

# **KOG Connection—December 2021**

## **Pastor's Corner**

Happy December, KOG family and friends!

The Gospel text for this Sunday, the second Sunday of Advent comes from Luke 3:1-6.

*In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, <sup>2</sup>during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John's son of Zechariah in the wilderness. <sup>3</sup>He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, <sup>4</sup>as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,*

*"The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:  
'Prepare the way of the Lord,  
make his paths straight.  
<sup>5</sup>Every valley shall be filled,  
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,  
and the crooked shall be made straight,  
and the rough ways made smooth;  
<sup>6</sup>and all flesh shall see the salvation of God."*

Since my sermon this Sunday will be less of a deep exposition of this text and focused more on our Advent theme of "The Perfect Word: A Charlotte's Web Christmas" I wanted to share a few thoughts I have for you on these verses. First, I love all the lofty names that are listed by Luke. He's setting quite the context for us, telling us about all the powerful people in Jesus' day and where they ruled. But then Luke juxtaposes all that power and prestige, all that name-dropping, with John the Baptist, someone completely powerless, a social outcast living alone in the wilderness. And to whom does God's word go? To the outcast. To the one struggling in the wilderness. There is so much good news in just these first three verses. God doesn't come to the most respectable folks, the ones who have it all together, the ones with lives marked by perfection, power and influence. Instead, God goes to the one who is in need, the one who is most open to hearing God's word. God comes nearest to us, not when we are having our best days, but when we are at our worst. When we are wandering in that wilderness, feeling alone. On those days, God's word finds us and gives us a word of hope for ourselves and others.

Secondly, I love the quote that follows from Isaiah starting with "Prepare the way of the Lord." They are such familiar words that I think we most often and most easily associate with our "to-do lists" of the Christmas season. There is SO MUCH to prepare! It can feel overwhelming at best and suck all the joy out of Jesus' birth at worst. But the good news in that line is that we aren't preparing the way "for" the Lord. We are preparing the way "of" the Lord. In other words, Jesus doesn't need us to prepare for his coming. He is coming whether we are ready or not. (Kinda like when you play hide and seek and the counter says, "Here I come, ready or not!") Jesus is counting down the days and is going to enter our world, our lives and our

hearts. He is going to find us whether we are ready or not! Through baptism, the Holy Spirit already lives in us and is working away at making our rough ways smooth, filling our valleys of self-doubt, fear and sadness and bringing our mountains of pride and self-sufficiency down. One person said they would rename this passage: Under Construction—Soul Work Ahead. I love that! These verses are a reminder that Jesus invites us to work with him in clearing the way for him to come again into our hearts.

Not only that, but Jesus invites us to help him prepare his way, prepare his path of peace, mercy, hope and joy, for others. While Jesus works on smoothing the pathways of our personal faith and trust, we are called to help pave the way for others, so that “all flesh shall see the salvation of God.” How cool that we get to be co-builders, co-workers alongside John and Jesus, making the promise of life abundant and life eternal more accessible to others! Jesus is coming, whether we are prepared or not. Thanks be to God!

Speaking of the ways that Jesus comes and how we try to prepare the way for others, I wanted to give you an update on our Stewardship Program and our Advent Season happenings. We had a great initial response to our Stewardship month of STARS. Our pledge total up to the Monday after Commitment Sunday was \$227,200 from 47 households. That’s a great start! Last year’s end of the year total was \$256,754 from 61 households, so we still have a little ways to go to surpass last year. However, it’s also important to note that last year’s final total was still about \$100,000 below what our pre-pandemic pledge levels were at. Thus, we’ve got a long ways to go before returning to those numbers. Every bit helps, though! So please turn in your Commitment Card if you haven’t yet. Send it to the office or just send me an email with your numbers, and we’ll see how close we can get! Thank you for your support and faithfulness during these trying times! Together we can accomplish so much, with Christ’s help, in making the rough ways smooth for others who are in need of God’s goodness and grace.

Lastly, I wanted to mention that to help lift our spirits and prepare us for Christ’s coming, we chose a beloved book to center our Advent season theme around: E.B. White’s Charlotte’s Web. I hope you enjoy the sermons and reflections that will tie the themes of Charlotte’s Web to the Christmas story. Here are the sermon themes for this month:

- Nov. 28 “The Coming of Wonders”
- Dec. 5 “Help is Coming from Above”
- Dec. 12 (children’s program, so no sermon)
- Dec. 19 “Ordinary Miracles”
- Dec. 24 “The Perfect Word”
- Dec. 26 “Sending Out Silk”

In addition to our weekly sermons, in honor of both Charlotte’s Web and the barn animals that surrounded Jesus at his birth, we are partnering with LRCC’s Luther Glen Farm to help care for their animals, and we will be meeting some of those animals at our Christmas Party following the 10:30 worship service on Dec. 12! Additionally, to help kick off the season, we will be having a church decorating part here on Dec. 4 from 2-4 with cocoa and cookies, a UNITY MUSIC SUNDAY

worship service this Sunday, Dec. 5 at 10 AM, plus a Christmas music concert on the evening of Sunday, Dec. 19. We hope you will join us for these fun events!

Whether you are feeling lost in the wilderness or traveling smoothly on the highway of our God, I hope that you will feel God's presence near to you and that God's word will dwell in you richly. May your soul work be filled with joy and wonder, and may you be a blessing to others that they too may know the saving grace of our God this Christmas season.

Peace to you in your Advent preparations!

Pastor Kinndlee

## ***Youth On The Go, Grow & Know***

#kogkids November 2021

For more information about KOG Kids Ministries please visit the website <https://www.kogchurch.org/community/cyf-2-3/> or email me at [kogkids@gmail.com](mailto:kogkids@gmail.com)!

## ***Preschool News***

Please visit our website calendar for future dates and more information about the preschool: <https://kogchurch.org/preschool/>.



Kelly Ramirez, Preschool Director

## ***It's Time to Decorate for Christmas!***

**Saturday, December 4th**

**2-4pm, Big Ed**

Join the fun as we kick-off the Christmas season by putting up the Sanctuary Christmas tree and inside and outside lighting. We will be serving up cookies and hot chocolate, so bring the kids. The more the merrier! With many hands we should be done in a couple of hours and be ready to welcome our community to celebrate the season.

Contact Deacon Leah to sign up - [deacon@kogchurch.org](mailto:deacon@kogchurch.org) or 949-295-6228

## ***KOG Christmas Party!***

**December 12 - On the Patio**

Mark your calendars for December 12th for our KOG Christmas party following the 10:30 am service. We will have a chili cook-off, lunch, games, bounce house and a petting zoo!

Friends and family are also welcome to join in on the fun too!

If you would like to show off your chili making skills and be a part of the competition, please sign up here by Dec. 3rd and you will receive an email with more information.

**<https://forms.gle/SqcQiZPrdaxcd6Vq7>**

## ***Family Winterfest***

Would you like to be "refreshed" over a fun weekend of faith, camp activities, farm fresh meals prepared for you and time in the beautiful orchards of Oak Glen? Plus be surrounded by your friends and faith family from KOG? Great! Everyone--young, old, singles, multi-child homes--EVERYONE is invited to join Pastor Kinndlee, Amanda Pulos, and both their families (along with several other KOG families that have already registered!) at Luther Glen for their Winter Retreat weekend February 19-21. It will be a great time! Follow the link for more info and to register yourself or your family. Friends are welcome too! If you have any concerns over the cost, please contact the church office as scholarships can be made available. Come be REFRESHED at Luther Glen's Winterfest with us!

**<https://lrcchome.com/2022-winter-retreats>**

## ***Endowment Liaison update***

As most of you know, the KOG Endowment Fund's purpose is to encourage gifts to support future growth, operations, and ministry of the congregation and to provide a means to leave a legacy.

The fund is set up to exist in perpetuity and only income such as dividends, interest, capitals gains are used to support its purpose. The principal is invested in the stock/bond market and managed by the ELCA Endowment fund. Year-to-date the market has helped our fund grow to over \$290,000. But this growth would not have been possible without the donations of some of generous members who have, even after their life on earth ended, considered our church.

The current Endowment committee consisting of Lynn Marecek, Lynn Gaede, Zach Sham, Pastor Kinndlee and myself have met several times this year to discuss opportunities for the Endowment to help our church and its ministries. While we encourage applications to our Endowment College Scholarship that supports students and seminarians in Lutheran Colleges, we have also developed an Endowment Fund Staff Continuing Education Scholarship that our staff can apply for.

Moreover, the Fund is supporting the Little Ed renovation youth ministry's portion of the project and has helped fund the so much needed staff retreat that was recently held. The Endowment Fund will also match up to \$5,000 of the congregations Advent Giving to LRCC's Luther Glen Farms.

The Endowment fund is a gift that keeps on giving. Like Proverbs 21:20 says: "Precious treasure and oil are in a wise man's dwelling, but a foolish man devours it".

### **How Can I Support the Endowment Fund?**

***Prayer*** - Pray that God will bless KOG's mission and ministry as well as those supporting the KOG Endowment Fund.

***Cash Gifts*** - As you feel moved.

***Memorial or Honorarium Gifts*** - At special occasions make gifts by designating KOG Lutheran Church Endowment Fund.

**Planned (Deferred) Gifts** - Planned (deferred) gifts can also be made to the Endowment that will benefit the fund after your lifetime, such as through Life insurance, Charitable Remainder Trusts, or your Will.

Thank you for your continued support!

Respectfully submitted

**Bernd Steinebrunner**

KOG Council, Endowment liaison

## **Women of the ELCA Events** (Information regarding Women's Ministry)



### **Events and Dates to Remember:**

Joy Circle: Monday, November 29 at 9:30 am in Little Ed. Please contact Gwen TeGantvoort for more information.

Hope Circle: New Women's bible study starting January 25, 2022. We will be using the "Gather" magazine study. If you do not receive the Women of the ELCA Gather magazine, we will have paper copies.

4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday night of the month, 7:00 pm at KOG in the library.

Leader: Gwen TeGantvoort

Any questions, please contact Gwen (714) 654-6999

Or Karen Ronchetti (714) 654-8919

ALL are Welcome!

### **\*\*The WELCA study magazine is Gather\*\***

The subscription office can be reached by calling 800.328.4648 or

<http://www.womenoftheelca.org/gather-magazine-pages-49.php>

Cost: \$19.95 for 1 year/10 issues (free digital access)

## **General Ministry News**

### **From the Prayer Warriors:**

"Joy to the world, the Lord has come! Let earth receive her King."

This carol was written by Isaac Watts in 1719. The thrill of hope within the message touches our hearts and encourages us all. The impact on earth of Christ birth will never diminish. This is the season to rejoice. We rejoice at the thought of the Savior's birth. His purpose, and his inheritance.

What will you rejoice about this Christmas season?

The prayer warriors extend grace and love to all. Merry Christmas!

### **KOG quilters:**

Our next Happy Hands meeting is Wednesday, December 8th at 10:00 am. We are excited that we are able to continue our holiday traditions (With some modifications!) for our December meeting. Please bring a potluck dish to share and a wrapped white-elephant item. We will still be tying quilts and then will end with the lunch and exchange. Please join us for the fun! All are welcome!

**Chancel Guild (Communion) Volunteer NEED:**

**Help for chancel! Communion** is a **vital** part of our worship. Thank you to those who have kept the Lord's table set these past 18 months. KOG needs volunteers to set up the wine and wafers, tend to the candles, and clean up between services. This works best with a partner and serving for a month. Set up is on your schedule, Friday or Saturday. Instruction will be given. Sadly, we have no volunteers for December's communion. Sign up for chancel with or without a partner on the church website (<https://www.kogchurch.org/2019/06/sunday-servants/>) or call Sharon Windhorst (714.783.6261)

**"The King's Kitchen" Community Meals Outreach:**

***"But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?"***

*1 John 3:17*

KOG serves up a free meal to anyone in need on the third and fifth Thursday of every month. Volunteers gather at 4:30 pm, and our "take and go" dinner is served at 5:30 pm. All are welcome. We are grateful for the support from KOG members who support this ministry with their prayer, service and financial support through Thrivent Action Teams. In addition to our usual need for volunteers, we would like to collect gently used coats (adult sizes only). Contact Karen Wallace for more details.

**Mark your calendar now for these upcoming King's Kitchen Meals:**

December 16 & 30

John Borack: 714.716.7780 / popdude@aol.com

Karen Wallace: 714.501.2807 / wallacepark@sbcglobal.net

Karla Bjorklund: 714.757.3134 / uccolor2@gmail.com

Peace and Blessings!

**Donate to Lutheran Social Services:**

9:00 – 10:00 am, Tuesdays, King of Glory

Want to help others during the COVID-19 crisis? Rich Bandurian will be at the church every Tuesday morning from 9–10 am to collect any donations of non-perishable food, diapers, etc. Click [here](#) for a list of needed items.

Thank you to all who continue to care for those in need in our community.

Contact Rich Bandurian if you have any questions.

**Text Giving Comes to KOG – 714.874.4777:**

Text giving is a feature of Breeze, KOG's church management system software. Text giving provides a convenient way to give besides cash or check. Text giving uses either a credit/debit card or an electronic transfer (ACH) from your checking account.

The registration process is easy and once you are setup, a transaction can be completed in seconds. To use this feature, you simply text the word "Give" to 714.874.4777 and follow the prompts. Also, there will be complete instructions available on our KOG website. The contribution can be given to the General Fund, Facility Fund, or other funds selected depending on current church activities.

If you're currently enrolled in an electronic giving (transfer of funds) program with KOG such as Vanco or Simply Giving, there is no need to change over to text giving as there are additional fees associated with text giving.

**King of Glory Recycles:**

**Used ink cartridges, pull tabs and eyeglasses!** Please place them in the Welcome Place.

## ***Other Upcoming Events***

**Prayer Warriors—December 6, 13, 20, 27:**

If you find in your heart that praying for others comes easy then join us Mondays at 3 o'clock in Little Ed.

**KOG Connection Deadline—December 17:**

The deadline to submit articles for the January KOG Connection is Friday, December **17**. During this time, it is particularly important to inform your ministry participants of any changes. Please submit your articles in a timely manner and please be sure to send your articles regarding ministry events to [newsletter@kogchurch.org](mailto:newsletter@kogchurch.org). Thank you!

**"The King's Kitchen" Community Meals Outreach—December 16 and 30:**

5:30 pm – 7 pm. Volunteers are needed, so please consider lending a hand, whether it's helping to prepare a meal, shopping, serving, greeting, cleaning up, or, when we return to serve at tables, being a table host chatting with our guests.

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Please visit this link <https://www.kogchurch.org/church-events/google-calendar-2/> on King of Glory's website to view a full listing of calendar events.

# ***December Birthdays...***

Leticia Alkire	1	Allyson Perez	16
Sandra Kelly	2	Catherine Kolster	18
Rod Patterson	3	Roger Bise	21
Marlene Watton	3	John Borack	21
Debra Bise	4	Rachel Kolster	21
Alissa Jeffrey	6	Gwen TeGantvoort	21
Elyse Tesla	6	Ann Lipot	22
Jon Kompara	7	Carrie Wight	22
Zachary Sham	7	April Bollinger	23
Kelly Lipot	9	Audrey Fullerton	24
Kimberly Nemec	9	Judy Goodman	24
Bryan Schwarz	9	Andrea Martin	24
Josh Baesler	11	Carol Tonjes	25
Mary Balo	11	Nancy Cotta	26
Melanie McCormick	11	Sherry Reid	27
Joshua Outman	11	Brynne Tesla	27
Virginia Anderson	12	Barbara Chakos	28
Merrick Fullerton	12	John Schuler	29
Catherine Marcum	14	Barbara Cormack	30
Campbell Grihalva	16		

## ***Happy Birthday!*** ***...and Anniversaries***

Delores & Bob Bixler  
55 years on December 10

Amanda and Dan Pulos  
6 years on December 31

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Joanne and Dale Woolley  
55 years on December 21

## ***Happy Anniversary!***

If we have missed your birthday (25 years or more) or anniversary, please contact the church office.