

DECEMBER 2014

CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH



Dear Friends in Christ,

One of the books I am currently reading is *Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places* by Eugene Peterson. Early in his book he makes this observation: “Story is the most natural way of enlarging and deepening our sense of reality, and then enlisting us as participants in it. Stories open doors to areas or aspects of life that we didn’t know were there, or had quit noticing out of over-familiarity, or supposed were out-of-bounds to us. They then welcome us in. Stories are verbal acts of hospitality.”

Stories are an important part of our lives. Let me make a suggestion that I have made before about Christmas and our preparations for this time of year: This Christmas why not give yourself this gift. After everyone has gone to bed or before anyone else gets up, find a quiet place and read the Christmas story. Do it for a week. One day read it from Matthew and stop and think about how Joseph must have felt. The next day read it from Luke. How did Mary feel? Go back to Matthew and ask: “How did Mary react to what Joseph wanted to do”? Go back to Luke. How did the shepherds feel as the angels came, as they tried to find the baby in the town, as they saw Jesus in the manger, as they returned to their sheep? Go back to Matthew. What was Herod thinking and feeling? How about the Magi? How do you think God must have felt? How did the angels feel? As you are reading the stories and thinking about what you have read don’t be afraid to read between the lines and to use your imaginations. Listen to what God is trying to say to you. Look at all of the different angles, facets, and stories within the story. What does God want you to know? What is he saying to you?

We have this great story. Read it again and again but take the time to look at it with fresh eyes and ears and hearts. If Christmas has lost its meaning it isn’t because of the store owners, toy manufacturers, television, or Internet – it’s because of us. Somewhere we have lost the story. It has ceased to be ours. Take the time to rediscover and reclaim it.



Yours in Christ

Pastor Randy

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COUNTIL MINUTES - NOVEMBER 10, 2014

Old Business

Window Coverings – Need to remeasure the windows before ordering the new blinds.

Carpets - Motion passed to accept the bid from Fresh and Clean. It was decided that the carpet cleaning would be done after the New Year.

Sign- Mark will be on the committee and Jon L. will head the committee.

Began study on the Use of the Means of Grace

New Business:

Picture Directory- Lifetouch is now doing church directories. Motion passed to have pursue the picture dictionary.

Insurance policy- We will review the matter at the next meeting.

Randy shared an article: "Is your church driving away first time guests?"

Wedding policies were reviewed.

Council elections for 2015:

Keith Pieh- Council President,

Ted Johnson- Vice President,

Cheryl Romatz- Church Secretary

Next Meeting: December 8, 2014 Meeting

THE ADVENT CONSPIRACY

'TIS THE SEASON TO TURN YOUR CHRISTMAS UPSIDE DOWN

Perhaps some of you have begun your Christmas shopping or are considering starting soon. As you begin making your plans, please consider the Advent Conspiracy. The story of Christ's birth is a story of promise, hope, and revolutionary love. So what happened? What was once a time to celebrate the birth of a Savior has somehow turned into a season of stress, traffic jams, and shopping lists. And when it is all over, many of us are left with presents to return, looming debt that will take months to pay off, and this empty feeling of missed purpose. What if Christmas were to become a life changing event? Welcome to the Advent Conspiracy.



This year, as in the previous 2 years, we don't want to change the whole world, but we do want to change one village. More than a billion people worldwide lack access to clean water. A woman or child in sub-Saharan Africa will walk an average of 3.7 miles every day to get water, not all of it clean. Helping a community construct and maintain a well opens a world of opportunity. This year we would like to collect enough money to furnish one village with a well and change their world. The cost is \$2,500.

If you want to see what difference a well can make in the life of a village and what some of the conditions are in sub-Saharan Africa read [*A Long Walk to Water*](#) by Linda Sue Park. There are a few copies in the entryway of the church. You are welcome to borrow one and read it. It is a quick read, but certainly one that will touch your heart. There are also copies of [*The Advent Conspiracy*](#) in the entryway. Take one, read it, share it, and try out a few of the ideas to make your Advent and Christmas more meaningful.

COMMUNION DATES

11:00 AM Service, 1st and 3rd Sunday, December 7th and 21st
6:00 PM Service, 2nd and 4th Sunday, December 14th and 28th

ALL CHURCH FAMILY OLD FASHIONED ADVENT FAIR

December 7th 9:30 till 10:45

Spread Christmas cheer throughout the COMMUNITY, OUR CHURCH AND YOUR HOME!!



COMMUNITY: help assemble bean soup bags for the food bank

OUR CHURCH: be part of the team stringing popcorn for our church Christmas tree, and help decorate some gingerbread cookies for coffee hour

YOUR HOME: enjoy making paper chains, pinecone decorations and much more!

All are welcomed; this is a great time for adults and youth to get to know each other. If you are interested in helping out please call Denise Harro at 394-4876. Areas of help needed: making gingerbread boys, girls at home and bring pre-cooked for Sunday morning, and help with the various craft stations. All materials will be provided and prepared prior to Sunday morning.



ADVENT SERVICES



Advent is a time of preparation to celebrate the birth of Jesus. This year we will be setting aside time on Wednesday, December 3, 10, and 17, at 11:00 AM and 6:00 PM to slow down, listen to God's word, pray, and give thanks for the greatest gift in history. The theme of our services this year will be "Bethlehem Speaks." We will have an opportunity to hear from Mary, Joseph, the Innkeeper's Wife, angel, a shepherd, and a wise man as they talk about the birth of Jesus.

Advent devotional materials are available in the entryway to help you with your Advent preparations.

5:00 and 7:30 PM

**COME AND JOIN US
AS WE CELEBRATE THE BIRTH
OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR**



Remember in Prayers:

Healing for: Healing for Ted Johnson's Uncle Chuck; K Dean's son-in-law's mom who had a stroke; Marsy's dad with back pain and other problems; Sandee Simon's friend with genetic problems; Joan Corr; Katie MacLeod's lung problems; Katie MacLeod's niece's husband, John, needs liver transplant; Dennis Bible's cousin's granddaughter, Emily, recovering from an automobile accident; Stephanie Bouchard who is dealing with lupus; Darnell Schneider - dealing with health problems-wisdom for her doctors.

Continued prayer for those with cancer: JoAnn's friend, Marilyn, 9 of 12 chemo treatments are finished; Natasha's friend, Charlene, who has liver cancer; Bill Connel whose cancer has returned; Ron Martinson whose cancer has returned; Ted Kreger with a rare form of cancer; Kathy Gensel's friend with breast cancer; Norma Forbs and her husband both battling cancer; Marlene Pearson's friend in Anchorage undergoing treatment; Sue Bigg's friend, Jerry; Jon and JoAnn Hagen-Lillevik's friend undergoing treatment in Minnesota; Alex Nisler's uncle; Lana Syverson's brother-in-law; Sandy Knutson; Deanne Pearson's friend in Seattle and her sister with breast cancer; Hannah Thompson's friend; Scott Cunningham's mother, Dee Richard's brother, Bob; Leslie Virelli; Barb Norbeck's friend; Polly Crawford undergoing treatment for cancer of the spine; Katie MacLeod's nephew, Joe Auld; Michael Hollinger's mom; John Brewer's brother, Glenn; Dee Richards five year old grand niece undergoing leukemia treatments; Rochelle Schneider's son-in-law, Tom; Dick Evenson undergoing chemotherapy.

Strength for: Renee Henderson's and JoAnn Hagen's friend undergoing radiation treatment; Betty Wittenberg's father dealing with Parkinson's; Robin Castleman's brother suffering from depression; Jeanna Carver's niece dealing with anorexia; Marlene Pearson's son, Mark, who has ALS; Dennis Alder's father who is doing poorly; Dennis Alder's son's mother-in-law who is having brain problems.

Prayers for: God's guidance for seniors as they make choices about moving and downsizing; Twyla's daughter-in-law Steph with problems and the twin babies at 26 weeks; Robin Castleman's niece's twins, Patrick and Andrew who are now 2 pounds each; the people of Marysville and Tulalip tribe; prisoners in the middle east; families who have lost loved ones; peace in Somalia, Israel, Palestine; Nigeria, Middle East, Syria and Ukraine; safety for those in the military; protection for Jamie Willard's husband in Afghanistan; Synod Prayer Partner - Faith Lutheran in Delta Junction; wisdom for the leaders of our country and world.

Thanksgiving for: Marsy Ware's new grandson; Renee's sister, Marles, cancer is not back; John and Jan Brewer's Anniversary; John Brewer heart surgery went well; Dave Stein's procedure went well; Deanne Pearson's dad doing better; continued improvement for Dan Houglum;

Comfort for: Jack Will whose oldest brother passed away; Paula Weaver whose husband, Dick, passed away; the family of Vern Miller who passed away; the children around the world who are in orphanages.



CROCHETING THEIR WAY MINISTRY

We are collecting yarn for women at Wildwood Prison who are crocheting articles for people in the community. There is a box outside of Randy's office for your donations.



LUNCH BUNCH - CALLING ALL LADIES!!!!



Ladies: The Lunch Bunch will meet Tuesday, December 9th at 11:30 AM at Gingers in the Peninsula Center Mall.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY



The Women's Bible study meets Fridays at 9:30 AM. They are using "The Story: The Bible as One Continuing Story of God and His People." If you have any questions please contact Mandy Pieh at 260-9559 or Twyla Mundy at 252-1510. Please take note there will be NO Bible Study on Friday, December 26th.

BROTHER FRANCIS SHELTER



Winter is just around the corner. When you are homeless, life on the street can be harsh, and the colder it gets the more harsh it can become. New, clean and lightly used winter gear and clothing including shoes, boots, hats, scarves, socks, etc. continue to be collected. Handmade items are appreciated. Drop off items at the church and they will be delivered to one of the homeless outreach agencies. Contact Sandy 262-7460 or sandyalaska@gmail.com for more information. Thanks!

FOOD PANTRY

"For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat." Matthew 25:35

The Pantry is a joint project of Soldotna United Methodist Church and Christ Lutheran Church. Additional support comes from generous individuals, organizations, local businesses, as well as help from the Peninsula Food Bank. The Pantry is open Wednesdays from 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM. Volunteers are always needed. Bagging starts at 10:00 AM and you are welcome to come for an hour or for the afternoon. Peanut butter, cereal, canned fruit, canned entrees like chili, ravioli, pork and beans, etc. are always needed. If you are shopping and wish to buy extra food for the pantry, please drop it by the church and we will get it to the pantry. Small bottles of shampoo, bars of soap, tooth paste, etc. are also needed. Of course, money is always appreciated. There is a can on the table for your gifts. Check out the Food



Food Pantry
Donations Needed

Pantry in the Entryway. If you wish to help with the staffing any Wednesday (10:00 AM to 2:00 PM), please call Cosette at 262-7610.



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PO Box 568
Soldotna AK 99669
Return Service Requested

Christ Lutheran Mission Statement:

Knowing Christ

Empowering His Followers

Making Him Known To Others

Please Call Us ... 262-4757

We want to include you in our prayers, arrange for pastoral visits, and announce information to the congregation, when appropriate. Please notify the church office as soon as possible when:

- A member of your family or someone you know dies.
- You or someone you know is ill or grieving.
- You or someone you know is in the hospital.
- You or someone you know wants to plan a baptism, wedding or celebration.
- You move or change telephone numbers.