

# **DECEMBER 2017 UPCOMING EVENTS**

**THANKSGIVING BASKETS-** Thank you to everyone who participated in our Thanksgiving Baskets. It is so grace-filling to be able to help someone else get a warm meal, especially when their “thanks” is a little on the low side.

**WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN SINGING IN THE CHRISTMAS CHOIR?** If so please contact our music director Steve Natoli after service or you can reach him at [natoli@cox.net](mailto:natoli@cox.net).

**DECEMBER 2<sup>ND</sup> FROM 9-3PM IS THE 36<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL NORDIC GUILD FAIR** at Streams in the Desert Lutheran Church, 5360 E. Pima, Tucson. Norwegian, Swedish, Danish and Finnish clubs as well as individual vendors will sell ethnic food, baked goods, Scandinavian items, crafts and collectibles. Folk dancers and musicians will entertain throughout the day. Free admission.

**DECEMBER 3<sup>RD</sup> WE HANG OUR GREENS!** Please join us immediately after service as we add the festive touches of the holiday season to our Narthex and church Sanctuary. The choir will be rehearsing, refreshments will be available and all are welcome (even if it is just to offer encouragement!)

**DECEMBER 5<sup>TH</sup> THE WOMEN OF THE CONGREGATION ARE INVITED** to the annual Christmas Coffee at St. Paul’s United Methodist Church, 8051 E. Broadway Blvd. This Tuesday morning event will begin at 9:30 am. For more information, please see Sheryl Felde.

**DECEMBER 6<sup>TH</sup> ADVENT MIDWEEK SERVICES START**– and continue for the next two Wednesday evenings in December preceding Christmas (December 13 and 20). We start the evening off with a simple soup supper at 6pm and follow with service at 7pm. Can’t make the soup supper? We will miss you but will look forward to seeing you at service. Don’t drive after dark but still want to attend? Call the church office at 747-3745 and we will make arrangements for you. Don’t want to attend alone? Christmas is a lonely time of the year for many people. Reach out to someone you know who could use the inspirational message that comes with Christ’s birth and ask them to attend with you.

**PLANNING TO ATTEND THE SOUP SUPPERS?** If you could bring in a soup one Wednesday night or some bread to share that would be great! Please see the signup sheet in the Narthex so we can plan appropriately.

**DECEMBER 8<sup>TH</sup> THE LUNCH BUNCH** is celebrating Christmas! Bring your holiday cheer to a potluck PARTY at the church at noon with a game of bingo to follow. Want to be part of the festive happenings but need more information? Please contact Sheryl Felde at 885-5325.

**DECEMBER 9<sup>TH</sup> WE WILL HOST A NATIVE AMERICAN FLUTE WORKSHOP AND CONCERT WITH GARY STROUTSOS.** For more information or to purchase tickets for either event, please contact Paul Surhoff at 908-917-2307 or psurhoff@gmail.com.

**DECEMBER 11<sup>TH</sup> OUR COUNCIL MEETS AT 7PM** in the conference room. If you are interested in the running of the church, have a suggestion or concern you are always welcome to attend. Can't attend but would like to add something to the agenda? Please see Gerri Eberle or Pastor Keith.

**DECEMBER 16<sup>TH</sup> WE WILL BE HAVING A MISSION PLANNING MEETING-** This meeting is to help us discern our options in staying financially stable and relevant in our community. This will be an all-day event and lunch will be served. If you are interested in attending, please contact Pastor Keith.

**DECEMBER 19<sup>TH</sup> THE WOMEN OF THE ELCA** meet at 12:30 for a bible study with Pastor Keith and then a brief business meeting. All women of the congregation are welcome to attend.

**DECEMBER 24 WE CELEBRATE THE BIRTH OF OUR LORD-** Christmas Eve falls on Sunday this year so we will be having two services that day. Our regular 9:30am service will be the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Advent celebration and at 7pm that same evening we will have our Lessons and Carols service. We invite you, your families and friends to join us in worship, praise and song as we rejoice in His arrival.

**DECEMBER 29<sup>TH</sup> WE JOIN WITH PRIMAVERA** in making lunches for the homeless men housed there and who are struggling to work and improve their circumstances. You can help in either two ways, by providing the ingredients for the lunches (please see the signup sheet in the Narthex) or by helping to assemble the lunches at 10am in Fellowship Hall. For more information, please contact Vickie Luthro.

**A CHRISTMAS COOKIE CONCERT HERE AT ABOUNDING GRACE – SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2 PM** – Our Director of Music Steven Natoli is organizing a free concert to which we will invite our friends and neighbors as a way getting to know them better. The concert will be about 75 minutes long, followed by a sharing of Christmas cookies which we will encourage everyone to bring. If you are interested in performing, please contact Steven for more information. If you would like to participate, please contact please contact our music director Steve Natoli after service or you can reach him at [natoli@cox.net](mailto:natoli@cox.net).

**WE NEED USHERS!** It is the time of year when we are making up the schedule for next year and if you would be willing to help usher it would be greatly appreciated! Not sure what the job entails? Please speak with Pastor Keith or Shirley Williamson. If you are interested in helping out, please call Shirley at 790-4932.

**DO YOU KNOW HOW TO COUNT?** Counting the Sunday offering is an essential and necessary job for our church. Done once a week, counting takes about an hour to an hour and a half. After prayerful consideration, if you are willing to help out, please call Jay Froehlich at 275-1043.

**WE NEED A NEW TREASURER!** After many years of faithful service, Dick Gruentzel is resigning as our church treasurer. He has indicated that he will work with a new volunteer to bring them up to speed. If you or someone you know would be willing to serve in this capacity, please contact Pastor Keith, our Office Manager Jay Froehlich, or any member of the Congregation Council.

**STEWARDSHIP UPDATE-** as of 11-24-17 Abounding Grace has a total of \$103,816 in pledges. This does not include the donations we receive from the various groups that use our facilities. It cannot be stressed enough that the membership of our church has really stepped up in our time of need and your participation in our Stewardship Program really has made a difference. But more than that, your devotion and your belief in Abounding Grace is beyond gratifying. Thank you.

## **ON-GOING EVENTS and ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **HAPPY DECEMBER BIRTHDAY to**

12/10 Danny Montoya  
12/13 Samwise Victorson  
12/18 Vickie Luthro  
12/21 Kathy Peters  
12/29 Penelope Vasquez

### **HAPPY NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARY to**

12/5 Ken and Vickie Luthro  
12/17 Dave and Sharon Lybarger

**IF YOU NEED A RIDE FOR ANY SERVICE, PLEASE CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE AND WE WILL MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR YOU!**

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**THRIVENT FINANCIAL WILL MATCH UP TO \$3 MILLION FOR HURRICANE RELIEF!** As the Christian community comes together to pray for and reach out to those who have been affected by the recent disasters, Thrivent Financial is mobilizing its financial resources and members nationwide to help those in need. Thrivent members and others who are interested in ways to help with the recovery effort are encouraged to visit [www.Thrivent.com](http://www.Thrivent.com) to learn more about the organization's \$3 million match on individual personal donations and other ways in which they can help. We thank you for continuing to keep storm victims in your prayers and support them as you're financially or physically able. Your commitment to living generously is appreciated.

**DO YOU EVER HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE READINGS?** The Thursday Bible Study at 11:30 led by Pastor Keith, are a deeper study of the following Sunday's readings and usually last 60- 90 minutes. It an excellent way to learn the history and context of the readings as well gaining a more meaningful look into what it is that our Lord is trying to teach us. For more information, please call the church office.

**DO YOU LIKE HAVING COMMUNION?** Please consider helping the Altar Guild as we set and clean the table for the Holy Meal. We will train you (it's not hard at all) and only takes about 20 minutes each Sunday. Men are perfectly acceptable in this role! Please see Jay if you can help out!

**SUNDAY HOSPITALITY TABLE** – Who doesn't like to have a chance to sit down with a cup of hot coffee (or tea), a sweet treat, and for a little while, just chat? It could be with a friend you've known for a long time or someone you just met. It's a nice feeling, isn't it? Well that's what we try to provide right after each Sunday service. Here's a place to talk about the sermon or the music. Here's a time to discuss an event that just occurred or will be coming up soon. You may think that you're just giving yourself a little refreshment time, but don't forget the person you greet with conversation. Could it be that person needed somebody to share their thoughts with as well? Could it be you're a blessing to someone and you never knew it? By the way, that's alright, God knew, and it's called... loving your neighbor.

**IF YOU HAVE ANY CORRECTIONS TO YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION**- please let Jay in the office know as soon as possible.

**THE PEACE CANDLE** – Our church carries on a tradition that began in Russia, of lighting a candle each week on our altar as a symbol of our prayer for peace in our world. We invite visitors from other congregations to take a Peace Candle along with the literature of its history to your home church to continue the tradition. If you would like to take the Peace Candle to your home church please mention it to the Pastor or an Usher and we will be happy to “pass it on.”

**PRAYER CHAIN**- Our church has a Prayer Chain. Anyone with a prayer request, please call **Shirley Berner at 885-4892**. Also, anyone that is interested in helping on the Prayer Chain please contact Shirley to lighten the load. **If you have someone on the list that should be taken off or someone to add, please contact Shirley Berner and Jay Froehlich in the office.**

**PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN**

Donald Stoelting (husband of Hanna), Michael H. Botti, (son of Mike Botti), Chris Camp, John Stum (son of Paul & Martha Stum), Audrey Neymeyer (granddaughter of Cheryl Emtman), Clay Hardwick (grandson of Jane Dunfee), Jessica & Tom Lauwers, James Simpson (from Aspire), Levi Thompson (grandson of Dave Kitner), Jonathon Batchler (nephew of Bill and Jay Froehlich), Travis Dodge (friend of MaKain Willard), Tyler and Jay Jahn, Chip Boyce (friend of Maybelle Armier).

**PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR FRIENDS**

Bob Williamson, Cheryl Emtman, Sarah Williams (niece of Cheryl Emtman), Sara Seagrove, Tiffany (granddaughter of Virginia Reymer), Christopher Lawson (grandson of Maggie Cook), the Robnett Family, Jeannie Van Sickle (daughter Mark Westlake), Virginia Reymer, Robert Lloyd, Ron Briggs (friend of Cheryl Emtman), Eric Leland, Peter Leveratt (brother of Carol Leveratt), Ryan Judd, Alice Yaskanich, Kathie Josephs, Betty Hetler, Mark Westlake, Susan Martinez, and Gretchen Surhoff (niece of Paul & Sharon Surhoff), Walter Brewer, Christine Gilbert, David Glarborg (son of Estelle Glarborg), Police Officer Mike Duffrin, Susie Wiese (sister of Kay Victorson), Don and Nancy (brother-in-law and sister of Kathy Peters).

**CHECK THE SIGN UP BOARD PLEASE!** You are needed! Sunday mornings are a busy time around here and you are just what we need! Jobs range from Sunday School teachers/ helpers to communion assistants and everything in between. We will be more than happy to show you how easy some of these tasks are! Just ask any member of council or Pastor Keith.