

Prince of Peace

THE BELLS

December 2024

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The True Meaning of Christmas

"It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, while the sun's light failed. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!" And having said this he breathed his last."

Luke 23:44-46

Christmas has become so commercialized prompting Christians to come up with creative slogans to remind people as to what Christmas is really all about like, "Jesus is the reason for the season." Yet very few Christians actually attend a Christmas service on

Christmas Day. What's interesting is that the early Christian church didn't celebrate Christmas for 300 years after Christ's ascension. The reason why they didn't celebrate Christ's birth was due to the fact that Christ's birth was insignificant when it came to life & salvation in Christ. What gives meaning to Christ birth is the events that took place on Good Friday & Easter morning. If Christ had not died for the sins of the world & was resurrected, defeating death, then Jesus' birth would have no meaning. His birth would have been the same as all the other babies that were born. And Jesus wouldn't have even be a footnote in history.

Christ's birth only has meaning through the forward looking lenses of His crucifixion & resurrection. Jesus was literally born to die & be raised from the dead for the life & salvation of the world. It was on Good Friday that God & sinners were reconciled through the cross. Luke is the only Gospel writer who gives us a glimpse at Jesus childhood & that is kept to a very small period when Jesus was twelve. And the reason is His childhood had nothing to do with His ministry, death, & resurrection. Luke's snippet of Jesus' life at the age of twelve was to show His divinity & His total obedience as He perfectly fulfilled the Law in our place. His righteousness is what made Him the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world.

Today, Christ's birth takes on a whole new meaning through the lenses of His second coming. God had promised Israel a Messiah & He kept His promise when Christ was born. But Israel had other ideas as to who the Messiah had to be – an earthly king. So, a child born of humble means, a stable, didn't fit the bill for their idea of a Messiah. And so, they were not prepared to welcome the King of the Universe. The same still holds true today. God has promised that Christ will return, but people have become complacent believing Christ won't come in their lifetime. There are so many people who are not prepared for the second coming of Christ. We celebrate the birth of Christ to remind us that just a God kept His promise to send a Messiah, He will keep His promise of Christ's return.

WORSHIP WITH US

Sunday:
10:15AM

Contact us:
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The birth of Christ is a very special birth through the lenses of His death & resurrection, & the fulfillment of God's promise of His return. There is significance to Jesus being laid in a manger or a feeding trough because today we feast on His body & blood for the forgiveness of our sins & the strengthening of our faith. And it all because of His sacrifice on the cross for the sins of the world. It shouldn't surprise us that Jesus was born in a stable because where else would you expect a lamb to be? The Lamb of God is the perfect gift, given by God for the life & salvation of mankind. So when you look at the baby Jesus in a manger, look through the lenses of the cross & the empty tomb & you will see the greatest gift ever given. Merry Christmas!

Pastor Sean Walters



A signup sheet is hung up in the narthex area for help with Altar Guild for 2025. If you are able to sign up for a month or two worth of Sundays please do so!

We are happy to work with you. It just takes a little time each week to set up and clean up.

Please contact Linda Weimer at 724-584-7327 if you can help us.

There are dates available for 2025 to put flowers on the altar.
Please consider placing flowers on the altar in memory of loved ones or to the glory of God.

**The sign-up sheets are in the preschool hallway.
The cost is \$25.**

Money can be put in the altar guild mailbox.
The flowers are yours after the service.



Allen's cousin, Ima Gene - Hoby's Father-in-Law, Bob, - Jack Hogue, parkinson's disease - Kristy, kidney failure – Elizabeth
Jean Taylor's brother Don, kidney cancer - Dee Phillips
Colleen McCormick Lambert, terminal cancer - Edward Cramer, Stage 4 stomach cancer - Willis Voland - Skylar DeThomas - Terry DeThomas - Angela Walters
Karol – Dan - Holden, fighting leukemia



Advent Services

December 4 @ 7PM

December 11 @7PM

December 18 @7PM

December Servants in Ministry

ACOLYTES

12/01 Lily Rachuba
 12/08 James Shibata
 12/15 Noah Schweikert
 12/22 Grace Shibata
 12/29 Brooke Lehman

ALTAR GUILD

Linda Weimer

READERS

12/01 Matt Claus
 12/08 Karl Borgman
 12/15 open
 12/22 Sunday School students
 12/29 open



Hoby Schweikert, V 20
 Bonnie Keen 24
 Noah Schweikert 29
 Alice Dietrich 31
 Joy Shibata 31
 Jennifer Weedon 31



Chuck and Sue Szabo 1



Beau DeThomas, Jr 3
 Sarah Nuerge 5
 Amy Rachuba 6
 James Shibata, Jr 9
 Craig Genser 20
 James Shibata, Sr 22
 Twila DeThomas 24





<u>Station</u>	<u>City, State</u>	<u>Freq</u>	<u>Band</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Time</u>
WWCH	Clarion, PA	1300	AM	Sun	7:30 AM
WWNL	Pittsburgh, PA	103.9	FM	Sun	3:30 PM
WWNL	Pittsburgh, PA	103.9	FM	Tue	12:30 PM
WWNL	Pittsburgh, PA	1080	AM	Sat	3:30 PM
WWNL	Pittsburgh, PA	1080	AM	Tue	12:30 PM

December 1

"Will Everything Sad Come Untrue?"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: [Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler](#)

A mother and her young son trade a life of privilege for one of poverty, a story that is borderline unbelievable, yet nonetheless true.

(Jeremiah 33:16)

December 8

"Completely Ordinary Human"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: [Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler](#)

Everyone has a story to tell and yours can be one through which Jesus is working to make the world new again.

(Malachi 3:7)

December 15

"Sorrow Welcomed Here"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: [Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler](#)

The church welcomes people, but does it also welcome their problems? Dr. Michael Zeigler says the church should be a place that makes room for both joy and sorrow.

(Zephaniah 3:14-20)

December 22

"Does It Matter If Jesus Is God?"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: [Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler](#)

Jesus sets a good example, but good examples can't help dead people. Only God's Son can make us alive again.

(Luke 2:10-11)

December 29

"No Getting Better Than This"

Guest Speaker: Rev. Dr. Chad Lakies

The Good Life--what is it? Pastor Chad Lakies says life is truly good when it's life the way God meant it to be.

(Colossians 3:12-17)



Mrs. Smith's Classroom News

Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever! (Chronicles 16:34)

The month of November is always a time for us to reflect upon the things in life that we are truly thankful for. I personally use this time of year for reflection, and to thank God for my many blessings which include but are not limited to, my two high school age daughters, and supportive husband at home. I am also thankful for my "work family" as we spend five days a week together shaping our students! During the daily hustle and bustle of life, we sometimes take for granted the roof over our heads and the materialistic items we enjoy. Take all the extras away in life and you still have the love of our God!

Continuing with our letter and writing skills, this month we added three new letters L, P, and T. The letter L helped us focus on Love and Laughter while completing feathers with items we were most thankful for. The letter P coincided with Perky Turkeys in the three year old class. The letter T most certainly stood for THANKSGIVING! We read the book "Thanks for Thanksgiving" by Julie Markes. This was a perfect book to read during the week of Thanksgiving because of its language directly explaining to children what they should be thankful for. Our four year old class dedicated a day to a FEAST. Each student brought one food item to share and we all sat down together to eat our preschool Thanksgiving Feast! Happy Thanksgiving to you all!!!

As always, we are truly thankful that we get this opportunity to share class time with each and every student. We love all the willingness to learn. Sometimes students need to practice school lessons at home so that we can move forward in class from month to month.

Rounding out the month of November we asked all the students what they were thankful for and discussed our blessings. Some students said they were thankful for their teachers. :) and also, their friends, pets, Moms and Dads. A variety that we wanted to get them to think about how much we have. The teachers and staff at Prince of Peace Preschool are super THANKFUL for YOU...

Blessings until next month,
Mrs. Smith, Ms. Twila, & Ms. Michelle



2023–2025 Mission Grants

1. [Orphan Grain Train Servant Center — Orphan Grain Train, U.S. \\$100,000 — PAID IN FULL](#)
2. [A Healing Space for At-Risk Children — Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, ND \\$100,000 — PAID IN FULL](#)
3. [Serving God's Children with Special Needs — Journeys Lutheran School, Milwaukee, WI \\$100,000 — PAID IN FULL](#)
4. [Fortifying Faith in Those with Vision Impairment — Lutheran Braille Workers \\$100,000 — PAID IN FULL](#)
5. [Disaster Response Team — Trinity Lutheran Church, Tyler, TX \\$50,000 — PAID IN FULL](#)
6. [Mobile Kitchen — Forged by Fire Services, Gulf Coast Region, U.S. \\$85,000 — PAID IN FULL](#)
7. [Upheld by God's Hand, Mental Health Outreach — LCMS Life Ministry \\$96,500 — Partial payment of \\$48,250](#)
8. [Expanding Gospel Proclamation Worldwide — Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO \\$100,000](#)
9. [Equipping Young Leaders — LCMS Youth Ministry \\$50,000 — Partial payment of \\$25,000](#)
10. [Set Apart To Serve — LCMS Office of Pastoral Education \\$100,000 — PAID IN FULL](#)
11. [Lutheran Women in Mission Finish the Job — Ministry in Mission, Haiti \\$85,000 — PAID IN FULL](#)
12. [Sharing Christ Crucified with High School Youth — Lutheran High School of Greater New Orleans, LA \\$35,000 — PAID IN FULL](#)
13. [Water and the Word — Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya \\$80,000 — PAID IN FULL](#)
14. [Enhancement of Deaf Ministry and Outreach — Ephphatha Lutheran Mission Society, U.S. \\$47,000](#)
15. [Feeding Haitian Children Through Gospel and Meals — Trinity HOPE \\$58,082 — PAID IN FULL](#)
16. [Care for Street Children of Western Kenya — Capstone Ministries \\$50,000 — Partial payment of \\$28,418](#)
17. [Nurturing Faith for the Aging — Lutheran Ministries Media \(Worship Anew\) \\$100,000](#)
18. [Zoe's Home Support — Zoe's Home, Trinity Lutheran Church, Clinton, MO \\$75,000 — Partial payment of \\$25,000](#)
19. [Tanzania Children's Homes — Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania, Africa \\$74,500 — PAID IN FULL](#)
20. [Sharing Christ with Women and Children in Kazakhstan — Lutheran Hour Ministries \\$100,000 — Partial payment of \\$50,000](#)
21. [Healthy Together: Healthy Workers, Healthy Church — Lutheran Family Services, U.S. \\$106,000 — PAID IN FULL](#)
22. [Expanding Gospel Outreach to Hispanics in U.S. — Lutheran Hour Ministries \\$100,000 — Partial payment of \\$50,000](#)
23. [A Legacy of Love for Special Needs Children — Lutheran Special Education Ministries, U.S. \\$100,000 — Partial payment of \\$50,000](#)
24. [God's Word for Central and South American Missions — Lutheran Heritage Foundation \\$100,000 — PAID IN FULL](#)
25. [Bringing God's Word to India — India Bible Translation Project \\$100,000 — Partial payment of \\$74,019 — **Featured**](#)
26. [Life Connection Events and Kits — Lutherans for Life \\$70,000](#)
27. [Siouxland Lutheran Hispanic Ministry — Hope Lutheran, South Sioux City, NE \\$50,000](#)
28. [Growing Our Place: Care for Special Needs Students — Our Place After School Care, Inc., NE \\$20,000 — PAID IN FULL](#)
29. [Repairs for St. Paul's Lutheran School — St. Paul Lutheran School, Cullman, AL \\$50,000 — PAID IN FULL](#)
30. [Showering Love on the Least of These — Mercy Holistic Ministry, CA \\$100,000 — Partial payment of \\$50,000](#)
31. [PARTIAL Breaking Generational Poverty in Detroit — Camp Restore Detroit, MI \\$58,988.62 — PAID IN FULL](#)

2023–2025 MISSION GRANT NO. 19

TANZANIA CHILDREN'S HOME

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF TANZANIA, AFRICA | \$74,500



Protecting Albino Children

An albino child is characterized by the partial or complete absence of pigment in the skin, hair, and eyes. Lack of skin pigmentation makes for more susceptibility to sunburn and skin cancers. In Tanzania, albinos represent one in every 1429 births, a much higher rate than in any other nation. Albinos are especially persecuted because witch doctors have promoted a belief in the magical and superstitious properties of albinos' body parts. An albino child is often seen as a bad omen and treated as unwanted. Children may have their hands or arms amputated and sold to witch doctors.

Parents of albino children will protect their children by sending them to an orphanage that will offer more security than their own home. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Tanzania — Southeast of Lake Victoria Diocese (ELCK — SELVD) currently has a teaching center for training church leaders in Mwadui where there are a high percentage of albino children. The church is growing through baptisms and evangelism. On the campus of the teaching center is the Lutheran Boarding School. In 2021, an orphanage was built on the campus to provide a home and school for albino children.

The orphanage, sponsored by the ELCK — SELVD is safer and more secure for the children than the government run orphanage. Since the orphanage is located next to the Lutheran boarding school, the albino children are integrated into a more normal life and are not isolated. The most important care they receive is that their body and soul are served as they are cared for, and they are reared in the fear and instruction of the Lord.

The purpose of the grant is to purchase a school bus to transport children from their homes to school and to assist with the funding of the children's care. The school provides for their bodily needs as they are threatened by health risks, and protects them from the pagan practices. They are built up in their faith and are children of God.

The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore (Psalm 121:7–8).



Mission Grant Story | Learn more at wmi.org/mission-grants



The Preschool staff & students would like to thank the congregation for buying new, much needed, playground equipment. The first nice day we have, we are planning to venture across the parking lot to try it out! The students have been waiting all school year! Thank you!

Mrs. Smith, Ms. Twila, & Ms. Michelle

**NO SUNDAY
SCHOOL**

DECEMBER 29



DECEMBER

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.
1 1st Sunday in Advent 9:00 Sunday School 10:15 Service	2	3 	4 11:00 Midweek Bible Study 7:00 Advent Service	5 	6	7 
8 2nd Sunday in Advent 9:00 Sunday School 10:15 Service	9 6:30 Council Meeting	10	11 11:00 Midweek Bible Study 7:00 Advent Service	12 	13	14
15 3rd Sunday in Advent 9:00 Sunday School 10:15 Service VOTERS MEETING	16 	17	18 11:00 Midweek Bible Study 7:00 Advent Service	19 	20	21
22 4th Sunday in Advent 9:00 Sunday School 10:15 Service	23	24 Christmas Eve Service 7PM	25  10:15 Service	26 	27	28 
29 4th Sunday in Advent NO Sunday School 10:15 Service	30	31	1			