

Sharon Lutheran Church's Monthly News Update

December 2013

ADVENT VILLAGE FAIR

MissionS ACCOMPLISHED

December 8 from 6-8pm

Join us for the Advent Village Fair Sunday, December 8 from 6-8pm in the fellowship hall. It is a great opportunity to invite a friend, neighbor or relative to enjoy an evening of crafting, caroling and visiting with old or new friends. There is no cost and some activities will be donated to Kelsey's Dream and given to our shut-ins.

We are also seeking donations of 2 yards of fleece for the blankets. (Joanne's in the Susquehanna Valley Mall often has sales on the No Sew fleece kits.)

Our booths will be:

- Food by Fellowship
- Ice Cream by Welcoming Team/Finance
- Yarn Dolls by Knitters
- Boy scouts = popcorn
- Kelsey's Dream knotted blankets by Senior High
- Felt flowers by confirmation/7th graders
- Girl scouts
- Other? See Robin Kunkel to add another booth to the Fair
- Talent Show by Sharon children and teens



CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

4:30 pm

7:00 pm

9:30 pm

*All Services will
have Holy Communion
and a Candle-lighting
Ceremony*

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

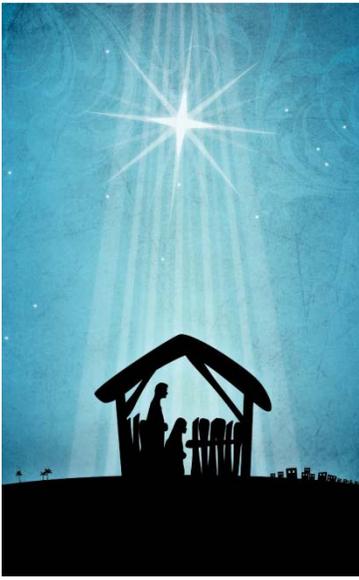
Poinsettia orders will be
taken until Dec. 8.

The cost is \$9.50 per plant.
Contact the church office
with your information.



ADVENT STUDY AND REFLECTION

Pastor Doll, Vicar Rick, and Robin Kunkel
will lead 3 sessions on Hope, Love, Joy, and
Peace in preparation for Christmas.
Join them Wed., Dec. 4, 11, 18 at 9:30am



From Advent to Christmas

If you are like many of us, you might feel the movement to Christmas beginning to reach a fevered pace. It might not be simply the shopping and gift selections that are overwhelming, but all the requests for help and additional gifts and the cries of those who are need. It may be the juxtaposition of the joy we want to feel and the anxiety of the calendar of events, the constant news barrage of national and global disasters, storms and tragedies, or the boisterous healthcare and political wrangling.

This time before Christmas, the beginning of the church year known as the season of Advent, is meant to be marked with contemplation and with purposeful watching and waiting—expectant that God is doing a new thing. Yet, there seems to be so much else—images of despair, anxiety, and hurt--that is in our line of view. We might not want to see it, but there it is right in front of us; easy to see, easy to identify.

Can hope be as tangible? Can we unveil it in front of us? Can we unmask it and keep it from seeming so hidden, so transparent and elusive? Can it be more than simply wishful thinking, but rather concrete and visible and captivating? Hope does not simply distract us or cover up everything else—it stands in spite of everything, in the face of everything.

Look into the manger and see this little child, baby Jesus. Here is our God made visible—not at all what we might expect God to be or look like; not this mighty power wielded forcefully with awe and frightening majesty, but the fragility of life—of infancy and birth. What does it mean that God is revealed in this way? What does it mean that God steps right into life with us? What does it mean that God knows us to the depth of our own weaknesses, in our own frailty--little children and elders; in sickness and fear, in moments of profound joy and valleys of deep despair, minds racing with thoughts, minds clouded and forgetful.

Might God step into our line of sight. Might God look deeply into us and stop us, awaken us, and open our eyes again to the hope right in front of us, to the hope standing with us, to the hope that is new life for us.

What child is this who laid to rest on Mary's lap is sleeping? Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping? This, this is Christ the king, whom shepherds guard and angels sing; haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!

May this Christmas be a time of peace and blessing.

Pastor Doll



MINISTRIES for CHILDREN, YOUTH & TEENS

Director Family & Youth Ministry

Robin Kunkel 374-8444 robinkunkel@gmail.com

YOUTH & TEENS: Visit our Facebook page at [Sharon Lutheran Youth Page](#)

P.S. Don't forget to put "Page" at the end!

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN SUNDAY SCHOOL? Anticipate Advent!

Each year we take time to increase the children's awareness of Advent. It is unfortunate that Christmas glitter, glitz and shopping are advertised earlier and earlier. I hear people complain that they are already hearing Christmas songs in the store. Sometimes as early as Hallowe'en! So if we're by-passing Thanksgiving, what happened to Advent? Here at Sharon, we like to give pause for the season of Advent. The time of anticipating.....The time of reflecting on Jesus and the reason we are celebrating with gifts to friends and family. The children enjoy learning about the Advent wreath and anticipating lighting each of the four candles. If you are in need of ideas to celebrate Advent in your homes, visit our library and look in the Christmas/Advent section.

Animate! Ani-what?

The *Animate* series is designed to present a topic that really has no black and white answers. It encourages youth to question and search the scriptures and their theology about religion, salvation, worship and other areas. While in that search with adult leaders, they may have more questions than answers. In one of their classes, the Senior High crew had a scavenger hunt to seek different types of crosses in our church building. They were looking for bedazzled crosses and we are happy to announce, did not find many. If you are curious, ask one of our teens why they were glad not to see a bedazzled cross.

FIRST COMMUNION AND REFRESHER CLASS: January 12, 2014

Pastor Doll, Vicar Rick Robin, and our confirmation students are planning a first communion session for families on January 12 from 5 to 7pm. The confirmation students will be serving supper and participating in the learning session. There will be a variety of age appropriate activities that will help children and families in understanding the sacrament, it's

history, it's practice, and it's promises. If your child needs instruction or just a refresher, please contact Robin or Pastor Doll to reserve a place at the table. The session is designed for children ages 5 and above. There is no age restriction for receiving the sacrament. Anyone who is baptized can receive communion. These sessions are meant to be one place where we expand the meaning and depth of communion and learn together as families about this amazing gift God gives us.

CONFIRMATION RETREAT January 31-February 2, 2014

Outdoors, in this beautiful setting, even near the end of winter, will be a great place to experience the variety of ways we pray. Pastor Doll will be leading the Confirmation Retreat which is offered to our 7th through 9th graders as part of their catechetical experience. Each student is requested to attend at least two retreats while attending the three year program. We will be heading to Camp Karoondinha to stay at the Edna Sheary cabin in the great woods of Pennsylvania. The 'cabin' is handicap assessable, heated, has indoor plumbing and beds. We will leave early evening on Friday and return early afternoon on Sunday. There may be other youth joining us from a couple of the Lutheran churches in our area. If that changes or others cannot join us, we may open the retreat up to additional friends who might also appreciate experiencing prayer.

ELCA YOUTH GATHERING 2015 = DETROIT, MICHIGAN

Deadline January 31, 2014

The next ELCA Youth Gathering will be held in Detroit, Michigan on July 15-19, 2015. Any youth that has completed eighth grade by June 2015 is eligible to attend. Any students and parents interested in learning more about the trip should contact Robin Kunkel or Pastor Doll. The deadline to be part of the Sharon group going to Detroit is January 31, 2014.

Ministry and Money Meeting Notes

66 of you took advantage of being in conversation together and with me over the past month as part of our Ministry and Money (MM) meetings. I was blessed by the discussion, by the encouragement, and by your partnership in ministry. Thanks to all who took part in the conversation. I hope you were encouraged as well.

In Matthew's gospel in the 16th chapter Jesus asked the disciples two questions: 1) Who you people say that I am? 2) Who do you say that I am? We used these two questions to think about our identity as Sharon. What is the word on the street?—who do people say we are? What do they think? What don't they know? We also thought about our witness to Christ, our testimony to God's grace—who do we say Jesus is? What is our message about faith and about this God we serve? We realized how much more we need to say about what we do and why. We realized our desire to actively be part of our community and our need to be bolder and not so quiet about what we do and the ways we serve.

I took some time to show pictures of our current ministries and to explain those ministries and our broader church connections in this region and across the US and world. We talked about designs for a caring ministry—Sharon Cares, the development of our nursery and family ministries, the collaborative ministries we are working on with our fellow Lutheran congregations in the area, the possibilities of a continued internship ministry, and thoughts about ministry potentials that each of see in the community around us.

The second part of our conversation together was about money. I wanted to give everyone a sense of the progression of this year 2013 and decisions that were made about funding and managing the shortfall in the operating budget. I talked about decisions by the finance team and council regarding funding for the coming year and the recommendation not to use trust principle for operating expenses. I went over the budget as it will be presented to the congregation on December 8 detailing the expenses and the income sources. We spent some time processing the financial gap that exists even after reductions and salary freezes of roughly \$28,000. What is important to know is that together we can fund this budget and close that gap, but it will take everyone's participation and generosity. We are not expecting anyone one person to bear the weight, but each of us in our own giving to do what is necessary to completely fund our ministry and beyond.

There were many suggestions about how to explain the ways that together we can easily fund this difference. We have 175 giving units (individuals or families who give \$100+ in a year) who if each of us increased our giving by \$3 a week or \$13 a month—would generate \$27,300. Or, if everyone increased their giving by 10%, we would generate \$30,000 in increased giving. Or, if those of us who are giving \$45 a week and less (96 givers) would all increase our giving level by \$5 a week and those of us who are giving \$50 a week and more increase giving by 10%, we would generate \$24960+\$20060, respectively for a total increase of \$45020. We realize that not everyone can increase giving to this extent, but we do need everyone to step up in faith because together we are meant to bear witness to God in this community, to lift up families, to care for the sick and elderly, and to share the good news of Jesus.

PROPOSED BUDGET 2014

Summary	2013 Budgeted	2013 Projected	2014 Budget	Change from 2013 Budget
Budget				
INCOME - SOURCES OF FUNDS				
REGULAR ENVELOPES	\$ 315,000	\$ 310,000	\$ 332,877	\$ 17,877
TRUST ACCOUNT TRANSFERS (Total)	\$ 39,657	\$ 30,357	\$ 9,811	\$ (29,846)
GAND TOTAL - INCOME	\$ 354,657	\$ 341,532	\$ 342,688	\$ (11,969)
EXPENSES - USE OF FUNDS				
<i>GIFTS TO OTHERS</i>	\$ 26,800	\$ 26,300	\$ 26,400	\$ (400)
<i>PASTOR</i>	\$ 97,673	\$ 95,772	\$ 97,673	\$ (0)
<i>PARISH MINISTRY ASSOCIATE</i>	\$ 47,809	\$ 48,119	\$ 48,414	\$ 605
<i>OTHER STAFF</i>	\$ 87,304	\$ 88,674	\$ 81,541	\$ (5,763)
<i>OFFICE EXPENSE</i>	\$ 11,950	\$ 11,650	\$ 12,400	\$ 450
<i>WITNESS</i>	\$ 5,900	\$ 5,126	\$ 5,000	\$ (900)
<i>PROPERTY</i>	\$ 55,350	\$ 46,550	\$ 54,100	\$ (1,250)
<i>CHRISTIAN EDUCATION</i>	\$ 9,400	\$ 4,820	\$ 7,700	\$ (1,700)
<i>SOCIAL MINISTRY</i>	\$ 3,100	\$ 3,100	\$ 3,050	\$ (50)
<i>WORSHIP & MUSIC</i>	\$ 9,371	\$ 6,300	\$ 6,410	\$ (2,961)
IN/OUT		\$ 1,000		
GRAND TOTAL - EXPENDITURES	\$ 354,657	\$ 338,723	\$ 342,688	\$ (11,969)

Budget in detail available in Narthex literature rack or from church office

For those in need, we remember in prayer....

Carole App, Douglas App, Neil Aucker, Laura Aungst, Terry Beaver, Doris Berry, Barb Blakley, Paul Botteron, Mary Bottiger, Don Bower, Frances Bowersox, Pat Campbell, Grace Cote, Mark Cote, Sandra Depkin, Donna Digan, Ellie Dinsmore, Ed Fisher, Larry Forrey, Teresa Flynn, Wade Ganns, Pat Garmen, Markye Greenawald, Grace Greiner, Suah Harris, Jeremy Hoffman, Grace Hollenbach, David Holmes, Jr., Valerie Holmes, Kendra Hoover, Nancy Hummel, Martha Hummel, Devon and Jindrah Kember, Paul Kerstetter, Harvey Kreamer, Jr., Donna Krebs, Sue Krex, Dale Morse, Susan Mull, Ernie Renninger, Dr. David Revak, David Rishell, Erica Robatin, Shirley Rowe, Wendy Stauffer, June Stetler, Robert Stetler, Steve Twitchell, Molly Walker, Erma Weirick, Ken and Chris Whitebread, Gary Wydell



Bernhisel, Deborah	12/2
Freed, Paul	12/2
Ries, Rodney	12/2
Aucker, Rita	12/3
Kuster, Norah	12/3
Messner, Edna	12/5
Weirick, Madison	12/6
Wise, Phillip	12/6
Driscoll, Donna	12/9

Herman, Sarah	12/9
Herman, Isabella	12/12
Nickler, Kevin	12/12
Marziale, Lauren	12/14
Bilger, Janet	12/17
Terrio, Allison	12/17
Kramer, Gregory	12/18
Mullen, Rheta	12/20
Scholl, Eric	12/20
Kemberling, Dana	12/21
Freed, Harley	12/22

Matrey, Megan	12/22
Spigelmyer, Jack	12/22
Sands, Christopher	12/23
Gilson, Ilene	12/25
Schreffler, Jennie	12/25
Aucker, Gary	12/27
Wagner, Clara	12/28
Reiland, Casey	12/29
Anderson, Dorothy	12/30
Bottiger, Donald	12/30

Simply Giving

The *Simply Giving*® Program endorsed by Thrivent Federal Credit Union is designed to help you conveniently make payments to a nonprofit organization of your choosing. Through the *Simply Giving* Program, your payments are made through a preauthorized withdrawal from your bank account.

Give on Your Terms

You determine the frequency of your automatic payment – weekly, semi-monthly or monthly. Your payment is deposited into the organization's bank account on the same day it is withdrawn from your account.

Easy Giving You Can Count On

Convenience – Payment will still be made if you are out of town or on vacation.

Security – No lost or stolen checks.

Environmentally and Wallet Friendly – Save on checks, envelopes and postage.

Sign Up and Start Giving

Council Updates

Approved 2014 budget as recommended by the Finance Team for presentation at the December 8 Congregation Meeting.

Approved Dalton Savidge as Treasurer for 2014.

From Vicar Rick

Emmanuel – God with us!

As we begin a new church year the gospel of Matthew becomes the focus for most of the Sunday readings for the next 12 months replacing Luke. Both Luke and Matthew contain genealogies of Jesus. Luke's gospel traces Jesus' ancestors from Jesus back to Adam and God. Matthew chooses to begin his gospel with a genealogy that begins with Abraham. His purpose is to place Jesus in the ongoing story of God's acts in the history of the world.

Matthew's genealogy primarily names fathers. But, unlike Luke, he names five mothers including Mary, the mother of Jesus. Can you name the other four? Hint: You will find three other names and one woman described as "the wife of _____."

The genealogy is just the beginning of a unique narrative about the birth of Jesus who is the Messiah and both "Son of Abraham" and "Son of David," placing Jesus in the tradition and the hopes of the people of Israel. The birth narrative also introduces numerous themes that will be present throughout Matthew's gospel including Jesus' role as Emmanuel, "God is with us," and Savior who "will save his people from their sins."

There is no better way to prepare for the Christmas season than to read through the opening chapters of Matthew. Angels, dreams, wise men and stars contribute to the meaningful story of the birth of Jesus. As we celebrate another Christmas season, my prayer is that you will encounter Emmanuel in the midst of the bustling season.

From The Ridge: by Carol Black

The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg

This is the time. Celebratory holiday days are peeking around the corner. But in the meantime, a way back memory has clicked in, calling back those eloquent words of a formidable President past who honored those who bravely fought on ground right here where so much Battle Gettysburg did wage. This is the time when dry leaves crunch now under feet, reminding us: dead things and beings have profoundly spoken, too! There's a daily newspaper of the Seminary called "The Redactor." A faithful friend, this publication appears everyday still in my email, arriving with tidbits of the day. It has its say of who's in town, who's up and down the hill to lecture, share, provoke. This week spoke some civil righters on hate groups in PA, plus two Feminism and Biblical Interpretation speakers. This week is the meeting for next June's Graduating Class, my dear friends and former classmates. They say it's time for planning graduation! Already? Wow! This being a part-time, sometimes' student is sure different! Feels like that favorite old sweater sometimes: a bit unraveled! A sweater still it is, as comfy as it can be just for now. The Ridge. It's chilly there tonight as I write here by the fire. And well we know that there's the Spirit here and there that warms and fires us all! God bless The Class of 2014 as they plan for that Graduation time and may we at Sharon support in prayer all Seminary personnel throughout the ELCA.

December Worship Volunteers

	Greeters	Acolytes	Readers	Ushers	Cantor/CA	Altar Guild
Dec 1	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM
	Matt + April Metzger	Vance + Wyatt Metzger	April Metzger	Jack + Kay Spigelmyer	Carol Black	Maureen Ries (B)
	10:30 AM	10:30 AM	10:30 AM	10:30 AM	10:30 AM	10:30 AM
	Mike + Janet Bilger	Olivia Dunkle	Harvey Murray	Robert + Romane Dagle	Casey Reiland Markie Reiland Maddie Weirick	Joyce Kuster Nancy Martin Carol Harrison
Dec 8	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM
	Jim + Carol Black	Kyle Kemberling	Alma Pauling	John + Roseann Stetler	Lowell Leitzel	Jackie Winey (B)
	10:30 AM	10:30 AM	10:30 AM	10:30 AM	10:30 AM	10:30 AM
	Bob + Carol Bradford	Emma Kalcich	Maureen Ries	Harley Freed Doug Hassinger	Jeff Whitman Dave Deckard Don Housley	Mary Seiler Marian Thomas
Dec 15	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM
	Brian Pauling Dawn Dunkelberger	Megan Keeney	John Pendley	Jim + Carol Black	Philip Riggs	Alma Pauling (B)
	10:30 AM	10:30 AM	10:30 AM	10:30 AM	10:30 AM	10:30 AM
	Art + Karen Bowen	Hannah Doll Raechel Councill	Tammy Hassinger	Don + Grace Housley	Tori Doll Art Bowen Doug Hassinger	Vi Soper
Dec 22	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM
	Craig + Karen Hoke	Elise Keeney	Fred Hooper	Paul Culbertson Terry Kissinger	Sue Pennay	Roseann Stetler (B)
	10:30 AM	10:30 AM	10:30 AM	10:30 AM	10:30 AM	10:30 AM
	Rueben + Kim Councill	Jessica Beaver Sarah Fedder	Kermit Ritter	Harvey + Nancy Murray	Dawn Doll Sue Starr Kathy Reiland	Audrey Deckard Mary Hummel
Dec 29	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM	8:00 AM
	Charles + Sue Hummel	Aaron Weirick	Roseann Stetler	Tim + Teresa Berger	Lowell Leitzel	Linda McMillin (B)
	10:30 AM	10:30 AM	10:30 AM	10:30 AM	10:30 AM	10:30 AM
	Jason + Rachel Dagle	Brandon Dunkle	Eric Rowe	Carol Harrison Keith Kunkel	Bob Bradford Alex Pennay Curtis Pennay	Karen Bowen Grace Housley

Outreach Update

From Blanket Sunday: The Social Ministry Team thanks you for your contributions toward this cause. We collected \$930., and collected items from the congregation helped to create 40 personal care kits which will be sent to LWR, in addition to the many blankets and school kits created by the Stitches.

Mission Mall at Zion Lutheran Church, Sunbury: Dec. 8: 11:30am to 2 pm: Mission Mall is an opportunity to honor Christ this Christmas Season, while giving gifts to family and friends and to help others. Monetary donations to nonprofit organizations are made in honor of those we love-to better the lives of those in need.