

## From Pastor Anne

### The Peace of Christ Regulates Our Hearts

Our Christmas cards and greetings this time of year wish a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to our families, friends, and neighbors. We also often include a wish for peace on earth. Humanity longs for peace today, just as the people living under Roman occupation did in the time when Jesus was born.

The Gospel we shared on Christmas eve (Luke 2:1-14) ends with the Heavenly Host singing *Glory to God and peace on earth*. And so we make a glorious song to God and pray, as always, for peace.

The apostle Paul had something to say about peace. Paul encouraged the Colossians to live Godly lives. In chapter 3, verses 14-15 he wrote, *Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful.*

The Greek word translated here as *rule* could also be *govern* or *regulate*, and what Paul is calling us to regulate is our own heart. This is a *put your own oxygen mask on first* kind of instruction. You see, when traveling by plane, we are told that if the oxygen mask drops down in front of us, we are to put our own on first because if we try to help someone else first, we are likely to faint from a lack of oxygen. Sometimes, to be a part of the solution, we must first make sure that we don't become a part of the problem.

Paul wisely tells us to cover or clothe ourselves in love, and to let Christ's peace be the governor of our hearts, so that we will be dressed and ready to go, doing the work of sharing the love of God in Christ and the peace that comes with it.

Peace and love, Pastor Anne

### Congregational Budget Meeting

The next congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, January 12<sup>th</sup> following worship. The council will present the proposed 2025 Budget. A conference call line will be set up for those who cannot attend in person. Copies of the proposed budget are available in the fellowship hall.

### Tuesday Evening Bible Study

We will continue Tuesday evening Bible study via Zoom on January 7<sup>th</sup>. We meet for an hour beginning at 6:00 pm and all are welcome. The study on the books of Ruth and Esther is available from Pastor Anne or in the fellowship hall.

### Souper Bowl of Caring

We will collect canned soups for the Souper Bowl of Caring from January 1 – February 9, 2025. All soup will be donated to Open Door.

For over 30 years, the Souper Bowl of Caring movement has been inspiring people across the nation to tackle hunger in their local communities.

## Canceling In-Person Worship for Dangerous Weather

The council and Pastor Anne will decide about canceling **in-person** worship when the weather presents dangerous travel conditions. The roads will be assessed after 7:00 am and the decision about continuing with worship or canceling for the day will be made by 9:00 am. The announcement will be made by email, by changing the phone message at Church, and through our Facebook page. Most importantly, don't travel for Church if it does not seem safe to you.

We will hold morning prayer via Facebook and Zoom if in-person worship is canceled. The zoom link information appears at the top of this page.

## Ladies Bible Study – January 9

Our WELCA unit meets in the fellowship hall at 2:00 pm. All women are welcomed to participate. Ladies from Calvary will also be attending.

Our meetings open with an hour of Bible study, led by Pastor Anne, and conclude with our business meeting, if needed. Please bring your January/February copy of *Gather Magazine* to the meeting. Copies of the Bible study will be available.

## News from the Church Council

The council met on December 15<sup>th</sup>. The Fifth Sunday worship (here on December 29 at 10am) will be followed by coffee and cookies fellowship.

The 2025 budget meeting was set for January 12<sup>th</sup>, following worship. Those who wish to participate via conference phone call, see Pastor Anne ahead of time.

Arrangements for snow removal have been made. The council approved a proposed budget via email following the finance committee meeting.

## Announcements

- Pastor Anne will offer laying on of hands and prayers for healing on Sunday, January 5<sup>th</sup> following worship.
- We collected \$24.40 for last month's Noisy Offering. This money will be given to ELCA World Hunger.
- Pastor Anne is offering Facebook Live Prayer and Devotions Monday-Thursday at 8 am on her Facebook page.
- The church secretary will be on vacation January 27-31. The church office will be closed.
- Has your address or phone number changed? Please notify the church secretary so our upcoming 2025 address/phone directory is up-to-date.
- February newsletter items are due to the secretary by Monday, January 20<sup>th</sup>.
- This month the local benevolence offering will be given to Open Door Food Pantry.

## 2025 Altar Flowers

The sign-up sheet for altar flowers is posted in the fellowship hall. Altar flowers are \$20 for two bouquets. On the day of your donation, take your flowers after worship and enjoy them in your home, or give them to someone special.

Please fill out an altar flower form, located just below the sign-up sheet, to ensure that your flower donation is acknowledged in the bulletin. Forms and payments may be placed in the secretary's mailbox. Note: Make checks payable to Christ and Trinity.

## Prayer Requests

Linda Boe, Floyd Hatfield, Helen Ewing, Nelson Eckhoff, Connie Shoemaker, Pr. Yvonne Marshall, Lavern, Debbie Dollinger, Amyah Smith, Marcy Cash, Shayla Mitchell, Richard Dean, Rick Morrison, Gerald Hunton, Carol Benner, Gwen Eppenauer.

Continue to pray for our home-bound members: Sandra Graf, Nadine Fingland, Marene Levin, and Val Hoon.

Let us also remember Getayawckal Ariaya from Ethiopia, and Mouniratou from Burkina Faso; and those who serve our country in the armed services, peace corps and missions.

### Happy Birthday!

- 9 Getayawckal Ariaya
- 15 Mike Olson
- 18 Steve Randall
- 22 Alyssa Ream
- 26 Hadley Randall
- 26 Staci Harrison
- 27 Linda Boe
- 30 Larry Barnes

**No Anniversaries in January**

## A Single Thought

*If you wish to be disappointed, look at others; if you wish to be disheartened, look at yourself; if you wish to be encouraged, look to Jesus.* - Anonymous

Our former Pastor Yvonne Marshall has been battling brain cancer and has entered into hospice care. If you would like to send her a card, her address is as follows:

Steve and Yvonne Marshall  
2556 Airport Road, Apt 10  
Portage, WI 53901

## Readings for Sundays in January

### January 5 – Feast of the Epiphany

- Isaiah 60: 1-6
- Psalm 72: 1-7, 10-14
- Ephesians 3: 1-12
- Matthew 2: 1-12

### January 12 – Baptism of Our Lord

- Isaiah 43: 1-7
- Psalm 29
- Acts 8: 14-17
- Luke 3: 15-17, 21-22

### January 19 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany

- Isaiah 62: 1-5
- Psalm 36: 5-10
- 1 Corinthians 12: 1-11
- John 2: 1-11

### January 26 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after Epiphany

- Nehemiah 8: 1-3, 5-6, 8-10
- Psalm 19
- 1 Corinthians 12: 12-31a
- Luke 4: 14-21



With a grateful heart  
Celebrating 100 years  
MERRY CHRISTMAS  
Nadine Fingland