

### Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church November Newsletter

Still Waters Café invites <u>you</u> to share a *free* community meal every Thursday at 5:00 p.m. The café is located at 4191 Cochran Street. For more information please call 805-526-7577



"A dining service to those who are suffering economic hardship, homelessness or who are lonely and wish to have a dining companion" Amenities at the café:

- Mealtime is served beginning at 5:00p.m.–7:00 p.m. every Thursday.
- Fresh home cooked meal served in a family atmosphere with home style table settings.
- To go snack bags are offered.
- Highchairs and booster seats are available for the younger family members.
- There are wheelchair accessible entrances and bathrooms available.
- Prayer requests can be satisfied.
- Homework help is available for school age children K-8<sup>th</sup> grade 3:30 5:00 p.m. and includes a snack.

For further information please call 805-526-7577

**REMEMBER IN PRAYER**...Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Preschool, Good Shepherd Lutheran School and our church leaders

Dear Friends and Family, if there are friends and loved ones whom you would like to have prayers for, or military persons on active duty, please contact the church office at 526-7577 and we will list them in our bulletin and newsletter.

<u>Undergoing cancer therapy</u> ... Craig Wells, Gary Lee Boswell (son of *Gloria Holst*), Willie Cornforth (*Allison Graybill's aunt*), Shirley Stienke, Heinz Raaber (*cousin of Joanne Askew*), Carol Williams (*Al & Joanne Askew's daughter*), Terry Labrum (*SVLC Preschool Director*), Marguerite Kidd (*Marvin Kidd's mother*).

### <u>Under convalescent or hospice care</u>...

Tim Simpson (Minn Simpson's son), Rev. James Cherrill (Cathie Badillo's uncle), John Moore

<u>Undergoing surgery, various tests, treatments, recuperating and continued comfort</u>...Eloise Cooley (Marcia Cooley's mother), Pastor Leslie Soyster, Ron Schultze family, Connie Kieffer-Collins, June Goldberg, John Yanuklis, Becky Counts, Kent & Rosalie Fredrick, Jenny & Marvin Kidd, Dewey Blowers.

### Our Military Personnel now serving:



Joe Anderson, Dan Balaun, David Bond, Jeffrey C.A. Bower, Wayne Combs, Tyson and Blake Crosby, Nisha Dean, Shane Denning, Richard Deobler, Robert Deobler, Travis Girard, Nick Goldsmith, Jorden Gutowski, Mike Hultman, Michael Kidd, Frank King, Chris Labelle, Brian Lowen, John Parker, Brian Richardson, Jonathan Scholberg, Raymond Schooler, Captain Ted Slocum, Allen Steinke, Cpl. Brett Tyre, Sgt Elliott Van Marion, Thomas Weaver, Matthew Wilkins

The Congregation of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church thanks you for your service



Dear Fellow Pilgrims,

It's interesting how much can be missed during a busy time. Imagine how busy it must have been in Bethlehem with so many people from out of town returning to their ancestral home town to register for the census. Only so many people could stay with family members and once the house was filled, or if other members of the family had abandoned Bethlehem to move into other towns, the only option was a local Inn. These Inns were essentially rooming houses where a person or family might have a room or two available to rent to the first comers. Anyone arriving after the rooms were all taken found themselves out of luck. At that point, any available spot would have to do, even if it was the cave out back or next to the house that served as the stable for the family animals. A desperate couple on the verge of becoming first time parents would be grateful for anyplace — as long as it was out of the elements.

In the meantime, the Romans continued to sign up people for the census and collect any taxes associated with the census. All the local business that supported a huge influx of people were reaping the financial rewards of providing for the needs of the visitors. Commerce continued, births and death and engagements and family issues continued on normally. Fishermen continued to fish, shepherds continued to watch over the flocks and the soldiers charged with keeping the peace continued to do their jobs. Most had no idea or any interest what was taking place in the stable. As far as anyone who knew what was taking place was concerned, it was just another poor couple bringing a new life into the world, adding additional struggles for a family already struggling to survive. No big deal – just another day.

No one knew what God was doing. No one was really looking for God to be doing anything here in Bethlehem. Jerusalem was the place where all the action took place, not Bethlehem. And anyway, no one could see how this helpless child could fit into God's plan – as they understood God's plan. But God did have a plan for this child – a plan that would unfold in the next thirty-some odd years.

Today a new baby will be born. We may miss it because we don't know the parents, or we are caught up in our plans for the season, or we are having enough trouble keeping track of ourselves and our own families, let alone worry about some new born baby. It could be just one more poor child being born into another poor family. We may even see it and think to ourselves, "I hope they can find a way to make things work out financially so we don't have to waste our tax money supporting this child for his/her whole life. What a tragedy."

What if God was choosing to do something new and special through this newborn, poor, helpless child? Will we receive this child, encourage his/her family and help the child along? Wait a second, God did this one already. Surely God wouldn't do this again. Or would God try it again? Hmmmm... Who knows,

is it possible? Are we watching? Can we embrace? Or will life just go on? May God bless us as we prepare ourselves to greet again the babe born in our hearts at Bethlehem.

Merry Christmas.

**Pastor Gary** 





### YOUTH NEWS - DECEMBER 2011

Hello Shepherd Of The Valley Lutheran Church. My name is Marc Mohr and I'm the new youth director here at the church. It has been great meeting many of you. My family and I are so excited to be apart of this lovely church. Just a little bit about myself and my family. I used to attend Our Savior Lutheran Church from when I was in kindergarten through eighth grade. My wife Niki and I have been married for eight years now and we met at Royal High School. We have two children, Vinny who is five and Tiana who is fourteen months. Again thank you for the warm welcome. As I get more familiar with SVLC I will try to come up with some relationship building activities that the youth can do so I can get to know them more. Below are some upcoming events that we will have for the youth in December. Please call me at 805-526-7577 or email me at <a href="marc.mohr@dslextreme.com">marc.mohr@dslextreme.com</a> if you have any questions. Thank you.

### Spark (3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> grade)

Ice Skating – Monday, December 19<sup>th</sup> at the The Lakes in Thousand Oaks Meet at the church at 5pm and we will return by 8pm. Cost is \$13. Please sign up with either Marc Mohr or Adrienne Stuck.

### Middle School (6th -8th grade)



Movies – Saturday, December 17<sup>th</sup> at Regal theatre. Meet at the church at 11am and we will be back by 3:30pm. Cost is \$15 for lunch and a movie. Sign up with Gary Stevenson or Marc Mohr.

### High School (9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade)

Citizens With The Saints Tour – Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup> in West Covina. Meet at the church at 2pm and we will return by 8pm. Cost is \$10 for dinner. Experience a taste of NOLA with Agape and Rachel Kurtz. Raise money and awareness for ELCA World Hunger. Inspire our youth to be the hands, feet, and ears of Jesus in our community. Sign up with Marc Mohr.

Bowling – Thursday, December  $22^{nd}$  at Lucky Strike in Hollywood. Meet at the church at 11am and we will return by 5pm. Cost is \$15 for lunch and bowling. Sign up with Marc Mohr.





### Christmas Eve Services

5:30 p.m. Family service 7:30 p.m. Candlelight-Communion 9:30 p.m. Candlelight-Communion

> Christmas & New Year's Day One Service 10:00 a.m.



### ADVENT 2011 A BABY SHOWER FOR JESUS

What does a modern loving community do to help a family prepare to receive a new baby? The answer is simple: Baby Shower. As Advent begins this year on Sunday, November 27<sup>th</sup>, we will be preparing to celebrate Jesus' birth at Christmas by collecting "Baby Shower" gifts each Sunday during Advent. The preparation will culminate at the Family Worship at 5:30 pm on Christmas Eve as we gather to celebrate the birth. After Christmas all items collected will be donated to Sarah's House, Care and Share, Children's Hospital LA, and our own food pantry. Please bring the following items during Advent Sunday worship:

### **November 27** (First Sunday in Advent)

- Formula
- Baby food
- Baby bottle/liners
- Pacifiers

### **December 4** (Second Sunday in Advent)

- Receiving blankets
- Sleepers
- Onesies
- Booties/caps

### **December 11** (Third Sunday in Advent)

- Diapers of various sizes
- Baby Wipes
- Bath Products (lotion, shampoo, wash cloth/towel, etc.)
- Changing pads

### **December 18** (Fourth Sunday in Advent)

- Teething ring
- Baby safe toys

### **Family Service on Christmas Eve**

- Any of the above.

Thank you for your help this Advent/Christmas season.



### **CONFIRMATION SCHEDULE** CLASSES BEGIN AT 7:00 P.M. IN EICHELE HALL

### 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Schedule

Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> – Jesus calls the Disciples

Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> – The Beatitudes

Dec.  $21^{st}$  – **No class** until January

### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Schedule

Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> – Love your neighbor

Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> – Exploring the Commandments, Part 3

Dec. 21<sup>st</sup> – **No class** until January



### **Y.I.M.A.H** (Young In Mind And Heart)

### Holiday Celebration at Home-Town Buffet

December 15<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 a.m.

For further information please call: Edith Engemann 805-526-9020 **or** the church office 526-7577.

## Holiday Sunday School Schedule

Grades K-5: Our Christmas rotation classes will be on 12/4, 12/11 and 12/18.

We'll be singing, crafting and playing - please join us! During our Sunday School rotations,

Grades K-5 will be learning Christmas songs and singing them at the 9:45 am service on 12/18.

Grades 6-8: The Middle School Sunday School class is going to be taking the "baby shower for Jesus" theme to a more global level this year. In addition to talking about the advent wreath and the Advent and Christmas story, we'll talk about kids in other parts of the world, what types of things they need, and how they are similar and different from us and from what life was like in Jesus time."

Grades 9-12: We will meet on Dec. 4<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, and 18<sup>th</sup>

There will be NO Sunday School on 12/25 and 1/1.

Any questions or need more information? Please call or email.

In His Service.

Grades K-5: Lisa Lewis (olseysue@sbcglobal.net or 527-6379)

Grades 6-8: Angela Hess (ahess91@roadrunner.com or 526-3731)

Grades 9-12: Youth Director Marc Mohr (marcmohr@dslextreme.com or 526-7577)

## 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> graders No SPARK Dec. 21 & 28<sup>th</sup>

We meet in the upstairs SAC room on Wednesdays from 7-8:15 p.m. Please join us for a relaxing evening of fun, games, and bible study. Friends are always welcome.

Call Adrienne Stuck at 520-6947(h).



## New Orleans News



### National ELCA Youth Gathering Update December 2011

We have had one more youth join the group going to the New Orleans National ELCA Youth Gathering making it a total of 18 youth!

So far this month we have done the following fundraisers:

- Souplantation \$156.60
- Junkyard \$95.60
- Elephant Bar (have not received total raised yet)
- Cookies in a jar \$ 900.00 so far
- Homemade cards \$286.00 so far

Total fundraising results so far: \$1,523.81

Total estimated need: \$27,000

### Coming up:

- Round Table Pizza Dec. 7 (hosted by Schulz family)
- Envelope project (hosted by Hess family)
- Quilt opportunity drawing to be held on Jan. 29<sup>th</sup> (hosted by Graybill family)
- Potato/Sundae Bar at annual meeting Jan. 29<sup>th</sup> (hosted by Gearhart family)
- Christmas help (hosted by the Plyler family)

Continue to watch for the youth serving the church in various ways and also for more exciting events in the coming months. The excitement is building!

If you have any questions, please contact Marc Mohr at <a href="marc.mohr@dslextreme.coom">marc.mohr@dslextreme.coom</a>, Pastor Gary Stevenson at <a href="marc.gstevenson@svlcsimi.com">gstevenson@svlcsimi.com</a> or Corrine Stevenson at <a href="marc.gstevensongs">stevensongs.gstevensongs</a> used to stevenson at <a href="marc.gstevensongs">gstevenson@svlcsimi.com</a> or Corrine Stevenson at <a href="marc.gstevensongs">stevensongs</a> used to stevensongs used to stevenson at <a href="marc.gstevensongs">gstevenson@svlcsimi.com</a> or Corrine Stevenson at <a href="marc.gstevensongs">gstevensongs</a> used to stevensongs used to stevensons used to

Thank you all for your support and prayers.



### Samaritan Center of Simi Valley

Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church serves a meal to the less fortunate at the *Samaritan Center* – located at 280 Royal Ave. on the 1<sup>st</sup> *Wednesday of every month from 4:00-6:00 p.m.* 

This is a church service project and we need help.

We need volunteers to do the following: buy and deliver food to the Samaritan Center, serve food **or** donate money.

If you would like to help, please contact Yvonne Baird at 584-2521. Thank you for your prayers and support for this important ministry.

### Stamps – Stamps – Stamps...

On behalf of the Women's group and in support of various charities here in California as well as around the country, please save used postage stamps. You can leave them on the envelope or clip about 1/4 inch around the stamps, pop them in an envelope or baggie and drop them off in the narthex the next time you visit our pretty little church.

It's quick; it's easy, and it means a lot to the folks we help.

### Interface Ministry



As an ongoing ministry of SVLC we collect items for personal care bags at the monthly Women's Circles, or by taking your donation to the Church office. These items then go into a care bag and are given to Interface for their Battered Women's Shelters throughout the county. The items needed to make a care bag are (in regular sizes): shampoo, conditioner, brush, comb, lotion, toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, deodorant, tampons, disposable razors, pocket size Kleenex. Last year twenty bags were donated to Interface!

Individual size lotion, soap, shampoo etc. from motel/hotel stays are also appreciated, as they are taken to the Samaritan Center for use. If you have any further questions regarding this ministry please contact Jennifer Wacenske @ 581-2923.



Christ Caring for People through People - That's the motto of Stephen Ministry. The Stephen Minister's role is to bring God's love into the lives of people who are going through a difficult time or experiencing a crisis. What do Stephen Ministers do? They listen to you, care for you, support and encourage you, and pray with and for you. And in the midst of this confidential, one-to-one, caring relationship, God's healing love comes pouring through.

#### What you should know about Stephen Ministry

Shepherd of the Valley has a system for training and organizing laypeople to provide one-to-one Christian care to hurting people in our congregation called **Stephen Ministry**. All Stephen Ministers receive 50 hours of training in care giving and attend continuing education classes every month that prepares them to listen and care for anyone going through a difficult time. The name Stephen comes from St. Stephen, who was the first layperson commissioned by the Apostles to provide caring ministry to those in need, (Acts 6).

Stephen Ministry began in 1975 when the Rev. Kenneth C. Haugk, Ph.D., a pastor and clinical psychologist, trained nine laypeople at his congregation in St. Louis to be **Stephen Ministers.** They assisted him in providing distinctively Christian care to members of the congregation and community. These trained caregivers were so enthused about their ministry; they encouraged Dr. Haugk to offer it to more congregations. Since that time more than 500,000 laypeople have been trained as **Stephen Ministers** in 50 states, 10 Canadian provinces and 24 other countries.

If you or someone you know is facing a crisis--large or small--and could benefit from the caring presence of a Stephen Minister, call Pastor Gary at 805.526.7577.



## Good Shepherd Lutheran School Students proudly presents Star of Wonder

December 9<sup>th</sup>, 7 p.m. in Eichele Hall at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church

### celebrating 40 years

### **Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Preschool**

"We believe that each child deserves the opportunity to grow and develop in a safe, loving and stimulating Christian environment. Children are treated with warmth and respect, and learn to appreciate their value and importance in God's world."

During the month of November we have been talking about being thankful. We want you as a congregation to know how thankful we are for you.

Money that was given to upgrade the preschool was put to good use. First off we would like to thank the anonymous donor for the generous gift of our new windows. We are thankful for the property committee who spent much time finding contractors and scheduling the upgrades to be completed. We are thankful for the Women's group spending much time organizing fundraisers, and with their donations we were able to have some additional work done to the center, and hopefully we will be moving the entrance age for children down to 2 (it's currently 2 years 9 months) and we will be able to accommodate children who are not potty trained. All of this could not have happened without your support.

We had a wonderful Thanksgiving feast on November 16th, which included chicken tenders, Mac and cheese, corn, rolls, and pumpkin bars. We asked the children about what they are thankful for. Some of their answers included: cake and balloons, all the animals, gum ball machines, mom and dad, number 4 and 3 too, ladybugs and butterflies, my sister, and lizards and wells. It's always fun to hear what is important to them.

December will be a busy month as we get ready to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Out themes for the month will include Advent as well as Christ's birth.

We will be making surprises for our families, and of course the highlight of the month will be our Christmas Program, in which the children will be telling the story of Jesus' birth, as well as singing songs for their families.

The Preschool staff wishes all of you the happiest of holidays!

We still have both part day and full day openings.

Please pass along the word about our center.

Call the preschool at **805-526-9069** for more information.

SVLC Preschool Director Terry Labrum

### **SCRIP NEWS**

Christmas is a-comin". Time to start planning the gifts you will be giving. Gift cards make such perfect gifts. They are always the right size, the right color and just what the recipient has always wanted! We have such an enormous list of stores from which you can choose that we cannot possibly keep them all in stock. So we have made a list of as many of our stores' gift cards for you to order as possible. In most cases your cards will arrive the following Sunday for your convenience. Stop by the Scrip table for your "wish list"

Gift cards are perfect not only for family (even my 5 year old granddaughter knows what a gift card is for!) but for gift exchanges, Prayer Partner gifts, business co-workers, and thank you's for the gardener, newscarrier, hairdresser, baby sitter and so many others. Be creative with your gift list and see us for ideas.

Remember every card you purchase returns a portion to the church at no cost or bother to you. Couldn't be easier!

Also remember to register with Ralphs whether you are new at this or have signed up before. You can also register on line with Von's to donate a portion of what you spend to Shepherd of the Valley.

The Scrip table is open Sundays between services for your convenience - or - you can always purchase gift cards from Candy in the office during the week.

We look forward to seeing you. God bless.

sheet and place your order as soon as possible.



# Holiday Gamp for Grades N-0



Good Shepherd Lutheran School will be offering a special holiday camp during the school vacation for Christmas. Any student in grades K-8 is invited to participate in this program. Plans for these weeks include service projects, field trips, and themed activities. If you are interested in enrolling your child in a Christian vacation camp during these times, please call the school office, 526-2482.

### PLEASE...HELP SUPPORT OUR SCHOOL

**Luther's Attic...**a thrift store in Moorpark at 189 High Street that helps support Good Shepherd Lutheran School.

### Give donations, shop and/or volunteer your time!!

It all helps our Christian school ministry here in Simi Valley.

The proceeds from the store are split between the three schools that receive financial support from the store. The financial split is based on volunteer hours submitted by members from each of the churches (the more volunteer hours from your church the stronger the financial support). For further information call 805-523-7188.

# Calendar of Events December 2011



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs  1 6:00-Preschool 7:00-SAC 8:30- GSLS Begins 10:00-SVLC@Attic 3:00-SWC 5:00-Café Open 6:00-Stretch Tone 6:30-Al-anon 7:00-Stephen Ministry	Fri  2 6:00-Preschool 7:00-SAC 8:30-GSLS Begins 6:30-Pack #3643 7:30-PADS	Sat  3 8:00-BSA #622 Car Wash & E-waste 8:00-Alanon 10:00-AA-Library
4 8:30-Traditional 9:45-Contemporary 9:45-Sunday School 11:00-Blended 11:00-NA 2:00- Youth Citizens with the Saints Tour 4:00-Simi Valley Christian Church 7:00-Al-anon-CR	5 6:00-Preschool 7:00-SAC 8:30- GSLS Begins 6:00-Stretch N Tone 7:00-BSA #698 7:00-Al-anon 7:30-Al-ateen	6 6:00-Preschool 7:00-SAC 8:30- GSLS 10:00 SVLC @Attic 6:00-Stretch N Tone 6:30-SVCC Prayers 7:00-BSA #622	7 6:00-Preschool 7:00-SAC 8:30- GSLS Begins 9:00-GSLS Chapel 11:00-NOLA Round Table Pizza All Day Fundraiser 4:30-Samaritan Ctr. 7:00-Confirmation 7:00- Youth Group 7:00-SPARK 7:00-GSLS Bd. Mtg. 7:30-Bell Choir	8 6:00-Preschool 7:00-SAC 8:30- GSLS Begins 10:00-SVLC@Attic 3:00-SWC 5:00-Café Open 6:00-Stretch Tone 6:30-Al-anon	Pastor Off  9 6:00-Preschool 7:00-SAC 8:30- GSLS Begins 7:00-GSLS Students Present "Star of Wonder" 7:30-PADS  Pastor Off	8:00-Alanon-CR 10:00-AA-Library 5:00-Hall in Use
8:30-Traditional 9:45-Contemporary 9:45-Sunday School 11:00-Blended 11:00-NA 3:00-Preschool Christmas Program 4:00-Simi Valley Christian Church 7:00-Al-anon-CR	12 6:00-Preschool 7:00-SAC 8:30- GSLS Begins 3:00-GSLS Tryouts 6:00-Stretch N Tone 7:00-BSA #698-Hall 7:00-Al-anon 7:30-Al-ateen	13 6:00-Preschool 7:00-SAC 8:30- GSLS Begins 10:00-SVLC@Attic 3:00-GSLS Tryouts 6:00-Stretch N Tone 6:30-SVCC Prayers 7:00-SVLC Council 7:00-BSA #622	14 6:00-Preschool 7:00-SAC 8:30- GSLS Begins 9:00-GSLS Chapel 5:30-GSA Leader Mt 7:00-Confirmation 7:00-Youth – YR 7:00-SPARK 7:30-Bell Choir	15 6:00-Preschool 7:00-SAC 8:30- GSLS Begins 10:00-SVLC @Attic 11:30-Y.I.M.A.H 3:00-SWC 5:00-Café Open 5:30-GSA Mtg. 6:00-Stretch N Tone 6:30-Al-anon 7:00-Stephen Min. 7:00-Men's Group	16 6:00-Preschool 7:00-SAC 8:30- GSLS Begins 7:30-PADS	8:00-Ala6on-CR 10:00-AA-Library 11:00-SVLC Youth Movie Day 5:00-Hall in Use
18 8:30-Traditional 9:45-Contemporary 9:45-Sunday School 11:00- Blended 11:00-NA 4:00-Simi Valley Christian Church 7:00-Al-anon-CR	19 GSLS closed SAC open 6:00-Preschool 5:00-SPARK Skate 6:00-Stretch N Tone 7:00-BSA #698-Hall 7:00-Al-anon 7:30-Al-ateen	20 GSLS closed SAC open 6:00-Preschool 10:00-SVLC@ Attic 6:00-Stretch N Tone 6:30-Youth Bd. Mtg 6:30-SVCC Prayers 7:00-BSA #622 7:00-Hannah Circle 7:00-Happy Squares	21 GSLS closed SAC open 6:00-Preschool 7:00-High School Christmas Party 7:00-No SPARK 7:00-No Confirmation 7:30 Bell Choir	22 GSLS closed SAC open 6:00-Preschool 11:00-High School Bowling 7:00-Property Mtg	23 GSLS closed SAC open Preschool closed 7:30-PADS	24 Christmas Eve 8:00-Alanon-CR 10:00-AA-Library 10:00-SVLC @Attic 5:30-Family Worship 7:30-Candlelight 9:30-Candlelight
25 Merry Christmas 10:00-Worship 9:45-NO Sunday School 4:00-Simi Valley Christian Church	26 GSLS closed SAC open Preschool closed-1/3 6:00-Stretch N Tone 7:00-BSA #698 7:00-Al-anon 7:30-Al-ateen	27 10:00-SVLC@ Attic 6:00-Stretch N Tone 6:30-SVCC Prayers 7:00-BSA #622	28 5:30-GSA Leader NO-Confirmation NO-Youth Group NO-SPARK	29	30 7:30-PADS  Pastor off	31 New Years Eve 8:00-Alanon-CR 10:00-AA-Library

The reason for the season

