

# Sweethearts Meal♥

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## Tickets on Sale Soon

♥Romantic Relationship Not Required. Bring a family member or friend, all are welcome!

# THE SIGNAL

DEC. JAN. FEB.  
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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### Worship With Us:

Saturdays 5:30 pm

Sundays 8:30 am & 10:30 am

### Church Office Hours:

Monday 9 am - 2 pm

Tuesday - Thursday 9 am - 4 pm

Friday 9 am - 12 pm

### Contact:

[office@our-saviours.org](mailto:office@our-saviours.org)

970-484-3133



# PASTOR'S

## P O S T S

Amy Grant's song, "I need a Silent Night" runs through my head this time a year almost on constant. The chorus declares her need for a little peace and quiet amidst the chaos of the season. I feel that and yet I LOVE this season. I love the get togethers, worships, the chance to see loved ones in a new way, the school break, the really good reason to light a bunch of candles and fill the house with winter scents, and the possibility of gentle snow. I love the change that turns our focus towards a waiting--waiting for light, waiting for birth, waiting for foggy to clear and rays of hope to start to break through. It's not always a happy season, not always filled with anticipation or joy, but it is always a season of promise. Promise that no matter the depths of despair or the heights of joy God is again saying I am WITH you.

In the spirit of Advent, we hope you will find a place or places for moments of silence and peace, moments of gathering with others and gathering in your own heart. There are so many ways to do that and this newsletter is filled with them! We hope you will engage in devotions that we send and in services that we offer, gathers of all kinds, and a little peace as well. One way we can support you in that this year is in our Midweek Reflections. We will have two opportunities, Wednesday nights and Thursday mornings, to gather in a brief (30 min) service of prayer, reflection, and song. On Wednesdays we will gather as we have dinner. We will pause to pray and sing and reflect amongst the ins and outs of all that happens in our community on that night. Or join us on Thursdays; we invite you to begin your day in a quieter time of reflection at 8:00am. We will have the coffee on and some light goodies out for you to enjoy as well. Our midweek reflection times invite you to Do Less, Experience Wonder, and Hold on to Hope, all a part of our longing in Advent and as we begin again in a new church year.

May you know the God of peace and wonder. May you be filled with the love and presence of Jesus. May you feel the spirit stirring in your heart. Amen

Pastor Leta

## Bishop Jim's Gratitude Gleanings

What a gift to spend the morning with the people of this vibrant, welcoming and engaged community of faith. Our Saviour's is a congregation where people of diverse ages and backgrounds find a faith home together for the sake of sharing Christ's love with community and world. At today's service, a local children's choir participated in worship and a group of 40 were commissioned for their journey to the Holy Land.

Congregational expressions of gratitude include thankfulness for:

- \* our willingness to wrestle with difficult issues and change
- \* being part of a church that embodies a Christ of love, acceptance and welcome
- \* a faith community that welcomes, cares for and supports all
- \* ELCA Good Gifts that supports people around the world
- \* the exposure to spirituality that is the most significant part of my faith
- \* the message of love that is always here
- \* a church community that is ecumenical by nature and did not expect or require me to renounce or disparage my Catholic upbringing and roots of faith

Christ's Church, Better Together!







# Christmas

## CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT

**Tuesday, December 25th**

3:00 pm Children & Youth

5:00 pm with Chancel Choir

7:00 pm with Bells

10:00 pm with Special Music

## CHRISTMAS DAY

**Wednesday, December 26th**

10:00 am Lessons & Carols

**Our Saviour's Lutheran Church**

2000 South Lemay Avenue Fort Collins, CO

[www.our-saviours.org](http://www.our-saviours.org)

# Advent

hope · peace · joy · love

Midweek Reflections

**Pause \* Breathe \* Connect**

Wednesdays 5:30 pm

Thursdays 8:00 am

In the Fellowship Hall

Week 1: Do Less

Week 2: Experience Wonder

Week 3: Hold on to Hope



# ADVENT & CHRISTMAS

## EVENTS

### PRESCHOOL CRAFT FAIR

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7TH 9:00 AM

### KIDS NIGHT IN/GIFT WRAPPING

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7TH 5:30 PM

### CHILDRENS CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15TH 10:30 AM

### LUAU LUNCH BY OSLC HS YOUTH

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15TH 11:40 AM

### CHRISTMAS CANTATA

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21ST &  
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22ND

### HAPPY BIRTHDAY JESUS PARTY

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22ND 9:40 AM

1. Our awareness is broadening, recognizing that Jesus was clearly teaching nonviolence, simplicity of lifestyle, peacemaking, love of creation, and letting go of ego, both for individuals and groups. More and more Christians are now acknowledging Jesus' radical social critique to the systems of domination, money, and power. In the past, most of Jesus' practical teaching was ignored by Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant Christians. The establishment chose instead to concentrate on private sinfulness and personal salvation and, as Brian McLaren says, on an "evacuation plan" into the next world.

2. There is a common-sense and growing recognition that Jesus was clearly concerned about the specific healing and transformation of real persons and human society "on earth as it is in heaven." The Church, more than Jesus, historically focused on doctrinal belief and moral stances, which ask almost nothing of us in terms of real change. They just define groups—often in an oppositional way.

3. We are recovering the older and essential contemplative tradition within Christianity, starting with Thomas Merton in the 1950s, and now spreading to numerous denominations, like a "treasure hidden in the field" (Matthew 13:44). Some emerging church leaders have yet to grasp the centrality of contemplative and inner wisdom.

4. Critical biblical scholarship is occurring on a broad ecumenical level, especially honest historical and anthropological scholarship about Jesus as a Jew in the culture of his time. This leads us far beyond the liberal reductionism and the conservative fundamentalism that divide so many churches. We now see the liberal/conservative divide as a bogus and finally unhelpful framing of the issues.

5. While these may not seem like significant changes in and of themselves, together they are causing sea changes in modern theology as well as practice. These shifts may be the very reason we are currently so divided as Christians, with some clinging to an older way of doing and thinking while others are pulling in these new and "emerging" directions.

As we emerge together yearly, weekly, and daily, we invite you to pause and notice where and how the Holy Spirit is present in your life and present in and amongst community. Imagine, dream, and let the spirit of God move in your soul and our souls together.

- Pastor Michael and Pastor Leta

## Visioning the Present - Future of Church

### *Some thoughts to ponder together...*

We, at OSLC as pastors, staff, council, vision team, and community have engaged in creating a flexible and even nimble church ready to be the church of today and the church of the future. As we figure out how to be the church, we are becoming aware that in the larger church conversation no one is really sure what the future church will look like. This period of uncertainty can be daunting, but we are grateful for a local church, this congregational community, that has positioned itself to respond to a changing landscape. Even as we don't know what the future holds, there are some more recent steps forward that can help us recognize the church of today.

We have engaged in a vitality survey which will bring us another step forward in knowing our gifts, our passions, and our call. In 2020, our council and vision team will engage in a visioning and strategic plan process with coaching and support from Vibrant Faith Ministries and through continued conversation and reflection together as a congregation.

The following is a response to the emerging church by theologian and Franciscan Priest Father Richard Rohr that we think helps us see a start to a map for the road ahead. We encourage you to read it and consider what it means to you and to our community. This is for wondering and a step to share these thoughts as we move together in a vision!

*I do believe that what some refer to as the “emerging church” is a movement of the Holy Spirit. Movements are the energy-building stages of things, before they become monuments, museums, or machines. In the last sixty years, several significant events have taken place, both within and alongside the various Christian churches, to foster this movement. Spiritual globalization is allowing churches worldwide to profit from these breakthroughs at approximately the same time, which of itself is a new kind of reformation! No one is directing, controlling, or limiting this movement. We are just trying to listen together. It is happening almost in spite of all of us—which tells me the Spirit must be guiding.*

*Just so you know I am not merely arguing for my own agenda within the Catholic Church, I want to briefly identify some of the historical developments that I see propelling this movement throughout Christianity:*

## DORA, THE MUSICAL EXPLORER

A Story from Kiss Ministry

I noticed the petite grey-haired lady in the back of the dining room. She was dressed in pajamas and a robe. Her name was Dora and she was sitting at a table with a much younger woman. It was obvious that her sight was gone but Dora knew the words to every song we sang that afternoon.

As I went through the set list we sang songs from the 30's, 40's, and 50's. We sang Rogers and Hammerstein musical numbers, folk songs, and patriotic songs. But when we came to the hymns, Dora really came alive. She swayed back and forth, hands in the air, wiping tears from her eyes as we sang “Just a Closer Walk With Thee,” “Jesus Loves Me,” “Whispering Hope,” and Dora's favorite, “How Great Thou Art.”

At first I thought Dora might be southern Baptist and this was her way of expressing her love for Jesus. Dora's enthusiasm was contagious and you could see the joy in her face as she sang words that touched her heart and filled her with happiness. The younger woman sitting with Dora was moved by Dora's love for the songs we were singing and watched her intently as Dora “danced” to the rhythm of the songs.

After the program, I asked the activity director about Dora and the younger woman that sat by her. I thought the younger woman might be a granddaughter visiting her grandma for the afternoon.

“No,” Carol, the activity director responded. “The younger woman is a Hospice nurse who visits Dora on Tuesdays and Thursdays. You see, Dora doesn't have much more time here. We are making her last days as comfortable as possible.”

Now it was my turn to shed a few tears. You see, from month to month, the volunteers and I never know who will still be at a music program and who might have passed on between our visits. It is a hard thing to get used to, if anyone can get used to this type of loss; however, just knowing our program brought Dora joy and happiness through the songs we sang together made my time spent at Dora's facility priceless.

I doubt I will see Dora next month. No one knows but “the big guy upstairs.” I do know that music makes a difference in the senior living facilities we visit and the KISS program will continue to reach out to those that need inspiring, a little joy, and a break from their earthly challenges. What better way to spend a morning or an afternoon touching the hearts and souls of our senior communities through the gift of music. A big shout out to all the KISS volunteers that make this outreach ministry possible. Hugs and KISSes to you all!





# MEET OUR CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILY TEAM!

This year we have created a team of people who are committed to holding the bigger picture of ministry with children, youth, and family. This team meets quarterly and focuses on supporting the children, youth, and family ministries, providing feedback and direction, and helping to shape the ministry as we go forward. There is room for a few more people on the team if you would like to be involved. Please contact any member of the team to find out more or Pastor Leta or Intern Pastor Jon.



## Anthony Asmus

As I enter my 25th year in education, I enjoy finding other ways to help our youth. Serving on the children youth and family team has close connections to my job. I am enjoying working with this team to ensure we guide and support our leaders in youth ministry.



## Jana Kraich

I believe that youth are the spirit of the church. Investing time and energy in kids and families benefits them, but also keeps our church community evolving and vibrant. With two young kids of my own, a husband that travels, and my own endeavors in life and furthering my education, I have grown to appreciate our church family and the love and support we give. I enjoy looking for new ways to expand this ministry.



## Korin LaPlante

Korin is a mother of three and Executive Director of a small not for profit in Fort Collins. She and her husband Mike and their kids joined Our Saviours 14 years ago after moving to Colorado from California. Her kids Will, Georgia, and Griffin are active in the youth programs and she has served as a Sunday School superintendent as well

as with the Faith Family Hospitality ministry. She values her friendships and close bonds she's made through OSLC over the years.



## Craig Skinner

I have been a member of Our Saviours Lutheran Church all my life, Baptized, and Confirmed. I'm the proud father of two children Zach (14), and Avary (11), and married to my wonderful wife Heather for over 19 years. We live in Fort Collins and enjoy mountain biking, hiking, camping, skiing, and basically anything outdoors. Both of my children are involved with competitive soccer, basketball, and go to Preston Middle School.