

**Our Saviour Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
**56 Cleveland Drive**  
**Croton-On-Hudson, NY 10520**  
**(914) 271-4632**

# **The Seeker**

**JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2012**



Pastor Anthony Stephens, Ph.D.

*Seek and you shall find.  
Knock and the door will be opened to you.*  
-Matthew 7:7

### **Sunday Worship Schedule**

**Sunday School: 9:30 am**  
**Confirmation Class: 9:15 am**  
**Adult Bible Study: 9:15 am**  
**Worship: 10:30 am**  
**Coffee Hour: 12:00 noon**

### **Weekday Office Schedule**

**Office hours: 9:00 am - 12:00**  
**Office Phone: (914) 271-4632**  
**Office E-mail:**  
**mail@oursaviourcroton.org**  
**Website: www.oursaviourcroton.org**

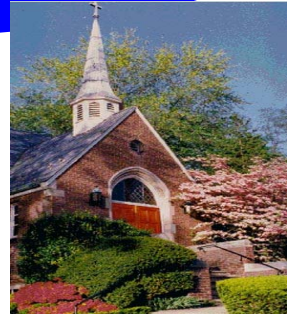
### **Weekday Activities**

**Choir Practice: Thursday @ 7:45 pm**

Our Saviour Lutheran Church  
56 Cleveland Drive, Croton-On-Hudson, New York

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# The Seeker



**Bi-Monthly Newsletter for Friends & Family of Our Saviour Lutheran Church**

## The Body & Soul of Resolutions

- Pastor Anthony Stephens

The Christian New Year, or at least the Western Christian New Year, started with the First Sunday in Advent in November. As you will observe it is well under way as we celebrate the 12 days of Christmas, and now Epiphany.

It is the, again Western, secular New Year. As with Advent's complexion as a time of spiritual repentance, so comes the New Year's resolution; a time of secular repentance, which is usually focused on issues of health and consumption.

Perhaps why so many New Year's resolutions fail is that they lack a spiritual motivational component. They are just not part of our pilgrimage.

Perhaps why so many acts of spiritual repentance fail is that they are not practical, by which I mean embodied.

Christians are completely wed to incarnational theology: In the beginning was the Word and the Word became flesh (John 1:1). Our spiritual journeys are and must be experienced incarnationally. Incarnation, as anyone who has ordered *chile con carne* knows, is about meat, or, strictly, flesh.

This is why Christianity reduced to an ethereal feeling good about oneself is doomed to failure. Those who use their personal spirituality as a type of SSRI - anti-depressant, will be disappointed, and ultimately gravitate towards something that is specifically mood altering.

What works, and I realize that I am sounding very formulaic and self-helpish here, are those secular resolutions that can be clearly seen to advance our spiritual self. An advance in a spiritual self can only be experienced in an orientation towards the Divine, and not creating our own little surrogate, or "apple god" as Luther called it. So, if we aspire to become healthier we do so because our body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. If we adjust our consumption patterns we do so because it is God's stuff: "All things come from you, O Lord, and of your own do we give you."

Similarly our acts of repentance if they are confined to being lachrymose, neither help ourselves nor God's world. Canon John Luce used to say that being sorry had nothing to do with it – which I think overstates it a bit. However, repentance is "metanoia" (Greek for a change in thought), but metanoia is not disembodied. The change from selfish acts to charity is truly embodied metanoia.

We will, ask Jimmy Carter, always have thoughts and ideas of which we could rightly be ashamed, but the trick is to avoid them becoming incarnate in actions. Or, let our incarnate actions aspire to be more holy behavior. (This has nothing to do with greater or lesser sin).

Consider the veritable epidemic of gossip or "bearing false witness" that is being facilitated by social media; cyber-bullying being one such example. Luther wrote:

We are to fear and love God so that we do not betray, slander or lie about our neighbor, but defend him, speak well of him and explain his actions in the kindest way. (Small Catechism – The Eighth Commandment).

I was forwarded something onetime that said avoid forwarding anything mean. Would this include Obama and Santorum doggerel? Presumably so ...

The truth of the matter is that our spiritual journey is embodied, and our embodied journey is inherently spiritual in Hitchens' case. Even if we were of Christopher Hitchens' persuasion, whose god was "no god," such a journey is defined by its journey away from God, eloquent and occasionally droll as it might have been. It was unfortunate that it also at times embodied meanness towards others of different persuasion – but we know who invented that, and they definitely were not atheists.

Another paradox, of which Lutherans are particularly fond, is that whatever we do, including whatever good we do, we make God no better. Thomas Aquinas called God the "summa bonum simpliciter" (the sum of all good uniquely) – the source of all goodness. On the other hand, our good deeds reflect and respond to God's good nature.

Let our spiritual resolutions be embodied.

A blessed and blessing New Year ...

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

**Bryan Montgomery, Council President**

Hello! Let me start by saying that I hope you had a great Christmas, and hope you have a wonderful 2012. This past Advent season was again a great time to celebrate the birth of Christ. With the hard work of many in the congregation the Christmas fair was again a great success. We had a healthy income and shared much fellowship. Like many others I'm sure, I enjoyed the Christmas services - a highlight of the festivities.

As we look forward to the New Year, I should remind everyone they can still submit their pledges and talent forms. Historically we have not done a great job as a congregation in submitting our pledges, but it does help the finance committee significantly in trying to set an accurate budget. In these hard times I think they need all the help they can get. Even as we begin the New Year we are faced with more unplanned expenditures on our property. We are having work done on the chimney above the offices to stop the leaks and we recently replace several windows in the link. Both of these will stop us wasting money in the future, and pay dividends but takes a hefty investment up front.

At the annual congregation meeting, we had a discussion regarding Pastor's Call and how it should be updated almost 10 years later. ( In Lutheran churches, a "call letter" is a formal document used to set out the terms and conditions between the congregation and its pastor.) There are several reasons as to why we think it is now a good time to do this. Back in 2010 Kunmi did a lot of work with the cluster groups. This opportunity will allow us to think about using some of the ideas from that process. As we seem to mention often, finances are a concern. Up until this year, we have been paying Marcie from a bequest. However those funds are exhausted at the end of this year - however the congregation feels that we should continue this wonderful ministry. Having completed his Law degree Pastor has an obligation to repay his student loans. Subsequently, updating a formalized agreement that states what duties the congregation needs from its Pastor, and the time that we expect that to take will allow Pastor to pursue other endeavors that will help him fulfill his obligations.

A committee to update the Congregations Call is in the final stages of being formed. This committee will be providing Council with their proposal by April so the finance committee can use that to assist with the budget and so that the Congregation can approve the revised call. If you would like to share your thoughts on what should be included please speak to any of the Council members or Pastor Parish committee members.

Lastly, as we enjoy this unusually mild and dry weather - I suspect it won't be too long before we have more of the white stuff! If you have any excess energy - or children with excess energy - please feel free to come to Church and clear the pathways!

Thanks,  
Bryan

## OUR SAVIOUR COUNCIL MEMBERS—2012

**Bryan Montgomery**  
**Greg Evans**

**Steven Millar**

**Julie Kelly**

**Peter Ling**

**Dianne Carroll**

**Susan Papertsian**

**Angie Nuwesra**

**Laura Keil**

**Ex Officio: Michelle Garrison Hough, Treasurer**

**Barbara Henninger, Financial Secretary**

***New Officers and Council Member Ministries will be appointed at the January 8, 2012 Meeting.***

Here is a list of Council Members and their respective Ministries from last year:

**Circle School: Janet Behning & Greg Evans**

**Property: Bryan Montgomery**

**Christian Education: Kunmi Johnson**

**Social Ministry: Laura Keil**

**Evangelism & Outreach: Susan Papertsian**

**Stewardship: Julie Kelly**

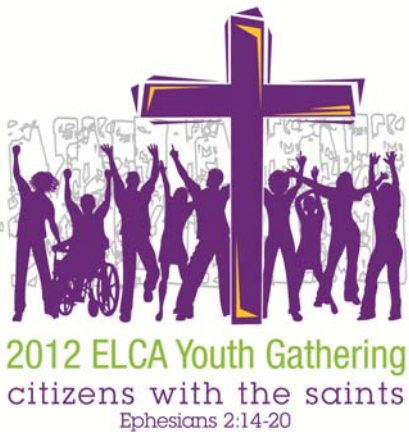
**Finance: Peter Ling**

**Worship & Music: Barbara Henninger**

**Pastor / Parish Relations: Kunmi Johnson**

All Council members have mailslots in the Office. Feel free to leave any messages or information for them.

# Youth Ministry



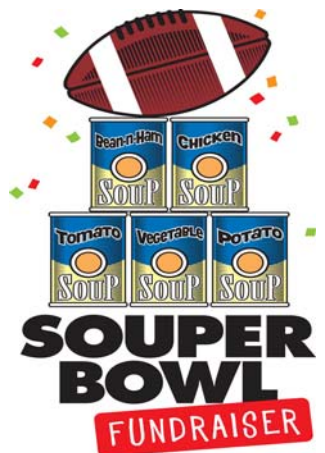
## ELCA NATIONAL YOUTH GATHERING

The ELCA National Youth Gathering occur every three years. The first Gathering took place in San Antonio, Texas in 1988. This year the event takes place in New Orleans, Louisiana from July 18 through 22. ELCA Youth Gatherings bring youth and adult leaders together around a theme that is integrated into all program components. These components include Bible study, service, worship, focused study areas, experiential learning, special events, dances and tours.

This year Youth Pastor, Marcie Zook will be leading several of our youth to the Gathering. Please pray for Jillian McCarthy, Alex Stephens, Sandy Kelly and Brenden Kelly as they prepare for the ELCA National Youth Gathering this July. They will gather as citizens with the saints to learn to love like Jesus by practicing discipleship through peacemaking that works for justice.

## SOUPER BOWL SUNDAY is Sunday, February 5th.

The youth will be collecting non-perishable food items to support the Cortlandt food bank. The youth are teaming with Souper Bowl for Caring, an organization that tackles hunger by encouraging local organizations to collect food on Super Bowl Sunday. All proceeds go directly to the local food pantries. Please remember that food banks need financial gifts in order to purchase perishable food for families around the community or to accommodate special dietary needs such as sugar free items for diabetics. Check to ensure your non-perishable food items are not expired before you donate. Monetary donations are also welcomed. Our youth thank you in advance for your support!



## SNOW DAYS!

When Croton-Harmon Schools are closed, youth events will be cancelled.



# Lutheran Social Services of New York—A Service Opportunity

Lutheran Social Services of New York's Immigration and Refugee Program is refurbishing a Kingsbridge apartment for clients in transition. One of the main things that need to be done, is to repaint the walls. There is a group of students who will be doing this on January 12<sup>th</sup>. Here is an estimate of what they will need:

- 2 x 5 gallon buckets of an off white paint/mix with primer at \$148-164 each.
- Brushes, pans and tarp to cover the floor estimated at \$150-200.

Does anyone have some paint and brushes that they can donate or would anyone like to contribute towards buying these materials?

Here's more about the program.....

Lutheran Social Services of NY's Immigration and Refugee Program (IRP) has helped thousands of immigrants and refugees obtain permanent residence and citizenship in the United States as well as gain access to essential social services, such as healthcare, housing, and public benefits. The populations served by the IRP are predominantly indigent or low-income, and have little access to reliable legal and social services.

## LSSNY's Assistance to Refugees

Until recently, most of the refugees resettled by the IRP (following national trend) were "family reunification" cases, i.e. refugees that were rejoining "anchor" family members in NYC. In most of these cases, the refugees had a strong built-in support system upon arrival that could assist with basic needs such as housing, furniture, household necessities, etc. Recently, however, the shift in refugee resettlement has been towards resettling refugees without strong anchor support and who have only loose ties to New York. This year, the IRP has resettled 23 such refugees, mainly from Iraq, Afghanistan, Burma, Eritrea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. It is expected that for fiscal year 2012, 50 individuals will be resettled.

The IRP currently provides a number of reception and placement (R&P) core services to refugees immediately upon arrival including services that lead to self sufficiency. These services include securing housing, furniture, general household items, and clothing; transportation; providing social adjustment / acculturation services; securing basic identity paperwork and services such as social security cards, Medicaid, and Food Stamps, and assistance in the preparation of personal budgets. For all employable refugees, the program assists refugees with the development of an employment plan and the implementation of that plan, including employment support services such as resume preparation, job counseling, referrals to ESL classes and job training services. The IRP also assists with transitional support to address barriers to obtaining and maintaining employment such as childcare and educational support for children and accessing healthcare.

Each refugee receives a Reception and Placement (R&P) grant of a maximum of \$1100 during their first 90 days in the country. This grant is usually spent very quickly because of the high cost of housing in the New York City area, and requires supplemental funding in almost all cases.

## The Safe Haven Project

The most challenging part of the R&P program is securing safe and affordable housing for LSSNY's refugee clients in the relatively short period of time between notification of arrival and the actual arrival of the refugees (usually at most 3 weeks). In the past, under "family reunification," the anchor relatives were usually able to provide temporary shelter for the refugees while they were seeking permanent housing.

Under the Safe Haven Project, LSSNY hopes to be able to provide safe, temporary haven for the refugees upon arrival until permanent housing is secured. Refugees without strong anchor support would thus have the time to find adequate permanent housing and furnishings that refugees with close anchor relatives are afforded.

LSSNY is currently renovating and furnishing an apartment that it owns in the Kingsbridge section of the Bronx. LSSNY's vision is to use this apartment for transitional housing for LSSNY's refugee and asylee families. Newly arrived families would be able to live there for up to three weeks at little or no cost while they search for permanent housing with the help of LSSNY staff. The apartment will be repainted on January 12<sup>th</sup> with the help of a group of students who have volunteered their time. Following this, the floor will need to be stripped and waxed. Once the fire panel and fire extinguisher are inspected and the plumbing checked for leaks, all that will be required will be to furnish the apartment so that it can welcome its first clients.

For those interested in this project, the LSSNY point of contact is

Joy Paone

Refugee Resettlement Coordinator

Lutheran Social Services of New York

308 W 46th St, 3rd floor

New York, NY 10036

212-265-1826 x 303

**Pastor notes:** I did some volunteer work with LSSNY's Child and Family Services arm, which encompasses the IRP. Many of the clients are or start with refugees fleeing based upon a "well-founded fear of persecution." Their tales were very disturbing. At the very minimum, IRP clients are merely seeking to be reunited with their families and be productive members of their new-found home country.

# JANUARY SUNDAY SERVANTS

## January 1

Greeters&Ushers: Nancy Riekert & Rosie Evans  
 Worship Assistant: LeeAnn McCarthy  
 Lector: Frya Barnes  
 Altar Guild: Janet Behning  
 Communion Assistant: Frya Barnes  
 Acolyte: Liam Montgomery  
 Hospitality: Susan & Faith Papertsian

## January 8

Greeter&Usher: Dianne & Meagan Carroll  
 Worship Assistant: Greg Evans  
 Lector: Lily Evans  
 Altar Guild: Karen Magerlein  
 Communion Assistant: John Magerlein  
 Acolyte: Nick Kelly  
 Hospitality: Lisa Stephens & Dianne Carroll

## January 15

Greeters&Ushers: John & Tom Magerlein  
 Worship Assistant: Lori Esteves  
 Lector: LeeAnn McCarthy  
 Altar Guild: Karen Magerlein  
 Communion Assistant: Alexandra Stephens  
 Acolyte: Graham Kelly  
 Hospitality: Karen Magerlein & Sue Montgomery

## January 22

Greeters&Ushers: MaryBeth Soucy & Abbie Voss  
 Worship Assistant: Lance Kelly  
 Lector: Amy Gardiner  
 Altar Guild: Karen Magerlein  
 Communion Assistant: Brenden Kelly  
 Acolyte: Daniel Crumb  
 Hosp: Karen Kuchnicki & Melanie Mueller

## January 29

Greeters&Ushers: Evelyn Garrett & Alex Stephens  
 Worship Assistant: LeeAnn McCarthy  
 Lector: Eric Golberg  
 Altar Guild: Karen Magerlein  
 Communion Assistant: Ken Gabrielsen  
 Acolyte: Shoshanna Nuwesra  
 Hospitality: Sue Montgomery & Brigitte Anderson-Crumb

# FEBRUARY SUNDAY SERVANTS

## February 5

Greeters&Ushers: Frya Barnes & Lily Evans  
 Worship Assistant: Julie Kelly  
 Lector: Christopher Orts  
 Altar Guild: TBD  
 Communion Assistant: Sandy Kelly  
 Acolyte: Liam Montgomery  
 Hosp: MaryBerth Soucy and Susan/Faith Papertsian

## February 12

Greeters&Ushers: Nancy Riekert & Karolyn Kingman  
 Worship Assistant: Greg Evans  
 Lector: Lori Esteves  
 Altar Guild: TBD  
 Communion Assistant: Bob Riekert  
 Acolyte: Nick Kelly  
 Hospitality: LeeAnn McCarthy & Heather Cooper

## February 19

Greeter&Usher: Chuck Cooper & Julie Kelly  
 Worship Assistant: Lance Kelly  
 Lector: Matilda Weekes-Johnson  
 Altar Guild: TBD  
 Communion Assistant: LeeAnn McCarthy  
 Acolyte: Graham Kelly  
 Hospitality: MaryBeth Soucy & Lori Esteves

## February 26

Greeters&Ushers: Anita & David Baumann  
 Worship Assistant: Lori Esteves  
 Lector: John Magerlein  
 Altar Guild: TBD  
 Communion Assistant: Evelyn Garrett  
 Acolyte: Daniel Crumb  
 Hospitality: Keil Family & Nuwesra Family

## March 4

Greeters&Ushers: Rosie Evans & Eric Golberg  
 Worship Assistant: Julie Kelly  
 Lector: Janet Behning  
 Altar Guild: TBD  
 Communion Assistant: Chuck Cooper  
 Acolyte: Shoshanna Nuwesra  
 Hospitality: Karen Magerlein & Greg Evans

## March 11

Greeters&Ushers: Dianne & Meagan Carroll  
 Worship Assistant: LeeAnn McCarthy  
 Lector: Ken Gabrielsen  
 Altar Guild: TBD  
 Communion Assistant: Frya Barnes  
 Hospitality: Jen Stieglitz & Nancy Riekert

### LECTOR'S READINGS



1/1	Num 6:22-27	Galatians 4:4-7
1/8	Genesis 1:1-5	Acts 19:1-7
1/15	1 Samuel 3:1-10	1 Corinthians 6:12-20
1/22	Jonah 3:1-5, 10	1 Corinthians 7:29-31
1/29	Deut 18:15-20	1 Corinthians 8:1-13
2/5	Isaiah 40:21-31	1 Corinthians 9:16-23
2/12	2 Kings 5:1-14	1 Corinthians 9:24-27

2/19	2 Kings 2:1-12	2 Corinthians 4:3-6
2/26	Gen 9:8-17	1 Peter 3:18-22
3/4	Gen 17:1-7, 15-16	Romans 4:13-25
3/11	Exodus 20:1-17	1 Corinthians 1:18-25



# JANUARY 2012



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> Name of Jesus <small>(white)</small> Confirmation 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Service 10:30am	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> AA 7:30pm	<b>4</b> NA 7:30pm	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>  <b>epiphany</b> Family Night 6:00pm	<b>7</b> AA 7:00pm
<b>8</b> Baptism Of Our Lord <small>(white)</small> Confirmation 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Service 10:30am <b>Church Council Mtg</b> <b>12:15 pm</b>	<b>9</b> HB Andrew Liebler	<b>10</b> AA 7:30pm	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> Choir Practice 7:45 pm	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> AA 7:00pm
<b>15</b> Second of Epiphany <small>(green)</small> Confirmation 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Service 10:30am	<b>16</b>  <b>HB Christopher Gabrielsen</b>	<b>17</b> AA 7:30pm	<b>18</b> NA HB Ben Schwartz HB Jon Schwartz	<b>19</b> Choir Practice 7:45pm	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> AA 7:00pm
<b>22</b> Third of Epiphany <small>(green)</small> Confirmation 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Service 10:30am	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> AA 7:30pm	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> AA 7:00pm
<b>29</b> Fourth of Epiphany <small>(green)</small> Confirmation 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Service 10:30am	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> HB Salim Nuwera				<b>Key:</b> HB - Happy Birthday HA - Happy Anniversary



# FEBRUARY 2012



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3 Family Night 6:00pm	4
5 Fifth of Epiphany (green) Confirmation 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Service 10:30am <b>Souper Bowl Sunday</b>	6	7	8	9	10	11
		AA 7:30pm	NA	Choir Practice 7:45pm	Choir Practice 7:45pm	AA 7:00pm
12 Sixth of Epiphany (green) Confirmation 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Service 10:30am	13	14 <i>Valentine's Day</i>	15	16	17	18
		AA 7:30pm	NA	Choir Practice 7:45pm	Choir Practice 7:45pm	AA 7:00pm
19 Transfiguration of Our Lord (white) Confirmation 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am	20	21	22 <i>Ash Wednesday</i>	23	24	25
		AA 7:30pm	Services: 12noon & 7:30pm NA	Choir Practice 7:45pm	Choir Practice 7:45pm	AA 7:00pm
26 First Lent (purple) Confirmation 9:15am Sunday School 10:30am Service 10:30am	27	28	29	30		Key: HB - Happy Birthday HA - Happy Anniversary
	AA 7:30pm	AA 7:30pm	NA	Choir Practice 7:45pm	Choir Practice 7:45pm	