

Pastor's Reflections

December 2021 Pastors Reflection
“And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.” John 1:5

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ. < > <

We are in Advent. The time of waiting before Christmas and the birth again of the Christ child in our lives. Advent is a time of preparation. A time to make ready, once again, our hearts, spirits, minds, our very being so that this Messiah can come into our lives in a new way. Imagine the birth of a child in our family. We are excited about this new arrival who will turn our worlds upside down. We paint, re-arrange the furniture, we make room in our bodies, our homes, and our lives. When the event happens, we sometimes find that we must re-arrange again. There are no instructions. There is only love and anticipation. Each tiny human comes with their own unique personality. Their own identity. Babies come with their own needs, gifts, and ways of being in the world. When they are born our lives are not ever the same again. And so often we are excited about this change. This new way of doing and being.

In the season of Advent, we light the candles of the Advent wreath. It can remind us of the Christ light in each of us. Each week another candle is lit until we have four candles lit and then at Christ Mass, we light the

Christ Candle in the middle. On a walk one day in Philadelphia, I came upon this artwork on the sidewalk. If you look you might be able to see that it says, “Be Light.” This seems appropriate for this month, the season we are in, and as a reminder of the light that is coming into the world again. As well as the light we bear witness to, and the light that shines in each one of us. As a contemporary Christian band said in a concert a number of years ago at my home congregation in Westminster, Md. “A light so bright you need to put on your sunglasses.” Are you ready for that illuminating, transforming light?



We have opportunity to prepare our house in this time. The house that is the four walls and roof above us, the house that is our body, the house that is our spirit, the house that is our heart, the house that is our _____. Jesus continues to be a radically life changing event for us, every day.

My prayer for all of us is that we may be able to bear witness to this light in a way that we never dreamed before. How has Jesus changed you? How has the light that has not been overcome by the darkness of the world come into your life? What difference does this time of preparation make? Because of this illuminating, transforming light how are we church together? How will the light shine in us this time? Continued on page 4

A NOTE FROM PASTOR JOHN

My desire is for each of you to have unconditional love relationships with God, each other, and each person with whom you come into contact. That is one thing that God wants for us. Some of the ideas I presented to you from Holy Scripture are:

The 2 most important COMMANDMENTS are: Love God

Love your neighbor

When you speak, ask yourself

1. What would Jesus say?
2. Would Jesus say anything at all?
3. Would what you want to say

show love to your neighbor?

God is LOVE

God is GOOD

God is JUDGE

God has made provision, through Jesus' sacrifice, that we will have MERCY (which we don't deserve) rather than Justice (that all of us deserve)

May God's blessings be with each of you as we worship and serve together.

Pastor John

NEW YEAR PRAYER:

Thank You Lord for giving me
The brand new year ahead.
Help me live the way I should
As each new day I tread.
Give me gentle wisdom
That I might help a friend,
Give me strength and courage
So a shoulder I might lend.
The year ahead is empty,
Help me fill it with good things
Each new day filled with joy
And happiness it brings.
Amen.

Dear Love of Christ Members and Friends,

What a year! We opened our doors January 17, 2021 to worship together and our weekly attendance has slowly increased each month. Our Winter Friends are now returning and that is great! Hopefully, soon all of our activities will begin to function.

One of the major changes for us is our mission work with Runn Elementary School. As you are aware, Runn has become a Virtual Learning Academy for the entire Donna School District and "our" Runn Students have been divided to attend two different elementary schools.

We will be distributing 20 Thanksgiving food baskets and 40 Christmas food baskets to "our" Runn needy families and the Hedlunds will be bringing down 80 bicycles for the students. This will most likely end our mission work with Runn which has been a wonderful, satisfying, Christian experience for 24 years! However, we are not giving up as we are searching for mission work in our area. We will keep you informed.

Love of Christ has some items that are for sale:

1. The Story and Clark piano w/bench
2. Six 28 inch wooden stools
3. Thirty-two white choir robes with 2 sets of reversible collars, and wooden cross neck pieces. Do you know of a church or school or organization that may be interested in these robes? Our contact person is Jon Schwartz, phone 712 540 3555. Thank you.

Upcoming events:

Our annual meeting will be held Saturday, February 19, 2022 at 10:00 AM.

Our Spring Fling Polka Fest is scheduled for Thursday, March 3, 2022, 5:00 PM at the Villa de Cortez Hotel. Jon and LuRae Schwartz are the chairpersons. More information is forth coming.

Remember our motto: "Love your neighbor!"
Shirley Nelson



December Anniversaries

- 02 Bob & Jo Deneger
- 23 Gene & Marian Johnson

January Anniversaries

- 01 Ernie & Lorraine Harrell
- 03 Helen & Gerald Lamson
- 28 Gloria & Mike Jensen

February Anniversaries

- 04 Ann & Harlan Thompson
- 20 Adeline & Rodger Olson

December Birthdays

- 02 Lois Tanula
- 13 Wayne Winter
- 14 CB Shields
- 15 Arlys Buland
- 18 Joyce Klindt
- 19 Gene Hasselquist
- 19 Wendy Haught
- 23 Ed Haught

January Birthdays

- 01 Mike Jensen
- 03 Helen Lamson
- 05 Garry Rhoades

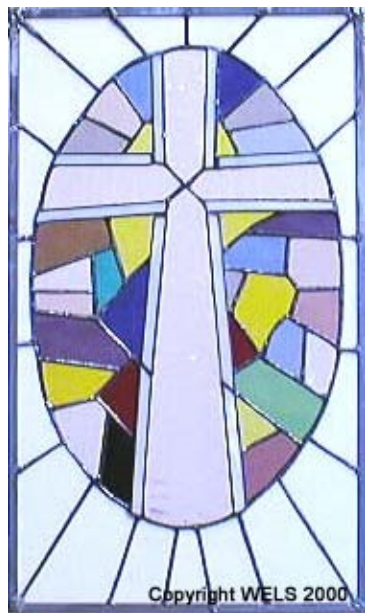
January Birthdays (continued)

- 10 Lee Nelson
- 10 Eleanor Scott-Meyers
- 10 Betsy Sutton
- 11 Bonnie Moore
- 13 Gloria Jaegler
- 22 Jon Schwartz
- 24 Bob Chaloupek

February Birthdays

- 01 Marilyn Sill
- 06 Marilyn Rounds
- 14 Mary Nelson
- 22 Ken Tanula
- 28 Lorraine Harrell

Drop a personal note to one of your brothers or sisters in Christ at LoC who celebrates a special occasion this month and let them know how much their presence in our family of faith at LoC means to you.



CHRIST CARE...

Reflecting Christ's love in our community of faith! His inspiration! **Please, if you...or someone you know... could use some Christ care, some concern, some prayers, or some expression of the love of Christ in his/her life, LET US KNOW.**

You may do so by calling:
 Pastor Ann (503) 707-7406-c
 Pastor John (319) 481-2970-c
 or the church office (956) 447-1337
 We at LOC want to care for you, for your friends, and for all who want to know the love of Christ in their life.

PRAYER SQUARES

We have a "Prayer Squares" project. A square is quilted and tied with loving strings of embroidery thread. Then when one of our members of Love of Christ (or a friend) is having surgery or is in a hospital, each of us say a prayer, tie a knot, and then give the patch to them. We want our prayers with them. Contact Betty Bentson 701-371-6631 or email bettybentson@aol.com

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

Prayers are offered while shawls are created. Then the shawls are given to the sick and those needing comfort. Shawls have been distributed to many within the community and they have been mailed to numerous locations within the United States and Canada as requests for those needing prayers and comfort are filled. We are pleased to fill requests. Contact Betty Bentson 701-371-6631 or email bettybentson@aol.com

A RIGHTEOUS MAN

Pastor's Reflections cont from page 1

As we approach this Holy and wonderful season, there is much focus on the mother and the child. But have you ever considered the third party in this little family?

The setting is in Nazareth in Galilee where we find a young teenage girl being approached by an angel. The angel spoke to her and said, **“Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David.”** Luke 1:30

How can this be, this young maiden is not married but pledged to marry Joseph, the carpenter. She is so afraid to tell Joseph she flees to the home of her cousin Elizabeth.

Can you imagine how Joseph must have felt when he heard? **Because Joseph, her husband to be, was a righteous man, and because he did not want to disgrace her, he intended to divorce her privately.** Matthew 1:19

(The custom of the day would have had Mary stoned at her father's doorstep.)

Before the divorce or stoning could happen, God sent an angel to Joseph in a dream. **While he was trying to figure a way out, he had a dream. God's angel spoke in the dream: “Joseph, son of David, don't hesitate to get married. Mary's pregnancy is Spirit-conceived. God's Holy Spirit has made her pregnant. Mathew 1:23a**

And we read the “rest of the story”

Then Joseph woke up. He did exactly what God's angel commanded in the dream: He married Mary. Matthew 1:24

So our righteous man took a young pregnant maiden to be his wife, raised the child as his son, taught him an honorable trade and did not neglect to teach him the practices of their faith.

In our world today, a righteous man, (or woman), is seldom celebrated, have special holidays named for them, have their name in the Hall of Fame, but be assured God takes notice and will never forget the courage and the dedication it takes to be a “righteous man (or woman).

None of us will ever have the opportunity to something as wonderful as Mary and Joseph, but take time each day to consider the opportunities which are given to you to be righteous in God's sight.

What dark places will the light show us as we wait and prepare for the Messiah? Most of all, what difference does it make?

Christmas and Christ's birth are about more than the birth of a baby. It is more than family time or gifts for friends and family. Christmas is also a powerful reminder of the life, the crucifixion, the death, and burial of Christ. As well as the resurrection hope, the promise of everlasting life, and Christ's coming again. All of this wrapped up in the small package of a newborn.

Christ be our light! May we be light! Lord prepare us for the transforming light that is you!

Be light!

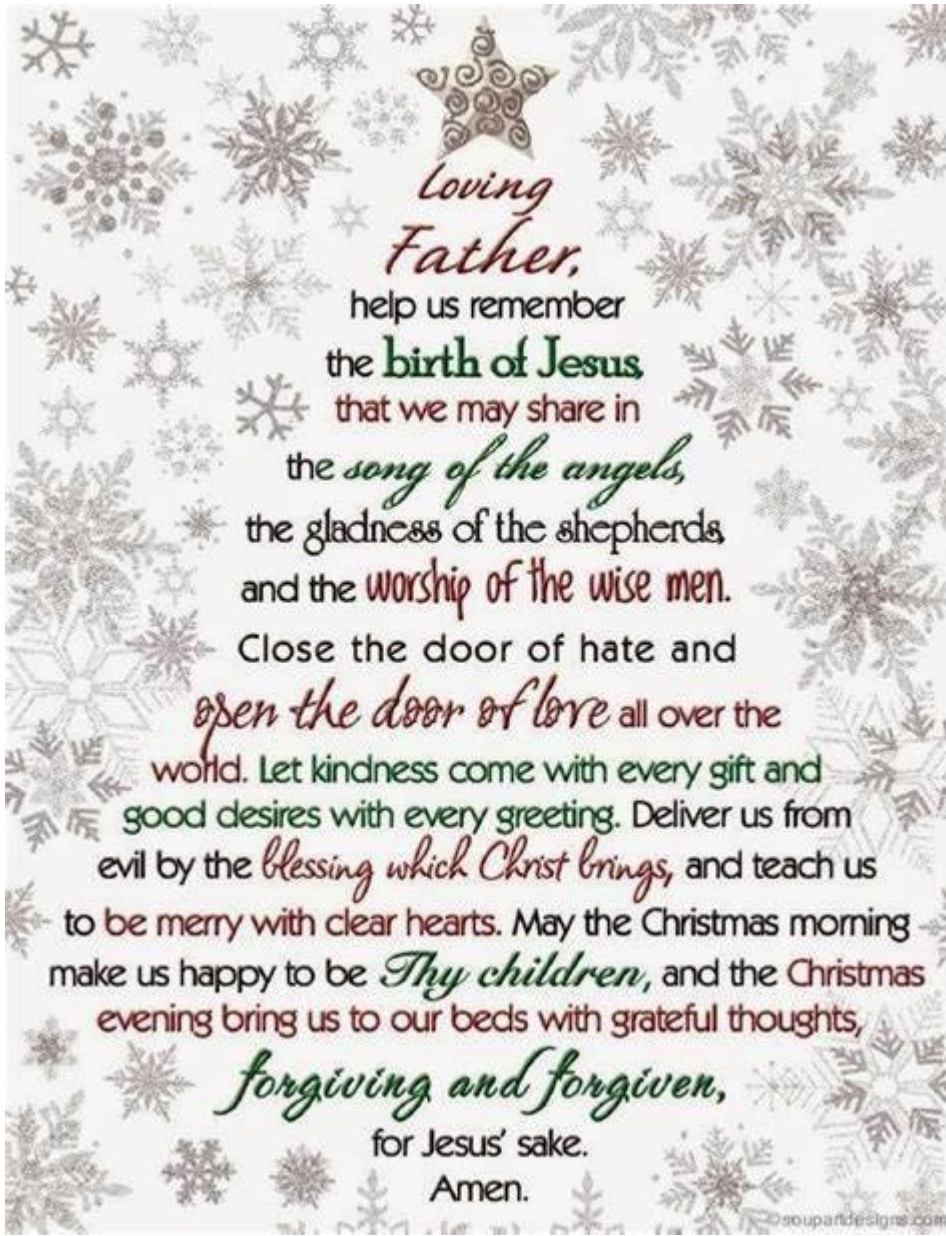
Pastor Ann <><



Welcome New Members:

**Kent Campbell
Ranchero Village
2100 S Bridge Ave #240
Weslaco, TX 78596
612-787-7966**

**Barbara Wilkinson
Ranchero Village
2100 S Bridge Ave #159
Weslaco, TX 78596
319-481-3117**



ACTS OF KINDNESS IDEAS:

- Give a friend a compliment
- Leave a card for your mail carrier
- Put candy canes on car windshields
- Take flowers to a nursing home
- Bring cookies to nurses
- Tell five people that Jesus loves them
- Leave positive notes for people to find
- Help make dinner
- Send a card to a local service member
- Donate your old clothes or toys
- Take supplies to an animal shelter
- Do an extra chore
- Donate food to your foodbank
- Share your favorite toy for the day
- Meet a new neighbor
- Sit by someone new at lunch
- Help clean up a local park



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 3:00 PM

Two little boys were known troublemakers, stealing everything they could get their hands, even from the church. One day a pastor stopped one of the boys and asked, "Where is God?" The boy shrugged and the pastor repeated, "Where is God?" The boy ran out of the church crying to his home where he hid in a closet. Eventually, his brother found him and asked, "What's wrong?" The crying boy replied, "We're in trouble now! God is missing and they think we took him!"

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!

Find the words in the puzzle and write them under the appropriate picture:



C S H P X Z
 U O B K H E A R T
 Z W
 U J R F J F I B P
 Y M T P P V T M K I S S B
 D J F E L R G H U K B W J W C
 C X G T D E T G C Z O V E C A K E
 L W R A D I Z T M U G I E H O I T Z
 B C O R Y L D A T E I F T O B E O T O
 Y T O O B L T B O W F K S C U P I D T G
 M M E S E P L D C K T T C H O L Q L W Z F F U G
 L R K P O E M B X U A O P H U R L V X K C
 O W M B P D D B I T Y A R R O W L V G
 A V T O S O C A L N D D L E G G J G Q W Z N
 R R E V Z B A L L O R N Z S B N Q E R Y U
 U F R E C L J N T I N R O M D L R K J I E R E
 R P L D D A L W M R U A L G I W R A S
 V R I N G S Q Y A R R H G W W D P R R
 M I S X C X Q N S R R Z D F G E N Y
 S X U A P B I C L X B Q S L O
 C B R F W Z Y Y D O V E S
 U D B V V G N Y J Z F X
 V M X I I C M X S
 F N Z F H U G



We Make our Plans but God Directs our Steps

Thanks for the surprising information of what has happened at Runn School. I am truly bewildered that our mission project at Runn has seemingly come to an abrupt end. After hundreds of hours of volunteering for the children and their parents it nearly seems like an emotional and spiritual slap in the face. And yet we should be grateful for the opportunity to work with these families.

It is our prayer they will never forget the things we tried to do for them. Like all of the food baskets at Thanksgiving and Christmas; as well as the Christmas Parties and over a hundred ton of personal items made possible through the generosity of many loving people and carried out by means of many semi loads unloaded at the Sharing Place.

We make our plans but God directs our steps. Thanks to the Love of Christ congregation for originating this special mission project for the children and their parents of the Runn School District. We are grateful to God for the privilege of sharing our blessings and concerns.

May the blessings of God continue to surround us and be appreciated.

Gene Hasselquist

Donna ISD opens first virtual learning academy

SPECIAL TO THE MONITOR

With the symbolic cutting of the ribbon, the Donna Independent School District ushered in a new era of education for the district's students.

Donna ISD administrators, the district's Board of Trustees and City of Donna dignitaries gathered Sept. 27 to celebrate the transformation of Runn Elementary into the district's first virtual campus, now known as Runn Virtual Learning Academy.

Acting Superintendent of Schools Rebecca Castaneda commended everyone who played a role in making this important initiative possible. Castaneda said with this virtual learning campus now in place, Donna ISD has positioned itself to be at the forefront of providing students a quality education in both a traditional and online setting.

"You may remember, this campus celebrated its 115th anniversary on March 12, 2020 and today we are commemorating another major milestone,"

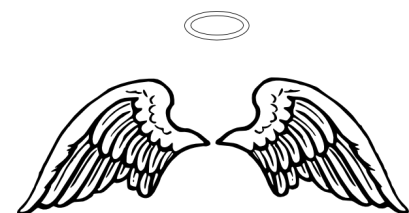
Castaneda said. "We are excited to announce that Runn has been transformed into the district's first virtual campus. As of today, Runn Virtual Learning Academy will serve students Kinder through sixth grade who qualify to receive virtual instruction. Teachers who volunteered to teach virtually will be housed here along with support staff."

Runn Principal Maria Hinojosa described this transition as another historical milestone for the district's first elementary. "Runn Elementary was the first campus to open in Donna in 1904," Hinojosa said. "Runn is also the pioneer in bilingual education and now we're the first virtual learning academy in Donna ISD and the Valley. So we're the only one of its kind. Teachers from other districts are servicing students from their assigned campuses or from home. We are housing all of our Kinder through sixth-grade teachers including our elective teachers in one campus."

Hinojosa said having all

teachers under the same roof is a big plus. "This will allow for us to provide support from administration at the district and campus levels," Hinojosa said. "It will also allow our teachers to collaborate and get to know our students better. Furthermore, our virtual learners from across the district will be housed here, which allows for a central location for them to call in case they need technical support, information or any other assistance."

Donna ISD Board Member Fernando Castillo spoke on behalf of the Board of Trustees. "We want to thank each and every one of you for being here for something that is very unique, but not uncommon across the state, the nation and even the world," Castillo said. "I don't know how many of you all grew up with 'Star Trek.' I grew up watching 'Star Trek' and they had little things that looked like iPads. That was back in the early 70s and here we are now—living it. We're about to embark in opening a new venue of education."



PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Let us pray especially for:

Reb & Heather Baker (son and daughter-in-law of Will & Anne Baker)

Bill & Gail Brandt (Faith Lutheran Church)

Britta Campbell (niece of Kent Campbell)

Renate Chamberlain

Pastor Sylvia De La Garza

Dean Garnett

Marilyn Garnett

Zoe Gray

Richard Learned (son of Sam and Bette Learned)

Alicia Lewis (granddaughter of Sam & Bette Learned)

Maria Mendoza

Joe Moore

Evelyn Nelson

Geoffrey Nelson (grandson of Lee and Mary Nelson)

Doug Pedersen (son-in-law of Forrest Zemlicka)

Ed Puder

Ryan Rounds (son of Marilyn Rounds)

Sharon Shull

Sandford Sill

Daniel Slade (son of Pastor Bob and Jan Slade)

Staff and children of Runn School

Don Van Deest

Elaine & David Wisely (daughter and son-in-law of Lou Vitek)

Tom Young

people experiencing violence in their lives, all the men and women of the police, fire, EMS, and all the men and women of the Armed Forces and their families.



Our 14-year-old dog Abbey died last month. The day after she passed away my 4-year-old daughter Meredith was crying and talking about how much she missed Abbey. She asked if we could write a letter to God so that when Abbey got to heaven, God would recognize her. I told her that I thought we could so, and she dictated these words:

Dear God,

Will you please take care of my dog? She died yesterday and is with you in heaven. I miss her very much. I am happy that you let me have her as my dog even though she got sick.

I hope you will play with her. She likes to swim and play with balls. I am sending a picture of her so when you see her you will know that she is my dog. I really miss her.

Love, Meredith

We put the letter in an envelope with a picture of Abbey and Meredith and addressed it to God/Heaven. We put our return address on it. Then Meredith pasted several stamps on the front of the envelope because she said it would take lots of stamps to get the letter all the way to heaven. That afternoon she dropped it into the letterbox at the post office. A few days later, she asked if God had gotten the letter yet. I told her that I thought He had.

Yesterday, there was a package wrapped in gold paper on our front porch addressed, 'To Meredith' in an unfamiliar hand. Meredith opened it. Inside was a book by Mr. Rogers called, 'When a Pet Dies.' Taped to the inside front cover was the letter we had written to God in its opened envelope. On the opposite page were the picture of Abbey & Meredith and this note:

Dear Meredith,

Abbey arrived safely in heaven. Having the picture was a big help and I recognized her right away.

Abbey isn't sick anymore. Her spirit is here with me just like it stays in your heart. Abbey loved being your dog. Since we don't need our bodies in heaven, I don't have any pockets to keep your picture in so I am sending it back to you in this little book for you to keep and have something to remember Abbey by.

Thank you for the beautiful letter and thank your mother for helping you write it and sending it to me. What a wonderful mother you have. I picked her especially for you. I send my blessings every day and remember that I love you very much. By the way, I'm easy to find. I am wherever there is love.

Love, God

You will all be happy to know this wonderful story is 100% true, please don't take offense to the reference of God, it's part of the story.

“Three things in human life are important: the first is to be kind; the second is to be kind, and the third is to be kind.”

Marry Jane

Live Love Laugh

AURORA HOUSE WISH LIST



Foods Grocery Store Gift Card *Fresh Fruits/Seasonal Fruits *Fresh Vegetables Frozen Juices Butter/ Margarine

Lawn Maintenance 30W motor oil (5)

2 Cycle Weed Eater Oil Weed Eater

String: 80 or 90 gauge Lawn Mower Gift Cards for gas for Lawn Mower Home Improvement Gift Cards

Office Supplies And Equipment: Colored Copier Paper 8½ X 11 *Copier Paper 8½ X 11 Pocket Folders Small sticky notes Plastic File Boxes *Manila Folders Dividers Highlighters Binders with plastic cover in front

Household Plastic Cups Foam Cups 8 oz. Antibacterial hand Soap Hand Sanitizer Laundry Detergent (HE Only) Foil Paper Parchment Paper Plastic Coffee filters *Garbage bags- 13-gal/ 30 gallons *Freezer bags gallon sizes *Ziplocs 1 gallon & 1 quart *Paper Towels *Toilet Tissue Air Freshener (sprays) – all aromas Light Bulbs Kleenex Windex Disinfectant wipes Adult size wipes Latex Free Nitrile gloves Medium *Clorox Floor Cleaners (Faboloso/Pine Sol) Powder Cleaner (Ajax)

*Milk *Eggs Instant Tea (sweet & unsweetened) Tea bags Coffee mate *Coffee: regular & decaf Soft Drinks: all flavors Lemonade Mix Bread Lunch meat Artificial Sweetener Sugar Substitutes Sugar *Oatmeal Potatoes *Rice *Pinto Beans *Lentils Olive Oil Vegetable Oil Cooking Spray Red Wine Vinegar Rice Vinegar Bread Crumbs Garlic Powder Garlic Salt Crackers Flour Cake Mix Frostings Mayonnaise Pancake Mix Pancake Syrup Honey Peanut Butter Jam/Jelly

Kitchen Napkins *Latex Free and Powder Free Gloves small Dish Soap

Meats Fish Beef Poultry Prepared Casseroles

Due to Health Regulations, we cannot accept the following: any opened items such as: packages of meat, medications, opened/expired bottles, boxes, canned food, cereal, rice, etc. ***We use a lot**

Aurora House Foundation is asking for donations.

Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor, a matching gift of up to \$150,000 will be donated to Aurora House to help us continue to provide compassionate care for those in our community who need it most. They will match up to \$150,000 donation from individual donors. We are challenging our friends, family, and supporters, to help us do something amazing and reach our goal! We cherish every donation* and work hard to ensure every dollar is put to work providing compassionate care to our residents. But we need your help!

It all begins TODAY! (Matching ends December 2021) Every dollar you donate will be matched dollar-for-dollar, doubling your donation and doing twice as much good! If you donate \$10 your donation instantly becomes \$20! If you donate \$500 your donation will become \$1,000!!

Become a Compassionate Care GEM today and sign up for monthly donations!

Website: www.aurorahouse.org/aurora-house-monthly-pledge-drive/

Mail to: Aurora House P.O. Box 976 Weslaco Texas, 78599

Call: 956-973-9690

Did you know? The CARES Act allows for up to \$300 per taxpayer (\$600 for a married couple) in an above-the-line deduction for charitable gifts made in 2020 and claimed on taxes in 2021 and each year thereafter (this is not limited to only 2020). This means that you can lower your income tax bill by giving to Aurora House even if you take the standard deduction on your taxes. Please talk with your accountant to learn more.



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**
God's work. Our hands.



**Christmas Eve
Candlelight Service
3 PM**

**Souper Bowl
February 13, 2022
Collecting Canned
Goods for
Aurora House**

**Annual Meeting
February 19, 2022
Fellowship Hall**

**Spring Fling
March 3, 2022
Villa de Cortez**

**Love of Christ Lutheran Church
914 W Third Street
Weslaco, TX 78596**

Corner of Border & Third Street
We worship in the Facilities of Faith Lutheran Church
Phone: **956-447-1337-Office**
Email: locmailbox@yahoo.com
WWW.LoveofChristelca.com
Office Hours: Tues-Fri 9:00am-2:00pm
Office Administrator: Julie Knutson 956-447-1337 - o

PASTOR ANN SCHLOSSNAGLE
PASTOR JOHN WILKINSON

503 707-7406-C
319 481-2970-C

2021 Church Council

President - Shirley Nelson 956 358-6690 - c

Vice President - Jon Schwartz 712 540-3555 - c

Secretary - Jo Coyle 651 470-8190 - c

Treasurer - Lauren Coyle 651 434-1694 - c

Associate Member at Large - Rex Kirchhoff 402 469-0176 - c

Finance Secretary/Prop. & Fin./Stewardship - C.B. Shields 956 330-7426 - c

Music/Worship & Discipleship/Prayer - Dean Garnett 956 463-5941 - c

Social Ministries & Outreach – Open Position