



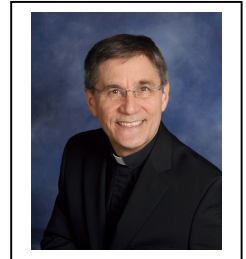
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St. Luke Lutheran Church

Open doors, open hearts, open minds.

Parish Times December 2014

An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took Mary as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus. Matt. 1:20-25.



Matthew and Luke both record accounts of the birth of Jesus. Mark doesn't mention the birth, while John begins his gospel in all eternity, at the very beginning (In the beginning was the Word...). As you prepare your heart and mind for Christmas this year, I would like you to take time to read these accounts in Matthew (1:18-25), Luke (1:1-20) and John (1:1-18). How do they differ from one another? What is being emphasized and why? How does the light, hope and joy of the gospel shine through each account? What is surprising to the people in the story? What is surprising to you? As you read them slowly, deliberately, prayerfully, what do you notice that you hadn't noticed before? As you read and mediate over these passages, let it be a time to open your heart to the movement of the Holy Spirit, who prays with and for you with sighs too deep for words (Romans 8:26-27).

Christmas Eve worship begins at 6:05 pm (after the chimes finish ringing) on Wednesday, December 24. From 5:30-6:00 pm we will once again offer a time of silent meditation, reflection, prayer which we call "Blue Christmas." It is for those who, for whatever reason, may have difficulty celebrating the joy of Christmas because of a loss, a death, a sickness, or whatever reason. As in years past, we will have a large bowl of water in front of the altar, along with blue markers and transparent sheets of plastic. You may write a prayer to God, if you so wish, then place it in the water. The water will turn blue as the words of the prayer dissolve in the water. We will then set the bowl on the altar as we offer those prayers to God.

Christmas Day worship will take place at 9:00 a.m. As with past years, we will use a delightful liturgy and receive Holy Communion. This is a beautiful, reflective worship on the day of our Lord's birth.

This year take time to prepare your hearts for the birth of our Savior, Jesus. Then come, worship the Lord!

Pr. Dave



Ladies Night Out – Ladies Night Out in January will take place on Tuesday, January 20th at Bennett's Chop & Railhouse – 1305 W. 7th St. at 5:30 p.m. Please notify Joyce Bluel (651-690-4614) if you are planning on attending by Sunday, February 11th so we have an idea of how many for the reservation.



St Luke and St Mark Lutheran church supplied dinner for 148 hungry people at Loaves and Fishes Program at St Matthew's Catholic Church on October 27th.

Adults and many children enjoyed their meal. Workers from St Luke were Pastor Dave, Joyce Bluel, Larry Litzkow, Ann Verschoyle, Sandy Berger, and Roger and Dianne Diestler.



pray

**Let us pray
and put those prayers into action:**

1.) Pray for our members every week. They are listed in the bulletin. Each week we pray for different people. Take your bulletin home and make it a priority to lift them up in prayer. Then let them know you are praying for them. Send them an email or card, give them a call, or tell them in person. Let us care for one another in word and deed.

2.) Let us pray we receive four new families this year. This isn't just so we have more members. It is so we can spread the good news of Jesus Christ to more people through word and deed. Make this prayer a priority and when you see new people come to worship, greet them with Christian love, THEN talk with your friends. Make greeting new people your priority. Pray, then put that prayer into action by reaching out with love.

3.) Pray for our children and youth and put it into action by once again reaching out in love. Give them a hug. Call them by name to say hi and listen to what they have to say. Studies have shown that when children have loving adults outside of their family involved in their lives, they are much more likely to succeed in life. You can make a huge difference in a child's life by simply showing them a little love. Pray for them, love them. That is what Jesus calls us to do.

--Pr. Dave.



Holiday Morning French Toast

(Reprinted from the 2005 St. Luke Church Cook Book)

- 1 c. brown sugar
- ½ c. butter, melted
- 3 t. ground cinnamon (divided)
- 3 tart apples (such as Granny Smith) peeled, cored and thinly sliced
- ½ c. dried cranberries
- 1 loaf Italian or French bread, cut into 1" slices
- 6 larges eggs
- 1 ½ c. milk
- 1 T. vanilla extract

Combine brown sugar, butter and 1 t. cinnamon in a 9x13 inch baking dish. Add apples and dried cranberries; toss to coat well. Spread apple mixture evenly over bottom of baking dish. Arrange slices of bread on top. In a separate bowl, mix eggs, milk, vanilla and remaining 2 t. cinnamon until well blended. Pour mixture over bread, soaking bread completely. Cover and refrigerate 4 to 24 hours. Bake, covered with foil, in a preheated 375 degree oven for 40 minutes. Uncover and bake 5 minutes. Remove from oven; let stand 5 minutes. Serve warm. Makes 12 servings.

--Karen Wasko



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BOOK AND BAKE SALE: We will be hosting a Book and Bake Sale in May. We need to start collecting books now. Please bring them to church. We will need both paperback and hardcover...all ages. If you would like to help coordinate (or even store a bag or two of books until spring), please contact Sue McNeill (coordinator). Any meetings we have this year will be to brainstorm about how we want to set this up, advertise, etc. This will also be a great event to announce Vacation Bible School. New events need new ideas and all are welcome.



December Birthdays

- 4 - Olivia Peterson
- 5 - Helen Bye, Douglas Nelson
- 9 - Mark McGough
- 10 - Bill Klotz
- 16 - Mary Faust
- 18 - Holly Schultz
- 22 - Sander Johnson, Trevor Johnson
- 23 - Garrett Faust, Deborah Vigdal
- 27 - Cammy Horne
- 30 - Roger Diestler



December Anniversaries

- 3 - Dwight And Donna Paulson: 1966
- 17 - Doug And Karen Wasko: 1960
- 29 - Anne And John Fabie: 1984

December Readers:



- 7 - Laurie Herrmann
- 14 - Mike Hegdahl
- 21 - Beth Peterson
- 24 - Wendy Bjorklund
- 25 - Sue McNeill
- 28 - Jennifer Frederickson



December Acolytes:

- 7 - Sami Brummund
- 21 - Evan Nelson
- 24, 6:00 PM -
Matt Brummund
Zach Moore

O Come, All Ye Faithful! Join us for our time-honored Advent Candlelight Service on Sunday, Dec. 7 at 7:00 p.m., in which we celebrate the Advent season with many beloved hymns. Please bring 2 dozen cookies to share, if possible, for the fellowship time following the service.



O COME LET US ADORE HIM!

*Join us as we celebrate
Advent and Christmas!*

Candlelight Service
Sunday, December 7, 7:00 p.m.

**Sunday School
Christmas Program**
Sunday, December 21, 9:00 a.m.
(As part of our Sunday service)

Christmas Eve Worship
Wednesday, December 24
Blue Christmas Meditation: 5:30 p.m.
Worship: 6:05 p.m.

Christmas Day Worship
Thursday, December 25, 9:00 a.m.



Usher Notes

Many thanks to our ushers for November: Gwen, Steve and Matthew Brummund, Lisa Vandrovec, Mike and Nancy Hegdahl, Linda Funkhouser, Tom Gaarder. Our ushers for December will be: Eva Mac Niven, Jim Kroschel, Doug Nelson, Wanda Mathison, Larry and Carol Vigdal, Pam Ballis, Katy Eggert.

Need to pick up a special gift for a teacher, co-worker or favorite aunt? You will find just the right things among the wide variety of one-of-a-kind, handcrafted treasures at the north end of the Social Hall....check it out soon!



There will be a brief congregational meeting on Sunday, Dec. 14 after worship to vote on the 2015 budget. All are welcome; we need and value your participation.



Fall Bazaar – Preliminary Report
Joyce Bluel – Co-chair

We still have many lovely craft items available for your holiday shopping. We will continue to sell items until after the candlelight service, December 7th. As of October 31st, we have sales totaling \$5,165.25 and after expenses we have made \$3,425.25.

In the next month or so we will meet to decide how to spend these proceeds. Last year we gave our benevolences to Camp Onomia, the Youth Work Camp, the Airport Ministry, Highland Leisure Age, and purchased a flat screen TV for the youth camp spaghetti dinner raffle. We also used these funds to have the carpet throughout the church cleaned in August.

If you have ideas of how you think we should spend these proceeds, feel free to contact any committee chair, Judy Salaba or myself. You are also welcome to come to our meeting, just watch the bulletin for date and time.



Our heartfelt thanks to our Bun Run volunteers for November: Mike Hegdahl, Joan Wilson, Ken McGrew, Doug and Jo Klein, Julie Ellingson.

Dec The Halls!

All are invited on Sunday, Nov. 30 at 11:00 a.m. to decorate our church home for the Advent and Christmas seasons. We'll begin with a potluck lunch, and then roll up our sleeves and dec the halls! Donations of Poinsettias to adorn our altar are greatly appreciated. Join us for this cherished, time-honored St. Luke tradition...it is sure to put you in a festive mood!



As is the St. Luke tradition, we will be collecting donations for Christmas Baskets, which will be distributed to members of our community. If you would like to make a monetary contribution to filling these baskets, please indicate "Christmas Basket" on the memo line of your check. Thank you!

As the holiday season approaches, the Sunday School students would like to extend an invitation to everyone to attend our Christmas Program on Sunday, December 21 during the worship service. Come, hear the joyous Christmas message as only children can tell it!





Spotlight on...Jim Kroschel

When I was asked to write up my bio, I was tempted to fill it with ridiculous claims such as, "I invented the color green." Perhaps I'll save that for the next time.

I was born right here in St. Paul and grew up in Dellwood, MN. Never heard of it? That doesn't surprise me since the people in the town next door to Dellwood have never heard of it either. It is a small town between White Bear Lake and Stillwater.

Several of you have met my parents already. They come to St. Luke every once in a while for a visit, though they are members at St. Andrew's Lutheran Church in Mahtomedi. St. Andrews is the church I grew up in, but I much prefer the smaller nature of St. Luke's.

I'm the youngest of three boys by a fair bit. John and Dave are 11 and 13 years older than me respectively. Having significantly older brothers was interesting as a small child; my mother would tell them to take me outside and play catch with me. They took this to mean they should go outside and play catch with each other, using me as the object being caught.

For college, I went to St. Olaf, where I majored in English. I planned to go into publishing, but somehow ended up in IT instead. Go figure. While at St. Olaf, I met my lovely wife, Jennifer. We started dating on April Fool's Day, which may explain a thing or two.

After college, I began teaching computer science at Minnesota School of Business. I taught for about five years and then moved to a staff position. Currently, I work at Capella University, where I develop tools for the online course room.

When I'm not sitting behind a computer, I can often times be found in my garage doing woodworking projects. Throughout my life, I spent a lot of time in my grandfather's shop, my dad's shop, and now my own.

A few months after Jennifer and I got married, we moved to our first house, which is right down the street from St. Luke's. Though we were members at Pilgrim Lutheran, we thought we'd try out that cute little church down the street from us. It was nice to be able to walk to church, plus everyone was so pleasant, so we just kept coming. As the years passed, we became members (though in absentia, since it was the weekend after Collin was born). We have enjoyed bringing in treats for coffee hour and playing games in the kiddie room during the fall bazaar. Roger has even wrangled me into being an usher.

Unlike many folks at St. Luke, I may not have been a member my entire life, but I kind of feel that way anyways. St. Luke feels like home. Several people asked if Jennifer, Collin, and I were going to look for another church after we moved, but why would we? Where else could we get the same warmth that we get every Sunday at St. Luke?



Musings from the Music Director Karleen Jung

As we move into the season of Advent, I can't help think of the parallels between it and what is happening in nature.

Especially since the time change, it seems that the daylight hours have suddenly gotten shorter and shorter and the darkness is longer and longer. Of course, this is natural as we get closer to the winter solstice. However, it is even more noticeable to me here in the northern hemisphere. I rush during the day to finish everything within daylight hours so that, if at all possible, I don't have to be out in the snow and cold in the dark.

In some ways, this is similar to the season of Advent. We have just transitioned from the end of the church year, where our lectionary readings spoke of death and dying, of the end of the world, and about the end reign of Christ, our King. Our readings now shift to those, which speak of expectation, longing, and hope. These readings and the growing light of the Advent wreath all lead us to the birth of Christ, the One who is the Light-Bringer for us and our world.

I'm reminded of one of my favorite hymns, "Lost in the Night" – a hymn that is in our hymnal (ELW 394) and that comes from the Finnish tradition. For me, it has always characterized these Advent themes of expectation, longing, and hope, and the coming of our Savior. Here's a sampling of the words below. And, if you prefer, here's a link to a vintage recording on YouTube of an arrangement by F. Melius Christiansen, sung by the Concordia College Choir during their 1974 Norway tour:

<http://youtu.be/hOunsOLf8dg>.

Lost in the night do the people yet languish
longing for morning, the darkness to vanquish,
plaintively heaving a sigh full of anguish.
Will not day come soon? Will not day come soon?

Must we be vainly awaiting the morrow?
Shall those who have light no light let us borrow,
giving no heed to our burden of sorrow?
Will you help us soon? Will you help us soon?

Sorrowing wand'ers, in darkness yet dwelling,
dawned has the day of a radiance excelling,
death's dreaded darkness forever dispelling.
Christ is coming soon! Christ is coming soon!

Light o'er the land of the needy is beaming;
rivers of life through its deserts are streaming,
bringing all peoples a Savior redeeming.
Come and save us soon! Come and save us soon!

Text: Finnish song; tr. Olav Lee, 1859-1943, alt.
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This time of year is such a busy time that it can be easy to focus only on Christmas and forget about the waiting of Advent. One way to refocus is to join us on Sunday evening, December 7th, at 7 pm as we hear readings and sing Advent carols of hope and expectation. Both choirs will be joining the service. It will be an opportunity to participate in candlelighting—a reminder of the coming Light. Please come!

"The Lord bless thee, and keep thee." - Numbers 6:24