



Peace Lutheran Church

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December, 2014

I Just Can't Wait!

December 2014

"I just can't wait!" Anyone who had a kid or has been a kid recognizes this phrase as one which appears at this time of year. Kids used to start saying this immediately after Thanksgiving was over. However, now, thanks to the merchants who want to boost sales and increase profits from the "holiday season", you begin to hear this phrase earlier and earlier.

Of course, the "I just can't wait" season which the kids are talking about is Christmas. As adults, we may not share that same feeling any more. The time from Thanksgiving to Christmas whisks by so quickly that we don't have time to be impatient

But do you remember what it was like as a kid, living in anticipation of the coming of Christmas? We all have our memories. I personally couldn't wait to be in the Children's Christmas Eve Service which our Lutheran school had every year. I was always excited to get a speaking part (big shock, eh?). Then, I couldn't wait to go over to my grandfather's house where all of our relatives gathered on Christmas Eve. Waiting for the time between the end of church and when we could finally go to grandpa's seemed long in and of itself. And then there were the presents. I really couldn't wait for them – first at grandpa's on Christmas Eve and then at our house on Christmas Day.

I'm sure you all have similar recollections of how you just couldn't wait. Wouldn't you like to experience that joyful eagerness once again? You may think it's not possible. You're too old to be in the Children's Christmas Eve Service. Many of your family and friends have long since died. And you don't really need Christmas presents any more, at least not like when you were a kid.

While there is no way to recreate your childhood and relive the "I just can't wait" feeling from the past, there is a way to experience the "I just can't wait!" joyful eagerness for the future. And it comes, not from celebrating Christmas per se, but from a robust celebration of the Advent season.

While the word, *advent*, means "come" and the Advent season does deal with the 1st coming of Jesus Christ as a baby in Bethlehem to be our Savior from sin and death, a main thrust of Advent is the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ in glory and power to be our king forever. While there is enjoyment in celebrating our Savior's birth at Christmas and all that He came to do and bring, there is just as much (if not more) enjoyment in celebrating our Savior's return on the Last Day and all that He comes to do and bring. It is as Paul writes to Titus, we are "waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ." (Titus 2:13)

In many ways, this celebration will be just like Christmas – only better. Instead of a Children's Christmas Eve service, we will be brought to worship in heaven in the direct presence of God and all the heavenly host. Instead of gathering together to celebrate with just the immediate members of our family, we will gather together in the direct presence of God with all of God's people of all time – Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; Peter, Paul, and Mary Magdalene; our parents, grandparents, and all our family and friends who have died in the faith and gone before us. We won't be saddened by their deaths like we so often are now because they will never die. And don't forget about the presents. They will be better than anything you ever opened on Christmas morning. There will be perfect peace, continual joy, and eternal life (just to name a few) without sin, Satan, or death ever being able to interfere, intrude, or interrupt those gifts.

Will you celebrate Advent this year? Make it more than just a pre-Christmas event. Remember all that Jesus came to bring in His first coming and look forward to all He comes to bring at His return. I don't know about you, but I just can't wait!

In Christ, our Advent King,

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.

Everyone who donated hats, socks and gloves/mittens for the people on the reservation where Rev. Dennis Bauer is pastor.

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

The choir for enhancing our worship services.

Val Martin and Elizabeth Allen 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 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.

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 Services

The Christ of Advent will be theme of our Wednesday evening worship services during Advent. In these services, we will meditate on those things which Christ came to bring us.

December 3rd – “Christ: Our Hope”

December 10th – “Christ: Our Joy”

December 17th – “Christ: Our Peace”

Each evening begins with a soup supper at 6:00 PM. Worship is at 7:00 PM. Take time out of your busy holiday time to remember the “reason for the season” and to be spiritually renewed.

Christmas Schedule

Christmas Eve: 7:00 PM - *Good King Wenceslas (All About Mercy)*, Children’s Christmas Eve Service (interpreted for the deaf)

11:00 PM – Candlelight Service

Christmas Day: 10:00 AM – Communion Service

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.

“Life Quotes” from Lutherans for Life

“God is a person, and in the Church, He offers Himself to you. Jesus has promised that where two or more are gathered He is here Himself. Though we can’t detect this with our eye, it is nevertheless real. Jesus was born to Virgin Mary [and] ... This very Jesus gives Himself to you in His holy Word and Sacrament. He will not abandon you ...” *Dr. Harold Senkbeil, executive director for Spiritual Care for DOXOLOGY – A “Life Quote” from Lutherans For Life · www.lutheransforlife.org*



Finances

The following is a rundown of our giving for the year 2014:

First Quarter (January – March)	
Given: \$30,540.09	Expenses: \$36,091.68
Second Quarter (April – June)	
Given: \$31,331.02	Expenses: \$32,088.53
Third Quarter (July – September)	
Given: \$28,124.20	Expenses: \$31,772.45
Fourth Quarter (October – December)	
October – Given: \$9,437.75	Expenses: \$11,441.44

Ladies Bible study schedule

During the winter months the FRIDAY LADIES BIBLE CLASS will be in recess. Snowbird activity affects this group...

Assisted Living Ministry continues no matter what the weather! Ladies and gentlemen committed to this activity will meet at the following locations for hymn singing and a devotion. On Tuesday, December 9th at 11 a.m. at Bee Hive Home #1, 2816 15th Av So. On Friday, December 12th the group will gather for a no host lunch at 11:45 a.m. at 4 B's Restaurant, 4610 10th Av So. Afterward many of the group will go to Highgate House, 3000 11th Av So. As part of your Advent Walk try to join in part of this ministry. Singing Advent and Christmas carols with the residents brings the true meaning of the season to all involved!

LWML

- ♥ **The Gift of Love Tree is up!** There are tags for kids from the Great Falls Rescue Mission and a few tags for members of Peace. If you take a tag for the Rescue Mission, please DO NOT wrap the gift. Bring the gift back with the tag and it will be wrapped later. Feel free to donate wrapping paper and supplies for the Rescue Mission as well. If you take a tag for a member of Peace, please wrap the gift and tape the tag to it and bring it back by December 14th. Thank you, **Elsie Huss and Helen Lewis**, for organizing the tree.
- ♥ **The ladies of LWML are sponsoring the first Advent Soup Supper on December 3rd.** If you would like to help in anyway, please contact Elsie Huss. The money donated for the soup supper will go toward the purchase of new red/white reversible altar paraments for the altar!
- ♥ **Cookie Exchange** – The ladies of LWML are sponsoring a cookie exchange on Sunday, December 14. After we go caroling, we will come back to the church and exchange cookies. All members of the congregation are invited to come and participate! If you bring 6 dozen cookies, you may choose 6 dozen to take home, If you bring 2 dozen cookies, you may choose 2 dozen to bring home, etc. etc.! Please bring 6 additional cookies for taste testing!
- ♥ **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 10 at 10 a.m. with a Bible study. Please note the day and time change!!** If you want to make a no sew fleece blanket during our meeting, please bring a 1 ¼ yards of any fleece material with you and we will show you how! 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. 30 Emich and Sieglinde Steinke

Baptismal Anniversaries

December 2 Bill Southard
4 Garry Denning
6 David Greenwood
8 Terri Sivumaki
14 Bill Lowden
19 Kristen Jacobsen
22 Ganetta Ryster
23 Donnalene McPartlin
26 Tanner Rubino
27 – Joddie Naeseth
27 Chisholm Naeseth
28 Abigail Eby
29 Ernie VanVleet
29 Reilly Jacobsen
30 Nicholas Birkholz



INCLUDE THESE PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS:
The following people are experiencing health problems:

John Birkholz
June Foard, June Meier's daughter
Jane Hering

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

Deacon for December is Pat Lewis

Ushers for December

7 Ed Ostlund
Jeff Blomgren
14 Mitch Martin
Eric Fletcher
21 Tyler Denning
Lee Henselin
28 Arnie Gidlow
Matt Schlund



Caroling and Cookie Exchange

Anyone interested in going caroling is asked to meet at the church at 3 PM on Sunday, December 14. We will go caroling to some of the area nursing homes and member's homes. After caroling, we will meet back at the church for a Cookie Exchange. Bring as many dozen cookies as you would like to exchange. Bring an additional 6 cookies for taste testing! Come and join us!



Christmas Open House

Pastor and Becky Schlund invite all members Peace Lutheran Church and Christ Lutheran Church for the Deaf to a Christmas Open House at their home on Sunday, December 21st from 2:00 – 4:00 PM. The address is 2504 6th St. NE. Come before the choir concert and join the pastor and his family for food, fun, and fellowship as we celebrate the joy of Christ's birth!

Choir Christmas Concert

On Sunday, December 21 at 7:00 p.m. there will be a joint choir concert with members of Peace and Trinity Lutheran Churches along with their bell choir and music from youth musicians and Bible readings at Peace Lutheran. All are invited to join us for this very special service!





Attention Youth
We Want to See You Up On the Mountain
Youth Ski and Swim Retreat

Who?

Youth 7-12 graders (and younger if accompanied by a parent)

What?

Friday night: Check in 6:00-8:00p.m. Dinner, Devotions, Fellowship and Games

Saturday: Early Breakfast at the Church, bus out to Showdown Ski area for a day on the Slopes. We will have a brown bag lunch on the mountain. After Skiing travel to White Sulphur Springs for Pizza, Swimming and Showers before returning to Great Falls for sleep.

Sunday Morning: Join us for breakfast and worship and Sunday School before heading back home.

Where?

Peace Lutheran Church, 3340 11th Avenue South, Great Falls, MT.

When?

December 19-21, 2014

Why?

Because winter in Montana is an awesome time to experience some of God's amazing handiwork outdoors and share it with fellow Christians!

Cost?

\$55 per youth, includes all meals, transportation, equipment, lift tickets and swimming

What do I need?

Bring your Bible, your sleeping bag and air mattress, your toothbrush, and a friend! You will want appropriate winter clothing for skiing, long underwear, hats, gloves etc., as well as a swimming suit and towel.

We will require final registration numbers by Dec 12, 2014. Please contact us as soon as possible to we can get you information on the rental equipment process.

Contact Brook Gerard (brook.gerard@malmstrom.af.mil), Tom Croskrey (tom@croskrey.org), or Lyle Onstad (lyleomd@gmail.com) for more information.

Applying Biblical Teachings

“Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, ‘Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you’” (Hebrews 13:5).

If one were to look for an example of a person who lived a life of contentment, one need look no farther than the Apostle Paul. Whether he served the Lord as a laborer, a preacher, or a writer, he was content. Whether food was plentiful or scarce, he was content. Whether he lived in a fine house or was confined in prison, he was content. Whether he faced the dangers of the road, the perils of the sea, or the hatred of his enemies, he was content.

Matthew Henry wrote, “Haman was the great court-favorite, and yet not contented; Ahab on the throne, and yet not contented; Adam in paradise, and yet not contented; yea, the angels in heaven, and yet not contented; but Paul, though abased and empty, had learned in every state, in any state, therewith to be contented.”

Paul understood what Jesus meant when He said, “This, then, is how you should pray: ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name . . . Give us today our daily bread. . . .’” (Matt. 6:9, 11) and when He said, “Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own” (Matt. 6:34).

By the power of the Word and the work of the Holy Spirit, the Apostle Paul had personal knowledge of God’s divine grace. He had genuine confidence in the grace of God. He knew that after all that God had done for him, through Jesus Christ, he would never be left or forsaken. He trusted that God would be with him every day, providing what he needed that day for his ministry. The Apostle had complete trust in God and was content.

Often we find it difficult to be content. We find ourselves uncomfortable and insecure as we look to the future. We are tempted to look to our money and wealth as the source of our security. We are tempted to put our trust in what we have accumulated. We are tempted to love and trust our money.

We must never forget that “. . . God has said, ‘Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you’” (Hebrews 13:5). After all that God has done for us, through Jesus Christ, He will daily provide all that is necessary to sustain this life, to do the good works we were meant to do and to carry out His work of salvation. With that, we are content.