
N E W S

Good News of Peace

L E T T E R

December 2017 A.D.

A Caring Family ✚ Reaching Out ✚ Sharing Christ's Love ✚ Teaching God's Word!

From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Friends in Christ,

As November draws to a close and we prepare to enter the month of December, a new Church Year is upon us once again and, along with it, the season of Advent. As we begin to be surrounded more and more by the sights and sounds of the Christmas season, many of which suggest to us that Christmas has already arrived, it is good for us to be reminded what the season of Advent is all about. It is intended to prepare our hearts for our celebration of the true meaning of Christmas: our Savior's coming for us and for our salvation. At the same time, however, it is also intended to prepare our hearts for His coming again on the Last Day. That two-fold focus is important.

Each of the first three full weeks of the Advent season will once again this year be marked by a midweek, Wednesday evening service. Each of these services will begin at 6:30 p.m. and will be preceded by a Soup Supper in the Fellowship Hall, served by our Senior Youth and their families, beginning at 5:30 p.m.

This year's services will observe the following themes:

December 6: Put On the Light! (Romans 13:11-14)
December 13: Many Lights Are Brighter – Together (Romans 15:4-13)
December 20: A Light with a Special Purpose (Romans 1:1-7)

Please plan to join us for these three services, as well as for a light supper and fellowship beforehand!

As you are starting to look ahead to Christmas weekend and your family's plans, please also note this year's Christmas service schedule, which will feature a couple of minor changes due to the fact that Christmas Eve is on a Sunday and Christmas Day (and New Year's Day) on a Monday:

Christmas Eve: 9:30 a.m. Service
6:00 p.m. Family Service & Children's Christmas Program
No Candlelight Service this year

Christmas Day: 9:30 a.m. Service with Holy Communion
New Year's Eve: 9:30 a.m. Service
New Year's Day: No Service this year

A blessed Advent and Christmas season to each of you in Christ, our Savior and King!

In His Service,

Pastor Derek Riddle

What is Advent?

The Church divides the year into different seasons that emphasize the life of Christ and the life of the Church. Beginning on Sunday December 3, 2017, we will enter the season of the Church year called Advent. Advent is the season of preparation and anticipation leading up to Christmas, and continuing to Epiphany on January 6, 2018.

The focus of Advent is two-fold. On the one hand, we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who came into the world as both God and man so that our sins might be forgiven. On the other hand, we anticipate the day when Jesus will return to Earth and bring an end to this world. Those will be scary days, but we can look forward to the end of the world with hope because through faith in Jesus, the end of this world will mean the beginning of a new life with Christ for eternity.

Advent, then, is a time for us to repent and believe. Knowing that Jesus was born to forgive our sins, we repent (admit our failures to God) and believe that we are forgiven because of the death and resurrection of Jesus on our behalf. Also, knowing that Jesus is coming back, we repent and believe that when He returns, He will give us eternal life. – from www.lhm.org

2017 Advent Devotions from Lutheran Hour Ministries – *Love Came Down*

In *Love Came Down* we see how the Heavenly Father spared nothing—not even His own Son—to work out our salvation. Though we had rebelled in our sins and spurned God and His Commandments, He chose us—not for exclusion, but redemption. The Father’s love sought us out in our perilous condition and, in His infinite mercy, bridged the divide to our isolation through Jesus—the one Mediator between God and Man.

“Jesus came to be in our lives, a part of our lives, one of us. He came to be our Savior, and that is not a job someone can do by standing safely at a distance. Instead, He embraced our human nature—He was born, He grew, He lived, worked, and suffered, He died. And then He rose from the dead,” writes author Dr. Kari Vo. The story of our salvation is a hard-fought victory. What began in a humble manger stall in Bethlehem on Christmas morn reached its zenith when Jesus—child of Mary, Son of God—was crucified, died, and rose from the dead three days later. This is what God did for us; this is what happened when *love came down*.

A few paper copies will be available in the narthex. Devotions can also be read or listened to on-line at www.lhm.org/advent, subscribed to, or downloaded via Podcast.

Also from Pastor:

When Helping Hurts

I would like again to invite all interested members of the congregation to participate in a monthly study and discussion of a book entitled, *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty without Hurting the Poor ... and Yourself*. This is for all who are interested in being a part of our ongoing congregational discussion of the most effective and faithful way(s) for us to reach out to and serve our community in Jesus’ name. Five of us met for the first time in November and began with an initial discussion. When we meet again on Thursday, January 18, at 7:00 p.m., we will be discussing the Introduction and Chapter 1 of the book. It is not too late to join us; if you would like copies of the reading and discussion materials, please see me.

Jesus and the Ark

Recently I have been reading a book by Ken Ham, the founder and president of the organization Answers in Genesis, entitled *Ready to Return? The Need for a Fundamental Shift in Church Culture to Save a Generation*. In chapter 7, entitled “Jesus and the Ark,” he writes the following:

“Even for those who profess belief in Scripture, the story of the ark and the Flood raises many questions, which when left unanswered, tend to also raise the

Christian’s doubt level. To be clear, the credibility of the Flood event has a huge impact on how people view the rest of Scripture.”

Ham then proceeds to address some of the most-frequently asked questions concerning the ark and the Flood that he has been asked from both inside and outside the Church. He explains, “If such questions remain unanswered, this can be a major contributing factor to why so many in the 20s generation have left (and are leaving) the Church. Answering them is part of equipping believers with a reasonable apologetic (defense of the Christian faith and the truth of the Scriptures).”

I’d like to share a few of these in the coming months, as I think they are worthwhile. I’ll begin this month with the question “Were Dinosaurs on Noah’s Ark?” Ham says the following:

“This is one of the questions most often asked of me. The history of God’s creation (told in Genesis 1 and 2), tells us that all the land-dwelling creatures were made on day 6 of creation week – the same day God made Adam and Eve. Therefore, dinosaurs (being land animals) were clearly made with man. Keep in mind the word “dinosaur” was only invented in 1841 as a name for a particular group of land animals.

Also, two of every kind (seven of some) of land animal (which must have included the dinosaur kinds) boarded the ark. The description of “behemoth” in chapter 40 of the Book of Job (Job lived after the Flood) seems to fit with something like a sauropod dinosaur. The ancestor of “behemoth” must have been on board the ark.

(For some remarkable evidence that dinosaurs have lived until relatively recent times, visit www.answersingenesis.org/go/dinosaurs.)

Juveniles of even the largest land animals do not present a size problem and, being young, they have their full breeding life ahead of them. Yet most dinosaurs were not very large at all – some were the size of a chicken (although absolutely no relation to birds, as many evolutionists claim). Most scientists agree that the average size of a dinosaur is actually the size of a bison. So God most likely brought Noah two young adult sauropods. The same goes for elephants, giraffes, and other animals that grow to be very large, even though there was adequate room for most fully-grown adult animals anyway.

It should also be noted that, although there are hundreds of names for different varieties (species) of dinosaurs that have been discovered, there are probably only about 50 different kinds, because there are only around 50 families of dinosaurs.”

Look for more next month!

Board of Elders

Oh, come, let us adore Him! Come and join your brothers and sisters in Christ at our mid-week Advent services. We hear and learn more and strengthen our faith as we prepare ourselves for the big celebration, the celebration of the birth of our Savior, JESUS. Come join in this joyful time of year. Come early and enjoy the soup supper and the fellowship with one another before the church service begins.

We would like welcome our new members for October and November and wish them God's blessings. We welcome Ruth Altman and Phylis Altman. Thanks be to God! We wish God's blessings to Mike Myers as he has transferred to Immanuel Lutheran Church, Alpena. The Board has been discussing the inactive members. Elder Teams have been encouraged to pray for the members of their team. Letters are also being sent to many members to encourage them to help us update our records and to let them know that we are praying that their spiritual needs are being met.

Come, let us adore Him! This is the season to pray, praise, and give thanks to God for His Son, Jesus. Hope you have a Christ-filled Christmas! Merry Christmas to all! There will be NO candlelight service and NO New Year's Day service this year.

The Lutheran Hour

The Lutheran Hour can be heard locally on Sunday mornings at 7:00 a.m. on 92.5 FM and at 11:00 a.m. on 1450 AM. You can also listen on-line or via podcast at www.lutheranhour.org. Now you can also download the new Lutheran Hour Mobile App to your mobile device. Instructions for doing so can be found at www.lhm.org/apps/.

December 3

"Advent Adventure"

Guest Speaker: Rev. Dr. Dale A. Meyer

Sometimes our faith gets weaker, sometimes it grows stronger. Let's take this Advent to heart, and "live by faith, and not by sight."

(Mark 13:24-37)

December 10

"Prep Time"

Speaker Emeritus of The Lutheran Hour: Rev. Dr. Ken Klaus

Preparing for Christmas is quite different than preparing for Christ. Today's Lutheran Hour message explores those differences.

(Mark 1:1-3)

December 17

"Life Narrows Down"

Guest Speaker: Rev. Dr. Dale A. Meyer

John the Baptist had a passion for the Lamb of God. What's your passion in life? How far into the future will it take you? (John 1:6-8, 19-28 (John testifies to Christ))

December 24

"The Greatest Story Ever Told"

Speaker Emeritus of The Lutheran Hour: Rev. Dr. Ken Klaus
What is your favorite story? This Christmas Eve Day, The Lutheran Hour speaks about God's greatest story.
(Luke 1: 30-32a)

December 31

"Children of Promise"

Our identity as God's children encourages us to live in His grace, to embrace the freedom Jesus won, and to resist the ways of the world that strive to keep us captive.
(Galatians 4:4-7)

Stewardship Corner

Christmas is coming. It is a joyous time of feasting. The Church feasts upon the Word of God in sermon, song, and sacrament.

We hear the proclamation of the message of the angels: "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11).

We mingle our voices with theirs as we sing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!" (Luke 2:14)

We receive the proclaimed Savior, Christ the Lord, not wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger, but wrapped in bread and wine placed into our mouths for the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation.

We feast in great joy indeed because of this great blessing from our Lord and God.

God's people in ancient Israel also feasted with great joy. The Lord showered His abundant blessing on His people. And He commanded them to feast upon it (Deut. 16). The people were to go to the place appointed, where the Lord would make His name dwell, and give offerings, each man as he was able, according to the blessing of the Lord that He had given them (Deut. 16:10, 15, 17).

And there the Lord would bless them with joy as they feasted upon what the Lord had provided. They ate of the choice parts of their offerings. They enjoyed the company of all the people of God as they together heard His promises of blessing, sang of His bountiful goodness, and partook of what He gave.

We feast on the Word who became flesh to dwell among us, not just during Christmas, but throughout all the year.

We feast not just on the salvation He has wrought for us in His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, but we feast also on all the temporal blessings that God gives out of His fatherly divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in us.

We enjoy the rich bounty that God provides, not only in Word and Sacrament, but also in house and home, property and income, family and friends.

Let us then, as did our brothers in the faith from ancient Israel, give as we are able, according to the blessing of the Lord our God that He has given us.

Let us, like them, give generously of the first fruits of our income, which He gives, so that all may know and enjoy the salvation He gives and the joy we have in the Savior born in the city of David, who is Christ the Lord.

Taken from www.lcms.org

DECEMBER 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Baptisms: Matthew Rhode, Sarah Kamyszek	2 <u>Anniversaries:</u> James & Carol Fleury <u>Baptisms:</u> Kelly Crull <u>Birthdays:</u> Jan Dullack
3	4 <u>Anniversaries:</u> Tom & Jan Dullack <u>Birthdays:</u> Bill Claus	5 <u>Baptisms:</u> Isaac Riddle, Alex Rhode <u>Birthdays:</u> Amanda Jumper	6	7 <u>Birthdays:</u> JoAnne Muller, Opal Wright	8 <u>Baptisms:</u> Jill Brege	9 <u>Baptisms:</u> Cindy Srebnik <u>Birthdays:</u> Scott Grulke
10 <u>Baptisms:</u> Mercedes Russ <u>Birthdays:</u> David Kaski, Matt Boughner	11 <u>Baptisms:</u> Elwood Knopf <u>Birthdays:</u> Hunter Jumper, Martha Mahlburg	12	13 <u>Baptisms:</u> Kathleen Zimmerman <u>Birthdays:</u> Larry Grulke	14 <u>Baptisms:</u> Jan Latz, Randy Reisener <u>Birthdays:</u> Rose Buck	15 <u>Baptisms:</u> Sharon Loomer <u>Birthdays:</u> Eugene DeBeust	16 <u>Baptisms:</u> Terry Peltz
17 <u>Baptisms:</u> JoAnne Muller, Jan Dullack, Ralph Zempel <u>Birthdays:</u> Alyssa Hudock, Mark Fuhrman	18 <u>Baptisms:</u> Janice Brown, Mary Gledhill, Adalyn Senff	19 <u>Birthdays:</u> Rae Reneau	20 <u>Baptisms:</u> Art Radtke <u>Birthdays:</u> Cody Elowsky	21 <u>Baptisms:</u> Karlee Longoria, Bill Claus <u>Birthdays:</u> Norm Elowski	22 <u>Baptisms:</u> Amanda Jumper <u>Birthdays:</u> Nicole Hoeft	23 <u>Anniversaries:</u> Art & Irene Radtke, Bart & Cathy Hellmuth <u>Baptisms:</u> Jacob Longoria <u>Birthdays:</u> Carol Fleury, Jacob Longoria
24 <u>Birthdays:</u> Tom Bruning	25 <u>Birthdays:</u> Alex Rhode	26 <u>Baptisms:</u> Ruth Wright <u>Birthdays:</u> Mark Rhode, Kari Grulke, Chelsea Myers	27 <u>Anniversaries:</u> Terry & Jan Blumberg <u>Birthdays:</u> Cody Wenzel	28 <u>Anniversaries:</u> Bob & Lee Bingle <u>Birthdays:</u> Frankie Jumper, Janet Schalk	29 <u>Baptisms:</u> Matt Boughner	30 <u>Anniversaries:</u> Dale & Joan Sorgenfrei <u>Birthdays:</u> Ava Grulke
31 <u>Baptisms:</u> Mark Fuhrman <u>Birthdays:</u> Melissa Schleben						