



Peace Lutheran Church

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December, 2013

“Not Yet”

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One of the most frequent and frustrating phrases heard throughout the month of December is, “Not yet!” As soon as children see presents under the Christmas tree, they will begin to ask their parents, “Can we open the presents now?” “Not yet,” reply Mom and Dad. The same exchange will take place every day between then and Christmas. The children say the same thing, “Can we open the presents *now*?” And the parents respond with the same thing, “Not yet!” Before going to the Christmas Eve service at church, the children say, “Now?” and the parents respond, “Not yet!” Finally, on Christmas morning, the children ask, “Now?” and the parents say, “Now!” This exchange helps us remember what the season of Advent is all about. It’s all about, “Not yet!”

Most people don’t really know what to do with Advent. Most non-believers and some Christians don’t even know what Advent is. Those Christians who have heard of Advent think of it as little more than a “pre-Christmas”. As adults we are no different from children. We want Christmas to be here NOW. But there’s no one around to tell adults, “Not yet!” So merchants set up Christmas displays and sales earlier and earlier. Radio stations start playing Christmas music earlier and earlier. People start shopping earlier and earlier. Yet, no matter how early the world begins celebrating Christmas, we can’t really hasten the actual coming of Christmas. Even as adults during Advent we are forced to live in a time of “not yet”. Christmas will come when it comes.

But Advent is not only about Christ’s first coming as a baby at Christmas time. Advent is also about Christ’s second coming as judge at the end of time. Our anticipation of that event should be as great as (if not greater than) our anticipation of Christmas. For what Jesus will come to bring on that last day is greater than what He came to bring us on that first Christmas.

Jesus was born on Christmas to die on Good Friday in order to earn forgiveness for all of our sins. He died on Good Friday to rise from the dead on Easter Sunday to guarantee our resurrection from the dead and life forever with Him in heaven. When Jesus returns on the great Day of the Lord, He comes to bring to fruition everything He has promised us.

It’s like Christmas all over again. We see God’s gifts for us already. He gives us what we need to support this body and life. We hear His voice, mediated through a pastor, to give us forgiveness and encouragement. We taste His love and joy as we receive His body and blood in with and under bread and wine.

When Jesus comes again, all of those gifts will be fully unwrapped and given. We will no longer need support for this body and life. Rather, he “will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.” (Philippians 3:21). We will no longer hear someone speak for Him. We will hear His voice directly. We will no longer have just “a foretaste of the feast to come in the Holy Supper.” Rather, we will be at the wedding supper of the Lamb to celebrate with all of God’s saints for all eternity.

As Advent Christians, we live in a curious position which some have labeled “the now, not yet”. We live in the “now” of Jesus’ incarnation at Christmas and all He came to give us by His perfect life, sacrificial death, and glorious resurrection. We also live in the “not yet” of Jesus’ coming on the Last Day and all that He will come to give us at His return.

Let us, therefore, be like children at Christmas time in our joy and anticipation of the Last Day. “Can we see Jesus now?” “Not yet!” Can we go to heaven now?” “Not yet!” The epistle for the 1st Sunday in Advent says, “The hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed.” (Romans 13:11) Soon, the time of “not yet” will be over. The “now” will be here. Jesus will come and we will be with Him forever! I can’t wait. I hope you can’t wait either.

In Christ,
Pastor Steven R. Schlund

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TO

Everyone who donated food during the Thanksgiving Day Worship Service for the Great Falls Rescue Mission.

Gloria Creek, Val Martin, and Karen Schaefer for playing the organ during our worship services.

The choir for enhancing our worship services.

Jill Keil, and Karen Schaefer for organizing and leading the choir at Peace.

Elsie Huss and Kevin Aguiar and all of the many hands that prepared the food for the Thanksgiving Day meal here at Peace.

All those who volunteer to teach Sunday school, Bible class, and midweek classes on Sundays and Wednesdays.

Idell Croskrey for changing the banners and paraments.

Angelika Fisher and Jennifer Lewis for cleaning the church.

Everyone on the Prayer Chain for their time and prayers.

Everyone who has donated treats for our fellowship time.

All of the men who volunteer to usher.

Everyone who counts the offering.

Cheri Magnuson for cleaning the Communion linens.

John Birkholz for reorganizing and cleaning out the library.

Cascade County Thrivent for donuts during their election.

This list is not inclusive. Please accept our apologies if we have missed giving you credit for serving the Lord in any fashion. We know that the Lord knows your service to Him.

Advent Worship

The *Quempas Carol* is the theme for our Wednesday evening Advent services and our Children's Christmas Eve service. The name *Quempas* comes from the first two words of the carol in the original Latin language: "Quem pastores." (meaning "He whom the shepherds praised.") Join us on December 4th, 11th, and 18th as we consider the message of this ancient carol. Worship will be at 7:00 PM with soup suppers at 6:00 PM. All services will be interpreted for the deaf.

Christmas Schedule

Christmas Eve: 7:00 PM - *A Shepherd's Christmas*, Children's Christmas Eve Service
(interpreted for the deaf)

11:00 PM - Candlelight Communion Service

Christmas Day: 10:00 AM - A Service of Carols & Readings

New Year's Eve: Worship With Holy Communion. There will be a New Year's Eve Celebration in the Fellowship Hall immediately after worship until midnight with food, fun, and fellowship.

Christmas Open House

Pastor and Becky Schlund invite all members of Peace Lutheran Church and Christ Lutheran Church for the Deaf to a Christmas Open House at their new home at 2504 6th St. NE on Sunday, December 22nd from 4:00 - 8:00 PM. Join the pastor and his family for food, fun, and fellowship as we celebrate the joy of Christ's birth!

Caroling

Anyone interested in going caroling is asked to meet at the church at 3 PM on Sunday, December 15. We will go caroling to some of the area nursing homes and member's homes. Come and join us!

Finances

Our giving in October, 2013 was \$9,520.80 and our expenses for October are \$10,281.94. **The amount that Peace's checking account is in the red at the end of October is \$23,217.23.** The **Lutheran Church Extension Fund** loan balance as of October 31, 2013, is **\$44,136.48.**

“Life Quotes” from Lutherans for Life

“*Christmas is also for the unborn.* The Savior has come also for the children yet living in their mothers' wombs. The Gospel message is addressed also to our youngest brothers and sisters. In fact, we can say it is addressed *especially* to them, because they are the most helpless.” *Father Frank Pavone, Priests for Life – A “Life Quote”* from Lutherans For Life www.lutheransforlife.org

Ladies Bible study schedule

FRIDAY LADIES BIBLE CLASS will not meet during the month of December for Bible study.

Assisted Living Ministry continues with hymn singing and a devotion at the following locations. Tuesday, December 10th at 11 a.m. they will be at Bee Hive Home #1, 2816 15th Ave So. On Friday, December 13th ladies and gentlemen will meet for a no host lunch at 11:45 a.m. at JB's Restaurant, 1322 10th Ave So. Afterward they will go to Highgate House 3000 11th Ave So. Christmas carols are a joy for the residents to sing. Come and join in as God's greatest gift, the Savior of the world is sung and proclaimed!

LWML

- ♥ **The Gift of Love Tree is up!** There are tags for kids from the Rescue Mission marked “Ornament of Hope” and tags for members of Peace. If you take a tag for the Rescue Mission we ask that you take the unwrapped gift to the Rescue Mission. You may also donate wrapping paper to the Mission if you so choose, but please do not wrap the gift. If you take a tag for a member of Peace, feel free to wrap the gift and attach the tag to it so we know which packet goes to which member. Please bring it back with the tag by December 15th. Thank you, **Elsie Huss and Helen Lewis**, for organizing the tree.
- ♥ **The ladies of LWML are sponsoring the first Advent Soup Supper on December 4th.** If you would like to help in anyway, please contact Ruth Denning or Helen Lewis.
- ♥ **Cookie Walk CANCELED!**
- ♥ **Sunday, December 15** we will go caroling. We will meet at the church at 3 p.m., carol to various nursing homes, shut-ins and people's homes. Plan now to join us!!
- ♥ **During the month of January**, we will have a Baby Shower for Denice Combs who gives baby layettes to the mothers at Benefis who have babies but have no clothes to put on them. You may bring new or clean, gently used baby items and place them in the box provided. We will also be making fleece blankets that will be given to Denice Combs.
- ♥ **Our next meeting will be Saturday, January 11 at 10 a.m. with a Bible study. Please note the day and time change!!** All ladies of Peace are invited and encouraged to come and join us! Don't forget your Mite boxes!
- ♥ **Remember to bring your new soap for Soap Sunday on the second Sunday of each month.** Soap collected will go to Lutheran World Relief. Thanks for your continued support.





December Anniversaries

- Dec. 14 John and Terri Sivumaki
- Dec. 18 Ed and Sarah Ostlund
- Dec. 26 Brandi and John Holefelder
- Dec. 28 Richard & Sharon Panask
- Dec. 30 Emich and Sieglinde Steinke

Baptismal Anniversaries

- December 2 Bill Southard
- 4 Garry Denning
- 4 Jacob Meierhoff
- 6 David Greenwood
- 8 Terri Sivumaki
- 9 Brandon Anderson
- 10 Fran Davidson
- 14 Bill Lowden
- 16 Brandon Arensmeyer
- 19 Kristen Jacobsen
- 23 Jennifer Heard
- 23 Donnalene McPartlin
- 24 Andrea Holzheimer
- 25 Vern Pankratz
- 26 Tanner Rubino
- 27 Rustin Kraenzel Sr.
- 28 Abigail Eby
- 29 Ernie VanVleet
- 29 Reilly Jacobsen



INCLUDE THESE PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS:

The following people are experiencing health problems:

- John Birkholz**
- Jane Hering**
- Beate Neumann**
- Hank Politz**
- Judy VanVleet**

Our members who are away serving in the military are **Kurt Mueller and Michael Lewis.**



Deacon for December is **Arnie Gidlow**

Ushers for December

- 1 Kevin Aguiar
Matt Schlund
- 8 Tom Croskrey
Karl Dorr
- 15 Mitch Martin
Eric Fletcher
- 22 Jeff Blomgren
Reilly Jacobsen
- 29 Greg Franzcyk
Ernie VanVleet

Worship on the Internet

Many deaf people in Montana cannot come to church in Great Falls because they live far away. The Montana District of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League gave money so Christ Lutheran Church for the Deaf could buy equipment to broadcast their worship services on the internet. Anyone who has a computer and an internet connection will be able to go to a website and watch a church service entirely in American Sign Language. Go to the Peace Lutheran Church website (www.peacelutherangreatfalls.org) and look for the Christ-Deaf tab. You can also go directly to the page at <http://deaf.peacelutherangreatfalls.org>. Sometime in the near future, Christ Lutheran Church for the Deaf will also broadcast their Bible Study every Tuesday morning at 11:00 AM. If you have any questions about this, talk to Pastor Schlund.

