

The Lyons Community Church

Mid-Week Message

Thursday, December 17, 2015

Not-so-Midweek Message

OK, so here we are again at week's end - and I am thinking of renaming this newsletter in the coming year! ;-) We will not be sending one next week, though, so we hope you will enjoy a wonderful Christmas time of sharing with your friends and family. Eat cookies, open presents, sing beloved carols and favorite Rudolph and Santa songs, see a holiday movie, take a hot bath - whatever it is you do to unwind and celebrate!

Last week, we drove Lillian around our new neighborhood to look at lights. We stopped in front of one house with the 1960s light-up plastic Nativity (just like the one we put up on Main Street last year). All of the characters were there - Mary, Joseph, Baby Jesus in a manger, Wise Men, Shepherds, even a few sheep... but the one in our neighborhood also had a Santa Claus kneeling in front of the Holy Couple and the precious Savior-Baby. I tried to photograph it, but my camera refused to cooperate... (so here's a similar image I found online).



During this season, I don't think Christians need to deny themselves of the "secular" fun of the holidays - Christmas trees, cookies, presents, even Jolly Old Saint Nick. Just because these things are not in the Bible or not part of Christian tradition, does not mean that they are bad. You see, if God could use a Roman Emperor to help fulfill God's plan for where Baby Jesus would be born, surely God can use a fat old guy in a red velvet suit to help bring hope, joy, peace and love to all during this cold, dark time of the year.

This Sunday is Fourth Advent - the waiting is almost over, and as we make our final preparations to welcome the Baby on Christmas Eve, we will focus on the PEACE that we can find even on the unwanted journeys in our lives. God can use everything - Christmas stress, grief and loss, disappointments and fears, endless to-do lists, frustrations with family and friends, sadness, 10 inches of snow... any of it, all of it, can be redeemed and transformed into the Holy Light of Christmas. So RELAX a little in the next few weeks, kick back and enjoy



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Sunday, Dec. 20

Sermon: Fourth Advent—A Musical Journey, *From Nazareth to Bethlehem - PEACE Despite Unwanted Journeys* - Rev. Emily Flemming

Scripture: Luke 2:1-7 (NRSV)

Reader: Jason Curton

Flowers: Given by Bonnie Richards and Sam Miller in celebration of their 10th anniversary on 12/22

Refreshments: Karen Schwenn; please contact Karen at (303) 823-9030 if you can help!

Pastor's Message (continued)

the bright lights, the gaudy sweaters, the kettle-ringers and the off-key carolers... and anything else that brings a smile to your lips and heart this season. Give yourself the gift of joy, and peace... you deserve it.

Merry Christmas to you all!

Pastor Emily

Announcements

LCC Choir members: There will be NO rehearsal on Dec. 20th. We will meet at 3:15pm on Christmas Eve.

Monday, 12/21 at 5:30pm at the Walt Self Center is our monthly Senior Meal - turkey and all the fixings. Monica is coordinating 303-818-7276. Please consider bringing a dish and joining in the fun!

We will celebrate a candlelit carol service this Thursday, **Dec. 24th at 4:00pm**. Please invite your friends, family and neighbors.

Our Catholic community will celebrate their Christmas Eve Mass at 6:00pm.

Pastor Emily will be taking a week off after Christmas - Jani, Kitty, and Mark can help with any needs, and Rev. Bob Shaw will be leading the Dec. 27th service with music by Marilyn Penn - thanks to you all!

From Mark Browning: We are trying to get as much community input as we can about what people would like to see in a new library/community resource center. Here is the link to the library website, which has the survey link at the top of the home page: <http://lyons.colibraries.org/>

Prayers

Joys: Birthdays of Emily Flemming (12/19), Lily Kincaid (12/26), Mark Boys (12/28), Jenna Bear (12/31), Leah Bear (1/1), and the 10th anniversary of Bonnie Richards and Sam Miller (12/22), for the coming Christmas Eve Candles and Carols Service

Concerns: families and friends in the deaths of Lorraine Self, Hanno Jensen, Gordon Thompson; Jerry T., Josh Loukonen, Jim Olinger, Donna Lee, Marie Baker, Sandi Fikes and Sean, Cody, Alice, all those searching for healing, a home, job, love or hope this season

You may make prayer requests by contacting Pastor Emily Flemming (Emily@lyonscommunitychurch.org) or Prayer Team Chair Kitty Keim. (kathkeim@earthlink.net). You may also join the Prayer Team at any time by contacting either of these ladies.



Thanks to Chuck Keim for submitting photos of last week's All-Age Spontaneous Christmas Pageant.





Santa's Christmas Prayer

On Christmas Eve the other night,
I saw the most amazing sight;
For there beneath the Christmas tree,
Was Santa kneeling on his knee.
His countenance was different than,
That all-familiar jolly grin;
His head was bowed with hand to breast,
And slightly tucked into his vest.
For there in a nativity,
Was Jesus and his family,
And as I heard him start to pray,
I listened close to what he'd say.
"Lord, You know that you're the reason,
I take pleasure in this season;
I don't want to take your place,
But just reflect your wondrous grace.
I hope you'll help them understand,
I am just an ordinary man,
Who found a way to do your will,
By finding kids with needs to fill.
But all those centuries ago,
There was no way for me to know,
That they would make so much of me,
And all the gifts beneath the tree.
They think I have some hidden power,
Granted at the midnight hour;
But it is my love for you,
Inspiring all the things I do.
And so when they begin to open,
Gifts for which they have been hoping,
May they give you all the glory,
For you're the One True Christmas story."

