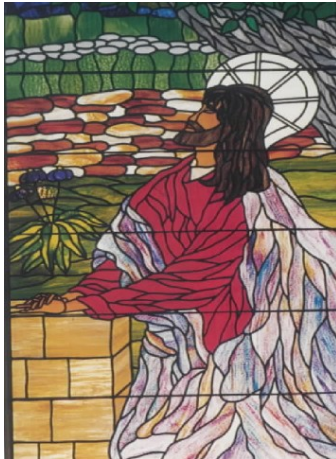


“We are a gathering of God’s people committed to worshipping God and to sharing his love and salvation through Jesus Christ by meeting the spiritual, emotional, and physical needs of our community.”



Gethsemane Lutheran Church

2825 Paris Road, Chalmette, La. 70043

504-271-4254

News from the Garden

DECEMBER 2011

The Work of Preparing

Grace to you and peace from our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ!

Advent is the season of preparing. The stores have been preparing for this month since August. Many of you are preparing your homes, your trees, your bank accounts for the coming of Christmas.

But as Christians we are called to also be preparing our hearts and our lives not just for Christmas, but for the coming of the Christ child!

The good news is that this kind of preparing doesn't cost a cent. And the other good news is that it doesn't stop when the lights and trees have come down. Preparing for Christ is an ongoing, heart-growing, world-changing process.

This is also a season of preparing here at Gethsemane. We are preparing for the work that God has called this congregation to do in this parish. We may not know exactly what that is going to be but that doesn't mean we shouldn't keep preparing.

Preparing can take many forms: being involved in faith formation activities like Sunday School and bible studies; developing an active, deliberate prayer life; giving from the heart, out of gratitude for all you've been given; serving your neighbor; and

This preparing needs to be done by everyone, from our youngest to our oldest members, no exceptions. We all have a role to play in the unfolding of Christ's coming right here, right now. So have a blessed Advent, a Merry Christmas and a productive time of preparing for Jesus, our savior and Lord.

Your partner in the work of preparing,

Pastor Bonnie

Your Little Ones, Dear Lord are We

*Oh, draw us wholly to you, Lord.
And to us all your grace accord;
True faith and love to us impart,
That we may hold you in our heart.*

*Until at last we too proclaim,
With all your saints, your glorious name;
In paradise our songs renew,
And praise you as the angels do.*

“I know the plans I have for you.... to give you a future with hope.” Jeremiah 29:11



Upcoming Events

The next VPT (Counsel) meeting will be on Thursday, December 8 at 7pm.

Gethsemane News:

Dami Dotson's birthday is Dec. 21st.

Steve and Debbie Brandt celebrated their 40th Anniversary.

Jonathan Shears and Jennifer Burcham welcomed a baby girl, "Rylee Grace", on November 14, 2011. She was 6lb 4oz and 19in long.

Amy Palmeri Domino gave birth to a baby boy, "Gianni", on November 28, 2011. He was 7lb 20oz and 21in long.



2012 ELCA Youth Gathering
July 18-22, 2012
New Orleans, Louisiana
Online Registration

Once again the Youth Gathering will need adult volunteers to help make this event special for our youth. Adult Volunteers must believe that our youth are important and worth helping! They must be at least 19 years old and have graduated from High School at least a year by July 2012. And they must pass a security check. The security check fee is paid by the local volunteers not the Gathering.

For more information contact:

Phyllis DuSang
3029 Indiana Ave
Kenner, LA 70065
Cell: 504-388-6938
Email: edaphyllis@bellsouth.net

Patricia Armstrong
1204 Vintage Dr
Kenner, LA 70065
Cell: 504-460-7874
Email: parmstrong8@att.net

Registration for the Youth Gathering is now open to the youth and in a couple of days we had 27,000 youth registered, so we are looking for a wonderful turn out!!!!!!!

BLESSING OF THE HOME AT EPIPHANY

Matthew writes that when the magi saw the shining star stop overhead, they were filled with joy. "On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother" (Matt. 2:10-11).

In the home, Christ is met in family and friends, in visitors and strangers. In the home, faith is shared, nurtured, and put into action. In the home, Christ is welcome.

Twelfth Night (January 5) is the last night of the twelve days of Christmas and the night before Epiphany. It is a time when people gather with family and friends for a blessing of the home.



Following an eastern European tradition, a visual blessing may be inscribed with white chalk above the main door; for example, 20 + CMB + 12. The numbers change with each new year. The three letters stand for either the ancient Latin blessing *Christe mansionem benedica*, which means, "Christ, bless this house," or the legendary names of the

magi (Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar).

This year Pastor Bonnie is offering Twelfth Night House Blessings for anyone who would like to participate. The blessing will take about 15-30 minutes. You can sign-up in the Narthex, call the



Baptism of our Lord Sunday January 8, 2012

We will be remembering and celebrating the baptisms that happened in our congregation last year. We will be presenting each child with a Baptismal Medallion to keep as a reminder of the promises made at their Baptism.

This year we celebrate with:

Bella DiGiovanni
Tre' Ajan
Sebastian Katz
Lydia Switzer
Brienne Vicknair
Sean Vicknair
Clifford Wuertz III
Cullen Chalona



This is also a time for all of us to remember and reaffirm our own baptisms so please be here for worship.



February 5, 2012

Mission Statement

Using the energy of the Super Bowl to mobilize youth in a united national effort to care for people in their local communities who are hungry and those in need.

Vision Statement

Transform the time around the Super Bowl into the nation's largest celebration of giving and serving.

In 2011 groups in Louisiana collected \$28346.72 and 6,241 food items. One of those groups was Christ the King Lutheran in Kenner. We can be one of those groups in 2012. Are you ready for some food-ball?

Gethsemane Pre-School News

The kids are all getting ready for Christmas.

On Friday, the 3 and 4 year olds had a birthday party for Jesus and received Advent Calendars.

The 2's are learning Christmas songs and the story of Jesus' birth.

The Pre-School Christmas Programs will be:

December 19th at 9am for the M/W 2 year old class

December 20th at 9am for the T/TH 2 year old class

December 20th at 11am for the other 2 year old class

December 16th at 9am for the T/TH/F 3 year old class

December 21st at 9am for the other 3 year old class

December 16th at 11 for the 4 year old class

Everyone is invited.

Christmas holidays begin after the Christmas programs and class begins again on January 4 or 5th.

THANKSGIVING BASKETS

We bought food for 15 families for Thanksgiving. We have a little bit of the money left over which we will use for Christmas. Thanks for helping us to feed the hungry in St. Bernard Parish.

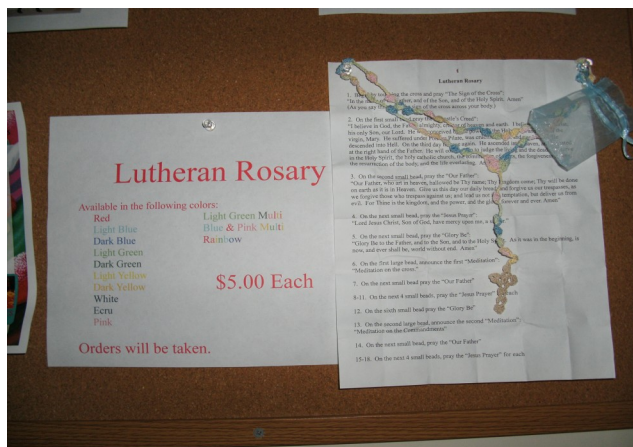
Thanks to the TX-LA Gulf Coast Synod for their financial contribution. Thank You to: Barbara Forestier, Barbara Brunet, Gaby Serpas, Krista Brunet, Terrell Brunet and Martin Parker for shopping, packaging, and delivering.



New Youth Fund Raiser

LUTHERAN ROSARIES (Instructions included)
Handmade by Judy Perez
\$5.00 each

These would make wonderful stocking stuffers for Christmas.
(Catholic Rosaries also available for purchase)





**GOD'S GLOBAL BARNYARD/
ELCA WORLD HUNGER**

As of December 4th, we have raised \$326.55 towards our goal of raising \$500.00 to buy a cow for Christmas.

Holy Cow

Please keep filling those barns with money in any form!

Remember we give gifts at Christmas because of God's gift of Jesus to us!

(You can check our progress on the cow poster in the narthex!)



St. Bernard
Christmas Parade
Afterparty



Thanks to Peggy, Mary, and the Preschool; thanks to Steve Brandt, Joe Oster, and the Heart of Chalmette Neighborhood Association; thanks to Krista, Zack, Patrick, Sarah, Maria and Barbara.

To all the KING'S Men...

(in other words, all you guys out there!)

check out the latest blog post... <http://gulfcoastmen.blogspot.com/>

In this post you will find:

- A report and update on the Camp Lutherhill workday;
- A post on how to love yourself, and
- **A '*mark the day*' reminder for the annual gathering in Kenner, LA February 10,11,12, 2012**

There is a new poll at the very bottom of the blogsite!

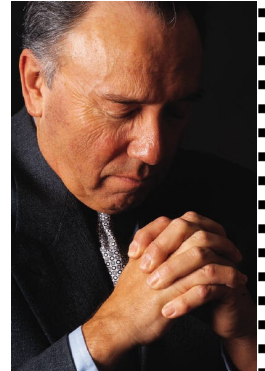
Thanks to all you do to be one of the KING'S men in your congregation... and continue to pray for your pastors and the men of the congregations and their families.

One man @ a time; no man left behind,

Rev. Dr. Brian K. Gigeo, New Life Lutheran Church, Pearland, TX

281-485-1818

brian@newlifelutheran.com



ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING JANUARY 15TH 9:15 am in the Sanctuary

We will be:

- Approving the 2012 church budget
- Electing council members for 2012
- Addressing any business that requires approval by the whole congregation

Please plan to attend.

There will be Sunday School for the kids!

Everybody counts, everybody matters in God's kingdom!



Christmas Schedule

Advent & Christmas Schedule:

Wednesdays, December 7, 14, 21—7pm
Sundays, December 4, 11, 18—8am & 10:30am

Christmas VBS:

Ages 3 through 8th grade
Thursday, December 22—9am to 3pm

Christmas Eve:

Saturday, December 24—6pm Candlelight Vigil

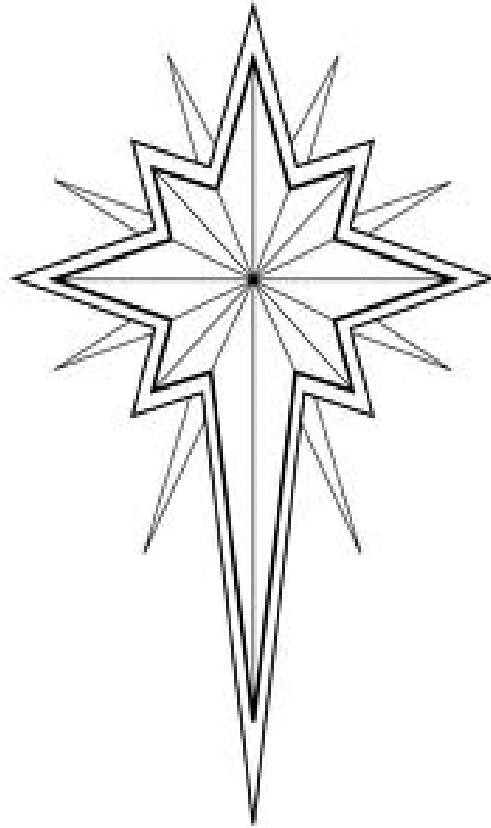
Christmas Day:

Sunday, December 25—One Service at 9am.
No Sunday School

New Year's Day:

One Service at 10:30am.
Youth will lead Service.
No Sunday School.

Please join us!



All Saints Sunday



Lighting of the Advent Wreath



Wishing everyone a Spirited time during all these wonderful holy days.

Spirited with the Holy Spirit of course, yet many of us like a bit of the fermented or burnt spirits as well. This leads to this special time to be also one of many tragedies, often due to driving or other dangerous behaviors.

Please be careful, do NOT drive when drinking, do NOT drink when driving.

- avoid mixing different drinks as it may seriously impair your judgment (not to speak of impairing your physical well being)
- remember your liver, God gave you only one, and it needs its time to work out the spirits.
- avoid dangerous combinations: Energy drinks act as a stimulant, alcohol acts as a depressant. This is a deadly combination. Yes, deadly. This now quite popular combination may give one a quick buzz, but many cases are reported where the buzzer is now in an irreversible coma or no longer alive.

So please be smart, stay healthy, pace yourself, enjoy the holy days, drink not so much where you don't remember them. God has a plan for you here on earth, so stick around. He's not finished with us.

Happy Hopeful Advent and Merry Christmas.

Gaby

Gethsemane Lutheran Church, ELCA
2825 Paris Rd
Chalmette, LA 70043
504-271-4254
www.gethsemane-lutheran.org

Sunday Schedule

Traditional Worship 8am
Faith Formation 9:15am
Contemporary Worship 10:30am

Staff

Pastor Bonnie Parker
Barbara Brunet—Secretary