



King of Kings Lutheran Church

Open Arms Lutheran Child Development Center

Bringing the Light of Christ to our Neighbor!

Volume 39 Issue 1

January 2026

PASTOR'S THOUGHTS

A Look Back in Order to Look Ahead

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. (Jeremiah 29:11-12)

Believe it or not, I actually enjoy reading the traditional Christmas letters sent by family and friends. I know, sometimes their "family highlights" during the year seem a little more like bragging than sharing, but most of the stories and recapping of events are informative.

Reading some, and putting the final touches on our own after Rachel finishes the draft, got me to thinking. Why do we send out only the highlights of the past year? Why not add a few goals and dreams for the coming year?

The more I thought about it, the more uncomfortable I became. Sharing New Year resolutions makes me accountable to someone besides myself. If I fail myself, which I usually do by the end of January, is one thing. But, to confess my failure to the world is something entirely different.

The joy of a New Year is the new opportunities, the new life granted by the Babe of Bethlehem and proclaimed in the Christ of Calvary. A New Year is an opportunity to lay our fears and failures of the past year and years at the foot of the cross. A New Year is an opportunity to pick up our cross (God's plans, promises and power) and begin anew on the journey of faith.

How do I begin in this New Year of new opportunities? How about the 2026 Bible Reading Guide. Dedicating a small amount of time, fifteen minutes, a day can not only start off your day with God's guidance, but can walk you through the entire Bible in one year! Also, join your brothers and sisters during weekend worship either in person or online. Keep in contact with your brothers and sisters and ask what goals and dreams they see in you and the many opportunities to put them into practice. The only way to connect others to Jesus is first being connected ourselves!

Reflecting on the past year, Rachel and I thank God and you for all the gifts, words, and kind actions shared among us. Looking to the future we pray for God's protection and providence as we continue "Bringing the light of Christ to our neighbor"

Your Servant in Christ,

Pastor Dan
2 Peter 3:18

Open the storehouse of your praise today. Let your heart rejoice and be glad!



Read Through the Bible in a Year Calendar

Scripture reading suggestions:

- 1) It's important to find yourself a regular time and quiet place to read the Bible; reading Scripture regularly and habitually gradually deepens your relationship with God. Remember, keep it simple. This is only a guide, not a rule. Use this to help hear and study God's Word.
- 2) Begin by praying. One very simple and good prayer to use is Psalm 119:18 "Open my eyes, so that I may see the wonderful truths in your Word."
- 3) Take some time to be quiet with God, to think about what you read yesterday, and to think again about what you learned from that reading.
- 4) Read the passage for the day. Think what the passage tells you. Some questions worth asking yourself are: 1. Does this passage tell a story? Or is it a prayer or a poem, or perhaps part of a letter? 2. What is it mainly about? 3. Does it tell me something about what God is like? Does it tell me something about how to live in response to God's love and plan for me?
- 5) Try to summarize what you have learned from the passage.
- 6) Is there something here that I don't understand, that I need to think about a lot more, or talk to someone else about, or perhaps even look for more information?
- 7) Take some more time to be quiet with God-don't just ask these questions once over, but think about them for a while. Think again about yesterday's reading-how do the things you learned yesterday fit with what you learned today?
- 8) Keeping a notebook of what you learn can be very helpful.
- 9) Did you know that.....When you carry the Bible, Satan has a headache. When he sees you reading it, he faints. Let's read the Bible every day so he keeps on fainting. Maybe one day he'll have a stroke and never wake up.

The following is the next two months readings. 16



JANUARY

1/Genesis 1-3
2/Genesis 4-6
3/Genesis 7-9
4/Genesis 10-12
5/Job 1-4
6/Job 5-7
7/Job 8-10
8/Job 11-14
9/Job 15-17
10/Psalms 1-4
11/Job 18-20
12/Job 21-24
13/Job 25-27
14/Job 28-30
15/Job 31-33
16/Job 34-36
17/Job 37-39
18/Job 40-42
19/Psalms 5-8
20/Genesis 13-15
21/Genesis 16-18
22/Genesis 19-21
23/Genesis 22-24
24/Genesis 25-27
25/Genesis 28-30
26/Genesis 31-33
27/Genesis 34-36
28/Genesis 37-39

29/Psalms 9-12
30/Genesis 40-42
31/Genesis 43-45

FEBRUARY

1/Genesis 46-48
2/Genesis 49-50
3/Exodus 1-4
4/Exodus 5-7
5/Exodus 8-10
6/Psalms 13-16
7/Exodus 11-13
8/Exodus 14-16
9/Exodus 17-19
10/Exodus 20-22
11/Exodus 23-25
12/Exodus 26-28
13/Exodus 29/31
14/Psalms 17-20
15/Exodus 32-34
16/Exodus 35-37
17/Exodus 38-40
18/Leviticus 1-3
19/Leviticus 4-6
20/Leviticus 7-9
21/Leviticus 10/12
22/Leviticus 13-15
23/Psalms 21-24

24/Leviticus 16-18
25/Leviticus 19-21
26/Leviticus 22-24
27/Leviticus 25-27
28/Numbers 1-3

MARCH

1/Numbers 4-6
2/Numbers 7-9
3/Psalms 25-28
4/Numbers 10-12
5/Numbers 13-15
6/Numbers 16-18
7/Numbers 19-21
8/Numbers 22-24
9/Numbers 25-27
10/Numbers 28-30
11/Numbers 31-33
12/Numbers 34-36
13/Psalms 29-32
14/Deuteronomy 1-3
15/Deuteronomy 4-6
16/Deuteronomy 7-9
17/Deuteronomy 10-12
18/Deuteronomy 13-15
19/Deuteronomy 16-18
20/Deuteronomy 19-21

***Thank you to the 2025 Board for their
dedication and service to King of Kings.***

Welcome to the 2026 Board:

Phil Gehrt, President

Rick Hughey, President-Elect

Dale Melancon, Treasurer

Dan Popp, Support/Admin. Leader

Pam Gartner, Worship Ministry Leader

Penni Blank, Youth Ministry Leader

Tana Melancon, Family Ministry

Allen Snyder, Head Elder

Erin Schrepel, Open Arms Team Leader

Sharlot Ahrens, Pam Enserro, & Heather Petit, Open Arms Team

Thank you to Roger Zimmerman for serving as Elder, and
welcome to new Elder Dan Wahl.



January is National Puzzle Month. Did you know we have a puzzle exchange?

Did you receive a puzzle for Christmas and don't know what to do with your old ones?

Bring a puzzle, take one home, bring one back, enjoy. Please mark on the box if any pieces are missing.

See the Puzzle Exchange cabinet in the conference room in the new addition.



Please join us for a casual evening with dinner,
God's Word and fellowship at our **Adult Bible Study at 5:30pm.**

Second & Fourth Mondays @ Church

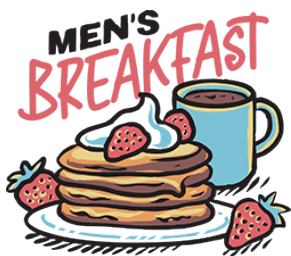
This group is open to all members of our congregation and their guests.



Make a Joyful Noise!

We are still looking for some more Ringers and Singers. If you would like to participate in either choir, we would welcome new musicians. Bells practice at 5:30pm and Choir at 6:30pm on Wednesdays but are not every week. See the calendar at the end of the newsletter for the next rehearsal dates. Come as you are, when you can. All

musical levels are welcome! For more info please reach out to
Kody@Willnauermusicworks.com or the church office. Thank you for sharing your talents!



Come join the Lutheran Laymen's League (LLL) Men's Breakfast
on
Saturday, January 10th
7:30 AM at Church

All Men Welcome!



We will take down the Christmas
Decorations starting at **9 AM on**
Saturday, January 10th.
If you are available for an hour or two,
please help out. The more hands the quicker we will finish.
Contact Tana 913-522-2648
themelancons@gmail.com for info.



Join us on Thursdays
at 9am.

Contact Pat with any questions.



Don't forget the less fortunate; donate nonperishable food, paper products and cleaning supplies to The Hope Market. Items they are currently needing: Flour, Sugar, Chicken Broth, Canned Fruit, Stuffing, Graham Crackers, Canned Chili, Spaghetti sauce, Ramen noodles, Soups, SpaghettiOs, Baking mixes such as pancake, muffin, brownie, and cake. The donation box is in the hall across from the church office. Thank you to Kim Hayes for dropping our donations off to them.

In December we donated a total of 177 lbs!

THANK YOU!

Thrivent is excited to share that a deposit of \$202.00 is coming in the next few days to King of Kings. We hope this gift on behalf of Thrivent Choice® helps to further support your important work. Thrivent clients directing Thrivent Choice Dollars® are:

Jean Germer

Paul Helmer

If you have any questions about Thrivent Financial or Choice Dollars, please contact
mail@thrivent.com or Jean Germer 913-484-7502.



Lutheran Women Missionary League (LWML)

At the beginning of December, the girls with Scout Troop 800 helped us make placemats for the residents of Meadowbrook South nursing home here in Gardner. We decorated them for Christmas and then laminated them, so that each resident has a personal placemat for their holiday meals. We took 75 placemats to them, so that each resident would get one, and they all loved them.

Winter was good to us on Christmas day but decided we had it too easy and came back with a very cold day last Sunday! Truly we are blessed to have such a faithful congregation during this time of year. All the ladies that attended the Christmas party had such a good time. There was so much good food, laughter and just relaxing visiting together. We shared around the room our favorite Christmas food and why we enjoyed it or the memory that went with it, thank you Rachel.

Please plan on coming to the next meeting on Sunday, January 11th after second service at 11:30am. We will go over the possibility of changing our meetings to the evening and also start planning our menu for Ash Wednesday Lenten service. Lenten starts on February 18th.

May God bless you all with Good Health!

Yours in Christ,
Judy Anderson-President



Lutheran Laymen's League-KINGS MEN

The group had a nice turnout for breakfast on December 13th in Olathe. The 2026 meeting schedule and respective head chefs for next year have been posted on the board and shown here.

As we reflect on the blessings of 2025, we look forward to serving in 2026 to fulfill our LLL/LHM mission.

Please reference the LLL bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall for the latest events and information.

God Bless,
Brian Blank



2026 Lutheran Laymen's League Mtg. & Breakfast Schedule



Date	Chef
10-Jan	Greg Gartner
14-Feb	Brian Blank
14-Mar	Dale Melancon
11-Apr	Paul Anderson
9-May	John Klein
13-Jun	No breakfast or mtg. in June
11-Jul	No breakfast or mtg. in July
8-Aug	Tom Stevens
12-Sep	Pastor Dan
10-Oct	Richard Ahrens
14-Nov	Neal Brockschmidt
12-Dec	Big Biscuit?



OUR SUPPORT OF THE LORD'S WORK

KING OF KINGS

<u>MEMBERSHIP</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Baptized	601	598
Confirmed	383	380
Family Units	265	263
<u>ATTENDANCE</u>		
Nov. (Avg) *in-house & virtual	167	179
<u>RECEIPTS</u>	<u>November</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Actual	\$22,171	\$278,085
Budget	\$26,854	\$295,394
<u>EXPENSES</u>		
Actual	\$21,254	\$275,460
Budget	\$26,827	\$295,097
<u>NET</u>		
Actual	\$917	\$2625
Budget	\$27	\$297

OPEN ARMS

<u>RECEIPTS</u>	<u>November</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Actual	\$67,251	\$874,703
Budget	\$85,249	\$937,739
<u>EXPENSES</u>		
Actual	\$76,318	\$885,440
Budget	\$81,912	\$901,032
<u>NET</u>		
Actual	(\$9,067)	(\$10,737)
Budget	\$3,337	\$36,707

King of King's Elected 2026 Officers/Parish Planning Committee

Pastor:	Dan Wehmeier
President:	Phil Gehrt
President – Elect:	Rick Hughey
Treasurer:	Dale Melancon
Support/Admin. Leader:	Dan Popp
Worship Ministry Leader:	Pam Gartner
Youth Ministry Leader:	Penni Blank
Family Ministry Leader:	Tana Melancon
Head Elder:	Allen Snyder
Open Arms Director:	Shonda Williams

Open Arms Team

Team Leader: Erin Schrepel
Team Members: Sharlot Ahrens, Pam Enserro,
and Heather Petit

Board of Mission Directors

Pastor:	Dan Wehmeier
President:	Phil Gehrt
President– Elect:	Rick Hughey
Support/Admin. Leader:	Dan Popp
Head Elder:	Allen Snyder
Open Arms Administrator:	Shonda Williams
Open Arms Team Leader:	Erin Schrepel

2026 Elders:

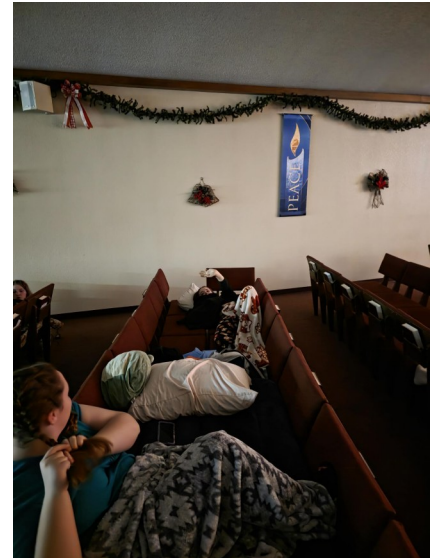
Allen Snyder (Head Elder), Richard Ahrens,
Ryan Berens, Ryan Church, Greg Enserro,
Greg Gartner, John Klein, Kevin Kufeldt, Dale
Melancon, Chadd Schrepel, and Dan Wahl



2026 Offering Envelopes are now available on the table at the back of the fellowship area. Please pick up your box before you leave. If you can't find your box, please let the church office know.

YOUTH GROUP News

The youth group had a busy December. We started the month having our Christmas party which started at an escape room, and then we had yummy Olive Garden for dinner and had a great Secret Santa exchange. I think fun was had by all. Next came holiday music bingo at church, where we raised \$260. It's always a big hit. We decided to bring back the lock-in from years ago right at the start of school break. At the beginning of that night, we went shopping with a Thrivent card to purchase food for the Hope Market. Then we had a night full of food, crafts, decorating cookies, movies, fun, and some sleep. Thank you to Carolyn Hoppe for getting us the Thrivent card. Also thank you to Kim Hayes and Allison Weaver for spending the night with the youth.



Open Arms

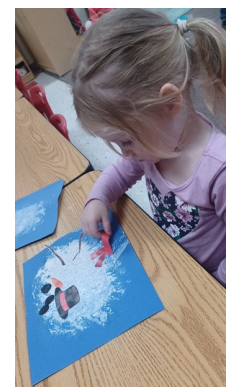
LUTHERAN • CHILD • DEVELOPMENT • CENTER

December was busy here at Open Arms. We had a very successful Christmas show. Thank you to everyone who came and supported their student! Also, thank you, to King of Kings for providing sweet treats after the program. The sweetness continued throughout the month with Polar Express Day (including hot chocolate and popcorn), Christmas spirit week, and Christmas parties with New Years parties shortly after.

It's been a year full of blessings and we look forward to what God has in store for our school in 2026! We hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and safe New Years! Safe travels to those going on any adventures this holiday season.

This January it's National Lutheran Schools Week. We will be celebrating with a spirit week and classroom activities. Watch Brightwheel for more information.

We are also hiring here at Open Arms. We are looking for teachers with early childhood backgrounds and a part time cook! If you know anyone who is interested please reach out to our office staff for more information.



January Calendar of Events

January 2 6:00 PM Kings Singers
January 5 6:30 PM Parish Planning Meeting
January 7 6:30 PM Elders Meeting
January 10 7:30 AM LLL Men's Breakfast
9:00 AM Take down decorations
January 11 11:45 AM LWML Meeting
January 12 5:30 PM Bible Study @ Church
January 15 6:00 PM Open Arms Team Meeting
January 18 9:00 AM Youth Group Meeting
January 22 6:00 PM Men's Night Out @
Jumpin Catfish
January 26 5:30 PM Bible Study @ Church

Every Tuesday 1:30 PM Bridge
Every Wednesday 9:30 AM Chapel for Open Arms
Every Thursday 9:00 AM Quilters



We have two services:
8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m.
9:20 a.m. Bible Class,
Sunday School and Confirmation

**Communion will be celebrated at both services.
No nursery available at this time.**

**Be sure and tell your friends and
neighbors about these services.**

They need the light of Christ too!



We're on the Web: www.kingofkingsks.org

King of Kings Lutheran Church
306 East Madison
P.O. Box 364
Gardner KS 66030-0364
Daniel Wehmeier, Pastor
Paul Helmer, Pastor Emeritus
William Postel, Pastor Emeritus
Phone: 913-856-2500
Email: info@kingofkingsks.org
Open Arms Lutheran Child Dev. Ctr.
Email: openarmscdc@kingofkingsks.org
Phone: 913-856-4250