

GIFT of GRACE

LUTHERAN CHURCH

GRACE NOTES

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 25, 2024 AND JANUARY 1, 2025

A WORD FROM PT

'Tis the Season to be jolly'...

I'm certainly not opposed to feeling jolly. But the deep-seated joy and hope of the Holy Nativity is not dependent on some ideal emotional state. The good news of Christmas is especially helpful amid our troubles.

The title of my Christmas Eve Sermon is "Christmas Comes in the Bleak Midwinter." And I have more in mind than the fact that December 25 comes in the snowy, dead of winter in the northern hemisphere. I am reminded that Jesus' birth took place in a bleak world. And the world in this age remains bleak, dark, broken, and full of

trials and tribulation.

Jesus' birth to the Virgin Mary was the first advent of our Lord. The Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, came into this world humble and as the Babe of tiny, obscure Bethlehem. In fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy "the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them light has shown." The greatest darkness is the darkness of sin. And with Jesus' coming the darkness was pierced. He indeed is the Light of the world!

Surprisingly, this great light has not immediately ushered us into the light of the New Day, also promised from of old. Instead, it is

light, life, comfort, and hope where it was scarce to be found. It is a light promised to be with us to the end of the age, and onto the dawn of the new age. This Light, Christ Himself, enlightens and gives life for the world. His life! And all who do not stubbornly refuse it and turn from it, it seeds and sustains a profound hope and an abiding joy deep in our hearts, even as we suffer, mourn, and endure trials in this age. Whether or not we feel jolly, the news of Christ's birth is balm for the troubled heart and soul. Christ came to save us from sin, and to deliver us from evil. God's peace to you this Christmas!

SINCE YOU ASKED...

What is the significance of the Season of Christmas?

The season of Christmas begins on the evening of December 24, the Eve of the Nativity of Our Lord, and continues through January 5. The feast day is Decem-

ber 25. On the octave (an 8-day period beginning with the festival day) of Christmas two festivals occur: the Circumcision of Our Lord and the Name of Jesus. Depending on the day of the week on which Christmas falls, there may be two Sundays after Christmas. In

most years, however, there is only one. Because of the nature of this singular event in the history of the world and its meaning for our salvation, the festival and season of Christmas is a time of great joy. (drawn from the Altar Guild Manual, published by Concordia Publishing House)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Tuesday, 12/24 Christmas Eve
5pm Eve Candlelight Service

Friday, 12/27
7am Men's Breakfast at McDonalds

Sunday, 12/29 1st Sunday after Christmas
8am Choir Practice
9am Divine Service with Communion
10:15am Coffee Fellowship
10:45am Adult Bible Study

Friday, 1/3
NO MEN'S BREAKFAST

Sunday, 1/5 2nd Sunday after Christmas
9am Divine Service of the Word
10:15am Coffee Fellowship

Thursday, 1/9
9am Prayer Gathering
6pm Church Council

Friday, 1/10
7am Men's Breakfast at McDonalds

Sunday, 1/12 Baptism of Our Lord
8am Choir Practice
9am Divine Service with Communion
10:15am Coffee Fellowship
10:45am Adult Bible Study



**Making
Disciples
for Life**

LCMS (Lutheran Church Missouri Synod) (LCMS.org)

THIS AND THAT...

The **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service** with Holy Communion will be at 5pm on Tuesday, December 24. Expect most of your favorite Christmas hymns.

The **Men's Breakfast Bible Study** will meet on Friday, December 27 at 7am, but will not meet on Friday, January 3.

Our congregation will have a representation at the **South Wisconsin District (SWD)**

Convention next summer in June. If any of you are interested in knowing more about the Convention, check on the web page: swd.lcms.org/convention.

Please save the dates. First, Saturday, January 18, from 10am - to 2pm for a **Workshop** we want everyone to attend. And then Sunday, January 26 for our **Annual Voters Meeting**.

Don't forget non-perishable

Food Donations for the Food Pantry!

The Bjornstads will clean the church the week of December 22. And the Warners are scheduled for the week of January 19.

The December **Designated Benevolence** is for the **Salvation Army**.

Discipleship involves daily the mediation and hearing of God's Word!

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LUTHERAN CHURCH

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God. - Eph 2:8

HUMOR DEPARTMENT

Celebrations

Birthdays

Dec 21 Drew Staff
 Dec 31 Marilyn Magnuson
 Jan 2 Elliott Cunningham
 Jan 4 Matt Repaal
 Jan 13 Carol Peterson

Anniversaries

Bad Dad Jokes

Did you hear about the ice cream truck accident? *It crashed on a rocky road.*

What kind of bird works on a construction site? *A crane.*

What type of music do planets listen to? *Neptunes.*

Why did the phone wear glasses? *Because it lost all its contacts.*

Why do bakers work so hard?

Because they knead dough.

Why are fish so easy to weight? *Because they have their own set of scales.*

What do you call a priest that becomes a lawyer? *A father-in-law.*

What do you call a scientist with bad breath? *Experi-mints.*

What did Benjamin Franklin say when he discovered electricity? *Nothing. He was*

too shocked.

What do you call a medieval lamp? *A knight light.*

What did one hat say to the other? *You go on ahead.*

Why did the frog take the bus to work? *His car got toad.*

What does an evil hen lay? *Develed eggs.*

How can you tell the difference between a dog and tree? *By their bark.*

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

tbd (to be determined)

12/24 Christmas Eve Service
Asst Minister: Jeremy Schoonover
Reader: Naomi Rislow
Crucifer: *not needed*
Acolyte: *not needed*
Ushers: Dan Molstad
Counters: *not needed*
Comm Asst: Mike Meunier
Accompanist: Tom Rislow
Fellowship: *not needed*
Livestreamer: Jeremy Schoonover

12/29 First Sunday after Christmas
Asst Minister: Cole Warner
Reader: Karri Bjornstad
Crucifer: Regan Cunningham

Acolyte: Stella Roll
Ushers: Mary Bartos
Counters: Dan M/David B
Comm Asst: Mike Meunier
Accompanist: Tom Rislow
Fellowship: Leslie Duesenberg
Livestreamer: Cole Warner

1/5 2nd Sunday after Christmas
Asst Minister: Cole Warner
Reader: Naomi Rislow
Crucifer: Regan Cunningham
Acolyte: Chase Repaal
Ushers: Mary Bartos
Counters: Cole W/Jackie R
Comm Asst: N/A

Accompanist: Tom Rislow
Fellowship: tbd
Livestreamer: Cole Warner

1/12 Baptism of Our Lord
Asst Minister: Naomi Rislow
Reader: Connie Meunier
Crucifer: Chase Repaal
Acolyte: Stella Roll
Ushers: Paula Betlach
Counters: Dan M/Tim B
Comm Asst: Tom Rislow
Accompanist: Leslie Duesenberg
Fellowship: tbd
Livestreamer: Tim Betlach

Gift of Grace Lutheran Church
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Services held at 9am at:
 642 Western Avenue
 A block north and then
 a block west of King Furniture