



LOVED BY GOD; LOVING OTHERS

# Loved by God; Loving Others. Fed by God; Feeding Others.

December  
2022

## The Shepherd's Voice

Monthly Newsletter of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church

The best Christmas character is Max.

We have to watch *The Grinch Who Stole Christmas* because Jesus will not return unless we watch it every year. It's part of the waiting and preparation of Advent.

And every year I want to be the Whos in Whoville. I especially want to be Cindy Lou Who because she gets the tiny little strawberry on the tiny tray and I love that. I also love the fact that she has no legs. We're thinking she's part seal. Somehow they figure out how to be joyful when everything is taken from them.

So I want to be a Who.

I want to imagine that if some green creep snuck into my house and stole absolutely everything while also leaving my house a mess, then I would have a huge heart of forgiveness. But I'm not that person. I might be able to get there, but the fact is my gut reaction would not be singing. And in all truthfulness, I'd still yell when he returned the stuff because I'd have to decorate all over again.

I want to be a Who, but the character I relate to the most is Max. He's the dog. I'm sure there are all kinds of arguments that the abuse situation Max is in makes him a pitiful creature. He and the Grinch do not have a healthy relationship. I think we can all agree on that.

But Max seems to make the best out of the situation. I'm enough of a church nerd that when I watch Max, I hear the words of our confession, "We are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves."

Max is not a hero. In the face of evil he can't figure out how to fix, he shrugs his shoulders and smiles. In the face of tasks or experiences that are overwhelming, he waves.

These are coping skills I have embraced too often but with some success. Some problems just seem too big and I can't figure out how to stop being a part of them let alone fixing them.

There really isn't any explaining the character Max. His motivation is not the easiest to figure out. And I realize it's a thirty minute holiday special so I won't spend too much brain power on doing it.

But somehow Max is complicit in evil without being wicked. Somehow he is still a light of grace and delight in a dark venture. He doesn't quite come off as a victim of evil he can't control, but he's not tainted by it either.

When the Grinch is set free from bitterness and evil, then Max is set free to be the joyful dog he's called to be. That for me resonates a little more than folks who are singing in the morning and not calling the cops.

I know I shrug my shoulders at too much evil, but Max gives me hope.

It's not an excuse to turn a blind eye to evil. We still need to strive for justice, but with a humble hope. My hope is that someday we will all be set free from bitterness and evil to be joyful creatures, but till then we do the best we can with what we've got. And there are worse ways to respond than shrugging your shoulders and smiling.

Peace,  
Pastor Tari





## Faith Formation at SOV

We hope you'll join us as part of your faith journey. There are opportunities to grow for all ages and comfort levels. Please join us during one of the weekday small groups or on Sunday morning.

### Sunday Schedule in December

8:30 am Choir Rehearsal  
 8:45 am Men's Devotion Group  
 9:30 am Worship.  
 10:30 am Advent Brunch and Bonding for Everyone

### Advent Brunch and Bonding for Everyone

All ages are welcome to participate in brunch, a devotion, and craft after worship on each Sunday in Advent. Part of the "bonding" will be prep for the Christmas Play that happens during Sunday morning worship on December 18. We will wrap up by 11:30 a.m.

### SOV Christmas Play

We will present the play during worship on December 18. Open to all ages, we are using the "Instant Christmas Play" script this year. Thank you Michelle Weaver and Amanda Duvall for helping lead this.

### SOV Choir

Everyone who likes to sing is invited to join the choir. Rehearsals happen at 8:30 a.m. Sunday mornings. The choir sings some Sunday mornings during worship and Christmas Eve.

### Holden Evening Prayer

Join us on Zoom for the lovely 30-minute Holden Evening Prayer Service, 5:30 p.m., Wednesdays, December 7, 14, and 21. Zoom link can be found on the SOV website.



### Weekday Small Groups

#### Monday Small Group Devotions

Noon Mondays, the group will continue their discussion on the book *No Cure for Being Human* by Kate Bowler. Books are provided thanks to Thrivent Financial.

#### Tuesday Small Group Devotions

Tuesday devotions will take a break until after the New Year.

#### Discipleship Academy—two Thursdays in December

Thank you for the energy and discussion in this crew. We continue with theology from 5:30-7:30 p.m., Thursdays, December 15 & 22. The topics are "What is salvation?" and "What does this mean?" The readings are available in Google docs and the link is on our website.

#### Small Group Devotions—Fridays in December

9 am in-person at SOV. Morning coffee (or tea) and a simple devotion (or two).



### Sunday Worship

Join us at 9:30 a.m. We worship in-person and on Zoom. The Zoom invite for worship is published in the weekly church email. Masks are encouraged at church, but not required.



## Many Hands & Many Hearts! Serving with Love at SOV

Check out these ways to contribute your generous gifts of reflection, time, money, food, or prayers. Prayers are appreciated for any and all of our ministries.

### Advent Devotions on SOV App

If you haven't yet downloaded the SOV app on your phone or tablet, please do so. Allow the app to send notifications, so you don't miss any of our upcoming devotions. Thank you to everyone who wrote an Advent devotion. Some paper copies will be available at church; and they will also be posted on the website: [www.sovlutheran.org](http://www.sovlutheran.org).

### AWARE - Thanksgiving and Christmas

Thank you to everyone who purchased food for the Thanksgiving meal boxes for AWARE families. Stay tuned for news about adopting families for Christmas.

### Glory Hall Meatloaf

Thank you to all of you who cook and serve and donate food to the Glory Hall. We will cook and serve our traditional meatloaf meal on Wednesday, December 21. Keep an eye out for the sign-up sheet for needed contributions of time and food.

### Glory Hall Tree in Sanctuary

Our traditional "warm clothing tree" for the Glory Hall will be set-up in the sanctuary. Stop by church and adorn the tree with warm socks, hats, mittens, gloves and scarves. Please have your donations to church by December 18.

### Food Pantry

We've got a wonderful crew of pantry volunteers. If you'd like to volunteer for the pantry too, let us know in the church office. The pantry can always use donations of canned or dry goods (or fresh foods too). Leave your donations on the table in the food pantry room (or in the pantry refrigerator or freezer).

Please note the pantry is closed on Saturday, December 24.

### Newsletter Sponsor

If you are interested in sponsoring a month of the newsletter in honor or celebration of something or someone, let us know. The suggested donation is \$100. Call or email the church to let us know which month you would like to sponsor and any special wording you want included.

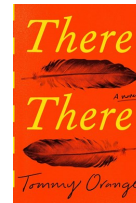


## Good Newsy Stuff

### Master Facility Team

Thank you to the following for their willingness to serve on the Master Facility Team: Chuck Orsborn, Dan Corson, Elfrida Nord, Jim Wilson, Jeff Jenkins, Linda Thompson, Steve Landvik, Theresa Ross

Part of our strategic plan is to have a master facility plan by March so we can prioritize projects and make sure they are consistent with our ministries.



### SOV Book Club

6 p.m., Friday, December 16 at Forbidden Peak. The book for December is *There There* by Tommy Orange.

This wondrous and shattering novel follows twelve characters from Native communities: all traveling to the Big Oakland Powwow, all connected to one another in ways they may not yet realize. Together, this chorus of voices tells of the plight of the urban Native American--grappling with a complex and painful history, with an inheritance of beauty and spirituality, with communion and sacrifice and heroism. Hailed as an instant classic, *There There* is at once poignant and unflinching, utterly contemporary and truly unforgettable.

### Senior & Post-High Overnights

Stay tuned for details! We have a cabin rented at the Shrine for two nights, December 28-30, and will have a one-night overnight for each group. Pastor Tari will let you know sometime soon which night for which group.

# Let the Blessings Overflow!

## Good News and Celebrations in December



### Birthdays

1 Amy Witt  
 2 Nicole Fenumiai  
 2 Judy Gustafson  
 2 Mac Oliver  
 3 Scott Ranger  
 4 Ben Hinchman  
 5 Bob Wright  
 14 Al Fenumiai  
 15 Sandra DeLong  
 16 MJ Hinman  
 17 Annette Ranger  
 18 Jacob Carls  
 18 Dani Witt  
 22 Joelle Newport  
 23 Loren Rasmussen  
 24 Caleb Abbott  
 27 Cameron Marx  
 27 Karsun Newport  
 29 Logan Balstad  
 29 Brittany Fenumiai

### Baptismal Birthdays

1 Gen Nestler  
 1 Bob Varness  
 5 Laura Rorem  
 10 Macey Fredenberg  
 13 Tyler Weldon  
 16 Bobbi Meek  
 21 Aaron Doten-Ferguson  
 24 Brittany Fenumiai  
 24 Nicole Fenumiai  
 25 Savona Kiessling  
 26 Nadine Marx  
 29 MJ Hinman  
 29 Arlo Hinton  
 29 Jack Pegues  
 29 Morgan Pegues  
 29 Rylan Pegues

### Christmas Eve Luminaries

Sponsoring a luminary is a lovely way to honor or remember loved ones at Christmas. The luminaries will be decorated by folks at SOV and adorn the walkway on Christmas Eve. The suggested donation will be \$10 per luminary. Keep an eye out for the luminary sign-up form.



### Christmas Eve Worship Services

#### Christmas Eve Bonfire Worship

5:30 p.m., Saturday, December 24

We will have a short, in-person worship outside around a bonfire (weather permitting; we will be indoors if the weather is really nasty).

#### Traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship

7 p.m., Saturday, December 24

Traditional worship with hymns and candle lighting. In-person, but you also have the option to participate on Zoom.

#### Christmas Day Prayer Service

7 p.m., Sunday, December 25

There will be no morning worship on Christmas Day. We will gather in the evening for prayer and quiet reflection.



### Moment for Prayer

Gracious God, during this season of peace and joy, we keep in our prayers those who are lost, lonely, poor, broken-hearted, hungry, and grieving. Help us to remind them of your unconditional love. May you fill them with your peace during times of grief and sadness. Amen.

We also keep in our prayers Pastor Tari Stage-Harvey; Alaska Synod Bishop Shelley Wickstrom; and ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton.

# January 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

www.printable-calendar.com



## Food Pantry Hours

9-10 am on Saturdays (in person)

Deliveries available Saturday morning to homebound folks in the Valley and Lemon Creek. Call the food pantry direct line for information or fill out the form on the home page of our website: [www.sovlutheran.org](http://www.sovlutheran.org)

**Food Pantry Direct Line: 907-500-3588**

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu


Fri

Sat

### Looking Ahead to January

**January 1**—There is an informational meeting following worship for the Greek pilgrimage in 2024. The theme is “Welcoming the Stranger” with an emphasis on refugees and hospitality. This is not a tourist trip, but a deep investment in learning more about ourselves and growing a community of faith.

**January 29**—Annual Meeting of the Congregation at 10:45 a.m. (immediately following worship; no faith formation that day).

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4 830 am Choir 845 am Men’s Group 930 am Worship 1030 am Coffee 1045 am Advent Brunch and Bonding	5 Noon Devos	6	7  530 pm Holden	8	9 9 am Devos	10 9-10 am In-Person Pantry & Deliveries
11 830 am Choir 845 am Men’s Group 930 am Worship 1030 am Coffee 1045 am Advent Brunch and Bonding	12 Noon Devos	13	14  530 pm Holden	15  530 pm Discipleship Academy	16 9 am Devos  6 pm Book Club at Forbidden Peak	17 9-10 am In-Person Pantry & Deliveries
18 830 am Choir 845 am Men’s Group 930 am Worship with Christmas Play 1030 am Coffee 1045 am Advent Brunch and Bonding	19 Noon Devos	20	21 SOV at the Glory Hall  530 pm Holden 7 pm Council	22  530 pm Discipleship Academy	23 9 am Devos	24 Pantry Closed  <b>Christmas Eve</b> 530 pm Bonfire 7 pm Candlelight Worship
25  <b>Merry Christmas</b>  7 pm Prayer Service	26 Noon Devos	27	28	29	30 9 am Devos	31 9-10 am In-Person Pantry & Deliveries
				Senior and Post-High Overnights		

## Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church

4212 Mendenhall Loop Road

Mailing Address: PO Box 34859, Juneau, AK 99803

Email: sovjuneau@gmail.com Office: (907) 789-4093

Food Pantry Direct: (907) 500-3588

Web: www.sovlutheran.org Like us on Facebook

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Your church family is here for prayers, visits, and encouragement. Please call if you would like a visit from Pastor Tari, or anytime you can use a kind word.

Pastor Tari enjoys opportunities to go for walks while visiting with folks. Feel free to call her and plan a time to go for a walk.

We would also love to hear from you with comments about or submissions to *The Shepherd's Voice*. If your address has changed, or if you no longer wish to be on our mailing list, we want to know that too.

**Rev. Tari Stage-Harvey, Pastor**

**Please see inside the newsletter for the many ways we are connecting.**

**Sunday Worship:** 9:30 a.m. (via Zoom and in-person)

**Faith Formation for All Ages:** See inside for details.

**In-Person Food Pantry:** 9-10 am Saturdays (closed on 12/24)

Deliveries available Saturday mornings to homebound folks. Call the pantry direct line for information.

**Food Pantry Direct Line (call with questions):** 907-500-3588

*The Shepherd's Voice:* Editor, Becky Corson and Production/Distribution, Lewis Gates