

# *The JANUARY 2024 LEAVEN*

## **Keeping Warm Together**



As I am awaiting the expertise of a Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning professional (otherwise known as the "HVAC Guy") at my home, where our heater is attempting to keep up with our near record temperatures, I am struck by the immense safety my privilege affords me. Even with a "limping-along" heater, the temperature of my home can be kept 80 degrees warmer than it is outside. Meanwhile, many are unable to afford the expense of heating equipment, maintaining or fixing that equipment, or do not own homes to heat in the first place.

At the Leavenworth Interfaith Community of Hope, the Director there has recently made changes to allow for guests to stay 24 hours a day. Normally, there would be a cleaning period or time in which the shelter is fully emptied out and cleaned and reset, providing for respite for staff and volunteers. But with temperatures outside that threaten frostbite in 15 to 30 minutes, even an hour can be a threat to life.

Heat. Shelter. Food. These are the necessities for all of us. And yet for many of our neighbors, these are resources difficult to obtain. I might imagine myself in a better spot, able to obtain these through resources or connections that I have. I might imagine that our neighbors who must rely upon the services of the Community of Hope as being in a lesser spot. And yet we both must rely upon one another. For my neighbors at Community of Hope, there is a vast network of volunteers, staff, support folks, board members and community members that are relied upon for that heat and shelter. And as much as I might expect things to just "work" at my home, I am reliant upon a vast network of professionals, workers and community members also. We are dependent upon one another for our shelters to function.

I am a big fan of Luther's hymn: "A Mighty Fortress is Our God." Usually singing that song makes me imagine a mighty castle in the black forest with towers and walls and little windows. Safe behind those walls, in a great hall, illuminated by firelight, it is there I imagine God's safety from the terror and hate of the world. But as we station ourselves next to our heaters and fireplaces, keeping warm from the blistering cold of these days, perhaps just as mighty as a stone wall, the heat itself is a bulwark - a mighty fortress.

And these walls that we keep safe behind, in our homes and in our shelters, they are built and maintained by one another. The literal walls of this mighty fortress protecting from the cold; the reference that we make to God being that wall that protects us, is a product of community. Not so difficult is it then, to jump from the safety of the Divine to the work of that Divine in our work together as a community. God is our image of safety, shelter, heat and all that we need. And we can lean into that image by working together, giving to one another what we need, no matter the resources we individually amass.



As we continue to huddle next to our heater and fireplaces, in our homes or in shelters, let us give thanks to the God who gives us the example to seek out; to pursue a love for one another, no matter where we are. God's love in a warm meal, a friend's embrace, a bed to sleep in, or, in the case of our heaters, the friendly HVAC professional keeping it warm inside. Thanks be God, and gratitude for one another.

To help with our neighbors in need of shelter, get in contact with the Leavenworth Interfaith Community of Hope at their website ([www.lvcommunityofhope.org](http://www.lvcommunityofhope.org)) or by calling 913-702-8108.

--Pastor Tim

## THANK YOU

The Session wants to thank you for the 35 pledges to the 2024 budget. We have a total of 60% of the budget, or \$177,950 pledged at this time. The asking budget is \$294,700.

A piece of church history, the church has never pledged the full budget in the years that I have records for.

The work of the church is ongoing and we can never think it is completed or the goal reached. The Session in the next year will try to provide you with a monthly update of the income and expenses in the Leaven.

There are several giving units that pledge annually, not monthly. That fact makes the first of the year look very good, but by summer that cushion is often decreased or almost gone.

Again, thank you for your gifts toward the church's work at home and in the world.

## BLUE BAGS

The new year has arrived and the mission committee met with the Mission on Broadway staff and have made a big change in the items and when we are asking for the Blue Bags. Many groups gave during the holidays, but the giving in January and February is usually greatly reduced. After consulting the following list was created. These are items that are almost never in the food distributed by the mission. It may seem strange to have a list of what we consider basics, but they are needed even more.



The bags collected before Jan 7 will be dedicated at the communion service that day and distributed to the Mission. There will be another dedication of bags on Feb 4.

### The revised list of preferred items:

Dried or shelf stable milk

Cooking Oil

Salt and pepper

Sugar and flour

Tea bags or coffee

Dishwashing detergent

Tuna or canned Chicken

Hamburger or Tuna Helper

Potato Products

Cereal - all types

Stove Top Dressing

Cake Mixes and Frosting

**All gifts are welcomed!**

## **PRAYERS**

**Immediate:** Rick Nichols, Shirley Rockwell, Marge Grafke-Doby, Herbert Montgomery (V. Strand), Frank, Lynne, Cecilia, Mary (Kathy), Anna Hurt, Gaza, Israel, Ukraine, Jami Gleason (Tom & Becky), Lisa Rees

**Ongoing:** Michele Holland, Richard Cooper (M. Holland), Brianna Hoffman & Family, Jim and Lorna Mathison, Cathy Tillotson, Michael Brock(Cindy S.), Dana Guanciale (Ginnie S.), Patricia Sibblee (Cindy S.), Dale (Cindy S.), Scott Williamson (Cindy S.), Abby (Cindy S.), Margie Holland, Maria Gordon (Carolyn T.), Barbara-Sue Rose, John Garner (Carolyn T.)

## **JANUARY FELLOWSHIP TREATS**

**January 7** – Session

**January 14** - Potluck

**A-C**- Dessert    **D-M**-Main Dish    **N-Z** – Salads, Sides, and/or Bread

**January 21** - Choir & Bell Choir

**January 28** - Circle 3

## **JANUARY BIRTHDAYS**

**1**-Kathy Lemke

**1**-Linda Barry

**15**-Gregg Scircle

**20**-Ron Kenton

**29**-Dennis Goodwin

## **JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES**

**29**-Dick & Ruie Gibson

# January 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31	<b>1</b> Happy New Year's!	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> 9:30am Crafts & Fellowship	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> Church Office Closed	<b>6</b> 10:00am Flute Practice 1:00pm Special Needs Meeting
<b>7</b> Fellowship Treats-Session Mission Committee Meeting 9:00am Adult Study 9:15am Choir Practice 10:30am - 11:30am Worship	<b>8</b> 7:00am Men's Morning Discussion Group 2:00pm - 4:30pm ESL 7:00pm - 8:30pm Cody Choraliers	<b>9</b> 10:00am Circle 3 6:00pm Circle 5	<b>10</b> 9:30am Crafts & Fellowship	<b>11</b> 6:00pm Session Meeting	<b>12</b> Church Office Closed	<b>13</b> 10:00am Flute Practice 1:00pm - 4:00pm Reading Club
<b>14</b> Fellowship Treats-Potluck 9:00am Adult Study 9:15am Choir Practice 10:30am - 11:30am Worship	<b>15</b> Martin Luther King Jr. Day Church Office Closed	<b>16</b> 5:00pm - 6:00pm Community Meal	<b>17</b> 9:30am Crafts & Fellowship 11:00am Deacons Meeting	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> Church Office Closed	<b>20</b> 10:00am Flute Practice 10:00am League of Women Voters
<b>21</b> Fellowship Treats-Choir and Bell Choir Worship Committee Meeting 9:00am Adult Study 9:15am Choir Practice 10:30am - 11:30am Worship	<b>22</b> 7:00am Men's Morning Discussion Group 10-Circle 4 2:00pm - 4:30pm ESL 6:00pm B & G Committee Meeting	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 9:30am Crafts & Fellowship	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> Church Office Closed	<b>27</b> 10:00am Flute Practice
<b>28</b> Fellowship Treats-Circle 3 9:00am Adult Study 9:15am Choir Practice 10:30am - 11:30am Worship Congregational Meeting	<b>29</b> 7:00am Men's Morning Discussion Group 2:00pm - 4:30pm ESL	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 9:30am Crafts & Fellowship	1	2	3