

The King's

Business



Grace Lutheran

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December 2020

We at Grace Lutheran Church are called to reach, teach and be the people of God, as stewards of the Word and gifts of God.

What Could Have Been ...

There were so many ways I could have started this newsletter article for December. For quite a while I was going to ask you “How many masks do you have?” relating this to our experience in 2020 with the coronavirus. I also considered tying Christmas coming to how many people already have their Christmas decorations already in place. I believe they are hoping that by decorating early, they can better block out what all has transpired during this year.

For a short time, I mulled over discussing our fears (which have become so evident during this year) about life in general against the specific thought of Jesus’ birth (which takes away all fear). But I

finally decided that this is no time to get cute or fancy. What we need to hear is the sure and certain promise of our Lord.

“in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him

in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with fear. And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a 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. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

**“Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among those
with whom he is pleased.”**

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered

at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told to them. (Luke 2:1-20)

Why do I share this with you? Because this is what you need to hear, right now in the last month of 2020. We have heard so many other things which have helped pull us away from our Lord. Pain, sickness, death, turmoil—you name, we’ve heard about it this year. But

what we have heard only serves to take us farther away from God unless we also hear His Gospel news that He loves us so much that He sent His Son, our Savior, Jesus to be born for us. Our Savior has come to offer forgiveness and life everlasting. That’s the message we need to hear and believe in. Nothing else can help—only Jesus.

Enjoy Christmas as never before, knowing for certain the baby born in Bethlehem is your Savior!

Pastor Herring

Fellow Workers on God’s Team

In his first letter to the church in Corinth, the Apostle Paul wrote, **“For we are God’s fellow workers ...”** (1 Corinthians 3:9). Through Paul, God was telling the people in Corinth that they had the honor and privilege to work with Him and to be important participants in His mission. In the same way, God makes us His fellow workers on His team. Even though we are undeserving and have nothing to offer, God, in His sovereignty, chooses us to be His vessels through which He will accomplish His purposes. As God’s fellow workers, we become His hands, feet, and mouth to the world.

God does not schedule tryouts for those He selects to be on His team. He isn’t seeking the most talented,

the most powerful, or the most attractive. He invites and encourages everyone to be part of His team. The people who become part of God’s team vary in appearance, in gifts, in stations in life, and other ways. Although God’s team is made up people who are different in some ways, the one common factor is that they are all new creations with transformed hearts for Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:17). Through the work of the Holy Spirit, they have become people of faith who see God as their greatest treasure. Faithfulness is a top priority as a fellow worker with God. Through faith, we commit and are energized to serve God by serving others. What we do with our time, talents, and money gives evidence to which team we belong.

In God’s Word, we find examples of people who were not eager always to be fellow workers on

God’s team. Moses gave numerous excuses that God shouldn’t use him to lead the Israelites out of the Egyptian captivity. Saul hid! David felt unqualified to be king. God caused Jonah to be swallowed by a fish in order to get him on His team. God didn’t give up on these people. He chose and equipped each of them to be fellow workers on His team.

God blesses each of us with the privilege to be a fellow worker on His team. Whether we willingly join or are at first resistant, we are now participants in God’s mission to help others “to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4). God uses ordinary people like us to do extraordinary things. Are you ready to go to work?

Pastor Herring

Grace Lutheran Ladies' Guild

Began with our Bible study "Be Still and Know That I Am God" by Deaconess Jean McCain, a very timely message during this time of uncertainty and turmoil. We'll continue with this study at our next meeting. After a break for refreshments, Barbara Herring opened our business meeting with prayer. Eight ladies were in attendance: Sharon Schultz, Glenna Cates, Lisa Bennett, Terri Herman, Barbara Herring, Jane Bleser, Janice Willmuth, and Dianna Mancuso. Glenna offered a sweet devotional story about Henry Ford's generosity and willingness to help others, albeit anonymously.

Dianna Mancuso read the minutes for our September meeting.

Dianna gave a brief financial report. Our checking account balance is \$2,644.30 and our savings account balance is \$3,490.20. Since the savings account earns only 0.44 cents per quarter, Dianna requested that we move the balance of \$3,490.20 to the checking account which would eliminate the savings account. After brief discussion, Barbara so moved; Lisa made the second. Motion approved unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

✂ Per our decision at the September meeting, Sharon reported that the Guild will "adopt" seminarian Jeremy McDonald from our own Mid-South District. Jeremy and his family, originally from Tennessee, currently live in Fort Wayne, IN while he attends school at Concordia Theolog-

ical Seminary, Fort Wayne. Jeremy and his wife Dana have 4 children: Luke (15), Madalyn (9), Connor (7), and Nathan (6). Jeremy will graduate in May 2023. We thank God for giving us this family to pray for, encourage, and support in any way we can.

✂ We briefly discussed other missions and organizations to support financially. Sharon shared a pamphlet which we received from Lead a Child. We donated \$500.00 to this organization in 2017. After discussing several other possibilities, we decided to address this issue further at a future meeting.

✂ Stephen and Jessie Goline have welcomed a baby girl, Willow Rey. The Guild had planned on having a baby shower for them, but COVID-19 has pre-vented this. Willow Rey will be baptized soon (in a private service) and Barbara suggested that those who would like to give a gift, bring them to the church within the next few days. The Golines can get them at the baptism.

✂ Guild members agreed that we will not host an Advent dinner this year since COVID-19 will prevent a good turnout. Hopefully, we can host some Lenten dinners.

NEW BUSINESS

✂ After further discussion concerning our new "adopted" seminarian, Barbara moved to send Jeremy and his family \$1,000.00 for Christmas; Lisa made the second. Motion unanimously approved. Sharon will write a letter of introduce-

tion from the Guild and Dianna will buy a Christmas card.

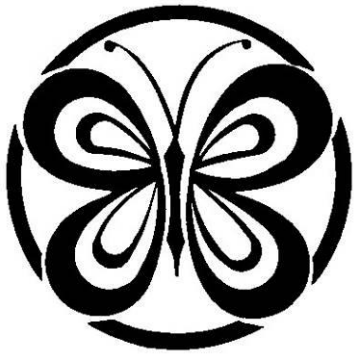
✂ The Guild will provide hygiene bags for homeless men who come to the food pantry in town. We are asking the congregation to help us in this effort by donating the following items (**full-size, not travel-size**): toothpaste, toothbrushes, disposable razors, shave cream, bars of soap, deodorant, combs, shampoo). For those who donate, please leave your items downstairs on the table we have set up for this. Sharon will purchase biodegradable bags to use for this effort. Once enough items have been donated, the Guild will meet to fill the bags.

✂ The Guild will support the Angel Tree program this Christmas. Lisa volunteered to select 4 angels from the tree at Equity Bank. We once again will ask the congregation to help us in this worthy cause by purchasing the needed gifts. We'll have more information on this shortly.

✂ Next Guild meeting: Tuesday, Dec. 15, beginning with Bible study at 10:00 am and meeting at 11:00 am. Barbara will give the opening devotion. In celebration of Christmas, we'll have a potluck refreshment time. Guild members are asked to bring finger foods; e.g. small sandwiches, veggie/fruit trays, chips, crackers, cheese, dips, cookies, brownies, etc.

With no further business to consider, the meeting was closed with The Lord's Prayer.

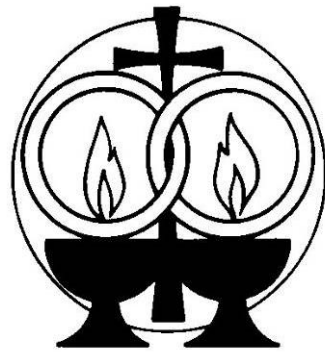
Respectfully submitted,
Dianna Mancuso



December

Birthdays

Lelis Knuth	2
Barbara Herring	8
Hilda Krutz	11
Norma Achord	22
Joe Steichen	28



December

Anniversaries

Maurice & Georgia Deubler 6

Special Services

All at 5:00pm

Midweek Advent

December 2 – In Advent,
Wait for Rescue

December 9 – In Advent,
Wait for Rescue

December 16 – In Advent,
Wait for Rescue

December 24 – **Christmas Eve**

**Unto us a child is born,
Unto us a Son is given!**

The name “Advent”

derives from Latin: the prefix “ad” means “to” and “venio” means “come”.

[the following is from the Synodical website. Ed.]

Advent begins the church year because the church year begins where Jesus' earthly life began — in the Old Testament prophecies of his incarnation. After Advent comes Christmas, which is about his birth; then Epiphany, about his miracles and ministry; then Lent, about his Calvary-bound mission; then Easter, about his resurrection and the sending of the apostles; and then Ascension (40 days after Easter) and Pentecost, with the sending of the Holy Spirit.

The first half of the church year (approximately December through June) highlights the life of Christ. The second half (approximately

June through November) highlights the teachings of Christ. The parables and miracles play a big part here. That's "the church year in a nutshell," and it should help reveal how Advent fits into "the big picture."

Advent specifically focuses on Christ's "coming," but Christ's coming manifests itself among us in three ways — past, present, and future.

The readings which highlight Christ's coming in the past focus on the Old Testament prophecies of his incarnation at Bethlehem. The readings, which highlight Christ's coming in the future, focus on his "second coming" on the Last Day at the end of time. And the readings that highlight Christ's coming in the present focus on his ministry among us through Word and Sacrament today.

The traditional use of Advent candles (sometimes held in a wreath) originated in eastern Germany even prior to the Reformation. As this tradition came down to us by the beginning of this century, it involved three purple candles and one pink candle.

The purple or blue candles match the paraments on the altar (purple and blue have had royal implications of the coming King). The pink candle was the third candle to be lit (not the fourth) on Gaudete Sunday, the Third Sunday of Advent. "Gaudete" means "Rejoice!" in Latin, which is taken from Phil. 4:4.

("Rejoice! ... the Lord is near"). Hence a "pink" candle was used to signify "rejoicing." Some included a white "Christ candle" in the middle to be lit during the 12 days of Christmas (Dec. 25 to Jan. 5).