



PILGRIM LUTHERAN CHURCH

44 CHAPEL ROAD – KENMORE, NY 14217

(716) 875-5485

A Congregation in Mission, Community and Service

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

DECEMBER 2017

PASTOR: Rev. Ben Eder

SUNDAY SCHOOL: 9:00 AM

EDITOR: Mary Werth

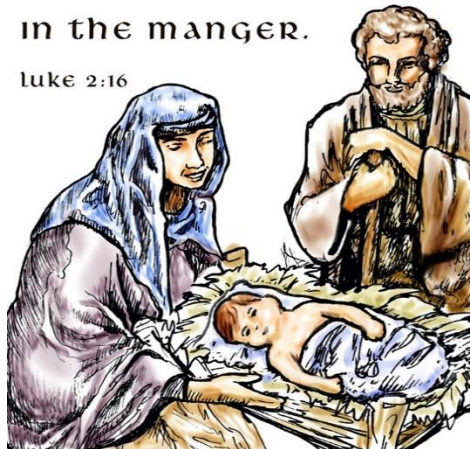
TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY: 9:30 AM

ASSOC. EDITOR:

WORSHIP: 10:00 AM

So they... found mary
and joseph, and the baby,
who was lying
in the manger.

luke 2:16





From the Pastor

“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” - 2 Corinthians 9:7

I realize that every December the pastor's article should be something about Advent or Christmas: however, this year I want to talk about something that also comes around every year at this time, namely, the church budget.

In December, the **voter's assembly** votes on the church's budget for the upcoming year. By this vote, the church commits to supporting the budget through the coming year. When we set the budget, we do not ask for formal commitments from church members & friends (which some churches do); rather, we rely upon the faith and good will of our contributors who gratefully give back a portion of that which the Lord has first given them.

Approximately **45 voting members** attend the voter's meeting, but there are many more who could attend and participate. As we prepare to enter 2018, I have a few thoughts about supporting the church budget.

1. **EVERYONE CAN GIVE SOMETHING** – No member of the church should have a “0” behind their name in terms of giving. While service is an important part of stewardship, it is not the only aspect of stewardship. The financial resources the Lord has lent us also play a part in our support of the congregation and other ministries of the Church. For illustration of this point, please see the example of the Widow's Mite (Luke 21:1-4).
2. **HAVE A CONVERSATION ABOUT YOUR GIVING** – Every year, Linda and I discuss what amount we are going to set aside every month for our giving to the church. The Biblical guide for tithing is 10% of one's income, and that is a goal we and everyone can work towards (please note that the Old Testament tithe of 10% is not a rule but a guide in the New Testament).
3. **THE GOSPEL, NOT THE LAW, MOTIVATES THE GIVING OF THE BELIEVER IN CHRIST** – the Mormon Church requires its members to tithe 10% annually; Jewish synagogues send out invoices to their members. As you know, that is not the way of the Lutheran Church. Lutherans give not out of compulsion, but gratitude. “God loves a cheerful giver,” *2 Corinthians 9:7* writes the Apostle Paul. We give to the Lord out of gratitude for all that He has (and continues) to do for us. Jesus has saved us, not with gold or silver, but with His “holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death” in payment for our sins.
4. **PLEASE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THIS MINISTRY WITH YOUR PRESENCE, PRAYERS, SERVICE, AND FINANCIAL GIFTS** – In years past, regular attendance meant “weekly;” today, it means twice a month or monthly in some cases. Some I only see a few times a year in church. We do have a solid core group of members and friends who participate regularly and consistently, but we also invite and challenge more to do so. If you are not currently attending or participating regularly in the life of this congregation, I challenge you to do so: I believe if you do, you will be blessed for the experience.

Your Servant in Christ,

+ Pastor Ben Eder



SUNDAY SERVER SCHEDULE

DECEMBER 2017

| DATE → | Dec. 3 | Dec. 10 | Dec. 17 | Dec. 24 | Dec. 31 |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| READER | Eric Fellner | Tim McGuan | Wes Weirs | Carolyn Alessi | Abigail Size |
| USHERS | Mike Wuerch * Dianne Weurch | Jim O'Brien * George Alessi | Eric Fellner * Gary Smith | Tegwanda Alford * Peggy Clark | Tyrone Bryant * Jim Miller |
| COMMUNION ASSISTANT | Gary Smith | Eric Fellner | Jack Hambridge | George Alessi | Frank Alessi |
| NURSERY | Jim & Gaby O'Brien | Peggy Clark | Carolyn Alessi | Linda Eder | Amber Trimmer |



ACOLYTE SCHEDULE

| | |
|---------|---------------------|
| Dec. 3 | Lily Hinterberger |
| Dec. 10 | Gaby O'Brien |
| Dec. 17 | Seth Keef |
| Dec. 24 | Philip Hinterberger |
| Dec. 31 | Lily Hinterberger |



Happy Birthday!

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| Paul Holway | Dec. 2 |
| George Alessi | Dec. 4 |
| Sarah Hinterberger | Dec. 7 |
| David Porter | Dec. 16 |
| Greg Jakubowski | Dec. 28 |



The giver

Many Christian families struggle with what role — if any — Santa Claus should play in their Christmas celebrations. No matter what you decide, it's fascinating to know the history of the real-life St. Nicholas.

Born about 270 A.D., Nicholas was a bishop in Myra, or modern-day Turkey. In the year 325, he was part of the Council of Nicaea, which produced the Nicene Creed.

Nicholas, known for his generosity, often gave away his money anonymously. According to tradition, he secretly provided dowries for the three daughters of a bankrupt merchant. Nicholas threw two bags of gold through open windows and placed the third in a stocking hanging by the fireplace to dry. Thus began the Christmas tradition of placing gifts in stockings.

St. Nicholas is quoted as saying, "The giver of every good and perfect gift has called upon us to mimic God's giving, by grace, through faith, and this is not of ourselves."



ESTHER CIRCLE

Many thanks to all who brought in disposable razors. It was a great success. They will be taken to the City Mission/Cornerstone Manor during the first week of December.

Thank you to all who brought in their pennies. Another check for \$25 was sent to the LWML. That makes a total of \$75 for the year.

Sue Holway will be turning in the Dash's register tapes soon. If you have any around the house, please bring them in so Sue can submit them with the others. We went over the needed quota of \$5,000. Good job, everyone!

COOKIES, COOKIES, COOKIES! It's that time of year again. Our annual COOKIE exchange will take place on Monday, December 11th, at 6:30 p.m. We will have a brief meeting and then make up boxes for our shut-ins. This event is open to everyone. Just bring at least 3 dozen "no nut" cookies to exchange. Come and enjoy some hot chocolate and delicious cookies!

We will be sending a check for \$600 to Seminarian Joshua Radke. He is in his first year of study at Concordia - St. Catherines. Josh is married and has a 7-year-old son and a 3-year-old daughter. He and his family will try to come visit with us here at Pilgrim sometime in the future.

We wish everyone a very blessed and merry Christmas season!



Our next Community Dinner is Friday, December 1st, from 5 to 7 p.m. The menu is baked ham, mashed sweet potatoes, mixed vegetables along with tossed salad, desserts and beverages. These dinners are sponsored by the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod.

PLEASE NOTE

The P.A.L.s men's group will NOT meet in December.

December Schedule for Advent and Christmas:

1. **Decorating the church for Advent and Christmas**
– Saturday, December 2nd, starting at 9:30 a.m.
2. **62nd. Annual Christmas Candlelight Vespers**, Sunday,
Dec. 3, 4 p.m. & 7 p.m., First Trinity Lutheran Church,
1570 Niagara Falls Blvd., Town of Tonawanda
3. **Voter's Meeting** – Sunday, December 10th
following the service; on the agenda will be the
budget and new Council members for 2018.
4. **Sunday, December 24th**: Worship, 10 a.m.;
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 4:30 p.m. There
will be no Saturday service on December 23rd.

Midweek Advent Services (Soup & Sandwich meal, 6 p.m.;
Hymn-sing, 7:15 p.m.; Service, 7:30 p.m.)

Wednesday, Dec. 6th – St. Luke, Cheektowaga (Union @
Maryvale)

Wednesday, Dec. 13th – Holy Cross, Clarence (8900 Sheridan
Drive)

Wednesday, Dec. 20th – Our Savior, Buffalo (26 Brunswick
Blvd.)



November 14, 2017

A Little Good Can Go a Long Way

I was filling up my gas tank recently when a college student approached me and asked if I had any spare cash. I immediately reached into my pockets and discovered that I really didn't have any cash. He then thanked me for looking and proceeded to the next person pumping gas.

I didn't think much more of the incident until I went to put the hose back into the pump and heard someone say, "Mom, I did ask the people here. No one has any money for me."

I looked around the pump and saw the college student who had asked me for cash; he was leaning on his car trunk talking on the phone to his mom. I waited until he hung up and approached him.

"I was wondering what's up."

"My mother called and said she needed me to come home, but I don't have enough gas there. I don't have any money. I called her and she said I should ask the people here if they could give me a few bucks to get home, but no one can help."

I told him to put the hose in his tank. I then swiped my credit card at the pump and had him fill it up.

His eyes got big and he asked, "You're sure?"

"You bet," I replied. "I was a poor college student once."

Every time I remember that day I feel good.

That is what acts of kindness do for us. They give us a helper's high. It's a rush of euphoria, which is followed by a longer period of calm, after performing a kind act. This high comes from the physical sensations and the release of the body's natural painkillers: endorphins. This initial rush then produces a longer-lasting period of improved, emotional well-being. It's all good.

Research also found that acts of kindness reduce stress, give us a sense of joy, and deaden pain.

Kindness is also contagious. Someone seeing you do an act of kindness prompts them to do one, which prompts another person, etc.

I have also been on the receiving end of acts of kindness as when a Good Samaritan shoveled the snow from my walk and driveway. That was very much appreciated.

Kindness can lead to social connections, too. If you do a favor for your neighbor, he just might want to do one for you, and pretty soon you are sharing stories, grilling recipes, and making new friends.

Doing good deeds makes us feel good, and it's not a bad deal for the other person either.

Isn't it funny how going out of our way to help somebody else (even in the slightest way sometimes) can truly change our outlook, our mood, our sense of well-being? When we do these unexpected good things, we'll probably wonder why we don't do them more. And, of course, there's no good answer to that other than we *should do them more*.

Got any good-deed stories you want to share -- either something *you've done* or something *done for you*? If so, you can pass them along by [clicking here](#) and sharing your thoughts.



~~oops!~~

From a church bulletin in Canton, Ohio:

ORDER OF WORSHIP

(Portions of this liturgy adapted from the Lutheran Cook of Worship.)

INVOCATION

Do you suppose they have a chef instead of a pastor?



~~oops!~~

From a worship bulletin in Baton Rouge, Louisiana:

~~CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SCHEDULE~~

Join us on Christmas Dad!

~~Service begins at 10 a.m.~~

Come worship our heavenly Father on Christmas Day!



~~oops!~~

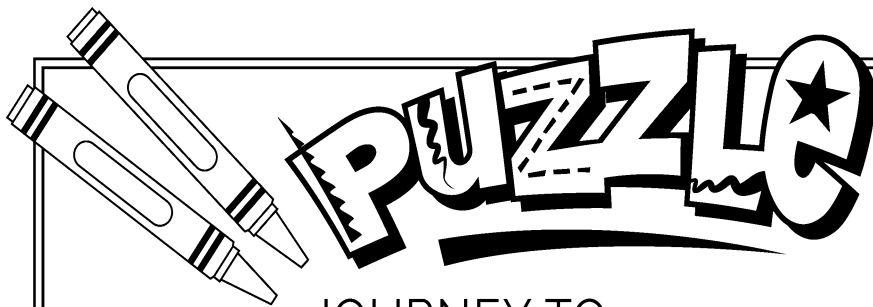
From a worship PowerPoint:

~~SON OF GOD, LOVE'S PURE LIGHT~~

Radiant beams from thy holy face

~~With the dawn of redeeming grace~~

This likely caused *beams* of laughter during the candlelight service!



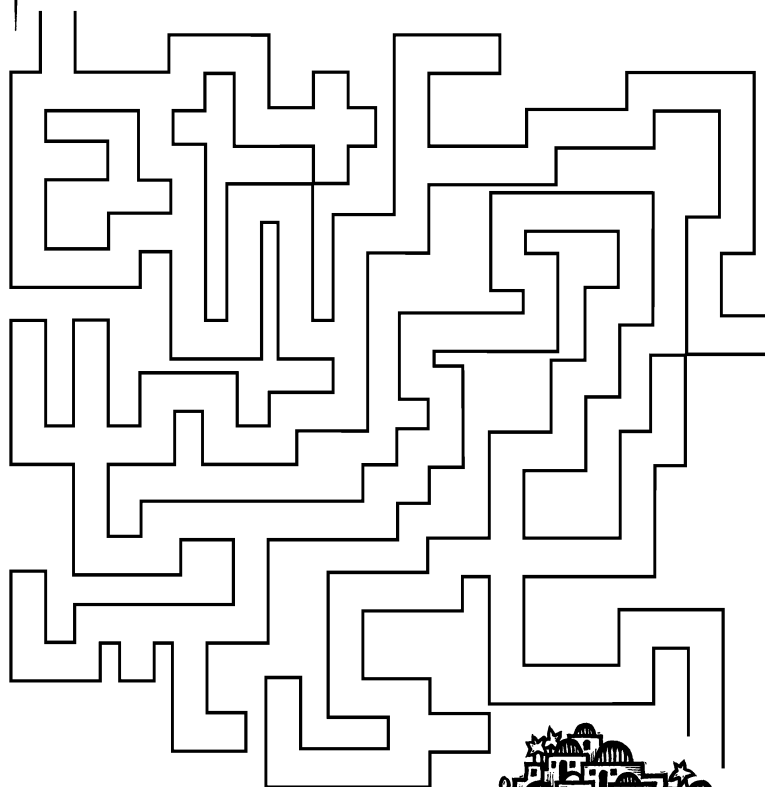
JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM

In the Christmas story in Luke 2, an angel tells some shepherds to go see baby Jesus in Bethlehem.



START

Directions: Follow the maze to arrive in Bethlehem.



BETHLEHEM

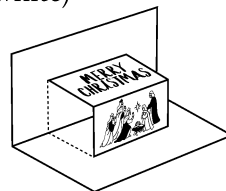


POP-UP CARD

Share the good news of Jesus' birth with this creative Christmas card.

What you need:

- Construction paper (two pieces, including one white)
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Pens
- Glue stick



What you do:

1. Neatly fold the white paper in half, short side to short side.
2. Draw two parallel lines (at least 2 inches apart) from the fold to about halfway to the edge. Cut along the lines.
3. Fold the cut section back and forth so it pops up.
4. Push the section up so it pops up inside the folded paper. Draw a nativity scene on the pop-up box.
5. Fold the colored paper in half, short side to short side. Place the white paper inside it and glue the white paper down, being careful not to glue the pop-up box.
6. Write a Christmas message and give or send the card to someone.

**THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS FOR THE
JANUARY 2018 NEWSLETTER IS DECEMBER 24TH.**