



PILGRIM LUTHERAN CHURCH

44 CHAPEL ROAD – KENMORE, NY 14217

(716) 875-5485

www.pilgrimkenmorelcms.org

A Congregation in Mission, Community and Service

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

DECEMBER 2020

PASTOR: Rev. Ben Eder

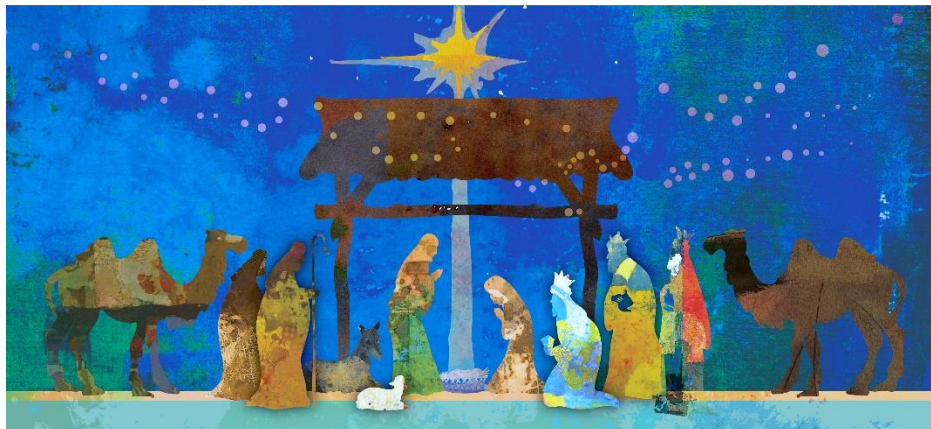
SUNDAY SCHOOL: 9:00 AM

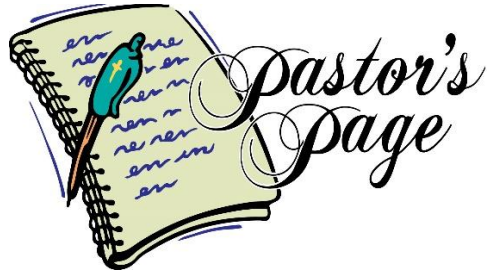
EDITOR: Mary Werth

TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY: 9:30 AM

ASSOC. EDITOR:

WORSHIP: 10:00 AM





Next to only Easter itself, December is the high point of the year: in this month we prepare to celebrate our Lord Jesus' birth and Second Coming which then culminates in the observances of Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Christmas is, after all, a message of hope: Christ the Savior is born! Our Savior is laid in the wood of a manger. As the Church Year continues, we witness his death upon the wooden cross. On Easter Sunday, the Day of His Resurrection, we rejoice that not even a stone could keep him in the tomb.

What a difference a year makes. Last year at this time, we worshiped the King in a full sanctuary singing Christmas hymns and lighting candles to celebrate his birth among us. This year, it remains an open question as to what kind of gathering we can safely have.

Some headlines shout "CHRISTMAS CANCELLED" or "NO EASTER THIS YEAR." Regardless of what happens, Christmas is not cancelled and neither is Easter, for that matter. In the Spanish Flu Pandemic of 1919-20, businesses were closed and churches were shut down much as we experienced during this year of Covid-19. During that time, the predecessor body of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (a name adopted in 1947) sent worship materials to families so that they could worship at home. That was an excellent approach, as instruction and worship of Jesus begins in the home and is supplemented by the Church.

Today, in this technologically-rich era in which we live, there are many ways to bring the Gospel to people: services can be livestreamed or recorded and then sent out on Facebook and other social media sites. Bible studies, services and meetings can be conducted on Zoom and similar formats. Now, even a small congregation like Pilgrim can potentially reach the world through these efforts. In fact, there are people throughout the world who have seen our worship services after they've been posted online.

Imagine the impact that we can have, not only in Kenmore or Western New York but anywhere in the world. We can reach the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

What will our in-house gatherings look like this season? A decision will be made shortly before Christmas, as conditions warrant. In any case, Christmas will not be cancelled. The message will continue to go out through Facebook, Zoom, and other means. Those who are willing to gather in-person may also have the opportunity to do so.

In any case, the hope of the Christmas message dwells in our hearts as announced by the angel to the shepherds: *"Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger."* – Luke 2:10-12

May God's peace continue to dwell within you.

+ Pastor Ben Eder

DECEMBER

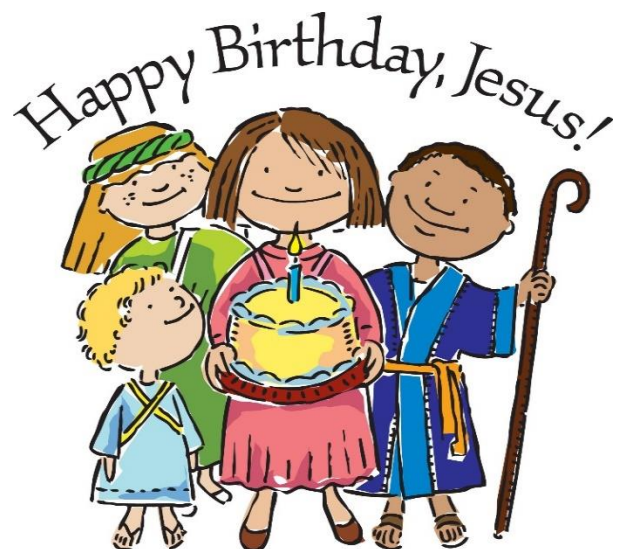
Birthdays

Paul Holway	Dec. 2
George Alessi	Dec. 4
Nancy Partridge	Dec. 10
David Porter	Dec. 16

DECEMBER

Anniversaries

Dec. 19	Jim & Judy Miller
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ESTHER CIRCLE

Our December meeting is Monday, December 14th, at 12:30 pm via Zoom. We will be having Rev. Deborah Tyler at the meeting. She is the chaplain at The Elderwood Nursing Home in Hamburg and the coordinator of “The Buffalo Burrito Project”. This is the mission the Esther Circle donated to this year. She will give us an update on how the project is coping with the pandemic. All women of Pilgrim are welcome to attend.

In place of our annual holiday cookie exchange, we plan to give Christmas envelope packages to the shut ins. Thank you, Karen Smith, for assembling them.

REMINDER! Keep the Dash’s tapes coming! If you are having Dash’s deliver your food, please keep those tapes also. All these receipts go to Sue Holway. The mites (loose change) go to Karen Smith for LWML grants. The cancelled stamps cut with a 1/2-inch border frame go to Sharon McGuan. Old printer ink cartridges go to Pat Watkins.

Advent is the season of **HOPE!** The coming of our Savior Jesus Christ. May this message resonate in everyone’s hearts. We pray you have a Christmas of **PEACE, JOY & LOVE!**

Carol Obot & Sue Holway



100th *Anniversary*

Pilgrim's 100th Anniversary will be in 2022!

Something to look forward to!!

We will begin making plans for our Celebration during 2021.

Hopefully this Spring the Committee will be able to start the planning process. Dianne Wuerch has agreed to be the Committee's Chairperson.

Anyone who is interested being on the Committee, have ideas, photos or stories email Dianne at dywuerch54@gmail.com

Everyone's input is important!

As 2020 Ends, Thanks Be To God for Our Pilgrim Church Family!!

Glancing back at 2020, I see the grace of God and His bountiful provision in all He has accomplished through His people at Pilgrim Lutheran Church. As we celebrate the New Year, let us look back with gratitude for our “faith home” and begin to think about ways we can serve God with our time, talent and treasure in the year to come. To God be the glory!

If you take a moment to reflect on the many times we, as a congregation, have worshipped and prayed together, studied God’s Word, at church or on Zoom, and met to continue the work of His kingdom in 2020, it fills your heart with joy. During this difficult year, our gracious God has permitted us to be His engaged hands and feet to the community and one another.

It reminds me of a hymn by Daniel March (1816-1909)

Hark the Voice of Jesus Crying, “Who will go and work today?

Fields are ripe and harvest waiting, Who will bear the sheaves away?”

Long and loud the Master calls us, Rich reward He offers free;

Who will answer, gladly saying, “Here am I, send me, send me”?

If you cannot be a watchman, Standing high on Zion’s wall,

Pointing out the path to heaven, Offering life and peace to all,

With your prayers and with your bounties, You can do what God demands,

You can be like faithful Aaron, Holding up the prophets hands.

Let none hear you idly saying, “There is nothing I can do.”

While the souls of men are dying, And the Master calls for you;

Take the task His gives you gladly; Let His work your pleasure be;

Answer quickly when He calls you, “Hear am I, send me, send me.”

In God’s hands, our prayers and bounties support our church, our pastor and reach out to the world. Together we are privileged to extend the Kingdom of God. We may not always see, or know, when a life changing rebirth occurs; but God promises, “so shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please,” *Isaiah 55:11 KJV*. God’s Word assures us, that as we encourage each other and share our time, talent and treasure to extend His Kingdom, He will accomplish His purpose in our church and community.

So much for looking backward. As the hymn states, we have no time to be idle while souls are dying and the Master calls us to ripe fields and harvest waiting. We look forward, as watchmen do. We heed the call that God has in store for us! We continue to pray and study God’s Word that we might be

equipped to identify new church goals and reach out to our community in ways which lift high the Name of Jesus. Again, using our time, talents and treasures, we become like faithful Aaron, holding up hands where ever the Lord leads, pointing out the path to heaven, offering life and peace to all!

Therefore, looking backward, or forward, our purpose remains the same: to encourage each other as we share our faith in Jesus Christ, the loving Savior, with our community and the world. Thank you, Lord Jesus. May we ever harken unto Your Voice with gladness!

Sharon McGuan

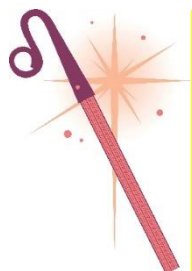


Fear not!

On that first Christmas night, the angel said to the shepherds: “Do not be afraid” (Luke 2:10). What is there to fear from a baby? A baby is powerless, with no guile, no anger and no judgment, only needing from us without fearing we will not provide: simply trusting, and content to be resting in our arms. This is how God came. This is Christmas. This one child, and for a time, perhaps too brief, our fears are taken over by our love for this child, and he is able to change our hearts. ...

In Jesus, we are free to live life as fully and as joyfully as we will allow ourselves. For it is only we who hold ourselves back. God does not. For God has forgiven us in this baby and will not restrain us from living with sheer abandon, trusting in this gentle and gracious God, who keeps telling us: “Do not be afraid.”

—Gary Westgard, *At Break of Day*



A sacred summary

The simple shepherds
heard the voice of an angel
and found their Lamb;
the wise men
saw the light of a star
and found their Wisdom.

—Fulton J. Sheen

Save The Date!

Join us for a
Buffalo Zone LWML
Zoom Mission Speaker
Event!

Sat, Feb 6, 2021 9 -10 am

**Be inspired by a presentation of
stories and pictures
by Buffalo Zone Pastoral Counselor,
Pastor at First Trinity and Missionary,
Dr. Chuck Whited**

***“Reaching Nepal and China
with the Gospel through
Sowers Ministry”***

**(Sowers Ministry received an LWML Eastern
District grant last biennium.)**

RSVP Sharon McGuan: stmcguan@gmail.com by 2/1



"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

In 1865, a young American preacher named Phillips Brooks spent time in and around the fields of Bethlehem. On Christmas Eve, he attended worship in the Church of the Nativity, located on the site where tradition says Jesus was born.

Brooks was so spiritually touched by the experience that he later wrote a hymn for children to sing on Christmas Eve in his Philadelphia church. Lewis Redner, the church organist and Sunday school superintendent, composed the music for the beloved hymn, "O Little Town of Bethlehem." Today it appears in most denominational hymnals. Brooks, a giant of a man physically (6'6" tall), was known throughout America as an eloquent and dominant force in the pulpit.

There is a large statue of the gifted man of God in front of Boston's famous Trinity Church, where Brooks last served. His death in 1893 was a major event in Boston. Upon learning of his passing, a 5-year-old girl exclaimed, "Oh, Mama, how happy the angels will be."

Lullaby for the Christ-child

First published in 1539 in Germany, the Christmas hymn "From Heaven Above" recounts the angels' message to the shepherds and then the spiritual journey of the baptized Christian to Jesus' manger-bed.

Try singing verses 8, 9 and 13 (translated by Catherine Winkworth) as a tender lullaby of praise, a song of love and a prayer to the newborn Savior. If the original tune is unfamiliar, use "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow" or "Just As I Am."

Welcome to earth, thou noble Guest,
Through whom the sinful world is blest!
Thou com'st to share my misery;
What thanks shall I return to thee?

Ah, Lord, who hast created all,
How weak art thou, how poor and small,
That thou dost choose thine infant bed
Where humble cattle lately fed!

Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,
Make thee a bed, soft, undefiled,
Within my heart, that it may be
A quiet chamber kept for thee.



LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES
www.lhm.org

Shining the Light of Christ into the Middle East

The Middle East and North Africa has the youngest population in the world, many who feel hopeless because of political turmoil, social instability, and high unemployment. When you factor in the ongoing effects of a global pandemic, the hopelessness for many in the region only continues to grow.

A new television series produced through Lutheran Hour Ministries' ongoing partnership with SAT-7, the first and largest Middle East and North African Christian satellite television network, is shining the light of Christ into the lives of these hurting people at a time when they need to hear this message more than ever. The program, titled *New Light*, debuted Nov. 20 and will air four times weekly on SAT-7's Arabic channel. This satellite television program has the potential of reaching tens of millions of viewers in more than 20 countries spanning from as far west as Morocco to as far east as Iraq and the Persian Gulf.

"We are overjoyed to unveil this broadcast leading into the Advent season when we can bring the good news of great joy that Jesus Christ was born to people who may not have ever heard the Gospel message," says LHM President & CEO Kurt Buchholz. Buchholz currently serves as a Partner representative to the SAT-7 International Council, the first time a Partner from North America has been chosen for this appointment as these positions are typically held by European Partners.

The new program is a 55-minute talk show that highlights a different topic or brings a different perspective to current affairs and matters affecting the target audience of viewers ages 17 to 30. Each episode includes multiple segments covering in-studio and on-the-street interviews with guests sharing opinions on the program topic as well as their motivating stories, musical guests or pre-recorded songs, spiritual devotions pre-recorded from an off-site location, and much more. Some of the scheduled topics include the influence of mass media, types of addiction, freedom and responsibility, family values, marriage, recognizing and managing emotions, handling disappointment, and coping with pain and loss.

Given this demographic's preference for online media, the use of multiple segments allows material created for this television program to be utilized and promoted in multiple ways through social media platforms. The program's young co-hosts walk the viewers through the segments and encourage in-depth discussion on the topic.

"We pray this programming brings God's love and mercy to millions of young Arab viewers who are suffering and questioning their faith and place in society," says Buchholz. "Hearing about God and how He loves them and gives them hope for the future, from the privacy of their own homes, may be the only opportunity for many of these young adults to hear this message at all."

LET IT snow!

Create a winter wonderland with this fun craft.



What you need:

- Glass jar with lid but no label
- Laminated photo (that will fit in the jar)
- Small plastic Christmas trinkets
- Hot or waterproof glue
- Container with spout
- 1 cup distilled water
- 3 tsp. glycerin
- Glitter



What you do:

1. Unscrew lid and flip jar upside down. Glue the photo and trinkets to the inside of the lid, standing upright.
2. In a container, mix water and glycerin. Pour the mixture into the jar, leaving space at the top.
3. Spoon in some glitter.
4. When glue is dry, attach the decorated lid tightly. Shake the jar to see "snow" swirl and settle.



WHITE AS SNOW

Jesus, our Savior, came to earth to purify sinners.

Directions: Figure out which path through the puzzle is correct. Choose one to try, starting at the first picture under the "Path" box. Follow each picture's directional cues to see if the words make sense when placed in order in the blanks below. If not, try a different path until you figure out the Bible verse.



PATH 1	PATH 2	PATH 3	PATH 4	PATH 5	PATH 6
❄️ for	❄️ give	❄️ come	❄️ together	❄️ around	❄️ after
❄️ self	❄️ into	❄️ settle	❄️ eternal	❄️ thanks	❄️ forgive
❄️ God	❄️ LORD	❄️ says	❄️ without	❄️ Christ	❄️ warmth
❄️ love	❄️ sins	❄️ scarlet	❄️ other	❄️ light	❄️ praise
❄️ red	❄️ star	❄️ white	❄️ snow	❄️ winter	❄️ peace



"_____ now, let us _____ the matter," _____ the
_____. "Though your _____ are like _____,
they shall be as _____ as _____"

ISAIAH 1:18, NIV

Answer: Path 3; come, settle, says, LORD, sins, scarlet, white, snow

**THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS FOR THE
JANUARY 2021 NEWSLETTER IS DECEMBER 27TH.**