

Beka's
Buzz

Last month while trying to figure out what to write about my thoughts went to Christmas, but then I reigned it in knowing it wasn't even Thanksgiving. I love Christmas though, I know that it is chaotic and it is crazy but I love all of those things because I see it as truly selfless. This does not mean I want to go out on Black Friday and get trampled or my hair ripped out but I can see why people do it. Ultimately the reason why Betty Spaghetti pulls your hair or pushes you out of the way is to be able to give joy to someone else. There are lots of reasons to love Christmas and people have their reasons but when I started working at a church I started to hear the reasons people didn't want to rush to Christmas. I am with you, there are people who don't want Christmas cheer early. Their reasons were that this holiday feels like work, which if you work in a church it is. However, there is something magical about getting to see the preparations for Christmas happen in the church. I get to watch the manger scene go up, read and watch Christmas plays, angel tree shopping and gifts, and my favorite, finding Advent activities for families.

I have to admit to you that I was in fact one of those people who started the Christmas preparations before Thanksgiving *but* after Halloween (I feel the need to defend myself here). Although after working in the church I have learned a lot about being present in the season and learning to enjoy what the season of Advent brings. This season brings Advent worships, Advent meals and fellowship, and it also brings us hope. As we prepare for this Christmas season I am prayerful to be present in the season of preparation and waiting for Jesus. This season I am going

to choose peace in what is normally stressful and full of anxiety. My mom has this sweatshirt that says, "Jesus is the Reason for the Season", that horrible and tacky sweatshirt is right. So instead of thinking of the wreaths and the presents I am hopeful, peaceful and eager for the birth of Christ. I am choosing to exist and experience those feelings rather than wrestle with Betty Spaghetti at the mall. Not to mention I love to spend this time of year with my church family.

Some things to look forward to in this season are:

- HolyC's float in the Belmont Christmas Parade on **December 5th**
- Christmas caroling on **December 9th**
- Santa's visit on **December 16th**
- Christmas Play on **December 17th**
- HCY Christmas Party on **December 17th**
- Advent dinners and worships on **Wednesdays in December.**

Beka Forst,
Youth & Family Ministries

BCO December Items Of the Month Grits & Oatmeal



 Lutheran Church of the
Holy Comforter COMMENT
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Micah Kearney, Pastor email: micahkearney@gmail.com
Greg Cline, Organist /Choirmaster
Beka Forst, Director of Youth & Family Ministries
Dianne Lail, Communications/Office



³⁰The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus.

Luke 1:30-31

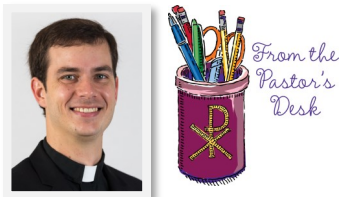
Communion Opportunities for December

December 6: Advent Worship Wednesday
December 10: Centennial Sunday
December 13 & 20: Advent Worship Wednesdays
December 24: Christmas Eve
10:30 am & 11:00 pm services



Dianne Lail, Communications/Office Manager
Volume 38, No. 12

SUNDAY SCHEDULE 9:30 am Sunday School
10:30 am The Service
Church Office Hours Monday-Thursday
8:30 am—3:00 pm



Grace and peace,

Since becoming a pastor, I have become more and more aware of the extent to which anxiety permeates the lives of people. It is something that has come up many times, often when the number of responsibilities and relationships that pull on them and make demands on them rise. But in the past year especially, it seems like peoples' anxieties have been high. I don't know if it is because of the political climate and the extreme tension in the country, a lack of sense of security, feeling like life has kept them off balance, or what. Anxiety can be a good thing, raising our awareness and senses when needed. But it seems that often the anxiety level does not match the things causing the stress in lives. When this comes with limited relief it leads to all kinds of lack of health, often most apparent in relationships with those around us, as well as in our levels of exhaustion and in our physical health.

As much as we think of the holiday season between Thanksgiving and Christmas in nostalgic ways, the reality is that it raises the anxiety level for many. The pressure to buy presents, bake cookies, appear like you have it together for Christmas parties, spend time with family that don't always have healthy or helpful expectations of you, and just the feeling like you have to be in eight places at once, can all build and mount and a joyful season turns into one that breaks us down and makes us feel inadequate and defeated.

Which brings us to Advent, the season of the church year in which much of this time falls. Often we view Advent as a count-

down to Christmas, and in a sense it is. Many of the familiar readings through Advent are Old Testament readings that speak of the coming Messiah, Jesus. But Advent is also a season that looks forward and proclaims Christ's second coming, when he will bring to fruition the healing of the world that was begun in the Incarnation. It is a season that looks at the world and names the reality that things are not as God desires them to be, and then offers hope in the promise that one day Christ will come and set things right, moved by love for all God has made.

I invite you all to come and worship with us, on Sundays, as well as on Wednesday nights in Advent, to hear the good news of hope and restoration as we await Christ's coming again, and invite someone you know that needs to hear this promise as well. To do so is to push back against the chaos, a claim that the narrative we hear that demands so much from us is not the only one offered us.

And whatever you do, remember that the coming season of Christmas reminds us that Christ remains present with us even in the waiting.

***Yours in Christ,
Pastor Micah***

Just a personal note of thanks to all the members of Holy Comforter—thank you for: Making and sending birthday cards to every member, for making and serving food for our Bereavement meals, for visiting and sending cards to our HomeBound members, and for connecting with our college students. Our committee has mailed the newsletter to our HomeBound and those without email addresses.

Social Ministry is an integral part of our church. Thank you so much for your participation in this ministry. ***Kathy Graves***

MUSIC NEWS

December always promises to be a hustle and bustle month for individuals and families. Advent also ushers extra time required for our music ensembles. Special thanks is expressed to all those who participate in our music ministry here at Holy Comforter. We give thanks for all of your gifts of time and talent.

The adult handbell choir will continue to rehearse at 9:00 am on Sundays through Christmas Eve. They will share musical offerings through the Advent Season.

Members of the children's ensemble are busy preparing for the Christmas Presentation. Due to other meeting times our last Sunday at 4:00 pm session will be on December 3. They will meet at 4:00 pm, with a party to follow. At 5:00 pm they will join with our church choirs for a dress rehearsal for our Centennial Service on December 10.

Advent Wednesdays continue with our midweek vespers, "Unfailing Light." Come respite with us for dinner and worship. See calendar. This beautiful liturgical service of worship includes youth handbell accompaniment, as well as flute and keyboard. Our choirs will lead from the front of the nave. Chamber choir members will gather briefly after each service.

We are officially 100 years in ministry on December 10. All our choir voices will gather collectively in our chancel as we present our gathering and prelude anthems, "Carry the Light" and "God Bless Us, Everyone." The Gardner-Webb University String Quartet will accompany this service of worship. We will incorporate

portions of various liturgy settings that we have utilized over the years. The church choir will present, "And the Glory of the Lord" from Handels' *Messiah*.

On December 17 our church choir will hold our final rehearsal of the year from 5:00-6:00 pm. We then will parade to Greg's house for our annual Christmas party. You may bring a favorite appetizer. Spouses are always invited to attend.

Christmas Eve is on Sunday this year. Lots of Christmas music packed into two (2) services just 12 hours apart. For those participating in the music ministry I am certain that afternoon includes napping. See calendar for gathering and service of worship times.

***Greg Cline
Organist/Choirmaster***



Seasons Greetings

As the holidays approach, the members of our congregation are encouraged to send cards or notes to our **HomeBound members**.

If you need any addresses, feel free to call or email me.

Thank you, Kathy Graves

Phone: 704-825-1190
Email: kgraves2@live.com



HCY meets December 3rd:
2:30 pm meet at church to volunteer with *Gaston Animal* for the Gastonia Christmas parade
December 17: Christmas Party
Time & place TBA



Christmas Caroling
Saturday, December 9
3:00 pm (after play practice)



Staying Connected will meet
Saturday, December 9th at 7:00 pm
at the Sarrazin's home in Belmont.

We will collect a pampering item (lotion, specialty soap, etc.) for the Women's Shelter in Gastonia.



Bring a *white elephant* gift (value around \$20 for the evening's exchange) and an appetizer to share.

Please RSVP to Krystyna at 262-497-4046.



Centennial UPDATE

Our **Centennial Luncheon Celebration** will be held **December 10th** immediately following the service at *The Haid* on the Belmont Abbey College campus. Invitations have been sent via e-mail. If you do not have/use e-mail, please pick up an invitation and RSVP card from the narthex or office.



Kids' Club
Visit from Santa
December 16

3:00 pm at the Church
(Immediately after Christmas play practice)



Christmas Play Practice

December 3 at 9:30 am
December 9 at 2:00 pm
December 10 at 9:30 am
December 16 at 2:00 pm

CHURCH SCHEDULE:

Sunday, December 3 1st Sunday in Advent

9:30 am Sunday School/Play practice

10:30 am The Service

5:00 pm *HCY*, Dinner/activities

Wednesday, December 6, 13 & 20

6:00 pm Dinner

6:45 pm Advent Worship w/Holy Communion

Saturday, December 9

2:00 pm Play Practice

3:00 pm Christmas Caroling

7:00 pm *Staying Connected* meets

Sunday, December 10 Centennial Celebration Sunday

9:30 am Sunday School/Play practice

10:30 am The Service w/Holy Communion

Luncheon at *The Haid*, Belmont Abbey

Saturday, December 16

2:00 pm Play Practice

3:00 pm *Santa Visit/Kids' Club*

Sunday, December 17 3rd Sunday in Advent

9:30 am Adult Sunday School

10:30 am The Service/*Children's program*

5:00 pm Church Choir, Christmas party after

HCY, Christmas party

Sunday, December 24 4th Sunday in Advent

10:30 am The Service w/HC

10:10 pm Church Choir

10:45 pm Prelude

11:00 pm Candlelight Service w/Holy Communion

Sunday, December 31 1st Sunday of Christmas

9:30 am Adult Sunday School

10:30 am The Service

REGULAR MEETING TIMES:

Sundays: 9:00 am Adult Handbells

9:30 am Sunday School

10:10 am Church Choir prep

10:30 am The Service

4:00 pm Children's Ens. (except as noted)

6:00 pm Church Choir

Tuesdays: 7:00 pm Nar-Anon

Wednesdays: 6:00 pm Dinner

6:45 pm Advent Worship w/HC

7:30 pm Chamber Choir

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Report for the month	October, 2017	Year-to-Date
Budget Expenses:	\$24,511.17	\$245,111.67
Actual Expenses:	22,684.32	235,993.07
Offerings Received:	30,623.50	225,090.93
Gain (Loss) for Period:	\$ 7,939.18	(\$ 10,902.14)

ASSISTING MINISTERS:

LECTORS: December 10 & 24: Billy Joye, Chief Lector

ACOLYTES & CRUCIFERS:

Volunteers

ALTAR GUILD: (Team 3)

Fran Holland, Co-Captain

Tracey Nault, Co-Captain

Amanda Kelly Katie Kessen Rebecca Yount

COMMUNION ASSISTANTS:

December 10 & 24: Volunteers

EUCHARIST PRESENTERS:

December 10 & 24: Volunteers

GREETERS FOR THE MONTH:

December 3: Katie Kessen

December 10: Carmen Buell

December 17: Sue Lahr

December 24: Kathy Graves (10:30 am)

Pat Koehler (11:00 pm)

December 31: Becky Richards

TELLERS: Janet & Brian Anchor

USHERS: Volunteers

ALTAR FLOWERS:

December 3: Kathy Graves (both vases)

December 10: Deb Williams

1 vase available

December 17: Angie Morton

Ron & Pat Speck

December 24: Julia Gunter (both vases)

December 31: **2 vases available**

CHILDREN'S CHURCH:

December 3: Krystyna Sarrazin

December 10: Krystyna Sarrazin

December 17: Krystyna Sarrazin

December 24: Volunteer

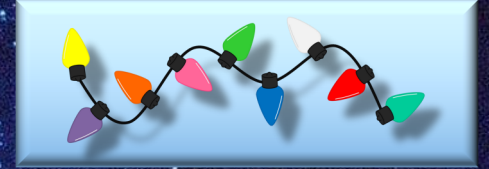
December 31: Volunteer

NURSERY: (9:30 am-11:45 am)

A nursery is provided for infants and a separate nursery for the toddlers. We encourage you to use the nurseries if your children become restless and/or vocal. Let an usher know if you need assistance.

Thank you for the support of the HVAC project! Updates to the heat system and controls have been installed and are working. The switches in the hallway no longer control the system. Normal events should be scheduled with the office so that the HVAC system will be on and the doors unlocked. Thermostats include a button on the left edge for unscheduled activities. Press the button to run the system for a period of 1 hour. The icon on the thermostat will change from a person outside the house to inside a few moments after the button is pressed. **Property Committee**

December 2017



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 1st Sunday in Advent 9:00 am Adult Handbells 9:30 am Play practice during S.S 10:10 am Church choir prep 10:30 am The Service 4:00 pm Children's Ensemble 5:00 pm All Choirs dress rehearsal HCY , Dinner/activities	4	5  Belmont Christmas Parade Look for HolyC's float	6 6:00 pm Dinner 6:45 pm Advent Worship with Holy Communion 7:30 pm Chamber Choir	7	8	9 2:00 pm Play Practice 3:00 pm Christmas Caroling 
10 2nd Sunday in Advent 9:00 am Adult Handbells 9:30 am Adult S.S./ play practice 10:10 am Church choir prep 10:30 am The Service w/HC Luncheon at <i>Haid</i> , the Abbey 6:00 pm Church Choir	11	12	13 6:00 pm Dinner 6:45 pm Advent Worship with Holy Communion 7:30 pm Chamber Choir	14	15	16 2:00 pm Play Practice 3:00 pm Santa Visit (Replaces Kids' Club) 
17 3rd Sunday in Advent 9:00 am Adult Handbells 9:30 am Sunday School 10:10 am Church choir prep 10:30 am Children's program 5:00 pm Church Choir, with Christmas party after HCY , Christmas party	18	19	20 6:00 pm Dinner 6:45 pm Advent Worship with Holy Communion 7:30 pm Chamber Choir	21 St. Thomas, Apostle	22	23
24 4th Sunday in Advent 9:00 am Adult Handbells No Sunday School 10:10 am Church choir prep 10:30 am The Service w/HC 10:10 pm Church Choir 10:40 pm Prelude 11:00 pm Candlelight Service	25 The Nativity of Our Lord Christmas Day 	26 St. Stephen, Deacon Martyr	27 St. John, Apostle Evangelist	28 The Holy Innocents, Martyrs	29	30
31 1st Sunday of Christmas 10:10 am Church choir prep 10:30 am The Service						

We recognize and celebrate these birthdays in the month of December. We are thankful for the life and Spirit of those we celebrate. May the blessings of God flow in the life of each of you.

December 1 **Madison Kelly**
 December 3 **Travis Fleming**
 December 3 **Brenda Jenkins**
 December 4 **Anne Lineberger**
 December 5 **Aaron Nault**
 December 7 **Jackson Bryant**
 December 8 **Nathan Kelly**
 December 8 **Vivian Lane**
 December 8 **Brian Wallace**
 December 9 **Bob Koehler**
 December 10 **Caitlan Reese**
 December 10 **Marguerite Shive**
 December 10 **Denise Wiegand**
 December 11 **Beth Brittain**
 December 12 **Janet Anchor**
 December 13 **Brody Alvarez**
 December 15 **Greg Cline**
 December 17 **Mason Morton**
 December 19 **Dennis Tucker**
 December 21 **Denise Jenkins**
 December 22 **Remi Ince**
 December 24 **Kurt Rogers**
 December 26 **Amy Alvarez**
 December 26 **Beverly Robinson**
 December 28 **Molly Koehler**
 December 29 **Trudy Whitener**
 December 30 **Elizabeth Tench**
 December 30 **Luke Via**

If we have unintentionally left any member's name off this list, or if there are any errors, please call the church office.