

The Herald

December 2006 • Bethany Lutheran Church • <http://www.bethanyportland.org/>

From Our Pastor—

Our “Watch-Words” Guide Advent 2006

This Advent, our worship services will be graced with new Advent banners, actually four banners. **Pam Thomas** and I have been working together these past few months and she has created these thematic banners for our worship time together this Advent season.

The banners hang seventy-five inches long and are eighteen inches wide. Significant in each banner are the “watch-words” which are, in liturgical order: **COME, PREPARE, REJOICE, and GLORY.** Each banner is unique and yet has similar qualities such as: (1) a candle flame, located at the top of each banner, provides the symbol of God’s presence (2) a cross(es) mark the journey which the Christ child will take. The cross can be seen in the star (banner one), in (Christ’s) hand (banner two), at the crucifixion (banner three), and in the butterfly (the fourth banner). Threads of gold wind their way throughout the banners symbolizing the royalty that is being bestowed upon the earth through the Christ child’s presence.

Each Sunday, the “watch-word” will be a part of, not only our advent wreath lighting, but will shape the focus of our time together at the 9:30 worship gathering. The Advent Sunday focus is as follows:

Dec. 3, First Sunday in Advent – COME!

Dec. 10, Second Sunday in Advent – PREPARE!

Dec. 17, Third Sunday in Advent – REJOICE!

Dec. 24, Fourth Sunday in Advent – GLORY!

Thanks to **Pam Thomas** for her continued work and creativity in sharing new Advent Banners with us. Each time any one of us shares our gifts, we inspire and encourage those around us.

May your coming Advent bring you great hope and anticipation of the coming One, Immanuel, God with us!

Focus Groups Meet; All Congregation Discussion Planned

Many thanks to all who participated in our focus groups held this past week. A total of nineteen people participated in four focus groups. If you have been worshipping with us since September, you received a first class mailing announcing the times and dates of our focus group meetings. Our purpose for the focus groups was to gather information from responses to questions in three categories: “yourself”, the congregation, and our congregation’s calling.

Our next gathering will be at **noon on Dec. 10** to discuss the participant’s responses to the questions. Lunch will be served. (Please see your weekly INFO sheets for additional details.)

I am so thankful for your deliberate and hard work in answering the questions (which were not all easy) and for your commitment to our church’s future!

Thanks to everyone, prayer chain participants, and others who, although may not have participated directly, were no less valuable in your offering of thoughts and prayers during this past week. Keep those prayers flowing for the needs of others and for Bethany as our vision process unfolds!

*Yours in Christ-
Pastor Jeff*

Advent Midweek Worship

Mount Tabor Cluster congregations will be celebrating Advent together with Advent Worship services on Wednesday mornings at 11:30am followed by a light lunch. Bethany members and friends are welcome and encouraged to attend.

December 6th – Luther Memorial, 4800 NE 72nd Avenue
“The Christ Who Came in Bethlehem”

December 13th – St. Mark, 5415 SE Powell Boulevard
“The Christ Who Comes Today”

December 20th – Holy Trinity, 7220 SE 39th Avenue
“The Christ Who Is Coming at the End of Time”

Christmas Events at Bethany

Bethany Christmas Party December 20, 7pm

You are invited to Bethany's annual Christmas party and potluck on **Wednesday, December 20 at 7pm.**

By all means, invite a neighbor, friend or relative to join you! We will have a \$5 gift exchange [optional] and lots of fun.

Annual “Lillejuleaften” Danish Language Service

Celebrate Christmas at Bethany Danish-style with people from all over Portland region on **Saturday, December 23 at 7pm.**

Services on Sunday, Dec. 24

10:00am Lessons & Carols for Christmas

7:00pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Come and celebrate the Savior's birth!

A Special Thank-you from Dorothy Parsons

I want to thank the Bethany family for your outpouring of prayers, calls, cards, flowers, and visits during my recent cancer surgery. The surgeon says the operation was an unqualified success and I should expect a full and complete recovery (up to one year to be back to 100%).

Thanks for your prayers regarding Jim who has now been placed in a wonderful foster care home and he is adapting well and seems quite at ease.

I may be away from church for a while but look forward to seeing you all again soon. Please keep us in your prayers.

New Hymnals to Arrive early 2007; Not too Early to Give a Gift in Memory/Honor of Someone

With our new E.L.W. (Evangelical Lutheran Worship) hymnals to arrive soon in 2007, we are making opportunities available to help offset the financial cost. Members and friends of Bethany are able to give a gift of \$17.50 toward the purchase of a new hymnal and, in return, have their name along with someone they would like to remember or honor written inside of the front cover.

Many of our current L.B.W. hymnals were given in such a manner: by someone making a

financial gift to the church for the hymnal cost, and, in return, listing a person they would like to honor or remember. This is a splendid way to recognize someone who has meant much to you and, also, help defer the total cost for purchasing all new hymnals for Bethany.

Look for more information in our bulletins or call the church office (503)284-3836 as to how you can make a financial gift to the church in honor or memory of someone you know and love.

Wednesday Morning Bible Study

Join us for Bible study on **Wednesday** at **11am** in the church library.

Wednesday Activity Night

Drop-in **any Wednesday evening between 7:00 and 8:30pm** for snacks and games and fun with friends and neighbors of all ages.

Going Like 60 Events

Watch for updates. The next meeting will be on January 25, 2007.

The Lutheran Magazine

Yearly subscriptions to **The Lutheran** magazine are available for \$15.95 (1-800-426-0115). We can also save \$4.20 per subscription if we place a group order for 15 or more. Please see or call Doris Reese at 503-282-6820 right away if you would like to subscribe.

Volunteers for Christmas Festival of Lights

Bethany's youth and pastor plan to volunteer at the **Grotto's Christmas Festival of Lights** on **December 3, 4:45 to 7:30pm**. If you are interested in helping chaperone or would just like to volunteer, please pick up a volunteer form and send it in to the address inside the left panel. Please indicate you are participating with the group from *Bethany Lutheran Church* and please tell Pastor you intend to go as well. It will be a great time to volunteer and share with others!

Lutheran Ministries Need Your Support

Two Lutheran ministries can use your financial support during this time of the year: **Luther House** (Lutheran Campus Ministry at Oregon State University) and **Portland Lutheran School**. Each ministry is shaping the lives of young to college-age students each and every day! Your gift, small, large, or somewhere in between, is a great way to show your support of these ongoing “Lutheran” ministries throughout our synod. Please see the back table in church for more information. Thank you for your consideration!

Do You Have Some News for the Herald? – You Can Put Your Written Articles in the Bottom Left Box Near the Office Counter

If you have articles for publishing in the monthly Herald newsletter, please place them in the bottom left hand slot labeled “Herald Articles/Information” before the information due date (published on the calendar each month). From now on, this will be our designated area until such time that a need arises to change that location. We would appreciate you leaving your name with the article in case our editor has any questions about it. Thanks for your help and assistance in this matter!

October Council Meeting Highlights

Council met October 10 at 7pm with four members excused. Transportation Ministry: We still need a number of volunteer drivers before we can proceed with this ministry; vehicles are available for Sunday use for the cost of fuel only. Property: Several plugged-up downspout drains have already been cleared by volunteers in anticipation of gutter replacement which should occur in about two weeks. Transformational Ministry: A lengthy discussion was focused on the importance of engaging the whole congregation in our visioning process, and on strategy on how next to proceed. Council approved a recommendation to sponsor a Watoto concert on February 6 and authorized \$100 in expenses. The nine-month financial reports show general fund income of \$49,592 and general fund expenses of \$80,183. Transfers from savings were used to pay the difference. Next Council meeting is November 14 at 7pm.