

## **THE SERVANT**

The monthly newsletter of Servants of Christ Lutheran Church, a congregation of The North American Lutheran Church serving the Cedar Rapids area

Meeting at Robins City Hall Community Room, 265 South Second St., Robins, Iowa 52328  
Worship: 9:00 am; Fellowship & Coffee: 10:00;  
Bible Class and Sunday School: 10:15  
Ron Voss, Pastor

\*\*\*\*\***December 2019**

Dear Advent Christians,

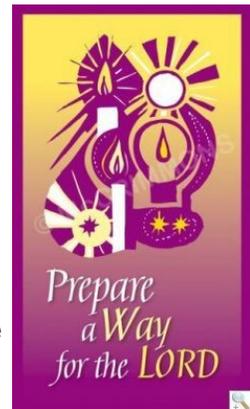
The liturgical church celebrates four weeks of Advent, the four weeks before Christmas. It is a time to once again prepare our hearts and minds for the coming of Christ: to remember his first coming with his birth in Bethlehem; to anticipate his second coming when he returns to earth in all his glory. But sadly, Advent is often eclipsed by the excitement of Christmas.

John 3:16 tell us, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only son that whoever believe in him will not die but have eternal life." That first Christmas was about God's love, God's gift, God fulfilling his promise of salvation. Those who lived that event were hopefully changed forever. They were called to believe, to obey. Although the words of the Christ Child would not be spoken for another thirty years, those witnesses of the birth were asked to, "Come, follow me."

So, what about each of us? The Christmas narrative still thrills us; the message of love still beckons us. Will we sing joyfully, "Let every heart PREPARE him room?" As we unpack the Christmas decorations with nostalgia, will we open our Bibles with eager anticipation to hear again that prophecy from Isaiah: "For unto **us** a Child is born, unto **us** a Son is given?" As we watch the Christmas tree light up and fill the room with beauty, will we allow the Light of the World to erase the darkness from our lives and fill us with His light that never extinguishes? As we bake Christmas goodies (hello calories), will we approach the Lord's Supper where the "sweetest bread" every offered mankind is shared? As we sing beloved Christmas carols, will our hearts be attuned to the background music of the angelic host, praising God and singing, "Glory to God in the highest?"

In this holy season, as we once again revel in the traditional and familiar, let us pray that our hearts and minds will be open to new possibilities, new adventures, new avenues of service. So, Prepare, Participate, Proclaim.

In preparation with you,  
Ron



**CHRISTMAS EVE  
WORSHIP  
4:30 PM  
ROBINS CITY HALL**

Come and celebrate  
the birth of Christ.



Advent Devotional Books are available. Help yourself to the various offerings on the information table.

**EMMANUEL**

Outside the Shibuya train station in Tokyo is a statue commemorating an Akita dog name Hachiko. Hachiko is remembered for unusual faithfulness to his own, a university professor who commuted from the station daily. The dog accompanied him on his walk there in the morning and came back to meet him every afternoon just as his train arrived.

One day the professor didn't return to the station; sadly, he'd died at work. But for the rest of his life—more than nine years—Hachiko showed up at the same time as the afternoon train. Day after day, regardless of weather, the dog waited faithfully for his master's return.

The season of Advent focuses on waiting, on waiting with anticipation. We wait to again celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. But we also focus on waiting for His return, for His coming back in glory. Sometimes this event takes a background seat. With a ho-hum, we acknowledge that, yes, Jesus will return . . . someday . . . But in the meantime, we have other things to do.

In this holy season, let us adopt the attitude of that Akita dog. Everyday let us faithfully await the return of *our* Master and Lord. Remember, He is *not* dead; He is alive. And He *has* promised to return. And He *keeps* His promises.



### **LEGACY GIFTS MATTER!**

Prayerfully consider including the North American Lutheran Church and/or the Seminary in your will or estate planning. Pass on the love of Jesus to future generations.



### **December Servants**



Greeter/Usher: Michelle Hosch  
Communion Assistant:  
Dan Heckart

Snacks:

\*\*December 1—Mary Collins

\*\*December 8—Ron Voss

\*\*December 15—Tami

Gerdemann

\*\*December 22—Judy Waugh

\*\*December 29—Brunch

## **Our Sunday Bible study on The Bible as the Word of God *Continues through December***

This study on Holy Scripture prepared by the NALC Commission on Theology and Doctrine, as well as a study guide for congregational use, affirms the strong commitment of the North American Lutheran Church to the Bible as God's gift to the Church. It also affirms that "the Bible not only makes known this holy, loving purpose . . . to free His fallen human creations from the wrong and corruption of sin, the tyranny of the devil and the threat of death, draw them into communion with Himself," the Bible is also "a means by which God achieves His purpose."

Learning and discussion topics include:

\*\*Where does the Bible come from?

\*\*What kind of book is the Bible

\*\*How many we understand the Bible?

\*\*What is the authority of Scriptures in the Church?

**JOIN US!**

**Let Ron know  
of any prayer  
re-**



**Bi-monthly Brunch  
will be Sunday, De-  
cember 29. Our dis-  
cussion will focus on  
our 2020 Mission Out-  
reach efforts. Addi-  
tional focus will be on  
the NALC Administra-  
tive structure.**

Explanation of our liturgy con-  
tinues through December. Each  
week during worship we pause  
at the point of emphasis for  
that day to explain the liturgy  
and its Biblical basis.

"Introduction to Lutheran Wor-  
ship" is available to anyone who  
wants a copy.

## 2020 Mission Outreach Budget

North American Lutheran Church	\$ 6,000 (\$500 per month)
NALC Seminary	\$ 3,000
NALC Great Commission Society	\$ 1,500
Friends of Madagascar Mission	\$ 1,500
Trinity Lutheran Church, Warrenton, Virginia	\$ 1,000
Iowa Mission District	\$ 500
Water Mission	\$ 500
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$14,000</b>



*Our hope and expectation  
Jesus, now appear  
Arise, thou Son so longed for  
O'er this benighted sphere  
With hearts and hands uplifted  
We plead, O Lord, to see  
The day of earth's redemption  
That sets Your people free.*