



Our Saviour's Good News

Volume XVI, Issue XII

December 2021

MISSION STATEMENT

Our Saviour Lutheran Church welcomes all people to a safe place to grow in faith and serve the Lord Jesus Christ

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O Holy Night

The Story Behind The Carol

In 1847, a French priest commissioned this beloved song for his parish. Lyricist Placide Cappeau finished his poem, and pleased with his work, he asked Adolphe Charles Adams to compose the music. The song was sung for Christmas Eve mass.

Initially, *Cantique de Noel* (the song's French name) was widely loved. Later, leaders learned Cappeau was a socialist and Adams Jew – and the song was banned from services. But the French people loved it so much, they continued to sing it.

Ten years later, John Sullivan Dwight introduced it in America. An abolitionist, he was moved by the third verse (Chains shall he break for the slave is our brother. Although banned in France, *Cantique de Noel* became popular in America.

On Christmas Eve in 1871, in the midst of fierce fighting between France and Germany during the Franco-Prussian War, an unarmed French soldier jumped out of the trenches, walked onto the battlefield, and started singing the song's first line in French. After singing all three verses, a German soldier emerged and started singing a sacred German hymn. Fighting stopped for the next 24 hours in honor of Christmas Day. Temporary peace was initiated by *O Holy Night*.

Fast forward to 1906, Reginald Fessenden figured out that by combining two requeencies, radio could do more than transmit Morse Code. It would be possible to speak! For the first time in history, a human voice ws heard on the airwaves; Fessenden read the Christmas story from the book of Luke, than picked up his violin and performed *O Holy Night*.

Have you sung or read all three verses of *O Holy Night*?

Powerful!



(O Holy Night cont'd on page 2)

(O Holy Night cont'd from page 1)

O Holy night! The stars are brightly shining

It is the night of our dear Savior's birth

Long lay the world in sin and error pining

'Til He appears and the soul felt its worth

A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices

For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn

Fall on your knees; O hear the Angel voices!

O night divine, O night when Christ was born

O night, O Holy night, O night divine!

[Verse 2]

Led by the light of Faith serenely beaming

With glowing hearts by His cradle we stand

So led by light of a star sweetly gleaming

Here come the Wise Men from Orient land

The King of kings lay thus in lowly manger

In all our trials born to be our friend

He knows our need, to our weakness is no stranger

Behold your King; before Him lowly bend

Behold your King; before Him lowly bend

[Verse 3]

Truly He taught us to love one another;

His law is love and His Gospel is Peace

Chains shall He break, for the slave is our brother

And in His name, all oppression shall cease

Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we

Let all within us Praise His Holy name

Christ is the Lord; O praise His name forever!

His power and glory evermore proclaim

His power and glory evermore proclaim!



Love incarnate,

Love divine!

As we celebrate Christ's birth

And God's love for us,

let us also take the time to celebrate

our love for each other.

Wishing you many blessings

At Christmastime an always.

The Deep Sigh-lent Night

by

Carrin Mahmood

This is it. The long waited for moment. For Mary, nine months of pondering and anticipation. For the Israelites, centuries of Messianic preparation. For the world, the moment the fallen creation would be re-created. Together we release our collective breath and liberate a sigh. The holy night is upon us. Nothing will ever be the same again. The hope of all time rests with a tiny infant, lying in a manger. We rise up to worship, filled with a hushed awe. The Prince of Peace has entered the scene, the stage is set, the prophesy fulfilled. Now we have the opportunity, the privilege and obligation to worship anew, to be drawn to the light, and encounter the living God. Alleluia, let praises ring. ***All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: 'Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel', which means, 'God is with us.' Matthew 1:22-23.***

Silent night, holy night

All is calm, all is bright

Round yon Virgin Mother and Child

Holy Infant so tender and mild

Sleep in heavenly peace

Sleep in heavenly peace

Silent night, holy night!

Shepherds quake at the sight

Glories stream from heaven afar

Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!

Christ, the Savior is born

Christ, the Savior is born

Silent night, holy night

Son of God, love's pure light

Radiant beams from Thy holy face

With the dawn of redeeming grace

Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth

Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth "

The origin of the well known Christmas carol Silent Night was a poem written in 1816 by the Austrian priest called Joseph Mohr. On Christmas Eve in 1818 in the small alpine village called Oberndorf it is reputed that the organ at St. Nicholas Church had broken. Joseph Mohr gave the poem of Silent Night (Stille Nacht) to his friend Franz Xavier Gruber and the melody was composed with this in mind. The music was therefore intended for a guitar and the simple score





Bethlehem Star: What It Was, What It Meant

THE NINE POINTS OF CHRIST'S STAR

From the Biblical account in Matthew, unpacking it verse by verse, we can compile a list of nine qualities that must be present before any celestial phenomena could be considered to be the Biblical Star of Bethlehem. If any qualification is missing, then we will assume we haven't found our Star. Let's start with the nine points of Christ's star:

1. It signified birth.
2. It signified kingship.
3. It had a connection with the Jewish nation.
4. It rose in the east, like other stars.
5. It appeared at a precise time.
6. Herod didn't know when it appeared.
7. It endured over time.
8. It was ahead of the Magi as they went south from Jerusalem to Bethlehem.
9. It stopped over Bethlehem.

All of these following verses come from the Gospel of Matthew Chapter 2:1:

"After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod" (NIV)

To begin, we see again how important the date of Herod's death is to the investigation. If Herod died in 4 BC, then Christ had to be born before that year. But if Herod died in 1 BC, as the best evidence indicates, then we should look at the years 2 and 3 BC.

Matthew 2:1b continues: "Magi from the east came to Jerusalem..." (NIV)

Who are these magi?

The word, 'magi,' which is sometimes translated 'wise men,' is the root from which we get our word 'magic.' This doesn't make them all magicians, in the present sense of the word. Some of them were learned men in general, who studied the physical world and were knowledgeable about many things, including the stars. Magi were often court astronomers who were consulted by the rulers of the day for guidance in affairs of state. This was also true in much earlier times. For example, during the Babylonian captivity of the Jews, some 500 years earlier, King Nebuchadnezzar kept a stable of court magi.

Nebuchadnezzar made the Jewish prophet Daniel Chief Magus of his court when Daniel was able to interpret a dream the other magi could not. There were magi of various schools, and some were more respected than others. We know something of a particularly prestigious school of magi from the writings of Philo. Philo was a Jewish philosopher and contemporary of Jesus who lived in the large Jewish community of Alexandria, Egypt. Philo wrote in praise of an Eastern school of magi and their great learning and understanding of the natural world. This school may have descended from the Babylonian magi of Daniel's day.

Matthew does report that the Wise Men were from the East, and Babylon is east of Judea. It was at one time part of the Persian Empire, which ties in with Philo. So it is possible the Wise Men were of this prestigious Eastern school. This would account for Herod giving them an audience, and for his strong reaction to the news they brought. Matthew 2:2 continues with Herod's question: "...and asked, 'Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews?'" (NIV) The Magis' question gives us three points for our list of qualifications for the Star. Whatever happened in the sky indicated 1) birth, 2) kingship and 3) Jews. It also gives us a clue about the Magi. They were interested in things Jewish.

In verse 2, Matthew writes: "We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him." (NIV) When the wise men said "we saw his star in the east," they didn't mean "we saw his star while we were in the East."

The Greek text here says the Star was "*en anatole*," meaning they saw his star rising in the east. That's what all but polar stars do, because of the rotation of the Earth. Stars rise in the east, but not all celestial objects do that.

So, that's another qualification for the Star: 4) it must rise in the east like most other stars.

The motive of the Magi in coming to Jerusalem tells us a great deal more about them. They wanted to worship a Jewish king. It can't be proven from the text, but it is quite possible that some of the Magi were of Jewish descent, perhaps a Jewish

(Star cont'd on page 4)

(Star cont'd from page 3)

remnant from Daniel's day. This would help explain why a Jewish philosopher, Philo, would admire them, why they were watching chief priests.

If they were not Jews, then they must have been most impressive magi indeed, as Jews of the time were deeply disdainful of pagans and their beliefs. In verse 3, we read Herod's response:

"When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him." (NIV)

You must know more to understand just how very troubled Herod and Jerusalem became at the Magis' news. Historians tell us that respect for the stars and guidance derived from them was at a peak. Both ancient historians and the Bible make it clear that the Jews of this period expected a new Jewish ruler to arise, based upon Jewish prophecy. And it was accepted that the stars could announce such an arrival. For example, about 60 years earlier, in 63 B.C., magi made a presentation to the Roman Senate. They described celestial portents indicating that a new ruler had been born. Evidently regretting that news, the Senate responded by ordering the death of baby boys in the candidate age range. Sound familiar? It turns out that when Herod ordered the slaughter of children in Bethlehem, he may have been following a sort of Roman precedent.

That precedent may be one reason Jerusalem was troubled at the news the Wise Men brought. Perhaps they realized the Romans might shed blood in response in Matthew 4:4-6:

"When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: "But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel." (NIV)

Herod took the Magis' message as factual, and consulted the Jewish experts about the location of the birth. The fateful verse in the Book of Micah which is quoted to Herod by the Jewish experts soon resulted in the death of many little boys in Bethlehem. Matthew pens these words in verse 7:3: "Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared." (NIV)

Another qualification for the Star: 5) It appeared at an exact time. And yet another qualification: 6) Herod didn't know when it appeared. He had to ask. In verses 8 and 9, the Hebrew king orders:

"He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him." 9 After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was." (NIV)

And now we have the last three qualifications for the Star: 7) it endured over a considerable period of time. The Magi saw it, perhaps from Babylon, traveled to Judea, and saw it still. 8) It went ahead of them as they traveled from Jerusalem to Bethlehem.

You might not realize that this doesn't mean the Star was needed to guide the travelers to Bethlehem. Bethlehem was (and is) just five miles south of Jerusalem on the main road. They couldn't miss it. No, the star appears ahead of them as they trek south not so much as a guide as a further confirmation of the signs they had seen. Lastly, 9) the Star stopped!

IN REVIEW, WE NOW KNOW MUCH ABOUT THE STAR!

1. It signified birth.
2. It signified kingship.
3. It had a connection with the Jewish nation.
4. It rose in the east, like other stars.
5. It appeared at a precise time.
6. Herod didn't know when it appeared.
7. It endured over time.
8. It was ahead of the Magi as they went south from Jerusalem to Bethlehem.
9. It stopped over Bethlehem.

John the apostle tells us that Jesus Himself was the "star," the light of men. He embodied the revealed truth of God. Jesus not only revealed the nature of God, but His light also revealed the character of man.

(Star cont'd on page 5)

(Star cont'd from page 4)

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it...v.14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:1-4, 14 (NIV)

- What do we learn about Christ and His relation to God and man according to the John 1 passage?
- The magi were persistent in their search for the king. What are some ways that you can seek God's Word and His presence in the coming year?
- Read Isaiah 9:6-7.
What are the descriptive names of Christ in this passage?
How do they impact the blessings you receive from knowing Christ?
Spend some time praying and praising God for who He is.

APPLYING THE SCRIPTURES

Read the following passages and and what did you observations.

John 1:1-14; Matthew 2; Isaiah 9:6-7; John 3:19-20; 1 John 1:5-9

***Micah***

For Micah keeping awake in the fields at night wasn't a problem. His mother sent him out each night with freshly pressed olive oil just-baked bread, his favorite cucumbers and some sweet dried figs. She filed a flask with water from a large urn that served the family and packed everything in her youngest son's goat-skin bag.

And each night she reminded Micah that he was very dear to her as the two hundred cakes of figs Abigail had given David.

The nights were times for dreaming. As his family's flock rested in the cool air, Micah studied the stars and wondered about the life that lay ahead. His father was one of the enlightened. Micah could choose to go to school (not an option offered to his sisters) because his older brother would be expected to take charge of the family's sheep herd in years to come. It would all be very simple. He would learn a trade perhaps a baker, Then he could bring bread to his mother so she would not have to work hard.

Micah heard a sound coming from the right of the herd and caught a glimpse of a young lamb bolting from the group. The boy was a fast runner and had developed the habit of lacing his sandal strings all the way to his knees just in case that evening's duty included recapturing a wooly runaway.

How crisp the night air felt as Micah sprinted to the very edge of the meadow so as not to disturb the other lambs. Swiftly he scooped up the soft-fleeced animal in his right hand while the creature struggled to get free.

"You mustn't do that again," Micah said gently to the animal. "You'll scare" Without warning a powerful light appeared in the cobalt sky. Shielding his eyes from the golden shafts. Micah tucked the lamb onto his hip. Even the animal quieted. "What is that star?" he asked aloud. But there came no answer. The boy continued to hold the soft animal and to stare into the heavens unable to move. Light poured from the celestial display, making the night even more beautiful than it had been just moments earlier.

And the star shone brightly throughout the night. Micah returned home the following morning still spellbound by the miraculous sight. From his brothers, he learned that heavenly display had signaled a great miracle that had taken place in the nearby town of Bethlehem a Baby Boy had been born to travelers visiting an inn.

Our Saviour Lutheran Church
Anna Lowery, President
October 18, 2021 Council Minutes



Devotions: Alice Vlaservich

Meeting called to order by President, Anna Lowery

Members present: Alice Vlaservich, Melinda White, Anna Lowery, Denise Traveria, Becky Messick,

Members Absent: Teri Trudnak, Joe Finger, Robbie Wooten, Jeff White

Minutes: September 2021 minutes were reviewed.; Alice Vlaservich made the motion to approve the minutes and Denise Traveria seconded the motion.

Reception of Petitions and Communications:

- a. The Carolinas Mission Region sent a letter showing the approved budget for the Carolinas Mission Regions of the NALC for year 2021/2022. There was a decrease in the budget lowering the "per congregation" share of this budget. OSLC currently is giving \$260/month and with this new decrease, our "per congregation" share is decreased to \$72.00 /month. Melinda White made a motion that we make this adjustment to the NALC giving and Anna Lowery seconded that motion.

Report of the Pastor: None

Report of the Treasurer: Report was reviewed, and a motion was made by Alice Vlaservich to accept the Treasurer Report and seconded by Anna Lowery.

Report of the Ministries:

- a. Property: Replaced faucet in the sacristy
- b. Stewardship and Finance: No report
- c. Worship & Music: No report
- d. Youth Team: No report this month
- e. Witness: Cards and prayers continue to be sent to shut ins. Alice is also sending bulletins to those unable to attend worship service.
- f. Christian Education Team: Operation Christmas Child is in motion. Shoe boxes are due by 11/21/2021. Help spread the Gospel!

Report of Auxiliaries:

- a. CLW/Rachel Group met 10/25/2021 at the home of Alice Vlaservich
- b. Prayer Group met at the home of Shirlee Marazza on 10/19/2021

Old and/or Unfinished Business:

- a. Council discussed decreasing the number of council members required from 9 to 7 and meeting every other month for meetings instead of monthly. These changes will take affect 1/1/2022. Currently there is a need for two additional members to join the Council. Melinda, Anna, Becky, Alice, & Robbie will remain on Council for the coming year 2022. If you are interested in serving on the Council at OSLC, please let Anna Lowery know.

New Business:

- a. Amending NALC Constitution, Article 11 still under review.

General Information:

- a. Attendance: BRING A FRIEND!!
- b. Laszlo Mission (Kids International) Report

The Council meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

Next meeting is November 15, 2021 at 7pm
 Becky Messick - Devotions

The Original King-Sized Bed!!



Thank God for that bed and The Baby who slept there

Bible Quiz

In the story of the Magi, what word is used to give a sense of Jesus' age when the wise men visited? What does it tell us?

- A. "baby"; Jesus was still a newborn in a manger
- B. "child"; when the wise men visited, Jesus had grown past infancy
- C. "youth"; Jesus was probably between 10 and 14
- D. No word is used to suggest Jesus' age at the time of the wise men's visit.



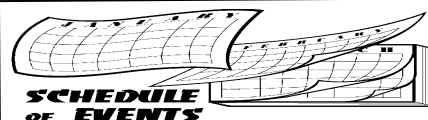
Answer: B (See Matthew 2:1-12.)











December 2021



Sunday School: 9:45 am Sunday
Church Service: 11:00 am Sunday



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 Food Collection			1	2	3 	4
5  Second Sunday of Advent	6 Team Mtg.	7	8	9	10  BANDS DAY	11
12  Third Sunday of Advent	13	14 CLW/Rachel Group	15	16	17	18
19  Fourth Sunday of Advent	20 Council Mtg.	21 Prayer Group	22	23	24 Candlelight Service	25 
26 1st Sun. after Christmas	27	28	29	30	31  Looking Forward to New Year	

- Dec. 3—Carols n the Square (see below)
- Dec. 5—2nd Sunday of Advent
- Dec. 6—Team Meeting 7:00 pm
- Dec. 7—Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day (p 9)
- Dec. 12—3rd Sunday of Advent
- Dec. 12—Dallas Parade 3:00 pm
- Dec. 14—CLW/Rachel Group will meet at the home of Betty Clemmer at 12:30 pm—Christmas Luncheon & Program
- Dec. 19—4th Sunday of Advent
- Dec. 20—Council Meeting 7:00 pm
- Dec. 21—Winter begins
- Dec. 21—Prayer Group will meet at Home of Shirlee Marazza at 1:00 pm
- Dec. 24—*Christmas Eve Candle Light Service* Communion
- Dec. 25—The Birth of Jesus Christ
- Dec. 26—1st Sunday after Christmas
- Dec. 31—New Year's Eve.

FOOD FOR THE MONTH: **Green Peas, Crackers, Peanut Butter**



Choir practice each Wednesday at 4:00 pm unless otherwise announced in the bulletin



"Carols on the Square"

Dec. 3, 6:30 pm

Reading of the Christmas Story
Christmas Choir

Visit The Gaston Co. Museum
& enjoy refreshments after program

FLOWERS

Flower Schedule:

Dec. 5
Dec. 12 Poinsettias*
Dec. 19 Poinsettias*
Dec. 26

*Wayne Ann Penley

Please sign up to place flowers on the altar in the glory of God and in honor or memory of your love ones for 2022



Birthdays

2 Pastor Pete	Bryan Petzold
3 Mary Feige	Jerry Mullen
6 Kaitlyn Feige	Katie White
6 Tiffany Cobb	Robbie Wooten
7 Jeff White	
10 Bryan Petzold	
12 Doyle Clemmer	
25 Kathy Trudnak	
26 Julie Digh	



Holy Communion Schedule:

All Sundays and
Dec. 24: Christmas Eve

Worship Service Assistance:

Acolyte: Nora Cole
Communion
Asst: Nora Cole
Lay Reader: Yvonne Finger
Worship Asst: Yvonne Finger
Greeters: OSLC Members
Ushers: OSLC Members

Collection: Melinda White

Board Devotions: Dec. 20. Denise Traveria

THANK YOU: 20 Shoe Boxes were donated.





OUR SAVIOUR LUTHERAN CHURCH
725 Gastonia Technology Parkway
Post Office Box 475
Dallas, North Carolina 28034
Phone: 705-922-4648
Email: oslc-dallas@aol.com
Website: oslc-nc.org

OUTREACH MISSION

SHUT-INS

NURSING HOME RESIDENTS

Please remember our church members who are shut-ins or reside in a nursing home* and visit them.

Marilyn Finger

2701 Jackson Square, Andersin, SC 29625

Jill Petzold

Brookdale Senior Living, Rm 44,
1680 S. New Hope Rd., Gastonia, NC 28054

(If others, please let the church office know)



EVENTS for:

Agrape/Kure Beach

Contact Camp Agapé:

Telephone: 919-552-9421

e-mail: agape@agapekurebeach.org

Contact Kure Beach Lutheran:

Telephone 910-458-0783

e-mail: kurebeach@agapekurebeach.org

Web site: www.agapekurebeach.org

Directions to Camp Agapé are on the web site.

Please see calendars and other information on the bulletin board or go on-line

"Want to keep Christ in Christmas? Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, forgive the guilty, welcome the unwanted, care for the ill, love your enemies, and do unto others as you would have done unto you."

Steve Maraboli



That's Not My JOB!"

This is a story about four people named **Everybody**, **Somebody**, **Anybody** and **Nobody**. There was an important job to be done and **Everybody** was sure that **Somebody** would do it. **Anybody** could have done it, but **Nobody** did it. **Somebody** got angry about that, because it was **Everybody's** job. Everyone thought **Anybody** could do it, but **Nobody** realized that **Everybody** wouldn't do it. It ended up that **Everybody** blamed **Somebody** when **Nobody** did what **Anybody** could have.

Author Unknown.



GO OUT ON A LIMB **GET INVOLVED** **BE A WORSHIP ASSISTANT**

A positions are still open. Participate in the service of the Lord and sign up.

Sign up sheets
for the 2022 calendar year are on the
wall in the Education wing.



2022 Church Envelops are
On table in hallway.

?? ? Bible Quiz ? ? ?

Which of the four Gospels name(s) Bethlehem as the place of Jesus' birth?

- A. Only Luke
- B. Matthew and Luke
- C. Mark and John
- D. All four



Answer: B (See Matthew 2:1; Luke 2:1-7.)

A Stewardship Minute

The magical sound of a bell choir can only be achieved if the group plays together ... harmoniously. The music played will not sound right unless each bell player rings his or her bell at the right time.

Humans working and living together are similar. God has given us talents, intelligence, strength, resources and time to live according to God's plan. When we live under the guidance of God, in harmony with the direction God gives us, then we fulfill the purpose God has for us. We bring joy, peace, sweetness to the world.

Mother Teresa, the little nun who worked among the poorest of the poor in India, said that she wanted to make her life Something Beautiful for God. She did! Her life was not discordant because she lived in harmony with God.

To live with inner peace and a sense of purposefulness, this month's issue of Stewardship points out that it is necessary to use the totality of our lives under the direction of the Master Conductor. It is to use whatever brain power we have, whatever talents, whatever time we are given, and whatever resources we have on behalf of our Creator and for the betterment

of the world. In short, it is to be the best steward possible, making sure that we bring harmony instead of disharmony to this aching world.

Prayer: Give us the courage and will-power, O Lord, to love and serve you each day we live. May our lives be purposeful and constantly pleasing to you. **Amen**



National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day Proclamation

On a serene Sunday morning 76 years ago, the skies above Pearl Harbor were darkened by the bombs of Japanese forces in a surprise attack that tested the resilience of our Armed Forces and the will of our Nation. As explosions sounded and battleships burned, brave service members fought back fiercely with everything they could find. Unbeknownst to these selfless individuals, the sacrifices endured on that infamous day would galvanize America and come to symbolize the mettle of a generation.

In the wake of the bombing of our harbor and the crippling of our Pacific Fleet, there were those who declared the United States had been reduced to a third-class power. But rather than break the spirit of our Nation, the attack brought Americans together and fortified our resolve. Patriots across our country answered the call to defend our way of life at home and abroad. They crossed oceans and stormed beaches, freeing millions from the grip of tyranny and proving that our military is the greatest force for liberty and security the world has ever known. On the home front, dedicated civilians supported the war effort by repairing wrecked battleships, working in factories, and joining civilian defense organizations to help with salvage programs and plant Victory gardens. At this time of great strife, we reminded the world there is no challenge we cannot meet; there is no challenge we cannot overcome.

On National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, we honor the more than 3,500 Americans killed or wounded during that deadly attack and pay tribute to the heroes whose courage ensured our Nation would recover from this vicious blow. Their tenacity helped define the Greatest Generation and their valor fortified all who served during World War II. As a Nation, we look to December 7, 1941, to draw strength from the example set by these patriots and to honor all who have sacrificed for our freedoms. The Congress, by Public Law 103-308, as amended, has designated December 7 of each year as "National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day."

Words To Live By

Believe in yourself.
Anything is possible.

Never give up.
Practice makes perfect.

Be grateful.
Appreciate what you have.

Work hard.
Make every job count.

Be Kind,
Treat everyone with respect.

Stay strong.
Overcome the lumps and bumps.

Keep Smiling
Think positively.



On **December 21, 2020**, a rare event occurred in the night sky... And it has not been seen in over eight centuries. On that date, Jupiter and Saturn, the two largest planets in our solar system conjunct to form what's sometimes referred to as the "**Christmas Star**" or the "**Star of Bethlehem.**"



Church News



"Carols on the Square"

Dec. 3, 6:30 pm

Reading the Christmas Story

Gentlemen Songster

Christmas Choir

Singing of Carols

Santa

Refreshments



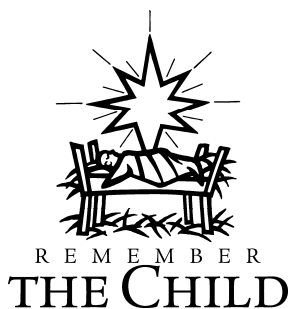
Dallas Parade

DALLAS CHRISTMAS PARADE

DECEMBER 12

3:00 PM

Holiday Open House
at the Gaston Museum
from 3:00 pm and 6:00 pm
after the Dallas Parade. Moon Pies and hot ci-
der will be served. Plus a new toy exhibit



Annual Report



With the year end close in sight it will be here before we can say Happy New Year.

Please start working on your Annual Reports, Scheduled for Team Meeting dates, and Looking Ahead activities, such as: Group Meeting, VBS, Conventions, etc. Please submit by Jan. 15, 2022.

If you need a Pastor, please contact Pastor Pete Feige at 704-516-2805 or our office at 704-922-4648. Check out our website at oslc-nc.org or email us at oslcdallas@aol.com.



CLW/RACHEL GROUP

will meet at the home of Betty Clemmer Dec. 14 at 12:30 pm

"Christmas Luncheon"



PRAYER GROUP

Will meet in the home of Shirlee Marazza

on Dec. 21 at 1:30 pm



LET US PRAY... "Are any among you suffering? They should pray...The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up." (James 5:13-15)

MARGARET Addington, SUSAN Aderholt, SETH Alexander, AMANDA (friend of the Penley's), MARVIS Anderson, WHITNEY Auten (breast cancer), KELLY Ballard (friend of Shana Dease), BRAXTON Bearden (friend of the Locketts), ADDISON Blanton (friend of Dease's), KATHY Bohanan (cancer), KAREN Brady, JACKIE Carpenter (friend of Alice Vlaservich-liver cancer), SYLVIA Cloninger (friend of Nick Vlaservich), MIKE Coffey (Robbie Wooten's uncle), STEVE Cloninger (friend of Brady Ratchford-cancer), BEVERLY Copeland (friend of Robbie's-cancer), STEVE Digh (cancer), HARDY Feige (Pete's dad - chronic back pain), NANCY Friday, BECKY Goodwin (friend of Brady's - cancer), JAMES Goudelock (cancer), JASON Hames (friend of the White's), GRACE Harbin (friend of Robbie Wooten-cancer), JEFF Lineberger (stroke), JOYCE in Morganton (Nick & Alice Vlaservich's acquaintance-cancer), DANA Kirshman (friend of Robbie Wooten-cancer), MARINA Marazza (Shirlee Marazza's granddaughter-Covid19), SAM Marr (Heart), BO Messick (foot), FRANCIS McAllister (broken hip), CHRIS Messick (recovering back surgery), JASON, ALLISON & LEX Murray, MARSHAR Patton (embryo implants), ELLEN & ED Pfeiffer (Keenan Gordy's Parents - Heart issues), GARY Neal, (friend of Caleb Dease), SON-DRA Phillips (friend of Melinda White), GWEN Ratchford (Brady Ratchford's sister-in-law-cancer), MARTHA Surrett (friend of Alice Vlaservich-Cancer), LIBBY Toler (Dec 14 - heart value), TERI Trudnak, TONY Trudnak (cancer reoccurring), GARY Turner (father of Jason Murray), HAL White, JOE White (stroke), DANNY Wilson (surgery Dec 22), NANCY Wilson, REESE Wilson (blood cancer).



The Story of the Seated Camel

Buying a camel in the Holy Land thousand of years agoe was no each task. Breeders saved the best animals for the rick while the poor were offered those with light hope of living to old age. Such a camel ws sold to a family of merchants living many days west of the city of Bethlehem.

How difficult her first year was! The little camel's back sagged under the weight of ay burdens, yet she never let her master hear the sound of relief as bundles were taken from er back. She grew accustomed to her role and never complained how- ever that could not be said about her owner. Every day he complained she was not big enough. She could not carry as much as other camels. How he complained!

It came to pass that s stranger with skin the color of night arrived from the west. Townsfolk murmured about the royally robed man with the turban of a nomad and jeweled feet. But though his figure was imposing his needs were understandable to all his camel had grown too frail to finish their journey to Bethlehem.

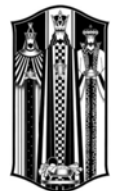
The stranger strolled to the market looking for a new animal but found none to his liking Just as he began to despair he encountered an angry merchant screaming like a fishwife as he stacked enormous rolls onto his camel's back. The black man could not imagine that much weight on the little animal and spoke quietly to him, "your camel is too small to carry your burden." he said.

"Mind your business stranger." the man shot back, resentment in his voice. "This is my camel to do as I wish just as your beasts are at your royal command." The stranger looked at the camel and felt a stirring in his heart. "Sell me your camel I will give you what you ask." the stranger said.

The man laughed and continued to load calling out anaount one might pay for a finely bred camel. When he heard the tinkle of gold he stopped at once.

"Here is your price," the stranger said quietly. "May I help you remove these parcels from my camel?"

At last the camel was free of her burden. Her new master walked her toward the in tethering her beside his aged beast. He transferred a beautiful blanket onto her back, fastening a bridle with tassels of gold. The black king mounted his new camel proudly, continuing his journey to Bethlehem with the other annal in tow.



THE THREE KINGS

Independently, three men of wealth and nobility received a divine message to travel to a distant land to worship the Son of Man thousands of years ago Known as Wise Men because of their knowledge of the heavens and earth, these men were also rick in belief. Once they received signs of the Savor's imminent birth each gathered a retinue of animals and prepare for the journey east.

The youngest king was called Gasper. How his white beard flowed beneath an ornate turban! Layers of the fine fabric fashioned his elegant robe trimmed with embellishments of gold and gems. Casper came from India carrying a symbol of divinity frankincense.

A Nubian prince named Balthazar journeyed from Africa to pray before the Child. Balthazar carried the most valuable treasure he could gather myrrh. I symbolized the passion of Jesus and foretold the destiny. Dressed some say in desert robes and cloth beneath his crown to protect him from heat. Balthazar wore soft slippers so that he might not disturb the Child when he found Him.

Finally, the eldest Magi was Melchior. He air was golden and long and his beard was beautifully trimmed as benefits a royal presence. His red robes were spun of fine cloth and trimmed with white fur. Melchior bore a gift of gold for the newborn Christ Child as gold as his hair in the afternoon sum.

Though each wise man left his home alone a magnificent star brought the three together. It had shone brightly over their heads on the night of Christ's birth adding to the urgency of the journey. Stopping briefly at King Herold's palace to pray their respects to the local rule as was custom, the Magi completed the journey to the threshold of the Bethlehem.

Quietly, the kings entered the enclosure joining worshipers and animals before the blessed Baby. Despite the miles each traveled they did not look at all tired. Kneeling to worship, adore and present the Child with the treasures they had brought, they stayed until the las shadows of the sun left the earth. King Harold had requested a return call on their journey home. But a dream told them ot to stop lest they endangers the Child. The three took a route far from the path of Herold's influence, traveling back to their homes in go's holy protection after their miraculous journey of faith.



Four Gifts for You This Advent

Jim Campbell

The four weeks of Advent are a time of spiritual preparation that begins with an awareness of our own longing and leads us to a deeper openness to the many gifts God wants to give us. This article offers a reflection on a different spiritual gift for each week of Advent. Take time each day to reflect on the week's theme. If you make time for inner preparation, carrying out all the other demands of the season is bound to be more enjoyable. May you have a blessed Advent.

Gift 1: Time to Know Your Deepest Longings

As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and behold the face of God? My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me continually, "Where is your God?" Psalm 42:2-4

One day on a winter's walk in the woods I came face to face with a deer. Our town had been in the midst of a stretch of very cold weather, and the stream I was walking along was mostly frozen over. I had stopped at a place where the swift current of the stream broke through to the surface and swirled around in eddies before it disappeared back under the ice.

As I sat for a while watching and listening to the gurgling water, a deer quietly appeared. We stared at one another for a few moments and, sensing I was no threat, the deer moved to the edge of the water and drank deeply.

I recalled the words, "As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God." I had been experiencing a kind of winter in my soul. There were few signs of life, and the Spirit of God seemed to have become frozen over within me. Somehow, I was drawn to this external image of my internal longing—flowing water finding a way to bubble up from beneath solid ice.

It was Advent and I was longing, even though I was barely aware of my discontent. Like everyone else I had been caught up in the busyness of Christmas preparations. Though we had lit the Advent candles at home and I had tried to pray, I needed more. I needed time to really allow my sense of longing to swirl up and become clear to me as it did on that winter's walk in the woods. I knew then that I needed a closer relationship to God and that I had to stop just going through the motions of my prayer life. My longing, once acknowledged, turned out to be an invitation to live with a deeper awareness of God's presence and care all around me.

What are you longing for? What is your heart trying to tell you? The gift God offers this first week of Advent is the invitation to explore your inner longings. The Church, through our Advent customs, and even the weather of the season itself support such inner work. During the first week of Advent, give yourself time and space to contemplate what you are truly longing for in life. Know that this is the season when your longings will lead you to the Christ Child, in whom the hopes and fears of all the years are known and responded to with generous love.

As individuals and as a community, we are longing for the presence of God. World events shatter our complacency; family difficulties shake our resolve. How can we say God is present when so much seems to be unstable?

Theme: Our World Longs for God

Gift 2: God's Words of Comfort

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the LORD'S hand double for all her sins.

A voice cries out: In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken. Isaiah 40:1-5

In early adulthood I began to find Christmas a great letdown. People talk about the magic of Christmas. At that time in my life, the magic seemed to have disappeared. Christmas began to seem like just any other day, only one with a lot of additional obligations and emotional demands.

Ironically, my sense of holiday malaise began to ease when I accepted that Christmas is, in one respect, just like any other day. That is, I can recognize the coming of Christ into my life and into my heart at any moment, on any and every day. Christ's coming wasn't limited to that one single day when "the magic" had to happen. In fact I came to realize that this wasn't about magic at all, but about reality. The true meaning of Christmas is grounded

(Four Gifts cont'd on page 13)

(Four Gifts cont'd from page 12)

in the profound revelation that God so loves us that he chose to dwell among us both in Bethlehem and today right in our families. I came to see how, in Isaiah's words, "the glory of the Lord shall be revealed" whenever I am willing to prepare the way of the Lord into my life. For me, making a straight path in the wasteland usually has to do with quieting my mind and opening my heart.

The gift for the second week of Advent is that God speaks a reassuring word of comfort in the midst of our discontent and longing. In this quiet season—a season we tend to fill up with a lot of noise and frantic activity—make time daily to listen for the comforting words of God in your life. Probably the quickest way to begin hearing those words is to create a daily gratitude list. Set aside five minutes each morning or evening and take a few deep breaths. When you are settled, start jotting down whatever comes to your mind that you are grateful for. With a heart full of gratitude, everything else in our lives will change. We will begin to see, even in the demands of our Christmas preparations, the real purpose of those efforts—celebrating the Lord's arrival in our life and the lives of those we love.

Theme: God Speaks Words of Comfort

The prophet Isaiah spoke God's words to the Jewish people in the midst of their exile in Babylon between 597 and 537 B.C. Their lives were shattered, the Temple had been destroyed and the memory of it was fading among their children. In the midst of a discouraging time came words of comfort. God speaks words of comfort to us today. We can only hear them if we are open to listening. They are not the words of false comfort that everything will somehow turn out for the best. They are words that come to us in the midst of our pain and confusion. They will lead us to an even greater sense of God's presence in our lives and in our families.

Gift 3: God's Love Placed in Your Heart

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD. I will put my law within them, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Jeremiah 31:31-33

As a child, every year before Christmas I drew up a list of the toys and presents that I had my heart set on receiving. Usually there was that one special item that I just knew would gladden my heart and make me feel complete.

This week in Advent we focus on hearts: glad hearts, sad hearts, hard hearts, broken hearts, longing hearts. In the Scriptures much is written about hearts because the heart represents the person's deepest identity. Our hearts reveal who we most truly are because they hold what we most deeply desire.

What's in your heart? We can give many answers to that question, and it's a good question to ponder during this week of Advent. But God has an answer for that question, too. "I will put my law within them, and write it on their hearts," says the Lord. So in addition to whatever else might be in your heart, you can also be sure that the law of the Lord is written—in permanent ink—on your heart. That law is love.

It's time to live out what's in your heart. I know that when I've gotten confused and lost in my faith there is one sure way to find my way back, and that is to love somebody. In my confusion, I look around to see who in my life could use a loving response. It might be my daughter, who's confused about a decision she faces and needs someone to listen—truly listen. Or it might be my wife, who is overwhelmed with responsibilities and could use a helpmate to shoulder some of those duties. Or it might be that my parish offers me the chance to help make Christmas happier for a family in need. The Advent gift this week is the love God places in our hearts.

Theme: God Calls Us to Conversion of Heart

The bottom line is that we have to take responsibility for ourselves. The seed of change in our families, in the community, and in the world begins with answering God's call to meet us and to change our heart. In the midst of a world going insane, it seems a small thing to do. But one heart in tune with God can resonate in our families and through our families and communities into the world.

Gift 4: Hope That Lasts

Blessed are those who trust in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD.

They shall be like a tree planted by water sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit.

Jeremiah 17:7-8

(Four Gifts cont'd on page 14)

(Four Gifts cont'd from page 14)

One day while on retreat in New Mexico, I made a trek across a barren stretch and up a difficult slope to stand on top of a high mesa. As I walked, the whole area seemed desolate and empty. But once atop the mesa I got another view. From there, in the distance I could see the outline of a currently dry river bed. It was easily visible because all along its dry banks, life abounded. From high above, the river bed was like a ribbon of green and gold. In the brilliant sunshine, green and gold leaves fluttered on trees and shrubs, whose roots stretched out to be watered by the stream when the rains came. These roots must have gone deep to sustain such abundant life even during a long, dry season.

Advent is a time to sink our spiritual roots deep, to let them stretch out to God, the source of all life. Because we are thus connected with God, we too can be sources of life to others in the way we live our daily life. Christmas is not only the season of receiving gifts; it is even more so the season of taking delight in giving to others. We emulate what God has done for us and in that we find our deepest joy. Let us prepare, then, to be generous in offering our family, coworkers, and neighbors spiritual gifts such as patience, prudence, encouragement, counsel, faith, hope, and love.

There's a spiritual adage that says, "You can't give what you haven't got." The gift offered during this last week of Advent is the gift of hope. Let us drink deeply of the spiritual gift of hope that God offers us. Then we can cherish within us the spirit of Christmas and bring to others the blessings of the Christ Child every day of the year.

Theme: Hope Helps Us Endure in Difficult Times

We can easily become impatient with God and with one another. Living in hope means being willing to live courageously day to day. The signs of change in us will most likely be subtle. Living in hope means that while Jesus has already come, we are still in the process of letting him complete the journey into our hearts.

Even the Inn Keeper?

by Carrin Mahmood

All God's critters got a place in the choir is how the song goes. One can assume that must mean that we all have a place and a purpose in God's kingdom. However after weeks of anticipation, worshipping fully, spending less, giving more, and now loving all, we begin to look at the nativity story. I know I believe that we are to love all, but upon closer inspection, I can't quite believe that all these critters are suppose to be in the same choir. The Inn Keeper comes to mind. Really? Not a nook or a cranny for the pregnant girl? This "loving all" business is a tall order indeed! I guess now would be the perfect time to practice. ***And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth 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 heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!' Luke 2: 7-13.***

Infant holy, infant lowly
For His bed a cattle stall;
Oxen lowing, little knowing
Christ, the babe, is Lord of all.
Swift are winging, angels singing,
Noels ringing, tidings bringing:
Christ the babe is Lord of all.

Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping
Vigil till the morning new
Saw the glory, heard the story,
Tidings of a gospel true.
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow,
Praises voicing greet the morrow:

This Polish folk carol was published in December, 1925. Several sources indicate that the translation occurred in 1921. Ms. Reed was born in London, March 31, 1885. She was educated at Clifton High School, St. Leonard's School, St. Andrews and the Guildhall School of Music, London. An Associated at the Royal College of Organists, she assisted Percy Scholes in editorial work. During World War I, she edited The Music Student, Music and Youth, and Panpipes, and continued as editor of the latter two after the end of the war. She travelled widely, was devoted to athletics and outdoor life, wrote two Christmas mystery plans, and authored Story Lives of the Great Composers. She died in London, June 4, 1933.



DECEMBER 21

THE CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

This is worth reading all the way to the end. If you aren't laughing, you have never even SEEN a child!!

My husband and I had been happily married (most of the time) for five years but hadn't been blessed with a baby. I decided to do some serious praying and promised God that if he would give us a child, I would be a perfect mother, love it with all my heart and raise it with His word as my guide.

God answered my prayers and blessed us with a son. The next year God blessed us with another son. The following year, He blessed us with yet another son. The year after that we were blessed with a daughter. My husband thought we'd been blessed right into poverty. We now had four children, and the oldest was only four years old.

I learned never to ask God for anything unless I meant it as a minister once told me, "If you pray for rain, make sure you carry an umbrella."

I began reading a few verses of the Bible to the children each day as they lay in their cribs. I was off to a good start. God had entrusted me with four children and I didn't want to disappoint Him. I tried to be patient the day the children smashed two dozen eggs on the kitchen floor searching for baby chicks. I tried to be understanding... when they started a hotel for homeless frogs in the spare bedroom, although it took me nearly two hours to catch all twenty-three frogs. When my daughter poured ketchup all over herself and rolled up in a blanket to see how it felt to be a hot dog, I tried to see the humor rather than the mess.

In spite of changing over twenty-five thousand diapers, never eating a hot meal and never sleeping for more than thirty minutes at a time, I still thank God daily for my children.

While I couldn't keep my promise to be a perfect mother - I didn't even come close... I did keep my promise to raise them in the Word of God. I knew I was missing the mark just a little when I told my daughter we were going to church to worship God, and she wanted to bring a bar of soap along to "wash up" Jesus, too. Something was lost in the translation when I explained that God gave us everlasting life, and my son thought it was generous of God to give us his "last wife."

My proudest moment came during the children's Christmas pageant. My daughter was playing Mary, two of my sons were shepherds and my youngest son was a wise man. This was their moment to shine.

My five-year-old shepherd had practiced his line, "We found the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes." But he was nervous and said, "The baby was wrapped in wrinkled clothes." My four-year-old "Mary" said, "That's not 'wrinkled clothes,' silly. That's dirty, rotten clothes."

A wrestling match broke out between Mary and the shepherd and was stopped by an angel, who bent her halo and lost her left wing. I slouched a little lower in my seat when Mary dropped the doll representing Baby Jesus, and it bounced down the aisle crying, "Mama-mama." Mary grabbed the doll, wrapped it back up and held it tightly as the wise men arrived.

My other son stepped forward wearing a bathrobe and a paper crown, knelt at the manger and announced, "We are the three wise men, and we are bringing gifts of gold, common sense and fur." The congregation dissolved into laughter, and the pageant got a standing ovation.

"I've never enjoyed a Christmas program as much as this one," laughed the pastor, wiping tears from his eyes. "For the rest of my life, I'll never hear the Christmas story without thinking gold, common sense and fur."

"My children are my pride and my joy and my greatest blessing," I said as I dug through my purse for an aspirin.

Jesus had no servants, yet they called Him Master.

Had no degree, yet they called Him Teacher.

Had no medicines, yet they called Him Healer.

Had no army, yet kings feared Him.

He won no military battles, yet He conquered the world.

He committed no crime, yet they crucified Him.

He was buried in a tomb, yet He lives today.

Feel honored to serve such a Leader who loves us.



Our Saviour Lutheran Church
P.O. Box 457
725 Gastonia Technology Parkway
Dallas, NC 28034



*"The child to be born
will be holy;
he will be called
Son of God."*



Luke 1:35, NRSV

December 2021



Christmas Worship Schedule

Dec. 5..... 2nd Sunday of Advent... .11:00 am

Dec. 12..... 3rd Sunday of Advent.....11:00 am

Dec. 19..... 4th Sunday of Advent.....11:00 am

Dec. 24.....Christmas Eve
Candle Light Service.... 7:00 pm
Holy Communion

Dec. 25.....Christmas Day*Merry Christmas*