

Faith Lutheran News

Christ is Born

December, 2025 Page 1

Faith Lutheran Church

65 Mitchler
Murphys, CA 95247
(209) 728-2041
Faithlutheranchurch@att.net
www.flcmurphys.com
Facebook:

Faith Lutheran Church, Murphys
Pastor Karen Johnson
KarenWJohnson@sbcglobal.net
707-696-5947 cell
209-890-7682 home
Office Phone number
728-2041

Office Hours:
Contact Pastor for an appointment
Tuesday and Wednesday
Church Council
President: Kathleen Walsh
Vice President: Wayne Earthman
Treasurer: Susi Lewis
Financial Secretary: Loretta
Soracco
Secretary: Carol Lagomarsino
Director of Worship & Music:
Kaarn Egge Westerhoff
Property Chairperson:
KC Anderson
Newsletter Editor: Kaarn Egge
Westerhoff



Joy to the World! The Lord is come!

Advent Worship

Sundays, November 30, December 7, 14, & 21
Prepare the way of the Lord with carol-based liturgy
during our regular 11:00 am Sunday services

Decorating the Christmas Tree

Saturday, December 6, 10:00 AM
Each beautiful chrismon tells a story of God's love in Jesus our Savior

Community Christmas Carol Sing-along

Wednesday, December 10, 4:00 PM
Join us for a joyful time of singing together all your favorite
traditional and fun carols – open to everyone!
Refreshments served afterward

Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship

Wednesday, December 24, 7:00 pm

Invite your family and friends to this traditional service
of lessons and carols, children's time,
a message, Holy Communion, and lighting candles
to celebrate the birth of Jesus the Christ, the light of the world

Christmas Day – Thursday, December 25

No worship at Faith – have a blessed day!

Sundays after Christmas – December 28 and January 4
Celebrate Jesus' birth and the turning of the year with Lessons and Carols

Pastor's Message

*“...and they shall name him Emmanuel, which means, ‘God is with us.’”
(Matthew 1:23)*

Dear Siblings in Christ,

Happy New Year! Advent brings the beginning of a new church year, as we prepare for the coming of Christ into the world and into our lives. It is a season to contemplate the miracle and mystery of the Incarnation – God breaking into our human world in the baby born in Bethlehem; the glory of God revealed in a humble manger; the Word made flesh, dwelling among us. How do we tell, in our words and in our living, this good news of great joy?

With beloved traditions of decorations, carols, and candlelit services, this season is an opportunity to reach out and invite friends and neighbors to worship with us in the hope and anticipation of Christ's birth among us. We will have our second annual “Christmas Carol Sing-along” on December 10 at 4:00 PM – a chance to sing beloved Christmas carols together, open to everyone in the community. Who will you reach out to and invite this season?

Bible study will continue studying the lessons coming up, diving into the Sunday Advent readings. You may also pick up the Advent devotional *Humble and Holy* as an accompaniment for your contemplations. Open Door UCC invites us to their “Longest Night” contemplative service on December 12. These are all opportunities to pause, ponder, and prepare to receive Christ, wherever and however he chooses to come.

We gathered on November 16 for a “Commitment Sunday” potluck. It was a fun time of fellowship and conversation, and I reviewed some insights from my visits with you all over the past year. Kathleen shared that our bookkeeper was greatly impressed by our ministry partnerships with the Murphys Senior Center, the Murphys Food Pantry, and Sierra HOPE. My hope is that we will be a “strategically small church,” faithfully committed to worship, discipleship, and service in ways that are appropriate to our size and the resources we have, without apology or regret. After all, Jesus gathered with twelve disciples and began feeding people with only five loaves and two fish. Never underestimate what a small group of faithful, God-trusting, Jesus-followers can do!

It's hard to believe, but this is my tenth holiday season among you – and what great joy to be in ministry with you! Thank you for your faithfulness in love of God, one another, and our neighbors. You are a blessing, shining together with the good news of Christ our Savior.

Peace, comfort, and joy to you this Christmas.

Pastor Karen

Christmas Eve worship helpers needed

If you will be here for Christmas Eve and can help with worship, please talk to Kaarn. We will need greeter(s), usher(s) (take care of lights and candle-lighting), an acolyte, and altar care. Thank you!



Poinsettias

You are invited to bring poinsettias to decorate the sanctuary for Christmas Eve. Please sign-up in the narthex to designate your poinsettias in memory or honor of someone, or let the office know by Tuesday December 16: faithlutheranchurc@att.net. You may bring your poinsettias on Sunday Dec. 21 or before the 7:00 pm service on Christmas Eve.



Longest Night – December 12 at Open Door UCC

Open Door United Church of Christ, Murphys (formerly First Congregational Church) is holding a “Longest Night” service, Friday, December 12, at 4:30 PM. This is a special gathering offering a space of comfort, reflection and hope during the holiday season. With music, silence, readings, and healing, this service seeks to provide moments of peace in what can be a challenging season. Pastor Karen will be there; will you?

Bible study – Looking at Sunday’s Readings

Our Bible study in Advent will continue looking at the lessons for the Sunday coming up. What do we notice in our readings? What do we wonder about? This kind of study helps us to get more out of the readings as we hear them on Sunday... and your insights could make it into the sermon, so that you will be part of the ministry of proclaiming the good news of God in Jesus Christ! You are invited to join anytime **Wednesdays at 3:00 PM** in the narthex – December 3 and 17 only. *No meeting Dec. 10, 24 or 31.*

Council meeting – Tuesday, December 16, 2:00 PM (new time) in the narthex.

Fill the Red Barrel—December 7

The first Sunday of the month is designated as “Fill the Red Barrel” day. You are invited to bring in food for the Pantry’s red barrel in the narthex or make an extra monetary donation to Pantry (make checks to “Faith Lutheran Church” with “Murphys Food Pantry” in the memo.) With higher prices at the grocery store, need will continue to increase. Thank you for your generosity toward this ministry of caring for our community. Together we are making a difference!

Food pantry ongoing needs: Cereal, peanut butter, spaghetti noodles & sauce, tuna, chicken, soups, mac & cheese, noodles or rice mix, beans, corn, top ramen, granola bars, crackers.

“Meal-in-a-Bag” Program for Senior Center

We are invited to fill a bag with items for a sustainable “shelf food” meal. Please check the weekly announcements for the meal ingredients this month.

Breakfast Fellowship – Tuesdays

You are invited to gather with Faith folks for breakfast each week, **Tuesdays at 8 AM, at Grounds**. Hope to see you there for this time of food, fellowship, and faith. Check with Rob if you are coming for the first time, because occasionally the schedule changes.

ELCA Good Gifts

Our church has been collecting funds to send to ELCA Good Gifts, which is a part of the Lutheran World Relief. We will be sending in our donation at the beginning of December. This is a great program to support because our gifts go to people in need all over the world. Our initial goal was \$1,000. We exceeded that goal and have collected over \$1,200. We are thinking we will have enough money to provide a cow, some chickens, goats and also help a women start her own business to help sustain her family. I am so proud of our success.

Thank you everyone who participated.

We had a wonderful time at our Stewardship Fellowship Pot Luck. Below are pictures of those who were able to attend.

First picture, clockwise from the left—Annette Stout, KC Anderson, Wayne Earthman, Kathleen Walsh.

Picture 2 Loretta Sorocco, Pastor Karen and Dave Johnson, Liz Gilbert and Charlene Perry.

Picture 3 Jan and Mike Skenfield, Carol Lago-marsino, Kaarn and Rob Westerhoff and Susi Lewis.



December Birthdays

Pat McKee

1st

Carol Lagomarsino

14th**January Birthdays**

Vivian Hansten

3rd

Loretta Soracco

16th**January Anniversary**Janet and Mike Skenfield 30th

Merry Christmas



Sunday Date	December 7	December 14	December 21	December 24	December 28
Theme	2nd Sunday of Advent	3rd Sunday of Advent	4th Sunday of Advent	Christmas Eve	First Sunday of Christmas
Reader/ Worship Assistant	Janet Skenfield	Liz Gilbert	KC Anderson	Robert Westerhoff	Kathy Walsh
Altar Care	Kathleen Walsh	Carol Lagomarsino	Rob Westerhoff	Kaarn Westerhoff	
Counters	Kaarn Westerhoff	KC Anderson	Kaarn Westerhoff	Carol Lagomarsino/ Kaarn Westerhoff	Kaarn and Rob Westerhoff

Sunday Date	January 4	January 11	January 18	January 25
Theme	Second Sunday of Christmas	Baptism of Our Lord and First Sunday after Epiphany	Second Sunday after Epiphany	Third Sunday after Epiphany
Reader/ Worship Assistant	KC Anderson	Liz Gilbert	Rob Westerhoff	Janet Skenfield
Altar Care	Kathleen Walsh	Carol Lagomarsino	KC Anderson	Annette Stout
Counters	Kaarn Westerhoff	KC Anderson	Kaarn Westerhoff	Carol Lagomarsino/ Kaarn Westerhoff

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
65 Mitchler Murphys, California 95247
Phone: (209)-728-2041 Email: Faithlutheranchurc@att.net

*Do justice, love kindness, and
walk humbly with the Lord.
Micah 6:8*