



Advent Acts

January 2010

Volume 6, Issue 1

A Note from Pastor Justin:

Dear fellow servants of Christ, grace to you and peace from God our creator and our redeemer Jesus Christ. Amen.

Happy New Year! Wow, it is so hard to believe that we have finished out 2009, celebrated the wonderful birth of our Messiah, and now make our way forward to the journey that will be 2010. I am writing this newsletter on Monday after an amazingly uplifting and Holy service on Sunday where we gathered, sang our favorite Christmas songs, participated in the Lord's supper and shared how God was evident in our lives during the past year. I felt so blessed to be able to listen to how you all witnessed the presence of God around you and how together as community we actively expected God to do marvelous things. It was a great way to end our worshipping year of 2009 and a wonderful way to send us into 2010. As I reflect on the stories shared as well as the other ways I have seen God working this year I wonder what 2010 will bring. Where will God lead this congregation and us as individuals? Are we capable of doing all the things we set out to do? What do you think?

I ask those questions and truly hope that you seriously consider them with me. We have set a driven ministry plan in front of us for 2010 and I believe certainly that we will be able to meet it and even surpass it but it depends largely on all of our willingness to be stretched, to be challenged, to be opened a little more than we are today. The budget that was approved sets us up for amazing ministry in this community yet it depends largely on our ability to meet our pledges and commitments- otherwise we will not be able to succeed at what we hope to do. Now...don't get me wrong- we are not a congregation that dwells on finances or is held hostage by the financial numbers, but we must be serious about our planning and our ability to function. The budget is a tool which will help us accomplish our goals. Lon Gilbert, our treasurer said it quite well- we control our own future largely as an organization (related to the budget) and because of that we need all of us to maintain our commitment and our hope that God will lead us and guide us. Dear friends, please dig deep this next year, pray that you are opened and pray that you are touched so that you can be touched and help to open others to the glory of what God is doing. Can we make the goals we have set? Yes...but only together, and only by God's grace.

God was unleashed through you in 2009 and I know that God will continue to be made known in this part of the world because of you and the ministry we are part of together. It makes me so excited to think about what 2010 will bring: the active work of building community, the beginning perhaps of our building, growth for all of us spiritually, reaching out to the needs of our community, being filled with the gifts of the Spirit and allowing those gifts to lead us, being made uncomfortable in our complacency, inviting others to experience God, and the list goes on and on. Please get excited with me, pray for a new revival for Advent and all of us, pray for the Spirit to guide, pray for strength to trust God and pray that we will truly be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ.

Honored and Humbled to be your pastor,

Justin



January Happy Birthday & Happy Anniversary

Birthdays

1/3 Sophie Olson
1/4 Tanner Woodworth
1/7 Aidan 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 Mat Branch
1/27 Del Roelofs
1/30 Grace Heiges



Anniversary

1/10 Eric & Khiela Alpers

Special Thanks

Dear Advent Family,

Thank you so much for the numerous cards of Christmas greetings and the wonderful gift table that you surprised us with. Your kindness, love, and generosity humbled us as a family and truly reminded us how special this place is. I give thanks daily that I have been called to be your pastor and that our family can be here as part of this family. I thank God also for each one of you and way that you have impacted our lives. Thanks again for the gifts and more importantly thanks for who you are and what you do.

Pastor Justin, Anna, Logan, & Payton

Prayer List

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

We remember in our prayers: Jeff Fancher; Ken Davis; Bruce Lockwood; Paul Sutton; Juanita Weber; Mike McDonald; Josh Griffith; Gary Cox; Todd Wittke; Josh Pohill; Wayne Wright; Mary & Bernie Holtman; Ed Bloxsom, Sr.; Jon Brief; Brady & Paige Potter; Helen Rought; Cam Deering; Gary Harris; Mary Ghering; Shelly & Bill Honer; Moss; Catherine Stabnau; Ian Gerald; Wally Schaub; Pastor Len Etzel; Margie Randall; all troops: those deployed and those at home; Pastor Jim Foster and Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Holland, MI; and our mission here at Advent.

January Readings



Here are the readings for this month:

Jan 3 Jeremiah 31:7-14; Psalm 147:12-20; Ephesians 1:3-14; John 1:[1-9] 10-18

Jan 10 Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8:14-17; Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

Jan 17 Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 36:5-10; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11; John 2:1-11

Jan 24 Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10; Psalm 19; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a; Luke 4:14-21

Jan 31 Jeremiah 1:4-10; Psalm 71:1-6; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; Luke 4:21-30

Director Of Faith Formation
January, 2010

In December Pastor Justin challenged us to prepare for the birth of Jesus. Regarding that challenge, I would like to share this little note I found:

You have received mercy, kindness and unconditional love from our God.
You have many physical, emotional, mental and spiritual abilities that can be used to better the lives of others.
You have people in your life who've believed in you when you didn't believe in yourself.
You have people who stood by you in your difficult times.
You have a heart capable of great compassion, empathy and tenderness.
You have inner strength.
You have the gift of hope and the desire for good.
You have food on your table, clothes in your closet and a roof over your head.
You have access to medical care, quality education, music and the arts, and numerous sources of communication.
You have religious freedom, the power of free speech, advocacy groups, and structures for promoting justice and protecting citizens.
You have a marvelous planet on which to live, the beautiful forests, rich soil for growing food, priceless minerals, and precious creatures of all kinds.
You have the opportunity for spiritual renewal, growth and maturity in your relationship with God, and opportunities for faith development.

What strikes me most is the suggestion to "Exist for the other". I realize that I have not been as appreciative of these gifts as I would like to be. I have become comfortable. I have not been accountable to myself and my responsibilities regarding the challenge for me to ... stop settling and strive to stretch ...
I would like to share with you a prayer that I will be using this year;

Dear God,
I lack for little yet yearn for so much. Teach me to appreciate my many blessings and gifts. Keep urging and challenging me to share what I have with others each day, continually giving thanks for everything granted to me. Amen.

Happy, Happy New Year!
Becky MacGirr

The Church Guild

As we begin the New Year we are anticipating the arrival of several new babies. We will be making quilts to welcome them into our Advent Family as a remembrance of their baptism. If you are a quilter, if you can sew, or would like to learn how to quilt or sew, the Church Guild will meet every second Wednesday at noon at the church.

If you are interested in sharing your talents with us, we invite you to join us as we work on these and other projects. Our first meeting will be on January 13th. Please call the church office if you have any questions.

Our Journey to Advent

Ben & I both grew up in well established churches, all be it thousands of miles apart. I attended the Church of England parish church of St. Peter, a beautiful ancient church, the origins of which date back to the 13th century, with stained glass windows, medieval paintings and tombstones and wonderful old bells up in the steeple which ring out on Sundays calling everyone to church. I can still remember some of the choir boys trying to pull the ropes to ring the bells and being lifted off their feet in their efforts to hold on to the ropes as the bells swung far above. We had two services every Sunday, 11 o'clock Matins and 6 o'clock Evensong. I was in the choir, but to be honest, I think it was more of a social than spiritual experience. Vicar Brown, bless his heart, was a wonderful old man and was our vicar for many many years, but I don't believe I ever heard a sermon all the way through. I (along with many other parishioners) would get lost part of the way through, but we loved him all the same.

Ben's church, Good Hope in Detroit, was a very traditional German Lutheran church, and had gone through very much the same as we at Advent are now experiencing as they moved their church from the Southwest side. His parents were very active in the church and Ben sang in the junior choir and was part of the youth group. Pastor Baumann was very much a "fire and brimstone" preacher, and there was never a peep to be heard during his sermons, but he too was a wonderful man. He had baptized Ben and when, many years later, he baptized our children, he became very emotional as tears came to his eyes.

During our years in the Air Force we made several moves but attended very few church services, until in Omaha, Nebraska we joined Kuntz Memorial Lutheran Church. It was a huge church, very beautiful, and was the first church in the U.S. that I became actively involved in, other than Good Hope while Ben was in Vietnam and the kids and I were living in Detroit. We really enjoyed the three years we spent there and were sorry to leave the church when we were sent to Germany, although I of course was ecstatic to move to Europe and be so much closer to home. Church services in Germany (on the base) were either Catholic or Protestant, so unless you were Catholic, the services were non-denominational and we never attended church there. When we returned to the U.S. and were stationed in Austin, Texas, we attended a few services but were there only a year until Ben retired from the Air Force.

And so we returned to Michigan and decided to make Traverse City our home. We became members of Bethlehem, spent many happy years there and were blessed with some very good friends. Our kids were all in the youth choir and we helped chaperone a very memorable trip with them to Vermont where they performed "He's Alive" at several Lutheran churches. Making that trip in an old school bus we affectionately called "Big Blue" was an experience we'll never forget! Eventually, we started another barren patch in our spiritual lives and attended church less and less frequently, until we became "Christmas and Easter people". When Lis asked us, four years ago on Christmas Eve, to go to a new church in Lake Ann with her and Nick and the kids, we thought, why not? So we all went to the Town Hall for our first service at Advent and met Pastor Justin. We rejoice and give thanks that we did! To be honest though, after that first service, we weren't quite sure about it. We were welcomed with open arms, which was wonderful, but we had never experienced anything quite like it, such a small laid-back country church after the splendor of the churches we had known. So, for the next several months we only attended occasionally. With each time though, we were made to feel so welcome, and the sense of belonging became stronger. Then came Christmas Eve again, and on the way out Ben told Pastor Justin that we would begin to attend services regularly in the New Year. So we did, and we thank God for it. We thank God for Pastor Justin and his family. We have come to know and love them as part of our own family, and we give thanks for so many people in the church who have been so kind to us and so caring, and have become our friends. We are so grateful for the many blessings we have received here and thank God every day that the Advent family is our family. Being part of this church and experiencing the love and caring of so many people here has enriched our lives. As we look forward with excitement and anticipation during the next year to the building of our new church, we pray that we will all stay the same and never lose sight of why we are here. As Pastor Justin has said so many times, the people, not the building, are the church. The Lord has blessed us all with bringing us together in this place called Advent.

Thanks be to God
Jan & Ben Price

The following people are assisting in worship this Month.

Communion Bread: Jennie Wentzloff
Altar Guild: Traci Wong

January 3

Fellowship: Education Committee
Counters: Becky MacGirr & Lis Bank

8:00 Service

Assisting Minister: Deb Mikko
Communion: Becky MacGirr & Emily Bramer
Ushers: Bud & Marlene Habermann
Acolyte: Abbie Smith
Nursery: Laney Wiggins

11:00 Service

Assisting Minister: Laney Wiggins
Communion: Pat Cudney & Carrie Baldwin
Ushers: Harold & Gwen Muenchow
Acolyte: Emily Fancher
Nursery: Laney Wiggins & Mary Mikko

January 10

Fellowship: Outreach Committee
Counters: Becky Douthitt & Cher Baumann

8:00 Service

Assisting Minister: Tom Peterson
Communion: Nancy Dow & Jennie Wentzloff
Ushers: John & Evan Mocan
Acolyte: Mikayla Mayo
Nursery: McKenna Cudney

11:00 Service

Assisting Minister: Mike Achorn
Communion: Charlie & Cher Baumann
Ushers: Ed & Laurie Bloxsom
Acolyte: Halee Stalmack
Nursery: Emily Bramer & Halee Coon

January 17

Fellowship: Stewardship Committee
Counters: Bud Habermann & Marge Achorn

8:00 Service

Assisting Minister: Karen Harrison
Communion: Jim & Nedra Shoobridge
Ushers: Clint & Becky Douthitt
Acolyte: Addison Bank
Nursery: Laney Wiggins

11:00 Service

Assisting Minister: Amiee Erfourth
Communion: Charlie & Joan Chamberlain
Ushers: Keith & Claudette Johnson
Acolyte: Aaron Hockenberger
Nursery: Laney Wiggins & Mary Mikko

7:00 Prayer Service

Nursery: Emily Bramer

January 24

Fellowship: Choir
Counters: Joan Chamberlain & Ellen Fancher

8:00 Service

Assisting Minister: Marcie Kaven
Communion: John & Lynn Mocan
Ushers: Brian & Matthew Kaven
Acolyte: Michael Kaven
Nursery: Emily Bramer

11:00 Service

Assisting Minister: Nancy Ackerman Will
Communion: Mathew Branch & Michelle Anderson
Ushers: Elfie Steigerwald & Gail Stradinger
Acolyte: Katey Bank
Nursery: McKenna Cudney & Mary Mikko

January 31

Fellowship: Wednesday AM Bible Study Group
Counters: Marge Achorn & Lis Bank

8:00 Service

Assisting Minister: Ryan Brady
Communion: Rich Andersen & Bob Sutton
Ushers: Nancy Dow & Cheryl Smith
Acolyte: Kayla Brady
Nursery: Laney Wiggins

11:00 Service

Assisting Minister: Carole Zang
Communion: Nick & Lis Bank
Ushers: Pat Cudney & Brad Stowe
Acolyte: Jake Weichert
Nursery: Laney Wiggins & Halee Coon

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 and advise Tom or Sally of the change. (Counters, please contact one of the other volunteers or Wendy Roelofs.)

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

5:00 Saturday Evenings

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
Jan Price, Church Secretary

Cherie Hockenberger, Director of Music
Becky MacGirr, Director of Faith Formation

Church Council

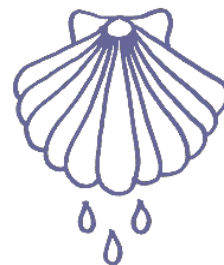
Church council meetings are held the fourth Thursday of the month at 7:00 at the church. Meeting minutes are available upon request. Please see Rich Andersen or Marlene Habermann.

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**
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