



Advent Acts

January 2008

Volume 4, Issue 1

A Note from Pastor Justin:

Dear sisters and brothers, grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord and Risen Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Happy New Year! I hope that you have had a wonderful Christmas season and that joy fills your hearts as the New Year begins. As the year does indeed get underway I thought it would be good for us to consider a bit what does it mean to be the Church? Over the past couple of weeks I have been engaging in an online conversation about what the "church" is. Theologian, mentor, and friend, Kelly Fryer at her blog www.reclaimingtheword.typepad.com, is constantly challenging all those who read it to reconsider perhaps what the Church of today should be. The "f" word she speaks of is one that many people seemingly have lost- that being faith and she is striving to stir up a revival within our churches. Recently, some of the conversation has focused on the role of clergy in the church. She argues that all too often churches live and die by what the pastor does- or in other words that everyone sits back and waits to be led, to be served, and the body largely trusts the Pastor to do much of the ministry. When this happens, the result is a dying or dead church that fails at bringing in new people and living out the calling, which stems from the gift of God's grace in Christ Jesus. As I read her many posts and the feedback to them I found myself again and again saying Amen! It really does not take a genius to figure out that many of the churches in mainline denominations are dying and at best are "doing evangelism" by putting up a new sign or a fancy add in a paper. This indeed is a problem. I agree with Kelly on many levels but especially on the importance for the people of the Church to live out their calling and to be active in ministry every day.

Now for some good news! I think that Advent is doing so many things right- we seem to truly understand the idea that all of us have a calling to ministry, that everyone of us is gifted spiritually and with those gifts comes a responsibility to use them to be the CHURCH in the WORLD and to listen and give witness to God acting in the world we live in. I am so encouraged by the ministry that I see happening and by the stories that you tell of how God is working in your life and in the world. Those who have taken the spiritual gifts class can testify to the power that lies within knowing some of the ways God has blessed you. We now find ourselves at a new chapter in our life together and I am so excited at what God continues to do here in this place and how God continues to challenge us to live out our calling. At our congregational meeting many good things happened including the passing of our budget for 2008. In that budget was a new staff position of five to ten hours a week. The position as it stands now is titled "Discipleship". While the exact logistics are still being worked out, we envision this person's main responsibility to be one of helping equip and empower the members of this body to respond to their calling of service in the most appropriate ways. The "Discipleship Coach or Mentor" will be trained on asset mapping, coaching, and deployment of Spiritual Gifts. They then will meet with us, individually throughout the year to help us gain a better insight into who we are and how God may be calling us right now based on our assets, our resources, and our Spiritual Gifts. I am excited about this for many reasons but mainly because it enables us to live out our calling and helps us stay focused on who are to be. Remember, we are the Church, we do not exist for ourselves but rather for others, and our attention needs to be outward. It's not about me, it's not about you (singular), but it's about what God will be doing through us all!

So... this New Year, take a step back, give thanks, and prayerfully consider how God is calling you to minister.

Honored to be your pastor,

Justin



Prayer List

Throughout this month, we ask that you lift these people up in your prayers:

We remember in our prayers: Jan April; Peggy & John Grumbeck; Arnold Denter; Ben Price; Sara Skarshaug; Betty Wick; Callie Hausler; Vicki Poswoski; Teri Hansen; Harriet Reed; Leonard Olson; Ron Allen; Drew Palombizio; Katie McGuffin Noll; Pastor Len Etzel; Tom Dorgan; Zack Gaz; Cam Deering; Mary Ghering; Cyndi Ansorge; Jennet; Bonnie Jean Zenner; Susan Puchovan; Phil Feiger; Debby Regiani; Margie Randall; all troops: those deployed and those at home; Pastor Beth Graham and Risen Lord Lutheran Church in Conifer, CO; and our mission here at Advent.

From the Church Office

On December 9, we had our first tri-annual congregational meeting, as defined by our constitution. The purpose of this meeting was to review and vote on the 2008 working budget and two new constitutional bylaws.

The budget was reviewed carefully and approved as proposed.

The first bylaw was a definition of our council officer position duties. The council has carefully delineated the duties of each of the four officer positions. The position duty bylaws were accepted without change.

The second bylaw was the addition of an Agape Fund. This fund can be used at the pastor's discretion to assist local families in need. The bylaw outlines the terms that the pastor follows when distributing these funds. The Agape bylaw was approved as proposed.

Copies of the budget and the bylaws are available for all members upon request.

January Readings

Here are the readings for Sundays this month:

Jan 6	Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14 Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12
Jan 13	Isaiah 42:1-9; Psalm 29 Acts 10:34-43; Matthew 3:13-17
Jan 20	Isaiah 49:1-7; Psalm 40:1-11 1 Corinthians 1:1-9; John 1:29-42
Jan 27	Isaiah 9:1-4; Psalm 27:1, 4-9 1 Corinthians 1:10-18; Matthew 4:12-23

Thank You

Dear Advent family, thank you all for the many cards and blessings this Christmas season. I cannot begin to tell you what an honor and a privilege it is to be your pastor and the way that you have welcomed our family into the lives of you and your families has been amazing. And last but not least, thank you for the generous and unexpected gift assortment that touched us on so many levels. Your love, your stories, and your authenticity continue to be a tremendous source of strength and energy for us all. We truly love this place and love you.

Peace to you all.

Pastor Justin, Anna, Logan and Payton Grimm

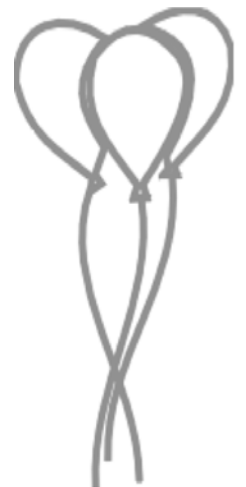
January Happy Birthday & Happy Anniversary!

Birthdays

1/3	Sophie Olson
1/4	Tanner Woodworth
1/7	Aiden Olson
1/7	James Wick
1/9	Lis Bank
1/10	Claudette Johnson
1/11	Cher Baumann
1/14	John Cudney
1/18	Payton Grimm
1/20	Nathan Fancher
1/24	Christine Griffith
1/27	Matt Branch
1/30	Grace Heiges
1/30	Chad Schwendemann

Anniversaries

1/10	Eric & Khiela Alpers
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Coming Home

The mail brings things expected and sometimes unexpected. Late in November of 2005, the afternoon mail brought with it an answered prayer. As I sorted through the stack, I found a post card announcing Advent Lutheran Church, here in Lake Ann. As invitation to worship- my heart jumped. I ran to the house to call the number provided for more information. Pastor Justin's greeting answered my question—it's an ELCA congregation! Could it get any better? (I've found out it just keeps getting better).

After moving "down" here from the UP in early 2000, we sampled many of the churches in the area. They were friendly and very welcoming, but the "feeling" wasn't there. We've missed our church- Sharon Lutheran of Bessemer. We missed the community, the support, and most of all the great feeling of getting to go to church. We still receive the "Rose of Sharon", a monthly newsletter- a letter from home. Now a postcard inviting us to come to a new house in Lake Ann. From the first service, "the feeling" was there, the people, the message, and Pastor Justin all made it happen. Since then many events and changes have occurred and through it all the "feeling" is there, and most of all the community gives you a sense that seems like you've known them most of your life. It's uncanny!

It's been said that church is "the house of God." But it's the people, the community, and the family that make it a house. In a home each member from the youngest to the oldest, provides something to make it complete. We were welcomed home, and we keep welcoming others home. So...come on home, cause nothing can stop us now...But US!

John Mocan

Healing Services

Peace to you dear Advent brothers and sisters, I hope all are doing well this holiday season. With all that we have on are plates in are daily lives and especially during the busy holidays we tend to run our batteries a little low. A great way to get a "recharge" is attending a healing service, and you're in luck. Advent happens to be holding two different healing services a month. What is a healing service you may ask? A healing service is an opportunity for people to gather in a worship setting outside of a regular worship in a meditative prayer atmosphere asking for healing in their lives. We started this service with our U-nite youth group and has been wildly popular with the kids, so much so that we have made it a monthly event on the first Wednesday of each month. After a couple of youth services it was decided that we needed to have a

healing service open to the entire church body, and in the first couple of services there is a great feeling present. The meditative ambiance allows for you to really open your heart to the Holy Spirit, which we know is present with us all the time but rarely ever give the opportunity to come in to our hearts and minds to do his work. So come and join us on the third Sunday evening of each month to pray, meditate, and let the Holy Spirit move into your life and heal what is hurting in your life. The Spirit is waiting; all you have to do is ask.

Peace & Love,
Nick Bank

Angel Tree

A sincere Thank You to all those who generously donated wrapped presents or gift cards to the Angel Tree holiday gift giving program. Because of you, we were able to provide Christmas presents and food baskets to three local families. The spirit of Christmas was evident as the Outreach Committee organized and sorted the overwhelming amount of gifts to be delivered. Thank You!

Love and Light in the New Year,

Abigail Cudney
Outreach Committee Member

A Gift for Advent

Dear Justin, I am grateful to see the unfolding life of Advent Lutheran Church. 2007 has been a significant year for you, and I have every confidence that God will continue to prosper your efforts in 2008.

Please receive this check as part of your LIGHT campaign. The enclosed candles are from the Church of San Francisco in Antigua, Guatemala. If you place sand in a container, people can use these to accompany their prayers for healing. Thank you for your witness in the Lake Ann community.

Yours in Christ,
Patricia Lull

Some of the candles from Patricia are hanging on our Christmas tree in the sanctuary.

Future Advent Property Update

There were a couple of questions at the Congregational Meeting regarding the future Advent Lutheran Church property. Here is quick update for everyone on a couple of points. It would be great to say that we have a "done deal" and the property belongs to us. In a sense, that is the case. But, nothing is ever that simple. The Mission Investment Fund (MIF), the North/West Lower Michigan Synod (N/W MI) and the leadership of Advent are all firmly committed to the purchase of the property north of Lake Ann. The money is almost all there, the commitments are all made, the property survey is done and agreed upon, testing may already be done by the time you receive this, and we have been assured zoning will not be an issue. The family selling it is still committed to selling it to us at the agreed upon price. How that process proceeds is still indefinite. There seem to be a thousand different ways to make that happen involving the four groups: MIF, N/W MI Synod, Advent, and the sellers. We are receiving excellent advice from the church leadership and will probably be able to get everything lined up for the Mission Investment Fund to secure the property in the very near future. Then Advent Lutheran Church will have to do some work, raise some funds, make a LOT of plans, pray a bit, and then take a big step in faith. This is all very reasonable and doable, but it just seems a little uncertain today. When the property has been secured Advent can begin our process and in a couple of years (or less) we will celebrate in our own worship space.

John Jeffrey, Council President

Music Notes

I would like to thank the congregation for its support of the first community Christmas supper and Concert. What a wonderful sight to see the community of Christians gathered together for a meal and fellowship with one common thread, to celebrate the coming of Christ. I hope that this will be the first of many joint fellowship gatherings.

The children's Second Christmas play was another success! They all practiced very hard, and the dance choreography was a hit. I believe we may have been the first ELCA's children's kickline. All I can say is 'Look Out, Broadway!'

The Christmas Eve services were simply lovely. A special thanks to the choirs who gave their gift of voice that night.

Choir rehearsals will continue January 8th at 7:00. The Children's Bell choir will begin rehearsal again Sunday January 6th at 10:30.

Love and Joy!
Cherie Hockenberger

The Church Guild

The Church Guild will be collecting your quilt squares late in January. We are still handing out the material for the quilt. If you haven't picked up your square, please do so as soon as possible. See Mary Jeffrey or Juanita Weber for the kit.

The Guild will be meeting on Sunday, January 13 to work on baptismal quilts. We meet after the 11:00 service at church. We can use all levels of sewing skills in making these quilts. Please join us. Bring a sack lunch and plan to have some fun.

Winterfest is coming soon!

LA WinterFest will be February 16, 2008. Advent will be sponsoring a mini business expo - in our sanctuary. This will allow an advertising venue to small area businesses in hopes of boosting their winter income potential. If you have a small business, see Becky MacGirr to reserve a spot.

Also, if you are interested in helping out with any aspect of WinterFest, there will be several opportunities for all kinds of activities. This is a great outreach to our community and a super fun time to be had by all.

Outreach Committee

Your Outreach Committee would like to thank you for your donations to the Angel Tree Project. Through your generosity we were able to share the Love, Joy and true meaning of Christmas to some very grateful and deserving families in our area. (Thank you Lynn Cox for your experience and helping us pull this off!)

We have been busy the last couple of months designing a more up-to-date brochure. With Becky Douthitt's help we finished it this month and sent it to be printed. It has updated information and pictures of Advent to let people know who we are now. It turned out really nice!

I have been grateful for the opportunity to reach out to others in our area through the Outreach Committee, but after some very serious thinking, I have stepped down as chairperson of the committee and Matt Branch will be taking over. Thank you Matt!

Kathy Johnston

The following people are assisting in worship this Month.

Communion Bread: Shirley Ransom
Altar Guild: Shannon Nemeth

January 6

Fellowship: Church Council

8:00 Service

Assisting Minister: Michelle Anderson
Ushers: Bob Sutton & Ken Williams
Communion: Mathew Branch & Abby Cudney
Acolyte: Noah Weichert

11:00 Service

Assisting Minister: Juanita Weber
Ushers: Gwen & Harold Muenchow
Communion: Anna Grimm & Duce Olson
Acolyte: Cyndee Bence

January 13

Fellowship: Worship Committee

8:00 Service

Assisting Minister: Tom Peterson
Ushers: Ryan Brady & Gary Wertz
Communion: Pat Cudney & Julie Harris
Acolyte: Halee Coon

11:00 Service

Assisting Minister: Ellen Fancher
Ushers: Mathew Branch & Nathan Fancher
Communion: Becky & Steve MacGirr
Acolyte: A.J. Kettinger

Children's Education

Happy 2008! We ended 2007 with a fantastic Christmas Pageant and will start off 2008 with a new unit of study, Experiencing God, in our Akaloo program. Watch for further announcements about our unit kickoff.

Our children did another wonderful job telling the story of Jesus' birth in our 2nd annual Christmas Pageant. The older children had the speaking parts, while the younger children acted the scenes out. All the kids sang the songs together. We had a great turnout and once again the pageant was loved by all. Thank you to all those who helped with practices, set design, set-up, take down, and assisting with dress rehearsal. A special thank you to the parents for listening to that CD over and over again so your child could learn the songs for the big day.

I would also like to thank all the teachers that helped with teaching our children about God's love this fall. You did a great job and the kids loved the message you brought to them each week. Our first day back for Children's Education will be January 6th, 2008.

Peace and happiness,

Lis Bank

Nursery

Please check out the nursery door. The new sign up is hanging on the door. It is looking a little empty. If you are willing and can donate the time please consider volunteering during one of the services. Your services are needed and I know parents appreciate it when someone is in the nursery to watch the little ones so they can worship.

January 20

Fellowship: Youth Committee

8:00 Service

Assisting Minister: Mary Jeffrey
Ushers: Bud & Marlene Habermann
Communion: Paul & Paula Stabnau
Acolyte: Evan Mocan

11:00 Service

Assisting Minister: Nancy Ackerman Will
Ushers: Becky & Clint Douthitt
Communion: Sue Olson & David Romberg
Acolyte: Aaron Hockenberger

January 27

Fellowship: Education Committee

8:00 Service

Assisting Minister: Richard Andersen
Ushers: Charlie Baumann & Shannon Nemeth
Communion: Bob Sutton & Jeff Wentzloff
Acolyte: Michael MacGirr

11:00 Service

Assisting Minister: Lis Bank
Ushers: Pat Cudney & Sue Olson
Communion: John & Lynn Mocan
Acolyte: McKenna Cudney

If you are interested in helping with the Sunday morning worship experience, please see Tom or Sally Peterson. If you are unable to help on the day listed, please be sure to make arrangements for your spot.

Advent Lutheran Church

P.O. Box 249
Lake Ann, MI 49650
Church: 231.275.8031

Pastor Justin Grimm:
PastorJustin@charter.net
Phone: 231.632.0824

www.adventlakeann.org

Worship with Us

Advent Lutheran Church
19631 Maple
Lake Ann, MI 49650

8:00 & 11:00
Sunday mornings
and
9:30 AM
Education Hour

Church Staff

If you need Pastoral Care, are interested in helping out during the service, have an idea about a new program, interested in the choir, or want to help out with children and teen spiritual growth, please contact one of us.

Rev. Justin Grimm, Pastor
Becky Douthitt, Administration Coordinator
Cherie Hockenberger, Director of Music
Lis Bank, Children's Education Coordinator

Church Council

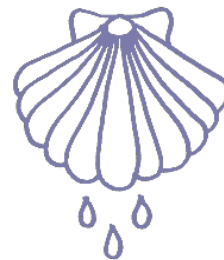
Church council meetings are held the fourth Thursday of the month at 7:30 at the church. Meeting minutes are available upon request. Please see John Jeffrey or Michelle Anderson.

For a list of your Church Council members, please go to www.adventlakeann.org and click on Directory.

Pastoral Assistance

If you or a loved one is in need of pastoral assistance, don't hesitate to contact Pastor Justin.

Are you interested in learning about Baptism or Communion for you or a family member? Pastor Justin would love to talk with you! Call or email him to set up a meeting.



ADVENT LUTHERAN CHURCH

PO Box 249
Lake Ann, MI 49650

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Lake Ann, MI 49650
Permit No. 6

“For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given;”

Isaiah 9:6