



The Mountain Top Messenger

ZION LUTHERAN EVANGELICAL CHURCH, ASHLAND, WI DECEMBER 2018

Not sure how to start, I guess first by blessing you a Happy New Church year, next by wishing you a Happy Advent Season as we prepare to welcome the incarnate Lord to Earth, and then finally with a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2019 (that hardly seems possible). It is going to be a very busy month of December. We have four Sundays and 3 Wednesdays in Advent, the Monday and Tuesday for Christmas, that also offers most folks a hopefully relaxing 4-day weekend. With all of the goings-on sometimes it is easy to lose sight of "the reason for the season". Even when so much is centered around that reason, you then add in sports, visiting family, Christmas shopping, and Christmas parties to go to, your list is never ending.

So, in this newsletter I would like to urge you to do the thing that drives my children up the wall when I tell them to do it, and that is "RELAX", don't let yourself get overloaded. If you slow down, take a breath and trust in the Lord to help you get all the things done you need to get done, it will happen. I knew a woman who simply loved Christmas. She loved decorating her house, she loved buying the perfect presents, she loved hosting the perfect Christmas party, all of it had to be perfect. She spent so much time working on making it so perfect for everyone else that it wasn't until Christmas was over that she realized she had missed it, at least personally. She was so exhausted after pulling all of that off that she actually slept right through Christmas morning worship and then felt guilty because she got so caught up in it all that she completely missed "the reason for the season".

The whole meaning of why our Savior came into this world and what it means for you and I was lost in the glitz and the glimmer of Christmas decorations and presents and food. Sometimes we forget the simple surroundings of the Savior of mankind's birth. It was plain, nothing ornate, nothing fancy, other than the announcement of the Heavenly Hosts. Don't get buried in the quagmire that has become Christmas. Keep it simple, let the message of who Jesus is and why he chose to come into this world be your guide this year. Yup, it is fine to have a Christmas tree, it is fine to buy each other presents, it is even fine to sit on Santa's lap. Just remember none of those things would be happening if it wasn't for that beautiful little boy laying in a manger, who came to save you from sin and death. Always remember the "reason for the season" – Come Lord Jesus, Come.

(continued on next page)

Pastor Rick Williams -
715-209-0479

Office Hours: M/T/W/Th
8:00am-5:00pm

Please call ahead if you need to speak with Pastor Williams as he may be visiting shut-in's, at a conference, etc.

Office Secretary

Lynn Ladd 715-682-6075

Office Hours M-W 8-3

Days and times may change upon need of work.

Church President:

John Pruss 715-292-4825

Head Elder:

Darryl Warren 715-492-0488

**Little Friends of Jesus Child
Care Center:** 715-682-5185

LFOJ Administrator:

Karyn Leino 715-682-6075

Website

www.zionashland.org

E-mail

secretary@
zionlutheranash-
land.com



ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH
1111—11TH AVE WEST
ASHLAND, WI 54806
715-682-6075

Sunday Worship Service 9:00am
Wednesday Evening Service 6:30pm
Sunday School 10:15am (Sept.-May)
Bible Studies
Sunday 10:15am Monday 10:00am

(continued from previous page)

Please check the rest of the newsletter for all of the things happening this month and their dates and times.

¹⁰ And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² 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)

God Bless! Pastor Rick





Our Prayer Concerns

PRAYERS FOR HEALTH AND HEALING

For good test results, treatment, positive thinking, healing, and comfort during cancer treatments, for those suffering from addiction, mental illness and for healing, strength, comfort, and peace for family we pray for:

Bob Heggie Kevin Heggie Joni Frisco
Brad Prill Johnny Galligan Alice Balmer
Mary Bullis Tim Smith Jim Bullis
Ellen Hodgson Doug Tutor Barb Bjork
David Kaarre Joan Spalding Ruth Goldman
Lloyd Koosmann Tim Fulton David Palm
Theresa Koosmann Mike Dimich Randy Lauer
Margaret Goodwin Doris Nye Crystal Flectcher
Steve Wahlston Steve Gilmore Marty Kaarre
Ruth Young Mary Helen Bergschneider
Sandy Fletcher Sheryl Hildebrandt Heather Gust
Cheryl Lueck Ron Wegener Kate Smith
Larry Steckling Wendy Clark Linda Larson-Nelson
Rebecca Gurske Rachel Juoni Sue Dimich
Gary McLaughlin Ingrid Pocernich and those in our hearts

PRAYERS FOR HOMEBOUND

Those who aren't able to attend common worship that they would find comfort knowing that the Lord is with them. *Walt Schutte, Arlene Zimmerman, Madge Houle, Donna Graves*

PRAYERS FOR PROTECTION

For our full-time troops and public servants, for travel, missionaries, and for peace and protection for families. *David Wright
Johanna Pearce Emily Melecha Tucker Melecha*



This Sunday when we light the first candle on the Advent wreath, a familiar warmth will be rekindled inside of us as we feel that nudge to *let go...* and reroute our course for Bethlehem. Since we were children, we have heard the Advent invitation and we know what was real “back then” is as real today. Real that we will see a Holy Child wrapped in swaddling cloth, lying in the manger. Real that we will hear angels singing. Real that Mary will shelter this miracle in her heart, and real that Joseph will remember the promise of angels. Real that we will stand with dusty shepherds called out of the night, and real that we will kneel with Wise Men who have traveled afar. Real that we will see a Star of Wonder. Real that God has come down to earth. For this “full of grace” story erases the boundaries of human understanding, and we just can’t make it another year without showing up. Say “yes” to the call of Advent and come to Bethlehem to be refreshed in the real and holy love of God. For He has called us to be His own and to Be-loved by His presence and peace. Have a wonder-filled Christmas and a year of amazing grace in 2019.

Let there be light.
 Let there be light.
 Let there be light, O God!



First light. Precious light. Divine light. Pure light. Anointed light.
 Holy light. Ancient light. Marvelous light. Blessed Light.
 Perpetual light.
 Gentle light. Light in the darkness. Light of the world. Light of light.
 The Eternal Light of Jesus.

Advent Sundays 9:00am Dec. 2, 9, 16, 23
 Midweek Advent Wednesdays 6:30pm Dec. 5, 12, 19
 Christmas Eve 4:00pm and 7:00pm
 Christmas Morning 9:00am
 (No Wednesday, Dec. 26th service)



CHRISTMAS IS THE CELEBRATION OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS, THE SAVIOUR OF MANKIND



Each
new
Day is
God's gift to
you
What you do
with it is
your gift to
God

**"Stewardship Is A
Way Of Sharing
God's Blessings"**



Merry Christmas



THE FAMILY CIRCUS®



By **BIL KEANE**

**Jeff and
Bil Keane**



Mustard Seed

Daily Devotions
Lutheran Women in Mission

Living in the Spirit... Bestows Gifts Upon Me

In the Word

"... let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." [Matthew 5:16b](#)

Of the Word

G.A.T.E. was printed on the classroom door. Gifted And Talented Education was its meaning. Only students with high test scores, teacher recommendations, and parental permission were allowed to be in these advanced classes.

Does God have a G.A.T.E. program? Yes! All who have been baptized with water and His Word are gifted and talented, for they have received His Holy Spirit. To them God gives special gifts and talents to use for Him.

No gift is too small; no gift is unimportant. All gifts can be used in doing good deeds to proclaim the glory of God. Can you cook? Can you teach? Can you visit friends, neighbors, shut-ins, the dying? Can you smile? ... let your light shine, for the Holy Spirit has made you gifted and talented for God's service.

Walking with My Lord

Dear Lord, I sometimes feel useless and unworthy. Forgive me, I pray, for forgetting that You have given me gifts and talents to use for You. Open my eyes to opportunities for service so that Your light will shine through me. The honor, glory, and praise will belong to You. In Jesus' name. Amen.

"Christmas is a necessity. There has to be at least one day of the year to remind us that we're here for something else besides ourselves." —Eric Sevareid

HOLLY LEAF PROJECT

Ashland Health and Rehabilitation Center (AHRC)

We will be posting leaves to take off the bulletin board soon. Each leaf will have a gift suggestion that will be presented to one of its residents. You can drop off the present directly at AHRC or then to the office by December 10th. *AHRC would like to thank all of those who have sent over gifts in the past!! The residents sure have big smiles on the day of their party when they receive a present. AHRC*

NORTH WISCONSIN DISTRICT—THE HAPPENINGS

Hearts for Jesus 2019—Camp Luther This February, our #HeartsForJesus2019 will be Filled with the Spirit! Chapel and Sunday School offerings will be used to purchase new & larger round tables for the new dining hall/ Community Center, as part of the current Camp Luther campaign. Sojo & Beemer will be kicking off the challenge with a Facebook Live event during Lutheran Schools Week at the end of January and will update everyone weekly via social media! We're encouraging every day school and Sunday School to share their "fires" on social media and try to win a visit from Sojo & Beemer when they take their Facebook Live on the road! How much money and how big of a fire can we build? A \$3,000 "Spark," a \$5,000 "Flame", or an \$8,000+ "Bonfire"? Please let us know that your group will participate by sending a note to sojo@campluther.com and we will be sure to get "thank you" pencils to your children. Check out the Camp Luther website for all the templates and ideas you will need... Chapel Talks/devotions, printables, a promotional video, and links are all available now at www.campluther.com!

LCEF Scholarships The Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) - Central Region Scholarship applications are available now January 31, 2019. NWD graduating high school seniors or current full-time post-secondary students at an accredited institution with at least one year of courses remaining are encouraged to apply



Poinsettia Box

Donations for purchasing poinsettias will be in the Narthex now through Dec. 9th



12-4
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"How come the only kid Baby Jesus got to have at his birthday party was that little drummer boy?"

SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Sunday, December 16th 9:00am

Please be sure to join in on Sunday's service for the rendition of the Christmas story by Zion's Sunday School children.

Thank-you to all who have helped with the program.



Sunday School News! The students took part in the October project Christmas Shoebox by going to Walmart and having them pick out items they wanted to go in the boxes. The students picked enough to fill six boxes and having fun doing so.

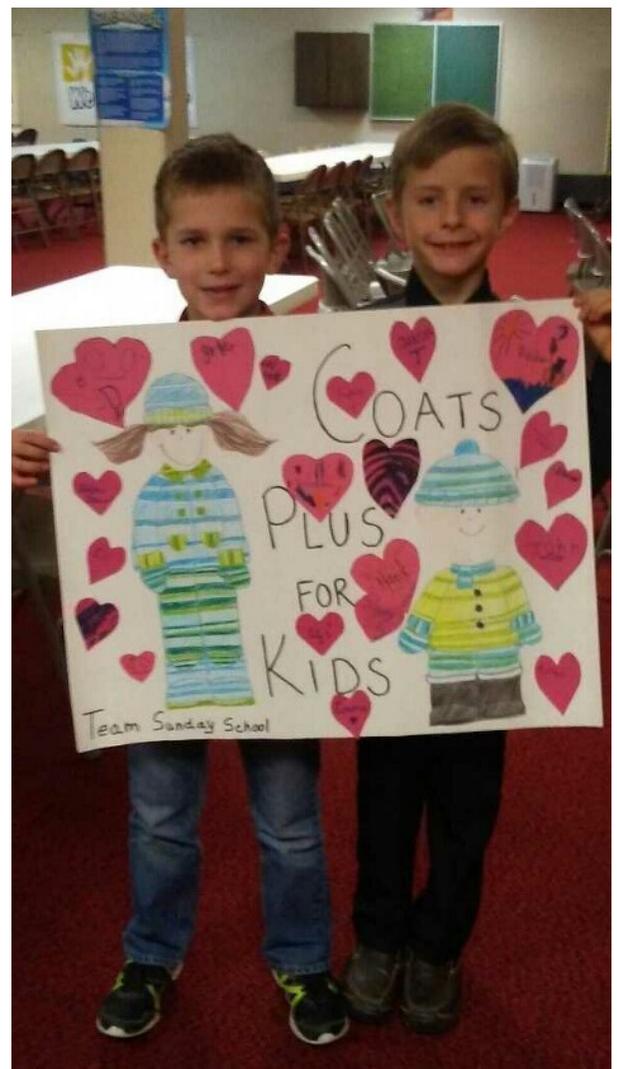
The November project, Coats Plus for Kids, the students each made and decorated a heart and posted it on the poster then some participated in picking out jackets, snowpants, boots, scarves and mittens.

Jodi Truchon has been working on the song My Lighthouse; which they sang in church on November 4th.

Lisa Guski is working on the Children's Christmas Program along with Jodi for the music.

The Sunday continues with lessons from DIG IN @HOME; which sometimes involves a science project.

God's Blessings to all.



REVIEW

Martin Luther's Small Catechism - when was the last time you looked through your catechism? One year? Ten years? Forty years?

A review at any time is a good thing and more times the better. It helps us to keep refreshed in our beliefs and ideals. This will be a monthly addition to the Newsletter. We hope that you will review and enjoy, and maybe learn something that was forgotten.

Confession

"When I urge you to go to confession, I am simply urging you to be a Christian."

(Large Catechism, Brief Exhortation, 32)

What is confession?

Confession has two parts. First that we confess our sins, and second, that we receive absolution, that is, forgiveness, from the pastor as from God Himself, not doubting, but firmly believing that by it our sins are forgiven before God in heaven.

What sins should we confess?

Before God we should plead guilty of all sins, even those we are not aware of, as we do in the Lord's Prayer; but before the pastor we should confess only those sins which we know and feel in our hearts.

Which are these?

Consider your place in life according to the Ten Commandments: Are you a father, mother, son, daughter, husband, wife, or worker? Have you been disobedient, unfaithful, or lazy? Have you been hot-tempered, rude, or quarrelsome? Have you hurt someone by your words or deeds? Have you stolen, been negligent, wasted anything, or done any harm?

What is the first part of confession?

The first part of confession is that we confess, or acknowledge, our sins.

Ps. 32:3, 5 When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. . . .

Then I acknowledged my sin to You and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord" and You forgave the guilt of my sin.

Ps. 51:1-4 Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your unfailing love; according to Your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against You, You only, have I sinned and done what is evil in Your sight, that You are proved right when You speak and justified when You judge.

What sins should we confess before God?

Before God we should plead guilty of all sins, even those we are not aware of, as we do in the Lord's Prayer.

Ps. 19:12 Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults.

Prov. 28:13 He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.

1 John 1:8-9 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

What sins should we confess before our neighbor?

Before our neighbor we should confess all sins we have committed against him or her.

James 5:16 Confess your sins to each other.

Matt. 5:23-24 If you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.

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What sins are we encouraged to confess privately before our pastor or confessor?

Before the pastor or confessor we confess those sins which we know and feel in our hearts, especially those that trouble us.

2 Sam. 12:13 David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord." Nathan replied, "The Lord has taken away your sin."

James 5:16 Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.

Note: No one may be forced to make private confession.

What is the second part of confession?

The second part of confession is that we receive absolution, that is, forgiveness of sins.

Is. 1:18 "Come now, let us reason together," says the Lord. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool."

How should we regard the absolution (forgiveness) spoken by the pastor?

We should receive the pastor's absolution as from God Himself, not doubting, but firmly believing that by it our sins are forgiven before God in heaven. "It is not the voice or word of the man who speaks it, but it is the Word of God, who forgives sin, for it is spoken in God's stead and by God's command" (Augsburg Confession XXV 3).

Matt. 18:18 Whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

Luke 10:16 He who listens to you listens to Me

An Explanation of The Small Catechism

John 20:23 If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven.

What assurance do I have that my private confession to the pastor will remain confidential?

The pastor is pledged not to tell anyone else of sins told him in private confession, for those sins have been removed.

Ps. 103:12 As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.

Prov. 11:13 A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy man keeps a secret.

1 Tim. 3:1-2 Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer [pastor], he desires a noble task. Now the overseer must be above reproach.

What is the benefit of private confession and absolution?

In private confession and absolution, God Himself through the pastor forgives each individual the sins that are confessed. "If there is a heart that feels its sin and desires consolation, it has here a sure refuge when it hears in God's Word that through a man God looses and absolves him from his sins" (Large Catechism, Brief Exhortation, 14).

Ps. 32:2 Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord does not count against him.

2 Sam. 12:13 Nathan replied, "The Lord has taken away your sin."

Matt. 9:2 Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven.

A Nice Experience

A few weeks ago Nadine and I sat down to eat at a Chic-fil-a. We were about to pray when a waitress named Fabi brought our food. I asked, "Fabi, can we pray for you?" She said, "Oh, yes, please!" Two weeks ago we sat down at the same restaurant, and Fabi came to our table and said, "Will you pray for me again?" We did. It was good! A week ago I decided I would give her a special gift - *I Have Good News for You in Spanish*. Last Wednesday she came up and said, "Let's pray again." After prayer I gave her the Good News in Spanish. She opened it. Her eyes got big, and she said, "Oh, I can read this!" Hope you have a favorite waiter or waitress you can pray with. - Don Ginkle

December Mission

LFOJ Wish List

Items can be dropped off in the narthex.



Dry erase markers

Mr. Clean Magic Erasers

Clorox Wipes

Clear packaging tape

Brass paper fasteners

Construction paper

Metal staples

Silicone whisk

Saucer sleds

Walgreens gift cards (for photo developing)

Sharpies

AA Batteries

Double-sided tape

Painter's tape

Staples

Water colors

Metal colander

Kitchen paring knives

Long toboggans

Share Portals of Prayer with Everyone You Know!

Christmas is just around the corner—have you decided what to get for your friends and family yet? For a limited time, you can give the gift of Portals of Prayer for our lowest price yet! Simply renew your current subscription (or start one for yourself) to Portals of Prayer for one year and qualify to give a friend or loved one their very own subscription at half the regular price.

Plus, you can give as many gifts as you want of any size—so feel free to share God's word with everyone you know! Simply call 1-800-325-3040 (Concordia Publishing House) to place your order by December 20th; *You can order online at www.cph.org—then click: "subscriptions"...'magazines'...'Portal of Prayer'*

A subscription covers four quarterly issues.

Pocket Size Portals of Prayer is \$15.50 per year

The New Digest-Size Edition is \$16.50 per year.

The Large-Print Edition is \$17.50 per year.

Digital \$5.00 per year

The Church will continue to offer a limited supply.



Our Servers for our Worship Service are very important. We ask that if you are unable to serve on your designated date, please find someone else to take your place. We really appreciate your help in this matter!! If you would like to be added or taken off one of our lists please contact the office. Greeters and Ushers should arrive 20 minutes before services start. Thank-you to all who serve.

December	Elders	Acolytes	Ushers	Greeters
Nov. Sun. 25th	Darryl Warren John Pruss	Adeline	Andrew Wickman	Brian & Linda Klobucher
Nov. Wed. 28th	Randy Spangle			
Sun. Dec. 2nd	Scott Thimm Andy Pruss	Lily	Larry Hildebrandt	Sally & Roger Gustafson
Wed. Dec. 5th	Scott Thimm	Austin	Jake Pruss	Clarence & Kathy Osmak
Sun. 9th	Darryl Warren John Pruss	Daniel	Nick Jarvela	Honkala Family
Wed. 12th	Randy Spangle	Faith	Kyle Sapper	Ron & Brenda Schwiesow
Sun. 16th	Andy Pruss	Matthew	Chris Bolz	Loren & Ellie Munson
Wed. 19th	Scott Thimm	Adeline	Rick Nutt	Sunie Family
Sun. 23rd	Doug Warren Darryl Warren	Faith	Brian Klobucher	Don & Laurie Moreland
Mon. 24th 4:00pm	Scott Thimm Randy Spangle	Lilly	Clarence Osmak	Wickman Family
Mon. 24th 7:00pm	John Pruss Andy Pruss	Austin	Adam Hinch	Warren & Peggy Draeger
Tues. 25th 9:00am	Doug Warren	Adeline	Jim Johnson	June Williams
No Wednesday, Dec. 26th Service				
Sun. 30th	Darryl Warren	Matthew	Todd Vyskocil	Pat & Katie Colgrove



December
Penny Mattson 292-6528
Maria Truchon 682-9508

OFFICIAL ACTS

Deaths:

Henrietta Lou Pearce 10-20-18
David Sorenson 10-25-18

DECEMBER

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
December 2nd—Annual Voters' Meeting 10:15am						1
2 Mite Sunday Worship 9:00am Annual Voters' Mtg. 10:15am Sunday School 10:15am	3 10:00am Bible Study Evangelism Mtg. 5:30pm Dartball at Saron 7:00pm	4 LFOJ Chapel 11:00am	5 LFOJ Chapel 11:00am Confirmation 1:30-3:00pm Advent Worship 6:30pm	6	7	8
9 Worship 9:00am Bible Study 10:15am Sunday School 10:15am	10 10:00am Bible Study Dartball vs Messiah 7:00pm	11 Sewing Circle 1pm	12 Confirmation 3:30-5:00pm Advent Worship 6:30pm	13	14 <i>Newsletter Reports Due</i>	15
16 Sunday School Christmas Program Worship 9:00am Trustees' Mtg. 10:15am	17 10:00am Bible Study Council Mtg. 5:30pm Dartball vs St. Annes 7:00pm	18 LFOJ Christmas Program 6:30pm	19 Confirmation 3:30-5:00pm Advent Worship 6:30pm	20	21	22
23 Worship 9:00am	24 Christmas Eve Services 4:00pm 7:00pm	25 Christmas Morning Service 9:00am	26 Offices Closed No Wed. Service	27	28	29
30 Food Shelf Sunday Worship 9:00am	31	January 1st Offices Closed				

