



# THE GOOD NEWS

San Marcos  
Lutheran Church

January 2026

**Our Mission:** "To know, accept and live the love of God and share it with others"



## Important Dates in January:

### **Saturdays of Sisterhood**

Saturday, Jan 3rd at 10am  
in Luther Hall

### **Pr Casey Out of Office**

Jan 4th-8th

### **Office Closed**

January 19th

### **Service of Prayer for Christian Unity**

Tuesday, Jan. 27th at 6:30pm  
Bethlehem Lutheran Church in  
Encinitas

*The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning. — Lamentations 3:22*

Merry Christmas! Happy New Year!

If you are reading this in the first days of January, it's still Christmas! (I said I'd remind you every year.) The twelve days of Christmas begin on Christmas Day and end with the Epiphany, when we celebrate the arrival of the magi at the home of the Holy Family. As I explained to our preschoolers during chapel recently, every day is a good day to celebrate the birth of Jesus, the love of God coming to live with us. They're on winter break for Christmas, so we got a little ahead of ourselves and sang Happy Birthday to Jesus the week before. If you haven't tired yourself out with Christmas carols just yet, keep singing them!

The candles in your Advent wreath may have melted down to stubs by now, but you can keep the light of Christ shining in your home throughout this winter. January can be a hard month for many of us; the holiday celebrations fade, visiting friends and family travel home, our sparkling and joyful decor goes back in the garage. And it's still a little too dark and a little too cold outside.

Our creature siblings have it right, I think, with hibernation. Our plant siblings in their dormancy. This time of year is for rest. Our bodies can tell! We have to be gentle with ourselves. Turn the lights a little lower to rest your eyes; turn the volume down to rest your ears. Set aside the things that distress you—rest your heart. Before you say yes or no to things, take a moment to consider: will this give you rest?

I am, as usual, inviting you into countercultural behavior! January is the time when our culture is whipped into a froth about the new year and all the changes we should already have discerned and decided and begun to make! I'm exhausted just thinking about it. Who you are, today, is a beloved child of God. Any resolutions that you make should keep that in mind! No diet plan, household reorganization, career ambition, relationship status, or other goal will make that any more or less true.

And your resolutions, if you make them, need not have started the minute you opened your eyes on January first. January 12th is also a great day to try something new. As is the month of February. Or even July! Any day is a good day to notice that God is making all things new—even you.

This year at SMLC, we're embarking on a season of looking inward. Not of self-centeredness in an insular, uncaring way—don't get me wrong. But a time of noticing who we are and how our ministry survives and thrives on this campus and in our community. We are a community devoted to outreach, doing the work God has called us to do with and for our neighbors. And that is only possible if we are also doing inreach (okay, it's possible that's not a real word), building relationships among one another and working together right here. It takes a lot of willing hands and giving hearts to do the work of church together; I invite you to listen carefully for how God is calling you to serve.

I don't expect anyone to sign up for every committee, event, and leadership role all at once. That wouldn't give you much rest, would it? But I am expecting you to wonder about the specific place where you feel most connected to God's work here at SMLC. Everyone's talents, abilities, gifts, and skills have a home here. I know that our congregation is bursting with great ideas—they are shared with me every day! This time will offer us the chance to ask ourselves some questions. What are the steps you are willing and able to take to make those dreams a reality? Where does your giftedness meet our congregation's needs?

As you rest and reflect in these winter months, notice what is taking root in you. What sprouts will shoot forth from your good soil as we move toward spring? What will you harvest next fall?

Peace,  
Pastor Casey

**San Marcos Lutheran Church**

3419 Grand Avenue San Marcos, CA 92078

(760) 727-1509

office@sanmarcoslutheran.org

www.sanmarcoslutheran.org

*All are Welcome! As a community of the people of God, the members of San Marcos Lutheran Church welcome all people, regardless of age, economic status, ethnic background, gender, physical or mental ability, race or sexual orientation. We affirm that in Christ "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female." (Galatians 3:28)*

Pastor Casey Kloehn Dunsworth

Office Manager: Aimee Hudlow Musician: Justin Hershey

Bookkeeper: Cristen Mugford Choir Director: Max Chodos

Communications: Adriana Alfaro

**Council Members**

Dan Norris, President

Ed Mossuto

Kelly Van Jen, Vice Pres.

Devin Hogan

Anne Voth, Secretary

Donna Johnson

Beda Farell, Treasurer

Sharon Phelps

Tom Andreas

Esther Daniels

Brother Jack Anderson

To contact any Council members, email  
council@sanmarcoslutheran.org

**San Marcos Lutheran Preschool**  
preschool@sanmarcoslutheran.org  
(760)727-0326

**Director: Ann Leong**

Teachers: Roxy Maldonado, Marlene  
Vazquez, & Elle Kim

**Remember in Prayer:**

Christine Buma, Sue Check, Crystal, Celia  
Genishi, Jolene Hanson, Pete Johnson, Gary  
Kloehn, Karin Kloehn, Larry, Deborah  
McGregor, Maddie, Melinda Nelson, Alvar Roy,  
Jean Russell, Marilynne Smith, Dawn Steele,  
Stephanie, Nick Torres, Kelly Van Jen.

**PLEASE CONTACT US!**

We want to include you in our prayers, arrange for pastoral visits, and inform the congregation, when appropriate. Please notify the Church Office (760)727-1509 when:

- A loved one or someone you know dies
- You, or someone you know is ill or grieving
- You, or someone you know is in the hospital
- You want to plan a baptism, wedding, or celebration
- You moved or contact info has changed.

For urgent needs, contact Pastor Casey at cell:

442-222-1194

**Lutheran Fellowship Lunch**

Everyone is invited for good food and fellowship with First Lutheran of Vista. We will meet on Monday, January 12th at 12pm at PEGAH's Kitchen at 955 S Santa Fe, in Vista. It will be order from the menu and they have a great selection. Any Questions contact Bill Hanson, 760-805-4565. Hope to see you there!

**Saturdays of Sisterhood**

For Women. By Women. About Women.

Bible study, self reflection, and finding community amongst the women of the Bible and those of SMLC!

Please join Karin Kupka on Saturday, Jan. 3rd from 10-11:30 AM In Luther Hall.  
Coffee and tea will be served. No need to RSVP.  
Questions?

Email Karin @karinkupka533@hotmail.com  
or call 760-415-2525.



## Financial Update

End of November 2025 - 91.7% of Year

### Income

Annual Budget	Actual YTD	% of Budget
\$310,704	\$257,217	82.79%

### Expenses

Annual Budget	Actual YTD	% of Budget
\$310,704	\$278,021	89.48%

Thank you for your generous gifts which support the mission and ministry of San Marcos Lutheran Church!

## Social Action

*Thank you*



Many thanks to all who participated in the Hope for the Holidays Christmas card creating and writing project. We were able to send 150 cards with hopeful, welcoming messages for Global Refuge to distribute to our friends seeking asylum and in detention centers. A special thank you to Iris, Jade and Jackie Garcia who wrote messages in 70 of those cards. Thank you again for sharing your time and talents to spread some joy this holiday season.

Blessings, Your Social Action Committee

## ALL SAINTS FOOD PANTRY

We'd like to share some detailed information this month.

Christmas of 2024, we had 20 clients the Saturday before Christmas. In 2025 we had 46 clients representing 159 family members! A big Thank You to everyone who contributes, and especially Ann Leong and the Children's Center for their donations for Thanksgiving and Christmas. We were delighted that there was such a good response to our request for special items in December. We also made some special purchases thanks to a Thrivent Action Team card. And, we were able to give out 40 Target gift cards, a very special treat thanks to generous donors. Any food or monetary donations are always welcome. Checks may be made payable to San Marcos Lutheran Church and marked "Food Pantry." All Saints receives the bills from the San Diego Food Bank for the items we pick up twice a month. Hector Gonzalez loaded almost 1,000 lbs. into his SUV (plus a few things went in Doris's car) on December 20th (at 7am!), and the bill was \$54. That included bread, 15 dozen eggs, 2 cases of small watermelons, apples, potatoes, sweet potatoes, pears, 2 cases of frozen ground chicken, a case of shelf-stable milk, and cases of various canned goods. Our clients are so thankful. Many of them come in as soon as we arrive to help set up. Look for photos from December on the outside bulletin board. As you will see, our wonderful volunteers were decked out in festive attire, and we had Christmas music playing on a boombox.

Again, thank you for whatever part you play in supporting this very active ministry that provides food and a friendly welcome to so many people.

If you'd like more information about the Food Pantry, please contact Doris Payne, 760-653-3026.

## INTERFAITH'S HOLIDAY SPONSOR-A-FAMILY EVENT

San Marcos Lutheran did our part once again! We filled those two big bins with gifts for Interfaith clients of every age – from babies to adults. This year 343 families were able to "shop" for themselves and their children from the gifts we and other faith organizations, clubs, and businesses provided. To quote from Interfaith's Wrap-Up, "This simple change brought dignity and joy in ways we'll never forget."

Over 170 volunteers helped in many ways. Volunteer time slots filled so quickly that we missed out on going as a group from our church! Maybe next year.

**Ecumenical Prayer Service**

During the week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the churches of North County are invited to come together for an Evening Prayer Service on Tuesday, January 27 at 6:30 pm at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Encinitas. The service will be led by clergy members from the various Christian churches. An ecumenical choir will lead us in song. The theme is One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism. Some time for fellowship will follow the service. With one heart and voice let us praise the Lord

***Council Update:***

*Hello SMLC and Happy New Year!  
Here are the updates for the December Council meeting.*

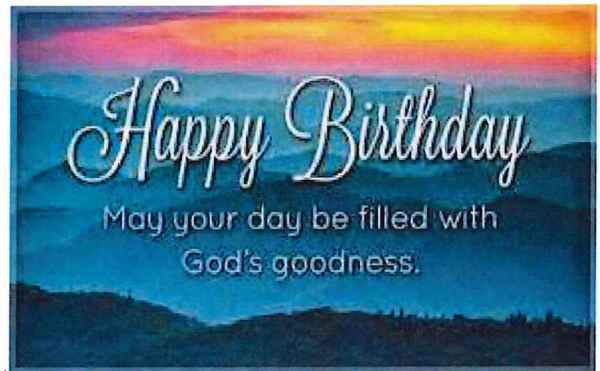
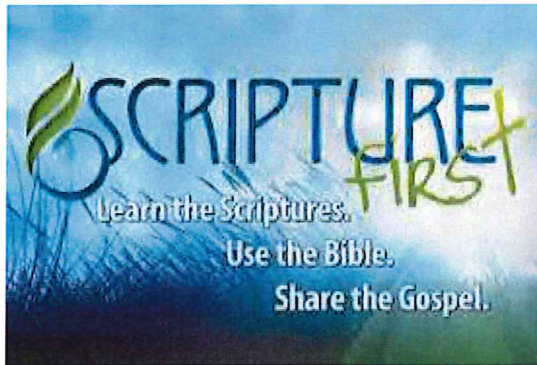
*The Council met on December 17th for our regular monthly meeting. The Council accepted and/or approved the submitted minutes and reports as well as reports for November. The Council considered 4 items of business. First, the housing allowance for Pastor Casey was approved for 2026. The Council voted to increase the rent for the parsonage by \$180/month which is approximately 5% over the current rent, and approved the signing of a 12 month lease to the current tenants. The Council forwarded changes to the Model Constitution to the congregation for approval at the February Annual Meeting with recommendation to approve the changes. Lastly the Council set February 8, 2026 as the date for Part 2 of the Annual Congregation Meeting. Please plan to attend.*

*As this was the last Council meeting of 2025, the Council thanked and celebrated the contributions of Jan Parthemer and Karla Strazicich-Cain during their terms on the Council.*

*Thank you for the opportunity to serve as president for 2025 and for your continued support of SMLC, our Council, Pastor Casey, and the staff.*

*Happy New Year and may 2026 be prosperous to you and your loved ones!*

*Daniel Norris, President*



**Jan 4 Epiphany of Our Lord**

First Reading: Isa 60:1-6  
 Second Reading: Eph 3:1-12  
 Gospel: Matt 2:1-12

**Jan 11 Baptism of our Lord**

First Reading: Isa 42:1-9  
 Second Reading: Acts 10:34-43  
 Gospel: Matt 3:13-17

**Jan 18 Second Sunday after Epiphany**

First Reading: Isa 49:1-7  
 Second Reading: 1 Cor 1:1-9  
 Gospel: John 1:29-42

**Jan 25 Third Sunday after Epiphany**

First Reading: Isa 9:1-4  
 Second Reading: 1 Cor 1:10-18  
 Gospel: Matt 4:12-23

Jan 5 Maggie Riley-Hagan

Jan 7 Susan Walsh

Jan 14 Louise Testerman

Jan 17 Holly Kepler

Jan 18 Kerri Nolan

Jan 23 Grant Carreon

Jan 23 Fran Iverson

Jan 23 Eloise Nimmer

Jan 24 Jean Russell

Jan 27 Haylie Murray

Jan 27 Rob O'Carroll

Jan 31 Wanda Luckey

**The next Newsletter article deadline  
 is January 15th**





# SMLC Children's Center News

## JANUARY 2026



3419 Grand Ave, San Marcos 92078 • 760-727-0326 • smlcchild@sbcglobal.net

Happy New Year & Welcome January!

Thank you for your tremendous generosity in remembering the entire staff during the holidays. We all have been deeply touched by your love and kindness!

Blessings, Mrs. Leong & Children's Center Staff

### Dates to remember:

**January 19th (Mon):** Preschool is closed for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

**January 28th (Wed):** Staff meeting~ NO LUNCH BUNCH

**January 22nd (Thurs) & 23rd (Fri):**  
Celebrating 100 days of school!



### Time to change out the clothes!

With the weather a little colder and the children a little bigger, this is a great time to change out your child's Ziploc bag of extra clothes and make sure they have at least a light weight jacket at school (as well as socks and underwear, of course!)

Don't forget to label your child's belongings :)

### OPEN ENROLLMENT FOR FALL 2026

**PRIORITY Enrollment for returning families will begin as early as January 20th. If you have plans on having your child join us for the 2026-27 school year, please let me know! As a reminder, if you sign up for Fall, you will be eligible to sign up for Summer Camps 2026.**

**New Family enrollment will begin on February 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

**Packets will be available mid-January. (Non-refundable) Registration is \$200~ this will secure your spot!**

### 2025 SMLCCC

#### Giving Generously Projects:

- 22 New Pajamas to Cal-Safe Program in Escondido
- 14 Homemade Cards to San Marcos Lutheran Church Home-bound Members
- 14 Pigs total to God's Global Barnyard for World Hunger
- 2 Wagons FULL of canned goods for All Saints Food Pantry in Escondido
- \$500 to California Wildfires through Lutheran Disaster Response

Learn  Live  Share  the Love of God

2026

JANUARY

CALENDAR YEAR

CALENDAR MONTH

SUNDAY

FIRST DAY OF WEEK

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	29	30	31	01 Office Closed- Happy New Year	02 12pm- AA- LH	03 10am- Sat of Sister- LH 6-9pm AA- LH
04 10am- Worship Service 11:15- Community time	05 12pm- AA- LH	06 7-9pm- Music Men- LH	07 12pm- AA- LH	08 7pm- Choir Practice-SA	09 12pm- AA- LH	10 6-9pm AA- LH
11 10am- Worship Service 11:15- Community time	12 12pm- AA- LH	13 7-9pm- Music Men- LH	14 12pm- AA- LH 130pm- Soc. Act. Mtg- Conf	15 7pm- Choir Practice-SA	16 945-1145a- St Joe's- SA 12pm- AA- LH	17 6-9pm AA- LH
18 10am- Worship Service 11:15- Community time	19 12pm- AA- LH	20 7-9pm- Music Men- LH	21 12pm- AA- LH	22 7pm- Choir Practice-SA	23 12pm- AA- LH	24 6-9pm AA- LH
25 10am- Worship Service 11:15- Community time- Blessing Bags	26 12pm- AA- LH	27 7-9pm- Music Men- LH	28 12pm- AA- LH	29 7pm- Choir Practice-SA	30 12pm- AA- LH	31 6-9pm AA- LH
01	02	03	04	05	06	07