

2011 December Pastor's Perspective

December brings the **Advent Adventure** that leads us to Christmas, the recalling of the birth of a Savior, and a new year. And so we gather to celebrate – the life that calls us to live a new life year in and year out.

The Advent Adventure calls us to PREPARE – to prepare our hearts and lives to “make room” in the inn of our heart and life –

to prepare to “make room” not only for presents for our family and those who are like us – but also to “make room” for the alien and the stranger, because our Savior became an alien almost immediately after his birth in the flight to Egypt in order to avoid the persecution carried out by Herod

- to prepare to “make room” to receive what our Savior offers in and through the gifts he bestows of forgiveness and peace – but also to prepare to “make room” to follow this Savior, not just into exile in Egypt, but in sharing what we have first received with all those in need.

So we **prepare**:

We prepare our hearts and minds with the Advent Devotional Booklet written by Henri Nouwen –

We prepare the sanctuary with the Advent color of BLUE –

We prepare the sanctuary and fellowship area with decorations and wreaths and trees and lights. You are invited to help us do that on **Friday, December 9th**, beginning with **Pizza at 5:30 pm** (freewill offering accepted to cover the cost) and then setting to work around the whole area.

We will prepare for the **Children's Christmas "Pageant"** at the beginning of Worship on Sunday, **December 18th**. And of course, we will prepare for **Christmas Eve Worship at 7:00 pm** on Saturday the 24th. Now – about Sunday morning, December 25th and Sunday January 1st, I am wondering how many will prepare along with me? I guess we'll see!

Other preparations are also in process! We are preparing our new part-time secretary, **Debbie Mikulak** to work with us! We are preparing our **2012 budget** for the **Annual Meeting to be held January 22nd**. It would be helpful for each of us to consider and re-consider what we will choose to give to this ministry in response to what God has first given us. To that end, some have found it helpful (to them and to Water of Life) to use the **Simply Giving** process, which means that their donation to the church is “automatically” and “electronically” sent to the church bank account directly from their savings or checking account at whatever time they choose: that could be weekly,

bi-weekly or monthly. It is convenient and safe and something the church can be assured of, no matter whether the weather is good or bad, whether you are present or absent. And you can change or cancel this form of payment easily and at any time.

Another option is to give or **donate stock or securities** to the church. We have opened a stock account and can receive your gift in that way. Some have chosen to give their annual amount at one time during the year in this way. For more information on either of these options, talk to Pastor Holm.

And as we plan for 2012 **we prepare to elect a new Bishop for the New England Synod**. I know that some of you are not too concerned about the Synod or are even opposed to information about or our connection the New England Synod, but I must say that I have never seen in my almost 40 years of ministry a Synod that is attempting to involve in such a significant way all members of all congregations in discerning the gifts needed in a bishop for the future of the Lutheran Church in their geographical area.

The Synod Council Leaders have come up with a plan that hopes to involve (along with the Holy Spirit) as many members of the Synod as possible as we prepare to elect a new bishop. Each congregation is encouraged to pray for our Synod, our congregations and rostered leaders as we engage in this process.

On **Saturday February 18th**, **we** – Water of Life Lutheran, have been asked to **host one of the preparatory meetings** for our Conference from 9:30 am to noon. Each congregation is asked to select members who will be the **Voting Members at the Synod Assembly in June to come to this meeting** (along with any and all other interested members) **to do Bible Study around the Purpose of this Synod** as a preparation **to begin to list the Gifts needed by a Bishop who would lead this Synod**.

Our list will be combined with those of other Conferences and presented at another Conference meeting in April where participants will design and refine questions which will be asked of the 7 candidates who have been determined after an “Ecclesiastical Balloting process” at the New England Synod Assembly in June of 2012 that will further help the Voting Members with the assistance of the Holy Spirit to select a Bishop. Interested? Talk to Pastor Holm.

Well, there is a lot of **preparing** to do and it does indeed look like an **Adventure!** To Welcome a Savior and to work at incorporating all this into not only our own lives, but also the life of **Water of Life Lutheran Church**, and our Synod as well.

Peace and Courage,

Pastor Hugh

PASTORAL NEEDS AND SERVICES

Pastor Hugh Holm

Church Phone: 563-1142

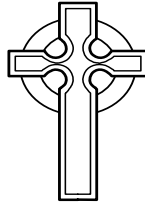
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Office Hours: Saturday – Monday 9 am - 5 pm



Please keep these people in your hearts and prayers: The Newell Family, Mike Murphy, Ruth Jones, The Peterson Family, Dean Ness, Gwen Swank and The O'Dell Family. Your continued prayers are asked for Water of Life: the Church Council; for Susan and Hugh Holm; and for the community of faith that makes up Water of Life Lutheran Church.

Watered by God's Word

We are Growing in God's Love through faith in Christ

Our thirst for a faith Community is Quenched

We are refreshed by the Holy Spirit to Serve

IN OUR PRAYERS...

WATER OF LIFE MISSION STATEMENT

Since we are the body of Christ and Jesus is the Head of the Church, we seek the mind of Christ in unity and act upon His leading. Our mission is to make disciples of all people by proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This evangelism is a personal commitment and an intentional ministry of the congregation continually discovering our personal talents by means of prayer, praise and fellowship.

These we share in service to the congregation, the community, and the world.

Water of Life Lutheran Church 2011 Church Council Make Note of Our New Slate Of Officers!

President	Larry Omland	882-6280(H)/449-9240(C)	lgomland@gmail.com
VP/Long Range Planning	Ragnhild Baade	882-7794	None
Secretary	Nancy Parker	563-8455	parker@tidewater.net
Treasurer	Giselle White	623-8411 ext. 5696(W)	Giselle.white@va.gov
Parish Life	VACANT		
Music and Worship	Trish Higgins	582-7211	tandj776@msn.com
Mission and Outreach	Joan Owen	563-2515	djowen@roadrunner.com
Christian Education	Dawn Gildersleeve	677-2382(H)/380-5634(C)	nyamom@hotmail.com
Property	William Leinonen	832-6619	musti@midcoast.com

To submit newsletter information contact Sally Farrell at 563-5378 or swp@woodenbobbins.com

Music and Worship Note

Advent is here! We lit the first candle yesterday at service. We look forward to our Lord's birth! We have Advent devotional booklets available for pick-up on the table in the Fellowship room. Anybody out there who likes to bake and can help make Communion bread? It is an easy recipe.

We look forward to seeing you at our Christmas services. There will be a service on Sunday, Dec. 25th, Christmas Day as well as Christmas Eve. (No Sunday School)

Thank you to one and all who help make our services meaningful and worshipful. There are many jobs and your commitment is appreciated. God is Good!

Trish and Committee

Decorating Time

The season is upon us. We shall gather to adorn our church for Christmas. It was so beautiful last year, I can't imagine we'll be able to top it. But let's try!! Friday evening, December 9th, at 5:30, we will gather to decorate the Christmas Tree in the sanctuary, hang wreathes, and share a little pizza. Please bring some kind of sweet to share if you are able and enjoy the fellowship of the season. The kids will be presenting a short puppet show and we will sing Christmas Carols.

Christmas Pageant

The Sunday School Children will present their traditional Christmas Pageant this year during the service, Sunday, December 18th. They always seem to express the "reason for the season." So try not to miss it!

Wreath Making

As we did last year, a group of crafty folks will gather Thursday, December 8th, at 1:00, to create wreathes for Friday's decorating party. Greens and rings will be provided but if you can bring your own hand clippers and/or florist wire that would be helpful. Some will be provided. Check with Dorothea or Linda if you have questions.

On Sunday, December 4th, St. Olaf's will be performing their 100th Christmas Festival. Visit their website to see where you can locally see a simulcast of this celebration: <http://www.stolaf.edu/simulcast/index.html>

Grief Support Group

"Companions in Grief" a support group for those who are bereaved sponsored by All Saints Parish will once again begin to meet every other week at St. Patrick's Church in Newcastle in January. This is an ecumenical group, open to persons of all faiths or no faith, or of a faith weakened by their loss. Part of each meeting will focus on the work of understanding your grief. This group made a presentation to the Twin City Ministerial Group to inform us of their training before beginning their sessions last year. They are ready to start another group in January. For more information pick up a brochure in the Fellowship Room or contact John or Ellen Nolan (677-6355), or Val Skov (832-4549) or talk to Pastor Holm.

DECEMBER	4	11	18	25
Usher	Neighoff/Crommett	Neighoff/Crommett	Neighoff/Crommett	Neighoff/Crommett
Communion	Susan/Trish	Bill/Nan		
Flowers	Bailey	Holm		Farrell
Readers	Baade	Baade	Baade	
Coffee	Baade/Owen		Chase/Farrell	

Meet WOL's New Church Secretary: Debbie and her husband, Fred Bloom, moved to Round Pond in July, 2011, from Elverson, Pennsylvania where they had an artisan goat cheese business and goat dairy. Having raised dairy goats for 30 years, Debbie and Fred decided to open an artisan cheese business in 2009. They didn't know that it would take off so quickly and end up being about an 80 or 90 hour a week business! Being at retirement age, they decided to sell the business and farm and retire to Maine where they had been vacationing for over 20 years.

Having worked in human resources for 30 years, Debbie always enjoyed working with people and enjoyed administrative work and working with a computer. Not fully ready to retire, Debbie decided to look for a part-time position once she got settled in her new home. Debbie said that when she saw the advertisement in the paper for this position at the church, she was very interested and excited about it and applied immediately.

Debbie and Fred have 2 dogs and 4 cats now and Debbie enjoys running, walking, kayaking and many other sports as well as gardening and jewelry making. Debbie's hours at the church office are Mondays from 10:30 am until the work is completed and Thursday afternoons starting at 1:30 pm. We will see how this schedule works out and it may be changed in the future but we'll keep everyone updated.

STATISTICS FOR WATER OF LIFE

October	2011	2010	Yr to Date	2011	2010
Income	16,025	13,861		89,598	103,960
Designated	<u>226</u>	<u>700</u>		<u>3667</u>	<u>3255</u>
Totals	16,251	14,561		93,265	107,215
Total Expenses	<u>7,159</u>	<u>8,160</u>		<u>62,395</u>	<u>96,537</u>
NET + -	9,092	6,401		30,870	10,678
Cash on Hand June:	2011	2010	Mort-	2011	2010
Checking	35,228	27,075	gages:		
M. Invest	17,138	4,099	1st Bank	164,453	167,000
Restricted	3,337	5,427	Members	<u>19,989</u>	<u>26,602</u>
Prop.Sav.	5,028	0	Totl. Owed	184,442	193,602
Crisis Fund	<u>0</u>	<u>12,876</u>			
Totals	60,731	49,477			
Attendance	2011	2010	Yr to Date	2011	2010
Sunday 2 October	72	76	Total	2542	2668
9	41	78	Avg.	59	62
16	61	58			
23	61	67			
30	<u>cancelled</u>				
Total	235	279	Avg.	58.75	69.75

DECEMBER 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
4 9:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 11:45 am Fellowship * Christin Bailey	5	6 * Dorothea Vogel	7 6:00 pm Girl Scouts 6:30 pm Choir * Tom Farrell	8 8:00 am Community Prayer 1:00 pm Wreath Making	9 5:30 pm Pizza and Church Decorating	10
11 9:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 11:45 am Fellowship	12	13	14 5:00 pm Music & Worship 6:30 pm Choir	15 8:00 am Community Prayer	16	17 * Harry Lind
18 - Noisy Offering/Pageant 9:00 am Sunday School 10:30 am Worship 11:45 am Fellowship	19	20	21 6:30 pm Choir	22 800 am Community Prayer * John Neighoff	23	24 - Christmas Eve *Natalie Farrell
25 - Christmas 10:30 am Worship 11:45 am Fellowship	26	27	28 6:30 pm Choir	29 8:00 am Community Prayer	30 * Lori Bailey	31 - New Year's Eve