

The Disciple

December 2017

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 12.3 Food Pantry Sunday**
- 12.4 Elders Meeting**
- 12.6,13,20 Advent Worship**
- 12.9 Christmas Sing Along**
- 12.11 Council Meeting**
- 12.12 Community Meal**
- 12.16 Birthday Party for Jesus**
- 12.17 Newsletter Articles Due**
- 12.18 NEM Meeting**
- 12.24 Christmas Eve Worship**
9:15AM & 7:00PM
- 12.25 Christmas Day Worship**
10:30AM
- 12.30 Board of Education**
- 12.31 New Year's Eve Worship**
9:15AM & 7:00PM



LUTHERAN ADVENT TRADITIONS

Have you ever wondered about the history of the Church's celebration of Advent? What is it and why do we celebrate it? It's not an "empty" rite in the Church but is loaded with much meaning. The article below, "Lutheran Advent Traditions" by Dcs. Betsy Karkan, seeks to and succeeds in answering these and other questions concerning Advent. I thought I would share it with you.

"At a time when much of the world is frantically gift shopping, putting up Christmas lawn decorations and anticipating the arrival of Santa Claus, Christians around the world are observing the liturgical season of Advent. From the Latin word for "coming", Advent is a time of preparation and anticipation for the coming of Christ both in the past in His incarnation as the baby Jesus, but also in the future with His promised second coming as Christ Triumphant. Furthermore, Advent is a time to focus on His present coming to us in the Word and Sacraments[1]. In the Lutheran church there have been many traditions observed during Advent that help Christians to both prepare for and anticipate His coming at this time. Martin Luther encouraged families to observe Advent as a time for them to teach their children about the coming of Christ.

Advent marks the beginning of the church calendar. It traditionally starts on the Sunday closest to St. Andrew's Day (November 30th) and continues for four Sundays until Christmas.

Continued next page



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During this time the liturgical paraments and vestments in many churches will change to violet to recognize Advent as a time of preparation and repentance as well as a symbol of the royalty of the coming King. The color blue can also be used as a symbol of anticipation and hope.

Christians in many countries have adopted various traditions of lighting candles during Advent to observe this as the time of the coming of Christ who is the light of the world. One widespread tradition is the use of an Advent wreath both in the church and the home to mark each Sunday in the Advent season. While the origin of this as an Advent tradition dates back to the Lutheran church following the Reformation, the current form commonly used today was developed more recently and is used in many other Christian churches throughout the world. The wreath is made out of evergreens in the shape of a circle to represent eternal life. It consisted of four candles originally; three purple or blue candles to match the liturgical colors and one pink candle lit on the 3rd Sunday in Advent. This 3rd Sunday is known as Gaudete Sunday, meaning "rejoice" in Latin and comes from Philippians 4:4. Lighting this 3rd candle, Christians relax the fast to rejoice for the promised Messiah is coming soon. Many Advent wreaths also have a 5th candle, the Christ candle, which is lit during the time of Christmas, symbolizing that Christ, the light of the world, has entered the darkness. ...

There is so much beauty and rich tradition during the season of Advent to prepare Christians for the coming of Jesus, the babe of Bethlehem. When you see the altar draped in purple, remember your King who came to bring you life and salvation. If you don't have one already, consider getting an Advent wreath for your home as you prepare for the coming of Christ, the light of the world. Give thanks to God for the confession of faith He gave to His people to shine His light in dark places..."

Of course, Advent leads us to the most important event in the history of mankind second only to our Savior's resurrection- His physical birth into our world through the Virgin Mary. Advent is a time to prepare our hearts with sincere contrition and repentance over our sins to receive Jesus who comes to us in His Word and sacrament, absolving us of our guilt, and welcoming His rule over our lives.

The advent of the Christ child is the true joy of our celebration of Christmas. Have a meaningful Advent and a very merry Christmas!

Pastor Chris

Wishing you a blessed Christmas

Celebrate

BIRTHDAYS

Walter Fabry (26)

Jonathan Ongstad (28)

BAPTISMAL ANNIVERSARIES

Kaitlyn Shelton (3)

Theresa Boltz (4)

WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

John & Josie Knoska (3)

Prayer Request

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR FAMILY WITH HEALTH CONCERNS

Alisa Bahr

Kenneth Pollack

Jim Boltz

Kathy Ridder

Nancy Fehser

Robert Schulz

John Knoska

Erna Sherman

Doris Kracht

Julie Wedster

Bob Long

Rochelle Zemgulis

Marilyn Long

Disciple Newsletter

Holy Cross Lutheran Church
(LCMS, SELC District)

4041 W. 120th St.

Alsip, IL 60803

708.597.5209

Office: Mon.- Thurs. 8:00am - 12:00pm

Web: www.hc-lc.org

Email: hclc@hc-lc.org

FB: <https://www.facebook.com/hclcalcip/>

Pastor Chris D. Ongstad

Worship-8:00am & 10:30am Sundays

Sunday School/ Bible Class 9:15am



The League Pledge

In fervent gratitude for the Savior's dying love and His blood-bought gift of redemption we dedicate ourselves to Him with all that we are and have; and in obedience to His call for workers in the harvest fields, we pledge Him our willing service wherever and whenever

He has need for us. We consecrate to our Savior our hands to work for Him, our feet to go on His errands, our voice to sing His praises, our lips to proclaim His redeeming love, our silver and our gold to extend His Kingdom, our will to do His will, and every power of our life to the great task of bringing the lost and the erring into eternal fellowship with Him. Amen.

WOMEN OF HOLY CROSS-New Covenant women are priestesses in the home and, if employed outside the home, are Christ's servants in the workplace and builders of His church. They are first class members of Christ's body, the church. They gladly serve Him in and out of church, in every aspect of their lives because they know and believe that He died for them and gave them a place of honor in His Kingdom.

We encourage all women to join the LWML of Holy Cross, and work together with us to serve God in the Mission Field. We need your support, ideas for LWML events and your commitment to serve our Lord with gladness so that we can support the work of the mission. Don't forget the Mite offerings. Talk to Nancy Fehser or Jeanne Simovic for boxes, and give the filled ones to Nancy. Our meetings are held quarterly, on Saturdays at 1:00 p.m. Please prayerfully consider becoming an active member. The next meeting is January 20, 2018. If you have any questions call Jeanne Simovic or Pauline Griffin.

Give thanks to God for the women of Christ's church and for the part they play in our lives.



WORDS OF THANKS

We had a great turnout for the Community Meal. We rearranged to tables for a cozy atmosphere. It was nice to see more conversations and interaction between all.

Oak Street Medical sent 2 representatives to explain benefits of coming to Oak Street Medical.

We also had 3 girls from Shepard volunteer with this evenings event.

Thanks to Faith, Elizabeth and Kaitlyn for all your help. It was greatly appreciated.

God Bless,
Joan Opyd

Thank you to all of the people who diligently worked with the Stewardship and Finance Committee on this year's program, " Consecrated Steward."

It would not have happened without the support of everyone in the congregation and leadership of Pastor Soltis and Pastor Chris.

We hope it inspired everyone else as it did members of the Stewardship and Finance Committee. We called upon individual members of the congregation to help with this very involved program.

Thank you!! God has truly blessed us all with gifts, talents and treasures and we should use what God has given us to rejoice in Love, and share his Love and Word to all.

Bless you,
Barb Piekosz



Note from the Secretary



I want everyone to know that I have made the best decision in not taking the full time position that would have forced me to quit as church secretary. I absolutely love working here and I love you all! Thank you so much and Have a Wonderful and Blessed Christmas!

Linda



March for Life, Chicago is January 14, 2018. Northern Illinois District Life Ministry is partnering with Lutherans for Life to join thousands of pro-life advocates gathering in the Chicago Loop to celebrate the sanctity of human life. We hope you'll join us as we walk together in celebration and observance of Love which affirms life. A short walk around Federal Plaza begins and ends with a line up of speakers affirming the value of life and underscoring the importance of continuing to speak out for it. Meet us under the Lutherans for Life banner on Federal Plaza (50 W. Adams Street, Chicago) at 1:55 p.m.

Artist Series Concert. St. John's Lutheran Church, 215 S. Lincoln Avenue, Lombard, is hosting professional harpists Camille and Kennerly Kitt, who will appear in concert Sunday, November 26, at 3 p.m.

75th Anniversary Celebration- Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 8659 S. Sayre, Burbank, will be celebrating its 75th Anniversary on November. 19, with a celebration service at 3 p.m. and dinner to follow at 5 p.m. Tickets for the dinner are available by calling the church office at 708-598-8070. The cost of dinner tickets is \$15 for adults and \$10 for children 6 to 12, 5 and under free. There will be a continuation of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation at this service also.

Join LCEF's Laborers for Christ. Are you looking for a satisfying next chapter of your life? Join LCEF's Laborers for Christ. Laborers For Christ (LFC) is a service provided by Lutheran Church Extension Fund to help Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) ministries save money on their building projects. Laborers are retired carpenters, handy people, farmers, school teachers and other willing workers. They are committed to working at minimum wage for LCMS ministries who desire to undertake the construction and improvement of their own facilities. To view future projects or fill out an application, visit lcef.org/category/laborers-for-christ or call 314-885-6444.

Summer Camp Counselors. Walcamp, is one of dozens of Lutheran camps across the country looking for college-aged young adults to make a difference in the lives of children. The opportunity to serve at a camp awaits! For more information, visit www.walcamp.org/page/summer_camp_counselors

Holiday on Pulaski. Alsip, Friday, Dec. 8, 5:30-9 p.m. We will be at Burger King playing games with kids! Come and visit with us. **IN NEED OF VOLUNTEERS!** If you are interested in volunteering for this event please contact Mary Schmidt at 708-597-2668 .

Altar Guild will be taking orders for Poinsettia plants for decorating the altar for Christmas this season – similar to how we took orders for Easter Lilies. A sign-up sheet will be on the bulletin board in the narthex for anyone interested. We are trying to keep the plants uniform and helping everyone keeping their hassle low on shopping for one. The due date for orders will be announced as soon as we have the details firmed up.

Midweek Advent Worship for three consecutive Wednesday evenings beginning Dec. 6 at 7 p.m. This year our theme is on the family. Everyone needs godly wisdom when it comes to family relationships. That's why, as we begin a new church year, we plan to learn from the families connected with our Lord's birth. This includes Joseph, Mary, and Jesus, along with Zechariah, Elizabeth, and John. These families faced infertility, frustration, loss, misunderstandings, death, and so much more. Leave the mayhem of Christmas-ness and spend some quiet time with Jesus preparing your hearts for the entrance of the Savior born in Bethlehem.

Children's Christmas Party Saturday December 16, 2:00-4:00PM Kids and their friends are invited. Games will be played, gifts given hot dogs, chips and refreshments offered.

Christmas Sing Along– Saturday December 9, in the Fellowship Hall 2:00PM, light refreshments will be served.



The October 16, 2017 Holy Cross Lutheran Church Council Meeting opened at 7:35 with prayer. A motion was made and approved to accept the September minutes.

PASTOR'S REPORT– The district convention will be in Lakewood, Ohio in April 2018.

Holy Cross will be having a Trunk-or-Treat from 3-6 p.m. on October 31.

Tom & Rita Joyce have requested a release of membership.

Edna Wendt passed away on October 5, 2017 her funeral was October 10, 2017.

Mission Insite presentation by LCEF vice president David Thiele is confirmed for October 21, 2017, 1-4p.m.

Mobilizing the Mission presentation by Rev. Dr. Peter Meier will be Nov. 4, from 12:45 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. He will preach on Nov. 5, and will consult with leaders about formulating our own mission plan on Nov. 5, from 1p.m. to 2:30p.m.

Rev. Thomas Soltis will be our guest leader for our stewardship program entitled, “Consecration Sunday,” October 4. November 12, 2017 to preach and speak at Consecration Sunday brunch or lunch..

Pastor Chris attended the Professional Church Workers Conference in Macungie, PA. September 27-28, along with the SELC Board of Directors meeting at the same time. Josh Weiser also attended the conference with Pastor.

TREASURER'S REPORT– We dropped financially this year in the month of September, and the general fund is down. A motion was made and approved to accept the Treasurer's Report.

INTERNS REPORT - “Joining Jesus on His Mission,” continues on Wednesday evenings. Josh is planning a scavenger hunt for Trunk-or-Treat, and we are preparing for a visit from Dr. Jacob Youmans on November 10-12, 2017.

ELDERS REPORT– The Elders will be having an extra meeting on October 23, 2017 to discuss the budget. They also proposed an Amendment to the Constitution, which will be brought to the next Voter's meeting.

EVANGELISM REPORT– The Evangelism committee discussed passing out cups of coffee to people stuck in traffic near the 127th and Cicero construction.

EDUCATION REPORT– On December 16, 2017 we will be having a birthday party for Jesus.

STEWARDSHIP/FINANCE REPORT– Stewardship and finance are preparing for the “Consecrated Stewardship Program.”

SOCIAL MINISTRIES REPORT– Donations to continue the community meal would be appreciated. We are collecting hats and scarves through October 29, 2017.

CHRISTIAN ORGANIZATIONS REPORT– Martha Stevens, Dorothy Lux and Liz Wilczynski will be selling Carson's Community Days Booklets.

A motion was made to approve the changes Elders made to the constitution concerning self exclusion.

A motion was made to release Tom & Rita Joyce from membership.

A motion was made to have the LCFS toy drive this year.

A motion was made to have the Southwest Lutheran Chorus concert at Holy Cross on January 7, 2017 at 3:00p.m.

A motion was made to have a Voter's meeting November 19, 2017 at 11:45a.m.

Josh's Corner

Well...winter has begun. In the time since my last article several important markers of the changing seasons have passed. On the same day of our first snowfall my mentor, supervisor, professor, and director from Concordia Texas visited. Both moments indicate the end of one season and the beginning of another. Snow, something I had only seen a few times before in my whole life, reminded me that Fall is over, Winter is coming, and I am stepping into a new season in a new city, with different friends, family, and food to share with my new communities. My supervisor visit brought me into a new mode of thinking with my ministry here; the time has come for us to start making footprints and impressions into the community, not only as individual people but as a community of believers. Between the time of this being written and the publication of the newsletter I will have left for a vacation back to Texas. My best friend is getting married, and the timing is perfect to stay for the Thanksgiving break. Keep my family and my travels in your prayer as we move toward Christmas!

Your Intern,
Josh

EVANGELISM

Is evangelism the converting of unbelievers, or the sharing of good news?

Often our culture, our church history, and our own preconceptions tell us that Evangelizing consists of arguing, convincing, and ultimately persuading the other person to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. The Bible indicates that this is not to be our strategy for bringing others to Himself, some of the clues to this are in the words themselves. The word itself comes from the Greek *Euangelion*, an ancient word that means "good news". We of course know that our good news is the greatest of all, the good news of Christ's death, resurrection, forgiveness of our sins, and the salvation that we are assured. Evangelism is not about convincing others of the truth of God's good news, although that skillset can strengthen our personal faith. Evangelism is living out the good news of Christ, the gospel, allowing the truth of Christ to take over our behavior. Loving your neighbor, caring for others, these are ways to proclaim God's gospel to others, potentially in more profound ways than we could have by just our reasoning or argumentative skills alone. So, don't be under the impression that your potential to evangelize is limited to your intelligence, your eloquence or your education: God designed every single one of us to proclaim the Good news in ways that are special, unique, effective, and glorious to Him. So simply ask yourself this question if you want to evangelize this Christmas: How can I love my neighbor? Your answer just might be a way to proclaim the good news with so much more than words.

EDUCATION

The Gospel of Luke is where we get one of our favorite stories from the Bible: this birth of Jesus. The Christmas story is tried and true, sometimes even boring, but we should make sure that we take time every holiday season to reach out to God through His word and hear from him. Here is my challenge to you: this Christmas season read through the first few chapters of the gospel of Luke. Below is laid out a simple reading plan you can use to enrich your faith this holiday season. Before you read each verse, you may want to offer a prayer to the Lord. Here is a sample to get you started:

Lord Jesus,

Your word is Holy and good. Please show me your love and strengthen my faith by the reading of your scripture. Help me to see through the outward appearance of the Christmas season this year, and look to the true purpose for the holidays: your arrival into the world as a child. May I see your good news and gospel, even in this simple story.

Amen

Take it nice and slow through these verses. Don't feel like you must get through the words of scripture, let the words get through to YOU. Take your time, ask the Lord questions as you study his word, and be blessed this Christmas season.

December 21st: Luke 1:1-25
December 22nd: Luke 1:26-38
December 23rd: Luke 1:39-56
December 24th: Luke 1:57-80
December 25th: Luke 2:1-21



SERVANTS IN WORSHIP -DECEMBER, 2017

DATE	TIME	USHER	COMMUNION ASSISTANT	LECTOR	ALTAR GUILD	COUNTER	GREETER	PROJECTIONIST
3	8:00AM ----- 10:30AM	Jim Boltz ----- Jim Bahr	Jim Boltz -----	Donna Judd ----- Donna Meilahn	Martha Stevens Dorothy Lux	Faith Schulz Donna Meilahn	Sue Boltz Liz Wilczynski	Martha Stevens ----- Theresa Boltz
6	7:00PM	Martha Stevens	-----	-----		Pauline Griffin Martha Stevens	Donna Judd	Theresa Boltz
10	8:00AM ----- 10:30AM	Jim Boltz ----- Jim Bahr	----- Ron Wedster	----- Liz Wilczynski	Martha Stevens Dorothy Lux	Dorothy Lux Martha Stevens	Sue Boltz Liz Wilczynski	Martha Stevens ----- Theresa Boltz
13	7:00PM	Martha Stevens	-----	-----		Pauline Griffin Martha Stevens	Donna Judd	Theresa Boltz
17	8:00AM ----- 10:30AM	Jim Boltz ----- Jim Bahr	Jim Boltz -----	Josh Weiser ----- Sue Wilczynski	Martha Stevens Dorothy Lux	Terry & Carole Vrshek	Sue Boltz Liz Wilczynski	Martha Stevens ----- Theresa Boltz
20	7:00PM	Martha Stevens	-----	-----		Pauline Griffin Martha Stevens	Donna Judd	Theresa Boltz
24	9:15AM ----- 7:00PM	Jim Boltz Jim Bahr ----- TBA	Jim Bahr -----	-----	Martha Stevens Dorothy Lux	Pam Rutkowski Marye Meyer	Sue Boltz Liz Wilczynski ----- TBA	Martha Stevens ----- Theresa Boltz
25	10:30AM	TBA	Tom Griffin -----	Aimee Wilczynski -----	Martha Stevens Dorothy Lux	Terry & Carole Vrshek	Pauline Griffin Carole Vrshek	Martha Stevens
31	9:15AM ----- 7:00PM	Jim Boltz Jim Bahr ----- Jim Boltz	----- Jim Boltz	----- Pam Rutkowski	Martha Stevens Dorothy Lux	Donna Meilahn Dorothy Lux	Sue Boltz Liz Wilczynski ----- Donna Judd	Martha Stevens ----- Theresa Boltz

December, 2017

Church Office Hours: Monday through Thursday 8:00 am - 12:00 pm, 708.597.5209 hclc@hc-lc.org

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 Pastor's Day Off	2 10:00AM Praise Band 10:30AM Food Pantry
3 FOOD PANTRY SUNDAY 8:00AM Worship/Traditional (C) 9:15AM Sunday School/ Bible Class 10:30AM Worship/Contemporary	4 7:30PM Southwest Chorus 7:30PM Elders Meeting	5 7:00PM LifeLight Bible Study	6 7:00PM Advent Worship	7 9:00AM Evangelism Meeting 9:00AM Senior's Group Gathering	8 Pastor's Day Off	9 10:00AM Praise Band 10:30AM Food Pantry 2:00PM Christmas Sing A long
10 8:00AM Worship/Traditional 9:15AM Sunday School/ Bible Class 10:30AM Worship/Contemporary (C)	11 7:30PM Southwest Chorus 7:30PM Council Meeting	12 4:30PM Community Meal 7:00PM LifeLight Bible Study	13 7:00PM Advent Worship	14 9:00AM Senior's Group Gathering	15 Pastor's Day Off	16 10:00AM Praise Band 10:30AM Food Pantry 2:00PM Birthday Party for Jesus
17 NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE 8:00AM Worship/Traditional (C) 9:15AM Sunday School/ Bible Class 10:30AM Worship/Contemporary	18 9:00AM NEM Meeting 7:30PM Southwest Chorus	19 7:00PM LifeLight Bible Study	20 7:00PM Advent Worship	21 9:00AM Senior's Group Gathering	22 Pastor's Day Off	23 10:00AM Praise Band 10:30AM Food Pantry
24 CHRISTMAS EVE 9:15AM Worship (C) 7:00PM Christmas Eve Worship	25 CHRISTMAS DAY 10:30AM Christmas Worship (C)	26 7:00PM LifeLight Bible Study Walter Fabry (b)	27 7:00PM "Joining Jesus"	28 9:00AM Senior's Group Gathering Jonathan Ongstad (b)	29 Pastor's Day Off	30 10:00AM Praise Band 10:30AM Food Pantry 1:00PM Bd. Of Ed
31 NEW YEAR'S EVE 9:15AM Worship 7:00PM New Year's Eve Worship (C)						

HAVE A BLESSED CHRISTMAS!