

Grace Notes

**BRINGING UNITY, EVENTS & NEWS
TO THE CHURCHES OF ALMOND, WAUTOMA,
STEVENS POINT AND WISCONSIN RAPIDS**

A December to Remember

December is one of my favorite times of the year. It's not the weather that makes this time of year special to me. It's not the fact that I have to dress warmly just to go outside, or warming up the car before I go on my daily journeys. It's not even shoveling snow. No these are normally unavoidable when you live up North. So what makes December so special to me is traveling home to see friends and family that I have missed all year.

The Holiday season is a time to reflect on the events of the year. It is a time to catch up on what has changed and to think about what next year will bring. Perhaps the events of this year have gone well. Maybe it is a year filled with hardship and grief. But whatever has transpired, one thing is sure. It is over. Yesterday is past, today is now, and tomorrow hasn't happened yet.

This time of the year is what we make it. It can be a time to set aside old conflicts and disagreements. A time to mend fences and demonstrate forgiveness. If there are words we need to say, I'm sorry to be said, please forgive needing said, there is no time like the present. Maybe it's time to overlook an offense as in Psalm 17:9.

I can't help but think about Jesus being born to do that very thing, forgive offenses. What if our entire life was focused on forgiving others? How would this change our perspective on how we treated others when we are offended? Jesus was able to change the entire world by overlooking our offenses. This holiday season let's all look to Jesus for our example, and practice what Jesus was born to demonstrate so clearly for us. Forgive.

May God bless you all this December and make it a December to remember.

Yours in Christ Service
Pastor Joseph Perricellia

From the heart of our Elder

A Christmas Thought

It is that time of year, when the Christmas Spirit is either received with great joy or met with great opposition. Seems like there isn't a year that goes by, that some objection or another rears its head, and the Reason for the Season is all but forgotten. Either someone doesn't want to believe in the religious aspects, believes only in the commercial aspects, has trouble dealing with friends or family to a point where get-togethers are strained, wishes it were celebrated in a warmer time of year or the opposite and we should have a good covering of that common white stuff, or just get upset that it is celebrated at the incorrect time, according to the calendar and historic study. Growing up with family members that voiced such comments, I found I had to make the decision to celebrate in a way that would please myself, and yet have a meaningful relationship with my own value system. By the very name of the holiday, I concluded that if it was related to the person of Jesus, then His character attributes should be associated with our activities. Even if the time was not correct, the simple fact that most of the world stops, acknowledges, and even observes Christ's birth, should, at least, open the door for hope and celebration.

As a youngster, even though the Bible was read very little in my home, and going to church was occasionally around one or the other greatly observed "churchy" holidays, the Christmas Story had a great influence on my belief factors. Though the concept that Santa was an active giver of gifts, I had to learn that God's gift, a baby, was given to save the world. This concept was coupled with the understanding that believers from across the then-known world traveled to bring Him gifts, resulting in their lives being enriched and made better. Understanding these concepts through the process of growing up, I reasoned out that a stable in Bethlehem was climatically different than one in Colorado, and that gifts like spices and gold must have had their place, not just novel things that the rich and famous would give. If I only had friends who would drop some gold off in case I needed a little boost of encouragement. I'm not sure I want to travel to Egypt and hang out there until the leadership of the country changes, but gold would be alright. Where are those Wise Men?

The "Wise Men" aspect of the story is astounding at the very least. Here were a group of people, not directly related to the subject being researched, The Messiah, through the study of spoken and recorded prophecy. They decided to mount their camels, travel through the nights, follow a star as a GPS, camp out in the hot sun until darkness fell once more, for a great length of time, to a place they probably had never been or would never be again, to find a couple they didn't know, with a baby in a manger, amidst crowded streets of people complaining about registration and taxes. This compounded with the fact that they were foreigners to the country and they might not have held the correct passport or visa to be welcome by the government officials. Talk about conviction and determination. They were connected somehow though, in an unseen way, because they did have dreams that alerted them of dangers and they listened to what they were told through these dreams. Maybe they were more related than they knew. What a lesson we can learn and share with our world through their example.

The shepherds and angels, the innkeeper, the stable, the clip clop of small donkey's hooves, the fact that an expectant mother rode on a donkey the distance Mary did, the patience and determination of Joseph to nurture the expected and accepted Son that was a gift from God, all important facts, that if timing was off by only a bit would have nullified the very prophecies that the Wise Men studied. These are far more rewarding concepts to wrap a mind around than other Christmas traditions. As followers of Jesus we should not be afraid to stand for our beliefs, travel the extra distance for Him to assure others around us that the reason for the season is Jesus, and that reason wants to end the separation between not only we humans but with Him also. We should have the same determination as Joseph, to nurture the growth of belief in Him, in young and old believers, and that He has a plan to dwell with us. To think He wants to partner with us in this plan, as His children, to tell the world of His Love! I am positive that "We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us". Like the small donkey, we too can bear the message of the soon arrival of the Savior to our world. Donkeys are unique creatures in the respect that their step is the closest in length to that of man's. May the world hear the clip clop of our hooves as we walk closer and closer to the Coming of our Lord.

Merry Christmas to all,
From a fellow Donkey, Darrell Brown

Of Rainbows and Unity

(Emily Thurman, Wisconsin Rapids)

While I was out west, I was praying to God about unity in the church-pouring my heart out. It is vulnerable, and yet I was blessed, so I'll risk sharing it

"God, I don't know just how to work side by side with those I've been so repulsed by, but I know YOU can change that."

"Emily, how many were repulsed by the lepers?"

"Pretty much everyone, save maybe their family-and Jesus. "

"And Emily, is there a sinner too far gone, for God to change them?"

"No, Lord. It's not them that I question so much as it is me. How do I tell my face to express welcome when I do not feel it in my heart?"

"Em, the key is, feelings follow thoughts. As long as you entertain their sin/unacceptability, your feelings and actions will be repulsive. My child, it is when you choose to submit your will, your choice, your thoughts to God, that change can and will take place. Emily, there is power in prayer. Talk less to people, and more to God. Em, you long to do something for God. My child, if you longed to serve your king, honor your king, understand your king, and obey your king, then whom should you consult?"

"The king himself-my God and King."

"Emily, you mentioned that the church grew when it drew together on their knees, so it shall be again. Unity Em, means one God, One goal, One Spirit. It does NOT mean one talent, one personality, one line of service. Emily, as it takes rain to make a rainbow, it takes adversity/challenge to produce growth. If you never had a problem, you wouldn't know that God could solve them. Child, as the rainbow started in the midst of the rain-one ray of light, two, then three, then more, it started faintly, growing in intensity and depth. Em, notice, it was still raining. what changed was not the rain factor (adversity/challenge). What changed was the intensity of the light-as the individual rays joined together one by one, they mixed with the rain to create a spectacular thing of beauty-the blessing. Emily, your attention, rather than removing or changing the rain, should be your response TO the rain. You cannot change the fact that raindrops fall-but you can cast your beam of light into the midst of the rain in the form of a heart of prayer. Pray for those who curse you, who spitefully use you, those you feel are a challenge. Pray for them-not in an attitude of judgment or condemnation. Pray God's blessing over them. Pray to bless them. Pray for God to change your heart to see them as God sees them, to serve them as you would Christ himself, to care for them as for the leper. Emily, anyone can repulse them, judge them, ignore them. Jesus loved lepers. Jesus touched lepers. He cared not that they came to Him unclean. He saw into their hearts. Emily, this wilderness you enjoyed and found beauty in the past 5 days-has it been without challenge?"

No Lord, we've had rain, cold, snow, wet boots, lost trails, long drives and often Lord, there are ugly things-just plain ugly! There are scars-burned areas where there is left only the charred remnants of what once was. To many Lord, it is rocky, scruffy sagebrush, cold harsh weather, old dead trees, wild and dangerous predators. Lord, they say this is one of the most dangerous wilderness areas-because the worst, most dangerous, naughtiest grizzly and black bears to be found are dropped off here.

And Em, how many have spoiled your beauty?

Um, none Lord. There is a peace, a beauty, a serenity. There are tiny leaves or flowers, or sometimes big rainbows, or just the ever changing intriguing sky against the majestic mountains. Lord, it took the cold to make the beautiful snow. It took the rain, to make the rainbow. It takes each rock, each sagebrush, each type of cloud or mountain, it takes a mix of it all to create this masterpiece-this place of healing, of peace, of serenity.

You see Em, and it takes the dead bones, the dead logs, the dry leaves, it takes the harsh winds and temps to create the snow mosaics and the rain must be in the mix for the glorious rainbow. You see Em, you need not pray that the rocks be removed, but rather that the sound as the water passes over them, be a blessing. You need not pray to remove adversity or those who create it in the church. Em, it takes each individually to create the masterpiece. The landscape would be different if one element were missing. My child, notice that the healthy trees grow right next to the dead scrubby ones. Seek not to be blessed by a pristine, perfect environment, (church). Seek rather to be a blessing with in the church you are a part of. Be a ray of light. Your light (prayer) aligned with another , and another, will lead to beauty and healing. Em, when someone goes to the hospital, they seek healing-it may be mental, physical, spiritual, or all of that. A church is a hospital for sinners. Fret not that the sinners are there. Rather seek to serve them, pray for them, and be a blessing to them, as you would a patient in the hospital. Em, you must focus on the sinner, not on their sin. ALL have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. No-one is immune. Let He/She who is without sin cast the 1st stone (judgment). Some dark clouds will come, but without them, there'd be no rain for the rainbows or to water the earth and there'd be no beautiful snow. Pray a blessing over them.

To Salt or Not to Salt?

By Judy Boehmke
(Submitted by Dorothy Tess)

All salt is not created equal! There has been so much controversy on salt that many people are actually fearful about consuming it. Sodium is the third most vital element that our bodies require. What a lot of people don't realize is that our bodies need sodium in order for the potassium/sodium levels to be in balance within our cells. Also, our DNA is held together by the minerals we consume. In order to better understand, let's take a look at how salt is processed.

"White table salt is the by-product of the processing of earth salt after the valuable minerals have been extracted for sale to industry. The salt is subjected to a complicated process of refining, which includes heating the salt to over 2,000 degrees. The minerals are precipitated out of the salt, going through numerous processes, and then the salt is re-crystallized. To make the salt free flowing, an anti-caking agent is added, which has the unfortunate side-effect of turning the salt purple. . . It is bleached, and then glucose, talcum, aluminum silicate and. . . a few other things are added. The end product is 97.5 percent sodium chloride with no trace elements. This salt is poison to the body."

On the other hand, "Celtic [pronounced Keltic] salt. . . is harvested from the ocean in a 9,000 acre, pristine area of Brittany, in northwestern France. The area has been protected by the French government as a historic site, so that ancient traditions can be preserved for the future generations."

"To produce the salt, ocean water is channeled into a series of shallow ponds. The sun and wind evaporate the water, leaving a mineral-rich brine. The salt farmers then hand rake the brine with wooden tools, and within hours, crystals form and are gathered by hand. The method used for the whole process is a 2,000-year-old tradition in Brittany. This salt is unheated, and unrefined." (Living and Live Food, Alissa Cohen).

According to Barbara O'Neill, nutritionist and naturopath from Australia, "Sodium should be taken into the body the way it is found in nature. The largest concentration of sodium is found in sea water. Sea water contains 92 minerals." (Self Heal by Design, Barbara O'Neill). Both Himalayan and Celtic salt are unrefined sea salts that contain approximately 82-87 minerals respectively. Whereas table salt contains only two minerals: sodium and chloride. Without the other trace minerals, this is a dangerous combination that causes an electrolyte imbalance within our bodies as well as an acid effect, which then leads to a toxic environment in our bodies.

Another plus is that it contains three types of magnesium: magnesium chloride, magnesium sulphate and magnesium bromide. With these combinations, they are able to eliminate excess sodium from our bodies. For example, if you should become dehydrated, just dissolve a couple of Celtic salt granules on your tongue followed by drinking a glass of water. The magnesium combos of the Celtic salt will literally pull that water into your cells and help you to be rehydrated. Not only will you feel better, but it will give you an energy boost as well.

With this valuable information, you can now see why Celtic salt is a far superior choice for your sodium requirements. Salt may appear to be an insignificant part of your lifestyle, but table salt can create havoc and cause major repercussions within our entire body.

My advice for you is to carry a small amount of Celtic salt with you wherever you go especially during the hot summer months. It could literally be a lifesaver!

Judy Boehmke is the Director/Chef for Legacy Lifestyle Centre, LLC and the Atrium Restaurant,

located at W6887 Two Mile Road, Porterfield, WI 54159 (715) 789-2878.

Are You In Need of ?

This section is intended as an outreach to help those with needs, also helping those with the need to free up space in their homes by donating those un-needed items to those who have a use for them. May God Bless you for your generosity. If you have items to donate to someone, please let us know.

ITEMS TO GIVE AWAY

Electric Clothes Dryer (Free to a good home)

House broken and does not shed!

Call 715-498-1126

Used Desktop Computer

715-572-0650

Fully reloaded with Windows 7

In Need

There is a family of a Mom and 5 children that are going to be moving into a house and are in need of all household items, such as beds, dressers, living room and kitchen furniture and the likes. If you have any extra items of this sort, please contact Maria.

at 715-498-0305

Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow

God loved me yesterday on the cross;
He loves me today when I feel lost;
When He comes, there will be no sorrow
For He promised to love me tomorrow.

(Written and submitted by Nona Schmidt)

What a wonderful way to explain it!!!

A sick man turned to his doctor, as he was preparing to leave the examination room and said, "Doctor, I am afraid to die. Tell me what is on the other side." Very quietly, the doctor said, "I don't know." "You don't know? You, a Christian man, do not know what is on the other side?" The doctor was holding the handle of the door; on the other side came a sound of scratching and whining, and as he opened the door, a dog sprang into the room and leaped on him with an eager show of gladness. Turning to the patient, the doctor said, "Did you notice my dog? He's never been in this room before. He didn't know what was inside. He knew nothing except that his master was here, and when the door opened, he sprang in without fear. I know little of what is on the other side of death, but I do know one thing...I know my Master is there and that is enough."

U-turn

I've come to realize with some surprise,
With clear and bright and searching eyes,
That seeking pleasure seems to add to my pain.

My thinking has been self-centered,
twisted and insane
But today, thanks to God, that has come to an end,
As I'm pulling a "U-Turn" and starting again.

Submitted by Ken Wells

Ponder on this...

1. How much time did Jonah spend in the belly of the fish?
2. The name of God is not mentioned in only one book of the Bible. Which one?
3. How old was Moses when he died?
4. What is the longest name in the Bible?
5. Who is the only woman whose age is mentioned in the Bible?

Ponder on this... Answer Key

1. Jonah
2. Esther
3. 120 according to Deut. 34:7
4. Mahershalalhashbaz (Isaiah 8:1)
5. Sarah

Unity

Being modeled into unity I am gaining ground to an understanding of the Trinity.

The most noticeable evidence of the Trinity is the simple fact gathered from reading the Bible: God sees man and knows him completely and loves him.

It is a natural process of the constant peering into the life of God in order to realize the wonder of Him, or so I have been told. That the terrible nature of our sins toward Him cause this to seem a redundant exercise in futility. But still, we must persevere in our ways. So that we can gain even an atoms distance closer to God. That which seems too great a distance from us can seem to be closer through our perseverance.

This has to be understood if one is attempting to love the creator of the universe. We need to base our study for this on a plain reading of the Bible. This insures us that the Spirit is present in our studies. Without the Spirit we are nothing more than empty vessels making a loud sound to ourselves. But with the Spirit we can soar from our seats to attain the glorious Heaven we want.

Unity is about the joining to God. We surrender our wills and everything we do and think to Him. We can see Three holy and separate parts of His Being from His word.

God is Spirit.

God sends us His Spirit to help us see what He wants us to see. He directs us through different human actions. He is persistently trying to get our attention by dropping the façade and admitting He is the creator. If we are too demanding He tells us to be quiet. When He shows us His Spirit we have to listen and see the most wonderful instruction in the universe. When He shows a hint of His power as an all-seeing eye we need humility. God wants us to be humble, selfless, servants to Him. This is an important point. He wants us because He is Selfless. He wants us to understand, as He does, the mysteries that we are able to grasp. And this is why He sends His Spirit: to show us His ways.

God's Spirit marks a specific time or place as being something different, a turning in our lives. He announces this in such a way that we can't help but recognize its truth. The Spirit is loving us when He shows us His, or Her, or Its ways: It is all God.

God is the Son.

God acts at different times to fulfill the living One's prophecy. He has a joining piece of the puzzle, like matter-antimatter. This joining is ionic-like in that it represents a picture of an invisible bond of attraction and repulsion. God sends His physical counterpart in the hopes of teaching His people His right and just ways. His physical nature is always a moral teaching of the highest order. It instructs man where he most needs to improve for the sake of His love. He also gives us a time of deep reflection and peace: His Sabbath.

That Christ gives God His utmost sacrifice, by His blood, informs me of my sinful, unholy state. His Son shows us just how and why we must act to partake of His joy which is an eternal bliss. While we can choose to emulate Jesus, follow His will in everything He has done, He doesn't force it on anyone. He merely does these things to please His Father. We are justified having been embraced by the Son.

We love Him because He loves us first.

God is the Father.

That we need to end the dichotomy in the universe is evident from a look at the state of war among the peoples at any given time. One way to do it is to follow the will of our Father in Heaven. And this *one* way is stated simply in the term unity. It is the only way we can escape the bonds that hold us in thrall. Do our Father's will. With our selfless beings we must begin and accomplish everything we attempt. And when we fail we must learn just how to protect and cherish the times that we can act like His people.

With this or similar characteristic traits we can notice our lack of, or success in, what we are attempting. The moment of our reflection upon our actions can bring with it all the snares the very enemy that we most fear: our old selfish qualities. Bumps in the road are for us to eliminate and prepare the way for the Lord. Clear sight is what God wants of us. We have to show people what we are to be able to effect by our unity with God. Father shows us how much we need His mercy. We need to change from an empty cup to become a filled cup with the love of God.

One is many. We are the seeds of God, planted for His pleasure. We grow and develop according to His will. The Trinity of God is one of the ways He works out the plans and the purposes of His will. The Trinity is generated by the studies of unity. We see the Trinity only by using the word of God in a very special manner. To use the lessons we learn from the grace of God each of us has a specific time. We must see these spots of time as an endless challenge toward our final resting place within the arms of our glorious maker.

From seeing the Word I was saved. Being saved, I noticed the real love of people toward another suffering soul. By the accumulation of God's blessings with that knowledge I have learned valuable lessons in order to help me pray and live and love. Daily I thank and praise Him Who has called me in one hope: to serve my God.

It is time for all of us to unite as one will, which directs us to the understanding of God.

Psalm 23 for me

(Emily Thurman, Wisconsin Rapids)

When we completed the trip out west, finally had arrived at our destination, we were full of expectation and anticipation. Waking in the morning to find sleet coming down, didn't put much of a damper, as I'd already been warned that snow could be part of the picture. We had been warned a day ahead of time, that roads were closing, and we'd be tight getting in before the storm. As the day played out in reality, we enjoyed a nice warm breakfast and headed out to backpack and see what we could see. We hiked around for a couple of hours, enjoying the mountain air, the view, and a little less, the brisk temps/wind. It wasn't long, before the wet boots let us know, there would be no more safe hiking, until we all had dry gear. We sat for what seemed like hours in that tiny little cabin. Frustration and disappointment started to build, as one suggested we head back east, before we were snowed in for the winter, and one couldn't hike because of wet gear-and one couldn't go out alone, because of the threat of bears nearby. As the afternoon lazed away, frustration, fear, and anxiety were building in my heart. The 2nd day held it's own challenges, as one got separated, and we spent time looking and looking until we were reunited, and then once again, we were cabin bound because of the wet boots. It didn't take long until the cozy little cabin felt more like a prison.

I decided I had to get out in the fresh air and have a chat with God to change my spirit and feelings, so I donned all my snow gear, and wandered out to the swing by the river. There, I began chatting with him about all the challenges and frustration. He brought to mind Job's comment I'd read just that AM "Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?" As I pondered the bit of adversity I was facing, it was clear that I just wanted MY WAY-as I thought of 2 friends back east, who were in the height of battling cancer, I realized I was just pouting. I asked God to forgive me, and help me find a better state of mind. My thoughts were interrupted with the lowing of a cow, and I looked up to see some just across the river from me. God asked me, "Will you choose to accept adversity from God's hand? Look at the cattle across the river from you. Tell me about them Em."

I replied, "Well Lord, they look totally calm, totally happy-some of them are grazing, and some are lying down and chewing their cud. Some are just standing watch."

"Tell me Em, " He responded, "what sort of grazing is available, and what type of place to lie down?"

"Well Lord, they are either at the river's edge-just above the water and rocks, or just above that. The landscape is strewn with downed limbs and trees, and rocks. They are in the shade of the pine trees. The grass isn't all that green. Frankly, on the upper aspect, I can barely see any. They don't have much really-no shelter, COLD water, what looks to be harsh grazing conditions. Plus there are no fences, so therefore no security-no-one to feed and care for them, no-one to give them grain, no-one to supply them with hay, no-one to protect and provide for them. They have plenty of predators;-wolves, grizzly bears and black bears. Yet they are healthy and content"

"Em, notice how the cattle are resting contented in the midst of their mess. They didn't demand all the rocks, sticks, obstacles and dangers to be removed. They have an element of danger that could come at any moment, so you could say they should be stressed and full of fear."

"Lord, are you asking me to rest in the midst of my mess? What exactly are you saying?"

"Em, do you see the calf all laid out, relaxing with just one ear tuned for danger? What I'm trying to tell you, is that you need to rest sometimes-it can't always be about fixing, working, doing, stressing. Ultimately, make the most of your journey. My child, they don't have guns or fences, or anything to protect them, and yet you see a state of calm-of peace and enjoyment of the blessings they are afforded today. Em, read Psalm 23."

"Wow, Lord" I responded. Somehow I see it differently than I ever have before. They do have green pastures I suppose-there is some tiny hint of green. It's not nearly as green as the grass on this side of the river, yet they are contented in their circumstances. They're not bawling for greener pastures, they're just enjoying the pasture at hand. When I look at them lying down, again, it's not nearly as nice as this side of the river, and yet they are relaxed amidst the rocks and broken limbs. Lord, their water isn't calm, and it's VERY cold-yet they drink from it and are refreshed. Lord, I sense you asking me to face the adversity of my situation with grace, poise, and thanksgiving. I sense you asking me to accept the pasture (circumstances) where I live. God, David spoke of restoring his soul-I long to be restored."

"My God shall supply ALL your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:19. Em, my word is life to you. Come to the quiet. Time to relax, is just as important as all the duties of life."

"Lord, it talks of leading us in the paths of righteousness for your names' sake. What are paths of righteousness?"

"A path of righteousness refines, defines, shapes, and clarifies you. Your path will have some challenges, some ups and downs, some obstacles, some rewards, and some dangers."

"Lord, as I look at the cattle walking through a literal valley, one that could lead to their death, it takes on new meaning. They are not afraid-though they never know where the next grizzly resides. Lord, when I think about how a rod and staff could comfort, I remember a rod was used for guidance and correction-but it also confirmed the shepherd's presence, and provided a sense of safety. It is a comfort to know that you're still here with me, in my circumstances, and that you value me enough to correct me and care for me. Lord, as I think on the next verse, You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies-Wow Lord-you've prepared a table so to speak, for them, with enemies all around. I have to say, I see Psalm 23 a whole lot differently-and my life circumstances differently as well. Thank you God, for helping me to see, that you are there in the midst of our mess.

WISCONSIN RAPIDS CHURCH SCHEDULE OF EVENTS



Calendar of Events

- Dec 5 Women's Ministry meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- Dec 7 Bible Study & Prayer meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- Dec 10 Caroling with Pathfinders, 2:00 p.m.
- Dec 11 Cookie baking for Women's Shelter, 9:00 a.m.
- Dec 12 Board Meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- Dec 14 Bible Study & Prayer meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- Dec 21 Bible Study & Prayer meeting, 6:30 p.m.
- Dec 28 Bible Study & Prayer meeting, 6:30 p.m.



*Today is the tomorrow you worried
about yesterday. Was it worth it?*

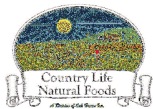


Sabbath School begins at 9:30
Worship Service begins at 10:55

Food Drive: We are collecting non-perishable food items for our fall/winter food drive. Items can be placed in the fellowship hall next to The Giving Tree.

Country Life Natural Foods order deadlines:

- | | |
|-------------|------------|
| December 21 | January 18 |
| February 15 | March 15 |



If you would like to place an order, please contact Dean Thomas (715.644.8183) or Pam Thomas (715.644.8399).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Women's Ministry meeting – December 5th at 6:30; cookie baking for the Family Center on December 11th at 9:00 a.m.

Nominating Committee Process: Please be praying for the guidance of the Holy Spirit for the nominating committee. If you have any concerns during the process, please contact Pastor Joseph.

CITRUS FRUIT PROJECT - TEXAS navel oranges, ruby red grapefruit and tangerines. Order forms are on the table in the foyer. Sponsored by the Stevens Point SDA church.

MEN OF FAITH Winter Retreat – On Friday, January 20th a light supper will be served at 6:00 p.m. followed by the first meeting at 7:00. The weekend will conclude after brunch at 9:30 Sunday morning. See brochure in foyer for more information.

Your offering on December 10th will help **Adventist Community Services** continue serving communities across the North American Division. ACS fulfills Christ's mission to reach people by coordinating education and services for senior citizens, equipping youth to help others through Young Adults Emergency Services (YES!), and more.

Visit us on the web at "www.wrsdachurch.org"

Whisper His Name

In this world of turmoil and pain
Don't you think that it's a shame
More people don't turn to Him
Who's love can heal and mend
Just by whispering His name?

(Written and submitted by Nona Schmidt)

Something to Think About

My friend, Caren Churkey, has introduced me in the past couple years to a new genre, for me... Christian fiction. Even more recently, I've discovered, through her, the popular Christian author, Michael R. Phillips. I realize some Adventists do not appreciate that type of literature but I've been amazed at the wonderfully spiritual insights that Mr. Phillips presents in his books. They are especially evident in his series on Corrie Belle Hollister, a story of a young Christian woman set during the middle 1800s. In his books, Corrie is a journalist, writing for a newspaper, who meets President Lincoln, General Grant and others, and the influence she has upon them. She eventually marries....well, no, I don't want to give anything away. Read it for yourself. Here are some excerpts throughout the last book in that series "A New Beginning" by Michael R. Phillips that impressed me very much. Some parts I put in brackets [] to update the description from the 1800s:

"Listen to what Jesus tells us to do—lend money when asked, visit those in prison, don't envy, do good, show mercy, feed the hungry, treat others kindly, pray to your Father in Heaven, speak graciously, take accountability for your actions, love your neighbor, do to others what you would like them to do to you."

* * * *

"Everything in God's kingdom is inverted from the ways of man. Man says 'Get all you can and you will be happy.' God says, '**Give** what you have, and you will have riches indeed.' Man says 'Raise yourself up.' God says, 'Put yourself to **death**.' Man says, 'The greatest goal is to possess.' God says 'The highest ambition in life is to **relinquish**.' Man says, 'To be served by others is to be great.' God says 'Greatness is measured by **servant hood**.' Man says 'The first are first and the last are last.'

God says, 'The **last shall be first and the first last**.'

* * * *

"The things that have eternal value have to do with character, with the kind of people we are, more than the things we do. Internal things rather than external. It's not always as easy as saying that we ought to be helping people. If we're not becoming more Christlike as a result, then of what permanent value is it? I may fix [Mrs. Jones' car], but if inside I'm annoyed about the inconvenience, what will be the permanent benefit to my eternal character from having done it?"

But what about Mrs. Jones? Doesn't she benefit whether I was annoyed or not? How does she benefit?? By having her car in good working order? How does that benefit **her** eternally? That car will go up with all the wood, bricks and stubble.

But what if your fixing her car benefited Mrs. Jones **internally**? What if you helped her eternal character somehow by doing it? When we are becoming more internally Christlike from what we do, or when we are in some small way helping **another** man or woman to become more internally Christlike themselves...then we are expending our energies upon things of eternal value.

Everything else we do, everything else we are, is going to vanish the instant we die. Some poor individuals will be left with very impoverished natures. Others will find themselves giants of character in the kingdom of Heaven because of the multitude of small acts and choices of Christ like kindness they demonstrated in this life. Turning ourselves constantly toward such a focus, and helping others to orient their lives likewise toward Jesus, is life's ultimate goal."

Something to think about.

-Submitted by Koreen Boettcher

WAUTOMA CHURCH PLANT SCHEDULE

- Dec 3 Sabbath—Vegetarian Potluck after
- Dec 4 Bible Study (Anderson's) 5:30
- Dec 7 Prayer Mtg. 7:00
- Dec 10 Sabbath—Vegetarian Potluck after
- Dec 11 Bible Study (Anderson's) 5:30
- Dec 14 Prayer Mtg. 7:00
- Dec 17 Sabbath—Vegetarian Potluck after
- Dec 18 Bible Study (Anderson's) 5:30
- Dec 21 Prayer Mtg. 7:00
- Dec 24 Sabbath—Vegetarian Potluck after
- Dec 25 Bible Study (Anderson's) 5:30
- Dec 28 Prayer Mtg. 7:00
- Dec 31 Sabbath—Vegetarian Potluck after
- Dec 31 District Rally (Stevens Point)

Hello from Wautoma,

It continues to be a blessing to have part in Gods plans for Wautoma. We don't know yet how great God's vision is for the church there, but we trust that God has many blessings in store.

We are seeing God at work as He brings young families to join us, young families with young children. God is good. The sound of young children's voices cheers us as they make a joyful sound to the Lord during Sabbath School. We look forward to the Christmas program planned for Christmas Eve Day that will involve those young people along with a string trio of musicians. There will be Shepherds and Angels, complete with costume and a camp fire.

The women's group meets weekly and is a very spirit filled experience. Our prayer group continues to meet weekly, seeking God's blessing on our church and the growing church family. Bible studies continue through both the English and Spanish Groups. The prison ministry also remains a blessing with our contact at the Redgranite Correctional Institute. Take a moment to read the poem from Ken in this month's Grace Notes. (Alan Anderson)

ALMOND SDA CHURCH SCHEDULE OF EVENTS



Community Bible Study - Wednesday 7PM

We are currently studying *The Great Controversy* by Ellen G. White

Unity Prayer Meeting - Friday 7PM

"Christ is leading out a people, and bringing them into the unity of faith, that they may be one, as He is one with the Father." EGW, TC, v1, p324, p1

Bible Study - Anderson Home - Sunday 5:30PM

This study begins with fellowship and potluck before we dive into the book of Acts for an in depth study.

December Events

(Visit our website)
www.almondsda.org

- Dec 2 Prayer Mtg. (Unity) 7:00
- Dec 3 Sabbath—Vegetarian Potluck after (Msg. by Doug D.)
- Dec 4 Bible Study (Anderson Home) 5:30
- Dec 7 Community Bible Study 7:00 (Great Controversy)
- Dec 9 Prayer Mtg. (Unity) 7:00
- Dec 10 Sabbath—Vegetarian Potluck after (Msg. by Darrell Brown)
- Dec 11 Men's Ministry Breakfast/Bible Study 9:00
- Dec 11 Bible Study (Anderson Home) 5:30
- Dec 14 Community Bible Study 7:00 (Great Controversy)
- Dec 16 Prayer Mtg. (Unity) 7:00
- Dec 17 Sabbath—Vegetarian Potluck after (Msg. by Pastor Joseph Perricellia)
- Dec 18 Bible Study (Anderson Home) 5:30
- Dec 21 Community Bible Study 7:00 (Great Controversy)
- Dec 23 Prayer Mtg. (Unity) 7:00
- Dec 24 Sabbath—Vegetarian Potluck after (Msg. by Maria Frank)
- Dec 25 Bible Study (Anderson Home) 5:30
- Dec 28 Community Bible Study 7:00 (Great Controversy)
- Dec 30 Prayer Mtg. (Unity) 7:00
- Dec 31 District Rally (Stevens Point)

The November Men's Breakfast - What happened? Rick Felts generously provided breakfast, and lead out in a good discussion about *really* listening to the Lord, and not just nodding along. After that, the group discussed ways it can minister to others, and there were quite a few good ideas.

The conclusion of the day was that we all are unique. Even amongst a group of men, there are lots of insights in discussion and various ways to serve the Lord and others, which one man might be able to better perform while another is more skilled at another service. Praise the Lord for variety. I can tell that this will be a good thing, and urge other guys to come next time on Dec. 11th. -Luke Anderson

District Rally

The small Church building was packed full in Almond on October 29th. I was standing in the front row during the doxology, at the start of the worship service, and I was practically blown away by all those wonderful voices. It truly was a blessing. The fellowship with everybody from Stevens Point, Wisconsin Rapids, and Almond (and the Wautoma Church plant) Churches was good.



Here are a few things I took note of: During Sabbath-school, someone from each church gave a report of their ministries and evangelism. The Lord is working in this district. Eric and Carrie Anderson dedicated their son, William. May your prayers be for them as they train up their child in the Lord. Also, it was good to meet the new Wisconsin Conference Youth Director, Eric Chavez, who presented his testimony of how the Lord has lead him to the ministry.



For lunch, the ladies and men (but mostly ladies) provided a wonderful potato and chili meal. And that was followed by a nice afternoon of visiting and music.

-Luke Anderson



STEVENS POINT CHURCH
SCHEDULE OF EVENTS



Upcoming Events for December in the year of our Lord 2016

Thursday, Dec 1st - 7:00p.m. -	Community Bible Study in the fellowship room. Maria is facilitating the lesson.
Sabbath, Dec 3rd - 9:20 a.m. -	Sabbath services. Sabbath school at 9:20 a.m., Lesson Study is at 10:00 a.m. Worship service at 10:50 a.m. The Elder is Lem Lowry, Beth Ruehl is leading the lesson, and Pastor Perricellia will present the message.
Sunday, December 04 - 11:00 a.m. -	We will be sponsoring a Holiday meal at Fireside Apartments with a short program. Contact Shirley or Darrell if you would like to get involved. Those interested in helping should arrive at church around 11:00 a.m. so that the meal can be served around 12:30.
Tuesday, December 06 - 7:00 p.m. -	Prayer meeting and lesson study at church. Jasper St. Bernard is facilitating the lesson on Revelation.
Thursday, December 08 - 6:00 p.m. -	Church Board meeting.
Thursday, December 08 - 6:45 p.m. -	Community Bible Study in the fellowship room. Maria is facilitating the lesson.
Sabbath, December 10 - 9:20 a.m. -	Sabbath services. Sabbath school at 9:20 a.m., Lesson Study is at 10:00 a.m. Worship service at 10:50 a.m. The Church Leader is Doreen Lowry, Leroy Dissing is leading the lesson, and Rick Felts will present the message.
Tuesday, December 13 - 7:00 p.m. -	Prayer meeting and lesson study at church. Jasper St. Bernard is facilitating the lesson on Revelation.
Wednesday, December 14 - 4:30 p.m. -	Quilting group will meet in the fellowship room.
Thursday, December 15 - 6:45 p.m. -	Community Bible Study in the fellowship room. Maria is facilitating the lesson.
Sabbath, December 17 - 9:20 a.m. -	Sabbath services. Sabbath school at 9:20 a.m., Lesson Study is at 10:00 a.m. Worship service at 10:50 a.m. The Elder is Darrell Brown, Harvey Churkey is leading the lesson, and Maria Frank will present the message.
Tuesday, December 20 - 7:00 p.m. -	Prayer meeting and lesson study at church. Jasper St. Bernard is facilitating the lesson on Revelation.
Thursday, December 22 - 6:45 p.m. -	Community Bible Study in the fellowship room. Maria is facilitating the lesson.
Sabbath, December 24 - 9:20 a.m. -	Sabbath services. Sabbath school at 9:20 a.m., Lesson Study is at 10:00 a.m. Worship service at 10:50 a.m. The Elder is Harvey Churkey, Darrell Brown is leading the lesson, and Doreen Lowry will present the message.
Tuesday, December 27 - 7:00 p.m. -	Prayer meeting and lesson study at church. Jasper St. Bernard is facilitating the lesson on Revelation.
Thursday, December 29 - 6:45 p.m. -	Community Bible Study in the fellowship room. Maria is facilitating the lesson.
Sabbath, December 31 - 9:20 a.m. -	District Sabbath in Stevens Point. Sabbath school at 9:20 a.m., Lesson Study is at 10:00 a.m. Worship service at 10:50 a.m. More info to follow.

Visit us on the web at www.stevenspoint22.adventistchurchconnect.org

MONTHLY HEALTH NUGGET

BY FREDDIE RAMIREZ

Our Small and Large Intestines

After we eat a meal, we remember it for a short time and then forget. The meal is forgotten, but not yet gone. After our stomach next finishes its work, then it goes to the intestines.

The intestines are a long, continuous hollow tube running from the stomach to the anus. This tube is folded many times so that it can fit inside the abdomen. The absorption of most nutrients and water happens in the intestines. The intestines include the small intestine, large intestine, and rectum.

The small intestine (small bowel) is about 20 feet long and about an inch in diameter. Its job is to absorb most of the nutrients from what we eat and drink. Mostly these are found in the chyme (the semi liquid form of food after it has been partially digested). The nutrients are absorbed through finger like villa. Velvety tissue lines the small intestine. The small intestine is divided into 3 parts: the **duodenum, jejunum, and ileum**.

The duodenum -is the first and shortest segment of the small intestine. It receives partially digested food (known as chyme) from the stomach and plays a vital role in the chemical digestion of chyme in preparation for absorption in the small intestine.

The Jejunum -most of the nutrient absorption is done in this part of the digestive tract. Simple sugars, water soluble vitamins (except vitamin C and some Bs) and amino acids made from the food are passed from the villi into the blood stream while the fat is passed into the lymph capillaries. The rest of the food passes into the ileum.

The Ileum -The function of this area is mainly to absorb vitamin B₁₂ and bile salts plus whatever products of digestion were not absorbed by the jejunum. The wall itself is made up of folds, each of which has many tiny finger-like projections known as villi on its surface.

The large intestine (colon or large bowel) consists of 3 parts: **The cecum, colon and rectum**. The large intestine is about 5 feet long and about 2 to 3 inches in diameter. The large bowel is the place where most of the water absorption happens. When the water is absorbed, it leaves behind the undigested part of the food, known as stool. Waste is solid because most of the water has been removed by the intestines

The **Cecum** -The main **functions** of the **cecum** are to absorb fluids and salts that remain after completion of intestinal digestion and absorption and to mix its contents with a lubricating substance called mucus. The internal wall of the **cecum** is composed of a thick mucous membrane, through which water and salts are absorbed.

The appendix is found at the end of the Cecum it acts as a reservoir for beneficial bacteria that is kept in the body in case you lose your normal intestinal bacteria; the appendix can repopulate it. Some species of bacteria have evolved to live inside a human's intestine and help them digest their food by breaking it down.

The **Colon** (ascending colon, transverse colon, descending colon and sigmoid flexure) Its **function** is to reabsorb fluids and process waste products from the body and prepare for its elimination. The **colon** consists of four sections: ascending **colon**, transverse **colon**, descending **colon** and sigmoid **colon**.

— **Rectum** and anus are the final stages of the digestive tract. The **rectum** is the last straight section of the large intestine before reaching the anus.

The Anus is a set of muscles, called a sphincter, at the end of the large intestine the holds back the waste until it is time to release them. When the stool enters the rectum the nerves in that area send impulses to the brain which make the urge to defecate. The pelvic floor muscle creates an angle between the rectum and the anus that stops stool from coming out when it is not supposed to. The internal sphincter is always tight, except when stool enters the rectum.

Next month, we will learn about digestive enzymes, nutrient absorption and various conditions that afflict the intestines.

Prayer of Daniel Chapter Two
By Eric James Anderson
Based on Daniel 2:17-23

Death loomed overhead like a quickly falling anvil. The King had pronounced doom to all the wise men of Babylon and Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were among those to be killed. Daniel called his companions together to plead to God for mercy. Together, they prayed for wisdom, Together they came before God in their trial, not bickering about fault or blame. They realized that without God’s direct intervention of their behalf, they would be dead in a very short amount of time. Many of Babylon’s wise men were already dead and many more were being killed as they prayed to God.

“Lord, have mercy on us sinners. We have trampled on your Holy Law. We have trampled on your grace. We have trampled on every good and perfect gift you have ever given. We realize that is why we are in Babylon. We as a people have turned our backs on you, but Lord hear our prayer; we realize that only you can save us from this trail, only you can reveal the secret that will keep us alive. We ask for your mercy. We beg for your grace. In tears we come to you on our knees, confessing our sins and our transgressions. Lord, please give us a clean heart, a new soft heart to replace our stony dead heart. Lord, in your mercy, we plead for wisdom, Your wisdom, so we can glorify your righteous name in this wicked land we live, so we can lift up Your word before a fallen people so that many more may believe in you.”

That night of prayer and pleading to God changed their hearts. God did reveal the secret they were seeking. God, in His mercy, He gave the young men a chance to glorify God and save many lives, including their own. Daniel praised God for His infinite wisdom. All wisdom belongs to God. God is wisdom. God sets up Kingdoms and tears down kingdoms. God knows the beginning from the end. He knows all secrets of every heart, no matter how deep or how dark they might be. God reveals all things. He has foretold the entirety of world history in a single dream. God has a plan for His people. We are to be His mouthpiece; we are to be His hands. We are to be His feet.

Lord in your mercy and in your infinite grace, open our eyes to see you, open our ears to hear your word. Then dear Jesus, send us, use us, and direct our path. Put us in the place that you can use us most. Loosen our legs so that we will go. Give us your faith so we can take the first step. Remove the fear that holds us back, unclench our jaw so that we can speak boldly before our rulers, bosses, and supervisors; our family, our enemies and our friends; about your saving sacrifice, about the new life, separate from our current sins and vices, about how you cleanse our heart like you cleanse the sanctuary. As You are cleansing the heavenly sanctuary of our sins; please cleanse our hearts of our sins. Wipe our mistakes away. Remove our attachment the rebellion. Bring us back to perfection.

WR- - WOMEN’S MINISTRY

The Wisconsin Rapids women’s ministry group has been busy this fall. In October, our meeting topic focused on “What’s in your hand” encouraging each woman to use whatever God puts in their path for His service. On October 22nd, members of the church went out into the surrounding community and handed out small gift bags to our neighbors. Women’s ministry sewed the bags and provided literature, candy, bookmarks, WRAO radio station magnets and notebooks. These were well received. At the November meeting, the ladies stuffed 20 hand-made pillows and filled personal care bags for the women’s shelter. 15 care bags and 1 quilt were delivered to the women’s shelter. On November 12, some of the ladies and children of the church visited Strawberry Lane Convalescent Facility and gave the pillows and bookmarks to the residents. The residents were very excited to receive these items and chatted awhile with us. We ask for your prayers that God continues to lead and provide for ways to bless and serve others.

Submitted by: Trudy Stephenson, Women’s Ministry Leader

Words of Hope from Redgranite

Thank You Lord

By Ken Wells

I thank you Lord, for Blessing me, although I don’t deserve it.
 You let me see what I can be if I apply your word.

You saved me, time and time again”.

When I would seek self, I self-destruct.

Then when in fact, I’m back on track, I’d claim it was pure luck.

I felt that I had failed you Lord, each time I disobeyed.
 Although I said, “I live by faith”, my life has not displayed it.
 It seems the way I want to live stays trapped inside my mind.
 I pray this day, God pave the way that life in Christ I will find.
 I know I would not have come this far unless it was your plan
 to reap or sew.

In God I know one has to take a stand.

We as men are called to lead the head and not the tail.
 When we believe what Christ has achieved is when we will not fail.

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Stevens Point- Koreen Boettcher
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Wautoma-Alan Anderson

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If you would like to become a part of this publication, we would be honored to have your help. Please contact us with your contributions...

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ATTENTION ALL PRAYER WARRIORS & MEMBERS OF THE STEVENS POINT DISTRICT

WE HAVE A NEW PRAYER LINE FOR THE DISTRICT

As we have been instructed to work together as the body of Christ's believers, we need to pray more and pray together.

It is written in Acts 2:1 - "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place...And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost,..." Don't we long for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit? In the Old testament, God dwelt in the physical sanctuary. Now, we are God's temple

(I Cor. 3:6). When we confess our sins (I John 1:9) and turn to Him in true praise and worship, His Holy Spirit will fill us and leave not room for self or self-righteousness! His glory will fill our hearts and our churches! Amen, church? Remember the following -- "Indeed it came to pass, when the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord. . . that the house, the house of the Lord, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord filled the house of God." (II Chronicles 5:13, 14)

Can we begin to make a small sacrifice of our time and pray and praise God together? One half hour once a day, or week, or month, or whatever days you are able to join us. Together, let us bring our praises and requests to our Father!

Prayer Line number: [641-715-3580](tel:641-715-3580)
Access Code: 152984#
Time: 5:30 a.m. to 6 a.m.
Do join us -- you'll be glad you did . . .



“Change” For Change!

Almond SDA
Worthy Campers
Fund



On November 19th, Almond held it's first annual "Wheelbarrow Collection." The wheelbarrow was pushed down the aisle and everyone was given the opportunity to contribute the coins that they have been saving. This project was held with the goal of raising money to help children who would otherwise not be able to attend summer camp. I'm very happy to say that we surpassed my expectations by collecting \$1103.05 to this point, with more trickling in. Because of the generosity of our small congregation, many children will be blessed, through the "Worthy Camper Fund" in a way that could be life changing for them and for their future families. We give all praise to God for His blessings.

