

The Message Newsletter

Advent/Christmas Schedule



Important Upcoming Dates:

Sunday, January 11 -
Annual Budget Meeting

Sunday, January 25 -
Annual Congregational
Meeting with potluck

Wednesday, February 18 - Ash Wednesday

Midweek Advent Services
Wednesdays, December 3, 10
& 17
7:00 pm

**Worship Service with
Communion & the 2025
Sunday School
Christmas Presentation**
Sunday, December 7

**Worship Service & the
2025 Christmas Cantata:
The Winter Rose**
Sunday, December 14
9:30 am

**Worship Service with
Communion**
Sunday, December 21
9:30 am

**Christmas Eve Candlelight
Services**
Wednesday, December 24
5:00 & 10:00 pm

**Worship Service
(Christmas Sweater Sunday)**
Sunday, December 28
9:30 am



**Merry
Christmas!**

WORSHIP

Every Sunday 9:30 am
and Wednesday 7 pm

Sunday School:
6th-12th Grade -
8:45 am

Godly Play starts in the
Sanctuary 9:30 am

From the Pastor's Desk

ADVENT: A TIME OF PREPARATION

Dear Friends,

The word Advent means “coming.” For Christians, Advent is a time to prepare, reflect and acknowledge that Jesus has come and will someday come again. We remember his birth and we anticipate the promised second coming of Christ. Like Mary and Joseph prepared for the birth of their son, so we prepare for the celebration of Jesus’ birth.

Advent marks the beginning of a New Church Year. While the secular year begins with the countdown from New Year’s Eve to New Year’s Day, the church year begins on the first Sunday in Advent, this year Sunday, November 30. In the Lutheran church it means we start a new cycle of studying the life of Jesus through Scripture. This year the focus of Scripture will be on the Gospels of Matthew and John.

The color blue has become the symbolic color for Advent. The use of color has always played a significant part in the observation of church seasons. Blue represents the hope and the joyful anticipation we have as we wait to celebrate Christ’s birth.

The Advent Wreath is a symbol for the season. The circle represents the unending love of God. The evergreens represent the hope of eternal life that all of God’s people share.

The Four Candles count down the four weeks of Advent to Christmas. Most importantly they “Light” the way through our darkness, leading us to the true Light of the World - Jesus the Christ. They also remind us that as Christians we are to reflect God’s light to those around us. When the 5th candle is lit, it represents the true Light come into the world, and is often a much larger candle that will continue to be burned after Christmas Day and into Epiphany.

Advent Calendars are another tool we use to prepare for Christmas. Found in many stores, they are a way for children and families to count down the 24 days to the birth of Jesus. Homemade or store bought, they are a wonderful gift for any child, and a great teaching tool. When my daughters were young, after supper each evening, either Kayla or Kathryn would read the bible verse on a small ornament. Then we would place the ornament on our tree. It was a daily devotional and built anticipation as we waited for Christmas to arrive. However you prepare for the celebration of God’s gift to you, may you find meaning and have fun.

God’s Peace,
Pastor Benson

Winter President's Column

Advent planning is underway. Please plan to enjoy some of the seasonal activities we have planned here at Ebenezer.

There are events for all ages. One of the winter activities here at Ebenezer is the Annual Meeting which your council set for Sunday, January 25th.

The annual meeting will follow our church service and a potluck brunch. I hope to see you all there.

At our annual meeting you will elect new council members. Our nominating committee will be looking for new candidates to fill the vacant positions. If you are approached by the nominating committee, please consider serving on the council. The council meets in the evening of the 2nd Tuesday each month, except July. Each council member also chooses to serve as a council liaison on one of the church ministry committees. I have enjoyed the opportunity to meet and work with so many of you.

In February your council will elect a new executive team. I will finish two years of service as your council president. I want to thank everyone here at Ebenezer for allowing me to serve as your president of the council. I have enjoyed working with every member of the council. I want to thank all of our council members for their service to our church.

Wish you a very Merry Christmas and many blessings in the coming New Year.

~Gretchen Aikman

Youth of Ebenezer

The Youth of Ebenezer (YOE) is dedicated to creating and coordinating fellowship opportunities and events for students in grades 6 through 12. The Committee convenes monthly, meeting on the fourth Sunday in the Youth Room. All youth and their families are encouraged to participate and share their ideas for future activities and events.

October: Craven Farm Trip: A fun and memorable outing to Craven Farm provided youth with a chance to connect, explore, and enjoy the autumn season together.



Get Involved - The Youth of Ebenezer welcomes all youth and their families to join in these meaningful activities. Your participation and ideas help shape a vibrant, supportive community for everyone. For more information, attend the Executive Youth Committee meetings on the fourth Sunday of each month in the Youth Room, or reach out to the YOE coordinators:

Virginia, 425-290-2986, and
Andi, kaholm13@hotmail.com.

Worship & Music

WOW (WORSHIP ON WEDNESDAYS)

During December our Midweek Worship will celebrate Advent every Wednesday at 7 pm.

Our regular Wednesday Evening Worship will resume January 7.

Bible Studies

PASTOR'S BIBLE STUDY EVERY THURSDAY ~ 10 am

Pastor Benson's Thursday morning Bible Study meets every Thursday at 10 am. Join us in the Fireside Room as we dig deeper into the scripture lessons that will be read on the following Sunday. We will not meet on Christmas or New Year's Day.

MAR-CILLA CIRCLE FIRST TUESDAY ~ 10:30 am

Women of Ebenezer are invited to participate in the Mar-Cilla Circle that meets on the first Tuesday of each month. On December 2, we will meet for Bible study in the Fireside Room at church at 10:30 am. Topic is "Messages of Hope from Micah." We will have an Advent/Christmas potluck at noon after the study.

In January we will begin a study of the book of Ephesians. You are welcome! For more information, contact Julia Moen.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY THIRD TUESDAY - 10 am

All women are invited to join us for this Bible Study from *Gather*, the wonderful women's magazine of the ELCA. Questions? Please call Lynn Riggs.

Trunk or Treat

Halloween was wet, windy and cold, but our intrepid PNW Trunk or Treaters were out having loads of fun despite the wild weather. Puddles were stomped in, bubbles blown and popped, and countless treats handed out to all the happy children and families who tromped through Ebenezer Lutheran Church's parking lot trick or treating for festive Fall fun and plenty of yummy treats. We had visitors in scary costumes, cute costumes, funny costumes, family costumes, and even a Jeep with a giant spider costume.

Fresh pumpkins and corn from King Family Farms were a favorite, as was hot chocolate for our volunteers, and oodles of candy for all. Trunk or Treat 2025 was a rousing success, and a great (if extremely wet) time was had by all. Special thanks to all the volunteers who worked together to make a fun festive stop for our neighborhood families. We appreciate each and every one who helped, and all who stopped by for a very Happy Halloween!



Sip 'n Paint ~ September 27



Park Butte lookout ~ September 27, 2025

On a beautiful fall day, we drove up to Mt. Baker to hike to the look-out at Park Butte. What a beautiful hike!



Fall work party ~ Saturday, October 25, 2025

A few people came to the annual work party on a windy, rainy day, so we worked inside. So many things were accomplished: A group washed the pews, (Comment: I didn't know we had so many pews in the Sanctuary);



Upcoming Events

Variety show, Sunday, February 1 following the Fellowship Time.

We are reviving the Variety show we used to have in the past. If you sing, tell jokes, read poetry, play an instrument, or anything unique to share, let JoAnn know as soon as possible.

Summer at Holden Village-Tuesday, July 14-19, 2026. Join us for an adventure as a group from Ebenezer, travels over the mountains, riding a boat to the top of Lake Chelan, and then a bus to a remote village for 4 nights of rest, hiking and renewal in the mountain tops of the Cascade mountains. Questions, talk to JoAnn Cross. We will make our registrations on line early January 2026.

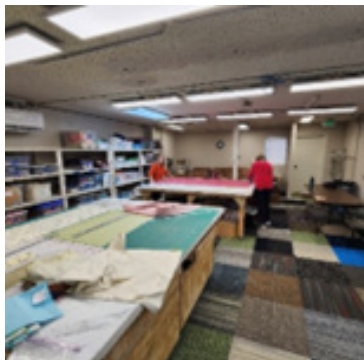
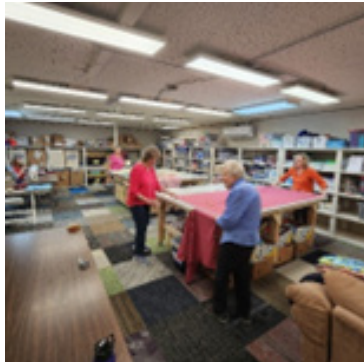


Mark your calendars for camping at Camp Lutherwood - August 7-10, 2026. Eight campsites have been reserved at the beautiful camp on Lake Sammish in Bellingham, WA. Lots of time to rest, visit, swim, kayak and be in God's world.

Ministries of Ebenezer

Dedication of Craft Room-Sunday, October 19

We celebrated the ministry of our quilters and crafters, and we dedicate our new Craft Room to God's glory. In the spirit of Jesus' parable of the persistent widow in our Gospel today, we give thanks for faithful hands and hearts that "do not lose heart" but turn prayer into action, service, and love.



COMMUNITY SUPPER

A shout out to the community groups that helped serve our Take-out meal. Each month we invite a community group to come and serve our weekly take-out meal to the community. We serve each Thursday, from 4-6 pm.

Thank you to the Riding Club who served in August and the Lake Stevens Kiwanis who served in October.



PACKED WITH LOVE

The following items were blessed on Sunday, October 19:

- 22 Quilts for Lutheran World Relief and 27 Quilts for the Lake Stevens Resource Center
- 79 School Backpacks
- 8 Prayer Shawls
- 25 Angels of Comfort

Nine people packed boxes with quilts and school backpacks on Tuesday, October 28.

Thank you to Lon Shultz, Gary Briske and David Boneham who delivered the quilts and kits to Seattle for shipment to the LWR. Thank you to everyone who generously contributed items needed. We are so appreciative of your support.

**Welcome to the Ebenezer
family through Holy
Baptism: Neil Johnson-
Wednesday, September 10,
2025**



The Prayer Corner

Prayer Chain:



If you have an urgent need, please call Prayer Chain leaders Ken

Cross and Lia Stuart. They will contact Prayer Chain members to pray for your request. We're starting the list anew so if there are people you would like to add, please let Melissa know.

Please pray for the following:

Members of the Congregation:

Dee Anne Williams
Fran Clapper
Oscar Eichelberger
Patty Myntti
Debbie May

Homebound or Special Care Residents:

Sheldon Hendrickson
Marlene McSherry
Marilyn Peterson
Arlene McDaniel
Nancy Poremba
Sue Wilmoth

Family/Friends:

Yvette Schwartz (Jeff Gust's aunt)
Larry Morrison (Korrine Gust's uncle)
Dennis Jines (Korrine Gust's friend)
Steve Himel (Cathee Himel's husband)
Doreen Ross (Bob & Gretchen Aikman's friend)
Terry Lambert
Joe Mulligan (Herb Singleton's friend)
Mary Koepsell (Betty Bauer's sister-in-law)
Sharon Lawrence (CC Kuehl's friend)
Joann Millett (Sally Yates' friend)
Aaron Gay (Helen Hendrickson's nephew)
Dan Bagwell (Melissa Probst's brother-in-law)
Lori Wight (Margaret Dildine's daughter)
Dawn Nielsen (Kathy Larsen's granddaughter)
Curt Johnson (Neil Brandt's nephew)
Steve (Betty Bauer's friend's neighbor)
Bruce Koepsell (Betty Bauer's brother)

Judy Brooks (Herb Singleton's friend)
Dave Hopps (Fran Clapper's brother-in-law)
Doug Clapper (Fran Clapper's son)
Scott Giebel (friend of Herb Singleton)
Levi Anderson (Lynn Moller & Dennis Anderson's grandson)
Dianne Major Storey
Kathy Spade

Those Who Grieve:

Johnson Family – Former member
Carol Johnson passed away
Dildine Family - Margaret Dildine passed away
Bersas Family - Hans Bersas passed away

All Our Military and Their Families:

Hunter Gardoski, Sid Hendrickson Jr, Tyler Perry, Faith Poor, Ethan Stuart, Alec Zimmerman

Stewardship-

If you are at least 70½ you may qualify to donate to our church using a QCD (Qualified Charitable Distribution). It's tax free from an IRA to a qualified charity. Contact your financial advisor.

Time & Talent survey sheets allow each of us to get more information about areas of service we may want to explore. Each year the old data is discarded and new information is saved. Filling out a form is not a commitment but a communication tool to use.

Estimate of Giving cards are just an estimate. They will be used to establish a budget for 2026. It's important that we each indicate our intentions so we can establish a realistic budget. If circumstances change, you can always submit a new Estimate of Giving card or talk to JoAnn Cross, Financial Secretary.

It's not too late to submit these stewardship forms. If you need another form, they are available in the Narthex.

End of the Year Giving 2025

Thank you for your generous support of Ebenezer Lutheran Church! If you wish to receive contribution credit for gifts in 2025, they must be received by **Wednesday, December 31, at 10 am**. If you mail your gifts, please make sure they are received by Monday, December 29. All offering received on Sunday, December 28, 2025, will be recorded on your 2025 financial statement

Living Lutheran

Lutherans welcome people of all faiths at Trinity Community Lutheran Church in Point Roberts, Washington. This is a church in the United States but on the peninsula west of Blaine that is partly in Canada. Trinity Lutheran was founded in 1913 by immigrants from Iceland, but through the years it became a worship center for people of all faiths in the community. The word "Community" was added to their name in 1972. Many members are dual citizens of the U.S. and Canada.

The church is served by part-time pastors and lay leaders: One is an ELCA pastor, another is Episcopalian, another is Unitarian. Music is an important part of their worship and includes a jazz service on fifth Sundays. Testimonials by members on what it means to be a Christian are central to worship services. Member Andy Mar says, "No matter the politics along the border and the paperwork required to cross, the message is always, all are welcome."

You can read more about the "Church along the northern border" in Living Lutheran in print (Fall 2025) or online at livinglutheran.org.

Thanks

Many thanks to Ebenezer's Care Team for their meal support, and for everybody's prayer.
Cathee & Steve Himel

Dear Ebenezer Church,
On behalf of the Lake Stevens Community Food Bank, I would like to thank you for your recent donation of \$795 that we received on October 27, 2025. Because of generous donors like you, we can feed over 700 families each week. Your donation helps us carry out our mission of providing for our friends and neighbors who may be struggling. We can also refer them to other helping organizations for assistance and guidance on how to better their lives. Your one gift has a deep and lasting impact for the betterment of our community. ~ Anthony Hawley, Executive Director

Endowment

Thank you for your generous support in funding the new commercial refrigerator for the Kitchen. Your prompt response when the old refrigerator, which had served us faithfully for 21 years, quit working, was greatly appreciated by all of us involved with the Community Supper. Over the years, we have been incredibly fortunate to have members who have thoughtfully set aside portions of their estate to be donated to the Endowment. These contributions have not only provided for scholarships but also covered other essential expenses, ensuring the continued success and smooth operation of our programs. Your commitment to our community and your willingness to support critical needs exemplify the spirit of generosity and care that defines the Ebenezer Endowment Committee. Once again, thank you for your unwavering support and for making a significant difference in our efforts to serve the community.

Ebenezer Lutheran Church (ELCA)
Message Newsletter
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JESUS LOVES ...



Godly Play-

As we are approaching Advent I can feel the magic and the mystery of Advent season brewing. Our Godly Play students have been diving deep into wonder these past few months. It has been so wonderful to watch them truly take in the stories, wonder and talk to one another about their thoughts. Its really beautiful to witness. If you are interested in learning more about Godly Play and becoming a volunteer, please reach out to me anytime! annier7280@gmail.com

Sunday December 7th - Children's Service. The children will be leading worship at 9:30am. Any children that would like to participate, please arrive at 9:10am.

The Godly Play Foundation does FREE story time every Monday evening for 30 minutes through advent leading to Christmas. Story time will be with book authors.

Check it out: godlyplayfoundation.org - You will find the stories in the Everyday Godly Play sections. Under Featured Resources.

Blessings, Annie