



St. Jacob's Lutheran Church

JACOB'S LADDER

December 2020

Volume 31, Issue 12

PASTORAL DEVOTION FOR DECEMBER

THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

Read *Luke 2:1-20, John 1:1-4*

Light came down; it came from heaven. This light came down and assumed the flesh of a child. He took up residence among the people of God. Many who encountered the light did not recognize its source. Most who passed by didn't even take notice. Others, most certainly found it hard to believe such light could radiate from the smallest, most insignificant of people; a baby wrapped in rags, a feeding trough for his bed. But then shepherds came.

They were filled with excitement; theirs was a story too good to be true. Angels brought, to this band of sheep watchers, the news concerning the birth of a Savior; Christ the Lord they said! Can it be? The Christ of God born this night...in this little town? So they ran, only to find things just the way the angels said they would be. In that instant, the shepherds recognized the light.

Who told you? Who brought you the good news of this light from heaven? Was it an angel, or a shepherd? Probably not, but it was most certainly someone who recognized the light from heaven; and now you do too. Tell others. Tell them light came down. It came from heaven. And in the light was life and the life was the light for all people. Angels told shepherds. Tell someone, anyone. Share the good news.

Prayer: God of wonder, fill us with the light of your Christ, that we may share the light of his love. Amen.



CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Our meeting will be held on Sunday, December 6th at 10 AM. We will not have an early service or Sunday School. Please see the Council Briefs write up on page 5 to see what will be occurring that day.

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Monthly Birthdays
- Memorials and Acknowledgements
- Weekly Bible Study on Zoom
- Up & Going
- Thank You
- Letter from Water Mission
- Card from We Care
- Financial Information
- Grounds Team for December
- Council Team Members

BIRTHDAYS FOR DECEMBER

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 03 – Brandon Lindler | 19 – Ethan Ballentine |
| 04 – Olivia Lambeth | 19 – Annie Pharis |
| 06 – Donald Turner | 22 – Richard Shealy |
| 07 – Tracy Eargle | 23 – Angela Nuottila |
| 07 – Carroll E. Lindler, Jr. | 25 – Carla Lindler |
| 07 – Ashley Slice | 26 – Lauren Wise |
| 08 – Ed Walker | 29 – Ann Lindler |
| 09 – Lisa Amick | 29 – Chris Doyle |
| 09 – Rhea Matthews | 30 – Emma Sightler |
| 09 – Joshua Mack | 30 – Ethan McDuffie |
| 10 – Chrissy Slice | 31 – Denise Mack |
| 11 – Wayne Stuck | |
| 13 – Ken Smith | |
| 16 – Copeland Peoples | |
| 17 – Heather Slice | |
| 18 – Jo Sullivan | |
| 19 – Randy Rushe | |
| 19 – Matt Bowers | |

happy
birthday!

YOUTH DIRECTOR & FAMILY MINISTRIES

Heavenly Father, we bring to you our loved one Caleb Covalt as he prepares to leave for training in the United States Armed Forces. You have guided him in pursuit of this goal, and we pray that the good work You have begun in Caleb will be overseen with Your supervision and love as he leaves to complete this training. We ask you to help him in every expectation the military has. We ask You to make all things possible for him as he faces the standards and goals that the military has for him. If anything seems impossible to him, we ask You to strengthen him with Your power in order for him to achieve whatever is expected. We pray that You will put Caleb in the company of Godly influences. We pray that You will use these people to impress upon him the importance of following and obeying Your rules and laws to be successful as a member of the Armed Forces and as a child of God. We turn Caleb completely over to You. We trust that our prayer in the Name of Your Son, Jesus, by His power, by His Spirit and by His Blood will be answered to Your glory as we await Caleb's graduation and his official recognition as a member of the Armed Forces in service to You and our country.

Our Love and Trust is in You, Father. Amen.
*Caleb's address will be available for anyone who would like to send him a card/letter as soon as we receive it. I think it would be wonderful for him to receive mail from his church family knowing that we are praying for him especially during the holidays!



Grace & Peace,
Rachel

ANNUAL CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

You're invited! Please join us on December 13th at 6 PM for our annual Children's Christmas program. As you know, our Children's Choir has been learning to play the hand chimes and this will be our first performance. The program will be live streamed if you want to participate from home. Come listen to the scriptures, sing the hymns, and celebrate the birth of Jesus with our church youth! You won't want to miss it!

From the Pastor's Heart *by Pastor David Nuottila*

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6

These words from the prophet Isaiah are very familiar. We hear them every year as we prepare for the celebration of Christmas and once more receiving God's promise of salvation through his beloved Son. Hearing them so often, it is clear to us what the prophet is saying in his foretelling of the birth of the Christ child. God will come to his people, taking on human form, invading our time and space. But imagine yourself a person in the kingdom of Judah, living in Isaiah's time and hearing the prophet proclaim this message from God firsthand. Certainly, questions would come to mind. "Who is this child Isaiah is talking about?" "When will the child be born?" So many questions to be asked, so many answers to be given, but for now, all the people of Judah could do is hear the message of the prophet and wait for God to reveal what is to be done.

As the Church enters into yet another season of Advent, especially within a year such as this, the question becomes; "What are we waiting for?" One thing that would spring into the forefront is that we are all waiting for the coronavirus to finally run its course. We are waiting for a return to "normalcy." As a people world-wide, we are waiting for the all clear signal that life would resume as it was before we had even learned the word COVID-19. But if that is all we are waiting for, once again we have missed the mark.

As so many people turn the pages of their calendars from November to December, thoughts of the Christmas celebration quickly move to the forefront. There are plans to be made, parties to attend, cards to be mailed and gifts to be purchased, all while being sure to wear masks,

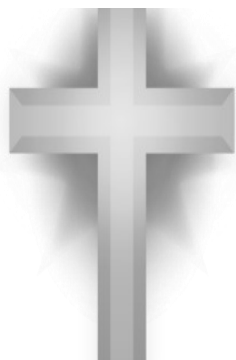
wash hands and remain six feet apart from others. Lockdown, social distance, and quarantine are words that have challenged us in the way we live. Still, it is nearly Christmas. What about the promise? Where do Isaiah's words enter the picture for our celebration this Christmas?

Well, first of all, as we hear these words, we should remember they are words of Advent. They are words of promise and words of patiently waiting for God to act. Isaiah calls us to reflect on God's promises. Isaiah calls us to a time of anticipation and a time of faithful waiting. The message of our Advent season is that, just as Christ came into the world so long ago, he will come again bringing God's kingdom to his people in its fullness and glory.

As we patiently wait for Christ to come again, we respond in faithfulness to Jesus' commandment to love God and love others as God loves us. Even during a world-wide pandemic, his **love** continues to be the calling for the people of God. As we await the coming of God's Messiah, we must strengthen the relationships we share, remain diligent in our service to our neighbor, and strive toward greater faithfulness and discipleship.

Yes, we will celebrate Christmas. But this year it will seem different. Safeguards will be in place. Crowds within churches will be smaller, and the programs for the season will certainly be somewhat modified. But the promise remains the same.

As Isaiah said so many years ago, the Christ child has been given unto us. Christ invaded our world, taking on human form and reconciling people to God. Now we await that day when Christ will come again, just as he has promised to do. We actively wait by lifting up our voices in praise and thanksgiving, loving our neighbor



as God loves us, and by passing on the good news of Christ to a world in need of God's grace – just as we have always done.

Blessings to you all this Advent season, and peace to you as we celebrate together the Nativity of our Lord.

Merry Christmas,



Pastor David Nuottila

SHARING THE PEACE

Over a period of time, several of our church family members have asked me about the sharing of the peace within our worship. When the COVID-19 virus came upon us, several asked if we would refrain from engaging in the practice. In recent conversations, the sharing of the peace of Christ has come up again. I truly want everyone here among us to understand this element of our liturgy and why it is positioned as it is. And so yes, here is a second article I've written for this month's newsletter.

Sharing the peace during worship is not simply a moment when we say a quick hello to those around us. It is not a time to catch up or for brief conversation. It serves a much deeper function. Primarily, we share the peace for biblical reasons. The first comes to us from the fifth chapter of *Matthew*. Jesus said, "if you are offering your gift at the altar, and there, you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering" (*Matthew 5:23-24*). Within the early Church, sharing the peace was a way for people in the Christian community to be reconciled to one another before making their offering at the altar. It is for this reason that sharing the peace always comes before the offering and receiving Holy Communion. We are first reconciled to our brother or sister. Then, at peace with one another, we share the Lord's Supper in communion with the people of God.

We also share the peace because during the Last Supper, Jesus said "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you" (*John 14:27*). Again, when Jesus himself appeared to the disciples after his resurrection,

he greeted them by saying, "Peace be with you" (*Luke 24:36; John 20:19, 26*). We bring these two together: just as Jesus shared his peace with us, so we should share peace with one another.

Sharing "peace" with one another is an ancient Christian tradition, not only in the words of Jesus, but also in the practices of the Christian community. Paul begins every one of his letters by saying, "Grace to you, and peace" (*Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:3; 2 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 1:3; Ephesians 1:2; Philippians 1:2; Colossians 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 1:1, etc.*). This suggests that in the early Church, "Grace to you and peace" was the way Christians greeted one another. Many pastors, as do I, begin their sermon with this greeting in the peace of Christ. His is the Word preached, and so the sermon is brought to the congregation in the peace of Christ.

So why are there so many questions regarding the sharing of the peace? The truth be told, the tradition was either lost or reduced to a few simple words in the hymnal's liturgy many decades ago. As progressiveness crept into the church, much of the symbolism and tradition faded into the background. Instead of traditional expressions of faith, programming and relevance welled up to the surface. Thankfully, several denominations are reforming or renewing and returning to the rites and tradition of Christian worship.

The surprising thing is not that we share the Peace during our services; it is that we lost the tradition for so long. In some ways, it was lost for centuries. Sure, it was there, in the midst of the Communion service, but it was reduced to a simple sentence from the pastor at the altar, and a plain response given by the congregation. What followed was a time for handshakes, hugs and hellos, and that was that. It had lost its meaning.

When fully understood, sharing the peace is a spiritual practice that brings congregations and individuals together in faith. Ideally, we would do this not simply with words, but also employ our usual handshakes and hugs. Sadly, as current conditions dictate a necessity for physical distance, handshakes and hugs are out of the question. Still, with smiles and the words of Christ's peace, we can continue this traditional practice of our faith. I look

forward to the next time we can share the peace of our Lord Jesus. Until then, these words will convey my heartfelt desire for you.

Grace to you and PEACE,



Pastor David Nuottila

COUNCIL BRIEFS - NOVEMBER

St. Jacob's Church Council met for its regular meeting on November 3rd.

Good Things at St. Jacob's for November:

- Attendance is steadily improving
- New Organist
- Trunk or Treat was a success

Important Notes and Dates:

- Council has voted on Parking Lot/Building Additions and made recommendation for payment; to be presented at Congregational Meeting
- Congregational Meeting will be held December 6th
 - ◊ There will only be one (1) service, to begin at 10 AM and no Sunday School will be offered
 - ◊ Overflow will be available in the balcony and Fellowship Hall to accommodate for larger gathering
- Items to be discussed at meeting will be:
 - ◊ Election of Council members for 2021
 - ◊ Approval of 2021 proposed budget
 - ◊ Approval of Constitution
 - ◊ Discussion and vote on proposed NALC Convocation Amendments
- Noted: Pastor recommends against ratification due to the way in which the vote was handled at a virtual convocation.
 - ◊ Parking Lot Construction Plan
 - ◊ Parking Lot Payment Recommendation from Council
- 2021 Council Ballot; be on the lookout for info on each candidate
 - Nate Nickel
 - Johanne "Jo" Sullivan
 - Michael Corley
 - Helen L. Lindler
 - James Richard Lindler
 - Gloria Zeimer
 - Brandon Slice
 - ◊ Nominations from the floor will be

accepted as well, if nominees meet criteria for running

- KFC meeting November 22nd; after choir
 - Children's Christmas Program – December 13th, details to follow
 - Christmas Caroling to be December 20th; details to follow
 - Please check Facebook page and/or Website for updates to church activities and functions
 - Next regularly scheduled Council meeting is December 8th, at 6:30 PM in Fellowship Hall
- Respectfully submitted,

Andrew J. (A.J.) Peeples, Secretary
St. Jacob's Church Council

MEMORIALS

Building Fund

- In memory of Veterie Slice—By: Retha Russell

Lutheran Men

- In memory of Chevis Ballentine and Glenn Addy—By: Robert and June Lindler

Lutheran Women

- In memory of Jamie Lindler and Glenn Addy — By: Ramonia Lindler
- In memory of Jamie Lynn Lindler and Andrew Bunnell—By: Robert and June Lindler

Cemetery

- In memory of Litang and Sergio Rimando, Sr.— By: Mitchell Martin

WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY ON ZOOM

Bible study continues to be held each Wednesday morning at 9:30 AM on Zoom.com. We are continuing our study of the book of James. There are no special materials that you must purchase. All you need is a computer and access to the internet to join in the conversation. Weekly study guides are emailed to the congregation on Tuesday afternoon. Even if you have not provided an email address our study's such that you can join in and participate in the conversation. Why not make Bible study a part of your week? If you have any questions, please contact Pastor David or Rachel Shelton.

ST. JACOB'S IS GETTING READY FOR 2021—SIGN UP FOR ALTAR FLOWERS TODAY

As in the past, an altar flower sign-up sheet will be posted in the Narthex on Sunday November 29th and will remain until Sunday, December 27th. Many times, members wish to provide the altar flowers in memory of loved ones or in honor of anniversaries, birthdays, and other special occasions. If there is a particular Sunday YOU would like to furnish the altar flowers for the worship service, please indicate your choice by signing up for that Sunday. If you are not currently attending in-person worship services at the church, you can email Robin Lindler (robinlindler54@gmail.com) to request a Sunday. All open dates will be assigned to other members of the congregation. NOTE: During Advent/Christmas Seasons only one vase of flowers is needed. Also, artificial flowers are never to be used in the altar vases and pot plants are to be used to enhance services on Palm Sunday, Easter Sunday, Pentecost Sunday and Christmas Services - not as altar flowers.

IT'S TIME TO PRINT A 2021 ROSTER

Our current membership roster will be in the Narthex window from Sunday, November 29th until Sunday, December 27th. All members are urged to check their household information to be sure it is correct. We especially need to know if you no longer have a landline and that your cell number, email address or mailing addresses have changed in 2020. If you are attending in-person worship services, you can indicate any updates or changes in the roster. You can also provide the information directly to Robin Lindler – email: robinlindler54@gmail.com; text: 803-622-9247; or call: 803-345-3645. Our Ministry Teams, Auxiliary Groups and members of the congregation use the information from the roster to ensure everyone is made aware of important happenings at St. Jacob's. **Thank-You** for taking the time to help keep our church roster and membership records accurate and up-to-date.

ADVENT VESPERS

The theme for our Advent Vespers will be “Letters from Bethlehem” featuring four brief monologues. Each monologue is a reading of a letter written to loved ones describing the events of Jesus’ birth.

Below is our schedule for mid-week Advent services.

- December 2 – The Angel to a Friend
- December 9 – A Shepherd to His Family
- December 16 – A Wise Man to His Court
- December 23 – Mary to Her Mother

Advent Vespers will begin at 7 PM each Wednesday during the season. We will also receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion at each service. Please plan to attend each week as we anticipate the coming of our Lord Jesus. Social distancing will be observed; and for those who are unable to attend, the services will be streamed live on our Facebook page.

BLUE CHRISTMAS —WORSHIP ON THE LONGEST NIGHT

As Christmas approaches, not everyone gets caught up in the joy of the season. No matter the situation, for some, Christmas is a time of extended grief, sorrow, and loneliness. For these and other reasons, we offer a time for worship and reflection on God’s gift of the Messiah. Worship on the Longest Night, also called Blue Christmas, falls on December 21st, the longest night of the year. This year, due to COVID-19 concerns, we will not gather in person. Our Blue Christmas service of worship will be live streamed on our Facebook page. The service begins at 7 PM.

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

Because of the current pandemic and the need for social distancing, St. Jacob’s will offer two services of worship on Christmas Eve. This is to ensure that we honor our coronavirus protocols we have in place. The first service will begin at 4:30 PM with the second service beginning at 7:30 PM. Holy Communion will be celebrated at each service and both will conclude with the traditional candlelight singing of Silent Night.

In order that we might be faithful to our coronavirus protocols, yet accommodate everyone who would like to attend worship on Christmas Eve, we will post a sign up list on which families shall indicate which

service they will attend and how many will be in their party. We look forward to sharing this most holy evening with you, along with the traditional readings and carols of Christmas.

CHRISTMAS MORNING WORSHIP

All are invited to keep Christ in Christmas and worship with us on Christmas Morning. The Christmas Morning service is “come as you are.” Children in pajamas, adults in relaxed and casual dress are all most certainly welcome. Come make a joyful noise and share in the blessing of Christmas with your church family. Worship with Holy Communion will begin at 10 AM. As always, we will live stream our service on our Facebook page.

UP AND GOING

The Up and Going held a short meeting on Nov 15th after Church services with 11 members present. Sure was good to see all of you. Get Well cards were signed for Davis Brown and Leon Lindler. During August, a memorial was sent to St. Jacob's Cemetery Fund in memory of Gloria Dugan; a memorial was given to the Monts family in memory of Landon, grandson of Sandra and Davis Brown; a memorial was given to the Lindler family in memory of Jamie, granddaughter of Frances Shealy. Birthday cards and get well cards have been sent to appropriate members. Members are reminded to bring non-perishable food items as is our custom in November and December for We Care. The December Meeting will be held after Sunday Church Services on a chosen Sunday in December. Watch Sunday bulletins for date or updates. Take care of yourself and Be Safe. Love to all.

Thanks,
Helen



To our church family and friends, there are no adequate words to express how thankful we are for all the prayers and acts of kindness shown to us during Davis' injury and recovery. Your help has made a difficult time easier to manage. We are so grateful and blessed to be a part of such a wonderful and caring church family. We ask that you continue to keep us in your prayers as Davis continues to heal.

Davis and Sandra Brown



Letter to St. Jacob's from the Water Mission

Your gift to Water Mission is making a significant difference in the lives of people who lack access to safe water. Together, we strive to be the hands and feet of Jesus as we serve those in need.

Thanks to the love and generosity of your congregation, women around the world no longer spend hours every day collecting contaminated water. Children attend school without waterborne illnesses holding them back. The hope of Jesus, the true Living Water, is shared with entire communities through the life-changing, physical gift of safe water.

Water Mission's vision is that all people have safe water and an opportunity to experience God's love. Your generosity is helping to make this vision a reality.

For your prayers, financial support, and all that you are making possible—thank you so much.

Blessings,

George C. Green IV, PE
Chief Executive Office



Thank you for your donation of 302 pounds of food for the month of October 2020.

Your continued support allows us to follow the lead set forth in *Proverbs 22:9* “A generous man will himself be blessed, for He shares his food with the poor.”

Thank you again!

God Bless You
Alicia Klauk
Executive Director

FINANCIAL INFORMATION WEEK OF NOVEMBER 15, 2020

Weekly Giving: \$ 4,766

Budget Requirements: \$ 5,634

MTD Actual Giving: \$ 14,212

MTD Budget Requirements: \$ 16,902

YTD Actual Giving: \$ 243,317.39

YTD Budget Requirements: \$ 259,164

OCTOBER GIVING FROM WALT SHEALY

October 2020 Giving: \$24,499.00

Month To Date Budget Requirements: \$22,536.00

Year To Date Giving: \$229,104.65

Year To Date Budget Requirements: \$242,262.00

SERVING ASSISTANTS FOR DECEMBER

| Date | Time | Usher | Lay Reader | Communion Assistant | Acolyte |
|--------|-------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------|------------------|
| 6-Dec | 10:00 | Chris Doyle | Angela Nuottila | Don Dease | Isabelle Peeples |
| 13-Dec | 8:30 | Carroll Lindler | Phyllis Bickley | Sherrie McTeer | *** |
| | 10:30 | Lynn Shealy | Bob Ziemer | Kristen Nickle | Cora Wallace |
| 20-Dec | 8:30 | Billy McTeer | Rachel Shelton | Carroll Lindler | *** |
| | 10:30 | Don Dease | Helen Lindler | Nicki Peeples | Jack Wallace |
| 24-Dec | 4:30 | TBA | TBA | TBA | TBA |
| | 7:30 | TBA | TBA | TBA | TBA |
| 27-Dec | 8:30 | Lynn Shealy | Susan Shealy | Sherrie McTeer | *** |
| | 10:30 | Bob Ziemer | Gloria Ziemer | A.J. Peeples | Audrey Doyle |

ALTAR FLOWERS DECEMBER

6-Dec Davis and Sandra Brown

13-Dec Wade and Marie Slice

20-Dec Pastor David Nuottila

27-Dec A.J. and Nicki Peeples

GROUNDS TEAM FOR DECEMBER

Co-Chairs—Billy McTeer and Lynn Shealy

Walt Shealy, Danny Shealy, David Kibler, Donald Turner, Jeff Kleckley, Arthur Langley, A.J. Peeples, Michael Corley, Jason Wicker, Bryan Metze

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2020 YEAR END CLOSING

Financial Year End information is due by December 31st. If you have any paperwork (reimbursement requests, receipts to back cash advances, and any leftover cash, etc.) for 2020, please turn your information into Walt Shealy so he can close out the year. If you have any questions, please see Walt.

ANNUAL REPORT INFORMATION

Please be sure and forward your 2021 schedules and 2020 reports to Sherry in the church office by December 31st so your information can be provided in the report booklet. Auxiliaries that have checking accounts, please send that information to me as soon as you receive your statements. Thank you in advance.

MEMBERS SHUT-IN OR IN FACILITIES

Michael, Dewey, Letha, and Minnie Lee. We are not publicizing last names or addresses due to regulations. Please use your directory to find that information; or if you are missing your copy, you may contact Sherry in the church office.

WE CARE

Please continue to bring your donations of non-perishable items for We Care. You may bring your donations to worship with you on Sunday morning, or drop them off at the church office Monday - Thursday from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. When the list changes, it will be posted on the Bulletin Board in the Narthex.

1. Jelly/jam
2. Corn muffin mix
3. Pancake mix
4. Chili beans
5. Chunky soup
6. Progresso soup
7. Canned sweet potatoes
8. Shampoo/conditioner
9. Shaving cream
10. Cleaning supplies

We also ALWAYS need any cleaning supplies, paper products and personal care items.



BIBLE VERSE OF THE MONTH

*She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.
Matthew 1:21*

(803) 345-2309

ChurchOffice@st-jacobs.org

www.st-jacobs.org

Office Hours: Monday through Thursday—9 AM-2 PM

Worship Time: Sundays—8:30 AM & 10:30 AM

Sunday School—9:40 AM

St. Jacob's Lutheran Church

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