



December 2023

# *The Messenger*

## **Shelton Presbyterian Church**

Rev. Jeffrey W. Bursch, Pastor  
1430 Shelton Springs Road / PO Box 2510  
Shelton, Washington 98584  
360-432-8696



## **Church Christmas Party**

Like making soup? Sign up to bring soup for lunch for the Christmas Party on Sunday Dec. 10th following worship.

Once our worship service is over, together we will set up for the Christmas Party and have soup and then enjoy all the festivities like wreath decorating, crafts for kids, card making, cookie decorating, eating holiday cookies and more. This is a great event to invite others to. In addition we provide Christmas trees, tree decorating kits, and gift wrap supplies for 35 families to help them celebrate Christmas. Here is a list of items need to complete our tree decorating kits:

- 25 ornament packs    -17 tree skirts
- 15 packs of garland    -Christmas tree stands
- Lots of wrapping paper and scotch tape
- We also need COOKIES!!!

There will be a meeting following worship on Sunday, December 3rd with Marcus, in the game room portable, for all those interested in helping with this event.

## **MISSIONS COMMITTEE**

The Apple Cup challenge ended successfully for the Cougars in pet food donations, not so much the football game. Thank you for participating. Donations were given to the 5XL Shelton pet food bank that provides pet food to seniors, low income and homeless families.

Community Homeless dinners need volunteers every month. The signup sheets are on the bulletin board. Crazy Love serves a Friday night dinner every week. If you would like to help serve or would like more information, contact Jubilee Whitman 206 999-5714. The Mission Committee meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of every other month. December's meeting is Sunday, December 3rd. Our next meeting is on February 4, 2023. Please feel free to join us.

## **YEAR-END GIVING**

We appreciate your generous support of the ministries of Shelton Presbyterian Church. Making gifts at year-end is a holiday tradition for many and a Required Minimum Deduction (RMD) opportunity too. Remember all donations must be made by December 31, 2023, to count as deductions for this tax year. If you want to make a gift of stock and securities, please contact Pat Sanborn, Treasurer, prior to making the gift (360 791-9047 or [pats220cm@yahoo.com](mailto:pats220cm@yahoo.com)). Distributions from retirement plans and IRAs can be donated, so long as certain conditions are met. Be sure to check with your financial advisor for your particular situation. Your gifts can be dropped in the offering boxes on Sunday, mailed to Shelton Presbyterian Church, PO Box 2510, Shelton, WA 98584, or donated on-line at [www.sheltonpres.org](http://www.sheltonpres.org).

## Word from the Pastor

Advent means coming. It's the season of preparation for Christmas when we celebrate Christ coming into the world. Our congregation utilizes an Advent wreath with a candle for each of the four Sundays of Advent. We light a new candle in worship each week to celebrate the themes of Advent: Hope, Faith, Joy, and Love. On Christmas Eve, we light the center candle in the wreath, the Christ candle.

Rituals like Advent wreaths are a way to focus our attention on the significance of the season. It is so easy to get caught up in the hurried business of the holiday season that we forget what Christmas is all about. There are parties to plan, presents to buy and wrap, and activities to attend. There is plenty of excitement, but often little focus. Lighting a candle each week is a moment of focus that reminds us that Christmas is about God's light coming into the world in Jesus.

There are many fun events planned for the month of December at SPC. There will be a wonderful Christmas party on December 10th. We will gather to hear our choir and band perform and to sing songs together for our Christmas Music Program on December 17th. We will worship together on the night of Christmas Eve at our Candle-lit worship service. It's going to be a very fun month, but more importantly my prayer is that the activities and programs help us focus on Christ.

So enjoy yourself this year. Embrace the people in your life with love and grace. Eat great food. Sing joyful songs. Give and receive gifts. But remember, at the center of all this celebration is the joyful truth that God's love has come to us in Christ. What a wonderful gift to receive.

In Christ,  
Pastor Jeff



## Bible Studies

### ***Men's Bible Study***

Men meet Thursday mornings at 8:00 AM at the church. This study is led by different men in the church. Please join us.

### ***Soup & Bible Study***


This study is *usually* held every other Thursday at 7:00 pm. Enjoy soup at 6:30 and then study the Bible. The study is led by Pastor Jeff and is open to everyone. It is held in the lobby of the church. Please join us. *Watch the bulletin for when this is scheduled.*

### ***Women's Bible Study***

Women meet Wednesday mornings at 10:00 AM at the church. The study is led by Lori Matlock. *Christmas break is Dec 13 - Jan 3, resuming Jan 10th.*



## December Birthdays



3 Tucker Austin	24 Roger Johnson
14 John Tarrant	25 Marie Allen
16 Andrew Young	27 John Hall
17 Lori Matlock	27 Karen Hilburn
18 Michelle Swartz	31 Allen Moore
24 Carole Hagen	

**REMINDER THAT THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE  
CLOSED DEC 25 - JAN 1**

## WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

	December 3	December 10	December 17	December 24	December 31
<b>Lay Leader</b>	Gary Sarver	Jubilee Whitman	CHRISTMAS MUSIC PROGRAM	10am Jonathan/ Katie Hill  7pm Erin Clifton	Mary May

Dear SPC Family, I am mindful that there have been several losses within our family of faith, and that for many of you, we are coming into the first holidays without your loved one. It can be a very stressful time for you to know what to do, that honors your loved one, and yet doesn't ignore the grief you feel. We all grieve in our own way, and in our own time. So it is important that you give yourself the space and time to grieve as you need, and to give yourself permission to maybe cut back on some of the traditional things you have done in the past. Here are some suggestions:

1. Do what feels good to you, and put off for a year what only causes you additional stress. People will understand if you choose not to decorate as before, or send Christmas cards out to 300 of your closest friends.
2. If you were the one to host the family celebration, maybe have someone else do it this year, or find ways to lessen the load by having other family members help with the meal.
3. Have an empty chair at the table or light a candle in honor of your loved one.
4. Have the family each share a story of your loved one. Maybe a funny story, or something that you learned, appreciated or will never forget about them, closed by a prayer of thanksgiving.
5. Some families do something completely different: serve a meal at a homeless shelter, go to a restaurant, make a trip to a place that your loved one loved.
6. Use creativity: a poem, a writing of some kind, a letter, drawing or painting.

## Do's and Don'ts

- Do be gentle with yourself and protect yourself.
- Don't do more than you want, and don't do anything that does not serve your soul and your loss.
- Do allow time for the feelings.
- Don't keep feelings bottled up. If you have 500 tears to cry don't stop at 250.
- Do allow others to help. We all need help at certain times in our lives.
- Don't ask if you can help or should help a friend in grief. Just help. Find ways; invite them to group events or just out for coffee.

Do, in grief, pay extra attention to the children. Children are too often the forgotten grievers.  
I hope this helps all who are grieving, and know Pastors Jeff and Marcus, and I ( Pastor Susan) are all here for you, if you need additional support.

Pastor Susan Hermann

Merry Christmas

## CHURCH CALENDAR EVENTS:

December 2nd Decorating the church

December 3rd    Congregational Meeting  
1st Sunday of Advent

## December 10th Church Christmas Party

## December 17th Church Music Program

December 24th Two Services—10:00am and  
7:00pm

## CHURCH DIRECTORY UPDATES

**ADD: Janke, Elizabeth**

630 E Aycliffe Dr, Shelton WA 98584

(509) 439-9292

ejahnke300@gmail.com

Zone: 4 Timberlake/Agate Rd

**Johnston, Shelly**

418 Arcadia Ave, Shelton WA 98584

(360) 490-7685

shellyfromshelton@gmail.com

Zone: 6 Hillcrest/Arcadia Rd

**CHANGE: Thompson, Evelyn**

cell: (360) 226-6331

Zone: 7 Downtown/Angleside/ Mt View/Cap.Hill

**SUNDAY SCHOOL** continues to be a fun, activity filled, time for our children to learn bible stories. We will be focusing on Old Testament stories through most of January, at which we will switch our focus to the New Testament.

Nursery care is available for the youngest of children. Sunday school is designed for our grade-schoolers. We encourage you to bring your children, or grandchildren, whenever possible.

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Tina VanderWal

A few weeks ago, we watched our eleven-year-old granddaughter Sydney play her heart out in a soccer game. Her team had won every one of their games and this one was for their divisional title. The teams were evenly matched and they went into overtime after a scoreless game on both sides. It was raining, cold and muddy on the field. We were all bundled up on the sidelines like snow bunnies hoping for their win. But the other team sadly slipped in a goal.

My granddaughter's team was crushed and so was Sydney. My daughter and I tried our best to console her, telling her how great she played and that they would win it next year. But I know it sounded empty to her young ears.

Just a week before, Chuck and I had watched two college football teams battle. It would be the final game for whichever team lost and the other would go forward for their division championship. The Texas Longhorns won, and one of the players on the defeated team jumped up into the bleachers into the arms of his mom. She was holding a sign and covered his face, but you could see from his body shaking that he was sobbing. It was heart wrenching to see.

Defeat is tough no matter what age you are. I had an English teacher that told our class, "I hope you run for a high school office and are defeated." At the time, I thought that was the cruelest statement ever, especially when I ran for class secretary and was defeated. But looking back, I think she felt it was important to experience defeat and overcome it early in life because we won't win every challenge in life.

Thank goodness as Christians we have Jesus to bolster us back up when we experience the pain of defeat, of loss. To comfort us when we feel like the world is against us and let us know – you're going to be okay and that this is not the end of the world. Like the mother in the stands, our Lord opens His arms and cradles us through those temporary defeats. I call them temporary, because ultimately, we win the biggest win of all – being with You, sweet Lord, for eternity.

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." John 16:33