



newsletter

Northwest Hills Church
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Rev. Alex Wolf, Pastor
Suzy Parsons, CE Director
Cheryl Morehouse, Office Administrator

Vol. 53 No. 2
January 28, 2025

Barb Renicker, Music Director
Nate & Rita Merriam, Custodians



February 2025



February 2		9:30 AM Worship/Communion (No Sunday School) 10:30 AM Hot Chocolate & Cinnamon Rolls—C 10:45 AM Worship 101—L 6:30-8:30 PM Square Dancing—FH
February 9 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE		9:30 AM Worship/Sunday School 10:30 AM Fellowship—C (Fellowship Cmte.) 10:45 AM Worship 101—L 5:00 PM Watch Party—C 6:30-8:30 PM Square Dancing—FH
February 16		9:30 AM Worship/Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship 101—L 6:30-8:30 PM Square Dancing—FH
February 23		9:30 AM Worship/Sunday School 10:30 AM Urban Family—C 10:45 AM Worship 101—L 6:30-8:30 PM Square Dancing—FH

"The Big Game" Watch Party Sunday, February 9th – 5:00 PM Commons

Come watch the "Big Game" on Sunday, February 9th at 5:00 PM here at the church in the Commons! Bring your favorite tailgate food or snack to share. No RSVP needed, just come and enjoy!



Deadline for articles/information for the monthly newsletter is usually the second Sunday for the next month's newsletter. Thank you in advance for your contributions!



"Northwest Hills Church,

Thank you! Your generous donation of time and energy is amazing! All of your donated goods will go to the Winter Night Watch Program, aimed directly to the homeless. We appreciate you!

*— Maria Moreno & Todd Connely
Salvation Army"*

"Thank you to the Northwest Hills Congregation for the Christmas cards, well wishes, and prayers. We're doing OK, and hope to be back once the weather gets better." - John & Connie Anderson

*"Thank you to EVERYONE who purchased cookies during our November and December Cookie Sales! Our Northwest Hills family is simply the best!"
— Sarah Circle*

For God

So lo**V**ed the world

Th**A**t he gave his

On**L**y

Begott**E**n

So**N** so

Tha**T** Whoever

Bel**I**eves

In Him Shall

Have**E** everlasting

Life

John 3:16

Deadline Sunday, February 2nd!

FEBRUARY MISSION & SERVICE PROJECT

We will be creating hand-made Valentines again this year for those in care facilities in our community! It was such a well-received and appreciated kindness. Our "Valentine's Box" will be out again starting this month to collect your hand-made cards to share God's love with others.



We will be collecting home-made Valentine's Day cards from January 1st through February 2nd. (See collection box in the Commons). If anyone has suggestions as to where we can deliver them and a contact person at the facility, please let me know. We will be delivering again to Immanuel Fontenelle on February 10th as the residents truly enjoy being remembered in this special way. Thank you SO much for helping out!
— Kath Caito, Chair

Membership Class: February 15th

Have you been attending Sunday worship and other church activities for a while now? We would love to invite you to experience the joy of belonging to our faith community through church membership. Pastor Alex will host a membership class on Saturday, February 15th from 10:30 AM to 12 noon. Our membership class is an opportunity to learn more about our church, what we believe, meet new people, and find ways to serve. Even if you decide not to join, it will still be time well spent.

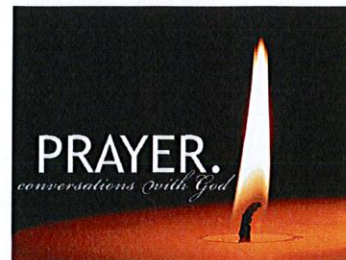
Please RSVP to Pastor Alex.



POP TABS: Our pop tab collection was so successful that we've decided to make this a year-round project! Now you can bring your pop tabs to church at your convenience so they don't accumulate in a pile at your home! Look for the big jar in the Commons. Thank you for your participation with our community partners – Ronald McDonald House and the Shriners!



Our church family will continue to collect **non-perishable food donations** for the Holy Cross Church Food Pantry. Our faithful contributions are blessing those in need who experience food insecurity in our immediate neighborhoods and community. Your selfless acts of sharing food with our neighbors makes a lasting impact in ways we may never know on this side of heaven. The bin for collections is located in the Commons for this year-round support. Thank you for your generosity!



Prayer chain requests can be called to Ardell Reuter at 1-918-703-1068 or the church office at (402) 572-8392.

REMINDER: we are collecting "**white elephants**" throughout the year for our October sale! No clothes** or broken items, please. There is a large green bin in the Board Room (down the hall across from the main church office) for your items. Thank you for your contributions!

CLOTHES** are being collected year-round for the Open Door Mission. New or clean, gently-used clothing can be deposited in the specially-marked bin in the Commons. Thank you for your kindness!



CRAFTERS! We took a break from the Wednesday craft group during January, and are starting up again this month! Any questions, contact Leigh Powell.

ALL LADIES GROUPS/CIRCLES continue to take a break during the month of February. See you all in March!

MEN'S MINISTRY BREAKFAST: We are also taking a break during the winter months of January and February, and look forward to resuming on Saturday, March 1st at 9:00 AM in the Commons. It is a BYOB: "Bring Your Own Breakfast." All men of the church are invited for this great time of fellowship!

WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDIES continue to take a break during February. We will see everyone again in March!



CHURCH COUNCIL have their meeting on Thursday, February 13th at 7:00 PM in Room 128 (Community Room/Choir Room).

Thank you for your kind responses regarding updating our prayer list. We are always encouraged to hear when our loved ones are much improved. Please continue to let us know of any changes so that we can update our list and assure that the prayers going out weekly are the most current and urgent needs expressed. Thank you in advance. The ongoing list is below:

Continued Prayer Requests: Sandy Christopherson, Dianne Hasch (Dianna Cupps' friend), Jeff Walton, Susie Ryan, Cierra Ervin, Kyle Hurt & Jacoby, Marchelle Conrad, Peg Hawkins (friend of Annie Kuti), Steve Swift, Jerrie Wilcox, Tom Vincent, Nikki Heim, Elaine Jenkins, Cindy Key, Joanne Mears, Vicky (Nikki Heim's daughter); Suzy Salonen, Linda Nelsen, Urban family

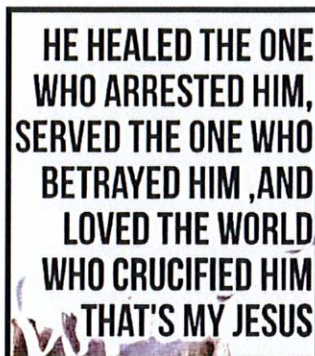
On-Going Cancer Treatment: Mike Lambert, Mary Larson, Patricia Gename (Mary Hinman's daughter), Gail Schroeder, Dave Merriam, Sue Day, Robert Baker, Sharon McNutt (Ruth Negus' friend's sister), Betty Benskin, Judy Intlekofer, Gail Formanack (friend of Bev Ambrosius), Gary Dutton, Vicki Nolan, (Leigh Powell's sister), Ena Nolan, (Leigh Powell's niece), Bill Owens, Maxine

"He sent His Word, and healed them"

— Psalm 107:20

"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

— Isaiah 53:5



FROM PASTOR ALEX WOLF

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

On Sunday, February 9th, many Americans will gather together to celebrate our nation's biggest unofficial holiday: Super Bowl Sunday. People start planning weeks in advance for their parties and get-togethers to watch the NFL's championship game (we'll have our own watch party here at the church as well). This game is the most-watched television program in the United States year in and year out. Over 125 million people are estimated to tune in to this year's big game (almost 40% of the U.S. population!).

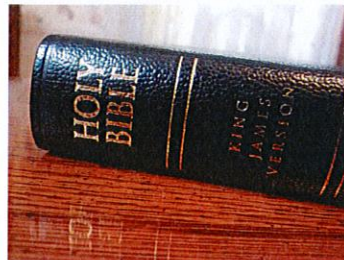
Along with viewership, a lot of money goes into this day. Super Bowl Sunday is reported to be the day when Americans eat more snacks than any other day of the year. An estimated \$17 billion is spent on Super Bowl related purchases, including food, beverages, and decorations. A 30-second advertisement will reportedly cost businesses over \$7 million. The average value of a ticket to the game is near \$10,000. The revenues alone for the entire event would be enough to fund a small country. It is an event like no other.

The Super Bowl is certainly a fun and exciting time. But it is a game of extravagance, maybe a bit too much. Before getting all wrapped up in the pageantry, perhaps we can take a timeout to remember those who have so little. For example, the non-profit organization Tackle Hunger invites communities to host a food drive for local food banks and charities called the Souper Bowl of Caring during their watch parties. Events like this help us remember and fulfill what the author of the Letter to the Hebrews once wrote, "And do not forget to do good and share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased" (Hebrews 13:16).

As we watch the big game this February, let's enjoy all the festivities that go with it. Let's give thanks to God that we can enjoy the company of friends, good food, and fun entertainment. But let's remember just that...it's entertainment. Some things are bigger than a football game.

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Alex



Sermon Topics and Scriptures for February

February 2025 Sermons

February 2 – Luke 4:21-30, "Jesus' Fickle Fandom"

February 9 – Luke 5:1-11, "A Life-Changing Experience"

February 16 – Luke 6:17-26, "Blessings and Woes"

February 23 – Luke 6:27-38, "Simple, Yet Not So Simple"

LOVE YOUR ENEMIES





From our Northwest Hills Preschool...



Our little school is coasting along! The transition back to school after the long Christmas break was very smooth, thankfully! January was spent doing all sorts of winter themed science experiments and learning all about the Arctic and Antarctica....it is even colder there than here! BRRRRR! We have all sorts of fun Valentine-themed activities planned for February, including a party! Our verse for February is "God is love." 1 John 4:16. Although short, it is indeed a very important message for these young children. Please pray that we can continue to show God's love to these children that have been entrusted to our care!

Happy Valentine's Day from the preschool crew!

— Jacque, Lori, and Robin



Worship 101

Whether you've been a part of the church your whole life or you've just recently started attending, perhaps you've wondered why we do things the way we do in worship. Join Pastor Alex after Sunday worship (about 10:45 AM) in the Library to discuss the basics of the worship service. Each session will be 30-40 minutes.

February 2 – *The Order of Worship*

Why is worship structured the way it is?

What's with the robes?

February 9 – *Planning for Worship*

How are the Scripture readings chosen?

How is a sermon written?

February 16 – *The Christian Year*

What are the liturgical seasons?

What are the liturgical colors?

February 23 – *Holy Communion*

What do we believe about the Lord's Supper?

March 2 – *Baptism*

What do we believe about baptism?

Be watching for.....

DR. WERNER P. JENSEN SCHOLARSHIPS:

Scholarships up to \$2500.00 are available for members of Northwest Hills Church who are pursuing a certificate or diploma from an institution of higher learning. This scholarship will be paid directly to the institution of education. Completed applications should be returned to the church. Hard copies will be available beginning March 1st, or via email. There will be two different applications: one for new applicants and another for re-applicants.

Criteria for Consideration:

- New applicants must have participated in church activities at Northwest Hills Church
- Exhibiting an active commitment of faith
- Application to an institution of higher learning
- Completed written application
- Completed recommendation letter(s) (see application form)
- Interview with committee
- Priority will be given to applicant not previously awarded this scholarship

DEADLINE: The **application** deadline is April 30th. **Recommendation forms** are also due April 30th. All documents must be returned to Northwest Hills Church, 9334 Fort St., Omaha, NE 68134, Attn: Scholarship Committee.





The CANASTA CLUB will join the OES ladies for a card party in Papillion on Thursday, February 13th from 10-2. Plan to arrive in time to start playing by 10:00 AM. If you have any questions, or would like to join, please contact Deb Shafer (ddshafer@outlook.com or cell 402-999-1052). We still need subs (men or women). Please contact Ardell Reuter at 1-918-703-1068.

The remaining 2025 Giving envelopes are available for pick up in the Commons (alpha by last name). If you have not been assigned a set and would like one, please see Leigh Powell. Thank you for your faithfulness.



BAD WEATHER

Should very severe weather (dangerous travel and/or frigid temperatures) cause Northwest Hills to cancel a Sunday service, there will be three sources used to communicate a closure to you by 8:00 AM that morning: 1) The three major local television channels (WOWT NBC-6, KMTV-CBS-3, and KETV ABC-7) will have a continually updating scroll of closures at the bottom of the screen. Look for Northwest Hills under "church closures" 2) Facebook post and 3) Email.

Although we would love to see you and fellowship with you at church, please always choose caution and personal safety regarding attendance, even if services are NOT cancelled. If there is a concern regarding walking and driving in the white stuff and frozen patches, we'd rather you be safe and snuggled up at home rather than taking a chance of a fall or accident. We love you and care about you!



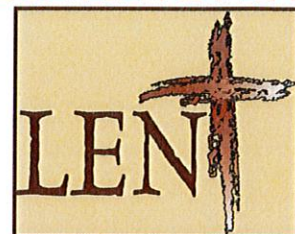
LADIES MAHONEY WINTER RETREAT

Thursday, January 30th
through
Sunday, February 2nd

The ladies will be returning from their retreat. We pray they had a wonderful time of precious fellowship and refreshment to start off the New Year!

Looking ahead.....

Be watching for details as we plan on having another Lenten Evening Study starting in March!



Look for more information in upcoming bulletins, Midweek emails, and the March 2025 Newsletter!

With the dissolution of Hannah Circle at the conclusion of 2024, here are a few tidbits of the past history of the group of ladies to reflect on and be grateful for their contribution to the Northwest Hills Church family and our community. On the opposite page is a copy of a page from the 2010 directory depicting all of the ladies circles at that moment in time. Who do you recognize? Does this bring back memories? Enjoy!

1970-1975: Hannah Circle made the decorations for the Chrismon Tree (see next page for meaning).

1970: Hannah Circle started out as a night circle meeting in people's homes.

1970: Easter Breakfast: 14 attended.

1971: During Verneda's presidency Hannah Circle cleaned the kitchen "once or twice." There were 16 active members. Hannah was also very instrumental in publishing the first cookbook.

1972: Hosted a chicken dinner.

Hannah Circle also used to pay for coffee used monthly, and was instrumental in having the former Bunn Coffee Makers installed in 1987.

Hannah Circle was still doing chicken and turkey dinners in 1990. Soon after that the Circle was instrumental in the Craft Fair (Bazaar).

From its inception, Hannah Circle had trouble getting officers.

2003: started filling Easter Eggs.

2005: Card Parties started.

Who are those two
Cuties with hard hats
And power tools?!?



History of the Chrismon Tree (Retrieved on 01.17.2025 from <https://www.southernliving.com/what-is-chrismon-tree>)

The word "Chrismon" draws from the words "Christ" and "monogram," translating to "symbols of Christ." Historically, there have been times when Christians were not free to worship in public, or even acknowledge their faith. These symbols were a way for the followers of Christ to recognize their faith in a more covert way. For example, a symbol like a fish might be used in an underground passageway to point toward a place of worship so visitors would know where to go or simply mark that they were among friends.

In 1957, Mrs. Harry W. Spencer of the Lutheran Church of the Ascension in Danville, Virginia, was inspired to use these Christian symbols, or Chrismons, in lieu of colorful balls and non-religious décor on her church's Christmas tree. Today you'll find Chrismon trees used in the nave of many churches throughout the country and even the world during the Advent and Christmas seasons.

Making Chrismon Tree Ornaments

Traditionally the ornaments found on Chrismon trees are handmade, though you can find ready-to-go options via retailers like Amazon and Etsy. Part of the beauty in the tradition though, seems to be taking the time to select the symbols and create the ornaments. For those who take part, it can be a labor of love that prepares hearts and builds anticipation for the Advent season and birth of Christ.

The ornaments decorating a church Chrismon tree are oftentimes made by members of the congregation and can be built upon each year. Materials can be as humble as Styrofoam, paper, or bleached wood though beads, white glass ornaments with gold symbols, and cross-stitched pieces are all popular choices. Preparation for the church's Chrismon tree might be a year round project, but it usually always culminates by assembling the tree in time for the first week of Advent.

Chrismon tree ornaments and symbols can not only point to the Christian faith, but can also be a reminder of generations that came before. Similar to handmade cross-stitched stockings, or vintage mercury glass orbs passed down from parents and grandparents, these white and gold treasures are a labor of love that can be a tradition that depicts not only the symbols of Christianity, but also the growth of faith whether in a family or larger church community throughout the years.

Why Chrismon Ornaments are Traditionally White and Gold

Every aspect of the Chrismon tree has significance, from the symbols on the ornaments to the colors they draw on. Chrismon trees are typically decked in all white and gold. The white symbolizes the perfection and purity of the Lord, while gold points to His nobility and glory. The tree's white lights are a reminder to believers that He is the Light of the world and the evergreen symbolizes our own eternal life, a gift of Christ's sacrifice for us.

Chrismon Tree Ornament Symbols

Chrismon tree ornaments are meant to serve as reminders of God's gift of Jesus Christ, which mean all of the ornaments used on the tree hold special significance.

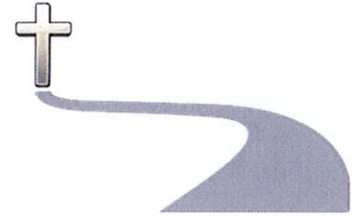
Popular Chrismon Tree Symbols

- **Star:** There are a variety of star Chrismons, each with its own meaning. They range from the five-pointed star to the 8-pointed Natal Star Cross, with the former representing the five wounds of Jesus and the latter representing the Bethlehem star and the four New Testament gospels.
- **Triangle:** A triangle represents the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- **Cross:** There's a wide range of crosses used on Chrismon trees. Like the various stars, each cross delivers its own special meaning from the anchor cross, the Fleur-de-Lis cross, the Celtic cross, the Jerusalem Cross, and the Latin Cross—to name a few.
- **Dove:** The dove is traditionally used as a symbol of the Holy Spirit.
- **Lamb:** A lamb signifies Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God.
- **Fish:** This was one of the original secret symbols used to identify followers of Christ and would be used to point in the direction of places of worship.

FEBRUARY 2025



KIDS QUEST!!
EPIC Youth
PK-High School



FEBRUARY 2 No Kid's Quest

FEBRUARY 9 "Jesus Feeds the 5,000"

FEBRUARY 16 Kids Quest Mission Project

FEBRUARY 23 "Love Your Enemies"



FEBRUARY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 9-11 AM Lambert Prayer Group-19D
2 9:30 Worship/Communion (No Sunday School) 10:30 Hot cocoa & cinnamon rolls Fellowship (Ruth Circle)-C 10:45 Worship 101-L (<i>Ladies return from Mahoney</i>) 6:30-8:30 PM Sq Dancing—FH	3 6:45 PM AA Mtg-FH	4 7 PM Scouts-FH	5 1-3 Crafting—128 6:30 PM Choir	6	7	8 9-11 AM Lambert Prayer Group-19D 12-5 Urbans—FH
9 9:30 Worship/Sunday School 10:30 Fellowship—C (WIA) 10:45 Worship 101-L 5:00 PM Football Watch Party—C 6:30-8:30 PM Sq Dancing-FH	10 6:45 PM AA Mtg-FH	11 6:30 Bell Choir 7 PM Scouts-FH	12 1-3 Crafting-128 6:30 PM Choir	13 10-2 OES Card Party in Papillion 7 PM Church Council Meeting—FH	14	15 10:30-12 noon Membership Class —L 9-11 AM Lambert Prayer Group—19D
16 9:30 Worship/Sunday School 10:45 Worship 101—L 6:30-8:30 PM Sq Dancing—FH	17 6:45 PM AA Mtg-FH	18 6:30 Bell Choir 7 PM Scouts-FH	19 1-3 Crafting-128 6:30 PM Choir	20	21	22 9-11 AM Lambert Prayer Group-19D
23 9:30 Worship/Sunday School 10:30 –5:00 Urban Family—C 10:45 Worship 101—L 6:30-8:30 PM Sq Dancing-FH	24 6:45 PM AA Mtg-FH	25 9 AM Newsletter Crew—C 6:30 Bell Choir 7 PM Scouts-FH	26 1-3 Crafting-128 6:30 PM Choir	27	28	S: Sanctuary C: Commons L: Library FH: Fellowship Hall

NORTHWEST HILLS CHURCH
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OMAHA NE 68134

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FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS



3	Jim Killion	10	Barb Renicker	20	Molly McCoy
4	Glenda Kalina	10	Maria Urban	21	Jeremiah Urban
5	Elizabeth Fiske	12	Christopher Hunter	21	Chloe Volmer
6	Tanner Urban	14	Jason Key	22	Kathy Owens
6	Tyler Urban	14	Caden Mahan	24	Nicole Fields
8	Pauline Hughes	14	Taylor Perez	24	Samantha Pitts
8	Allie Johnson	15	Susan Miller	24	Mattie Stricker
8	Tony Parsons	19	Theri Evitts	25	Lake Stamp

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES



3	Joseph Svacina & Kristi Stamp-Svacina
15	James & Susan Ryan
19	Anthony & Jodi Infante

