

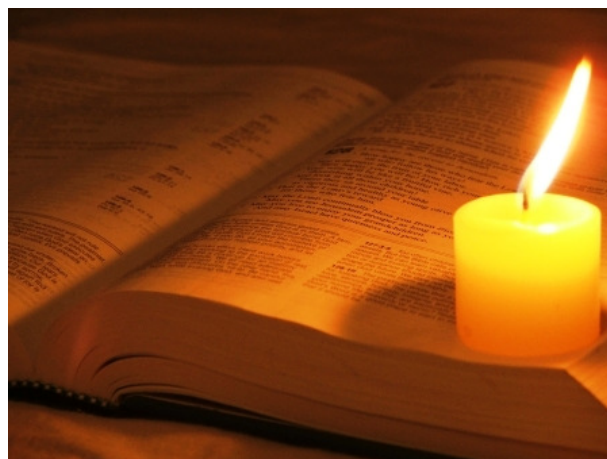
FAITH FLIGHT



December 2013

Watch for the light.

"In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep...Then God said, 'Let there be light.'" (Gen. 1: 1-3). When God enters our lives, there is light. When God enters into our world to camp with us, God comes as light. *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it."* (John 1: 1-5)



As we begin this Advent season together, may we again see the wonder of the light and life of God entering and making our lives new. With the distractions of consumerism, may we pause with anticipation and be guided by the brightest star. May we together, help nurture and strengthen one another.

December 1 is the beginning of a New Year in our Christian calendar. I would like us to try something new this blessed New Year. As the Word that was in the beginning is Jesus Christ, and the Word is our living Scripture, I would like us to enter into the Word together every day of this month in the anticipation of seeing Christmas again through the eyes of our children. In our busy lives, this pause will help ground us with the fullness of why we celebrate Christmas.

Parents, I have been intentional in selecting Bible verses that help build from the prophecy to the birth of Jesus. One of the greatest gifts we can share with our children is a love of reading our Scripture. Pick the time that works best for your family. We will choose to do this each night at bedtime. If you think of a Christmas Carol that goes well with the song, or a story, may we share the true gift of Christmas of a great light. Also, we will be regularly blogging and sharing thoughts on these readings on our website throughout Advent. Please join in and share in the conversation at www.spiritoflifeav.org.

Merry Christmas, Pastor Rob

Suggested daily readings are
on page 2



1-Dec Isaiah 2: 1-5
2-Dec Isaiah 7: 13-14
3-Dec Isaiah 9: 1-7
4-Dec Isaiah 11: 1-3, 6-9
5-Dec Isaiah 25: 6-9
6-Dec Isaiah 35: 1-10
7-Dec Isaiah 49: 1-2
8-Dec Jeremiah 1: 4-5
9-Dec Psalm 139
10-Dec Isaiah 60: 1-5
11-Dec Luke 1: 5-25
12-Dec Luke 1: 26-38
13-Dec Luke 1: 39-56
14-Dec Luke 1: 57-66
15-Dec Isaiah 40: 1-5
16-Dec Luke 1: 67-80
17-Dec Matthew 1: 18-24
18-Dec Luke 2: 1-5
19-Dec John 1: 1-9
20-Dec John 8: 12
21-Dec Isaiah 42: 1-9
22-Dec Micah 5: 2-5a
23-Dec Zechariah 9: 9-17
24-Dec Luke 2: 6-20
25-Dec Luke 2: 21-38 and Luke 1: 31-32
26-Dec Matthew 2: 1-12
27-Dec Matthew 2: 13-23 and Luke 2: 39-40
28-Dec 1 John 3: 1-3
29-Dec 1 John 4: 9 and John 3: 17
30-Dec 1 Peter 2: 2-3
31-Dec Colossians 3: 16-17

Nurture
Sign of Emmanuel
A coming king.
A peaceful kingdom.
Passionate waiting.
Prepare for God's reign.
You are God's beloved child.
"Before I formed you—I knew you."
You are beautiful.
Your light has come.
Song of Zechariah
Angel comes to Mary
Mary shares good news
Prepare the way of the Lord.
(Prepare the way)
Song of Zechariah
Angel tells Joseph
Mary and Joseph travel to Bethlehem
Light shines in the darkness
Light of the world
A light to the nations.
Prophecy of one of peace
The coming ruler.
Jesus is Born
Emmanuel
Wise men follow a star.
Herod becomes angry
Children of God
Why did Jesus come?
Spiritual Milk
New Life.

"Cocoa & Carols"



Mark your calendars to join us
Saturday, December 14, 3:00 p.m.

We'll enjoy lots of Christmas music with our
choir, bells & even the children singing!

Cocoa & Cookies will be served
immediately following.



December 2013

12/01 Lisa Smith
12/02 Irene Andersen
12/10 Matt Raatz
Tyler Fried
12/17 Chaz Dufon III
12/30 Michael Tisland

**Spiritcare
Prayer Team**
call 1.507.263.5975
952.423.2212 (office)

**DECEMBER
CAREGIVER**
Sue Mayers



CARD CARE LIST REMINDER :

If you had someone on Loving Community Ministry Team's Card Care List in November 2013 and wish them to remain on in December, please resubmit them with an update to Ruth Shepard at:

rshepard2@frontier.com or 507.263.5975 or by filling out a blue Prayer Request card during worship.

*BE SURE TO CHECK THE APPROPRIATE BOX(S) ON THE LEFT SIDE OF THE CARD.

*NOTE: Each month our Card Care List starts with new and updated submissions only.

ATTENTION MEN ONLY

Inviting all men! Our next **Men's Breakfast** is **Saturday, December 7, 8am.** Come on out to the **Long Branch in downtown Farmington** (309 3rd Street). We have invited the men of the Farmington Presbyterian Church to join us. Note the later start time to encourage more men to join us! RSVP to Bob Shepard at 507.263.5975 or via email at shepardsprairie@gmail.com.

In the spirit of joy and giving appropriate to the season of Advent, the **Community Service/Mission team and the Deacons** are again working together to prepare and send or deliver Christmas cookies to our college students, and less mobile members of our congregation. If you would like to participate, bake your favorite Christmas cookies and bring them to church **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8**, and help us after worship to pack boxes to send to our college students, and plate cookies to deliver to members of our congregation. We have 24 people to surprise with treats! If you have questions, contact Denise Lewis. A light lunch will be provided.



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Dates to remember

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Alice Gracek

**We'll have a very special Christmas Eve with the choir
performing pieces from their cantata entitled**

"A Garland of Carols"

Bring your family December 24, 7-8 p.m.

Communion will be served.



Youth News

Final Youth Group Meeting for Fall 2013: December 8

Youth Group will meet in the youth room right after church.

Wednesday nights we share in a meal at 6:00 p.m. followed by youth gathering and confirmation.

Baked Potato Fundraiser News: The youth group would like to THANK everyone who participated in the Bingo and Baked Potato fundraiser. It was a lot of fun and we raised over \$300! We served 50+ baked potatoes and had some great bingo games. Special thanks to Brian Gracek for providing his awesome chili.

The youth group also had a fantastic time at Sky Zone. There were 15 trampoline jumpers & 2 observers, ranging from age 4 to 40-something!

Our next event is the SLEIGH RIDE AND BONFIRE at Bunker Park Stables on **Saturday, December 7.**

Cost is \$10/person. Family & friends are invited to join the youth. Sign up, fee and signed parental release are due Sunday, 12/01/13 to Sayra Maberry. We'll be leaving the church at 2pm sharp. Bring warm clothing, blankets and campfire food to share. Also, bring a thermos of cider or hot chocolate.

Come on out for a fun and memorable family event! Address: 550 Bunker Lake Blvd NW Andover, MN

m&m

MEET IN THE MIDDLE *Spirit of Life's mid-week ministry*

Meeting in the middle of the week; meeting between generations; meeting to share our faith!

*Wednesdays are filled with excitement, spiritual highs, companionship,
and a warm meal to keep the spirit moving at Spirit of Life Presbyterian Church.*

- ⇒ **School Age children** are welcome to come after school (2:30pm).
- ⇒ They will find: Snacks, activities, time to complete homework, a community building time and at 6pm a family style meal will be served.
- ⇒ **Youth** are also welcome after school (2:30pm). Youth programs (youth group & confirmation class) will begin after the 6pm meal.
 - ◇ 6:30-7pm community building together
 - ◇ 7-8pm Confirmation & youth group break out
- ⇒ **Adults** are welcome to come and participate in any of the children's / youth activities. They are welcome to stay for the meal and be a mentor for our children.

Remaining 2013 dates are Dec 4, 11, & 18.

2014 dates include Jan 8, 15, 22, 29, Feb 5, 12, 19, 26, Mar 12, 19, 26, April 2, & 9.



Operation Christmas Child

Thank you to everyone that donated a filled shoebox for OCC! The shoeboxes will be made ready for shipping on **DECEMBER 17 FROM 6-10PM** at the OCC site in Bloomington. *Spirit of Life* has signed up for twenty spots. Look for a sign up sheet or talk to Julie Raatz if you can help.

WEDNESDAY CLUB

Christmas Potluck

12:00 p.m., December 11, Everyone bring a dish to share for the noon potluck. Following our meal, we'll join in singing Christmas carols with Kate Olaf accompanying.

A **Presentation on ADHD, Autism, and Other Disabilities** will occur at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church on Monday, December 2, at 6:45 PM. Location: 12650 Johnny Cake Ridge Road, Apple Valley, MN. The phone number is 952.432.6351. FREE- register at the door. Come & learn about the latest news & what works for adults and children. Go to www.sotv.org/events for further information.

VITAL SIGNS...for October

| WEEK | ATTENDANCE | | (+/-) | CONTRIBUTIONS | | (+/-) |
|------------------------------------|------------|-----------|-------|--------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| | 2012 | 2013 | | 2012 | 2013 | |
| Week 1 | 51 | 62 | +11 | \$2,169.25 | \$3,724.85 | \$1555.60 |
| Week 2 | 50 | 55 | +5 | \$2,621.75 | \$1,866.00 | (\$755.75) |
| Week 3 | 50 | 48 | -2 | \$2,587.00 | \$2,695.00 | \$108.00 |
| Week 4 | 62 | 71 | +9 | \$3,336.00 | \$1,138.00 | (\$2,198.00) |
| AVERAGE ATTENDANCE / TOTALS | 53 | 59 | | \$10,714.00 | \$9,423.85 | (\$1,290.15) |

For questions in regard to the church finances or your personal giving statement, please contact our financial team: Barb Ostlund—Treasurer or Steve Raatz—Financial Secretary

**We had 14 volunteers at
Feed My Starving Children
on October 12!**



Thanks from the Community Service Team:

The Community Service Team would like to extend its sincere thanks to *Spirit of Life* for the generous donations to support Evelin and Luis for one year each. They are members of the **MATSIKO WORLD ORPHANS CHOIR** who visited with us last July. Our support goes to pay for schooling, supplies and other necessities when they go back to their country. Both Evelin and Luis are from Peru and live in challenging family situations. Pictures of both kids are hanging on the bulletin board in the narthex, along with some facts about each of them. Please take a minute to read about them. The Matsiko organization has asked that we not send gifts as they have to pay shipping costs and import taxes to send them and often times the items are stolen and never get to the kids. We are encouraged to send cards and letters through the Matsiko organization. They mail them to the Matsiko offices in each country twice a year. **You never cease to amaze me with your generosity and love!** Thank you for sharing your love and the love of God with Evelin and Luis.

Crop Walk Final Report

The wrap up for the South of the River Crop Walk shows a total raised of \$13,607 with *Spirit of Life* raising \$2,000 of that total. A big THANK YOU to our Crop Walk team!! The date for next year is set for October 12, 2014, and the walk will again be hosted by St. James Lutheran Church in Burnsville.

2013

Officers

Session

Rebecca Brandt
Brian Gracek
Leslie Hohmann
Karen Johnson
Marge Lewis
Denise Lewis
Julie Raatz
Peggy Roeske
Chris Sachs

Board of Deacons

Duane Brause
Pat Buchholz
Alice Gracek
Loretta Hunt
Jerry Johnson
Janna Warren-Perry

Treasurer

Barb Ostlund

Financial Secretary

Steve Raatz

Please contact the Clerk of Session, Karen Johnson, in regard to membership changes and any Session member with questions or concerns.

NEXT LEADERSHIP MEETINGS

DEACON MEETING

8:00 p.m. on
Thursday,
December 12,
2013

SESSION MEETING/

6:30 p.m. on
Thursday,
December 19,
2013

Spirit of Life Presbyterian Church Session Minutes – September 19, 2013

A quorum was present (7 of 9 Session members) for the Session meeting on September 19, 2013. Pastor Smith offered an opening prayer and devotion based on Roy Oldenburg's writing "Great Good Place, and Celebrating the Third Place". First place is home, second place is work, and the third place is the informal gathering place where we find belonging. Pastor Rob gave his report concerning many successful activities in August including Kid's Camp, hosting the Matsiko Orphan Choir, outdoor meal/worship and new pastor group. A new member class will be started in October. Minutes of the Aug 15 stated Session meeting were read and approved. Attendance was reviewed. Team Reports included the Christian Ed committee report on a successful start to the new Sunday school year with 25 students enrolled and an adult class also. The Wednesday after School program will begin Oct 23, 2013. Pastor Rob will be seeking volunteers for activity time, bible time and family meal time. Outreach committee report concerned press releases for CROP walk and Wednesday after school program. Worship and Music report concerned the Oct 6 World Communion Sunday, there will be a special collection, an international pot luck, and a baptism. Oct 13 will be tentatively a Jazz service followed by the Crop Walk. Advent will begin Dec 1, Carols and Cocoa will be Dec 14, and Christmas Eve service will be Dec 24 at 7:00 p.m. Community Service report concerned the ongoing harvesting of vegetables from the garden and delivery to Rosemount Food Shelf. Week of Community service will be held Oct 6-13 as an opportunity to serve our community in some way each day, including Oct 5 outdoor clean up, Oct 6 indoor clean up, Feed My Starving Children and the South of the River CROP walk. A fund will be set up for donations to help educate for one year a student from the Matsiko Orphan Choir. Stewardship committee reported on plans for the fall. Oct 27 will be a dinner for Session and Deacons, Nov 3 will be kick off Sunday and Nov 24 will be Consecration Sunday and Brunch. HUB report concerned the outdoor clean up on Oct 5, the tree trimming in Nov, the outdoor leaky faucet, the broken inside door lock, and a security door for the Montessori. Hub will also be looking into a different cleaning service and professional grade carpet cleaning. Personnel committee report concerned a first year review for Pastor Rob in Sept followed by reviews for Trista and Kate in Oct. We are also looking for volunteers to help with the nursery. Deacon's minutes submitted by Loretta Hunt were also reviewed.

Old Business included the mentoring to start with the new member class in Oct and the Confirmation class starting in Nov. The Deacons will be responsible for the care list of members and friends of the church. The Worship and Music committee will be responsible for setting up Communion leads, ushers, greeters, and lay leaders. The Deacons will be responsible for coffee and cookie hosts. The financial report was given by Barb Ostlund. We are \$17,000 under budget of that, \$13,600 is pledges. Pastor Rob will remind members to get up to date on their pledges. Our bank account has been converted to non-profit status with on line banking. The Session approved credit cards for Barb, Rob, and Shari. Concerns and joys of individuals were expressed and prayers were offered to close the meeting.

Clerk of Session, Karen Johnson

Spirit of Life Presbyterian Church Session Minutes – October 17, 2013

A quorum was present (9 of 9 Session members) for the Session meeting on October 17, 2013. Pastor Smith offered an opening prayer and devotion based on Psalm 36 and a blog titled "[achurchforstarvingartists](#)". Interesting tidbits from the blog were discussed. The financial report was presented by Barb Ostlund. It was moved, seconded and carried that we accept the financial report and have no change in the 2013 budget and acknowledge Barb Ostlund's comments that giving has been down. Pastor Rob gave his report. It was moved and seconded and carried that we register for "Camp in a van" for \$1000 plus mileage. It was suggested that we charge a small fee of maybe \$25 per child to help offset the cost of "Camp in a Van". We could have scholarship money for those who could not afford the \$25. Our first choice for date of "Camp in a Van" is June 22-27. Our second choice is July 6-11. Our third choice is June 15-20. It was suggested that the choir present Christmas music on Dec 22, 2013 for the final service at First Presbyterian at Farmington. Pastor Rob will check with Kate Olaf and the Farmington church to see if this will work. It was moved and seconded and carried that we use memorial funds and the Multi-Media System fund for purchasing hand held wireless and head set wireless microphones. Pastor Rob reminded Session members that Saturday, Dec 21, 2013 is the Session/Diacons Christmas party hosted by Pastor Rob and Lisa Smith. Minutes of the Sept 19 stated Session meeting were read and approved. Attendance was reviewed. Team Reports included the Christian Ed committee report. There was a discussion concerning funding for the Wednesday afterschool program M&M. Donation envelopes will be placed on the dinner tables. There was a discussion on advertising/marketing for M&M. We will put the plywood signs up on Pilot Knob Road advertising M&M. Outreach committee report was given by Peggy Roeske. No Session action was required. Worship and Music committee had no report. Community Service report was submitted by Chris Sachs. Julie Raatz added that we have collected enough donations to sponsor Evelin from the Matsiko World Orphan Children's Choir for one year and probably enough for another child also. No Session action was required. Finance Committee reported that the audit was conducted on Sept 21, 2013. More information was needed so there will be a full report in Nov. Stewardship committee report was given by Rebecca Brandt. There was no Session action required. HUB report was given by Denise Lewis. There was no Session action required. Personnel committee report was given by Julie Raatz reviewing Pastor Rob's review which was very positive. Deacon's report was submitted by Loretta Hunt, recording secretary for the Deacons. They met Oct 10, 2013. There was no Session action required.

Old Business The mentoring project will start with the new member class of Oct 2013. Confirmants will be asked to suggest 2-3 options for their mentors. Pastor Rob will confirm the mentors for both the new members and the confirmants. We discussed the care list of members and friends of the church and it was decided that only the Deacons would be responsible for contacting people on this list. We also discussed having Session members be responsible for one month of Communion lead. Worship and Music committee will be asked to come up with a plan for ushering, greeting, and Lay leaders. Deacons would still have the responsibility for coffee/cookie host. We discussed the Communion Schedule for 2014. It was moved, seconded and carried that we have communion on the first Sunday of each month and Maundy Thursday, Easter, and Christmas Eve and that the frequency of intinction or "in the seats" communion be referred to Worship and Music committee. New Business There was no new business. Concerns and joys of individuals were expressed and prayers were offered to close the meeting. Special E-vote Friday, Nov 1, 2013: Pastor Rob notified the Session members by e-mail that two Girl Scout troops had requested to meet at our church building beginning in November. It was moved, seconded and carried that we welcome the two Girl Scout troops to meet at our church. A donation of goods or services should be requested at the discretion of the HUB.

Clerk of Session, Karen Johnson

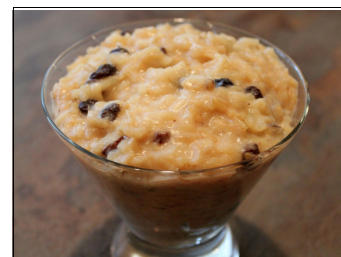


| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Sunday, December 8, 2013 Isa. 11: 1-10; Ps. 72: 1-7, 18-19 Rom. 15: 4-13; Matt. 3: 1-12</p> | <p>Sunday, December 1, 2013 Isa. 2: 1-5; Ps. 122; Rom. 13: 11-14 Matt. 24: 36-44</p> |
| <p>Sunday, December 22, 2013 Isa. 7: 10-16; Ps. 80: 1-7, 17-19 Rom. 1: 1-7; Matt. 1: 18-25</p> | <p>Sunday, December 15, 2013 Isa. 35: 1-10; Ps. 146: 5-10 or Luke 1: 46b-55; James 5: 7-10; Matt. 11: 2-11</p> |
| <p>Sunday, December 29, 2013 Isa. 63: 7-9; Ps. 148 Heb. 2: 10-18; matt. 2: 13-23</p> | |

SWEDISH RICE PUDDING WITH LINGONBERRIES submitted by Ruth Shepard

4 c. half and half
1 tsp. almond flavoring
3/4 c. long grain white rice
2 T. sugar
1 jar Lingonberries (FELIX brand, in a glass jar, are good to use for this.
Available at CUB)

1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 c. milk, warmed
2 extra large eggs, slightly beaten



Place half and half, rice, & salt in the top of a double boiler, cover. Place water in the bottom of double boiler & bring just to the simmering point. Cook over the simmering water stirring every 15 minutes until the rice is soft. Combine eggs, almond flavoring, & sugar. Whisk this while slowly pouring the warm milk into the mixture. Careful, a little at a time, fold the egg mixture into the cooked rice. Turn heat off & let set to cool. Chill until serving. Serve with the Lingonberries. I like to serve at room temp.

Communications Policy Statement

It is Spirit of Life's policy to...

- ▶ list names, and place photos of members associated with church events, in the newsletter and on the website.
- ▶ Spirit of Life also acknowledges birthdays (month & day) in the newsletter, during the member's birthday month.
- ▶ Finally, Spirit of Life plans to put a copy of the monthly newsletter on its website.

Any member who does not want his/her name, likeness, or birth month listed in these, or any other church publications, is requested to contact the church office with a formal request to keep their personal information confidential.

Send newsletter articles, announcements, or info to: spirit@spiritoflifeav.org or drop them in the Faith Flight mailbox in the office.

SPIRIT OF LIFE STAFF

PASTOR Rev. Rob Smith:
pastorrob@spiritoflifeav.org - 952.807.4413

OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR Shari Shaw:
spirit@spiritoflifeav.org - 952.423.2212

MUSIC DIRECTOR Kate Olaf:
music@spiritoflifeav.org - 952.423.2212

NURSERY CAREGIVER Trista Hansen:
spirit@spiritoflifeav.org - 952.423.2212

OFFICE spirit@spiritoflifeav.org / www.spiritoflifeav.org
14401 Pilot Knob Road / Apple Valley, MN 55124
952.423.2212

Office Hours

10:00am—3:00pm M-Th

Pastor

10:00 AM—3:00 PM TU

10:00 AM—3:00 PM W

10:00 AM—3:00 PM TH

FOR PASTORAL EMERGENICES
PLEASE CALL 952.807.4413



**NEWSLETTER
DEADLINE**

10 PM ~ SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15TH
for the January issue.



14401 Pilot Knob Road
Apple Valley, MN 55124

Office 952.423.2212

spirit@spiritoflifeav.org
www.spiritoflifeav.org

Mission Statement

Spirit of Life Presbyterian Church, created by the Holy Spirit, seeks to be a loving community where all can grow in faith while serving and worshipping the God made known in Jesus Christ.

DATES TO REMEMBER

- Dec 1 "Hanging of the Greens"
- Dec 2 8:30AM *New Sociables*
6:45PM ADHD, Autism, and Other Disabilities Presentation @ Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran
- Dec 4 **M & M /6PM Family Style Dinner / Youth**
- Dec 7 8AM Men's Breakfast @ Long Branch, Farmington
2PM Youth Sleigh Ride & Bonfire @ Bunker Park Stables, Andover
- Dec 8 6PM Small Group Meeting
- Dec 11 12PM Wednesday Club Potluck
M & M /6PM Family Style Dinner / Youth
- Dec 12 8PM Deacon meeting
- Dec 14 **3PM Cocoa & Carols**
- Dec 17 6PM Operation Christmas Child
- Dec 18 **M & M /6PM Family Style Dinner / Youth**
- Dec 19 12PM Pastor Group Meeting
6:30PM Session meeting
- Dec 22 6PM Small Group Meeting
- Dec 24 **7PM Christmas Eve Contata and Communion Service**

Weekly Events

- | | | | |
|------------|----------------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| MON | Cubs @ 6PM | TUES | Scouts @ 6:30PM |
| WED | 6:30PM BELLS, Scouts | 7:30PM CHOIR | THURS Cubs @ 6PM |

Sunday Worship 10:00 AM

Sunday School/Youth Group/Adult Ed 11:10 AM (September thru May)
* Nursery provided during Worship & Education time