



Our Saviour Lutheran Church

# THE SEEKER

DECEMBER 2023

*Rev. Justin Johnson, pastor*



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

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

**Sunday Worship Schedule**

**Sunday School: 9:00 am**

**Worship: 10:00 am**

**Coffee Hour: following worship**

**Weekday Office Schedule**

**Office hours: 9:00 am - 12:00**

**Office Phone: (914) 271-4632**

**Office E-mail: [mail@oursaviourcroton.org](mailto:mail@oursaviourcroton.org)**

**Website: [www.oursaviourcroton.org](http://www.oursaviourcroton.org)**

**Rev. Justin Johnson, pastor**



**Mission Statement:**

Our mission is to offer spiritual grounding and growth by connecting with God and one another.

**Vision Statement:**

Our vision is to provide meaningful, well-attended, active, and growing worship, education, fellowship and service opportunities.



I have not been shy in stating that this time of year is my favorite time of the year. I am a big fan of twinkly lights, hot cocoa, a good book, Christmas songs playing in the background, while the TV shows the 24 hour fireplace on YouTube with Patty sitting next to me. In Norwegian the word is “hygge” pronounced “HUGH-ga”

While it has become popularized to mean comfort or coziness, it is a cozy that come from being connected. One cannot practice Hygge without others being involved. It is enjoying the goodness of life with loved and dear ones.

To me, this is what Christmas is about. I am about to ruin the Christmas narrative a bit for some, I apologize ahead of time. Pageants though have often gotten it a bit wrong (sorry). When it is stated there was no room for Mary and Joseph in the inn, it didn't mean they were sent off to some unattached area away from the inn, but rather it meant they couldn't have a guest room, so they had to sleep in the common area with all of the inn's community.

Inns were often two stories or so, with the animals staying on the ground floor rather than off to the side. Guests would be upstairs and the innkeeper's family would live near the animals to care for the guest's transportation. Meals would be served and prepared from this area as well, so guests would gather in a common area in the innkeeper's living area.

When we hear there is no room in the inn, it meant there were no guest rooms, so Jesus was born in the midst of the innkeeper's house and into community, so to speak. It wasn't that Mary and Joseph were alone, it was everyone together. Jesus was born with the helpers, so to speak, in an unlikely place. It fits better with the rest of the Gospel, where Jesus is ministering to those in unlikely situations. Jesus was comfortable when he was with people. Hygge.

As we gather in community this season, I am glad to be with all of you. Whether it is singing together when we Christmas carol, sing together during worship, or exchange cookies. You are part of my Hygge.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

## TREASURERS REPORT

-Bryan Montgomery

Thank you everyone for the comments and support at the annual meeting last month and approving the budget that the finance committee prepared.

As I mentioned then, it looks like we will end this year with a surplus due to receiving a covid payroll credit. The approved budget shows a deficit for 2024, but we hope to reduce this through the upcoming year. Hopefully the congregation can continue to increase our benevolence through increased giving. If you want to setup or change your automatic giving from your bank account, please speak to John Magerlein.

Council are also continuing to review the additional uses for the church property with a view to increase our income.

Please do not hesitate to contact myself or anyone on council if you have any questions or thoughts on what we can do.

Hoping that everyone has a wonderful Christmas and prosperous 2024!



## 2023 COUNCIL MEMBERS & OFFICERS

### OFFICERS:

President: Sue Montgomery

Vice President: Matt Papertsian

Secretary: Marilyn Grantner/Jamie Polcari

Treasurer: Bryan Montgomery

### COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:

Property: Matt Papertsian

Stewardship: Marilyn Grantner

Worship & Music: Eleanor Keil

Social Ministry: LeeAnn McCarthy

Finance: Sue Montgomery

Christian Education: Jamie Polcari

Evangelism & Outreach: LeeAnn McCarthy

Finance: Sue Montgomery

Mutual Ministry: MaryBeth Soucy



## **BABY CARE KITS FOR LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF (LWR)**

**-Karen Polacek**

We are now collecting baby layette items leading up to our traditional Christmas Eve blessing of white gifts. The collection bin is inside the front door of the church.

Baby Care Kits include the following:

- 2 light-weight cotton T-shirts suitable for either a boy or girl
- 2 long- or short-sleeved gowns or sleepers (No feet so they can be used longer as the child grows)
- 2 receiving blankets of medium-weight cotton or flannel, or crocheted or knit with lightweight yarn, between 36" and 52" square.
- 4 cloth diapers, flat fold preferred
- 2 diaper pins or large safety pins
- 1 jacket, sweater or sweatshirt with a hood, or include a baby cap. Preferred styles have buttons or ties down the front.
- 2 pairs of socks
- 1 hand towel, dark color recommended
- 2 or 3 bath-size bars of soap equaling up to 8 to 9 oz., any brand, in original wrapping

Please do not donate items with religious symbols, messages, or decorated with a U.S. flag, patriotic or military symbols, or references to the armed forces, including camouflage.

Single items or entire kits are welcome. Clothing items should be sized no smaller than 12 months, and up to 24 months. You may wrap your items in white tissue paper. They will be brought forward by the children on Christmas Eve and placed under the church Christmas tree. If you would prefer, you may donate to this project by writing a check to Our Saviour Lutheran Church with "Baby Care Kits" in the memo line and Social Ministry will shop for you. Again, we thank each and every one of you for your continued support.



## **POINSETTIAS**

In keeping with a long held Christmas practice, the altar guild will be placing poinsettias at the altar. The congregation is invited to sponsor plants in memory or honor of a loved one. The poinsettias are \$20 each this year. Send orders with payment to the church office or place in the offering plate on Sunday.

Order forms can be found at the bottom of this page and on the tables in the narthex and link. As always you may take home your poinsettias after the Christmas Service. Dedications must be received by Tuesday Dec. 19 for inclusion in bulletin.

### **2023 CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS**

I would like to donate (quantity) \_\_\_\_\_ Poinsettias  
at \$20 per plant. Total submitted: \$\_\_\_\_\_

In Honor / Memory of:

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In Remembrance / Thanks for:

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From:

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## HISTORY OF THE MISTLETOE

-Gloria Laemmell, Asbury UMC

Mistletoe is one of the plants we associate with Christmas. "Don't stand under the mistletoe with anyone else but me," a line from that old popular holiday song!

Embracing under the mistletoe began in the 2nd century BC in the British Isles with the Druids celebrating the start of winter by burning mistletoe. Cuttings were hung in homes to bring a year of good fortune and family harmony, and guests embraced under the mistletoe to extend the year's good fortune. Even enemies were expected to lay down their arms and forget their differences for the day. Mistletoe is a very invasive plant that grows on trees similar to bittersweet, The Druid priests cut the plant with a gold knife only from plants growing on sacred oak trees as dramatized in Bellini's opera Norma.

The plant was a symbol of love, hope and harmony for the Druids and for the Scandinavians who thought it belonged to Frigga, the goddess of love, which is where the kissing custom is believed to originate. During Roman times the plant was used in homes to celebrate the Roman feasts of Natalis Solis Invicti and Saturnalia. With the date of December 25 established in the 4th century AD as Christmas day the church forbade the use of the plant because of Roman idolatrous association. Holly was substituted because of its sharp leaves representing the crown of thorns and the red berries as the blood of Christ. The mistletoe ban continued into 1900's in some English churches.

## CHRISTMAS COOKIE COFFEE HOUR

On Sunday, December 24, after the 10 a.m. service, in lieu of our traditional coffee hour, you are invited to bring a small plate of Christmas cookies to share with your "extended family" at Our Saviour.

We will be celebrating the Birth of our Lord on Christmas Eve with two services.

10:00AM Communion Service with Carols.

Followed by a  
Christmas Cookie Coffee Hour &  
7:00PM Communion Service with  
Carols & Special Music

Keep the true meaning of Christmas in your heart by worshipping with us this year.

There are many opportunities for  
Lectors, Worship Servants at this time.  
Look for the sign-up sheets  
on the Link Table .



## PADRES HISPANOS

-Frya Barnes

Frya spoke to Ana Guzman at Padres Hispanos this week regarding any blankets she might take them and asked what they were in need of. Their answer was warm jackets and sweaters plus hats, gloves and scarves.

Anyone who would like to donate to this wonderful ministry please speak with Frya.



# DECEMBER 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2 YOGA Class 9:45am AA 7:00pm
3 First Advent WorshipService 10:00am via Facebook & IN SANCTUARY	4	5 Christian Crafters 9:00am –noon AA 7:00pm	6 NA 7:00pm	7 AI Anon Mtg 1-2pm	8	9 YOGA Class 9:45am AA 7:00pm
10 Second Advent WorshipService 10:00am via Facebook & IN SANCTUARY	11	12 Christian Crafters 9:00am –noon AA 7:00pm	13 NA 7:00pm	14 AI Anon Mtg 1-2pm	15	16 YOGA Class 9:45am AA 7:00pm
17 Third Advent WorshipService 10:00am via Facebook & IN SANCTUARY	18	19 Christian Crafters 9:00am –noon AA 7:00pm	20 NA 7:00pm	21 AI Anon Mtg 1-2pm	22	23 YOGA Class 9:45am AA 7:00pm
24 Christmas Eve WorshipServices 10:00am & 7:00pm via Facebook & IN SANCTUARY Christmas Cookie Coffee Hour	25 <b>MERRY CHRISTMAS</b>	26 Christian Crafters 9:00am –noon AA 7:00pm	27 NA 7:00pm	28 AI Anon Mtg 1-2pm	29	30 YOGA Class 9:45am AA 7:00pm
31 New Years Eve WorshipService 10:00am via Facebook & IN SANCTUARY						