



PILGRIM LUTHERAN CHURCH

44 CHAPEL ROAD – KENMORE, NY 14217

(716) 875-5485

A Congregation in Mission, Community and Service

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

DECEMBER 2019

PASTOR: Rev. Ben Eder

SUNDAY SCHOOL: 9:00 AM

EDITOR: Mary Werth

TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY: 9:30 AM

ASSOC. EDITOR:

WORSHIP: 10:00 AM

THE STAR OF
BETHLEHEM





Every year around this time we hear reports about references to Christmas being eliminated from the public square, whether it's the refusal of a village to display a manger scene or store employees who say "Happy Holidays" instead of "Merry Christmas" to customers.

While I also find this trend disconcerting, I have grudgingly come around to the idea that we Christians shouldn't expect the public to do our "work" for us. There was a time when our culture supported and even encouraged the promotion of the Christian faith, but that is generally no longer the case. We who believe in Jesus should not expect the government (or business for that matter) to spread and proclaim the Gospel: that is the Church's doing (the personal witness of every believer is in keeping with that mission).

In fact, even the word "Holidays" can be redeemed for our purposes: the root of the word "Holiday" comes from "Holy Days," and certainly we are in the period of "Holy days," a stretch that begins with Thanksgiving Day to Christmas Eve/Day and then New Year's Eve/Day to close out the year and welcome the one just begun.

While some attach only secular meanings to these holidays, it is for Christians to remind the world of the holy significance of these days:

That in **Thanksgiving** we acknowledge God as the source of our blessings and give Him thanks for them.

That **Christmas** isn't merely an excuse to celebrate and open presents but an opportunity to rejoice at the birth of the world's Savior.

That **every year** ends and begins in "Anno Domini," "In the Year of our Lord:" all time finds its fulfillment in Him who is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End.

Rather than lament how the culture no longer shares our Christian beliefs, let us see ourselves as witnesses who make Jesus known to the world. It can be something as simple as sending a Christian-themed Christmas card or saying "Merry Christmas" or "Have a blessed Christmas" to an associate at the store who wishes us "Happy Holidays."

In these, and other ways, we can point to Jesus as "The Reason for the Season."

In His Service,

Pastor Ben Eder



SUNDAY SERVER SCHEDULE

DECEMBER 2019

DATE ➡	Dec. 1	Dec. 8	Dec. 15	Dec. 22	Dec. 29
READER	Mary Werth	Gary Smith	Tyrone Bryant	Karen Smith	Dooley O'Rourke
USHERS	Traci LaFalce * Scot LaFalce	Tyrone Bryant * Jim Miller	George Alessi * Jim O'Brien	Eric Fellner * Gary Smith	Dianne Weurch * Mike Weurch
COMMUNION ASSISTANT	Eric Fellner	George Alessi	Frank Alessi	Jim O'Brien	Gary Smith
NURSERY	Ruth & Gabby O'Brien	Carol Obot	Carolyn Alessi	Linda Eder	Jim & Gabby O'Brien



“Be born in us today”

In 1865, Phillips Brooks, an Episcopal preacher from Boston, went on a Holy Land pilgrimage. Riding horseback from Jerusalem to Bethlehem for Christmas Eve worship at the Church of the Nativity was so moving that he wrote “O Little Town of Bethlehem.” The hymn’s final stanza addresses the town’s most famous newborn:

O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!



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



Dec. 19 Jim & Judy Miller



ESTHER CIRCLE

The Esther Circle gives thanks to Pilgrim for the contributions of 136 cans of soup and 25 boxes of crackers donated to the Kenmore Presbyterian Food Pantry. Praise God! The nuts and candy sale ended on November 17th. We hope to have the orders delivered in early December. Thank you for your support!

The next meeting is on Monday, December 9th, at 6:30 pm. We will be doing the cookie packing for the shut ins. Please refer to the flyer for more information on the cookie exchange. We hope to have a speaker from Hananiah Lutheran Church to give an overview of their Food Pantry mission that we supported with your coffee hour and Pot Faith donations this year. All are welcome to attend!

REMINDER! Used stamps and old printer cartridges can be given to Pat Watkins. The stamps are used for a mission project that provides Bibles to prisoners. Karen Smith will accept your “mites” (pennies and other change) for LWML mission projects. Sue Holway will collect your Dash’s grocery receipts.

As we enter the season of Advent, let us reflect on the impact of the coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ into the world!

Carol Obot & Sue Holway



This month’s Community Dinner will be held on Friday, December 6th, from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm. The menu is lentil soup, chicken and rice, tossed salad, bread and butter with assorted desserts and beverages. Everyone is welcome!

***** PLEASE NOTE: There will be NO P.A.L.s meeting in December. *****



Monday December 9th 6:30PM

Who: Esther Circle will be doing a Cookie Exchange including cookie packing for shut-ins.

Where: Downstairs in the Fellowship Hall.

Bring/Bake 2-3 Dozen Cookies to share.

All are welcome!!!

PLEASE LABEL if they Contain NUTS !!

During this Christmas season, if anyone is interested in purchasing my mom's book about the Lord's Prayer, entitled, "God's Rainbow of Promise", please let me know and I can get a copy for you. It's a wonderful gift to give to friends and family. The cost is \$14.00. You can call me at 835-9075 and leave a message if I'm not able to answer. Thank you.

I hope you enjoy my mom's poem, below.

I wish everyone a Blessed Christmas!

Marilyn R. Schneck



THE FIRST CHRISTMAS

Shepherds passing in the night
Stopped to comprehend the sight –
The baby in the manger lay;
They bowed their heads to softly pray.

They could hear His mother sing
Greetings to the new-born King –
“Starlight shining up above
Offering Your gift of love.”

One could never comprehend
Peace and love from this dear friend;
Joy so deeply felt within –
May this hope each day begin.

Oh, such glory fills the heart;
Dare one offer to impart
Peace and love beyond compare;
Grant me, Jesus, sweet and fair.

12-20-13 by Doris V. Neumann



Pilgrim will be Christmas Caroling at the McAuley, Schofield, and Brookdale Residences and at Kenmore Mercy Hospital on Saturday, December 21st. We will meet at church at 12 PM. If you are interested in participating, please contact Mark DiFazio (716-875-2540) for more information.

A MUSIC NOTE

On December 1, the choir sings "Come Thou Long Expected Jesus" composed by Charles Wesley, to the Hyfrydol hymn tune. Charles Wesley wrote this in 1744 focusing on the longing for a Messiah by the Israelites in Old Testament times. It also harkens to Jesus' Second Coming - and so is one of those memorable hymns that Christians everywhere can delight in worship. The Hyfrydol tune is a Welsh tune composed by Rowland Prichard in 1831; and according to Harvard University Press, was written when Prichard was around 20 years old.

Lyrics:

Come, thou long expected Jesus, Born to set thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us; Let us find our rest in thee.
Israel's strength and consolation, Hope of all the earth thou art,
Dear desire of every nation, Joy of every longing heart

Born thy people to deliver; Born a child and yet a King!
Born to reign in us forever, Now thy gracious kingdom bring.
By thine own eternal spirit Rule in all our hearts alone;
By thine all sufficient merit Raise us to thy glorious throne

Musically Yours,
Ruth Whitmer

64th Annual CHRISTMAS CANDLELIGHT VESPERS



DECEMBER 8, 2019
4:00 PM & 7:00 PM

First Trinity Lutheran Church
1570 Niagara Falls Blvd., Tonawanda, NY

Candlelight Procession, Choral & Instrumental Music, Congregational Singing
Featuring at 4:00 pm Holy Ghost Lutheran Church SKIP Children's Choir
Special Guest Organist, Jason Weber
David Werth, Music & Choir Director

Free Will Offering
Advance contributions will be greatly appreciated

New this year! Fellowship time between the services - all are invited!

Sponsored by:

Pioneer Camp and Retreat Center and Buffalo Area Members of Valparaiso University Guild



Christian Symbol

HOLLY — Holly was first used by pagans to decorate for the festival of Saturnalia. When Christians began celebrating Christmas in honor of Christ, they adapted that decorating practice to reflect Jesus' life and death. Holly's pointed leaves symbolize the crown of thorns and its red berries symbolize Christ's blood shed on the cross. Because holly thrives and its berries retain their brilliance even in harsh winter conditions, non-Christians saw it as a symbol of eternity — which is fitting for Christians as well.



Navigate THRED's New Layout and Join the Conversation

We're confident you'll like **THRED**'s new look and layout. At THRED you'll find contributors and visitors who are interested in what you have to say. Here you'll encounter honest exchanges about the things that matter, the things we think about, as well as the big issues like God and faith and Jesus.

At THRED you can share your perspective, respond to others, and come away invigorated by the give-and-take. THRED offers an open forum for people to talk about the things they care about. And while it offers a Christian perspective, visitors to THRED will find that it's amenable to all kinds of viewpoints.

At the THRED website, there are articles and vlogs (video logs) on relationships, community, society, God, Christianity, and other items of interest. These can be accessed by [clicking here](#).

At THRED we believe your voice and experiences are significant. We know we can learn more through dialogue with each other, which then makes for wonderful and enriching discoveries. And we think the hardest topics should be talked about more, not less.

At THRED we look forward to hearing from you!

Seasonal Messages to Share the Savior's Story

This year's Advent devotions, *Call His Name Jesus*, by LHM's Theological Writer Dr. Kari Vo, will once again be a Christmas blessing to many thousands this year.

They can be received in your e-mail inbox as a daily message during the holidays. Otherwise, you can read them online, listen to the audio, or enjoy them via LHM's Daily Devotion app as you travel. You can find the app by [clicking here](#).

In *Call His Name Jesus*, God comes to us. "In this tiny baby we see the Man who lay down His life for us on Calvary's cross, the Son of God who defeated all the power of the devil—because He loved us," Vo said. "But it also starts with you in all of your tininess—somebody sitting in a comfortable chair reading in the lamplight; a parent putting the little ones to bed with a prayer and a story about Jesus; a driver with your eyes on the road, watching out for hazards while the back of your mind is preoccupied with work or errands. You are a single speck of human life among billions of others on a troubled planet in an ordinary galaxy of this immense universe. And yet, Advent is about you, because you are the reason Jesus came," Vo added.

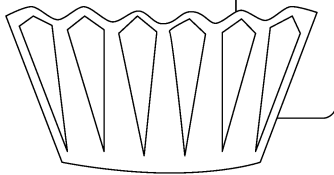
During the Advent season, you can receive these devotions as a daily e-mail, beginning December 1. You can also access a downloadable version, which includes a large-font text and bulletin inserts, right now. Audio begins on December 1 with Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler, Speaker for **The Lutheran Hour**, reading the devotions. You can [click here](#) for all the details.

Le pondrás por nombre Jesús, the Spanish-language version, will be available to read online or to receive as a daily e-mail through the Advent season beginning December 1. Audio will also begin on December 1 with Rev. Hector Hoppe reading the texts. The print version is also now available. You can [click here](#) for the details on LHM's Spanish-language devotions.

Don't forget to sign up—if you haven't already—for LHM's regular Daily Devotions in English and Spanish, too. They begin Tuesday, January 7, 2020, following Advent.

Light the way

Make some Christmas
candles to remember
Jesus, the Light of the
world.



What you need:

- Unlined white notecards
- Hot glue (and adult help)
- Yellow tissue paper
- Mini muffin liners
- Clothespins

What you do:

1. Roll a notecard from side to side into a "candle" tube. Secure with glue.
2. Insert a piece of tissue paper "flame" in one end.
3. Glue the other end to a muffin liner. Then glue the liner to a clothespin.
4. Repeat to make many paper candles. Pin them to the branches of a Christmas tree.



Symbols of the *season*

Many traditional decorations convey the meaning of Christmas.

Directions: Use the picture clues to the right to complete the words. Then write the boxed letters in order to complete 2 Corinthians 9:15, NIV.



shepherd's staff _ ☐ ☐ _ _ _ _ ☐

tree that keeps its leaves _ _ _ _ ☐ _ _ _ _

shines to lead the way _ _ _ _ ☐

green for eternal life, ☐ _ _ _ _ &
red for Jesus' blood _ _ _ _ ☐ ☐ _ _

sounds to announce ☐ _ _ _ _
good news

has no beginning or end _ _ _ _ ☐ _

Th ☐ ☐ ks b ☐ to ☐ od fo ☐ ☐ is
indesc ☐ ☐ ba ☐ le gif ☐ !

2 CORINTHIANS 9:15, NIV

Answer: candy cane, evergreen, star, holly & berries, bell, wreath.
Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift! 2 Corinthians 9:15, NIV

**THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS FOR THE
JANUARY NEWSLETTER IS DECEMBER 22ND.**