

# LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

& The Vineyard Christian Preschool  
December, 2012, Volume 61, Number 12  
Website address: [goodshepherdgilroy.org](http://goodshepherdgilroy.org)

## THE WELCOME WE OFFER

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH OF GILROY IS AN INCLUSIVE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY. ST. PAUL, IN GALATIANS 3, REMINDS US THAT BAPTISM MAKES US CHILDREN OF GOD, AND THEREFORE, "THERE IS NO LONGER JEW OR GREEK, THERE IS NO LONGER SLAVE OR FREE, THERE IS NO LONGER MALE AND FEMALE; FOR ALL OF YOU ARE ONE IN CHRIST JESUS." THEREFORE, WE WELCOME PEOPLE OF ALL SEXUAL ORIENTATIONS AND GENDER IDENTITIES FULLY INTO THE LIFE OF OUR CONGREGATION.

Our Congregational Council, at our November meeting, approved this statement of welcome. The Council recommends that our congregation adopt this statement of welcome as our way of becoming a Reconciling in Christ Congregation. We will meet in January on a Sunday after worship to take up the vote. It is an important step for us to take in our witness to the expansive grace of God in our community.

For centuries, churches have more often been on the side of excluding people of non-mainstream sexual orientation and gender identities. Some have thought that a person's sexual orientation was a matter of choice. Some have thought that only people who follow "nature's order" are worthy of God. Some have cited selected Bible verses as proof of God's disfavor of people who are different from most of us. The "Us vs. Them" thinking has hurt many faithful, baptized Christian people who find themselves left out.

My father, may he rest in peace, had a strong bias against gay and lesbian people. Then I told him about Glen, whom my Dad knew. Glen worked for the church at large in the area of youth leadership. Glen was a dedicated man who gave generously of his time and talent and treasure to the work of the church. My Dad didn't know Glen was gay until I told him. I said that Glen was baptized as an infant before he became aware of his sexual orientation at adolescence, but that his baptism still counted. We in the church cannot all of a sudden exclude people like Glen because he happens to be gay. He is not a criminal, he is not a pedophile, he is a good man who was wired to like men. My Dad changed his mind.

Many of us, including myself, have made something of the same kind of discovery about someone we have come to know and love as a fellow Christian, as a human being. We have had to overcome the social stigma about people who are "other" than ourselves. We have learned through scientific studies that sexual orientation and gender identity are not life-style choices that people make, but that people just come that way. We have come to learn that almost everyone knows someone who is gay, and that knowing such a person makes all the difference. People of different sexual orientation and gender identity are saints and sinners, like all of us. They have mothers and fathers and siblings. They have jobs and pay their taxes and are good neighbors. They sing in church choirs and teach Sunday school.

A Reconciling in Christ congregation believes that God's love is bigger than any thing that would keep us from being reconciled to one another. That means we welcome all people. We have been welcomed and received by God through the reconciling work of Jesus. He says to us, "as the Father has sent me, so I send you." By adopting our statement of welcome, we become the only church in south county to directly and clearly and overtly welcome people who have been left out and have felt rejected. This is truly who we are; nothing about us changes. We are simply making it known: This is God's work, our hands.

Your Pastor & Friend, *Ronald E. Koch*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>December, 2012</h1>						<b>1</b> N.A. 9:30 am Flowers: Patti Johansen N.A. 8 pm
<b>2</b> Advent 1 9:30 am Worship N. A. 4 pm	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> N.A. 6 pm	<b>5</b> Handbells 7:30 N.A. 7 & 8:30p	<b>6</b> N.A. 8 pm	<b>7</b> N.A. 8 pm	<b>8</b> N.A. 9:30 am Flowers: Patti Johansen N.A. 8 pm
<b>9</b> Advent 2 9:30 am Worship N. A. 4 pm	<b>10</b> N.A. 6 & 8 pm	<b>11</b> N.A. 6 pm Council 7:30	<b>12</b> Handbells 7:30 N.A. 7 & 8:30p	<b>13</b> N.A. 8 pm	<b>14</b> N.A. 8 pm	<b>15</b> N.A. 9:30 am Flowers: Carolyn Carver N.A. 8 pm
<b>16</b> Advent 3 9:30 am Worship N. A. 4 pm	<b>17</b> N.A. 6 & 8 pm	<b>18</b> N.A. 6 pm	<b>19</b> Handbells 7:30 N.A. 7 & 8:30p	<b>20</b> N.A. 8 pm	<b>21</b> N.A. 8 pm	<b>22</b> N.A. 9:30 am Flowers:Needed N.A. 8 pm
<b>23</b> Advent 4 9:30 am Worship NA 4 pm	<b>24</b> Christmas Eve Worship at 4 and 9 pm N.A. 6 & 8	<b>25</b> N. A. 6 pm	<b>26</b> N.A. 7 & 8:30p	<b>27</b> N.A. 8 pm	<b>28</b> N.A. 8 pm	<b>29</b> N.A. 9:30 am Flowers: Sally Hammelev N.A. 8 pm
<b>30</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of Christmas 9:30 am Worship NA 4 pm	<b>31</b> N.A. 6 & 8 pm					

#### December Birthdays

11 Fred Prahl 16 Will Anderson

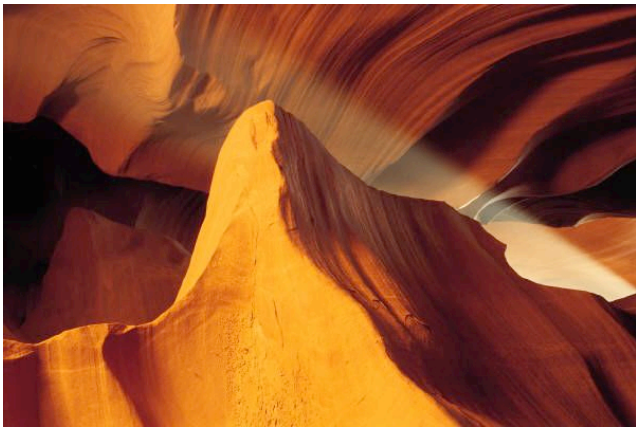
#### December Anniversaries

#### December Assisting Ministers

Date	Coffee Time:		Acolytes	Lectors	Ushers
	<u>Set up</u>	<u>Clean up</u>			
2	Sally Hammelev	Mariah Garcia	Will Anderson	Carolyn Carver	Mariah Garcia and Kyra Guerra
9	Karen Spence	Michelle Anderson	Ben Anderson	Jo Brooks	Karen & Sabrina Spence
16	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday Brunch: <b>Team 3</b> <b>Team 3</b> is <u>Earnest Brooks, Pastor Koch, Vic Lase, and Herm Weyland</u>		Elena Finucane	Patti Johansen	NEEDED
23	Carolyn Carver	Weylands	Abigail Finucane	Rozanne Koch	Mariah Garcia & James Guerra
24	<b>4 pm Christmas Eve – No Coffee Time</b>		<b>Ben Anderson</b>	<b>Children</b>	<b>Karen &amp; Nicci Spence</b>
	9 pm Christmas Eve – No Coffee Time		Needed	Rozanne Koch	Needed
30	Michelle Anderson Karen Spence		Will Anderson	Patti Johansen	Karen & Sabrina Spence

FLOWERS: December 2 Patti Johansen December 9 Patti Johansen December 16 Carolyn Carver  
December 23 NEEDED December 24 **Christmas Eve Poinsettias – please loan your plant** December 30 Sally Hammelev

If you have a birthday or anniversary that you would like included in the monthly list, please let us know, and we'll add it. Thanks.



## Stewardship Updates

**Expected Offerings based on last year: \$85,860.  
That is \$1620/week for 53 Sundays.**

### **Stewardship Update through November, 2012**

Average attendance for 48 Weeks: 28

Expected to date at \$1,620 for 48 weeks: \$77,760

Actual Offering: \$69,838

Shortfall: \$7,922

Average shortfall per week: \$ 165

Total offering for November was \$7,408, an average of \$1,852 per week, an upward trend. Thank you!

## **Advent Is Filled With Hope**

The new church year is upon us and we wait the unfolding of God's love in the celebration of Jesus' birth. During Advent, the color is blue: the color of hope and the color for the Blessed Virgin Mary. With her, the church awaits the hope-filled arrival of God with us. We sing hymns of Advent, filled with anticipation and promise. Christmas will come soon enough and is very present in our lives already in shops and advertising and decorations. Here on Sunday we can retreat from the hype and joyfully contemplate God's coming to humanity. While are we waiting, we ask: what is our hope, how can we be God's

hands bringing peace? Advent means "coming." Jesus is the coming one, and we worship in order to be prepared for service. We invite and encourage you to come to worship regularly throughout December in order to prepare for Christmas. The new Church Year has begun and is filled with hope. What better way to begin anew than with God present in the midst of the Assembly, and with the People of God "on tip-toe" awaiting the Prince of Peace.

## **We have a new church/preschool logo!**

The new logo was designed by Anastasia (Hammelev-Paula) Hamlin, daughter of Jake and Sharon Hammelev-Paula. Anastasia has taken classes in graphic design, and we are very pleased that she is using those skills for Good Shepherd and the Vineyard Christian Preschool. We wanted a design that showed our church and preschool are together in ministry to Gilroy. Anastasia's design expresses our unified ministry as the shepherd's staff and vine intertwine in support and vitality. We think it is very attractive and gives us a new and appealing look. Check it out for yourself, and come to worship and see it in the worship folder and elsewhere.

Good  
Shepherd  
Lutheran  
Church



and  
Vineyard  
Christian  
Preschool