



Adoring Him with Our Gifts

Throughout Scripture, everyone who has come into the presence of the Lord has been in awe of Him and has adored Him. Think of Moses and the burning bush. Quietly watching over his father-in-law's sheep, Moses saw a bush on fire but not being consumed. When God spoke to Moses telling him to remove his shoes, Moses realized who was speaking, and *"Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God"* (Exodus 3:6). But he listened and spent 40 years showing adoration to God by obediently leading God's people according to God's direction.

Isaiah writes about the vision through which God called him to be His prophet: *"I saw the Lord...high and lifted up...[and the angel] called to another and said: 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts.'" His reaction was to confess his sinfulness and, like Moses, to adore God by answering His question, "Whom shall I send?" with "Here am I. Send me!"* (Isaiah 6:1-8).

This is the Christmas season, and we cannot help but think of the Wise Men, too, who came in search of the newborn King, bringing their gifts and bowing before Him in adoration. Matthew 2:11 records, *"And going into the house they saw the Child with Mary His mother, and they fell down and worshiped Him."* And they offered to the Christ Child the gifts they had brought for Him, *"gold and frankincense and myrrh."*

The shepherds adored Him, too. They heard about Jesus from the angels as they sat outdoors watching their sheep and ran to Bethlehem to see the Christ Child. They didn't have gifts to bring as the Magi did, but they, too, responded in adoration. Luke writes, *"And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning the Child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them"* (Luke 2:17-18).

God gives gifts to each of us, and uses us to tell the Good News of the birth of His Son who came to bring us forgiveness of sins and life eternal. Some of us, like the Wise Men, are blessed with monetary gifts to be used to support mission and ministry. Others of us are more like the shepherds, able to *"make known... [what has] been told [us] concerning the Child."* By God's grace, all of us can respond in faithful obedience to God's Word. In these ways, we adore our Savior.



Special points of interest:

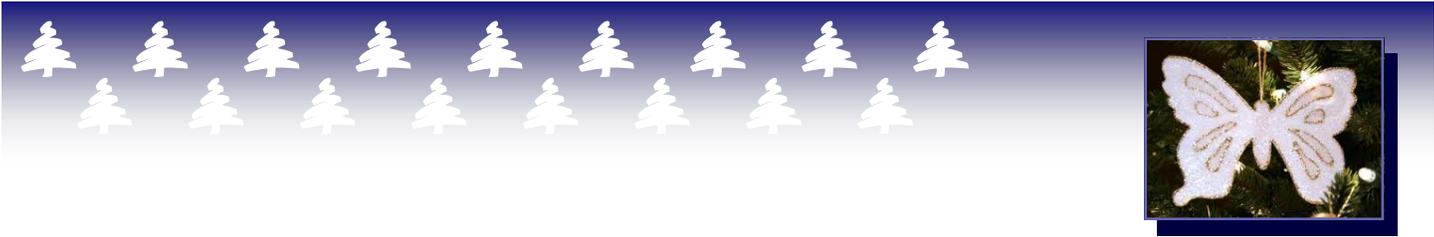
- Voters' Meeting December 8th, 9:15am
- Unity Sunday December 15th, (Worship at 10:30am only)
- Mid-week Advent services begin December 4th.

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Voters' Meeting Scheduled

The December Voters' Meeting is scheduled for December 8th at 9:20am. This meeting will include final budget discussion and approval as well as election of the 2014-2016 officers. Please see your bulletin board or Sunday's bulletin for the complete list of nominees. Nominees can be added during the meeting provided the nominee has accepted the floor nomination.



The Great O Antiphons: Mid-Week Advent Services & Suppers

The Great O Antiphons are seven brief prayers traditionally chanted or sung on successive evening beginning December 17. By the 8th and 9th centuries, European churches began using them for evening worship during the season of Advent. These ancient supplications beautifully express the profound yearning of Christian church for her long expected Savior. They continue to be part of the seasonal devotions of many churches today. The *Great "O" Antiphons* form the basis of the popular Advent hymn, *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* by English hymnographer John Neale.

Each antiphon begins with the acclamation "O," addresses Christ by one of His messianic titles from the Old Testament, and ends with a heartfelt plea for His coming. In preparation of Christ's birth, we will honor this tradition by focusing our mid-week Advent worship services on specific "O" Antiphons:



- December 4th: Jesus Is Immanuel, *Isaiah 7:10-14*
- December 11th: Jesus Is Wisdom, *Colossians 1:24-2:3*
- December 18th: Jesus Is Lord, *Exodus 3:1-6, 13-15*

These lay led services will begin at 7:00pm each Wednesday and will be preceded by a light supper in the fellowship hall. Supper begins at 5:30pm and will be available until 6:45pm (or the food runs out). Everyone is invited to drop in for a bite, even if you can't stay for worship. Thank you to the groups providing our meals this year: the Church Council, SOP Youth, and the Men's Group. We are blessed and thankful to have so many leaders and chefs in our midst.

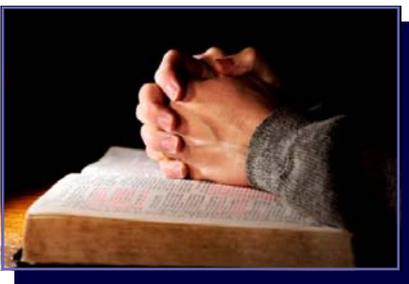
(Further explanation of *The Great O Antiphons* and devotions can be found at <http://www.stpaulskingsville.org/oantiphons.htm>)

New Prayer Group

"Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praises. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him." James 5:13-15

Prayer is a gift from God, our connection to an intimate relationship with our Creator and our Redeemer. How privileged we are that we can use prayer to lift up one another and to lift up our church, knowing that God will hear the cries and praises of His people!

We are blessed to have a new prayer group beginning Thursday, December 5th at 9:30am. This forty-five minute weekly prayer group, led by Teresa Creasman, will follow four steps of prayer: Praise, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Intercession. *Praise* is a time of consideration and thanks for who God is in relation to the Scripture references.



Confession is a time for silently confessing sin to God who forgives. *Thanksgiving* is time devoted to praise for what God has done and what we see Him doing in our church, families, and community. The closing step, *Intercession*, is time set aside for prayers for the needs of the church, for the individuals that make up Shepherd of Peace, and the congregation as a whole.

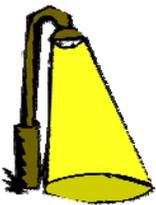
We encourage you to join this group each Thursday from 9:30am-10:15am in the Conference Room.



Church Decorating

We will be decorating the church for the Christmas season on December 14th at 9:00 AM. Everyone (including children and men) is encouraged to join in the fellowship opportunity. Coffee, juice, and donuts will be served.

In addition to the trees draped with Christmons and lights, Shepherd of Peace adorns the altar with poinsettias every year in celebration of the birth of Jesus. You will find a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board if you would like to purchase a poinsettia for the altar. The cost is \$7.00 per plant, and the plants can be taken home after the Christmas Day Service.



Parish Grounds

The Property Board met for its monthly meeting to discuss all things property related. We discussed the lights in the parking lot. As you may have noticed, the light at Shepherd of Peace hasn't been shining through the darkness for some time. Some of the lights in the parking lot just keep burning out, so we are looking at replacing the existing light heads with new heads that should shine brighter, longer, and more consistently.

I'm sad to report that we have lost a couple of very dear and, in one case, ancient trees. The gi-normous pine tree just as you come into the parking lot has recently died. We reached out to the professionals, who have assured us the tree is recently dead and is in no immediate danger of falling. While we have at least a year or so before the tree begins to become worrisome, the Board is in negotiations to have it removed from the property by springtime.

Not to be outdone by a single pine, there are a couple of old oak trees (At least, I'm told they're oak trees. I can't tell the difference between an oak tree and a Bradford pear) at the edge of the property are also in need of being removed. The current plan is to ambush the men after Men's Breakfast this Saturday (as of the writing of this article, that's on November the 23rd.). If the men sniff out the ambush and flee before we can spring the trap, we will schedule a time coinciding with the spring clean up to take care of these trees when next we clean up the property.



The Property Board has been asked to look into the possibility of putting a hand-rail on the edge of the steps leading up into the Worship Hall to provide a bit of stability when going up or down those steps. I must admit, at first I thought this was folly until this past Friday. Shepherd of Peace hosted the local Maumelle High School Senior Picnic. I was headed into the Worship Hall to find an extra table and actually fell UP the steps. I found myself instinctively grabbing for a railing that simply wasn't there.



And, finally, the Board would like to extend a very special and heart-felt "Thank You" to all of the volunteers who so graciously have given of their time and talents to keep the property in such great shape throughout the growing season. Our 2013 Mowing Volunteers were: **Jason Smith, Ken Quimby, Leroy Mahnken, Michael Flakoll, Parrish Hurley, Rick Sutherland, and Serge Galant.**



More Than a Little Change

The following article was printed in the 1950 Lutheran Witness. Has the message changed in 63 years?

It is Christmas. "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." "Unto us a Child is born!" And look at the changes He makes in the lives He touches.

A carpenter's career is interrupted for several years because of the birth of this Baby. A village hotelkeeper's hectic life suddenly becomes more complicated by the problem of a woman seeking a birthplace for her Child. A handful of shepherds are prompted to do something almost unthinkable because this Baby was born—they leave their flocks in the field! The regular pattern of several wise men's occupations is thrown off balance by the appearance of this Baby's star. A band of soldiers is sent on a gruesome mission of murder because this Baby's birth made their master uneasy. Changes—changes in routine because a Child was born.

But changes deeper than that: For many, the news of this birth was "good tidings of great joy." The impact of His birth on them was tremendous! The entire course of their lives was changed by His coming.



The Virgin Mother and her betrothed became intricately involved in the center of God's plan for the human race. Their life was given a purpose it would never have had if this Child had not been born. The commonplace life of the shepherds was invaded with heaven's own glory. They were the audience for the rarest song ever heard by human ears, and their eyes saw the Word made flesh, and they beheld "His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Kings, with all their privileges, had reason to envy the ecstasy of these poor laborers whom God had visited. The intellectual treasury of the Wise Men became barren when this Baby's star led them to the Wisdom of God. An old man and a woman's life finally became complete when they

clutched the Baby to their heart. And so on down the endless line of men, women and children—all the way down to us, that Baby's birth changes lives, outlooks, surrounding, destinies, nations, history and fills everything it changes for the better with the glory of God. For this Baby is God! Immanuel! And when God enters someone, it is no longer the same.

Thank God for the unspeakable Gift, which alters our life, blots out the past, redirects the present and secures the future. Who, weary of wandering, sick of failure, at wit's end, terror-stricken at his offenses against a holy God, sinking in the quicksand of frustration, would not welcome the one Person who can replace all this with life? Who, searching for peace, would not greet with open arms the Prince of Peace?

That transforming Christ is operating in you if you find yourself reacting to Christmas as did the first ones to experience heaven's glory: Mary, who sang, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God, my Savior." Zacharias, who exclaimed, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel: for He hath visited and redeemed His people." The shepherds, who returned from the Lord's crib, "glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen". The Wise Men, who, when they saw the Star, rejoiced with exceeding great joy. Aged Anna, who "gave thanks likewise unto the Lord and spoke of Him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem". And, Simeon, the departing pilgrim who "took Him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, 'Lord now let Thou Thy servant depart in peace, ' according to Thy work; for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people a Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the Glory of Thy people Israel."

Perhaps the question isn't has the message change, but rather how have we been changed by the message?

(Source: Article by Rev. Jaroslav Vajda - Reprinted from the December, 1950 Lutheran Witness)





Shepherd's Flock (getting to know His sheep): Duanne Markman

Duanne is a “real” Yankee— having been born and raised in Augusta, Maine. She spent two high school summer vacations working as a nurse’s aide at the local hospital; her choice was made, and a career in nursing was planned. She graduated from a three year diploma program in 1958 at Yale-New Haven Hospital. Those were fun days! The students had most of the campus privileges (sports, theater, library, and, of course, boys.)



After three years working in the hospital, boredom set in, and Duanne decided to join the Air Force. She was stationed at Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska. That’s where she met her husband, Bob, a good Lutheran boy from Minnesota. Bob was stationed at Little Rock the B-58 program and remained there until retirement.

At that time, Bob and Duanne were members of Trinity Lutheran in North Little Rock.

Arkansas has been a good place to live, and it was a good place to raise two boys. However, Duanne did not expect to still be here 44 years later! The family traveled a lot but were always happy to get home to Little Rock. Bob died in 1989 of cancer. Duanne earned both a BSN and a MNSC at UAMS and worked there until her retirement in 1997.



In 1996, Duanne moved to Maumelle and joined Shepherd of Peace. She has been active travelling and collecting antique perfume bottles. She feels very fortunate for her many friends and family which includes two granddaughters in college.

A Blessed Christmas to All!

~Duanne Markman

December Volunteers

	8:00	10:30
Lay Minister	Marc Higgins	Mark Filter
Acolyte	Ladye Hurley	Keeley Ausburn
Ushers	P. Hurley & L. Mahnken	F. Ausburn & J. Smith
Comm. Prep	Higgins	L. Sutherland
Comm. Assist	Peter Christiansen	Felix Cates





Church Growth: Serving through STEP Ministries



Church growth has recently been made aware of a great opportunity to serve the youth in our community. STEP Ministries is an organization that enables people like you and me to serve Christ by investing in the lives of struggling school children. We are looking for anyone who is interested in spending a half hour mentoring a local youth through this program. The only requirements are that you bring your loving and caring heart, along with a little time and energy. Exact days and times have not yet been nailed down, but please contact Ben Weigand if you are interested!

Looking Ahead: Church Growth will be partnering with the youth at SOP to host a chili cook-off during the month of February. Start preparing your recipe now and they might just be ready in time! Keep a lookout for more details to come.



Notes from Education



Children are working on the Christmas Program which will be presented December 15th at 10:30am. We will have one service that Sunday. Parents, we will be sending home the words to the songs and the lines for the various parts. Please work with your children on learning the songs and lines. If you have any questions, please contact Clarice or Veronica.

Once again we want to give a big thanks to our Sunday School teachers: **Ladye Hurley, Barbara Tilley, Jeanette Hurley, Tracy Wray, Kara Weigand, Veronica Shepherd, Danielle Ausburn and Jerri Shertzer.** And, we want to give an extra special thanks to **Mark Filter** for teaching our Confirmation class on Tuesday afternoons.

Youth Christmas Party

The SOP Youth Christmas Party will be held at Ms. Dani and Mr. Jeremy's house (6 Ouachita Cove, Maumelle) on Friday, December 20th, from 6:00pm-8:30pm. All post-confirmation youth and confirmation youth are invited to attend. The party will include a "Dirty Santa" Exchange so be sure to bring a \$10 wrapped present; it is a fun game you don't want to miss. The youth will also be making blankets to share with others who are in need this winter. Food, Fellowship, Movies, and Fun! Contact Dani at 413-7698 if you have any questions.





Shepherd's Care Mothers' Day Out

November was all about the changing fall season and being thankful at preschool. We worked on patterning and number recognition in math and began to work on "reading" names of our friends as we matched lunch boxes with nametags. We made sunflowers and painted bluebirds when we heard the Bible story about Jesus telling his friends, "If God takes care of the flowers and birds, He will also take care of us." We took apart flowers and looked closely at the seeds and petals to see how wonderfully God's makes them all. We also heard a Bible story about how Jesus called disciples to help with His work. We learned that He calls us to help also, and we practiced "catching" fish so we would be ready to "catch" people for Him.



Later in the month, we talked about things that happened on the first Thanksgiving when the Pilgrims and Indians celebrated all the gifts God had given them. We painted "Mayflowers" made from our hands on our blue finger paint oceans. We had some silly Thanksgiving fun when we made Albuquerque turkeys to wear on our heads. There were pinto beans in our sensory table this month, and we had fun pouring them through tubes and moving them with dump trucks and bulldozers. There were often many princesses and super heroes at school since the costume box appeared at free play time. Thanks to Mrs. Carol Smith and Mrs. Lucy for fun additions to our costume collection. We added letters Mm and Kk to our letter wall and practiced forming and sounding out those new letters.

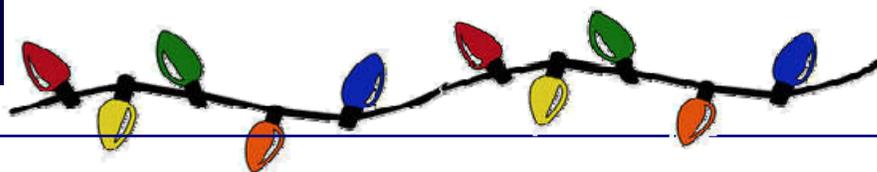


In music we sang Thanksgiving songs to praise God and to have fun. "The Turkey Tango" and "Albuquerque Is My Turkey" were two of the favorites along with "Thank You God for giving us ____" which included everything from stuffed animals to family, and "God is Good, All the Time."

On the Tuesday of Thanksgiving week, we "will become" the pilgrims. This involves, saying good-bye to our friends in England, sailing across rough, stormy seas on the crowded Mayflower table, chopping down trees and building new houses, making friends with the Indian teachers, planting seeds that we brought from England, harvesting the crops that "grow", searching for and shooting our turkey, "churning" butter for our cornbread, and enjoying the "feast" provided by our super parents. Through it all, of course, we will remember to stop and give thanks for each blessing along the way.



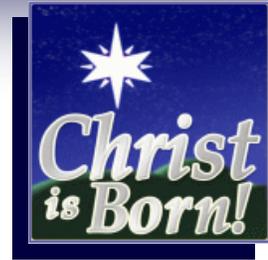
There are currently 17 children enrolled in the Preschool class so that class is full. However, due to some children moving up and another to a full time program, there are currently two openings in the Toddler class. If you know anyone who is looking for a two day program for a 1 or 2 year old child, send them our way.





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THE PURPOSE OF OUR EXISTENCE

Shepherd Of Peace exists to praise and glorify God. This happens when we are faithful in reaching out to others with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, in promoting growth in discipleship, and in performing acts of self-sacrificing love to all people in Christ's name.

Sunday Schedule:

8:00 AM - Traditional Worship

9:15 AM - Family Bible Hour

10:30 AM - Blended Worship

There's a place for you at SOP!

facebook

Special Days in December

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|-------|------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|
| 12-1 | First Sunday in Advent | 12-24 | Nativity of Our Lord, Christmas Eve |
| 12-5 | Morgan McDonald (B, 10) | 12-25 | Nativity of Our Lord, Christmas Day |
| | Connor Smith (B, 8) | 12-27 | St. John, Apostle |
| 12-6 | Will Creasman (B) | 12-28 | Jim Drane (B) |
| 12-8 | Alec Bishop (B, 16) | | Marc & Cookie Higgins (A, 17) |
| 12-9 | Jim & Carolyn Drane (A, 7) | 12-31 | New Year's Eve |
| 12-10 | Jacob Schroeder (B, 4) | | Janet Elwood (B) |
| 12-11 | Fred Lemons (B) | | |
| 12-12 | Karen Johnston (B) | | |
| 12-14 | Elaina Flakoll (B, 6) | | |
| | Kathy Heintzen (B) | | |
| | Pat Wheat (B) | | |
| 12-15 | Mark Filter (B) | | |
| 12-16 | Allison Mahnken (B) | | |
| 12-17 | Dave Schroeder (B) | | |
| 12-21 | Duanne Markman (B) | | |
| | Ashlee Schroeder (B) | | |
| 12-22 | Mark & Jeanie Filter (A, 40) | | |



December

Shepherd of Peace Lutheran Church

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																			
<u>1</u> 8:00 AM Worship 9:15 AM Family Bible Hour 10:30 AM Worship	<u>2</u> 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM Peace Quilters	<u>3</u> 9:05 AM - 2:00 PM MDO 4:30 PM Confirmation Class	<u>4</u> 5:30 PM - 6:45 PM Fellowship Supper 7:00 PM Mid-Week Advent Service 7:30 PM Choir Practice	<u>5</u> 9:05 AM - 2:00 PM MDO 9:30 AM - 10:15 AM Prayer Group 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM Bible Study 6:00 PM Mid-Week Teens 7:00 PM Church Growth	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>																																																																																			
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