



# Advent Ablaze

*Celebrating  
30 Years  
of Warm  
Welcomes!*

An ELCA Congregation in the Heart of the Monadnock Region ■ Late Spring 2014 Issue



*Hand-made  
Mother's Day  
cards all  
addressed  
and ready  
for delivery.*

## Upcoming Events

**18** *may*

**Congregational Meeting & Capital Campaign Lunch** following the service

**31** *may*

**May Fair with the Advent Book Sale** (9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., see article at left)

**5-7** *june*

**New England Synod Assembly**

## Book Donations, Cakes, Smiling Faces Needed for Fair!

The Advent May Fair and Book Sale (31 May from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.) aims to combine the best of the Really Big Yard Sale with popular activities from the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Festival and 2013 Fall Fest. Helpers and donations are still needed for this important church fundraiser and community event! Julie S. is the event coordinator.

**Advent Book Sale:** Books, movies, and records (yes, LPs) are all welcome. We have everything from 25-cent beach reads to a display of signed editions! Leave your donations in the Fellowship Hall by Wednesday 5/28, please.

**Advent Yard Sale Table:** The scaled-down version of years past. Prefer to set up your own yard sale table? Spaces available as usual. See Jeanne C., yard sale table coordinator.

**Chuck Wagon Café:** If you attended last year's Really Big Yard Sale, you'll remember the delicious burgers... thick, hand-formed patties with your choice of toppings... homemade guacamole, green chile all the way from Hatch, N.M., and saucy grilled mushrooms. We sold out last year – so get there early!

**Cake Walk:** Guests at the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Festival had a great time with this old-fashioned game best described as musical chairs with the chance to win a cake. We're trying it as a fundraiser this time around. Cakes still needed!

Also planned are free kids activities and family games like three-legged races (with prizes). Even if you're not signed up to help, please stop by on the 31<sup>st</sup> to show your support of those Advent members who are! ■

## Supporting Our Troops: Care Package Update

Advent has a new member of the U.S. Armed Forces to send care packages to, a woman named Stephanie based in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. She shares her packages with another woman in her

unit, and has specifically requested personal medical supplies and new or used books. As always, any cards left for Stephanie in the collection box will be included in the next box mailed. ■

**Pastor Bob: "What if I told you that if you drink of this living water, you'll never be thirsty again?"**

**Eight-year-old: "That doesn't really work for me."**

– Exchange at a recent children's sermon

## \*\* A BIG THANK YOU \*\*

**To coordinators Rose S., Ken S., and all who gave their time and favorite dishes to the Mile Long Buffet. Advent's dinners are important as both a means for community outreach and as fundraisers for the operating budget – and everyone's contributions help!**





## Pastor's Corner: How Young Is Too Young for a First Holy Communion?

In the last several weeks, we've had two First Holy Communions of varying ages... a three-year-old and a 12-year-old. The older one because she is preparing to be confirmed and had never received the Eucharist. The younger one because he grabbed the bread off the paten recently and so we thought it was time!

Lutherans who recall having their own First Communions at age seven or eight or later are naturally curious about the trend toward younger and younger communicants.

Well, some time back, the church decided there was no liturgical reason why very young children could not receive communion. After all, can any of us really say we understand the mystery and miracle of the Eucharist? I discussed this in my sermon the day of Marcus's First Holy Communion.

Here at Advent, I like to look at the issue this way. When I was a very little boy and my mother would make me a sandwich, she would say "Hold tight" as she handed it to me. Eventually, I started asking her for a "hold tight" when I was hungry. And that is what I want our young people here to grow up feeling about communion – that it is their "hold tight," their link to Christ and to this church that is as natural to them as breathing, something they never remember *not* doing.

– Pastor Bob

## "God's work. Our hands." Sunday



# Coming This Fall



## Mail Call: An Update on One Member's Ministry Abroad

**The Easter season brought us a letter from long-time Advent member Judy Perry about her mission work in China. If you would like to write to Judy directly, her e-mail address is [Judy.perry@evergreenchina.net](mailto:Judy.perry@evergreenchina.net).**



Dear Friends,

I hope you had wonderful year so far. I see from the news that it has been a hard winter. The first hint of green leaves appeared last week here in Shanxi and now the trees are flowering. We have had our first dust storm and our central heat has been off two weeks, so we know spring is here!

Let me give an update on the Diabetes Prevention Project, PATH. We had 9 groups of women who completed 6 months of health lessons (in two cohorts). We have enjoyed seeing these women once a week and it is going to be strange when the weekly classes are over. The first cohort of women will be finished follow-up by June, and the second by November. I am traveling to Greece to attend the Christian Medical Dental Association continuing education conference in late April, and will be presenting 2 sessions about doing research. I am looking forward to the conference. It'll be an amazing experience to be together with 700 Christian medical professionals working all over the world. I know the professional lectures, worship, and fellowship will be great, as they always are at these conferences, but the location is what is special about this year! I have always wanted to visit Greece.

Now that my workload is lighter (with PATH down to one class a week), I have joined a group of staff studying an 8-month on-line basic seminary training in Chinese. I listen to a 30-minute class every day 6 days a week (with pauses and taking notes, I spend about 1 hour a day on this). Each course is 24 sessions. The first course went through the Apostle's Creed line by line, and also talked about the sacraments. Homework included memorizing the Apostle's Creed and all the books of the Bible (I am still working on this!). It is good language practice and also hearing the familiar themes in a different language and sometimes from a different perspective helps me think more deeply about basic teachings. It is always satisfying to add more words to my vocabulary and I was pleased when I heard three of the terms I had just learned used in discussion at the last Medical Fellowship.

The Apostle's Creed content also included the church. The church is not a building but a community of believers, forgiven sinners, the body of Christ, a family, with God as the father. Even though China is not an individualistic society (as the U.S. is), the church still seems very individualistic as I do not think people consider the church to be their family. A few months ago I offered to sit with Sister Ji's mother who had a stroke 2 years ago (I have mentioned her in my prayer requests) so she could attend church, but Sister Ji and her father refused. They are both leaders in the church but still seem to get no help. I think about some of the ministries the U.S. churches offer their church family, for example, Care Teams for terminally ill people, and wonder if this is an aspect we can help with when we get our Family Service Center up and running.

It is almost time for my next home assignment. I will be in touch to set my schedule. I am also looking for learning experiences to help me prepare for our next project, elder care. If anyone has any suggestions, please let me know.

Thank you for your prayers and support. I am attaching an updated version of the prayer list I sent in January.\* Evergreen has just compiled a prayer list and if you are on their mailing list you should get that as well.

Praise the Lord! He is Risen!

Blessings,  
Judy Perry  
15 April 2014

*\* If you would like a copy of the list, please see  
Linda Bensinger, Prayer Circle coordinator.*



**Please remember Advent's ongoing community programs when you go shopping!**

**Rindge Food Pantry    Care Packages for Servicemen & Women**





**Good Eats, Good Reads, Good Fun!**

**Stop By to Show Your Support! 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

**Gourmet Burgers and Homemade Pie! ~ Old-Fashioned Cake Walk  
Free Family Games & Kids Activities ~ Yard Sale (spaces available)**

**Local Business Vendors ~ BOOKS FOR EVERY TASTE...**

**from 25-cent beach reads to signed rare editions**

*Advent Lutheran Church*

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