Welcome to

Faith Lutheran

**December 11, 2016**

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**4515 Dobie Road**

**Okemos, MI 48864**

**517-349-0620**

**Pastor Ellen Schoepf**

**prellen@faithlutheranokemos.org**

**What You Hear and See**

Messengers of John the Baptist ask Jesus, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” (Matt. 11:3). John, who thrived outdoors, is confined to a prison cell, awaiting violent death. Perhaps he wonders: Was I wrong about Jesus? Has my own life’s calling been in vain, or can it bear fruit? John’s question is the sort we ask when we are hemmed in and it’s hardest to see, hear, or move. In our darkest hours of pain, injustice, and loss, we too may wonder: does it make sense to trust, to hope?

Jesus asks the crowds who had followed John, “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at?” (Matt. 11:7). The wilderness is empty and rough, yet it can also be a wide open space for gaining perspective and connecting or reconnecting with God. As we continue through the wilderness season of Advent, what do we ourselves long to discover and see?

A desert is a vast reach of rock and sand. When rare and welcome rain soaks into its thirsty ground, color and life spring forth; the very earth rejoices! Neither Solomon in all his glory nor Herod’s soft-robed courtiers were clothed like this. Our Advent readings from Isaiah present visions of the whole creation blossoming—flowering—flourishing—not elsewhere, but on the climate-stressed, war-torn planet where we live. Today, images of healing and wholeness intensify promises of gladness and singing even in a hostile desert environment.

Jesus responds to the messengers and to us, “Go and tell . . . what you hear and see” (Matt. 11:4). Evil would confine us in cynicism and fear, and hope is no small virtue. We strengthen one another’s hearts by sharing where we have sensed God’s presence: in beauty, in acts of healing and liberation, in people of integrity who have held to the truth. As we tell, we answer both questions. Yes, this is the one for whom we have waited—whose coming is certain, and whose day draws near.

**Sunday, December 11, 2016**

3 Advent

Sunday School Christmas Pageant

**Introduction to the day**

A note of joyful expectation marks today’s worship. Isaiah announces that the desert shall rejoice and blossom. Jesus points to signs of God’s reign: the blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear. We wait with patience for the coming of the Lord, even as we rejoice at his presence among us this day: in word and holy supper, in church and in our homes, in silent reflection and in works of justice and love. We pray that God would open our eyes and ears to the wonders of Christ’s advent among us.

*If hearing assistance is needed, please ask an usher for a personal PA receiver.*

*The ushers also have large print copies of today’s worship folder available.*

*If it will be difficult for you to stand along with the congregation during*

*any part of the worship service, please feel free to remain seated.*

*There is a nursery available during the worship service for those who wish*

*to use it. It is located at the end of the hall beyond the coat racks.*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*We cordially greet all who have come to worship today.*

*Please register your attendance and join us in fellowship after the service.*

Prayer Requests

Temple Talk Rich Weingartner

PRELUDE

*The pre-service music signals the beginning of the worship service. Silence during the*

*pre-service music enables worshipers to prepare for worship through quiet meditation.*

“People Look East” arr. Dale Wood

**Gathering**

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

*The assembly stands*

**Gathering Song*ELW #248***

*Please use the hymnal in your seat.*

**Greeting**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,

and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

**Candle Lighting Litany**

Blessed are you, O Lord our God, ruler of the universe.

Your prophets spoke of a day when the desert would blossom

and waters would break forth in the wilderness.

Bless us as we light the candles on this wreath.

Strengthen our hearts

as we prepare for the coming of our Lord.

May he give water to all who thirst,

for he is our light and our salvation.

Blessed be God forever.

**Amen**



We light the third Advent candle, as we sing Verses 1-3.

**Prayer of the Day**

Let us pray.

Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

*The assembly is seated.*

**Christmas in a box**

By Cathy Skogen-Soldner

Readers

Griffin Ransom – Luke 2:1-5

Adelle Dingledine – Luke 2:6-8

Atu Ngasala – Luke 2:9-14

Owen Kadrofske – Luke 2:15-20

Brenna Seeley – Matthew 2: 1-2, 9-12

“Joy to the World” Verses 1-3 All

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come!

Let earth receive her king;

Let ev’ry heart prepare him room

And heav’n and nature sing,

And heav’n and nature sing,

And heav’n and heav’n and nature sing

2 Instrumental

3 Joy to the earth, the savior reigns!

Let all their songs employ,

While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains

repeat the sounding joy,

repeat the sounding joy,

repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

“Away in a Manager” All

1 Away in a manager, no crib for a bed,

The little Lord, Jesus lay down his sweet head.

The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,

the little Lord, Jesus, asleep on the hay.

2 The cattle are lowing; the poor baby wakes,

but little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.

I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky

and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

“Angels We Have Heard on High” All

1 Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o’er the plains,

And the mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains.

Gloria…… in excelsis Deo

Gloria…… in excelsis Deo.

2 Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;

Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn king.

Gloria…… in excelsis Deo.

Gloria…… in excelsis Deo.

“Go Tell It on the Mountain” All

Refrain:

Go tell it on the mountain, over the hills and ev’rywhere;

Go tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born.

1 While shepherds kept their watching o’er silent flocks by night, behold, throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. (refrain)

2 Down in a lonely manger the humble Christ was born; and God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn.

(refrain twice) That Jesus Christ is born. **Yah!**

“Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful” All

1 O come, all ye faithful,

Joyful and triumphant!

O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;

Come and behold him,

Born the king of angels:

*Refrain*

O come, let us adore him,

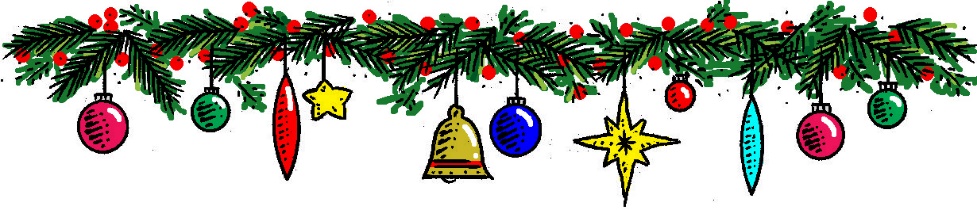
O come, let us adore him,

O come, let us adore him,

Christ the Lord!

Happy Birthday Jesus Drew Williams

**Children’s Message**

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**2016 Pageant Cast List**

Narrator 1 Juliana Lewis

Narrator 2 Rachael Ngasala

Child 1 Sami Ransom

Child 2 Zeke Guenther

Mary Kate Magyar

Joseph Zach Hereza

Angels

Anja Guenther, Serena Ngasala, Claire Nelson, Paige Lewis

Shepherds

Isaac Webb, Jonas Guenther

Sheep

Paul Nelson, Sammy Magyar, Maddie Webb, Abigail Steinke

Star Atu Ngasala

Wise Men

Austin Jones, Calvin Kadrofske, Kaden Steinke

Props Dane Webb, Clayton Wenzel

Costumes Brielle Bowers, Lauren Schultz

Special Music Drew Williams

Assistants Kadin Bowers, Sam Kadrofske, Alyssa Magyar,

Emilee Nussdorfer

*The assembly stands*

**Prayers of Intercession**

As we anticipate the fullness of the presence of Christ, we join with the church throughout the world, praying for all who are in need.

*Prayers of intercession are prayed.*

*To each petition, the assembly responds:*

let us pray.

**Have mercy, O God.**

*The presiding minister concludes the*

*prayers, and the assembly responds:*

Merciful God, hear the prayers of your people, those spoken aloud and those known only to you, and grant us peace through Jesus Christ, our coming Savior.

**Amen.**

**Peace**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*The assembly is seated.*

**Meal**

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

**Offering**

“Hark the Glad Sound” arr. Charles Callahan

*****The assembly stands*

**Offering Prayer**

Savior of the nations, come.

Make your home here in us.

Feed us with your love,

that our faith shine ever new

and our lives reveal your light.

**Amen.**

**Great Thanksgiving**

**Dialogue**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**Preface**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,

that we should at all times and in all places

give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,

through our Savior Jesus Christ.

You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,

through whom you will also make all things new

in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.

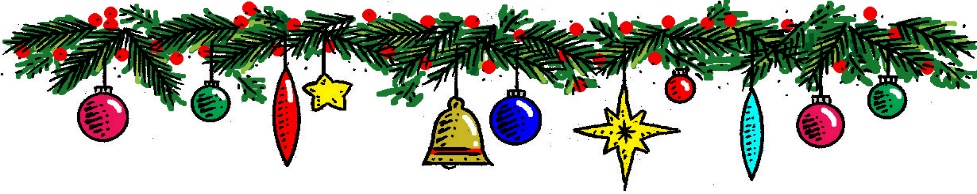
And so, with all the choirs of angels,

with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,

we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**Holy, Holy, Holy**



**Thanksgiving at the Table**

Holy God, the Beginning and the End,

our Salvation and our Hope,

we praise you for creating a world of order and beauty.

When we brought on chaos, cruelty and despair,

you sent the prophets to proclaim your justice and mercy.

At this end of the ages your Son Jesus came to bring us your love

and to heal all the suffering world.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his life, death, and resurrection,

we await his coming again in righteousness and peace. Send your Spirit on us and on this bread and wine we share: strengthen our faith, increase our hope, and bring to birth the justice and joy of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever.

**Amen**

**Lord’s Prayer**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit,

let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**Our Father in heaven,**

**hallowed be your name,**

**your kingdom come,**

**your will be done,**

**on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins**

**as we forgive those**

**who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial**

**and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,**

**and the glory are yours,**

**now and forever. Amen.**

**Invitation to Communion**

Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you.

Share in the feast of salvation.

*The assembly is seated*

**Communion**

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

Amen.

**Communion Song**

**congregational song *ELW #595***

*Please use the hymnal in your seat.*

**congregational song *ELW #715***

*Please use the hymnal in your seat.*

*The assembly stands*

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ

strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

**Prayer after Communion**

God for whom we wait,

you come to us

in the broken bread and the cup we share.

Make us ready always

to welcome Christ into our hearts,

and send us forth to be your people in the world,

announcing your coming among us

in Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**Sending**

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

**Blessing**

May Christ, the Sun of righteousness, shine upon you

and scatter the darkness from before your path.

Almighty God, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit,

bless you now and forever.

**Amen.**

**Sending Song *ELW #264***

*Please use the hymnal in your seat.*

**Dismissal**

Go in peace. Prepare the way of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Postlude**

“Prepare the Royal Highway”

arr. Paul Manz

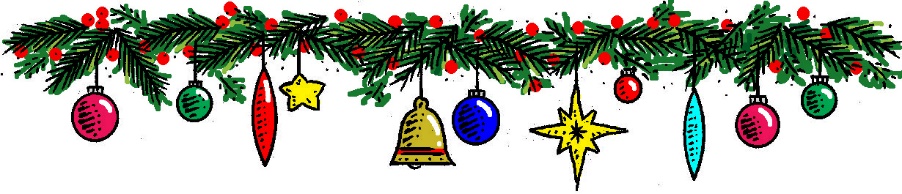
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Christmas in a Box

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Arden Hills, MN 55112

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When we suffer doubt, we’re in good company; even John the Baptist questioned whether Jesus was the Messiah (Matthew 11:2-3). Lord, help us see your work before our very eyes.

**Winter Break Schedule**

There are No Adult or Children Sunday School Classes scheduled for December 18, 25 and January 1st. Children’s Classes will resume at 9:00am on Sunday, January 8th.

**Christmas Eve Services**

4:00 p.m. Family/Candlelight Service

10:00 p.m. Candlelight Service

Pastor Ellen Schoepf prellen@faithlutheranokemos.org

Secretary Katie Love klove@faithlutheranokemos.org

Director of Christian Education Melinda Schultz

Director of Music Debra Borton-McDonough

Organist/Pianist Bruce Williams

December 4, 2016 Attendance : 143

Serving Faith December 11 December 18

Acolyte Brenna Seeley Clayton Wenzel

Altar Care Karen Whitmeyer, Heidi Bowers & Brielle Bowers

Communion Assistants Brenna Seeley Clayton Wenzel

Diane Wilke Mike Eschelbach

Nathan Nelson Heidi Nussdorfer

Greeters Mike Eschelbach Doug & Linda Hirt

Lay Assistants Diane Wilke Mike Eschelbach

Readers Nathan Nelson Heidi Nussdorfer

Ushers Ken & Karen Whitmyer and Family

Nursery Drew & Pam Williams Connie Nelson

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

FaithFamily&Friends3

**December 11th, 2016**

*Log onto Faith’s website www.faithlutheranokemos.org 24/7 for updates*

**DEADLINES**

Sunday worship folder announcements⎯Tuesday of each week

Submit to Katie at klove@faithlutheranokemos.org

***January Faith Family News newsletter*⎯**

**Please submit by Monday December 19th**

Submit to Katie at klove@faithlutheranokemos.org

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Please lift up in prayer this week:

🕆 Members—Max Ambs, Lowell Barricklow, Ellen Milne, Harry Nawrock

and the Barry family.

🕆 Friends and family—

Pat Belonga, Chris Cotter, Lil Jennings, Terrie Becker, Allie, Heather,

Al, Lilly, Sai Eshwar Lingamgunta, Jenn Leitch, Jeanne and Leonard, Tom

Brown, Susan Heft, Pat Hillberg & Family, Dennis Cobler, John Joseph

Lanzetta and Bethany Robison. Please pray for Erika Engel, her brother David

and mother Edwina Engel upon the death of Erika’s brother Jerry.

🕆 Our mission partner congregation⎯Lansing Redeemer Lutheran Church

🕆 Those in military service⎯Jon Schoepf, Lani Yearicks,

Melody and Adam Wright and Joe Galvin.

🕆 Samaritas children who seek adoption— Giovanni, Jessica, LeeAnn and

Valerie. Pray for each to be adopted and for Jesus to be their lifelong friend.

**NORTH/WEST LOWER MICHIGAN SYNOD PRAYER PARTNER**

As Jesus calls us to be one, even as he and the Father are one, please include

Pastor Cheryl Johnson and the congregation of St. Peter Lutheran Church of Battle Creek, Michigan in your prayers of intercession this week.

**ALTAR FLOWER DEDICATIONS**

The flowers on the altar are given to the glory of God by the Gerard Family in celebration of Cameron’s birthday.

**FINANCIAL UPDATE**

**Weekly Offering 12/04/16**  Year-to-date as of 09/30/2016

General Fund $5450.00 Income $219,713.88

Loose Cash 48.00 Expenses 228,998.75

Loaves & Fishes 10.00 Net Income (-9284.87)

Flowers 155.00

World Hunger 20.00

Caring Com-Stuff/Stocking 15.00

Subtotal $5698.00

Simply Giving $2081.00

Total **$7779.00**

THIS WEEK’S CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

**Invite your friends and neighbors to Christmas at Faith! Pick up Postcards in the narthex.**

9:00 a.m. Sunday School

10:00 a.m. WORSHIP**:** Christmas Pageant

11:30 a.m. Youth Bake Sale

3:00 p.m. Christmas Caroling at the Willows-All are Welcome to Join!!

7:00 p.m. Service of Lessons & Carols at Okemos Presbyterian.

Monday, December 12th

7:00 p.m. Bridging the Great Divide

This past presidential election has created division among people in our own community and in the lives of families within our faith community. In an effort to help create healing of that divide, enable people to listen to each other and converse with each other in a safe, hospitable manner, we are holding and evening of conversation at church on Monday, December 12, at 7:00 PM. When we stand at the foot of the cross, we stand on common ground. That is Christian community. When we gather at the foot of the cross we find a way to accept people who have experienced what theologian, Walter Brueggemann, calls “an alternative obedience”……a different lived-experience from our own in regard to matters of faith and obedience. Consider joining us for this evening of conversation.

Tuesday, December 13th

Worship folder announcements deadline

12:00 p.m. Lectionary study in Pastor Ellen’s office

Wednesday, December 14th

7:30 a.m. Men’s Study Group in the Library

9:30 a.m. Quilting and Samaritas ACTION

5:30 p.m. Joyful Noise

6:00 p.m. T&C

6:30 p.m. Faith Bells

6:30 p.m. Cookie Exchange

7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir



All interested singers are invited to join the Chancel Choir in singing at the 10:00 pm Christmas Eve Worship service. Rehearsals will take place on December 14th and December 21st. Please speak to Deb Borton if you have any questions.

Thursday, December 15th

7:00 p.m. RIC Meeting

Friday, December 16th



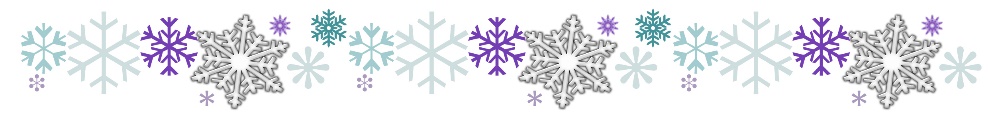
Saturday, December 17th

2:30 p.m. Caroling at Campus Medi-Lodge: 2815 Northwind Dr, East Lansing, MI 48823

*Other Caroling Times:*

Today! December 11th: Caroling at the Willows

Saturday, December 24th, Noon-1: Campus Medilodge.



As Winter Weather approaches please note that if OKEMOS SCHOOLS are Cancelled the Church office will be closed. If Events or Services are cancelled it will be announced on Facebook and the website and emailed, if possible.

UPCOMING MEETINGS & STUDIES



**Annual Meeting- Sunday, January 22nd**

This year’s annual meeting will take place Sunday, January 22nd following the worship service. Committee annual reports are due to the church office by Monday, January 9th.

**CAREGIVERS SUPPORT Group Meeting**

Join us at 11:30am for a light lunch and discussion. All are Welcome!

Thursday, January 12th: Angie Cantlon form CareLinc Medical Equipment will speak on how the Durable Medical Equipment World works. There is more offered then just a wheelchair and a walker!

Thursday, February 9th : Michelle Traill – Crosser from Caring Transitions will be speaking about downsizing.

**Book Study: Shalom Church**

New Book Study beginning Wednesday January 4th. Join us as we read and study Craig L. Nessan’s book “*Shalom Church”.*

*“It is encouraging to those of us who have tried so hard to believe in the ‘reality’ of the church and work for its ‘realization’ that new voices have taken up that challenge today and are addressing the religious situation in North America and the world with imagination, zest, and hope. I am delighted to commend Craig Nessan’s thoughtful book, and I hope that it will be read widely and attentively throughout the churches.”-Douglas John Hall*

***Please sign up in the church Narthex. Books can be ordered through the church for $20.00.***

**Thursday Evening Worship Service**

The Worship Committee has decided to experiment by adding a second worship service to our weekly schedule.  This service will NOT take place on Sundays.  It WILL take place on Thursday evenings at 6:30 PM.  This service will be more intimate, less formal, and more contemplative.  The first gathering of this alternative worship service take place on Thursday evening, January 12.  Join us if you are able.  Please speak to Pastor Ellen if you have any questions.

UPCOMING MEETINGS & STUDIES

**Water In Tanzania** - Tula Ngasala is one of our members and she is working on her Environmental Engineering degree at MSU.  During this time, she has also been working on developing water projects in her home country of Tanzania.  Working with Engineers Without Borders and WEES (another non-profit organization), she was able to construct a much needed well at her father's home congregation in Tanzania.  This well serves people in the surrounding community.  Now she is developing and working on a water project in another part of her home country.  On **Sunday, January 8**, during the morning worship service, Tula will be sharing information about these water projects and the way her faith informs her work.

**Adult Sunday School**

Class will resume on Sunday, February 5th at 9:00am in the library. We will be studying Walter Brueggemann’s book “Embracing the Prophets”

Walter, arguable America’s leading Old Testament scholar and theologian, takes us on a wild ride through the poetic prophecy of Hebrew Scripture, identifying cultural contexts, putting a framework to Israel’s history, and, most significantly -and at times challengingly! - drawing connections between Israel’s sociological, economic and spiritual status and that of America today.

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

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**Help Decorate the Sharing Tree**

**Not with Ornaments and Tinsel....**

**.....but with baby items!!!**

Visit the Sharing Tree in the coffee fellowship area and select a paper “ornament” or two. On each ornament a specific layette item is indicated.  Take the ornament home, so it can be a reminder of what to purchase. *(Only new baby items, please.)*  Bring your unwrapped, layette items and tuck them into the Sharing Tree branches.  Your gifts will be given to Shared Pregnancy of Lansing, an organization that offers emotional and spiritual support to new moms.

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED CONT.



**Stuff the Stocking Food Drive**

**Caring Committee News**

The Faith Lutheran Caring Committee was asked by the Meridian Township Human Services Director if we could provide support to families during the Christmas/Winter school break. There is a need for food items during this two week break from school because children are at home during this time and do not get their breakfasts and/or lunches at school. Please look in the narthex for the grocery cart to appear and be ready to collect the donations for food items needed.

Needed Items…

Peanut butter, jelly, snack bars, pop tarts, muffin mix, pancake mix, syrup, canned fruits, boxed cereals, oatmeal, macaroni & cheese, boxed meals-example hamburger helper, soup, boxed crackers, rice, pasta and spaghetti sauce.

With your cash donations we will purchase one dozen eggs, one gallon of milk and a loaf of bread to be included with the food donations.

Thank you, Faith Family, for helping those in the community that have a need. Food collection for this project begin now and our delivery date will be Sunday, December 18.

**GREEN TEAM TIP OF THE MONTH**

Green Team tips for the holiday season:

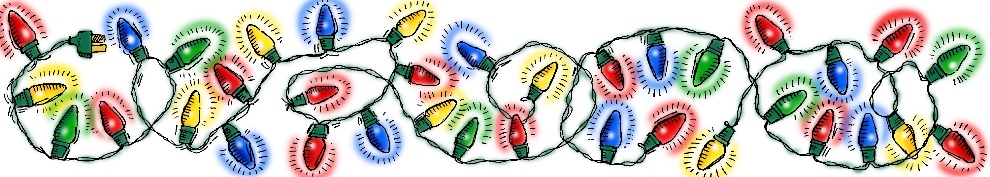
Recycle or reuse your wrapping paper & cardboard boxes

Switch older Christmas lights to LED's

Look for environmentally-friendly and sustainable Christmas gifts

Take your own mug when going to your favorite coffee shop

Recycle your live trees- look for free township drop off locations

Buy our Faith reusable grocery bags to use for all your Christmas shopping!

**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND YOUTH ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Bake Sale**The Youth Group will be having a Bake Sale immediately following the Christmas Pageant on December 11th. Please come and check out our many goodies for sale!

**Thrivent Action Teams are needed!!!**  
Please apply to help your youth group in a one-time fundraiser, service activity or educational event that can be completed within 90 days. Here are some suggestions for your Thrivent Action Teams: March Madness Meal and Quiche Meal, to name a few. Use this link to get started: <https://www.thrivent.com/making-a-difference/living-generously/thrivent-action-teams/> Please talk to Melinda if you have any questions.

**\*\*\*\*RESCHEDULED\*\*\* FOR October 20th, 2017 – 6:00-9:00pm**

The Youth, with the assistance of the Music Program, will be hosting a fun evening which will include entertainment, dinner, and multiple opportunities to win some great items. Please join us for this special event. Tickets will go on sale in September.

**DONATIONS NEEDED** – While you are out shopping and preparing for this Christmas season, please keep our auction in your mind. Ask your vendors and those people who you get services from for a donation to our auction. It only takes a quick ask, and many are happy to oblige as it also brings in new customers. Things you can ask for or may have access to: Sports tickets, haircuts, massages, dry cleaners, vacation home, artwork, jewelry, oil changes, pet grooming, restaurant gift cards, sports memorabilia, landscaping, house cleaning, etc.

**Important Dates in December**14th - Trinity & Confirmation Fun Night, bring White Elephant present.

**IN OUR COMMUNITY**



Pastor Ellen will be helping with readings again this year at “An Evening of Lessons and Carols” at Okemos Presbyterian Church. All are welcome to join. Invitations are available in the narthex.

**READ THROUGH THE BIBLE IN 2017**

Do you need a New Year’s resolution that will grow your faith and knowledge of the Bible? **Join us as we read through the entire Bible in 2017**. Readings for the entire month will be posted in the Newsletter. Daily readings will be printed in the worship bulletin and on the website calendar.





To make disciples for Jesus Christ. . .

. . .we **Gather** in faith for worship, prayer,

study and fellowship

. . .we **Equip** the people of God with a faith

that works in real life

. . .we **Serve** the world in the name of Jesus Christ