

Forward in Faith  
2018 Stewardship Appeal  
Sunday, December 17th

## Decorating The Christmas Tree

Today you are invited to tie your commitments to the Christmas Tree. Pledges to two funds support the mission and ministry of Faith Lutheran Church in 2018. Our combined gifts to the *General Fund* help achieve our mission to introduce people to new life in Jesus Christ that grows into enthusiastic Christian living. The *Mortgage Fund* provides monthly payments on our facilities which are tools for our mission and ministry.

During this time of Advent, we have been encouraging one another to reflect and pray before making these pledges. Our call as Christians is to a life of **Thanks-living**. The use of our financial resources reflects the **priorities** of our lives. We were reminded (“re- minded!”) to be mindful and open to the possibility of a **new beginning** in our giving habits. And, last week, we were challenged to consider how we can **step forward in faith and generosity**.



The tradition of decorating Christmas trees reaches back over 1000 years. Pagans used branches of fir trees to decorate their homes during the winter solstice, as it made them think of the spring to come. The Romans used them to decorate their temples at the festival of Saturnalia. As Christians, we have used the tree as a reminder of everlasting life with God. Many of the decorative ornaments we hang are symbolic, conjuring memories and conveying meaning.

Through the wood of a tree - from a manger to a cross, we have everlasting life with God. As we decorate the Christmas tree, we remember, give thanks, and celebrate God's greatest gift to us. Oh come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord!

*Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:13-14*

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