

CHIMES

A PUBLICATION OF LAKE VIEW PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2009
DECEMBER

CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITY OF FAITH

JOY TO THE WORLD!

BY ASHLEY HEHER

Partridge in a pear tree? Practically.



Where is the light of the world? And finally, who is this baby anyway? Advent services continue Dec. 6, Dec. 13, and Dec. 20.

If a jazz Christmas concert isn't enough music, break out the pitch pipe for an evening of carols on the church porch on Dec. 21. No experience -- or musical ability -- required. Just a love of carols, fellowship, hot chocolate, and cookies! The festivities start at 7:00 p.m. and last until we can't feel our toes.

At LVPC there's enough holiday activities to last through the 12 Days of Christmas. From tree trimming and caroling, to professional performances and a short play performed by the Sunday School classes, December's church calendar is full.

"Advent is our time to prepare ourselves for the birth of Christ. How will we intentionally meet this challenge?" asks Rev. Joy Douglas Strome.

"Set aside some time to participate and see how the season takes on new meaning."

Whether you can make it to every event, or have just enough time for reflection during worship services, there's something for everyone — and a reason to remember why we're celebrating.

The festivities kick off Nov. 29 during the first Sunday of Advent. Each week will feature a different element of the Christmas story and a service that engages the senses, complete with specially selected music and artwork by Shawna Bowman.

Find answers to four central questions posed this Advent: Where do we hail from? Can you conceive it?

Can you conceive it?

Christmas isn't always merry. And a special Thursday night worship service on Dec. 10 is a chance to find healing and comfort, particularly for those for whom Advent is intertwined with hurt and loss from past memories, sadness, stress and unreasonable expectations. The Blue Christmas service begins at 7:00 p.m.

Holiday cheer's all that's required on Dec. 12 when we'll deck the sanctuary with garlands, trim the tree and get spruced up for Christmas rush. Decorating begins at 11:00 a.m.

If you're trying to attend services each week for Advent, stick around after the 9:00 a.m. service, or drop by early before the 11:00 a.m. worship on Dec. 13 for a chance to see LVPC's youngest thespians perform their annual Children's Christmas program. The show begins at 10:15 a.m. (Fun fact: Each year's show is all new and written by Joy!)

Be prepared for a sugar high on Dec. 16 when The Gathering Place and the Lake View Parents' Group mixes up a Christmas Cookie bakeoff. One day later, the Lake View Academy will dig into their annual Christmas feast.

Looking for opportunities to volunteer this season? Lake View will continue to support the Erie Neighborhood House Gift Drive. Look for the decorated Christmas tree in the back of the Sanctuary and select an item from a child's wish list. Bring the present back to church and we'll deliver it so Erie House kids can have the happiest of holidays.

If you'd rather get busy in the kitchen, LVPC needs volunteers for the Seniors' Christmas Luncheon on Dec. 22 at 11:00 a.m. Parish Nurse Sue Cox has details, but helpers are needed to bake treats, serve food and provide gifts at our senior site.

And finally, cap Advent off with the power, emotion, and beauty of the Christmas Eve candlelight service as we celebrate the birth of our Lord and the gift He brings to us. The service begins at 7:00 p.m. ♪

Our own John Erickson performs songs from his CD, *A Feeling of Christmas*, on Dec. 20 at Uncommon Ground's Edgewater location at 1401 W Devon Ave. The show, which also features LVPC mainstays Patrick Williams on bass and Tim Mulvenna on percussion, begins at 8:00 p.m. Stop by for hot cocoa, organic food and a chance to cheer on your favorite trio.





IN THAT REGION

JOY DOUGLAS STROME

In that region there were shepherds...
who thought glory meant one thing
whose dreams were capped at a warm bed and a full stomach
who were caught off guard

In that region were others
who were worn down from hungers
who had lost hope sometime in their teens
who had given up on the idea of new

In that region love burst in
across the boundaries of despair and defeat
through the morass of high minded duty and low minded sloth
around shields of indifference and doubt

In that region glory shone all around
and cut to the chaste and to the bone and to the point
cut through the muck and mud of corruption
into the sweet new light of day

In that region fear went out the window
and life was set loose on a rampage of delight
thawing the hearts of the frozen
loosening the tongue of the tight-lipped

In that region is our destination
waiting and hoping and watching
the tremors of possibility shake us
glory looks good, safe, and warm.

In that region alleluia is born!
Alleluia!
Alleluia!
Alleluia says it all.

This Advent season my hope and wish for us all is a renewed sense of the possible, an openness to miracles and a full measure of delight in this time of expectant waiting. Come to church as a child, wide-eyed with expectation and full of hope for the future. Come to the church ready to sing great songs and be stirred by music and art and poetry. Find time to think about what is really important in your life and prepare yourself for the promise of Christmas morning. Blessings on your Advent journey.☞

THE CHRISTMAS DOLL

BY DAISY BRAUCHER

The tree with gift wishes for Erie's kids in the back of the Sanctuary brings happy memories for me.

I was an Erie kid. This settlement house on the new west side, attached to our church, was a second home to many of us going through the Great Depression. It changed lives in wonderful ways. For it was a place in which we learned about the love of God brought to us by people who cared.

One of the ways we children experienced this was at Christmas when some of the more affluent churches (LVPC included) donated wonderful gifts for boys and girls who attended the various activities throughout the year.

For us girls there were very beautiful dolls dressed in satins and laces and soft velvets, placed under a magnificent tree. The one I chose when I was about seven years old has been a special treasure all these years. It feels good now to give back.

These gifts were so exciting, but even more important, I think, were the stirrings of gratitude we began to feel in our little hearts. This in itself is a great gift—to be able to feel the caring of others.

None of us Erie kids ever forgot the material and spiritual gifts we received. We still talk about them whenever we meet.

Here at LVPC, the seniors, the Academy students, the young people who gather at Café Pride, won't forget this church as we strive to make it a place of real community.

Gratitude is one of the most important heart lessons we can learn. IT can bring people together and, of course, keeps us ever mindful of the Greatest Gift of all time that God lovingly placed beneath all our trees.☞

CALENDAR

Place Your
Favorite
Refrigerator
Magnet Here

DECEMBER

EVERY SUNDAY

Sunday service in the Sanctuary at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Childcare is provided in the Mulford Room. Coffee hour and time for fellowship immediately follow both services.

Sunday school for children at 10:00 a.m. Classes for ages 3-4 and grades K-2, 3-6, and 7-up meet in the Parish House.

Choir practice at 10:15 a.m.

Share your thoughts about faith and life in Begin@10 class, 10:00 a.m. in the Chapel.

Free parking is available evenings and weekends in the Recycled Paper Company lot north of the church. Access the lot from the alley.



ADVANCE WARNINGS: SIGN UP NOW!

Men's Group Outing—See December 5
Wild Women Christmas Arts & Crafts —
See December 12
Senior Site Holiday Party—
See December 22
Women's retreat, January 29-31

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1

Regular exercise is the key to vitality, so join the Seniors in Motion fitness class. An exercise specialist from Advocate Fitness leads the group. Class begins at 10:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall.

Young Adult Bible Study meets at 6:30 p.m.

Crossroads Intergenerational Bible Study meets at 6:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2

Senior Book Group meets at 12:15 p.m.

Worship Committee meets at 6:00 p.m.

Choir practice at 7:15 p.m.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3

Senior Movie Matinee at 12:30 p.m.

Deacons meet at 6:00 p.m.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4

A Taize service features scripture reading, repetitive singing, and meditative silence, combining traditional worship forms in a contemporary way. Join us tonight at 7:00 for Taize.

Cafe Pride provides a safe social space from 8:00 p.m. to midnight for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and questioning youth and their allies, ages 16-24.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5

There will be a Men's Group outing leaving from LVPC at 8:00 a.m. heading to Sheboygan, Wisconsin.

The Quest Theatre Ensemble performs *Blue Nativity* at LVPC. The troupe's production tells the story of Christmas and Christ's birth using large-scale puppetry and live music. The show starts at 4:00 p.m., and is followed by a potluck dinner.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6

Lake View Pantry food donations and Two Cents A Meal offerings will be taken at the morning worship services.

Sue Cox will give blood pressure screenings between worship services.

LVPC hosts the second orientation session for the Presbytery delegation to Cuba. It starts at 3:00 p.m.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8

Seniors in Motion fitness class meets at 10:00 a.m. See December 1

Young Adult Bible Study meets at 6:30 p.m.

Crossroads Intergenerational Bible Study meets at 6:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9

Senior Book Group meets at 12:15 p.m.

Choir practice at 7:15 p.m.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10

Senior Movie Matinee at 12:30 p.m.

Christmas isn't always merry. The Blue Christmas service is a chance to find healing and comfort, particularly for those for whom Advent is intertwined with hurt and loss from past memories, sadness, stress and unreasonable expectations. It begins at 7:00 p.m.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11

Christian Nurture Committee meets at 9:00 a.m.

Cafe Pride meets from 8:00 p.m. to midnight. See December 4.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12

LVPC's children meet for Christmas Program rehearsal at 9:00 a.m.

Get in the holiday spirit by decorating the Sanctuary for Christmas at 11:00 a.m.

LVPC's Wild Women will host a Christmas Arts & Crafts Afternoon at 2:00 p.m. The event will feature candle and card making, easy-to-make Christmas present projects, and a social circle where you can complete your own artistic endeavors. Sign up in the back of the Sanctuary.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13

Don't miss the children performing an original Christmas Program. It starts at 10:15 a.m.

CALENDAR The Flip Side DECEMBER

MONDAY, DECEMBER 14

Eco-Justice Taskforce meets at 6:00 p.m.

Finance Committee meets at 6:30 p.m.

Social Justice Committee meets at 7:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15

Seniors in Motion fitness class meets at 10:00 a.m. See December 1

Young Adult Bible Study meets at 6:30 p.m.

Crossroads Intergenerational Bible Study meets at 6:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16

Senior Book Group meets at 12:15 p.m.

The Lake View Parents Group meets at 6:00 p.m. for discussion and fellowship.

While the parents are meeting, kids are invited to The Gathering Place. They'll sing songs, play games, and learn more about the Bible. It begins at 6:00 p.m.

Choir practice at 7:15 p.m.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17

Senior Movie Matinee at 12:30 p.m.

The whole LVPC community is invited to Lake View Academy's annual Christmas Feast at 6:00 p.m.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18

Cafe Pride meets from 8:00 p.m. to midnight. See December 4.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19

A Session meeting takes place at 9:00 a.m.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20

After both services today Parish Nurse Sue Cox will provide us with Ten Healthy Minutes. She'll enlighten us about a health topic in just 10 minutes.

A group from LVPC will meet at 8:00 p.m. at Uncommon Ground, 1401 W. Devon, to hear LVPC pianist John Erickson



perform songs from his CD, *A Feeling of Christmas*. The show also features LVPC member Patrick Williams on bass.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 21

Spread Christmas cheer throughout the neighborhood by Caroling on the Porch at 7:00 p.m.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 22

Seniors in Motion fitness class meets at 10:00 a.m. See December 1

The annual Senior Site Holiday Party kicks off at 11:30 a.m. There are lots of ways you can be part of the celebration. Donations of casseroles, vegetables, salads, and desserts are needed. You can also give hat/gloves/scarf sets for the seniors. Volunteers are needed to serve the meal and distribute holiday cheer. Sign up in the back of the Sanctuary or see Sue Cox or Larissa Kwong Abazia.

Young Adult Bible Study meets at 6:30 p.m.

Crossroads Intergenerational Bible Study meets at 6:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 23

Senior Book Group meets at 12:15 p.m.

Choir practice at 7:15 p.m.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24

Senior Movie Matinee at 12:30 p.m.

Experience the music, the wonder, and the message of Christmas at a Candlelight Christmas Eve Service beginning at 7:00 p.m.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 25

Merry Christmas, everyone!

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27

No Sunday School today.

There will be one worship service this morning at 10:00 a.m.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 28

The church office is closed today.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 29

The church office is closed today.

Seniors in Motion fitness class meets at 10:00 a.m. See December 1

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 30

Senior Book Group meets at 12:15 p.m.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31

Senior Movie Matinee at 12:30 p.m.☞

WHO YOU KNOW



BY ERIC DIEKHANS

GRACE STROME

Paul and Joy's daughter, Grace Strome, practically grew up at LVPC. She's now a Junior at Carleton College majoring in Political Science and International Relations.

What's your earliest memory of being in church?

My mom's first church had a small children's library near her office. I remember reading books in there while she was at work. I also remember getting ready for church in the morning with my dad and Maggie and then sitting near the back of the sanctuary during church playing pew games.

You're on a quest to visit 25 countries by the time you're 25. How's that going?

Pretty well — I certainly have been blessed with a lot of unique travel opportunities. I have 10 more countries to see and five more years in which to see them! Right now I am applying for a fellowship that would give me funding to see all the sites of the 1989 revolutions in Eastern Europe. That should give me about 5-6 more countries.

What was the most amazing part of your travels so far?

It's hard to top (figuratively and literally) being at the base camp of Mt. Everest in Tibet. At 17,000 feet above sea level it was difficult to breathe, sleep, or even walk at times. All that just melted away, though, while watching the sunrise over the tallest peak in the world. Amazing would be an understatement here.

Describe the worst public restroom you've ever been in.

On the 50-hour train ride from Lhasa, Tibet to Beijing the bathroom on our car flooded and so there was about a half inch of funky water on the floor of the whole car. All of our gear was stored under our seats and there was nothing we could do but let it get wet. Yeah, that was pretty gross now that I think about it.

What do you want to be when you grow up?

I'm hoping to never have to grow up! But in the event that I do, I would like to find someone who was willing to pay me to help people in some way. I want to leave this world better somehow. I could see myself being the director of an NGO.

What do you want under the Christmas tree this year?

An all-countries plug adapter.

BACK TO LA

BY ERIC DIEKHANS

On November 1, a five-member team from LVPC made the journey south to Louisiana on the church's fifth mission trip to continue the rebuilding process after Katrina, Gustaf, and other hurricanes devastated the area. Three members of the team — Sandy Roberts, Brooks Darrah, and Paul Strome — shared some of their adventures during the November 8 worship service. LVPC member Djuro Micovic and Sandy's friend, Elvin Carmichael, were also part of the team.

This year, they worked alongside eight volunteers from North Carolina at a Presbyterian Disaster Assistance village in Houma, Louisiana, about 50 miles south of New Orleans in Bayou Country. Team members stayed in corrugated plastic pods provided by FEMA while they worked on two homes. They gave one house, owned by a Houma Indian, a fresh coat of paint, reframed the bathroom, and replaced the sub-floor.

They also worked on a second home, deeper in the Wetlands. It belonged to Linda, a local sheriff, who lived there with her disabled daughter. She had

made some repairs herself, but had applied to PDA after she ran out of money. The team built new back steps and dry walled two rooms.

Living on the Bayou was an adventure for the city dwellers. Mothballs were scattered around their pods to keep the black snakes out. Sandy said that she shook out her sleeping bag every night and her boots every morning to make sure no poisonous spiders had taken up residence.

But the mission trip was about more than just manual labor and dangerous critters. The volunteers formed a small community, pitching in to cook breakfasts and dinners, lead devotions in the evenings, and clean showers, sinks, bathrooms and the dining hall.

One evening, members of a small country church, Bayou Blue Presbyterian (www.bayoubluechurch.com), came together to feed the crew a delicious spread of homemade Cajun food. Paul described it as "the way to do mission."

Sandy said that everywhere they went, people were welcoming and appreciative. "We got 'blessed' a lot," she joked.

Plans are already underway for next year's mission trip, as there is still much work to be done. Talk to Sandy to find out how you can be part of it. For more on Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, go to www.pcusa.org/pda/.



MISSION TRIP TEAM MEMBERS ELVIN CARMICHAEL, BROOKS DARRAH, PAUL STROME, SANDY ROBERTS, DJURO MICOVIC

LVPC



ARTS

Wil Snodgrass performs:

December 11-12, "Christmas Follies," Chicago Gay Men's Chorus, Athenaeum Theatre, Chicago, www.cgmc.org

John Erickson performs:

December 2, Berwyn Cultural Center, Berwyn, www.berwynartscouncil.org

December 5, Northminster Presbyterian Church, Evanston, (224) 545-1560

December 20 with **Patrick Williams**, Uncommon Ground, Chicago, www.uncommonground.com ♯

Submission deadline for the January issue is December 15. Send articles, calendar listings, rants, and raves to Eric Diekhans at ericdiekhans@ameritech.net. ♯

CHIMES

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