



Business Meeting

Joint Council Reminder

The Joint Council will meet on Tuesday, December 1st at Samuel's. To celebrate the close of another year working together as partners in Christ and leaders of the church, we will have a potluck dinner before our meeting. Dinner starts at 6:30pm and matters of the church will commence at 7pm.



OUR NEW BUDGET

Don't Forget: Annual Congregational Meetings

Our annual congregational meetings will be held on **Sunday, December 13th** immediately following worship at each congregation. On the agenda is the adoption of the 2010 spending plan (budget) and the election of new council members.

(Personal letters went out at the end of November.)



Your Pastor's Ponderings

This month I'd like to share with you some reflections on Advent and waiting that I have excerpted from an article by Daniel Weitner.

The first thing you discover when you enter today's typical hospital emergency room is about its nursing department: it's understaffed and overworked. The second thing you discover in a hospital where nurses are attempting to perform a dozen things at once is the art of waiting. For everything. It's the kind of thing that makes one alternately boil with frustration when the simplest thing isn't answered and coo in sympathy when you see how many have to be served by so few.

A few minutes spent waiting for a bedpan can seem like hours; getting a response for medicine can seem like days; and word on test results from the lab can seem an eternity in coming. There's a real temptation in these situations to stand by and say, Well, they're the experts, they know better and that you really ought to sit down in the chair, wring your hands, mutter under your breath, and basically do nothing while waiting for something to happen.

It takes a little push to act instead of vegetate. But it's worth it. It's worth to speak up and say, we need help now! It's worth it to walk to the supply closet and get what everyone's too busy to get. It's worth it to get on the phone, make a call and get answers to all those nagging little questions. It's worth it to do something while waiting.

This season of Advent that we now enter is also a season a longing and waiting, a period that recalls Israel waiting for the coming Messiah. Now it is altogether too easy for us to misinterpret the command "Wait!" (as Isaiah says in chapter 4) as a cry to "do nothing." Yet, waiting hours should not be thought of a wasting hours.

It's like when you make the Thanksgiving turkey or the Christmas ham. It takes several hours to cook one of those. But after you place it in the oven, do you go ahead and pull up a chair and watch as they cook. Do you stop all activity for the next two, three or even four hours? Or do you get busy – peeling potatoes, washing veggies, setting the table. Waiting hours are not wasting hours.

Pregnant woman (like Mary) have to wait an average of forty weeks for the baby to develop fully and labor to begin. But does waiting those forty weeks mean they stop doing anything? Of course not, life goes on. Normal work has to be accomplished. Activity needs to be maintained, for Mom's sake and the baby's sake. Waiting hours are not wasting hours. They are hours of expectation – time to anticipate what is to come, not by doing nothing, but doing something while keeping an eye toward the future.

This theme of expectation also runs through the scriptures of Advent. Waiting for the Lord as Isaiah speaks about is not sitting down in a rocking chair, facing the east, and waiting for God to appear. No, what Isaiah is really saying is Get up and at it. While you're waiting for God, wait on God. The world's needs are great so get going – practice love, mercy, and compassion, share God's story, his justice, and his majesty with others.

Look at the original characters in the Advent story. Mary didn't sit around waiting. She believed the angel, she trusted God, she went on a journey to see her cousin Elizabeth, she bravely told Joseph what was going on. She acted. Joseph believed God's word sent in a dream, he didn't dismiss Mary, he cared for and nurtured her, he did his civic duty by returning to Bethlehem. He acted. They didn't say, "I can't see the end of my journey from where I stand: it's too far around the bend so I'll do nothing." Rather, in their waiting, they trusted God and said, I'm going to rise up, shake off the cobwebs, and go where God tells me and do what God wants me to do." Because they did this, they were able to recognize God when he came."

My Advent wish for us is that we recognize God in our midst when he comes but until then, may our waiting time be an active time not a wasting time. A time to trust in God, to share his mercy, to tell his story, to get up and get busy.

Here's to an active Advent and a Merry Christmas!

Pastor Will



Somerset's Hospital's In Touch Hospice is in need of Vigil Volunteers. Training for Vigil will be held on November 21st, December 12th from 9am- 11am. Persons interested in participating or need additional information may call Beverly Penrod at 814- 443-5047.



CHRISTMAS EVE PRE-SERVICE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We are planning to have 10-15 minutes of pre-service music/poems before the 7:30pm Christmas Eve service at Messiah. If you are interested in participating, please sign below and list what you will be doing. We encourage people from all 3 congregations to participate in this event. Please place the form in the offering plate. Last day to sign up is **November 30th, 2009.**

Thank you, Ann Sechler, Music Coordinator Messiah

NAME _____
MUSIC/POEM _____



Advent/Christmas Program – Angels, Please Come to Order

On Sunday, December 13th, (immediately following worship and our congregational meeting @M) the New Centerville Parish Players will once again present an Advent/Christmas program and a meal.

Our story focuses on the various scriptural passages related to Christmas Eve and how they were seen through the eyes of God's holy messengers, Angels. Come see Gabriel and Michael and the others figure out how best to announce to Mary the news about her coming child, how to keep Joseph from dismissing her, and how to proclaim to the shepherds the good news of his coming. Come on out and celebrate with us as the Angels try to bring order to God's Christmas story.

The meal will be provided by the Parish. Our menu includes roast beef, baked potato, peas and corn, salad, and of course, Angel Food Cake. Just bring yourselves.



Advent Program Rehearsals

Our first rehearsal will be on Sunday, December 6th after late worship @M. Our second (and final) rehearsal will be on Saturday morning, December 12th, from 9am to 11am.

JOY TO THE WORLD

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered ... while Quirinius was governor of Syria" (Luke 2:1-2). This order sets into motion a trip that lands a baby in Bethlehem instead of at home in Nazareth. It is a thread that places all these things into human history: a very pregnant young woman, the city of David called Bethlehem, a food trough for a cradle.

A baby is born to save the world. How does this baby's story become ours? Why does it matter to you, other than some warm emotions about babies and their cuteness?

This is not just any cute baby, but the source of life itself, coming in a most vulnerable form to live with us and share our pain. This is good news—because it's a story much larger than those first shepherds who witnessed the angel announcement. This baby's story of great joy becomes ours to share with "all the people."

The joy announced this day is not just for a select few with the right résumé, a particular ethnicity, or a superior ability to trust without questioning, but a message for *all* people. This joy is not a false happiness that pretends all is well in our broken and troubled world, but a real hope that walks through the valley of the shadow of death and knows with confidence that somebody's got your back.

On Christmas Eve, Dec. 24th, come to our places of worship and experience the joy of this precious gift that God places in the manger. All are invited to come sing Joy to the World. Our Christmas Worship schedule is as follows:

Thursday, December 24th – Christmas Eve 7:30pm – Service of Holy Communion and Candlelight @ M

(Pre-service music and program starts at 7:15pm approx)

10pm – Service of Holy Communion and Candlelight
@ Samuel's

Sunday, December 27th – Carols and Lessons (regular worship schedule)



Where Did You See God this week!

Please share your stories with Pastor Will about where you saw God this week by email, bulletin insert, writing a letter, leaving a message on the voice mail, or in person. **Please continue share with me where you see God in your lives.**

Example: I saw God in

I saw God _____



The Laurel Highlands Chorale



"Come, Let Us Adore Him"

- a concert for the Christmas Season -

The Dates are as follows-

***Sunday, December 6th – 2:30pm**

Church of the Brethren

Plank Road in Somerset

\$5.00 donation at the door.

***Friday, December 11 – 6:30pm**

Dinner Show - \$20.00

Coal Miner's Cafe in Jennerstown

Call: 629-5518 for reservations

***Monday, December 14 – 7:00pm**

St. David's Lutheran Church Davidsville

Free-will offering

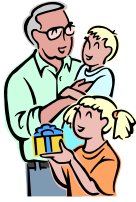
Tickets are available at the door of from any Chorale Member

For more information call: 814-926-3610 / 814-444-3446

The Laurel Highlands Chorale is an affiliate of

Laurel Arts





Pagani Children's Centre Update

We have received the Pagani Centre's most recent newsletter. A few copies of each are available in our churches' narthex. What follows are some brief updates –

Dear Friends of the PLCC,

We wish to continue to express our gratitude to all our friends in generally for supporting our program. Like any growing entity, the PLCC has been going through different challenges – health problems, food crises, education challenges, accommodation limits, and psychological issues just to mention a few... We have been able to work under the challenges by insisting on team work and sharing, believing God will continue touching His people to keep on holding hands with us in this mission.

Other updates –

Work continues on the construction and completion of a well. Ten new girls were admitted to Pagani Children's Centre this year.

The girls went to summer camp for a week in August at Mjji Wa Furaha.

Ten girls registered to take the Kenya Certificate of Primary Education.

Two girls registered to take the Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education.

The older girls were taught quilting.

International volunteers from Germany arrived to help for a year.

Two new staff members were welcomed.

The Pagani Lutheran Children's Centre



Thanks to all the wonderful volunteers we have had at the work sight in Central City, the Thrivent Habitat house is ready for dedication on December 19th, @ 2:00. Thanks for volunteering, providing meals, snacks for break, monetary donations, and especially for your prayers. Hope you can join us for this very special event



ANNUAL FOOD BAG PROJECT

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans of New Centerville Lutheran Parish is sponsoring their Annual Food Bag Project. The organization will prepare food bags for people of the community in need or shut in.

Please submit names for those who may benefit:

1. _____
2. _____

Name of person who submitted:

(anonymous requests may not be honored)

PLEASE PLACE IN OFFERING PLATE BY DEC. 13, 2009.

PS – If you would like to make a donation to help with this Food Bag Project, you may do so. Please make your check out to Messiah Lutheran and indicate that the donation is for Food Bags for Families.

(Also, please place in offering plate by Dec. 13th.)



Confirmation- Schedule for December

December 6th – 5pm: Class @M

December 13th – 5pm: Class @M

December 20th – Lead Worship & Caroling @the Patriot

2:30pm – Meet at parking lot at **Mt. Calvary**

December 27th – NO CLASS: Christmas Break

January 10th – Classes resume: **5pm @MZ**

Please note: In the new year, class will meet at Mt. Zion in Bakersville for the remainder of the confirmation year.



SNOW CAMP is Coming – Keep the Date Open

Attention! Confirmation students and any interested Jr/Sr High Youth (grades 6-12)

Snow Camp will be held at Camp Sequanota on the weekend of February 5th – 7th. Please put the date on your calendars for the new year. Details regarding registration and other pertinent info will be forthcoming in future bulletins.



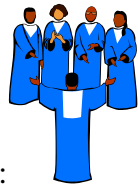
Adult Choir @M during Advent:

The schedule for Messiah's Adult Choir during Advent will be as follows:

Thurs, Dec. 3 – 7pm @M

Weds, Dec. 9 – following Advent Midweek worship @M
(approx. 7:45pm)

Tues, Dec. 15th – Christmas Gathering @Ann Sechler's with practice to follow.



There's Wisdom in the Word

Due to the Holidays and the Pastor's schedule, our Parish Bible study for December is canceled. We will resume in January.



Missionary Support

The Holiday season is soon upon us and as usual, we will reach into our pockets not only for ourselves but to remember others with grateful giving. To be sure, times are tight and so we might not be able to give as much as we would like this Christmas season, but hopefully we can still find room to help others.

As we think of what to gift others this year, don't forget our missionaries serving Christ across the world. Presently, we are supporting Andrew and Barbara Hinderlie and family serving in East Africa and Madagascar.



Soup Sale – Coming in January

The Laurel Mountain Mission Team will once again be holding a soup sale next month. We will be selling Ham N Bean and Vegetable Beef. Look for sign up sheets in the narthex at the start of the new year.



On the Horizon: Worship Happenings in December

December 6th – Advent 2: Prepare the Way Sunday

Today through prophetic voices like Malachi's and John the Baptist's we hear about the coming of the Lord Jesus. Like those prophets, all the baptized are called to participate in the sharing of the gospel to prepare the way for the coming of the Lord and assist all flesh in capturing a vision of the "salvation of God."

December 13th – Advent 3: Sunday of Joy

As believers in the good news of Christ Jesus, we are called to "Rejoice in the Lord always!" Advent is a season of rejoicing as we recognize the power of Christ's immediate presence while we await his coming again in glory. Joy now, joy tomorrow, joy forever in Christ's presence!

December 20th – Advent 4: Sunday of the Blessed: Mary and Katharina Bora

Today we hear a tribute to the little town of Bethlehem and the blessed virgin Mary's magnificent song of praise. We remember in no uncertain terms that Christ's advent is for "the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all."

December 24th – Christmas Eve: The Nativity of Our Lord

Tonight we hear the story of Jesus birth and the good news and joy he brings. His story of hope and promise, even in difficult times, is not just for those who can assemble this holy night but also for those who cannot. For those whose depression keeps them home, for those whose families can't be bothered to attend, for those deployed around the world, for those too sick to be here, and even for those who don't care: Jesus comes as a gift of good news to the whole world. See other announcement for worship times.

December 27th – A Festival of Lessons and Carols

The Good News of the Christ Child is told again and again through the hearing of familiar scripture and through the singing of our favorite Christmas carols. Come sing Joy to the World.



Hanging of the Greens party

On Sunday, **December 6th** at Messiah, immediately following worship, we will have an old fashioned hanging of the greens party to prepare the sanctuary for Advent and Christmas. Folks are invited to stay, help us hang the greens and the lights, and also enjoy a light lunch of soup and sandwiches.

Please plan on "hanging" around to help us hang the greens.



Advent Midweek Services

Take some time away during the busy holiday seasons to come reflect on God's peace and promises. Once again, we will be combining our mid-week Advent services with the Lavansville-Bakersville Parish.

This year, we are doing something a little new. Our evenings will start off each week with an informal Bible study and a pot-luck (covered dish) supper at 6pm and then worship will begin at 7pm. For worship, we will enjoy Holden Evening Prayer as our liturgical setting.

Services will be held on Wednesday at the following times and places:

Dec. 2nd – @ Mt. Zion, Bakersville

6pm-Potluck supper and Bible Study, 7pm – Worship

Dec. 9th -- @Messiah

6pm-Potluck supper and Bible Study, 7pm – Worship

Dec. 16th -- @Mt. Calvary, Lavansville

6pm-Potluck supper and Bible Study, 7pm – Worship