

Invitation Says "Join In"

The Minneapolis Area Synod has endorsed the ELCA's Book of Faith initiative by asking all members to read the book of Mark during Advent. A reading guide has been prepared and is available at the church.

Help to make this vision a reality:

*That the whole church become more fluent
in the first language of faith,
the language of Scripture,
in order that we might live into our calling
as a people renewed, enlivened, empowered,
and sent by the Word.*

Add to the Address Book

These new members were officially received last month. Make note of:
Beckman, Kara; Mauricio Gomez '98,
Laura Gomez '00

1101 Seventh Ave. So.

South St. Paul 55075 952-484-3627

Strom, Renee and Thad; Henry '06

2050 Bluestone Lane

Eagan 55122 651-528-6860

Woolever, Kate

Augsburg College, 731 21st Ave. So.

Minneapolis 55454 218-731-1967

Ylvisaker, Amanda

7614 York Ave. So. #3114

Edina 55435 952-893-3885

Agora Celebrates with a Christmas of Nations

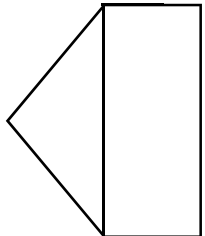
Join Agora to celebrate the birth of Christ with all people. Scripture, prayer and music will be provided by diverse worshiping communities at the annual Christmas of Nations service on Dec. 7. Atonement Lutheran Church, 601 E. 98th Street, will host the 4:00 p.m. service.

BBBS Rep to Visit

Sarah Lackore of the Big Brothers Big Sisters organization will be available for conversation during a visit to Woodlake on the evening of Wednesday, Dec. 10.

PERIODICAL

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MESSENGER

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Alternative Giving—Again

Woodlake members and friends will again be able to buy "just the right gift" for a favorite person and make the world a better place, too. Take part in this year's Alternative Gift program.

A Good Gifts Catalog from the World Hunger program of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will be distributed at church this Sunday. Browse its pages for examples of what as little as \$3.00 can buy, from trees to goats to school fees to vaccinations. Place an order on any of the three Sundays remaining until Christmas.

Projects involving water are in the spotlight this year. One in six of our global neighbors lacks access to safe drinking water. Turn to page 14 of the catalog to see how Good Gifts will help.

From Darkness to Light . . .

Worship on Advent Wednesdays at

7:00 p.m. Supper hours
have been extended to
6:30 p.m.; call the office
at 612-866-8449 for
reservations by Tuesday.

Practicing for the Pageant

With the annual Sunday School Christmas program scheduled during the 10:00 a.m. service on Dec. 14, preparations are picking up speed.

The children will spend the Dec. 7 Sunday School hour practicing, then take an extra hour (11:00 a.m. to noon) to work on their costumes together. A full rehearsal takes place on Saturday, Dec. 13, 10:00 a.m. to noon.

Sunday Morning Adult Forum

Dec. 7, 10:00 a.m., Fireside Room

VEAP's Executive Director

Susan Freeman will speak at this week's Adult Forum. Woodlake has a long history of ministry with Volunteers Enlisted to Assist People and recent blows to the economy have made that relationship even more important.

As VEAP's Executive Director, Freeman will shed light on the issues faced by low-income families in our neighborhood and ways that the community, including Woodlake, is responding.

-more VEAP news on pg. 3

Poinsettia Orders

Poinsettias to decorate the church at Christmas can be ordered through Dec. 14. Look for order forms in Sunday bulletins.

December 6 & 7

The Second Sunday in Advent

Services:

In the Chapel:

5:00 p.m. Saturday

In the Church:

8:45, 10:00, 11:11 a.m. Sunday

Sunday School:

Begins at the 10:00 a.m. service

Texts:

Isaiah 40:1-11

Psalms 85:1-2, 8-13

2 Peter 3:8-15a

Mark 1:1-8

Holy Communion at all services.

Nursery available Sundays.

ASL interpreted at 10:00 a.m.



Woodlakers

The fellowship group will celebrate the holidays at a potluck dinner in the Fireside Room on Friday, Dec. 12, at 6:30 p.m. Along with passing those “dishes to share,” small gifts will be exchanged. Get reservations and info from Pru Meyer, 952-944-3888.

Couples ‘n’ More

All of Woodlake’s “younger” singles and couples are invited to the annual Couples ‘n’ More Christmas Party on Saturday, Dec. 13, at Bill and Pam Bullock’s, 6657 Lynnwood Blvd. in Richfield. Instead of exchanging gifts, party-goers will again collect cash to donate to various parish ministries. Call Bullocks at 612-869-6394 to RSVP for the 7:00 p.m. festivities.

Mission Trip Meeting

High school students considering the challenge of the summer mission trip to the Ozarks should be at an informational meeting this Sunday, Dec. 7. Meet in the Fireside Room after the 10:00 a.m. service. Bring a parent.

Pure-ly Fun is Saturday

Kids in Kindergarten - Grade 6 meet Saturday, Dec. 6, for lunch and gift-making. Parents, please pack a photo that your son or daughter can use to create a gift. (And then try to act surprised when you open it.)

Wreath Sales

start Sunday, Dec. 7. See a member of Cub Pack #384 between services.

Correction to Circle Notices

The Lydia Circle’s Dec. 8 meeting, a Christmas luncheon, is at the home of Lois Gantrii (6520 James Ave. So.).

From the Pastor

I’m ready for snow. I’m not actually looking forward to snow, but I am ready for it. We raked and bagged the last of the leaves from the maple tree a week or two ago. They’re always the last to come down, sometimes only a day or two before the first big snowfall. But this year we got rid of them all.

I put fresh gasoline in the snow blower, and finally got it started after about twenty pulls. The ice scraper is in the glove compartment, the snow brush is in the back seat, and spare stocking caps and gloves are stored in the trunk, in case of an emergency. I’m ready.

Which is what Advent is all about. It’s about anticipating something and being ready for it to arrive. The question is: What exactly is it that we are to be ready for?

More often than not, the answer has something to do being prepared for a tragedy, a disaster, an emergency. The old Boy Scout motto—“Be Prepared”—was just that sort of advice. In other words, be ready for something bad.

Suppose we turned it around, and talked about being ready to enjoy something good? Advent could become a time to anticipate good things, blessings, joys both large and small.

The cover story in the current issue of the *Smithsonian* magazine (which you can find on a table in the Heritage Room) is all about the Sufis, a sect within Islam. Violent Muslim extremists get most of the public attention, but the Sufis practice a more joyful, peaceful, life-affirming version of their faith. Some think they have the numbers and the history to eventually overcome the radical negative factions.

Maybe. Maybe not. But you’ll have to admit that being ready to find something good sure beats the opposite.

— Pastor Mark Wegener

Seasonal Programs at VEAP

Results on Thanksgiving Goal

Area pastors received a gracious thank-you letter from VEAP last week. It read, in part: “VEAP has had the privilege to serve 2,000 low-income families for Thanksgiving (600 more families than in 2007) and will deliver hot meals tomorrow to 180 seniors. . .”

A more spontaneous note from Susan Freeman told of a scheduling error that brought a record number to the food shelf in one day. She writes: “. . . best of all—we had enough food! Churches are bringing in more food. . . [W]e feel confident VEAP can respond because the churches already have!”

Part of that response was the 1,060 pounds of food given at Woodlake in November. Caroll Hall’s last delivery met and passed the 1,000 pound goal.

Now a drive to provide fresh food for Christmas dinner is underway. Add milk, vegetables, and other perishables to holiday tables by purchasing food certificates in \$5.00 increments. Look for a table at church this Sunday.

While there, pick up a “wish list” from VEAP’s gift program. Parents shop for their children by choosing among items donated by church members. Bring the list along while shopping, buy an item or two, and return them (unwrapped) to church by Sunday, Dec. 14.

Christmas CD Sales Benefit Woodlake

Guitarist John Roth has released a remastered version of “December Dreams,” a collection of Christmas music now on CD for the first time. Familiar carols feature the guitar with other instruments.

The CDs are available in the church office for \$15.00. A part of each sale will be donated to Woodlake. Roth is the husband of Pastor Diane Roth and the son of George and Elaine Roth.

Head for Holidazzle

Woodlake kids and chaperones are going on a “field trip” to the Holidazzle Parade and Macy’s Christmas display on Saturday, Dec. 20. Plans call for a pre-parade late lunch/early supper at church at 3:30 p.m.

A minimum of 35 bus riders (with 6-8 helpers) must attend to keep the price at \$9.00 each, so Children’s Ministry Director Tisa Zachau is inviting all—parents, grandparents, Confirmation-age “assistants”—to sign up in the church office by Dec. 13.

Still working on that gift list? Sneak off for a little shopping while the kids enjoy the holiday attractions.



Bake & Buy

for the fund-raising bake sale that Woodlake youth will conduct on Dec. 14.

Contribute treats (divided for sale) to help them raise money for summer trips and camps. Then plan to shop.

You Can Still Say “Hi”

Even though some organized souls have already signed on to be greeters at holiday services, non-designated folks are still encouraged to be friendly.

For a more “official” role, volunteer to be a greeter at the 5:00 or 10:00 p.m. service on Christmas Eve. Holiday hospitality is always much in evidence, but it is nice to know that someone is deliberately seeking to welcome guests and visitors. Don and Betty Hassenstab, 952-835-3133, are scheduling.

Wednesday A.M. - Dec. 10

7:30 a.m. Prayer Group
8:00 a.m. Matins Service
8:30 a.m. Coffee and Fellowship
9:00 a.m. Speaker Edna Thayer visits with a talk entitled, “And God Created Laughter.”