

THE DECEMBER BELL 2020

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PASTORAL THOUGHTS THIS CHRISTMAS

Well, I guess one begins where everything has begun in 2020, hoping that the pandemic may soon be over. It has created a year that we hope will not be repeated. As I write this, we all have to admit that instead of calming down...everything is on the verge of going the wrong way.

It is so very easy to focus on what we will NOT have!

I have already heard of people bemoaning the lack of the black Friday rush into the stores (I never quite got that one anyway). Folks gearing up to shop online and not sharing of joys of long lines in the stores.

Come Dec. 24th ... We will miss a service of wondrous carols...candles filling the church with light as the Silent Night is sung.

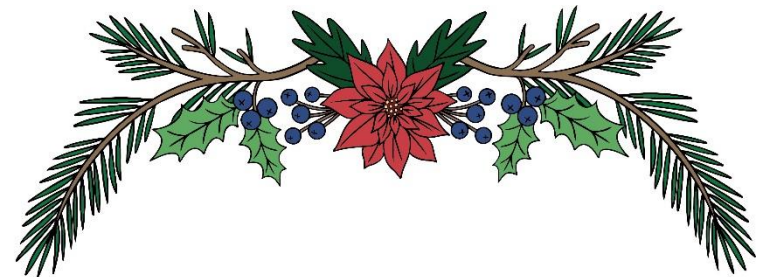
BUT...we ought not go there. Let's focus on the things we DO have.

We will still have the tree to put up and decorate!

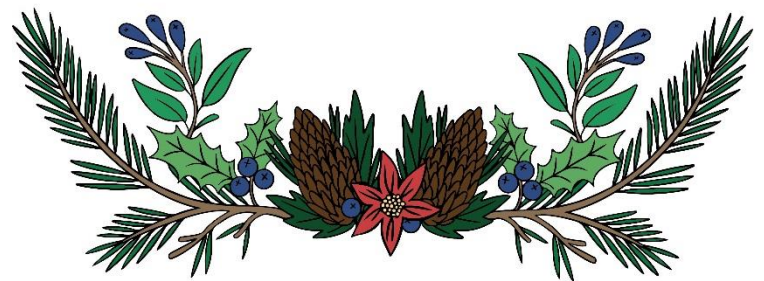
We can still make our favorite Christmas Cookies!

Yes...This year will be a quieter Christmas gathering with your family, probably in smaller numbers. I know extended family is NOT venturing up from Georgia. But that is okay.

Except for those noisy sheep and shepherds, the first Christmas was Mary and Joseph with a few animals. Joseph was busy learning the finer points of delivering a baby, hopefully with a mid-wife handy.



CHRISTMAS



Our tables will be filled with food and love and celebration of the love poured out in Jesus' birth. The carols will still be playing and can be sung at home.

It is too easy to think about what we will not have! BUT...think about you do have! Once again we celebrate that God is doing something new in our lives! A child is born! A Son is given! Emmanuel - God with us. **GOD WITH US IN ALL THINGS!**

I invite you to consider a special gift to Bethany this Christmas as we look forward to new things in 2021!

Peace and Blessings this Christmas,

Pastor Craig

revcw2016@gmail.com

ABOUT OUR CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

In conversations with the Synod Assistant to the Bishop, and using some of the guidelines from the Wisconsin Council of Churches (be mindful: some areas are basically doing no in person stuff until 2021)...we are currently planning on doing ***one service on Christmas Eve at 5:00 pm.**

The service will also be broadcast on the radio at 6:00 pm.

***We will be limited to 40 to 45 people, depending on family size, so we are asking people to call the church office (254-4501) or email me (revcw2016@gmail.com) to make a reservation.**



YOU CAN DO THIS ALREADY. This will also provide a tracing tool should someone attending the service test positive in a few days.



On **Sunday, December 6thth**, immediately following the 9:00 am worship service, we will be decorating the church for Christmas.

Council will meet at 10:15 am following the decorating.

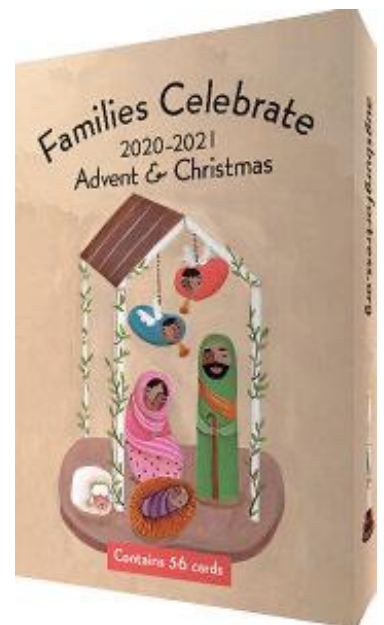
FAMILIES CELEBRATE ADVENT & CHRISTMAS 2020-21

Families Celebrate Advent & Christmas is a colorful deck of cards that is full of rituals, prayers and reflections. Endlessly flexible for busy schedules, you can create a new after-meal ritual, use them as decorations, or carry them on the go. Explore the entire season from Advent to Christmas through Epiphany.

Two Ways to Get a Pack:

1. Pick one up at church
2. Call us and we will put one in an envelope inside the Little Library by the Capital Street door

Advent begins Sunday, November 29.



ELCA GOOD GIFTS

We encourage you to celebrate Christmas giving with a new repertoire of Christmas songs:



Go Tail It on the Mountain

O Citrus Tree, O Citrus Tree

It's Bee-Ginning to look a Lot like Christmas

In the Bleat Mid-Winter

Have Yourself a Dairy Little Christmas

Do you detect a theme?

Check out the ELCA Good Gifts website: goodgifts.elca.org.
With a few clicks of the mouse, your Christmas shopping is done! Don't have access to internet? Call us, and we can arrange a gift for you.

Merry Chickmas!

<https://goodgifts.elca.org/> (Ctrl+Click to follow link)

GIVING ELECTRONICALLY

For your convenience, there is a GIVING opportunity on the dellsbethanychurch.org website. Clicking on the GIVING button takes you the tithe.ly site. There, you can use a credit card, debit card or bank account information to make a donation.



IN HONOR, CELEBRATION, and MEMORY



November 15 – The flowers were given by Ken and Helen Hoege in celebration of their 65th anniversary!

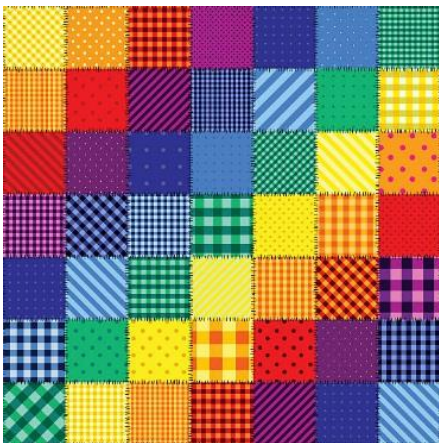
December 6 - The flowers are given in memory of Kathy Wolfgram.

The candle is given by Ellen Sigmund.

December 13 - The flowers are given by Steve and Karen Stuelke in memory of Karen's parents.

December 20 - The flowers are given by Dorothy Johnson in memory of Tim.

December 27 - The flowers are given by Betty Crum in celebration of all her family.



LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

The Bethany Women and Quilters prepared and sent

35 Personal Care Kits and 23 Quilts

to Lutheran World Relief