



Bethesda Lutheran Church

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SERVE YOU! CALL US
FOR ANYTHING!

Bethesda Outlook

December, 2010

CHRIST, Be Our LIGHT

The time of Advent is a time of waiting and longing. The nights of December are long and getting colder and we yearn for the light. When we step into this sacred time, we step into a blurring of future; present and past. We await the coming of God through the Son, Jesus the Christ. So we experience three Advents or comings here and now. We come to the manger on Christmas Eve with trust and hope that the light of Christ will come and dwell with us to overcome the darkness.

The Advent of His first coming in a humble birth as God comes to us, to be with us as Jesus born humbly among the animals in a feeding trough. The Advent of his second coming to reign in our hearts, to come and dwell in us and the third Advent as of His weekly and daily presence in our lives.

This Advent we are challenged to seek out God's vision and future for us and for our broken world and live that as a present reality. **Advent does not mean wishing; advent means coming, the coming presence of God!** How might *we be* Advent people, the coming presence of God, for and to those around us? How might we who long for our basic needs of life, food, water, warmth and shelter; also make sure that our cold, lonely and hungry brothers and sisters needs are also met? How might we be the beacons of light, hope and peace for the 'other' as we welcome them into our doors? Past is **present!** The hope that fills Advent is not for a maybe-perhaps-not-yet event. Future is **now!** Who was, who is, and who is to come to shine into our darkness.

In your waiting, may God's love and peace break into your hearts with wonder and may you share that peace as Advent people for our world. May you live in the holy present, now, and on Christmas morning awaken at the manger to Jesus breaking in and doing new and wonderful things in you.

Merry Christmas to you and all your loved ones and may *Christ* be your *Light* so that the *Light Of Christ* shines in your hearts today and in the coming New Year!

Pastor Malcolm and Charlie Brown

CHRIST, LIGHT

Be Our





Bethesda Lutheran Church

23406~56th Ave West, Mountlake Terrace, WA, 98043
425-778-6390 - <http://bethesdalcm.com>

*Come and Celebrate
Come to the manger and meet
the Christ Child
Bethesda Lutheran Church*

November 28th, 1st Sunday of Advent-10:15am

December 5th – 2nd Sunday of Advent - 10:15am

December 12th– Children’s Christmas Program-10:15am

December 19th – Choir Cantata Sunday - 10:15am

December 24th - Christmas Eve Services:

5:00pm Christmas Eve Family Worship

9:00pm Traditional Candlelight Worship Service

December 26th - Christmas Lessons and Carols- 10:15am

From Your Council President

“Share with God’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.” Romans 12:13

Let us all remember the art of Hospitality. It is a spiritual practice of the heart. Let us remember when we were strangers and how others, including God, welcomed us. Embrace the stranger within your own heart. Let us see Christ in each other no matter what we look like on the outside. When we see Christ in each other, we are truly seeing and receiving God’s abundant love and grace. We all want the same things: recognition, acceptance,

love and mercy. Who’s knocking on your door? Are you willing to take the risk and open the door? You might be surprised at the gift a stranger offers. It might be just what you needed most.

Blessings of the Season!

Your sister in Christ,

Dena Lee

We wish to thank all the members of the Bethesda family for their prayers and concerns extended to us during Della’s illness. And a special thank you for all the cards and emails sent to us after her death. She led a long and amazing life and blessed her family with many wonderful memories. She will be missed by many.

Thank you all,

Pastor Malcolm and Charlie Brown



The Spirit

News for the congregations of the Northwest Washington Synod of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Volume 27, Number 11

December 2010

Shall We Dance?

by The Rev. Wm Chris Boerger, Bishop



Some of you have already heard this story. For those who have not, this is a warning that this is not the last time that you will hear it. While DeDe and I were in South Africa during my recent sabbatical we had occasion to worship at the

Lutheran Church in Edendale, South Africa. Edendale is a township outside of Pietermaritzburg.

This was the shortest 3.5 hour service of worship I have ever experienced. There were no musical instruments in the building, but the singing was in four-part harmony and was amazing. The service was very similar in liturgical flow to our liturgies.

The point of this story is to reflect on the eleven offerings that took place. It should be noted that Edendale as a township is a place where the poor live. At the time of the offering, plastic containers were placed in front of the congregation.

The church council was invited to come forward with their offering while the congregation sang an African song. As the music started, the council danced forward to give their offerings. After the song was finished the next song was announced and the Sunday School children danced forward with their offering.

Each group was accompanied with a dif-

ferent song. The older men, then the older women, the young men, young women, those who worked in the service industries, those who had a job, those who had a car, the youth of the congregation and finally those who wanted to help pay for the bread and wine used in communion danced forward with their offerings.


This was an act of worship. It was the community joyously sharing, dancing at the opportunity to share in the work of God in their lives, their community, and their church.

At the conclusion of the service, during the announcements, the previous weeks offering total was announced and broken down into the sub-groups. There was accountability among the members of Christ's body.

I learned anew the fact that our offerings are part of our worship. In these days of economic uncertainty, we too often treat our offerings as a business transaction or a bill to pay. The church is just another way we use our discretionary income.


For the people of this congregation in South Africa, the offering was part of their worship experience. It was their turn to respond to what God was doing in their lives. We have much to learn from our sisters and brothers in South Africa. The joy of sharing in God's work is just one of them. Shall we dance?

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
DECEMBER 2010			1 Mtlk. Terr. Sr's. lunch - Noon Al-Anon Mtg. 7:00pm	2 Life Group 6:00pm Brownies 6:30pm Choir rehearsal 7:00pm	3 ESL Tutoring 9:00am Mtlk. Terr. Sr's. lunch - Noon AA Mtg. 6:00pm	4 Hospitality Comm. Mtg. 10:00am Exec. Comm. Mtg. Noon Xmas Pageant reh. 1:00pm
5 ADVENT 2 Worship 10:15am All Nations Harvest Church - 1:00pm Comm. Dinner prep. 3:00pm	6 Ruth/Miriam Circle 2:00pm @ J. Anstice's Community Dinner 5:30pm WAM Comm. Mtg. 5:30pm Facilities Committee 6:30pm @ J. Minnis'	7 ESL Tutoring 9:00am Brownies 6:30pm Jammers rehearsal 7:00pm	8 Esther Circle 10:00am Mtlk. Terr. Sr's. lunch - Noon Al-Anon Mtg. 7:00pm	9 Brownies 6:30pm Choir rehearsal 7:00pm	10 ESL Tutoring 9:00am Mtlk. Terr. Sr's. lunch - Noon AA Mtg. 6:00pm	11 Xmas Pageant reh. 12:30pm
12 ADVENT 3 Xmas Pageant 10:15am All Nations Harvest Church - 1:00pm Comm. Dinner prep. 3:00pm	13 Sue's Bible Study 2:00pm Community Dinner 5:30pm Finance Committee 7:00pm	14 ESL Tutoring 9:00am Jammers rehearsal 7:00pm	15 Mtlk. Terr. Sr's. lunch - Noon Al-Anon Mtg. 7:00pm	16 Life Group 6:00pm Brownies 6:30pm Choir rehearsal 7:00pm	17 ESL Tutoring 9:00am Mtlk. Terr. Sr's. lunch - Noon AA Mtg. 6:00pm	18
19 ADVENT 4 Worship 10:15am Christmas Cantata "Night of the Father's Love" All Nations Harvest Church - 1:00pm Comm. Dinner prep. 3:00pm Lee's Piano Recital 4:30pm	20 Community Dinner 5:30pm Council Meeting 7:00pm	21 ESL Tutoring 9:00am Brownies 6:30pm Jammers rehearsal 7:00pm <u>NEWSLETTER DEADLINE</u>	22 Mtlk. Terr. Sr's. lunch - Noon Al-Anon Mtg. 7:00pm	23 Brownies 6:30pm Choir rehearsal 7:00pm	24 AA Mtg. 6:00pm Christmas Eve Services 5:30pm & 9:00pm	25 
26 Worship 10:15am Lessons & Carols All Nations Harvest Church - 1:00pm Comm. Dinner prep. 3:00pm	27 Sue's Bible Study 2:00pm Community Dinner 5:30pm	28 ESL Tutoring 9:00am Twins Club 5:00pm Jammers rehearsal 7:00pm	29 Mtlk. Terr. Sr's. lunch - Noon Al-Anon Mtg. 7:00pm	30 Life Group 6:00pm Brownies 6:30pm Choir rehearsal 7:00pm	31 AA Mtg. 6:00pm	



"The Second
Shepherd's Pageant"

December 12
10:15 am



*Christmas
Cantata*

"Night of the
Father's Love"

December 19
10:15 am



December 26 ~ 10:15am



DECEMBER

- 2 - Judith Schwald
- 4 - Frances Hinson
- 6 - Andrew Molitor
- 10 - Jeanette Anstice
Kristina Cochran
- 11 - Cliff Pearson
- 13 - Cameron Anstice
Tricia Goldsmith
- 14 - Alice Swierenga
- 18 - Mikey Van Deren
- 20 - Robin Anstice
- 21 - Jim Rasmussen
- 22 - Kasi Reeves (Olson)
- 23 - Pat Olson
- 27 - Kelly Matteucci
- 29 - Carol Bader
Karen Carroll
- 31 - Kimberly Van Deren

Help Bethesda reduce its printing and mailing expense by receiving Bethesda's newsletter via e-mail!! The newsletter is also available on our website. If you are interested in being removed from the mailing list, contact Jean Leavens:

Phone: 425-778-6390

E-mail: jean@bethesdalcm.com

CRANBERRY FUN SALAD

It's quick and easy, fun to eat.
Yet no other salad can quite compete.
One bag of cranberries, chop 'em or grind,
Then, add little marshmallows-----
Half a bag will do fine!
Mix in one cup of sugar.
Add ½ pint of whipped cream.
Chill for two hours.
Then you'll see what I mean!

*Jennifer Nelson, Youth Chairman
Blue Mountain Grange, No. 263
Ryegate, Vermont*

Thoughts For The Month

by *Jeanne Krahn*

Why is it our lives are so filled (with what?) that each year we only find time to exchange Christmas greeting cards? November comes and I'm determined to get our Christmas cards written early. Whaa? Panic sets in and now an annoying case of writer's cramp. It boggles me—why is it so important to me that I hand-write our greetings? Why not the computer printouts that are family greetings for more and more people every year? Perhaps because I feel Christmas should always be a season of humanity, of warmth and caring. Messages should be personal—words that say “We're thinking about you” - a way of getting in touch with people who have enriched our lives in one way or another. Each one deserves to be remembered individually. Each year it's a sort of “panicville” here as the hustle and bustle of Christmas preparations pile up as I write our little epistles. I think it's important. I'll make the time. My family is sure I don't exist from breakfast time until 2am, except in the back room writing “snail mail” - it's everyone for himself when it involves food

No, I don't forget Advent. It is the time church signals Christians every year that something momentous is soon to happen and now is the time to prepare for it. We have at least three alternatives to respond to Advent. One can ignore it, making no special preparations or thoughts about it through the 27 days—life as usual, until Christmas. Or passively, you can depend on someone else to make Christmas meaningful and hoping they will do something. Or you can have 27 days and more of “Wow! Christmas is coming” with enthusiastic expectations of planning, praying and working for a full and complete Christmas. And yes, we do take time for both cards and Advent, trying to live like I say I believe and not being a copy-cat Christian.

“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior which is Christ the Lord” is still the heart of Christmas. It can be nothing else, and no changes in the message. Nor can it be forgotten though we're besieged by many things that tend to make us forget. Start your Advent Sunday with your Advent wreath and candles. Hint: if you put candles in the freezer, they burn more slowly so the first one can last until Christmas. Someone once said “Life is too short to get ready for Christmas; just let Christmas come.” But December 25th is not necessarily a deadline. The entire month of December is preparation and celebration—slow down and savor the flavor of the season.

We continue to Twelfth Night—Epiphany—the coming of the three wise men. It's my special treat to myself—to sit, hot cup of coffee in one hand, book about Christmas in the other, enjoying the tree lights, all of our decorations from friends and family in many countries. Maybe some soft Christmas music, etc. Re-reading and truly reflecting on Martin Luther's words: “There are some of us who think to ourselves, 'If I had only been there! How quick I would have been to help the Baby. I would have washed his linen. How happy I would have been to go with the shepherds to see the Lord lying in the manger!’” Yes, we would. We say that because we know how great Christ is, but, really, would we?

We'd probably have done no better than the people of Bethlehem. Why don't we do it now? We have Christ in our neighbor.

If decking the halls with boughs of holly or hearing one more Christmas carol are doubting your sanity amid the so called holiday madness, cool it! Holidays compound the time crunch—a day-to-day time crunch of most American families. Identify your main sources of stress, set your priorities and eliminate which you can eliminate and which can't be avoided. Make your decisions with a sense of focus. Decide what do the holidays really mean for you and your family. Keep your events and celebrations that capture the meanings of the season for all of you. During the holidays we need to look within about what the season means to us personally, not what we've been told it should mean. Truly, when we think about the special times in our lives, it's not the things we remember but our experiences with family and friends. Maybe that's why I feel I must write something to so many of our friends and family around the world we've been blessed with.

Robinson and Staeheli's 1982 book “Unplug the Christmas Machine” contains a meaningful “The Christmas Pledge” - believing in the simplicity of Christmas, I commit myself to the following:

1. To remember the people who truly need my gifts.
2. To express my love for family and friends in more direct ways than presents.
3. To rededicate myself to the spiritual growth of my family.
4. To examine my holiday activities in light of the true spirit of Christmas.
5. To initiate one act of peace making within my circle of family and friends.

Sometimes I think we expect too much of Christmas Day. We try to crowd into it the long arrears of kindness and humanity of the whole year and we fret when we hear that Christmas giving is an outward sign of what kind of person we are. As we leave “Bethlehem” we ought to leave behind old grudges, old fears, old sorrows. We need to continue our praising and praying to God, continuing our life's adventures by taking new paths. “Sometime during the winter we shall need the friendly spirit of Christmas. Sometime in the spring we shall want the hope of Christmas.” Don't pack up the true spirit of Christmas when we pack up our decorations.

So remember, while December brings the only Christmas Day in the year, let there be Christmas in the things you do and say; wouldn't life be worth the living, wouldn't dreams be coming true, if we kept the Christmas spirit the whole year through? Every moment that we spend caring and sharing each day is always a tiny seed of hope for our tomorrows! Shared experiences are a profound effect on family life. May all the joys of the coming season be yours. Merry Christmas from the Krahn family.



The People's Parking Lot Project


Wow! The new parking lot is going to be awesome! Already we see the results of better drainage and the new sidewalks are fabulous. Can't wait for the new blacktop to be laid down and the white parking stripes to be painted in! Grateful thanks to our graders, ditch diggers, wood choppers and cement pourers!

Now it is our turn, the Congregation, to do some hard work! We need you to help payback our loan for this wonderful improvement at Bethesda. Our generous donor has fronted us the capitol to underwrite this project and is hoping that we will pay him back within 5 years at no interest.

Please fill out the enclosed Parking Lot Pledge Form with your financial commitment. No amount of money is too little. This is our parking lot. We all benefit from this capitol improvement. Give your pledge to Council president, Dena Lee or Vice President, Jeff Thedens. Place in the offering plate or give it to Joy DeGraff. These pledges are confidential.

From time to time, the Congregation will be informed of how we are doing with our payback.

Thank you for your support!



Parking Lot Project

Donor Information (please print or type)

Name	
Street Address	
City, State, ZIP Code	
Telephone	
E-Mail	

Pledge Information

I (we) pledge a total of \$_____ to be paid (circle one): weekly monthly quarterly yearly

I (we) plan to make this contribution in the form of (circle one): cash check

Please make checks payable to: Bethesda Lutheran Church

Designate to: Parking Lot Project

Signature(s)
Date

**Bethesda
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Church of the Beloved: Ryan Marsh—Deployed

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