

Helping

December 2021



Hands

For the South Side of Lansing

Vol. XII. No. IV. © 2021 Redeemer Church and Helping Hands Christian Learning Center, Lansing, Michigan

Good News!

Christmas Eve—Candlelight Worship

Friday, December 24th, 2021

- Christmas Eve Worship Begins @ 7:30pm,
**To Be Covid Safe we will Not start with a Hymn Sing This Year*
- Communion Will Be Open To All
- Silent Night Will Be Sung, but No Candles will be Shared

Sunday, December 26, 2021

- Hymn & Stories @ 10:00am
- Communion Shared By All

Come join in with family, friends and neighbors for a time of holiday cheer. We will share the carols you love and hear God's pure and holy Word. What more could we ask for on the Eve of our Lord's birth?

Come to a relaxed setting and celebrate the "LOVE" of God that has come to earth for each of us. ***A mask is required by all.** See you on Friday, December 24th or Sunday December 26th.

Join fellow friends and neighbors for **Christmas Eve Service or Holiday Hymns with Christmas Stories or BOTH.** Fill your holidays with the true meaning of Christmas in a SAFE way by remembering the birth of God's Son.

May the love of our Father in heaven touch you this year in a way it has never touched you before. Remember Jesus came so that God could **"be with us"**- ALWAYS!!

See you, Friday, December 24th @ 7:30 p.m. and Sunday December 26th @ 10:00 a.m.



Merry Christmas

God's Helping Hands

Redeemer Church, E.L.C.A. “...your helping hands”

A Congregation of the *NorthWest Lower Michigan
Synod of Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America*

2727 W. Holmes Road
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517-882-8622 (school voice)
517-882-2063 (fax for both)
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redeemerlansing.com
hhclearningcenter.com

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Choir Rehearsal at 8:30am
Sunday Study Time at 9:00am
Sunday Worship begins at 10:00am

*Live & Streaming

**Holy Communion is Celebrated Every Sunday and Open
To all of God's Children*

Sunday Luncheon follows worship, 11:15am
Wed. Adult Enrichment Hour, 7:00pm

CHURCH STAFF

Jan Hite, Pastor
Alison Sall, Violin
Jeanette Eastham, Guitar
Bill Hart-Davidson, Bass
Tom Jones, Minister of Music
Sandra Walker, Council President
Vickie Crouch, Learning Center President
Carla Fitzgerald, Learning Center Director
Church Council meetings are open to all members.
**Their normal meeting time is the 3rd Sunday of
each month @ Noon.**

Helping Hands Christian Learning Center Board meetings are open to all to all members, parents and community members. **Their normal meeting time is the 3rd Thursday of each month @ 6:00pm**

Helping Hands Newsletter

is published monthly

Editors: Carla Fitzgerald and Pr. Jan Hite

*Deadline for the **January 2022** edition is:
December 20, 2021

*The editors reserve the right to make changes to all items submitted.



*“Our Hands are God's hands at
work with those in need”*

Birthdays & Anniversaries

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Paula Gartung	Dec. 02
Harry Wilson	Dec. 13
Sandra Walker	Dec. 20
Edward Fitzgerald	Dec. 21
Tom Jones	Dec. 21

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Ed & Carla Fitzgerald	Dec. 2
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JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Barbara McGraw	Jan. 24
Katherine Jones	Jan. 27
Denise Eulert	Jan. 31

We are sorry if we missed your special day. Please let the office know of your date by calling 882-8000, emailing, janhite@sbcglobal.net or by dropping your name and Birthdate or Anniversary date in the offering plate. **Thanks!**

ANNUAL MEETING SET...

Our Annual Meeting is set for **Sunday, January 30, 2022 following worship.**

As always this is an important time as we will decide on budgets for both our church and school, elect officers for the boards of both our school and church council and highlight what we have accomplished in the year 2021 and what we plan to do in the year 2022.

Please mark 1/30 on your calendar now as it is important that we all be present.

**See you Sunday, Jan. 30, 2022
following Worship!**



Consider Who's Most at Risk

This Holiday Season



As you're deciding what precautions to take this Christmas Season, or whether to travel at all, keep in mind the people you're trying to protect. The most important goal is to keep safe those who are at risk of severe disease or dying from COVID-19, says Denis Nash, professor of epidemiology at the City University of New York and co-founder of the CHASING COVID Cohort Study, a research project designed to understand the virus' spread. Even if they're vaccinated, people who are older or have pre-existing conditions are still at a higher risk of ending up in the hospital or dying of the virus.

Of course, not being vaccinated puts people at much higher risk of severe COVID-19. Unvaccinated adults are about 12 times more likely to end up in the hospital than vaccinated people, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

It's also worth considering the safety of children who are too young to be vaccinated or are only partially vaccinated. Although it's true that kids are at lower risk of severe COVID-19 than older people, that would be cold comfort if your child ends up in the hospital. "There are no guarantees," says Shruti Mehta, a professor of epidemiology at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. "The problem is that statistics don't tell [parents] what's going to happen to their child." In addition, unvaccinated children can still be carriers of the virus even if they don't suffer related symptoms, which means they can unknowingly pass it on to those who are at higher risk of severe disease, like grandparents.

Once you've identified who's at greatest risk, the next step is to consider how you can protect those people. For instance, if you have a young, unvaccinated child, the "safest scenario," says Mehta, is if they're surrounded only by people who are vaccinated. She emphasizes that when someone you're gathering with is unvaccinated, it's especially important to layer on other protective measures, such as reducing other social activities and masking around the time of the visit.

For her part, Mehta has been thinking about how to keep her elderly father safe over the holidays. She says that she'll make sure he's had a booster and throughout the season gatherings, will only come in contact with vaccinated, masked people. "**That's the best that we can do,**" she says.

Know Who's Vaccinated—or Had a Booster

It isn't foolproof, but the best thing you and your loved ones can do to protect yourselves from COVID-19 is to get vaccinated. Fortunately, more people are eligible for vaccination than ever before: **children as young as 5 can now receive the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine.**

Before you agree to attend a Christmas Celebration, speak to the other guests about whether or not they and their families are vaccinated. "It's always important to have conversations well in advance with everyone involved about the plan to gather safely."

You and your loved ones may be able to further strengthen your immunity by receiving a booster shot. Boosters are currently recommended for people at high risk for severe COVID-19—including those over age 65 and who have certain health conditions or are at increased risk because of where they live or work. They're also recommended for anyone who initially received the J&J, Pfizer or Moderna shots. Check for age eligibility before you make an appointment.

Think About Where You're Going ... and Where You're Coming From

The spread of COVID-19 isn't *just* about our own behavior—it's also about what's going on in our communities. That's why you should keep an eye on how quickly the virus is spreading in your local community, as well as in the community you're traveling to.

Dr. Jill Foster, a professor of pediatrics at the University of Minnesota, says that if the parent of an unvaccinated child asked her if they should travel, "I think the first thing to ask is where they're going," she says. "The number of infections is very low in New York; I would feel very safe taking an unvaccinated child to New York. I'm now in Minnesota, which has some of the highest [daily case] rates in the entire country right now. And so, I wouldn't bring an unvaccinated child to Minnesota."

Continued On Next Page.....



Please join us for these upcoming Community Events & Needs

“Don’t Forget Poinsettias or Holiday Gifts” ...

Every Christmas Season we have the opportunity to purchase a Poinsettia Plant for the church or a special gift for another in need. This year our special gifts are: all on the home front: **Food Backpacks for Kids on the Weekend, \$10; 10 Warm Meals @ Local Soup Kitchen \$20.** If you purchase a Poinsettia Plant to adorn our worship space for Jesus on Christmas Eve **the cost of each plant is \$10/each.** Thank You for your gift!!!



“Mobile Food Pantry” ...

Date: Saturday, December 18, 2021 @ 9-11am
Distribution of **FREE, fresh, non-perishable food items** at **Lansing Catholic Central, 501 Marshall St. Lansing.** For more info. Call 483-4477.



Who can participate?

- The disadvantaged and vulnerable.
- Senior citizens on fixed incomes.
- Families/individuals with limited/low income jobs.

ALL PARTICIPANTS MUST BRING A VALID DRIVERS LICENSE OR I.D.

THANK YOU...to ALL OF YOU for caring for those in need. This year we put together 10 “Thanksgiving Food Baskets” for families in our surrounding neighborhood to enjoy Thanksgiving. It is always a blessing when we can be a “blessing” to others. A BIG “thank you” to **EACH OF YOU** for making this project a wonderful success. May God bless **ALL OF YOU** for the way you have chosen to bless those in need. Keep your eyes open and see where you can help a brother or sister in need, especially as the economic challenges continue around us. **Thanks!**



“Hospice-Grief Support During Covid” ...

Hospice of Lansing knows that the holidays are a difficult time for those who are grieving. With holidays comes tradition and with tradition comes the memories of those you love and are missing. Holidays, like losses, cannot be avoided. Sometimes our grief feels unbearable and we may try to escape the pain but we can't. The key is to try to find a balance. **In the past,** Hospice has held support groups, however Covid has gotten in the way of those. Even though groups are not meeting, please know that Hospice can provide you with support by phone, in their office or at your home. If you need someone to talk with don't hesitate to contact them about what you are experiencing.

Hospice of Lansing: 517-882-4500

...cont. from pg. 3, “Consider Whose Most At Risk”

What Else Are You Doing to Reduce Risk (Besides Getting Vaccinated)?

Beyond getting vaccinated, infectious disease experts say it's important to keep up the now-familiar pandemic safety measures: **social distancing, masking, washing your hands and considering eating outside.** There's promising evidence from last Thanksgiving that efforts to slow transmission can make a difference. In research published by *Scientific Reports* in August, Mehta and colleagues from Johns Hopkins found that people who traveled for Thanksgiving were only more likely to test positive for COVID-19 if they'd also participated in lots of other activities that put them in contact with people in the weeks before and after the holiday.

One big lesson for this year, says Mehta, is not only to think about the holiday itself, but all the other gatherings we're taking part in around that time. “I think it's this idea that if you're going to do one thing, you can't do all of the others,” says Mehta. “If you're going to travel, just limit the other pieces. Don't go to a restaurant every day the week before you travel.”

Consider Waiting Until Next Year

If you ultimately decide that the risks posed by gathering for the holidays are too great, **your best option might be staying home.** That's especially true for those who are unvaccinated, and even more so if they're at higher risk for COVID-19 and its variants. “Really think twice,” before you risk the lives of those you love or yourself!!

Yes, it is a challenging time, but it is Christmas so look for the JOY found in the Baby born in the stable in Bethlehem. Merry Christmas!!





Helping Hands Christian Learning Center

Our Mission: to provide nurturing care to God's children through our helping hands, offering a safe haven for holistic growth.

7 ways to prevent holiday stress — for your children

The holidays can be hectic — and tense. Between buying presents (expensive and nerve-racking), holiday events (how many holiday concerts can there be?), entertaining (so much cooking), traveling, and family gatherings (which are not always as pleasant as we might like), what should theoretically be fun has a way of becoming stressful. It can be stressful for kids, also.



Okay, they aren't driving long distances, dealing with office parties, or managing a credit card bill. But it is stressful nonetheless. Routines are off, there are so many expectations, and the ambient stress has a way of affecting children too.

Here are seven ways to prevent and reduce holiday stress for children this season.

1. Manage your own stress. Not only are you setting an example, there's just no way to stop your children from sensing your stress and being affected by it. It's kind of like the safety message we hear every time we get on an airplane: if you are flying with a child and the oxygen masks drop, you should put yours on first and then put on the child's. You're no good to anyone if you can't function. Try to be self-aware. Set aside time for yourself. Create code words that your partner and friends can use to let you know when you are starting to act like a snippy, crazy person. Practice self-care. Get enough sleep. Speaking of sleep...

2. As much as possible, keep routines the same. Kids do best when routines are predictable — and healthy. This is particularly true for sleep. As tempting as it may be to let kids stay up late and sleep late throughout the holidays, try to stay within an hour of usual times, except for special occasions (like New Year's Eve). We all do better when we stick to our sleep routines. Same goes for mealtimes (be sure your kids get three healthy meals a day, preferably with you and not in front of the television). As you think about how your children will spend the holidays...

3. Manage expectations. My youngest child has a way of getting incredibly excited for Christmas,

expecting that he will get that incredibly expensive and hard-to-find Lego set, and that we will spend every day of vacation visiting museums and doing other activities, preferably with his friends — and then getting sad when he gets something slightly different and has to amuse himself some days. This is true for lots of kids, and is very preventable. Up front, let kids know what they can and can't expect. You don't have to give away the surprise, but you could, as a family, say that everyone gets one big but not break-the-bank gift (and otherwise set parameters on gifts). And you can sit together, look at the calendar, and let your kids know what you can and cannot pull off when it comes to vacation activities. As you think about activities...

4. Keep kids active. Speaking of television, sitting in front of it (or a gaming console or an iPad or phone) all day isn't good for anyone, and exercise is a known stress-buster. Kick them outside. Go to the park. Take advantage of free swim time at the local Y. Go for walks together. That together part is key...

5. Spend some time together. Real time, where you are sharing an activity. Going to the movies or having a family movie night is fine (and a nice way to end a crazy day), but try to do things that involve actual interaction. Play games together. Visit a museum together. Bake cookies. Which is a good example of how you can...

6. Build some family holiday rituals, if you don't have them already. Whether it's holiday baking, or making homemade gifts together, or a particular concert you always attend, or some friends you invite every year, create things you can do together every year that are meaningful and fun. There are plenty of things you *have* to do. Make your family rituals things you *want* to do. And as you build your rituals...

7. Choose something to do as a family that helps others. Choose toys for a toy drive. Go through clothes in the closet and bring gently used ones to a shelter or clothing drive. Donating money to causes is always great, but look for things that your children can actively participate in, preferably that you can do as a family. Try not to think of it as another family chore. Instead, think of it as a way to not only teach kindness, but to keep perspective on the holidays — and on what's way more important than presents or parties. That's a perspective we all need — and the perspective that could save all of us a lot of stress.

By Claire McCarthy, M.D., Harvard Health Publishing

What's Happening

December/January

Dec 20th—Dec 31st Winter Holiday—No School-LSD, LCA & Cole Academy

Dec. 21st—First Day of Winter

Dec. 23rd & Dec. 24th Center Closed

Dec. 24th—Christmas Eve

Dec. 25th—Merry Christmas

Dec. 31st—Center Closed-New Year's Eve

Jan. 1st—Happy New Year

Jan. 17th—Martin Luther King Day—All schools closed

Jan. 21st—Half day LSD

Helping Hands Christian Learning Center is a ministry of Redeemer Church and has been servicing the community for over 25 years. Here we offer love and quality care to God's children. Come in today to see what we have to offer you and your family.



Sunday Schedule

-Choir Rehearsal:	8:00am
-Study Time:	9:00am
-Worship:	10:00am
-Lunch and Fellowship:	11:15am
-Wed. Adult Enrich. Class:	7:00pm

We are a church of this community and ALL are welcome.



Happy Birthday To You...

December

Aaliyah D. 12/08
 Jack D. 12/10
 Pauline K. 12/11
 Chelcea R. 12/14
 Nolan C. 12/17
 Wyatt B. 12/26
 Jackson W. 12/27
 Carter C. 12/31

January

Aidan S. 1/02
 Eli W. 1/02
 Tiana B. 1/08
 Morgan B. 1/09
 Vivian S. 1/11
 Ms. Michell 1/19
 Charles S. 1/30
 Kohlton P. 1/31

**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY**



It is not
what's
under the
tree that
matters but
who is
around it!!



***Merry Christmas
to all
from
Helping Hands
Christian Learning Center***

Have a special and safe holiday!!!



The Gift

We can bring so many blessings into our lives just by realizing that it is never too late. Before you turn the page on this day, make a pact with yourself to untie the ribbons and open the gifts we are given in this life. Do ordinary things in extraordinary ways. Have health and hope and happiness! Live a full life on this earth, understand your real worth, and wish on all your stars.

And don't forget, for even a day,
how very special
you are.

Always remember our greatest
gift of all....

Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
Give thanks for the ultimate gift He brings

Helping Hands Christian Learning Center...

**Child Care, Pre-School, Kindergarten Readiness,
Before and After School & Summer Programs**

are here, for your "Peace of Mind"!

Call 517-882-8622 for more information

“A BROTHER LIKE THAT” (Author Unknown)

Sam was awestruck when he received a new car from his brother as a present a couple of days before Christmas. As Sam finished up work and left his office on Christmas Eve, a small boy in ragamuffin clothes and worn out shoes was walking around the shiny new car admiring it. “Is this your car, Mister?” asked the boy as Sam approached. Sam nodded his head, smiled and answered: “My brother gave it to me for Christmas!” The boy was astonished. “You mean your brother gave it to you and it didn’t cost you nothing? Man, I wish...” He hesitated. Of course Sam knew what the boy was about to wish for. He was going to wish he had a brother like that. But what the young fellow said instead; stopped Sam in his tracks. **“I wish,”** the boy continued; **“That I could be a brother like that.”** Sam looked at the boy in astonishment, then impulsively asked; “Would you like to take a ride in my new car?” Excitedly the boy answered; “Oh yes! I’d love that!”

After a short ride, the little passenger turned and with his eyes aglow, asked: “Mister, would you mind driving in front of my house?” Sam smiled a little. He thought he knew what the young boy wanted. He wanted to show his neighbors that he could ride home in a brand new automobile. But once again; Sam was quite wrong. “Will you stop where those two steps are?” the youngster asked, pointing to a small and nondescript Apartment. “I’ll be right back!” He ran quickly up the steps. And In a moment, Sam heard him coming back; but this time not as fast as he had left. He was carrying his little crippled brother in his arms. He sat his little brother down on the bottom step; then hugged up against him and pointed to the shiny car. “There she is Buddy, just like I told you upstairs. His brother gave it to him for Christmas and it didn’t cost him one red cent. And someday I’m gonna give you one just like it...then you can see for yourself all of the pretty things in the Christmas Store windows; that I have been trying to tell you about.”

Sam got out of the car; lifted the smaller fellow in his arms and said: “Let’s all take a ride and see those Christmas Store decorations; right now.” With his little brother in the front seat, the shining-eyed older brother climbed in beside him and the three of them began a joyous and memorable Holiday ride; they would never forget.

That Christmas Eve; Sam realized what Jesus meant when He said: **“It is more blessed to give than receive.”** He also found heartfelt inspiration in the little ragamuffin boy’s words... **“I sure wish I could be a brother like that.”**

May the wonderful Spirit of Christmas, wrap its arms around your Family and your Hope filled hearts.

Merry Christmas!



Redeemer Church, E.L.C.A.
“...your Helping Hands”
Helping Hands Christian Learning Center

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www.redeemerlansing.com
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**TIME-VALUED
MAIL**

Please deliver by:
Dec. 23rd

*Christ
IS Born!*



We invite you to visit us. **Everyone is welcome here!** We are people of God who give ourselves freely and joyfully to God, to one another and to others. This community witnesses to a God who is

active in the world. *We proclaim God's active love for all people:* poor and rich; people of all cultures and races; women, men, children, younger, older, single, married, divorced, widowed, those of all lifestyles, blended families, single-parent households, ... all are welcome! You are invited to meet this community that seeks to reflect God's open and loving embrace.

***SUNDAY MORNINGS
Praise Time!***

- ♦ Worship begins at 10:00 a.m.
 - Holy Communion is shared each week
 - ALL are welcome *Dress is casual
 - **Masks Are Required**

**ALL ARE ENCOURAGED TO
JOIN US!!**

**WE ARE A DIVERSE, AND
WELCOMING COMMUNITY.**

***Masks Are Required By All**



Join Us At...
**Helping Hands Christian
Learning Center**
December 20—January 3rd
7:00 a.m. till 6:00 p.m., M-F

While your elementary age children are on break from school, Helping Hands Learning Center will be offering full-day care for children, ages 5-11. There will be indoor and outdoor activities to keep them busy along with movies, crafts, games, and some field trips. Also breakfast, lunch and snacks are included. **OUR SPACE IS LIMITED**, so call to reserve your spots soon!!

***We are closed Thursday, Friday,
December 23, 24 and
Friday, December 31st.**

517-882-8622

***Masks Are Required By All**

Winter Break