



## A New Year, A New Beginning in Christ

As we enter a brand new year, you may be feeling a sense of anticipation and hope for what is to come. The new year offers us a fresh start, a chance to reflect on the previous 12 months and contemplate the journey ahead. This new start allows us to deepen our relationship with Christ and align our lives more closely with His will.

In Isaiah 43:19 ESV, the Lord tells us, "Behold, I will do a new thing, Now it shall spring forth; Shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness, And rivers in the desert". We have this promise from our Father in Heaven every day, not just at the start of a new year! Let us lean on our faith that the God who has guided us year after year, will continue to make a way.

Even when we start anticipating the plans for a new year, the Bible reminds us of something important – God’s plans are far greater than anything we can imagine on our own. In Jeremiah 29:11 NIV, He declares “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future". Even with uncertainty and the unknown, we can find

comfort in knowing that God is working all things together for our good (Romans 8:28).

The beginning of a new year is a great time to think about how we can renew our commitment to Christ. Here are a couple of ideas:


- Daily Devotion Time: Spending time in prayer and reading the Bible daily strengthens our relationship with God. Make spending time with God a commitment this year.
- Attend Church Regularly: Please join us for worship and fellowship! Attending church and Bible Study is a great way to connect with other believers.
- Find Ways to Serve Others: Acts of service, such as volunteering or helping those in need, allow us to live out our faith. Abiding Savior has lots of volunteer opportunities!
- Practice Forgiveness: This is a tough one but letting go of resentment and bitterness releases us from past burdens. Pray for God’s help in this area.
- Seek God’s Will: Ask God for His guidance and wisdom daily.

In the year to come, let us embrace the hope that comes from knowing Christ. He is the source of our strength, peace, and joy! We can go into the new year confidently knowing that we don’t walk alone.

Happy New Year!



LADIES GUILD  
SCHOLARSHIP  
APPLICATION

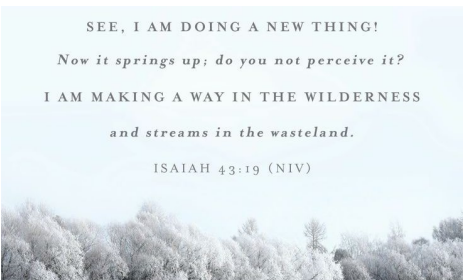



Thanks to Lori Beniche and Keigh Lee Horn for organizing and working on Trivia Night. Also a great thanks to all those helping and attending Trivia Night making it a great success.

Ladies Guild is accepting applications from students studying to enter church careers at LCMS colleges, universities, and seminaries, who are members of Abiding Savior Lutheran Church.

A letter of recommendation from Pastor Lucas and a teacher or school administrator who knows you well is required.

Please contact the church office for a scholarship application. **The deadline to apply for a Ladies Guild Scholarship is *Sunday, March 9, 2025.***



 **Abiding Savior Lutheran Church, School & Preschool**  
23262 El Toro Road  
Lake Forest, California 92630  
Church: 949.830.1460

### Church Staff

Reverend Glenn Lucas, Senior Pastor  
Dr. Christian Guebert, Director of Music  
Tricia Stroube, HR and Office Manager  
Alexis Wood, Director of Family Ministry  
Chris Vick, IT Specialist  
Janet Calhoun, Church Secretary  
Lisa Taylor, Accounting  
Laura Lyons, Member Coordinator  
Stephanie Harmon, Business Administrator  
Lori Beniche, Director of Communications  
Stephanie Harmon, Editor of Day by Day

### Church Officers

Jonathon Harmon, President  
Daniel Carrillo, Vice President  
Sara Helmreich, Secretary  
Lynda Jacobs, Treasurer  
Erica Volz, Congregation Liaison

### School Staff

School.....949.830.1461  
Donna Lucas, School Principal  
Yesi Naber, Admissions Director  
Keigh Lee Horn, School Secretary  
Marika Parent, School Secretary  
Extended Care .....949.837.4289  
Deana Hicks, Extended Care Director

### Preschool Staff

Preschool Center .....949.837.4292  
Celeste Cisna, Preschool Director

#### Church Office Hours

Monday through Friday  
8:15 AM to 4:00 PM

#### School Office Hours

Monday through Friday  
7:30 AM to 4:00 PM

#### Preschool Office Hours

Monday through Friday  
8:30 AM to 4:30 PM

Visit us on our website at  
abidingsavior.com



abidingsaviorlakeforest



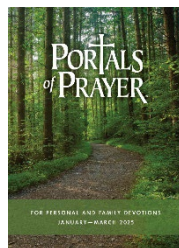
abidingsavior | aslc\_youth



Please note, the Church Office will be closed on Monday, January 1 (New Year's Day) and Monday, January 20 (MLK Day).

If you have a pastoral emergency when the church office is not open, you can call **661.505.8152** to be connected to the pastor's emergency line. In particular, we ask you to notify the church office if you or anyone in your family is hospitalized.

### Portals of Prayer



The January, February, and March 2025 edition of Portals of Prayer is now available. Pick up your copy at either the desk in the Narthex or in

the Gathering Grounds. Portals of Prayer is great for personal devotions and can be used to open church meetings or Bible studies.



### Family Ministry

*Alexis Upchurch*

Our Family Advent Activities beautifully captured the joy of the Christmas season. Families decorated cookies and ornaments,

crafted Advent calendars, played bingo, and shared fellowship over lunch. It was a heartwarming season of creativity, connection, and celebrating the spirit of Advent together.



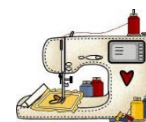
The Young Adult Ministry has been an incredible blessing! Every other week, 10-15 young adults come together for Bible study, games, and snacks, fostering both spiritual growth and community. Recent study topics have included purpose, finding rest, and living intentionally.

Beyond our regular gatherings, we've enjoyed a variety of fellowship events like trivia nights, pickleball tournaments, Friendsgiving, and more. These moments of connection have been a highlight for everyone involved.

A beautiful extension of this ministry is our Young Adult Women's Group. Centered on being RENEWED through Christ, this group meets monthly to share devotions and build a supportive community of women navigating life's joys and challenges together.

### Sew 'n Sews

Abiding Savior has a group of sewing enthusiasts that meet on the 1st Saturday of the month. We are currently making pillowcases for My Own, A Case For Kids. This local charity provides a suitcase for foster children ages 3 - 18. Each has necessary hygiene essentials, clothing, school supplies, books, and/or toys. We help by providing them with their own pillowcase in fun fabrics.



We have in the past made placemats for "Meals on Wheels",

Continued page 3

grocery bags for our Church pantry, walker totes for seniors, pillowcases for CHOC hospital, and the busy bags we have at Church. Please join us! We have sewing machines for you to use, we supply all that is needed for the projects. If interested contact Janice Trumbauer at krafter@cox.net.



## New Year's Resolutions

*Audrey Henry*

New Years Resolutions! We all make them! And they're usually pretty lofty, which sets us up for failure. Or, if we're "older and wiser" we just might not make them at all, knowing we're going to fail. Here's a new suggestion: start small.

As we get older, and that applies to everyone, we tend to spend more time sedentary. We might have jobs that require us to sit at a desk most of the day, or if we're retired, that sitting might be in front of a TV or reading a good book. We all know that lots of sitting isn't good for our health. It increases the risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and loss of strength.

What can we do? Simple: just stand up every 30 minutes. Over a period of six months, that act alone lowered the blood pressure of participants in a study. The researcher reported that it was kind of like doing squats. And along with standing up, you could take a five-minute walk. If you're at work, walk around the office; if you're at home, make a couple of trips around the house; if you live in an apartment, walk the hall. Pretty

soon, you'll want to go outside during your lunch hour for a longer walk, and presto! You've not only kept your New Year's resolution, you've increased it. Feels pretty good, doesn't it? A lot better than that "I've failed again" feeling!

## Advent by Candlelight

*Janice Trumbauer*



This year's Advent by Candlelight was held in the Fellowship Hall. Our theme "The Christmas Guest" was a great story by Helen Steiner Rice, reminding us to turn our hearts and minds to the coming of Jesus. You may see Him in ways you never expected.

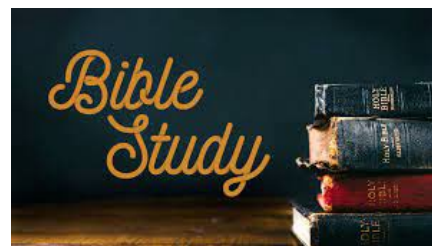
Once again, the tables were beautifully decorated, with plenty of food for all, and some lovely voices to lead us in song. We always have some fun with the Christmas Trivia questions. Our table hostesses this year were; Debby Amick, Julie Taylor, JoAnn Taylor, Heidi Wolfson, Chris Rogers, Joni Terens, Karen O'Brien, Audrey Henry, Sue Kenagy, Mariah Lucas, and Kathy Vick. A huge thank you to these ladies who went all out in decorating. And a thank you to all who participated in our evening and made it a huge success.

Please mark your calendars for next year to join us on Saturday, December 6th. We are always looking for members to join our planning committee or to host a table.

Thank you to our planning team; Audrey Henry, Heidi Wolfson, Janice Trumbauer, Joyce Brown, Karen O'Brien, Kathy Vick, and Lori Beniche.



## Sunday Morning Adult Bible Study



Sunday morning adult bible study meets at 9:15 a.m. in the Adult Education room. We would love to have you join us!

## Wednesday Morning Adult Bible Study



Wednesday Bible Study will not be meeting again until January 8. Enjoy Christmas and New Year's Day.

When we return, we will be taking up the series "What is a Christian," led by Francis Chan. It explores key concepts common to all Christians through the centuries. No matter what divides us, we are united by these truths about the God we worship.

We will be meeting at 9:00 am in Gathering Grounds.

## Free To Grow

John T. Egley, Campaign Director



On behalf of the Free to Grow ministry expansion campaign team,

I would like to extend an enthusiastic thank you to the entire Executive Leadership Board and everyone else who led committees and participated in this initial campaign push. I have greatly appreciated working with Pastor Glenn Lucas, Sara Helmreich as our Campaign Manager, and Marika Parent as our Communications Manager. Without their tireless dedication and support, this campaign would not have been as organized as it was and it would have been far less enjoyable to serve as the Campaign Director. It takes a team of dedicated people to help a campaign like this succeed, and it was a pleasure working with this Board.

The first Sunday of December 2024, December 7th and 8th, will be our First Fruits where we will encourage everyone to start the process of fulfilling their commitments to our ministry expansion campaign. Throughout the next three years, I will be making periodic announcements and communications to keep the congregation informed during the fulfillment phase of this campaign. We will also hold periodic fellowship-focused events to keep the Free to Grow campaign on our collective consciousness. As indicated in the campaign materials, funds contributed to this expansion campaign will be promptly put to the designated use of paying down our mortgage, which will have an immediate impact on the amount of principal owed and improve the strength of the church's financial

position.

This campaign is off to a successful start, and I greatly thank everyone's participation during the launching phase of Free to Grow as we embark on the fulfillment phase of the campaign. Please continue to remain in prayer for one another as we continue to work towards the expansion of Abiding Savior's ministry together.

I am looking forward to the next three years and seeing what we can accomplish together as a congregation with God's help. Thank you!

## Youth Ministry

Alexis Upchurch



The Youth Ministry at Abiding Savior has flourished this past year! Our Junior High Youth Group consistently gathers 15-30 students weekly for a mix of fun games, delicious meals provided by our supportive youth parents, and meaningful scripture study. This semester, we've been exploring the theme "Jesus and..."—examining how Jesus intersects with all aspects of our lives, including identity, forgiveness, and culture. We're excited to continue this journey, making Jesus central to everything we do.

We also launched a bi-weekly High School Youth Group! Though small, our group is vibrant, enjoying fellowship, games, and, of course, good food every other week.

A highlight this year was the transformation of our Youth Room in September. What was once an old classroom is now a cozy, welcoming space filled with comfy seating, fidget toys, and warm colors—thanks to the support of SEEDS and Design with Purpose.

We're incredibly grateful to everyone who made this project possible, creating a space our students truly love.

## Soup Donations for January

South County Outreach has a growing need for soup to help feed the many people in Orange County including families and the elderly. Please bring canned or packaged soup throughout the month of January to the church.



## Youth Ministry: Looking Forward to 2025

Alexis Upchurch

As we look ahead to 2025, we are excited about all that God has planned for our ministries! Our youth group will attend the annual Junior High Winter Camp in February and the District Youth Event in March. The Young Adult Ministry is gearing up for the ROOTED series starting in January and the annual summer Young Adult Retreat with other churches.

Family Ministry has exciting plans too, including the return of Children's Church in early Spring 2025 and more family events and activities throughout the year. We're grateful for God's blessings and trust He will continue to do amazing things at Abiding Savior Lutheran Church and School.

If you'd like to get involved or volunteer, contact Alexis Upchurch at [aupchurch@abidingsavior.com](mailto:aupchurch@abidingsavior.com).

## Carol Festival

*Dr. Christian Guebert*

The music ministries would like to thank the congregation for supporting the Christmas Carol Festival. This year's event was well-attended. The program "Joy and Light" featured the theme of Jesus as the true Light of the world against darkness and coldness. The Chapel Choir, adult and student handbell ensembles, narrators, and Abiding Praise musicians were joined by a chamber orchestra.

Attendees especially noted their praise for solo violinist Alexis Meschter's rendition of Vivaldi's "Winter," and Emily Valenzuela's soprano solo "O Holy Night." We continued our tradition of audience carol singing and handbell ringing. And the choir was tasked with the largest variety of languages yet (English, Latin, Spanish, German, and Russian!).



## Women's Fellowship

*Janice Trumbauer*

We welcome all women of the church to join us on the 1st Monday of the month and invite a friend to come with you. We have an evening of fun, fellowship, devotion, and a pot-luck dinner. Each month we have either game night or a craft to make for our seniors and shut-ins. It's an evening to get to know each other better, spending time in fellowship and fun.

Our next gathering is Monday, January 6th, it's a fun night of BINGO! February, we meet on Monday the 3rd and it's a craft

night. For March we are planning something special so we will not be meeting on the first Monday, instead, we are meeting on Saturday, March 8th. Stay tuned for more information beginning in January. If you want to get on our email list, contact Janice Trumbauer at [krafter@cox.net](mailto:krafter@cox.net)



## VITA Returns

TIMES FLIES! Everyone is saying it these days. Did it not seem only days ago that the 2024 tax season ended? Well, at the risk of being the bearer of bad news, the 2025 tax season for preparing 2024 taxes is almost upon us. And again this year the Abiding Savior free income tax service—named VITA—will open its doors this month! You may conveniently register online at the Abiding Savior website.

While companies aren't required to mail tax documents to recipients until the end of the month it is a well-organized and responsible citizen that begins to collect all tax-related docs now. Past years' experience discloses that well-meaning clients show up without important documents, and in a few cases, their documents are still in unopened envelopes!

As a great reminder, Abiding Savior clients are afforded important benefits not available to the general public.

Although members who reside in Laguna Woods Village have their own resident-only VITA service you are warmly invited to use our service, which is conducted here at church in an inviting Christian atmosphere.

First appointments begin on January 28; clients can register at

<https://abidingsavior.com/vita/> for the date and time of the desired appointment, subject to review. Beginning January 28, the service will operate as follows:  
Tuesdays: 4:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.  
Saturdays: 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.  
The final day for appointments is April 12.

Please add these dates to your calendar and we hope to see you soon!

## Good Tidings of Great Joy!

Good tidings of great joy were proclaimed in the public square in the 2025 Rose Parade with the theme *Best Day Ever!*

The Lutheran Hour Ministries float entry was entitled *Behold! Jesus the Savior is Born.*

The gospel message included: the angel's announcement to the shepherds through to Jesus' returning and our homecoming!

"9 And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. 10 Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. 11 For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:9-11 NKJV

"Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'" Matthew 25:34 NKJV

To learn more about the LHM float, volunteer opportunities, or ways to support this project, visit [lhm.org/petalpushers](http://lhm.org/petalpushers).



## Elementary School

Donna Lucas,  
School Principal



The Christmas season brings a host of activities to our school campus. We celebrate the birth of Christ with a lot of joy, songs, generosity, Bible messages, food, and a whole lot of excitement and anticipation. Our school children shop at a special Christmas store. They prepare for their Advent programs and do an amazing job presenting their programs at the Advent services. Our 8th grade students deliver the Operation Christmas Child boxes to the processing center and spend a day serving this project. With hearts of gratitude, our entire student body collects toys for Spark of Love. Our Parent Teacher League provides a very nice Christmas luncheon for our faculty and staff. Before our students leave on Christmas break, each class celebrates with a class party.

Christmas is a special time at Abiding Savior as we welcome in the Christ-child.

## Preschool

Celeste Cisna, Preschool Director

Preschool has been enjoying the Christmas season with lots of fun activities. The front play area has been transformed into a winter wonderland making for some frosty fun! We had a special "Evening with Mom" where we decorated cookies together. Our Preschoolers joyfully sang Christmas songs in church to celebrate the birth of baby Jesus.

Dear Abiding Savior Families,

Word of mouth is a powerful force, and we're incredibly grateful for the wonderful community spirit surrounding our Christian school. Your enthusiasm and support are instrumental in helping families discover the exceptional Christian education we offer.

As we gear up for the 2025/2026 school year, we invite you to continue spreading the word about Abiding Savior's Christ-centered education. Our upcoming January and February admissions events are perfect opportunities for prospective families to explore our campus and learn more about the unique Christian educational experience we provide.

### PROSPECTIVE FAMILY ADMISSION EVENTS:

- January 30 | 6 pm | Open House: PS-8th
- February 18 | 6 pm | Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten Information Night

We encourage our students to invite a friend to the Open House, which will give them a firsthand look at why we all love Abiding Savior. And here's an exciting incentive: if you bring a friend, you'll be entered into a Registration Fee raffle (TK-8th grade), with a chance to win a FREE REGISTRATION FOR THE 2025/2026 SCHOOL YEAR (open to domestic students only)!

To extend an invitation to your friends, provide their email to Mrs. Yesi Naber, our Admissions Director, at [ynaber@abidingsavior.com](mailto:ynaber@abidingsavior.com), and we'll ensure they receive an invitation to one of our admissions events.

Thank you for being an essential part of our Christian community and for helping us share the Abiding Savior experience far and wide. Your support is invaluable!





| SUNDAY   | MONDAY   | TUESDAY  | WEDNESDAY   | THURSDAY   | FRIDAY                                    | SATURDAY   |
|--|--|--|---|--|---|--|
|  |  |  | <b>1</b><br>NEW YEAR'S DAY<br>Church Office<br>Closed<br>7:45p-AA   | <b>2</b><br>8-Church Office<br>Reopens<br>8:30a Large Print<br>6:30p – Praises Ring<br>7p – Young Adult Bible<br>Study                                       | <b>3</b><br>7:30p-Narcotics<br>Anonymous  | <b>4</b><br>9a-Altar Guild<br>10a – Sew and<br>Sews<br>5p-Praise Worship<br>service                |
| <b>5</b><br>Worship Schedule<br>– see chart at<br>bottom of calendar<br><br>10:30a-Praise and<br>Nurture                                       | <b>6</b><br>6p- Women's<br>Fellowship<br>7p-Boy Scout<br>meeting<br>7:30p-Narcotics<br>anonymous           | <b>7</b><br>8:30a – Large Print<br>5p-Pickleball<br>6p- Elders meeting                   | <b>8</b><br>8:30a – Large Print<br>9a – Wednesday<br>Bible Study<br>6p-Jr High Youth<br>group<br>6:30p -<br>Confirmation<br>7:30p – Chapel<br>Choir<br>7:45p-AA | <b>9</b><br>8:30a – Large Print<br>6:30p – Praises Ring<br>7p – Young Adult Bible<br>Study<br>7:30p-Abiding Praise   | <b>10</b><br>7:30p-Narcotics<br>Anonymous | <b>11</b><br>9a-Altar Guild<br>5p-Praise Worship<br>service  |
| <b>12</b><br>Worship Schedule<br>– see chart at<br>bottom of calendar<br><br>10:30a-Praise and<br>Nurture                                      | <b>13</b><br>8:30a – Large Print<br>7p-Boy Scout<br>meeting<br>7:30p-Narcotics<br>anonymous                | <b>14</b><br>8:30a – Large Print<br>5p-Pickleball<br>6p – Elders<br>meeting              | <b>15</b><br>8:30a – Large Print<br>9a – Bible Study<br>6p-Jr High Youth<br>group<br>6:30p -<br>Confirmation<br>7:30p – Chapel<br>choir<br>7:45p-AA             | <b>16</b><br>8:30a – Large Print<br>6:30p – Praises Ring<br>7p – Young Adult Bible<br>Study<br>7:30p-Abiding Praise  | <b>17</b><br>7:30p-Narcotics<br>Anonymous | <b>18</b><br>9a-Altar Guild<br>5p-Praise Worship<br>service  |
| <b>19</b><br>Worship Schedule<br>– see chart at<br>bottom of calendar<br><br>10:30a-Praise and<br>Nurture                                      | <b>20</b><br>MLK DAY<br>Church Office<br>Closed<br>7p-Boy Scout<br>meeting<br>7:30p-Narcotics<br>anonymous | <b>21</b><br>8:30a – Large Print<br>5p-Pickleball  | <b>22</b><br>8:30a – Large Print<br>9a – Bible Study<br>6p-Jr High Youth<br>group<br>6:30p -<br>Confirmation<br>7:30p – Chapel<br>Choir<br>7:45p-AA             | <b>23</b><br>8:30a – Large Print<br>6:30p- Praises Ring<br>7p – Young Adult<br>Bible Study<br>7:30p-Abiding<br>Praise  | <b>24</b><br>7:30p-Narcotics<br>Anonymous | <b>25</b><br>9a-Altar Guild<br>9a – VITA income<br>tax preparation<br>5p-Praise Worship<br>service |
| <b>26</b><br>Worship Schedule<br>– see chart at<br>bottom of calendar<br>10:30a-Praise and<br>Nurture<br><br>National Lutheran<br>Schools Week | <b>27</b><br>7p-Boy Scout<br>meeting<br>7:30p-Narcotics<br>anonymous                                       | <b>28</b><br>8:30a – Large Print<br>4p - VITA income<br>tax preparation<br>5p-Pickleball | <b>29</b><br>8:30a – Large Print<br>9a – Bible Study<br><br>6p-Jr High Youth group<br><br>7:30p – Chapel Choir<br>7:45p-AA                                      | <b>30</b><br>8:30a – Large Print<br>6p – School and<br>Preschool open house<br>6:30p-Praises Ring<br>7p – Young Adult Bible<br>Study<br>7:30p-Abiding Praise | <b>31</b><br>7:30p-Narcotics<br>Anonymous |               |

**WORSHIP | COMMUNION SCHEDULE**

In Person Informal Worship – Saturday 5:00 PM  
 In Person Classic Worship – Sunday 8:00 AM  
 In Person Abiding Praise Worship – Sunday 10:15 AM  
 Live Stream Abiding Praise Worship Via You Tube – Sunday 10:15 AM

*Communion Offered Weekly*  
*Communion Offered 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Weeks*  
*Communion Offered 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Weeks*



**Abiding Savior  
Lutheran Church**

23262 El Toro Road  
Lake Forest, CA 92630

**Return Service Requested  
Time Dated Materials**

**NATIONAL LUTHERAN SCHOOLS WEEK  
2025**

**ENDURE**  
HEBREWS 12:1-3