



News of Elizabeth Lutheran

January Highlights

Jan 5th

Altar Guild Mtg after worship
Council Installation

Jan 16, 17 and 18th

Community Pantry - volunteer
opportunities Thurs, Fri & Sat

Jan 22nd

Council Mtg @ 5:30 at the FH

Jan 29th

Newsletter info deadline by 10 AM

Elizabeth Lutheran Church

165 CR 307 (PO Box 675)
Caldwell, TX 77836
Office: 979-567-4286 (hrs. M-F, 9-1)
office@elizabeth-lutheran.org
www.elizabeth-lutheran.org

Pastor email:

pastor@elizabeth-lutheran.org

Prayer Chain

Lisa Blum
Margaret Hibbeler
Clair Schulle
Connie Suehs
Debbie Skrabanek
Twana Benner
Sue Brinkman
Christie Havemann
Becky Goetsch
Dianna Curington

Council Members

President - Cody Novosad
Vice Pres - Devin Gerland
Secretary - Christie Havemann
Treasurer - Vince Neal
Property - Jaxton McNair
Worship - Devin Gerland
Congregatnl Life - Melanie Woods
Christian Education - Shawn Faust
Membership - Maryanne Rogers
Evangelism - Gabbo Goetsch
Pastor - Mark Neumann

Loving God, loving others, sharing the Word.

Pastor Mark's Post

Tradition, Today, Tomorrow

January newsletter articles are written in mid to late December. That means that as I write this little message I am basking in the familiar and comfortable traditions of Christmas. This year, our Christmas tree is decked with, Susan's favorite, white lights. She has been accommodating me with my multicolored tradition for the past couple of years, so this time it's her turn.

Tradition brings us joy. Since marrying each other, Susan and I have each gotten rid of half our ornaments. That means that we've kept the ones our children and grandchildren have made for us. Each one brings us a sweet measure of joy and happy memories. We like it so much, it's really all that we put on the tree, besides the lights.

Tradition empowers us. It keeps us moving to recreate the satisfaction of doing it again. Like learning how to do a task, we practice what we know. I'm sometimes amazed that we move a tree into the house for a month (or two). Why? It's a lot of work! But we love it.

Tradition reminds us of important truths. They are part of our "institutional memory." In churches and organizations there are repetitions of ritual, mission statements, and creeds that help us stay grounded. As we launch into 2025, the tradition of a New Year celebration is to lay aside the old year and embrace the new. We do it with a song at midnight which tells us to keep our memories alive while we celebrate the new. How does a church congregation begin a new year? Tradition? Today? Tomorrow?

Tradition can become hobbles. When I was a groom at the harness racing track, I used to wash down racehorses after they ran. The hobbles kept some horses running in a certain way, and never in a gallop. Harness racing is never done at a gallop. Church leaders are often met with the Seven Last Words of the Church: "We've never done it that way before." Some churches won't reinvent themselves to stay relevant in the present-day context of ministry. They can only run a certain way.

Tradition resists change. It's not just organizations that must be able to adjust for today and tomorrow. Individuals are a part of it too. In this new year:

- Culture will change – events, opinions, fads, fashions.
- Circumstances will force us to do things we've never done before.
- A shifting economy will change how we work and do business.
- Physical changes in our bodies will affect our desires, abilities, and our lifestyle – sometimes dramatically.
- Relationships will be severed or renewed as friends or relatives react to circumstances or move miles away. Some tradition-bound people will experience a miserable new year if they interpret every change as a loss.

Tradition focuses on the past. When we must have everything the way it has always been, we are often disappointed with what we have now. We don't appreciate our young because their world is so different from our youth. We don't like our community because it's getting less familiar to us. We can't even keep up with Jesus because he is wanting to reach people today, not yesterday.




Tradition is not the essence of Christianity, it's relationship. It's Christian "life" and that means it not about preserving a building, or a memorial of the past but a center of activity that is reaching people we live with in our community. The Bible teaches us that faith does remember, and we do well to remember what God has done for us. But it further teaches us that faith "works" for the sake of others, or it is dead.

Tradition can keep us from listening to God. Have you ever stopped listening to someone because you already know what they are going to say? We don't expect God to say anything new, so we don't listen to his Word or work to put it into a context for reach others today or tomorrow. The religious, tradition-bound Pharisees of Jesus' day resisted him more strongly than anyone else. Jesus did not hold back when he told them they had a fine way of throwing out God's purposes before their traditions and rules.

Tradition is not bad at all and good ones can be built. A church that is walking with Jesus will do what he has always done. We will focus on and reach people today and tomorrow what better tradition could we possibly build?

Pastor Mark 
pastor@elizabeth-lutheran.org

CELEBRATIONS*


January Birthdays 	January Anniversaries 	January Baptisms 
Stephen Skrabanek 1 Duane Suehs 1 Larry Hein 3 Brynleigh Parkin 7 Mandy Novosad 8 Deni Kate Lloyd 12 Jeffery Zgabay 20 Patsy Jennings 21 Paul Schulle 25 Caitlyn Faust 27	Randy & Sonja Brinkman 16	Eileen Schneider 2 LJ Graves 8 Irene Schumacher 13 Tanner Stefka 18 Blair Groce 19 Dana Skrabanek 25 Stephen Skrabanek 25 Houston Gerland 27 Emma Brekenfeld 29 Sterling McManus 30

*For corrections or additions, please email office@elizabeth-lutheran.org

New Office Hours: Mon – Thurs 9am – 2 pm

Offices will be back at the church January 13th!!

January

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
			New Years Day 			
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Altar Guild Mtg after worship Council Installation						
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
				Pantry Volunteer 6 PM	Pantry Volunteer 9 am	Community Pantry 7-10 AM
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
			Council Mtg @ 5:30 pm in FH			
26	27	28	29	30	31	
			Newsletter Info Deadline by 10 AM			

Monthly Financial Information:

2024 Annual Budget: \$189,886.00
 Amount needed monthly: \$ 15,823.84
 Amount rec'd in Dec: \$ 22,303.00
 Average weekly attendance: 118

January Worship Responsibilities

9 AM Service	Jan 5	Jan 12	Jan 19	Jan 26
USHERS	Jeff Curington, Henry Curington, Weldon Coker, Mike Cook, Paul Schulle and Mark Streetman			
ALTAR GUILD	Joni Cook & Maryanne Rogers			
ACOLYTES	TBD	Houston Gerland	Aubrey Maurer	Jackson Lloyd
READERS	Willie Hobbs	Hadleigh Novosad	Barbara Warren	Devin Gerland
AUDIO/VISUAL	Britt Lloyd	Novosads	Gerlands	Gabbo Goetsch
COMMUNION SERVERS	Lisa Blum & Gabbo Goetsch	Vince Neal & Chistie Havemann	Maryanne Rogers & Cody Novosad	Jaxton McNair & Shawn Faust

WOMEN'S MORNING BIBLE STUDY

- ✚ All women are invited 😊
- ✚ Do you know of someone in need of prayer? Prayer chain contact info on the front page or call the church office @ 567-4286.
- ✚ Please join us for Bible Study each Monday @ 10 a.m.! Will gather again starting February!
- ✚ The updated, 2025 WOW directory is available in the narthex. All ELC women, 18 years and older, are automatically WOW members!

NATIONAL ALLIANCE on MENTAL HEALTH

Free Burlson County Support Groups meet at 1108 Woodson Drive in Caldwell on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month, 6:30-7:30 pm.

Family Support Group is for adults with a family member or loved one with a mental health condition.

Peer Connection Support Group is for any adult 18 years or age or older who has experienced symptoms of a mental health condition.

For more information visit www.namibv.org or call 979-777-4713.



Texas District

Mission Moment

by Pastor Bryce Formwalt
Director of Mission Growth



HARVEST
WORKERS

A New Command

As Jesus gathered with his disciples for his last supper, he not only communed with them, but he also served them in a unique way. Before the meal began, he took off his outer robe, knelt down with a basin of water and a towel, and washed their feet. It was a stunning act of service by the King of kings and Lord of lords! Then Jesus began to teach his disciples: *"I give you a new command: Love one another. Just as I have loved you, you are also to love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."* (John 13:34-35)

This familiar text is a reminder of what sets Jesus' followers apart: a self-sacrificing love for one another. Jesus did not say "it would be really neat if you would be nice to one another." He was not asking his followers to tolerate or put up with one another. He did not offer his example of humble service as a suggestion among a buffet of options. He clearly states this as a new command that is a mark of every single disciple of Jesus. Jesus makes the clear connection that this love will be noticed by the world and is key to sharing Jesus' love and bearing witness to the Gospel to the world. So, this loving one another thing is *really* important for our mission in the world!

But what does it mean to love one another? What does this look like in your local church and current ministry context? How do we relate to and connect with one another in ways that are loving, forgiving, serving, encouraging, and, in all ways, build up the body of Christ? As an association of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ, I believe that it is essential to connect and relate to one another in ways that strengthen our mutual mission and ministry and lead to healthier churches in each of our communities.

For this reason, I would like you to join me and others from across our association as we take two days to dive deeper into this topic. Our Winter Retreats will gather in beautiful Concan, Texas next month around the theme of "One Another". There are two identical retreats being offered, so choose the one that best fits in your schedule: Sunday evening, February 2 through Tuesday noon, February 4 or Wednesday evening, February 5 through Friday noon, February 7. Each retreat will feature two teaching tracks. LCMC's Coordinator for Leadership and Pastoral Development Christian Huntley will be teaching the Leadership Track while Texas District Council member Barbara Hoover will be leading the Devotional Track.

The retreat is open to all and is an affordable opportunity to grow in your walk with God and develop your relational capacity to love others as Jesus loves us. If you register by January 11, the retreat registration costs \$120 and includes the program, food, and lodging. To learn more and register online, go to www.lcmctexas.org/winter-retreat. Feel free to reach out with any questions as we are here to help: 512-942-7776 or info@lcmctexas.org.

Pastor Bryce Formwalt is the Director of Mission Growth for LCMC Texas District and Program Director of Harvest Workers, an online ministry training program (learn more at www.harvestworkers.net). Residing in Georgetown, Pastor Bryce is available to coach congregations on mission. Please contact him with any questions or comments: 512-942-7776 or bryce@lcmctexas.org.

WINTER RETREAT

One Another

February 2-4 or 5-7, 2025
Concan, Texas

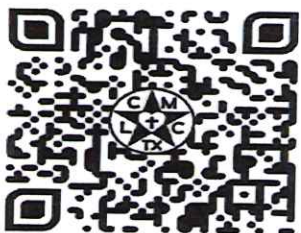
\$120 - early bird pricing
***includes meals and lodging**

Choose from 2 tracks:
Leadership or Devotional

*"A new command I give you: Love one another.
As I have loved you, so you must love one another."*

John 13:34

Same great Texas District Winter Retreat with all
the benefits of the LCMC LeaderCare initiative.



Scan for more info
and registration.

www.lcmctexas.org/winter-retreat