

GOOD NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

VOLUME 34, NUMBER 12 DECEMBER 2009

Christmas Traditions by Pastor Plautz

Ever wonder where we got some of our Christmas traditions? Allow me to offer some interesting facts about the origins of several of our customs.

The Christmas Pie: the traditional Christmas pie is mince meat, which represents the spices the Wise Men offered to the Christ Child.

The Christmas Tree: tales of its origin vary. One is that Martin Luther was walking home under a star-studded sky and wanted to bring home the beauty he saw. He thought of a tree with gleaming candles. He cut down a tree and lit it with candles, which remind us of the Christ Child who is the light of the world and shines His light into the hearts of people to break the darkness of sin.

The Christmas gift: according to tradition, the original "Santa Claus" was a well-to-do church bishop named Nicholas. He gave his money to the poor and children in such a way that no one knew from whom the gifts came.

The Christmas Card: in 1844, an outstanding British artist named William Dobson used his talent to cheer a friend and convey a spiritual message. The first card was so successful that he had lithographic copies made and sent them to each of his friends. Perhaps the greeting which best sums up the Christmas message is that of the angel: "*Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord*" (Luke 10-11).

Christmas traditions are well and good as long as they do not overshadow the real meaning—celebrating the coming of the One who rescued us from sin, death, and Satan.

So gather with family, give your gifts, share a meal and in all give thanks to the God who has opened heaven's door for you through the sacrifice of the Christ Child who is your Savior.

Our family sends Christmas greetings and blessings to you and yours for a peace-filled "holy day" season.

Christian One-liners & Others

Light-hearted humor with a spiritual lesson

As Lutherans we are familiar with Luther making the 10 Commandments the first chief part. Here's a version of the 10 Commandment you may not have seen as they exist only in Minnesota. (It works best if you read them with a Scandanavian accent.)

1. Der's only one God, ya know.
2. Don't make dat fish on yer mantle an idol.
3. Cussing ain't Minnesota nice.
4. Go to church--even when yer up nort.
5. Honor yer folks.
6. Don't kill. Catch and release.
7. Der's only one Lena fer every Ole. No cheatin!
8. If it ain't yer Lutefisk, don't take it.
9. Don't be braggin' about how much snow ya shoveled.
10. Keep yer mind off yer neighbor's hotdish.

While humorous the Commandments are a call for us to be a "cut above" everyone else. Since we are connected to the only true God who is in every way perfect, He expects His children to be like Him. We will never reach that level but He desires us to strive for that in our thinking, speaking, and doing. And He promises to help us be more and more like Him as He works in us through the Word and Sacrament.

Choir Rehearsal Like to sing? Come to choir practice on Dec. 2 & Dec. 16 at 7pm. Choir will sing for worship services the Sunday following rehearsal.

Praise Team Like to sing contemporary music? Come to practice Dec. 2 & Dec. 16 at 8pm. The team will perform at services the Sunday following practice.

Corinthians 13 applied to Christmas BY AN UNKNOWN AUTHOR

A couple of years ago right when I was in the midst of a pressure-filled week, and I am ashamed to say I did not receive it well. I want to start out this Christmas season with these thoughts at the forefront:

If I decorate my house perfectly with plaid bows, strands of twinkling lights and shiny bulbs, but do not show love, I'm just another decorator.

If I slave away in the kitchen, baking dozens of Christmas cookies, preparing gourmet meals and arranging a beautifully adorned table at mealtime, but do not show love, I'm just another cook.

If I work at the soup kitchen, carol in the nursing home and give all that I have to charity, but do not show love, it profits me nothing.

If I trim the spruce with shimmering angels and crocheted snowflakes, attend a myriad of holiday parties and sing in the choir's cantata but do not focus on Christ, I have missed the point.

Love stops the cooking to hug the child.

Love sets aside the decorating to kiss the husband.

Love is kind, though harried and tired.

Love doesn't envy another's home that has coordinated Christmas china and table linens.

Love doesn't yell at the kids to get out of the way, but is thankful they are there to be in the way.

Love doesn't give only to those who are able to give in return but rejoices in giving to those who can't.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never fails.

Video games will break, pearl necklaces will be lost, golf clubs will rust, but giving the gift of love will endure.

Merry Christmas! God bless you with Love

December Bible Studies

Monday Eve Bible Study: Class meets on Monday's at 4:30pm for the study called "Faith Weavers". Weave Christ into your life, through study of His word. Leader: Sue Smith.

Tuesday Morn Bible Study: Class meets Tuesday's at 6:30am at the Chippewa Family Restaurant. Bring your Bible and your appetite (cost of the meal is on your own). Topic: 2 Corinthians led by Pastor Mathews & Pastor Plautz.

Tuesday Eve Bible Study: Come at 7pm (2nd & 4th Tuesday's of December) to the home of Fred & Joan Bargmann (11250 27th Avenue, CF). Topic is the life of Jesus. Leaders are Dale & Sharon Volrath.

ATTN: High School Youth: High School Bible classes are Wed's at 7pm. Come join other students in their journey for Jesus. Leader: Sue Smith

Thursday Morn Bible Study: Come Thursday's at 9:30am to this fun class. If you're thinking about joining a daytime Bible study, this one is for you! Leader: Pastor Mathews.

Thursday Women's Bible Study meets at 6pm here at church. The study is from CPH entitled "*I Have Set My King on Zion*" will encourage and uplift you as you reflect on the time and place of God's fulfillment of the Messiah and the wonderful, incredible, eternal reign of our Savior-King. Leader: Laura Hills.

Christmas Schedule:

Advent Services

Yes! Advent Services are back. Come Wednesdays throughout the month of December for this season of waiting and preparation of our Savior in the "Walk to Bethlehem". Services are at 6pm (remember... no service on Dec. 23 & Dec. 30.)

Christmas Bazaar—Dec. 5

Women of Faith are hosting their annual Christmas Bazaar from 10am to 1pm on December 5. This event features a cookie walk (by youth), tree ornaments, white elephant table, baked goods and crafts. Luncheon menu includes: cheesy broccoli & chicken noodle soup; barbeque, chips & pickle plate and homemade pies. Come and enjoy the fellowship of the season!

Needed: Donations of craft and baked goods, and white elephant items are needed. A sign-up for food donations and help is available in the narthex. Come and enjoy this festive time of the season!

Cookie Walk—Dec. 5

The youth are sponsoring a Cookie Walk the day of the bazaar. Youth are asked to donate 15 dozen cookies and work at the event. The cookie selection is great and the cost is \$7/container. Proceeds will benefit the youth accounts. Come and stock up on your holiday goodies!

Bethlehem Walk—Dec. 5

(for families with children ages 3- 10) 10:30-11:30am

Hear the Christmas story (with costumed characters), make a gift for local firemen, create a table centerpiece, and make an Advent calendar full of activities to get ready for Christmas. What a wonderful way to celebrate our Savior's birth!

Spirit of Christmas Donations due Dec. 7th

Our church sponsors Christmas gift tags from the Chippewa Co. Spirit of Christmas organization. Simply purchase gifts (as recommended on the tag) for needy children (ages 13 & under) and bring back to church unwrapped by Dec. 7. The tags will be available the weekend of Nov. 28/29. Thanks in advance for your support of this effort.

Preschool Christmas Program - Dec. 17

Everyone is invited to join in the joy of season by attending the Faith Christian Preschool's Christmas Program on December 17 at 10am. The program includes songs that celebrate the story of Jesus' birth

Family Christmas Program – Dec. 22

On Sunday, Dec. 22 at 10:15am the children of our Kingdom Quest program and youth of the congregation will be presenting a program on the "Story of the Chrismon Tree". As you know, "Chrismons" are the white and gold ornaments that adorn our Christmas trees in the sanctuary. Come and hear the story of how "Chrismons" came to be!

Christmas Eve Services

Thursday, December 24
4pm—Family Service
7pm—Traditional Service
10pm—Candlelight Service

New Year's Eve Service

Thursday, December 31
6pm—Worship with communion

Congregational News

Mission & Ministry Year End Meeting/Celebration

On November 9 council met to discuss planning for the Year-End meeting on Dec. 9 at 6:45pm. The presentation is entitled "Review, Rejoice, Renew". Items to be presented this evening include:

- 2010 Ministry Goals
- Proposed 2010 budget
- Election of Officers:

List of Nominees-at-large: Jim Clark, Brenda Musser, Larry Bohl
President: Bill Musser
V-President: Pam Pfankuch
Secretary: Jane Christian
Treasurer: Bea Newman

- Endowment Fund
- Nomination of synodical candidates

All are invited & welcome to attend.

ATTN: Thrivent Financial Members

The Christmas potluck is Dec. 6 at noon here in the fellowship hall. Bring a dish to pass, Thrivent will provide ham sandwiches, beverages and door prizes. Questions? contact your congregational rep: Dale Volrath, Lorraine Benner or Linda Ahlen.

Volunteers Needed:

The Children's Ministry on Sunday welcomes you to help in areas of presenting scripted stories, organizing supplies and coordinating the program. Contact Linda Kuechle at 861.3322 for more details.

Church Directory - Our 2009 Church Directory is available for purchase from the church office. Cost is \$7.

ATTN: YOUTH

Don't forget! Bowling/pizza party at Falls Bowl on Sunday, Dec. 13 from 5-7pm. We'll go bowling then come back to church for pizza & pop. Bowling is \$2.10 a line and \$1 for shoes. Bring a friend!

Campbell's Label Update - If you save Campbell's Soup Labels PLEASE save only the "UPC/Point Value" portion for redemption. Better yet—submit the WHOLE label to the collection bucket in the cloakroom. Your help in this matter is greatly appreciated.

Many Thanks! – To our generous congregation. In the month of November over 30 coats were collected to warm the needy of the Chip. Co. Salvation Army, as well as, 15 boxes of turkey dinners (with all the trimmings) delivered to the Chip. Co. Social Services. We thank God for richly blessing our family of Faith in being able to reach out to the communities we live in.

Have a Christmas full of God's Love and Joy!

The staff of Faith Lutheran Church

December Birthday's & Anniversaries**Happy Birthday!**

- 1 - Steven Wing
- 2-Gillian Schaller, Jerry Sorensen
- 3-Sarah Ceraso
- 4-Joseph Hills, Bonnie Jacobson, Lacey Quale
- 5-Dolores Polzin
- 6-Judy Drivas, Caroline LaGrander
- 8-Jennifer Krueger
- 9-Nichel Andersen, Alice Lofgren
- 10-Christopher Volrath
- 11-Becky Davis, Austin LaGesse, Heather Printz
- 12-Tyler Grant, Dawn Nesvacil, April Peters, Debra Peterson,
Barbara Redmond, Cole Schindler
- 13-Chelsea Harings, Tresa Juedes
- 14-Amy Bowe, Beverly Goettl
- 15-Scott Swoboda
- 16-Garnet Mathwig
- 18-Maxine Nazer, Gregory Senn
- 19-Katherin Blaha, Aaron Chittendon, Shirley Schroeder
- 20-Nancy Krebs, Elizabeth Kummer, Paul Wikan
- 21-Adam Kern, Paula Young
- 22-Kelsey Hackler, Julius Huth, Sharon Volrath
- 23-Caryn Wikan
- 25-Kathryn Haakana
- 28-Kim Feirn, Cindy Schroeder
- 29-Lorraine Benner
- 30-Elna Buttenhoff
- 31-Janice Wirth

Happy Anniversary!

- 12-Leonard & Carolyn Licht
- 26-Jack & Sandy Bornsen
- 30-Ronald & Pamela Pfankuch
- 31-Jerry & Roxanne Hallman