



NORTHDALÉ NEWS

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Dear friends in our Savior,

Blessings. This is what we see all around us. Nothing but God’s blessings. It’s always so easy for us to want what we don’t have or complain about what isn’t happening or grumble about what’s going wrong. It’s not always so easy for us to see the blessings that are present. So it’s good from time to time to take a step back, stop what we are doing, and see and acknowledge the blessings our God is bringing to us.

God has brought us blessings through our 10 for 10 emphasis. God’s people have responded to his word with joy and love in their hearts. We approved an income budget number that to many seemed unattainable, yet at the almost halfway point in the year, we are right on track to meet this goal. What a blessing from God! As we have been generous and given sacrificially up to this point, it’s important that we not let our foot off the gas going forward. We’ve shown that we can do it and we pray God’s people continue to respond in a generous way. What blessings from God!

We are currently at about \$326,000 given to our Building our Faith- Family-Future campaign. With a few big gifts coming in and matches that have been submitted we will be right at \$350,000 of the \$370,000 pledged. This does not include the weekly gifts that have been coming in regularly and will continue to come in until the end of our campaign in March. We are going to be very close to the \$370,000 that was pledged. What a blessing from God!

We are currently starting the permitting process for our addition. This means the construction should begin sometime early in the new year. We are excited for the progress being made and anxious for our expanded space. What a blessing from God!

We have 2 new students who started in our school just prior to Thanksgiving with another to start in new year. What a blessing from God that he is bringing more children to us to share his Word with.

We will be holding our Welcome Home Celebration on December 15. This is a great way for us to reach out to people we haven’t seen at worship for awhile and let them know how special they are to us and how happy we are to see them. We’ve already seen our worship attendance rising and are excited to see what kind of a response we will have on that day. In addition, we have our annual Christmas Dinner/White Elephant Gift auction that day. We can worship together and grow as God’s people as well as laugh and eat together afterward. What a blessing this will be.

Most importantly, this month we prepare our hearts to celebrate the greatest blessing of all: God’s love in sending his Son into this world to carry out the work of our salvation! While this month will be full of parties, gifts, decorations, and other good times, most importantly is when we gather together as a family of God to worship him and give him praise for keeping his promise to bring salvation to us through his Son. Through Jesus, our sins are forgiven, we have been brought into God’s family, and we will live with him forever. There is no bigger blessing than this. All praise goes to our God who loves us.

So, while things might not always be perfect, we recognize the many blessings our God is giving to us. Stop to thank God for these blessings. Let his amazing love spur you on in your service to him, now and always.

Pastor Vannieuwenhoven

MISSIONS HIGHLIGHT—

Pursuing a Kingdom culture

As my friend Bo and I watched our kids play together on the playground, Bo turned to me and said, “I’m not afraid to lose my culture.”

Bo is an important member of a successful business, owns his home, is blessed with a wonderful wife and 2 kids, is well-liked by his neighbors, and finds many joys in the life he has been given. Bo and his family have invited us to celebrate their cultural holidays and festivals with them. Bo has been a quality language partner who genuinely wants me to learn his native language. His hope is that we can continue to be neighbors for a long time.

What would cause a man like Bo to be at peace with losing his culture? Especially considering this man has many visible blessings and opportunities from growing up in his culture. He has not been turned away or forgotten by his own people. Instead he is respected and enjoyed by many.

Bo spent a few seconds smiling at the surprised look on my face before explaining the joy he has in his heart from his family pursuing a new culture: a Christ-centered culture.

My friend has no plans to stop speaking his native language or befriending his fellow countrymen. He will continue to celebrate local holidays and enjoy the unique foods that accompany the festivities. But Bo simply has bigger things on his mind and in his heart. He is pursuing a Kingdom culture. His family reads the Bible together, prays together, worships together, and enjoys living life with their Christian friends.

Many of our contacts in East Asia initially pause when presented with the teachings of Christianity, because to them Christianity is a cultural way of life in the West. Bo would say you could count him as one of those skeptics in the past. In the present, Bo is quick to speak on how Christianity isn’t pursuing a Western culture at the expense of losing an Eastern culture, but instead it’s a new culture altogether. In a Kingdom culture, God reigns supreme in the hearts of God’s people, the followers of the Way speak truth from Scripture and build each other up in love, and we all walk together with our Good Shepherd on the narrow path to eternal life.

Bo’s way of thinking has moved away from being set on earthly things (Philippians 3:19) and is now pursuing his citizenship in heaven (Philippians 3:20).

Only the Good News of our Savior Jesus can change a human’s heart to pursue God and want to follow His Word. My prayer is that we keep our eyes fixed on our Savior as he desires to lead us to our true home and citizenship in heaven.

How might that affect our own cultural practices? Does our way of thinking in our earthly culture ever cause us to lose focus on the life God calls us to lead?

Ask God in prayer to help you know the way in which you should go. Listen to him as he speaks to you through your Bible reading. Surround yourself with brothers and sisters in the faith who are willing to walk with you home to heaven. Invite others to join you and enjoy the warmth of a Christian community.

Jesus calls us to seek first God’s kingdom and God’s righteousness (Matthew 6:33). May God bless you with his peace and joy as you pursue a Kingdom culture.

Written by a missionary in East Asia

Thanksgiving Food Drive



Every November, we gather food to give to Metropolitan Ministries to help people who don't have the means to provide fully for themselves or their families. This not only praises God as we use what he has given us to help others, it provides some very real help for people in need. We will be gathering food throughout the month of November and into the start of December. Please bring non-persishable food items and place them on the tables provided either in the church or the school building. We'd love to have everyone participate to be able to show our love to those less fortunate than us. It is a great way to say thanks to God for the blessings he has given us.

Thank You

Thank you to everyone who has grabbed their newsletter from their mailbox each month. Since we have been distributing them through the mailboxes, we have been able to save 50% of the postage that we normally spend. So this is an encouragement to everyone to check your mailboxes regularly and grab your newsletter when it is there. We will mail them after the first week.

Thank You

NEW BIBLE INFORMATION CLASS

Pastor Vann will be starting his next Bible Information Class on Tuesday, January 14. The class will meet from 6:30-8:00 p.m. for 13 weeks. The Bible Information Class is an overview of all of the main teachings in the Bible. It is a great introduction for someone who is interested in learning more about what the Bible teaches. It is a great way to share with a friend or relative what our church teaches. It is also a good review for our members of all those truths that were taught at Catechism class so many years ago. This class is also required for anyone who wants to join our congregation. If you are interested in attending, or if you have a friend or neighbor interested or that you would like to invite, please talk to Pastor Vann about that. The class is a free class and a great way to dive deep into the truths of scripture. If you need some more information, please talk with Pastor Vann.

Bible Study

We continue our Bible Study on the Four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) in our Sunday Morning Bible Study. We have had a great turn out for the last many weeks. We are excited to have so many people eager to learn about the Gospels. This class takes a look at the life of Jesus in a chronological order. It is a great way to become more acquainted with your Savior Jesus and know all that he did to live as your substitute here on this earth. It is through the study of God's Word that we remain connected to our Savior and grow in our faith and godly living. This is a great time for you to begin coming to Bible Study on Sunday. We hope to see you on Sunday morning.



10 for 10 Stewardship Emphasis

On December 1, we bring to an end our 10 weeks of enhanced giving. God has truly blessed our efforts these past 10 weeks. We approved a offering budget of \$230,000 for the fiscal year—a budget that many felt we could never meet. Yet as we near the end of our enhanced giving and the mid-point of our fiscal year, we are right on track to hit that number. What a blessing from our God! What a response of grace from God's people. Well done, good and faithful servants. But now that we've done so well, we don't want to let our feet off of the gas, so to speak. We'd like to keep up what we've accomplished so far. I pray that God's people continue to be as generous going forward as they have been throughout this effort. What a celebration of God's amazing blessings!

1010
for
Stewardship Emphasis

Christmas Dinner/White Elephant Gift Auction

Our annual Christmas Dinner/White Elephant Gift Auction is scheduled for Sunday, December 15th after the 10:30a.m. worship service. We encourage everyone to put this on their schedules to attend. This is a fun fellowship day where everyone brings anonymously wrapped gifts for Pastor to auction off. The money raised goes to support our Women of Northdale who help to make sure that we have refreshments, banners and other materials that enhance our worship. Please bring a main dish, salad or a dessert. There will be a sign up sheet for meals in the church entryway. And don't forget your white elephant gifts! If you would like more information about this please see Aimee Hardman.



SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School is for our all of our young children ages 3 through 5th grade. It meets every Sunday at 9:15am, between worship service. We encourage all of our families to participate in our Sunday School Program. This is a great program to assist parents in bringing up their children in the training and instruction of the Lord. If you are interested in helping with Sunday School or teaching, you can speak to Pastor Vann or Kristin Phillips.

MINISTRY LEADERSHIP TEAM

Because a number of our Ministry Leadership Team members were traveling during the scheduled date of our meeting, the MLT moved it's meeting to December 2. There will be highlights of that meeting in the January newsletter.

November Preschool Highlights

This month is preschool, one of the books we read was, We're Going on a Bear Hunt. We learned the order of the different actions in the story and also learned a lot about bears. We ended the week by bringing our own teddy bears to school for a teddy bear picnic. We've learned how to write our names on our own and now we're working on even more letters and numbers. We were glad to join in on the Veteran's Day presentation and learn about our military. We also enjoyed a visit from our Moms and Tots class. It was a great opportunity to share what our preschool is all about with these families. We ended the month learning about turkeys, but more importantly, all the things we have to be thankful for. God has provided so much for us and we thank Him for it all!

Ministry Teams Meeting

In an effort to better serve God's people here at Northdale and involve more people in the ministry, we offer several ministry teams. We ask each member of Northdale Lutheran to consider what gifts, abilities and interests God has granted to you to see if there is a place where you could serve.

Please see where you might consider serving and see the meeting schedule for this month below:

	Date	6:30pm	7:30pm
December	2	Ministry Leadership Team	
	16	Evangelism Team	Worship Team
	17	Financial Advice Team	Elders/Member Care Team

Mid-week Advent Worship

This year, we will be holding one mid-week advent service. This special mid-week service will be on Wednesday, December 11th. We will offer the service at both 2 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. We are encouraging all of our members to plan for this special service. Our mid-week Advent service will be a service of reflection and meditation as we ponder the coming of our King and reflect on Jesus Christ as the Light of the World.



Christmas Worship Schedule

It is time to once again be thinking about our Christmas worship of our Lord and King. What joyous days of celebration these are for God's people as we ponder God's love in the miracle of Jesus becoming flesh. We invite you and any guests you might want to invite and/or bring to join us for each of these special opportunities to gather before God and worship him for his goodness in sending Jesus to be our Savior. Our Christmas Worship is as follows:



Christmas Eve Worship: Tuesday, December 24

5:00 p.m. Children's Service

6:30 p.m. Candlelight Service

**Christmas Day Festival Service: Wednesday,
December 25 10:00 a.m.**

C 19 Outreach Initiative

1 Million People! That's the goal for how many people we want to invite to hear about Jesus this coming Christmas! No that's not something we can do as our own congregation. But it is an easily attainable goal when we combine together as a church body. We are joining with our brothers and sisters in WELS to reach out to our friends, neighbors, co-workers, etc. and invite them to join us for worship at Christmas and hear about the good news of a Savior born for their salvation. We have ordered 1500 postcards to distribute as invitations to our neighbors. As we get into December, we will be asking each member to take a handful of cards and hand them out in your neighborhood, to friends and relatives, whomever you know to join us for Christmas. It is amazing to see the impact we can have when we all actively and aggressively join together to bring the good news of our Savior to the world.



December 2019

STAY CONNECTED...

to your school.

to your teachers.

to your youth.

Basketball Season

Our second sports season of the school year is now underway. We have 13 student in 5th-8th grades participating in basketball this year. Pastor Schwartz is serving as head coach and Mr. Haring is assisting. We have a full schedule of games against some local schools and against our fellow SALSA (WELS) schools. Stay tuned to the Northdale Lutheran Facebook page for game results and photos.

Children's Christmas Eve Service

The preschool through 8th grade students of our Lutheran school will have the awesome privilege of proclaiming the birth of our savior during the Children's Christmas Eve Service on December 24 at 4:00 PM. Preparations are well underway. We look forward to hearing the familiar message as shared by our students in word and song.

NLS Marketing Team Update

The NLS Marketing Team has been hard at work considering how to advance our school's mission in the community: assists families by providing an excellent education in a safe, Christian environment. The team has made great progress on their action items since last month. The team has reviewed a few website design companies and has selected a local one to build separate websites for our church and school. The new school site will also receive search engine optimization which will help with online marketing efforts as well as increasing traffic to our website. A challenge grant has been offered to match \$4,050 of \$8,100 the new website will cost. If you'd like to make a contribution, please mark your donation for website.

The second major action item was consideration of a name change. The team has recommended the name Northdale Christian Academy. The team considered many suggestions through the online survey and felt this one most accurately reflects our Christ-centered purpose and accurately conveys our desire to serve the community with Christian education, preschool through 8th grade. This recommendation is currently working through our leadership groups. Look for more information in the coming weeks.

These are exciting opportunities to promote our school and offer Christian education, preschool through 8th grade to our community.

Christmas Gift Service Project

Each year we select a donation project at Christmas time. We have been so blessed to receive God's greatest gift to us, and this is a great opportunity to give back and share the Christmas spirit of giving. Our recipient this year will be the Metropolitan Ministries, a Tampa-based organization that supports those less fortunate in our community. If you would like to donate to this project, please contact Mr. Mattes or any teacher. We have more information about the most needed items.

**Northdale Lutheran Church and School
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Bethany Schwartz: 920-222-9279
Amy Vannieuwenhoven 813-787-5025**

**Sunday Worship: 8:00 & 10:30 a.m.
Communion Services: First and Third Sundays of the month
Sunday School & Teen Bible Class: 9:15 - 10:15 a.m. (September through May)
Sunday Bible Class: 9:25-10:15 a.m.
Fellowship: 11:30 p.m.**