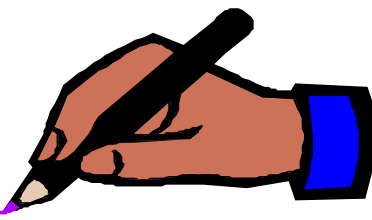


FROM THE PASTOR



MUSTARD SEED
CALVARY LUTHERAN CHURCH
DECEMBER 2016

Dear Friends in Christ,

Many have characterized John 3:16 as the Gospel in a Nut Shell.

*“For God so loved the world, that He gave
His Only
Son, that whoever believes in Him should
not Perish but
have Eternal
Life.”*

It certainly makes sense, doesn't it? God, in His limitless and uncompromising love for us sinners, sent His Son...His only Son...to pay our debt of sin with His life. In so doing, our Savior promises us that whoever believes in Him will not die eternally, but will have the assurance of eternal life with Him in Heaven's Paradise. That, my dear friends is certainly wonderful news! In just one verse, our Lord sums up His entire plan of salvation for you and me. It is upon this one verse that during the season of Advent for our midweek services we will meditate.

Over the course of the next several weeks, I will discuss with you God's love for us and the world. Certainly, it should be rather obvious...He sent His only Son to die for the sins of the world. If you ask people what this Christmas season is about spiritually, chances are you will get a plethora of responses. Some might say it's about love. Others might say it's about caring for the needy. Perhaps you might hear that it's about peace on earth or goodwill toward mankind. And all these responses haven't even gotten us to Santa Claus and gifts and holiday treats and family time and Hallmark movies. Phew! The list can go on exponentially I suppose.

Then, I will speak with you about God's promises and how God is not like the wicked stepmother of the Cinderella fairytale who says one thing and turns around and does the opposite. Sure, God doesn't always do things the way we think He should do them. God is not our puppet whom we can manipulate to do our bidding. There certainly are times that God does things completely the opposite of the ways of the world...like using death to bring about life, for instance. Nevertheless, God ALWAYS keeps His promises, even if a great deal of time has elapsed. The Old Testament prophets kept assuring the Israelites that God would send the Messiah. Yet, many, many years had passed and there was no Messiah to behold. But, on one night, the angels announced, “Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:14). And just like that, a righteous Branch of David's stump emerged and the promise of the coming Messiah had

come to pass. Does God still keep His promises, even after all these years have passed and He hasn't returned in His second coming? The answer is a resounding YES! We simply have to remember that it is about God's timing...not ours.

Thirdly, I will point out that as God's children, God leads our own will to match His. It is God's will that all people be “saved and come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim 2:4). After all, that is why God gave His Son...that we all may believe and not perish. To have faith in Christ means to not only know His will and prayer, but that our will and prayer mimic His. Is it our will to believe in Christ Jesus? Is it our prayer that we not perish? Is it our prayer for our loved ones and friends believe in Jesus? Where have we set our sights, especially this season? Are we focused on Jesus and His birth, death, and resurrection? Or, are we more inclined to ooh and ahh over the presents and arrangements and parties? Hmmmm.....

Finally, I will conclude our series on the fact that God so loved each and every one of us, that He gives us eternal life. The entire point of Christmas is that we have everlasting life with our Lord in Heaven above. After Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, God promised that while the wages of sin is death, He would send One who would crush the head of the devil. Yes, earthly death would exist, of which we are so very well accustomed. But, in Christ, the assurance of living forever with Him is every Christian's present reality. There will be no mourning, no suffering, no more tears. Christmas is an earthly invasion of God's grace...an invasion by God to rescue sinners from condemnation. Without Jesus of Nazareth, there would be no hope...no comfort...no peace on earth or goodwill toward men. But God would not have it. Instead, Christmas is the day our liberation from sin began. That gives us much for which to rejoice and sing.

I look forward to our midweek meditations as we discover once again God's great love for us...a love so profound, and yet so simply summed up in one verse: “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16).

In Service to Christ,
Pastor Kessler

Happy Birthday!

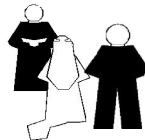
Idonna Deaver	12/03
Ed Hahn	12/07
Joseph Parker	12/07
Carol Bickham	12/16
Gladys Timoruski	12/17
Brian Rochester	12/18
Roxana Williams	12/18
Jennifer Kessler	12/19
Rosemary Suhr	12/19
William Stewart	12/21
Robert Barton	12/31
John Ehrlich Jr	12/31

BAPTISM

Megan Ehrlich	12/01
Jaiden Williams	12/02
Katherine Seeger	12/06
Tyler Green	12/12
Katie Strom	12/12
Lisa Elam	12/13
Joseph Parker	12/19
Matthew Joynt	12/23
Jennifer Kessler	12/25
Robert Barton	12/31

Happy Anniversary

Ron & Michele Hill	12/20
Bruce & Maggie Fenske	12/29
Pat & Debbie Lamaestra	12/30



Recycle aluminum cans
Please continue to bring your cans in.

Calvary Lutheran Church Council Reports

Board Meetings & Council Tuesday, November 15, 2016 @ 6PM

If you have a complaint or concern please attend the board meetings so the boards can address the issue.

2016 Contributions	
11/06/2016	\$2,090.75
11/13/2016	\$4,151.00
11/20/2016	\$2,933.00
11/27/2016	\$3,211.66



Avg. \$ per week \$3,096.61
Contribution amount needed, per week is \$3,444.95 to meet current budget.

Year to date	\$129,913.78
Misc Income	206.83
Fund raiser (pizza)	364.25
Avg. \$ per week (48weeks)	\$ 2,718.44
Short \$ per week	\$ 726.51

2016 Contributions & Expenses NOVEMBER

GENERAL FUND	
Contributions	\$12,386.41
Misc Income	\$
Expenses	<u>\$12,511.56</u>
Excess/Loss	\$ - 125.15

YEAR TO DATE

Contributions	\$129,913.78
Misc Income	\$ 1,121.08
Expenses	<u>\$148,107.80</u>
Excess/Loss	\$ -17,072.94

Parking Lot Fund

Fund Total as of October	\$12,076.00
Contributions	\$
Aluminum Cans	<u>\$</u>
Fund Total	\$12,076.00

Nominating Committee

It's that time of year again when the Vice President and his nominating committee will be contacting members of the congregation. Please carefully and prayerfully consider serving Calvary's congregation on a board or as an officer.



ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS
SERVICE SCHEDULE

* **11/27** - 1st Sunday of Advent – 9:00AM
Worship Service – 10:30AM Sunday
School/Adult Bible Class

* **11/30** - Advent Midweek – 6:00PM Soup/
Sandwiches – 7:00PM Worship Service

* **12/4** - 2nd Sunday of Advent – 9:00AM Worship Service
– 10:30AM Sunday School/Adult Bible Class

* **12/7** - Advent Midweek – 6:00PM Soup/Sandwiches –
7:00PM Worship Service

* **12/11** - 3rd Sunday of Advent – 9:00AM Worship Service
– 10:30 Voter’s Assembly. No Bible classes.

* **12/14** - Advent Midweek – 6:00PM Soup/Sandwiches –
7:00PM Worship Service

* **12/18** - 4th Sunday of Advent – 9:00AM Worship Service
– 10:30AM Sunday School/Adult Bible
Class

* **12/24** – Christmas Eve – 7:00PM

* **12/25** – Christmas Day Worship Service
– 10:00AM



MISSION BOARD NEWS

Thank you for attending the Thanksgiving Potluck. Thank you to those who helped set up and clean up. It is always nice to be able to enjoy the fellowship of others and we have so much to be thankful for.

Dec 11th at 4 PM is Children’s Card-Making. We will be making Christmas Cards for shut-ins, military, and nursing homes. Adults are also welcome. Pizza will be served afterwards. Please RSVP to Paula, 726-4053 or 271-9210, if you are coming. Thank you.

Dec 17th at 3 PM is Carol Singing for Emerald Springs, Nursing Homes and shut-ins from Calvary. Pizza will be served afterwards. We will meet at the church and go from there.

As I leave Mission Board, thank you to all who have participated in church sponsored mission events. It is with your generous donations that we have been able to support LCMS designated projects, such as Lutheran World Relief and Disaster Response, Ministry to the Armed Forces, Rural and Small Town Missions, Veterans and Soldiers of the Cross, our seminary food banks, our missionaries, Lutheran Braille Workers, as well as, our AWC campus ministry.

God Bless You as you continue to support and keep all these worthwhile church services in your prayers.

Respectfully submitted, Paula Backs

ADVENT REFLECTIONS
BY HIGHER THINGS



The First Sunday of Advent

November 27, 2016

Today's Reading: St. Matthew 21:1-9

Daily Lectionary: Isaiah 1:1-28; 1 Peter 1:1-12

“And the crowds going before Him and following him cried out saying, ‘Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord! Hosanna in the Highest!’” (Matthew 21:9)

The Second Sunday of Advent

December 4, 2016

Today's Reading: St. Luke 21:25-36

Daily Lectionary: Isaiah 10:12-27, 33-34; 2 Peter 1:1-21

“Now when these things begin to happen, stand up and raise your head, because your redemption draws near.” (Luke 21:28)

The Third Sunday of Advent

December 11, 2016

Today's Reading: Matthew 11:2-10

Daily Lectionary: Isaiah 28:14-29; 1 John 5:1-21

“And when John heard in chains about the works of the Christ, he sent through his disciples and said, ‘Are you the One who is Coming or should we wait for another?’” (Matthew 11:2-3)

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 18, 2016

Today's Reading: St. John 1:19-28

Daily Lectionary: Isaiah 34:1-2, 8-35:10;

Revelation 6:1-17

“And so they said to him, ‘Who are you? We need to give an answer to those who sent us! What do you say about yourself?’” (John 1:22)

The Nativity of Our Lord -Christmas Eve

December 24, 2016

Today's Reading: Isaiah 7:10-14


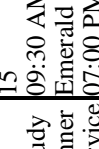
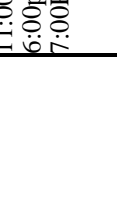
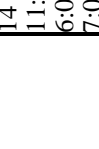


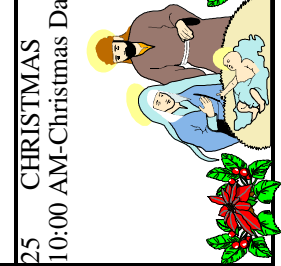

Daily Lectionary: Isaiah 44:21-45:13, 20-25; Revelation 12:1-17

“Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” (Isaiah 7:14)



December 2016

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

<p>4 09:00 AM-Communion Service 10:30 AM-Sunday school classes</p>				<p>1 09:30 AM-Bible Study/ Emerald Springs 07:00 PM-AWC campus ministry 07:00 PM-LWML meeting</p>	<p>2 09:00 AM-LWML Cookie Walk Set Up 4:00pm Elders Meeting</p>	<p>3 07:00 AM-Bible Study/ Goldsborro 08:00 AM-LWML Cookie Walk </p>
<p>5 09:00 AM-Communion Service 10:30 AM-Sunday school classes</p>	<p>6 06:00 PM-Board meeting 07:00 PM-Council</p>	<p>7 11:00 AM-Bible Study 6:00pm Pot luck dinner 7:00PM Advent Service </p>	<p>8 09:30 AM-Bible Study/ Emerald Springs 07:00 PM-AWC campus ministry</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10 07:00 AM-Bible Study/ Goldsborro</p>	<p>17 07:00 AM-Bible Study/ Goldsborro 03:00 PM-Christmas Caroling </p>
<p>11 09:00 AM-Communion Service 10:30 AM-Voter's Assembly 4:00 PM Christmas Card making</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13 11:00 AM-Bible Study 6:00pm Pot luck dinner 7:00PM Advent Service </p>	<p>15 09:30 AM-Bible Study/ Emerald Springs 07:00 PM-AWC campus ministry</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24 Christmas Eve 07:00 PM-Christmas Eve Service </p>
<p>18 09:00 AM-Matins Service 10:30 AM-Sunday school classes</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20 11:00 AM-Bible Study 6:00pm Pot luck dinner 7:00PM Advent Service</p>	<p>22 09:30 AM-Bible Study/ Emerald Springs</p>	<p>29 09:30 AM-Bible Study/ Emerald Springs</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31 07:00 AM-Bible Study/ Goldsborro </p>
<p>25 CHRISTMAS 10:00 AM-Christmas Day Service </p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27 11:00 AM-Bible Study 6:00pm Pot luck dinner 7:00PM Advent Service</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31 07:00 AM-Bible Study/ Goldsborro </p>