



KEEPING CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS

It's that time of year again. Social media will be flooded with images (memes) calling for Christians to keep Christ in Christmas. All this in response to the shorthand Xmas. Many Christians find this offensive because it looks as if Christ has been removed and replaced with the letter 'X'. This is found offensive because Christ is at the center of the Christmas celebration, His birth is the whole reason we celebrate. But before you go and join the crowd calling for the world to keep Christ in Christmas, I would like ask you to take a moment and consider two very important things.



The first is simply a bit of history and language. The word 'Christmas' is a mashing together of 2 words, Christ and Mass. Christmas is the Mass celebrating Christ's birth, so the Christ $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$ Mass become known as Christmas. The English word Christ comes from the Greek 'cristos'. In Greek it looks like this " $\chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{o}\varsigma$ ". Notice the first letter, it looks like an 'x'. In fact, we see this letter in Christian symbolism, often combined with the second letter which looks like a 'p'. These letters are chi and rho, and when we see them they often look something like the image you next to this paragraph. In the early church this symbol, the chi rho, or simply the chi(x) by itself were used as shorthand for Christ. What the world sees as 'Xmas' is this tradition of using the first Greek letter of Christ as shorthand continuing today. And so in reality, though many are unaware of it, the word 'christ' has never really been taken out of Christmas.

That of course is just the first thing I would like you to consider. The second thing more about your actions. It is all well and good to talk about keeping Christ in Christmas, but does putting those 6 letters in the word Christmas really keep Christ in Christmas. I would contend that it doesn't. Insisting on those letters being included is much like what James talks about with works and faith when he writes: "What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead (James 2:14-17 ESV)." The presence of those 6 letters really does nothing for keeping Christ in Christmas. Instead consider living out your faith, doing those things Christ has called us to do; feed the hungry, care for the sick, give to the poor, and proclaim the good news of sins forgiven because of Christ. These are far better and more effective ways of keeping Christ in Christmas.

With these things in mind, perhaps seeing Xmas isn't such a bad thing. Use it as a chance to proclaim Christ, not by insisting on the use "Christ" in Christmas, but by sharing your faith, by showing forth the love of Christ as you share the reason for your own joy during this season.

Merry χ mas!

Merry Christ-mass!

Merry Christmas!

Pastor Paul

MORENO VALLEY MASTER CHORALE and orchestra under the direction of Dr. Viorel Gheorghe Joyfully present
Carols by Candlelight, featuring: A Christmas Carol Sing-A-Long
& The Armada Elementary Choir on
Sunday December 11, 2016 at 4 PM at Shepherd of the Valley.
Ticket Donations (cash only) Adults: \$15, Seniors/Students: \$10.
Call 951-485-8414 for tickets or information, or go to
www.morenovalleymasterchorale.org.



**There will be
ONE SERVICE ONLY
On Sunday,
January 1, 2017
At 9:30 am**

Don't forget!



QUILTING FOR LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

Shepherd's Staff - Vol. 23, No. 12 Published Monthly
by Shepherd of the Valley;
11650 Perris Blvd.; Moreno Valley, CA 92557-6563

Hello everyone! Even with us off until January of 2017 we have been working on making things for the boutique. We are so happy to announce that two of our adult quilts were sold at the sale and our Ice Cream Basket also sold at the auction.

Now we have to start planning for next year and finish the baby quilts to take to Pregnancy and Family Resource Center later in January. We have been busy with ideas for this project also.

We would like to thank the secret Angels that dropped off material and thread to Anne Neudecker's home for our group. Thank you all so much with your support and continued care and thinking of us when you have things we can use for our quilting.

Now may we all wish you a blessed Thanksgiving with your loved ones. Also we wish you a wonderful Christmas and New Year and may God bless your holidays and our country.

If you would like more information on our group just give me a call at 951-276-0373 and I will try to answer your questions. Keep watching the bulletin on Sundays to see the time and date for our meetings in the fellowship hall starting up again in January.

Blessings, Linda Olson



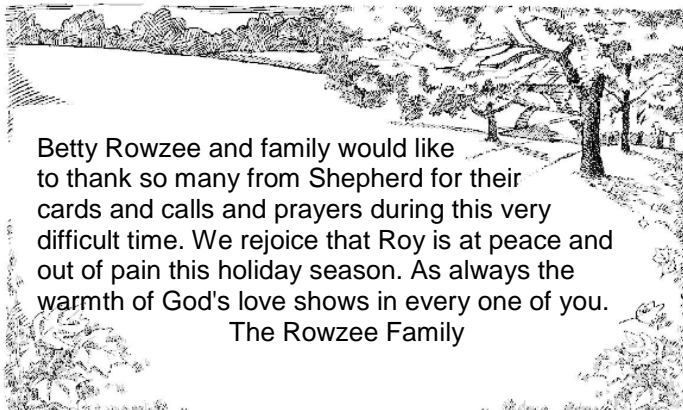
Our Annual Holiday Boutique was a huge success, we raised \$3900 and still counting – enough to pay for the new church front doors. A special thank you to everyone who contributed and helped this year, we are very blessed each year to have dedicated workers, crafters, and bakers helping out. May all of you be blessed during this holiday season.

Yours in Christ,
The Boutique Group

CELEBRATE THE 500TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REFORMATION IN GERMANY

August 2017 on a Trafalgar Tour with Kedma Wenz from Faith Lutheran, Riverside.

The 16th century split from the Roman Catholic Church, resulting in the Protestant religious movement, is explored on this nine-day trip following the story of the main protagonist, Martin Luther. Guests will explore Erfurt, the town where Luther lived as a young man when he was a student and a monk, Wartburg where he lived in exile and incognito devoting himself to translating the New Testament into German, and Wittenburg where he nailed 95 Theses to the church door, among other Luther heritage attractions. \$3,145 (approx.). Mark your attendance card or contact the church office for more information.



Betty Rowzee and family would like to thank so many from Shepherd for their cards and calls and prayers during this very difficult time. We rejoice that Roy is at peace and out of pain this holiday season. As always the warmth of God's love shows in every one of you.
The Rowzee Family



THRIVENT CHOICE DOLLARS:

Members of Thrivent Financial are eligible to designate Thrivent Choice Dollars to a church or charity of their choice. Have you remembered to designate your Choice Dollars for 2016? Undesignated dollars "expire" after March 31. Go to thrivent.com and click the MyThrivent button on the upper right side of the site and direct your Choice Dollars. Both the church and school are registered to receive Choice Dollars and Shepherd is grateful to those who have contributed through this program.

Meet Our New



Hello to everybody at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, firstly I would like to introduce myself. My name is Robby and alongside Julie Kim we will be the youth leaders. I myself am originally from Australia, growing up on the Gold Coast, I attended church in Brisbane.

Having traveled the world with ice skating, both coaching and competing, I now plan to make Moreno Valley my home.

My most recent departure was from Vancouver, Canada, where I have spent the last two years working. So it is with great honor that I receive this position as a youth leader and thank you all at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church for granting me this wonderful opportunity to work with and be a part of the lives of young and inspiring children.

Julie Kim as you may know is the daughter of Pastor John Kim who runs the Grace, Korean service on Sundays. Julie has been a part of youth throughout the years and also works as an ice skating coach. We do spend a lot of time together both at work, at home and now at youth group. A little fun fact about Julie is that Julie was a national champion of figure skating when she was 12.

Both Julie and I have enjoyed our previous evenings with youth so far, they are a wonderful group of children with brilliant attitudes towards the church and each other.

Keep an eye out in the bulletin for updates and progress reports along with what's going on with our youth group. I look forward to getting to know you all and building relationships along the way,

God bless,
Robby McNamara



We hope that everybody had a great Thanksgiving. We also want to thank everybody who donated items to our Thanksgiving boxes which included nonperishable items, turkeys from our turkey angels and also the monetary funds we received during the month of November. As a result of your continuous contributions, we were able to give out 10 Thanksgiving boxes. We especially would like to thank the parents of our preschool children who went the extra mile and made donations to our boxes. Without everyone's help, this endeavor could have never been accomplished.

Christmas is just around the corner and we will be needing items for our Christmas boxes as well. If you know of a family that will need a Christmas food box, please fill out one of the food box nomination forms, available in the church lobby or office. These forms need to be filled out completely and returned to the office, a Lay Minister or to Pastor Paul no later than December 11, 2016, as the Christmas food boxes will be made available for pickup or delivery on December 15, 2016.

We know that the holidays can be very hard for families who need to put food on the table, so please watch the church bulletin in the next coming weeks to find out what you can donate or how you can help us fill the Christmas food boxes. For Christmas, we will definitely need hams (10-12 pounds each) and they will need to be at the church no later than December 14, 2016. Also, as a result of your generosity, we were able to donate about 80 pounds of nonperishable items to CAP. Again, thank you for your support and prayers of this ministry.

Eva Carlson & Bernice Bennett, Social Ministry Coordinators

Dear Shepherd of the Valley,

About a month ago I took Ruth Ann into the Hospice Care facility because I just wasn't able to care for her properly. Ten days later, on October 20th, I stood next to her bed as she finished her fight and the good Lord called her home. She fought her cancer for about 28 months. I still remember the night when Dr. Gill, her first oncologist, came into Ruth's hospital room in Riverside and told her (us) that she had stage 4 colon cancer – like it was yesterday. The past 2 1/3 years have been hard, yet very good at the same time. We grew closer and discovered the wonderful support of many friends and family like you – the members of Shepherd! Thank you for your love and support, kind thoughts and prayers.

Special Thanks to all who send cards and notes. Also thank you for the beautiful flowers sent in memory of Ruth Ann. She would have truly loved them. God bless you all! Happy Thanksgiving to you – this year be especially thankful for your spouse and family.

Pastor D. Krueger





PREVENT WAKING IN A GROGGY HAZE

1. Don't hit snooze when your alarm rings. Falling back asleep only to have a second loud alarm go off can leave you with decreased motor skills.
2. To loosen your stiff joints, sharpen your mind, and improve your circulation, do a full body stretch before getting out of bed.
3. By opening blinds as soon as you are up lets in the sunshine and lets you feel more fully awake.
4. If possible take a walk before breakfast.
5. Be sure to have at least 20 grams of protein with your first meal of the day. This helps you to feel full until lunch.

Suzy Langhorne, Parish Health Minister



Thanks to everyone who donated shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. We transported 36 boxes to Moreno Christian Assembly during delivery week in November. Thanks also to Bud Kenefick for taking them over there for us.



NO-COST GIFT CARD FUNDRAISER - IT'S BACK!



Hello my name is Karen Rice and I will be known as your "Scrip Lady" from now on. What is scrip you may ask? Scrip are gift cards that will be our year round fundraiser for many years to come, God willing. Now of course you can buy these gift cards at any retail store but the percentage earned from the sale goes to that store. With the scrip programs we get a percentage of each card sale and can build a savings which will allow us to help our church and school in the future. You pay full amount for the card and the company gives us a percentage of that amount back to keep in a saving account.

If the congregation and school families find this program beneficial, possibly next year we can help the school with their "Apple Tree" and in a few years' scrip may be able to help get a new parking lot. If you buy only gas and food scrip each month, you are building a saving account for the church and school. If more people order during the month, it is even a greater amount to be put into the savings.

I will have lists ready for you take and review starting in December and our first ordering date will be on January 8th 2017. The orders usually take a week to turn around. Order one Sunday and they will be ready for pick up next Sunday. These orders are to be cash or check only. Checks are made out to the church and given to me with your order.

I hope the school families will also get involved to enhance our monthly savings. I will have orders forms for them and collect them on Sundays to process their orders.

I hope to build enough of a savings to have a cash and carry program within 2 years. This is an amazing program and I believe you can embrace it and be part of the future of SVLC and school. Scrip cards are also great for birthdays, prescriptions, anniversaries, date night, graduations, thank you cards, to our social ministry and Sunday coffee time ministry and even Pastor appreciation month.

Again, this is a ministry I am passionate about and I pray that you too can find it will be helpful in your life. The lists will be in the church lobby as well as outside with me if you would like a copy to share with your co-workers, neighbors and other family members to develop our scrip program. Just bring their orders and money on Sunday and the following Sunday pick it up for them.

If you have any questions regarding this ministry, please feel free to see me on Sundays or feel free to give me a call. 951-235-6593.

Thank you and God Bless,
Karen Rice

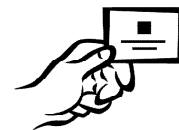


NEXT LUTHERAN CURSILLO WEEKENDS

LC#166 - February 16-19, 2017 for Men

LC#167 - February 23-26, 2017 for Women

Cursillo is an organization serving the Lutheran churches of Southern California to develop leaders in the Lutheran church through training and spiritual renewal. There is no cost to you to attend a weekend but you must be a baptized member in good standing at a Lutheran church. You will be paired with a sponsor who has been through a Cursillo weekend and have your pastor endorse your reservation request. We recommend praying about it first, then talk to your pastor or others who have attended Cursillo about what you may be able to gain from attending a Cursillo weekend before applying. Cursillo retreats will be held at a new venue - Cursillo House in Pomona - in 2017. Check their web-site for more information: www.lcsocal.org.



INVITE OTHERS TO OUR CHURCH AND SCHOOL!

SVLC business cards are available (in packets of 10) in a basket in the church lobby. Take a pack and pass them out to strangers, friends and neighbors who need a church home or a preschool for their children.

NEEDED FOR NURSING HOMES:
Magazines and greeting card fronts.
Bring to the church or office.

2017 FLOWER CHART

If you'd like to donate flowers for the altar, sign up on the board hanging in the church lobby. Indicate what the flowers are for - anniversary, birthday, in honor of or in memory. Take a slip with ordering instructions. Flowers are ordered by you from Moreno Valley Flower Box (653-3171) and they deliver them to church. Each large bouquet is \$26. Small bouquets for the altar are \$19 each. Questions? Call the office.



Joseph Project - Community (Citywide) Food Bank

Shepherd is working with other churches in Moreno Valley with this community food bank that provides food for the needy every Thursday from a distribution center at the Koinonia Evangelistic Center, 21866 Brill Rd., Moreno Valley (951-867-3050). Volunteers are needed to help out with distribution, sorting, clean up, etc. at the center. Contributions to the Joseph Project will be gratefully accepted through Shepherd. Please pray for this ministry and volunteer your time and talents! Contact Larry Alexander for more information.



DON'T FORGET YOUR FOOD DONATIONS FOR OUR LOCAL FOOD BANKS EACH SUNDAY!
Thank You!

JOIN IN THE CHALLENGE

Join us in choosing a time (maybe even 10 or 15 minutes) of any day of the week that is best for you individually and lift your silent (or loud) voices to the Lord. Ask for His touch on Shepherd, our Pastors, the members of our congregation, our school, and our community. His promise is clear - if His people gather together in prayer, He will hear our prayers. Let's do it!



Resolve to pray each day

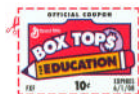
SPECIAL NOTICE

Your pastors, your lay ministers and the church office want to know when someone is hospitalized or home bound. There have been instances of not finding out for several days. We would rather hear from several sources than none at all so, PLEASE - PLEASE pick up the phone or e-mail us whenever there is an opportunity for ministry to members or to family or friends.



Thursdays at 9:30 AM
In the Fellowship Hall
Presented by Suzy Langhorne
Certified Instructor
FREE! Please join us.

SAVE BOX TOPS FOR OUR SCHOOL!



Specially marked box tops are worth \$.10 each when redeemed from Box Tops for Education. Encourage friends & family, near & far to help, too. Thanks for taking the time to help our school.

The sponsors appearing on the back cover of the newsletter help defray the cost of printing the Shepherd's Staff, please give them your consideration when possible.

Your Shepherd Real Estate Team

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December 2016

Sunday Worship: 8 AM and 10:45 AM -- Communion: 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sundays

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 <p><i>Wise Men and Women Still Seek Him</i></p>				1 7:00 AM BrailleMail(H) 9:30 AM Tai Chi (H) 7:00 PM Life of Christ Bible Study (H)	2 10:00 AM School Chapel (S) 6:00 PM Women's Christmas Party (H)	3 8:30 AM Cursillo Grouping @ Panera Bread
4 9:30 AM Sunday School & Bible Class (O-H-PS) 12:30 PM Grace Korean (S-H) 5:00 PM Confirmation (O) 6:30 PM Youth Group (Y)	5 10:00 AM First Place TLC (Reese Home) 7:00 PM MV Chorale Rehearsal (S)	6 12:00 PM BSF (H) 5:45 PM Chancel Choir (S) 6:00 PM School Board (O)	7 4:00 PM Midweek Advent Service (S) 5:00 PM Soup Supper (H) 6:30 PM Midweek Advent Service (S)	8 7:00 AM BrailleMail(H) 9:30 AM Tai Chi (H) 10:00 AM School Chapel (S) 7:00 PM MV Chorale Dress Rehearsal (S)	9 6:00 PM Secret Pal Revealing (H) 6:30 PM Pack 210 Christmas Meeting (S)	10 6:00 PM Progressive Dinner (White Home, Alexander Home)
11 BP Screening between Services 9:30 AM Sunday School & Bible Class (O-H-PS) 12:30 PM Grace Korean (S-H) 5:00 PM Confirmation (O) 6:30 PM Youth Group (Y)	12 9:00 AM Women's Koffee Klatch @ Brandon's 6:00 PM School Staff (O) 7:00 PM MV Chorale Rehearsal (S)	13 12:00 PM BSF (H) 5:45 PM Chancel Choir (S) 7:00 PM Lay Ministers (H)	14 4:00 PM Midweek Advent Service (S) 5:00 PM Soup Supper (H) 6:30 PM Midweek Advent Service (S)	15 7:00 AM BrailleMail(H) 9:30 AM Tai Chi (H) 7:00 PM Life of Christ Bible Study (H)	16 10:00 AM School Chapel (S) 5:00 PM Outside Event (H)	17
18 8:00 AM & 10:45 Choir Christmas Cantata (S) 9:30 AM Sunday School (O-PS) 12:30 PM Grace Korean (S-H) 6:30 PM Youth Group (Y)	19 10:00 AM First Place TLC (Reese Home) 7:00 PM MV Chorale Rehearsal (S)	20 6:30 PM School Christmas Program (S-H) 7:00 PM M & M Board (O)	21 4:00 PM Midweek Advent Service (S) 5:00 PM Soup Supper (H) 6:30 PM Midweek Advent Service (S)	22 7:00 AM BrailleMail(H) 9:30 AM Tai Chi (H) 10:00 AM School Chapel (S)	23	24 6:00 PM Christmas Eve Family Service (S) 11:00 PM Christmas Eve Service (S)
25 9:30 AM Christmas Day Service ONE SERVICE ONLY 12:30 PM Grace Korean (S-H)	26 7:00 PM MV Chorale Rehearsal (S)	27	28	29 7:00 AM BrailleMail(H) 9:30 AM Tai Chi (H)	30	31 Happy New Year! ONE SERVICE ONLY TOMORROW, JANUARY 1, 2017 AT 9:30 AM
School & Office Closed						
CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: 9:00 AM -- 4:00 PM, MONDAY - FRIDAY						

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: 9:00 AM -- 4:00 PM, MONDAY - FRIDAY



The Shepherd's Staff

WORSHIP SERVICE TIMES: Sunday: 8:00 & 10:45 AM

"Preach the Gospel at all times. If necessary, use words." — Francis of Assisi

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**PAUL YEARYEAN, PASTOR
LINDA WILLIAMSON, SCHOOL DIRECTOR
MARGE CLARK, OFFICE MANAGER**

December 2016

There will be Midweek Advent Services on
Wednesdays, December 7, 14 & 21 at 4 pm and 6:30 pm
with Soup Suppers served at 5 pm

A sign up sheet to volunteer to bring crock pots of your favorite
soups, breads, and desserts to share at the suppers is in the
church lobby. Please join us and invite your friends and family!



Chancel Choir Christmas Cantata - Sunday, Dec. 18th at 8 & 10:45 am

School Christmas Program - Tuesday, Dec. 20 at 6:30 pm

Christmas Eve Services - Saturday at 6 & 11 pm

Christmas Day Service Sunday at 9:30 am

New Year's Day - Sunday, one service only at 9:30 am.