

Buffalo Lutheran and St. Paul's Lutheran Churches

DECEMBER 2014 PARISH POST

Comments from Pastor Chris . . .

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

First things first, Advent began November 30. During the season, we will be having Wednesday night services at 7:00PM. This year I will be preaching on Holy Communion for these services. Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services will be held in Tower City.

Advent is a season of expectation, fasting, and preparation. Traditionally, Advent was understood to be the sister of Lent and had similar traditions concerning fasting and almsgiving. In the spirit of the season, it is fitting to make some type of devotional shift during this time. The idea is this: we remember Christ's birth and his eventual return during Advent. As such, especially considering the latter emphasis of the season, Christians have taken stock of their lives during this time. Much like the emphasis of the parable of the ten bridesmaids (Matthew 25), we should do what we can to prepare for our Lord's return. Not that any of this justifies us before God, but disciplining our flesh is always a good way to take stock of the condition sin leaves us in. In short, it helps us to know more intimately our need for Christ and his salvation.

So, if you have not done so yet, take up daily reading of the Bible, pray an extra time each day, give extra to charity; especially the poor and hungry, or undertake some other devotion. These disciplines can help focus your attention on the coming Christmas celebration and its significance. Happy Advent to you all!

Humbly yours in Christ,

Pastor Chris

Included in this newsletter is the annual worship schedule.

BUFFALO LUTHERAN CHURCHST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

General fund balance thru Nov. 23 - \$7074.90 General fund balance thru Nov. 23 - \$204.55

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHRISTMAS TOUR OF HOMES and "CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS ON PEARL STREET" will be held 1:00 to 5:00 PM on November 30. Supplemental funding provided by Thrivent #31333. NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ACCIDENTS - NO CHILDREN PLEASE. Purchase \$10 tickets for the tour & enjoy Christmas goodies at the Historic 1916 school at 303 Pearl Street in Buffalo. Featuring local artists, crafters, and the Olde School Gift Shoppe! Serving homemade soups and bread 4-6 PM. Free will donation for Buffalo Historical Society school restoration project.

Divine Sunday Services will continue at Buffalo Lutheran Church the first Sunday in December. **The Buffalo Lutheran Church Annual meeting will be held on December 7** following the Divine Worship Service with lunch to follow the meeting. Please bring a dish to share for the Buffalo Lutheran Potluck Dinner after the December 7 meeting.

Please have any information to be included in the Buffalo Lutheran Church Annual Report into the office NO LATER than December 3. Thanks so much!

Advent Vespers will be held every Wednesday night at 7:00 PM during Advent beginning December 3 at St. Paul's Lutheran Church. Beginning December 14 Divine Services will be held at St. Paul's Lutheran Church.

The Buffalo Lutheran Church family extends an appreciative thank you to those families who provided funds to pave our church parking area! We are blessed by your generosity.

The Buffalo Lutheran church year closes at the end of November and those wishing to have offerings and donations included in the year 2014 should try to have them in by Dec 3 if possible.

Everyone is invited to the St. Paul's Advent Breakfast on December 14 at the Tower City Community Hall from 10 AM-1:00 PM. Enjoy French toast, sausages, and the complements! Free will offering.

† May we remember in prayer newly baptized at St. Paul's Lutheran Church Brinley Mae Milbrandt, daughter of Tom & Amy Milbrandt. Brinley was baptized November 23.

† May we remember with prayers of sympathy the family and friends of Norbert Kosir. Formerly of Tower City and recently living in Fargo, Norbert passed away November 17 in Fargo, his funeral was held at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church, West Fargo, on November 21. May he rest in peace!

Beyond Our Walls -- As we are generously blessed during the holiday season, please consider sharing your blessings with the many causes that are in need of help!

Dear Family and Friends,

I am writing this newsletter in September and am finding it difficult to believe that some stores have Christmas decorations up all ready. I wonder “What happened to Thanksgiving or even what happened to summer?” The other day, a friend mentioned “Did you know that there are only 14 more weekends before Christmas?” So it begins again. Needless to say, there are a lot of expectations and busyness during the Christmas season and it seems that the pressure to “do it all” starts earlier every year. I would challenge you to STOP! Seriously, STOP! I would encourage you to remember Christ’s birth was anything but elaborate. Stop putting unrealistic pressure on yourself and your family. Traditions and gift giving are fine as long as they are done in an appropriate manner.

I hope we can take time this season to reflect on what really happened with Christ’s birth. Why do we choose as Christians to celebrate this event? What do we choose to celebrate? Where do we spend our energy and center our attention?

I hope we can take time to focus on the “gift” of the Christ child...God’s gift to each of us. What does that mean to you? What does that mean to your family? How can you celebrate Christmas and embrace the gift of the Christ child?

To those of you reading this, this challenge is not meant to be up to you alone, thus creating more stress. I would encourage you to talk to your family about how they see celebrating Christ’s birthday...what are important traditions to carry on, new traditions to start, and how everyone can become involved. It is refreshing how our children can come up with some of the best ideas!

I wish you well as you celebrate your “gift “of the Christ child.

“Oh come let us adore Him, Oh come let us adore Him, Oh come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.”

Peace in Him,

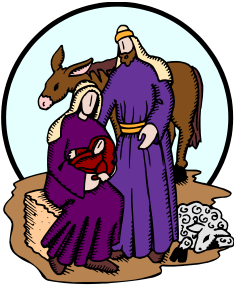
Gwen Fraase RN

Parish Nurse

Community Health Ministry

Buffalo & Tower City Lutheran Parish
Box 68
Tower City, ND 58071
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UPCOMING DECEMBER EVENTS*

DECEMBER SUNDAY SERVICES WILL BE HELD AT ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH AT 9:00 AM. STARTING DEC. 14. ADVENT VESPERS SERVICES WILL BE HELD AT 7 PM EVERY WEDNESDAY IN ADVENT AT ST. PAUL'S. FAMILY BIBLE STUDY FOR EVERYONE IN THE FAMILY FOLLOWS DIVINE SUNDAY SERVICE.

Pastoral guidance and individual confession are available by appointment with the pastor. You can contact him at 749-2309 or 701-710-0446. His e-mail address is cbrademeyer@gmail.com

November 30: Christmas Tour of Home (see page 2)

December 3, 10, 17: Confirmation classes each Wednesday at 1:41 at Maple Valley High School

December 7: Divine Service at Buffalo Lutheran Church followed by Buffalo Lutheran Annual Meeting and Potluck dinner.

December 14: Youth Group meets at 10 AM; St. Paul's Advent Breakfast. (please see page 2)

December 24: Christmas Eve Service at 5:30 PM at St. Paul's

December 25: Christmas Day Service at 10 AM at St. Paul's

*Please check on both church's individual Council meetings and the St. Paul's WELCA meeting.