

The Messenger

Cross of Christ

Lutheran Church

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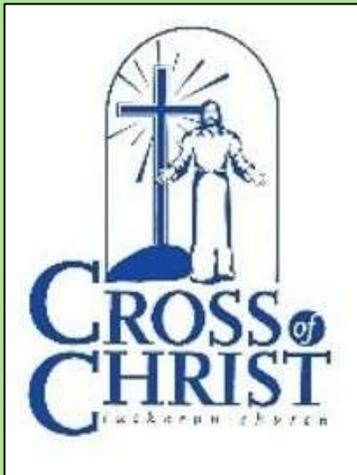
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Paul Mueller, Pastor



Worship Services

Sunday: 10:00 am

Communion

1st, 3rd, and 5th Sundays

Bible Classes

Sunday: 9:00 am

Tuesday: 11:00 am, 7:00 pm

Wednesday: 1:30 pm

Thursday: 1:30 pm

Men's Bible Class

Second Saturday: 9:30 am

Sunday School

Sunday: 9:00 am

DECEMBER 2022

A GRINCHY CHRISTMAS

Message from Pastor

I don't think there's more than a very few people who don't know the Grinch. Dr. Suess' Christmas classic in all its' cuteness (think Cindy-Lou Who) and rhyming charm (Every Who down in Whoville like Christmas a Lot - Except for the Grinch who certainly did Not!) is a fun family adventure... right?

The story goes on "How Grinch hated the feasting, the singing, the Noise So he dressed up like Santa and stole all their Toys." Can't you see poor Max, the dog, trying to lug the over-stuffed sleigh up the mountain? Then comes the 'Yeah!!' moment of the show as Grinch waits for the unison 'boo-hoo.' But instead, he hears "Every Who down in Whoville, the tall and the Small - was singing together with no presents at All. It came without ribbons. It came without tags - it came without ribbons or boxes or bags. It came - just the same. Maybe Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store - maybe Christmas perhaps means a whole lot more!"

Dr. Bob Moorehead, of Overlake Christian Church, recaps the confusing of priorities in our world well when he said, "The paradox of our time in history is that we have bigger dreams and shorter tempers; greater knowledge and narrower viewpoints; we have learned how to make a living but not a life; we've added years to our lives but not life to our years. We are conquering outer space but not inner space." It comes down to a matter of perspective of what Christmas is all about, doesn't it?

The real problem is that we have been led to believe things make Christmas. How seductive the TV ads are, to make us crave and want and even covet trinkets. Madison Avenue madmen try to make parents feel that unless their progeny have the latest iPhone, the coolest clothes, the most stylish shoes, they will be permanently scarred. Joy can only be found in joy-sticks. Relationships - phss. That's so Ozzie and Harriet or Brady Bunch. I'm trying to think of a modern one, but I can't! Doesn't that speak volumes?!

It's no wonder many people dread Christmas. Theirs will never be a Norman Rockwell picture.

(Continued next page)

Christmas can never be stolen from us when we, like the newly-enlightened Grinch, remember Christmas is about Jesus and him alone. The Whos had the right spirit. They were unfazed by having nothing at all. They still sang.

They remind me of the lady Jesus met at the well in John 4. She was startled Jesus, a Jew, would not only ask her, a Samaritan, for a drink, but she was shocked when he offered her 'Living Water.' This water would quench all thirst and last forever. Jesus exact words were "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst." Looking for happiness under the tree; instead of in the manger, will only lead to disappointment.

Our Lord made that promise to an unknown nobody - and to you and me and to the whole world. Being a part of God's family is what makes Christmas. Jesus left his home to be a part of ours so that we might permanently be a part of his. He put his life on the line for us so we would be free of fear and full of freedom. He rose so we would too.

The Grinch was on the right track when he posed, "Maybe Christmas doesn't come from a store - maybe Christmas means a whole lot more!" That whole lot more is Jesus.

In my best Suess-esqe, 'There's only one place for Christmas to start; and that's deep down in your heart. For God loved the world so that he gave; his only Son the lost to save. So when you gather your songs to sing; sing thanks alone to Jesus our King.'



SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT...

Christmas and Rudolph

It was Christmas, 1939, when department store giant Montgomery Ward came up with the "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" advertising idea. Robert May came up with Rudolph so Ward's wouldn't have to buy coloring books from a supplier every Christmas. What's more warm-and-fuzzy than a poor rejected deer who turns into the hero? In 1949, songwriter Johnny Marks put the ad-gimmick to

music, and we've sung it every "foggy Christmas Eve" since. Today, Rudolph with his "nose so bright" is as recognized as the One whose birthday we celebrate!

While the story of Rudolph guiding Santa's sleigh is heart-warming, we must be very careful lest it diverts attention from the true meaning of Christmas. Before the birth of Jesus, Zacharias prophesied: "*The rising sun (Jesus) will come to us from heaven...to guide our feet into the path of peace*" (Luke 1:79 NIV) The world is desperate for lasting peace - but not even Rudolph can bring that in Santa's sleigh. Only when we receive the love of God, through Jesus his Son, will there be genuine peace. Peace begins in your Christ-centered heart. I think I would rather follow the star of Bethlehem instead of Rudolph's nose so bright, wouldn't you?

Pastor Ken Lofton



A Christmas Thought

If there had never been a Christmas
Or the Holy Christ Child's birth,
Or the angels singing in the sky
Of promised peace on Earth -

What would the world be like today
With no eternal goal,
What would the temporal body be like
Without a living soul?

Just what would give us courage
To push on when hope is dead
Except the Christmas message
And the words our Father said:

"In love I send My only son
To live and die for you,
And through His resurrection
You will gain new life too."

TIDBITS

- ❖ We need a volunteer to prepare our Sunday service bulletins. Reach out to Pastor, Julie Mueller, or Shari Bishop if you know how to use MS Word and would like to help.
- ❖ Construction of our new shed is coming along nicely; however, there's still a lot of work to do. Call Gene Bishop to learn what you can do to help.
- ❖ On Sunday, November 13, we heard an interesting presentation from Doug Meyer of the Arizona Lutheran Academy. If you'd like to learn more about this great Christian school, their web site is www.ALAcoyotes.org. If you'd like know how you can use your state tax money to assist their education (with no cost to you), go to ACSTO.com.
- ❖ If you'd like to contribute your thoughts to the new Worship Committee, contact Tim Mangelsdorf.
- ❖ FYI, our Sunday services are posted on YouTube.



LIVE CHRISTMAS PLAY

People from our church will put on a realistic play of the Christmas story on Dec. 17th at 4:30. Everyone is invited for this re-creation of Christ's entry into our world. It's free.

FOUNDATIONS OF FAITH

What better time to really get to know the Bible well than the new year?! Pastor will be starting a class where you can ask any questions you want about the Bible. He compares different churches so you can figure out which church is right for you. Almost everyone who's ever taken it has really enjoyed it. No pressure is applied. Try a class. If you don't like it, that's OK. Let Pastor Mueller know what day and time (morning, afternoons, or nights) are best for you.

- ❖ What's the most important part of Christmas? "The first six letters!"

CHRISTMAS HUMOR

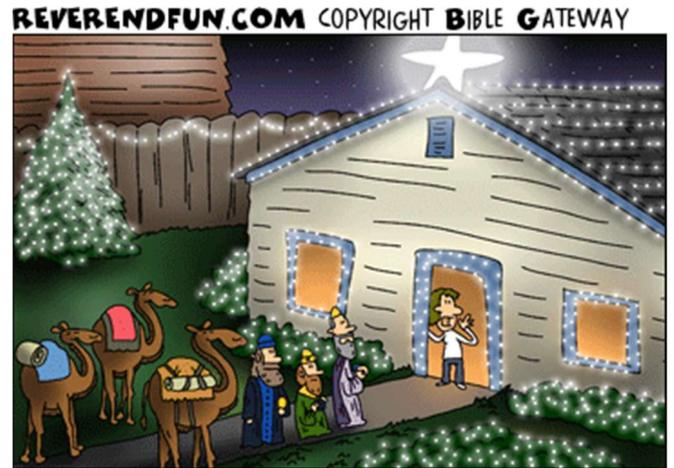


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Ten-year-old Johnny announced to his parents that he wanted a new bike for Christmas. They asked him if he thought he deserved it. He proudly declared that he did, which his folks knew wasn't true. They came up with a plan to correct his behavior and arrogance. "Go to your room and write a letter to Jesus. Think about your behavior and tell Jesus why you deserve a bike."

Grudgingly, he does. 'Dear Jesus, I have been a very good boy this year, so I want a bike, a red one. Johnny.' He looked it over and knew Jesus would know that wasn't true, so he started again. 'Dear Jesus, I have been a pretty good boy and I would like a bike, a red one. Johnny.' He looked that one over and came to the same conclusion.

So, he started again. 'Dear Jesus, I know I haven't been a very good boy this year, but Mom made me say I'm sorry. If you get me my red bike, I promise to be good the whole year. Please, pretty please! Johnny.'



I THINK YOUR LIGHTS MIGHT BE TOO BRIGHT THIS YEAR

Johnny didn't think that one would work so he came up with plan B. Just before Christmas, he went to the nearby church, and when no one was looking, he took the Virgin Mary from the manger scene. He ran home with it and wrote another letter. 'Dear Jesus, I've got your Mom. If you ever want to see her again, send the bike! The Red One. You know who.

- ❖ "What did Adam say when he was asked his favorite holiday?" "It's Christmas, Eve."
- ❖ "Which nursery song would Jesus have heard the most?" "Mary Had a Little Lamb."
- ❖ "What's every parent's favorite Christmas Carol?" "Silent Night."
- ❖ "What did the stamp say to the Christmas card?" "Stick with me, and we'll go places!"

Christmas Services

Dec. 24th, CANDLELIGHT WORSHIP, 7 pm.

Dec. 25th, CHRISTMAS MORNING SONG SERVICE. 10 am.



LADIES CIRCLE

DECEMBER NEWS

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12TH - MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- ❖ \$75 donations are being sent to Central Africa Medical Mission and Friends of China.
- ❖ Craft sale proceeds will be going to the WELS Relief Program for the Lutheran Church in Florida damaged by hurricane Ian.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

Boxes of Christmas cards are in the narthex for \$5 per box. Place your payment, (cash or check) in the small collection box located on the table. *(This is a service for our congregation, not a fundraiser)*

FUTURE EVENTS

- ❖ The recipient(s) of the Christmas “Bags of Joy” this year are still in the works.
- ❖ Baked goods for our shut-ins.

2ND EDITION CHURCH COOKBOOKS

Cookbooks are available (a nice gift for the holidays) - see Leena Meza, Committee Chair.

ALTAR FLOWERS

If you would like to provide fresh flowers on the altar for a Sunday service, a sign-up sheet is in the Narthex.

KITCHEN

- ❖ Donations of **regular ground coffee** are needed. Thank you!
- ❖ The Sunday meal schedule is in the Fellowship Hall by the beverages.
- ❖ *-If you would like to be a host or help in the kitchen (set-up or clean-up), contact Christine Hanson (Committee Chair) or Trish Olson (Ladies Circle President).*

DECEMBER’S MONTHLY MEETING

When: Saturday, December 10th

Time: 9:30 am

Place: Education Building

Devotion series: God is in the Laundry Room

Ladies Circle (Continued)

Monthly meetings are held on the 2nd Saturday of each month from September thru May. Committee call leaders will contact the ladies of the congregation prior to each monthly meeting.

All ladies of the congregation are invited to attend and join in the fellowship, devotion topics, planning future activities, and the WELS Missions we support as a Ladies Circle group. By getting involved your time, talent and treasures will help continue God’s work.



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

3 rd	Jan Sidwell
3 rd	Brooklyn Nichole Vincent
3 rd	Loretta White
6 th	Melody Coffin
18 th	Ron McMillin
19 th	Wyatt
23 rd	Ellen Gentz
27 th	David Coffin

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

16 th	Mike & Rhonda Luxton
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DECEMBER- FELLOWSHIP MEALS

DAY	MAIN DISH
4 th	Crock Pot Meals
11 th	International
18 th	Soups/Stews/Salads
25 th	Christmas (Meat Provided)



DECEMBER USHERS

Tim Mangelsdorf
Duley Nelson
Jesse Mangelsdorf
Don Nomann

December 2022



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9:00 am Bible Class & Sunday School 10:00 am Communion Worship Service 11:15 am Fellowship Meal		8:00 am Workday 11:00 am Bible Class 4:00 pm Choir 7:00 pm Bible Class	1:30 pm Bible Class	1:30 pm Bible Class		9:30 am Men's Bible Breakfast 9:30 am Ladies Circle Meeting 10:30 am Elders Meeting
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
9:00 am Bible Class & Sunday School 10:00 am Worship Service 11:15 am Fellowship Meal	6:00 pm Council Mtg	8:00 am Workday 11:00 am Bible Class 4:00 pm Chori 7:00 pm Bible Class	1:30 pm Bible Class	1:30 pm Bible Class		4:30 pm Christmas Play
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
9:00 am Bible Class & Sunday School 10:00 am Communion Worship Service 11:15 am Fellowship Meal	1:30 pm Bible Class	8:00 am Workday				Christmas Eve 7 pm Candlelight Service
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
9:00 am Bible Class & Sunday School 10:00 am Morning Song Service 11:15 am Fellowship Meal <i>Merry Christmas</i>		8:00 am Workday 11:00 am Bible Class 4:00 pm Choir 7:00 pm Bible Class	1:30 pm Bible Class	1:30 pm Bible Class		New Year's Eve