

THE GRAPEVINE

Greetings Faithful Disciples of Jesus,

Advent begins this Sunday, December 2 and it is always such a wonderful time of the year. We put a special emphasis on the arrival, the coming, and the birth of Jesus during the Advent season, but truly, Jesus deserves this amplified focus all year long.

During the season of Advent, can you imagine God telling you, first of all, that the Messiah is coming and, second of all, that you have the mission of preparing the way for him. Imagine being Advance Person for Jesus! How would you handle it?

Knowing myself, I'm sure that I would be intimidated for a moment. Why me? What credentials do I have for such a task? There must be a million people better qualified as PR experts and ten million who are better qualified spiritually than I am.

But then I would get hold of myself and relax. After all, if God picked me for the job, God must know what he is doing. Besides, I know that's how God works:

- * God picked ABRAHAM, an ordinary hayseed from Ur of the Chaldees.
- * God picked MOSES, who had been discredited both as a Jew and an Egyptian.
- * God picked PETER, who smelled of fish and who flew off the handle with some regularity.
- * God picked SAUL, who had been murdering Christians.

They all did all right. So if God picks me for a job, things will work out. Whatever I don't know, God knows. We'll manage. Besides, the call would be so dramatic. How often do you hear a voice from heaven saying: "Make ready the way of the Lord. Make his paths straight. Every valley will be filled. Every mountain and hill will be brought low. The crooked will become straight, and the rough ways smooth. All flesh will see God's salvation" (Luke 3: 4-6)

Join me in preparing the way for the Lord. You and I are God's people who have been chosen to:

- * Prepare the way of the Lord * Make his paths straight * Fill in the valleys
- * Flatten out the mountains * Make the crooked roads straight
- * Make the rough ways smooth so that all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

God called John the Baptist to prepare the way of the Lord in the first century. He calls us to prepare the way of the Lord in the twenty-first century. And we do that every week:

- * As we worship together * As we invite our friends, relatives and co-workers to worship with us
- * As we eat together and sing together * As we praise God together.

As we do all of these things, we prepare the way of the Lord.

We need not be rich or famous to prepare the way of the Lord. We need not be well-educated or sophisticated to prepare the way of the Lord. We need only to be servants of the Lord. We need only be people who have received Jesus into our own lives so that we might be enabled to help others receive him into their lives.

Dawson Trotman put it this way:

Soul winners are not soul winners because of what they know, but because of Whom they know, and how well they know Him, and how much they long for others to know Him. During this Advent season, let us receive Jesus again into our lives. Let us make Jesus Lord again of our lives. Let us allow Jesus to remake us and remold us and refashion us again so that, once again, he might allow us the privilege of preparing his way into our world.

May we be "Soul Winners" for Jesus and bring one new soul to church during the month of December.

Blessings+
Pastor Don



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CHURCH NEWS

Scripts Orders

The next Scripts order will be turned in this **Sunday, December 2**. Gift cards make great Christmas gifts! Start shopping now for all of your holiday needs. Please see Carole Ross for a complete list of available gift cards. This will be the last opportunity to order until next year's Holiday Season.

Poinsettias

We are taking orders for Poinsettias to help beautify the sanctuary for the celebration of the Christ child's birth, so we'd like to encourage everyone to order one. Please sign up to order by **Sunday, December 9** so they can be delivered in time for Christmas Eve. Thank you!

Youth Group

We've had a few changes to the Youth Group schedule. **We now meet on Friday evenings from 6:00-7:30 pm, unless there is a scheduled outing or other event that week.** We are planning to meet **December 7 & 14**.

On **December 7**, the youth will be helping to set up for Breakfast with Santa for Saturday morning. Many hands make light work, so we hope to see you there!

Christmas Eve Play

This year's Christmas Eve play is a modern spin on the Nativity and should be a lot of fun! Practices will be held **December 16** after Sunday School and **December 23** after second service. Please see Donna Myers to sign up or for more information.

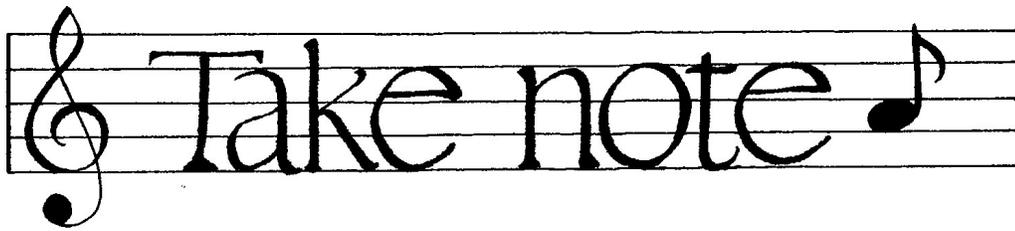
Pat Baker

Pat Baker is settled into her new place in Colorado and her daughter, Autumn, called the church to give us her new address. I'm sure she would appreciate a note from her church family. If you would like to send a card, it's: Pat Baker, 1055 Adams Circle, Apt. 924, Boulder, CO, 80303

A Christmas Carol

Mackenzie Bryant will be performing with The Children's Theater of Southern Indiana in Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" at Eykamp Theater on **December 8 at 7:00pm and December 9 at 2:30pm**. Tickets are \$10 each and can be purchased online at <https://bit.ly/2BHeH5e>





Take note

Advent is here! Our service music changes! And our service music changes again on Christmas Eve!!! Every Sunday in Advent we sing “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” as we wait in anticipation of the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. How exciting!!!!

For the traditional Christmas Eve service, the choir has been diligently working on some beautiful music. Vocal soloists and our “mini orchestra” are also practicing to give our best to the Christ child.

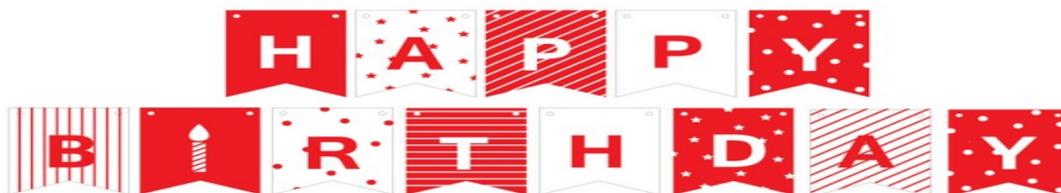
Traditional Christmas Eve service begins at 7:00 p.m. Come early to get a good seat!!! We will have pre-service music beginning at 6:45 as the musicians will play and you can join in singing Christmas Carols. Hopefully, we will also have youth share their musical talents with us during this time.

This is a very busy time of year often bringing a significant level of stress as we are out and about in search of that “perfect” gift for family and friends; hosting/preparing food for family gatherings/parties; and for some, seasonal depression can kick into gear (especially for those who have lost loved ones). There may be holes in your heart for whatever reason, but come worship with us and be surrounded by an atmosphere of Christ’s love through the church body to help you heal those wounds. Make it a priority to attend worship services all thru Advent and Christmas Eve and bring some unchurched friends and family members, too!

My Christ be born anew in us this Christmas!!!

Musically in Christ

Debra Ordner



12/1—Nolan Miller
12/4—Gary Simpson
12/5—Carole Ross
12/5—Don Rodd

12/6—Morgan Goebel
12/10—Kathy Ewing
12/10—Kevin Browning
12/12—Doris Wiegand

12/14—Juan Trevino
12/24—Natalie Clark
12/28—James Porter





Breakfast with Santa

Mark your calendars! Breakfast with Santa will be held on Saturday, **December 8 from 9:00-11:30 AM**. We are collecting *French Toast Sticks, syrup, and apple juice to serve for breakfast*. Also, please think about where you would like to help; sign-up sheets for helpers are in the Gathering Area. Thank you for all you do to help make this a fantastic outreach event!




MISSIONAL SERVICES

Angel Tree

We have partnered with St. Mark's Preschool and Dexter Elementary to collect gifts for 10 children for the Angel Tree. Tags are hanging on the Christmas tree near the coat room. Please bring in wrapped gifts, with the tag, no later than **Friday, December 14** so they can be delivered to Dexter before Christmas Break. Thank you!

Toys for Tots

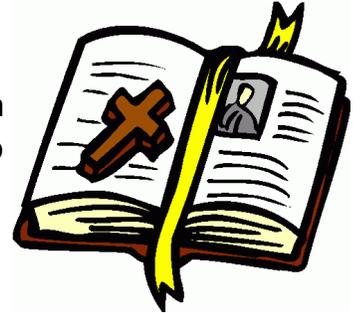
The Salvation Army will be collecting donations in the forms of cash, check, and toys for Christmas through the first several weeks of December. If you can help make sure these kids have a gift this Christmas, please put your new and unwrapped gift in the Salvation Army collection box near the parking lot doors, or in the tub on the bench near the coat room. Gifts are collected for infants through age 16.



There's a place for you!

Evening Bible Study

The evening Bible Study will meet **December 4 & 17 from 6:30 to 8:00 pm** at St. Mark's. We will be studying the book of Luke and you do not need to be a member of St. Mark's to join. Please contact Diane Meier if interested.



Ladies' Christmas Party

The Ladies' Christmas Party will be held **Sunday, December 2 at noon**, right after second service. Cost will be \$2.00 for the meal. Please also bring a \$2.00 gift to be used for prizes to play Jingo. We hope to see you there!

Lunch Crew

The Lunch Crew will meet **December 17 at 12:00 pm**. Please watch the bulletin and eVine for more information. This is a great opportunity to spend time with your church family outside of the church walls. Join us for good food and great fellowship. All are welcome!

Creative Hands

Creative Hands fellowship group will meet Wednesday, **December 12 from 9am-2pm** and also on **Saturday, December 15 from 9am-8pm** in the Fellowship Hall. Bring your own creative project to work on plus any snacks or lunch you might want. There will be people here during the times listed, however, you are welcome to come when you like and leave when you need. Hope to see you there! —Susann Betz



New Small Groups

Small groups are an excellent way to connect with and get to know members of your church family who are interested in similar things or have similar life experiences. If you would like to start a small group, please contact the church office to let us know and we will be happy to help you promote it in the newsletters and bulletins.



We Remember In Our Prayers

The family of Victor
Schuler,
Leon Meyer,
Olivia & Adam Spicer,
Sandra & Randy Lowe,
Ray Pfender,
Richard Torres,
Mary Ferley,

Darrell M.,
Clifford Schmidt,
Dottie Peteritas,
Jim Brogan,
Evie Ferguson,
Kelcie Richart,
Kimberlee Grimm,
Bryce Pitlick,

John Williams,
Skip Herrera & family,
Arlene Sellers,
Sharon Bieber,
Sharon Cota,
Michael Lawson,
Mary Lou Thayer, and
Ken & Jan Heugel



Let Us Pray...

God of majesty and promise, who spoke and this world was, who breathed and this world lived, who counts the hairs upon our heads, sees our thoughts, reads our hearts and loves us more than we deserve, how can we not bring to you this offering of praise? For in the child at Bethlehem lies the promise of intimacy with a Savior who would die even for me, and the promise of an eternity in which to praise you more each day. God of majesty and promise, we praise your holy name.

Amen.

—Birch, John. *The Act of Prayer: Praying through the Lectionary*, Bible Reading Fellowship.

Please Remember Our Shut-Ins and Homebound Members

Arthur Aarstad—*Newburgh Healthcare*
Norma Cobb—*Home*
Jan Heugel—*Protestant Home*
Ken Heugel—*Protestant Home*
Dottie Peteritas—*Oasis Dementia Care*



December Ministry Schedule

	12/2	12/9	12/16	12/23	12/24 Christmas Eve	12/30
Altar Guild	J— Deb Schade T— Jason & Christy Borg					
Usher	Dan & Lynne Mowrey	John & Janet Voyles	Scott & Linda Larsen	Mike & Judi Chase	Bob Parker & Mark Zeller	Tom Pfender & Jim Weitzel
Greeter	J— Amanda Summers & Joey Hardy T— Dan & Lynne Mowrey	J—Carole Ross & Cheri Kieffner T—John & Janet Voyles	J—Jim & Deb Schade T—Scott & Linda Larsen	J—Arlene Sellers & Sharon Arvidson T—Mike & Judi Chase	J—Jon & Sara Watson T—Bob Parker & Mark Zeller	J—Margaret Boyles & Cathy Goller T—Bob & Gayle Carter
Communion Assistant	J— T—	J— T—	J— T—	J— T—	J— T—	J— T—
Nursery Attendant	J— Jayme Trevino T—	J— Kelsie Tarter T—	J— Diane Hawkins T—	J— Sharon Arvidson T—Sharon Arvidson	J— T—	J— Margaret Boyles T—
Lector	Lavon Niehaus	Mackenzie Bryant	LaVon Niehaus	Lynn Wahoski	LaVon Niehaus	LaVon Niehaus
Acolyte	Mackenzie Bryant	Isabella Nelson	Mackenzie Bryant	Isabella Nelson	Mackenzie Bryant	Isabella Nelson
Assisting Minister	Sherri Zeller	Mark Zeller	Jeff Braun	Karen Dunlap	Larry Gajderowicz	Sherri Zeller
Coffee Hour	Meier—Gray	Larsen	Arvidson—Hawkins		SOUP & SANDWICHES Please sign up	Sellers—Myers
Kids' Church	J— Susan Gray T— Susan Gray	J— Susan Gray T— Susan Gray	J— Susan Gray T— Susan Gray	J— Susan Gray T— Susan Gray	J— Susan Gray T— Susan Gray	J— Susan Gray T— Susan Gray
Media Ministry	J— Donna Myers T— Mike & Donna Myers					



St. Mark's Lutheran Church
2300 Washington Avenue
Evansville, IN 47714



Please join us for worship each Sunday

9 am Contemporary Service

10 am Coffee Hour/Sunday School

11 am Traditional Service