

INTERMISSION

WORSHIP & MUSIC



And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Advent and Christmas are upon us! One of my favorite Christmas shows is "A Charlie Brown Christmas." My favorite part, besides the pitiful Christmas tree, is when Linus recites these verses from Luke at their Christmas play rehearsal announcing to all that this is the true meaning of Christmas. It always brings tears to my eyes to hear those words in that sweet little voice Linus has. This time of year is always full

of shopping, parties, and the hustle and bustle of the season. It makes sense to stop and reflect on Luke's message and hear those words that Linus so sincerely proclaims to all who can hear..."Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Merry Christmas, everyone!!

Yours in Christ,
Tamara Porras
Worship & Music Chairperson

Advent Theme: "Cradle, Cross, and Crown" based on Billy Graham devotional

Midweek Services: December 2nd, 9th, and 16th - at noon and 7:15 p.m.

Annual Christmas Cantata- Savior of the Nations, Come- will be December 13 at both services

Christmas Eve Services: 5:00, 7:00 and 11:00 p.m.

December 27th : one service at 10:00 a.m.



IT'S TIME FOR COLLEGE NIGHT AT NINO'S

All CTS college and graduate students are invited to join Pastor Jim for dinner at:

NINO'S
2817 W. Dallas St
December 29
7:00 p.m.

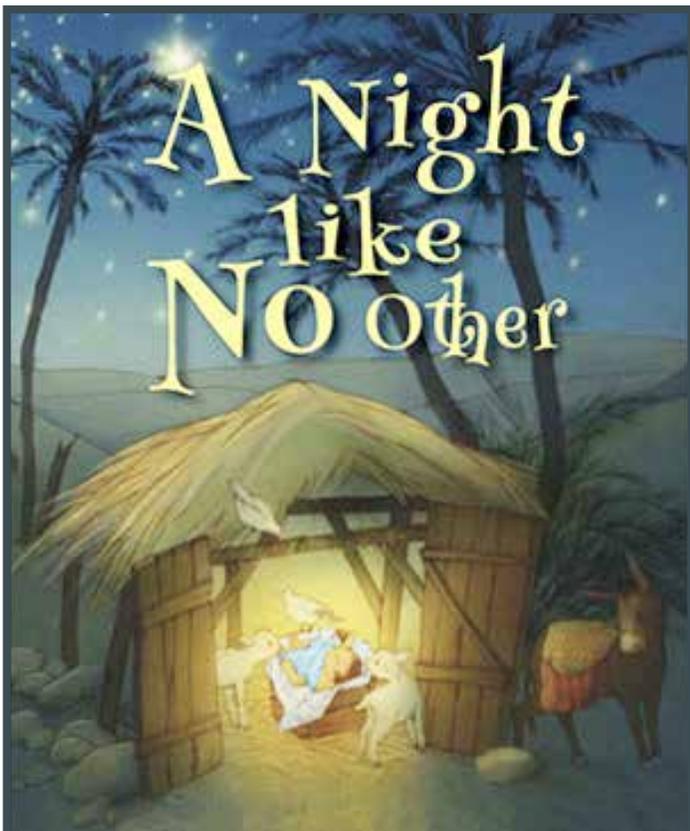
To join the fun, email Pastor Jim at jrgiannan@gmail.com or call the office to tell them you're planning to come.

MID-WEEK ADVENT SERVICES & LUNCH

Service 12:00, Lunch 12:30

Sign-up sheets are in the Narthex

Contact Rosalie Fontenot for more information.



*Remember that ONE, SPECIAL night--
a night like no other!*

ANNUAL ANGEL BREAKFAST

Saturday, December 6
9:00 am - 10:30 am

For more information:

Vicki Rudolph-Williams 713-703-9155

Denise Carlson 281-236-0174

Karen Murawski 281-253-1331

2016 FLOWER CHART

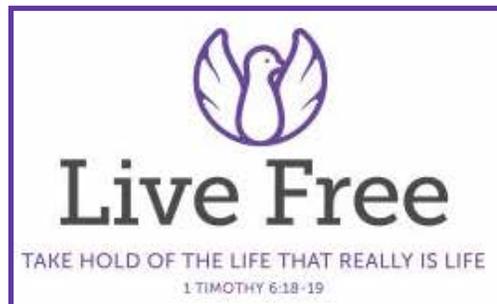
The 2016 Flower Chart is hanging in the Narthex. Sign up for the Sundays you want. Single bouquets are \$26. To donate both arrangements, the cost is \$52.



POINSETTIA ORDERS



It's time to order poinsettias to decorate the sanctuary for Christmas. Sign up sheets will be in the Narthex until December 13. The cost is \$8.50 per plant.



STEWARDSHIP SPOTLIGHT

THANKS to all of you who have made financial pledges for 2016 by completing Financial Commitment forms.

By pledging your financial commitment, we can continue to accomplish good things together as we share our mission – living our name with passion and purpose.

If you have not yet completed a Financial Commitment form, it's not too late! There are extras in the Narthex. Just complete and put in the offering plate.

Thank you again for your faithfulness!

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 3 Lon and Fay Hileman
- 8 Andy and Christy Iversen
- 11 Robert and Pam Milke
- 15 Clement and Dorcas Ukpe
- 17 LeRoy and Karen Bauer
- 20 Joel and Anyu Ulomi
- 22 Jim and Rhoda Burkett
- 29 Karl and Susan Kramer



COUNCIL COMMENTARY

November's Council meeting was a lively one. As usual, when voting to approve the minutes from the prior meeting, there was a lot of good-natured banter as to which members actually took time to review them in advance for any needed corrections! Fortunately, Betsy Riggs does an outstanding job of tracking the often overlapping bursts of dialog during meetings. So any misstatements in the recorded minutes are few and far between.

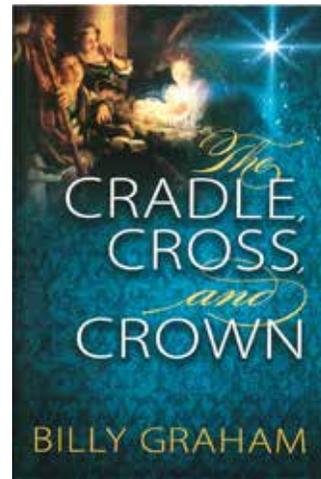
The first order of business was receiving the annual audit report submitted by Pat Welborn. (Pat worked a lot of hours on this. Cheryl Skillman assisted with the final review. We thank you both!) Pat's report confirmed that our books and records are accurate and that appropriate controls are in place and operating. There were a few comments related to ongoing policies which will be reviewed by Council to determine needed actions.

Then Financial Secretary Ron Herbanek reported an unexpected drop in October's average Sunday attendance which, along with contributions, is trailing last year's numbers for the same period. Nevertheless, we remain extremely optimistic that we will not fall short of projected budgeted income at year-end. In fact, thanks be to God, we have been able to meet all our financial obligations every month without dipping into any savings. This has not always been the case in past years.

Finalizing our 2016 budget proposal was the next order of business. This responsibility is taken very seriously by Council members, and every line item was studied for reasonableness. Our goal was to design an income and spending plan that will meet the needs of our church ministry, while also reflecting a frugal stance. Some items were lowered; some were increased. Ultimately, the proposed budget was almost exactly the same dollar amount as the 2015 budget. By the time you are reading this article the Annual Congregational Meeting may have already taken place with members voting on it.

A final agenda item was a quick overview of a Disaster Recovery Plan. Its purpose is to have an action plan in place in case a disaster occurs. In such a situation a team of volunteers will be prepared to garner resources or to implement a variety of pre-assigned responsibilities. There are about 17 categories of assignments that range from ensuring our building and its contents are safe and secure, to conducting emergency repairs and cleanup, facilitating access to shelters or checking on special needs members who might be in distress. Consider

Advent Services at Christ the Servant



**Come Celebrate God's Gift of Christmas:
The Cradle – His Son;
The Cross – His Life;
The Crown – His Coming Kingdom.**

Wednesdays at 12:00 Noon and 7:15 pm
December 2nd, 9th, and 16th

Christmas Eve – 5:00 pm, 7:30 pm & 11:00 pm

attending an upcoming information session and decide if you want to be part of this stand-by team. Think about it!

Before adjourning, it was J.T.'s turn to lead our devotional. He related to us a series of Bible readings about the disciples' sometimes bungled attempts to model themselves after Jesus. Just as we do today, they were trying to imitate Jesus' intentions, and just as we do today, they often fell short. But, regardless of failures, those who follow Jesus ultimately must strive to imitate His accomplishments at the cross. That is -- sacrifice and denial of self.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Riggs
Council President

**Christ the Servant is now forming
a new team for....**

Disaster Response

Attend an Informational Meeting!

Nov. 29 12:30

Dec. 13 9:00

Only 20 Minutes! No Obligation!

YOUTH AND FAMILY NEWS

Family Advent Devotionals and Wreaths

If you missed last Sunday's Advent Faith Together Workshop, there are still a few copies of the family devotionals and the star wreath we are using. As you exit the sanctuary, check the table on the far right against the wall for the devotion books, and the box underneath for the wreaths. First come, first served!

Last Call for Advent Family Retreat at Camp Lutherhill! December 11-13, 2015

Awaken to the Advent season as we await for the coming of Christ. Grow in fellowship and community with your own family members and fellow campers of all ages. This third weekend of Advent provides an opportunity for your family to spend some time away in community with God and others. Enjoy camp activities in the Christmas spirit like the high ropes course, arts and crafts, archery, and much more with your family while also experiencing age specific Bible studies for youth and adults. This retreat will begin Friday evening with family activities and an opening devotion. On Saturday, we continue with morning worship and Bible study and an activity filled afternoon. Sunday, we wrap the weekend up with a closing activity, a community brunch, and a sending worship. Several families are already going! Yours can be one, for only \$35/person.



Last Day of Sunday School/Seafarers Center Shoeboxes

It's that time again! We're collecting supplies for our shoebox Christmas gifts for the Seafarers' Center in the Port of Houston. The chaplains hold worship services and visit each ship to help the seafarers any way they can while they are docked in Houston. Many of the crews are made up of men from impoverished countries who are sending their wages back home to their families. Some of them aren't actually allowed to leave the ships while they are here. Any supplies we can give them will be very much appreciated. We hope to fill around 40 shoeboxes to be delivered and handed out around Christmas. We invite you to donate if you can! Please make sure your donations will fit in a shoebox. On December 13th, the last day of Sunday School for 2015, our kids will fill the shoeboxes, wrap them, and they will be delivered in the weeks before Christmas. Here is a list of the items we'd like to collect to fill the boxes:

bath soap - shampoo - shaving cream - disposable razors - gum - toothpaste - small Texas souvenirs - new work socks - new T-shirts - pens - needle and

thread - flashlight - Kleenex packets
playing cards - disposable cameras - hard candy that doesn't melt in heat - lotion and lip balm - warm knitted caps or beanies - note pads/envelopes
Texas postcards



Progressive Dinner

6th - 12th graders! Grab your friends, wear your ugliest Christmas sweater and join us for some great food and fun on December 20th! Meet us at CTS at 5 p.m. to kick things off. We'll go from house to house enjoying different courses of our dinner, and doing great Christmas-Themed activities. We'll end the night with a yummy dessert and a white elephant gift exchange! Bring an interesting or funny gift in good condition from your house, or spend NO MORE than \$10 on something, wrap it up and bring it with you! Everybody that brings a gift is guaranteed to leave with one. Free food. Holiday fun. Awesome gift. I can't wait to celebrate with you!

Jr./Sr. High New Year's Eve at Main Event!

What better way to ring in the New Year than with bowling, laser tag, and video games galore! This year, we're going to Main Event in Katy to welcome 2016 with more fun than you can blow a noisemaker at. The party starts at 9:30 p.m. and goes until 12:30 a.m. after the ball drops! Cost is just \$5 per person for maximum fun!



Senior High Retreat at Camp Lutherhill! February 19-21, 2016

Spend time in fellowship and learning with young adult leaders and fellow senior high campers. Lutherhill's energetic staff will lead activities and small group community time to further explore what it means to be the body of Christ. Hear from our speaker about our church's commitment to living in community with one another. Students in 9th through 12th grade are invited to attend this amazing weekend. This retreat will begin on Friday evening with community time lead by a live band and our speaker. On Saturday, we will further explore the weekend's theme and spend an afternoon filled with activities. We close the weekend on Sunday with a community brunch and a sending worship. A great weekend for youth to grow in faith and friendship in a unique setting! Sign up today for just \$35 per person!



CARE TEAM

Visiting is about prayer and the gifts of time and listening. The care team has been expanding its outreach to visiting members when suggested by Pastor Jim and Betsy. Visiting, along with sending cards and calling on the telephone, is what the care team does to give love and support, strengthened by the Holy Spirit.

Sue Kaestner writes: I sometimes feel nervous before a first visit and I calm myself by saying a prayer that God's spirit will guide my listening skills and that my visit will be received comfortably. (And I do the same for my phone visits.) More communication is revealed in body language than by the spoken word. So when I am able to visit in person it can be a special time to get to know that person on a deeper level, especially if I can visit often - which takes a good deal of effort and time. I had better health in the past and as a trained Stephen Minister visited the same grieving lady on a weekly basis for a year. We both looked forward to seeing each other for that hour and after a few weeks of visits could share deep feelings with trust in true Christian confidential friendship. I feel sad that I am not able to visit as I once did. I do enjoy the times now when I am able to get in the car and go visit with a shut in, grieving person or sick member. I look forward to our monthly Care Team meetings where we share ourselves to deepen our friendships and study very interesting topics to learn how to be better care givers. You may ask why the Care Team does this; it is because as God tells us in Isaiah 40:1 NIV, "These are my people; comfort them for me." And many of us have had the blessing of being cared for so we know how important caring is.

Linda Iverson writes: Visiting a care receiver is another way our care team keeps in touch with our church family here at Christ the Servant. It may be a visitation to a nursing home, hospital, rehab facility or a member who is home bound. Preceding the visit, a phone call is made to confirm a convenient time for the care receiver and ask if there might be any special requests. I always like to take a Sunday bulletin when visiting to keep them up to date on the happenings of our church family. I like to make the visit extra special by bringing a picnic lunch to share, or a meal prepared or just a loaf of nut bread or homemade cookies.

As a member of care team when on a visit, we talk, we listen, we pray together, we advocate and may even run personal errands, depending on the needs

of the care receiver. However long or short the visit, it is time well spent and the rewards are many! We care!

Room to Work

by William and Nancy Martin

The person we are caring for is in the midst of a complex process. So are we. Part of what we can offer is the compassionate space to contain all that is happening. A helpful image is of a large, shallow bowl that occupies the space between us and the one in our care. Into this bowl the care receiver can pour out anything and everything. We listen without comments or advice. We take nothing personally as he/she shares, so there is no limit to what he/she can pour out in our presence. We reflect back a few of his/her own words to help him/her to continue untangling the jumble of thoughts and emotions that come as his/her body no longer behaves as it once did. It is not up to us to find or give answers. In this safe place, the one in our care will find those answers emerging in their own words.

Next month – we are all called to be caregivers.
Annie Kaestner

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|----|--|
| 1 | Christina Dittrich
Austin Beaver |
| 6 | Pat Hogan-Korge
Helen Wolf
Nancy Jones |
| 7 | Randy Collins |
| 11 | Evan Welborn |
| 14 | Bob Cox |
| 17 | Dana Herbanek |
| 18 | Ethel Kijimiyo |
| 19 | Emaa Ezebuio |
| 20 | Bernice Ribe |
| 21 | Rhoda Burkett |
| 22 | Mary Hiestand
Karen Taylor |
| 23 | Carl Teegerstrom |
| 24 | Mike Karas
Salome Mvungi
Anna Wilhelm |
| 25 | Samantha Clark |
| 27 | Rosalie Fontenot
Jennifer Beaver |
| 30 | Ron Herbanek |
| 31 | Donna Schneider |



PRAYER REQUESTS

David **Aguilar**, friend of Bitsy **Muse**
 Karen and LeRoy **Bauer**
 Alice **Bonkowsky**, mother of Lily **Sweet**
 Eric **Booth**, brother-in-law of Ron **Herbanek**
 Sam **Brown**, father of Elizabeth **Brown**
 Reid **Burrell** and the **Burrell Family**, friends of
 Vanita **Homer**
 Haily **Callihan**, grandchild of Karen and LeRoy
Bauer
The Hagen Family
 Pilar **Harkless**
 Rev. Arlyn **Hausmann**, brother of Vanita **Homer**
 Kathy **Herzog**
 Roxanne **Hymel**, friend of Michele **Byrnes**
 Vivian **Johnson**
 Rosamond **Landry**
 Jason **Leif**, friend of the **Stallwitz Family**
Lourdes and Pepe, friends of Tom and Sandy **Wills**
Penny, four-legged family member of Tom and
 Sandy **Wills**
 Alicia **Porras**, mother-in-law of Tamara **Porras**
 Deb **Prive**, friend of Karen **Murawski**
 Cathy **Roberson**, daughter of Jodie **Davis**
 Beverly **Rosson**, sister of Susan **Givens**
 Larry **Rosson**, brother-in-law of Susan **Givens**
 Gordon **Rountree**, uncle of Ron **Hatcher**
 Beverly **Sandifer**, family friend of Ron and Marti
Hatcher
 Mary Ann **Shabunas**, mother of Mary **Hiestand**
 Kelly **Nickels**, sister of Carrie **Stallwitz**
 Doris **Stange**
 Marjorie **Swartz**, mother of Julie **Heil**
 Marcy **Williams**
 Barbara **Winter**, friend of Betty **Boxx**
 Robin and Mark **Wolfley** and family, friends of Ruth
Klinger
Zachary, grandson of Bitsy **Muse**
 Sandy and Ricky **Wilson**, aunt and cousin of Phylis
Karas

If you would like to add a name or remove a name
 from the Prayer List, please call Betsy or email her
 at the church office

713-784-6620 or ctsoffice1@comcast.net

ADVENT CANTATA DECEMBER 13

The combined choirs of Christ the Servant will present the premiere of the cantata "Savior of the Nations, Come" by John Krueger at both services on December 13. The work, written for choir, flutes, chimes and piano, treats each stanza of Luther's Advent hymn plus three stanzas of the original Latin lyrics by Ambrose of Milan (340-397). This is the third extended work by John, with the first two being performed last Advent and Good Friday. It gives the congregation a chance to hear one of the great hymns of the church in the context of worship and in an alternate setting that ranges from folk to jazz to chant. The musicians have worked hard preparing this work and look forward to sharing it with the congregation.





DECEMBER 2015



Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

Sunday Worship 8:00 and 11:00 a.m. Christian Education- Sunday Classes for all ages 9:30-10:30 a.m.		1	2  12:00 and 7:15 Advent Services 7:30 AA Journey	3	4 11:00 WHAM ESL	5  9-11 a.m. Angel Breakfast
6 12:30 Annual Congregational Meeting	7 3:30-6:30 Homeless Ministry	8 5:30 WHAM ESL 6:00 FAT 7:00 Worship & Music Meeting	9  12:00 and 7:15 Advent Services 7:30 AA Journey	10 5:30 WHAM ESL 7:00 Council	11 11:00 WHAM ESL Family Retreat at Lutherhill	12 7-7 Runoff Election → Thru Sunday
13 WHAM Toy Drop-off 9:30 Sunday School Seafarer's Boxes 12:30 Confirmation	14 WHAM Toy Distribution 	15 5:30 WHAM ESL 7:00 Bible Study- Wonder & the Church	16  12:00 and 7:15 Advent Services 7:30 AA Journey	17 5:30 WHAM ESL	18 11:00 WHAM ESL	19
20 5:00 6th-12th Grade Progressive Dinner	21 3:30-6:30 Homeless Ministry	22	23 7:30 AA Journey 	24 Christmas Eve Services 5:00, 7:30, 11:00	25 Office Closed 	26
27 One Service at 10:00 a.m.	28	29	30 9:30 pm Jr/Sr High at Main Event 7:30 AA Journey	31 		

This newsletter and a calendar of church activities are available on the CTS website at: www.christtheservant.net

January newsletter information deadline is:
December 15

Please submit information and articles in **MSWord documents** to Laura Wilhelm at lvwilhelm@comcast.net
Information may be edited to available space.

CHURCH STAFF

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jrgiannan@gmail.com

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Amanda Howell
Michelle Sanchez

SUNDAY CUSTODIAN
Sulma Cruz

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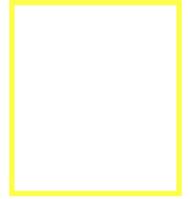
CHURCH OFFICE FAX
713-784-4742

If you would prefer to receive your monthly newsletter via email instead of US Postal mail, please let us know by contacting Betsy in the church office:
ctsoffice1@comcast.net

INTERMISSION
DECEMBER 2015

Christ the Servant Lutheran Church
2400 Wilcrest Drive
Houston, Texas 77042

Phone 713-784-6620
FAX 713-784-4742
www.christtheservant.net



2015 COUNCIL MEMBERS

President: Kathy Riggs
Vice President: Kevin Scace **At Large: Rosalie Fontenot**
Secretary: John Shoemaker **At Large: Bruce Palfreyman**
Treasurer: Mickey Walters **At Large: Bill Blair**
Financial Secretary: Ron Herbanek **At Large: David Stallwitz**

COMMITTEE CHAIRS, GROUP LEADERS, CONTACT PEOPLE

Acolytes	Mary Beth Teegerstrom	Men Who Love Spaghetti	Roger Cutler
Adult Christian Ed	Mary Beth Teegerstrom	Nursery Attendant	Amanda Howell
Altar Guild	Lori Wood		Assistant: Michelle Sanchez
CanCare Representative	Susan Kramer	Opportunity Endowment Fund	Carrie Stallwitz
Care Team	Arnie Kaestner	Personnel	Karen Welborn
College Ministry	Linda Shoemaker, Linda Siegele	Prayer Chain	Judi Leisk
Family Aid Ministry	Carolyn Giannantonio	Property	Brent Brown, Ron Herbanek
Fellowship Committee	Rosalie Fontenot	Sound Team	TBA 8:00 Service
Greeters	Donna Schneider		Brent Brown-11:00 Service
Homeless Ministry	Shirley Downing	Stewardship	Carolyn Kirk
Ladies Dinner Group	Mickey Walters	Ushers	8:00 Russell Farmer
Lawn Care	Russell Farmer, Kevin Petterson		11:00 Pat Welborn
Lectors, CTS Players	Carolyn Kirk, Matt Grant	WHAM Representatives	Arnie Kaestner, Marilee Dittrich
Liturgical Assistants	Mary Beth Teegerstrom	Worship and Music	Tamara Porras
Memorial Service Coordinator	Linda Iversen	Youth Fellowship	Michele Byrnes, Vicki Williams