



# Bethesda Outlook

December 2012

May **CHRIST**  
be your **LIGHT**,  
be our **LIGHT**

I find it very difficult to wait, do you? For me this time of Advent is an opportunity to relearn how to wait, to remember and practice the art of appreciating the future in an unhurried way of being. And yet, this year, although it is hard to wait, I find myself yearning and longing for the waiting time to begin, even before Advent has begun. I find myself seeking to stay in the present of each day and in every moment of each and every day and find meaning in the waiting.

The nights of December are long and getting colder and we yearn for the light. When we step into this sacred time of Advent, we step into a blurrrrrrring of future; present and past. We await the coming of God through the Son, Jesus the Christ. We come to the manger on Christmas Eve with trust and hope that the light of Christ will come again and dwell with us now, today, to overcome the darkness.

Who was, who is, and who is to come. Advent is the very real in-breaking of future and past into the present, right here in Mountlake Terrace in the year 2012! This in-breaking of God is about God coming to us and breaking into our lives to say, "I love you" through the birth of this little one. It is about God coming to us and saying to us here right now: "My beloved Child what might I

do for you?" This Advent we are challenged to seek out God's vision and future for us and for our broken world and live that out as a present reality. **Advent does not mean wishing; Advent does mean waiting for the coming, the coming presence of God!** How might *we* be Advent people, the coming presence of God, for and to those around us? Past is **present!** The hope that fills Advent is not for a maybe-perhaps-not-yet event. Future is **now!** Who was, who is, who is to come!

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 through you and 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*

Hello, My Brothers and Sisters!

Can you believe it is the season of Advent? How we all await the birth of a new time, a new adventure, a new relationship or maybe a renewed relationship with God and Jesus, our friends and neighbors and those many and varied brothers and sisters who need our loving gift of grace and compassion.

I continue to meet and greet my Cascade neighbors. It truly is a joy to be here. Last community council meeting, there was a presentation of the upcoming Seattle City Light Denny Substation Project. I meant to only stop for a moment to lend support as I was on my way to a dance class. BUT, the whole subject was so fascinating and informative I could not leave the meeting! Seattle City Light showed us three different plans for redevelopment and the pros and cons of each plan. The first plan sounded okay. The second plan sounded even better and the third plan was the winner! The third plan addresses the impact of such a substation would have on this community in so many ways. The idea is that the substation must be green, safe, be pleasing to the eye and benefit the community in other ways than just be a “substation”. Wow! City planning is an art form!

All of this re-development makes me think of Mountlake Terrace and the vision your city planners have for the future. Bethesda is a part of that future. I hope you all will join in the fun...

My dance conference in Los Angeles was a grand experience. What a vibrant city L.A. is. We had an opportunity to view dance programs in L.A. public schools. It was a great way to view the city and be witness to what L.A. public schools are doing with the arts. So many beautiful children performed for the conference opening. Our conference hotel was located in an area of L.A. called “Little Tokyo”. I explored lots of shops, new and old, within walking distance of our hotel. One of the highlights of my explorations was stumbling into a gallery that featured Japanese science fiction art! I was mesmerized!

Early in October, I traded my beautiful Cadillac in on a newer VW Passat Sedan. It was sad to let the luxury vehicle go but it wouldn't fit into most of the parking spaces in my apartment building and I crunched it twice getting into the garage. Lots of dinks were showing up due to other car doors banging open into my oversize “gangsta' car”. It's another “new-ism”—an appropriate mode of transportation for this urban adventure I have begun.

Last night, Bill's son, Phillip, and I attended Immanuel Lutheran Church's annual Thanksgiving dinner. We arrived early to help set up but everything was already done! We tried to help with the coffee scene but that didn't really work either! Maxine, they needed you there to get it straight! It was a lovely Thanksgiving meal. The turkey and fixin's were prepared by the men who participate in the recovery residency program at ILC—it was delicious—real mashed potatoes, cornbread stuffing, mustard greens. The congregation and friends brought side dishes and desserts. Each of the men received a quilt made by the quilting team. It was a wonderful evening and I feel like I am making some beautiful friends.

We await our King! Our Messiah! Our Chancellor! Blessings of the Season!

Dena Lee

(p.s.) I will be worshiping with my Bethesda brethren on December 16<sup>th</sup>.)

*Dear Pastor Malcolm,*

*Please thank everyone for the sweet surprise I got from them. The jam is very good and just what I can eat now. The cards are beautiful and must have taken a long time to make. My purple frog will have to wait for next year's garden as it has turned cold and snow is around the corner.*

*God loves us all so much and I'm so happy He used me to reach out to you. It has been a wonderful blessing in my life. May he keep blessing all of us until we can be with Him. Thank you again.*

*Love & Blessings,  
Brenda Bunny*



**Northwest Washington Synod**  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

## The Season Of Advent

by The Rev. Wm Chris Boerger

In my years in ministry I have watched the season of Advent become increasingly at odds with our culture and with the desire for the church to be an inviting place. Most of my "hymn battles" were focused on the Advent Hymns. "Can't we sing at least one Christmas Hymn starting after Thanksgiving?" What was intended to be a season of reflection and repentance has become an unappreciated relic of a slower moving society.

I will also confess that I gave up on the Advent wars in my later years in the parish. The Sunday School program, Choir Festival and Christmas Hymn festival were not hills on which to continue my plea for a reflective Advent. So while I have given up the fight for a traditional Advent I do want to argue that there is still a need for the work of the Advent season.

Knowing that families are deluged with extra activities starting at Halloween (aka Reformation Day), I once suggested that we cancel all extra meetings during Advent. No council meetings, no worship committee meetings were scheduled in December. This did require advance planning for the November meeting, but there were no issues that could not take a month longer to address. In theory this allowed members more time with their families during the Advent season.

The reflection on the work of God becoming incarnate also leads to a need for repentance. This is about how our lives are changed by the grace of God. This is probably the biggest loss in this culture of Christmas joy and spending. The season of Christmas is not about us, it is about God. How we reflect on what God is doing is important to our daily lives. If we are not able to find time for this reflection and repentance during the weeks prior to Christmas, then I suggest we look at when we will do this essential work.

I know that this is daily work and that our individual devotional practices should include this work. It is also important maybe even essential for the community to do this work together. How else will we be able to encourage or challenge each other if our repentance is private? When left to our own scheduling we might just ignore reflecting on this work of Christ in our lives.

I do not have an answer to these questions. I offer them as an observation of what we have lost as we have moved from a season of meditation and repentance to a season of hyper preparation. I would encourage practices that let go of our work and remember what God is doing in and through each of us in Christ's church. Blessed Advent.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>2</b> Worship - 10:15am Comm. Dinner prep. 3:00pm	<b>3</b> Ruth/Miriam Circle 2:00pm Community Dinner 5:30pm Facilities Committee 6:30pm @ J. Minnis'	<b>4</b> Washington Missionary Choir 6:00pm Brownies 6:30pm	<b>5</b> Mtlk. Terr. Sr's. lunch - Noon Al-Anon Mtg. 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm Jammers Rehearsal 8:30pm	<b>6</b> Brownies 6:30pm	<b>7</b> Mtlk. Terr. Sr's. lunch - Noon	<b>1</b> Hanging of the <i>Greens</i> 9:00am—Noon
						<b>8</b>
<b>9</b> Worship - 10:15am Comm. Dinner prep. 3:00pm	<b>10</b> Care & Concern Ministry 10:00 am Sue's Bible Study 2:00pm Community Dinner 5:30pm Finance Committee 7:00pm	<b>11</b> Washington Missionary Choir 6:00pm	<b>12</b> Mtlk. Terr. Sr's. lunch - Noon Foodie Book Group 6:30-8:30pm Al-Anon Mtg. 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm Jammers Rehearsal 8:30pm	<b>13</b> Life Group 6:00pm Brownies 6:30pm	<b>14</b> Mtlk. Terr. Sr's. lunch - Noon	<b>15</b> Family Movie Night 5:00pm
<b>16</b> Worship - 10:15am Comm. Dinner prep. 3:00pm	<b>17</b> Community Dinner 5:30pm Council Meeting 7:00pm	<b>18</b> Washington Missionary Choir 6:00pm Brownies 6:30pm  <u>NEWSLETTER DEADLINE</u>	<b>19</b> Mtlk. Terr. Sr's. lunch - Noon Al-Anon Mtg. 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal 7:00pm Jammers Rehearsal 8:30pm	<b>20</b> Brownies 6:30pm	<b>21</b> Mtlk. Terr. Sr's. lunch - Noon	<b>22</b> Men's Fellowship 8:00am
<b>23</b> Worship - 10:15am Comm. Dinner prep. 3:00pm	<b>24</b> Community Dinner 4:00pm  Family Worship 5:00pm  Candlelight Service 9:00pm	<b>25</b>  <i>Merry Christmas</i>  (office closed)	<b>26</b> Mtlk. Terr. Sr's. lunch - Noon Al-Anon Mtg. 7:00pm Jammers Rehearsal 8:30pm	<b>27</b> Life Group 6:00pm Brownies 6:30pm	<b>28</b> Mtlk. Terr. Sr's. lunch - Noon	<b>29</b>
<b>30</b> Worship - 10:15am Comm. Dinner prep. 3:00pm	<b>31</b> Community Dinner 5:30pm	<h1>December 2012</h1>				



- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| 4 - Frances Hinson                       | 14 - Alice Swierenga     |
| 6 - Paula Geyen<br>Andrew Molitor        | 15 - Rod Schwald         |
| 10 - Jeanette Anstice                    | 20 - Robin Anstice       |
| 11 - Cliff Pearson                       | 21 - Judith Schwald      |
| 13 - Cameron Anstice<br>Tricia Goldsmith | 22 - Kasi Reeves (Olson) |
|  | 23 - Pat Olson           |
|  | 27 - Kelly Matteucci     |

*Hanging  
of the  
Greens*

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1,  
9:00—Noon**

**hot chocolate  
hot apple cider  
goodies & music  
provided**

*\*\*~Greetings Bethesda Family,~\*\**

As we look forward to celebrating  
the birth of our Savior,  
let us be ...

Joyful in Hope, Patient in Affliction, and  
Faithful in Prayer.  
(Romans 12.12)

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Take it from me..  
(a gentle reminder)

Tell your family and friends you love them,  
because you never know what is right  
around the corner.

Whatever the Lord's divine plan is  
we'd best be prepared..

"Ye know not the hour or the day"....  
May each and everyone of you have a  
wonderful Christmas.

God Bless you  
In Love and Peace  
Mickey Schwald  
Council President

## Thoughts For The Month

by *Jeanne Krahn*

Yep! It's really me - Jeanne. You thought I was left in Finland and not home to grumble and nag you all about keeping our faith during the holidays, etc. Well, isn't faith an odd part of our lives or seems to be? It's that invisible foundation upon which we try to build our emotional and spiritual lives but too often, it seems to disappear from daily life. Doesn't this too often happen at Christmas? Parties, tinsel, gift giving, relatives, friends! We acquire sort of a nagging feeling looking for a more spiritual Christmas as if we could find it somewhere and bring it home. Spread this think called faith over our entire holidays! No way! Faith isn't something imposed upon our lives. It's deep within us, from your lifetime of believing, praying and accepting, of seeing God in the faces of others and always a "thank you" for the blessings we have received. There is good in the world! Give back out of whatever God has given you. Bring something there that wasn't there before. Reclaim Advent!

And yes, I'm really grumbling! Black Friday now becoming Black Thursday—Thanksgiving Day. The holidays are around the corner and I can scarcely believe our country is entering the biggest buying season of the year. Americans will spend a total of \$586.1 billion in November and December, and an average of \$646.00 per person on gifts alone! The impact of the consumption on people and planet is gross! Our economy thrives on consumer spending and if the stores open, people will come. Visa versa, they will come because the stores will continue to open. The vast majority of American spending goes to those CEOs and corporations that are outsourcing jobs and taking money from the communities. Think a moment! Your holiday meals could be laden with toxic pesticides. The brand name shirt you were gifted has been sewn in a sweat shop. The gift wrapping was made from trees cut down for only one usage. What a waste!

Whoa! It's not all bah, humbug. You do have a choice. What a perfect time to encourage your family to go green. Try to use organic ingredients for meals, make your own gifts and gift wrap (funny papers always work) and choose to buy from small, green businesses. Big pat on the back for "going green". More people (even your own family) will learn that where your values are, you're not becoming victims to corporate greed and recklessness. What a help for our communities!

Holiday practices aren't always green. Here's a bit of eco-twist on tradition. If decorating a Christmas tree in your home is an annual tradition, which tree? Most live, cut Christmas trees for sale, sprayed with pesticides that linger in your home, has been shipped long distances. Best option can be buying one from a local, organic tree farm or farmer's market. These trees are often grown on rocky soil that's not good for other crops. Be sure to ask whether the trees have been sprayed with pesticides. Artificial trees can be even worse than the parking lot trees and whoops, yes, we have one after a trillion years

of a green outdoor tree! Most fake trees are made from polyvinyl chloride PVC which leaches carcinogenic and very toxic chemicals throughout its life cycle. Even worse are the lead compounds used to stabilize the PVC in fake trees but after about 9 years, the dangerous lead exposure begins. Most artificial trees are made in China! Much of our holiday waste comes from gift wrap (made from virgin paper and used only once though the plastic ribbons and shiny foil paper are rarely recyclable. If you have some pretty fabric scraps or old scarves around, try your hand at "furoshiki", the Japanese method of wrapping boxes with carefully folded cloth. I like to use a special print on a kitchen towel for a person. Many send e-cards to save resources and shipping. Not me. I try to find cards made from 100% post-consumer recycled contact and then disappear for days to write. Ask Stan. He grumbles also. Where is she?

Lights everywhere! LED holiday lights use up to 80% less energy than incandescent lights and they're worth the splurge because they last longer. Rather than buying new decorations, scour thrift sales, garage sales and the many bazaars. If you do buy new decorations, make them fair trade to ensure the workers who made them earned a living wage and didn't labor under sweat shop conditions.

Through all this about Christmas season, I hope your Thanksgiving was a remembrance for all counting blessings. Grace helps us acknowledge that our food didn't just appear. Someone grew, ground it, bought it and baked it. And what kids really want for Christmas; yep, always the latest electronic gear and designer clothes, but in their hearts (and our also) what they really want is not on their lists;

1. A relaxed and loving time with family.
2. Realistic expectations about what's under the tree.
3. An evenly paced holiday season.
4. Reliable family traditions.

It's time for the dentist again. Sometime during the last couple of weeks in Finland, I broke a tooth—big 'owies' yet to be fixed, but one does lose weight. When your holiday is over physically, not mentally, keep your faith. "When the song of the angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone, when the kings and princes are home, when the shepherds are back with their flocks."

The work of Christmas begins:

To find the lost  
 To heal the broken  
 To feed the hungry  
 To release the prisoner  
 To rebuild the nations  
 To bring peace among people  
 To make music in your heart... *Howard Thurman*

May your faith be alive amongst the tinsel. It's always there, waiting to be recognized. Happy Holidays! Blessings, hugs and much love.

*Jeanne (and Stan)*

**Bethesda Visionary Planning Process** has been started to help guide our congregation's mission into the immediate future.

We have been working at gathering information about this community, this congregation and the demographics of the community to help us to answer the question, "What is God calling Bethesda to be...now, What is God calling Bethesda to do ...now."

We have surveyed the community asking the question, Have you heard of Bethesda Lutheran? What have you heard? What do you see as a need in this community?

We asked the same question of the members of Bethesda.

We asked the members of Bethesda to tell us what they saw as the assets of this congregation.

We then, to round out all the information, put together a demographic report on MLT.

Now we are working to pull all this information together so we can present our findings to the congregation for your input and commitment to what our congregation's mission is going to be into the immediate future.

I would like to introduce the team. If you have any questions regarding the planning process contact a team member.

Sue Rasmussen

Penny Thedens

Sue Hauman

Tom Ruzicka

Merry Wick

Tim Minnis

Mimi Seale

Katherine Dedrick

Jeff Molitor

Tracy Ruzicka

Becky Smith

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**Dialogue not Debate**

**WE ARE HERE TO  
SERVE YOU!  
CALL US FOR  
ANYTHING!**

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Church**

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

*December 2<sup>nd</sup> - 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent-10:15am*

*December 9<sup>th</sup> - 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent - 10:15am*

*December 16<sup>th</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent-10:15am*

*December 23<sup>rd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent - 10:15am*

*December 24<sup>th</sup> - Christmas Eve Services:*

*4:00pm - Community Free Dinner-All Welcome*

*5:00pm - Christmas Eve Family Worship*

*9:00pm - Traditional Candlelight Worship Service*

*December 30<sup>th</sup> - Lessons and Carols - 10:15am*

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