The Brooke ~ December ~ 2019

Advent is a season of *active waiting*. That might sound contradictory, especially if we're used to thinking of waiting as a time where we sit still and don't do anything. God's version of waiting, like God's version of everything, is different than the one we're used to and calls us to look at things differently. You might be more familiar with this kind of active waiting than you realize – just think about making a meal for company. After you've put the dish in the oven to cook, there's a lot that goes on while you're waiting for it to be done, right? Maybe you set the table or do the dishes or finish straightening up the living room. Advent is like that too. It's the season where we prepare our hearts for Jesus to show up in a new way, and there's a lot we can do as we wait.

Our denomination is going through a period of active waiting too. On November 16th, the Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church held a special session to consider how we will respond to the 2019 General Conference passage of The Traditional Plan. A team of leaders from our conference have drafted a covenant statement that you can read in its entirety at the link here (or ask the office to print you out a copy), that reads in part:

Following the witness of Jesus, we, the Northern Illinois Conference, are committed to becoming entirely inclusive and welcoming. We foster and celebrate the dignity and sacred worth of all of God's creation. By the power of the Holy Spirit and Christ's love, we commit ourselves to grow in love and understanding for one another, and commit to breaking down the walls that divide us. We hold the fullness of Wesleyan theology as a cornerstone of our faith, including the receiving and testing of Holy Scriptures through the lens of reason, tradition, and experience. We seek to do no harm, to do good, and to stay in love with God.

Therefore, we covenant to the following:

- ❖ To live into our baptismal vows to resist evil and injustice and oppression in all forms, including racism, sexism, and every abuse of power and privilege.
- ❖ To affirm the full participation of all ages, nations, races, classes, cultures, gender identities, sexual orientations, and abilities.
- ❖ To affirm the sacred worth of LGBTQIA+ persons, and commit to being in ministry together.
- ❖ To eliminate discriminatory language and the restrictions and penalties of marriage and ordination in the Book of Discipline regarding LGBTQIA+ persons, and stand united in resisting trials and punishments.
- ❖ To affirm the right and responsibility of clergy to discern, counsel, and officiate for marriages.
- ❖ To engage in acts of justice, grace, mercy, kindness, compassion, and reconciliation.
- ❖ To affirm that God works in and through community and acknowledge that Jesus welcomes all people as beloved children of God.
- ❖ To embody and exemplify the best practices of our historic Methodist faith, including John Wesley's emphasis on grace, and to continue the practice of an open table.

Bishop Sally Dyck also shared her reflection on the future of the church, which you can read here.

As your pastor, I fully affirm both the Bishop's statement and the Exploration Team's covenant and will do all in my power to celebrate God's already inclusive love here at The Brooke. If you have any questions about these documents, feel free to contact me. There will also be a series of listening sessions in February facilitated by conference staff, and we'll keep you posted on when those take place.

Pastor's article continues below.

Also at the conference special session, a new budget was approved. After a presentation from the Conference Council on Finance and Administration (CCFA) and Q&A, the Annual Conference passed a \$4,574,255 budget for 2020, down 5% from 2019. Like most local churches, the NIC has seen a decrease in giving over the past few years. The reduced budget means there will be consolidation of staff, and there is currently discussion about reducing the number of district superintendents in our conference.

In all of these matters, we are waiting to see what the future holds, but we are not waiting passively. We are waiting actively, taking steps to ensure that the doors of United Methodist Churches are open to all people and that the good news of the love of God is shared with all people. We are waiting actively, studying scripture and seeking to discern God's will for us. Like John the Baptist, Mary, and Joseph and all those awaiting the coming of Jesus, we are called to make preparations for the new work God is doing.

On December 1st as we celebrate communion and welcome new members, we'll reflect on Matthew 3:1-12 and John the Baptist's announcement of the coming of Jesus. December 8th we'll read Luke 1:47-55 and contemplate what it might have been like for Mary to actively wait for her baby and envision his future ministry. On December 15th we'll welcome the gift of our Christmas Cantata, a very special Sunday not to be missed! Then on December 22nd we'll study Matthew 1:18-25 and look at the season of Advent from Joseph's perspective. Christmas Eve we'll gather together and hear the traditional story from Luke 2:1-10 of the night Jesus was born and the world was changed forever. And after Christmas we'll go to Matthew 2:13-23 and read about the Wise Men and all those who are still actively waiting to learn about God's son.

My prayer for you during this Advent season and this time of active waiting for clarity about our denomination is that we would continually go to God together, bringing all of our questions and our hopes, our worries and our joys in prayer. Even though things aren't the way we want yet, God is not finished with us. May this be a blessed season of hope for all of us, and for the church.

-Pastor Violet

Benefit for Asylum Seekers at the Border

Friday ~ December 6, 2019 ~ 6:00pm Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd 1829 N. Rockton Avenue ~ Rockford

Speakers

Linda Zuba, attorney

has been to the southern border five times to help asylum seekers

Paul Klazura, M.D.

has provided medical assistance at the border, volunteering with Refugee Health Alliance

This benefit is to inform and to raise money to help Linda and organizations at the border that are helping adults and children in the asylum process. Free will offering will be taken. Checks should be payable to Linda Zuba Asylum Seekers.

Program is sponsored by League of Women Voters of Greater Rockford and AAUW.

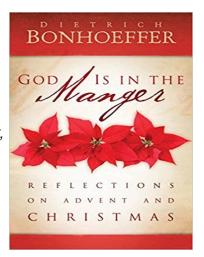
Advent Study Group

Mondays ~ December 2, 9, 16, 23 ~ 5:30pm At the parsonage ~ 4949 Radnor Drive ~ Rockford, IL

Join Pastor Violet for a weekly study on Dietrich Bonhoeffer's book of Advent reflections, *God Is In the Manger.*

"As long as there are people, Christ will walk the earth as your neighbor, as the one through whom God calls you, speaks to you, makes demands on you. That is the great seriousness and great blessedness of the Advent message. Christ is standing at the door; he lives in the form of a human being among us."

— Dietrich Bonhoeffer, God Is In the Manger



Thank you, thank you, thank you!

To all of you who have prayed for my daughter Diane and all of our family thank you for all your love, care, and prayers. She had a bad set back last week and thanks to a brilliant oncologist, a wonderful nursing staff who gave her outstanding care, and especially all the prayers from all of you she is slowly getting better. Your prayers are an almost tangible thing. We all feel it and it gives us comfort and strength. And a special thanks to Linda Johnson who made her a prayer shawl in her favorite colors & prayed for her every time she worked on it. And to Violet who blessed it & prays for her daily. I gave it to Diane the week before she got so sick and she LOVES it and was deeply touched. So all this week when she was so very ill she was wrapped in the warmth of that beautiful prayer shawl and the prayers of all of you enclosing her. Thank you is such an inadequate word for all the courage, strength, and comfort your prayers provided. She is slowly improving & we continue to ask God for His mercy and strength to face whatever we must face in the future. May God Bless each and every one of you in this season of Thanksgiving.

In Humble Gratitude, Ann Phillips

Directory Update

Jackie Parod 525 S. Anaheim Hills Road Apt. C 202 Anaheim, CA 92807 815-262-0177 jlparod@gmail.com John Houghtaling 1805 Cottage Grove Apt. 328 Urbana, IL 61801



Beginning December 2nd, a local Zumba instructor will be holding classes in Wesley Hall here at Brooke Road. If you are interested in participating, church office can connect you with the instructor.



Mitten and Hat Tree

Mittens and hats collected will be donated to two local elementary schools: Nashold Elementary Riverdahl Elementary Outreach will be collecting food for Christmas baskets to be donated to Children's Home and Aid Society. Sign-up sheet will be in narthex through December 15th.



Rockford Urban Ministries

Rockford Urban Ministries presents:

What Happened to Kurdistan?

Speaker: Julie Brown - Christian Peacemaker Team peace activist Thursday ~ December 12, 2019 ~ 6pm 201Seventh Street ~ Rockford (the former JustGoods store)

Parsonage Refrigerator

The Trustees are looking into updating the refrigerator at the parsonage. Does anyone have leads on a good used one? If so, please contact church at 815-398-8914.



Nine brave women attended the UMW meeting on November 12. Lyla Flynn presented the program highlighting the UMW's focus for these four years:

- Climate Justice: Just Energy for All
- Criminalization of Communities of Color and Mass Incarceration: Interrupt the School-to-Prison Pipeline
- Economic Inequality: A Living Wage for All
- Maternal and Child Health: End Maternal Mortality

Our Thank Offering goes to support education and work to alleviate these problems.

Our unit chose four local agencies in addition to Heifer International to each receive a \$100 donation to support their work.

The agencies chosen were:

- Rockford Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation (RAASE)
- Justice for Our Neighbors (NIJFON)
- Rock House Kids
- Gigi's Playhouse.

Our December meeting will be going out to lunch at Hoffman House on December 10th. Call Lyla Flynn to reserve a seat.

Thank you to all the ladies who agreed to make treats for the last quarter of the year. With two farewells, we thank Jacki Shaver for the beautiful and tasty cakes.

Long ago, a Baby was born in Bethlehem that would change the world. He came as our Messiah, to redeem and deliver us. This cantata celebrates the coming Messiah with a worshipful retelling of the Christmas story. Come along as we worship the newborn King, born to save us all!

Join us **Sunday, December 15th during 10:00am Worship** to hear this year's Christmas Cantata, "**Messiah ~ Heaven's Glory**" directed by Vicki Jacobson.



2020 Wall Calendars

These beautiful, inspiring calendars, at \$10 each, make nice gifts! Please see purchase list in narthex or contact church office (815-398-8914). Proceeds will go to church's Current Fund.

Monthly Finance Update

The Finance Committee has provided the following Current Fund information:

October income: \$8,083.60 October disbursements: \$17,406.52

This information is always available by contacting Sandy McCallum (Treasurer).

Gift Wrapping Fundraiser

All hands on deck! We still need <u>LOTS</u> of help with this project. On the following days we will be wrapping gifts at CherryVale Mall's Gift-Wrapping Center:

November 29, 30 and December 1, 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23 and 24

Here's where the "fundraiser" part comes in: we are able to accept any money shoppers donate for the convenience of having their gifts wrapped. Can't get much easier than that for a fundraiser! It does take a lot of time and wrappers, but we have loads of fun in the process.

We will also be wrapping gifts at **Barnes and Noble** on the following dates: **December 21, 22, 23, 24** If you can donate time on any of the dates listed above, please check sign-up sheets in narthex (available beginning November 4) or contact church office (815-398-8914). Happy wrapping!





December Birthdays

2nd Leslie Stanford
8th Jefferey D'Angelo
9th Richard Albee
15th Lori Vowles
19th Bob McKinney

21st Ken Dodge
22nd Linda Johnson Bonnie O'Hara
28th Linda Schelin
30th Tyler Dobbs

December Anniversaries

15th Ray & Carol Scribner
17th Jim & Georgia Joiner
22nd Steve & Jeralynn Cox
23rd Dale & Leslie Stanford
26th John & Hazel Dyke



Our Military

Matt Cowan, Matt Crabtree, Scott Dickson, Thomas Helser, Will Hoyum, Ian Long, Joshua Mattson, Jonathan Modler, Jerry Nettles, Stacy Huser, Christine Tornow, Tommy Turnure, Ryan & Kate (Vowles) Levack

Family and Friends

Erma Albee
Boots Baxter
Chris Beebe
Betty Bennett
Rick Bried
Dorothy Carpenter
Shelby Coleman & Cheryl May

John & Hazel Dyke Ardene Friest Roberta Gambrel Joanne Hughes Jackie Parod John Pippel Vicky Quist

John Sauer
Charlene Taylor
Phil & Vivian Schwab
Maxine Zolk
Tom & Cynthia Zolk
Diane Zwirblis
Pastor Violet, Kyle & Lincoln

December 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u> 7</u>
10:00am Worship	9:15am Zumba	9:00am TOPS	9:15am Zumba	9:15am Zumba	9:00am - 8:00pm Wrap at CV Mall	9:30am SPRC
11:30am Worship Committee Noon - 5:00pm Wrap at CV Mall	5:30pm Advent Study at parsonage	9:15am Zumba	10:00am Budget Meeting 6:00pm Celebration Choir	10:00am Bible Study at Doughboy Donuts		10:00am Church Conference 10:00am - 8:00pm Wrap at CV Mall
5:00pm Girl Scouts	6:30am Zumba	6:30am Zumba	6:30am Zumba			
			7:00pm Sanctuary Choir	6:30am Zumba		
<u>8</u>	9	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u>
10:00am Worship	9:15am Zumba	9:00am TOPS	9:15am Zumba	9:15am Zumba	10:00am - 9:00pm Wrap at CV Mall	9:00am Cantata practice
Noon - 5:00pm Wrap at CV Mall		9:15am Zumba 12:30pm UMW lunch at		10:00am Bible Study at Doughboy Donuts		10:00am - 9:00pm Wrap at CV Mall
	5:30pm Advent Study at parsonage	Hoffman House 5:30pm	6:00pm Celebration Choir			
5:00pm Girl Scouts	6:30am Zumba	Finance 6:30pm Trustees	6:30am Zumba			
	7:00pm Girl Scout Comm.	6:30am Zumba	7:00pm Sanctuary Choir	6:30am Zumba		
<u>15</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>21</u>
10:00am Worship (Cantata)	9:15am Zumba	9:15am TOPS	9:15am Zumba	9:15am Zumba	9:00am - 9:00pm Wrap at CV Mall	9:00am - 9:00pm Wrap at CV Mall
	10:00am - 9:00pm Wrap at CV Mall	9:30am Zumba	10:00am - 9:00pm Wrap at CV Mall	10:00am Bible Study at		1:00pm - 9:00pm Wrap at BN
Noon - 6:00pm Wrap at CV Mall		10:00am - 9:00pm Wrap at CV Mall		Doughboy Donuts 10:00am - 9:00pm		wrap at BN
5:00pm Girl Scouts		Noon Mona's Paper		Wrap at CV Mall		
	5:30pm	Angel Closet 5:00pm	6:00pm Celebration Choir			
	Advent Study at parsonage	Outreach 6:00pm	6:30am Zumba	6:200		
	6:30am	Council 6:30am	7:00pm	6:30am Zumba		
	Zumba	Zumba	Sanctuary Choir			
<u>22</u> 10:00am	23 8:00am - 9:00pm	<u>24</u> 9:00am - 1:00pm	<u>25</u>	<u>26</u> 9:15am	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u>
Worship 10:00am - 7:00pm	Wrap at CV Mall 9:00am - 9:00pm	Wrap at BN 8:00am - 2:00pm		Zumba		
Wrap at CV Mall 1:00pm - 9:00pm	Wrap at BN 9:15am	Wrap at CV Mall	Office Closed	6:30am Zumba		
Wrap at BN 5:00pm Girl Scouts	Zumba 5:30pm Advent Study					
	at parsonage 6:30am	10:30pm Christmas Eve				
	Zumba	Service				
<u>29</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>31</u>				
10:00am Worship	9:30am Zumba					
5:00pm Girl Scouts	6:30am Zumba					

Mission Statement

to transform lives through faith, love, and service

Vision Statement

to be a transforming congregation of believers to serve the community, renew lives, and build faith

BROOKE ROAD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

1404 BROOKE ROAD ROCKFORD, IL 61109

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Church Office Hours

Monday 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM CLOSED

Phone: 815-398-8914 www.the-brooke.org



Candlelight Service Monday December 24 ~ 10:30pm

Sunday Morning Schedule

Worship ~ 10:00am (Nursery available for NB - 4 years)

Children's Sunday School during worship

Fellowship ~ Following Worship