

CENTRAL LUTHERAN MESSENGER

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Pastor Kathleen Anderson

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The
Greatest
Gift



[January Messenger Deadline is
December 25, 2022](#)

Please e-mail your articles to
Central Lutheran Church

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Quit Thinking of the Church as a Family

What is the church's purpose? Why do we gather to hear the Word and receive the sacraments? These are questions worth asking periodically, in order to renew and refresh our sense of mission. A few years ago, I found a blog entry by Tony Robinson, a nationally-known UCC pastor in Seattle, the title of which was "Quit Thinking of the Church as a Family". Because I've observed certain issues and problems get created in congregations because of this way of thinking, I was intrigued. In this blog entry, Robinson writes:

"'Our church is just like a family.' This is a common claim in many congregations, perhaps especially in smaller ones."

Robinson writes about a congregation in which he was going to begin ministry that enlisted the services of a national firm to do a "ministry audit" before beginning their ministry together. He wrote that the firm's very first recommendation, in bold print, read, "The most important thing (Name of Church) will ever do is end whatever amount of ongoing conflict exists as well as **quit thinking like a family.**" This, says Robinson, grabbed people's attention. "Church leaders seemed both miffed and mystified. What did the consulting firm mean by its blunt directive? Didn't Jesus speak of 'all those who do the will of God' as his kin? (Matthew 12:50)." The consulting firm elaborated: "**The purpose of the church is to transform both society and individuals to be more Christ-like. This concept goes way beyond family.**"

"This," writes Robinson, "may be stiff but necessary medicine for many stuck or declining congregations. The purpose of the church is to change lives. That's the 'business' we are in. While some families certainly do that, forming and sustaining faithful and courageous people, the use of the 'family' concept in congregations often seems to mean something else.

“Many of the congregations that claim ‘We’re a family,’ lose sight of larger transformative purposes and settle, instead, for the comfort and satisfaction of their members. The core purpose of a congregation — growing people of faith and helping people and communities move from despair to hope — gives way to lesser and even contrary purposes like keeping people happy. While it may not be a necessary outcome of the use of the family image, many congregations that gravitate towards it seem to make member comfort and satisfaction their *de facto* purpose.

“That may be because ‘family’ suggests to people something like, ‘We’re all loving and nice here.’ That in turn often means no hard questions are asked and no honest challenges are allowed [because] it wouldn’t be nice.

“I can think of other reasons to be cautious about ‘family’ as our image for church. Families sometimes keep secrets that shouldn’t be kept in order to keep from bringing shame on the family name. And families aren’t typically that easy to join.”

If not family, then what? Robinson suggested using “other biblical images like “People of God,” “Creation of the Holy Spirit,” or “Body of Christ” as better ways to talk about the church. Unlike “family”, Robinson writes, these terms are uncommon enough not to carry baggage and images about which people already have their own “set ideas about what they mean.” “In some congregations,” Robinson writes, “I hear leaders address the congregation simply as ‘church.’ That too seems promising, reminding the gathered community that they are the Church of Jesus Christ (and the building is not).

“Keeping the family members happy, having everyone know everyone else and get along like ‘a happy family,’ isn’t really the point for Christian congregations. Their goal and purpose is both different and higher.”

Robinson concludes: “If we must use ‘family,’ we should be aware of the way that Jesus, while using ‘family,’ also subverts conventional understandings of family and challenges their usual boundaries with a thoroughly new vision of ‘family.’ ”

A healthy congregation should take the time to periodically consider and reevaluate how they think and talk about “church,” and should take time to consider to what it is that God calls them as a community of faith, as the Body of Christ in the world. We invite

with the living God so more people can experience the living God, in the love and forgiveness of God through Christ. Our purpose is not to bring people into our congregations in order to get their money so we can prop up an institution that we're afraid to lose. Our faith, according to Luther, is what impels us to "good works"—like working with God to repair the world, or inviting people to come and see, to come and worship, to come and experience what can happen when faith is alive and active. Don't let fear win. Don't let fear take over. Fear, not hate, is the opposite of love. The root of hate is fear. We are called to love, to trust in God and God's promises, and to love some more. Remember that God's word teaches us that "perfect love casts out fear." Kierkegaard wrote about a "leap of faith," but maybe it's more accurate to talk about a leap of love.

Peace,
Pastor Anderson





Worship will be at
6:00 pm and 9:00 pm



Worship will be at
10:00 am

1st Elaine Bueling

7th Abby Christianson

8th Nancy Smart

9th Cooper Valicoff

10th Courtney Franks

11th Matthew Imbrock

13th Heather Crane and Karen Avery

15th Kirsten Monick

16th LeNee Gatton

20th Myrna Hillestad

21st Wayne Hahn and Suzanne Tarr

29th Lori Wilson

30th Soren Rottman

31st JoAnn Schliemann



4th Tim and Judy Johnson

28th Mike and Faith Richardson

29th Paul and Holly Gonseth

In Our Thoughts and Prayers



Phyllis Gillihan (Ponderosa)

Chet Hausken (Fieldstone)

Art Ries (Livingcare)

Toni Perschke (Brookdale)

Betty Douglas (Moxee)

Wilma Aspevig (Lives with daughter)

Doris Benish (Orchard Park)

Marie Halverson (Yakima)

Elaine Bueling (Covenant House)

Joanne Puyear (Arbor House)

Greg Bainter (Yakima)

Tim Schulz (Yakima)

Virginia Prochnow (Izzy's House)

George Skipworth (Stroke)

Donald Breshears (Anne Chapman's Dad)

Barbara Breshears (Anne Chapman's Mom)

Chris DeMonbrun (Friend of Anne Chapman)

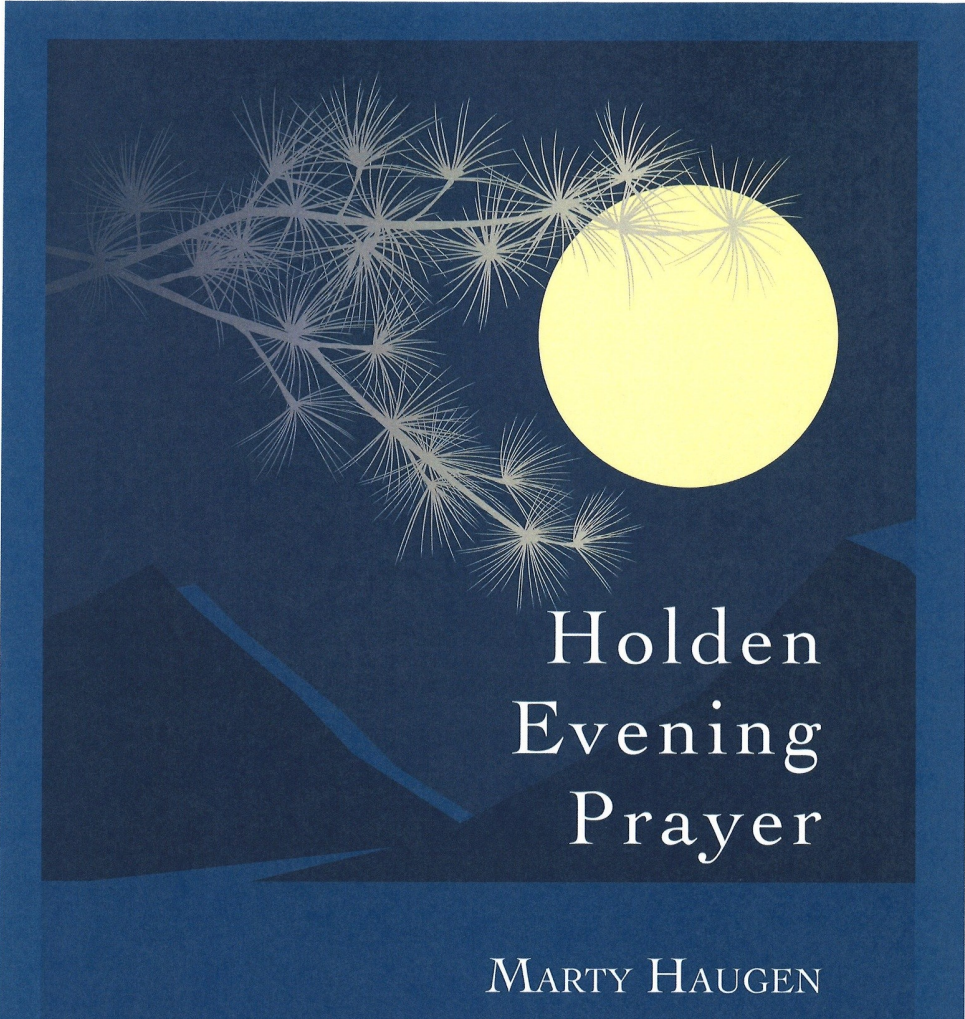
Mickael Benson (Heart)

Don Adams (Toni Lynn Adam's Grandpa in Cowiche)

Lindsey Nelson (Naches)

Kai Perala (Norma's Grandson)

Eunice Koeppel (Sun Tower)



Holden
Evening
Prayer

MARTY HAUGEN

Join us in the chapel at 4 pm
on Sundays during Advent,
for Holden Evening Prayer

CHRISTMAS
WITH
CANTICUS!

TOGETHER AGAIN!



ENGLEWOOD CHRISTIAN
CHURCH
511 NORTH 44TH AVENUE

11


DECEMBER

4:00 PM



TICKETS AVAILABLE AT THE DOOR
\$20 GENERAL ADMISSION, \$5 STUDENTS
TICKETS ALSO AVAILABLE AT
YAKIMACANTICUS.COM

December

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
	<p>WORSHIP CHRISTMAS EVE December 24th 6 and 9 pm</p>	<p><i>Merry Christmas</i></p> <p>10:00 am Worship December 25th</p>
<p>4 Second Sunday of Advent</p> <p>9:00 am HOLY COMMUNION 4:00 pm HOLDEN EVENING PRAYER</p>	<p>5</p> <p>6:00 p Property Committee</p>	<p>6</p> <p>10:00 a Bible Study 3:00 p 'On the Corner'</p>
<p>11 Third Sunday of Advent</p> <p>9:00 am HOLY COMMUNION 10:00 am MEET & GREET 4:00 pm HOLDEN EVENING PRAYER</p>	<p>12</p> <p>10:00 a Meet & Greet</p>	<p>13</p> <p>10:00 a Bible Study 3:00 p 'On the Corner'</p>
<p>18 Fourth Sunday of Advent</p> <p>9:00 am HOLY COMMUNION 4:00 pm HOLDEN EVENING PRAYER</p>	<p>19</p> <p>6:00 p Church Council</p>	<p>20</p>
<p>25</p>  <p>10:00 am WORSHIP SERVICE</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>

2022

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday/Saturday

1

2:00 p **Worship Committee**
3:00 p "On the Corner"

2

3

7

4:00 p Youth Group
6:30 p Handbells
7:30 p Choir

8

3:00 p "On the Corner"

9

10

14

12:30 p **CHRISTMAS DINNER**

4:00 p Youth Group
6:30 p Handbells
7:30 p Choir



15

3:00 p "On the Corner"

16

17

21


First Day of Winter

22

23

24


*Christmas Eve
Worship*

28

6:30 p Handbells

(Break for Choir until Feb. 1st)

29

30

31



A
HOLIDAY FEAST

Please join the Hospitality Committee of Central Lutheran Church for Christmas Dinner!
Wednesday, December 14th at 12:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Please call the office to put your name on the list for a count. Happy Holidays!



Foot Care is available by appointment on Tuesdays and Fridays at the church.
Please call Ruth at
(509) 303-0079

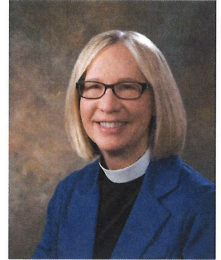
Meet Pastor Ann Murphy



Meet Pastor Ann Murphy

"I am sent as God's agent of reconciling grace to all people, making, maturing, and mobilizing disciples to be God's hands and feet in this broken and hurting world. I seek an ever-deepening personal relationship with God and to minister Christ's presence wherever I go." -Pastor Ann Murphy

Pastor Ann Murphy is the current pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Ephrata, WA and St. Paul Lutheran Church in Quincy, WA where she has served for the last four years. Pastor Murphy lives with her husband in Ephrata and they have two adult children.



Pastor Ann holds A Master of Sacred Theology in the Systematic Theology field of study from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, a Master of Divinity from Faith Seminary in Tacoma, WA, and a Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration from Washington State University in Pullman, WA.

"Pastor Ann brings a strong background from her first career in finance. She has a very calm demeanor and an openness that invites people into an interaction. Her ability to identify nuances in committee and other group situations allows her to get from point A to point B quickly and effectively. In addition, she has strong group facilitation skills which allow goals to be met. As a teacher, she can quickly identify what needs to occur in the class setting and reach the stated purpose of the material." -Parishioner

The **Call Committee** is pleased to announce a visit by our preferred candidate on Sunday December 11th and Monday December 12th. Two "Meet and Greet" Sessions will occur. We hope to see you at one of the sessions.

Sunday December 11th 5:00 pm to 6:30 pm

Monday December 12th 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Both will be in the Fellowship Hall



December 15th in the Fellowship Hall Children's Village will have their Christmas Gift give away for their patients and families. Volunteers are needed, the event will be most of the day so any time you are free would be wonderful. They have pallets of donated toys coming.



On the Corner will have their Christmas Celebration in the Youth Room above the gym on December 15th. Everyone is welcome!



**CLC Youth Group
will meet on December 7th
& 14th.**

**We will not be meeting on
December 21st or 28th. We will
resume on January 4th.**

**If you are able,
please bring a treat to share
on December 14th.**





Winter Custodian Hours

Manny has 29 hours to do all the cleaning in the building and shoveling snow. If you need something done please contact the office so we can schedule it. Committees and groups need to do set up and clean up on extra things.



The temperature is now set to 68 degrees throughout the church. This includes the sanctuary. The temp in the sanctuary has to stay at 68 degrees to keep the organ and pianos in tune.

Be sure to bring a sweater if this feels to cold!



Church In Society

Have A Merrier and Greener Christmas!

Here are some ideas for a more eco and earth friendly Christmas.

1). **Gifts:** Buy sustainable, local products. Something from your kitchen is enjoyed and consumed. Charitable Gift donations help others (check out ELCA Good Gifts). The less left over the better!

2). **Introduce Something New:** Share with loved ones earth friendly products that you have discovered. Reusable silicone “baggies”, dry soap products that are lighter when shipping, other things you have been excited to find.

3). **Give Experiences:** Make a gift coupon for your time or for a shared experience, how about an evening of babysitting, a meal out together, a ticket to a play or concert? When it is over- “POOF” nothing is left but a fun memory!

4). **Tags:** Get creative with cut-up old Christmas cards, or photos, old paper bags stamped or decorated. Save money not buying sparkly gift tags.

5). **Wrapping:** Reusable gift bags can used again and again. Reuse pieces of last year’s wrapping paper, fabric scraps, using string, old yarn, or twine to tie things up. Your creativity will make it special while setting a green example.

6). **Pack for Mailing:** Use sustainable, reusable, or even edible filling for packaging. Try popcorn, holiday mix, or recyclable paper rather than plastic bubble wrap, or Styrofoam peanuts. Enjoy your holidays remembering that an earth friendly gift is a gift to us all!

The Fall Craft Bazaar made \$625 dollars from booth rental on November 12th, 2022. It was fun for all! Booth spaces were reserved as far back as Sept. 1st. We were able to have as many booths as we had tables in the building. We had to cut off reservations when we couldn't offer anymore tables. What a great problem to have! Piecemakers displayed and sold their beautiful quilts and items, many were sold.

Staff used the money for many outreach events in the name of Central Lutheran Church.

The first was items for the bags that went to children for God's Work Our Hands.

The second was Davis High School trunk - n - treat candy. Lea also received a Thrivent Card for this event.

Last was the sock drive for the homeless. All items collected were delivered to Madison House and the Union Gospel Mission. Banners purchased out of the funds were not dated. They say the second week of November so they can be used in future years!





