with God. Also, at the table you will find information relating to our ministry at LOTV and the December issue of the **Living Lutheran** Magazine. Feel free to take what you might find useful.

## Sunday Morning Fellowship

We would like to thank those who have generously hosted Sunday morning fellowship in the past few months. It is an important part of our ministry as it is a time to share in conversation and welcome guests. We have a few Sundays available in December and January for those interested in hosting Sunday morning fellowship. Please see the signup sheet at the back of the sanctuary as well as a list of responsibilities.

## Health and Wellness Holiday Stress: Eating Healthy

*Make healthy holiday choices*

*Holidays such as Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's bring to mind thoughts of family, friends, fun and food. However, each year millions of Americans struggle to maintain their waistlines during the holidays while surrounded by tempting holiday treats.*

### Holiday Parties

By following the healthy tips below, you will be on your way to enjoying all your holiday parties, while also staying in control of your eating. For example:

- Do not leave the house on an empty stomach – it promotes overeating.
- Avoid standing near the food table, a sure-fire way to overindulge.
- Make socializing your top priority; conversation will keep you occupied and away from the food.
- Limit your drinking; alcohol increases hunger and lowers willpower.
- Offer a low-calorie alternative; for example, if you have volunteered to bring a dessert, bring fruit rather than a cake.
- Listen to your stomach; reduce your portion sizes and stop eating when you feel satisfied rather than stuffed.

### Cooking and Baking

If you are the one hosting, use that to your advantage – it puts you in control of what will be served. For example, substitute calorie-laden ingredients with more healthy choices. There can also be a downfall when it comes to hosting: the temptation to sample the food while you are preparing it. To help you resist the urge to snack while cooking:

- Keep your mouth occupied with a piece of sugar-free gum or sip tea to reduce your urge to sample while you cook.
- Prepare foods on a full stomach. You will not be as tempted to taste what you are making.

### Cocktails and Beverages

Before you reach for the eggnog, remember that some mixed drinks may have as many calories as a dessert. It's okay to indulge in some holiday spirits, but keep the following suggestions in mind:

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## Dinner for Six

Sign-Up Has Started for “Dinner for Six” Groups. Dinner for Six is the chance you have to get together with other people from Lord of the Valley (usually in groups of six – hence the name) for dinner and conversation. The way that it works is that you agree to have dinner together three times. Each time you rotate hosts and the dinner moves from house to house. “Dinner for Six” is for all adults, of all ages, couples and singles are invited to join. This is a great chance to meet other people from Lord of the Valley. Sign up at the back of the sanctuary today and be part of a small group enjoying good food and good conversation with good people. Contact the church office for more information.

## Enjoy the Convenience of Electronic Giving

We want to remind you that we offer electronic giving as a way to automate your regular weekly offering. Electronic giving offers convenience for our members and provides donation consistency for our congregation. Direct Debit Giving is used to automatically transfer funds from your checking or savings account to the church’s bank account. As you contemplate future contributions, please consider electronic giving. Authorization forms are available at the back of the sanctuary. Please call the church office for more information, 887-9252.

## City Market Community Rewards

Thank you to our families who have signed up for the City Market Rewards program. If you haven’t signed up go to: [www.citymarket.com](http://www.citymarket.com). Once there, click on *Create an Account* or sign in to your account. Once you sign in to your account you will have the opportunity *View all Organizations* and select Lord of the Valley Lutheran Church. This is a quick and simple way to support Lord of the Valley Lutheran Church while doing your grocery shopping

## Vocal Ensemble

Would you be interested in singing in a vocal ensemble once a month or so for worship? We utilize digital accompaniment for members to learn their parts at home. We then come together for one or two brief rehearsals before sharing our music offering during worship. If you would like to add your voice please visit with Pastor Brian or Rich Klingner.

## Angie’s English School

Though Mission Nicaragua is no longer sending a Mission Team to Nicaragua, we are still able to maintain the relationships formed and help the people of Nicaragua with our generous gifts. Elmer Revas Mendoza, a long-time interpreter for the Mission Team, is teaching English to student’s age 6-14, 2 hours a day, 4 days a week. This is outside of their regular half day of school. We are looking for sponsors to provide \$15.00 per month to sustain his work in the Julio Velasquez neighborhood near Somoto. This monthly scholarship will supply all that is needed in the way of work books, supplies and teaching time for one child to complete a one-year English course. Sponsors will receive a short video of their student speaking English once every two weeks to observe their progress. As of right now, there are 20 students. If you feel moved to help with this program and become a sponsor or receive more information please contact Julie Anderson, 719-342-5245.

## Our New Church Directory is Here!

For those who were photographed or submitted a photo, you will find a directory with your name on it in a box at the back of the sanctuary. We do have extra directories available for those members and friends who were not photographed. They are next to the box at the back of the sanctuary.

## Christmas Decorating Advent Event

We will be decorating LOTV for Christmas as an Advent Event on Sunday, December 1<sup>st</sup> following worship. We will decorate the tree, hang garland and set up the crèche set. Bring a step stool and join the fun! This is a cross generational event, all ages are welcome.

