

What's Our "Storyworth"?

Dear Friends in Christ,

How was your Christmas? Are there still signs of the season around your house as we begin the New Year? Are you a traditionalist who likes to leave the tree and decorations up throughout the twelve days of Christmas (To Epiphany, and Beyond!), or do you like to begin the New Year fresh with the signs of Christmas packed away by January 1? Or are you somewhere in between, with some things put away and others waiting for you to gather the gumption to get everything back to normal?

I find it interesting that as Christmas Day approaches, people, even complete strangers at the store, don't mind asking, "Are you ready for Christmas?", while so many fewer are willing to ask, "Did you get everything for Christmas put away yet?" For many of us, it's a process.

At our house, Karen is the "Christmas Decorator in Chief". She curates the decorations for the family. The red Rubbermaid Totes that live in a storage area under the stairs (like Harry Potter) are filled with everything from the Advent Wreath and Creche to the stockings and tree ornaments. These boxes contain an eclectic collection. Some of the decorations are older than either of us, passed down from previous generations. Others have been gathered over our four decades together. All of them tell a story of the places we have lived and the people we have cared about.

I received some great gifts this year. A new "Seattle Kraken" Beanie to keep my head warm, some new cookware to replace well worn predecessors, and a fresh supply of Christmas Blend Coffee, enough to keep me caffeinated throughout the month of January.

I did receive something I wasn't expecting... An annual sub-

Readings for the Month

January 1

Numbers 6:22-27

Psalms 8

(1) Galatians 4:4-7

Philippians 2:5-11

Luke 2:15-21

January 2

Proverbs 14:7-12-20

James 3:13-18

Psalms 147:12-20

January 3

Job 42:10-17

Luke 8:16-21

Psalms 72

January 4

Isaiah 6:1-5

Acts 7:44-53

Psalms 72

January 5

Jeremiah 31:7-14

Psalms 147:12-20

Ephesians 1:3-14

John 1:[1-9] 10-18

January 6

Isaiah 60:1-6

Psalms 72:1-7, 10-14 (11)

Ephesians 3:1-12

Matthew 2:1-12

January 7

Daniel 2:1-19

Ecclesiastes 4:17-5:1

Psalms 72

January 8

Daniel 2:24-49

Ecclesiastes 5:15-20

Psalms 72

January 9

Ecclesiastes 1:1-11

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

Psalms 29

scription from Alex and Dan to a something called, "Storyworth".

I had heard about Storyworth on OPB radio. It's a service that sends out prompts weekly by email and invites you to write reflections on the questions. Some are suggested by the gift giver. Others, you get to choose from a list or make up for yourself. After a year, what you write is compiled into book form and printed for you and your family to have as a memento. I've written two short essays so far. It's strange to think that this collection might someday be read by my grandchildren. Hopefully, something new about me or my life will be revealed on the pages. Or maybe a well-worn story will bring a smile of remembrance years down the road.

As the New Year approaches, everyone seems to be focused on summing up the year. What celebrities and luminaries have passed away in 2024? What major events will we remember. Was it an "Annus Horibilis", as Queen Elizabeth once proclaimed, or was it a banner year? Or maybe, a little bit of both?

I remember learning in seminary about a prayer form, rooted in the Hebrew Scriptures, that always begins with a story about what God has done in the past. Only after that, is there a petition or request. An example might be, "O God, as you heard the cries of your people in bondage and brought them out of Egypt, deliver all in bondage to sin and show them your forgiveness."

This past year was one of major "retrospection" for our church. We celebrated 125 years as a congregation this past May, with music and stories and

gratitude for those who had gone before us. We pulled out mementos and pictures and remembered the saints, those long gone as well as those more recently departed. We looked back (retrospection), told our story as a community of faith, and gave thanks.

The next part, for the years to come, is to finish the prayer. "O God, as you have blessed our congregation with leaders and friends these many years, help us to move forward in our ministry, confident in your grace and empowered by your gospel of love." What stories are we writing with our lives that will be remembered by future generations of God's faithful people?

For our first Christmas together as a couple, Karen presented me with an album of pictures from our first eight months as boyfriend and girlfriend. She had surreptitiously been taking and collecting photos of us throughout the year and collected them into story form with captions (some quite funny!) that told the story of "Craig and Karen, 1983". It was the first chapter in a story that thankfully continues more than four decades later, with children, and grandchildren and friends added along the way.

For 2025, my prayer is that you might look to see how your story is a part of God's story. As you look back, look to see where God's grace has been revealed to you and give thanks. As you look forward, ask, "What new chapters is God writing in?" What's your "Storyworth"?

Peace!

Pastor Craig

Oreo Cookie Balls



Readings for the Month

January 10

Ecclesiastes 2:1-11

1 Corinthians 2:1-10

Psalm 29

January 11

Ecclesiastes 3:1-15

1 Corinthians 2:11-16

Psalm 29

January 12

Isaiah 43:1-7

Psalm 29 (3)

Acts 8:14-17

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

January 13

Judges 4:1-16

Ephesians 6:10-17

Psalm 106:1-12

January 14

Judges 5:12-21 1

John 5:13-21

Psalm 106:1-12

January 15

Numbers 27:1-11

Luke 11:33-36

Psalm 106:1-12

January 16

Jeremiah 3:1-5

Acts 8:18-24

Psalm 36:5-10

January 17

Jeremiah 3:19-25

1 Corinthians 7:1-7

Psalm 36:5-10

January 18

Acts 4:8-13

Psalm 18:1-6, 16-19 (2)

1 Corinthians 10:1-5

Matthew 16:13-19

January 19

Isaiah 62:1-5

Psalm 36:5-10 (8)

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

John 2:1-11

January 20

Isaiah 54:1-8

Romans 12:9-21

Psalm 145

INGREDIENTS

1 pound chocolate sandwich cookies, crushed

1 (8 ounce) package cream cheese, softened

1 pound vanilla-flavored candy coating, melted

INSTRUCTIONS

Place the creme cookies in a gallon-sized bag and remove all the air. Using your hands or a rolling pin, crush the cookies to a fine powder. You can also use a food processor.

Transfer the cookie crumbs to a large mixing bowl and add in the softened cream cheese. Mix well.

Line a tray or baking sheet with parchment paper. Form the dough into small (1-inch) balls and place on the baking sheet. Freeze the Oreo balls for 20 to 30 minutes.



Jan 1 Norman Colvin
 Jan 4 Kristi Zwicker
 Jan 5 Conner Groner
 Jan 7 Kimberly Pearson
 Monty Zwicker
 Jan 10 Tom Colvin
 Jan 12 Troy Bayless
 Jan 16 Lonnie Harms
 Jan 18 David Staehely
 Jan 25 Sharon Garrick
 Jan 27 Ilene Marnella
 Jan 28 Jeff Groner

Service Helpers for January 2025

January 5

Reader: Lance Lyon
 Usher: Lance Lyon
 Donuts: Carolyn Popma

January 12

Reader: Doris Grider
 Ushers: Lynn Bloomfield and Ilene Marnella
 Coffee Hosts: Marvis Gilnett & Bonnie Johnson

January 19

Reader: Burt Aus
 Ushers: Burt and Judi Aus
 Coffee Host: Marie Gunther

January 26

Reader: Kenton Wolfe
 Ushers: Dennis Lewis and Wyatt Akin
 Coffee Host: Sonya Johnson

January 21
 Song of Solomon 4:1-8
 1 Corinthians 1:3-17
 Psalm 145

January 22
 Song of Solomon 4:9—5:1
 Luke 5:33-39
 Psalm 145

January 23
 Isaiah 61:1-7
 Romans 7:1-6
 Psalm 19

January 24
 Nehemiah 2:1-10
 Romans 12:1-8
 Psalm 19

January 25
 Acts 9:1-22 Psalm 67 (3)
 Galatians 1:11-24
 Luke 21:10-19

January 26
 Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10
 Psalm 19 (7)
 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a
 Luke 4:14-21

January 27
 Jeremiah 36:1-10
 1 Corinthians 14:1-12
 Psalm 119:89-96

January 28
 Jeremiah 36:11-26
 2 Corinthians 7:2-12
 Psalm 119:89-96

January 29
 Jeremiah 36:27-32
 Luke 4:38-44
 Psalm 119:89-96

January 30
 2 Chronicles 34:1-7
 Acts 10:44-48
 Psalm 71:1-6

January 31
 2 Chronicles 35:20-27
 Acts 19:1-10
 Psalm 71:1-6

January

2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5 10 am Worship 7 pm AA	6 6:30 pm Aurora Emergency Preparedness Team	7 6 pm AA	8	9 9 am Backpack Buddies 6-8 pm "Welbriety" Recovery Support Group	10	11 5:15 pm AA Speaker Night
12 10 am Worship 11:15 a.m. Council Meeting 7 pm AA	13	14 6 pm AA	15 3 - 5:30 pm Food Share	16 6-8 pm "Welbriety" Recovery Support Group	17	18
19 10 am Worship 11:15 am Endowment Team 7 pm AA	20	21 6 pm AA	22	23 10 am Backpack Buddies 6-8 pm "Welbriety" Recovery Support Group	24	25
26 10 am Worship 7 pm AA	27 3-4:30 pm North Marion Services Team 6 pm AA	28	29	30 6-8 pm "Welbriety" Recovery Support Group	31	

Prayers for	Requested by	Prayers for	Requested by
Abraham	Barb B.	JoAnn Caufield Family	Cindy C
Anna (Grider) Westcott	Jim & Doris Grider	Joanna Painter	Dixie
Bankhead Family	Wyatt Akin	John Ries and Family	PC
Beth Brandt	Mary W.	Kate	PC
Betty Gerhardt	Kenton and Mary Wolfe	Kim	Lisa
Bob and Sally Boonstra	Doris Grider	Kimberly Kyser	Cindy C
Bonnie and Bruce John-	PC	Larry Marnella	Ilene Marnella
Brooke	Heather W	Laurie Boyce	PC
Bruce Baker	Kevin Baker	Linda Fender	Dan and Lonnie Harms
Burt Aus	Judi Aus	Lorrie D	PC
Carol Smith	Helen D	Lynn Bloomfield	Lonnie and Dan Harms
Charles G.	PC	Mark Kynsi	Wyatt Akin
Colin Brown	Heather W	Marlene McDonald	Amy Elliott
Cindy Caufield	Susan W	Mary Wolfe	PC
Dana St. Clair	Diane Schaber	Matthew Brown	Heather W
Dennis Ormseth	Mary W.	Matt H	PC
Dyrdahl Family	PC	Micah Akin	Wyatt Akin
Ellen Paulson	Lorrie Dyrdahl	Mike and Dixie Harms	Dan and Lonnie Harms
Eric Wechter	PC	Mike McCue	Heather Wechter
Evie Berg	PC	Misty Mann	Lorrie Dyrdahl
Gayle Abernathy Family	PC	Molly Fowler	Barb B.
Heather Wechter	PC	Oscar D	Sam D
Heide Hendrick	PC	Phyllis Murray, family of	Marie G.
Heidi Daniel Family	PC	Piper	Heather W
Hollinger Family, Ellie	Kimberly Macklin	Richard Dyrdahl	Lorrie Dyrdahl
Howard & Kathy Brandt	Mary W.	Robert	Jordain
Jan G	PC	Roy Steven	Joyce
Jean Ruter	Mary W.	Shirley Ann Andreason	Ilene Marnella
Jerry McKenzie	Sharon G.	Sylvia Peter	PC
Jo Miller	Kimberly Macklin	Tammara Davidson	PC
		Tom Haskins	Kim M.
		Traci	Barb B.
		Vi Anderson	Judi

- Those with memory care issues and those who care for them.
- Those receiving radiation or chemotherapy.
- Those who are in hospice care.
- Our loved ones serving in the armed forces, especially those serving overseas.

*"Hope is tethered to remembrance.
" We followers of Christ's Way are a people of memory—
of resilient, intergenerational memories
rooted in moments of grace and pain and life.
Stories which are both ancient and holy, and new and unfolding.*

*I pray that as we stand on this threshold of a new year,
we enter into a moment of spacious rest, pause, deep reflection.
It is hard to grow in depth and wisdom and hope
without rest, reflection and integration.*

*May these next few weeks offer us
the space and grace to be blessed by our memories,
healed by our own stories of truth, error and courage,
and challenged by them to walk into this new year with the courage of Mary,
the humility of Joseph and the abiding faith of Anna and Simeon.
Like them, may we have eyes to see Jesus when he comes to us.
Beloved, with Spirit beside us and within us,
let us each "Honor [our] becoming."*

*I am with you on the Way,
Bishop Laurie*

Christ Lutheran Church
15029 2nd Street N.E.
Aurora, OR 97002
clcaurora.org
(503) 678-5135

COURIER



January 2025

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH OF AURORA

