



CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH



Dear Friends in Christ,

I love stories. The thing that I enjoy the most about them is that they are intended to draw us and attempt to make us a part of what is happening. They intend for us to use our imaginations and all of our senses as we enter into what is taking place; however, when it comes to the stories we hear or read from the Bible I wonder sometimes if we have forgotten that this is what we are invited to do.

I think this is particularly true of the Christmas story. Many of us we have read or heard this story so many times that we simply gloss over it. As I read this story from Luke’s gospel I wonder if Mary really felt highly favored all of the time? Imagine being a 13-15 year old young woman and trying to explain to your parents that you’re pregnant but not to worry because the baby was God’s. Did she feel highly favored when she had to try and explain this to Joseph? How do you think she felt as she felt the stares and heard the whispers as she passed her friends and relatives in the town?

I’ve made this suggestion before, but it is one I believe each of us should try as we make our preparations for Christmas. After everyone has gone to bed or before anyone else gets up, find a quiet place and read the Christmas story. One day read the first chapter of Luke and just stop when you come to a place that strikes you. The next day read the story of Jesus’ birth from Matthew. The following day read from the second chapter of Luke. Keep repeating this pattern and as you do ask yourself such things as: How did Mary feel? What did she think when the angel appeared? What did she think when the angel said, “Be not afraid”? How did Joseph feel? What was Herod thinking and feeling? How did the angels feel? What was it like in the field as the shepherds watched the sheep? Can you smell the campfire? Can you hear the sheep? Can you imagine the stars in the sky and the feel the chill of the air? What was it like in the stable? Can you smell the straw? Can you hear the animals? What did it feel like to have a group of shepherds suddenly burst into the cave right after the birth of your son? The list of things to consider is as great as your imagination. Look at all of the different angles, facets, and stories within the stories. What is God saying to you? What is it that God wants you to feel?

Don’t just read and hurry through the words on the page in order to get through them. Take the time to look at these stories with fresh eyes and ears and hearts. Christmas hasn’t lost its meaning, but perhaps the story has been lost amidst all of the things we feel we have to do during this time of the year. I’m not suggesting that we stop doing those things, but what I am suggesting is that we reclaim the story, we rediscover the story, and that we enter into the story and make it ours once again.

Yours in Christ

Pastor Randy

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Council Minutes - November

Old Business:

- Keith shared the window bid from Doors/Windows for approximately \$15,000. Kathy suggested that we get a second bid for comparison. Keith said that he would call Randy's Glass.
- Sign update - Keith will call Guff Sherman to check on the sign.
- Playground update- Denise said that she looked at the playground and found that it needs to be cleaned up and then evaluated to see what repairs or replacements are needed.
- Bathroom update - Denise spoke to an architect about the design. She did not hear back from them yet. She will contact them.
- Storage rooms in fellowship hall - Randy will speak to Tom Seggerman about the storage rooms.

New Business:

- Installation of Council on December 6th.
- December meeting: need to elect new officers - meeting will be on December 7th.
- ACC Student cards- Denise offered to disperse the cards and ask people to pray for the kids and if they would like to do more for them, then they may do so.
- Synod Assembly is April 22nd-24th, 2016, at St. Marks in Anchorage. We need to look for two members that would like to attend.
- Kenai Peninsula Mission Church (Presbyterian) has asked to rent our facility for a service on December 20th. The council decided to allow them to use the church for free that afternoon. Randy will meet with their pastor to go over the requirements for using the church.
- Blue tooth Speaker system: Denise shared that John Harro is looking into devices that would allow people with hearing issues to use Bluetooth devices to be able to hear the services.

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 2nd, 9th, and 16th 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. This year we will have the opportunity to hear from A Shepherd's Wife, the Magi, and Joseph as they talk about the birth of Jesus.

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

CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

5:00 and 7:30 PM

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



COMMUNION DATES

11:00 AM Service Sunday, 1st and 3rd Sunday, December 6th and 20th
6:00 PM Service Sunday, 2nd and 4th Sunday, December 13th and 27th

CROCHETING THEIR WAY MINISTRY



We are collecting yarn for the 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.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY



The Women's Friday Bible Study meets at 11:30 AM. Remember, each lesson stands on its own, so if you miss one week you can come to the next one and not be behind. If you have questions about either, call Barb Norbeck 335-1040.

THE ADVENT CONSPIRACY



As you make your plans for Christmas, 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 three 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 *Along Walk to Water* by Linda Sue Park. It is a quick read, but one certainly that will touch your heart. There are also copies of *The Advent Conspiracy* in the entryway. Take one, read it, share it, and try some of the ideas to make your Advent and Christmas more meaningful.

CLOTHING DRIVE

2016 Project Homeless Connect will be held January 28th, 2016 in Kenai. Homeless or near-homeless people from our local communities will meet with intake volunteers who will identify the participants' top three needs Project Homeless Connect can help with. We can help local homeless near-homeless people by donating lightly used clean clothing, shoes, winter gear. All items donated here at Christ Lutheran Church between now and January 19th will be delivered to the 2016 Project Homeless Connect. If you have any questions you can contact Sandy at sandyalaska@gmail.com or 262-7460.



LUNCH BUNCH - CALLING ALL LADIES!!!!

Ladies: The Lunch Bunch will meet Tuesday, December 8th at 11:30 AM at Ginger's in the Peninsula Center Mall.



Remember in Prayers:

Healing for: Roxie's aunt's friend who has masses in body; Alex's friend's mom who is recovering from back surgery ; Natasha's friend with cancer ; Renee Henderson's friend with blood clots; Matt Altobelli's brother-in-law's mom with cancer; Dennis Alder's mom who is ill; Natasha's friend in Philadelphia; Lynne Sandahl who is dealing with an autoimmune disease; Katie MacLeod's niece who had a mini stroke; Jim Andrews having heart problems; Keith Pieh's knee; Twyla Mundy's friend starting chemo treatment; Billie Shackleton balance problems; Jim Delker's niece dealing with kidney issues; 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; 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 dealing with lupus; Darnell Schneider dealing with health problems-wisdom for her doctors.

Continued prayer for those with cancer: Lori Weimer's father; Scott Cunninham's sister; Joann's friend, Marilyn; Natasha's friend, Charlene, with liver cancer; 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; Sue Bigg's friend, Jerry; Jon and JoAnn Hagen-Lillevik's friend; Lana Syverson's brother-in-law; Sandy Knutson; Deanne Pearson's friend in Seattle and her sister with breast cancer; Dee Richard's brother, Bob; Leslie Virelli; Barb Norbeck's friend; Michael Hollinger's mom; Polly Crawford; Katie MacLeod's nephew, Joe Auld; John Brewer's brother, Glenn; Dee Richard's five year old grand niece; Rochelle Schneider's son-in-law, Tom; Dick Evenson; Chris Stiuve's family friend diagnosed with brain cancer; Renee Henderson's and JoAnn Hagen's friend.

Strength for: Roxie's brother so he can be more independent; Jan Brewer's longtime friend who has cancer and hasn't long to live; Levi Benner undergoing allergy testing; families facing difficult situations; Betty Wittenberg's father dealing with Parkinson's; Robin Castleman's brother suffering from depression; Marlene Pearson's son, Mark, who has ALS; Belle Warren dealing with family problems.

Prayers for: For wisdom for leaders of the world; Katie's nieces husband's liver transplant; Kelly and Mark Harro looking for work; peace in the world; those suffering from depression; people who deal with different addictions; an end to racial prejudice; peace in Somalia, Robin Castleman's niece's twins, Patrick and Andrew who are now home; Palestine; Israel, Nigeria, Middle East, Syria and Ukraine; safety for those in the military; Synod Prayer Partner – Thorton Memorial Lutheran Church in Wales; protection for Jamie Willard's husband in Afghanistan; wisdom for the leaders of our country and world; the unemployed.

Comfort for children around the world who are in orphanage; Sue Seggerman's sister who lost her son last March ; Emily Pieh's friend she met at conference; Matt Altobelli and his family whose grandmother passed away.

Thanksgiving for: Dave Stein's eyes are doing better; Carmen's twin sister sober for six month; Barb Norbeck's eye is getting better; Natasha's friend doing better ; Josh Pieh's birthday "13"; lutefisk dinner and the fellowship shared there; John Dombovy's mother is out of nursing home; Cole's successful surgery; Scott Cunninham's mother's cancer is in remission; continued improvement for Dan Houglum.

ADVENT FAIR

Sunday, December 6th from 9:30-10:45

Spread Christmas cheer
throughout the community and your home!!
Community: help assemble bean soup bags
for the Food Bank.
Your Home: enjoy making Christmas crafts to brighten up
your home during the Christmas Season.



All are welcome! This is a great time for adults and youth to get to know each other.
If you are interested in helping please call Darnell Schneider at 262-7747.
All of the materials for the crafts will be provided.



FOOD PANTRY

The Food 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 Kenai Peninsula Food Bank.

In October a total of 109 boxes were distributed serving 195 adult and 59 children. The pantry is open Wednesday from 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM. Volunteers are always needed and appreciated. Bagging begins Wednesdays 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 donation container on the table for your gifts. If you wish to help with the staffing any Wednesday (10:00 AM to 2:00 PM), please call Cosette at 262-7610.



**Food Pantry
Ministry**

CHURCH CHOIR PRACTICE

For all of those who like to make a joyful noise to the Lord,
the church choir practices on Sunday mornings
from 10:00-10:45 in the Fellowship Hall.
If you have any questions, contact Anna Veach (334)349-3046.





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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.