

Nativity

March 2024

On the path to Jesus gone missing

Siblings in Christ, Grace to you and peace this Lenten season.

As I write this morning, we are approaching the halfway point of our six-week season of Lent. Lent is a gift to our Christian Faith, as it provides an annual season of renewal- long enough to make serious changes, and short enough to pass with celebration on Easter.

Halfway is a difficult "place" to be. To be halfway through a delicious meal is to realize some things; think about it.. You can't get the first part back, and the second half might be a bit much.

Will you finish? To be halfway through an athletic event is to also measure one's reserve energy and personal focus in light of the competition and distance to finish. Will you?

To be halfway is to consider returning to the start (an option that is rarely available..)

But we don't stay halfway. Time generally insists upon a finish of some sort, and halfway is when we assess our plans and make adjustments for the finish.

We're halfway through Lent. Halfway through our annual season of Spring Training, where we renew our commitments to Christian life:

Examine & Repentance, Prayer, Fasting, Works of Love and Sacrificial Giving.

What will "coach" point out about you and your Christian training? Maybe read that five point list again. Where is your stride wonky, your swing funny? Where is your discipline soft? Where are you distracted? It's midpoint now. What can use your strong focus for the next three weeks? You can.

Lent began with the reminder that "you are dust and to dust you shall return."

Lent will end with Easter's daring proclamation that Jesus goes ahead of us- No longer in the grave, not even in the garden, but back out into ministry, ahead of us where he belongs, and where we belong, following. That's the way of the cross. Remember. That's the way of resurrection. Remember. God does beautiful things with dust.

Keep your resolve, community, in these last weeks of Lent. What is God teaching you?

You are not alone, but marked with the cross of Christ and sealed with the Holy Spirit forever. You can.

HOLY WEEK



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Make your Easter Sunday richer.

Maundy Thursday at 6:15 pm

Good Friday at 6:15 pm

Easter Sunday

6:15 am Sunrise Service in the Prayer Garden

9:00 am Traditional Easter Service

10:15 am Easter Egg Hunt

11:00 am Traditional Easter Service

We start Holy Week on Palm Sunday, March 24th with a palm leaf processional at both services.

We are also excited to announce that we are going big this year for both the 9:00 am and 11:00 am Easter services. We will have the brass band, several beautiful soloists, organ, and the Nativity Choir.

Monthly Financial Update

The purpose of this report is to highlight the church's significant financial activity for the month and YTD.

For the month ending 1/31/2024

| | Actual | Budget | Variance |
|-----------------------|--------|--------|----------|
| General Giving | 27,483 | 29,882 | (2,299) |

This is a reminder that budgeted General Giving from our congregation is the amount required to meet the budgeted expenses.

In January there were no significant variances between actual and budgeted expenses by line item.

Message From Our Church Council

Your council has ambitious goals for 2024. Our goals can only be accomplished with your gift of time and talent. Kindly jump in to help serve our community and reach out to others by:

- Committing to lead Saints Alive.
- Joining a Greeter's Gathering class to learn how to welcome people into their walk of faith at Nativity.
- Helping lead our Stewardship team.
- Helping to organize our worship volunteers.
- Committing to count the offering every 4th Sunday with a team member.
- Joining in to plan for our congregation's vision for the future.
- Prayer plus prayer.

Contact the office for more information or touch base with Dave Nissen or any council member to offer up your giftedness!



Soup Suppers and Holden Evening Prayer

Lent is a special time to engage in faith development, individually, with our families, and/or with our church community. You are invited to join us for Soup Suppers each Wednesday during lent through March 20th. We come together at 5:30 pm each Wednesday to share soup and bread. We then enter the Sanctuary for singing and worshipping through a Holden Evening Prayer service at 6:15 pm. This is a family friendly tradition here at Nativity and all are welcome.

The children's table is available if children want to draw, color, or read during the service. Sign up to bring soup or bread in the Narthex.

U of O Chamber Choir Cancellation

The University of Oregon's chamber choir has had to cancel their trip due to unfavorable weather conditions. They hope to rescheduled in the spring.



Welcoming Greeters!

At Nativity Lutheran "We reach out to all people with the love of Jesus Christ". Welcoming is one of our ministries, a ministry everyone in the congregation can participate in. This spring we are emphasizing our gifts as a welcoming congregation. Welcoming is not just for the Greeters at the door. It is sharing the Peace of the Lord with those you know and those you have yet to get to know; encouraging others to visit after worship in the fellowship hall. Church leadership goals are that everyone attending worship at Nativity feel a part of our worshipping community and that those coming to worship for the first time see Nativity as a community they want to return to.

On March 16th at 9:45 am, you are each invited to join in a discussion of how we grow and sustain the welcome in our faith community. We will meet for about an hour to discuss building and sustaining the welcoming spirit of Nativity. Join this discussion and bring ideas based on your experiences. We look forward to a lively discussion.



Classy Junque Sale

The Classy Junque Sale will be this Saturday, March 2 from 8:00 am - 2:00 pm. We welcome all donations of quality used items except clothing. Please bring your items to Nativity no later than the morning of Friday March 1st. We will be setting up all day on March 1st and could use lots of extra hands. I could use help either Friday for set up or Saturday during the sale and also afterwards for cleanup. I will provide free T-shirts and lunch/snacks for all the helpers plus helpers get first pick at the sale! If you would like to help or have questions please contact Carol Guthrie.

Sacred Stories

Sacred Stories is a time to share our experiences where God's presence was obvious to us. We know He is with us at all times and Sacred Stories reminds us of this fact. And maybe as we claim our Sacred Stories as real through sharing and listening, we will be more awake to His presence. The listening is as important as the sharing. Join us to share or listen on March 17th at 3:00 pm in the sanctuary. Please let Marci know if you plan to be there. This is only to have some idea of how many chairs to have arranged. However, if it works for you to just show up - that is fine!

The Saints Alive Team

Saints Alive

What a wonderful time we had in February.
Great food (thank you, cooks) and
entertainment by the Jazz Guys.

Our March 7th event, at 11:00 am in the Fellowship Hall, will also be entertaining and interesting. Our own Steven Marshall, Choir Director at Nativity, will be speaking about his life and many interests. Not only is Stephen very gifted with writing and performing music, but he has other fields where his creative gifts have been expressed. Come and learn more about this talented man. Stephen has expressed his love for Nativity and its congregants. Since it is St. Patrick's Day month, we will be serving a lunch of bangers, mash, gravy, and tasty desserts. Lunch is \$5, as you are able. **Please RSVP by Monday, March 4th.**

Join us on March 7th for good food and to learn about the path that Stephen's gifts have led him on. Your friends are always welcome, and we hope you will include them.



Troop 18 Adventures

Troop 18's New Year has gotten off to a great start! First, we had Freeze-o-ree, which is where we have a campout in the snow, and we do fun things like sled, and build snow caves, and compete for the spirit shovel. Then, we had Scout Sunday, where we stay the night at Nativity and in the morning, we make breakfast for the congregation and do a skit for them too. And just recently, we had our merit badge college where we learn some scout skills and get merit badges, and it is a ton of fun because we get to choose what to learn, but no matter what it will normally help us advance.

Sincerely, Troop 18's Historian, Owen



Nativity Family Camp Out

Are you ready to camp out this summer? The Nativity Camp Out is on for 2024. Dates are Thursday, August 15th - Monday, August 19th at Newberry Group Camp at Newberry National Volcanic Monument. A short 45 minute drive from Bend on the shores of Paulina Lake.

Hiking, camping, bicycling, canoeing, kayaking, SUP, swimming, star-gazing and just "hanging out" at the lake are all available. Worship in the Woods is Saturday, August 17th at 4pm with a potluck to follow.

Come up for the day, for one night, or all. But you **MUST SIGN UP**. Sign-ups will start in June.

Stewardship of Time

Sacred Stories at Nativity... Time is a gift that enables the nurture of oneself and it is a gift that can nurture another. Stewarding our time is crucial. Gifting oneself the time to be present in nature, deep in a book, intentional in prayer are but a few possible means to deepen one's faith. Listening to God and the Spirit's prompting for our lives can not only nurture us, but ultimately nurture another. Sacred Stories is an intentional opportunity to share how God has been present in your life. One can listen to others stories of God's presence in their lives and share your own. Giving yourself and others time to realize and understand God's manifestation in your life is stewardship in action!

March Bible Readings

March 3

Exodus 20:1-17
Psalm 19
1 Corinthians 1:18-25
John 2:13-22

March 10

Numbers 21:4-9
Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22
Ephesians 2:1-10
John 3:14-21

March 17

Jeremiah 31:31-34
Psalm 51:1-12
Hebrews 5:5-10
John 12:20-33

March 24

Mark 11:1-11
Isaiah 50:4-9a
Psalm 31:9-16
Philippians 2:5-11
Mark 14:1-15:47

March 31

Acts 10:34-43
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
1 Corinthians 15:1-11
Mark 16:1-8

Nativity Wood Bank

Thank you to Richard Berg who organized a recent wood acquisition with Tumalo State Park. Richard Berg, Tom Jacobsen and I made a total of 10 trailer loads of juniper to Nativity. Thank you to Mike Williams who drove the tractor, Dave Nissen, Mike Cunningham, Scott Knudsen and Larry Johnson who did chainsaw work to make that work out so well.

Thank you to Kevin Brady and Kyle Wright who worked so hard to secure a grant of nearly \$20,000.00 to purchase safety equipment, gasoline, oils, a new conveyor and two splitters and a chainsaw. These monies go a long way in making our effort more efficient as we prepare for next year's wood disbursements.

Thank you to Jim Hamey who drives each Saturday and delivers wood to those who are unable to drive to our church and pick up the wood themselves. He is an example to us all!

Thank you to Kevin Brady and Scott Knudsen who put together a new conveyor that we got from grant monies. I assisted in that all day effort too! It helps us put wood in areas with so much less effort!

Our wood supply is holding out very well! We don't anticipate running out of dried wood this year. We will likely continue giving out wood through March and possibly into April if the supply lasts!

We will be holding our **annual Wood Bank Volunteer Luncheon on Saturday, March 30th** to say thank you to all who help us. Put that on your calendar! We are inviting the Prayer Garden and Food Forest folks too!

Thank you to all of you who assist us. It takes a lot of hands to keep people warm!

"We love because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19). We give out firewood to those in need because we feel warmth in serving others. As we meet others in need, it provides us with a sense of self-worth and self-confidence. From that place we can love with even greater freedom knowing that we are the hands of Christ. We invite you to help us reach out to others as you are able! It is really quite an awe inspiring experience to meet others in their need!

-John Harro

China Hat Road construction won't require moving homeless

Several of you have expressed concerns about the camps on China Hat Road being evacuated by the Forest Service this summer. See the updated article in the Central Oregon Daily:

https://www.centraloregondaily.com/news/local/china-hat-road-reconstruction-homeless/article_144dee94-d69f-11ee-9cc0-53542b2744c7.html



Children's Ministry

On Sunday, March 17 from 4:00-6:00 pm we will hold a Holy Communion Class. Pastor Chris leads a class for families to come together and help the children learn what taking communion means. We start with a potluck meal then Pastor Chris dives into a communion book for the kids to take home, make bread from wheat grains, and make grape juice from fresh grapes. We do ask for a donation of \$10 per family to help offset the cost of the books and supplies (scholarships available.) Please RSVP to Renee.

Easter Egg Hunt

Join us for our annual Easter Egg Hunt. The Head Start playground area will be designated for younger children (under age 5). All elementary age children will gather at the picnic tables to hunt in the main backyard. Feel free to bring your own Easter baskets. We will have bags available also.

Central Oregon Mastersingers head to the Vatican

Central Oregon Mastersingers has been invited to sing in St. Peter's Basilica at The Vatican! In this once in a lifetime experience, they'll sing music of Palestrina, Victoria, Monteverdi, and more at The Vatican on June 30, 2024. In order to facilitate this amazing trip, they're asking for support from our community.

Their goal is to raise \$15,000. Will you help?

They are holding two concerts in April to hear what they will be singing at the Vatican in Rome. April 20, 2024 at 7:00 pm at Nativity Lutheran Church and April 21, 2024 at 3:00 pm at Sunriver Christian Fellowship.

2024 Flower Chart

The 2024 flower chart is up in the Fellowship hallway. Please sign-up to provide flowers for a Sunday's worship service. You can also add who or what they are honoring and Bonnie will add that to the before service announcements and here in the "This Week" announcements.

Property Maintenance

As many of you know we had our fire suppression system freeze during our very cold weather. The water damage that happened in the sanctuary, entryway narthex and kitchen is now being repaired. This event will cost us \$1500.00 for the repairs to our fire suppression system. Our insurance company is crediting our \$2500.00 deductible back to us because we have not had any claims in the last 6 years. We are lucky that so many people were at the church at the time of this event and that I could shut the system down. We otherwise would have had a lot more damage.

Be sure to thank Bill Rodgers who is helping to oversee the repairs with a trusted contractor that he knows. We will be making a plan to try to mitigate any freezing in the future so that we don't have to go through this again! Thank you for your patience. Thank you again Bill Rodgers for all you have done in making our kitchen so wonderful. Thank you for assisting our contractor too!

We are planning our **annual church cleanup for Saturday, May 4th** this year. Please put that on your calendar. Lunch will be provided after that event. I will send out a link to a Google Doc once we get closer to that event!

Let me know of safety issues that you feel I should address! I always try to place those at the top of my list.

Thank you for letting me serve you,

John Harro

Building Property and Maintenance

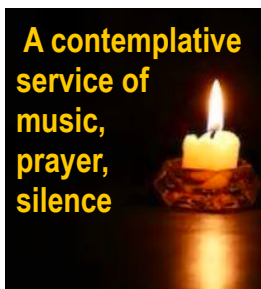
Game Day in March

Our monthly game day will take place on Thursday, March 28th from 12:00-4:00 pm. Come for some of the time or all of it.

Google Reviews

We here at Nativity would like to increase Nativity's web presence. One way to do that is to add a review of Nativity on Google. **This month we ask members whose last name begins with C and P write a review in March.**

What this does is not only provides true testimonies of our vibrant and wonderful congregation, but it also boosts our search rankings. You can also administer this Google listing and add updated photos of our ministry. Play around a little bit and see what you find out. Let Dave Nissen or the office know if you have any questions. Thanks in advance!



Taize in March

The Taize Choir of Central Oregon invites you to participate in an hour of meditative non-denominational Taize music, prayer, and silence at our monthly ecumenical service at 7:00 pm on Thursday, March 7th at Trinity Episcopal Church (in the St. Helens Hall), 231 NW Idaho, Bend. The theme for this service is 'Healing amongst Faith Traditions'.

You are welcome to participate in or listen to our rehearsal starting at 6:15.

For more information find us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100071919285548>

Planning for Pastor Chris's 2025 Sabbatical

Pastor Chris and Nativity are in the process of planning for his Sabbatical experience in 2025. That means that as a congregation we are, in conjunction with Pastor Chris, applying for a Lilly Endowment Grant through the Christian Theological Seminary. The Lilly Endowment National Clergy Renewal Program supports the causes of community development, education, and religion. Especially by "seeking out and supporting efforts that enhance the vitality of congregations and strengthen the pastoral and lay leadership of Christian communities." The grant supplies pastors with funds to support their 3-4 month Sabbatical experience and help support the congregation's ministerial needs during the pastors absence.

As a congregation we have been setting aside funds to support a Sabbatical for Pastor Chris since 2014 and have accumulated a modest amount of 8,250.00 in that time. The deadline for the application is March 13, 2024 and we are notified if we are given the grant in August of 2024.

Pastor Chris has been serving us here at Nativity for 11 years. As the solo pastor of our very active and vibrant congregation he will benefit from time to step away, spend some time reflecting on his ministry, and to recharge for the future ministry when he returns to Nativity.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Pastor Chris, Lisa Bailey, Dave Nissen or Scott Johnson. We will keep you notified of the application process and the results.

Peace,

Lisa Bailey
Sabbatical Planning Team

9:00 am Altar Guild

Here is the Altar Guild schedule for March for the 9:00 am service. Please remember that if you are unable to come on the day you are assigned, please call another Altar Guild member to switch or contact Pat Paris. Thank you for your continued service.

March 3 - Susan S.B. & Pat P.
March 10 - Kathy P. & Sue G.
March 17 - Sue J. & Annie R.
March 24 - Pat P. & Nancy M.
March 31 - Pat P. & Sue G.

11:00 am Altar Guild

Here is the Altar Guild schedule for March for the 11:00 am service. Please remember that if you are unable to come on the day you are assigned, please call another Altar Guild member to switch or contact Christine Thomas. Thank you for your continued service.

March 3 - Stephanie S.
March 10 - Barbara W.
March 17 - Kathy N.
March 24 - Sylvia M.
March 31 - Kathy N.

Please visit our website at:
www.nativityinbend.com

Office Hours

Pastor Chris Kramer - Wednesday - Saturday,
Sunday

Parish Administrator 9:00 am - 3:00 pm,
Tuesday - Friday

541-388-0765
office@nativityinbend.com

Sunday worship services are in-person indoors
& online at [FacebookLive](https://www.facebook.com/nativityinbend).

9:00 am Contemporary Service
9:15 am Children's Church
11:00 am Traditional Service



Bend Pops Orchestra Winter Concert

The Winter Concert features two of Robert Sheldon's original compositions, the celebratory and exhilarating Resurgences, and Appalachian Morning, a lyrical expression paying homage to the Scottish and Irish pioneers. Also included are familiar favorites, Michael Kamen's Band of Brothers, Merle Isaac's arrangement of Two South American Tangos, Elmer Bernstein's The Magnificent Seven, Warrior Legacy, a heroic melody by Soon Hee Newbold, and classical staples, Themes from Rimsky-Korsakov's symphonic suite "Scheherazade" and Richard Meyer's arrangement of Egmont Overture by Beethoven.

The concert takes place on Sunday, March 17th at 2:00 pm in the Mountain View High School Auditorium, located at 2755 NE 27th Street in Bend.

Admission is FREE! So bring the entire family and enjoy an afternoon of delightful music.

THE
CASCADE CHORALE ASSOCIATION
presents

Serenity

Directed by James W. Knox

SATURDAY 7:00 PM

MARCH 9

SUNDAY 3:00 PM

MARCH 10

Nativity Lutheran Church

60850 Brosterhous Road, Bend Oregon

**FREE
CONCERT**

*Donations
Greatly Appreciated*



CENTRAL OREGON
community college

CASCADECHORALE.ORG
A 501(c)3 ORGANIZATION



FOR WHEELCHAIR SEATING AND/OR ASSISTIVE LISTENING, PLEASE
CONTACT NATIVITY LUTHERAN CHURCH AT LEAST 48 HOURS IN ADVANCE

Sounds Italian

April 20, 2024 at 7:00 pm at Nativity Lutheran Church
April 21, 2024 at 3:00 pm at Sunriver Christian Fellowship
June 30, 2024 at The Vatican in Rome!

CONCERTS ARE FREE — DONATIONS APPRECIATED



Central Oregon 
MASTERSINGERS

Join us as we prepare for a performance tour to Rome!

Featuring Palestrina's sublime *Missa Brevis*,
along with pieces by Victoria, Monteverdi, Dett, Hogan, and more!

For more information: centraloregonmastersingers.org