

“A Stone’s Throw”



Advent begins Sunday, November 27th. I don't want to miss one part of this special journey towards Christmas—as we wait and prepare our hearts for the Christ Child. Wednesday(s) are so special with our Jesse Tree meditations by the light of the Christmas Tree and our Holden Evening Prayer. Dinners are 5:15-6:15PM and 6:30-7:00PM Worship each Wednesday night. Come let us adore Him—Christ our Lord Wednesday, November 30th First Wednesday in Advent, 5:15-6:15 chicken pie dinner, Worship 6:30-7:00 and lighting of the building.

This Advent season we have so very many gifts along the way in preparation for Christmas. Here are some which you truly do not want to miss:

Sunday, November 27th ----- Advent begins—Don't forget to light your family Advent wreathes. There was a devotional calendar in last November Newsletter for you and your family to enjoy.

Wednesday, November 30th – Advent—(5:15-6:15 Holden Evening Prayer) Jesse Tree focus is on a different Bible character each service. We will light the building outside singing “O Come All Ye Faithful.”

Saturday, December 3rd Lighting of the Bethlehem Star @ 7:00 PM on our property –Join Us
(we need everyone to bring cookies like last year)

Wednesday, December 8th & 15th –These are such special evenings of worship from 6:30-7:00 PM and don't forget the Wednesday(s) dinners @ 5:15-6:15PM. (Taco Salad Bar)

Sunday, December 11th –Our children will be sharing a special Christmas Program with us---You don't want to miss ---at both services. The Men will be putting on a breakfast for all the church family Sunday, December 11th 9:00-10:00 in the Celebration Hall-----Join Us!

Sunday, December 18th – The choir will bless us with a Christmas Cantata.

Saturday, December 24th ---We have our 2 Christmas Eve Candlelight Services (5:00 Family Service) (7:00 Traditional worship) Join us for these special times of Worship! Come let us adore Him!

Sunday, December 25th - One Service @ 10:30 no Sunday School.

In His gracious grip,
Mike
Pastor Mike

“listen to the angel's song, all you
who have a troubled heart! I bring you
good tidings of great joy!” Jesus
did not come to condemn you. If you

Budget and Attendance Information
For the Month of November 2011

Needed Weekly \$ 6,394.48
 Offering for November \$31,549.51
 Average Attendance 330

The Good Samaritan Food Pantry

Food for the month of **December** is Mac and Cheese, Tuna, canned chicken, canned green beans, canned tomatoes and Jams & Jellies. Food stamp recipients cannot buy health items with food stamps so laundry detergent, shampoo and paper products (**especially toilet paper**) are always needed and appreciated.

The Food Pantry is open on:
 Monday 3:00-5:00 PM
 Friday's 1:00-3:00 PM.

Golden Chain

The Golden Chain group will be having their monthly meeting and luncheon on **Tuesday, December 13th** @ **11:30 AM**. Join us for food, fun and fellowship.



This will be our Christmas Gathering

If you want to be part of the Golden Chain Group please come out and join us, we would love to have you. We welcome anyone 55 or older to visit and join in on our social activities.

Contact Dick @ 495-8558

Breakfast Club Schedule 2011

Dec. 12th Huffman Group ---Christmas Party @ Church
 Dec. 26th No meeting

✓
 ,



ASSISTANTS

Lay Assistants
for December 2011

8:00 Josh Hughes
 10:30 Faye Stafford

8:00 Ushers **10:30 Ushers**

Dec.

We have a few months still availableIf you want to participate/be a usher, please contact Libby Sigmon and let her know what month would work best for you.



Upcoming Weddings for the
2012 year

Dec. 31, 2011 Faustina Prystup & Darren Crow
 Feb. 4, 2012 Kendall Lail & Tyler Land
 April 21, 2012 Taylor King & Andrew Brothers



Advent Dinners

Join us for Dinner 5:15-6:15
 and Worship 6:30-7:30

Wed. Nov. 30th Chicken Pie (Stewardship, Worship & Finance)
 Wed. Dec. 7th Taco Salad (Christian Ed, Youth & Property)
 Wed. Dec. 14th BBQ (Fellowship, Outreach & Evangelism)

Simply Giving

Did you know that there is a way to be sure that your offerings to the ministry of our church are received whether or not you are in your pew on Sunday morning?

Simply Giving is an automated giving program designed to help you conveniently and consistently contribute to Mt. Pisgah. Through **Simply Giving**, your gifts are made through a pre-authorized withdrawal from your bank account. You determine the amount and frequency of your automatic gift—weekly, semi-monthly or monthly—the option is yours. **And this selection can be changed at any time.** Your gift is deposited into the church's bank account on the same day it is withdrawn from your account—at no cost to you.

Simply Giving is a reliable, safe way to move your stewardship plan into action. But you're not the only one that benefits. The congregation benefits from steady, more predictable revenues throughout the year, more efficient bookkeeping and greater confidence in meeting our financial commitments. Currently more than fifteen member families are enrolled in **Simply Giving**. Please consider joining them in this program. Contact Margie Oakes, our church secretary, for the application form.

IRA's and a Giving Opportunity

Are you older than 70½? Are you required to take an annual distribution from your IRA? IF so, there is a special tax break opportunity for calendar year 2011 only. As a result of Federal tax legislation enacted in December 2010, taxpayers over the age of 70 ½ are allowed to make tax-free withdrawals up to \$100,000 from an IRA when those funds are directed to a qualified charity like Mt. Pisgah. The funds must come directly to the church from the holder of the IRA. Contact your IRA bank or broker to get more information on this unique opportunity. I also have some limited further information for anyone who is interested.

Bill Oelkers
Congregation Treasurer

Men's Bible Study

Guys come and join us on Tuesday(s), 5:30-6:30
We are starting the Gospel of John together!

December schedule: **Dec. 6,**

We will resume in **January 10**



Join us

MT. PISGAH LUTHERAN CHURCH CHRISTMAS FOOD BANK SEEKS CAN GOODS AT BETHLEHEM STAR LIGHTING

Mt. Pisgah Lutheran Church in Bethlehem will accept all can goods for its **Special Christmas Food Bank** at the annual **Bethlehem Star Lighting** on Saturday December 3rd at 7:00 PM.

The Food Bank services and feeds the Bethlehem, Ellendale, and Wittenberg areas of Alexander County. Attendees of the Star Lighting are encouraged to bring at least one can as a donation. Carts will be set up at the Star Light to accept the goods. The Bethlehem Star Lighting is located at Mt. Pisgah Lutheran Church, 9379 NC 127 Hickory, NC (Bethlehem Community).



Please note for your Calendar December 25th & January 1st we will have one service 10:30 and no Sunday School

Weight Watchers @ Mt. Pisgah!

Weight Watchers are still meeting here at Mt. Pisgah! If you want to be a part of this special group contact Pam to join the Weight Watcher's. They are meeting on Monday(s) @ 6:00 PM. For more information about their meeting(s) or any other questions please contact Pam Queen @ 632-3887



New Members Welcome!

We still have room for more members!

Help Needed!

We need your help, please prayerfully consider being a volunteer for the Lay Assistant during the year of 2012.

Write the month you would like to be a volunteer for and check the time you would be willing to work.

The Month of _____

At 8:00 Service 10:30 Service Both Service

Your Name _____

Training is available if you need it. If you have any questions or need a substitute please contact Yvonne Osborne @ 495-7493

Your help is truly appreciated. Please drop off your form as soon as possible in Yvonne's mailbox. Thank You!



Adult Sunday School News

Special Thanks to Laurie Wegner leading the class for November.

Our leader for Sunday School will be Pastor Mike for the month of December . Grab your cup of coffee and join us in Celebration Hall at 9:15AM!

December 4, & 18 Pastor Mike will be leading a class on The Journey—Walking the Road to Bethlehem. This will be a journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem using historical archaeological data and Holy Land video footage. We will re-visit the happenings of the Nativity.

Join us as we take a special look at Mary & Joseph's road to Bethlehem. In my preparing for this class I have learned all kinds of special truths about Jesus and His birthplace I never knew. It all is part of God's Master Plan from beginning to end!

Outreach Committee News.....

Angel Trees in the Narthex

We have Two Angel Trees in the Narthex this year. Children in Social Services in Alexander and Catawba Counties will be represented. The need is great this year so please help to fulfill the Christmas wish of each child. A sign-up sheet and instructions for returning the gift(s) will be posted by the trees. Please be sure to follow the directions on the sheet.

The gift(s) must be returned by December 5th Thank you for helping to make the Christmas wishes of a child come true.

The Outreach Committee and Department of Social Services Alexander & Catawba Counties



Jesse Tree

This Advent season we are blessed to continue our tradition. A Jesse Tree Banner will be in our sanctuary and used in our Advent worship together. The Jesse Tree provides a great focal point for our worship this Advent. Each Sunday and Wednesday worship will be a symbol from this as our particular theme for that day.

The Jesse Tree is named from Isaiah 11:1: "A shoot will spring forth from the stump of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots." It is a vehicle to tell the story of God in the Old Testament, and to connect the Advent Season with the faithfulness of God across 4,000 years of history. The Branch is a biblical sign of newness out of discouragement, which became a way to talk about the expected messiah (e.g., Jer. 23:5). It is therefore an appropriate symbol of Jesus the Christ, who is the revelation of the grace and faithfulness of God.

We will celebrate God's faithfulness through history as He kept His promise to give us as Savior. Wednesday services begin at 6:30 PM starting on December 7th and dinners are @ 5:15-6:15 PM make this a special season.

Youth mark your calendars for:

December 21st 6:00 –Christmas Caroling and Party
at the Davis Home

January 14-16th -Gatlinburg

Overnight Friday, Jan. 27th (bring a friend, Bible &
\$10.00)

January 28th Saturday—Variety Show & Dinner

Advent Begins November 30th !

This Advent Season don't forget your Advent wreathes to share as a family.

Our Jesse Tree will be used every Sunday and Wednesday in Advent Prayers is the theme related to the Bible characters chosen:

- 11/27 First Sunday of Advent
- 11/27 Sunday, John the Baptist -----Shell
- 11/30 Wed., Hosea -----Rings
- 12/4 Sunday, Joseph-----Hammer
- 12/7 Wed., Isaiah -----Sun
- 12/11 Sunday, Mary -----Angel
- 12/14 Wed., Paul -----Cross
- 12/18 Sunday, Jesus -----Manger

- 12/24 Thursday, Christmas Eve 5:00 and 7:00 ----star
- 12/25 Sunday, Christmas hymn sing. (10:30)
Merry Christmas
- 1/8 Sunday, Burning of the greens----Epiphany in the evening

Join us for a special worship ---Holden Evening Prayer with a devotional about each Jesse Tree person under the light of the Christmas Tree.



Confirmation Parents

Please put Wednesday December 7th on your calendar. We will meet in the Upper Room right after Advent Worship at 7:00 PM. Important meeting for calendaring /Gatlinburg etc.



**Gatlinburg Trip
MEETING**

dy

le Study
e Study

0-6:30) Bible

ist &

Triumphs
James.
s us to face
o put your
ou ge to know
Join Beth
is Joy,
ledness, the
.....
or daily,
sions.

ary 2nd &
th .

/

en's Bible

Mt. Pisgah Staff Christmas Lunch

When: Thursday, December 15th
Where: Naganos
Time: 12:30 Join Us

We will meet at Naganos restaurant on Highway 127. This is our gift to you and a way to say Thanks! You are appreciated



Dear Members of Mt. Pisgah,

Thank you so much for your contribution to Keeping the Promise campaign for Lutheran Services for the Aging. Your gifts in this ministry will provide for seniors and their families for many years to come. To date, our congregation has generated over \$31,000 in gifts and commitments to the keeping the promise effort. We hope that more members may respond in the next few weeks.

You will be receiving an acknowledgement of your gift from LSA. They will also send you periodic updates on the campaign progress and the improvements made possible through your generosity. Hickory is fortunate to benefit with renovations to the Springs Rd. Lutheran Home and a new sight in Mt. View to replace Hickory West. Thank you again for your partnership in this effort.

Blessings,
Vicki Boyd



“Dont Miss the Gifts – A message on behalf of the choir

The season is upon us now, a time for gifts and giving. But for most of the church year, members of our congregation--singers, musicians, organist, and leaders give a gift of music each week. These are our gift to God and to you, our Mt. Pisgah family.

Over the past months, we have become increasingly aware that when the music starts, be it the prelude just prior to the service or when the choir sings, that this then is a time for some to begin conversations in the pews. Not only is this disrespectful to the musicians and singers, it creates an atmosphere so that the gifts cannot be fully appreciated.

With the upcoming Advent and Christmas seasons with all its special music, will you make an effort to not miss these gifts.....sit back, close your eyes if you wish and let the music and the words speak to you. Then when the service is over you can speak to your husband, your children, or the people sitting near you.

Thanks on behalf of the Choir



Gift of Music

Thrivent will be leading a special Sunday School Class on January 8th of ways in which we can contribute to the Church Ministry through a variety of creative –tax friendly means. Don't miss!

Help warm hearts and touch lives with Thrivent Choice

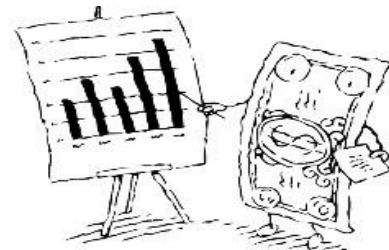
If you are a member of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, you have a new, easy way to help support what matters most to you—even your own congregation.

Through Thrivent Choice, a new charitable grant program, members can help choose where Thrivent Financial distributes some of its charitable funds each years.

Eligible benefit members also are designated Choice Dollars. By directing Choice Dollars, they can request funding for thousands of Lutheran organizations nationwide, including Mt. Pisgah Lutheran Church. Potential designated Choice Dollars amounts that can be directed range from \$25 to \$500 for each eligible member.

If you are eligible to direct Choice Dollars, you can direct them right now. If you are uncertain about your eligibility, visit Thrivent.com/thriventchoice or contact your local Thrivent Financial representative. Or call 1-800 -Thrivent

Directing Choice Dollars and voting in Voting Events are subject to the Terms and Conditions of the Thrivent Choice Program. Visit Thrivent.com/thriventchoice for complete Terms and Conditions.



Choice Dollars

Youth News for December

Advent

While we most often think about Christmas as a single day, it is actually a season of the year. It extends four weeks before Christmas Day and for two weeks after. The time before Christmas is a special season called Advent, comprising the four Sundays before Christmas Day. While the entire season of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany can be seen together, they each have distinctly different roles in the Church year. **The term "Advent" means "coming" and is a season of expectation and hope, the time of waiting for the coming of the Messiah that is celebrated at Christmas.** This time of waiting symbolizes the waiting throughout the Old Testament for the new act of God that would bring deliverance to his people. For Christians this season of expectation also symbolizes the waiting in anticipation for the Second Coming of the Christ when he will return and restore all things.

December Happenings...

December 3rd: Youth Fund-raiser Leaf Raking. We will be raking leaves at Mike and Toni Burris's home. Meet at the church at 8:30 and we hope to return around 12noon

December 7th and 14th: Advent meal, 5:15-6:15, Service @ 6:30

December 17th – College-age Christmas party: Celeste and Leah will be calling you!

December 21st – Christmas caroling, meet at the church at 6pm. We will go caroling to our shut-ins then head to Sherrie's house for dinner and white elephant gift game. So bring a \$5 gift. If you can not bring a \$5 gift, we will have a few extra. Pick up at Sherrie's or at the church and time for pick up: TBA

December 24th – Christmas Eve services

December 25th – Christmas and Church!

GATLINBURG – Jan 14th-16th

***We have a few more spots so youth, talk with your parents about going and let us know ASAP. The cost is \$100, spending \$75. Get your name and \$ turned in as soon as possible!**



Gatlinburg Trip

Happy Birthday To !!!

Dec. 2nd Tiffany Bowman

Dec. 2nd Courtney Cook

Dec. 9th Cody Nussbaumer

Dec. 9th Brooke Williams

Dec. 23rd Casey Black

Dec. 29th Grey Parlier

Friends

are angels who lift us up to our feet when our own wings have trouble remembering how to fly.

We are missing a few angels in Sunday School. Hope to see you soon.

Jesus loves you and we do to.

Thanks and Blessings! Leah and Celeste

Ushers Needed – Please sign up to Help

Would you like to be more involved in the church? We have a special opportunity for you to help. Please consider becoming an usher on Sunday(s) during the 2012 year.

Just fill in the blank of the Month you would be willing to serve and what time would be best for you.

Your Name _____

Usher for 8:00 Service

Month _____ Month _____

Month _____ Month _____

Usher for 10:30 Service

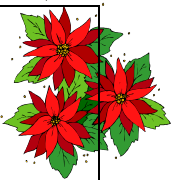
Month _____ Month _____

Month _____ Month _____

Please drop your form off in Linda Williams mail box. If you have any questions please call Linda @ 635-0816

Thank you for all your help and willing to help serve.

Christmas Remembrance (Memorials)



Every Advent season, the people of God at Mt. Pisgah enjoy honoring loved ones with special remembrances. This year, we would like to offer distinctive opportunities to remember or honor loved ones. As always, you may order poinsettias to grace our sanctuary. Please remember that poinsettias need to be ordered no later than **Sunday, December 11th**. Please make all checks payable to Mt. Pisgah.

Your Name _____

1. 7” Poinsettia \$10.00 each How many _____

In Honor of _____

In Honor of _____

In Memory of _____

In Memory of _____

2. A special fund: Food Pantry Match or your choice

In Honor of _____

In Honor of _____

In Memory of _____

In Memory of _____

(Please deposit completed form with check in the offering plate)



Advent Wreath

Suggested Bible Passages

First Week

Sunday	Matthew	25:1-13
Monday	Isaiah	1:16-18
Tuesday	Isaiah	60:1-13
Wednesday	Psalms	43:3-5
Thursday	Isaiah	58:6-9
Friday	1 John	2:8-11
Saturday	1 John	3:1-2

Second Week

Sunday	Isaiah	40:1-5
Monday	Revelation	1:7-8
Tuesday	Matthew	22:41-45
Wednesday	Hosea	11:3-4
Thursday	Psalms	130
Friday	Micah	6:6-8
Saturday	Jeremiah	14:8-9

Third Week

Sunday	Isaiah	9:6-7
Monday	Isaiah	7:10-14
Tuesday	Isaiah	11:1-6
Wednesday	Isaiah	40:10-11
Thursday	Isaiah	52:7
Friday	Jeremiah	33:14-16
Saturday	Malachi	3:1-2

Fourth Week

Sunday	John	3:16-21
Monday	Luke	1:1-25
Tuesday	Luke	1:26-28
Wednesday	Luke	1:39-56
Thursday	Luke	1:57-66
Friday	Luke	1:67-80
Dec. 24	Matthew	1:18-25

Prayer for the first week of Advent

Almighty God, Give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son, Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. *Amen.*

Prayer for the second week of Advent

Merciful God, who sent your messengers the prophets to preach repentance and prepare the way

for our salvation: Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake our sins, that we may greet with joy the coming of Jesus Christ our redeemer; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, on God, now and forever. *Amen.*

Prayer for the third week of Advent

Stir up your power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and forever. *Amen.*

Prayer for the fourth week of Advent

Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit on God, now and forever. *Amen.*



The Advent Wreath

The circle of the wreath and the evergreens that make it up both signify God's endless mercy and undying love. Three purple candles and one rose-colored (pink) candle are evenly spaced around the wreath. There is one larger white candle in the center of the wreath. The wreath can be as simple as four candle holders with greenery laid around them to form a circle. However, some traditions attach meanings to using different greens, each signifying another aspect of the season. These include:

Ivey--to remind us of the human spirit clinging to God's strength.

Cedar--to remind us of eternal life available to all through Christ.

Holly--to remind us of Jesus' crown of thorns.

Bay--to remind us of victory over sin and death.

Each week, an additional candle is lit. As the light grows brighter, we are reminded that the Light of the World will soon arrive in glory. The central white candle is to be larger (often thicker) than the four in the wreath. This relatively recent addition to the Advent wreath signifies the Light of Christ and is first lit on Christmas Eve and relit and burned on Christmas Day.

Kid's In Christ - (3yrs – 6th grade) Upcoming Events



Wednesday night KIC will continue on January 4th. Please join us for Advent services and in the activities below. Have a blessed Advent and Christmas season.

Saturday, December 3rd and December 10th – Christmas play practice - These are **very important** practices to finalize all last minute details for the Christmas play. Practice times are from 10 am till noon.

Saturday, December 10th – Kid's Night Out – A great time for parents to finish up their Christmas shopping or to just have an evening out. Event is hosted by the St. Stephens High School Junioresettes from 6:00 pm till 10:00 pm. Cost is \$15 for first child and \$10 for siblings. Cost includes supper and activities for the evening.

Sunday, December 11th – “It All Happened in the Country” Christmas Program during both 8:00 and 10:30 service. Breakfast will be served during Sunday school hour.

Wednesday, December 21st - 3rd – 6th grade Christmas outing - Meet at the church at 5:30 for supper. We will be working on some crafts then taking them to the Lutheran home to distribute and spread some Christmas joy.

Saturday, December 24th – Family Christmas Eve Service - Service begins at 5:00. This is always a special service and family time together. (If you have a part in the program for this service, please be there by 4:00)



Don't forget Sunday school every Sunday from 9:15 till 10:15!

Thanks to all the volunteers who dedicate their time and talents to our children. During the first few weeks of December, we will be using the Sunday school time to practice for the Christmas program. There will be Sunday school on the 18th; however there will not be Sunday school on December 25th and January 1st due to Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

Nursery – Heather Stafford

Preschool – Kelly Daughtrey and Kathryn Tesh

K – 2nd Grade – April Childress and JoAnna Talley

3rd – 5th Grade – Denise Mullins and Olivia Daughtrey

6th – 8th Grade – David Moser



Thank you to the Mullins family and Huffman family for hosting the bonfire in November. Thanks to all of our families who participated, brought food and joined in the fun.

Thank you to all the kids who created the beautiful blessing jar centerpieces and placemats for our Thanksgiving feast. You are all awesome and we are so blessed!

Thank you to everyone for continual prayers during Courtney's battle with Hodgkin's. We are officially at the 8 month cancer free mark! We are very blessed for our Mt. Pisgah family who helped us through every step of the way. We pray that each of you have a blessed Christmas and a joyful New Year! Jesus loves you and we love you too!

If you have any questions or need a ride to any of the events, please don't hesitate to call or email me anytime. (228-1306 or Crystal_Cook@catawbaschools.net)