



Stromsburg Cov News

A Publication of Stromsburg Covenant Church, Stromsburg, NE

Volume 3, Issue 11

December 2021

Christmas Journeys

Ever since we've had Ellie in our lives, traveling has been a very real part of the Christmas season, usually with some interesting sidelights to the adventure.

In 2006, when Ellie was just a few months old, we hosted a Christmas Day lunch at our Iowa church, then drove seven hours to my brother's home in Illinois. We recall stopping at a gas station 90 minutes into our trip, the only place open with food available, and the man with a ferocious cold making our burgers and complaining how horribly he felt. And, yes, we ate the food and drove on, arriving late for dinner, praying we wouldn't get sick from our earlier meal.

In 2007, we had to pick up our niece Cherish at the airport 2 days before Christmas, a two-hour drive from Mason City, IA to Minneapolis, MN in the ice and sleet. Mary's parents watched Ellie, we managed to slip and slide to MN, but couldn't drive home because of the weather; the next day on Interstate-35, it was like a car graveyard on the sides of the roads, so we felt fortunate to have made it both ways safely.

In 2009, it was my brother and sister-in-law that had the treacherous weather, getting home at midnight after driving from Chicago to Paxton, IL for our church's Christmas Eve worship service. The next few years, after our Christmas Eve services, we would drive to Texas to see Mary's family the following week, and, inevitably, the trips down involved some weather-related form of pestilence; we had tornado conditions in Memphis, TN one year, rain pretty much every drive somewhere in Missouri or Arkansas, and once we were doing the post-Christmas Eve drive from Ohio (2015-2017), there were slippery trips to Elizabethtown, KY and Nashville and Jackson, TN where we'd stop at some late hour.

Our one respite from driving on Christmas was during a four-month stay in Texas, right before we

were called to Nebraska at the end of 2018. Last year, after Christmas Eve service, we headed towards McPherson, KS...or was it Salina? All I know was that we opened Christmas stockings in a hotel room and headed to Jacksonville, TX to be there for a late dinner. We're glad that we'll be here for Christmas Day, as we're not driving south until after our worship service on the 26th.

If we look at the narrative of the story of the beginnings of Jesus – the story of the Christ child is about journeys. First, there's a journey taken by a pregnant teenage mom named Mary who's looking for clarity and a way to wrap her head around a virgin birth, of which she is the chosen one to be used by the Lord. And she finds solace and encouragement through a relative named Elizabeth, who's having a child in her old age and whose son will eventually prepare the way for this coming Messiah.

Then there's a journey by a bride and a groom-to-be to a place where a census will be taken. And in Bethlehem, all heaven breaks loose as the son of God comes wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger (Luke 2 tells us). Shepherds proclaim his praises in one juncture and magi come later on and give him honor and gifts. Angels sing from heaven, and two elderly, faithful people foretell of the greatness of this child and of the suffering that his mother will endure later on.

That's part of the story of the third journey – in my Bible it's called "The Escape to Egypt" – and it involves an evil king, disobedience by wise men, and death to boys under the age of two. The earthly father in this story from Matthew 2, Joseph, is told in a dream, "Get up, take the child and his mother



Continued on Page 2

Strengthen Faith, Cultivate Community, Care for Neighbors



Glory to God
in the highest,
and on earth peace,
good will toward men.

Luke 2:14, KJV

Christmas Journeys...(continued)

and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.”

One prophet foretold about Jesus coming out of Egypt, another told of weeping in Ramah for the dead children taken by Herod’s vindictive search, and then another prophet hints about where the savior will ultimately be from – Nazareth. That’s journey number four, God telling Joseph to take the family to Nazareth to live after Herod died, as Jesus can live a relatively anonymous life in a small town in the district of Galilee.

Which part of the Advent story journey is most poignant to you this season?

As we venture into December, there are a number of options for you to consider the story. Among them are: (1) a 3 p.m. Christmas program being done at Salem Lutheran involving children from our Kingdom Kids ministry with two other churches; (2) our 9:30 a.m. Breakfast and Carols time on December 19th in our Fellowship Hall; (3) our Blue Christmas worship service at 7 p.m. Tuesday, December 21; (4) our 10:30 p.m. Christmas Eve candlelight service; and (5) our regularly-scheduled 10:30 a.m. worship services on December 5, 12, 19, and 26 that will touch upon Advent themes. Please join us.

IN CHRIST,

Pastor Craig



December Dates to Remember



Wednesdays, Dec 1 & 8—Kingdom Kids at Salem Lutheran—5:30—7:00 pm—includes Christmas Program rehearsals.

December 5, 2021—“Stocking Around the Christmas Tree” - Elevate Youth Christmas Party for grades 7—12. 6:00 pm.



Sunday, December 12, 2021

12:00—Christian Formation Team Meeting

3:00 pm—**“Journey to Bethlehem” Children’s Christmas Program** at Salem Lutheran Church.

6:00 pm—Lead Team Meeting

Wednesday, December 15, 2021—Kingdom Kids Christmas Party—5:30 pm. (dinner included)
At Stromsburg Covenant Church. *(last Kingdom Kids for the year)*



Thursday, December 16, 2021—Rescue Mission Meal—5:30 pm

Sunday, December 19, 2021

9:00—**Breakfast and Carols** *(no Sunday School)*

12:00—Outreach Team Meeting



Tuesday, December 21, 2021—Blue Christmas Service—7 pm

Friday, December 24, 2021—Christmas Eve Candlelight Service—10:30 pm



Christmas Day—Community Christmas Dinner—12:00 noon

At St. Paul Lutheran Church in Osceola.



Financial Update:

2021 Budget Summary (1/1/21 through 10/31/21)

Needed Income: \$ 119,981.66

Actual Income: \$ 103,977.37

Difference: **(\$ 16,004.29)**

Budgeted Exp: \$ 119,981.66

Actual Exp: \$ 113,160.85

Under Budget: \$ 6,820.81

ONLINE GIVING: To make a one-time or scheduled reoccurring gift to our church, please visit: www.stromsburgcov.org and click on ONLINE GIVING.



Landon Everingham	12/01
Lori Rystrom	12/01
Ryan Cooper	12/02
Braiden Lovgren	12/03
Jacob Nielsen	12/03
Josi Noble	12/03
Sunni Cooper	12/07
Emily Noyd	12/24
Zane Bowerman	12/29
Nikki Patrick	12/30

Ministry Team Leaders:

Lead Team:

Dennis Nuttelman
402-366-9803

Christian Formation:

Judy Hanson
402-764-6681

Worship Ministry Team:

Neeli Noyd
402-363-3082

Outreach:

Julia Schram—402-710-9561
Shayla Hier—402-764-0261

Fellowship & Hospitality:

Pat Everingham
402-764-0345

Properties:

Kent Erickson
402-765-6721

Prayer Concerns? Please contact Connie Nuttelman to have a request go out on the prayer chain or to be included in the bulletin. Connie's number is 402-366-9045 or you can send an email to prayerchain@stromsburgcov.org.



Ministry Partners:

Sunday, Dec 5—2nd Sunday of Advent

Greeters: Mark & Judy Hanson

Scripture: Pat Everingham

Advent Readings: Sara Noble, Eleanor Greenwall

Pianist/Worship Leader: Ryan Cooper

Worship Team: Craig & Mary Pinley, Sue Rosenbaum

Audio/Visual: Ellie Pinley, Jodi Johnson

Sunday, Dec 12—3rd Sunday of Advent

Greeters: Bob & Jodi Johnson

Scripture: Dianne Nielsen

Advent Readings: Ryan & Sunni Cooper

Pianist: Sue Rosenbaum

Worship Team: Craig Pinley, Dennis & Connie Nuttelman

Audio/Visual: Mary Pinley

Thursday, Dec 16

Rescue Mission Meal: Shayla Hier (youth), Judy Hanson, Cheryl Erickson

Sunday, Dec 19—4th Sunday of Advent

Greeters: Doug & Linda Johnson

Scripture: Neeli Noyd

Advent Readings: TBD

Pianist/Worship Leader: Ryan Cooper

Worship Team: Craig & Mary Pinley, Sue Rosenbaum, Dianne Nielsen, Neeli Noyd

Audio/Visual: Ellie Pinley, Jodi Johnson

Sunday, Dec 26

Greeters: Mark & Judy Hanson

Scripture: Craig Pinley

Pianist: Sue Rosenbaum

Worship Team: Craig Pinley, Neeli Noyd

Audio/Visual: Mary Pinley









For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given...
and his name shall be called

Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God,
Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6

December 2021



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Sundays: 8:30 worship team 9:30 youth & adult SS 10:30 Worship (children's church) 11:45 Fellowship			1 9:00 am Moms in Prayer 5:30 pm Kingdom Kids (Salem Luth)	2 	3 	4
5 6:00 "Stocking Around the Christmas Tree"— Youth Christmas Party	6 	7 	8 9:00 am Moms in Prayer 5:30 pm Kingdom Kids (Salem Luth)	9 	10 	11
12 12:00 Christian Form. 3:00 Children's Christmas Program (Salem) 6:00 Lead Team	13 	14 	15 9:00 am Moms in Prayer 5:30 pm Kingdom Kids Christmas Party (Covenant)	16 5:30 pm Rescue Mission Meal 	17 	18 
19 9:00 Breakfast & Carols 12:00 Outreach Team	20 	21 7:00 Blue Christmas Svc 	22 No Kingdom Kids	23 	24 10:30 pm 	25 Merry Christmas! 12 noon: Christmas Dinner at St. Paul Lutheran, Osceola 
26 No Sunday School	27 	28 	29 No Kingdom Kids	30 	31 