

December 2014

Wednesdays at 7:00 pm

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I will be leading an adult education series on the first three Wednesdays of December I'm calling "Christmas and the Gospel." To be more precise these gatherings will happen in our church social hall and run from seven in the evening till about 8:30 p.m. Unlike our customary practice during the Lenten season, these Advent season events will not include a worship service nor will they include a meal. But anyone who comes may certainly bring light snacks and beverages to share. Though I've yet to complete the entire three week set of lesson plans, I can tell you the first meeting will use Martin Luther's devotional commentary on the Magnificat as a centerpiece.

In this article, I'd like to say a few things about Christian Education in our small congregation. As Katherine Ellis, our council contact with Christian Education, and I will tell you, it's not been easy to launch new educational programs in our church this past year. Many of you will recall from years past Sunday morning adult forums, regular Sunday School for children, and Vacation Bible School. At this time, apart from this month's Wednesday evening Advent series, my current role in Christian Education has been limited to a monthly home visit where I teach confirmation to one of our young people and her parents, and having attended one evening session of Pastor Terry Allen's recent adult series on the sacraments at Trinity in Pasadena.

In a small congregation like ours, Christian Education can be a challenge... but so are a lot of the things we do. Yet, one part of our regular program of adult Christian Education continues on pretty much without interruption. Can you name it? It's the monthly study conducted by the Women of the Church! Though I can't claim to know all the details of their routine, leadership of their monthly Bible study rotates among several of the members. They utilize a monthly study featured in each month's edition of the ELCA women's periodical "Gather." It works for them!

What can we learn from this?

First, consider the contrast between the challenge of keeping Christian Education happening where it used to happen in our church and how simple it is to maintain in a small, yet well-established group such as the Women of the Church. This tells me that when it comes to ministry structure matters. A small group that is committed to meeting and working together on a regular basis doesn't have to find participants for its monthly Bible study. It doesn't have to recruit a specially qualified leader either because the periodical they use provides a basic lesson plan, discussion tips, and a guiding theme. My guess is that if you asked the Women of the Church about their role in Christian Education in our church, they'd probably give you a funny look. Their monthly Bible study is so much a part of their work, it's practically second nature to them.

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Prayer List

For those who mourn: The family of Mollie Murphy, the family of Scott Steen, the family of Tom Creighton, the family of Laverne Johnson, the family of Lawrence Harper, the family of Kim Thornhill, the family of Allene Korineck, the family of Mary Armstrong.

For healing: Sarah Stafford, Jeff Mellstrom, Diane Wilson, Sandy Williams, Jerrome Duncan, Ethel Grissom, Tom Wortham, Sylvia Ford, Bernice Smith, Sissy & Lloyd Thornhill, David Stankov, David Glover & family, Dick Barnes, Ron Weekly, Jr., Carlos Paiva, Sherman Banks, Sylvester Scott, Millie Nobles, George Williams, Phyllis Taylor, Dan Miller.

It's our custom to have a prayer list in The Shepherd's Voice. This is a partial list of those for whom we pray. If you have someone you would like on the list, or would like to be taken off the list, please call or e-mail Judy Sonier at the church office.

Food Pantry

When you shop for your Food Pantry donations, please consider buying the items that we give out the week that CTS serves: Pasta, Pasta Sauce, Canned Vegetables, Canned Soup w/meat, Canned Fruit, Peanut Butter, Jelly.

Lutheran Maritime Ministry Gifts

Knitted sea watch caps; White socks; Packaged razors; Can of shaving cream; Other shaving items (Cologne, aftershave, etc.); Deodorant; Combs, brushes; Tooth paste; Tooth brushes; Finger nail clippers/files; Note pads, pens, envelopes; Pack of playing cards; Microwave popcorn bags; Gum and/or hard candy; Anything else small enough to fit into a shoe box; Bibles, bible studies, DVDs, CDs (new, read, reusable).

Friends Outside

Toys appropriate for ages 3-11 with a value not exceeding \$15.

December Birthdays

12/05 Zandra Williams
12/10 Reta Duncan
12/24 Milly Nobles
12/25 Brent Callum
12/31 Katherine Ellis

Baptismal Birthdays

12/07 Elicia Duncan
12/12 Dolores Scott
12/22 Pr. Baietti
Corey Sonier
12/25 Andre Harnanto



News and Notes

Our Committee Meetings for December

WAM. Sunday, Dec 7 @ 11:45 am
 Finance. Sunday, Dec 7 @ 11:45 am
 Property. Sunday, Dec 14 @ 9:00 am
 Christian Education. Dec 21 @ 11:45 pm
 Social Ministry. Sunday, Dec 21 @ 11:45 am
 Exec Comm, Sunday, Dec 21, 11:45 am
 Evangelism. T.B.A.

Pr. Witte on Vacation

Pastor Witte will be on vacation from Sunday, December 28 through Saturday, January 3. Pr. Stephen Fiechter will celebrate the Eucharist on the 28th.

Sandi Holden on Vacation

The Holdens will be spending the Christmas break in Oregon this year. Brian Havey will be filling in for Sandi on December 24th, 28th, and January 4th.

Caroling

The Evangelism Committee invites you to kick off the Christmas season with some neighborhood caroling. Join members of the Altadena Music Project for pizza, caroling, hot chocolate and dessert* on **Thursday, December 4, 6 p.m. in the Social Hall.** Help us spread Christmas cheer as we deliver invitations to our neighbors to participate in CTS' Christmas activities & services. This is a great opportunity to invite your friends, neighbors, co-workers, etc. for fellowship with members of the CTS family. **RSVP to Laura Mulfinger ismulfinger@gmail.com or 626.398.7568.**

December Outreach

We are **scheduled** to serve at the Cold Weather Shelter on December 1st and December 29th. The Shelter will only be open on a weather-dependent basis, and at the time I write, it's not completely clear what the weather will be like on December 1st. It might be raining, it might not. Katherine will keep us posted on what's happening.

Donations for the Lutheran Maritime Mission and Friends Outside are due in church by Sunday, December 14th. The list of items for both ministries can be found on page 2.

Christian Education

As Pr. Witte remarked in his article on page 1, our three-week Advent education program, "Christmas and the Gospel", will start on Wednesday, December 3rd, at 7:00 pm in the Social Hall, continuing on the 10th and 17th. Participants are invited to bring snacks and drinks to share.

Christmas Pageant

The annual Christmas Pageant, featuring the CTS Choir, the children of the congregation, and members of the Altadena Music Project will take place on Sunday, December 21st. Be there or be square!!

2015 Pledges

If you have not filled out your pledge card yet, please get it to our Stewardship Chair, Garrett Biehle, as soon as possible. It will be very helpful to your Finance Committee to have a good idea, by its meeting on December 7th, of what pledge income is going to look like next year.

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Second, if our goal is to multiply the ways Christian Education happens, we may want to start in a different place. Instead of asking what kind of programming we should have and how to pull it off, we might be better served if we simply encouraged people who already tend to associate with each other to be more intentional about getting together (not just socially) but with a shared project or purpose in mind. Then, we should allow them to decide how to utilize the Scriptures and what the church believes, teaches, and confesses on the basis of it to guide them. Perhaps they will fold what we refer to as "Christian Education" into their work as naturally as the Women of the Church at CTS do.

Lastly, we often connect Christian Education with learning rather than with doing. I imagine the rotating leadership of the Women of the Church's monthly Bible study has resulted in many of them learning a lot. But they would probably be the first to tell you that the best way to learn is to teach. Teachers whether they're new to the task or not need partners who are willing to work alongside them. Leadership of any sort develops with practice and practice depends on having a friend or two you can listen and talk to.

Perhaps the secret to making the ministry of Christian Education happen in a setting like ours is to spend less time conducting classes for this or that age or interest group. Instead, it may make more sense for us to consider how we might partner with and share tasks with one another whenever we have the opportunity. Renewal doesn't always mean repeating what we have achieved under different circumstances. Instead, it may involve increasing each other's capacity for leadership to get ready for what God is calling us to do next.

One of your friends in Christ,
Pastor Mark Witte



ELCA Conference of Bishops Statement on President Obama's Immigration Announcement

As people of faith and leaders of the church, we support public policy that protects children, reunites families, and cares for the most vulnerable, regardless of their place of birth.

The treatment of immigrants is a core religious value. To welcome the stranger is to welcome a child of God. In the New Testament, Jesus tells us to welcome the stranger, for "just as you did it to one of the least of these... you did it to me." (Matthew 25:40)

Each day in our congregations and in our service to the community, we see the consequences of this broken immigration system: separated families, children returning home to find their parents have been deported, and the exploitation of undocumented workers.

By removing the threat of deportation for many people, we are showing compassion for people who have been here for years, working hard to provide for their families, obeying the law, and contributing to the fabric of our community.

While today's action addresses a pressing need, it does not provide a path to citizenship, establish policies that prioritize family unity, or create more efficient channels for entry of new migrant workers.

Our hope is that congress will address these and related issues, including the practice of family detention, which undermines our values as a people of faith and a nation of welcome.

The Scriptures consistently show a significant concern for immigrants:

When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native - born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the Lord your God. (Leviticus 19:33 - 34)

The positive role of immigrants in our history, economy and our community is unmistakable.

We support this compassionate first step toward reforming an immigration system that is flawed and requires many of our neighbors to live in the shadows in fear.

Conference of Bishops
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
November 20, 2014

Serving in Worship

December 2014	Dec 7	Dec 14	Dec 21	Dec 24	Dec 28
Liturgical Day	2 Advent	3 Advent	4 Advent	Christmas Eve	I Christmas
Musician	Sandi Holden	Sandi Holden	Sandi Holden	Brian Havey	Brian Havey
Deacon	Dolores Scott	Bill Korn	Eric Mulfinger	Dolores Scott	Stephanie Gittoes
Server/Acolyte	Lennon Holden Nathalie Jaramillo	Dede Campbell Robby Holden	Emerald Bailer Zoie Chisum	Garrett Biehle Zoie Chisum	Dolores Scott Nathalie Jaramillo
Lector	Marcia Brown	Wayne Campbell	(Pageant)	Bill Korn	Garrett Biehle
Offertory Prayer	Deacon	Deacon	Deacon	Deacon	Deacon
Ushers	Marcia Brown Zetta Robinson	Wayne Campbell Jeff Mellstrom	Jordan Boye Valerie Jones	Zetta Robinson Al Schoepke	Zetta Robinson Sandy Williams
Communion Care	Rita Mello	Cece Guiar	Esmeralda Bailer	Dolores Scott	Ruth Creighton
The Lessons	Isaiah 40:1-11 Ps 85:1-2, 8-13 2 Peter 3:8-15a Mark 1:1-8	Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11 Luke 1:46b-55 1 Thes 5:16-24 John 1:6-8, 19-28	2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26 Romans 16:25-27 Luke 1:26-38	Isaiah 9:2-7 Psalm 96 Titus 2:11-14 Luke 2:1-20	Jeremiah 31:15-17 Psalm 124 1 Peter 4:12-19 Matthew 2:13-18
Social Hour	IT COULD BE YOU!	WELCA December Birthdays	The Chisums	(no Social Hour)	The Kornes

December 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 6:00 pm Bad Weather Shelter	2	3 7:00 pm Advent Study Program	4 6:00 pm Dinner and Caroling	5	6 10:00 am <u>WELCA</u> 12:00-6:00 pm AA/CA Fish Fry
7	8	9	10 7:00 pm Advent Study Program	11	12	13 9:30 am Food Pantry Team II
14 11:45 am Cong. Meeting	15	16 7:00 pm Church Council	17 7:00 pm Advent Study Program	18 12:00 pm <u>PACT Meeting</u> 6:00 pm AA/CA Secretaries	19	20
21 Christmas Pageant	22	23	24 7:00 pm Christmas Eve Service	25	26	27
28	29 6:00 pm Bad Weather Shelter	30	31			

Sunday Service with Holy Communion, starts at 10:00 am every Sunday, followed by refreshments in the Social Hall. See page 3 for committee meetings.

CHRIST THE
SHEPHERD
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

185 W. Altadena Dr.
Altadena

Phone: 626-794-7011
E-mail: office@ctsaltadena.org

We're on the Web
www.ctsaltadena.org

Worship

Sundays: 10:00 a.m. The Eucharist
Nursery Care Available

Our Mission

We, the people of God at Christ the Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church are called to witness to Jesus Christ, crucified and resurrected, in our worship, our daily lives, and through our Christian service in the community. In faithfulness to this calling, we are committed to defend human dignity, to stand with poor and powerless people, to advocate justice, to work for peace, and to care for the earth. Inspired by the Holy Spirit and compelled by God's love for all people, we commit ourselves to invite and welcome ALL into our church regardless of race, nationality, culture, social status, or sexual orientation.

Mark Witte, Interim Pastor
Sandi Holden, Musician

Sandy Williams, President ('16)
Peter Holden, Vice President ('16)
William Korn, Treasurer ('15)
Garrett Biehle, Secretary, Stewardship ('14)
David Chisum, Social Ministry ('14)

Judith Sonier, Office Manager
Jeff Mellstrom, Financial Secretary

Wayne Campbell, Property ('14)
Katherine Ellis-Schoepke, Christian
Education ('16)
Valerie Jones, Worship Arts ('16)
Laura Mulfinger, Evangelism ('16)

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