

Portal ght

the monthly Newsletter of West Portal Lutheran Church and School

NOVEMBER 2024

PAGE I

West Portal Lutheran Church Website:

westportallutheran.org

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Thanksgiving Eve
Wednesday, November 27th
7:00PM

Divine Service - Eucharist

Join us in giving thanks to the Lord.

From Pastor Binz:

Thanks Be to God

"Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!" Psalm 95:2.

What are you thankful for? This verse shows up in our liturgy for Matins and Morning Prayer known as the Venite-O Come, Let Us Sing LSB pg. 220. What we often forget in the church is that our liturgy is often taken directly from scripture. And in this case right from Psalm 95. We may at times take for granted God's goodness to us by giving us wonderful music. The blessings that we have to be able to gather together in worship and sing praises to our God, "the King above all gods" Psalm 95:3.

We have an amazing music director here at WPL-Ms. Amy Kao. She does an amazing job at leading us in making that *"joyful noise to him with songs of praise!"* The choir also does a great job at singing those praises and helping us with those hymns that we may be a little unfamiliar with. My heart is also warmed when I see and hear the young people from our school sing in church. I am grateful and thankful for their joyful noise to Him with songs of praise.



Let us come into
his presence with
thanksgiving.

Psalm 95:2

God makes His presence known to us through the Sacrament of the Altar and the Word. As we receive these gifts from God the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation, we are moved to thankfulness. That thankfulness is expressed in songs of thanksgiving. One of my favorite hymns is "Come, Ye Thankful People, Come" by Henry Alford.

(Continued on page 3)

Portal **ght** is the monthly Newsletter of West Portal Lutheran Church and School

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www.westportallutheran.org

Rev. Curtis Binz, Senior Pastor

Rev. Jacob Swenson, Associate Pastor

May Luu, Administrative Assistant

Angie Holt, Church Secretary, PortalLight Editor

Ms. Sherise Lee, Principal

Amy Kao, Music Director

Worship Schedule

5:00 PM Saturday Worship Service-Lord's Supper
9:00 AM Sunday School-Sanctuary
9:00 AM Sunday Adult Bible Study-Fellowship Hall
9:00 AM Catechism Refresher Class-Conference Room
10:00 AM Sunday Worship Service-Lord's Supper

West Portal Lutheran Church is a member congregation of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

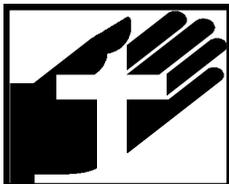
(continued from page 2)

“Come, ye thankful people, come; Raise the song of harvest home. All be safely gathered in Ere the winter storms begin; God, our maker, doth provide For our wants to be supplied. Come to God’s own temple come; Raise the song of harvest home” LSB 892.

I am grateful for the music of the church and all of you who gather to sing praises and thanksgivings to our LORD because He is what we all are truly grateful and thankful for, God’s Son our Savior Jesus Christ, “For the LORD is a great God” Psalm 95:3.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Binz



God’s people
pray...

LET US PRAY TO THE LORD GOD for those who are ill, homebound, or recovering from recent hospitalization: Vincent & Brigitta Ammann, Beatrice Priest’s parents; Emersynn Binz; Elfriede Bonfert; Paul Brase; Charlene Bruggemann-Wong; Angie Cheung, Helen Bok’s sister-in-law; Bill Eves, Virginia Ferry’s cousin; Mary Jo Fischl; Jimmy Fong, Evelyn Fong’s father; Karen Goeglien, Bob Bok’s cousin; Kenny Hioe, Julia Tom’s brother-in-law; Ted Jones; George Mogyorossy, Gilbert Mogyorossy’s father; Sigrid Rogge; Ruth Stresow; Marilyn Tom, Stanley Tom’s sister-in-law; Lisa Westermann; Cheryl Wong; Marilyn Wong; Franklin Yee.



Thoughts From Pastor Swenson

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

Last month we considered the purpose and strength of good Christian hymns. We considered that good hymns proclaim the Gospel of Christ, teach the faith, and praise God. This, indeed, is their purpose. They share with us the good news that we are forgiven our sins by God's grace, they lead us to confess this truth in our lives, and they invite us (and all those gathered with us) to praise God for His love. Another purpose for the Christian hymn (and we could probably think of many, if given the time) is to comfort. This is often how hymns are chosen for our funeral services. What hymns speak best the comfort of Christ to these grieving families? Let's consider a hymn that was written for the purpose of comforting Christians.

In 1596, Pastor Philip Nicolai was installed at the congregation in Unna, Germany. He experienced many joys as the new pastor in town, growing in love and fellowship with his congregation. Then, in 1597, the plague came. Half the town of Unna died as a result, including over 1,000 members of Pastor Nicolai's congregation. He himself was spared from illness - by God's grace - but his thoughts and prayers were continually directed to those families affected by the plague, how best to comfort them with the Gospel of Christ. He chose to write a hymn. It is based on the Parable of the Ten Virgins from Matthew 25. The hymn, which we still sing from our hymnal, is called, "Wake, Awake, For Night is Flying." Listen, for a moment, to what Pastor Nicolai wrote. (*Lutheran Service Book* 516):

"Wake, awake, for night is flying,"/The watchmen on the heights are crying;/ "Awake, Jerusalem, arise!" /Midnight hears the welcome voices/And at the thrilling cry rejoices;/ "Oh, where are ye, ye virgins wise?/The Bridegroom comes, awake!/Your lamps with gladness take!/ Alleluia!/With bridal care /Yourselves prepare/To meet the Bridegroom, who is near."

Zion hears the watchmen singing,/And all her heart with joy is springing;/She wakes, she rises from her gloom./For her Lord comes down all-glorious,/The strong in grace, in truth victorious;/Her star is ris'n, her light is come./Now come, Thou Blessed One,/Lord Jesus, God's own Son,/Hail! Hosanna!/We enter all /The wedding hall/To eat the Supper at Thy call.

Now let all the heav'ns adore Thee,/Let saints and angels sing before Thee/With harp and cymbals' clearest tone./Of one pearl each shining portal,/Where, joining with the choir immortal,/We gather round Thy radiant throne./ No eye has seen the light,/No ear has heard the might/Of Thy glory;/Therefore will we / Eternally/Sing hymns of praise and joy to Thee!

This is what the author himself wrote in his preface to the hymn:

"Day by day I wrote out my meditations, found myself, thank God, wonderfully well, comforted in heart, joyful in spirit, and truly content; gave to my manuscript the name and title of a Mirror of Joy... to leave behind me (if God should call me from this world) as a token of my peaceful, joyful, Christian departure, or (if God should spare me in health) to comfort other sufferers whom He should also visit with the pestilence."

In the hymn, he compares us Christians to virgins awaiting the call of their bridegroom to attend the wedding feast. We know that our heavenly bridegroom Christ will soon come calling for us. It may be at His Return, or it could be in our own earthly departure. In either case, we will leave the sadness of this world for the radiant joy of heaven where we will sing, *yes sing*, with all the saints and angels in praise to God eternally. As he said, Nicolai wrote this hymn as a confession of faith and to comfort those who also were afflicted by the plague. We give thanks to God for such a hymn and ask that, through this one and others, the Lord would grant comfort to us and all who are in any affliction.

Yours in Christ, *Pastor Swenson*

Stewardship Emphasis

The Declaration of Independence states in the preamble that “all ... are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of happiness.” But what do we possess to exercise these rights? Very simply our individual God-given Time, Talents and Treasure.

Each November we prayerfully review how we have used our Time, Talents and Treasure to serve our Lord and Savior and fellow Christians here at West Portal Lutheran over the past year and make new commitments for the coming year. Here are some things to think about when considering your commitments for the coming year.

TIME

“1 There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens:”

Ecclesiastes 1:1

“Tell me how you spend your time, I’ll tell you what you value most.” (Headline of article in Inc. magazine by Melody Wilding.)

The first commandment is “You shall have no other gods before me.” Exodus 20:3. Our relationship (time) with God should have a high priority in our lives. Sunday or Saturday worship, regular bible studies, and regular fellowship with other members serving our congregation show what we value most and is our response for the grace God has granted each of us through the atoning sacrifice of his Son, Jesus Christ.

TALENTS

The parable of the talents is not just about investing money.

“To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability.”

Matthew 25:15.

In the parable the bad servant was afraid to use his abilities lest he fail his master. We should have no such fears. Everyone is blessed with a mixture of abilities unique to each. Some can sing beautifully, some can read eloquently, some can cook delicious meals, and some can prepare the Lord’s Supper reverently. The list of abilities that we possess is limitless as are the ways they may be used to serve our church. All we need to do is share them with our fellow members gladly and without fear of failure. Taking part in the daily life of West Portal Lutheran using your God-given talents is a God-pleasing use of your time and abilities.

TREASURE

“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Luke 12:34.

Just like Time and Talents our use of our Treasure shows where God fits in our lives. It is not the size of individual offering that matters but the joy we have in giving our utmost to the Lord on a regular basis.

As the Founding Fathers proclaimed our Creator gave us certain unalienable rights and the tools to enjoy them. But He gave us something far greater – eternal life through the sacrifice of his Son for the forgiveness of our sins.

This year consider the additional new ways you may use your Time, Talents and Treasure to serve our Risen Lord at West Portal Lutheran with a joyful heart.

Dick Bass

Stewardship Director

West Portal Lutheran Church Event

The **Fall Piano Recital** held on October 26th was truly a heartwarming success and a delightful experience for everyone involved. I'm proud of all the students who bravely took the stage to share their chosen funky and spooky Halloween music. Their costumes were fun and beautifully expressive, adding an extra layer of joy to the event. It was wonderful to see them shine! A special thank you to all the parents for their continued support of our music ministry and for providing desserts and drinks for the event. We would also like to thank Chris Lee for capturing the moments through photography and video.

We appreciate the support from Pastor Binz, Pastor Swenson, the Council, and all church members.

I would also like to thank our kitchen volunteers; Angie Holt, Grace Man, Michele Boyer, Beverly and Gary Presley-Nelson, and Edward Chan, for preparing the delicious food and helping with cleanup after the event. We hope you all had a great time and look forward to seeing you on November 16th at 5 p.m. for our Christmas pageant, "Chris is the Same."

Blessings,

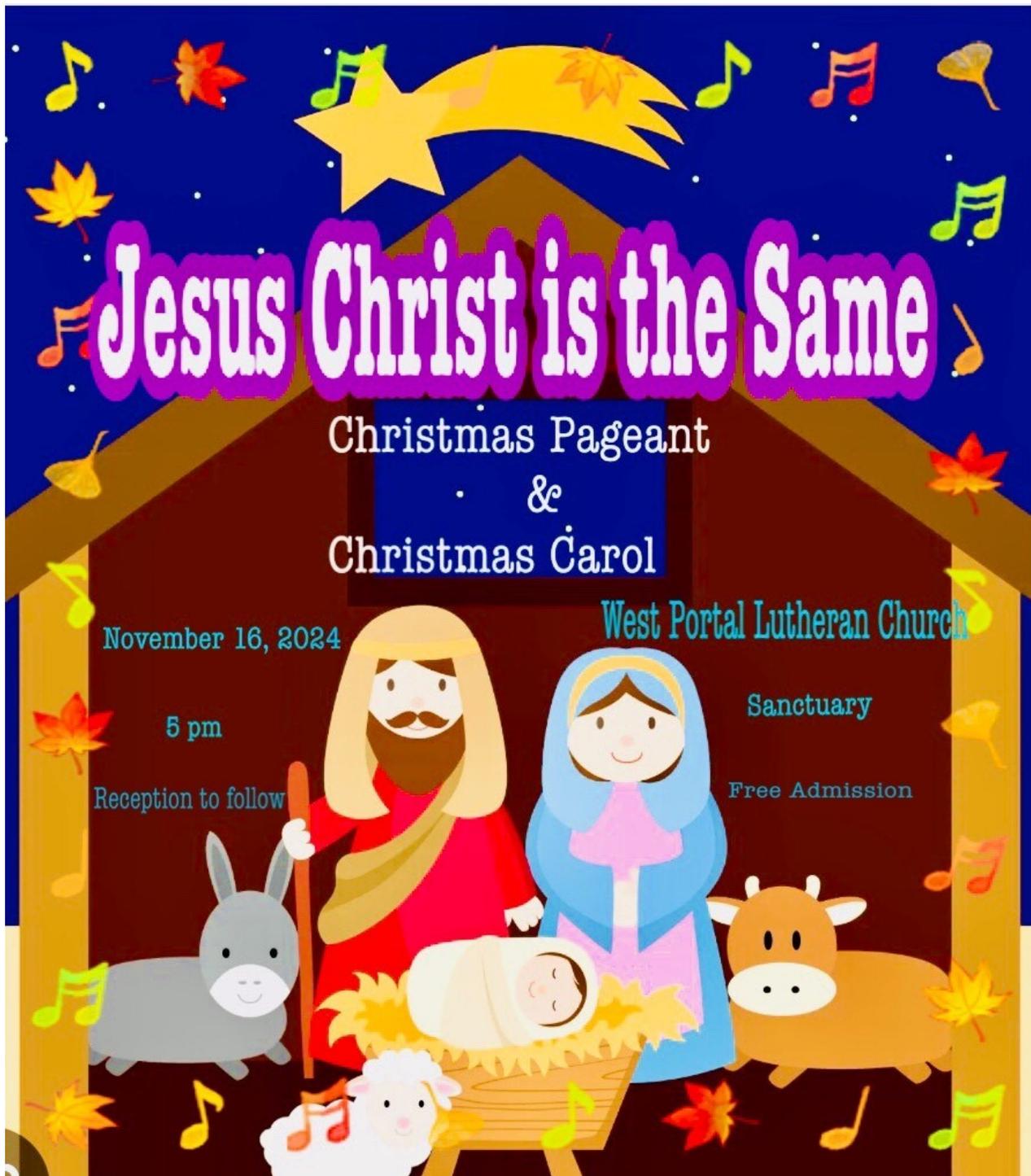
Amy Kao

Music Director



West Portal Lutheran Church Event

Please join us to celebrate “**Jesus Christ is the Same**” Christmas Pageant and Caroling on Saturday, **November 16th** during the 5pm Worship Service with a reception to follow in the Fellowship Hall. Any questions, please contact Amy Kao at amy.kao@wplsfc.com. It’s never too early to celebrate Jesus’s birth!



West Portal Lutheran School Event - PTL

Fri, Nov 22–Sun, Dec 1

Shop at any Sloat Garden Center and 10% of your purchase total will be donated to WPL PTL as part of their **Growing Up Green** fundraiser

Just mention West Portal Lutheran School at checkout!

All proceeds will benefit PTL community and student enrichment programs
Thank you for your support!



Sloat Garden Center San Francisco locations:

- 2700 Sloat Blvd • 3237 Pierce St
- 327 3rd Ave

Save the Date

CHRISTMAS FAIRE 2024

PRESENTED BY THE WEST PORTAL LUTHERAN PARENT TEACHER LEAGUE

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14 • 10:00AM–3:30PM

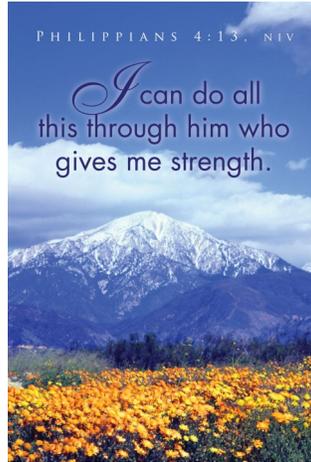
200 SLOAT BLVD, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94132

**GAMES • FOOD • STUDENT POP UP SHOPS
CRAFTS • SINGING • PRIZES**

West Portal Lutheran School: News from the Principal's Desk

Dear West Portal Lutheran Family of Faith:

I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me. (Philippians 4:12–13)



I have a tendency to think that things should get easier rather than harder over time. What I've seen, however, is that while some things get easier, new variables get tossed in, and things that seem like they should be easy are all of a sudden hard again. Perhaps this is just me overthinking, or the achiever in me that believes "I should have this down by now," but what I do know is that it reminds me of the Apostle Paul's

statement that he knows the secret of being content in all circumstances - whether low or high. This "secret" is that "I can do all things through him who strengthens me." This truth humbles the doer in me and recognizes that it is more important that I acknowledge at all times that I need Christ. After all, like John the Baptist realized, "He must increase, but I decrease" (John 3:30). Thus, it is not what I can achieve, but what I can demonstrate of Christ working in me.

We just finished last month talking to our students about growth mindset, which is the belief that with persistence and grit, our learning and success is not fixed - we can get better. As a school, we say that we can do this because it is through Christ who strengthens us. Pray with us that they (along with their families) may grow in the grace that is ours in Lord Jesus Christ.

Sherise Lee, School Principal



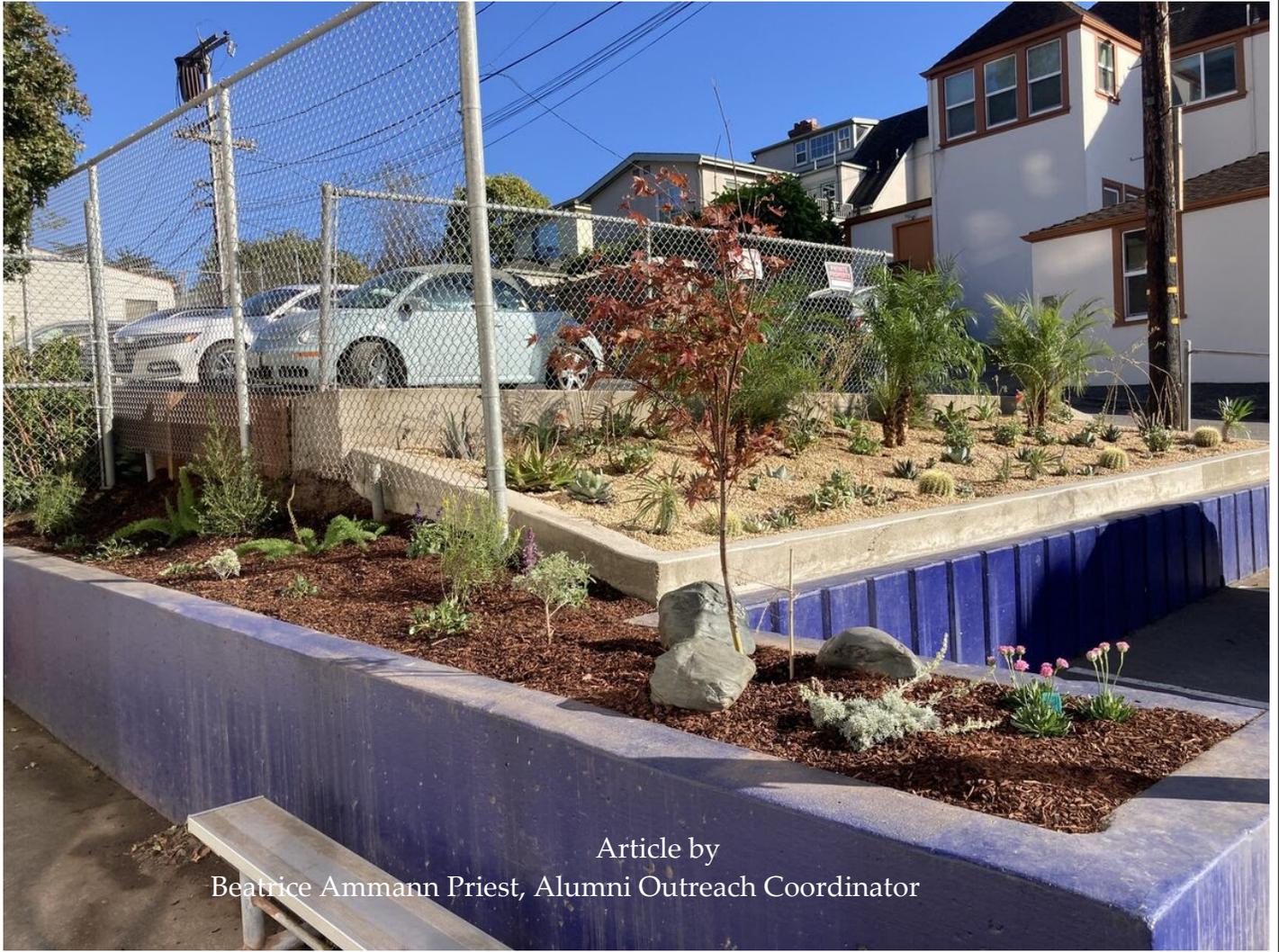
WPL Alumni Gathering during the Trunk or Treat Event. They now have children attending WPL School!

West Portal Lutheran School - 8th Graders 2024 Washington, D.C. Trip October 5-11, 2024



Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington Cemetery
Participants: Hailey Lai, Aiden Leung, Madelyn Wong and Starling Ueber.

West Portal Lutheran School



Article by
Beatrice Ammann Priest, Alumni Outreach Coordinator

WPL Class of 2024 Legacy Garden

Thanks to a group of volunteers made up of WPL parents, the WPL Class of 2024 Legacy Garden at the Sloat Campus has been planted! At the end of May 2024, the WPL Parents of the Class of 2024 donated monetary gifts towards this beautification project. Those funds allowed WPL School & Church to hire the non-profit "Nature in the City" to lead us in planting a native plant garden from Haake Hall's flagpole to the security gate and a succulent garden in the area above the 3 parking spaces directly in front of Haake Hall on October 17th. Much thanks to our entire Church Council, Principal Lee, Kyle Johnson, Howard Scully, Tom Wedergren, Dan Holt & Dick Bass for handling all the preparations to make this Planting happen!

Please come and visit the Sloat Campus to see how the butterflies are already flying around the native plants. We can smile knowing that our new urban landscape has created a rich habitat for pollinators!

West Portal Lutheran School Event-Trunk or Treat October 27, 2024







November



Saturday, 11/2	11:00 AM Quilt Class-Fellowship Hall
Saturday, 11/2	5:00 PM Worship Service-Partners-In-Faith
Sunday, 11/3	9:00 AM Sunday School-Sanctuary to Church Library
Sunday, 11/3	9:00 AM Adult Bible Study-Fellowship Hall
Sunday, 11/3	9:00 AM Catechism Refresher Class-Upstairs Conference Room
Sunday, 11/3	10:00 AM Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Sunday, 11/3	11:15 AM Church Council Meeting
Wednesday, 11/6	11:00 AM Midweek Bible Class
Saturday, 11/9	5:00 PM Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Sunday, 11/10	9:00 AM Sunday School-Sanctuary to Church Library
Sunday, 11/10	9:00 AM Adult Bible Study-Fellowship Hall
Sunday, 11/10	9:00 AM Catechism Refresher Class-Upstairs Conference Room
Sunday, 11/10	10:00 AM Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Monday, 11/11	No School, Church Office Closed (Veteran's Day)
Wednesday, 11/13	11:00 AM Midweek Bible Class
Saturday, 11/16	5:00 PM Worship Service-Christmas Children Service/Choir & Band
Sunday, 11/17	9:00 AM Sunday School-Sanctuary to Church Library
Sunday, 11/17	9:00 AM Adult Bible Study-Fellowship Hall
Sunday, 11/17	10:00 AM Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Wednesday, 11/20	11:00 AM Midweek Bible Class
Saturday, 11/23	5:00 PM Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Sunday, 11/24	9:00 AM Sunday School-Sanctuary to Church Library
Sunday, 11/24	9:00 AM Adult Bible Study-Fellowship Hall
Sunday, 11/24	9:00 AM Catechism Refresher Class-Upstairs Conference Room
Sunday, 11/24	10:00 AM Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Sunday, 11/24	11:15 AM Altar Guild Meeting-Fellowship Hall
Wednesday, 11/27	11:00 AM Midweek Bible Class
Wednesday, 11/27	7:00 PM Thanksgiving Eve Worship Service-Lord's Supper
Saturday, 11/30	5:00 PM Worship Service-Lord's Supper

Your tithes and offerings support the mission and ministries of West Portal Lutheran Church. If you wish to make an online donation, please use the QR code below. PayPal deducts a small fee from these donations, or you may add a nominal amount to your donation by checking the box to help cover the fees.



November Birthdays and Anniversaries



- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Jennifer Char | 13 Eric Tsang |
| 1 Laurie Rostrata | 17 Ray Toloski |
| 1 Irene Michaud | 17 Cassidy Westall |
| 2 Howard Scully | 18 Shireen Tabar |
| 3 Elissa Choun | 18 Kiley Wong |
| 3 Paul Mrabe | 20 Morteza Tabar |
| 4 Austin Fong | 21 Prescott Mai |
| 5 Paul Kolsanoff | 22 Katelyn Wood |
| 5 Eunice Go | 23 Katrina Tom |
| 6 Stewart Boyer | 23 Kimberly Yu |
| 6 Edward Chan | 23 Adrian Hasani |
| 6 Kelsey Porter | 24 Thomas Chin |
| 7 Joe Fong | 24 YuMeng Wong |
| 8 Sherry Bridygham | 25 Jessica Chan |
| 8 Yuwan Lam | 26 Michael Lee |
| 10 Gregory Williams | 26 Lucas Lee |
| 10 Martin Luther ☺ | 26 Krysta Szeto |
| 11 Angela Ng | 27 Caroline Hsiao |
| 11 Ella Man | 30 Shirly Go |



- | |
|-------------------------------------|
| 4 Dave & Nan Still |
| 9 Rich & Sherry Bridygham |
| 19 David Stranahan & Lai Ching Choy |

"Pray for one another" (James 5:16)

Let us follow this command of God's Word. Use the birthdays and anniversaries list each month to hold up one another to the Lord in prayer. You may wish to keep this list on your refrigerator, in your Bible, in your Portals of Prayer, or in some convenient place. What strength we receive from Almighty God when we sincerely pray for one another! And in these "interesting times," a call to a member wishing him/her birthday or anniversary greetings would certainly be appreciated. It's particularly important that we keep in contact with each other these days.

