



Cross Currents

Holy Cross Lutheran Church, LCMS

December 2019

Volume II Issue 176

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What Is the Season Of Advent All About?

By Pastor Mundinger

Tis the season, well, it's almost the season! Even though Thanksgiving is only a few days away that still hasn't stopped people from proudly displaying their Christmas decorations or from unabashedly bombarding us with Christmas music. Now don't get me wrong, I like Christmas as much as the next guy, but with all this premature celebrating we end up downplaying or missing out on the wonderful season which leads up to the celebration of the birth of our Lord. This season is Advent.

The origins of the season of Advent are still a mystery to us, although the earliest observance of this season can be traced back to sometime in the 4th century. The word Advent comes from the Latin word *Adventus* which means "coming" or "approaching." The season of Advent is a time where Christians around the world remember the first coming of our King and Savior, Jesus Christ, who arrived into this world in human flesh, conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary. Advent marks the beginning of God's salvific plan which had been put into motion since his promise of a messiah to Adam and Eve. This Messiah has now entered the world, born of a woman just as God had promised! Ultimately this plan will lead Him to the cross to suffer and die for the sins of the world! His precious blood will free the nations from their captivity into sin and death! The people of the Old Testament had been anxiously waiting for this coming for quite some time, and here it is, Emmanuel has finally come. God with us has arrived! This hopefulness is perfectly captured in the Advent hymn, Oh Come, O Come, Emmanuel.



*"O come, O come, Emmanuel
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
Shall come to thee, O Israel."*

Continued on page 2

Advent is truly a joyous season, yet it really isn't a celebration of Christmas, at least not in its entirety. I'm not sure how Holy Cross in the past has celebrated Advent, but some may be shocked to find as we get into the season there will be no Christmas hymns sung until Christmas Eve. That is because it is not Christmas yet! Advent is about the hope and joy that is to come! It is a season of anticipation and waiting!

The season of Advent not only suggest that we are waiting to celebrate the coming of Yahweh into the world in the infant Jesus, it also focuses us in on the return of the risen Lord in all of His heavenly splendor!

Christ's birth has already happened, salvation has already been accomplished for us on the cross through the incarnate Christ. We currently live in the reality of Christmas and the life that it brings to us! That is why our focus for Advent should not only be on Christmas but also on the second Advent of Christ, where we await for the approach of Christ who will one day come and take His bride, the church, into the heavenly wedding feast for all eternity!

Jesus speaks these words to us about His Advent, *"Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming..... Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."* (Mt. 24:42,44) The purpose of Advent is to awaken in the hearts of the children of God the anticipation of the Day of the Lord, and to encourage them to prepare for it! We are called to be ever watchful for that great day, for we do not know the hour or the day when Christ will come again. That is why Christ describes this day as being like a thief in the night. It will come suddenly and swiftly!

So how do we stay ever watchful of Christ's second Advent? What can we do to prepare for it? The best way to prepare our hearts for this joyous day is to remain steadfast in His word. Jesus Christ is the light of the world, the light that no darkness can overcome. It is there in His glorious light that we are illuminated and can be watchful for this day. And as the Psalmist so beautifully puts it, *"The Word of the Lord is a lamp unto my feet."* Where His mighty Word is preached, there Christ is present with us, scattering the darkness and illuminating His church. Remember, though we wait for His return, He still comes to us every time we gather around His marvelous light! I guess you could call the church service a mini-Advent, for Christ indeed approaches us with His wonderful gifts! The early church father, Cyril of Jerusalem, put it perfectly when he described the multiple Advents of Christ,

*"There is a birth from God before the ages
And a birth from a virgin in the fullness of time.
There is a hidden coming, like that of rain on fleece,
And a coming before all the eyes, still in the future."*

I invite all of you to join us for the Advent midweek services where Christ comes to us in His Advent Word to help keep us watchful for His second coming! He comes to us hidden among His mighty Word and sacraments, until that day when all the world will behold His heavenly splendor as He comes down from the heavens to bring us all to our heavenly home. He will continue to strengthen us and keep us illuminated in this dark, sinful world the same way He has done since the church was first established, through His true presence in His Words and sacrament. Let us use this Advent season for reflection and prayerful preparation as both the celebration of Christmas and the final Advent of Christ draws near.



Choir Rehearsals

for December will be December 10th at 7:00 pm,
December 17th at 7:00 pm, and December 24th at
6:00 pm. There will be no choir rehearsal on
December 3rd or December 31st.



*Sounds
of the
Season*



12/1	Liz B.
12/2	Randy S.
12/6	Peter L.
12/8	Anke W.
12/9	Kevin L.
12/12	Emily S.
12/16	Alex R.
12/16	Susan S.
12/18	Bill L.
12/21	Allen B.
12/25	Marv K.
12/30	Christopher C.



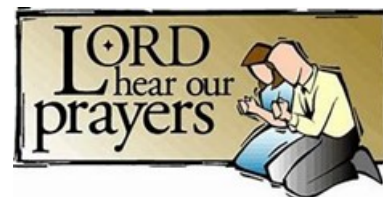
12/10

Herb & Marilyn N.

The Tuesday Morning Prayer Group will not meet at church on Tuesday, December 24th. We can still be joined in Virtual Prayer wherever we may be!

God hears our prayers, He answers:

"Before they call I will answer; while they are yet speaking I will hear." Isaiah 65:24 ESV



Make a joyful noise to the Lord... PSALM 100:1 ESV

Is singing good for you? The answer is a resounding "YES!", but you may ask, "HOW?"

- It's fun!
- It can improve your physical and mental health.
 - ◊ Steady, big, slow breaths can have a calming effect, like yoga.
 - ◊ Deep breathing brings more oxygen into your system.
 - ◊ It can improve your circulation.
 - ◊ More oxygen makes for more energy and alertness, and less STRESS!
- If you sing with a group, it can expand your social circle.
- It is good exercise, especially climbing the stairs at Holy Cross to sing in the choir!



Lutherans have been known for their singing. I recently came across this article that I saved from the JAN/FEB 2002 issue of the Lutheran Laymen's League Magazine. Read on ...

MUSIC IN YOUR LIFE, by Gerald Perschbacher

How much singing took place in your life in recent months?

For centuries the Lutheran Church has been called "The Singing Church" for good reason. Luther and other theologians realized how faith can be robustly reaffirmed and heavenly help reassured through music. Lutheran composers such as Bach and Mendelssohn added to the rich repertoire of worshipful music, furthering that initiative. For nearly 500 years many verses have been adapted to traditional tunes that made their way into numerous Lutheran hymn books. Many new songs have brought additional blessings, too.

Are you benefiting from this rich reservoir? Does your congregation fervently sing with conviction and determination? Does your organist play in like manner? Does your congregation have at least one active choir that brings its unique musical dimension to worship services and special events? By the power of God, hearty and good songs can stir the soul, lighten our human load, relieve pain and suffering, bring hope, and empower those who sing and listen.

Whether someone has the gift of singing in perfect key or sometimes hits a sour note, isn't the issue. Singing with conviction is what the Lord hears, more than anything. I can't picture Him sitting in heaven, grading the quality of our notes. While we want to make the best music possible, He understands our shortcomings. A song born from a faithful heart is the most beautiful music on earth-no matter how well the song is played or sung.

Enhance the music in YOUR life and in your congregation. Join a choir and encourage others to do likewise. Financially support your church's orchestral (musical) efforts. Praise those who spend extra hours in practice to bring musical beauty to your services. But most of all, sing as best you can and as often as possible.

- Sing of the Lord's goodness.
 - Proclaim His blessings to you.
 - And listen as you sing.

The Lord may convey much spiritual support through the words and tunes. Even if you cannot sing, at least listen and read the words as an expression of your faith.

Maybe the Book of Psalms is placed right in the center of the Bible because of the importance of music. Being a songbook of old, psalms still convey powerful messages as they are blessed by God.

However you sing, you become a messenger of God's truths. You become a witness for the Gospel. You share in the tradition of God's people. Whether your songs are new or old, sing. Sing to the Lord.! 🎵



December Choir Practice:

7:00 PM in the choir loft
Tuesday, 12/10 & 12/17

SUBMITTED BY: Cherylene

Upcoming Fellowship Activities

Wednesday Evening Advent Services

December 4th, 11th, and 18th at 6:30PM

Soup Supper in Parish Hall at 5:45PM

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

December 24th, 2019 at 7:00PM

Christmas Day Service with Communion

December 25th, 2019 at 9:00AM

December Sunday School & Bible

Study Schedules

- ♦ Sunday Bible Class 11AM: 12/1, 12/8, 12/15, 12/22, 12/29
- ♦ Sunday School 11AM: 12/1, 12/8, 12/15, 12/22, 12/29
- ♦ Monday Ladies Bible Study 10AM

LSS Gift Wrapping

Please join us Saturday,
12/7 at 9:00AM in the
parish hall



ATTENTION MEN!

Thursday, 12/19, 8:30am

Holy Cross Men's
Kaffeeplatsch, Mel's Diner





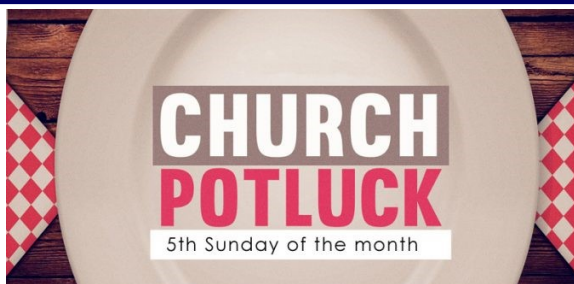
The 7th Annual Youth Bake Sale will be held Sunday, December 1st, during coffee hour. This year's proceeds will support Lutheran Social Services of Northern California's Mi Casa program which offers support services and housing for homeless, former foster care youth. In addition, we hope to be able donate funds towards Lutheran missionaries making a difference abroad. Please stop by, enjoy some festive treats, and support Holy Cross Youth in their endeavors.

Want to join a great group of Seniors for a fun filled afternoon of good food, Christmas singing, and comradeship? Then plan on attending the Nifty Fifty Seniors Christmas Luncheon. We will meet in the Parish Hall on Wed., Dec 11th at 11:30 am.

Melarie will provide lunch and Annaliesa will read a synopsis of Jack's presentation of the true meaning of the birth of Jesus and the miracles involved.

Then, as last year, the Ygnacio Valley Christian School Choirs will join us and sing Christmas carols. This year we have asked them to give a longer performance (& we will sing a little less). After the choirs sing, they will join us for cookies & hot chocolate.

Please sign up so we know how many to plan for. This is a great time to bring a friend!



**Please join us December 29th after church
for our 5th Sunday Potluck!**



Altar Guild Christmas Decorating,
Saturday, 12/7, 9:30am

Men – we need some help starting at 9:30 to get the supplies moved to the sanctuary & put the tree up.

Then after the LSS gift wrapping event, we will start decorating (around 10am).

Bring your family!

Also, mark your calendar for Saturday, January 4, when we will take the decorations down and store for next year.



On Sunday, 11/10, during coffee fellowship we recognized & honored our Veterans.



Pray for our Troops

“But those who hope in the Lord
will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles:
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint.”
Isaiah 40:31 NIV

Our 2019 Congregational Thanksgiving dinner. Thankful, blessed, & grateful.



December 2019– WoHC Happenings by Joyce Liebe, President

Here's a recap of our upcoming events. Please join us.

- ◇ 12/7 (Sat.) LSS Angel Tree Gift Wrapping, 9am, Parish Hall
- ◇ 12/9 (Mon.) WoHC Christmas Dinner, 5:30pm, La Veranda

Sign up by 12/1!

- ◇ 1/16 (Thurs.) Ladies Game Night, 6:30pm, Parish Hall

Also join us for 2 Holy Cross/YVCS Christmas Events

- ◇ 12/11 (Wed.) Nifty Fifty Christmas Lunch, 11:30am, Parish Hall. YVCS Choir will perform after our lunch.
- ◇ 12/13 (Fri.) YVCS Band & Choir Music Program, Holy Cross Sanctuary.

New Local Outreach Started

LWML Mission Statement

The mission of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League is to assist each woman of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in affirming her relationship with the Triune God so that she is enabled to use her gifts in ministry to the people of the world.

We, the WoHC, in following the LWML Mission Statement, support Mites, which fulfill grants locally, nationally, & all over the world. We support local groups such as Lutheran Social Services and The Network of Care. We also support our Holy Cross Sisters & Brothers in Christ as well as projects in our church.

A few weeks ago, Pastor shared an outreach idea from a local Pastors conference he attended. I really liked it. I prayed about it & with the support of several in our congregation, we have started a "Secret Sister" outreach.

I have paired up a Holy Cross member with a YVCS teacher/staff member. We will support them by giving cards, treats, gift card, and prayers through the school year. A little something special to remind them that what they are doing is important & they are supported. We will do a reveal at the end of the school year - maybe lunch out.

As we were planning this, I received this message from Ilyn, YVCS principal:
Thanks again for doing this. I'm so thankful for this idea. It will help promote wellness and encouragement to our staff who are always on the responder mode. Please let the sisters know that their willingness alone has already been a tremendous blessing to me. I'll be praying for them too. "

If you would like to participate, please let me know.



God really did something special...
when He blessed me with a
friend like you.



PRAYER OF GRATITUDE FOR MY FRIENDS (author unknown)

Heavenly Father, how gracious You are to bring into my life my many precious friends - all of which have become so special to me in their own individual and unique way.

I feel so blessed to be surrounded with so many dear people that I love and care for, and for the knowledge that they also love and care for me too – and thank You for the support that I have so often received from different ones, during those times of difficulty and pain.

Thank You also for the valuable lessons that I have learned through them, some of which have been very difficult, and yet I have been enabled through their loving support and encouragement to grow spiritually and emotionally – and gain wisdom and insight in so many important ways.

Help me to be the sort of friend that is always there for others: An ear to listen, a hand to help and a heart to comfort – and help me to grow in grace and in knowledge of our Savior, Lord Jesus, so that I may be His hand, His ear, His heart and His comfort to the many precious people that You have placed in my life, in Jesus name I pray, Amen.



December 2019



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Mite Boxes 9:30a Worship w/ Communion Youth Bake Sale 11a Sunday School/Bible Study 2-6 Myanmar Christian	2 OFC CLOSED 10a Ladies Bible Study (C) 7-9:30p Scouts (PH)	3 11a Prayer Group	4 5:45p Soup Supper 6:30p Advent Service	5	6	7 9a LSS Christmas Gift Wrapping (PH) 9:30a Altar Guild Christmas Decorating Sanctuary
8 9:30a Worship 11a Sunday School/Bible Study 2-6 Myanmar Christian	9 OFC CLOSED 10a Ladies Bible Study (C) 5:30p WoHC Christmas Dinner, La Veranda 7-9:30p Scouts (PH)	10 11a Prayer Group 7p Choir (cl)	11 11:30am Nifty Fifty Christmas Lunch (PH) 5:45p Soup Supper 6:30p Advent Service	12	13 PM YVCS Band & Choir Program	14
15 9:30a Worship w/ Communion 11a Sunday School/Bible Study 2-6 Myanmar Christian	16 OFC CLOSED 10a Ladies Bible Study (C) 7-9:30p Scouts (PH)	17 11a Prayer Group 7p Choir (cl)	18 5:45p Soup Supper 6:30p Advent Service	19 8:30a Men's Kaffeeklatsch, Mel's	20	21
22 9:30a Worship 11a Sunday School/Bible Study Outreach Sunday 2-6 Myanmar Christian	23 10a Ladies Bible Study (C) 7-9:30p Scouts (PH)	24 6p Choir (cl) 7p Christmas Eve Worship	25 OFC CLOSED 9a Christmas Day Worship 	26	27	28
29 9:30a Worship w/ Communion 11a 5th Sunday Potluck 2-6 Myanmar Christian	30 10a Ladies Bible Study (C) 7-9:30p Scouts (PH)	31 11a Prayer Group 	YVCS School Hours: 8:30am-3pm YVCS Parish Hall use during week: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choir: Mon. & Wed. 12-3pm Band: Mon. & Wed. 3:30-5pm Spanish: Tues. & Thurs. 12-3pm Chapel: Friday 8:30-9:15am (family & friends welcome) 			

cl=choir loft, C=Conference Room, E=Ed Bldg., PH=Parish Hall, L=Library, ws=wing room

Holy Cross Lutheran

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Office Hours: Tuesday-Friday 9am-1pm

Worship Schedule:

Sunday Service	9:30 AM
Communion	1 st , 3 rd , and 5 th Sundays
Adult Bible Study	11:00 AM
Sunday School	11:00 AM

Week Day Bible Study Schedule:

Monday (Ladies)	10:00 AM Conference Room
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Publication Deadline:

Bulletin: Noon, Tuesday
January 2020 Cross Currents: December 22, 2019