

December 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2021

We made it! It is Christmas week, only 3 days till we celebrate the birth of Jesus. What a wonderful day to celebrate with reflection on how good He has been to us in the past, and how generous he will be to those that are faithful.

A few weeks ago, I told some stories about God moments. This is the time to help God write some more stories. This is the time to take the generous gifts God has given you in 2021 and use them for the Glory of God! If you have been blessed financially in 2021, share that with others that are struggling. If God has given you the voice of an angel like Karen Torgersen, go out and sing Christmas Carols to your neighbors. If God has blessed you with good health, go out and care for the sick. Volunteer at a hospital or serve at a food bank. If you are a good listener, volunteer to read to seniors or children, and listen to them read to you. Or just talk to them and listen to their stories. People are anxious to be heard more than any time in the past. By listening, you are showing you care for them. Use your gifts to Glorify your God, which is why you have gotten them.

If you are feeling lost this holiday, please ask for help. If you are feeling down or sad, or thinking you cannot get through another holiday, please call for help. The suicide hotline number is 800-273-8255. Please call! You are important, and God loves you and knows your pain.

Please remember the volunteers at SOH. They are serving SOH every week, making sure things are ready for worship each week. Please make sure you thank Donna for her wonder gifts she shares with us in her music, and Josh Keck who works in the sound booth each week. Without them sharing their gifts, our services would not be the same. I am sure Donna and Josh would appreciate some recognition for the work they do.

I would also like to thank our 2021 Church council. I feel they have done an excellent job in 2021 balancing our mission to Making Christ Known with the financial needs of the church. We have ended the year on a strong note and look forward to 2022.

Also, thanks to all the teams we have at SOH. The worship team, outreach, evangelism, facilities, fellowship, and the education teams. You have worked wonders this year with growing our congregation, while bringing people together.

From the facilities team, I would like to thank Steve Osterman and Carl McCoy for all they have done to keep up on the landscaping and repairs on our church grounds.

Thank all of you for a great 2021, and a bright future for 2022!

Duane Gilson