

The Disciple

December 2014 / Monthly Newsletter of Holy Cross Lutheran Church

4041 W. 120th St., Alsip, IL 60803

708.597.5209

Mark Your Calendar

12.3, 10 & 17

Savior of the Nations

Advent Worship

12.3

Gifts for foster care children

12.12

Christmas Ornament Exchange

12.13

S.S. Crafty Christmas Party

12.2 & 16

Food Pantry

12.16

Community Meal

12.24

Christmas Eve Worship

12.25

Christmas Day Worship

12.31

New Year's Eve

Worship

THE LIGHT STILL SHINES

History records for us an interesting footnote. It was during the dark winter of 1864. At Petersburg, Virginia, the Confederate army of Robert E. Lee faced the Union divisions of General Ulysses S. Grant. The war was now three and a half years old and the glorious charge had long since given way to the muck and mud of trench warfare. Late one evening one of Lee's generals, Major General George Pickett, received word that his wife had given birth to a beautiful baby boy. Up and down the line the Southerners began building huge bonfires in celebration of the event. These fires did not go unnoticed in the Northern camps and soon a nervous Grant sent out a reconnaissance patrol to see what was going on. The scouts returned with the message that Pickett had had a son and these were celebratory fires. It so happened that Grant and Pickett had been contemporaries at West Point and knew one another

well, so to honor the occasion Grant, too, ordered that bonfires should be built.

What a peculiar night it was. For miles on both sides of the lines fires burned. No shots fired. No yelling back and forth. No war

Continued on page 2...



“LETS TELL IT LIKE LINUS”

By Billie Salzman

The Christmas season is another special time for us to speak of our blessed gift of Jesus birth and our new life in Him .(John 3;16-17).

Many have seen the animated Christmas classic ,A CHARLIE Brown's CHRISTMAS by Charles Schulz. The story tells that Charlie Brown is depressed by the commercialization and secularism of Christmas.

I believe a lot of us reflect that same feeling. We see the TV programs featuring Santa and his elves and hear the song of Rudolph and his red nose, and many other secular songs. While we may laugh with the song, “Gramma Was Run Over By A Raindeer,” we surely want people to know who, what, and why Christians celebrate Christmas.

In the program, Charlie Brown asks “Isn't there anyone who knows what Christmas is all about? Linus speaks up and says “Sure Charlie Brown , I can tell you what Christmas is all about” and he quotes Luke 2:8-12 . When he finishes he says,”You see Charlie Brown, that's what Christmas is all about.” The program was

first aired in 1965. It is said that the network executives did not want the scripture quoted, however, Charles Schulz was adamant that it remain, “If we don't tell the true meaning of Christmas, who will?” The message is even more important to tell now in 2014 . Holy Cross Lutheran Church offers many times to worship in Advent and at Christmas. Let us all reach out to many to tell what Christmas is all about, and invite them to worship with us and share our Christmas



“The Light Still Shines” Continued ...

fought. Only light, celebrating the birth of a child. But it didn't last forever. Soon the fires burned down and once again the darkness took over. The darkness of the night and the darkness of war.

The good news of Christmas is that in the midst of a great darkness there came a light, and the darkness was not able to overcome the light. It was not just a temporary flicker. It was an eternal flame. We need to remember that. There are times, in the events of the world and in the events of our own personal lives, that we feel that the light of the world will be snuffed out. But the Christmas story affirms that whatever happens, the light still shines. Jesus is still the Savior. Worship Him this Christmas.

*Let the light of your life
shine in such a
way that
others see
your good
deeds and
bring glory to your
Father in Heaven.
Matthew 5:16*

This & That

COMMUNITY MEAL by Joan Opyd

Our Thanksgiving Community Meal was enjoyed by around 31 sit down meals and 17 dinners to go. Everyone one had a lot to be thankful for. It is such a privilege to serve in God's name and to share our blessings with all who come. Thank you to ALL who made this meal possible.

Community Meal volunteers are needed to make potato salad for the meal which is Tues. Dec. 9th. We will supply the potatoes, celery and onions. You can pick up on Sunday, the 8th and bring to kitchen by 3:00 PM on Tues. If you have any questions, or want to volunteer, please contact Joan @597-9477 before Dec. 4th. (At least 5 people are needed.)

ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE by Barbara Piekosz

Thank you all, for the very generous donations for the carpet and financing of the Anniversary Dinner. We are very grateful for the support of our church's 75th Anniversary. God Bless.

ONCE AGAIN Holy Cross has decided to participate in the LCFS Christmas gift drive for children in foster care. Please consider taking an ornament from the tree located in the entry and purchase an unwrapped toy for that child. Please return the unwrapped gift by Wednesday, Dec. 3. Some gift ideas are posted on the bulletin board.

WEDDING BELLS RANG for Jennifer Vazquez & Jason Wedster, Nov. 15 at a service presided over by Pastor Chris. Congratulations Jennifer and Jason! May God bless you with a wonderful life together.

CAN YOU DONATE A POINSETTIA PLANT to the church for our Christmas celebration this year? Go to the store of your choice, purchase a large red or white poinsettia plant. Label the plant with your name. Bring it to the church on December 21 and place it in the Fellowship hall. The altar guild will put it in the chancel and you can pick up your plant and bring it home after the Christmas Day worship service.

REMEMBER TO SUPPORT local businesses that support our Community Meal including: Demon Dawgs, Labriola Baking Company, George's Restaurant, G&L Auto, Walt's Food, Pappas Restaurant and Family Dollar.



TOGETHER LET'S DISCOVER again the rich glories of the Word becoming flesh among us with our Advent theme "Savior of the Nations" Wednesday nights, beginning Dec. 3, 7:30 p.m.

ORNAMENT EXCHANGE. This year's Christmas Ornament Exchange will be held on Friday, December 12 at 7:00 p.m. at the Griffin's house located at 14819 Jean Court in Oak Forest. Everyone attending is asked to bring a new, wrapped ornament worth at least \$5.00. Also, if you'd like you can bring a snack such as an appetizer or dessert to share. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board if you will be attending. See Pauline Griffin, if you have any questions or need more information.

THE DINNER CLUB will be going to the Bonefish Grill on Saturday, December 6 at 5:00 p.m. This seafood restaurant is located at 15537 S. La Grange Road in Orland Park. A menu is on the bulletin board and also a sign-up sheet if you'd like to go. Faith Schulz has more information if you need it.

FUN FOR CHILDREN. On Saturday, December 13th the Board of Christian Education will be hosting an afternoon of of crafty Christmas fun. We will once again have a Christmas tree to decorate in front of the church. Grab your children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews and neighbors and join us from 2:00-5:00 pm. to make decorations for the tree, some light refreshments will be provided and perhaps some singing of Christmas carols. Hope to see you in the fellowship hall.



Christian Education

By Barbara Piekosz

On Saturday, December 13th the Board of Christian Education will be hosting an afternoon of of crafty Christmas fun. We will once again have a Christmas tree to decorate in front of the church. Grab your children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews and neighbors and join us from 2:00-5:00 pm. to make decorations for the tree, Some light refreshments will be provided and perhaps some singing of Christmas carols. Hope to see you in the fellowship hall.

There will be no Sunday School or Adult Bible Class on Sunday, December 28th. Sunday School and Sunday morning adult Bible class will resume on Sunday, January 4th.

Stewardship of Time

by Patricia Minet

It's that time again for the hustle and bustle of the holidays, but have you made time for what's really important, giving back to God and using your time for His glory?

What about your neighbor who may be lonely, bake her some cookies, visit her and let her know she is never alone, as our Lord is always with her? Shovel your neighbors walk without being asked. Work the food pantry or community meal and bring joy to those less fortunate. Help someone carry their packages or simply hold the door open for them. Visit a nursing home to brighten someone's day, and ask them if they would like to pray with you. Shop for a gift for a child who may not receive one. Attend Bible classes, and share what you have learned. Gather your unused clothing and drop it off at a shelter. Put aside a quiet time just to pray for others who may need our prayers. Ask pastor if he needs help in the office.

The list can go on and on. No matter how small, even a smile, just give of yourself and you will be making a difference. There is always a time to give of ourselves. After all " God has time for us always".



Holiday Stress

The holiday season is here and many of us are feeling pressure. Shopping, going to parties, baking and many other activities in addition to our normal tasks can leave us feeling exhausted. We always have more projects than we have time for. We often have more socializing than we feel up to.

The holidays bring different memories and feelings to each of us. For some, the holidays are a very joyous time, for others they are very emotional and bring up feelings of holidays long past.

It is important to know that symptoms of stress vary with each individual. During the holidays some people have trouble falling or staying asleep. Some wake up early, while others have trouble getting up in the morning. Some gain weight; others have headaches or mood swings. Some experience an inexplicable sadness, while others may miss loved ones who are no longer here.

It is important to remember the holiday blues are often short-lived and a reaction to the stress of the holiday season. Although some stress is good, too much stress can make us feel overwhelmed and exhausted. Here are some things that may help

you manage the season:

- Plan your time and recognize that it is ok to say "no." Don't over-schedule yourself.
- Set your priorities and let the less important things wait.
- Recognize that not everything can or has to be perfect.
- Delegate tasks to other family members.
- Don't overindulge in sweet, high-calorie food. Eat regular meals, especially lots of fruits and vegetables. Watch your intake of alcohol and tobacco.
- Try to get 6-8 hours of sleep every night.

If you recognize that stress or the holiday blues continue beyond the holidays, they may be symptoms of a more-serious problem. If that's the case, it may help to speak with a mental-health professional.

You and your family do not have to struggle alone. LCFS counselors help families generate hope and cope with life's challenges. Most insurance plans accepted; sliding-scale fees are available on a case-by-case basis. For more information or to schedule an appointment, contact us at lcfs_info@lcfs.org or 800-363-LCFS (5237).

Discover LCFS and the services we offer at www.lcfs.org and www.facebook.com/LCFSIL.

ISIS, other radical Islamists driven by Muslim eschatology

By Roger Drinnon

ST. LOUIS — To establish a world ruled by Islamic law, Jesus and the Mahdi will battle against the deceiver al-Dajjal and then convert everyone to Islam to usher-in the end times. Wait ... *what? Jesus?*

Muslim extremist groups like the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) seek to bring about this eschatological scenario through terrorist attacks, violent militant operations, well-funded propaganda and aggressive proselytizing efforts, according to one expert on the religion's eschatology.

Islamist eschatology was the topic of Dr. Timothy R. Furnish's Oct. 23 lecture at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, titled "Fighting for the End of the (Christian) World." The lecture was arranged by the Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology (EIIT), the seminary's specialized program of theological education for pastoral leadership within immigrant-based LCMS congregations.

Furnish holds a Ph.D. in Islamic History from Ohio State University as well as a Master of Arts in Religion from Concordia Seminary. He is a veteran of the U.S. Army and consultant to the U.S. military and intelligence community.

"Islam claims to be the corrective to the 'corrupted' religions of Judaism and Christianity," said Furnish. "In the Islamic view, [divine] revelations were given in three major groupings: to the Jews, about 1200 B.C.; to the Christians in the first century A.D.; and then 600 years later, the final revelation to [Islam's founder] Muhammad."

Furnish described Islam as a religion based on the theology of works, whereby one is deemed righteous by Allah, the Muslim god, through one's actions and adherence to Islamic law. He said most Muslims believe as a precursor to the end times, Jesus — who the Muslims believe to be only a mortal prophet...

(You can read the rest of the story at: <http://blogs.lcms.org/2014/muslim-eschatology>)

Church Council Minutes

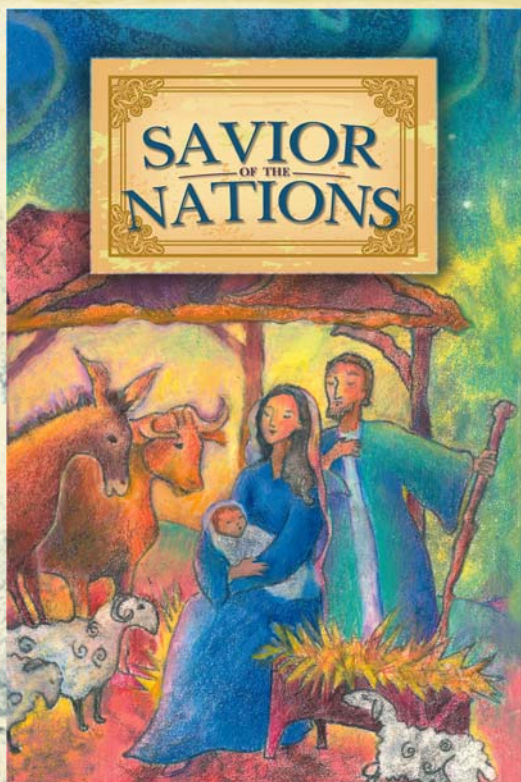
October 15, 2014

7:30 pm

- * Motion made and approved to accept the September minutes.
- * President's Report— Joint SELC Reformation Service to be held at Resurrection Lutheran, Merrillville, IN, Oct. 26 at 3 p.m., funeral for Bob Tiedema conducted on Sept. 10 and Lucille Ellendt on Sept. 13. Attended the GPC and Board of Directors meeting at Holy Cross, Lake Mary, FL. SELC District Convention will be held April 10-13, 2015 at Zion Lutheran, Clark, NJ and LCEF has a new program called Connect Plus for new investors pay 3% interest and will offer this program till June 30, 2015.
- * Treasurer's Report— donations towards the 75th anniversary are now \$7238. Cleaner's fund has a deficit of \$122.58.
- * Motion made, seconded and approved to accept the Treasurer's report.
- * Bd. Of Education— Will be hosting a

Christmas Tree Decorating even for the front of the church on Dec. 13 from 2-5 p.m.

- * Trustees— noted that the office furnace heat exchanger has failed and so far 1 estimate for repair has been received. The projectionist booth being created by Mike Meilahn and John Knoska should be done soon.
- * Stewardship/Finance—letters have been sent out thank members who have made 2015 pledges.
- * Social Ministries —Since there is a food pantry every Saturday morning from 10:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall, if there is another event that day that needs to use the fellowship hall the food pantry will give the food collected for distribution that day to the Restoration Ministries in Harvey. A letter was received from the Synod asking for donations to support seminary expenses. This will be brought up at the next Council meeting for discussion.
- * Next meeting of Church council



The flesh and blood of the God-man Jesus brings our salvation. God has become one of us. The mystery of the incarnation causes all of us to ponder anew the sacrificial love of God. To be fully one of us, to share with us in all things, to know no sin, and yet to become sin for us, that is the stuff that causes all creation to fall at His feet and worship. There is no greater love of God than the work of Jesus Christ in rescuing fallen creation. Here is the pure Gospel.

“Savior of the nations, come, Virgin’s Son, make here Your home! Marvel now, O heav’n and earth. The the Lord chose such a birth.” (LSB 332:1)

Midweek Advent Worship

Wednesdays, Dec. 3, 10 & 17 at 7:30 PM

SERVANTS IN WORSHIP - DECEMBER, 2014

DATE	TIME	USHER	COMMUNION ASSISTANT	LECTOR	ACOLYTE	ALTAR GUILD	COUNTER	GREETER	PROJECTIONIST
3	7:30 PM	Tom Griffin				D. Lux J. Maddox	F. Schulz D. Meilahn	Donna Judd	P. Rutkowski M. Stevens
7	8:00 am ----- 10:30 am	Jim Boltz ----- Ron Wedster	Bob Long -----	Donna Judd ----- Donna Meilahn	----- Kaitlyn Shelton	Joy Maddox ----- Dorothy Lux	F. Schulz D. Meilahn	Barbara Piekosz ----- Liz Wilczynski	M. Stevens ----- P. Rutkowski
10	7:30 PM	Tom Griffin				D. Lux J. Maddox	P. Griffin N. Fehser	Donna Judd	P. Rutkowski M. Stevens
14	8:00 am ----- 10:30 am	Jim Boltz ----- Ron Wedster	----- Tom Griffin	----- Faith Schulz	----- Carly Potts	Joy Maddox ----- Dorothy Lux	P. Griffin N. Fehser	Barbara Piekosz ----- Liz Wilczynski	M. Stevens ----- P. Rutkowski
17	7:30 PM	Jim Boltz				D. Lux J. Maddox	P. Rutkowski M. Meyer	Donna Judd	P. Rutkowski M. Stevens
21	8:00 am ----- 10:30 am	Jim Boltz ----- Ron Wedster	Scott Vrshek -----	Joy Maddox ----- Sue Wilczynski	----- Kaitlyn Shelton	Joy Maddox ----- Dorothy Lux	P. Rutkowski M. Meyer	Barbara Piekosz ----- Liz Wilczynski	M. Stevens ----- P. Rutkowski
24	7:30 PM	Terry & Scott Vrshek			Carly Potts	D. Lux J. Maddox	C. Vrshek T. Vrshek	Barbara Piekosz	P. Rutkowski M. Stevens
25	10:30 AM	Tom Griffin & Scott Vrshek	Jim Boltz		Kaitlyn Shelton	D. Lux J. Maddox	C. Vrshek T. Vrshek	Barbara Piekosz Billie Salzman	P. Rutkowski M. Stevens
28	8:00 am ----- 10:30 am	Jim Boltz ----- Ron Wedster	----- Jim Bahr	----- Aimee Wilczynski	----- Carly Potts	Joy Maddox ----- Dorothy Lux	Dorothy Lux Doris Kracht	Barbara Piekosz ----- Liz Wilczynski	M. Stevens ----- P. Rutkowski
31	7:30 pm	Jim Boltz	Terry Vrshek	Donna Judd	Kaitlyn Shelton	Joy Maddox ----- Dorothy Lux	C. Vrshek T. Vrshek	Carole Vrshek	P. Rutkowski M. Stevens

**“Serve the Lord
with gladness”**

— Psalms 100:2

DECEMBER 2014

Church Office Hours: Monday through Thursday 8:30 am - 12:30 pm, 708.597.5209 hclc@hc-lc.org

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 7:30PM-Southwest Chorus Carol Kernahan (b)	2 4:30PM Food Pantry	3 7:30PM Advent Worship	4 9:00AM Seniors Group Gathering	5 Pastor's Day Off	6 10:00AM Musicians 10:30AM Food Pantry
7 FOOD PANTRY SUNDAY 8:00AM Worship (C) 9:15AM - Sun School/Bible Class 10:30AM Worship	8 7:30PM Southwest Chorus 7:30PM Church Council	9 5:00PM Community Meal	10 7:30PM Advent Worship	11 8:00AM Stewardship Meeting 9:00AM Senior's Group Gathering	12 Pastor's Day Off 7:00pm Ornament Exchange	13 10:00AM Musicians 10:30AM Food Pantry 2:00pm Christmas Party
14 8:00AM Worship 9:15AM Sunday School/Bible Class 10:30AM Worship (C)	15 7:30PM Southwest Chorus Practice	16 4:30PM Food Pantry	17 7:30 Advent Worship	18 9:00Am Senior's Group Gathering	19 Pastor's Day Off	20 10:00AM Musicians 10:30AM Food Pantry
21 8:00AM Worship (C) 9:15AM Sunday School/Bible Class 10:30AM Worship	22 7:30PM Southwest Chorus Practice	23	24 CHRISTMAS EVE 7:30 Worship	25 CHRISTMAS DAY 10:30AM Worship (C)	26 Pastor's Day Off Walter Fabry (b)	27 10:00AM Musicians 10:30AM Food Pantry
28 8:00AM Worship 10:30AM Worship (C) Jonathan Ongstad (b)	29 7:30PM Southwest Chorus Practice	30	31 NEW YEAR'S EVE 7:30 Worship			

Get TIME on Your Side



Manage TIME God's Way