

ST. PETER COMMUNICATOR

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December 2021

From the desk of Pastor Peterson

Luke 2:11 ¹¹Today **in the town** of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the LORD.

Grace, mercy, and God's peace to you this Christmas Season. Christmas is upon us and by the time you all read this; the presents will have been opened, meals will have been eaten, and Christmas commercials will be off the air. That is unless you watch the Hallmark Channel! HA! Anyway, humor aside, I hope that every one of you has had a blessed Christmas season.

When I was growing up, my family would always have a dinner (and yes it did include Lutefisk), go to our church's Christmas Eve Program (I always wondered what would be in the brown bag that the church handed out after the service was over), and then we would open our presents. Needless to say, those were exciting times, and I must confess that the real meaning of Christmas was what was under the tree, and what was in my Christmas stocking. To be honest with you, the idea of the birth of Christ was way down on my list of things to be thankful for.

Now, as I have had 20 years in the pastoral ministry and have gotten older and wiser, the idea of gifts under the tree have taken on less meaning, and the greatest gift of all is that Jesus Christ, our savior was born. When you take a little bit to ponder what the birth of Christ means, we can take great comfort in the undeniable fact that God really, really, does love us.

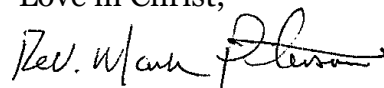
Think about this for a bit. Jesus left heaven to come into the world that He created. He created time, space, the universe, and through His Word, He made the seasons, and all creation. Jesus, the infinite son of God, became finite for us. Let's take a look at two words which we are all familiar with. These words are infinite and finite. Infinite can be defined as an adjective: **infinite 1. limitless or endless in space, extent, or size; impossible to measure or calculate. "the infinite mercy of God"**. Infinite can also be used as an adjective and for the purposes of this letter and what scripture says we will go with: the meaning of the word finite **ADJECTIVE having limits or bounds. "every computer has a finite amount of memory" synonyms: limited · not infinite · subject to limitations ·**

What is so wonderful and comforting for us as children of God is that while it may seem impossible for infinite to be confined in the finite, we have Jesus as an example of this very fact. Jesus, being true God and true man, the 2nd person of the Holy Trinity, The Word Made Flesh!! Took on human flesh and in doing so, became the one who would stand in unity with sinners. As true God, He was perfect in every way. His perfection enabled Jesus to be the perfect sacrifice for our sins (The Lamb Of God who takes away the sins of the world).

Just as we wrap our Christmas presents to give to family and friends, Jesus wraps us with His own righteousness. Our sins have been forgiven and on that last day, when we are "unwrapped" we will be perfect as He is. So, in conclusion, Jesus is the best gift, given to us by God.

I want to wish all of you a very Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year.

Love in Christ,


Pastor Peterson



LUTHERAN WOMEN IN MISSION

Excerpts from the November message of Debbie Larson, LWML President 2019-2023:

LWML Mission Statement: As Lutheran Women in Mission, we joyfully proclaim Christ, support missions, and equip women to honor God by serving others.

We joyfully proclaim Christ: It is a privilege to share what God is doing through the LWML. Blessed by God, this organization has given over \$130 million to fund mission grants and share Jesus' message of salvation since its founding in 1942. By His grace, 28 more mission grants will be funded this biennium.

We support missions: Through Mission Grant #10, men of faith at the Matongo Lutheran Theological College, Kenya, East Africa, will have access to pastoral education projects including scholarships and other seminary needs not only in Kenya, but also in Togo, West Africa, and Uganda. Through Mission Grant #17, Spiritual and Physical Food for Children of Peru, Mercy House, an outreach of the LCMS Missions in Latin America and the Caribbean, will be able to continue feeding families food for their physical bodies as well as sharing the spiritual food which sustains their souls.

We equip women to honor God by serving others: Through Mission Grant #14, Caring for and Sharing Christ with Hurting People, much needed scholarships for deaconess student and assistance with seminary costs will be provided to deliver a high quality theological education at Concordia Seminary St. Louis.

In each issue of the Quarterly, delivered to each woman of the congregation, you will find an updated list of our current mission grants showing the progress being made with our mite donations.

Thanks to all of you for your generous donations to the mite offerings. Mites can be added to the mite box in the Narthex at any time.

To participate in Bible study and to provide input into our local mission efforts, all women are invited to join us on the second Tuesday of each month at 1:00 in the Fellowship Hall.

Gifts of Love: Free at Last Ministry

As has been our custom during the last few years, we will once again be collecting items of warm winter clothing for the participants in the Free at Last ministry in Milwaukee. Patrick Batom directs the ministry of Free at Last at Mission of Christ Lutheran Church in Milwaukee. Through Chaplain Afam Ikanih at the House of Correction, they build a relationship with the men and women incarcerated there, and share God's love with them. Because their biggest challenges start when they are released, he gives them Free at Last contact information and invites them to stay connected with a support group outside the prison walls.

With the help of Patrick and the support of Mission of Christ, the former inmates are offered Bible study, one-on-one counseling, fellowship, meals, food and clothing, a backpack with hygienic and devotional items, bus passes and other supportive resources. Many find help for employment. Often they and their families become confirmed and baptized members of the congregation.

We are blessed to be able to help this group of post-offenders with our gifts of warm winter clothing. Any gently used clothing and blankets are needed. However, socks and underwear are in big demand. Please contribute any items you are no longer using to this ministry as one way we can show the love of Jesus to those who seek to start a new life beyond the prison walls. We give thanks to Rev. Ikanih and Patrick for their dedication to and support of all God's children. We will be receiving clothing items until December 31.





Mission Matters

International Outreach: UWM

International Outreach (IO) is affiliated with International Student Ministry, a Recognized Service Organization (RSO) of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. This mission began at Luther Memorial Chapel in 2010 as an international outreach of caring volunteers to University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee students to help improve their English-speaking skills while lovingly sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Through hospitality, friendship, English language classes, Bible reading and a Worldview Conversations class, they share the love of Jesus with those from other lands. The popular Exchange Room, maintained with donated goods, offer a variety of mainly household items at no cost to our international friends. The majority of those served are associated with UWM for one year and often includes their spouses, children and parents. They have been blessed to see dozens of people come to faith in our Lord and be baptized and even confirmed into God's family.

The staff members of IO ask that you would pray for their mission regularly.

'Lutherans Engage the World' Returns to Print

By Megan Mertz



Storm clouds gather near St. Paul Lutheran Church in the Marigny area of New Orleans in July. The November issue of *Lutherans Engage the World* includes a story about the Rev. Andrew Schlund, missionary pastor to St. Paul's. (LCMS/Erik M. Lunsford)

After a yearlong printing hiatus, *Lutherans Engage the World* magazine will arrive in mailboxes once again in November.

Although the pandemic disrupted many things, it could not stop the Gospel from going forth or keep Lutherans from serving their neighbors. In the Fall 2021 issue, read about how:

- **Two deaconesses** — one in Summerville, S.C., and the other in Anchorage, Alaska — are serving their congregations with joy.
- **The new bishop** of the Synod's partner church in Finland is standing up to persecution.
- **Young people** were encouraged by attending the 2021 National Lutheran Youth Workers Conference in Houston.

Copies of the new issue are currently available in the narthex.

Christmas Brunch

Women in Mission will be hosting a Christmas Brunch on **Sun., Dec. 12th**. Church will be at our regular time, and Christmas activities and the brunch will follow immediately after the service. You are welcome to invite family and friends to join us, as we prepare to celebrate Christ's birth.

We will provide egg bakes, French toast bake, ham, fruit, doughnuts, and beverages. There will be Christmas music and activities to enjoy, as well as door prizes.

So find a favorite lunch (brunch) item to share and come join in the fun! To help us with our planning, please take a moment to sign up on the sheet provided in the narthex by **Dec. 5th**.



Readers Answer Call to Write for LW

By Roy Askins

For the November 2021 issue of The Lutheran Witness, we tried something different. We asked readers of LW — and Reporter — to submit articles on topics of their choice. You answered the call and submitted a total of 72 stories. Thank you.

We whittled down the list to seven stories. They include such topics as advice from Martin Luther on how to comfort those who mourn and guidance from C.F.W. Walther on the relationship between church and state.

Additional articles offer low-cost ways to beautify your church and reflections on how burying one-quarter of a congregation's members in five years helped the congregation reflect on their life in Christ. We also have stories from a former missionary to Papua New Guinea and a mother who struggles to understand the Proverbs 31 woman. Everyone should be able to find something in this issue to pique your interest.

Finally, this issue also has a special announcement. If you have read and enjoyed Katie Schuermann's *Anthems of Zion* series from Concordia Publishing House, you will be pleased to read that Schuermann will continue her saga next year in the pages of *The Lutheran Witness*. In 2022, every issue of LW will contain one new story about the members of Zion Lutheran Church in the fictional town of Bradbury, Ill. And, if you want to reread the stories before the new series starts (or read them for the first time), check out Katie's book club.

Bake/Craft Sale

Women in Mission will be having a Bake/Craft Sale on **Sat., Dec. 11th** in the Fellowship Hall from **9 – 1**.

An assortment of cookies, sweet breads, and candy for the holidays will be available, along with a variety of crafts made by our members. Proceeds from the Bake Sale will go towards "Knapsacks for Foster Kids" to provide needed items for children, who are in foster care, through Calumet County services. This will be a Thrivent Action Team project, and we thank them for their assistance. Proceeds from the Craft Sale will be used to help Women in Mission, as they do their projects to help others throughout the year.

Donations of baked goods or crafts for the sale are certainly welcome. You may contact Eva Kamps or Bonnie Teinert for more information. We look forward to seeing you at the sale to support these projects, as we reach out to help our brothers and sisters in Christ, who are in need of help.

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
LCMS Stewardship Ministry
Newsletter article – December 2021

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the great physician of both body and soul, healed a man with dropsy by His Word on the Sabbath (Luke 14:1–6). Dropsy is a paradoxical ailment, with an unquenchable craving for drink even though the body is over inflated with fluid, a craving that, when indulged, served not to ease but to feed the disease.

And so, if a man drinks a great deal but is never filled, he sees a doctor to inquire about what ails him, what is wrong with his body, and how to remedy it. For that is not thirst but a disease (Seneca, *Consolation to His Mother Helvia*, 11.3).

But if the owner of five couches goes looking for 10, or the owner of 10 tables buys up as many again, and even though he has plenty of land and money, he remains unsatisfied and desires yet more, losing sleep and always in discontent, does he not also require a physician to diagnose the cause of this distress?

For this is not want or lack, it's a disease (Aristippus, quoted in Plutarch, *Love of Wealth*, 524b). As St. Augustine of Hippo wrote, “we may rightly compare the dropsical man to a covetous rich man: For the more the one is swollen with excess of water, the more he thirsts; so also the other: The more he abounds in riches ... the more eagerly he desires them” (*The Sunday Sermons of the Great Fathers*, 4:135). Both require physicians. Both require diagnosis and medicine applied from the outside to the inward being. For these are not desires to be fulfilled but diseases to be cured.

This is why our Lord instructs us to not to be consumed by money. “No one can serve two masters ... You cannot serve God and money” (Matt. 6:24; Luke 16:13). Our desire for money, like the disease dropsy, is never satisfied. We always desire more. We think, “If I just had this much then I would be happy.”

But even when that much comes, which God gladly gives, happiness evades us. The desire for

more is never satisfied. It demands our constant energy, either in procuring more or protecting what we already have. When this happens, God, in His mercy, shows us that the money that He has given is no longer serving us, but we it. We have another master.

To overcome this, we need a physician's diagnosis and a physician's remedy. And our Lord Jesus Christ, our great physician of both body and soul, applies His Word to us as He did to the man healed of dropsy. He shows us how we have put our fear, love, and trust in our money and not feared, loved, and trusted in Him above all things.

In essence, He says, “Stop chasing after these fleeting things. They are vanity. They are the things that moth and rust destroy. You cannot have two masters. Repent!” And in seeing our great error, we are sorry that we have not fully feared, loved, and trusted in God above all things. And, in the mercy and grace that He earned for us on the cross, He takes away this sin, restores us to health, and bids us to live.

But then what? What do we do with this healing balm and care that our great physician has given? Do we simply go back to our old ways? “By no means!” St. Paul says (Rom. 3:31; 6:2). We do not just go back to the old ways, the ways that lead us to death. No, we live a new life, a life filled with the grace, mercy and love of God toward us. And God's great mercy, grace, and love toward is so abundant that it overflows and pours out onto those around us.

So we no longer hoard money and possessions. We no longer scrape and crawl our way to amass more. We give to those around us, as God in Christ has given to us. We press our money and possessions into service for those who need it: our family, our society and our church. For money is God's gift to us to serve us and others. Not the other way around. It serves us because it is a gift from our Father in heaven.

– LCMS Stewardship Ministry
lcms.org/stewardship

Our Response to His Love

11-07-21

10-31-21

10-24-21

10-17-21

General Fund	\$2360	\$940	\$600	\$1668
Missions	\$52			
Tech Fund				\$1500
Totals	\$2412	\$940	\$600	\$3168

UPCOMING SPECIAL SERVICES

Midweek Advent Services

Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. @ St. Peter

Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. @ St. Luke

December 1, 8, 15, 22

Christmas Eve

December 24th 5:00 p.m. @ St. Peter

7:00 p.m. @ St. Luke

Christmas Day

December 25th 9:00 a.m. @ St. Peter

New Year's Eve

December 31st 6:00 p.m. @ St. Peter

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Dec. 9th Don & Karen Price

Happy Birthday

December

- 1 Susan Reeve
- 2 Abby Marose
- 3 Pastor Peterson
- 5 Elena Weyenberg
- 6 Doug Koffarnus
Coreen Behnke
- 7 Wally Jentsch
Tom Kamps
- 10 Michael Hostettler
Rebekah Bergelin
- 11 Lori Ott
- 12 Debbie Manders
- 13 Dean Bergelin
- 15 Sue Plate
- 17 Germaine Zahn
- 23 Ben Marose

December 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Altar Guild: Cheri Koffarnus Bonnie Ott Bonnie Teinert	Greeters: 5th LouAnn Seidl 12th George & Carol Krepline 19th Donna Marose 26th Ron & Dolores Bornemann		1 10:30 Midweek Advent Service <i>4:00p Confirmation Class @ St. Luke</i>	2	3	4
5 2nd Sunday in Advent <i>Violet</i> 8:30 Divine Service 9:30 Sunday School	6	7 9:00 Making & Frosting Cookies 7:00p Revelation Bible Study	8 10:30 Midweek Advent Service <i>4:00p Confirmation Class @ St. Luke</i>	9	10	11 Bake/Craft Sale 9:00-1:00
12 3rd Sunday in Advent <i>Violet</i> 8:30 Divine Service (NC) Christmas Brunch	13	14 7:00p Revelation Bible Study	15 10:30 Midweek Advent Service <i>4:00p Confirmation Class @ St. Luke</i>	16	17	18
19 4th Sunday in Advent <i>Violet</i> 8:30 Divine Service 9:30 Sunday School	20 Newsletter articles due	21 7:00p Revelation Bible Study	22 10:30 Midweek Advent Service <i>4:00p Confirmation Class @ St. Luke</i>	23	24 Christmas Eve <i>White</i> Christmas Candlelight Service 5:00p St Peter 7:00p St. Luke	25 Christmas Day <i>White</i> Christmas Day Service 9:00 @ St. Peter --- Pastor Away --->
26 1st Sunday after Christmas <i>White</i> 8:30 Divine Service (NC)	27	28	29	30	31 New Years Eve <i>White</i> New Year's Eve Service w/ HC 6:00p @ St. Peter	
<----- Pastor Away ----->						

Divine Services marked (NC) will not have Holy Communion