



From the Pastor's Desk

Waiting for God

"I wait for the Lord, my soul does wait, and in His Word do I hope."

– Psalm 130:5

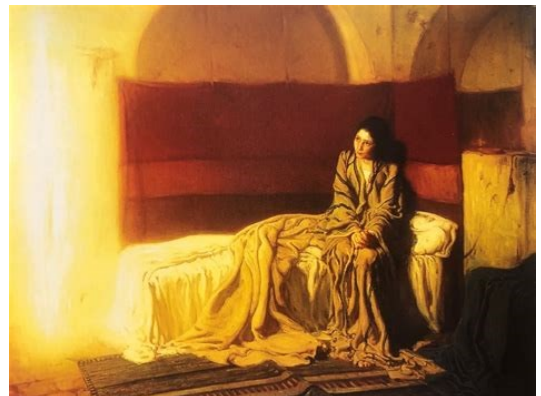
I admit that I don't particularly like to wait. Patience is a virtue that God is still developing in me. In our home a particular child is having difficulty waiting for Christmas. Decorations get taken out before there is a place prepared to display them. There is excited anticipation that can barely be contained! But sometimes we also wait with anxiety and in uncertainty over things in life, not knowing exactly what is coming. Perhaps waiting on a health diagnosis or anticipating an expense that one might not have the resources to cover.

Throughout the Bible, we find people waiting. Waiting for God. Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden wait for God's Promise of a coming Savior to be fulfilled. It will be thousands of years in coming. Throughout those years, people will faithfully wait, holding fast to the promise of God's Word. As the Psalmist declares, ***"I wait for the Lord, my soul does wait, and in His Word do I hope."*** (Ps. 130:5)

One of my favorite examples of waiting is the Virgin Mary. She is one of God's faithful people. She is waiting for the coming of the Messiah, the Savior of the world. Sometimes we wait impatiently and try to force things forward or open the packages before the right time. Other times we wait with boredom or indifference, to the point that we are no longer alert. The truth is, we are not waiting any longer for something promised, but have simply moved on to something else. Not only are we no longer actively waiting, but we are no longer even "present" in our waiting; we are absent-minded and no longer home.

Mary waits with anticipation, and with an active faith! She has been holding onto the ancient promise of God, and it is ever before her. She has not moved on to something else more exciting, but she has stayed centered in the Word of God. Therefore, when God comes, she is ready to receive the Christ-child into her very self. She has been at home in the Word of God, and now the WORD is at home within her.

Mary also waits with some uncertainty. When the angel announces that she will be the mother of the Christ-child, she asks, ***"how can this be?"*** From a human perspective, there are some impossibilities here! But when assured



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of God's miracle, she accepts and says, ***"Behold, the bondservant of the Lord; may it be done to me according to Your Word."*** (Luke 1:38) She does not completely understand how this will be possible, but by faith she accepts and receives the WORD.

It is also important to note that Mary waits by going and staying with Elizabeth for three months. She needs Elizabeth's support and encouragement. There is a lesson here for us as well. We need to wait upon God in the community of our church family. Together we faithfully and actively wait around God's Word as God's work unfolds in our world yet today.

In the Christmas story of Luke 2, we read that ***"While they [Mary and Joseph] were there [Bethlehem], the days were completed for her to give birth."*** (v.6) She had waited for nine months during her pregnancy. As she was waiting, she was growing. Yes, her body was growing, but also her faith was growing and her anticipation of God. Now the wait was over. ***"The days were completed."*** Christ had come into the world.

Today we celebrate Christmas and the coming of Christ, but we also continue to wait. We are waiting for Christ's Second Coming. Like Mary at the First Coming, we are to wait actively and in faith as our hope is in the promise of God's Word. We are to wait with alertness and growing anticipation as we see the signs unfold. We are to wait together within the community of the church, encouraging one another as the day draws near. We are to wait with an open heart to receive Christ when He comes again as King of kings and Lord of lords, the Savior of the world!

May God bless us everyone, as together we celebrate Christmas and wait for the Second Coming of Christ!

Pastor Carlson



A Christmas Greeting:

Dear Ruthfred Congregational Family,

It is a delight to serve as your pastors. Our church is filled with loving and caring people, and our families have certainly experienced this throughout the year. We pray God's blessing upon you and that the joy of knowing our Savior will be yours in abundance as we celebrate the birth of Christ! May we all be filled with His love and truth this Christmas Season!

We wish each of you a Blessed Advent & Merry Christmas!

Pastor Steve and Jen Carlson and family &

Pastor Bryce and Erin McMinn and family

Song of the Month

By Tom Glasser

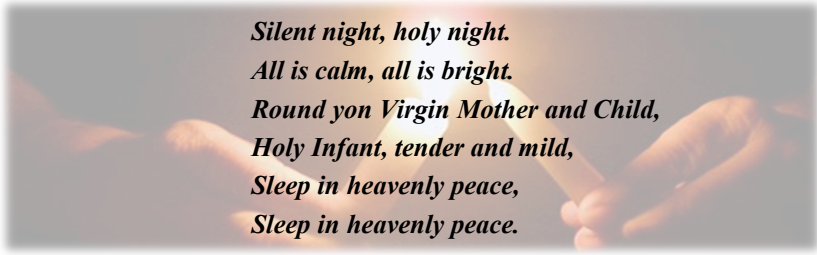
Silent Night

Lyrics: Joseph Mohr

Music: Franz Gruber

The beautifully decorated church is packed. Anticipation is in the air. Slowly candle flames are passed from one member to the next throughout the congregation. The sanctuary lights are extinguished, leaving the church ethereally lit only by hundreds of flickering candles. The organ intones the familiar melody of "Silent Night" and every one joins in singing the well-known carol, many from memory with no hymnal or bulletin needed. For many of us, this Christmas Eve tradition is one of the most emotional and moving worship experiences of the year.

I grew up in a very modest middle class family, but my parents always managed to spoil my brothers and me with many fun gifts under the Christmas tree. As a young boy I was about as excited and materialistic about this as most children are, I suppose. But I also was brought up as a Christian and felt deeply that Santa Claus and gifts and sumptuous dinners and big family gatherings all hinged mysteriously on that baby in the manger as we sang in church on Christmas Eve.



*Silent night, holy night.
All is calm, all is bright.
Round yon Virgin Mother and Child,
Holy Infant, tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.*

I like G.K. Chesterton's observation that even "any agnostic or atheist whose childhood has known a real Christmas has ever afterwards, whether he likes it or not, an association in his mind between two ideas that most of mankind must regard as remote from each other; the idea of a baby and the idea of unknown strength that sustains the stars."

You may recall that last year at this time I conducted a fun survey to see which Christmas hymn or carol was the most favorite amongst our RLC members. The winner was "O Holy Night". Second place was "Silent Night". So I decided to make it this December's "song of the month". This popular carol dates back to 1818. St. Nicholas church in Oberndorf, Austria, was preparing for Christmas Eve worship. But there was a problem. The church organ had broken down. What to do?! Assistant priest Joseph Mohr and organist Franz Gruber sprang into action and collaborated on a new song designed for choir accompanied by guitar. So, as Daniel Partner writes in *Sounds of the Season*, if organ repairman Karl Mauracher "had been able to repair the organ earlier, the world's best-known Christmas carol may never have been written."

Continued on next page ...

I pray that you will be able to attend one of our Christmas Eve worship services here at Ruthfred and sing, as you look into the shimmering flame of your candle, *Son of God, love's pure light; Radiant beams from thy holy face.*

Sources: Hymnary.org; The Everlasting Man by G.K. Chesterton; Sounds of the Season by Daniel Partner



Please join us

Children's Christmas Program

"The Son Has Come"

Sunday, December 11th
4 pm in the Sanctuary

Congregational potluck dinner to follow
Please sign up at the bottom of the stairs by the
Fellowship Hall by December 4th.
Meat, rolls, and drinks will be provided.

Please bring the following:
Last names A-K: salads
Last names L-S: sides (not salads)
Last names T-Z: desserts

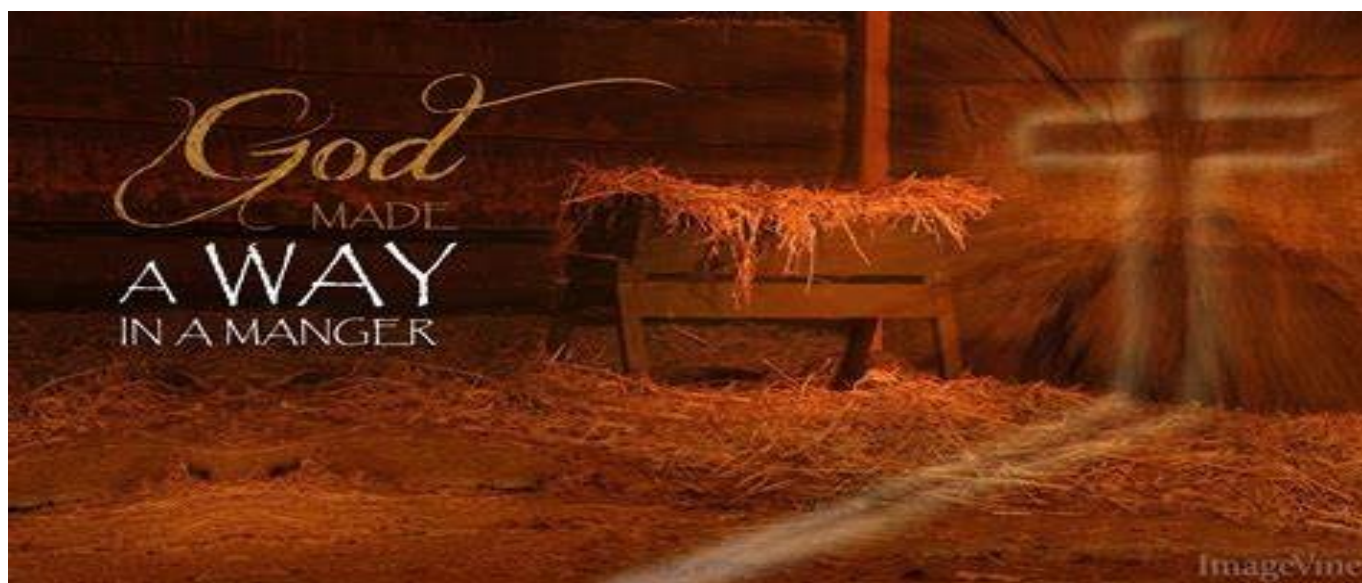


Life Quotes from Lutherans For Life



"As sure as Christmas will come again on December 25, our Lord will come again. As we look forward to the Last Day, let's dress for the occasion, putting on godliness and repentance. Let's celebrate everything He did the first time He came to assure us of our home of righteousness. Let's be spiritually awake and alert for His coming again, knowing that we will enjoy God's perfect paradise, our eternal home."

**Rev. Peter Sulzle, St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Redwood Falls, MN
– A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org**



Ponderable Quote:

It is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its mighty Founder was a child himself.

Charles Dickens

HAPPENINGS AROUND CHURCH . .



On Thanksgiving morning another beautiful worship service of thanks-giving was held. I hope you were able to attend or watch online. "Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, and His steadfast love endures forever." Psalm 136:1

Early in October we set aside a week to be designated **Compassion Sunday**. Tom Swan gave a message and showed a video during the adult Sunday school hour, urging people to consider sponsoring a child from Compassion International. A table was set-up outside the Sunday school room, with brochures and packets for 16 children for whom we hoped to find sponsors. Many churches across the country held similar programs, and the results were quite good with the average number of children sponsored being just over five per church. Ruthfred did a terrific job sponsoring 13 children that day, and the reports I have been getting since have been quite encouraging. Letters are being sent to children, and received back, and relationships are developing. Who could ask for more.



Submitted by Thomas Swan



Thank you to all those who participated in the **Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Ministry**, and to Carol Ward for directing it! This year 136 shoeboxes were filled and submitted by RLC members, which means that 136 children around the world will have a gift to open at Christmas. Last year's total was 111, so this was a significant increase. Thank you so very much!

A **New Members Class** is scheduled to start January 22, 2023. It will meet in the Fireplace Lounge during the Sunday School hour (9:45-10:45 AM). If you or someone you know is interested, please be sure to let one of our pastors or members of Council know.



Member Profile:

by Mettelise Ziegler

The Dolence Family



It is a treat to become acquainted with people who have attended Ruthfred from the cradle...those who are determined there is no better place to raise their own children. Ruthfred is a place where the Word of God is faithfully taught not only through study and preaching but also through music that touches the heart.

Kim was baptized and raised at the church. Kim and Jason along with their children A.J. and Morgan are regular attendees. Unfortunately Kim's mother, Sharon Allsopp, is at a nursing facility. Kim and Jason met at St. Clair Hospital while Kim was an emergency room nurse and Jason worked as an Emergency Medical Technician. Their jobs have changed over nineteen years of marriage. Kim now works as a case manager supervising surgical transplants for Cigna Health while Jason manages the parts department for

Pitt-Ohio Trucking. Jason is also the Fire Chief at the Bower Hill Fire Department in Scott Township.

A.J. Is seventeen. He volunteers at the fire department with his father. A senior at South Fayette High School, A.J. is a member of the drum line. He works at Pizza Hut part-time. He will be enlisted in the U.S. Coast Guard and off to Cape May, New Jersey after high school graduation. A.J. assists Andrew Vogel with the live streaming of our worship service from the back of the church on Sunday mornings.

Morgan, at thirteen, gave up dance competition in order to engage in horseback riding. She does "western" event contests like barrel racing. In addition to her studies in middle school, she is in confirmation class at church and plays on the school volleyball team. Morgan attends SWAP with church youth, as well.

The entire family finds camping at their weekend getaway in West Virginia meaningful. They try to go every weekend from spring through much of fall so they can do outdoor activities together. Kim believes church traditions hold significant relevance. Specifically, she wants those traditions to bless her family. Kim's heart is touched each Christmas Eve when she hears the song below sweetly sung at the end of the service. Unfamiliar to most other churches, this song has been sung by many dear souls at Ruthfred for decades.

*In Heaven, In Heaven
It must be Christmastime
The stars twinkle merrily, so bright they do shine.
O hundreds and thousands and more I can see
They bring me the message
That Christ is born for me...
(G. Dieffenbach)*



90+ Birthday Club

Joyce Alderson	December 9th	97
Garnett Wasson	December 10th	92
Lorraine Christman	December 21st	91
Cornell Ghise	December 31st	92

Happy Birthday !!



Official Acts -- November 2022

Funerals:

* Shirley A. Watson -- 11/10/22

* Mary Ann Scott -- 11/17/22

* Indicates member

*I am
the Way,
the Truth
and the
Life*
John 14:6

Worship Team Members for December 2022

Acolytes:

8:30 AM Isaiah Compel (4th, 11th, 18th)
11:00 AM Josh Cimarolli (4th, 11th, 18th)

Christmas Eve

5:00 PM Asher Manzo
7:00 PM Elliot McMinn
9:00 PM Josh Cimarolli

Christmas Day

10:00 AM Elliot McMinn

Ushers:

8:30 AM Bernard Pattera &
John Ruzicka
11:00 AM Pete Huwe &
Nathan Donolo (4th, 11th)
Logan Huwe (18th, 26th)

Crucifers:

8:30 AM Morgan Dolence (11th)
11:00 AM Morgan Dolence (4th)
Courtney Felicetti (18th)

Christmas Eve

5:00 PM Courtney Felicetti
7:00 PM Morgan Dolence
9:00 PM Holly Miller

Counters:

8:30 AM Neil Wagner &
Chris Clark
11:00 AM Kurt Ziegler &
Eric Wentz

Coffee Hour Glassers

CL



~Psalm 84:10
(KJV)~

For a day in thy courts
is better than a thousand.
I had rather be a
doorkeeper in the
house of my God, than
to dwell in the tents
of wickedness.

CL



December, 2022

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 Men's Prayer Group 7:00 a.m. (Fireside Lounge)	3
4 2 nd SUNDAY OF ADVENT Holy Communion 8:30 Sunday School 9:45 Holy Communion 11:00 Holy Communion 6:00 CITY MISSION FOOD SUNDAY GIFT Bible Study 6:30 (Location TBD)	5 JTTW Leaders 9:30 Craft & Sew 9:30 (Crafters only) Elders' Meeting 7:00 Benevolence 7:00	6 Worship Team 7:00	7 JTTW 9:15 Children's Choir 5:45 Forkless Dinner 6:00 Bell Choir 6:30 Confirmation 6:45 JTTW 6:45 Kids' Time 6:45 Senior Choir 7:30	8 Knit Wits 10:00	9 Men's Prayer Group 7:00 a.m. (Fireside Lounge) Happy 97 th Birthday Joyce Alderson 	10 Mary Bible Study 9:30 (Fireside Lounge) Happy 92 nd Birthday Garnett Wasson
11 3 rd SUNDAY OF ADVENT Worship Service 8:30 Sunday School 9:45 Worship Service 11:00 Children's Christmas Program & Potluck 4:00 POINSETTIA SALE ENDS	12 Craft & Sew 9:30 Elders' Prayer Time 7:00 Council Meeting 7:30	13 Worship Team 7:00	14 Esther Noon Children's Choir 5:45 Forkless Dinner 6:00 Bell Choir 6:30 Confirmation 6:45	15 Ruth 2:00	16 Men's Prayer Group 7:00 a.m. (Fireside Lounge)	17 Happy Birthday! Contemporary Liturgical Worship Service 6:00
18 4 th SUNDAY OF ADVENT Worship Service 8:30 Sunday School 9:45 Worship Service 11:00 (Zoe D'Alessandro Baptism)	19 Preschool (4 YO) Program ca. 11:00	20 Preschool (3 YO) Program ca. 11:00 Worship Team 7:00 Gideons Christmas Dinner 6:00-8:30	21 NO CONFIRMATION CLASSES or JTTW Senior Choir 7:30 Happy 91 st Birthday Lorraine Christman 	22	23	24 CHRISTMAS EVE Service 5:00 Service 7:00 (Livestreamed) Service 9:00
25 CHRISTMAS DAY Holy Communion 10:00 	26 Church Office closed	27 Worship Team 7:00 Herald deadline	28 Children's Choir 5:45 NO CONFIRMATION CLASSES or JTTW	29	30	31 Happy 92 nd Birthday Cornell Ghise



December 2022

Youth Ministry Calendar

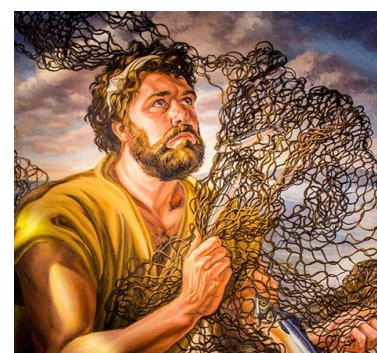
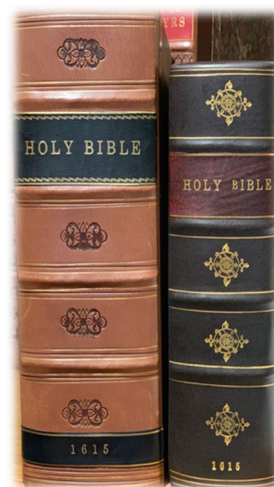
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	1	2	3
4 Sunday School 9:45 SWAP @ Church 6-7:30	5	6 TNT @ Church 7-9	7	8	9	10
11 Sunday School 9:45 NO SWAP	12	13 TNT @ Church 7-9	14	15	16	17 TNT Christmas Party 7-10 p.m. 
18 Sunday School 9:45 SWAP Christmas Party 5-8 p.m. 	19	20 TNT @ Church 7-9	21	22	23	24 
25 NO SWAP 	26	27 NO TNT	28	29	30	31 
						

Reading Through the Bible 2022

Schedule for December

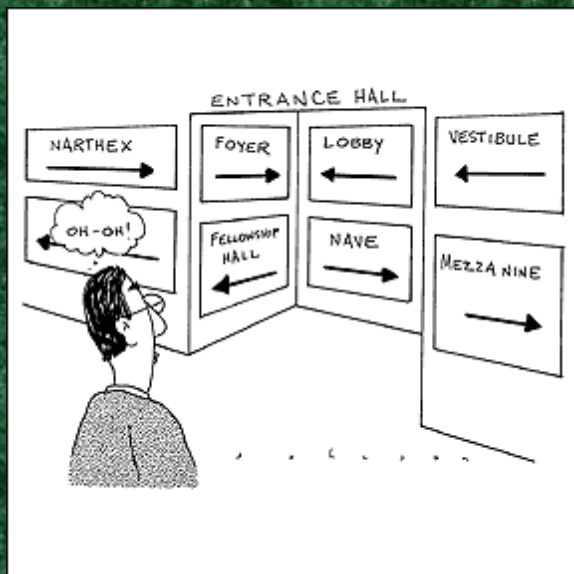


1st 1 Corinthians 9 1 Corinthians 10 1 Corinthians 11
 2nd 1 Corinthians 12 1 Corinthians 13 1 Corinthians 14
 3rd 1 Corinthians 15 1 Corinthians 16
 4th 2 Corinthians 1 2 Corinthians 2 2 Corinthians 3 2 Corinthians 4
 5th 2 Corinthians 5 2 Corinthians 6 2 Corinthians 7 2 Corinthians 8
 2 Corinthians 9
 6th 2 Corinthians 10 2 Corinthians 11 2 Corinthians 12 2 Corinthians 13
 7th Galatians 1 Galatians 2 Galatians 3
 8th Galatians 4 Galatians 5 Galatians 6
 9th Ephesians 1 Ephesians 2 Ephesians 3
 10th Ephesians 4 Ephesians 5 Ephesians 6
 11th Philippians 1 Philippians 2 Philippians 3 Philippians 4
 12th Colossians 1 Colossians 2 Colossians 3 Colossians 4
 13th 1 Thessalonians 1 1 Thessalonians 2 1 Thessalonians 3
 1 Thessalonians 4 1 Thessalonians 5
 14th 2 Thessalonians 1 2 Thessalonians 2 2 Thessalonians 3
 15th 1 Timothy 1 1 Timothy 2 1 Timothy 3 1 Timothy 4
 1 Timothy 5 1 Timothy 6
 16th 2 Timothy 1 2 Timothy 2 2 Timothy 3 2 Timothy 4
 17th Titus 1 Titus 2 Titus 3 Philemon 1
 18th Hebrews 1 Hebrews 2 Hebrews 3 Hebrews 4 Hebrews 5
 Hebrews 6
 19th Hebrews 7 Hebrews 8 Hebrews 9 Hebrews 10
 20th Hebrews 11 Hebrews 12 Hebrews 13
 21st James 1 James 2 James 3 James 4 James 5
 22nd 1 Peter 1 1 Peter 2 1 Peter 3 1 Peter 4 1 Peter 5
 23rd 2 Peter 1 2 Peter 2 2 Peter 3
 24th 1 John 1 1 John 2 1 John 3 1 John 4 1 John 5
 25th 2 John 1 3 John 1 Jude 1
 26th Revelation 1 Revelation 2 Revelation 3
 27th Revelation 4 Revelation 5 Revelation 6 Revelation 7 Revelation 8
 28th Revelation 9 Revelation 10 Revelation 11
 29th Revelation 12 Revelation 13 Revelation 14 Revelation 15
 30th Revelation 16 Revelation 17 Revelation 18 Revelation 19
 31st Revelation 20 Revelation 21 Revelation 22



A joyful heart is good medicine.

Proverbs 17:22a



As soon as I saw this cartoon, I figured it would strike a chord with many RLC members. As many of you are all too familiar, our church layout is not the easiest to navigate. So during this holy-day season, if you see a visitor struggling to find their way around, greet them and give them a hand!

