

Snohomish Evangelical Free Church

The Herald

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DECEMBER 2022 / JANUARY 2023

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You are invited to a “Blue Christmas” Service

Christmas can be a painful time for some. It may be the first Christmas without a loved family member who has recently died; it may be a time that has always been difficult.

The anguish of broken relationships, the insecurity of unemployment, the weariness of ill health, the pain of isolation—all these can make us feel very alone in the midst of the celebrating and spending.

We need the space and time to acknowledge our sadness and concern; we need to know that we are not alone.

For these reasons, Snohomish Evangelical Free Church is offering a special “Blue Christmas” or “Longest Night” Service on Wednesday, December 21 at 7:00 PM.

Come out, and join with us in sharing and hearing prayers, scripture, and music that acknowledge that God’s presence is for those who mourn – for those who struggle.

Everyone, regardless of church background is welcome.

RSVP to: 425-238-8482

A Prayer

May the Lord make my New Year a happy One...
Not by shielding me from sorry and pain, but by strengthening me to bear it if it comes.
Not by making my path easy, but by making me sturdy enough to tread any path.
Not by taking hardship from me, but by taking all cowardice and fear from my heart as I meet hardships.
Not by granting me unbroken sunshine, but by keeping my face bright even in the shadows.
Not by making my life always pleasant, but by showing me where His cause needs me most and by making me zealous to be there and help God, make my year a happy one.

FILLED WITH PRAISE

Ups and Downs

During a routine physical examination, I queried my doctor about the beeping heart-monitor machine that was attached to my body.

"Why doesn't the screen show a straight line instead of those peaks and valleys?" I asked him.

The doctor replied, "If that line was straight, it would mean that you were dead. Those ups and downs show me that you're healthy and alive."

I suppose that in a similar manner our Great Physician allows us to have "ups and downs" in our spiritual lives, so that we might be strengthened in our faith and made healthy in our attitudes. Perhaps the "downs"—the disappointments, failures, and stumbling's common to all of us—only serve to deepen our understanding of one another's problems and to heighten our sharing of one another's joys.

One thing is for certain: Without the low valleys we travel through, we would never reach the highest peaks. This year, I plan to start a praise diary to remind myself to use the ups and the downs to grow in understanding, wisdom, and compassion. Won't you join me?

Isabel Champ

A PRAYER

May the Lord make my New Year a happy one

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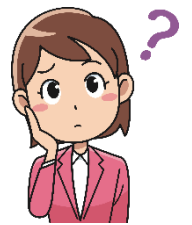
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Not by granting me unbroken sunshine, but by keeping my face bright even in the shadows.

Not by making my life always pleasant, but by showing me where His cause needs me most and by making me zealous to be there and help God, make my year a happy one.

To Ponder

"Prayer helps us to understand and conform our lives to His will and to His ways."

The Battle Plan for Prayer, Stephen and Alex Kendrick



Parish Nurse – Resolutions

Dear Family and Friends,

Blessings in the Name of our Savior, Jesus Christ! As we begin this journey of Advent and the New Year, I want to visit with you about another type of trek... one to good health. One of the best ways to protect and promote health is by staying active, and one of the best ways is to do so by Staying in Step with the Lord. Indeed, Proverbs reminds us that, "...a prudent man gives thoughts to his steps." (Pr. 14:15).

10,000 Steps to Health

There is ample scientific evidence to support that for most people, walking can be an excellent form of exercise. It is simple, can be done alone or with other



people, requires little equipment, and experts now recommend that we take a 30-minute brisk walk every day. A healthy diet and physical activity such as brisk walking can reduce the likelihood of experiencing some chronic diseases by 50 — 70%! To

begin enjoying the health benefits, the average person needs to walk approximately 10,000 steps per day (about 5 miles). Without an intentional exercise program, most of us only take 4,000-6,000 steps per day. Additional steps are needed to improve health and loose weight.

Prescription for Beginning your Walking Program includes:

- Checking with your health care provider first
- Using a pedometer to keep track of your daily steps (they provide instant feedback and can help to maintain your motivation)
- Checking your equipment: Do you have good shoes... reflective clothing for nighttime walking?
- Starting small and gradually increase your goals by 200-500 more steps per week. Considering multi-tasking: walk your dog and with a family member and catch up on each other's activities, or take a meditative walk!
- Accountability: Tell someone about your plan and ask them to help hold you accountable
- Keep at it! It takes several months to turn a behavior into a new habit
- Considering working a prayer walk into your wholistic health program

My Resolution

- I won't look back; God knows the fruitless efforts, The wasted hours, The sinning, The regrets; I'll leave them all with Him who blots the record, And mercifully for— gives, and then forgets
- I won't look forward. God sees all the future, The road that, short or long, will lead me home, And He will face with me its every trial, And bear with me the burdens that may come
- But I'll look up into the face of Jesus, for there my heart can rest, my fears are stilled; And there is joy and love, and light for darkness, And perfect peace, and every hope fulfilled.

The Lord is your partner and He will bless your efforts at growth (...He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus . Php 1:6) Enjoy the knowledge that all things are in the hands of our loving Lord.

If I can be of any help to you in setting new physical, emotional, or spiritual goals, please contact me, I

would be happy to assist you in any way. May you and your loved ones experience wholeness and joy in this new year !

With care,
Karen PN

10,000 Steps a Day is Key to Better Health — But So is How Fast You're Walking

SEPTEMBER 12, 2022, by Benjamin Fearnow, SYDNEY —

Millions of fitness-centric individuals aim to walk 10,000 steps each day to help lower their chances for serious health problems. Scientists now say that the speed at which they're walking may be just as important as hitting the number alone.



Walking five miles daily, or about 10,000 steps in a 24-hour period, has long been tied to a litany of positive health benefits, including the avoidance of cancer, dementia, cardiovascular disease and even sudden death. But two studies from researchers at the University of Sydney and the University of Southern Denmark reveal that a faster pace akin to "power walking" should be viewed as equally as important during such exercise. The researchers said much is

still unknown about the added benefits of walking faster (described as a "higher intensity cadence") even though countless studies have connected 10,000 daily steps to tremendous health benefits.

Hitting 10,000 daily steps remains important to one's long-term health, the authors write, but a faster pace of walking can achieve similar results in as few as 3,800 steps each day.

"The take-home message here is that for protective health benefits people could not only ideally aim for 10,000 steps a day, but also aim to walk faster," says study co-lead author Dr Matthew Ahmadi, Research Fellow at the University of Sydney's Charles Perkins Center and Faculty of Medicine and Health, in a statement.

Faster walking pace can have impact on 'all outcomes' related to health. In the study of more than 78,500 U.K. adults, a quicker speed of walking

was associated with the avoidance of dementia, heart disease, cancer and death "over and above [the value of one's] total daily steps," the researchers wrote in a Monday release. The study participants, all of whom were between the ages of 40 to 79 years of age, wore wrist accelerometers to measure their physical activity.

The study authors noted that a higher stepping intensity showed preventive health care benefits for "all outcomes," ranging from dementia to heart disease.

Every 2,000 steps each person took lowered their risk of premature death incrementally by eight to eleven percent, up to about 10,000 daily steps. The study found 9,800 steps was the "optimal dose linked to lower risk of dementia" by about 50 percent. But the authors note that was reduced by 25 percent at as low as 3,800 steps per day.

"The size and scope of these studies using wrist-worn trackers makes it the most robust evidence to date suggesting that 10,000 steps a day is the benefits and walking faster is associated with additional benefits," said Dr Matthew Ahmadi.

This latest study interwove daily step counts and exercise intensity along with mortality and diagnosis rates for cancer and cardiovascular disease. The co-authors said they hope this research will lead to more step-based physical activity guidelines and to develop more effective public health programs which target the prevention of chronic diseases.

"For less active individuals, our study also demonstrates that as low as 3,800 steps a day can cut the risk of dementia by 25 percent," explained co-lead author Associate Professor Borja del Pozo Cruz from the University of Southern Denmark and senior researcher in health at the University of Cadiz.

The studies are published in the journals JAMA Internal Medicine and JAMA Neurology.

When The Holidays Hurt

By Amy Quist

Christmas is marketed as the happiest season of all, but for those who have lost a loved one, the holidays can be a very painful time. Amy Mezulis, professor of clinical psychology, has a deep professional understanding of grief, along with first-hand

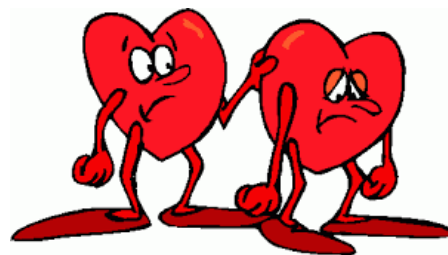
experience navigating the complexities of the holiday season in a time of loss.

Her husband, Matt Bencke, died in the fall of 2017 from an aggressive form of pancreatic cancer. Matt had only been diagnosed 12 weeks before his death.

"We have two daughters, and Thanksgiving has always been the most important holiday in our family," Mezulis said. "The focus of Thanksgiving is food and gathering with loved ones. Gratitude is the center, which is a very important life value to me. Without a doubt, Thanksgiving was the hardest without Matt."

For 12 years, the family alternated between trips to Hawaii and celebrating Thanksgiving at home. The year Matt passed away, they had already booked their trip to Maui before Matt was diagnosed.

"The trip was planned for what turned out to be only two weeks after the memorial service," Mezulis said. "That became our first holiday decision after he died.



Do we stay home, or do we go? Ultimately — and this became a guiding principle for

us — we simply asked ourselves which would feel less bad: Miss this important family tradition or go without Matt?"

They decided to go. "There's no right or wrong answer in a time of grief," she said. "Some bereaved people feel it's important to maintain the same traditions to honor the person who has died. But others find traditions too painful while grieving and find more comfort in starting new traditions. The girls and I talked it over and decided to go to the same place in Hawaii we'd always gone and be sad there. It was critical for us to feel that we were still a family, even though we were missing a person."

Mezulis was also concerned that if the family stayed home, they'd experience a triple loss — not only the loss of Matt and their sense of family, but also the loss of their beloved holiday tradition, which could lead to additional grief.

"In Hawaii we did all the familiar things," Mezulis said. "We ate in the same restaurants, stayed in the same hotel. It was heartbreakingly awful but also

beautiful. We spent the whole weekend with memories, telling stories about Matt." They also took some of Matt's ashes and distributed them on a familiar stretch of beach.

"It became a new thing, recognizing the day. It was beautiful and sacred. But we were also exhausted from the activity and emotion surrounding Matt's hospice, death, and the overwhelming details that follow the passing of a spouse. We made it to Hawaii, but I remember sleeping 11 hours, four nights in a row."

For those who are grieving, the holiday progression of Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's gatherings can feel like a triple blow.

"We went through another big decision at Christmastime," Mezulis said. "We always go to Cle Elum and spend Christmas with my parents, and we host a big New Year's Eve party with family friends. We discovered a way of following a tradition similar to what we'd done before but making it new by adding different people — using it as an opportunity to celebrate and remember. That was the one thing Matt asked for. He knew he was dying, and he asked to simply be remembered, to remain part of the family."

Mezulis and her daughters found other ways to mark his passing throughout the year. On Matt's birthday, they celebrate him with his favorite foods and a cake. On the anniversary of his death, they take time to feel sad and remember. But despite new traditions, the holidays are the time they miss Matt the most.

"We keep our traditions," Mezulis says. "Since our girls were small, we've kept doing the same Thanksgiving craft they did in preschool: We trace our hands on colored paper to look like turkeys and write notes of gratitude. Every year at least one of the notes says, 'I'm grateful that Dad is in heaven, and he's not in pain anymore.' He's still part of our table, and we still feel that he's there."

One of the challenges for Mezulis has been facing other losses that bring up fresh grief. In 2020, much-anticipated family gatherings were canceled because of COVID -19. Then a close family friend died on Christmas night, in a situation much like what Matt suffered. She had a short battle with a rare, aggressive cancer and died without much warning.

"It was really hard for the group of friends who normally gather at the holidays," Mezulis said. "It was like replaying Matt's death all over again. It's going to be very hard this year to have two people missing. The normal holiday parties and New Year's event will be when it is most obvious that they're not with us. So, we enter another round of grieving."

As a professional psychologist, Mezulis specializes in depression and adolescent development, which gave her some skills to help her daughters through the loss of their father.

"I'm grateful for my training," she said. "My daughters were 12 and 15 when Matt died. In addition to my concern as a mother, I had professional expertise to fall back on. I knew the importance of getting them into counseling, a place where they could talk about their feelings. But still, I can't separate the human part and the professional parts of myself. Even though I'm a trained psychologist, my own grief journey was sometimes mystifying."

On the first anniversary of Matt's death, Mezulis remembers feeling very disheartened about her progress. It had been a year, and she imagined she would feel better than she did.

"I thought something magical would happen at the one-year mark," she said. "What I missed seeing — and this is ironic, since I'm a psychologist — was that we actually weren't even grieving yet. There was so much shock around Matt's diagnosis and rapid death that I realized even after a year, we were still experiencing a trauma response instead of grief. There are big chunks of time I don't remember. We were in survival mode."

She recalls the many decisions and details a surviving spouse must handle: insurance, public records, notifying friends, canceling contracts, settlements.

"Somehow it all got done," she said. "The girls made it to school, and we kept going. But I don't remember feeling sad. I just remember numbness. It took a long time to move from that survival response into grieving."

According to Mezulis, it's helpful to recognize the difference between shock and grief. Grief, she says, typically has emotion attached to it — anger or



sadness — while shock can leave a person with little feeling at all. ❖

"I'm sure I cried," she said, "but inside I felt pretty empty. I was going through the motions. When Matt got sick, things happened very quickly. From the time of his diagnosis, he was hospitalized four times in six weeks, then spent just six weeks on home hospice. It felt like I didn't have time to grieve, to even sit down long enough to be sad or angry. That would have been a luxury. There was so much to do. The kids were in school, and I had a job to maintain, along with graduate students to train. I was so busy keeping us from drowning under the to-do list that all I could do was put one foot in front of the other."

Once life settled down, Mezulis thought she'd experience closure, or at least progress. "But I was only beginning to know the emotional reality," she said. "Grief is not linear. Everyone has their own trajectory."

Mezulis is clear there are no "best practices" to navigate the holiday season.

"The idea of 'best' practices sounds like judgment," she said. "My suggestion is do whatever you need to in order to get through it."

Still, Mezulis shared some principles that might help. Communication is first on the list.

"A loss impacts many people," Mezulis said, "though each may have had a different relationship with the departed person. And though not all losses are 'equal' in impact, losses are shared. I recommend talking with others who were also affected by the loss. In our family, we communicated about what we each needed, putting all the needs on the table. It's a time to come close to one another. Losses teach us how important our relationships truly are."

If one danger of grief is getting stuck in remembrance, Mezulis says, the other danger is avoidance.

"It's a human instinct, when things are hard, to avoid or escape. In the wake of grieving, many people make quick decisions like selling their houses or skipping gatherings to avoid any kind of reminders. While that may be the right thing to do, we need to be aware of our instinct for avoidance. A break from things that trigger grief might get you through the day — and that's OK — but ultimately we can't avoid our losses forever."

Mezulis offered a few ideas for how to help people struggling through the holidays. First, combat the temptation to avoid hard topics. A grieving person can feel even worse if no one is willing to bring up the name of the departed loved one. One of the best things a friend can do is open the door to communication.

"It's OK to ask, 'How are the holidays for you?' 'How can I support you?' Say the name of the lost loved one. Tell a story. Share a remembrance, even long after the person has died. Bring the lost person back into the event."

People care about our pain, Mezulis said, but they may not want to upset us by mentioning something hard. On the other hand, the grieving person doesn't want to burden others with their sadness.

"We all end up dancing around the painful issue, which becomes the elephant in the room," she said. "In my case, I talk about my husband, and I don't want people to be afraid to talk about him, too. He's a huge part of my life, and I try to make it normal to talk about him."

Mezulis identifies herself as someone who lives in the gray. Life is messy with few absolutes, she says, but one way to turn that to our advantage in a time of grief is the principle of both/and.

"We can move forward and enjoy life, and we can honor and remember," she said. "Grief is a balance of those two things. We don't pretend the loss didn't happen. In our family, we remember Matt is gone, but we don't want to get so drawn into missing him that we're miserable. He wanted us to remember him and to continue living life and enjoying the holidays."

Recipe: Bacon, Egg and Cheese Breakfast Boats

5 mins prep, 20 mins cook, 166 kcal,
Yields: 4 servings

Toasted French bread covered fluffy egg, crispy bacon, and melted cheese make for a quick and easy breakfast solution for any day of the week!



Ingredients

- 2 2-inch French bread loaves, cut in half lengthwise
- 1 teaspoon olive oil, liquid or spray

- 4 slices bacon, chopped to 1/2 inch pieces
- 4 egg, beaten
- 1 pinch salt, to taste
- 1 pinch black pepper, to taste
- 6 pieces Sharp Cheddar Sliced Cheese, or other Sliced Cheese flavor
- 1 tablespoon cilantro, fresh and chopped (optional)
- salsa, for dipping (optional)

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 375 F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Lay French bread, cut side up, on the baking sheet. Brush or spray on a small amount of olive oil on the top of each piece of bread.
2. If your chosen bread is very soft or you'd just like the bread to be more crispy, place olive oil-coated bread in the oven and bake 5-10 minutes or until bread is toasted to your tastes. Remove bread from oven and set aside.
3. In a skillet over medium-high heat, cook chopped bacon for 7-9 minutes or until desired doneness is reached (typically a solid red color with darker edges). Scoop bacon out of pan and place on a plate. Leave bacon grease in the pan.
4. Reduce heat to medium and add eggs to pan. Season with salt & pepper. Cook and scramble eggs until done, about 2-4 minutes. Remove pan from heat.
5. Layer Sargento cheese slices on top of the prepared bread, cutting in half if necessary to fit. Spoon on scrambled eggs and top with cooked bacon.
6. Bake breakfast boats for 4-8 minutes or until cheese has melted.
7. Serve immediately with cilantro for garnish or salsa for dipping (both optional).

NUTRITION

Serving: 1 breakfast boat | Calories: 166kcal | Protein: 8g | Fat: 14g | Saturated Fat: 4g | Cholesterol: 178mg | Sodium: 220mg | Potassium: 104mg | Vitamin A: 240IU | Calcium: 25mg | Iron: 0.9mg

7 Ways to Care for Widows in Your Church

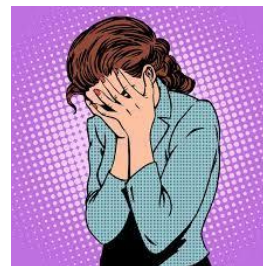
(The church's character is shown by how it treats widows and orphans. Here are seven tips for caring for widows in your church.)

Did you know there are more than 11 million widows in the U.S.? Widows are a significant demographic, and many are younger than you may expect.

Yes, people prey upon widows. They did in biblical times, and they still are today. Widows need those who will care and look out for them. Unfortunately, within the first year of widowhood, half leave the church they were attending at the time.

Ministry to widows in the church. More than 100 verses in Scripture show God's heart for widows and His instruction to care for them. I believe churches care about widows but don't know what to do. Church leaders are stretched thin, and other programs take priority. Folks care but don't reach out.

Each church is unique. No one model of ministry fits all. I recommend appointing someone to ensure that the widows in your church are "looked after." Once you've established the leadership, you'll need to determine who the widows are and then follow up to discover their needs.



While financial needs and help with home upkeep are common, connection is vital. Many of a woman's connections with the church are broken upon becoming a widow, especially a pastor's widow. This time is a widow's most painful, lonely, and vulnerable part of her journey—a time when she needs believing friends near her.

Losing many in our friendship network is typical, tough, and can be addressed. I thought I'd be an exception; I was wrong. Our churches should be places of comfort, not aloneness. God sees every widow as His treasure and has a great purpose for her.

Allow me to offer a few tips I learned on my own journey into widowhood. You can share these practical tips with leaders in your church and disseminate them through small groups.

1. Stay connected. There's already a huge hole in our universe. Don't assume we need "space" to grieve. We are tempted to fill lonely hours with empty activities, shopping, or wrong relationships. Before we heal and become whole people on our own, reaching for another person to fill the void is asking for trouble. We can hide, hoard, hand out, or hibernate. These are all fake solutions to our loneliness. Staying connected to people who have our best interests at heart is what we need.
2. Say you are sorry for our loss. We would rather you tell us you don't know what to say than tell us

your story of losing your friend or even close relative. We may be able to listen to your story later but not now. Don't tell us you understand. Each loss is unique. Yes, it's tempting for you to try to relate by telling us of *your* loss. But don't do that now. Listen, listen, and then listen more.

3. Call and ask specific questions. Can we go for a walk together? May I run errands for you? Can I meet you for coffee? Don't say, "Call me if you need anything." Our arms are too weak to lift the phone. Enter our space. It may have become a disaster area. Our refrigerator may be empty and our appearance, well, unkempt. We need you to keep us real, in the now. We are tempted to look back and miss what God has for us in the moment.
4. Refer to our husband's acts or words—serious or humorous. We find comfort in knowing you have not forgotten our husbands. Do not leave our husbands out of the conversation. You might be thinking: "But that will bring tears." Yes. But healing tears of remembrance are a good thing. Our culture doesn't handle tears well. But God does. They are treasured indeed.
5. Invite us to anything. We may decline, but we appreciate you asking. Don't assume we no longer want to participate in couples' events. And don't become discouraged in your asking. In time, we'll join you again. True friends stay, and we all adjust to the new reality. A few true friends are golden. I enjoy being with other couples now. Early on, it was painful. But being excluded is even more pain-filled.
6. Accept that we are where we are. Marriages are brief, long, healthy, dysfunctional, intense, remote. Death comes suddenly or in tiny increments over years. Again, our experiences are as different as we are and so is our journey through grief. Don't assume we go through the outlined grief process "by the book." Some marriages were not the sparkly object folks saw. And some have such fierce, tender, and tight bonding that grieving will be long and hard.
7. Walk the talk. Don't make "conversation only" offers. "We'll call you and go out to dinner," and then not follow up. We are sensitive in our grieving, but we'd rather hear you say, "I've been thinking of you," than make a "conversation-only" offer. Please know that as a widow, we know our share of crushed expectations. We have dreams that will never happen. Please don't get our hopes up of an anticipated event or connection and then not follow through.

Some widows need support only for a few months, others longer. We become strong and are ready to move forward into God's good plans for us. Some stay to lead the next widows through to strength. Your church can become that healing place where widows love to enter, worship, pray, give, and serve. That's our desire. I believe that is the desire of your church as well. Then you can say with Job that you made the widow's heart sing (Job 29:13).



Miriam Neff is national and international speaker on women's issues and the founder and president of [Widow Connection](#) and is the author of [12 books](#), including [From One Widow to Another: Conversations on the New You](#). She has 23 years of professional counseling experience and is the widow of Robert Neff, mother of four children, and a grandmother. [Insights | Church Life & Ministry](#) | Nov 9, 2022

How to Show Winter Who's Boss

By Andrea Brown, Herald Writer

Every winter, it's like the Seven Dwarfs. Dopey. Grumpy. Sneezey. Sleepy. Doc. We'll get to Happy and Bashful later.

It's a dark season of sniffles, fever, overeating and lethargy. Psychologist Paul Schoenfeld, director of behavioral health at The Everett Clinic, estimates 33 million Americans have symptoms of seasonal affective disorder, aptly nicknamed SAD.



Even those who aren't SAD can have a hard time coping. The lack of light turns ordinarily energetic people into sloths. As Schoenfeld put it: "It's an energy crisis."

By midafternoon, it's as if someone has taken a giant marker and blackened all the windows. The clock says 5 p.m., but our bodies think it's midnight.

Mornings are difficult. We crawl out of bed feeling foggy. It's hard to concentrate, much less stay awake. We'd all be snoring at our desks . . . if not for co-workers coughing and sneezing. But it doesn't have to be a season of discontent.

Winter is also the time of holiday fun, family memories, festive meals and indoor frolic. There are so many reasons to be happy. Don't be bashful. Go out and shake it on the dance floor.

Exercise so your figure doesn't start looking like one of the Seven Dwarfs.

Winter toolkit

- **Facial tissues.** Pocket packs are handy for yourself and to hand out to others.
- **Chicken soup.** Hot, soothing broth really does make you feel better. Cozy socks and gloves. Pamper your hands and feet.
- **Humidifier.** Cool streams of moisture aren't just for babies.
- **Water.** Drink lots of it. Soak in it: Relax in a hot bath.
- **Artificial sun lamp.** Energy lights, glow lamps and rise-and-shine clocks brighten up the long, dark days.
- **ChapStick.** It comes in many flavors, shapes, sizes and colors. Gloss it on as lipstick. Roll it on dry, chapped fingers.
- **Body lotion.** Rub, smear and spray it on. Have your partner help.
- **Sunblock.** Exposure isn't a summer-only concern. It happens year-round, even here. The dangerous rays pass through rain, clouds and car windows. Use a moisturizer or foundation with an SPF of at least 15. If you don't do it for your health, do it for your looks. Research backs the cosmetic value of sunscreen. It might be the cheapest and most effective antiaging beauty cream on the planet.

How to stay healthy

- Here are some ways to stay healthy and jolly during the winter:
- Wash your hands often,
- Keep your distance from ill people; avoid crowds during a flu epidemic.
- Don't bite your nails. Fingertips are a magnet for germs. Keep your hands away from your nose and mouth.
- Turn away from others when they cough or sneeze. Turn away from others when you cough or sneeze. (This is when those pocket packs of tissues come in handy.)
- Get plenty of rest to recharge your body and keep defenses strong.
- If someone in the house is sick, use paper cups and paper towels in bathrooms.
- Don't let your nose or mouth touch public drinking fountains.
- Sanitize your hands after using shopping carts and public keyboards. Many stores have dispensers mounted on the wall.
- Exercise. Do something. Anything. You don't have to moan and sweat. You can dance and

laugh. Most gyms have treadmills with TVs. Plug in the earbuds and an hour will fly by.

- Take vitamin D3 daily.
- Get out. Walk in the rain. Any natural light is a benefit.
- Not all light is a good thing. Beware of spending too much time in bright and shiny places that lure you in, such as nightclubs, malls and casinos.
- Happiness is good for your immune system. Try to smile. Watch comedy. Even a dark comedy
- Escape. Go somewhere sunny.

Blessings for Your New Year

(Adapted from the Bible) by Dianne Bundt

- **Purpose:** As you complete your daily tasks, may you understand how they contribute to the larger purpose of your life. May you experience deep satisfaction as you discover and carry out your unique role. (Psalms 25:12, 139:16; Jeremiah 29:11)
- **Fulfilling work:** May you take pleasure in all your work. May every task you undertake succeed, and may you enjoy the good things your labor supplies. (Ecclesiastes 2:24; Psalm 128:2)
- **Physical health:** May you and those you love remain strong in body and free from disease. May those who suffer from injury or illness recover quickly and completely. (3 John 1:2; Deuteronomy 7:15; Psalm 41:3)
- **Good relationships:** May you be surrounded by loving, faithful, and supportive friends. Where relationships have been broken, may you find reconciliation and forgiveness. (Proverbs 17:17; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; Matthew 5:23-24)
- **Sufficient resources:** May you have exactly what you need for each day. May you become rich in every way so that you can share generously with others. (Proverbs 30:8-9; Luke 11:3, 2 Corinthians 9:11)
- **Contentment:** May you take pleasure in all the good things you have and discover the secret of being content in any and every situation. (Ecclesiastes 5:19; 1 Timothy 6:6-7; Philippians 4:12)
- **Laughter:** May you laugh long and often. May each day be filled with gladness so that even your sorrows turn into joy (Proverbs 17:22; Ecclesiastes :7; Jeremiah 31:3)
- **Breathing room:** In the rush of life, may you always find time and space for the people and activities that refresh your soul. May what seems most urgent never distract you from what is most important. (Luke 10:40-42)



- **Great ideas:** May you receive fresh insight to meet the challenges of each day and discover creative solutions to your problems. (I Kings 4:29; Proverbs 2:6; Daniel 5:12)
- **New opportunities:** May you constantly be presented with new and profitable ventures. May you have foresight to recognize and take advantage of each opportunity. (Ecclesiastes 11:1-6, Ephesians 5:16)
- **Good decisions:** May you have wisdom to determine the best course of action in every situation. May you receive sound advice from those you ask for counsel. (Ecclesiastes 8:5-6; Proverbs 15:22)
- **Safety:** May you and those you love be kept from violence, calamity, and loss. May those who seek to hurt you physically, mentally, or emotionally fail so that you may live securely, without the fear of harm. (Psalm 12:5, 7; Job 11:18, Proverbs 1:33)

Verse for December

⁴ And Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family line of David, ⁵ to be registered along with Mary, who was engaged to him and was pregnant. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷ Then she gave birth to her firstborn Son, and she wrapped Him snugly in cloth and laid Him in a feeding trough—because there was no room for them at the lodging place. Luke 2:4-7

Events

Sunday Service: 10:30a live or on Facebook

December

- 3 – Cookie Exchange and Crafting Day, Noon-3p
- 16 – St. Nicholas potluck 5p
- 21 – Blue Christmas 7p
- 24 – Christmas Eve Service
- 25 – Christmas Day 10:30a

January

- 6 – Epiphany

Celebrations

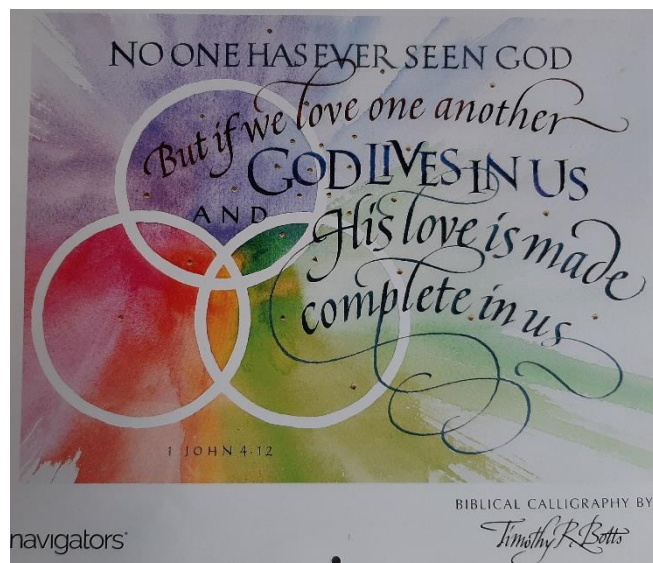
December Birthdays	December Anniversaries
5 – Theoden Lognion	
12 – Douglas Krauter	
18 – Jeyen Mauch	
21 – Atticus Lognion	
21 – Paul Ryner	
January Birthdays	January Anniversaries
14 – Lily Anderson	18 – George & Cookie Swartz

Christmas Challenge

Find the listed words hidden in the Christmas tree.

Y
 F O U
 Y R A M W
 T J O S E P H
 R I E Z P E A C E
 E K C G L Y V F S N U
 E H G H K T D S T A B L E
 Y I T H N O B
 I V N O D I A X L
 J I E L M Y M Y C E O
 E T V L P A L F Q J D S V
 S A D Y Z N N I J O K N K T E
 U N A L S W M G M Y S L A N G A V
 S J G N Y C W P E A F M H T Q I R R J
 E E L I L A G Y L R F L C E E T H R R Y M
 F R A N K I N C E N S E W
 Y L E P R T X O S T Y V I P H
 M O G O L D V B S H Q O W S L Z C
 A H A I S S E M L M E U D T R L E O N
 J U N E M E S I W X A P I M M A N U E L E
 S A M T S I R H C P S G H X C A R O L S T P G
 D E C E M B E R F C I L O E M E H E L H T E B F Z
 E O R
 M D D
 A W F
 C I S
 V L H
 F L U

ADVENT BETHLEHEM CAMELS CANDLE CAROLS CHRISTMAS DECEMBER	FAMILY FRANKINCENSE GALILEE GOLD GOODWILL HOLLY IMMANUEL INN IVY	JESUS JOSEPH JOY LOVE MANGER MARY MESSIAH MYRRH	NATIVITY NOEL PEACE SHEEP SHEPHERD STABLE STAR TREE WISEMEN
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SEFC Church Calendar – December 2022

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THR	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3 Noon – 3p Crafting & Cookie Exchange
4 9:30a Fellowship and Teaching 10:30a live and on Facebook	5	6	7	8	9	10 5p St. Nicholas potluck
11 9:30a Fellowship and Teaching 10:30a live and on Facebook	12	13	14	15	16	17
18 9:30a Fellowship and Teaching 10:30a live and on Facebook	19	20	21 7P Blue Christmas Service	22	23	24 Christmas Eve Service
25 Christmas Day 9:30a Fellowship and Teaching 10:30a live and on Facebook	26	27	28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve
Church office closed until January 3, 2023						

SEFC Church Calendar – January 2023

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THR	FRI	SAT
1 New Year's Day 9:30a Fellowship and Teaching 10:30a live and on Facebook	2	3	4 7p Men's Bible Study	5	6 Epiphany	7
8 9:30a Fellowship and Teaching 10:30a live and on Facebook	9 10a Women's Bible Study and Prayer	10	11 7p Men's Bible Study	12	13	14
15 9:30a Fellowship and Teaching 10:30a live and on Facebook	16 MLK Day 10a Women's Bible Study and Prayer	17	18 7p Men's Bible Study	19	20	21
22 9:30a Fellowship and Teaching 10:30a live and on Facebook	23 10a Women's Bible Study and Prayer	24	25 7p Men's Bible Study	26	27	28
29 9:30a Fellowship and Teaching 10:30a live and on Facebook	30 10a Women's Bible Study and Prayer	31				

