

MESSENGER

ST. PETER'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH & DAY SCHOOL
1343 PENNIMAN AVENUE
PLYMOUTH, MI 48170
734-453-3393

NOVEMBER 2011

REFLECTIONS ON CHRISTMAS

What do you have left when you take away the packages, the decorations and expectations, and every other thing society says you have to have at Christmas?

You have what John 1:14 tells you: "The Word became Flesh and dwelt among us." The God who became bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh to rescue us from sin and death. That is what you have.

The culture wants to celebrate a "spirit of Christmas" which is all about happy feelings. But spirits disappear. Our troubles do not take a holiday because the calendar says they should. Cultural Christmas can be ruined.

Christians celebrate the Flesh of Christmas - the God in the Flesh who dwelt among us. So we know nothing can ruin Christmas. Not sticks, not stones, not broken bones. Not drunkenness, nor neglect. Not old grudges nor fresh wounds. Not bad news from doctors, nor bosses.

The Lord will not be stopped. Not even the lack of room at the inn could stop Him. Not even the lack of room in our hearts, not the years of our refusal to forgive has stopped Him. God as Man - as a Baby - has placed Himself into the manger, a feeding trough. And that is appropriate because the Lord has given Himself as food for selfish people who behave worse than animals. He is the Bread of Life who gives Himself to taste buds that are deadened by evil words.

The Word became Flesh that could be nailed down so that our weak flesh could escape corruption. His light shines from the Cross through the empty tomb to drive away sins like the summer sun burns fog off.

Don't get me wrong. I am not telling you that you have no reason to be sad. Other people might demand, "It's Christmas, so you can't be upset, you can only be holly and jolly." But we still live this side of Heaven at Christmas. Try to sweep conflict under the rug, and you will trip over it. Our hearts still feel the touch of anger, frustration, and grief.

Yet Jesus is still Immanuel - God's Flesh in the midst of us. That is reason even for joy in the midst of sadness, life in the midst of death, hope in the midst of despair. Still He forgives those who desire His mercy. Still He shepherds His flock through death and into life. Until we receive Christ's reward in Paradise, we wait in peace with God. For Christ is our peace, the only stable thing, the only thing that does not age, wither or break in all of Creation. And nothing can ruin that - therefore, nothing can ruin Christmas. The Word became Flesh. We have a Savior. Thanks be to God.

In Christ's Service,

Pastor Paul Schaefer

A Couple of Items and Requests

Communion Announcement Cards—The question has been asked, "what purpose do they serve and do I have to fill one out each time I commune?"

Answer: The communion cards that are turned in are recorded in a database for our records. It can serve as additional source of information for the pastor and elders as we review church and communion attendance. Pastor Schaefer and the elders have a good handle on attendance, but this is an aid to their work. Please fill one

out when you commune. But if you don't fill one out, do not let that keep you from the Lord's Body and Blood. The important part is not the communion registration, but the forgiveness of sins given in the Sacrament.

Seminary Food Bank Collection

Food donations for students at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary are being gathered on the stage in the church basement. If you could have the food here by November 13, Jon and Johanna Townsend have volunteered to transport it to the central collection point at Lola Park Lutheran Church in Redford.

Sunday School Survey

You will find in this newsletter a survey regarding Sunday School attendance. Please fill it out promptly and return it to the box in the narthex. Plans to revitalize our Sunday School and Adult Bible Class attendance are in the works. Your help and quick response are greatly appreciated. More copies of the survey are available in the narthex.

A NOTE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

The school year is well underway! The teachers and students are busy in their regular routines and growing in their knowledge of our Savior, Jesus. We are truly blessed to have such a wonderful group of students and teachers at St. Peter's. Our Lord and Savior is truly showering His blessings of grace and mercy on us. Here are a few of the many highlights from the first quarter of the year:

1. Our enrollment currently stands at 69 students in PreK-8th grade.
2. Congratulations to Miss Diener and the girls volleyball team for completing another successful season. The players performed extremely hard, did a great job, and were exciting to watch.
3. On October 20th, our students went to HVL and watched an assembly on life in space. They learned many interesting facts about the life of an astronaut.
4. CONGRATULATIONS to the 7th-8th grade Floor Hockey team. Wearing their St. Peter's pink shirts, they were able to win the championship for the second consecutive year. WAY TO GO EAGLES!
5. On October 14th, Our Home & School group sponsored a Hayride/Bonfire event. Many of our students and parents were in attendance. They all enjoyed hot dogs, chili, and an extremely large bonfire. We thank the Ribar family for hosting the event. We also thank the many volunteers who helped organize the event.
6. Our Eagles Hoops Camp finished another successful year. The campers had loads of fun and improved their basketball skills during this six week event. Special thanks to the many volunteers who helped coach the players, especially Mr. Cording for organizing the camp.
7. THIS FRIDAY, grades 5-8 is excited to present to you the play, "Go West." Come and watch the students as they act, sing, and dance about the westward expansion of the early United States. The performances will begin at 10:00a and 7:00p.
8. On November 19th, many of our students will participate in the annual Academic Fair at HVL. They will compete in the areas of math, art, spelling and forensics against the other WELS schools in our area. This is a wonderful opportunity for students to display their God-given talents in contests other than athletics.

God's richest blessings to all of you!

Mr. Ryan Roth

PRESCHOOL

Autumn is here. How can one tell? The leaves on the trees are changing color and falling to the ground. The air is cool and crisp. Frost appears in the morning on grass and car windows. The geese head south for the winter. All these are signs of autumn. These are some of the signs we look for in preschool as “evidence” that fall has truly arrived. What a beautiful time of the year. Another sign that fall has arrived is our return to school and the busy bodies and minds that occupy this space.

I have enjoyed getting to know a new batch of students. We currently have seven students enrolled in the three-year-old program and fifteen in the four-year-old program. Last year, the three-year-old class started the year with only two girls. This year, the level of girls has surpassed that of the boys eight to seven. My three-year-old class has only girls. I have never experienced this in all my years of teaching. It is rather interesting. We have a student in the four-year-old class who will be undergoing heart surgery sometime this year – more than likely, after Christmas. Everyone has been very vigilant about trying to keep germs and illness out of our classroom.

We have enjoyed several fun experiences in the last few months. Big Box Day is always eagerly anticipated. This year was no exception. I have heard that some of the big boxes still live on at home, even though moms have tried to remove them. We went to the Leslie Nature Center in September. We learned about insects. One of the activities at the end of the program involved going out into the gardens and meadow with nets to try to catch some of those illustrious bugs. Unfortunately, one student had a close encounter with hornets when he stepped into a nest hidden in the ground. Fortunately, he was not stung, as far as we could tell, just frightened more than anything. He seemed to recover enough to catch a butterfly. We will be going to Nankin Mills Interpretive Center this month. There we will learn about leaves and identifying trees. One new experience for our four-year-olds is having Mr. Roth’s class come in on Mondays to read to them. It appears to be an enjoyable experience for both groups.

Another sign that fall is here is my big belly. As many of you know, I am expecting and will give birth in the next few weeks, God willing. This means, however, that there will be a change in staff for a time. The preschool is blessed to have Mrs. Abbott as our four-year-old assistant this year. I don’t know what I would do without her patient, calm demeanor. She will be a good resource person for Mrs. Laura Schoeder who will be taking over for me in the next few weeks. I am planning to return to the classroom after the Christmas break. I have a feeling the next few months will be very busy for all involved. (By the way, a parent asked my four-year-old class to come up with names for my little one. My favorite ones so far are “Buck” and “Daisy”.)

As one can see, there are many signs that fall is here and many reasons to give thanks for this beautiful time of the year. The most important reason for giving thanks is that God gave His Son, Jesus, to be our Savior. Thank God that we have a country in which we can still talk about and share this good news freely with those around us. Happy autumn!

In Christ’s Service,

Mrs. Christine Baganz

BD. OF STEWARDSHIP

The Board of Stewardship has recently wrapped up a number of major projects. Our annual church picnic was held on September 25. The rain cleared away just in time for the picnic, and we had a good turnout for an afternoon of food and fellowship. After lunch, members had the opportunity to play softball or just sit around and chat with friends. A great time was had by all.

A new pictorial directory was just published. Those who had their pictures taken are entitled to a free directory. If you did not pick up your copy yet, they are available in the back of church. About 30 extra directories were also published. If you did not have your picture taken but would like a directory, please take one. If you would like to make a donation, the price of publication was \$5 per directory.

Stewardship also recently printed two publications we have been working on over the past months. One is a tri-fold brochure about St. Peter's. Copies of this are available in the back of church near the Guestbook. The other is a postcard that we will mail to visitors to our church. We hope that these new publications will be helpful as we expand our efforts to make follow-up contacts with visitors to our church.

We are also beginning planning on several new activities. Last year we had several successful fellowship activities for young adults. We hope to organize another one to take place near Christmas. Also mark your calendars for January 25th. On that date we plan to begin another round of Wednesday evenings of "Soup and Bible Study." We pray that our work continues to draw the members of St. Peter's together for fellowship and the Word.

Peter Baganz, Stewardship Chairman

MUSIC

The St. Peter's Music Department has started another season of making music to the glory of God. The Senior Choir, soloists, and the school children have helped beautify our worship services. Junior Choir has started rehearsals.

The Senior Choir prepared special music for the Festival of the Lutheran Reformation, which is today, October 30. The 2011 Reformation Rally will be held at 4:00 p.m. at Salem Lutheran Church, Ann Arbor. We are entering the End Times portion of the church calendar, when we look forward to Christ's return, and backward to those who are already rejoicing in heaven with our Lord.

The Music Department is also working on music for the Candlelight Service (**December 11 at 6:30 p.m. Please note the earlier time, to accommodate the youngest school children**). This year's theme is "From Advent to Epiphany." We will take a musical journey through the festivals that celebrate our Lord's coming. There will be plenty of Christmas carols in the program, to be sung by the congregation and choirs. If you enjoy singing these joyful carols, please plan on attending our Candlelight Service.

The Senior Choir, Junior Choir, Handbell Choir, Junior Handbell Choir, school children, soloists, and instrumentalists will be participating in this special service. We all hope that you will attend the Candlelight Service, so that your faith may be edified, and so our musicians can demonstrate the fruits of their hard work to a large number of people. Please show support to these faithful volunteers who bring extra beauty to our worship services all year round. The Candlelight offering is used to buy music so that cost does not have to come out of the regular budget. After the service, there will be a cookies and punch reception for the congregation.

Blessings on your holiday worship.

LWMS www.lwms.org

Alpha Circuit Fall Rally – Sat, Nov. 12 @ 9:00am – Zion, Monroe

“Sharing the Gospel in Urban Settings”

Our speaker will be Pastor E. Allen Sorum, Professor at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. He will speak on “Equipping Faithful Men to Proclaim an Unconditional Gospel to an Unsettled World”. Bring a sack lunch. Dessert is provided along with babysitting. Registration is \$3.00. Please RSVP to Chris Pitcher by November 7, 2011 at 734-241-6377.

There’s an App for That!

Yes, there is a WELS app, free for download! Through this attractive app, users can receive popular WELS content like Today’s Devotions, Through the Bible in Three Years, Q&As, WELS Connection videos, “Together” e-newsletter, music selections, and blogs about Missions! It’s available for the Android and iOS platforms.

LWMS Convention 2011 Notes

- 1,284 registered attendees from 59 circuits
- Opening Service : 1,542
- Closing Service : 1,128
- First Time Attendees: 255
- Kids c.a.r.e. Offerings: \$80,232.01 (including \$25,000 from the Antioch Foundation)
- Mission Offerings \$69,919.12 (divided between World Missions Project #WM-2010-21: Japan and Home Missions Project #HM-2010-12: Vicars in Mission Settings)
- Worship Offering: \$45,481.34 (divided between World Missions Project #WM-2010-13: Brazil and Home Missions Project #HM-2010-14: Cross-Cultural Mission Conferences & Training)

LWMS Convention 2012 - “Our God Reigns” will be held in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. The dates are June 21-24, 2012. For more information, see the convention website: www.lwms2012convention.com. Details will be sent in the January 2012 convention registration newsletter.

Central Africa Medical Mission sent a newsletter with a message of thanks for prayers and notes of encouragement. The economy is hitting them hard in Africa too! Petrol is becoming harder to obtain, electricity is rationed at times, and medication that used to be free to them is no longer so. Their clinic has seen an increase in patients because of the austerity in the nation’s medical budget. Please remember them in your prayers!

The LWMS 2012 Prayer Calendar is available now for \$10 plus shipping. Each month recognizes missionary birthdays, items to add to one’s prayer list, and a Bible verse to keep us focused on God’s Word. You can also find interesting information regarding home and world missions, national pastors, and world and home mission maps on the back pages of the calendar. They are available through the LWMS central office @ 414-321-6212 or anyone interested in getting one, please contact Lois Bude @ 734-612-7604 or loheotbu@hotmail.com and I will place an order for our congregation.

PASTORAL ACTS

Below are Pastoral Acts for the months of August, September and October.

Baptisms

Benjamin Enzo Romain
Brayden Grant Wright

Loss of Member By Transfer to Sister Congregation

Brad Watts to Darlington, Ann Arbor, MI
Blaine Pelkey to Peace, Livonia, MI

Members Received by Transfer

Daniel Pierce from St. John, Westland, MI
 Kyna Pierce from St. John, Westland, MI
 (children: Katriana, Damon, Kai)
 Devyn Pierce from St. John, Westland

NOVEMBER

1 Elizabeth Schaefer
 3 Shaun Foster
 Ryan Roth
 Robert Schultz
 5 Tabitha Good
 7 Scott Foess
 Arlette Stobbe
 8 Katie Kehoe
 Julie Webber
 9 Brandon Honke
 Paul Pavloff
 Donald Wisman
 11 William Fraser
 Matthew Ringer
 12 Terry Smith
 13 Tekla Bude
 Marcia Todd
 15 Daniel Shelton
 James Shelton
 17 Andy Haines
 19 Erin Le
 Grace Duerr
 Charlotte Lohrmann
 20 William Hogue
 21 Elizabeth Good
 22 Jeff Good
 Kimberly Harris
 Sydney Knee
 23 Ron Bude
 24 Cherie Coon
 26 Courtney Majeske
 Blaine Pelkey
 Anne Runkle
 27 Thomas Kalish
 28 K. Nils Peterson
 30 Deborah Cording
 Edwin Good, Jr.
 Tekla Otte

so your records may be updated.

DECEMBER

1 Laurie Carr
 2 Lynda Tacia
 4 Isabella Melvin
 5 Nathan Roller
 Ronald Tacia
 Lucas Winkler
 6 Robert Kehoe
 9 Audra Hoffman
 Colin Laycock
 10 Rachel Anderson
 11 Rick Carr
 12 Danielle Castellese
 Madeleine Laycock
 13 Grace Overlander
 15 Connor Ince
 Jennifer Richter
 Nicholas Roth
 Kyle Tacia
 16 Alex Harris
 Tim Senkbeil
 17 Lynn Seppanen
 18 Marilyn Bogenschutz
 Cheryl Smith
 19 Eliot Duerr
 Kathleen Nordstrom
 21 Christopher Berridge
 Ethel Eckles
 22 Gary Crabtree
 23 Jacob Richter
 24 Diane Chesters
 Kortney Ondayko
 Donald Schroeder, Jr.
 26 Devon Moyer
 John Romain
 28 Lucy Wilhide
 30 Sharon Strebbling
 31 Bryan Williams

JANUARY

1 Brenda Hogue
 Sarah Rauch
 Eugene Schaening
 2 Kathleen Berridge
 Irene Dennison
 3 Mark Hannewald
 Vickie Pavloff
 5 Kristen Aston
 6 Nicholas Smith
 7 Julia Honke
 9 Mimi Barber
 11 Leah Brooke
 12 Shenal Smith
 13 Kimberly Kehoe
 14 Wendi LaManna
 Harry Michalik
 Philip Wendland
 15 David Broekhuizen
 18 Laurie DeBeau
 Amy Runkle
 Carolyn Wendland
 19 Sue Brooke
 Brian Schultz
 Johanna Townsend
 20 Hannah Good
 Amanda Sequin
 22 Michael Anderson
 Jacob Broekhuizen
 Drew Szewczyk
 24 Logan Broekhuizen
 Lauren LaManna
 Mary Simpson
 25 Branden Heimbaugh
 Doug Smith
 26 Richard Cording
 29 Michelle Roth
 Brigitte Helmke
 30 Jennifer Foess
 John Lovell

NOTE: If you have a birthday in November, December or January, which is not listed, please call the church office

Sunday School Survey

Please return to box in narthex or give to Pastor Schaefer by November 14

Why did you send your student to Sunday School?

- a. Parents see value in Sunday School
- b. Parents attend Bible Class
- c. It is a priority on Sunday morning
- d. Remember your Sunday School experience
- e. Other _____.

How often did your children come to Sunday School?

- a. Weekly
- b. 2X / month
- c. Monthly
- d. Quarterly or less

How often do (did) you attend Bible Class?

- e. Weekly
- f. 2X / month
- g. Monthly
- h. Quarterly or less

For what reasons would you allow your student to miss Sunday School?

- a. Don't want to/refuses
- b. Sport practices or games
- c. Too tired
- d. Other _____

Give your suggestions on what could improve our Sunday School participation.

What negative factors adversely affect Sunday School participation?

Are you and your children currently attending Bible Class/Sunday School?

