

View from the Lake



Planting Flowers

Written by Pastor Serena Rice

There's this lovely cartoon that has resurfaced at the end of December for the last couple of years. The referenced year gets updated, but the rest of the dialogue stays the same (because it continues to be relevant):

Person 1: Aren't you terrified of what 2024 could be like?

Everything is so messed up...

Person 2: I think it will bring flowers.

Person 1: YES? WHY?

Person 2: Because I'm planting flowers.

It's a simplification, of course. Even in the confines of the concept itself, we do not have total control over what grows in our literal gardens (I, for instance, have an infamous black thumb so there is no guarantee that I would be a harvest of flowers just because I planted them). And we have far less control over what grows and fails to grow in the world at large.

However, I still think it is a reminder that is worth contemplating as we face a new year. Whether or not we are the type of people to make resolutions (and whether or not we are the type of people to keep said resolutions throughout the year), it's helpful to contemplate both what we are planting and what we are expecting from 2024, and to consider how the two are related.

In both psychology and social science there is the phenomenon of the "self-fulfilling prophecy." This concept summarizes the fact that our expectations often influence what actually develops both on the individual and societal levels. As individuals, if we expect stress, we will respond to the circumstances of our lives in stress-oriented ways. As a society, if we expect the world to be "messed up" we will disinvest ourselves from efforts to fix social problems and respond to fear-based, authoritarian leaders and policy proposals as our only hope for security. In contrast, as individuals, if we expect to have the resources we need to respond to problems and still find joy and connection in our lives, we will be more likely to lean on our communities when needed and provides support to others as well, finding more connection and joy in our daily lives. And, as a society, if we expect that there is hope in working together and looking for solutions to our collective problems, we will be much more likely to find solutions that actually serve the whole.

So, as we head into 2024, we have the chance to "plant" expectations that can guide our responses to whatever this new year brings us. I personally think that planting the fruit of the Spirit is a good way to go: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

**February 2024
newsletter
deadline: 1/27**

January 2024

**Worship: 10:00 AM
Online/ In-person**

Our Mission and purpose: Abiding peace lutheran church makes christ known by welcoming all people to a supporting and accepting place to grow in faith and community and to serve the lord as people created by god, saved by christ and nurtured by the holy spirit. we are a reconciling in christ congregation, committed to the full inclusion and celebration of people of all sexualities, genders, and gender expressions, and to the work of racial equity.

Phone: 973-691-9393 Website: www.abidingpeacechurch.org

Council & Ministry

Officers

| | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| President | Howard Corneilson |
| Vice President | Aaron Hyndman |
| Secretary | Nick Senior |
| Treasurer | George Pawlo |

Council Members

| | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| Cindy Pawlo | Sheeba David |
| Ken Schwier | Maria Jerez-Kearney |
| Nick Senior | Howard Corneilson |
| Shelli Skeels | Aaron Hyndman |
| Sibylle Schroeder | |

Ministry Leaders

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Arts & Crafts | Sibylle Schroeder |
| Christian Education & Youth | <i>Vacant</i> |
| Evangelism | Aaron Hyndman |
| Fellowship | Demetria Laird |
| Finance | George Pawlo |
| Financial Secretary | Nita Persson |
| Messengers Dancers | Mary Kasakove |
| Mutal Ministry | Heather Nilsen |
| Property | <i>Vacant</i> |
| Social Ministry | Sibylle Schroeder |
| Seniors | Sibylle Schroeder |
| Stewardship | Nick Senior |
| Worship & Music | Mary Kasakove |

Food Pantry Needs for January

- Mac & Cheese (regular or gf)
- Pasta (regular or gf)
- Crushed Tomatoes
- Beans
- Rice
- Vegetable Oil
- Peanut Butter & Jelly
- Canned Fruit
- Juice
- Hot-Dogs and buns (please put these directly in the freezer)
- Vegan/vegetarian soups
- Vegan/vegetarian protein options (anything frozen must go directly into freezer)



Our Staff

Pastor:
Serena Rice
pastorserena@optimum.net
c: 908-458-3940

Music Director:
Ben Schroeder
benmschroeder@gmail.com

Administrative Assistant:
Erin Porter
aplcbuddlake@gmail.com

Pastor's January Hours

Jan 1 – Jan 7
Wednesday, 1/3 - 10:30am-8:30 pm

Sunday, 1/7 - 9:00am-1:00pm

Jan 8 – Jan 14

Wednesday, 1/10 - 10:00 am-5:00pm

Sunday, 1/14 - 9:00am-1:00pm

Jan 15 – Jan 21

Wednesday, 1/17 - 10:30am-8:30pm

Sunday, 1/21 - 9:00am-1:00pm

Jan 22 – Jan 28

Wednesday, 1/24 - 10:30am-8:30pm

Sunday, 1/28 - 9:00am-1:00pm

Jan 29 – Feb 4

Wednesday, 1/31 - 10:30am - 8:30pm

Sunday, 2/4 - 9:00am-1:00pm

Office Hours

Pastor Serena will hold office hours Wednesdays. The plans below may change, as circumstances require – check weekly bulletins and Monday e-blast for updates. In addition to posted hours in the office, Pastor Serena is also available to the congregation by cell phone or email during the week: (908) 458-3940; pastorserena@optimum.net. *Saturday is her day off, so please refrain from sending non emergency messages on Saturday.*

Erin will be in the office Thursdays from 9:00-12:00, and can be reached via email: aplcbuddlake@gmail.com

Check it out!

Thanks to your help, we were able to prepare 11 full meals and 14 hams for the Mt. Olive Food Pantry Holiday meal program.

Thanks!

A big Thank You to all of our Lord's Players who pulled together an amazing pageant with VERY LIMITED rehearsal time. I heard so many enthusiastic responses to your proclamation of the story of how God interrupts and breaks into our sense of time. – Pastor Serena



Star Words Study

For the past 6 years, we have incorporated the tradition of "Star Words" into our worship on the first Sunday of the calendar year. Inspired by the story of the Magi following the guidance of the Bethlehem Star, we pick paper stars out of the basket, each with a different faith-connected word written on them, and consider that word as a source of Spirit-led guidance for the following year. Last year we added the element of an associated scripture passage to go with each word and deepen our contemplation.

This year, we are going to try adding another element to this spiritual discipline. For our mid-week study during the season of Epiphany, we will use our star words as the basis for our spiritual study. Each week we will gather with a different "prompt topic" for exploration and sharing. There will be instructions sent out in the Monday e-blast if you want to do some exploring ahead of time, and resources at the church for exploring the day of as well. You can do the reflection on your own, or join with the group to gain the added opportunity to reflect together and hear about each others' journey guided by our individual star words.

January Readings

1/7:
 Genesis 1
 Psalm 29
 Acts 19
 Mark 1

1/14:
 1 Sam. 3
 Psalm 139
 1 Corin. 6
 John 1

1/21:
 Jonah 3
 Psalm 62
 1 Corin. 7
 Mark 1

1/28:
 Deut. 18
 Psalm 111
 1 Corin. 8
 Mark 1



Star Words Study:
 TUESDAY, January 9 – Initial Reactions

Wed. January 17 – Exploring Scripture

Wed. January 24 – Exploring Opposites

Wed. January 31 – Exploring Music

Wed. Feb. 7 – Exploring Impact

January Birthdays!

- 1/7 - Kevin Persson
- 1/10- Robert Bowden
- 1/11 - Gene Kasakove
- 1/14- Judith Jacob
- 1/16- Sarah Laird
- 1/17 - Barbara Prosser
- 1/18 - Brittanie Scalora
- 1/21 - George Pawlo
- 1/29 - Christina Belfiore



Did we miss a birthday? Please email Erin (aplcbuddlake@gmail.com) to keep us up to date!

January Happenings

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|--|--|--|--------|----------|
| 12/31 Worship 10:00 AM | 1/1 Happy New Year! | 1/2 Faith Kitchen 9:00 AM- 12:30 PM | 1/3 AA: 6:30 PM Open Space 7:00-8:30 PM | 1/4 Children's Church 6:00 PM Choir Rehearsal 7:45 PM | 1/5 | 1/6 |
| 1/7 Worship 10:00 AM Discernment Forum: Staying the Course 11:30 AM | 1/8 Worship & Music Committee, 12:30PM Council Meeting, 7:00 PM via Zoom | 1/9 Star Word Epiphany Study: Initial Reactions 7:30 PM | 1/10 AA: 6:30 PM | 1/11 Children's Church 6:00 PM Choir Rehearsal 7:45 PM | 1/12 | 1/13 |
| 1/14 Worship 10:00 AM Discernment Forum: Becoming a Partnering Congregation 11:30 AM | 1/15 Happy MLK Day! | 1/16 | 1/17 Prayer Service @Mount Olive Manor 4:30 PM AA 6:30 PM Star Word Epiphany Study 7:30 PM | 1/18 Children's Church 6:00 PM Choir Rehearsal 7:45 PM Reports for Congregational meeting are due! | 1/19 | 1/20 |
| 1/21 Worship 10:00 AM Discernment Forum: Flexible Ministry 11:30 AM <u>Flower orders for February Due</u> | 1/22 | 1/23 | 1/24 AA: 6:30 PM Star Word Epiphany Study: Exploring Opposites 7:30 PM | 1/25 Children's Church 6:00 PM Choir Rehearsal 7:45 PM | 1/26 | 1/27 |
| 1/28 Worship 10:00 AM Congregational Meeting 11:00 AM | 1/29 | 1/30 | 1/31 AA: 6:30 PM Star Word Epiphany Study: Exploring Music 7:30 PM | | | |

January Worship Assistant Schedule

It is your responsibility to find a replacement if you cannot serve

January 2024

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO FIND A REPLACEMENT IF YOU CANNOT SERVE.

| January | 1/7 | 1/14 | 1/21 | 1/28 |
|------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Altar Guild | Jackie Palermo | Sandy Carlson | Jackie Palermo | Jackie Palermo |
| Counter | Ursula Schroeder | Howard Corneilson | Anna Santino | Nita Persson |
| Assistant Minister | Sue Stirrat | Sandy Carlson | Maria Jerez | Demetria Laird |
| Lector | Anna Santino | Demetria Laird | Sue Stirrat | Sheeba David |
| Communion Assistant | Maria Jerez | Sibylle Schroeder | George Pawlo | Howard Corneilson |
| Usher/Greeter/Acolyte | Sandy Carlson | Doug Laird | Cindy Pawlo | Mary Kasakove |
| Soloist | TBA | TBA | TBA | TBA |
| Livestream Assistant | Nick Senior | Ray Mueller | Sheeba David | Tyler Rice |

BREAD BAKING:

Sandy Carlson

Keep these friends in your hearts and prayers

Those who are sick or in need: Emily Wager, Bill Phinney, Joshua Olsen, Dawn Larsen, Jon, Cheryl Inglin, Judy Consentino, Jon & Maria, Sandy Kahler, Karen Qualls, Jim Tangen, Elisabeth & Otto Schroeder, Don Larsen, Joseph Horn, Ryan Manhardt, Evelyn & Woody Woodruff, Grace Bessasparis, Jackson Cook, Donna Fahy, Jeanne Scalora, Valeriy Braginets, Linda Kahler, Mark Dennis, Mike Urodzinski, John Corneilson, Tim O'Connor, Karen & Ken Predmore and family, David Breault, Charles Wetzel, Patricia Coats, Alia Duffy, Harold Olsen, Neil Nilsen, Aimee Nilsen, Joy Laird, Lydia Millner, Dean Kowal, April Inglin, Bella Adams, Bodhi Maslow, Rick & Jeni Oliva, Barbara Pinekenstein, Joan Lewis, Susan & William Swainy, Scott Schaefer, Audrey Moehringer, Tara Woodard-Lehman, Peter Arzikovic, Ann Diecke, Ken Merson, Kelly Cook, and the Masone Family.