



Hope Lutheran Church

Enumclaw, Washington

The Messenger of Hope

"Member of the Plateau Ministerial Association"

Pastor Dan's Corner

This day dawned bright and cold. Our house looks to the east, and the sun coming up over the hills caused the frost-covered ground to glisten like diamonds as the sun rose to herald a new day. In the midst of winter's darkness, it is a treat to see the sun and blue sky. Enjoy the brightness of the day, and soak in a little vitamin D. As I look to the East, the light of new hope and possibility make me forget the dreariness of darkness and rain in the midst of winter's cold.

People, Look East! The Advent hymn (ELW 248) calls us to look not towards the darkness of the winter of life, but to the bright possibility now approaching. "Shining beyond the frosty weather, bright as the sun and moon together... People look east and sing today, Love the star is on the way." That song is alive, ringing in my ears and ringing through the hills as it is lived out on this frosty morning.

We will sing that song at second service on December 11 as we prepare our hearts for the Advent of our Lord. "People look east. The time is near of the crowning of the year. Make your house fair as you are able, trim the hearth and set the table. People look east, and sing today,

Love the guest is on the way."

And we are preparing for Love the guest, the Christ child's arrival, trimming not just the hearth, but the whole sanctuary. All decked out in Advent blue, the color that represents hopefulness. Garland strung, tree decorated, festive and ready for the arrival of our most important guest.

I hope and pray that in the busyness of the season, you will have time to reflect this Advent about what hopefulness you have for your life. What do you truly hope for? Not what you hope to find under the tree on Christmas morning, but what you really hope for in your life.

Advent is a time to reflect on that hopefulness. To sit quietly for a few precious moments and pray. Talk intimately with the Creator of the Universe, one on one, about what you feel deep within you, what you truly hope for in your life and in this world.

For it is in that quiet prayer that the false importance of all the hype of Christmas sales is exposed, and the true meaning of Christmas, hope for you, your family, your neighbor, and this world, rises from the dark shadow of the mall. Hope "shining us not

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Emotional Decisions

I just finished knocking on 1000 doors in my reelection campaign. I observed the different ways people come to decisions. One lesson that I learned is that when decisions are made emotionally, no amount of logic or reason will change any minds. I know because I tried. The reason I mention this is because all of us have made emotional decisions and this fact often keeps us from growing and changing.

I reminded of the Pharisees and Sadducees in their decisions about Jesus. He posed a threat to them because he offered a different way of thinking. His words turned their world upside down and threatened the whole structure of their society. When Jesus tried to reason with them, the Pharisees and Sadducees, instead of looking at his logic decided instead to kill him. Let me give you a few examples:

Jesus had just healed the invalid at the Pool of Bethesda. Jesus said to the man: 'Get up! Pick up your mat and walk... Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, which was against Jewish law, so the Jews persecuted him. Jesus said to them, 'My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working.' For this reason the Jews tried all the harder to kill him" (John 5:2-18). Why did they try to kill him? Had they made an emotional decision about what could and couldn't be done on the Sabbath, and would/could not change their

views?

A second example is when Jesus healed the paralytic who had been lowered through the roof by his friends. When Jesus healed him "The teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, 'Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone' " (Matthew 2:4-6)? They ignored the miracle that had just taken place before their eyes, and focused instead on his forgiving the man his sins.

Paul also had this problem after his conversion: "Saul grew more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ. After many days had gone by, the Jews conspired to kill him, but Saul learned of their plan" (Acts 9:22-23). Here Paul gave them solid logical proof, yet the response was that the Jews tried to kill him. Why? Because they had already made an emotional decision about Jesus not being the Messiah, and Paul tried to prove them wrong.

So, we see three times in Scripture that when people who had made emotional decisions were given facts and logical arguments, they instead became even harder in their beliefs. Are we also guilty of this when confronted with new, different information? Do we refuse to listen to logic because we made an emotional decision and no amount of logic or facts is going to change us? How does that make us different from the Pharisees and Sadducees?

Think about that the next time someone tries to convince you of something: Have you made an emotional decision where facts just get in the way, or are you open to logical argument? Where have you made emotional decisions? How are those decisions keeping you from growing?

Thoughtfully,
Richard Elfers
Sunday Forum Facilitator

Upcoming Events

- Dec 1-30 - Every Thurs-Rotary
- Dec 1 - Potluck & Decorating
- Dec 3 - Council retreat & Fourth Wisemen
- Dec 5 - Agenda Items Due
- Dec 7 - Mark Madness & Holden Evening Prayers
- Dec 8 - Brewed Awakenings
- Dec 12 - Council meeting
- Dec 13 - Theology on Tap
- Dec 14 - Mark Madness & Holden Evening Prayers
- Dec 17 - Fourth Wisemen
- Dec 22 - Brewed Awakenings
- Dec 24 - Christmas Eve Services
- Dec 25 - Merry Christmas
- Dec 27 - XYZ & Theology on tap



December Birthdays

- 12/13 Claudette Lorimor
- 12/16 Jayde Kettner
- 12/17 Rich Elfers
- 12/18 Kim Borgen
- 12/21 Robin Hanson
- 12/24 Erwin Plagens
- 12/28 Dorothy Christensen

December Anniversaries

- 12/18 Ron & Edith Evans
- 12/27 Dan & Sherry Idso

Our December schedule for POM-Package Side Dish & Shampoo/Toothpaste



Place all donated items in the basket in the Narthex. Thank you!

Pastor Dan's Corner cont.

beyond the frosty weather, bright as the sun and moon together." Hope that is God's gift to each of us not just a Christmas, but every day of our lives. Hope that is God's gift of grace to a world and a people praying for some good news.

Hope that will be found in a feeding trough in a cold barn in Bethlehem. God's gift of Love to you that you may truly

have hope.

People look East! For "angels announce with shouts of mirth, Him who brings new life to earth."

May God bless you and your family at Christmas and every day of your life.

Merry Christmas,
Pastor Dan

Chelsea Globe, Preaching December 18

Our most special and favorite seminary student, Chelsea Globe, will be preaching and leading service on Sunday, December 18. Chelsea is now in her third year of seminary at Seattle University's School of Theology and Ministry. Next year Chelsea is planning to attend Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary in Berkeley. Come and share the excitement of Chelsea's journey to ordained ministry.

Mark Madness and Soup

Mark Madness, our fast paced overview of Mark's fast action gospel will continue on Wednesday nights in Advent. Soup is served at 5:30, with the study beginning about 5:45. For Wednesday, December 7, we will be discussing Mark 1 through Mark 3; Wednesday, December 14, Mark 4 through 13 (a lot, but this is a fast action gospel); December 21 Mark 14-16. Come and enjoy a bowl of soup, and a fast action ride through Mark.

Council Meeting

The Congregation Council met on November 14.

Facilitator President: Debbie Littlefield

Guest/Visitor Requests

- Jeff Myers presented a quote for insurance, comparing coverage with what we currently have.

Agenda item Old Business Presenter: Debbie Littlefield

Discussion:

- Pew Cushions: We made a \$1,490.00 down payment; the balance is \$2,984 due upon receipt.
- New light bulbs were installed in Berg Hall thanks to Jed, Erwin and Charlie.
- Cross on the steeple is missing a part, Brian will look for a new piece and will replace.
- Emergency buzzers: Lorie will order buzzers from the security company.

Agenda item: New Business Presenter: Debbie Littlefield

Discussion:

- Ministry Teams: Need Budget prior to the Council retreat on 12/2/11.
- December Council meeting will be held December 12, 6:30pm at Pastor Dan's Home Spouses are invited.
- Ethnic Dinner Report, \$175.00 profit.
- Advent Decorating – December 1, 2011 6:30pm with Soup.
- Vice President Position – Brian Carey nominated & approved.
- Council affirmed and welcomed new members: Gary & Ellen Hahn, Marion Catto, Dottie West, Myrtle McNeas, TC, Joanna and Todd Groennert, Frank & Deb Prohaska, Pat Swift, Ida Dempster, Kristie Axleson and Marilyn Davis. Motion made & approved.

*A detailed copy of
the Council
Minutes can be
seen on the
roundabout*

*Agenda item deadline: Monday,
December 5 by noon,
Next regular Council Meeting: Sunday,
December 12, 6:30pm*

Welcome New Members

What a Wonderful day November 20 was as we welcomed 14 new members to our fellowship of Hope. Welcome to Marion Catto, Dottie West, Myrtle Mcnees, Kristie Axelson, Ellen and Gary Hahn, Marilyn Davis, Frank & Deb Prohoskas, Pat Swift, T.C., Joanne, and Todd Groennert. And welcome back to Ida Dempster.

God has truly blessed Hope with your presence in worship and the life of this community of faith. Welcome!

Look for pictures to follow and greet our new members with the love and peace of Christ.

HOLIDAY TIP #37



NEVER CATCH SNOWFLAKES
WITH YOUR TONGUE
UNTIL ALL THE BIRDS
HAVE GONE SOUTH
FOR THE WINTER.

Greetings, Bleatings, from the Sheep Pen

“Unbinding *your* Heart”

An Inviting & Welcoming Update

We had a pretty amazing combined church service a couple of Sundays back. It was a celebration of the completion of the six week Unbinding your Heart Evangelism program in which many of our congregation (over 80) participated in small groups studies with weekly discussions and daily personal prayer journals. It was also a welcoming of new members service as we accepted and welcomed 14 new members to our flock.

As part of the service, Pastor asked if any of us would like to share to the congregation any of our experiences or changes in perspective on Evangelism that occurred during the past six weeks. Pretty cool and pretty moving testimonials.

Becky shared her “Walk to Emmaus” experience over the past six weeks. The daily prayers opened her inner self back to an earlier time in her life by her again setting aside a special time to intentionally reach out to God through her prayers. Rich shared that he witnessed something he had prayed for years ago, the congregation as a group unleashing the power of prayer. Lois shared the loving support she felt in the prayers of her group for her during her time of grief. Ellen shared her joy in praying for others, even others not always known to her. Brian witnessed that prayer had become so much more meaningful in his life. Deb exclaimed that she now felt comfortable and encouraged in sharing the Good News with her friends. Karin was delighted in learning that Evangelism could be as simple as just being helpful in bringing someone closer to a relationship with God. Real Christian witnessing in our church. Real prayer experience shared with others. Powerful stuff.

Later in the service our new members were welcomed. 14 strong. We welcomed Marion, Dottie, Myrtle, Frank, Deb, Pat, Gary, Ellen, Kristie, T.C., Joanne, Todd, Marilyn and Ida to our flock.

Afterwards, we all gathered in Berg Hall for a pot luck luncheon to celebrate both of these great happenings in our church. Tons of food. Even more tons of good fun and fellowship, real sharing and caring for each other.

That day we had an Inviting and Welcoming Ministry Team meeting and everyone joined in. The flock is moved and ready to spread out and to share the Good News. Go forth and do so. We have plenty of room for more sheep in the pen.

Greetings, bleatings, from the sheep pen.

The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want. (Psalm 23: 1)

Jim Niehoff





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Our Purpose:

"Making Christ known in our community by reaching out through worship, service and fellowship"

Hope Lutheran Church is a member of the Southwestern Washington Synod of the ELCA

Their mission: "...Spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ by empowering congregations and church leaders to grow in worship, education, outreach, stewardship and other missions"

*Their website:
www.lutheranssw.org*

Soli Deo Gloria

Choir Members Welcome

You are invited to bring your voices to join in the choir on Wednesdays at 7:00-8:00. The choir is considering singing alternately at first and second service so that more people can enjoy the gifts of music and song the choir brings to us. Glenn is a wonderful leader, and don't worry about ability or previous experience. All are welcome. Even if you can't commit to singing every week, you are welcome to sing seasonally for Christmas and Easter. The choir will sing at the 4:00 service on Christmas Eve.

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Services

Because Christmas Eve falls on a Saturday, we will hold the first service, the contemporary family service of candlelight, carols and communion, at 4:00 PM. This will allow families to worship, and still have Christmas evening for family time. The children's Christmas pageant is planned for this service, and all kids who show up will be invited to be part of the program.

As this time is a change from our regular Christmas Eve 7:00 PM family service, we need your help. Please let your family members know about the time change. We will send an announcement card to all the members of the church.

Christmas Eve is a wonderful time to invite neighbors and friends to come to church, and this earlier service has the potential to be a better time for many people. Invite one and all.

Second service will be a traditional service of candlelight, carols, and communion at 11:00.

On Christmas Day, Sunday, we will hold a single service of carols and communion at 10:00.

Christmas/New Years Worship Schedule:

December 24th:

Contemporary Candlelight & Communion: 4:00 pm

Traditional Candlelight & Communion: 11:00 pm

December 25th:

Christmas Day Worship: 10:00 am

(no Sunday School until Jan. 8th)

January 1st:

1st Sunday After Christmas Worship: 10:00 am

Office will be closed the week of December 25 to January 1

Church Office Closed Christmas Week

The church office will be closed the week between Christmas and New Year. Pastor Dan will be on vacation that week, and can be reached on his cell phone at 253-961-6711. The office will open on Tuesday, January 3.

New Members and Inquirers Class

Pastor Dan will hold a six-week class for new members and inquirers beginning Sunday, January 8 at 12:30 following second service. The class will explore Lutheran faith and tradition, how Lutherans interpret the Bible, foundations of faith, and living life as a Lutheran today. The class is open to anyone who desires to learn a little more about what being a Lutheran is all about. A light lunch will be served. Let Pastor Dan know if you are interested.

As a special bonus for this class, Dr. Dan Peterson, who will be presenting Adult Forum on January 8 and 15, may be joining us for those two sessions.

Holden Evening Prayer

Want the perfect way to get into the Advent season and Christmas? Then come and participate in Holden Evening Prayer Wednesdays at 6:40. This beautiful prayer, written by Marty Haugen at Holden Village in the deep in the Cascades near Lake Chelan, is a beautiful, melodic evening prayer. If you have not experienced, come and you will be glad you did. Dessert and coffee follow.





Stewardship December 2011

WELCOME * INVITE PROCLAIM * RESPOND

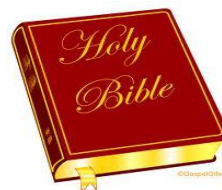
The season of Advent started on the first Sunday after November 26th. This is also the first Sunday in our new church year. The Advent wreath is an old German tradition. Many homes and churches use the Advent wreath throughout the month of December. The wreath is made into a circle, a symbol of eternity; God has no beginning or end. Evergreen branches are symbols of eternal life and a reminder that God is unchangeable. There are four candles to represent the four weeks of Advent, reminding us of the coming of Jesus. Come to church on Wednesday evenings at 5:30 for soup and bible study followed by the Holden Evening service. This is a time for us to prepare for the celebration of Jesus birth. Come celebrate with us on Christmas Eve at 4:00pm for the Sunday School program and the family Christmas eve service; there is also a candlelight service at 11:00pm.

2011 has been a very busy, but good, year at Hope. Thank you to each of you, who have volunteered your time, shared your talents and financially supported the ministries of our church.

- Read Luke 1:26-56 Mary sets an example for each of us.
- Prepare during the Advent Season
- Celebrate Jesus birth

God's Peace to each of you
Kathie Thompson
 Stewardship Ministry

Worship Schedule



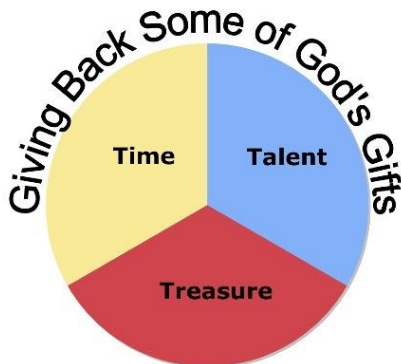
Dec 4 - 2nd Sunday of Advent: First reading: Isa 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; Second reading; 2 Peter 3:8-15a; Gospel Mark 1:1-8

Dec 11 - 3rd Sunday of Advent: First reading Isa 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126; Second reading 1 Thess 5:16-24; Gospel John 1:6-8, 19-28

Dec 18 - 4th Sunday of Advent: First reading 2 Sam 7:1-11, 16; Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26; Second reading Rom 16:25-27; Gospel Luke 1:26-38

Dec 24- Christmas Eve: First reading Isa 9:2-7; Psalm 96; Second Reading Titus 2:11-14; Gospel Luke 2:1-20

Dec 25- Christmas Day: First reading Isa 62:6-12; Psalm 97; Second Reading Titus 3:4-7; Gospel Luke 2:8-20



"Making Christ Known in Our Community"