

Living Waters News

December 2019

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May this Advent season prepare you for the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ.

May you all have a blessed Advent and a joyous Christmas season. "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Romans 15: 13

We begin our Advent season with a return to the Gospel of Matthew, in addition to a good dose of Romans as our epistle reading for Advent. In lifting up the readings from Romans this Advent season, we find that the readings have a lot to say about hope. "We are to rejoice in hope." (12:12), "We boast in our hope." (5:2), and, "In hope we are saved." (8:24). When there is nothing else left, there is always hope; hope seems to be what lifts the spirit of those who have less than the average income. Hope is the future for a lot of folks in our community here in Cherokee, NC. "We hope to find work." "We hope that our relatives can be rid of the addictions that plague our community." We hear a lot of talk about hope, we pray that the God of hope will relieve these people from their sense of hopelessness. Pray for all who live in hope, please.

It seems as though we have allowed ourselves to be caught up in the commercialization of Christmas, forget Halloween, forget Thanksgiving, forget Advent, lets start shopping for Christmas as early as possible. Let's start as soon as possible and get the best buys as early as possible, this year they have begun the early shopping days on Thanksgiving, (money changers in the Temple, eh?) We have allowed Christ to be taken out of Christmas, and allowed ourselves to be immersed in a spending frenzy, after all, it's all about gift giving, isn't it? The upside of this season of Advent and Christmas is there are many who give their gifts other than during the season of giving, and waiting. We are fortunate to have so many friends who support our mission ministry here at Living Waters, that we consider them "life changers"; because their support has changed the lives of many who come to receive the food and clothing gifts we distribute. May the God of hope bless all, and may the God of hope give a special blessing to those who contribute to feed and clothe those less fortunate than we. Don't know about you folks, but Christ has always and will always be in Christmas in our house! We know that with Christ, all things are possible. Merry Christmas from our church family to yours. Amen Pastor Jack



You Are Invited!

We invite you to come and visit us anytime you are in our area or to plan a mission trip to the Cherokee Indian Reservation and join us for Worship.

At Living Waters we honor our culture and Native Traditions as well as our Lutheran Theology. We begin our Worship Service by smudging to cleanse our hearts and minds and prepare us for worship.

We open our worship service using the hand drum and singing the Cherokee Morning song.

Living Waters is blessed to have Partners in Ministry who support us through financial giving, Spiritual support and visits. If you would like to become a Partner in Ministry with Living Waters we invite you to contact Pastor Jack at prjack@frontier.com

We offer Cultural Immersion days for groups who would like to learn more about the Cherokee Culture. Immersion Days include Traditional Cherokee foods, demonstrations by local artisans and discussions about Cherokee Culture. If your group is interested in planning a trip to Living Waters and would like to participate in a day of Cultural Immersion please contact Pastor Jack to make arrangements.

As always we welcome those who would like to come to Living Waters for Stewardship Projects.

Once we learn to pray with our hearts, and not our lips;
we truly begin to have a conversation with God.

 <p>Living Waters Secret Sister Reveal Party is scheduled for Saturday December 14th at 12 pm. If you are participating in the Secret Sister Group please plan to attend and bring your Sister's Christmas Gift.</p>	 <p>Living Waters Leadership Meetings December 8th There will be a potluck after service and the leadership meeting will follow after the meal. Please plan to attend and so you can keep informed of what is happening.</p>
 <p>Thank you to all the ladies who came out to the November craft day to make Advent Calendars. Thank you to Debra for planning and organizing the event and to all the ladies who brought supplies for the crafts and food for lunch. Check out our Facebook page for pictures of the finished Calendars.</p>	 <p>Women's Group Committees Member Support – Leslie Costello Donations - Lisa Russell Communication – Le Russell Kitchen Overseer – Patty Frederick Clean Up Overseer – Yvonne Swan Holiday Flowers – Dean Reed</p>
 <p>Thank you to those who provided soup and sandwiches for the Mission Partners Meeting. After the luncheon we were able to take the remaining soup and sandwiches and share with those who had come to the food pantry that day. They really appreciated the hot soup and sandwiches on such a cold day.</p>	 <p>Women's Group Officers Dorine George – President Le Russell – Vice President Josephine Teesateskie – Treasurer Lisa Russell – Secretary For more information please contact Any women's group member.</p>
 <p>Thank you to everyone who came on Saturday November 30th to help decorate the church. We appreciate your willingness to serve.</p>	 <p>Thank you to everyone who brought food and helped clean up after the Annual Thanksgiving Dinner. We had a record number of people in attendance.</p>
 <p>Annual Free Community BINGO December 7, 2019 6 pm Food – to purchase 5 – 6 pm Proceeds to benefit the Women's Group</p>	 <p>Living Waters Members Christmas Party December 21, 2019 5 pm If you plan to attend please check the menu sign-up sheet on the bulletin board for what is still needed.</p>
 <p>Women's Group Bake Sale The women will be holding a Bake Sale during BINGO. All proceeds will go to help the women's group ministry. Please see the sign up sheet on the bulletin board and plan to contribute baked goods to this event.</p>	 <p>Thank you to those who have helped provide soup on distribution days. Those who receive a cup of soup, coffee or hot chocolate are very grateful for this new ministry. If you would like to provide a pot of soup please let Lisa know.</p>
<p>When someone has hurt you, that's never a good reason to keep hurting yourself with anger and resentment. Smile, and be thankful that your future is yours to choose. Don't make yourself into a permanent victim of a temporary condition</p>	

Your time and effort have the potential to create great value.
Always invest them in what really matters.

 <p>Thank you to Le Russell for painting the benches outside the pantry. Please take a moment to notice how nice they turned out.</p>	CLOTHING NEEDED	Living Waters Clothes Closet Current Needs: Men's Jeans, Men's Long Sleeve Shirts, Shoes, Linens, blankets
 <p>Living Waters Annual Free Christmas Store December 4, 2019 – 10am We will be setting up the Christmas store on Monday Dec. 2nd. If you can come out to help please let Lisa know. Pre-registration is required to attend the Event.</p>		<p>We would like to thank the many people who help deliver food boxes to those who are shut in or have situations that prevent them from being able to come to the pantry on distribution days and get food. This is an awesome ministry and we appreciate all those who help with this outreach.</p>
 <p>Living Waters Food Pantry December 11th & 27th <u>Current wish list at the food pantry is:</u> Canned Meat, Sugar, Spaghetti Sauce, Laundry Soap, dish soap, Toilet Paper</p>		<p>Thank you to Grace Lutheran Church, Hendersonville for holding a food drive to benefit the Food Pantry. Thank you to those mission partners who attended the mission meeting on Nov. 13th and brought items for the food pantry and clothes closet.</p>
 <p>Thank you to those who help take food to the little pantries in our area to help make sure there is food available to those who utilize these pantries. If you would like to help with this outreach ministry please see Lisa.</p>		<p>Thank you to those who have donated book bags. The book bags are filled with easy open items, granola bars, crackers, peanut butter, individual cereals, pop tarts, and other nonperishable items and given to the walkers who come to seek relief.</p>
 <p>Thank you to Ben and Gwen Bushyhead for donating a wagon to the pantry. The grab-n-go processors really appreciate it. Thank you to Pastor Jack for helping repair the little red wagon – again.</p>		<p>Thank you to the anonymous donor for supplying the funds for the pantry to purchase a propane space heater to help keep the pantry workers warm. It is greatly appreciated.</p>
 <p>Thank you to all those who have helped at Living Waters Food Pantry this year. We appreciate your time and commitment to this ministry. A Special thank you to : Rick & Patty Fredericks, Dorine George, Bob Reed, Debra Uhler, Le Russell, Iann Booze, Yvonne Swan, Charles Lackey, Josephine Teesateskie, Dean Reed, and Toya Woodard for showing up every distribution and showing such love and compassion to those we serve. You are all Awesome and we are grateful to you for your dedication to this ministry.</p>	<i>Merry Christmas to All</i>	

Out of the field of all possibilities, only certain ones are possible for you to accomplish.
They're the ones you believe are possible for you.

<p>Youth Group News</p> <p>The youth group will be helping to move Christmas Store items after church on December 1st. The youth will be helping with the Bake Sale at the Family Bingo night December 7th. If you plan to help with any of these events please let JoJo know.</p>	 <p>Teenagers and young adults. JoJo has started a youth group that meets formally after the worship service on the 5th Sundays of each month. There will be events and other happenings at different times. If you are interested in knowing more about this new ministry or joining in the fun please see JoJo.</p>
 <p>REMINDER</p> <p>Parents and grandparents please remind your children or help your children to clean up the playroom when they have played in there.</p>	 <p>Please help decorate the Altar area for Christmas. Please bring a poinsettia in memory of a loved one. Please give Dean your information about who the Poinsettia is in honor of.</p>
 <p>Candlelight Service December 24, 2019 6pm</p>	 <p>REMINDER</p> <p>Please remember to dump your cups before you put them in the trash cans. Adults please help our little ones remember to dump their cups</p>
 <p>Please see Lisa or Dorine to pick up your tickets for the Fund Raiser to help with expenses for the trip to attend the American Indian/Alaska Native Association Meeting in Oklahoma, January 2020. Everyone is asked to help with this fund raiser. Please show your support of Living Waters by selling tickets to help with this fund raiser and help out those who are representing Living Waters.</p>	 <p>FUND RAISER</p> <p>Living Waters Fund Raiser Drawing --- December 21st Tickets - \$1.00 each <u>First Place</u> – A cooler/2 cases of drinks/2 chairs and a turkey <u>Second Place</u> – A complete Wii System with numerous games and accessories <u>Third Place</u> – 2 cases of drinks/2 chairs To help with expenses for the Mission Trip to Okalhoma, American Indian/Alaska Native Association Meeting in January.</p>
 <p>Living Waters Sunday School Christmas Party December 13th from 6-8pm If your child plans to attend you must let Lisa know by Sunday December 1st.</p>	 <p>Friendly Reminders</p> <p>If you would like to be included on the Text Reminder list please let Le know and remember to give her your preferred number to text. These texts are reminders of upcoming meetings, events and prayer requests at Living Waters</p>
<p>Do all you can do, and then accept the reality of all that happens. Exercise diligent control over the things you can control, and refuse to be frustrated or demoralized by all the rest.</p>	<p>Don't just ATTEND your church – LOVE your church. Serve, give, invite, worshp,post, join, engage, participate!</p>

Thoughts are important, but they're not everything.
For your thoughts to have value, you must put them to work.



Don't wait until Sunday Morning
Living Waters Members stand ready
to pray when you or someone you
know has a need.

All it takes is a call or text to the pastor or a church
member to let your need be known.
Your need for prayer will be spread immediately
through email, phone calls, and texting.



During 2019 from January through
November with the help of our mission
partners the Living Waters Food Pantry was able to
serve 5280 families and 20,170 individual people.

During the month of October we served over 700
families. Our Volunteers amaze us with their
commitment to serve those who come seeking relief.



Thank you to Allison McVann for donating
a large load of Christmas decorations for the
Christmas Store.

Live by intention, not by reaction. Consciously choose
your actions and they will be far more rewarding.



If you are a member of Thrivent and you are looking for an easy way to help Living Waters
please consider directing your Thrivent Choice Dollars to Living Waters Ministry.

How to Direct Thrivent Choice Dollars Online---- [Visit Thrivent.com/thrivent.choice](http://Thrivent.com/thrivent.choice)

Scroll down and click the "Get Started" button in the "How do I Direct My Designated Choice Dollars" box

Log in and enter your user ID and password

Look for your Choice Dollars to direct on the right side of your screen

Search for "Living Waters Lutheran Church" in "Cherokee, NC" to be taken right to our listing.

Click on "Direct Now" to direct your designated Choice Dollars to benefit
Living Waters Lutheran Church.

By Phone ----- Call 1-800-847-4836 and when prompted, say "Thrivent Choice"

Press 1 to direct Choice Dollars or press 2 to hear the Thrivent Choice program terms and conditions.

**Please be sure to specify that you want to designate
Living Waters Lutheran Church in Cherokee, NC**



Life is not easy and life is not fair. Nonetheless, you
can live each day with grace, integrity, purpose, love,
compassion and richness.

The decisions you make in each small moment will
determine how this year unfolds for you. Decide right
now to make the most of that amazing opportunity.

Later is much too late. Live your life now.

"Some gifts you can give this Christmas are beyond
monetary value: Mend a quarrel, dismiss suspicion,
tell someone 'I love you.' Give something away —
anonymously. Forgive someone who has treated you
wrong. Turn away wrath with a soft answer. Visit
someone in a nursing home. Apologize if you were
wrong. Be especially kind to someone with whom you
work. Give as God gave to you in Christ, without
obligation, or announcement, or reservation, or
hypocrisy."

Don't expect anyone else to believe something just because you do.

Quietly, humbly, respectfully, put it into practice.

Let life catch up to you.

Don't get so ensnared in chasing what seems important that you forget what's truly important.

Enjoy not just the times when you've racked up an impressive achievement.

Enjoy every moment along the way.

Allow the way things are right now, to be enough for right now.

There is much you can do to make life better, yet already there is much in life that is good.

Balance your ambition for what can be with your gratitude and appreciation for what is.

After all, if you can never be satisfied with what you have, there's no gain in getting more.

Perhaps the longing you feel is not really a longing to acquire more.

Perhaps it is a longing to more fully appreciate all that is already yours.

By all means, move forward, work, achieve, make a difference, create value.

As you do, give life, and purpose, satisfaction, and fulfillment, the chance to keep pace.



Meaning of the Advent Wreath

The Advent wreath is a symbol of watchfulness and increasing joy as Christmas approaches.

Lighting its candles is a common practice on the four Sundays leading to Christmas.

Different color combinations for the candles are used depending upon the church or denomination. Some churches use four blue candles around the wreath with one white candle in the center, while some use all white candles. Many denominations light purple candles on the first two Sundays, pink on the third, purple again on the fourth Sunday and a large white candle on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

The wreath, the candles and the colors all have symbolic significance. Here are just a few of the many and various interpretations:

- The circular green wreath symbolizes the everlasting love of God, having no beginning or end. Green represents eternal life.
- The four candles represent the four weeks of Advent. One tradition says that each candle also represents one thousand years. They total 4,000 years — the time from Adam and Eve until the birth of Christ.
- Blue is a color often used as a symbol of royalty. Some churches use blue candles to symbolize the night sky and the anticipation of the announcement of Christ's birth. Blue also symbolizes the beginning of a new creation as in the waters of Genesis 1.
 - The first blue candle signifies Hope.
 - The second blue candle stands for Peace.
- The blue candle for the third Sunday symbolizes Joy and signifies the halfway point of Advent.
 - The final blue candle is for Love.
- The white candle in the center is the Christ candle. Its light symbolizes Christ the Savior — "the light of the world."
- The beauty and brightness from the glow of all five candles is a reminder that Christ's life was the light for all earth's people — "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it" (John 1:5, NRSV).

Going through the dark valley can be difficult, frightening, painful.

Yet once you manage to climb out,

you'll be stronger, more inspired, more creative, more energetic.

Challenge is tough, yet you are tougher. Keep going, and get through it.

Live by intention, not by reaction. Consciously choose your actions and they will be far more rewarding.

Hatred gives power, attention, influence to whatever you hate. Is that really what you want?

If your love for one thing is conditioned by your hatred for something else, is it really love? Or is it just a path to continuous misery and destruction?

Life will always involve conflict and adversity, yet you have the power to rise above it all. You have the power to love without condition.

You can refuse to let your energy be consumed by fear and rage. You can choose to invest all you are, all you have, in the positive possibilities.

That does not mean you must live in a state of ignorance or denial. You can see and acknowledge the difficulties, the imperfections, the injustice and absurdity, without compromising your love for life and for all who live it.

The way to move beyond the conflict is not to give more fuel to it. Summon your courage and strength to love without hate, and forge a positive path forward.



It isn't in the sweet pastels of life that we find Jesus, that we encounter him in a new way. He isn't born in our sterile birthing rooms. He isn't wrapped in soft, sweet-smelling fleece. He isn't in the carefully structured, pleasantly perfect places we like to create for him.

Instead, we find him in the stink, in the noise, in the out-of-the-way, hard, sticky, smelly places of life. No, Jesus is not born in our palaces, or even in our guest rooms. He's born in our life-barns. He's born in the place where nothing seems right, where nothing is as we think it should be.

That's the real Jesus.



Angels Among Us

"When God wants to speak and deal with us," said Martin Luther, "he does not avail himself of an angel but of parents, or the pastor, or of our neighbor." Never underestimate how powerfully God can use you in the life of a child, a church member, a friend or a stranger.

The Hebrew word for *angel* also means "messenger." You may be specially chosen to deliver to someone the message of God's love or guidance. Listen intently for what God would have you share with others, then do so faithfully and caringly.



Resolution

What if we took our lengthy lists of changes we want to make in the new year and narrowed them down — way down? Rather than making a half dozen or more commitments that we're unlikely to keep, how about zeroing in on a single word that captures the essence of what we want to achieve or become?

North Carolina pastor Mike Ashcraft encouraged church members to each find one word that points to or describes a characteristic or vision they wanted to achieve in the year ahead. The experiment turned into a movement, with ideas and testimonials available at myoneword.org.

What would your one-word resolution be?



According to research conducted by the Barna Group, the holidays are tough for people who aren't connected to faith communities or other civic groups. They feel isolated by experiences that bring others joy, such as giving gifts, singing carols and attending religious services and parties.

"In past decades," writes George Barna, "there was an assumption that the holidays were a time when outsiders might explore church life. These days, however, churches and other religious institutions are not seen as safe or value-adding places by most outsiders. They see little reason to attend seasonal events, especially since those events often highlight their outsider status."

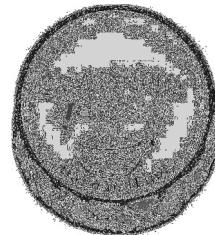
This Christmas, how can you help someone feel welcome and "attached" at your church?

Get clear about what matters to you, about all you love and value. Then act affirmatively to support it all.

<p>Care deeply about your purpose, your efforts, your values. Care not at all about what's beyond your ability to influence.</p> <p>Care deeply about the moment, its beauty, its possibilities, its challenges, about doing what's right.</p> <p>Care not at all about what others think of what you're doing.</p> <p>Feel the power of stillness within you. Engage that power to make yourself a positive presence in life.</p> <p>Always, life swirls around you. Give love, attention, effort and care to life, without getting too distracted by all the swirling.</p> <p>Care deeply about what matters, about what you can do. Let all the rest take care of itself.</p>	<p>You cannot fix everything that is broken. Yet you can love what is for what it is, and make steady progress. Life will never be perfect. Even so, you can fill every moment of it with richness.</p> <p>People, events, and even your own ideas may from time to time disappoint you. Smile, be thankful for the experience, for the wisdom, and step forward.</p> <p>You are stronger than the sting of regret. You have this moment, this life, and the ability to live it with loving purpose.</p> <p>Go ahead, and let yourself live true to what really matters. Drop your pretense, and show your genuine beauty.</p> <p>You have this day, and it is the opportunity that exceeds all opportunities. Embrace what's now possible, and make it all count.</p>
<h3>Showing Empathy</h3> <p>Empathy makes you a better communicator.</p> <p>Empathy makes you a better person.</p> <p>Your perspective has value, but it is not the only perspective. Always take the other person's point of view into consideration.</p> <p>Don't assume just because you know it, think it, feel it, that everyone else does too. Nothing ever entitles you to be rude, arrogant, or inconsiderate.</p> <p>Empathy helps you understand, understanding helps you relate, and positive relationships facilitate real progress. It's always better to work with others than to work against them.</p> <p>Empathize, understand, find common ground and common objectives. Remind yourself that the way to get what you want is to help others get what they want.</p> <p>Whether you're dealing with a customer, customer service rep, family member or stranger, empathy works wonders. Treat people like people, the way you want to be treated, and they'll almost always return the favor.</p>	<h3>Everyday Heroes</h3> <p>The most influential heroes in life are not those who get all the glory. All over the world are everyday heroes, doing what they do because they know it is good and right, and not for any recognition.</p> <p>Everyday heroes work patiently and diligently behind the scenes to create meaningful value, day after day. They honor commitments and pay attention to quality. Without humble everyday heroes, the world would be a dark and difficult place. Everyday heroes understand how positive and fulfilling life can be, and work to make it so for as many people as possible.</p> <p>Everyday heroes know how satisfying it feels to make a real difference in the world. That satisfaction enables them to sleep well at night and to be quite comfortable in their own skin while awake.</p> <p>It doesn't take any supernatural skill to be a real hero. All it takes is a genuine love of life and of all those who live it, plus a bit of decency, honesty and respect. Remind yourself often what a blessing it is to live in a world filled with everyday heroes. Though they don't make the news, they constantly make a positive difference in more ways than can ever be imagined.</p>
<p>Rejection hurts only as much as you let it.</p> <p>Rejection can teach, empower, motivate, energize, as much as you're willing to allow.</p>	

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1. First Sunday of Advent	2. Set up for Christmas Store 10am	3.	4. Annual Christmas Store 10 am	5. Clean up Christmas Store	6. Set Up for Bingo	7. Community Bingo Night 6pm
8. Worship Service 11:00 am Potluck Council Meeting 2 nd Sunday of Advent	9.	10.	11. . Food Pantry 1-4 pm	12.	13. Sunday School Christmas Party 6-8 pm	14. Women's Group Reveal Party 12pm
15. Worship Service 11:00 am 3 rd Sunday of Advent	16.	17.	18.	19.	20. Set Up for Church Christmas Party	21. Church Christmas Party – 5 pm Fundraiser Drawing
22. Worship Service 11:00 am 4 th Sunday of Advent	23.	24. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 6pm	25. Christmas Day	26.	27. Food Pantry 1-4 pm	28.
29. Worship Service 11:00 am	30.	31. New Year's Eve				

Every good aspect of your life has value because you have time to experience it,
enjoy it, make use of it.

But is that precious, irreplaceable time being contaminated?

If you don't make the specific, intentional choice of how to spend your time,
it will be filled in ways that do not serve you well.

You'll leave yourself open to countless sources of interruption,
distraction, anxiety, angst, and frustration.

You live in a physical structure that protects you from cold, rain,
wind, and unwanted intruders.

Your time would benefit from a similarly protective structure.

It's a structure you can impose upon yourself by choosing to do so.

Simply decide, in advance, how you're going to spend your time,
and then stick with that decision.

Give yourself a solid, compelling alternative to the frivolous, meaningless nonsense.

And you won't be tempted to waste one moment of your rich and beautiful life.

Within your time, build a special, powerful space to live,
to love, to learn and experience and achieve.

Fill your time with intentional choices, and fill your life with goodness,
meaning, and substance.