



Words of Peace

December 2011

Peace Lutheran Church

A congregation of Lutheran
Congregations in Mission for Christ

203 N. Jackrabbit Lane
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Pastor Bill Duffey
Pastor Bob Coughlin

Bruce Sorensen
Council President

Sandra Joubert
Church Office

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

Wednesday's - ADVENT SOUP & BREAD AND WORSHIP -

Starting on the 1st Wednesday in Advent, November 30th, we will have a Soup & Bread meal at 6:15 p.m. Following the meal at 7:00 p.m. there will be an Advent evening worship service – The Holden Evening Prayer. Please come and join us. There are sign-up sheets in the Fellowship Hall to provide soup and bread.



December 11, Sunday – Caroling –

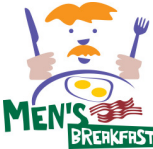
meet at the church at 5 p.m. to carpool. We will meet at Peace at 5 p.m. to carpool into Bozeman and around Belgrade for a caroling party. Afterwards, we will all warm up with refreshments. Everyone that enjoys singing and/or just wants to share some Christmas joy is encouraged to join us. Families are welcome!

December 18, Sunday - Breakfast to benefit family promise -

The youth of Peace Lutheran Church are going Christmas shopping for a family in Family Promise. To finance the shopping trip, on Sunday, December 18th the youth will be cooking breakfast. The breakfast will be served during Fellowship. A free-will offering will be collected.

December 24th, Saturday, Christmas Eve,

Men's Christmas Breakfast – 9 to 10 a.m. Come and enjoy a wonderful breakfast put together by the Wednesday Men's Breakfast group. Ladies – the men are doing the cooking, so come and enjoy.



Worship

Barn Service - 6 p.m.

Peace Lutheran Church has a very special service on Christmas Eve. It is held in Bruce and Virginia Sorensen's barn on Bolinger Road. The barn is not heated and everyone stands or sits on straw bales, so dress warm. (From Peace Lutheran Church turn right on Jackrabbit Lane and right on Main Street/ Frontage Road. Turn right on Bolinger and left at the second driveway next to the trailer. Parking is in the field next to Sorensen's home. If you have any questions, please call the church office at 388-1358.)



Candle-Light Service at Peace- 8 p.m.

December 25th, Sunday- Christmas Day Worship – 9 a.m.

A Word from our pastors



Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I am sure that some of you have experienced the same feelings that I am having right now: “Where has time flown to so quickly this month?” It seems that I just finished writing November’s Newsletter Article and here it is time to write one for December.

In this last month we have “Fallen Back” to regular time, we have cooked over 1400 lefse rounds, we have held the Thanksgiving Eve Service with many pies shared, we have begun our Advent Suppers and Services on Wednesday evenings, the Sunday School Classes, the Choir, the Altar Guild, and many other church groups have been preparing for the coming Christmas Services which will come very quickly for all of us if time flies past as quickly as it seems to have in November.

The First Sunday of Advent was on November 27 this year, so the first three Sundays in December are the **Second, Third, and Fourth Sundays of Advent** with **Christmas Day** on Sunday as well this year.

The Season of Advent is the Beginning of the New Calendar Year for the Church.

From the Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church comes the following definition of Advent:

***Advent** (Lat. Adventus, ‘Coming’, i.e. of Christ). The ecclesiastical season immediately before Christmas. In Western Christendom Advent Sunday i.e. the first day of Advent, is the Sunday nearest to St. Andrew’s Day (Nov. 30). Four Sundays in Advent thus precede Christmas Day. ... The season is observed as a time of preparation not only for Christmas but also for the Second Coming of Christ as Judge at the Last Day.*

The color the Season of Advent is **BLUE**, which is the color of **HOPE**, HOPE for the coming of The Christ Child born in a stable in Bethlehem and HOPE for the coming of The Christ as Judge of the whole world at the end of all things.

During the Wednesday Advent Services we use Marty Haugen’s **Holden Evening Prayer**, which is filled with great songs that carry the message of HOPE to our hearts and our minds. It closes with this final blessing:

May God, Creator bless us and keep us,
may Christ be ever light for our lives.
May the Spirit of Love be our guide and path,
for all of our days. Amen.

Advent Season will fly by and Christmas Eve will be here in the blink of an eye I am sure.

We will hold the Acoustic Service at 6:00 PM in Dr. Sorensen’s Barn this year; it will be good to return to that rustic setting once again.

The Traditional Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will be in the Sanctuary at 8:00 PM.

December 25th’s Christmas Morning Service will be in the Sanctuary at 9:00 AM and falls on Sunday, so that will be a little different this year.

May the Season of Advent and the Season of Christmas bring you Joy, Hope, and Love!!!

Pastor Bill

Dear Saints at Peace Lutheran,

It won't be long until you notice some things have changed at PLC. There will be more lights in and around the church, a tree in the sanctuary, ceramic figures of an old barn scene, candles encircled around a wreath, and kids dressed as angels and friendly beasts. All of it plays a part to help us get ready for the celebration of God's main event – the arrival of His Son.



This year, the celebration of Advent is meant to prepare us for Christmas by opening our ears to the message that God has spoken and continues to speak to the world. Each Sunday, as another candle is lit around the wreath, the choir will summon us to:

*Listen to the angels, hear the message they bring;
Telling the news of a coming King.
Filling the world with hope and good cheer.
Jesus, Emmanuel, God is near.*

The gospel message is that our God is not far off, but is near to us – a reality that is reflected in His name “Emmanuel”. This is good news because we don't have to reach for Him. It is God who reaches down for us, a belief unique to Christianity among all major religions of the world. He comes to us and He speaks to us. Not just two thousand years ago in the midst of a smelly barn, but today in the middle of our hurried and chaotic lives. Today, in a time of economic struggle, a time of relational strife, a time of global uncertainties.

Advent is a chance to hear again the messages of hope, of wonder and of love that we so desperately need in our world today. Hope offered through Jesus Christ, the hope of a world in need. Wonder in the Christmas story of God's promise fulfilled. Amazing love seen in the birth of a tiny, fragile baby - God's only Son sent for you and for me.

Where do you need hope this season? How does it help you to know that God is near?

Listen to the angels.

To help us listen, we have an Advent service on Wednesday evenings. It is a beautiful portrayal of expectant preparation of hearts ready to receive what God has promised. So, come join us for hot soup and warm bread supper provided by volunteers. Then as we gather for a time of reflective worship as we listen together as a community of faith.

Who knows what we'll hear?

God is near,
Pastor Bob



December

Ministry

Teams

	9:00 a.m.
December 4 2nd Sunday in Advent	<i>Evangelical Lutheran Worship #3</i>
Organ	<i>Karen Duffey</i>
Acolyte	<i>Luke Simonson</i>
Lector/Usher/ Refreshments	<i>Michael & Joy Spinella Eric & Connie Holton</i>
December 11 3rd Sunday in Advent	<i>We Bring Our Gifts (Rhythm & Blues)</i>
Piano	<i>Virginia Sorensen</i>
Acolyte	<i>Hudson Smith</i>
Lector/Usher/ Refreshments	<i>Heather Geiger & Steve, DeAnne, Hudson & Kaiana Smth</i>
December 18 4th Sunday in Advent	<i>Evangelical Lutheran Worship #10</i>
Piano	
Acolyte	<i>Liane Pipinich</i>
Lector/Usher	<i>Jeff, Kris, Dylan, Chase & Stara Bell John & Wynne Gillis</i>
Breakfast <i>Freewill offering for Family Promise Christmas Gifts</i>	<i>Peace Lutheran Youth</i>
December 24 Christmas Eve	
Barn Service – 6 p.m.	<i>Bruce & Virginia Sorensen</i>
Candlelight Service – 8 p.m.	<i>Jackie Currey, Piano Karen Duffey, Organ</i>
Acolyte	<i>Chase Bell & Nathan Ross</i>
Lector/Usher	<i>Dave, Lori, Amy & Tara Lanzendorf</i>
December 25 Nativity of our Lord	
Piano	<i>Virginia Sorensen</i>
Acolyte	<i>Mathew Mitchell</i>
Lector/Usher/ Refreshments	<i>Kathryn & Karly Jordan Bruce & Virginia Sorensen</i>
Council for December	<i>Debra Briggs, John Gillis & Tim Pipinich</i>
Offering Counters for December	<i>Lisa Duffey & Bruce Sorensen</i>
Altar Guild for December	<i>Heather Geiger, Marilyn Megaard & Jinx Sorensen</i>

DECEMBER 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			November 30 6:30 a.m. Men's Breakfast 12:30 p.m. Peace Re-Piecers 3:30 p.m. Peacemakers (Grade 4-6) 6:15 p.m. Advent Soup Suppers 7:00 p.m. Advent Worship Service 6:30 p.m. PLYO (High School) & TOPS (Middle School) 8:00 p.m. 10 th Grade Confirmation	1	2	3 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. 7 th Day Adventist
4 2nd Sunday in Advent 9:00 a.m. Evangelical Lutheran Worship #3 Baptism of Kameron Kyle Sando 10:00 a.m. Coffee & Fellowship 10:30 a.m. Sunday School & Adult Forum 11:30 p.m. Worship at New Hope in Townsend 7:00 p.m. Choir	5 PASTOR'S DAY OFF Manic Monday Noon Lunch for Grades 9-12	6 11:00 a.m. Staff Meeting 1:30 p.m. Crossways Bible Study 7:00 p.m. Music Jam 7:00 p.m. 7 th Day Prayer	7 6:30 a.m. Men's Breakfast 12:30 p.m. Peace Re-Piecers 1:30 p.m. Belgrade Early Release 6:15 p.m. Advent Soup Suppers 7:00 p.m. Advent Worship Service 6:30 p.m. PLYO (High School) & TOPS (Middle School) 7:00 p.m. 8 th & 9 th Grade Confirm 8:00 p.m. 10 th Grade Confirmation	8 7:00 p.m. Council	9	10 9:30 a.m. 7 th Day Adventist
11 3rd Sunday in Advent 9:00 a.m. We Bring Our Gifts (Rhythm & Blues) Coffee & Fellowship 10:00 a.m. Sunday School & Adult Forum 11:30 a.m. Worship at New Hope in Townsend 5:00 p.m. Carolling - meet at church to carpool	12 PASTOR'S DAY OFF Manic Monday Noon Lunch for Grades 9-12	13 11:00 a.m. Staff Meeting 1:30 p.m. Crossways Bible Study 7:00 p.m. Worship Committee 8:00 p.m. Music Jam 7:00 p.m. 7 th Day Prayer	14 6:30 a.m. Men's Breakfast 12:30 p.m. Peace Re-Piecers 3:30 p.m. Peacemakers (Grade 4-6) 6:15 p.m. Advent Soup Suppers 7:00 p.m. Advent Worship Service 6:30 p.m. PLYO (High School) & TOPS (Middle School) 7:00 p.m. 8 th & 9 th Grade Confirm 8:00 p.m. 10 th Grade Confirmation	15	16	17 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. 7 th Day Adventist
18 4th Sunday in Advent 9:00 a.m. Evangelical Lutheran Worship #10 10:00 a.m. Youth Breakfast for Congregation Freewill offering - Money benefits Christmas Shopping for Family Promise family Sunday School 11:30 p.m. Worship at New Hope in Townsend 7:00 p.m. Choir	19 PASTOR'S DAY OFF Manic Monday Noon Lunch for Grades 9-12 Newsletter Articles Due	20 11:00 a.m. Staff Meeting 1:30 p.m. Crossways Bible Study 7:00 p.m. Music Jam 7:00 p.m. 7 th Day Prayer	21 6:30 a.m. Men's Breakfast 12:00 noon Belgrade Ministerial Lunch 12:30 p.m. Peace Re-Piecers 3:30 p.m. Peacemakers (Grade 4-6) 6:15 p.m. Advent Soup Suppers 7:00 p.m. Advent Worship Service 6:30 p.m. PLYO (High School) & TOPS (Middle School) 7:00 p.m. 8 th & 9 th Grade Confirm 8:00 p.m. 10 th Grade Confirmation	22 Belgrade Early Release	23 No School in Belgrade Until January 2 nd	24 Christmas Eve Christmas Eve Breakfast 9 - 10 a.m. 6 p.m. Barn Worship Service 8 p.m. Candlelight Communion Service 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. 7 th Day Adventist
25 Nativity of Our Lord/ Christmas Day 9:00 a.m. Worship 11:30 p.m. Worship at New Hope in Townsend	26 PASTOR'S DAY OFF	27 Annual Reports Due 7:00 p.m. 7 th Day Prayer	28 6:30 a.m. Men's Breakfast Church office open 9 to 12 noon	29	30	31 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. 7 th Day Adventist



BAPTISMS FOR DECEMBER

Remember your Baptism – whether walking in the rain or in the shower. Members that have been baptized in December are:

- Nancy Vitarius
- 1 Dawn Pipinich
- 9 Lance Sorensen
- Angela Wubben
- 16 Kimberly Gruss
- Mark Duffey
- 19 Christopher Lennemann
- 21 Phil Davis
- Cameron Handsaker
- 22 Abigail Kabalin
- 23 Shylah Ranney
- Hudson Smith
- 24 Schuyler Germann
- Colter Handsaker
- Kevin Peters
- L. D. Severson
- Daniel Thibault
- Matthew Thibault
- 25 Nick Pipinich
- Joe Roesener
- 27 Marlyn Madison
- 28 Ava Anderson
- 29 Morgan Mitchell
- 30 Kirsten Haas
- Brighton Micech
- Justis Micech



December 4 – 2nd Sunday in Advent

FIRST READING – Isaiah 40:1-11
PSALM – Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13
SECOND READING – 2 Peter 3:8-15a
GOSPEL – Mark 1:1-8

December 11 – 3rd Sunday in Advent

FIRST READING – Isaiah 6:1-4, 8-11
PSALM – Psalm 126
SECOND READING – 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
GOSPEL – John 1:6-8, 19-28

December 8 – 4th Sunday in Advent

FIRST READING – 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16
PSALM – Luke 1:46b-55
SECOND READING – Romans 16:25-27
GOSPEL – Luke 1:26-38

December 4 – Nativity of Our Lord/Christmas Day

FIRST READING – Isaiah 62:6-12
PSALM – Psalm 97
SECOND READING – Titus 3:4-7
GOSPEL – Luke 2:1-20



December

- 1 Ben Cestnick
- Joseph Youngberg
- 2 Tiina Smith
- Nick Pipinich
- 3 Jessica Roesener
- 4 Butch Malby
- Shelby Lee
- 6 Phil Davis
- 8 Christopher Ranney
- 9 Mark Rathbun
- Kate Davis
- 11 Mark Salo
- Brandon & Deanna Thurston
- 12 Ken Peters
- 13 Haejin Peters
- 14 Tammi Malby
- Laura Leininger
- 16 Megan Winchester
- 17 Ethan Campbell
- 18 Joe & Jodi Robbins
- 19 Mark Roadarmel
- 21 Dennis Bechtold
- Brandon Watson
- Jackie Malby
- 22 Kevin Mattson
- Steve & Kerry Willger
- 24 Patrick & Vicki Pollington
- 25 Morgan Craver
- 26 Kristy Rieger
- 27 Lisa McCurley
- 28 Peter & Judy Noreen
- Mark & Laurie Salo
- Phillip & Megan Winchester
- 31 Fred & Kari Haas
- Richard & Robin Lennemann

If your birthday or anniversary isn't listed or has the wrong date, please contact the church office so that it can be corrected on the church records. Office email is plchurch1001@qwestoffice.net

STEWARDSHIP



January Ministry Team

In December a council member will be calling the following January Ministry Team Members:

- Rosalea Abelin
- Rich & Barb Barber
- Judi Beagley
- Paul & Gayle Clifford
- Jackie Currey
- Emery & Dee Field
- Roy Finkbeiner
- Fred & Kari Haas
- Mike & Lorrie Hansen
- Darlene Idland
- Paul & Sandra Joubert
- Rick Keller
- Don & Tammy Marks
- Marilyn Megaard
- Tom & Nancy Petrick
- Trish Severson
- Bruce & Virginia Sorensen
- Dale & Sue Spartas
- Michael & Vickie Streich
- Chris & Emily Vigness
- Tom & Shari Watson

General Fund Ending 10/31/11	
General Fund Balance 10/1/11	1,620.61
General Fund Income - Envelopes & Plates	16,248.73
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Total Funds Available:	17,869.34
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Less Expenses	13,018.07
Transfer to Building Fund	-1,225.00
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Accrued Benevolence (not paid, but due)	3,837.53
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General Fund Ending Balance 10/31/11	-211.26



If you would like to show your thanks for something in the next newsletter, please fill out a "I give thanks to" sheet and place it in the Give Thanks boxes that are located on the counter in the back of the Sanctuary and on a table in the Fellowship Hall.

- ✚ "Thank you so much for the beautiful prayer shawl. I love to snuggle in it now that the weather is getting cold. Love, Bert"
- ✚ Thank you to everyone that contributed to the 62 pounds of produce delivered to the Food Bank in October.
- ✚ Thank you to everyone that made pies for the Thanksgiving Eve Service. They were delicious!
- ✚ Thank you to Eric Holton for helping with the office computer.

ANNUAL REPORTS ARE DUE DECEMBER 27th

Anyone that is the leader of a team or small group needs to write up at least a paragraph for the Annual Report.

Special Donations Fund Ending 10/31/11	
Special Fund Balance 1/1/11	5,167.43
Special Fund Donations	6,456.52
Special Fund Disbursements	-7,677.84
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Fund Balance 10/31/11	3,946.11
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Building Fund Balance Ending 10/31/11	
Building Fund Balance 1/1/11	9,991.87
Transfers from General Fund	9,837.50
Transfers to General Fund	0.00
Building Fund Donations	36,941.97
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Building Fund Disbursements	17,977.00
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Building Fund Balance 10/31/11	38,794.34

Members Present: Debra Briggs, Val Ross, Nancy Vitarius, Tom Gruss, Lisa Duffey, Bruce Sorensen, Eric Holton, John Gillis, Pr. Bill Duffey, Pr. Bob Coughlin

Not present: Tim Pipinich, Gretchen Carrels, Vickie Streich



Devotions led by Debra Briggs about the stuff in our lives that drive us crazy. We need to remember how many blessings we have and give thanks.

Minutes of October 13, 2011 minutes approved with a motion by John Gillis, seconded by Nancy Vitarius. Motion carried.

Eric Holton was nominated to finish the term of Bob Coughlin. Motion was made, seconded and approved.

The **treasurer's report** was presented. The Thrivent matching grant for the community gardens arrived. PLC has a positive cash balance as of 10/31/2011. Report was approved (Tom Gruss motion, Debra Briggs seconded, unanimously carried).

Congregational Concerns: A member expressed concern that PLC continue to look for a youth coordinator. A number of Council members indicated that the youth have been stepping up in leadership and involvement. The church continues to look for the right fit for a Youth Coordinator position. A second concern was raised about the idea of renovating the lower kitchen. No plans have been made to follow up on this idea and any plans will be presented to the congregation for approval before any work begins.

Staff Concerns: The pastors mentioned again about having a second phone line for the church given the level of use of the phone with three staff members at the church. Eric Holton suggested using Google Voice and offered to help the staff set it up and train them on use.

Pastor Duffey's Report: Report from the roofers indicates that the original underlayment and other roofing elements were done incorrectly. He likes being able to worship when Pastor Bob is handling the service and feels more rested. He's working on getting to play the Christmas Eve barn service.

Pastor Coughlin's Report: Pastor Bob asked if shoveling the sidewalks before Sunday services could be an assigned job for somebody besides the pastors given the amount of work they have to do to get ready for worship services. Tom Gruss will ask the high school students if anyone is interested in the job. Pastor Bob is in the office on Tuesday and Thursday mornings and on Fridays if it is his week to preach. He has a 8th/9th grade confirmation class on Wednesday evenings of four students. The hardest part of preaching in Townsend is leaving PLC in time.

Team Reports

- **Congregational Life:** Work on the directory continues. The goal is to have it ready by the annual meeting.
- **Education:** The Sunday School program is preparing for the Christmas programs. Each age group will present a program during the children's sermon during each Sunday in December. There will be a brunch on December 18 as a fundraiser for the youth to shop for a Christmas family. Options for VBS are being explored.
- **Outreach & Mission:** Lots of outreach and mission occurs at PLC without the input of the team (Socks, Mission Store, Family Promise, Christmas family). PLC was put in the Bozeman Daily Chronicle Worship Directory. The team is planning a meeting soon to determine interest in a mission trip and will be meeting with Love, Inc. to determine if there is anything PLC can do to help with their mission.
- **Property Care:** The team has the list of items that need to be addressed at the parsonage. The roofing project will take another couple of weeks. Doors, trim and siding still need to be evaluated and addressed.
- **Stewardship:** We are doing well in the financial area of stewardship. The team plans to tell the congregation during announcements.
- **Worship & Music:** Thanksgiving Eve and December services have been planned. Christmas services will include 6 p.m. at the Sorensen barn, 8 p.m. Candlelight at the church, and Christmas Day at 9 a.m. There will not be a Blue Christmas service. Christmas services for New Hope, Townsend, still need to be decided. Men's breakfast will host breakfast for the congregation at 9 a.m. on December 24.
- **Youth & Family:** A successful lock-in was held with 14 kids. Kids are being asked to attend the Youth Encounter in February 2012.

Old Business: The roof and new doors for the church were discussed during the property care team report. It was discussed and decided that the church staff should have access to a corporate credit card for PLC purchases. Sandi will be asked to research it.

New Business: Council members that will need to be replaced at the annual meeting are: Rick Keller, Bob Coughlin (Eric Holton), Gretchen Carrels and Debra Briggs. Bruce Sorensen will join the offering counting team for December to replace Bob Coughlin. A discussion was held to explore installing cameras to stream the service and improve the sound system.

John Gillis will handle devotions for the December 8, 2011.

The December 8, 2011 meeting will start at 6 p.m. for the budget meeting. Council members will have a potluck meal at this meeting.

The motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Lisa Duffey, seconded by Nancy Vitarius and carried.

The meeting concluded with the Lord's Prayer.
Submitted by Lisa Duffey (secretary substitute).

PEACE LUTHERAN LIBRARY



Your Peace Library has many books to give you such a spiritual boost to celebrate the BIRTHDAY OF JESUS! Advent devotionals with family activities for Advent observances, stories of Christmas symbols, traditions, novels, and beautiful poetry and art are in these books that will be on the Library table.

The true meanings of Christmas are to be found in these Christmas books— so take time from your rushed, besieged, and weary schedule of decorating, making and buying gifts and yummy foods— to take these books and read the words that will give you a deeper, joyful, and genuine feeling—of WHY WE CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS!



SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS

The Sunday School students are celebrating THE BIRTHDAY OF JESUS in a 'new' and different schedule this year!

Each classroom in the PreK through 6th grades will have a Christmas presentation each at each Sunday Worship Service. The 7th-12th grade students will have a Christmas Breakfast on Dec. 18th to raise money for presents for homeless families. They are also now planning a Christmas Happy Birthday Jesus party for the younger students.

Here is our Advent/Christmas schedule:

December 4 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th grades will have CHRISTMAS PRESENTATION during Worship Service

December 11 1st-2nd grades will have CHRISTMAS PRESENTATION during Worship

December 18 PreK-K CHRISTMAS PRESENTATION during Worship Service
7th-12th grades CHRISTMAS BREAKFAST
In Fellowship Hall for all of you!

One of the **unobserved, but very important** 'works', [that are being done to make our Sunday School activities happen] are the many things that are being **handled by Sandra Joubert!** **THANK YOU SANDI FOR ALL YOUR GRACIOUS HELP!**

There are many wonderful Christmas books in Peace Library for the students to check out and enjoy!

The Peace Lutheran Sunday Staff wished YOU a very Blessed Christmas!

A letter from Jesus

It has come to my attention that many of you are upset that folks are taking My name out of the season. How I personally feel about this celebration can probably be most easily understood by those of you who have been blessed with children of your own. I don't care what you call the day. If you want to celebrate My birth, just GET ALONG AND LOVE ONE ANOTHER.

Now, having said that let Me go on. If it bothers you that the town in which you live doesn't allow a scene depicting My birth, then just get rid of a couple of Santa's and snowmen on put in a small Nativity scene on your own front lawn. If all My followers did that there wouldn't be any need for such a scene on the town square because there would be many of them all around town.

Stop worrying about the fact that people are calling the tree a holiday tree, instead of a Christmas tree. It was I who made all trees. You can remember Me anytime you see any tree. Decorate a grape vine if you wish; I actually spoke of that one in a teaching, explaining who I am in relation to you and what each of our tasks were. If you have forgotten that one, look up John 15:1-8.

If you want to give Me a present in remembrance of My birth here is my wish list. Choose something from it:

1. Instead of writing protest letters objecting to the way My birthday is being celebrated, write letters of love and hope to soldiers away from home. They are terrible afraid and lonely this time of the year. I know, they tell Me all the time.
2. Visit someone in a nursing home. You don't have to know them personally. They just need to know that someone cares about them.
3. Instead of writing the President complaining about the wording on the cards his staff sent out this year, why don't you write and tell him that you'll be praying for him and his family this year. The follow...it will be nice hearing from you again.
4. Instead of giving your children a lot of gifts you can't afford and they don't need, spend time with them. Tell them the story of My birth, and why I came to live with you down here. Hold them in your arms and remind them that I love them.
5. Pick someone that has hurt you in the past and forgive him or her.
6. Did you know that someone in your town will attempt to take their own life this season because they feel so alone and hopeless? Since you don't know who that person is, try giving everyone you meet a warm smile; it could make the difference.
7. Instead of nit picking about what the retailer in your town calls the holiday, be patient with the people who work there. Give them a warm smile and a kind word. Even if they aren't allowed to wish you a "Merry Christmas" that doesn't keep you from wishing them one. Then stop shopping there on Sunday. If the store didn't make so much money on that day they'd close and let their employees spend the day at home with their families.
8. If you really want to make a difference, support a missionary – especially one who takes My love and Good News to those who have never heard My name.
9. Here's a good one. There are individuals and whole families in your town who not only will have no "Christmas" tree, but neither will they have any presents to give or receive. If you don't know them, buy some food and a few gifts and give them to the Salvation Army or some other charity which believes in Me and they will make the delivery for you.
10. Finally, if you want to make a statement about your belief in and loyalty to Me, then behave like a Christian. Don't do things in secret that you wouldn't do in My presence. Let people know by your actions that you are one of mine.

Don't forget; I am God and can take care of Myself. Just love Me and do what I have told you to do. I'll take care of all the rest. Check out the list above and get to work; time is short. I'll help you, but the ball is now in your court. And do have a most blessed Christmas with all those whom you love.

And remember: I LOVE YOU.

Jesus