LAUREL CHURCH

GROWING IN FAITH TO LOVE THE WORLD

December Newsletter

2016

New Way Ministries

Bringing Hope and Help to Homeless Women and Children

New Way Housing

Opportunity to Share God's Love . . .

Each Advent, we here at Laurel Church have a tradition of pulling together our individual over-and-above-the-tithe resources to help a ministry in our community help others. Over the years, we've supported the Salvation Army's Giving Tree project, but this year we're looking to help children and families in a different way.

New Way Ministries is a transitional and supportive housing program for homeless women with children and expectant mothers in Whatcom County. Located on South BC Avenue in Lynden, New Way Ministries is currently housing and supporting 22 families with 6 babies, 29 children and 3 babies on the way. In other words, the house is full.

Between now and our worship service on December 25th, we're asking for donations to help with the nuts and bolts of the ministry. For every $10.00 dollars donated we'll place one ornament on our Worship Center Christmas Tree. The goal is to have 100 ornaments hanging on the tree by Christmas.

When asked what we could provide for them, Suzanne Olson, Director of New Way Ministries, replied that they really needed the most basic of cleaning supplies. Because they must constantly sanitize the facility for the health and safety of the residents, they are desperate, you guessed it, for paper towels, Pine-Sol and bleach. She apologized that they didn't have a more uplifting and warm kind of need to fill like toys, blankets or even diapers, but those needs other churches quickly take on for their projects. Towels, Pine-Sol and bleach are difficult to keep in stock and needed every day at the home.

Here's an opportunity to have practical impact on some women and children in our community. We care even about paper towels, Pine-Sol and bleach.

As you pray about this giving opportunity, ask God to tell you to give an amount that will reflect His grace and love.

Thank you ahead of time for your caring and witnesses to Christ as you grow in faith to love people in our county.

Information and brochures are available on the round table at the rear of the Worship Center and in the Church Office. If you have any questions, contact Pastor Cameron

Cameron's Corner

"Finding Hope in the Strangest Places"

While engaging in some web surfing the other day, I came across an article on The Theological Coalition web site written on July 30, 2016 titled "The Story of Iran's Church in Two Sentences" by Mark Howard. Mark writes:

> *"It's a simple story that can be summarized in just two sentences: Persecution threatened to wipe out Iran's tiny church. Instead, the church in Iran has become the fastest growing in the world, and it is influencing the region for Christ."*

He goes on to write: "… more Iranians have become Christians in the last 20 years than in the previous 13 centuries put together…"

After I read the article, I was reminded of the explosive growth of Jesus followers all over the world in places of persecution and severe restrictions. In China, the government has tried unsuccessfully to disrupt the house church movement. It just keeps growing. In Africa, where it appears that radical Islam is devastating the Church, the followers of Jesus are growing. In some of those same places disciples are being trained as missionaries with the intention to migrate to the United States in order to help us be renewed in our faith.

It's interesting that where Christians are relatively safe to practice their faith, they seem to be, by comparison less passionate and declining in numbers.

I believe that there are two factors at work in the persecuted church that are unleashing such remarkable and counterintuitive growth in faith and numbers: First they can see a distinct difference between the world they live in and the message and life of living in the Kingdom of God (man's hate versus God's love). The second is that Disciples must fully trust their Savior – they don't have the luxury of alternatives through which they can bypass their absolute dependence on God. Because of these two factors, they live out each day as a living sacrifice and experience the joy of the Spirit in the midst of suffering and chaos.

Mark Howard went on to write in his article:

> *"We're living in a time when many Christians are suffering for their faith, particularly in Islamic contexts. People often react by preaching fear and hatred of the Muslim world. Yet the apostle Paul reminds us that we are to "rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer". (Rom. 12:12[NIV])*

The story of God's incarnation, death and resurrection can never be proved scientifically or make rational sense. God's story can only be experienced and witnessed through the lives of those who trust in Jesus and learn from and follow His living Spirit. The baby Jesus isn't a nice warm fairytale, but a living reality. A reality found and lived out through a growing faith that loves those in this world.

The Iranian Church is testimony not to the strength and stubbornness of a group of people, but the counterintuitive power of God's Spirit working through faithful followers of Jesus.

It's with this kind of faith Jesus tells Peter that "… I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it." (Matthew 16:18[NIV])

Christmas is the season we have to remind us of the hope that God has given us in Jesus. God loved us so much that He came (in Jesus) and lived among us, showed us His Kingdom, died for us so that we might enter His Kingdom, rose from the dead to vindicate the sacrifice and soon He'll return with a new creation to match up with our new lives in Him.

Merry Christmas
See you in Worship,

Robert Cameron

TRAIL LIFE USA

Adventure | Character | Leadership

First Freedom Award In Washington State

The Freedom Award in the Trail Life, USA, troop is the highest award that can be earned by a young man. It is comparable to the Boy Scout Eagle Rank but with more emphasis upon the faith part of the award. It is not an easy road to navigate.

Recently, Connor Morton, the son of our Troop Master, Shawn Morton, completed all of the requirements. Pastor and Mrs. Vance agreed to prepare a banquet in his honor as he received his award at a special Freedom Award Presentation Night. His father was the proud presenter and Connor spoke of his journey in scouting. It was a wonderful family effort. This is what Trail Life is all about.

Howie Holz prepared a special plaque to hold the brass plate honoring Connor, and it will hold the plates of those new troopers who finish the course.

Connor has "aged" out of the Trail Life troop and now has the option of becoming a leader of youth as a young man. He is a credit to the troop and has a fine future as he serves his Lord and others.

The troop at Laurel now numbers in the 30's and is growing. New leaders are joining, and the future of the troop looks very promising. Thank you for your faithful support.

AMERICAN HERITAGE GIRLS

FAITH | SERVICE | FUN

American Heritage Girls Receive Charter

Laurel Church just completed the chartering process for the American Heritage Girls "Troop WA 3125". November 8th was the special day upon which this occurred. The Charter Organization Representative, Robert Vance, has been working with Anna Brewer, Troop Coordinator, and others to accomplish this through the charter coach at the home office. We are now official. The troop board consists of Anna Brewer, Troop Coordinator; Michelle Lindsey, the Vice Coordinator; Johannah Banham, Troop Shepherd; Nicholas Wonder, the Treasurer; Robert Vance, Charter Representative.

There are twenty some girls waiting in the wings to get underway.

Laurel Celebrations

December Anniversaries

Greg & Julie Parmenter 12/4

Jack & Ruth Johnson 12/12

Jimi & Cindy Neff 12/27

Jim & Kris Lissner 1/3

December Birthdays

Harold Jones	12/4
Ted Tutterrow	12/5
Susan Bakker	12/7
Ruth Johnson	12/12
Eunhee Davis	12/13
Brett Horgen	12/16
Linda Baird	12/18
Jill Horgen	12/18
Charlie Smith	12/19
Rob Horgen	12/20
Joy Schneider	12/29

TRAIL LIFE USA
Adventure I Character I Leadership

Adventures for December:

December 1 - **Court of Honor** (Church)

December 22 - **Meeting** (Church)

AMERICAN HERITAGE GIRLS
FAITH I SERVICE I FUN

Adventures for December

December 1 - Meeting Night (Church)

December 22 - Meeting Night (Church)

Trail Life Service Project for November

Hanging of the Christmas Lights at Pioneer Park

Christmas Schedule:

Christmas Eve Service
7:00 pm

Christmas Morning
Caroling - 6:45 am

Christmas Day
Service
10: 00 am

December 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 *8:30 am* ZLO Homeschool *10:00 am* Share Room *3:15 pm* Womens Yoga *7:00 pm* Worship Team *7:00 pm* Trail Life USA *7:00 pm* Heritage Girls	**2**	**3** *8:00 am* MBS Fellowship
4 *9:00 am* Discipleship Classes *10:00 am* Worship *10:20 am* Children's Church *11:15am* Sermon Based Grp *11:15am* Kingdom Prayer Grp	**5** *8:00 am* Classical Conv. Homeschooling *6:30 pm* Women Yoga 7:00 pm 4-H Council Mtg.	6 *8:30 am* Barbara B. piano *8:30 am* ZLO Homeschool *9:00 am* Share Room Restocking Grp *7:00 pm* MBS Fellowship	**7** *8:30 am* Barbara B. piano *10:00 am* Men Group *3:15 pm* Women Exercise Class *4:15 pm* Womens Bible study *6:30 pm* Men Group *6:30 pm* Womens 12 Step *6:30 pm* Laurel Archery	**8** *8:30 am* ZLO Homeschool *10:00 am* Share Room *3:15 pm* Womens Yoga *7:00 pm* Worship Team *8:00 pm* Preschool Christmas Program	**9**	**10** *8:00 am* MBS Fellowship
11 *9:00 am* Discipleship Classes *10:00 am* Worship *10:20 am* Children's Church *11:15am* Sermon Based Grp *11:15am* Kingdom Prayer Grp	**12** *8:00 am* Classical Conv. Homeschooling *6:30 pm* Women Yoga	**13** *8:30 am* Barbara B. piano *8:30 am* ZLO Homeschool *9:00 am* Share Room Restocking Grp *7:00 pm* MBS Fellowship	**14** *8:30 am* Barbara B. piano *10:00 am* Men Group *3:15 pm* Women Exercise Class *5:30 pm* Laurel Stampers *6:30 pm* Men Group *6:30 pm* Womens 12 Step *6:30 pm* Laurel Archery	**15** *10:00 am* Share Room Christmas *3:15 pm* Womens Yoga *7:00 pm* Worship Team	**16**	**17**
18 Christmas Program *9:00 am* Discipleship Classes *10:00 am* Worship *10:20 am* Children's Church *11:15am* Sermon Based Grp *11:15am* Kingdom Prayer Grp	**19** *6:30 pm* Women Yoga *7:00 pm* Church Board Mtg.	**20** *8:30 am* ZLO Homeschool *7:00 pm* MBS Fellowship	**21** *10:00 am* Men Group *3:15 pm* Women Exercise Class *6:30 pm* Men Group *6:30 pm* Womens 12 Step	**22** ***Share Room is closed*** *8:30 am* ZLO Homeschool *3:15 pm* Womens Yoga *7:00 pm* Worship Team *7:00 pm* Trail Life USA *7:00 pm* Heritage Girls	**23**	**24 CHRISTMAS EVE** *7:00 pm Christmas Eve Service*
25 *6:45 am* Christmas Caroling *10:00 am* Worship *10:20 am* Children's Church	**26**	**27** *7:00 pm* MBS Fellowship *7:00 pm* Sigs 4-H Mtg.	**28** ***Rolling Thunder***	**29** ***Share Room is closed*** *7:00 pm* Worship Team	**30**	**31 NEW YEARS EVE**

Laurel Preschool Christmas Break - December 9th thru January 3rd

Current Small Groups

CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE FOR MORE INFO ON THESE GROUPS @ 360.398.1761

Sunday Morning Line-up

9:00am Nursery – Rm. 104
Preschool – Rm. 103
K-2 – Rm. 204
3-6 grade – Rm. 205
Jr./Sr. High – Rm. 202
Women's Group – Rm. 101
Mixed Adult Group – Fellowship Hall

9:15 a.m. **Worship Team Practice**
9:30 a.m. **Hosting Team**
9:45 a.m. **Fellowship**
10:00 a.m. **Sunday Worship**
11:00 a.m. **Fellowship**
11:15 a.m. **Sermon Base Group**
11:15 a.m. **Kingdom Living**

Kingdom living through praise, sharing Scripture, prayer, and communion. This is not a class, drop in any Sunday! Children are welcome!

Craving God Women's Bible Study

We are studying the new book from Lysa Terkerurst: Uninvited: Living Loved When You Feel Less Than, Left Out, and Lonely. This group meets in **Rm. 101 from 4:15 – 5:30 Wednesday afternoon.** Talk with the church office for more details.

Ladies Tuesday Morning Bible Study

This group meets in the

Fellowship Hall @ 10:00 a.m.

and is led by Joni vanKesteren. For more details on this group please contact the church office!

Women's 12 Step Program

This group meets on
Wednesdays @ 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.
Please contact the church office for more details on this group.

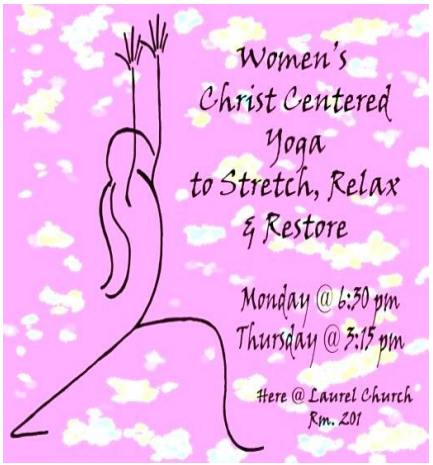
Adult Answers in Genesis

Monday Evenings at the Kotovic's,

This study starts at 7. This is a great opportunity to engage in the scripture, if you are not able to attend the Sunday morning classes. For more information or to RSVP please contact the church office for more details!

Share Room Ministry would like your help!

Come fellowship with us and help minister to the community He has blessed us with.
Tuesdays from 9 am – 12 noon and
Thursdays from 10 am– 3 pm

Please contact the church office for more details

His Share Room is open from
10 am—2 pm every Thursday