

Mountain Lutheran Church

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Ralph B. Herman and Ginger DuMars, Pastors

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December 2009

From Pastor Ralph

Advent

We recognize that our lives are to be lived in Advent, in preparation of this second coming and we wait with the certainty that God will come to us. The word *advent* means *to come*, and Advent is a time to prepare for Christ's coming, both in his birth, and for eternity. Because we also celebrate Easter, we need not fear.

THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD

God is a powerful speaker. Many people are good at talking, even persuasive in their testimony, but God uses words like no one can. God is not limited to description by language. God acts through speaking. God *is* in words. In holy speech worlds are created, life begins and we are saved.

At Christmas we have a new word from God, one which God had spoken many times before. Here is the Word made flesh, God-with-us, wrapped in a blanket for all to see, to hear, to experience. This is the Word of Life for all to hear, uttered in a language everyone can understand. It is a word that ears may

miss and minds may not comprehend, but it is spoken to the soul, where it rests.

Of all the gifts of Christmas, the most important and most precious is the one carried on the breath of God: Jesus, Emmanuel.

Christmas Eve Worship

Our Christmas Eve (December 24th) candlelight communion worship service will at 7:00 p.m. It will be an informal service including many of your favorite Christmas carols. Invite your friends to attend with you.

Church Council Members:

President	Stan Bruederle
Vice President	Dorine Smith
Secretary	Mary Bruha
Treasurer	Elden Bruha
Financial Secretary	Tom Carman
Member at Large	Jean Cox
Pastors	Ralph Herman Ginger DuMars

Our Volunteer chairpersons for this year are:

Web Master	Tom Carman
Altar Guild	Delores Van Brocklin
Publicity	Dorothy Parker
Prayer Chain	Judy Basey
Newsletter Editor	Mary Bruederle
Refreshments	Judy Basey
Music & Worship	Tom Carman
Property Manager	Bob Smith



**Pr. Ginger's
Advent/Christmas News,
2009**

Like Mary – preparing for the birth of Jesus – let us proclaim God's greatness & mercy! May our spirits rejoice in God sending us God's Son as our Savior! Let us prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus & anticipate his coming again! Our Advent candles & banners & Gospel lessons remind us to Be Alert & Watch, to Repent & Prepare, to Share & Rejoice! Hopefully, you will take some special time in this busy season for Prayer & Meditation, Bible Study & Worship. We celebrate Advent with 4 Sunday Morning Worship Services & 1 Wed. Eve. Soup Supper & Nativity movie (Dec. 2). Thank You, Tom Carman & David Wilkinson for setting up the movie & equipment to show it. Thanks to everyone who brought Soup & Bread & who set up & cleaned up! Prayer & Bible Study sessions on Paul's Letter to the Romans are on the 1st & 3rd Thursdays each month (Dec. 3 & 17, Jan. 7 & 21) at 1:00 p.m. Our Traditional Candle Light Christmas Eve Service is at 7:00 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 24. We'll continue our Christmas celebrations on Sunday, Dec. 27 & Jan. 3! Epiphany begins on Wed., Jan. 6. Invite your family & friends to our Advent &

Christmas services! And, PRAY OFTEN! The world & its people & leaders need our prayers! God wants to hear our prayers, and many people are blessed by our prayers!

My favorite prayers are ones of Giving Thanks! I thank God for ALL of you as members & friends of Mountain Lutheran Church (MLC)! I thank YOU for your generous support of Mountain Lutheran & our ministries & missions – with your time & talents, skills & with your financial support! We have dedicated volunteers who do most of the work that many churches pay a full time administrative assistant to do. Your pastors do much of the administrative work too. We are very grateful for MLC's Officers & Council & for our Stewardship Temple Talk speakers. We were all inspired in Oct. & Nov. by Stan Bruederle & Shirley Carman, Brenda Sweeney & Bob DuMars, Judi Wilkinson & Elden Bruha! THANK YOU! Thanks also to everyone who gave an "Estimate of Giving" card for 2010. If you haven't given MLC your "Estimate of Giving"/ pledge card for 2010 – you can still do so! Extra cards are in the Ushers' Desk in the Narthex (Entrance Hall). Thanks also to Tom Carman & Elden Bruha & Bob Smith for assisting me with our **"Thank the Lord & Sing His Praise"** Stewardship program! 10 members from MLC joined Mount Calvary Lutheran members for a delightful "Giving Thanks" Pot Luck & Turkey dinner at Mount Calvary in Sugar Pine on Nov. 22! What a nice way to start Thanksgiving Week & to conclude our Stewardship Emphasis for this year!

Thank You, Bob Wilkinson & Bob Smith, for serving as Property Chairmen this

year. Many projects have been accomplished & longer term projects begun. Of course, the roof & its leaks continue to be a challenge – on occasion! Thanks to numerous volunteers who have helped and/ or completed projects! **Thanks to our Altar Care Ladies** for changing seasonal & special Sunday paraments & for preparing the Communion elements in their proper containers for each Sunday & for cleaning up.



Thanks also to Anna Bramhall & Kay Smith for participating with me in our Sierra San Joaquin Conference & District E meetings in Fresno on Saturday, Oct. 24! With the long drive only 5 of our 10 conference churches attended. We voted against combining Conference & District meetings in the future. Our Conference nominated Shirley & Tom Carman as Voting Members for the next ELCA Church Wide (Nation Wide) Assembly in Orlando, FL. in Aug., 2011. The ELCA pays for most of their expenses. We look forward

to local representation at the next Church Wide Assembly! I also suggested Bethany Wilkinson as a Youth (ages 16-30) Voting Member, but she'll be leaving for college at the time of the assembly – so she declined.

THRIVENT NEWS – Tuolumne Co. Chapter's Thrivent Financial Members held Chapter Leader/ Officer Elections in Nov. & elected Bob Anderson (St. Matthew L.C.) as President, Lee Beam (Mount Calvary L.C.) as V.P., Mary Bruha (MLC) as Financial Director, Audrey Fiance (MLC) as Records Director & Pr. Ginger DuMars (MLC) as Congregational Service Team Director. As a chapter & as 3 congregations we have completed our projects for the year raising & donating money & many hours of labors of love for a variety of non profit organizations & good causes: Back to School kits, Youth & Sr. programs (Boutiques & Bake Sales & Sees Candy Sales), NAMI (National Association for the Mentally Ill) Horse Therapy & Camp Life at Camp Tuolumne Trails for special medical needs children & young adults, Art Quotient (promoting the art work of children & young artists) with tee shirt sales at Groveland Car Show, Groveland's Breakfast program, Educational Events, etc. PLUS our 3 congregational building programs. Look for

changes regarding congregational (or individual?) matching funds soon – as soon as we are told about these changes.

DATES to NOTE: *Advent & Christmas Sundays - Worship at 10:00 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 6* at 11:30 a.m. – Council Meeting



Sunday, Dec. 13 at 11:00 a.m. – Congregational Meeting, followed by refreshments & decorating the church's Christmas tree, window sills, chancel/ altar area. If you would like to loan the church a **POINSETTIA** plant or 2, please bring them on Sun., Dec. 13, Thurs., Dec. 17 (1:00 – 3:30) or Sun., Dec. 20. You may take them home after Christmas Eve's Service on Dec. 24 or on the Sundays after Christmas. **THANK YOU!**

Friday & Sat. Eve. (Dec. 11 & 12) at 7:00 – Pine Cone Singers' Concert at Evan. Free Church. Sunday Afternoon Concert on Dec. 13 is at 2:00.

Sat., Dec. 19 at 4:00 p.m. – Community Musical Christmas program at Groveland's 7th Day Adventist Church, 19585 Elder Lane.

Sun. Eve., Dec. 20 at 6:00 – Christmas program at First Baptist Church, 11347 Wards Ferry Rd., BOF.

Thursday, Dec. 24 at 7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve., Candle Light Service at MLC.



Wesołych Świąt Bożego Narodzenia

May God Bless You & Your Loved Ones with God's Eternal Light & Love during this Christmas Season & Always!
Shalom – Pastor Ginger DuMars





OPEN LETTER FROM BISHOP MARK HANSON

Advent 2009

Sisters and brothers in Christ
of the Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America,

I greet you with the words of
the apostle Paul to the
Romans: "Therefore, since we
are justified by faith, we have
peace with God through our
Lord Jesus Christ, through
whom we have obtained
access to this grace in which
we stand" (Romans 5:1-2a).

Where does the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America
(ELCA) stand today? We
stand together in God's grace,
but we are not standing still.
We proclaim Jesus Christ and
are fully engaged in this
mission by actively caring for
the world that God loves.
God's mission is serious work
that calls for serious
commitment. We bring all
that we are -- especially our
rich diversity, our shared
tradition and even our
disagreements -- in service of
God's mission.

We go forward in this mission
trusting that "God's love has
been poured into our hearts
through the Holy Spirit that
has been given to us"
(Romans 5:5b). Evidence
abounds of the Holy Spirit
being poured out upon us and
through us:

- [Emmanuel Lutheran Church](#) in Naples, Fla., recently purchased land for a new ministry center. They also convened ELCA partners, seminaries, synods, and churchwide staff to envision together a vibrant, evangelical and multicultural Lutheran presence in southwestern Florida.
- Our new directors of evangelical mission, based in synods, are trained and ready to serve ELCA congregations that they might continue to grow as [evangelical centers for mission](#).
- The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Malawi told Global Mission colleagues [traveling in the region](#) that they are ready to deepen their relationship with the ELCA so that together we can more generously and faithfully respond to [malaria, HIV and AIDS](#). Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl, ELCA coordinator for the Lutheran Malaria Initiative, writes, "The ELCA, especially through the Lutheran Malaria Initiative, will be part of a movement that changes the world. It's certainly going to change Malawi."
 - In summer 2009, 37,000 youth, young adults and adult leaders attended the [ELCA Youth Gathering](#) in New Orleans. They spread throughout the city, wearing orange t-shirts in a witness of service that touched the hearts of residents and has them talking still.
 - [ELCA chaplains](#) Michael Lembke, Richard Brunk and Paul Dirksmeyer bore witness to God's mercy at Fort Hood, Texas. They ministered to families, friends and an entire nation grieving the tragic shootings at the nation's largest military base.

These are just a few examples. Think of the signs of the Holy Spirit being poured out in your life and in your congregation! Thanks be to God for this continued outpouring of the Spirit

among us.

When the ELCA Church Council faced the reality of reduced financial resources for mission, it made a difficult but necessary 10 percent [budget reduction](#). The decision, however, does not diminish our resolve and commitment to engage together in God's mission for the life of the world.

We will engage Christ's mission with everyone who stands together in God's grace, using the rich gifts that the Holy Spirit has poured into our lives:

- Together we will proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord in worship spaces and workplaces, in [online conversations](#) and around kitchen tables.
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- Together we will develop [new ministries](#) in every synod in multicultural communities and among people [living in deep poverty](#).
- Together we will raise up and welcome faithful, wise and courageous leaders by sustaining vital and creative [seminaries](#) and [campus ministries](#).
- Together we will send [missionaries](#) to accompany new and growing Lutheran

churches throughout the world.

I invite you to deepen this conversation with me in an online town hall forum on Sunday, December 6, at 4:30 p.m. (CST); check www.elca.org for more details.

The apostle Paul wrote that where the Holy Spirit is poured out upon us, hope abounds and hope does not disappoint us (Romans 5:4-5). What a wonderful promise this is as we now enter the season of Advent! With our hope in Christ, we face the future together as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, serving the world that God so loves.

Amen. Come Lord Jesus!

Mark S. Hanson
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church
in America



President's Message

God's blessings, and wishing everyone a joyous Christmas season.

I think it is a good time to look back at our goals and accomplishments for the last year. The Church Council set a number of goals for this year. Two of these were to become a full status organized congregation and to update our constitution and by-laws. Our constitution was last updated in 2000. We became a full status organized church on April 11, 2009 at a special service held at Mountain Lutheran Church presided over by Bishop Holmerud. The updating of the church constitution and by-laws is well underway by a committee chaired by Audrey Fiance and supported by committee members Pastor Ginger, Mary Bruha, and myself. This committee's work will continue into 2010.

Finally, work on the church property progressed under the able direction of Bob Wilkinson and now under Bob Smith. We have a new memorial garden, and have performed needed repairs on the roof. We are also making progress on a new church sign, which needs county approval before we can start work on it, and a shed to cover exposed water pipes.

Stan Bruederle

December 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3 1PM Bible Study- Book of Romans	4	5
6 10AM Worship 11:30 Council Meeting	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 10AMWorship 11 Congregational Meeting/Refreshments & Church Decorating Bring Poinsettias	14	15	16	17 1PM Bible Study- Book of Romans 1-3:30 Bring Poinsettias	18	19 4PM –Community Musical Christmas Program—7 th Day Adventist Church, 19585 Elder Lane
20 10AM Worship Bring Poinsettias 6PM First Baptist Church Christmas Program-BOF	21	22	23	24 Christmas Eve 7:00 PM Candlelight Service	25 Christmas Day	26
27 10AM Worship	28	29	30	31		Jan. 3 (Sunday) Council Installed Council Lunch @ DuMars- Potluck

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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