



# Pilgrim's Progress





## From the Desk of Pastor Erv

### Greetings, in the Name of the LORD!

Did you ever notice that the Advent season seems to come and go in the blink of an eye? All of a sudden you find yourself at Christmas Services wondering how your time to prepare for Christ so easily slipped through your fingers.

Darn! You had promised yourself that *this* Advent would be different. You wouldn't be caught by surprise, *yet again!* You bought Advent devotions and an Advent wreath kit. You had great intentions to make this Advent season very different from last.

But already you can feel it happening again. The devotions didn't make it past page 2 and the wreath is only half complete.

However, that doesn't have to be the case. You can make the conscious choice—right here, right now—to stop in your busy tracks and embrace the season of Advent; and its purpose.

Advent is a season of preparing.

If you have ever entertained guests, or even made the slightest effort to get ready for any company, you will see how those experiences lend themselves well to your own groundwork this Advent to invite Christ to dwell within your heart—and thus truly be ready for His second coming.

**1. Prepare room at the Inn:** Your heart is where Christ wishes to dwell and Advent is the perfect time to make room in it for His presence. If your heart is filled with un-forgiveness, it

has no room for Christ. Begin Advent by asking your Heavenly Father to reveal to you any un-forgiveness that exists in your heart. Remember that as God has forgiven you, you are also asked to forgive others.

**2. Clean out the cobwebs:** It is important to clean out the vestiges of cobwebs that may still be lurking in the dark corners of your heart. This means that you should make a point of confessing to God or if you prefer, to the pastor those sins that particularly bother you during Advent. The Confession and Absolution is an important part of preparing your heart for Jesus; this is because the pastor acts in the person of Christ in helping you identify the cobwebs that you may not be seeing on your own—typically those ones that have been hanging on for so long they no longer get your attention.

**3. Hang new curtains:** The room of your heart is now ready: un-forgiveness and cobwebs have been cleared out. Now it is time to hang new curtains! Many of us fall into a rut in our daily lives and forget how to live in joy. You are preparing for Christ's indwelling and He abides best in those who have joy in their hearts. So throw out the old curtains of fear and despair and exhaustion and hang new curtains of hope and joy and anticipation.

**4. Get out the fine china and set the table:** Company is on its way! We aren't doubtfully thinking

that *maybe* He's going to drop by and thus making only superficial efforts to get ready. We are certain in our belief of His arrival and every cell in our body joyfully shouts, "He's on His way!" This is the time we get the fine china out of the cupboard—our attitude is one of enthusiastic expectation. Our hearts pound in anticipation of His presence. Our fine china goes so well with our new curtains!

**5. Open the front door:** Whenever we have company in our home, after all the preparation is complete, we open our front door and wait expectantly on our couch. We can see through the glass screen door as our company approaches. It is a time of quiet for us—all the work is finished and we are ready. So, in preparing our hearts for Christ this Advent, the last step after all the prep work is to simply "be." In this state of "be-ing" we don't question how time slipped through our fingers; we don't worry if there was more we should have done. We've been good and faithful servants and are ready for Christ.

May your heart be made ready for Christ and may your Advent season be a blessed one!

In HIS Service

Pastor Erv

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**November Voters Meeting** – The meeting was called to order at 7p.m. and was opened with prayer. The minutes the Financial Secretary's report, and Treasurer's report were accepted as presented. Under Old Business: There will be an organizational meeting for the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the church on Nov. 15<sup>th</sup> at 5 p.m. The new security system has been installed. Elder's Report: Elders for December will be Ryan Morley on Saturdays and Paul Pett on Sundays. The purchase of Children's Advent calendars was approved. Pastor Hutter will be on vacation on the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of November. Gary Leinberger made a beautiful rack to hold the new children's activity bags. 4 names have been submitted to fill the vacancies on the board of Elders. Trustee's Report: There will be no fall cleanup this year. The leaves have already been removed. Board Of Christian Education: The new women's bible study group will begin after the first of the year. A decision will be made as to the day and time. A volunteer is needed to sub as the leader of this group. The Children's Service will be Dec. 18<sup>th</sup> during the regular church service. The Preschool Christmas program will be held on Wed. Dec 21<sup>st</sup> at 6 p.m. The preschool realized a \$718 profit from their fundraiser. Pastor's Report: Pastor reported on Pastoral Acts, Church attendance, Bible Studies, and special services for the month. He also reported that there are four new members. He provided a list of current shut-ins and asked if anyone would be interested in visiting them. Under New Business: Election of officers will be next month. Slate of nominees will be presented two weeks before the next voter's meeting. Gary Leinberger made improvements to the storage system for organizing the altar paraments. The Altar Guild is very grateful. Church decorating will take place on Saturday, November 26<sup>th</sup> at 9 a.m. The Acolytes have new gowns. Thanks go to Dee Mast for alterations. It was suggested that a fund should be started for purchasing new gowns as they become needed. A list of "wants and needs" will be compiled so that people are aware of items either wanted or needed for the church. The meeting was closed with prayer and singing of a hymn led by Pastor Hutter at 7:35 p.m.

#### **PILGRIMS SERVING IN DECEMBER**

Elders:

Sat – Ryan Morley

Sun – Paul Pett

Altar Guild – Dolores Mast

#### **NEWSLETTER DEADLINE IS DECEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup>**

**ALTAR GUILD FOR 2017** – The sign-up sheet for Altar Guild workers for 2017 has been placed on the bulletin board. Please remember to sign up for two months. If you aren't able to do each week of the month, please consider doing part of a month.

**WORSHIP FOLDERS FOR 2017** – The sign-up sheet for 2017 Worship Folders will be on the bulletin board by December 4<sup>th</sup>. This will include "All Worship Folders" and all special bulletins for the holidays. The cost is **\$13.00.** You may put this money in your Designated Gift envelope from your numbered contribution envelopes. Be sure to indicate that this money is for the Worship Folders. Be sure to sign up early to get the dates you wish. Please let the church office know if they are in honor or memory of someone or an occasion.

**ALTAR FLOWERS FOR 2017** – The sign-up sheet for Altar Flowers for 2017 will be on the bulletin board by December 4<sup>th</sup>. The cost of altar flowers is \$20.00 and checks must be made payable to "Country Gardens." **DO NOT** put money for flowers in the collection plate. Payment must be made to the church office. Please contact the church office the week prior to your sign-up date to request your color and to let us know if they are in honor or memory of a special person or occasion.

**HOLIDAY BAKE SALE** – Pilgrim Lutheran Church Women's Guild is sponsoring a Holiday Bake Sale on Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Baked goods can be brought to the Fellowship Hall on Friday, December 9<sup>th</sup> from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Saturday morning from 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. Volunteers will be making phone calls to our members to ask that you contribute to the bake sale and come to shop for all your last minute holiday goodies!

**POINSETTIAS FOR THE ALTAR AREA** We are once again offering you the opportunity to purchase poinsettias for the altar area. The cost is \$9.75. The deadline for ordering is December 8<sup>th</sup>. Please make your check out to Begick Nursery and turn it into the church office.

**ATTENDANCE & CONTRIBUTIONS . . . . .**

| <u>SAT</u> | <u>SUN</u> | <u>H.C.</u> | <u>GEN FUND</u> | <u>IMP FUND</u> | <u>TOTAL</u>    | <u>+ OR -</u> |
|------------|------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 10/29=28   | 10/30=72   | 83          | 3,063.20        | 0.00            | 3,063.20        | + 1051        |
| 11/05=71   | 11/06=48   | 81          | 1,995.77        | 0.00            | 1,995.77        | - 16          |
| 11/12=33   | 11/13=70   |             | 2,668.51        | 10.00           | 2,678.51        | + 666         |
| 11/19=33   | 11/20=66   | 91          | <u>2,424.02</u> | <u>10.00</u>    | <u>2,434.02</u> | <u>+ 422</u>  |
|            |            |             | \$ 10,151.50    | \$ 20.00        | \$10,171.50     | + 2123        |

**Special Gifts** . . . . Adopt-a-Student Fund, \$15.00; Gift from Tai Chi, \$32.00; Thanksgiving, \$30.00; Together in Mission, \$30.00; Thompson Memorial, \$645.00; Office Security Door Fund, \$10.00; Roof Fund, \$300.00; Children’s Advent Calendars, \$60.00

**OUR STEWARDSHIP TO THE LORD AND TO PILGRIM**

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| PILGRIM'S 2016 BUDGET –                           | \$104,638.00 |
| BUDGET THROUGH NOVEMBER 20 <sup>th</sup> -        | \$ 94,577.12 |
| CONTRIBUTIONS THROUGH NOVEMBER 20 <sup>th</sup> - | \$101,041.29 |
| CONTRIBUTIONS OVER BUDGET NEEDS –                 | \$ 6,464.17  |

**DECEMBER VOTERS MEETING/ELECTION** -- A

slate of officers for 2017 has been posted. You may nominate someone for an open position or volunteer yourself. The final vote for officers will be at the December Voters meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup>. Positions available include: Two Elders, One Trustee, and Four to Six Board of Christian Education. We also need volunteers for Counting. If you are interested in any of these positions please contact the church office, 893-7224.

**ADVENT WORSHIP SERVICES** – This year our

congregation will gather for Advent Worship services on Wednesdays in the afternoon at 1:00 p.m. and evenings at 7:00 p.m. The theme for these special worship opportunities this year is: “Savior of the Nations, Come.” Please consider joining us for a time of Scripture and song.

**KEENAGERS CHRISTMAS PARTY** – The

Keenagers of Pilgrim will hold their annual Christmas Party in the Blue Room on Thursday, December 15<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. All retirees of Pilgrim are welcome and invited to attend. Please bring your own table service. Beverage will be provided. Please bring a dish to pass, a \$3.00 gift to exchange, and some Christmas cookies. Make plans to attend and join the fun!

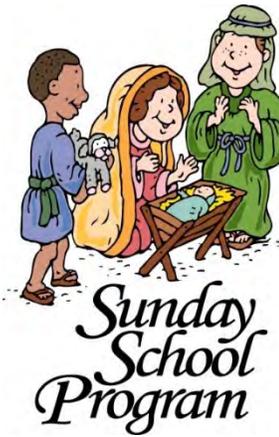
**ADVENT & CHRISTMAS  
WORSHIP SERVICE SCHEDULE**

Nov. 30<sup>th</sup> – Advent Worship, 1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.  
 Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> – Advent Worship, 1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.  
 Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> – Advent Worship, 1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.  
 Dec. 18<sup>th</sup> – Sunday School Christmas Program  
 during the 10:30 a.m. Service  
 Dec. 21<sup>st</sup> -- Advent Worship, 1:00 p.m. ONLY  
 Dec. 21<sup>st</sup> – Pre-School Children’s Christmas  
 Program, 6:00 p.m.  
 Dec. 24<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 7:00  
 p.m. (Holy Communion)  
 Dec. 25<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Day, 10:30 a.m.  
 (Holy Communion)

O Come,  
 Let Us Adore Him!



**PRESCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM** – The preschoolers Christmas program will be at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 21<sup>st</sup> in church. This is a great opportunity to hear and see the Christmas Gospel proclaimed by children. Please consider coming to celebrate Jesus’ birth and to support and encourage our preschoolers!



**The Sunday School Christmas program** planning is in process with the program scheduled to take place on Sunday, December 18, during the 10:30 am service. All children and youth are welcome to come and be part of the Christmas program: **“Wise Men from Afar . . . There’s a New Star in the Sky . . . We Come to Worship Jesus.”** There are group songs, speaking parts, and/or narrative parts, and non-speaking parts . . . which could include someone for Mary, Joseph, Star of the East, Wise Men, and others. Copies of the program are available for all those interested in making a selection to participate. We will incorporate practice as part of Sunday School at 9 AM on Sunday, December 4, 11, and 18.

- Materials have been ordered for the December, January, and February quarter.

**CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES** – Your 2017 contribution envelopes will be put in your church mailboxes by December 11<sup>th</sup>. Be sure to pick yours up and **do not use** until 2017. The ones that do not fit in the mailboxes will be on a table across from the mailboxes.



**THE LUTHERAN WITNESS** belongs in every home - offering pages of doctrinal, inspirational and devotional articles, plus the latest news of the worldwide mission of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Now included in The Lutheran Witness is the Michigan in Touch supplement which is no longer being printed separately. You get all that for the low price of \$11.60 per year. The subscription must be processed through the church office. Anyone interested in receiving a subscription for 2017 must contact the church office by December 8<sup>th</sup>.

**CHRISTMAS CARDS TO SHUT-INS** – The following is a list of our shut-ins who would really enjoy getting a Christmas card and/or visit from fellow members. They are:

- Della Burns, 734 N Pine Street, Sterling House #15, Bay City, MI 48708
- Pat Dammann, 568 N Pine Road #102, Bay City, MI 48708
- Marie Dardas, 601 Nebobish Avenue, Essexville, MI 48732
- Hattie Davis, 1271 Harding Road, Essexville, MI 48732
- Fran DeSanto, Shannon’s House, 4155 S Paul Circle, Bay City, MI 48706
- Sandy Hines, 85 W Hampton Road, Essexville, MI 48732
- Elaine Livingston, 564 W Hampton Road #134, Essexville, MI 48732
- Phyllis Mohr, 4471 Sheffield Place #201, Bay City, MI 48706
- Vera Niemi, 854 N Pine Street, #208, Essexville, MI 48732
- Suzanne Pascuzzi, 707 Burns Street, Essexville, MI 48732
- Sally Pavlik, 854 N Pine St. #255, Essexville, MI 48732
- Mabel Pett, 1211 W Center Road, Essexville, MI 48732
- Loretta Rozewski, 2448 Midland Road #233, Bay City, MI 48706
- Eileen VanTol, 4471 Sheffield Place #116, Bay City, MI 48706



**75<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY UPDATE** - The Anniversary Committee has had its first meeting. They decided to have a year-long celebration, with several special guest preachers, and other events throughout the year. In conjunction with our anniversary year, we will also have a new congregational pictorial directory and a history of our congregation. We are looking for a couple of volunteers to help coordinate the picture taking process. If you would like to help with this, please let Gary Leinberger or Pastor Erv know.

# Around the Circuit

**BOAR'S HEAD FESTIVAL** – Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 808 Weiss, Saginaw, is presenting the 32<sup>nd</sup> annual "Boar's Head Festival" on December 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7:30 p.m. and December 4<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. Please join with the singers, the players, and the musicians to feel the true spirit of Christmas enacted before you. There is no admission charge, but a freewill offering will be taken.

**LIVING NATIVITY** – Immanuel Lutheran Church of Frankentrost, 8220 Holland Road (M-46) in Saginaw, will host their 20<sup>th</sup> annual free "Living Nativity – A Journey to Bethlehem." This will take place on Friday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> from 7 – 9 p.m., Saturday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> from 6 – 8 p.m. and Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup> from 6 – 8 p.m. Experience the sights and sounds of Bethlehem on the blessed night when Jesus Christ was born. The paved sidewalk provides accessibility for all ages and needs. Fellowship and light refreshments will follow in the school. This is a 30-minute outdoor walk, so dress the family for the weather.



Most of us overlook the opportunity to include a Charitable Gift to our favorite ministries as part of our Estate Plans. Eighty percent of adults in Michigan make a contribution/gift to their church or other charities each year. Many of us willingly give a Memorial Gift when a friend or loved one passes away. But how many of us have considered leaving a Planned Gift when we get the best gift, going home to Heaven? When we take the time to plan end of life gifts, we are not only first-hand examples of generosity to our families, we pass along a legacy that allows the ministries we choose to share the life-saving message of the Gospel long after we are gone.

It is estimated that only 8% of people having a Will or Revocable Living Trust include a Charitable Gift as part of their plan. Our default is to just leave everything to our children. We are not opposed to leaving a ministry gift. We just never consider including it in our plan.

Contrary to popular myth, a person can witness their faith and support ministries without forgetting their family. But such giving must be documented while you are able to plan. If your Will or Revocable Living Trust, including a Charitable Gift, is not in place, Michigan Probate law doesn't allow you to make a Charitable Gift from your estate. Making gifts to family and ministry in a planned, intentional way, can lower taxes, bless family members and greatly impact your most cherished causes. You may experience a sense of relief and joy knowing your plan is in place.

Where are you in the process? Do you have your Estate Plan including a Will or Revocable Living Trust in place? Have you included a Planned Gift as part of the Plan? Does your Plan still accomplish the things most important to you? Confirm with the people you designated as Personal Rep, Successor Trustee or Power of Attorney that they are willing to fulfill the needed responsibilities. Do your existing documents communicate your current wishes or have you changed your mind on something?

If you have intended to start the process of writing your Will but life has interrupted your best efforts, contact Michigan Church Extension Fund for assistance getting started. Visiting with you, listening to what is important to you and suggesting ideas to begin the planning process is offered at no cost or obligation to members of the Michigan District. You can have a tremendous impact on your family, your community and the world. Get started now!



Bill Burmeister  
Church Extension Fund – Michigan District  
800-242-3944 ♦ [bill.burmeister@mi-cef.org](mailto:bill.burmeister@mi-cef.org)



# Pilgrim Lutheran Church



# December

| Sun   | Mon  | Tue       | Wed   | Thu   | Fri       | Sat   |
|---|--|-----------|---|---|-----------|---|
|   |  |           |   | 1   | 2         | 3<br>7-Holy Communion                       |
| <b>4</b> Advent 2<br>9- Bible Class<br>Sunday School<br>10 <sup>30</sup> - Holy Communion<br>11 <sup>30</sup> - Confirmation                      | <b>5</b>   | <b>6</b>  | <b>7</b><br>1-Advent Service<br>6:30 - Choir<br>7-Advent Service  | <b>8</b>                                    | <b>9</b>  | <b>10</b><br>9-Noon- Bake Sale<br>7-Worship |
| <b>11</b> Advent 3<br>9- Bible Class<br>Sunday School<br>10 <sup>30</sup> - Worship<br>11 <sup>30</sup> - Confirmation<br>6 <sup>30</sup> -Elders | <b>12</b><br>6 <sup>30</sup> -Trustees<br>7- Voter's | <b>13</b> | <b>14</b><br>1-Advent Service<br>Prayer Network,<br>e-mail or call in<br>6:30 Choir<br>7-Advent Service | <b>15</b><br>10 - Pineview<br>11- Keenagers | <b>16</b> | <b>17</b><br>7-Holy Communion               |
| <b>18</b> Advent 4<br>9- Bible Class<br>Sunday School<br>10 <sup>30</sup> - Holy Communion<br>11 <sup>30</sup> - Confirmation                     | <b>19</b><br>10 <sup>30</sup> - Chapel at<br>VLHS    | <b>20</b> | <b>21</b><br>1-Advent Service<br>Preschool Christmas<br>Program, 6:00 pm                                | <b>22</b>                                   | <b>23</b> | <b>24</b> Christmas Eve<br>7-Holy Communion |
| FOOD PANTRY WEEK  |  |           |   |   |           |   |
| <b>25</b> Christmas Day<br>10 <sup>30</sup> - Christmas Holy<br>Communion   | <b>26</b><br>CHURCH<br>OFFICE<br>CLOSED              | <b>27</b> | <b>28</b>   | <b>29</b>                                   | <b>30</b> | <b>31</b><br>7-Holy Communion               |



# December 2016

| Sun  | Mon  | Tue                         | Wed                            | Thu   | Fri   | Sat   |
|--|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|---|---|---|
|  |  |                             |                                | <b>1</b><br>Christian Hutter  | <b>2</b><br>Kyli Braeutigam<br><br>Ryan Morley                                    | <b>3</b><br>Walt Dominowski<br>Avery Johnson<br>Trace Johnson<br>Caiden Ramirez |
| <b>4</b>   | <b>5</b><br>Myra LaPoutre                      | <b>6</b><br>Tom Dillard     | <b>7</b><br>Harper Gibbs       | <b>8</b>  | <b>9</b><br>James Sloan   | <b>10</b><br>Crue Cornejo<br><br>Verna Rosenberg                                |
| <b>11</b><br>Katie Mielens<br><br>Marlene<br>VanOoteghem | <b>12</b><br>Jason Dardas<br><br>Shannon Grigg | <b>13</b>                   | <b>14</b><br><br>Canton Wagner | <b>15</b><br>Earl Evans<br>Kathryn Hafford<br>Joni Klepser<br>Tyler Schroeder | <b>16</b><br>Emily Benchley<br>Jean Mossner<br>Suzanne Pascuzzi<br>Vicki Thompson | <b>17</b><br>Alyse Hages  |
| <b>18</b>  | <b>19</b>                                      | <b>20</b><br>Matt Dardas Sr | <b>21</b>                      | <b>22</b><br>Dorothy Bunnell  | <b>23</b>   | <b>24</b>   |
| <b>25</b>  | <b>26</b><br>Noah Bursick                      | <b>27</b>                   | <b>28</b><br>Amanda Lyons      | <b>29</b>   | <b>30</b>   | <b>31</b>   |