



# Highlands Messenger

*This is Christ's church.  
There is a place for you here.*

## Happening at Highlands

Visit [www.highlandslutheran.org](http://www.highlandslutheran.org) for the most up-to-date times and locations for these events. Simply click on the [Events Calendar](#) or [Things to Be Part of at Highlands](#) button in the left menu.

### ADVENT SEASON EVENTS

- Sunday, 11/27 First Sunday of Advent, Worship @10:00am
- Sunday, 12/4 Community Birthday Celebration @11:15am  
NEW Prayer Service @6:00pm
- Wednesday, 12/7 Blue Christmas Service @6:00pm  
SPECIAL TIME Worship and Music Committee @6:30pm
- Saturday, 12/10 The Hanging of the Greens @10:00am  
Family Christmas Party in the Fellowship Hall @10:00am
- Saturday, 12/17 Christmas with Safonia! @7:30pm
- Sunday, 12/18 Special Music and Children's Service, 10:00am Worship  
Christmas with Safonia! @2:30pm  
NEW Highlands Happy Hour @6:00pm
- Saturday, 12/24 Christmas Eve Worship @4:30pm



### ADVENT 2016: EMMANUEL, GOD WITH US

**Sunday, November 27**, is the first Sunday of Advent and this year's them is "Emmanuel, God With Us."

Among the songs that we will be singing during this time are two by Albuquerque composer, Linda Larkin. They are "Whichever Way You Go", which will be sung before the Sharing of the Peace, and "Wait for God" during the Holy, Holy spot in the liturgy.

**December 18**, the fourth Sunday of Advent, will be the annual children's Christmas tableaux/pageant. Following that, the Highlands Choir, under the direction of Peggy Lundberg, will sing a lovely collection of carols "Glad Tidings We Bring," arranged by John Leavitt. Accompanying the choir will be Carol Mulvihill, flute, Paige Garnett, clarinet, and Lisa Phillips, handbells. Invite your friends to share in the music and the celebration of the birth of Christ.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The Christmas Eve Candlelight service will be held at **4:30 on December 24**. There will be no HLC service on Christmas Day, December 25. Those who would like to worship are welcomed by Pr. Sondra to the 10am HCC service downstairs.  
*Submitted by Wendy Haslegren*

### Inside this issue:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| December Worship                                | 2 |
| Ministers                                       |   |
| PRAYer Requests                                 | 2 |
| Birthdays and Anniversaries                     | 2 |
| There is a Place for You Here                   | 2 |
| From the Pastor:                                | 3 |
| <i>Let's Get Real about Politics and HLC in</i> |   |
| December Calendar, Seen And Heard               | 4 |
| Around the Church                               | 4 |

# Highlands Messenger

## Worship Ministers for December

Changes/Errors? Please contact Mary Williams

### December 4

Usher Team 2: Lorraine & Paul Rumpeltes, Jerry Haselgren

Reader: Nicole Jobin

Assisting Minister: Ken Wigg

Chancel Ministry: Mary Williams

Birthday Celebration: HLC and HCC

### December 11

Usher Team 3: Joe Milius, Martin Brotherton, Rick Wittkopp

Reader: Andy Lubansky

Assisting Minister: Carrie Olgeirson

Chancel Ministry: Judy Sims

Coffee Hour Host: Doug Howe

### December 18

Usher Team 4: Lorraine & Paul Rumpeltes, Jerry Haselgren

Reader: Carrie Olgeirson

Assisting Minister: Sue Wittkopp

Chancel Ministry: Sue Wittkopp

Coffee Hour: Christmas Cookies!

### December 24

Usher Team 1: Lynn Cooper, Joe Milius, Martin Brotherton, Rick Wittkopp

Reader: Judy Sims

Assisting Minister: Mary Williams

Chancel Ministry: Pam McClune

### WANT TO BE A PART OF THE WORSHIP TEAM?

At the minute, we have a few vacancies in the Assisting Minister and Chancel ministries. Both are a vital part of our worship each Sunday. If you are interested in or have questions about these ministries, please see Mary Williams after worship or email her at [mwilliams@iliff.edu](mailto:mwilliams@iliff.edu).

## PRAYEr Requests

**Marsha Reynolds**, her family, and her team of doctors.

**The Criley family, especially Marilyn and Paul.**

Send your prayer requests to  
[office@highlandslutheran.org](mailto:office@highlandslutheran.org)

## Get Involved — There is a Place for You Here!

*"In every community, there is work to be done... In every heart, there is the power to do it."* Marianne Williamson

We, the community of Highlands Lutheran Church, have work to be done, just as our broader community does. WE NEED YOU and value your participation. You have the power to help our community sustain, and reach further, to be a positive voice in the world. Get involved today! Stay involved and reach deep within for the power to do more! In January, our church council will enter a new year and we need your help.

Please contact Maren Markus ([marenmarkus@gmail.com](mailto:marenmarkus@gmail.com)) or Wendy Haselgren ([303-424-1908](tel:303-424-1908)) to hear firsthand about the wonderful experience of being on council. Our work at Highlands Lutheran has a ripple effect; be part of the ripple! *Submitted by Maren Markus*

## Birthdays and Anniversaries

### December

|    |                                       |
|----|---------------------------------------|
| 4  | Lynn Cooper                           |
| 10 | Pr Travis and Joaquin Johnson-Esparza |
| 11 | Sharon Dorcas                         |
| 17 | Robert Reynolds                       |
| 18 | Martin Brotherton                     |
| 19 | Julie Froehlig                        |
| 21 | Liz Smith                             |
| 28 | Ben Nielsen                           |



Is your name, or the name of someone you know, missing from the Birthday/ Anniversary list? Please contact the office so that Anna can update it: 303-477-2031 or [office@highlandslutheran.org](mailto:office@highlandslutheran.org)

# Highlands Messenger

## From the Pastor's Office

### *Let's get clear about politics*

The ELCA is not the religious wing of the Democratic party. Jesus was not a socialist, even though some of the things he did match their platform. Neither was he a constitutionalist, even though he said that he came "to fulfill the law". There is no question that Jesus was a powerful social figure who challenged the political systems of his day, but he did so for very different reasons than political gain. To reduce Jesus to the leader of a political movement is to reduce the power of Christ to the realm of policy and debate, to say that the Kingdom of God can be voted for or against. To reduce the church, the corporate Body of Christ in the world, to merely a politically motivated people is to neglect their true and most sacred power.

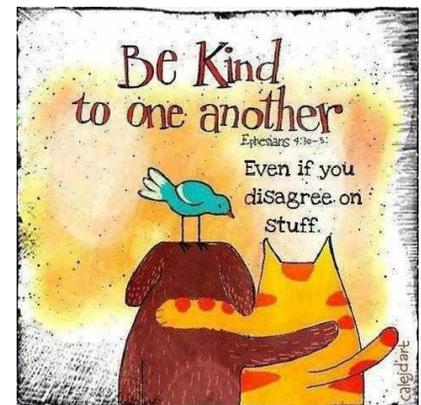
For progressively minded Christians as well as evangelicals, this

can be a hard pill to swallow, especially now. In the midst of real pain on both sides of the political aisle, the gospel of love for the whole of humanity is desperately needed. But, a politicized Jesus cannot move where he wants. We must take care not to put politicians before Jesus. / must take care. The idolatry of politics is a powerful thing.

The relevancy of the church is in the message it proclaims: God's grace cannot be contained. Grace comes as the Holy Spirit moves, not as the votes are cast. We are at an immensely important political juncture, in which churches of all traditions are clearing a path for Jesus to enter the world, as John the Baptist once did. Let's take his message to heart this Advent: The presence of God is made possible through repentance and forgiveness. That is our offering to the world; all others are worthless. In our political climate, those things

would go a long way. I don't care about Clinton or Trump. I care about you, and I hope you feel the same.

Gratefully, Your Pastor,  
Travis Johnson-Esparza



## HLC in Transition

*"Ch-ch-ch-changes (turn and face the strange)"*

Life is our experience of change over time. Or maybe, change is the experience of life over time! Regardless, every day gives us a new opportunity to face the strange changes, as David Bowie said. For churches, this is faithful work, and it is really what the intentional interim is all about. Come to think of it, it's what discipleship is all about.

I'd like everyone reading this

to consider being a part of Highlands' Transition Team. Your contributions to the vision of the church are important! Our work will include self-study as an organization, casting bold visions for our future, and strategic planning toward our vision. At its heart will be prayer, dialog, and discernment. The team will meet once per month on weekday evenings here at Highlands. 5-7 members is enough to complete the necessary tasks, but it will take all of us. We'll assemble the team over the next few weeks, and begin after the new year.

Only God knows how time shapes us into who we are. As Bowie said, "Time may change me, but I can't trace time." Faithful prophets, visionaries, and disciples, heed the call, turn and face the strange!

Thank you,  
Pastor Travis

## December 2016—Sunday Worship and Sunday School 10am

| Sun   | Mon                              | Tue | Wed   | Thu                    | Fri                             | Sat   |
|---|----------------------------------|-----|---|------------------------|---------------------------------|---|
|   |                                  |     |   | 1<br>6:30pm Choir      | 2                               | 3<br>6:30am<br>H Hunters  |
| 4<br>10am Worship &<br>Sunday School<br><br>11:15 am<br>Community Birthday<br>Celebration   | 5                                | 6   | 7<br><br>6pm Blue<br>Christmas Service<br><br>6:30pm Worship &<br>Music | 8<br><br>6:30pm Choir  | 9                               | 10<br>6:30am H Hunters<br><br>10am Family<br>Christmas Party<br><br>10am Hanging of<br>the Greens |
| 11<br>10am Worship &<br>Sunday School<br><br>11:15am Coffee   | 12<br><br>6:15 pm HLC<br>Council | 13  | 14  | 15<br><br>6:30pm Choir | 16<br><br>6:30pm HLC<br>Bookies | 17<br>6:30am H Hunters<br><br>7:30pm<br>Safonia Christmas   |
| 18<br><b>10am</b> Special Music<br>& Kid's Christmas<br>Service<br><b>11:15am</b> Coffee<br><b>2:30pm</b> Safonia<br>Christmas<br><b>6:00pm</b> Highlands<br>Happy Hour | 19                               | 20  | 21  | 22                     | 23                              | 24<br>6:30am H Hunters<br><br>4:30pm<br>Christmas Eve<br>Service                                  |
| 25<br><br><b>MERRY<br/>CHRISTMAS !!</b>   | 26                               | 27  | 28  | 29                     | 30                              | 31<br>6:30am H Hunters  |

### Seen and Heard Around HLC

Wee **Nora Milius** made her first appearance at worship on Sunday, November 13, accompanied by proud parents Sara and Joe and big brother, Isaiah. We welcome this new member of the Highlands family and will all gladly take turns cuddling her!

The annual Elderberries Thanksgiving feast was a delicious, rousing success. Thanks to **Ellen and Nicole** for coordinating the "do" and for providing the turkey and the lovely decorations. The next 'berries event is in February and will be hosted by Lynn Cooper, Pam McClune, Elizabeth Smith and Mary Williams.

Welcome back, **Vivian Anderson**, after your surgery and your stay in rehab. It was so good to see you!

**Pastor Travis and family** seem to be settling nicely into our midst. We are so happy to have them with us and wish them a glorious holiday season.

*Submitted by Wendy Haselgren*

#### YOU ROCK!!

The fall cleanup was a great success!

Thanks to **Elizabeth Smith** for cleaning up the bed surrounding the electronic sign in the front yard. Your hours of hard work made a big difference.

Thanks to **Ellen and Nicole** for cleaning up the potted plants from the front porch. It's hard to see the beautiful blooms go, but it had to be done!

Thanks to **Martin Brotherton** for trimming the sumacs out back and bagging up the results, and to **Maren Markus** for cleaning up the pinecones and needles.

Thanks to **Ken Wigg** for getting the swamp cooler ready for winter, and to **Andy Lubansky and Erin Power** for cleaning out the gutters.

Thanks to **Pam McClune** for dusting and cleaning the Narthex tabletops, chairs and shelves, and to **Mary Williams** for dusting the library windowsills and book shelves.

Thanks to **Judy Sims** for cleaning up the lounge area: tables, chairs and sink. It looks so much better!

And then there are all of the clean-up and decorating fairies who do their jobs anonymously—**THANK YOU!**

