



# THE M e s s e n g e r

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## ADVENT

A poem by Vicar Annabelle Markey

### The Lights of Advent

We light one candle.  
We wait in expectant hope.

We light two candles.  
We pray and work for peace.

We light three candles.  
We rejoice for Christ draws near.

We light four candles.  
We love and rest in love.

We light candles  
And the light of the world  
Rekindles us to new life in him.

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

### Working Toward the Mission

*By Marilee Rist, President*

I am inspired by how our CLC mission statement begins: "We are gathered by God in Christ, called to bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in our world." The rest of the mission statement beautifully expands upon that opening statement and captures what we at Christ Lutheran Church are all about. (You can read the full mission statement on the inside back cover of your church directory or on the CLC website at [www.christlutheran-dc.org](http://www.christlutheran-dc.org).)

Indeed, the three focal points that grew out of our congregational retreat early last winter build on that mission statement. These focal points also helped us develop our annual budget and continue to guide our programs and activities. It's useful to look at them again as we prepare for our Congregational Meeting and Elections on Sunday, December 11.

- Faith Formation -- we focus on serving children, youth, and young adults, nurturing them in faith and community.

- Faith in Action -- we focus on reaching out to our neighbors, community, and the world, through service and witness to God's saving work in Christ.
- Faith Transformation -- we focus on strengthening one another in faith through music, worship, and prayerful study of Scripture.

On December 11 following the worship service, the voting members of this congregation will meet to elect representatives to the Council. We will elect three deacons and three officers -- treasurer, financial secretary, and recording secretary. (In most years, only two of the four deacons would be up for election, but one current deacon, Pam Sieving, has agreed to step up to the office of recording secretary. We are grateful to her!)

Under our Constitution, the Council is responsible for the financial and property matters of this congregation. Those duties are important, to be sure. But the spiritual duties of the Council as outlined in the Bylaws are at the heart of what it means to be part of this body: to aid the Pastor in the spiritual affairs of the congregation.

To me, that means always aligning and directing our congregational finances, resources, talent, and human energy toward our all-important mission: to "bear witness to God's creative, redeeming, and sanctifying activity in our world."

Join us on Sunday, December 11, to elect your new Council representatives .

## FROM OUR VICAR

### CLC's Advent Conspiracy

*By Vicar Annabelle Markey*

This year, CLC is participating in the Advent Conspiracy. Advent Conspiracy began in 2006 when five pastors encouraged their congregations to worship fully, spend less, give more and love all during the Advent season. The idea was a success and it spread as a movement among congregations across the country. Why is it a conspiracy? Because it's about trying to take back Advent as a time of hopeful and expectant waiting, in which we long for God and ponder what it means that God has come (and will come again) among us! This is against simply moving through Advent as a time of hectic shopping and stress before Christmas.

While no money is collected through Advent Conspiracy, the movement encourages congregations to give to causes or concerns that are meaningful for them. As they state on their website ([www.adventconspiracy.org](http://www.adventconspiracy.org) or <http://ac.wcrossing.org/>), "Be as creative and bless those in need by giving relationally as God gave His Son to us at Christmas."

We have decided to focus on the following for the four weeks of Advent:

#### **Worship Fully – November 27**

- Worshiping Fully means placing Christ at the center of our lives and passionately worshiping and praising God with all we've got
- Adult Forum – responding to the Gospel via paint, colored pencils, finger labyrinths, poetry
- Making Advent wreaths during coffee hour

#### **Give More – December 4**

- Giving More includes reaching out to those in need, as well as spending more time *with* people rather than more money *on* people
- Adult Forum – Presentation on HIV/AIDS, particularly in our area

- In conjunction with World AIDS Day, collecting items and monetary donations for LSS Youth Haven Camps (camps for kids with or affected by HIV/AIDS)

### **Spend Less – December 11**

- Spending Less means considering buying one less gift this season in favor of giving more meaningful gifts (visit <http://tinyurl.com/GoodCauseGifts2011> for some ideas)
- Adult Forum – Discussing how to give more relational gifts rather than spending money this Advent and Christmas

### **Love All – December 18**

- Loving All focuses on using the time of Advent and Christmas to reach out to those who need help the most, loving them through word and action as Christ loves us
- Adult Forum – Discussing the Magnificat (Song of Mary), particularly its focus on the poor, weak and outcast in society
- Making Refugee Kits for LWR during the greening of the sanctuary

## **ALTAR CARE REPORT**

### **JEANNE BUSTER ASSUMES RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALTAR CARE**

*By Marilyn Zukel and Jeanne Buster*

Jeanne Buster has assumed primary responsibility for Altar Care from Marilyn Zukel. Marilyn's quiet demeanor and unassuming manner have been the backbone over many decades of selfless dedication and devoted service to this vital ministry at Christ Lutheran Church. She is by no means going away; she's just taking a step down.

A life-long Lutheran, originally from Minnesota, Jeanne is well acquainted with the many components of this sacred service and its Lutheran traditions.

Altar Care is a vital ministry, carried out by servers or sacristans, as servers in charge of the sacred vessels and vestments were called in the ancient church. The servers carry out their work with a sense of joy, praise and privilege; not as a burden but an honor.

The various components of Altar Care are the preparation of the altar for church services, baking communion bread, arranging flowers, and designing and sewing of vestments.

Current Altar Care servers:

**Altar Care:** Lori Beaston; Jeanne Buster; Valentine and Tim Breitbarth; Karen Conley; Melissa Graves; Tonya Holland; Betty Jentsch; Janet Kelly; Karin Klingman; Jean Mansavage; Beth Mills; Thea Mills; Linda Ott; Marilee Rist; Pam Sieving; Sara Sylwester; Danielle Willis; Marilyn Zukel

**Bakers of Communion Bread:** Lori Beaston; Janet Kelly; Mark Sharp; Sara Sylwester; Marilyn Zukel

**Flower Arrangers:** Valentine Breitbarth; Beth Mills; Linda Ott; Lee Ann Schray; Sara Sylwester; Marilyn Zukel

**Those who sew:** Alice Meyer; Joanne Noll

If you are interested in becoming an Altar Care server, please talk with Jeanne or contact her at home (301.871.8021) or by email ([kitty8391@msn.com](mailto:kitty8391@msn.com))

## Finding the Joy

*By Karin Klingman*

I was doing a listening exercise with some Stephen Ministers-in-training a couple of weeks ago. It's one of my favorite exercises. They became frustrated, angry, or confused when they weren't listened to, even though they know that it is just an exercise.

The whole discussion we had about listening was useful for all of us prior to spending time with family and friends over the holidays. I am a traveler for the major holidays since my family (cousins) is all elsewhere. Traveling has also for me become a means of coping with the holidays. It provides me with a way to be involved rather than being alone or with friends here, and ruminating about the past.

I suspect many people have these kinds of almost hidden coping mechanisms during the holidays, which are supposed to be happy and exhilarating, but often are tinged with or even taken over by sadness and loss. People, even in close family situations, often try to keep their sadness hidden. It behooves us then to listen carefully to those around us during the holidays.

You can help by being a good listener and providing some support—be it actually listening to a fond memory, or including someone in some event, or even just sharing cookies and good times with co-workers. Listening is part of experiencing Advent. We listen to the gospel message and to each other. Advent tells us that there is a way out of the darkness and that the light is coming. Jesus is our light, and the gospel message tells us that nothing can contain that light. The light conquers darkness and in it we find peace and joy. Remember then to listen to the gospel and to people around you during this season.

## SOCIAL MINISTRIES

### Social Ministries Celebration

*Social Ministries Committee: Karin Klingman, Kendall Bentz and Pam Sieving*

Our Yard Sale Beneficiaries were celebrated as part of our Reformation Sunday service this year. It was a great confluence of ideas. The missions and actions of our beneficiaries were shown to be part of the reforming spirit of the church. We had representatives from most of our beneficiaries present during the service and during coffee hour. Representatives from Transitional Housing Corporation, Samaritan Ministries, Lutheran Social Services, ELCA Strategy on HIV and AIDS and the Rwanda School Project visited with us during coffee hour, and information was available from our other 2 beneficiaries, the Frannie Foundation and Ak'Tenamit, All in all it was an uplifting experience.

On Saturday as a “prequel” to our Sunday worship service, some of us attended a “compassion walk” at the Silver Spring office of Lutheran Social Services and heard details about their refugee and asylum services, the Youth Haven Summer Camp for HIV infected and affected children and families, and their foster and adoption services. It was a moving experience and made what LSS does more real to those of us who attended.

This year we hope to deepen our involvement with some of our beneficiaries beyond giving them a check from the yard sale. For instance, as part of our “Advent Conspiracy” in which we will “worship more fully, spend less, give more and love all,” we will be collecting supplies for LSS Youth Haven Camp. (Specifically, we will be collecting sleeping bags, toiletry items, gift cards for Michaels, and K-mart and gift cards to Subway and iTunes.) On the 18<sup>th</sup>, during the greening, we will also do a toiletry kit assembly for LWR as part of our “love all” celebration.

There will be other opportunities to participate in the missions of our beneficiaries this year. Look for announcements in the bulletin and the Messenger.

## YARD SALE FOLLOWUP

*By Joanne Noll*

The final net total for Yard Sale distribution is \$37,079.15. This is about \$2000 more than last year. Well done! Thank you all for your hard work and dedication! I know our beneficiaries are happy. Let's do it again next year! (Mark your calendars for September 29 and 30, 2012)

From the Prevention of Blindness Society, one of the Yard Sale "gleaners" after it was all over....."I would like to extend our most sincere appreciation for your very generous donation of items including antique bricabrac, art, furniture, jewelry and other misc. items. POB will use the proceeds (from sales at the thrift shop in Kensington) to strengthen and expand its many sight-saving programs including providing close to 8,000 pairs of eyeglasses annually to those in need, screening more than 8,000 preschoolers for visual acuity and strabismus, offering glaucoma and vision screenings for thousands of adults each year. Michele D. Hartlove, Executive Director

## MUSICAL EVENTS

From choir member Cheryl Beversdorf: **The Washington Master Chorale** invites you to its Winter Holiday Concert, ***The Pleasure of the Fleeting Year***, on December 18<sup>th</sup> at 4 pm at Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church, 6601 Bradley Blvd Bethesda, MD

The concert will feature the world premiere of Lori Laitman's new choral cycle, "The Earth and I"—settings of three Emily Dickinson poems. The program will also include winter songs, rare and beautiful carol arrangements, and traditional holiday favorites.

To buy tickets: \$15-\$50 (adult) & \$10-\$12.50 (student), log onto [www.washingtonmasterchorale.org](http://www.washingtonmasterchorale.org).

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Another choir member, Ilene Pabon, will sing the role of Sally in Samuel Barber's "A Hand of Bridge" a short opera masterpiece with lyrics by Giancarlo Menotti. The Barber work is part of "Barber & Barberillo" an In Series Pocket-opera double-bill at the Source Theater (1435 14th St. N.W.) opening Saturday, January 7th and running for 8 shows on three weekends, through Jan 22<sup>nd</sup>.

The main work on the program is The Little Barber [Barberillo in Spanish] of Lavapies, a Spanish classic zarzuela (musical). Ilene will be performing several smaller roles as part of the cast for this piece as well. For tickets call [202-204-7763](tel:202-204-7763) or visit [www.inseries.org](http://www.inseries.org)

## EAR OF CHRIST

The Pitner family had exciting news over Thanksgiving weekend. Ann Marie, Scott and Aidan were celebrating with Ann Marie's brother and family in New Jersey. On Saturday, 11/26, Aidan's baby brother, Liam Patrick was born at 4:47 pm! We look forward to meeting him!

From Linda Ott:

Jason Ott is involved on a Film Studies film project. He is the lead, Rick Blaisley, in a series of genre short films. The first two are completed and available to view through vimeo.com. The series is a spoof of the featured genre with references to classic films of the genre. The first is Film Studies: Noir "Gritty Noire" and the second Film Studies: Horror "Bloody Slasher." There are likely to be 2-3 more genres explored before the project is put to rest. Stay tuned. The URL links to first two are:

**Gritty Noire** <http://player.vimeo.com/video/30815217>

**Bloody Slasher** <http://player.vimeo.com/video/32235027>

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The Mills family spent an eventful weekend at Nags Head. Fred and Beth were celebrating their 40<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, but the big event was the half marathon on 11/13. Fred, Philip and Thea ran along with the daughter of Beth's cousin and her husband who live in North Carolina. The half marathon went from just north of Nag's Head to Roanoke Island. It included crossing an 81 foot high bridge at mile 10 to get to Roanoke Island. Our finishing times spanned 18 minutes (2 hours for Beth's cousin's daughter and her husband, 2:02 for Thea, 2:06 for Philip, and 2:18 for Fred) - our ages spanned 30 years.



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The Cheston-Harris family would like to thank you for your prayers and support as we mourn the passing of Artie's beloved aunt Hampton Wade. We are also grateful for the prayers and support for Artie's mother Yvonne Harris, who has made a miraculous recovery from her subdural hematoma.

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Jeanne Buster spent four weeks in October and early November traveling throughout Eastern Europe. While she's been back to Austria many times and to Slovakia, it was quite a revelation re-visiting Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic. In addition to the quantity and quality of the food, and the beautiful shops, she found the various transportation systems vastly improved, very clean, and easy to use.

She hired a personal guide and driver when making trips to sites outside a city's limits. Hotel accommodations were lovely. The museums, government buildings, cathedrals and churches were either in the final stages of or beautifully restored. A highlight of her trip occurred outside Krakow when she ventured down with a guide into a deep salt mine shaft via a workmen's cage just large enough for two, then continuing down many, many flights of wood steps, round and round, to finally discover below a wonderland of underground water pools, numerous animal and religious statues and a chapel all beautifully carved out of salt by workers who lived below ground, some for more than six months at a time. In Budapest, she discovered and visited a fully equipped underground hospital on the Buda side near her hotel. These sites and many more were simply not known or available to visit 25 years ago. Thanks to UNESCO, they now are. It was a fabulous trip, but tiring, and Jeanne has decided to go back to visiting one country at a time!!

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Mary Hamer is in Hospice Care at Marty Jewett's home. She had special visits from her nephew William and his children April and William Jr. and Sadie and Jill Harris who played the violin and cello for Mary and Marty.



## GIFTS OF HOPE

### GIFTS OF HOPE

*By Alice Meyer*

What are Gifts of Hope? They are an alternative gift giving opportunity. Instead of buying a material gift for someone, a Gift of Hope is a purchase of a mission opportunity in your recipient's name. They vary in price from \$5 (a gift card from Giant or Safeway for a newly arrived refugee or books for kids and GED students) to \$250 (a week of summer camp for one child).

*GIFTS OF HOPE*, the alternative gift-giving program in the Metropolitan Washington, DC, Synod (ELCA), is starting its 19th season. Since 1992, over \$2,606,000 has been raised to help people in need in our community and around the world! And every penny received has gone directly to the beneficiaries.

For each gift you purchase, you receive three items, which you can give to your friend, family member, coworker, or anyone you desire.

I'll have the order forms and cards at coffee hour.

## FROM THE MESSENGER EDITOR

The *Messenger* is CLC's primary paper source for news about our congregation and community. Is there something you'd like to see that isn't here? Please send your ideas to me at [clcmessenger@gmail.com](mailto:clcmessenger@gmail.com).

Want to go paperless and receive the Messenger electronically? Let the church office know or look for the *Messenger* on CLC's website [www.christlutheran-dc.org/pdf/messenger.pdf](http://www.christlutheran-dc.org/pdf/messenger.pdf).

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