

All Saints Lutheran Church "Oasis of Joy" USA  
13350 S. LaGrange Road  
Orland Park, IL 60462  
Don Borling, Pastor  
"All the People" ----- ministers  
Advent – Christmas ----- 2018

Dear Friends ...

A little different "twist" this letter ... sending it to "everyone" ---- even those of you who have not been here for quite a while. Well ---- it's the Christmas season. It's a time to reflect ... give thanks ... thinking of all the folks and moments, bringing us to this point in time.

Each of you is a part of our history.

Each of you ... at some point in time ... has sat in one of our chairs ... has sung "This is the feast" at least a few times ... has heard one or two stories about "Fred's journey" ... has made some kind of physical and/or spiritual contribution to the ministry of our humble temple.

For me anyway ... this is a "reflective" time of the year. It's also a "reflective" time of my life. Having just turned the magic age of 70 ... in the middle of my 45<sup>th</sup> year as the pastor of All Saints.

\*I look a back on the many journeys that have led us to this point in time ...

\*I bask in the magic of the "present" ... the moments we all face each day ... the feelings and experiences we bring to church on Thursday night and Sunday morning.

\*I ... like most of you ... yes, we still have the capacity to dream ... and work for a better future ... and do our best to lay the ground-work for those coming after us.

In addition to the Christmas story ... there are two passages I'm thinking about today ...

Jesus' words:

*"Come to me ... you who are weary and heavy laden ... and I will give you rest.*

*My yoke is easy, and my burden is light."*

Hopefully we are a place ... where, for at least a few moments, you can lay your burdens down, and feel the refreshment of God's spirit. The door is always open for you and to you.

*"Bring the little children to me, and forbid them not ... for such is my kingdom. Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God like a little child ... cannot enter therein."*

These words are not just for kids ... it's for all of us. The invitation and capacity to be open to God's spirit: like a child ... with a child-like faith ... seeing the "magic" in ordinary moments.

It's why we are here. And especially this time of the year ... celebrating the birth of the Christ-child.

I know ... for each of you ... the place of the church is unique and personal. With the passage of time ----- there are things we need to hold on to ... so our journey of faith stays focused and solid. At the same time ----- we need to be open to the "winds of the spirit" ... so we can make positive changes, making us better as people and better as a church.

As we end one year ... and are soon to begin another ... I hope each of you can take a fresh look at what our "humble temple" means to you. We have a good place here ... not perfect, for sure ... but we are a place of goodness and joy. We need your prayers and support and presence.

May your Christmas be blessed with the spirit Jesus brings into our world.

Joy and Peace  
"rev"

### **OUR ANNUAL REQUEST FOR YOUR SUPPORT**

Most of you know our fund-raising is pretty low-key ... and simple. In fact ... the only “major fund-raiser” we have ... outside of offering envelopes ... is the spaghetti dinner in February. Anyway ----- we hope you will consider making a commitment for calendar year 2019. Please know ----- whatever you pledge/give during the year is strictly confidential. Our comptroller – Kathy Klang – keeps all of our giving records.

A couple notes:

- \*our weekly attendance (Sunday and Thursday) is the same as last year ... 320 this year, 319 last year.
- \*Our goal is to have our “offering income” cover budgeted expenses. We definitely fall short of doing this ... but we do get other monies that make up the difference.

For example: \*last year ... our budgeted expenses were \$531,000 ... offering income \$450,000 ... total income ... \$550,000.

\*so far this year (we still have December) ... offering only income \$400,000 ... budgeted expenses \$486,000 ... total income so far \$498,000.

We would like to narrow the gap between expenses and offering income ... so we aren't so dependent on “other income.” But the good news is ---- we pay our bills, we do have money in the bank ... and hopefully, with broader support from everyone ... we can stay on solid footing.

ALL OF US HERE ... WE DO OUR BEST TO MAKE THIS A PLACE YOU WANT TO SUPPORT.

We need your financial ... and spiritual support.

ANNUAL PLEDGE/COMMITMENT FORMS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE CHURCH.

If you would like ----- you can email your “commitment/pledge” to Kathy Klang:

[allsaintsklang@sbcglobal.net](mailto:allsaintsklang@sbcglobal.net)

Again ... it's confidential Obviously you can change during the year, depending on what you can or cannot do. New envelopes will be available at the church by December 16.

Thanks for caring and sharing.

### **SOME CHRISTMAS NOTES**

*\*Advent Suppers: Thursdays, Dec. 6, 13, 20 ... 6:30, before worship at 7:30*

*\*Forms for donating poinsettias are available ... we so enjoy having these plants beautify our sanctuary during the Christmas season.*

*\*OUTREACH ---- all our individuals have been adopted. We are accepting donations to the “love bucket” ... so we can purchase food for our families and also provide them with a bit of extra spending money for the season. Those of you who did buy gifts ... please have them back by this Sunday --- December 9.*

*\*SUNDAY SCHOOL rehearsal for the Christmas Eve service is Saturday, December 22, 9:00.*

*\*Regular worship schedule on Sunday, December 23, with Sunday School ... 8:30 and 11:00*

*CHRISTMAS EVE: \*Sunday School service 4:00 \*Open House at the church 8:00 – 10:00 PM (hosted by Don and Peggy) \*Candlelight worship, 10:00 PM (we have Communion afterwards, for those desiring to stay)*

*\*Christmas Day worship, 10:00 AM \*Sunday, December 30 ... worship at 8:30 & 11:00 (no Sunday School)*

**BLESSINGS AND JOY TO ALL**