



DECEMBER  
CALENDAR

- Hanging of the Greens, 1 p.m., December 2
- **First Sunday of Advent, December 3**
- **Congregational Meeting following services, December 3**
- Yarn Angels, 10:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m., December 3
- Confirmation & FX3, 12:30 p.m., December 3
- God's Little Achers Christmas Luncheon, 1 p.m., December 6
- **Advent Service, 7:30 p.m., December 6**
- Needlework Friends, 11 a.m., December 9
- **Second Sunday of Advent, December 10**
- Created by God Parent Meeting, 9:45 a.m., December 10
- Dessert Bake-Off and Luncheon, Noon, December 10
- Faith Formation Committee Meeting, 7 p.m., December 11
- Church Council Meeting, 7 p.m., December 12
- Staff Meeting, Noon, December 13

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# News You Can “Ewes”

VOLUME 6, ISSUE 12

DECEMBER 2017

## Christmas Eve at Good Shepherd Sunday, December 24

**Service of Carols and Communion at 2 p.m.**

**Family Service at 5 p.m.**

*This Service is offered especially for families with young children.*

**Praise Service with Holy Communion at 7 p.m.**

*Led by Good Shepherd's Praise Team, we celebrate the birth of Christ with a service of Holy Communion and the traditional lighting of candles.*

**Traditional Candlelight Service with Holy Communion at 9 p.m.**

*This liturgical Christmas Eve Service of Holy Communion features favorite Christmas carols and the traditional lighting of candles.*

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

**Sunday, December 24 at 10 a.m.**

*Because December 24 is also the 4th Sunday of Advent we will observe it with a simple service of Holy Communion in the morning.*

**CHRISTMAS DAY HOLY COMMUNION**

**Sunday, December 25 at 11 a.m.**

*Come as you are for an informal celebration of Christ's birth.*

**SIGN UP TO BE WORSHIP SERVANTS AT THESE SERVICES.**

## “What Are We Waiting For?”

### Wednesday Evening Advent Services

*Advent is a season of expectant and hopeful waiting. This year, our Wednesday Advent worship services reflect on the question “What Are We Waiting For?” Our liturgy will be the beautiful “Holden Evening Prayer.” Please note: there are **NO ADVENT SUPPERS**.*

**December 6, 7:30 p.m.**

What Are We Waiting For? We're waiting for the second coming of Jesus Christ.

**December 13, 7:30 p.m.**

What Are We Waiting For? We're waiting for the celebration of our Savior's birth.

**December 20, 7:30 p.m.**

What Are We Waiting For? Now is the Time!

## Bi-Annual Meeting Update



God's Grace in Action with Service Forms were consecrated. To date, we have received 122 forms

President Barb Blanke and Task Force Co-Chair Lisa Morton gave an update on the renovation project. Details of the project are in the letter to the congregation sent following the meeting and printed on page 4 of this newsletter.

In April 2018, we will make our final mortgage payment. In anticipation of this event, Council brought together a task force to look at options for when the mortgage payments end. Upon their recommendations, and requests from various committees, the Council will put forth recommendations for the July, 2018 budget cycle. Barb outlined the recommended expenditures, which assumed that giving will remain at current levels when the mortgage is paid off. The total annual mortgage payment is currently \$104,000.

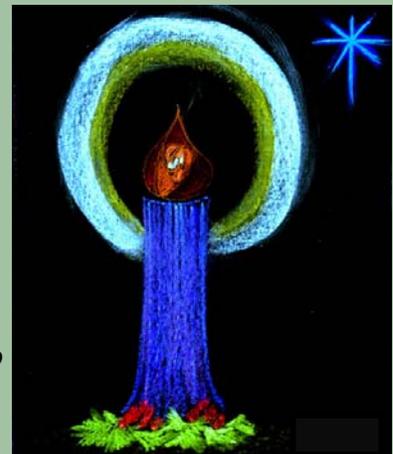
Gina Crittenden, Kristin Freeman, Cathy Mattocks, Geoff Morton and Carlie Epstein were elected to the Congregation Council. Barb Blanke, Paul Christensen, Marc Duclos, Karen Epstein and Ron Mixon will continue in their current terms. Those members of council who have completed their terms and will not be returning next year are Mike Angalet, Jaime Escamilla, Robert Luebke, and Hailey Hovda.

## Longest Night Service

Thursday, December 21

7:30 p.m.

*"In the Northern Hemisphere, December 21 is the longest night, the winter solstice. It marks the shortest day of the year, the official start of winter. Tradition says that nature and all her creatures stop and hold their breath to see if the sun will turn back from its wanderings, if the days will lengthen and the earth will once again feel the sun's warmth. On this darkest day of the year, we come with our honest yearnings seeking the return of light and hope.*



*While Advent is a season of hope and Christmas is a season of joy, not everyone feels hopeful or like celebrating. Grief, illness, aging, depression, loneliness, unemployment, and loss are magnified. Even those who are not struggling with losses may feel the stress of preparations and expectations around Christmas time. The Longest Night service provides a time and place of solace during the often frenetic days surrounding the celebration of Christmas. We come together seeking healing and room to share grief, sadness, loneliness, or confusion when these emotions often feel out of place during the holidays."*

— Sundays and Seasons

## Caring for Creation, Luther-style



Lutherans around the world are celebrating the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. Simultaneously, the Southeastern Synod is also celebrating 2017 as the "Year for Care for Creation". As part of these celebrations, the Southeastern Synod Green Team is lifting up Luther's commitment to creation. He taught us to care for creation through his writings and the explanation of the First Article to the Apostle's Creed (below).

The First Article: Creation: **I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.** *What does this mean? I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them. He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all I have. He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life. He defends me against all danger and guards and protects me from all evil. All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me. For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true. — Martin Luther*

To assist in this awareness, the SE Synod Green Team has developed "95 Theses of Creation Care." Here are the final theses of the 95 Theses for Creation Care:

82. The Holy Trinity yearns for us to be in community with the Trinity.
83. God created us to be in community.
84. The earth is a community responsibility.
85. The earth belongs to the earth's community.
86. Greed destroys community.
87. Apathy destroys community.
88. Self-centeredness ignores community.
89. Caring for creation creates community.
90. The presence of God is seen in all of creation.
91. God's love comes to us through the cross.
92. To care for the earth, we must pick up our cross.
93. Picking up our cross means to change our way of living.
94. When we care for the earth, we begin to pick up our cross.
95. Creation is God's work, we keep it with our hands.

## 500th Anniversary Commemoration Recordings

On Oct. 31, Lutherans around the world commemorated the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. "Looking Back & Called Forward" featured speakers and a worship service at the Lutheran Church of

the Reformation on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. View the recording at [ELCA.org/livestream](http://ELCA.org/livestream). ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton also preached at a worship service on Reformation Sunday at

the Washington National Cathedral. A recording of this festive worship service can be viewed at [metrodcELCA.org/livestream/](http://metrodcELCA.org/livestream/).

# Letter to the Congregation

TO: MEMBERS OF GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH  
 FROM: CONGREGATION COUNCIL  
 DATE: NOVEMBER 14, 2017  
 RE: CONGREGATION MEETING

At our Bi-Annual Congregational Meeting on November 12, an update on the entryway and bathrooms renovation project was presented. Phase 1, the entryway and library renovation, will cost approximately \$73,425, and Phase 2, the bathrooms, will cost approximately \$36,500. Additionally, information on funding was provided to the congregation. In 2013, the congregation set aside \$50,000 for the project, and we have been gifted with an additional \$45,000. From that gift, \$25k will be designated to Phase 1 and \$20k will be a matching fund challenge to the congregation. Therefore, we have the financial ability for Phase 1 to get underway early in 2018 and the possibility for Phase 2 to begin whenever the matching challenge is met. If the challenge is not met, then funds can be designated towards Phase 2 in the July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019 fiscal year budget. That would, however, delay the bathroom renovations until 2019.

The Council believes that there is congregational enthusiasm and support for moving ahead in the most expedient way possible and so has determined the following timeline:

**Sunday, December 3:** Renovation Task Force Co-Chair Lisa Morton and Congregation President Barb Blanke will be in the Fellowship Hall with the design boards and samples between worship services to answer any questions that you might have.

**Sunday, December 3:** Congregational Meeting only for the purpose of voting on the resolution from the Council: *Be it resolved, that Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Congregation will contract Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the renovation plans as funding becomes available, with the Congregation Council serving as agent.*

The December 3 meeting will be called to order after the 8:30am service and ballots distributed. Ballots will be distributed again following the 10:45 a.m. service. There will not be opportunities for amendments or discussion of the project. The general enthusiasm and support for the project leads us to believe that we may make a decision by simply having a vote on December 3. If you believe that the plan should be amended in anyway, then you should vote “no.” If there are a majority of “no” votes, then we will call a congregational meeting next year that will allow for amendments to the proposal and further discussion of it.

We hope that you will keep these matters in your prayers and that you will avail yourselves of the opportunities to view the design elements and ask your questions.

## Council Update, November, 2017

### Discussions

- Financial Secretary, Jaime Escamilla, reported that income for October was the lowest it has been for the past five years. Envelope giving was down and we are now approximately \$3,200 behind year-to-date vs. budgeted income.
- Council received updated renovation plan recommendations, which will be presented to the congregation at the Bi-Annual Meeting.

### Accolades:

- Thank you to everyone who assisted with the Confirmation Banquet – especially Michael and Karen Epstein who coordinated the event, as well as Al Reynolds, Jaime Escamilla, Patrick Swinford and members of Council who assisted in serving the youth and their families. We appreciate your assistance in making this milestone in the faith life of our youth so very special.
- Thank you to Will Jayroe for all your work on our new website – it looks wonderful! We could not have completed this project without your help and expertise!
- Many thanks to the members of the Fellowship Committee who worked to make the annual Thanksgiving Feast a delicious success!
- Many thanks to Lisa Morton and Kris McKeeth for their tireless work on the renovation plans – we truly appreciate all you brought to this project.
- Thank you to Wayne Wise for being our official Confirmation photographer.
- Many thanks to John Mau for directing and the GSLC Youth Players – Will, Carlie, Adrian, Sebastian, Kevin, Ryan, Hailey, Hailey, Alec, Grant, Greta, Sagan, and Alyssa - for the presentation of “The Trial of Dr. Martin Luther”. You did an outstanding job bringing this to life – what a wonderful way to celebrate the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Reformation!

Dear friends at Good Shepherd,

What a wonderful and joyous holiday season! First, let me say thank you to all who graciously donated to our MUST Ministries Thanksgiving Bounty collection effort. Thanks to you we delivered 113 cans of cranberries and 140 cans of yams along with a check for \$675 to be used toward the purchase of turkeys to MUST Ministries. This is an amazing effort on your part and shows just how seriously you take God's call to provide for others.

As you heard at our recent Annual meeting, we have a lot of exciting new beginnings to look forward to at Good Shepherd, but before we kick off what looks to be like a fantastic 2018, I hope you will join outreach in making the holiday season a little brighter for our neighbor's around us. Here's how you can help...

**God's work.**  
**Our hands.**

**Caretakers of Our Community: Adopt a Senior** In December we will be helping make the Christmas season brighter for some of our Cherokee County seniors by donating items on their wish lists this holiday season. Unwrapped items should be placed in the collection bin in the entryway by **December 17**. Suggested items include:

- New bath towels (set of two)
- Grocery store gift cards (\$25 suggested amount)
- Books of stamps
- Liquid body soap
- Boxed candy
- Emery boards/nail care kits
- Warm socks/slipper socks
- Warm throw blanket

**Don't forget to help make your holiday shopping easier by purchasing retail gift cards from Good Shepherd.** We will place orders every Sunday throughout the holiday season in the Fellowship Hall. Orders placed on Sunday are available for pick up the following Sunday. Last order placed **December 17**.

**Join the youth in spreading holiday cheer to our friends through caroling.** Outreach would like to invite the congregation to come join our younger church members as we serenade the residents at Autumn Leaves Memory Care Center with treasured and favorite Christmas Carols on **December 17 at 1 p.m.** We will enjoy a pizza lunch in the Fellowship Hall at 12:15 p.m. and then carpool to Autumn Leaves to sing with our friends at 1 p.m.. This is always a highlight of the holiday season for both ourselves and the residents and we hope you will join us. Please sign up at Sign Up Central.

As always, thank you for all you do to help support our Outreach efforts at Good Shepherd. It has been another glorious year of serving our Lord by serving our neighbor. I hope the peace and joy of the season will be yours.

God's Peace,

*Kristin Brenneman, Outreach Coordinator, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church*

## God's Little Achers Luncheon

Christmas Luncheon at The Lodge at Bridgemill  
1 p.m., Wednesday, December 6

Cost is \$10/person, choice of three menu options, dessert & drink. Please mark your calendar and sign up at Sign-Up Central. Meet at church at 12:30 p.m. if you want to carpool or contact Sandy Cerstvik at 770-928-4627. Hostesses for the event are Mary Murphy and Virginia Mille. In keeping with the theme of "Returning the Blessing", we will take up a good will offering for the Good Shepherd Emergency Fund.

## Hanging of the Greens

Volunteers are needed for the hanging of the greens in the narthex and sanctuary, and tree decorating. This will take place on **Saturday, December 2 at 1 p.m.** If you are interested please email Beth and Steve Ebert - [sbebert85@comcast.net](mailto:sbebert85@comcast.net)

## Holiday Caroling

You are invited to join the youth of Good Shepherd as they spread some holiday cheer. Accompanied on piano by GSLC's resident choir director, Thomas Eisnor, they will sing Christmas Carols to the residents of Autumn Leaves memory care center on **Sunday, December 17 at 12:15 p.m.** The group will share a pizza lunch in the Fellowship Hall before traveling across the street to Autumn Leaves. Caroling begins at 1 p.m. and usually lasts 30-45 minutes. This was a highlight of the holiday season last year, so be sure to join us!



## Two-Can Sunday!

Don't forget the first Sunday of every month is designated as Two-Can Sunday. Bring your Two-Cans on **December 3!**

## Last Chance this Year!!

**Yarn Angels** meet **Sunday, December 3**, from 10:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m. in Room 120. Join us!

**Needlework Friends** meets **Saturday, December 9** from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the home of Jennifer Taylor (223 Orchards Circle, Woodstock) for needlework and fellowship. Bring your projects, learn something new, teach or help another friend. Knit, Crochet, Cross-stitch, Embroider, Sew, etc. Light refreshments provided. Contact Jennifer at 678-880-2842 or [jennifer3094@windstream.net](mailto:jennifer3094@windstream.net).

**Ladies Night Out** takes place **Tuesday, December 19**, at 7 p.m. at Tuscan Italian Restaurant, 250 Cinema Lane, Woodstock. Sign up at Sign-Up Central and leave a cell phone number. Call Sue Pence, 678-522-3670 for information.

## Empty Nester's Christmas Party

It's time for the Annual Empty Nester's Christmas Party!

This year it will be on **Friday, December 15 from 7—10 p.m.** at the Woodstock Knoll Clubhouse. Bring your own Beverage/Spirits and a treat to share. Sign up through Sign-Up Genius (Empty Nester's) or contact Karen Yerkes or Tammy Frink.

## Confirmation in December...



**Confirmation Class** takes place on **Sunday, December 3** from 12:30 to 2 p.m. Our lessons will focus on the church calendar. Class meets in the fellowship hall.

On **Sunday, December 17** at 12:15 p.m. we will be going Caroling with FX3. We will provide a pizza lunch. In order to get an accurate count for pizza, you must sign up on the sign-up sheet in the fellowship hall or let Cat know by Saturday, December 16. Following caroling, the Confirmation and FX3 groups will have a Christmas Party from 2 - 3 p.m. Please bring a \$10 wrapped gift to play the White Elephant Game.



**Saints and Sinners**, for high school youth, meets at **GSLC every Wednesday** from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

**Wednesday, December 6**  
Devotion followed by Advent Service

**Wednesday, December 13**  
Christmas Party followed by

Advent Service (Please bring a \$15 wrapped gift to play the White Elephant game)

**Sunday, December 17—12:15 p.m.**  
Caroling with Confirmation and FX3

## You're Never Too Old for a Christmas Party

Attention All College age students!!! Please join us for a Christmas party on **Monday, December 18 at 6 p.m.** for some food, fun and fellowship. Dinner and snacks will be provided. Please bring a \$15 wrapped gift to play the White Elephant game. Please RSVP by Sunday, December 17.

## Mission Trip Reminder!

All Middle School and High School Youth—we still have spots available for our 2018 Summer Mission Trips. If you are interested, please let Cat know.

## Created by God Class

We are offering a Created by God class for 5th grade children as well as any 6th grade children who have not yet taken this class beginning on Sunday, January 7 and meeting each Sunday through February 11. There will be a parent meeting for all those who would like their child to attend or would like more information on **Sunday, December 10** at 9:45 a.m. in Pastor Paul's office. If you have already had a child attend this class, then you need not attend this meeting again. If you have any questions prior to the meeting, please speak to Janice Swinford, Sunday School Superintendent.

## Are You a Saint or a Sinner?

You can be both! Do you like to hang out with amazing youth and help them along their faith journey? Then we would love to have you. We need adult volunteers for our Saints and Sinners activities. If you are interested, and have taken CYP training, please contact Cat and she will get you added to our SignUp Genius list. If you need CYP training in order to volunteer we can set that up as well. We can't carry out our ministry without you!

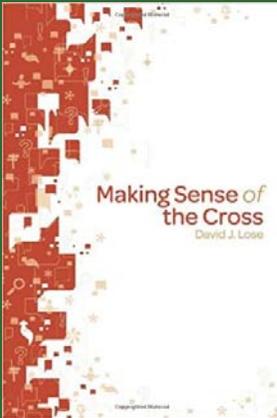
# The Trial of Dr. Martin Luther

This one-time presentation of the play, "The Trial of Dr. Martin Luther" took the congregation through discussions by the prosecutor with many of Luther's most ardent supporters. Thank you to our play director, John Mau, for bringing the idea to us and leading our youth for this wonderful celebration of the 500th Reformation anniversary on November 12.



Top, the cast of "The Trial of Dr. Martin Luther", front (left to right): Grant as Father, Alyssa as Mother, Will as Luther, Hailey as Prosecutor, Carlie as Kate. Back row, (left to right): Alexis as Princess, Sagan as Prince #1, Kevin as Guard #1, Sebastian as Tetzel, Alec as Prince #2, Ryan as Frederick, Greta as Phillip, Adrian as Monk, Director John Mau and Haley as Guard #2. Above left, Luther (right) has a heated debate with Tetzel. Above, Alyssa and Grant give testimony as Mother and Father Luther. Left, Sagan, Alexis and Alec as the Royal Ensemble reading its decree.

# New Sunday School Class/Bible Study Begin in January



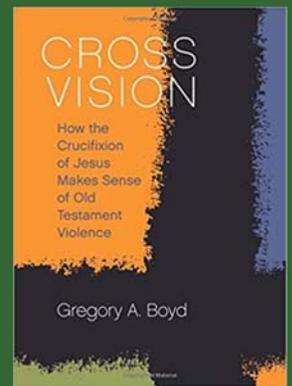
## Faith Stores

In January, the “Faith Stories” adult Sunday School class will begin studying the book *Making Sense of the Cross* by David Lose. The book is written in a conversational, question-and-answer style, depicting a candid discussion about the cross that takes place between a student and a teacher. In the book’s introduction, Lose notes that “the way we understand the cross very much shapes the way we regard God.” The book covers the major theories of atonement, helping us grasp the various ways theologians have struggled over the years to understand the meaning and implications of Jesus’ crucifixion and death.

If you are interested in this class (and are not already a member of the Faith Stories group), contact Mary Tucker at [marric1@yahoo.com](mailto:marric1@yahoo.com) or by phone at 678-224-1177.

## Thursday Morning Bible Study

You are invited to join the Thursday Morning Bible Study on **January 11** as we begin a new study exploring and trying to make sense of Old Testament violence. If you would like to know more about the Thursday Bible Study group or the new study, speak to Pastor Paul. This groups meets Thursday mornings at 10 a.m. Also, let him know if you would like to have a book ordered. You can also purchase the book online and in Kindle form.



## Order Your Poinsettia

Poinsettias will once again decorate the sanctuary on Christmas Eve. The plants this year will be red, two-quart size at a cost of \$10 each. If you would like to order one in

honor of or memory of someone, the forms are available in the entryway and must be turned in **TO THE OFFICE COORDINATOR BOX IN THE ADMINISTRATION HALLWAY by December 10!**

## Support us when you shop this holiday season

Buy your gifts and holiday essentials at [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com). You shop. Amazon donates.



Don't forget: Shop for everyone on your gift list this holiday at [smile.amazon.com/ch/58-1864604](http://smile.amazon.com/ch/58-1864604) and Amazon donates to Good Shepherd Lutheran Church!

## GSLC “Advent”-ure

Don't forget to like, follow our Facebook page @GSLCWoodstock. We have a fun "Advent"-ure for the month of December. You won't want to miss out! Thanks to everyone who participated in our “30 Days of Thanks” challenge—we enjoyed seeing all the comments and hope it made November extra thankful.

Continued from front page

- **Advent Service, 7:30 p.m., December 13**
- Stewardship Committee Meeting, 7 p.m., December 14
- **Third Sunday of Advent, December 17**
- Church-wide Caroling, 12:15 p.m. lunch, 1 p.m. caroling, December 17
- College Christmas Party, 6 p.m., December 18
- Finance Committee Meeting, 7 p.m., December 19
- Ladies Night Out, 7 p.m., December 19
- **Advent Service, 7:30 p.m., December 13**
- **Longest Night Service, 7:30 p.m., December 21**
- No Sunday School, December 24
- **Fourth Sunday of Advent Service, 10 a.m., December 24**
- **Christmas Eve Services: 2, 5, 7, 9 p.m., December 24**
- Administrative Offices closed, December 25 and 26; and January 1
- **Christmas Come-As-You-Are Service, 11 a.m., December 25**
- No Sunday School, December 31

## GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

1208 ROSE CREEK DRIVE  
WOODSTOCK, GA 30189  
770-924-7286  
GSLUTHERAN.ORG



AN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA (ELCA) CONGREGATION  
SERVING NORTH COBB AND CHEROKEE COUNTY COMMUNITIES. JOIN US!  
8:30 A.M. TRADITIONAL  
9:30 A.M. SUNDAY SCHOOL  
10:45 A.M. PRAISE

“WELCOME ONE ANOTHER, THEREFORE,  
AS CHRIST HAS WELCOMED YOU.”

ROMANS 15:7

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH WARMLY WELCOMES PEOPLE OF ANY AGE,  
RACE, NATIONALITY, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, LIFE CIRCUMSTANCE,  
AND PHYSICAL OR MENTAL CAPABILITY.



## Dessert Bake-Off is Back!

Are you someone who loves to bake? Do you have an old family dessert recipe you would like to share with the congregation? Luckily for you, the youth are holding the second annual Dessert Bake-off. Anyone can participate in the competition no matter their age. We will be giving prizes for the best tasting dessert for our adult and youth categories, judged by a wonderful panel of judges such as Pastor Paul and Hailey Hovda. Another prize will be given to the dessert with the best name voted by you, the congregation. You will be able to buy tickets to vote on the best name the day of the Bake-off. **The Bake-off will be held on December 10 after the 10:45 a.m. service with the youth providing a Mexican lunch.** All the money raised is going toward the youth mission trips. The entry forms are due to Hailey Hovda by **December 3.**

## Office Closed

Please note that Good Shepherd offices will be closed on **Monday, December 25, Tuesday, December 26** and **Monday, January 1** for the Christmas and New Year's holidays.

## Pick Up an Activity Bag

Attention Parents:  
The youth in FX3 have just recently updated the activity bags located in the entryway. They include lots of fun things to keep your little ones entertained during services, including coloring pages & crayons, activity sheets, and books to look at. Feel free to pick one up on your way in to service!