



St John Lutheran Church December 2019

Pastor's Page

(This thoughtful illustration came from a friend. I adapted it just a little, although the author was not given.)

A professor of philosophy walked into her lecture hall with a glass of water in hand. The hall was filled with antsy students who were eager to finish up class before heading home for the Christmas break. As she wound her way through the aisles, the professor raised the glass of water where everyone could see it; most of the students anticipated the predictable "half empty or half full" question. Instead, with a smile on her face, she inquired: "How heavy is this water?"

The students all went completely silent for a moment as they started thinking it through, then began calling out answers ranging from eight to 20 ounces. One astute student asked, "Does the glass matter?"

The professor replied, "The absolute weight doesn't matter; it depends on how long I hold the glass filled with water. If I hold it all up for a minute or two, it's not a problem. If I hold it for an hour, my arm will probably start to ache. If I continue to hold it for a day, my arm will go numb and feel paralyzed. The weight of the glass doesn't change, but the longer I hold it, the heavier it becomes."

She continued, "The stress and worries that you carry around in life are like that glass of water. Think on them for a minute or so and nothing happens... keep thinking about them for a bit longer, and they begin to hurt. And, if you think about them and hold them up all day long, you will feel paralyzed—incapable of doing anything."

Remember to put the glass down.

Christmas is a time of both letting go and picking up. Each year we have the opportunity to let go of past misunderstandings and mistakes. We also can find clarity and practice forgiveness and love. The longer we focus on what is truly important, the more we feel relief at putting down our glass of worries and finding joy in today.

May the cup of God's blessings and peace be found in your hand this Christmas Season, and may you drink deeply from it all year round so you may be strengthened and lifted up rather than being weighed down.

Pastor Russell Logston



A View from the Parsonage

Rev. Jane Logston

Christmas, for most people, is probably the most favorite Season of the year. It is an exciting time of year that is filled with expectation and promise. There is more to Christmas, though than what meets the eye. At this time of year, we see expressions of love, joy and hope. If we go through Christmas just looking at the tinsel and the trappings, the endless shopping and scurrying, while missing the Heart and Hope of this great Season, it is like going outside on a dark night and never looking up at the wondrous stars in the sky.

I believe that Christmas can be an enriching and fulfilling experience. It can be a time of great joy and gladness.

The message of Christmas is that God who is with us, reigns over us, and loves us. If we wish to experience Christmas more deeply, we must place ourselves in a position where Love, Joy, and Peace can be available to us. This can be done in many ways. We can focus our attention and our time on the festivities of this time of Advent, which is a time of waiting and preparation. Let us join in with our complete heart and soul. Let us take time to pray, to read our devotions, and to enjoy the Spirit of the Season. Let us help people in need and do a random act of kindness without telling another person. The joy we feel in our hearts is the joy that God gives to all people who seek to do God's Will.

Love is Supreme at Christmas. When the Good News about God is lifted up in Christmas Carols, Hymns and Special Services; when the life of God is celebrated in our midst; Christmas can take on a new and richer meaning and fulfillment. When Christ is the Center of our Celebration, Christmas can become an exciting time. Christmas is meant to be a Joyous Celebration about the Good News of God.

“So may Christmas bring you gifts no money can buy;

A patience that endures the dark,

A courage that can face the worst,

An insight that can see all things spiritual,

A love that touches God,

And a light that no darkness can dim.”

We have had a varied and interesting year for 2019. This past year has been a time of high and low times for the family and Church of God. We need to remember that in our life there will be times of gladness and joy and also times of sadness and tears.

In the Pastor's family this year has been varied and interesting also. The family went from living in Empire, that had limited shopping and entertainment choices; (although beautiful vistas, forests,

and wild animals) to moving to a very pleasant town and county seat near an urban area that has endless possibilities of shopping, entertainment and eating. We have had adjustments to make: moving to a different parsonage, meeting new people, finding places to shop and eat, and at each time and situation these last few months, we have become more adjusted and more comfortable to our surroundings and settling in and enjoying Lake City. The Bishop of the West Michigan Conference of the United Methodist Church had us pull up our roots we had for five years, move and make new roots here in Lake City, Michigan. We, as pastors, have taken an oath to obey our Bishop and to the open itinerancy system. To move our family and go to a different area and ministry whenever our Bishop instructs us. Sometimes, though, it has been hard on us, our children and our family. It can be daunting to be a clergy family: to be set apart from the community, to be scrutinized, to be apart from our extended families many times on holidays and/ or major family events, such as the birth of our first grandson, and the death of our sister and cousin; to be looked at and treated differently.

But we also have a faith to sustain us in times of good as well as times of upheaval.

“The life I live in the Body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” (Gal.2:20)

“But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from evil” (2 Thess. 3) “The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble. God cares for those who trust in him.” (Nahum 1:7)

We also have met some good and wonderful people here, and hope to meet many more as we get more familiar with our new town and home. One thing we do know for sure, that the more we have moved around our state, the more we have seen that people are people. There are good people as well as bad people. There are righteous people as well as wicked. But we are all equal under God.

“Clothe yourself in Love... let the Peace of God rule in your hearts.... And be Thankful.” (Colossians 3:14-15)

“It is our Prayer, O Lord, that Your divine Presence may not be obscured during the busyness and beauty of this Christmas Season. Among the Lights of Christmas, may we see the Light of the World. Among the jingles of Christmas, may we hear the Songs of Angels. Among the Gifts of Christmas, May we receive the Greatest Gift. Among the confusion of Christmas, May we feel the Peace of God. Among the tinsel of Christmas, may we see the Beauty of Holiness. Among the crowds of Christmas, may we see the Face of Jesus.” Amen

May the Light of the World brighten you and your family's life with Peace, Love, and Joy."

The Revs. Jane and Russell Logston Family

Blazing light and deafening sound suddenly were all around,

And shepherds trembling on the ground were we.

"All Glory Be to God On High!"

Their chorus sounding through the sky

And drawing now more closely nigh to us.
"Fear Not! I bring good news to All:
This night is birthed in a cattle stall
The Christ, who will undo the fall of Men.
So go now, find him lying there,
This infant on his pauper's lair,
And do not doubt this word we share with you."
And all was as it had been said;
We found the infant in his bed,
And told them how we had been led to them.
And through the years as I have dwelt
Upon that night, what I saw and felt,
I marvel more than when God dealt at first.
The babe grew up to be a man,
And took upon himself this plan:
God receives from God the hand of wrath.
And so for all who participate in the life which God,
Through Christ, creates, there remains a hope to annul the fate of sin.
Evan Kenyon Amen

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ST. JOHN PASTY FUNDRAISER

A BIG THANK YOU to everyone who helped support our annual Pasty fundraiser by donating ingredients, providing labor and purchasing our delicious pasties. We raised **\$2042** to help with the ministry of St. John. There may be a handful of those yummy Yooper treats in the kitchen freezer if you missed out. \$6 each.



'ADOPTING" A FAMILY AT CHRISTMAS

The women of St. John are again "adopting" a family to help its members experience a nicer Christmas when times are tough. The Lake City Schools select a family for us. This year's family is two elementary aged children being raised by their grandparents. We collect donations and then purchase clothes, toys, and sometime even a food gift card for the family. If you would like to donate please see Jeanene Brandt or Norann Chadwick. We will wrap the gifts on Dec. 10th.

PLEASE JOIN US. EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

WHAT: Holiday Gathering of Women

WHEN: Tuesday, December 10th 6:00pm at St. John

A light supper will be served. We will have a short meeting and devotion and then wrap the gifts that have been purchased for our "adopted" family. Please bring wrapping paper, tape and/or gift tags. We will also be sharing our ministry by preparing greeting cards to send to others with information about our holiday services.

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MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE UNTO THE LORD!

IT'S TIME FOR OUR HOLIDAY CHOIR

WANTED: VOLUNTEERS WHO LIKE TO SING

WHEN: EVERY SUNDAY AFTER WORSHIP SERVICE UNTIL CHRISTMAS EVE. Please join us and share your ministry of music to help make our Christmas Eve service more festive! QUESTIONS? See Jeanene or Walt

**St John Lutheran
Church Council Meeting
November 20, 2019**

Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm

Opened with prayer by Pastor Russell.

Present: Pastor Russell, Marcia Rackov, Jeanene Brandt, Gloria Foster, Doug Gensler, and Laurel Bradley. Visitors: Dan Martinez and Gay Gensler.

Council minutes for October 158 presented. Motion to accept the minutes by Jeanene Brandt and second by Gloria Foster. Council approved.

Treasurers report: Motion to accept treasurer's report by Gloria Foster and second by Doug Gensler. Council approved.

Mutual Ministry Report: December 16 Christmas Carol Jam at 7 pm at UMC, Joint serviced December 29th 11 am at MUC and they are working on Easter Performance.

Pastor's Report: Funeral service this week and Thanksgiving service November 24, 4 pm at EPC by Fosters.

New Business:

1. Projector/screen. Motion by Jeanene Brandt to purchase cables, projector mount and get an estimate from Atkins Electric for installing. Second by Doug Gensler. Council approved.

2. Christmas/tree/program/etc: Marcia Rackov is graciously donating a tree to be set up Saturday, Dec 7th and will decorate Sunday Dec. 8. Children's program is Sunday Dec. 15, Christmas cookies to follow service. Christmas caroling December 15 in the afternoon. All are welcome to join.

3. Church Mutual-Multi-Peril policy: Reviewed a terrorism insurance policy. Motion by Gloria Foster to reject terrorism insurance policy at this time and second by Jeanene Brandt. Council approved.

Property:

1. Footprints purchased their own snowblower and have a key to the shed to store it. Eric Anderson will continue to do their snowblowing.
2. Motion by Gloria Foster for Jeanene to get new bulletin boards to install in Church Narthex and second by Marcia Rackov. Council approved.

Other Business:

1. Council approved for Jim Bartholomew to use Fellowship Hall on Thanksgiving Day and Marlene Miller on May 23, 2020.

Events:

- Dec. 8: Decorate Tree after service.
- Dec. 10: M&M Fellowship 6 pm at church
- Dec 15: Children's Christmas Program/cookies
- Dec. 16: Christmas Carol Jam 7 pm at MUMC
- Dec. 29: Joint Service 11 am UMC

Next meeting is December 11, 2019. 6 pm

Meeting adjourned 7:45

Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by Secretary Laurel Bradley.

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Your Council is furnishing the following information contained on the next two pages if you need to contact someone "in the know". Please print and keep for your future reference.

YOUR ST. JOHN CHURCH COUNCIL

Pastor Russell Logston 269-425-2008

Pres. Marcia Rackov 231-429-9676

V.Pres. Jeanene Brandt 231-394-0364

Sect. Laura Bradley 231-920-0322
231-839-2842

Members:

Marcia Martinez 231-394-1785
231-328-4521

Doug Gensler 231-775-6735

Jack Graham 231-295-1270

Gloria Foster 231-884-8334

Jim Bartholomew 231-920-2979



“CHRISTMAS IS A COMING”:

In preparation for Christmas, please stay after the service Sunday, December 8th, to help trim the Christmas Tree! Many hands make light work and it will soon be done with your help.

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THE CHRISTMAS PROGRAM:

Is scheduled for December 15 during the service time. We ask that you bring a dozen of your family favorite cookies and perhaps share a story of why they are special to you.

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Highlights from Catechism



As a follow-up to last month's study, the Good Samaritan; ELCA World Hunger coin boxes were passed out to everyone. All were challenged to put loose change toward ELCA World Hunger program. These boxes will be collected and money donated in May.

October's studies was Stewardship for God's Creations, the Earth. One activity involved making and protecting an Earth ball. The Earth Balls were tied to each of their ankles with a string. Once they enter the universe they had to protect their Earth Ball. Cole McGiness was the top gladiator and Pastor Russell was one of the first to be out. Our thanks to Mel Penney and Missy McGiness who performed a skit about two teens not really thinking about caring for the earth. Their actions speak louder than words; it was great!! Between video clips, scripture, and activities we went a little over time (sorry parents, we will work on that).

The group worked together to create a new message for the church outdoor sign. It reads: "Take care of the Earth, We only have one!"

Respectfully yours, Gretchen Whitmer

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THE REASON FOR THE SEASON . . .

As you prepare for the busy Christmas season, shopping, baking, decorating, don't forget why we celebrate Christmas. Include on that list: a gift for Jesus.



St John Lutheran Church

December 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:30 Worship & Communion NO CONFIRMATION CLASS TODAY HOLIDAY CHOIR PRACTICE H.B. Charlotte Greenlee	2	3	4 H.A. Ross & Marijo Colon	5 10:00 am Bible Study H.B. Charlotte Fitzgerald	6 H. B. Ron Hamel	7
8 9:30 Worship of the Word HOLIDAY CHOIR PRACTICE TRIM THE TREE 3:00 – 4:30 Confirmation Class	9	10 6:00 Women's Fellowship Meeting	11 6:00 Council Meeting	12 10:00 am Bible Study	13 H.B. Kaitlyn Root	14 H.B. Emmy Cole
15 9:00 – 9:30 Confirmation Class 9:30 CHRISTMAS PROGRAM HOLIDAY CHOIR PRACTICE	16	17 H.A. Chris & Norann Chadwick	18 H.B. Harvey James	19 10:00 am Bible Study	20	21 H.B. Jared Ball
22 9:30 Worship of the Word HOLIDAY CHOIR PRACTICE NO CONFIRMATION CLASS TODAY	23	24 H.B. Todd Cole 5:30 pm Christmas Candlelight Service	25 	26	27	28 H.A. Jerry & Charlotte Greenlee
29 11:00 COMBINED WORSHIP @ LCUMC NO CONFIRMATION CLASS TODAY	30 H.A. Chuck & Lisa Dolley	31 H.B. Georgie Hooker	<h1>Happy 2020!</h1>			

