



ELIM
CHURCH
AN OASIS
IN THE CITY

DECEMBER
2017
THE
FORECASTER

“A Christmas Faith”

⁵ This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; ⁷ but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. —1 John 1:5-7

In his writings, John doesn't include a birth story. Rather, he proclaims that a light has come into the world. In John's understanding, either light is there, or darkness remains. In Christ, there is no moderate position; there is no gray area and there is no run-of-the-mill.

The same is true of God: “in him there is light, and no darkness at all.” (verse 5)

Because of technology, we perceive the darkness of the world with greater speed and frequency than ever before. We are just done learning of one tragedy, when another pops up in our newsfeed. In October and November, we saw two of the deadliest attacks ever on U.S. soil, just 35 days apart. The November 24 massacre of 305 people at a mosque in Sinai, Egypt, seemingly dwarfs the totals from Las Vegas and Sutherland Springs. How much darker can our world get?

How can we say we know God, but yet “walk in darkness” and “lie and do not do what is true”? (verse 6)

Perhaps the most terrifying thing about terrorism is that in these dark moments, the perception of what we are as human beings becomes impossible to discern. Like those trying to escape the gunfire in that dark PULSE nightclub in Orlando just a little over a year ago, we don't know who is a friend and who is the enemy. In the darkness, it's impossible to tell what and who we really are and—indeed—where we are going. In that horrific moment, the image we see in the mirror is not only distorted, it's dark, impossibly dark.

The good word of 1 John, however, is that there is a way to know who we are. “If we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another.” (verse 7)

In John's ‘anti-language’ of dark and light, there's only one way to know God, and only one way to know where we are going—through fellowship with ‘one another’ and ‘with the blood of Jesus, God's Son.’ For the community that surrounded John, Christian fellowship was the starting point where they began to see and be seen for who they were: the children of God, destined for glory. (1 John 3:2)

The first Christians didn't celebrate “Christmas.” Instead, they simply owned and proclaimed a ‘Christmas’ faith—a faith that (despite circumstances), chose to walk in the midst of great darkness with Jesus, the light. These early believers, inspired by the Holy Spirit, wrote and sang songs clinging to those words of Jesus: “I am the light of the world.” (John 8:12) The problems in the world haven't gotten any better or worse since then; it's still as dark and impossible as it ever was.

But the Light, the One we proclaim, is still as bright as it ever was.

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Leadership Team Update

“O Come, O Come Emmanuel!” This hymn reminds us of Advent, a time traditionally marked for remembering the years of preparation and consecration prior to the coming of the Messiah.

At Elim, we mark Advent with the display of a wreath. Its circle reminds us of God Himself—eternal and endlessly merciful. Its evergreen reminds us of the hope of eternal life. The four outer candles in the display represent the time of waiting and preparation for the Messiah during the four Sundays of Advent. The light of the candles reminds us of the Light of the world, and the prophetic promise of His coming. The white central candle of the Advent wreath, lighted on Christmas, reminds us of Christ and the humble means by which He came.

As Christians, we have tasted of His first coming as Savior, experiencing His forgiving grace and saving power. Through Scriptures, we have learned about and embraced the truths of His virgin birth, His sinless life, His atoning death, and His glorious resurrection. This, indeed, was a magnificent and redeeming event without comparison!

But at Elim, we also appreciate and embrace another significance in this season of Advent. This is a prime opportunity to affirm the promise that Jesus will one day, in the future, return to the earth as our Sovereign Ruler. May we never lose sight of this...

Bill McKibben, the writer and environmentalist, wrote, “Advent: the time to listen for footsteps—you can’t hear footsteps when you’re running yourself.” May we grab tightly to this truth as we experience the corrosive nature of unspeakable tragedy, uncertainty, and injustice in our world today. We are bound together at Elim Church for a purpose! Let us rise to a renewed hope, purpose and expectancy—letting our lives, our thoughts, and our words reflect the Gospel message always.

Thank you, Jesus, for giving us “strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow!”

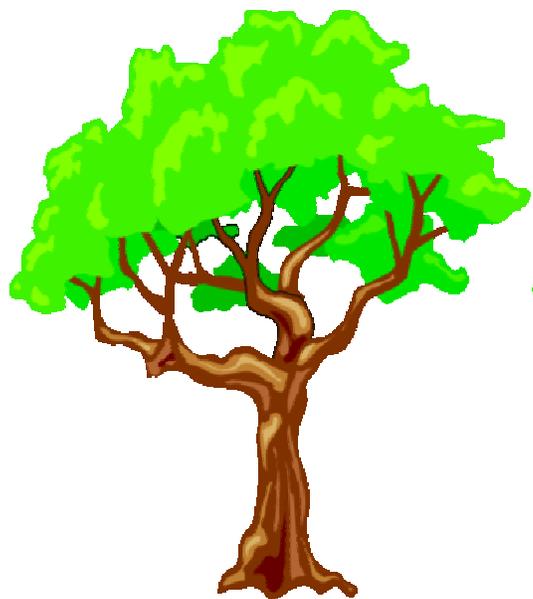
Jill Tezierski, for the Elim Leadership Team

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

December Birthdays!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to everyone at Elim celebrating a birthday this month!

Matthew Knutson (12-3), Greg Howell (12-4), Steve Moseman (12-4), Kari Nelson (12-4), Brendan Marsh (12-6), Felicity Champion (12-6), John Bremer (12-12), Micah Walden (12-14), Ruth Hill (12-15), Chad Eslinger (12-15), Ann Bremer (12-16), Larry Rodgers (12-19), George Johnson (12-26), Dan Edinger (12-27). Erin Hernick (12-29)



50 + Lunch—Tuesday, December 5, Noon-1:30 pm—Our December lunch will be at Jax Café. The full menu is available, per your taste and budget. This month's theme is "Jesus' Birthday Celebration!" Please bring a wrapped dollar store gift to share and be sure to RSVP on the sign-up sheet in the dining room. Contact Laurie Damberg with any questions.

Mariners' Breakfast—Tuesday, December 12, at 9 am—Breakfast in December will once again be at Denny's Restaurant (2045 Twin Lakes Parkway in Roseville).

MerryMakers' Christmas Party—Saturday, December 16, at 5 pm—Our Christmas Party will be at the home of Clayton and Doris Nolby. We will enjoy a potluck together, followed by games (with Ed & Joyce DeHaan and Clayton & Doris Nolby) and caroling (with Randy & Deb Somody). If your last name starts with A-L, please bring an appetizer or salad; if your last

name starts with M-Z, please bring a main dish. Also, please bring a dozen Christmas cookies or bars for dessert. We will also be discussing plans for next year, so please think about what you might want to do and what activity you would like to help lead or organize.

ECY Update

Rick Dischinger, Interim Director of Youth Ministry

Just in time for Thanksgiving, Elim Youth spent some time in Sunday School talking about anxiety and how to combat it with gratitude. It is an exercise that we are encouraged to do and it has amazing benefits!

Philippians 4:4-7 says: *Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

Max Lucado suggests three sources of anxiety in today's world: Change, Technology and Mobility. For the "iGen" generation (born after 1995), these are exciting times, full of potential and awesome opportunity! With these opportunities come challenges and anxieties. One example: the effect smartphones and screen time have on our young people has not been fully studied or understood. We do know that today's youth are less happy and more depressed than previous generations. Technology that was meant to enrich our lives has often led to increased anxieties!

The Apostle Paul has some simple advice about dealing with anxiety...don't do it! He says, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

When we are anxious, rather than turning to social media or our phones, God's advice is to leave our worry with Him and to give *thanks in every situation!* In Sunday School, we talked about how "every situation" means past, present AND future! We are to give thanks for the richness of God's blessing that is to come in our lives! For Elim Youth... that is a big deal! And God honors that activity with the *peace of God that transcends our understanding!*

The antidote for anxiety is God's peace, not more anxiety! If you have ever experienced this, you know it to be true! Reminding one another of what we are thankful for is a great place to start... and remain!



Elim Preschool News

The Christmas season is upon us once again and with it is the promise of God's love through the birth of Jesus. We celebrate this beautiful time with many activities focusing on the reason for the season, beautiful decorations, songs, and art. Our preschool will be alive with activity!

We had a wonderful turnout for our preschool conferences, and all the children got top notch reviews! We may be a bit biased, but we love these children so much that conferences go pretty smoothly! It is always a joy to be able to talk to parents about their wonderful little ones! Our last day of class for the year will be on Thursday, December 21, with our celebration on Friday, December 22. We are then off for two weeks, returning in January of 2018! Wow. That seems amazing, to say the least!

Registration for the 2018-19 school year will open up to the surrounding community in February of 2018. (Our enrolled families will register in January.) Please spread the word about Elim Preschool. It is with these kind words from all of you and the community that we are blessed with such wonderful enrollment. Thank you all from the bottom of our hearts.

Enjoy your holidays. Love your family and friends. Remember the reason we are all here; **Jesus was born for us all...**

Michelle Espelien, Elim Preschool Director

“Thank You” from Carolyn Pinke

Dear Elim family,

Thank you so very much for all your care poured out in hugs, cards, food and gifts. My children and I appreciate you!

With love,
Carolyn Pinke



YEAR-END
GIVING



Year-End Giving

If you plan to make an end-of-year donation to Elim, it must be in the church office by Friday, December 29, or postmarked by Saturday, December 30, in order for it to qualify as an eligible donation for the 2017 fiscal year. You may also place any year-end giving in the offering plate on Sunday, December 31. Anything handed in after this will appear on your first giving statement of 2018.

Christmas Cookie Open House

Come see the Olson family's house and enjoy a cookie and holiday drink!

Pastor Paul and Heather (and the family) are hosting an open house at their home on Sunday, December 3, from 2-5 pm. Come and go as you please; we look forward to seeing you!





December Wednesday Night Live

December's WNL will take place on Wednesday, December 13, at 6 pm. In addition to the regular activities, December's WNL will feature a Christmas craft at each table during dinner that families can make together.

Hanging Of The Greens

Please join us for the Hanging of the Greens on Saturday, December 2, at 4 pm. At this event (for all ages) we will decorate many spaces in the church for Advent, then enjoy supper. We will finish with singing and prayer in the sanctuary. Please bring side dishes and desserts to share (Elim will provide Sloppy Joes and drinks). Invite your friends and relatives to join us for this special time.



Advent Brunch



Advent Brunch

Elim will hold its annual Advent Brunch on Sunday, December 10. Brunch will be served in the Dining Room from 8:30-10 am. There will be no Sunday School (for any age) that day. Please feel free to invite your friends and relatives to join us for brunch, as well as for worship.

Christmas Eve Service and Blessing Service

Elim will hold its **Christmas Eve Service** on Sunday, December 24, at 4 pm. This will be a family-friendly candlelight service, and everyone is welcome to attend. Please invite your friends and relatives!

Each year, Elim Church engages in a very meaningful tradition—the **Blessing Service**. This service is an opportunity for every person, individually or as a family, to come forward and allow one of Elim's pastors or leadership to pray for you, to bless you, and to minister to you. This year's blessing service will take place during our morning worship time (10:30-11:30 am), on Sunday, December 31.

Kids Serving At Elim

Deb Somody, Director of Children's Ministry

ElimKids have many opportunities to serve at Elim during Christmas time.

First, you will see kids of all ages as Scripture Readers with their families during Advent.

On December 24, the Children's Choir will perform *Glorious* during morning worship. On Christmas Eve, at our family-friendly candlelight service at 4 pm, our Kids Hand Bell Choir will play *Away In The Manger*.

Finally, on Epiphany Sunday (January 7), the Children's Ministry (ages 2-6th grade) will present "**Emoji Christmas**" at 10:30 am. (Dress rehearsal is the day before, January 6, from 11 am-12:30 pm.) Please invite your friends and families to these wonderful opportunities.

Colossians 3:17 says, "Whatever you do in word or deed do it all in the name of Christ." The kids have been learning this each Sunday as we gather together for the Big God Story at 9 am, as well as during Children's Church. They are not the Church of tomorrow, but the Church of today!

May the Lord be honored and exalted in the lives of our children as they serve!



Save The Date!

Elim's women's retreat is Saturday, January 27, 2018, from 8:30 am-2 pm. The speaker is Linnea Winqvist, who will focus on rest and renewal in Jesus!

“God Moved Into The Neighborhood”

I grew up in Africa, and my second favorite story from the big black Book was “God came to earth as a baby!” Incredible, yet easier for Africans to understand than for Americans. Africans are much more aware of the spirit world. Ephesians chapter three says this truth well:

“Christ, the mystery, hidden by God for ages—the wisdom of God—now made known!”

This story is one for every day in Africa. When Bruce and I lived in Cote d'Ivoire, West Africa, we told it often. My best friend, Nochee, was healed when—out of the blue—a man walking by saw that she was very sick and asked if she wanted to be well. God sent him, a wandering evangelist—or an angel? Her heart agreed—even though the prayer was given in the name of Jesus, and she was a Muslim. After that, she took the Jesus road, believing utterly, amazed at the incarnation Story. She knew his power!

“In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.” (Ephesians 3:12)
Let the mystery thrill you!

Carolyn Pinke, for the Missions Team



The Unlimited / Kidz Klozet

The Unlimited is now accepting donations of gently-used, stylish, **WINTER** clothing—clean and on hangers. We can also use shoes and other accessories. Kidz Klozet is looking for clothing for kids of all ages, along with shoes, coats, backpacks... anything kid-appropriate, we can use!

You may drop off donations on Sundays in the old entry, behind the sanctuary. During the week, the office accepts donations during regular office hours. We are always in need of grocery or shopping bags.

In December, The Unlimited and Kidz Klozet are both open on the first Thursday of the month (December 7), from 9 am—noon.



December Calendar Changes

- There will be no Sunday School (for youth or adults) on December 10, because of the Advent Brunch, or on December 24 or December 31, due to Christmas and New Year's.
- The church office will be closed on Monday, December 25 and Tuesday, December 26, in observance of Christmas, as well as on Monday, January 1 and Tuesday, January 2, in observance of New Year's.



HAPPY 11TH BIRTHDAY HOPE AVENUE!

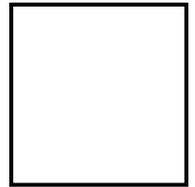
Hope Avenue Update *Becky Hanson, Pastor of Congregational Care*

The ministry of Hope Avenue continues to be an exciting part of Elim's overall vision of outreach beyond the walls of the church. We began as street outreach eleven years ago, but today offer at the church breakfast, showers, a clothing closet, foot care clinic, and food distribution each Sunday of the month. Many of our friends join us for Bible study and for worship. Lives have been changed both within our Hope Avenue community of friends as well as within our regular church body.

As we look forward to Christmas, we invite you to join us in one of the following ministry opportunities:

-  Provide a pair of gloves, mittens, socks and or scarves. We welcome your used coats, boots, snow-pants, hoodies, long johns, etc.
-  We invite you to volunteer on a Sunday morning to help make breakfast, work the clothes closet, etc. These are all works of love!
-  Pray for the ministry, that the love of Jesus will abound and that our precious friends will meet Him as the light of the world.

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Time Sensitive Information

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 •Men's Group, Dining Room, 6:30 am	2 •Hanging Of The Greens, 4:00 pm
3 •Hope Avenue, 7:15-9:30 am •Prayer Time, 8:00 am •Sunday School, 9:00 am •The Gathering, 10:00 am •Worship, 10:30 am •Olson Open House, 2-5 pm	4 •Women's Bible Study, 10:00 am, Lounge	5 •50+ Lunch, Noon, Jax Café	6 •Jesus Calling, 6:30 pm, Prayer Room •ECY, 6:30 pm, Youth Rooms, Gym	7 •Kidz Klozet, Unlimited open, 9:00 am	8 •Men's Group, Dining Room, 6:30 am	9
10 COMMUNION •Hope Avenue, 7:15-9:30 am •Prayer Time, 8:00 am •Advent Brunch, 8:30 am •Worship, 10:30 am	11 •Women's Bible Study, 10:00 am, Lounge	12 •Mariners' Breakfast, 9:00 am	13 •Seniors' Bible Study, 1:00 pm, Library •Jesus Calling, 6:30 pm, Prayer Room •Wednesday Night Live, 6:00 pm	14	15 •Men's Group, Dining Room, 6:30 am	16 •MerryMakers' Christmas Party, 5:00 pm
17 •Hope Avenue, 7:15-9:30 am •Prayer Time, 8:00 am •Sunday School, 9:00 am •The Gathering, 10:00 am •Worship, 10:30 am	18 •Women's Bible Study, 10:00 am, Lounge	19	20 •Jesus Calling, 6:30 pm, Prayer Room •ECY, 6:30 pm, Youth Rooms, Gym	21	22 •Men's Group, Dining Room, 6:30 am	23
24 •Hope Avenue, 7:15-9:30 am •Prayer Time, 8:00 am •The Gathering, 10:00 am •Worship, 10:30 am •Christmas Eve Service, 4 pm	25 Office Closed	26 Office Closed	27 •Jesus Calling, 6:30 pm, Prayer Room •ECY, 6:30 pm, Youth Rooms, Gym	28	29 •Men's Group, Dining Room, 6:30 am	30
31 •Hope Avenue, 7:15-9:30 am •Prayer Time, 8:00 am •The Gathering, 10:00 am •Blessing Service, 10:30 am						