

# The Pacific Hills Messenger

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER OF  
PACIFIC HILLS LUTHERAN CHURCH

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## Christmas and Advent Traditions

Below is an article from the *Lutheran Living* journal that I thought was interesting and worth sharing. Some of these traditions I've heard of, others I found a bit curious such as the legend of candy canes!

Since the sixth century, the season of Advent has been set aside as a time of preparation for Christ's coming. The word itself is Latin for "coming towards" ("ad" meaning towards and "vent" meaning "to come.")

Through the years, Lutherans have celebrated Advent through a variety of traditions like the Advent wreath, a hearty symbol of the everlasting God on which four candles symbolize Christ's light, or the Advent calendar, which often displays a colorful Christmas scene with each date of the Advent season printed upon a flap.

In other cultures and Christian faith traditions, though, there are some interesting Christmas and Advent traditions, some with deep cultural roots and others with curious beginnings.

Here are some traditions you may not have heard of:

1. Posadas—The word "posada" means "shelter" or "lodging." This Advent custom, popular throughout the Spanish-speaking world, re-enacts Mary and Joseph's journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem and their search for lodging along the way. The ritual lasts for nine days (Dec. 16-24). A group of people travels from house to house on a route, taking the role of pilgrims seeking lodging. Those inside the homes are innkeepers who refuse them. At the last home all are invited in for prayer and refreshments.
2. Jesse Tree—a family tree to the extreme! Each day of Advent a homemade ornament is added to the Jesse Tree, a small tree or simply a bare branch. These symbolic ornaments can each represent a prophecy foretelling of Christ. Other variations include creating ornaments that represent the ancestors in the lineage of Christ.
3. The Advent candle—In the late 19th century, Advent clocks or Advent candles began to make an appearance in many homes in Germany. Dates are marked in a row down the side of the Advent candle. Every day, the candle is lit and then burned down to the next date. By Christmas Day, the entire candle has been used.
4. Santa Lucia (St. Lucy) - is remembered on the 13th of December. On the morning of St. Lucia's Day, the eldest daughters in households dress in white robes with red sashes and wreaths with lighted candles on their heads. They carry a breakfast of coffee, gingerbread cookies and sun-colored "St. Lucia" saffron buns to their parents' bedrooms. The younger daughters of the household follow them carrying a single candle. Their brothers, called "star boys", wear tall, pointed caps.
5. Paper lanterns—A tradition most likely adopted from Christian missionaries, in China, Christians light their homes with decorative paper lanterns. They might also decorate a "Tree of Light" with paper chains or flowers.
6. Candy canes—Did you know that candy canes started as a way to teach children about Jesus? Legend has it that candy canes were invented by a cathedral choir-master as a way to keep children quiet during a Christmas Eve service. The design of the candy, though, was meant to help children remember the shepherds who visited Jesus.

Have a Merry Christmas!

In Christ,  
Zach Hastings  
Director of Music

## Church Events

<b>Sun</b> <b>Dec 26th</b>	<b>9:00 am</b> Eucharistic Worship First Sunday After Christmas
	<b>6:00 pm</b> Adult Bible Class (ZOOM)
<b>Mon</b> <b>Dec 27th</b>	Church Office Closed (Observed) Christmas Holiday
<b>Tue</b> <b>Dec 28th</b>	<b>7:00 pm</b> Pray, Knit & Crochet Group
<b>Wed</b> <b>Dec 29th</b>	<b>12:30 pm</b> First Ladies AA Meeting
<b>Fri</b> <b>Dec 30th</b>	<b>12:00 pm</b> Church Office Closed
<b>Sat</b> <b>Jan 1st</b>	Happy New Year 2022!
<b>Sun</b> <b>Jan 2nd</b>	<b>8:00 am</b> Eucharistic Worship <b>9:15 am</b> Sunday School Choir Rehearsal
	<b>10:30 am</b> Eucharistic Worship <b>11:30 am</b> Bell Choir Rehearsal <b>6:00 pm</b> Adult Bible Class (ZOOM)
<b>Mon</b> <b>Jan 3rd</b>	Church Office Closed (Observed) New Year Holiday

### MASKS AND SOCIAL DISTANCING:

If you desire to continue to wear a mask  
and social distance from others, please do so.

## NEW YEAR'S BLESSING—NUMBERS 6:24-26



The LORD bless you and keep you;

The LORD make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you ;

The LORD lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

## DECEMBER MISSION OF THE MONTH



PHLC is collecting winter woolies, scarves, hats, gloves and socks.

Collection begins Wednesday, December 1st and ends January 6th. So while you're shopping,

pick up a few items! Place unwrapped items by the tree that will be set up in the narthex.

## WELCOME JASON SEMPEK, CUSTODIAN

Leona Culkins has submitted her resignation. We are blessed to have a replacement with Jason Sempek to fill the position. If you see him, please greet and welcome him to Pacific Hills. Thank to Mark Stastny for his help during the transition.

## WEDNESDAY WOMEN'S PODCAST & CONVERSATION

Wednesday Women's Podcast & Conversation will meet January 12, 2022 at 6:30pm in the narthex. If questions call or text Brenda Whealy 402-201-1106.

## RETURNING TO GOD, TITHES AND OFFERINGS



As you know the church's ministry and expenses continue even though services and programming are a bit different. You can still give your tithes and offerings by mail. You can set up your bank account to give electronically or you can utilize

MyEOffering. There is also a link to MyEOffering on our web page, on the top menu. Our web page is: [www.PacificHillsLutheran.org](http://www.PacificHillsLutheran.org). You can sign up at <https://members.myeoffering.com>. Your church needs people like you to continue their patterns of giving despite virus-related closures to maintain current ministry. Consider the following passages: **2 Corinthians 9:7** - Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. **Malachi 3:10** - Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, say the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need. **Proverbs 11:24** - One gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want. **Luke 6:38** - Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you. Members can contribute to the Yahweh Fund to address community assistance. During this trying time recover from the pandemic, PHLC offers Walmart and HyVee gift cards that are purchased for those who seek assistance for food or gas.

## BIBLE VERSE OF THE WEEK

"I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."  
(Luke 7:56b)

## ONLINE WORSHIP SERVICES

PHLC website: [www.pacifichillslutheran.org](http://www.pacifichillslutheran.org) for more information.

## BIBLE STUDY VIA ZOOM SUNDAY EVENINGS

Dr. Bob Vandervort is offering a Bible Class on the book of Hebrews via Zoom every Sunday evening from 6:00—6:45 pm. Please email him at [rsvod@cox.net](mailto:rsvod@cox.net) or call 402-350-0872 for more information. Everyone is welcome!!!

## 2022 ALTAR FLOWERS CHART

The 2022 Altar Flower Chart is now located on the bulletin board in the coat room.

Altar flowers may be placed for any celebration, remembrance or just to the Glory of God. Please share your request or intention with Kim at: [KimKielty@PacificHillsLutheran.org](mailto:KimKielty@PacificHillsLutheran.org) or leave a note in her mailbox. The cost is \$25. Please mail or place your payment in Kim's mailbox.

## VOLUNTEER NEEDED!!!

Please contact Kevin Warneke for information on scheduling readers for Worship services each Sunday. This involves recruiting readers and providing the appropriate scripture. Kevin's contact information: [kwarneke6593@cox.net](mailto:kwarneke6593@cox.net) or 402-612-9151. Thank you!

## KNITTING FOR THE HOMELESS, SICK & SHUT-INS



Join us Tuesday evenings at 7 pm. We will meet in the narthex to knit or crochet hats, scarves and prayer shawls. We will open with a devotion and then start stitching. Feel free to bring your needles, yarn, or just bring yourself and supplies will be provided. For more info contact: Kay Storck 402-996-0722 or Michelle Steen 206-226-4554.

## FIRST FRIDAY FUN NIGHT – BINGO!

Join us in Acker Hall 6:30 pm Friday evening for game time. Bingo this month! Bring friends, family, your favorite game(s) and a snack to share.



## BEAUTIFUL SELECTION OF CARE MINISTRY CARDS

A large and beautiful selection of cards are available for only \$1 in room 115. The money goes for expenses for shut-in mailings, meals and more. Stop in and take advantage of this opportunity.

## IMPORTANT NOTICE: ELEVATOR

The elevator in the Educational building that accesses Acker Hall and the 2nd floor of the Educational building is currently out of service due to water damage. We apologize for this inconvenience and will notify everyone when it is back in operation. Thank you!