Advent Gives Voice to Our Longing for Salvation

I read this quote in my sermon preparation for Sunday. I'm drawn to its simplicity and depth. We know Advent is an afterthought in our culture, but not in our liturgical calendar. Advent never rushes into Christmas, mindlessly careening through the endless holiday specials and consumer temptations.

Instead, Advent pushes the pause button, and offers a season to contemplate God's desire to make this world right. The Prophet Isaiah, on the Third Sunday of Advent, gives voice to this desire:

He has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captive and release to the prisoners.

This year's calendar presents a unique scheduling conundrum for the 4th Sunday of Advent. You probably know that this Sunday is December 24th. I've heard of churches canceling Sunday morning services. I've heard of churches offering their Sunday morning service as another ‘Christmas Service’ option. But I don't want to lose the 4th Sunday of Advent. Theologically the day is too central to God's story of salvation. We need to hear the Magnificat, Mary's response to the angel's announcement that she will bear the Christ Child. This world needs to hear Mary's song:

The mighty one has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.

Advent gives voice to our longing for salvation.

So this year, on December 24th, come to church twice. Come in the morning for the 4th Sunday of Advent, and return in the evening for the Nativity of our Lord. It will be a good day.

— Pastor Froehlke
As Dark Awaits the Dawn

As the season of Advent arrives this week, I find myself reflecting on the past year and hopeful for the future. The music ministry mounted two major efforts this year. We offered the Requiem of Gabriel Faure during Good Friday worship, and we combined with St. Paul’s to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation last month.

This month, our young musicians will lead music during the Advent 3 worship with The PoP Players Present: The Nativity Story. We will hear handchimes, malleted Orff instruments, guitar, and the lovely sound of voices as the story of the nativity is told through mostly folk-inspired melodies. We’re greatly looking forward to this presentation that’s been in rehearsals for almost two months now.

As we look ahead to Christmas Eve, this is a unique year in that Christmas Eve is also a Sunday. This means that the morning worship on the 24th is actually the fourth Sunday of Advent. We’ll observe this last Advent Sunday (with a bit of a nod toward Christmas) in the morning. Then, on that evening, we’ll gather for just one combined worship for a wonderful celebration of Christmas Eve at 8:00 pm.

Again this year, we will be inviting Prince of Peace musicians to offer a special selection during an extended pre-worship prelude. Starting at 7:30 pm, you’re invited to sing or play a song that brings you joy. Please email me to reserve your spot so that I can make sure everything runs smoothly.

Coming up just this weekend, on the evening of December 3, some of our handbell ringers will be offering music to the community as part of the West Windsor Community Tree Lighting Ceremony. The ceremony starts at 7:00 pm, lasts about 30 minutes, and will conclude with fireworks. Join us in celebrating the season with our neighbors.

Lastly, Megan and I wish all of you joy and comfort during this Advent and Christmas season. We are thankful for all of you, and we look forward to worship and ministry in the days and weeks to come.

— Peace, Doug

Music Schedule

December 3
Adult Choir

December 10
Adult Choir

December 17
PoP Players

December 24
Adult Choir

December 25 & 31
No Ensembles

Feast of the Epiphany

Mark your calendar for Saturday, January 6th, for the annual Epiphany service. Join us for a pot-luck supper at 6:00 pm and worship at 7:00 pm.

— Peace, Doug

Tidings, the newsletter of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, is published monthly. Articles, story ideas, and comments can be emailed to loismcase@gmail.com.

Deadline for the January issue is Sunday, December 24

Staff and Officers of Prince of Peace
Rev. Peter Froehlke, Pastor
Dr. Doug Helvering, Minister of Music
Kathy Nowak, Parish Administrator
Tom Marvil, Church Musician
Tim Urbanek, Treasurer
Dorothy Safranek, Financial Secretary

Congregational Council
Martin Rexroad (President)
Newman Wilson (Vice President)
   Rich Carlson
   David Case
   Nancy Herrington
   David Jeedi
   Diane Urbanek
   Elizabeth Wagner
   David New, Secretary (non-voting)
December Events

Advent Midweek Services
Wednesday at 7:30
Casserole Potluck Dinner at 6:30
Join us for Advent Midweek worship on
Wednesdays in December at 7:30. On December 6 &
13 we will have a casserole potluck supper at 6:30.
Bring a favorite dish to share. On the 20th we will
decorate for Christmas.

The December Donation Requested
for the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen is
Starkist Chicken
or Tuna Salad & Crackers
Please place donations in the wooden box in the breezeway.

Joyful Stitchers Deliver Scarves for Homeless and Take On New Service Projects
December Gatherings are on the 4th, 11th, & 18th

The Joyful Stitchers have completed the
scarf project with Resurrection Lutheran
Church in Hamilton Square. We were able to
contribute 34 cheery, red scarves to the effort
to provide warm scarves to the clients of the
Food Pantry there. Ginne Cowell, coordinator
of the project at Resurrection, sent the
following thank you note in appreciation of
the Stitchers’ efforts:

Hi All,
What a wonderful surprise to
hear about the number of
scarves (34) you will be
donating!! You all have certainly
exceeded our expectations. Any
scarves that are not taken by
our Food Pantry clients will be
given to T.A.S.K. Please thank all
who have participated in
wrapping others in warmth!!

Gratefully, Ginne

Joyful Stitchers will continue to meet on
Mondays in December. All are welcome to learn
how to knit or bring your current project and just
sit with us and chat. Our stitching days alternate
between Monday afternoons at 1:00 and
Monday evenings at 6:30 in the lounge. We have
a new project: over the next few months, we will
be making scarves, hats, mittens, and baby
blankets to send to Santa Rosa in California,
where the community there has been
greatly impacted by the wild fires with
many families losing everything.

We also have a number of ongoing
projects, including hats, headbands, and
lap blankets for cancer patients, and, for
more experienced knitters, tiny, little hats
for preemies. We’re also making Mats for Cats — simple mats for new kittens which
we donate to a local animal rescue
shelter.

For those who would like to learn to
knit, our Prayer Cloths are a perfect first
project. We’ll get you started with yarn
and needles and give you all the help you
need to continue. All are welcome to
drop in. Bente Ott, Kate Chen, and Ellie
Crawford are experienced knitters and
Kathy Morris is an experienced crocheter,
and we’re all happy to help anyone learn.

Our Monday schedule for December: December 4th
at 1:00; December 11th at 6:30; and on December
18th at 6:30, we are planning to meet and have a little
holiday celebration. If you’re new to the Stitchers and
would like instruction, please contact Kate Chen at
kcuchen@comcast.net.
Advent Giving Tree
Deadline Sunday, December 10

Advent, the time of preparation for the coming of God's most precious gift, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, brings us many opportunities to share gifts with persons in need. This year, the Advent Giving Tree will be in the Gathering Area from November 26 to December 10, decorated with many stars, each naming an item to share with someone, ranging in age from infants through Senior Citizens, served by Lutheran Social Ministries of New Jersey (LSM/NJ). The gift cards for Shop Rite, Wal-Mart, and Target are for residents in LSM/NJ’s Lutheran Senior Residences.

LSM/NJ needs the gifts by December 13, so we have a very short time-frame. Our deadline for gathering gifts is Sunday, December 10. **Simply remove a star or stars, replace with a snowflake, purchase the gift, and place it (unwrapped) under the tree. You may return the star with the item, or you may place it on your own tree.**

A huge thank-you goes to the entire DiSanti-Wagner family for setting up and helping to decorate the Giving Tree. It was truly an intergenerational endeavor, spanning ages 2 to 73!

And thank you to the rest of you so much for being a part of this giving, gifting, sharing opportunity: As you have done it to one of the least of them...

Appreciatively, the Social Outreach Team

La Convivencia Receiving Donations of Personal Care Products

*Box is on Front Porch of The House Next Door*

Many families living in the Mercer County area desperately need our help. As Holiday Season is approaching, we as a community should keep these families as a part of our priorities as it is a great way to bring joy to these families and give back to our community during this time of thanks and celebrations. Let’s do our part, and through your kind donations, together we can make a difference!

— Kani Ilangovan for La Convivencia

Christmas Gifts for Specific Children
Served by LSM/NJ

**Deadline is Early This Year: December 10**

Lutheran Social Ministries of NJ (LSM/NJ) is again providing a specific wish list from 20 children in their care. These children have very little joy in their lives, and to have a specific wish fulfilled brings special smiles to their faces. The list is on a poster with sign-up sheet on a table in the Gathering Area.

If you would like to provide the desired gift(s) for one or more of the children, sign the sheet, take the candy cane with gift tag attached for your child, purchase the gift(s), put the child’s gift tag on the package, and place it, unwrapped, on, or under, the table holding the poster. All of the information you need is on the back of the gift tag. The gifts may be put in an open gift bag, if you'd like.

**Gifts must be returned by Sunday, December 10, as they must be delivered to LSM/NJ by December 13.** Special thanks to Susan Crossen for preparing the poster and gift tags.

Again, the deadline for all gifts is Sunday, December 10.

The Social Outreach Team thanks you for being a part of this special outreach ministry.

Advent Quiet Day

**Friday, December 15, 12:30 to 4:30**

*House Next Door*

Drop by when you can to enjoy some hot tea or coffee, quiet activities of your choice, and periodic devotions around the Advent Wreath. Led by Pastor Dale Selover.

Heartfelt Thanks to David Jeedi

for providing

*2018 Calendars & Promise Cards*

to Members and Friends of Prince of Peace
More December Events

Book Group Meets December 14
Annual Christmas Party
At the home of Anne Patterson, 8 Greenfield Drive
Princeton Junction
RSVP to annepatt@att.net or 799-8849

January 4, 2018
At the home of Ginny Moore
24 Terrapin Lane
Mercerville
Please RSVP to ginnycmoore@gmail.com or call 890-1929

In Order to Live — by Yeonmi Park

*In Order to Live* is the true story of Yeonmi Park, who was born in North Korea to parents who were forced to desperate measures to feed their family. When Yeonmi’s father is arrested, imprisoned, and tortured, their family’s world comes crashing down. In order to survive, Yeonmi and her family must escape to China. At this point, Yeonmi weighs a mere 60 pounds and is suffering from a botched appendectomy. She and her family hope to find Yeonmi’s sister who left for China before them.

Book Group usually meets the first Thursday of the month
beginning at 7:30 pm.

For the Christmas Party, it will meet on the second Tuesday.

New members are always welcome.
If interested, please contact Phyllis Church
at 799-0723 or p.church@mindspring.com

Many Thanks to Two Eagle Scouts Whose Projects Have Enhanced
Prince of Peace’s Developing Meditation Garden

George Aymes led in the refurbishing of two well-worn benches (seen above) as well as installing a path and landscaping.

Joe Durie led a group who installed this outdoor meeting/worship area and built the benches and table.
Parish Care Notes

As Advent begins and we prepare for the Christmas Season . . .

During the advent and Christmas seasons, we think of and spend time with our families. Some members of our church family may appreciate a little extra care during this time. If you are able to share a little time, make a call, deliver some holiday cheer, assist a member with some holiday tasks, read a Bible story, or say a prayer with a member of our church family, please let the Parish Care Team know, we can provide details.

Young Adults Away at School
The Advent Calendars to our young adults are in the mail - Many thanks to the families who provided us with addresses.

Care Note Ministry
Care Notes are available in the gathering area. Please take, read, and pass along to another as needed. Many thanks to Ginger Reierson for helping to keep the display organized and current. And to Chris and Barb Wethe for the financial support of this project.

Prayer Squares & Prayer Cards
... are in the breezeway to share with others.

Current Transportation Opportunities
Sunday transportation to and from the Monroe/Clearbrook area to Sunday worship. Many thanks to those who have been providing rides. If you can help with rides, please let us know.

Caroling/Sing-a-lot at Stonebridge
Plan on joining us and Christian Education as we go caroling in the area on Sunday, December 17 following the Sunday service. This will be a special treat for those that we visit. All voices welcome; come spend some time with your church friends and some of our older friends in the community.

Valentine Care Boxes (yes Valentine!)
Our next big project is the annual shipment of Valentine Day Care Packages to our young adults away at school and in the military. Watch for the details in the gathering area in January 2018.

We will need lots of donations — baked goodies, school supplies, snacks, dollars for shipping and current addresses to fill and send our POP care boxes. We are planning on filling around twenty-five boxes this year. (Numbers may change as we gather addresses.)

Please check with us to make sure we have a current year address for shipping. (When all are home for Christmas is a great time to get an address). The deadline for getting addresses to us is January 15, 2018. Packing and shipping will be on February 5, 2018.

Look for the details in the gathering area.

New Opportunities
Soup is a warm, filling meal, feeding both the body and the soul.

We would like to pick one day a month and make soup at the church. We will make two pots and share them with members of our community who would appreciate a warm soup lunch or supper.

We would make the soup and then deliver it that day.

Young and old, those who know how to make soup and those who want to learn are all welcome. We can try different soup recipes throughout the year.

This will be a fun way to spend some time at the church, get to know some of our church family, get some great soup recipes and warm the bodies and souls of many.

If you are interested, please let us know so we can plan some dates to make soup.

Phone Calls
We are looking for some folks who would be willing to make a few phone calls during the year. Just to say Hi and check in with our Church family members.

Share some Care
— Martha Winder
2017 Christmas Poinsettia Order Form

Please complete the information below to order a poinsettia for Prince of Peace’s Christmas Worship Room adornment.

Name________________________________________

I would like to contribute

_____ (#) plants @ $10 each (6”)

_____ (#) plants @ $20 each (8”)

_____ (#) plants @ $40 each (10”)

_____ Given in memory of ________________________________________

_____ Given in honor of ____________________________________________

_____ Given in thanksgiving for ____________________________________

_____ Given to the Glory of God

Orders should be placed by December 17

Please make a check payable to Prince of Peace Lutheran Church.

Plants may be picked up after the Christmas Day Service.
177 Princeton-Hightstown Road
Princeton Junction NJ 08550

Church Office: 609-799-1753
Fax: 609-799-0958
E-Mail: email@popnj.org
Website: popnj.org
Worship: Sunday, 9:30 am

Sunday Schedule
Worship at 9:30 am
Education Hour at 10:45 am

Office Hours
Monday - Thursday 9 am to 2 pm
Friday — 9 am to Noon