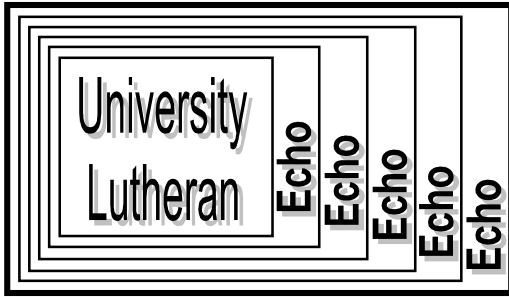


DECEMBER 2017



The Echo

UNIVERSITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
2122 University Avenue
Grand Forks, North Dakota 58203

On a recent Wednesday, I was at the entrance to the sanctuary watching head usher, John Neal, cradle Joe and Alyssa's Denman's newborn girl, Cecilia, in his arms. He had a big smile on his face, as he was obviously enjoying a little one to one time with this absolutely darling baby girl. On Sunday, December 10, we will have the privilege of baptizing Cecilia at worship. I have long told parents such as Joe and Alyssa, the most important thing we are doing in Holy Baptism, is placing our children into Jesus' arms, so he can cradle them for their whole lives.

I love this image of Joe and Alyssa placing Cecilia in Jesus' arms on December 10, and entrusting the Lord with the task of holding her, caring for her, loving her, and saving her in this life, and all the way to heaven. The picture in my mind is Jesus cradling Cecilia, much the same as John was doing just a few Wednesdays ago. In my imagination, Jesus is looking at her with a smile on his face, and as he looks into her eyes, he is also looking into her future life as a child of God. So, I wonder, what does Jesus see? How will he be there for her?

In some of my favorite nativity scenes, the baby Jesus is not laying in the manger, but is being cradled in Mary's arms. Of course, I remember what the Bible says, that Mary *"gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger"*. However, I wonder if this first time mom would so quickly give up her newborn, even if she was exhausted. Instead, I think she held him close, fed him his first meal, and gently rocked him back and forth, all in the cradle of her arms. It was only sometime later the manger became his cradle.

But today, Jesus is no longer a baby needing a cradle. He is no longer cradled by Mary or the manger, though interestingly enough, the Italian sculptor, Michelangelo, fashioned a famous sculpture known by one word, "Pieta" (Pieta is Italian for dutifulness). In this sculpture Mary is cradling the lifeless adult Jesus after he has been crucified. While this is an incredibly moving piece of art, this is not how we need to see Jesus in our lives. We need a risen Jesus, alive and present for us, to love us, help us, protect us, and save us in every way.

We meet this risen Jesus in the Advent carol, "Joy to the World". It announces to us the good news, that Jesus has come into the world, and that he is here to stay with us. It says, *"Joy to the world, the Lord is come. Let earth receive her king. Let every heart prepare him room."* Indeed, Jesus has come into the world, and where does he hope to live? He hopes to live in the hearts and lives of those who are his followers. Mary and the manger can no longer cradle him, because now human hearts do. Jesus has moved from the manger to you.



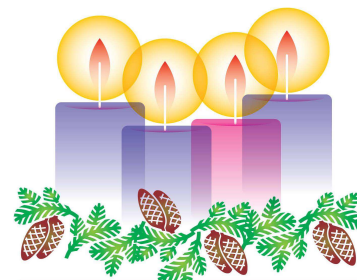
This is not simply an idea written into a favorite carol we love to sing. As a matter of fact, the Apostle Paul speaks about this very thing in Ephesians 3:17. There he prays for you, and for all who follow the Lord, *"that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith"*. Now this is something to really contemplate this Advent and Christmas season. Jesus' mother, Mary, no longer cradles Jesus in her arms. The hay filled manger no longer serves as Jesus' cradle. Instead, your heart is the cradle which holds Jesus. Instead, you cradle Jesus in your heart.

I pray this good news comforts you, even if the month of December is a little crazy, stressful, and hard for you, even if you are overwhelmed by financial stress, grief, or emotional troubles, and even if you are hurting from the struggle of sin, sickness, or addiction in your life. The good news is that Jesus has been born, and the Lord has come into this world to live in your heart and life. As you cradle him there, trust that he is your support, strength, and shelter, against every trouble, struggle, hardship, and challenge in your life. He will be there for you.

Have a blessed Advent and Christmas! You are in my prayers,

Peter Pan

Advent and Christmas



The seasons of Advent and Christmas are times where Christian worship reflects on the Lord's coming into the world. Here are such opportunities this December:

Advent Worship – Moving Toward the Manger

As December begins, so does Advent worship on both Sundays and Wednesdays. Our theme this year is, "Moving Toward the Manger". The weekly themes are:



- ★ Are We There Yet? (Wednesday, December 6)
- ★ Getting the Barn Ready for Jesus (December 10 and 13)
- ★ Seeing Light at the End of the Tunnel (December 17)
- ★ Where Love Is, There Is God (December 24)

Please join us for worship as we consider the Lord's coming into the world, and wonder how we may be ready for it.

Advent Candles

Sundays and Wednesdays will include the lighting of Advent candles as part of worship. The names of the candles and their meanings are as follows:

- ★ Prophecy candle: We wait for Jesus with hope
- ★ Bethlehem candle: We prepare our hearts for Jesus' coming.
- ★ Shepherd's candle: We experience joy at the coming of Jesus.
- ★ Angel's candle: We learn Jesus comes to love us.

Then on Christmas Eve we light the Christ candle to announce that indeed the Lord has come into the world through the birth of Jesus.

Candy Canes

Candy cane Sunday and Wednesday have become a staple at ULC. We will enjoy the legend of the candy cane, as well as enjoy the sweet, sugary taste of this tasty holiday candy at worship on Wednesday, December 13, and Sunday, December 17. Both the younger and older children of God look forward to this annual children's time.



Decorate the Church

Please join us as we decorate the church for Advent and Christmas on Friday, December 1, at 9:00 am. We will be setting up several Christmas trees, wreaths, garlands, and of course, our three nativity sets. We also need a crew to set up the nativity scene on our front lawn. There is something to do for all ages, so if you have the morning free, please come to help us.

Christmas Brunch

You are invited to the Christmas Brunch at 9:30 am on Saturday, December 2. After a delicious brunch, we will enjoy the program entitled, "Christmas Through the Generations". The morning will conclude with a Christmas carol sing-a-long. Our Christmas Brunch is a very special holiday tradition at ULC, and a great way to start your December on the right foot!



Advent Devotions – Adults, Families, and Children

Please look on the table in the narthex for two Advent devotion opportunities:

“Moving toward the Manger” is a series of reflections on the writings of Christian theologian, Fredrick Buechner, by biblical scholar, Martin Marty. Each day in Advent, you can read thought provoking quotes by Buechner which are paired with insights by Marty. The depth of this wisdom will prepare your hearts to cradle the Christ child.



“Up Above Bethlehem” is an Advent calendar for children and families. Each day of December is numbered, and when you lift it, something fun will pop up. A shepherd or sheep? An angel or a wise man? When Christmas arrives an entire nativity scene will appear, and Bethlehem (and our hearts too) will be filled with the hope and wonder of the birth of Jesus Christ.

We hope these resources will enhance your observance of the Advent season.

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

This year, the Fourth Sunday of Advent is also Christmas Eve. So, the 10:00 am service on December 24, is not a Christmas Eve service. Instead, we will feature a special play adapted from a Leo Tolstoy story by Dolores Jaehrling. The title of the play is, “Where Love Is, There Is God.” Come worship in the morning, and then back in the evening again!



Christmas Eve Services – Christ is the Heart of Christmas

Christmas Eve candlelight worship will be 5:00 and 10:00 pm on Sunday, December 24. Both services include Christmas carols, Christmas Gospel, sermon, special music, Holy Communion, and the popular candlelight conclusion. The 5:00pm service also includes a special children’s time, as well as gift for children. “O Come All Ye Faithful” to ULC!

More Christmas Worship and Happy New Year too

After the busyness of Christmas, come to worship on Sunday, December 31, to continue to celebrate the birth of the Lord Jesus. This will be a Christmas carol service with the carols serving as the liturgy for the day. After those Christmas gifts are opened, the real gift of Christmas, Jesus, will emerge. Oh, come let us adore him!



We also will have the laying on of hands and anointing with oil on this day. As we close out 2017, come to hear the good news of Christ’s healing presence for 2018.



Poinsettia Garden

Once again, we will enjoy a beautiful Poinsettia Garden for our Christmas Eve services. We will be ordering about 50 poinsettias, and if you would like to contribute toward the garden, then please fill out the form from the newsletter or one we will enclose in December bulletins. Our cost of a poinsettia is \$10, and you may bring it home with you after the 10:00 pm worship service.

Advent and Christmas Giving

This is the time of year Christians often participate in acts of service for the less fortunate. Here are a few opportunities for you:



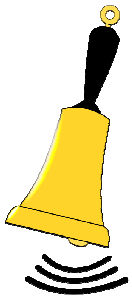
to Serve

Food Pantry Donations

This Advent season, we will help fill the shelves of the Salvation Army Food Pantry. We encourage you to bring the following items to church to feed local hungry people:

- ★ December 3 and 6: Canned fruits and vegetables
- ★ December 10 and 13: Any sort of boxed or canned meals
- ★ December 17: Canned soups and stews
- ★ December 24: Boxed cereals for kids and adults
- ★ December 31: Boxed cakes and brownies

Ring the Bells for the Salvation Army



Once again, we will ring bells for the Salvation Army to help them raise money for their disaster relief funds. Here are the dates and places we are ringing:

- ★ December 8: Inside the main door at Scheel's (9:45 am to 5:45 pm)
- ★ December 15: Inside the main door at Scheel's (9:45 am to 7:45 pm)
- ★ December 21: Inside the main door at Scheel's (9:45 am to 7:45 pm)

The sign-up sheets are available in the church narthex. Register for as many hours and as many days as you would like to participate.

Adopt-A-Family for Christmas

Visit the Giving Tree in our church narthex and choose a gift or two to help a family who is in need this holiday season. In our 26th year with this program we are serving 9 families. We are purchasing gifts for adults and children. You can pick out a gift to purchase or you can give cash, and someone will purchase a gift for you. Here are a few other pieces of information:

- ★ Please purchase a new item for the gift and wrap it.
- ★ Attach the ornament you took from the Giving Tree to the wrapped gift.
- ★ All gifts should be returned to ULC by December 17.
- ★ Place the gifts under or near the Giving Tree.
- ★ We are collecting money to purchase a \$50 Hugo's gift card for each family.



When we are finished with this great cause, we will have purchased over 100 gifts for needy families in our community! Way to go ULC!

Noisy Offering This Month

Noisy offering in Advent will go to ELCA World Hunger. Our church, the ELCA, is very active in helping and feeding adults and children in our world, serving 58 countries and 46 US states. Money donated to ELCA World Hunger will even return to Grand Forks, as through our donations we will help stock our local food pantry shelves at the Salvation Army. We thank you for all your generous gifts to our noisy offering.



Other December News

December 10 Worship Will Include Confirmation

Four ULC young women will be confirmed as part of worship on December 10. This will be a fun addition to our Advent worship this year. Please come to help them affirm their baptism, as we confirm their faith. After worship that day, we will have a cake reception in honor of the confirmands, and everyone is welcome to have their cake and eat it too!



Who are these four young women?

They are: Lauren Coleman, Kylee Horner, Maggie Sorensen, and Mady Torrez.

New Member Sunday Wednesday, Sunday, and Meal for World Hunger

We are receiving new members into our ULC family on Wednesday, December 13, and Sunday, December 17. If you would like to be a part of our ULC family, or you know someone who would, please contact Pastor Tom or the church office to fill out the proper paperwork. New member orientation will be on Tuesday, December 12, at 6:30 pm in the sanctuary.



On Sunday, December 17, we will host a meal for our new members (we always have meals on Wednesdays). We are asking for a free will offering which will go toward ELCA World Hunger. Menu: Pork loin, garlic mashed potatoes, green beans, roll and dessert.

End of Year Stewardship News

Are you ready for a December Challenge? We hope to make some serious gains on the general fund shortfall this month. With God's help and our generosity, we can do this! If you are able, please keep up your regular giving levels, your High 5 offerings, and so on. And, if you have anything extra you can give this month, small or large, we will truly benefit from your generosity as a congregation. The current General Fund challenge: At the end of October, the shortfall was \$28,315. While we have our work cut out for us, we have overcome such challenges before. We thank you for all your generous giving throughout the year.



WE NEED YOUR HELP!

ULC Friends. As you may already know we have 14 youth and 4 adults attending the National Youth Gathering this summer in Houston, Texas. There they will experience service in the community of Houston, learning, fun, time with our Eastern North Dakota Synod, and worship with 30,000 other Lutheran youth and adults from all over the country.

To attend the gathering we have to raise around \$27,000. We have been given the opportunity to raise these funds by cleaning the Ralph Engelstad Arena after hockey games. We have 3 cleanings, one in December and 2 in January. We will raise \$3,600 for just 3 cleanings. That is great money. Our biggest cleaning is Friday, January 5th at 10pm. We are cleaning the entire upper and lower bowl of the arena on this day.



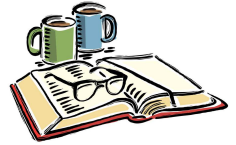
This is where we are asking for your help. If you are able bodied and willing to help with this cleaning we would be very appreciative. We can use as much help as possible. There will be a sign up sheet in the narthex. Please sign up if your are available this day. Thank you for your continued support of the youth at ULC.

Adult Education

Here are several learning opportunities for you in the month of December:

Sunday Morning Adult Class - *Servanthood in Our Midst*

During the month of December, we will examine the lives of three persons from this area who exemplified the concept of Christian Servanthood - Reverend August Hoeger (founder of the Good Samaritan Society), John Mancie (an early UND professor who championed the role of women in our society), and Dr. James Grassick (a pioneer physician who heroically served the needs of his patients). All were humble men who expressed their faith through many deeds of kindness and compassion. They were truly "God's Hands" in our midst. Ken Dawes will lead us in this study on Sundays at 8:45am, December 3, 10 and 17.



Women of the ELCA Bible Study - *Joy to the World*

The Bible study for ULC women and friends in the month of December is an Advent devotion. We will consider several seasonal reflections – The joy of giving, The gift of presence, Toward the light, and Room for our celebration and sorrow. We hope you will join us to prepare yourself for Christmas, and the coming of the Lord Jesus. We work so hard to get our homes ready for Christmas. Here is a time to get your heart ready too. This study will be on Friday, December 8, at 10:00 am. And it is very likely that there will be a few Christmas cookies too!

Calling All Men - *Some Thoughts on the Real Christmas Story*

Are there some parts of the Christmas story that we take for granted and maybe were not exactly the way we think? For example, in the Christmas story a stable is never mentioned; there was no innkeeper and maybe no inn either; Joseph very likely had a ton of relatives in the city of Bethlehem who would have visited the baby Jesus too; and why wouldn't the baby Jesus cry? Please join us for this fun look at the Christmas story that makes us think even more deeply about the Word becoming flesh in Jesus. Join us on Saturday, December 16 at 8:30 am for breakfast pizza, prayer, Bible study, and conversation.



Thursday Morning Bible Study - *The Freedom of a Christian*

This year on Thursday mornings in December, we are studying one of Martin Luther's works, "The Freedom of a Christian". The books are available for only \$8.



- ★ December 7: A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all
- ★ December 14: A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all
- ★ December 21: What do Christians do with such freedom?

Please join us Thursday mornings at 9:30 in December for this unique perspective what it means to be free Christians who are called to love God, and love our neighbors as ourselves.

55+OVER FELLOWSHIP: Preparing for Christmas

On Tuesday, December 12 at 11:30am we will gather at ULC to assemble Christmas treat bags for the Sunday and Wednesday Church School students. For our noon meal we will have a potluck. Please bring a dish to share. Invite a neighbor or friend to join you.



Education Update December 2017



The University Lutheran
Christmas Program will be
Sunday, December 17th at 6:30 p.m.
This program is for all students
(WWJ and Sunday School)
preschool-6th grade.
Please invite guests!

Christmas program practice will be on Saturday, December 16th at 10:00 a.m., practice will be over at approximately Noon. This practice is for all children in church school. Preschoolers-Kindergarten students may be picked up at 11:00, or they can stay until Noon, if they have siblings practicing until then. **It is VERY important that your child attend practice.** This may be the **ONLY** opportunity we have to practice with both Sunday and Wednesday students before the program. Students in 5th and 6th grade may need to stay a few extra minutes to practice speaking parts.



WWJ resumes on Jan. 3rd and Sunday school on Jan. 7th.
Have a fun and safe Christmas break!!!

Mission Endowment Committee News

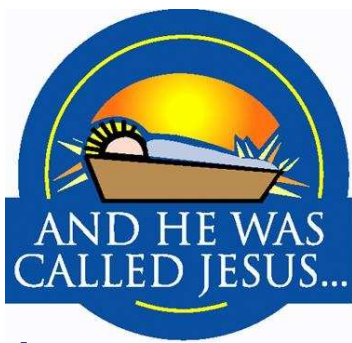
The Mission Endowment Committee met in October and November and accomplished the following business:

A grant request from Feed My Starving Children was reviewed, and the committee granted the local Grand Forks Mobile Pack event \$1,000. This event is April 6-8, and ULC members will have other opportunities to contribute toward it financially, as well as to help pack food. So far, the local effort has raised about \$17,000 of the \$88,000 it needs to prepare 400,000 meals.

Some bylaw changes were written, approved, and passed on to the Church Council. The Church Council also approved these changes, which are intended to help the Endowment Committee receive certain designated funds. The congregation will receive a separate mailing about these changes, and will have opportunity to vote on them at our Annual Meeting in February.

The current members of the Mission Endowment Fund are: Les Howard (chair), Mike Juntunen (vice chair), Dave Masterson (Secretary/Treasurer), as well as Betty Bloomquist, Teresa Kuhens, Dave Larsen, and Pastor Tom.





DECEMBER YOUTH NEWS

"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

Luke 2: 14

Christmas Program Practice and Party: K-6th Grade

- Christmas Program practice: **Kindergarten:** 10am to 11am
1st-6th grade: 10am-12pm
(an activity will be planned for youth until the party starts)

- **Saturday, December 16th from 12:00pm-4:00pm** youth in grades K-6 will meet at church for a Christmas Party. The afternoon will include lunch (mac & cheese, chicken nuggets, veggies, cookie, and juice), fun games, a craft and Christmas bible study, holiday treats, and a Christmas Movie. :) Please come and bring your friends. If you don't want to eat the lunch provided feel free to pack a bag lunch.

(The party will take place right after program practice)

- **Christmas Program:** Sunday, December 17th at 6:30 pm.
Kids should be to church no later than 6:10pm.



Christmas Program
Practice & Party



Middle and High School Christmas Party:

Sunday, December 17th from 3-5pm. Youth in grades 6-12 will meet in the youth room for fellowship, fun games, and food. We will also be playing a fun gift exchange game. Please bring a wrapped \$10-\$15 Christmas gift that could be given to a guy or girl for this game. Friends are welcome to come. Hope to see you there.

On **Thursday, December 21st** middle school and high school youth will be ringing bells for the Salvation Army.

Middle & high school youth will ring from 4:45-5:45pm. Please come help ring.



We will be ringing inside the mall at Scheel's. Cookies will be provided. If you have questions about this please let Heather know.

Dates to Remember:

- Ralph Cleaning: December 30th 10pm
- Ralph Cleaning: January 5th 10pm
- Ralph Cleaning: January 6th 10pm
- Confirmation Retreat for all youth in grades 7-9 at Red Willow Bible Camp. January 12-14.

Mark
Your
Calendar

Youth Gathering Information :

- A big thank you to everyone who supported the youth in their Christmas wreath sales. They raised \$1,138.60
- Also, thank you to those who bought tickets and helped with the Ground Round Pancake Breakfast. We raised \$2,675.00! Wow, thank you for your support of the youth program.
- We will not be meeting in December. Have a wonderful Christmas with your family. However **DO NOT FORGET** we have 3 Ralph cleanings in December and January and **need everyone's** participation. Questions please talk to Heather.

The dates and times are as follows.

RALPH CLEANINGS:

- December 30th: Lower Bowl 10pm
- January 5th: Upper and Lower Bowl 10pm (We need as much help as possible)
- January 6th: Half of the lower Bowl 10pm
- A gathering picture display will be up in the narthex soon. Check out the youth and adults who are going to the gathering. If you still need your picture taken or have not filled out the questionnaire see Heather as soon as possible. Thank You!

See you all in January!

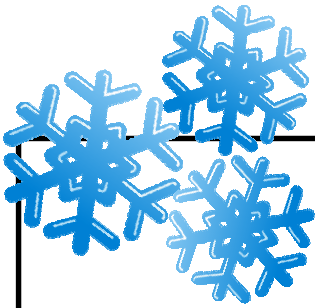


Holiday Tunes

Away in a Manger
 Choir of the Bells
 Dominick the Donkey
 Frosty the Snowman
 Holly Jolly Christmas
 Jingle Bell Rock
 Jingle Bells
 Let it Snow
 Little Drummer Boy
 Little St Nick
 O Holy Night
 Rudolph
 Santa Baby
 Silent Nigh
 Silver Bells
 The Christmas Song
 The First Noel
 Winter Wonderland



S	G	R	D	A	M	A	F	C	I	F	Z	Z	X	F	K	U	H	J	X
W	A	W	A	Y	O	B	R	E	M	M	U	R	D	E	L	T	T	I	L
C	K	M	B	H	P	L	O	D	U	R	J	T	G	J	I	H	Z	N	O
Z	D	W	T	Z	E	D	S	Y	E	L	C	B	Y	R	T	G	C	G	K
G	N	O	S	S	A	M	T	S	I	R	H	C	E	H	T	I	J	L	L
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N	D	T	U	C	C	H	S	A	Y	A	A	I	N	S	N	L	C	L	Q
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G	R	O	K	A	C	Y	M	V	Z	E	U	A	J	Y	S	L	D	K	U
M	E	Q	W	Q	O	L	A	O	H	K	P	I	T	Y	K	B	N	M	Q
G	T	A	P	U	I	O	N	T	S	L	L	E	B	E	L	G	N	I	J
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L	W	B	T	K	S	L	L	E	B	E	H	T	F	O	R	I	O	H	C
U	I	M	U	Y	F	C	J	H	B	X	B	V	R	U	M	Q	C	Y	B



WELCA NEWS DECEMBER 2017

WOMEN OF THE ELCA Purpose Statement



As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit,

We commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the Church, the society, and the world.

Despite a blustery and snowy Saturday on November 4th, we had a successful "Fall" Festival! We made nearly \$2,800 on lunch tickets, quilt and raffle sales as well as the bake sale. Many, many hardworking women and men helped to make our snowy festival the success that it was.

Each December, the women of ULC meet to elect officers for the coming year and vote on benevolences (contributions) to local and regional agencies and groups). This is your opportunity to share ideas and make decisions on how to distribute funds earned through events throughout 2017. We will hold our General Meeting on Sunday, December 17th immediately following the church service (@ 11:30am) in the lounge.

Hope to see you there!

In God's love,
Patty Olsen

WELCA Bible Study

Friday, December 8
10:00 a.m. in the lounge.
Led by Pastor Tom.
All women and friends of ULC
are encouraged to attend.

Our circles meet once a month for Bible Study, service and fellowship!
If you are interested in joining a circle, check out one of these.

Naomi/Rachel Circle

11:00am Friday, December 8 at the church

Mary/Martha Circle

9:30am Wednesday, December 20
at Bev Lunde's home - 2311 8th Ave N

Joy Circle

12:30pm Sunday, December 3
at the church
Holiday Home Tour @ 1:00pm



Bad Weather Announcements

In case of bad weather, tune into WDAZ TV (Channel 8) or KNOX Radio (1310 AM) for any changes to our schedule. Or, for the most current information, you can also join our group at [facebook.com/universitylutheranchurch](https://www.facebook.com/universitylutheranchurch) and we will send you a message.



Thank you to everyone who joined us when we gathered in November. We also want to extend a special thanks to those who joined us for the Holiday Home Tour event and fellowship. What a wonderful way to start the Christmas season. We look forward to gathering with you again in the new year. Merry Christmas and many blessings to you this Holiday Season. May you experience the wonderful joy that this season brings.

The Joy of Christmas

Christmas is a Time of Joy

Christmas is a time of joy
For every little girl and boy
All wishing for that special toy
That they can't wait to enjoy

Christmas is a time of love
Given to us from the Lord above
When we see with eyes of a dove
Christmas fits us like a glove

Christmas is a time for prayer
Christmas is a time to share
Christmas is a time to care
It's also the time for festive fare

Christmas time is a special thing
A time to worship Christ the king
In his honor gifts we bring
And to the heavens high we sing

University Lutheran Church Women of the ELCA Christmas Brunch

Saturday, December 2
9:30 a.m.

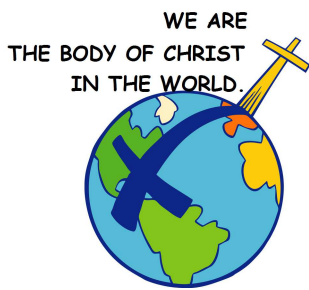
"Christmas Through the Generations"

*Invite your spouse, neighbors or guests
to join you for this festive morning
of fellowship, food, laughter, & music!*

Christmas Cookie Exchange
11:30am

*If you wish to participate in the exchange,
bring 2 dozen or more of your
Christmas specialties to exchange
and then take the same amount
of other Christmas goodies home with you!!*





Dear University Lutheran Church Friends,

Last summer we were blessed with the opportunity to be interns at For His Children Orphanage in Quito and Latacunga, Ecuador. We spent a month there from mid-July to mid-August. It was one of the most influential months of our lives so far, and we are so excited to share a little bit about it with you.

Every day we started work at nine in the morning and ended our day at six. We spent time caring for kids, helping the tías (the women who care for the children), doing activities with the children, and sometimes taking them on outings. We got to bring the kids to the park and to a movie. After work and during lunch break we often did our individual intern projects and explored the city. We planned activities to do with kids such as; yoga, singing, and reading stories. We spent time outside playing on the trampoline, pushing kids on swings, and going on walks. And of course, wheel chair racing and having dance parties. Some ways that we helped tías were by washing dishes, doing laundry, and feeding kids. Also, the amount of coffee we consumed was amazing.



There were five interns including us ranging in age from eighteen to twenty-two. We got to know them really well and are still very good friends. We made and ate dinner every night, played games, went on weekend trips, and had good conversations together (Did you know that people in Ohio and Tennessee don't know the word uffda?). We're really grateful to have met them. We all had different intern projects. Emily and Mary Page mainly worked on making sponsorship packets, and Anna mainly worked on planning activities for the kids. Cassidy collected pictures of every child that had ever been at FHC for their records, and Elizabeth wrote for their blog. When the sponsorship packets were finished we all got to talk about sponsorship to a volunteer team that was there for about eight days. Along with giving this talk we were able to give Louis a care package put together by Patty and Doug Olsen who sponsor him. It was fun watching his face light up, and he loved sharing his books with the other kids. While in Baños, we helped the team leaders, Dan and Michelle, with leading the team on their bus tour through the city.



We spent most of our time with kids at the orphanages. They are the most beautiful souls we've ever had the blessing to meet. We learned so much from them, and are forever thankful for our time together. We miss them every day. Whether we were feeding them, going on walks with them, playing with them, or just holding their hand, we felt loved, accepted, and connected to ourselves, them, and God.



On our trip we got to work with and meet amazing people. We worked with Jen and Megan, who run the volunteer program and are both such amazing role models. Like seriously, can we be them? When Emily had altitude sickness, Megan walked all the way to the corner store and bought her Gatorade. When we couldn't find a restaurant, and were tricked into paying thirteen dollars for a taxi, Jen ordered us Dominos. They're the real deal. Penny is the Grandma for the kids at the orphanage, she invited us over for lunch one day and

told us all about her interesting and inspiring life. We really enjoyed getting to know that wonderful lady (and she made very good food). In Quito we had a Spanish teacher named Paulina who also made really good traditional Ecuadorian food. She was so understanding of our language barrier, and patient while we were learning. Jhosue is our friend we made while volunteering. He is a local college student who volunteered at FHC Monday through Friday during the summer. We became good friends and went on weekend adventures together when we weren't working. It was so much fun exploring the city and the country with him, we also got to know his cousins, who were all so kind and fun to spend time with. He also introduced us to his four golden retrievers, so that's a plus. We spent time with Dan, Michelle, and their children Vaughn and Royce; Dan and Michelle were the leaders of the team that came down. They were very genuine people who helped us whenever we needed.

Our host family; Silvana, Marcelo, Mateo, and the dog, Manchez were so welcoming and giving to us. Marcelo took us on a tour of the churches in Latacunga. Being out in the city at night was a good time. They also bought us different types of bread every day, and it was so wonderful. Anna still dreams of Ecuadorian bread.

During the three weekends that we spent in Ecuador we travelled to different cities. The first weekend we went to a town called Papallacta which is famous for its hot springs. We spent the day bussing and relaxing at the spa. We also ate cevichochos, and it was so good. Emily still dreams of cevichochos and aji. It was a relaxing day and fun adventure. The second weekend we all hopped in Jhosue's car and after almost driving off a mountain, we bopped around the city going to the Swing at the Edge of the World, meeting some nice cows, getting lost going to the Swing of the Condor, playing basketball with random people at the park, and celebrating Cassidy's birthday with cake cut by a pocket knife. The last weekend we went to Mindo where we toured a chocolate factory, ate at a nice restaurant, and journaled in the park. It was so fun to not only be spending time being with the kids and doing things that we are passionate about, but to also be exploring the country with our new friends. Travelling on our own through a foreign country helped us feel more independent and confident in our abilities.

Thank you so much for the good energy and prayers you sent our way. It's so nice to know that we have a really strong support system through church, friends, and family. Thank you also for praying for and supporting this amazing organization. It wouldn't be what it is today without all the love they receive. Thank you for letting us share our experience with you.

Chao,

Emily Dencker and Anna Shallman

PS - If you're looking for some more information on For His Children you can visit their website at <http://www.forhischildren-ecuador.org/>

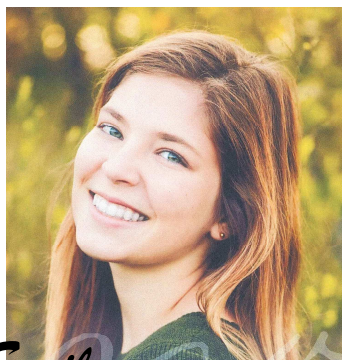
Or if you have any other questions about our trip feel free to shoot us an email!

Anna Shallman - ashallman33@gmail.com

Emily Dencker - emily.dencker@gmail.com



Anna



Emily

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

This Christmas we are again decorating our sanctuary with poinsettias. For your convenience we are making them available to you for \$10. If you would like to contribute toward this Christmas garden, please fill out the following information:

Order me _____ (number of) poinsettia(s) for the sanctuary on December 24.

I will bring _____ (number of) poinsettia(s) of my own.

This contribution is "in honor of"

or "in memory of"

Your name _____

**Please place this form in the offering tray,
or bring it to the church office.
Forms due by December 18th.**

About Ginnie and Ted?
What can I say
About a couple like them,
Who touched our hearts
In so many ways.

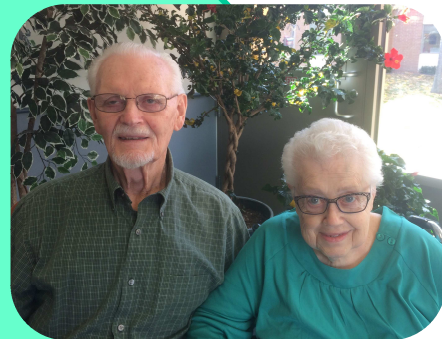
The 55 Plus group was blessed
With them at the helm;
As we gathered to learn,
Have some lunch, relax
Or just be plain overwhelmed.

Ginnie, of course, was the Guru
Behind the Kitchen Crew.
Her dietary role served us well
As we worked hard behind her
And our Mission Gifts grew and grew.

Ted was a Master of the Tool Shop;
The bird houses he donated were special.
But to the church, he dedicated each Sunday,
To serve us, kindly and politely,
As our very own handsome Head Usher.

We wish them well as they retire
Knowing they will feel the love
From we who very much
Appreciate their service,
And wish them blessings from the Lord above.

--Marilyn Berg



**POETIC MOMENTS
AT ULC**



Christmas

Christmas is remembering
The birth of Jesus, so dear.
Christmas is remembering
Loved ones we lost this past year.

Christmas is remembering
Family, friends, and those in need;
Especially the lonely,
The sad and the hungry, we should feed.

Remember them with prayer,
Gifts, calls, and lots of love,
Love, like God did, when he sent
Us Jesus, a true gift from above.

--Pauline Bondy



December 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3 8:45 Sunday School/Adult Class No Confirmation 10:00 WORSHIP – Advent 1 11:00 Fellowship 12:30 Joy Circle/Holiday Tour 4:00 Boy Scouts 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous	4 7:00 Game Fellowship 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous	5 9:30 GF Conference Leaders Meeting 1:30 Pastors Text Study 6:30 Quilters	6 11:00 TOPS 5:00 Supper – Hot dogs 6:00 Worship/WWJ 7:00 – 8:30 Grade 7-9 Confirmation Field Trip 7:30 Chapel Choir 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous	7 8:30 MOPS Planning 9:30 Bible Study 1:00 Quilting	8 9:45-5:45 Ring the Bells at Scheels 10:00 WELCA Bible Study 11:00 Naomi Rachel Circle 6:30 Confirmation Banquet	9
10 8:45 Sunday School/Adult Class Grade 7-9 Confirmation 10:00 WORSHIP – Advent 2 Confirmation 11:00 Fellowship/Reception 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous	11 6:00 Tupperware Event 7:00 Game Fellowship 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous	12 10:00 Staff Meeting 11:30 55+ Over Christmas Potluck 1:30 Pastors Text Study 6:30 Quilters 6:30 New Member Orientation	13 11:00 TOPS 5:00 Supper – Chicken Patty 6:00 WORSHIP/WWJ 7:00 New Member Wednesday Grade 7-9 Confirmation 7:30 Chapel Choir 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous	14 8:30-11:30 MOPS 9:30 Bible Study 1:00 Quilting	15 9:45-7:45 Ring the Bells at Scheels 10:00-11:30 MOPS Mentor Moms Coffee Lounge	16 8:30 Calling All Men 10:00-12:00 Christmas Program Practice 12:00-4:00pm K-6 th Christmas Party 1:00 Now the Feast Rehearsal
17 Adopt-a-Family Gifts Due 8:45 Sunday School/Adult Class Grade 7-9 Confirmation 10:00 WORSHIP – Advent 3 New Member Sunday 11:00 Fellowship/Pork Dinner Hunger Fundraiser 11:30 WELCA General Meeting 3:00-5:00 Grades 6-12 Christmas Party 4:00 Boy Scouts 6:30 ULC Christmas Program 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous	18 <i>Poinsettia Forms Due</i> 7:00 Game Fellowship 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous	19 10:00 Staff Meeting 1:30 Pastors Text Study 6:30 Quilters 7:00 Church Council	20 9:30 Mary Martha Circle at Bev Lundre's home 11:00 TOPS 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous	21 9:30 Bible Study 9:45-7:45 Ring the Bells at Scheels (4:45-5:45 Youth ring) 7:00 Franklin Group	22	23
24 CHRISTMAS EVE 10:00am WORSHIP – Advent 4 5:00pm Candlelight Worship 8:00pm Narcotics Anonymous 10:00pm Candlelight Worship	25 CHRISTMAS DAY  Church Office Closed 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous	26 Church Office Closed	27 11:00 TOPS 8:00 Narcotics Anonymous	28	29	30 10:00pm Ralph Cleaning
31 NEW YEAR'S EVE 10:00 WORSHIP 11:00 Fellowship 8:00pm Narcotics Anonymous						

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Advent Worship

"Moving Toward the Manger"

Please join us for worship
as we consider the Lord's coming into the world,
and in particular wonder how we may be ready for it.

December 3 and December 6

"Are We There Yet?"

December 10 and December 13

"Getting the Barn Ready for Jesus"

December 17

"Seeing Light at the End of the Tunnel"

December 24 - 10:00am

"Where Love Is, There Is God"



**Christmas Eve
Sunday, December 24**

Candlelight Worship
5:00pm and 10:00pm

Sunday, December 31

Worship 10:00am



Please join us for worship.

ULC STAFF

Ministers: Every Member of the Congregation
Pastor: Thomas W. Colenso
Education Coordinator: Jen Hanson
Youth Minister: Heather Kallestad
Administrative Assistant: Seanne Voracek

Organists: Lauri Shimpa and Jane Traub
Choir Director: KariJo O'Keefe
Custodians: Harold Stoller
Stephen Ministry Leaders:
Bonnie Peterson, Wayde Anderson
Evelyn Clark, Jane Traub

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