



DECEMBER 2020

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From the Pastor...

And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David ca Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased."—Luke 2:10-14

Glory to God in the highest, for He has brought salvation to His people. Glory to God in the highest, for He has fulfilled his promise. Glory to God in the highest for He has brought peace to the earth. Glory to God in the highest, He has sent us a Savior.

But this is no ordinary Savior. It is not one that you would expect with sword and shield, with power and might, with brawn and boldness. It is nothing like the angels that shine in majesty and cause men to fall on their faces. It isn't like the hosts of heaven which could destroy the earth and every enemy therein without breaking a sweat. ... No, this Savior has none of that glory; none of the glory that makes you tremble with fear, none of the glory that surely makes the shepherds drop to their knees in subjection and hide their faces from the glorious sight they see. ... The glory of God is to be found in a stable; a smelly, animal-infested, barn. It is to be found wrapped in simple linen and placed in a trough where cows and goats and donkeys eat. It is to be found in the arms of a teenage girl while an overwhelmed carpenter struggles mightily to provide any sort of comfort he can to his bride amongst the filth of that stall.

The angels tell the shepherds, "Go to Bethlehem and find a stable. Go there and seek out a dumbstruck virgin mother and an equally overwhelmed lowly father; their faces locked somewhere between joy and terror like only the faces of new parents can be. Go and find this scene, this sign, and tell them what you have seen and heard. Tell them who you know this child to be. And then go and tell everyone you meet. Glorify God and praise His name because He has now brought peace to the earth and it is for all people!"

And this peace is something new. It's not a peace that you would expect, not a peace that a mighty king and his army can bring. It isn't even a peace that can even really be seen or noticed here on earth with human eyes and ears. It is a peace beyond all of that, beyond the understanding of our feeble and sinful little minds. It is a peace that only God can bring because it is a peace between God and man.

This type of peace you would expect would be brought through the glories of heaven, through pomp and circumstance and bright lights and trumpets blaring. You would expect that this sort of peace would be brought by a mighty man of God, who is unmistakable in sight and appearance. ... But it isn't. If the shepherds had not been told what to look for, they would have never found it, never even known to look for it. They would have gone their entire lives without ever knowing anything about it because it is a peace that is so backwards and crazy, so unimaginable and lowly, so humble and simple that it seems to be nothing at all. ... But it is everything!

“You will find a child, yes a child. Nothing more than that. Just a simple child in a simple stable with simple clothes and simple parents. He will look nothing like the glories of heaven because He has laid all that aside. Instead, He is just like you, just like your little ones, just like every other baby that has ever been born, that has ever cried out in hunger, that has ever soiled a diaper. ... Here is the glory of heaven all wrapped up in the flesh of mankind.”

God’s glory is now nothing like it should be. We may want to find it angel choirs and wondrous visions. But those glories are hidden from the eyes of sinful men. They must be, because a sinner can’t see them, not if he wants to go on living. For sin separates us from God. In fact, it makes us enemies of Him, brings us to war with Him. And this is a war that we can never win, never come out victorious, never end up on the right side of, not while we are still sinners. ... And so God brings His glory to us in the simplest of ways: A child.

Simple beginnings and a simple end. Naked, except for a few stripes of linen at His birth. Naked except for a few stripes of linen at His death. Laid in a wooden manger. Nailed to a wooden cross. Crying out like a newborn baby. Crying out like a man being tortured to death. Sweat and blood and filth of a birth. Sweat and blood and filth of a crucifixion. Here is the glories of heaven now in the unlikeliest of places: a stable in Bethlehem and a hill outside of Jerusalem. ... This is Christmas, and it is nothing without Good Friday. The birth we celebrate this December we do so only because of the death we celebrate in April. It is a new sort of glory that brings about the only sort of peace that matters: peace between God and man.

In Christ, Rev. Eli

What We Believe – Augsburg Confession

Article XVI—Civil Government

Note: It was important for Lutherans to make clear they did not share the beliefs of the radical reformers of the sixteenth century. Some of these radicals rejected all forms of order and authority, in both Church and State, even rejecting their homes and families in order to be “super spiritual.” This article points to the biblical doctrine of two kingdoms, a way of speaking about God’s care for us spiritually through the Church and temporally through the various order in society: chiefly, home and government. Christians live out their various callings in life in service to God and their fellow humans, doing so in the stations, or situations, to which God has called them. (See also AP XVI.)

Our churches teach that lawful civil regulations are good works of God. They teach that it is right for Christians to hold political office, to serve as judges, to judge matters by imperial laws and other existing laws, to impose just punishments, to engage in just wars, to serve as soldiers, to make legal contracts, to hold proper, to take oaths when required by the magistrates, for a man to marry a wife, or a woman to be given in marriage (Romans 13; 1 Corinthians 7:2).

Our churches condemn the Anabaptists who forbid these political offices to Christians. They also condemn those who do not locate evangelical perfection in the fear of God in faith, but place it in forsaking political offices. For the Gospel teaches an eternal righteousness of the heart (Romans 10:10). At the same time, it does not require the destruction of the civil state or the family. The Gospel very much requires that they be preserved as God’s ordinances. Therefore, it is necessary for Christians to be obedient to their rulers and laws. The only exception is when they are commanded to sin. Then they ought to obey God rather than men. (Acts 5:29).

Something Worth Reading

Martin Luther, teaching on The Magnificat (Luther's Works/American Edition, Volume 21, page 321.)

“Mary confesses that the foremost work God did for her was that He regarded her which is indeed the greatest of His works, on which all the rest depend and from which they all derive. For where it comes to pass that God turns His face toward one to regard him, there is nothing but grace and salvation, and all gifts and works must follow. ... And that Mary herself regards this as the chief thing, she indicates by saying: ‘Behold, since He has regarded me, all generations will call me blessed.’ ... Note that she does not say men will speak all manner of good of her, praise her virtues, exalt her virginity or her humility, or sing of what she has done. But for this one thing alone, that God regarded her, men will call her blessed.”

Advent Worship Schedule

Midweek Services

*Wednesday, December 9th -Evening
Prayer - 6:30pm*

*Wednesday, December 16th -Evening
Prayer - 6:30pm*

Sunday Services

*Sunday, December 13th - Third Sunday
in Advent - Divine Service - 9am and
11am*

*Sunday, December 20th - Fourth Sunday
in Advent - Divine Service - 9am and
11am*

Christmas Eve

*Thursday, December 24th
5pm, 7pm, and 11pm*

Christmas Day

*Friday, December 25th
10am*

*(Please note that these times may change as circumstances change.
Be sure to look out for emails and Facebook posts for the latest info or contact the church office.)*





LUTHERAN WOMEN IN MISSION

"Be Still"

Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth. Psalm 46:10

Welcome to all Women of the Congregation!

Mission of the Month

Digital Media Development, Lutherans For Life - \$30,000

LFL believes our Savior is calling them to share the truth in love. Life issues such as abortion, embryo experimentation, and physician-assisted suicide, are not political choices but matters of the heart that affect people, neighbors, loved ones, and family. Digital avenues like the internet, smartphones, and social media offer an open mission field to connect to people, particularly the younger generations before they face such life issues. The Digital Media Development grant funds will assist in creating a collection of infographics, memes, shareable video clips, webinars, and podcasts. These tools have the unique ability not only to proclaim how God's power and presence makes human lives worthy - especially to the least and the weakest among us.



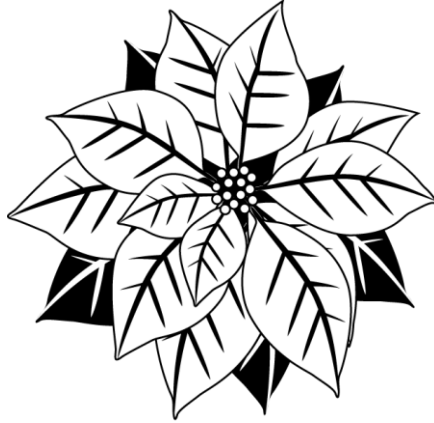
MITE BOX SUNDAY IS DECEMBER 13

Pray for our LWML mission grants that share Jesus with the world.
Fill your Mite Box!

THE ANGEL TREE

The Angel Tree has been up for the last four weeks accepting your gifts for the teenagers connected with the Family Tree. The LWML thanks you for joining us in supporting the Family Tree and your outpouring of gifts. Just a few statistics from the Family Tree...14,090 Crisis Helpline Calls Received, 1,655 Children served on Family Tree Programs, 43 Domestic Violence Outreach educational presentations given, and 9,411 Nights of safe shelter provided at House of Hope, women and children homeless shelter. All data is for fiscal year 7/2019 - 6/2020. Family Tree works with vulnerable populations in the seven-county Denver metro region. Clients have a history of poverty, trauma and/or crisis in family units. All the above programs provide individualized support to help move a client toward self-sufficiency and economic success. Gifts will be delivered the week of December 6th.

POINSETTIA ORDERS



This Advent season, you have the opportunity to order a poinsettia in honor or memory of loved ones. The poinsettias will decorate the sanctuary from now until Christmas Day and may be picked up following the worship service on December 25th.

Please include the following information and a check in the amount of \$12 for each poinsettia and drop it in the offering plate. Make checks payable to Wheat Ridge Lutheran Church with the memo line 'Poinsettia.'

Given by: _____

In memory or honor of: _____
(please pick one)

How many? _____

Amount enclosed: _____
(\$12 per plant)



Pastor Eli has a podcast...again! Season 2 of the Uncultured Saints is now available.

Back by unpopular demand, the Uncultured Saints brings you Season Deux: Parables. You might have heard it said that parables are "earthly stories with a heavenly meaning." Maybe this is true, but perhaps a better way to look at them is as "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." And if they are mysteries then they can't be about ethics or morals...though this is how we treat them most of the time. Instead mysteries are about the Gospel, and the Gospel is about Jesus, so parables are about Christ. Christ is the Subject, the Actor, the One doing the work. We can find ourselves in the parables...but only as the ones receiving Jesus. The podcast can be found on the Higher Things website here:

<https://higherthings.org/the-uncultured-saints>

Welcome!

As you pass by the church office, you'll notice a new face. Lucy Simons has joined our staff in the role of church secretary.

While she has a degree in music education and was a former music teacher for a small, private Christian school, she has experience in office administration as well. She used her office skills to help pay for her college education.

Lucy, her husband, Alan, and two boys, Henry and George have been members of Wheat Ridge Lutheran for

just over a year. Lucy is involved in the church choir and the LWML. In her spare time, Lucy enjoys bullet journaling, playing the flute, arranging music, and making Chrismons.

Over the next few weeks, please take time to stop by the church office and give Lucy a warm welcome.



MERRY CHRISTMAS

and

HAPPY NEW YEAR