



the Bugle

Volume 71, Number 49

"What does 'blessed are the meek' mean?"

Sunday School classes are spending this school year studying *The Beatitudes*. Each month in *The Bugle*, we will focus on each one of the Beatitudes. Perhaps you would like to add this study of *The Beatitudes* to your personal devotional time, as well. This month focuses on the third Beatitude.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus opens with a series of statements known as the Beatitudes. The third Beatitude is "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth" (Matthew 5:5). Jesus' words echo Psalm 37:11, which says, "The meek will inherit the land and enjoy peace and prosperity." What does it mean that the meek are "blessed"?

First, we must understand what it means to be blessed. The Greek word translated "blessed" in this verse can also be translated "happy." The idea is that a person will have joy if he or she is meek. The blessedness is from God's perspective, not our own. It is a spiritual prosperity, not necessarily an earthly happiness.

Also, we must understand what "meek" means. The Greek word translated "meek" is *praeis* and refers to mildness, gentleness of spirit, or humility. Other forms of this Greek word are used elsewhere in the New Testament, including James 1:21 and James 3:13. Meekness is humility toward God and toward others. It is having the *right* or the *power* to do something but refraining for the benefit of someone else. Paul urged meekness when he told us "to live a life worthy of the calling [we] have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love" (Ephesians 4:1-2).

Meekness models the humility of Jesus Christ. As Philippians 2:6-8 says, "[Jesus], being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing

"What does 'blessed are the meek' mean?" continued on page 3

Blessed
ARE THE meek:
FOR THEY SHALL
inherit the
earth

MATTHEW 5:5

IN THIS ISSUE

- Page 2 Pastors' Page
- Page 3 This Week
- Page 3 Midweek Advent Services
- Page 3 Thank you!
- Page 4 Advent Brunch
- Page 4 Christmas Poinsettias
- Page 4 Music Opportunity
- Page 4 Sharing Tree
- Page 4 Christmas Canned Food Drive
- Page 5 Sunday School Christmas Program
- Page 5 Christmas Greetings
- Page 6 Kappa Chi Cookie Walk
- Page 7 Worship Participants Needed for Christmas

Salem 
Lutheran Church
Growing People in Christ... to Love & Serve!

Worship With Us! Sundays

8:00am and 10:45am

Education Hour
9:15am

nursery provided

www.salemofpeoria.com

What does Advent Bring?

“O that you would tear open the heavens and come down!” This was the first line of our first reading for the first Sunday in Advent. While I usually find myself drawn to the “stir up” language of the prayer of the day for the weeks in Advent, this line from Isaiah 64 took hold in my heart and has been my Advent prayer. This is the theme of Advent, that God would come among us and with power. At Christmas we delight in the arrival of a sweet little baby. But Advent brings with it a greater longing than just sweetness. We desire to see God’s power at work in a mighty way: when we see the great poverty and hunger of so many in our world and in our own backyard; when we turn on the news and see images bloodshed and hear about the threat of war that could consume us; when our loved ones are wounded in ways that we ourselves cannot fix; when hurricanes and earthquakes strike; when... you can fill in the blank. There is great need in our lives and in our world. And so we pray, “O that you would tear open the heavens and come down!”

Pastors’ Page



Pastor Elise Rothfusz

This is what God has done. God-in-flesh came into our world; at Jesus’ baptism the heavens were torn apart and the Holy Spirit descended on him (Mark 1). John the Baptist questioned whether Jesus was really “the one,” since he did not see the fire of God, but in Jesus the kingdom of God broke into our world revealing a God who longs for healing and wholeness, for peace and redemption. God broke into our world confronting sin and injustice and conquering death. And we wait for God to come again, for we know that we still wait with eager longing for the fullness of God’s reign among us, and yet we live knowing God has come and transformed us into people of hope and people who live into the reality of God’s kingdom. We wait, but it is an active waiting, living as disciples of Immanuel, God-with-us, sharing the words, the love, the justice, the peace of Jesus; living as the body of Christ so that the world may glimpse the power of God and know the hope that comes in the presence of God.

Prayer Requests

Please pray for

- The men and women of our armed forces
- Military overseas - Col. Darnell Salley
- Midwest Food Bank
- Kim Ascherl and her family
- Natalee Arff
- Bryan Baker (Tammy Lott’s brother-in-law)
- Norma Behrends
- Thanks for prayers for Alton Berg
- Bonnie (cousin of JoAnn Misselhorn)

- Trude Boodt
- Carla (sister of Jenne Schuller)
- Debi Smith (Laura Hartman’s mother)
- Jack Grant, Jr.
- Frank Hernandez
- Amy Hoffman
- Jean Huprick and family
- Helen Johnson (mother of Joan Creager)
- Ken as he battles cancer
- Theresa
- Tyth going through chemo
- Jean and Frank Yancick



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Sunday, December 3: 211

The *Bugle* deadline for the **December 15** edition is at **Tuesday, December 12** at noon.

"What does 'blessed are the meek' mean?" continued from page 1

by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death — even death on a cross! Being “in the very nature God,” Jesus had the right to do whatever He wanted, but, for our sake, He submitted to “death on a cross.” That is the ultimate in meekness.

Meekness was also demonstrated by godly leaders in the Old Testament. Numbers 12:3 says that Moses “was very meek, more than all people who were on the face of the earth.”

We are called to share the gospel message in gentleness and meekness. First Peter 3:15 instructs, “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness [meekness] and respect.” It may seem counterintuitive, but Jesus’ promise stands — a meek person will be happy or blessed. Living in humility and being willing to forego one’s rights for the benefit of someone else models the attitude of Jesus Christ. Meekness also helps us to more effectively share the gospel message with others. Striving for power and prestige is not the path to blessedness — but rather being meek is.



DAISIES ARE BRIGHT SPOTS IN ANY FIELD. PEOPLE WHO LEAVE THEM TO GROW BECAUSE OF THEIR BEAUTY SOON DISCOVER THAT THEY CAN QUICKLY TAKE OVER AN ENTIRE FIELD CREATING A SIGHT TO BEHOLD. DAISIES CAN REMIND US THAT KINDNESS AND GENTLENESS ARE MUCH MORE EFFECTIVE THAN FORCEFULNESS. THOSE WHO ARE MEEK WILL CONQUER EVIL AND INHERIT THE EARTH.

Midweek Advent Services

In the midst of the busy weeks before Christmas, Salem offers some moments to center ourselves in the meaning of God’s coming among us. You and your friends are invited to attend any or all of these services, held in the Salem’s Faith Chapel.

Holden Evening Prayer – Join in song, candlelight, and quiet reflection on **Wednesday, December 13** from 6pm to 6:25pm.

Service of Solace – Christ’s coming proclaims hope for all who are grieving or otherwise find the holiday season difficult. Experience words of forgiveness and the comfort of Christ in this 30 minute service on **Tuesday, December 19** at 7pm.

Thank you!

Thank you to Gretchen Petrakis and Dave and Paula Sydow for all their work decorating Salem for the Advent and Christmas seasons!

THIS WEEK

- SUN., DEC 10: 8AM & 10:45AM** Worship
- SUN., DEC 10: 9:15AM** Education Hour, Kappa Chi Cookie Sale, Faith for Life Christmas Party
- MON., DEC 11: 9:30AM** TOPS Meeting
- TUES., DEC 12: 1:30PM** Staff Meeting
- TUES., DEC 12: 6:30PM** Lydia Circle
- TUES., DEC 12: 7PM** Council Meeting
- WED., DEC 13: 8AM** Men’s Prayer Breakfast
- WED., DEC 13: 9:30AM** Advent Brunch
- WED., DEC 13: 6PM** Holden Evening Prayer Service
- WED., DEC 13: 6:30PM** Praise Band
- WED., DEC 13: 6:30PM** Faith for Life Serendipity
- WED., DEC 13: 7PM** Serendipity
- THURS., DEC 14: 9:30AM** Bible Study
- THURS., DEC 14: 6PM** Sanctuary Bells
- THURS., DEC 14: 6PM** Faith for Life Service Project 2
- THURS., DEC 14: 7PM** Sanctuary Choir
- FRI., DEC 15: 7PM** Faith for Life Service Project 3
- SAT. DEC 16: 9AM** Sunday School Christmas Program Rehearsal
- SUN., DEC 17: 8AM & 10:45AM** Worship
- SUN., DEC 17: 9:15AM** Education Hour, Kappa Chi Christmas Party
- SUN., DEC 17: 12PM** Sunday School Christmas Lunch and Program

Pastoral Emergency Number:
In case of emergency a pastor is available at: 309-679-7708

DISCIPLESHIP

Advent Brunch, Wednesday, Dec. 13

You are invited to the Women of Salem's annual Advent Brunch. Patrick Jenkins, singer and songwriter, will be performing at the Advent Brunch on **Wednesday, December 13 at 10am**. The Women of Salem are delighted he will share his talents during the brunch.



Christmas Poinsettias

To beautify the Sanctuary on Christmas Eve and on Christmas Day, and to honor or remember loved ones at Christmas time, Salem offers members the opportunity to order a poinsettia through the church. The poinsettias are purchased by the church office and may be picked up or the church will arrange for them to be delivered to homebound members on Christmas Day following the 9:30am worship service.

Blank order forms will be available in the church pews. The cost for each poinsettia is \$10.50, and your payment must accompany the order. All poinsettia orders must be into the church office no later than **December 17**.

MUSIC MINISTRIES

A Wonderful Opportunity

Salem is blessed with so much musical talent. Here is a great opportunity for those gifts to be shared.

Each Christmas Eve service (4:30pm and 10:30pm) will feature a 20-30 minute prelude by our members. The 4:30pm service will be an opportunity for the youth to be showcased, and for the first time in many years, the 10:30pm service will showcase our adult musical gifts.

If you are a singer or instrumentalist, please consider offering your gifts during the prelude. Please contact Marcia Richardson at mrichardson@salemofpeoria.com to be included in this opportunity. Thank you and bless us all with a willing heart.

OUTREACH MINISTRIES

Sharing Tree

The "Sharing Tree" will be in the Welcome Center until this **Sunday, December 10**. There are a couple tags left! Thank you for your willingness to be a part of making Christmas special for those served by Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI). Your gifts should include a clothing gift and a toy or "fun" gift totaling \$30. Both gifts should be wrapped and placed in a bag with a handle, labeled with the person's name and the number that is on the information sheet. **Gifts must be returned and placed under the tree in the Welcome Center by the end of second service on Sunday, December 10.**

Christmas Canned Food Drive

The Salem Faith for Life students are planning to fill 15-20 Christmas Food Baskets for Thomas Jefferson families this year. The congregation is invited to help, too, by donating any of the items below. Any extra items collected will go to our on-going support of the food bank at Bethel United Methodist Church. The students will assemble and deliver the food baskets to Thomas Jefferson families on **Saturday, December 16**. Thank you for supporting Faith for Life and Thomas Jefferson families!

- | | | | | | |
|-----------------|--|------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| Spaghetti | Spaghetti sauce | Crackers | Canned fruits | Stuffing mix | Mac 'n' cheese |
| Jelly | Canned vegetables | Instant potatoes | Gravy | Mustard | Cereal |
| Instant oatmeal | Ketchup | Stews | Peanut butter | Hot chocolate | Chili |
| Sloppy joe mix | Canned meat (tuna, turkey, chicken, ham) | Meal helpers | | | |

From Heaven Above

Sunday School Christmas Program, Sun., Dec. 17



All are invited to lunch and the Sunday school Christmas program on Sunday, December 17. Terri Gustafson will be making a delicious lunch of ham and macaroni and cheese for us to enjoy. The Bidne family is providing us with a Thrivent card so costs of the lunch are being underwritten. All donations to the lunch will be given to ELCA Good Gifts. A sign up is in the Welcome Center. Please sign up so we have accurate counts.

Following the lunch at noon, the Sunday school children will be offering their gifts in telling the Christmas story. Come join the in the sanctuary as they lift their voices in Christmas songs and readings to tell this wondrous story. Our program this year is based on Martin Luther's hymn, "From Heaven Above to Earth I Come," and will have opportunities for the congregation to sing Christmas carols with the children.

As Martin Luther wrote in the first verse of his hymn: "From heaven above to earth I come, to bear good news to every home; glad tiding of great joy I bring, whereof I now will say, and sing."

You are invited to share the joy and sing with the Sunday school children.

SENIOR MINISTRIES

"Thinking of You" Christmas Greetings Bags

Let's let our members know they're remembered by filling and delivering Christmas bags! The bags will be in the Welcome Center through December 17. These Christmas greeting are sure to be cherished by those who are now unable to attend worship and activities on a regular basis.

Members to receive bags are: Mary Ackelson, Marian Anderson, Walt Anderson, Walter & Betty Bennett and Matthew, Carl and Helen Buerger, Walter and Ruby Chelgren, Marge Gramm, Vi Gruber, Berthena Hayes, Ron Hipple, Bev Holmes, Shirley Hornecker, John Johnson, Bea Kent, Major and Ruth Landes, Carl Lindquist, Jo Nolde, Lillian Ries, Fran Riley, John and Marge Ryberg, Irene Sawatzky, and Dean Schmidt.

Would you like to be the bearer of these cheery greetings? There is also a sign-up sheet for those willing to deliver the bags after second service December 17 through Christmas.



Planning to Make a Year-End Charitable Contribution to Salem?

Thanks so much to those who have already made a special gift to Salem at the close of 2017. It's a real blessing to our ministry together.

Such a gift can also be beneficial in easing your tax burden! If you are planning a gift to offset 2017 income, you'll want to be aware of the official rules from the IRS: "Donors must deliver or mail checks on or by December 31, 2017, in order to claim a charitable contribution deduction for 2017. Checks that are placed in the church offering on the first Sunday of 2018 will not qualify for a charitable contribution deduction in 2017, even if the check is pre-dated to 2017 or was actually written in 2017. However, checks that are written, mailed and post-marked in 2017 will be deductible in 2017 though they are not received by a church until 2018."

Thank you for keeping these things in mind as you plan your giving, and blessings and peace on your New Year ahead!

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRIES

Faith for Life December Service Projects

Faith for Life students will be participating in three small group projects to prepare for the Thomas Jefferson Christmas baskets. They will be on Saturday, December 9 at 10am; Thursday, December 14 at 6pm; and Friday, December 15 at 4pm. Parent help is welcome any of these days, too. The delivery day for the Thomas Jefferson baskets is Saturday, December 16.



What's Christmas without Christmas cookies?

Stop by the fellowship lounge between 8:30am-11am on **Sunday, December 10**, and purchase cookies sold by Salem senior high students. Cookie donations may be brought to the Salem kitchen by 8am on Sunday, December 10.

Kappa Chi is taking orders for Christmas Cookie Mix Jars

Cookie Jars are being sold again, and are \$5 each. These make wonderful gifts for co-workers, teachers, and friends. A limited number of jars will be available for sale on Sunday, December 10.

Pre-order your favorites today online, and they will be available for pick-up or delivery between December 10 - December 17. Your purchase will help 17 students and six adult leaders participate in the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston.

Worship Participants Needed!

Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday this year, and we need worship participants (acolytes, crucifiers, ushers, lectors, and sound board operators) for all Christmas services. Salem volunteers are needed for **December 24: 9:30am; Christmas Eve: 4:30pm and 10:30pm; Christmas Day: 9:30am; and December 31: 9:30am**. Please contact Matt Bastian (mbastian@salemofpeoria.com) if you are available.

Fourth Sunday of Advent WORSHIP

December 24 / 9:30am

Christmas WORSHIP

Christmas Eve / 4:30pm & 10:30pm
Christmas Day / 9:30am

New Year's Eve WORSHIP

New Year's Eve / 9:30am

Salem

Lutheran Church

Growing People in Christ... to Love & Serve!

1700 W. War Memorial Dr. • Peoria, IL 61614-6724

The Bugle
USPS 477-460



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



Tour of JK Williams

Salem Churchmen took a tour of the JK Williams micro-distillery in East Peoria on Sunday, December 3. There they learned about the history of spirit production in Peoria and the process to make bourbon and whiskey.