



# The BELL TOWER

A Newsletter of The Church at Litchfield Park

Winter 2019

PASTOR LYNNE'S

## Christmas Message

The Advent and Christmas season is always such a special time of year, and this year is no different. On Christmas Eve we will gather to celebrate the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ with four candlelight services. Our 5 p.m. service will be directed by our Worship Leader Amy Burns, along with a brass ensemble. Our 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. services will be directed by our Chancel Choir Director Jill Tabata and include a string quartet. Our 11 p.m. service will feature our Bell Choir directed by Marilyn Chandler.

The amount of people who serve on Christmas Eve alone in a variety of different ways is absolutely astounding. Similar to your gatherings with family and friends, the more people who gather to participate and celebrate, the greater the joy. We hope you choose to gather with us this Advent and Christmas season and experience the joy of our Lord.

**Merry Christmas!**

*Rev. Lynne Kammeraad*



CHRISTMAS EVE

*Candlelight Services*

**5 p.m.:** Brass Ensemble

**7 p.m. & 9 p.m.:** Choir & String Quartet

**11 p.m.:** Bell Choir

## STEWARDSHIP UPDATE



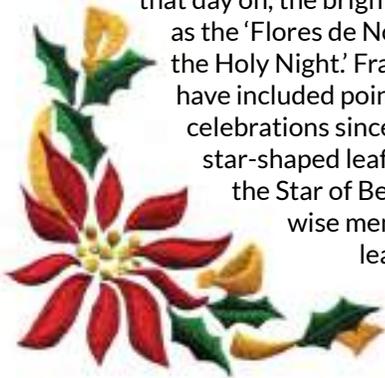
Our 2020 stewardship campaign focuses on the pillars of The Church at Litchfield Park being Worship, Service and Fellowship and how these ministries are the heart of our Christian experience. We have seen how our giving provides a broad range of ministries in these pillars for our members and community. Thank you to all who have filled out a pledge card. We are doing

well in reaching our financial goals through your generosity. As of Sunday, November 10, 128 pledges have been received totaling \$315,752. Of those 128 pledges, 32 are new. Filling out a pledge card in advance helps us know how much we can budget to support the needs of the church and our community. We need your financial support to continue in ministry, grow our reach in support of the members and the community, and maintain our facilities. Please prayerfully consider filling out a pledge card if you have not done so yet. Thank you and God Bless you for your generosity.

## Poinsettia Dedications

Decorating with poinsettias for Christmas began in 16th-century Mexico, where legend tells of a poor girl (Pepita or Maria) who had no gift to give the baby Jesus at the Christmas Eve services. She was inspired by an angel to gather weeds from the roadside and place them on the altar in the front of the chapel. Crimson blossoms sprouted from the weeds to become poinsettias. From

that day on, the bright red flowers were known as the 'Flores de Noche Buena', or 'Flowers of the Holy Night.' Franciscan friars in Mexico have included poinsettias in their Christmas celebrations since the 17th century. The star-shaped leaf pattern is said to symbolize the Star of Bethlehem, which led the wise men to Jesus. The red colored leaves symbolize the blood of Christ. The white leaves symbolize Christ's purity.

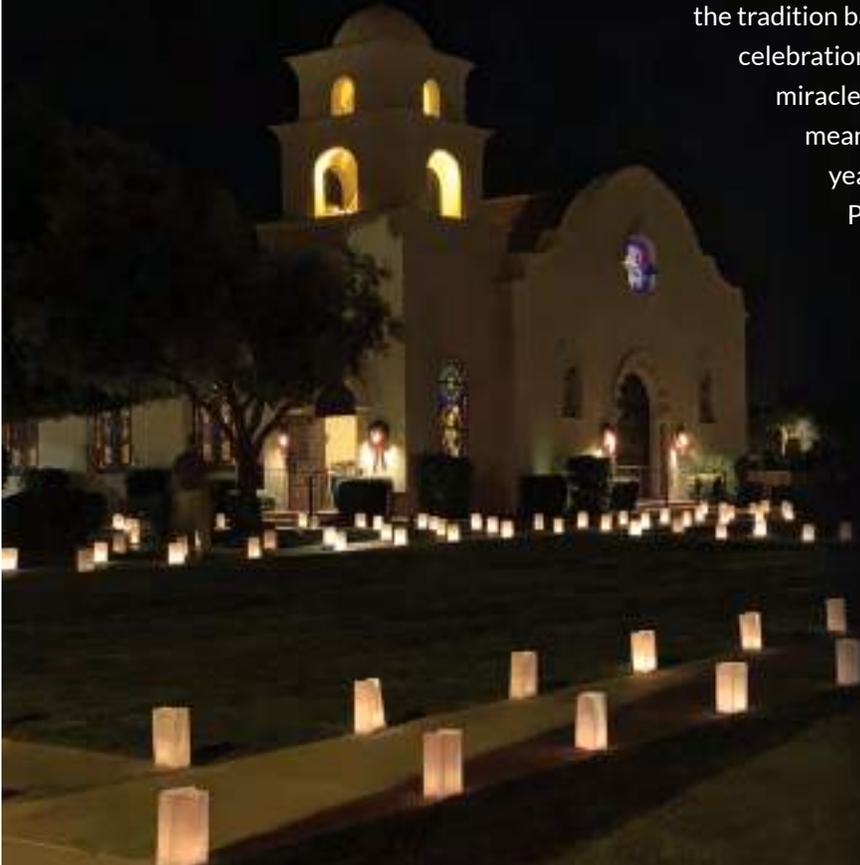


Poinsettias will adorn the Sanctuary and Souers Hall on Sunday, December 22 and at the Christmas Eve services. Help decorate our worship spaces for Christmas by dedicating a poinsettia in honor or memory of someone this Christmas season. Poinsettias may be purchased for \$10 in the breezeway/Souers Hall between services through Sunday, December 8. Your poinsettia may be taken home after the Christmas Eve service that you attend.



## Luminarias

Tradition has it that a luminaria lit the way for Mary and Joseph in their search for lodging in Bethlehem. Other writers place the tradition back even earlier, linking it to the Jewish celebration of Hanukkah, when people mark the miracle of the container of oil that was only meant to last one day but lasted eight. Each year, volunteers at The Church at Litchfield Park gather on Christmas Eve to assemble luminaria bags that will line the church walkways. They will be glowing and ready to greet guests as they arrive for the first service at 5:00 p.m. and burn all the way through the last service. A tradition for years, the luminarias have been displayed rain or shine and are enjoyed by visitors from across the southwest valley—a beautiful way to celebrate the Advent season. If you are interested in helping with this special ministry, please sign up in the breezeway/Souers Hall between services, or by calling the church office at 623-935-3411.



JOIN US FOR THE 2019

## Christmas Pageant!



**Sunday, Dec. 15 | 10:45 a.m. | Souers Hall**

We are excited to announce that our script, *The Nativity: A Traditional Story of the Birth of Jesus Christ* has been updated and includes even more roles! This year's pageant is directed by Jim Greer and Catherine Broski, with vocal direction by Kathy Drake and music played by Barbara Kolar.

## Christmas Angel Project



The Missions Committee has chosen **Luke Air Force Base Deployed Families** as the focus of the Christmas Angel Project this year. We will have the opportunity to donate a variety of gifts, gift cards, or money to go towards Christmas gifts on Sundays, November 24, December 1 and December 8, between services in the breezeway/ Souers Hall. A card made by our children/youth will be available for each

donor to be signed and sent along with the gifts to be received by our Luke Air Force Base Deployed Families on December 15. Suggested gifts include: gift cards for adults; a basket of goodies for mom that includes items/ gift cards for manicures, pedicures, massages, etc.; a man's basket with different items. For kids, non-wrapped gifts including: Big Wheels, gaming systems, Legos (for girls and boys), Barbie House, Barbie items, boys and girls bikes and other popular kids toys are suggested.

## Thanksgiving Eve Service

**Wednesday, Nov. 27 | 6:30 p.m.**



Join us for our annual service focusing on what this time of year is all about—giving thanks. All donations (monetary and/or non-perishable food) will be given to St. Mary's Food Bank. You won't want to miss this special service! Child Care will be available during this service.

## Hanging of the Greens

**Saturday, Nov.30 | 10:00 a.m.**



Help us transform the sanctuary and campus with the beautiful red and green décor that signifies the Advent season. Everyone is welcome to come and help decorate. We will enjoy our time decorating and follow it with lunch together. Please join us and bring your family as we celebrate the beginning of Advent!

## Christmas Tea

**Saturday, Dec. 7**

**2:00-4:00 p.m. | Souers Hall**



All women are invited to attend the annual Women's Christian Service Fellowship (W.C.S.F.) Christmas Tea. Ladies with last names beginning with A-N are asked to bring 24 finger sandwiches or savory hors d'oeuvres. Those with names beginning with O-Z are asked to bring 24 finger desserts. We will have entertainment, social time, and of course, enjoy a Christmas Tea! Please sign up in advance in the breezeway between church services, or in the church office during the week. For more information, call the church office at 623-935-3411.

## Christmas Caroling

**Sunday, Dec. 22 | 5 p.m. | Church Parking Lot**



Do you have a Christmas carol that you want to sing? Join us as we jump on a hay wagon and travel to various homes to sing Christmas carols. This is such a wonderful way to get into the Christmas spirit! After caroling, we will return to the church for hot chocolate, cookies and possibly a visit from a jolly man dressed in red.

## Christmas Cantata

On Sunday, December 15, at the 8:00 and 9:15 a.m. services the Chancel Choir will present *A Great Light*, by Eugene Butler. This collection includes narration of the miracle of our Savior's birth with a mix of beloved Christmas carols and original music. Sit back and enjoy being a part of this beautiful Christmas celebration!



CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED.



## November Food Drive



Our church can be the hands and feet of Jesus by sharing non-perishable food goods with St. Mary's Food Bank. Items especially needed include:

- Peanut butter
- Canned protein (tuna, etc)
- Canned fruits and vegetables
- Dry or canned beans

**Please check expiration dates.** Food banks cannot accept expired or opened food items. Food boxes will be placed throughout our church campus every Sunday in November. You may also share at the Wednesday night dinners, or the Thanksgiving Service. *The Church at Litchfield Park will make a difference for the hungry in Arizona!*



### Don't Miss Our Annual Holidays with Orpheus Concert Sunday, December 8 | 3:00 p.m.

We will feature traditional and contemporary holiday songs along with our audience sing-a-long featuring everyone's favorite Christmas carols.

**Save by purchasing tickets in advance, online only:** [orpheus.org](http://orpheus.org)—advance purchase pricing: \$25 for adults; \$20 for seniors and students; children under 12 are free.

**Admission at the door:** \$30 for adults; \$25 for seniors and students; children under 12 are free.

**For more information:** call the Orpheus Box Office, 602-698-7890.