

Martin's Lutheran Church



December 2020



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Preparation is such an interesting word, as some people are afraid of the word or maybe the work that comes with it; but it also can have many different understandings or meanings. An example of this is found by looking at the synonyms that Microsoft Word gives for the word preparation: Training, Planning, Groundwork, Homework, and Research. Many of these synonyms listed bring to mind for many people a one-word response-boring!!! We keep searching for the fun and exciting action parts of life.

Here are some examples, we would much rather just play the game on the field, court, or course instead of putting in the practice time to hone our skills. We would rather jump straight to the concert, instead of learning to play the instrument and notes or singing in the right key. We would like to just dance, instead of learning the right moves or choreography required of the group. We would like to skip the education requirements and head right to the work force of our choosing with the salary of our liking. We all want the meal to satisfy our hunger, without the wait time or the work to prepare it. In reality, we all need preparation to succeed at any and everything that we do in this world. We need to put in the practice time or the preparation, nothing goes right or is mastered the first time we do it. We continue to dribble the basketball, throw the ball, hit the ball, work on our footwork, sing or play the notes, slice the potatoes, vegetables and meat through out our lifetime. We do not like all the preparation work that is required but, it is all indeed needed to be successful in all that we do.

Our faith life is no exception we need to take the time to prepare for the gift that we have been given in the Christ child. We need to take the time to understand what it is that He has to offer us in this world. His gift is unlike any other we have or could be given in our lifetime, as He gives us a gift that is not just for this lifetime, but for eternity. Mark Batterson points out in his book "*IF*," "Christ makes us new each and every day." Are we prepared to live out the new day we have been given, free from all of our mistakes of yesterday with a clean slate? What a gift and it all comes from the infant baby who came into the world to change it all for eternity and we know Him as Wonderful Counselor, Prince of Peace, Messiah, Lord, Savior, and Jesus Christ. Together we prepare during the season of Advent to welcome Him anew into our hearts and lives, to let the light shine through the darkness with His never-ending love for us His people!!!

Speaking of preparation, as a staff we are looking into many different ways to prepare our building and online capabilities for you during the month of December, for our Sunday worship services, education opportunities and of course plan for our Christmas Eve services. Please know that we will communicate via email, Facebook and our website as soon as we have a plan in place for our Christmas Eve services. We will have signups available once we know the numbers we will be allowed to have in the building at one time. Our plan is to try and keep our service as close to normal as possible with celebrating Holy Communion, lighting candles and singing Silent Night together as the body of Christ, with our fellow brothers and sisters around the globe!

Peace,
Pastor Mike

Words and Images of Advent

Advent is a time to prepare and make ready. Being aware takes a lot of energy and thoughtfulness. The endurance of many weeks produces hope for the joyful expectation that is near and getting closer each day in Christmas. I find Advent preparation is a reward in itself. Living in the present moment with care can be lifegiving and transformative that shows in our posture when the day of celebration arrives.

I love how songs help us prepare... to go to sleep, to worship, to receive a gift (Happy Birthday), to celebrate Christmas, and much more. Here is a little background on this year's Advent song, ELW #593 "Drawn to the Light." It is written and composed by John Ylvisaker, a prominent contemporary Lutheran composer and musician who was born in Moorhead, MN and graduated from Concordia College. The first verse is based on Isaiah 9:1-4, "the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light." The second verse is from 2Peter 1:19, "pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts." The third verse is from Revelation 21:22-26, "The city doesn't need the sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is the lamp." The tune name is "LaCrosse" because it was premiered at a WELCA Conference held in La Crosse, WI.

Images can be powerful in conveying a message too. The collaborative community art project of coloring pieces that will come together to form large images of Advent and Christmas has been a holy experiment this year that started with, "what if..." Now we see them take shape and represent our wonderful community who colored in faith that they were part of something bigger. This panel of art announces of the birth of the Christ child saying, "Joy to the world..." A child has been born, hurray! This is the light of God we have waited for.

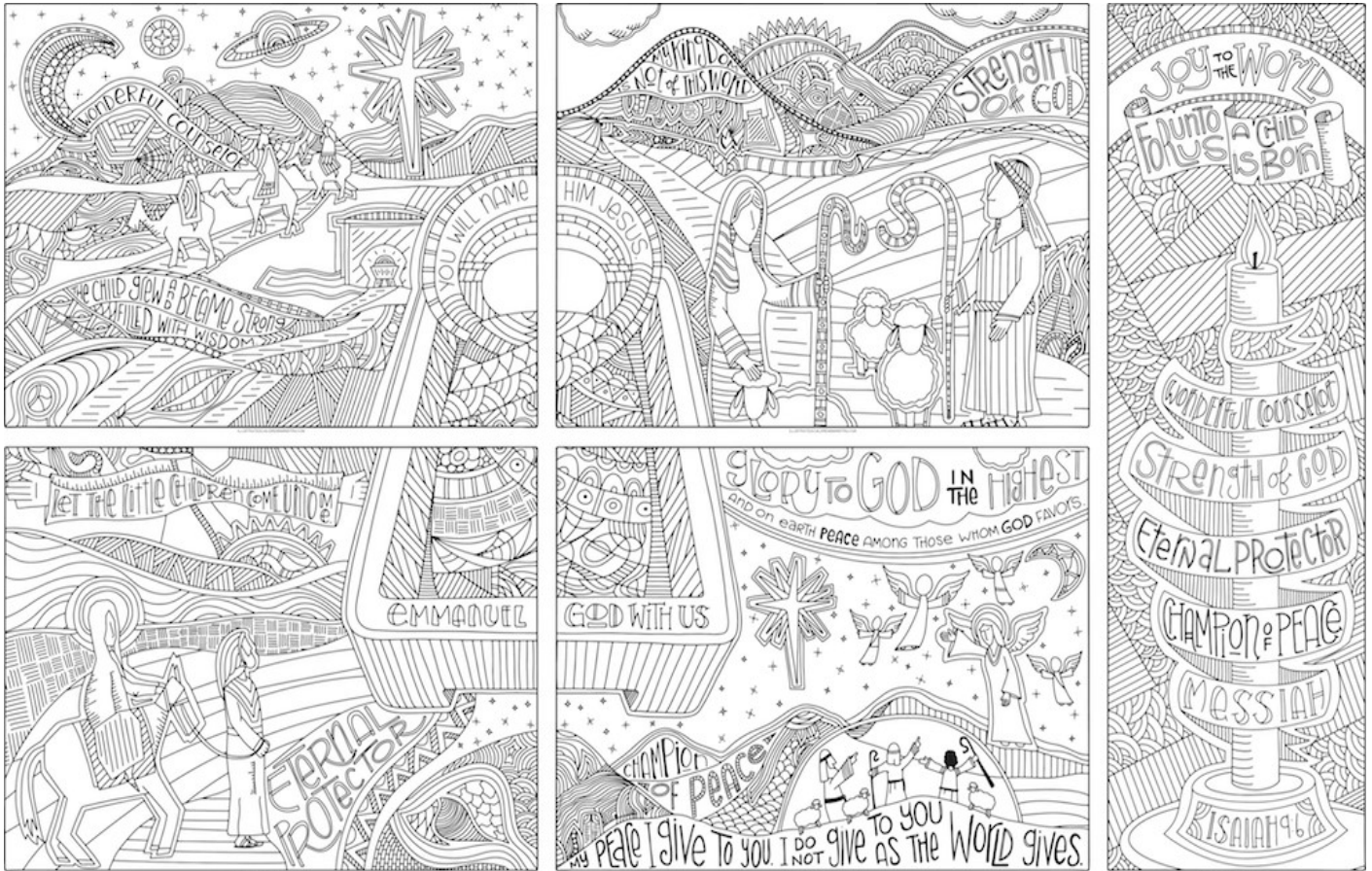
Bringing music and images together in a Christmas Pageant shares the story of Jesus birth in an impactful way during worship. This year, with capacity limits in place for safety during a pandemic, we lament that we will not have over 100 kids singing and sharing the story with families packed into our new church building. We are working on pulling together the pieces to have a Virtual Christmas Pageant this year. We are stretching and learning new ways technology can be used in this time to creatively gather people's stories and contributions into a story we recognize for celebrating the birth of Jesus, which is the true reason for this season that brings hope to an anxious world. Hear the good news of great joy, Do Not Be Afraid, for a savior is born, Jesus Christ our Lord.



Peace,
Pastor Keith

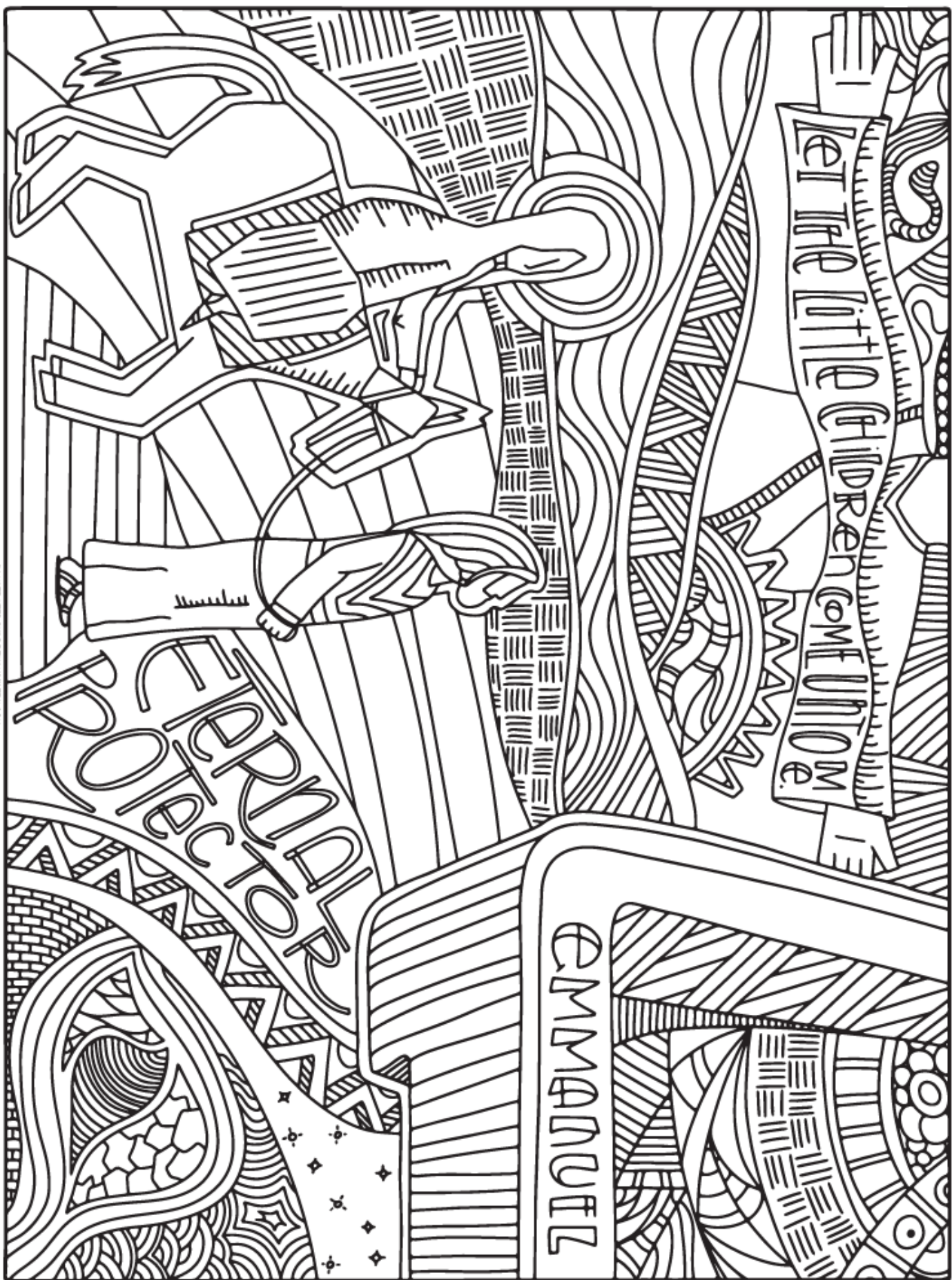
Coloring Pages

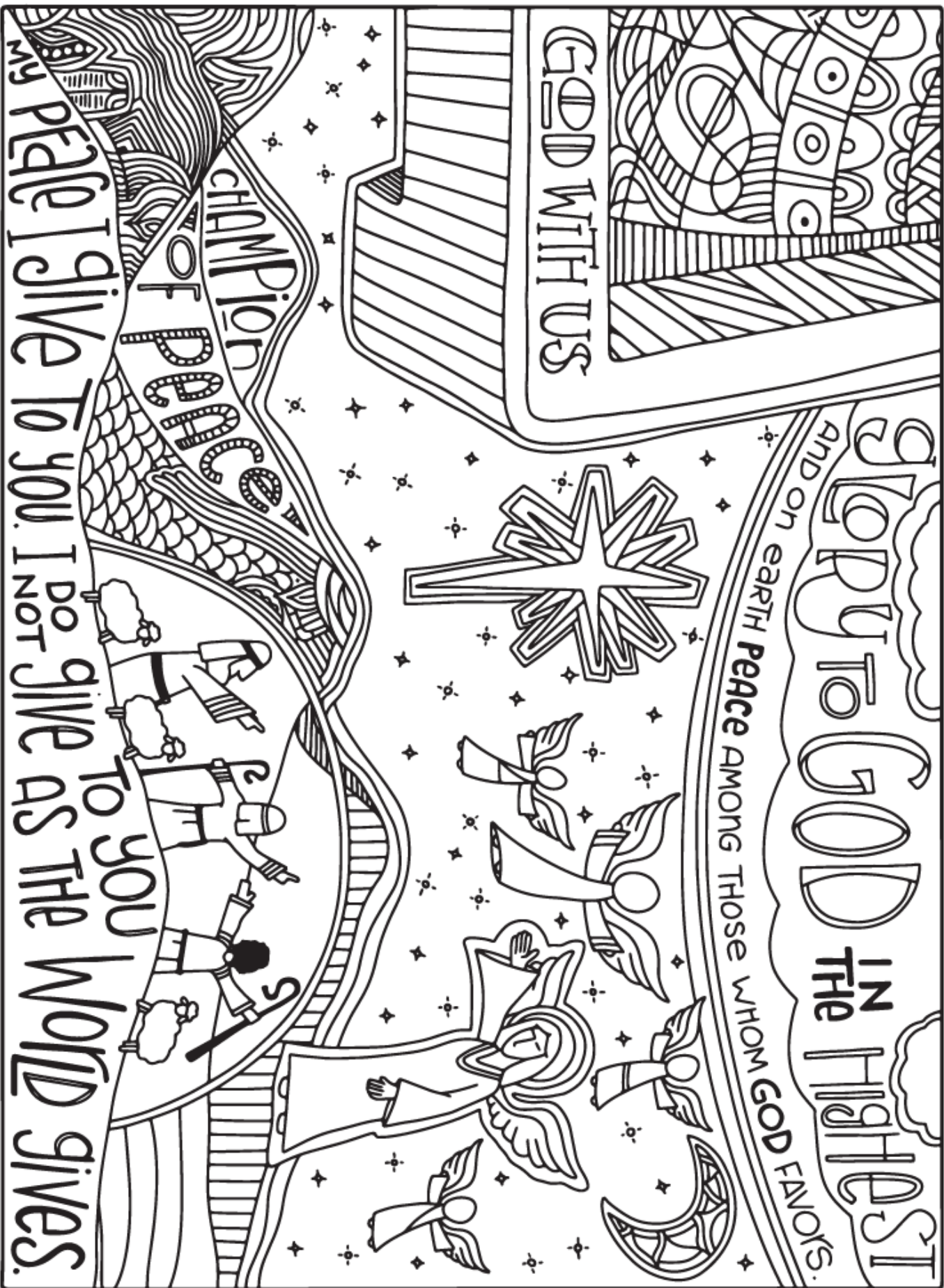
All the coloring panels are out but we are encouraging those that have checked them out to return them as soon as you are able. We would like to start assembling the panels to place them on the wall to create the mural. Thank you to everyone who colored a piece. We have included a couple bonus coloring pages for your family to enjoy.



We are venturing into new territory again this year by doing a Virtual Christmas Pageant. The creators at Illustrated Ministry have put together a script and digital backgrounds to aid in pulling off a program in 2020 when large groups haven't been able to meet safely. We are excited about and focusing on what we can do to be part of telling the Christmas story with our families and for our church community. Sharing the story of Jesus this time of year is a humbling and honoring opportunity we look forward to. It will be different, but however it turns out, likely it will be memorable! We are prayerfully preparing and getting ready for sharing a Virtual Christmas Pageant on December 20th! Look for more information as we get closer to that date.







COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

October 12, 2020 (Zoom)

Meeting called to order by Broc Lietz. Present: Wendy Mensing, Melissa Grommesh, Todd Erickson, Broc Lietz, Scott Kost, Jerome Crandall, Pastor Walka, Pastor Jacobson, Stacy Link

Opening Devotions led by Pastor Walka.

Secretary Report-Minutes from Sept. 14, 2020 were reviewed with no changes requested. Wendy made a motion to approve the minutes. Melissa seconded the motion, motion passed.

Financial Report-Scott noted that giving was down in Sept. He does not want to read too much into at this time. We will see how things will look in October. All our balances still look incredibly good. Expenditures are also down. Motion to approve the Financial report was made by Wendy. Todd seconded the motion, motion passed. Todd made a motion to pay the October bills. Jerome seconded the motion, motion passed.

Committee Reports

Worship/Media-Jerome has no major news. He has asked volunteers to step back into their Usher roles if they feel comfortable doing so.

Education-Pastor Walka reported that Sunday School starts on Sunday, the 18th. There will be a meeting with the possible teachers tomorrow the 13th to go over the curriculum and the process of how the classes should be done and the color system.

Property-Todd said that Lakeside needs to bring fill in so that compaction tests can be done. Gateway has been to the building and took pictures and measurements to give us a quote on the ice breakers.

Social Outreach and Ministry-Wendy said there is no social ministry happening right now.

Fellowship and Support Committee-Two people have signed up for yard clean up. Melissa has contacted one of the two and will call the other this week. There will be no Giving Tree this year per First Link. Pastor Mike gave Melissa a letter from YWCA about the Grace Garden apartments for moms with kids. Maybe we could fill an apartment for a family.

Old Business

Building Project Update

Punchlist Update/Final Bill-Enterprise has sent us a final bill. Enterprise would like to start charging a finance charge. Roughly \$78,000 is being held back because the punch list is still not finished. Pastor Mike sent out the punch list with the items noted that are finished and ones that are not. Pastor Mike suggested another walk through with Enterprise to explain that there are still many items that have not been corrected from the punch list. The council wants to come up with a dollar amount that could be released from the held back amount after that walk through. The council is asking the staff to coordinate a meeting with Enterprise to go through the church.

Snow Retention-Waiting on the quotes from Gateway.

Council Positions/Committees (Melissa)-Melissa asked if there were changes that people see that need to be made on the committee portfolios. Broc asked Melissa if she feels there should be an Executive Committee? Pastor Mike pointed out that the committee document is going to be a work in progress.

2020-21 Budget-Reminder if you have any budgetary concerns for the budget please bring them to Pastor Mike by Nov. 15 so that the Executive members can work on the budget for December approval.

Janitorial Position-Wendy has been cleaning the church with some volunteer help. She feels that an average

would be 12-15 hours without the Education wing and Fellowship hall.

New Business

Medical Plan-The council needs to choose which medical plan the church pays for in 2021. The Gold plan increases \$74.00 for next year but the Retiree support has been removed from Portico bill. Scott made a motion to continue with the Gold plan. Jerome seconded the motion. Motion carries.

Property Insurance-If we pay multiple payments at once we can save finance charges. Wendy made a motion to make the remaining two payments for 2020 and Scott seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Building Finalization-We are at a point of finishing the church atmosphere.

Interior Design Committee-Broc asked if anyone would like to be a liaison to an Interior Design committee. Stacy would be interested in doing that position.

Entry Rugs-We received a quote from Aramark for \$54.00 every 2 weeks or \$43.00 every week for rugs in the entry by the doors. They will also take our dirty mop heads when they pick up the rugs and give us clean ones. Scott makes a motion to go with Aramark for entry rugs and mop heads. Melissa seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Bell Placement-Broc asked what the council would like to do with the bell. Todd suggests having it outside on the west side, 10ft in the air and to have an electronic switch to ring it. If a foundation needs to be poured it should be before the final landscaping is done. Todd will get a quote for this project.

Storage Shed-Someone has come forward to purchase a mower and someone else has offered to pay for a storage shed. Todd feels we would be able to find volunteers to mow more easily than finding volunteers for snow blowing.

Pastor's Report and Remarks-Pastor Keith just returned from a trip to NC. He listened to the Transformed Christian Education, Confirmation has started, visits and phone calls with church members, a graveside service, and a funeral today. He has been reporting the music we use to CCLI. Boundaries classes are coming up.

Pastor Mike has been involved with weddings, funerals, confirmation, Bible studies, and hospital visits. He ordered an online class, attended the Transformed event, and is working with Moore Engineering. Men of Martin's is coming up, and he will be ordering books for the new Bible study he is starting up. There has been a request for a Baptism for a grandchild of a church member. The council approves. A non-member requested using Martin's for a wedding. Council does not approve the request.

Joan asked the council what they would like to do with the Memorial placards. Stacy will take care of them.

Next Meeting-November 9, 7:00 P.M.

Scott made a motion to adjourn.

Submitted by

Joan Carvell

October 14, 2020 (Zoom)

Present: Broc Lietz, Jerome Crandall, Melissa Grommesh, Wendy Mensing, Scott Kost, Stacy Link, Pastor Mike, Joan Carvell, Pastor Keith

The Devotions were led by Pastor Mike.

The Governor has changed Cass County to Orange and has mandated 25% occupancy or no more than 50 people to gather. The change leads to the question about Sunday services and Sunday School and other events.

Day to Day Operations-Pastor Mike recommends following the Governor's order of a maximum of 50 people in the church and all wear masks including the staff. The council feels this would be the right decision to follow.

Sunday Service-Broc asked if we should go back to collecting names before the Sunday service to ensure the 50-person maximum? Wendy recommended using Sign-up Genius to keep track of the number attending. The staff was asked to contact the people we know of that are not using email or Facebook to get them signed up.

Sunday School-Stacy thinks we should not do Sunday School in person and recommends moving to a virtual program. Scott feels it is prudent to postpone live Sunday School classes. Stacy and Pastor Keith will create a plan for virtual classes.

Special Events-There was to be seven confirmands to participate in the Confirmation ceremony and one that was going to have a private service due to family health concerns. Should we still have Confirmation with limited guests or postpone the service? The council felt the families should be allowed to give input on the options and then a decision made after that.

Quilters-The council felt it was fine to allow the Quilters to continue coming as long as they wear masks when not eating or drinking.

Submitted by

Joan Carvell

F.Y.I.

Martin's Giving Tree 2020

We have decided to do something different this year for our Giving Tree! Due to the pandemic, FirstLink has decided not to do their regular Giving Tree project this year. We knew that the generous members of Martin's would still want to participate in giving back to others, so we are doing a "Plant a Seed" Giving Tree instead! Grace Garden is a YWCA-supported residence that provides safety, stability and hope to once-homeless individuals and families, many of whom are survivors of violence. The "planting a seed" initiative strives to outfit each apartment at Grace Garden with the essentials needed to start their new journey. There are so many items to choose from – anything from a toilet brush to a full-size sheet set, or from dish soap to a set of pots and pans. Just like in previous years, items needed will be printed on tags and will be hanging from the tree in the church entry, starting Sunday, **November 29th**. Please pick a tag (or two or three) and write down your name on the list. Return your items, UNWRAPPED, to Martin's by Sunday, **December 13th**. We will get them to Grace Garden so they can supply a family with everything they need for their new apartment! If you would like to purchase some items but can't make it into church, please call Joan in the office to sign you up. If you have any questions regarding the Giving Tree, please call Melissa Grommesh at 701-238-2937. Thank you!



The Bell Choir will be performing Sunday, **Dec. 20th**. They are looking for a few more performers. They will practice Sundays at 10:30am after service and Wednesdays at 7:30pm. If you are interested please give Karen Kost a call or go to the next practice.
371-5662



Blessings...

Jax Charles Askew

son of

Joshua & Carley Askew was baptized
on Saturday, November 14, 2020.

His sponsors are
Nicole Tongen, Michael Kasowski and
Jaime Kasowski.

Welcome to our church family!



The Martin's Quilters were recipients of Bell Bank's "Pay it Forward" program on 11-04-20. Tony Lee, Joan Turchin's son, asked that \$1,000.00 be donated to the Quilters. The money will be used to buy quilting supplies the ladies need to complete over 200 quilts a year. The quilts they make are donated to Lutheran World Relief, Churches United, Red Willow Bible Camp, YWCA, New Life Center, Bethany Nursing Home, Dakota Boys & Girls Ranch, The Food Pantry, and the Cass County Sheriff's Department to name a few.

Direct Deposit Online Giving Guidelines:

If you choose to use direct deposit for giving, please use the church website and click on “Online Giving”; where you are able to designate your funds. If you are currently using online giving and wish to add “New Church” or any of the listed funds to your withdrawal please give the office a call so that we can assist you. We are able to add it to your current giving account without having to set up a new account. You are always welcome to contact the office for any assistance.



 If you or someone you know would like a visit from a pastor, please call or text their cell phones- Pastor Mike (701-789-1857), Pastor Keith (701-335-6213) or call the church office (347-4289) or email them:
 *srpastor@martinslutheran.com*
 *associatepastor@martinslutheran.com* 





BUILDING EXTRA

We have moved in and the “Extras” are fully paid except for one. **Thank you for your generous gifts!**

The last extra from the original list is Landscaping. We have begun looking ahead to the landscaping needs of the green space. If you wish to make a donation to this extra please indicate that on your donation check or you can assign it online for electronic donation. If you need assistance setting this up online or making changes to your current Giving please don't hesitate to call the office or email and Joan will assist you.

347-4289 or office@martinslutheran.com

Reminder of items:	Cost:	Received:
Landscaping	\$ 35,000	\$ 5,382.50

November 2020

Monthly Contributions	\$ 23,877.00
Estimated Budget to Date	\$316,643.76
Contributions Year to Date	\$282,984.34
Balance	\$ -33,659.42
Budget Expenses	\$258,870.51
Building Fund Balance	\$ 9,962.22
New Church Fund Balance	\$369,455.84

All figures are as of 11/22/20

Account	Budgets with 5% variance are considered at risk			Year is 89% complete	
	Actual	Annual Budget	Variance	% Budget	At Risk
Revenues					
Church Rent	450.00	0.00	450.00	0%	
Contributions	282,927.47	0.00	282,927.47	0%	
Churches United Shelter	20.00	0.00	20.00	0%	
Weekly Offering	565.00	0.00	565.00	0%	
World Hunger	3.00	0.00	3.00	0%	
SubTotal Contributions	283,515.47	0.00	283,515.47	0%	
Miscellaneous Contributions	593.87	0.00	593.87	0%	
Adjusting Entry	31.17	0.00	31.17	0%	
Total Revenues	284,590.51	0.00	284,590.51	0%	
Expenditures					
2019 Dec Payroll	1,443.53	0.00	-1,443.53	0%	
Associate Pastor	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%	
Pastor Continuing Ed	919.14	1,000.00	80.86	91.91%	
Pastor Housing Allowance	12,600.00	14,400.00	1,800.00	87.5%	
Pastor Professional Expenses	136.80	500.00	363.20	27.36%	
Pensions/Medical/Disability	20,272.08	24,492.00	4,219.92	82.77%	
Salary	35,175.00	40,200.00	5,025.00	87.5%	
Social Security Added	3,864.00	4,416.00	552.00	87.5%	
SubTotal Associate Pastor	72,967.02	85,008.00	12,040.98	85.84%	
Christian Ed Materials	2,934.06	6,000.00	3,065.94	48.9%	
Conventions	1,080.00	1,750.00	670.00	61.71%	
Custodian	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%	
Salary	4,374.88	8,500.00	4,125.12	51.47%	
Social Security	334.70	655.00	320.30	51.1%	
SubTotal Custodian	4,709.58	9,155.00	4,445.42	51.44%	
Insurance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%	
Ins Building	7,547.14	6,500.00	-1,047.14	116.11%	Y
Ins Workers Compensation	279.04	550.00	270.96	50.73%	
SubTotal Insurance	7,826.18	7,050.00	-776.18	111.01%	
Mission Outreach	593.87	0.00	-593.87	0%	
Churches United for the Homeless	916.63	1,000.00	83.37	91.66%	
END Synod	15,125.00	16,500.00	1,375.00	91.67%	
Lutheran Social Services	1,833.37	2,000.00	166.63	91.67%	
Mission - Local	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	0%	
Red Willow Bible Camp	1,833.37	2,000.00	166.63	91.67%	
Spec Missions/Sem Scholarship	100.00	500.00	400.00	20%	
SubTotal Mission Outreach	20,402.24	23,000.00	2,597.76	88.71%	
Music	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%	
Accompanist/Music Leader	3,280.00	4,200.00	920.00	78.1%	
Social Security	248.60	330.00	81.40	75.33%	
SubTotal Music	3,528.60	4,530.00	1,001.40	77.89%	
New Construction Exp	3,301.83	50,244.00	46,942.17	6.57%	
Office Administration	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%	
Office Manager	20,014.42	24,180.00	4,165.58	82.77%	

Account	Budgets with 5% variance are considered at risk			Year is 89% complete	
	Actual	Annual Budget	Variance	% Budget	At Risk
Office Manager Benefits	1,551.60	1,844.00	292.40	84.14%	
Social Security	1,436.44	1,850.00	413.56	77.65%	
SubTotal Office Administration	23,002.46	27,874.00	4,871.54	82.52%	
Office Worship/Supplies	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%	
Office Equipment	3,010.15	3,200.00	189.85	94.07%	Y
Office Supplies	5,763.80	6,500.00	736.20	88.67%	
Technology	654.00	1,500.00	846.00	43.6%	
Unknown Exp	30.00	1,000.00	970.00	3%	
Worship Supplies	3,416.10	3,200.00	-216.10	106.75%	Y
SubTotal Office Worship/Supplies	12,874.05	15,400.00	2,525.95	83.6%	
Property	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%	
Cleaning Supplies	699.73	850.00	150.27	82.32%	
Repairs & Maint Supplies	2,160.42	3,800.00	1,639.58	56.85%	
Seasonal Plants/Decorations	0.00	250.00	250.00	0%	
Snow Removal	360.00	1,250.00	890.00	28.8%	
Taxes on Martin Lot	661.71	700.00	38.29	94.53%	Y
Utilities	6,843.98	10,500.00	3,656.02	65.18%	
Utilities Natural Gas	2,670.70	3,300.00	629.30	80.93%	
SubTotal Property	13,396.54	20,650.00	7,253.46	64.87%	
Senior Pastor	0.00	0.00	0.00	0%	
Pastor Continuing Ed	652.19	1,300.00	647.81	50.17%	
Pastor Housing Allowance	21,000.00	24,000.00	3,000.00	87.5%	
Pastor Professional Expenses	97.24	1,000.00	902.76	9.72%	
Pensions/Medical/Disability	11,025.94	13,484.00	2,458.06	81.77%	
Salary	52,937.43	60,500.00	7,562.57	87.5%	
Social Security Added	5,250.00	6,000.00	750.00	87.5%	
SubTotal Senior Pastor	90,962.80	106,284.00	15,321.20	85.58%	
Stewardship & Evangelism	441.99	1,000.00	558.01	44.2%	
Total Expenditures	258,870.88	357,945.00	99,074.12	72.32%	
Other Revenues					
AP Discounts Taken	0.94	0.00	0.94	0%	
Bank Interest	793.77	0.00	793.77	0%	
Total Other Revenues	794.71	0.00	794.71	0%	
Other Expenditures					
Adjusting Entry	-43.26	0.00	43.26	0%	
Total Other Expenditures	-43.26	0.00	43.26	0%	
Other Financial Sources-Uses					
Transfers In	4,556.43	0.00	4,556.43	0%	
Transfers Out	-926.00	0.00	-926.00	0%	
Total Other Financial Sources-Uses	3,630.43	0.00	3,630.43	0%	

Summary

Account	Budgets with 5% variance are considered at risk			Year is 89% complete	
	Actual	Annual Budget	Variance	% Budget	At Risk
<i>Total Revenues</i>	<i>284,590.51</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>284,590.51</i>	<i>0%</i>	
<i>Total Expenditures</i>	<i>258,870.88</i>	<i>357,945.00</i>	<i>99,074.12</i>	<i>72.32%</i>	
<i>Total Other Revenues</i>	<i>794.71</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>794.71</i>	<i>0%</i>	
<i>Total Other Expenditures</i>	<i>-43.26</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>43.26</i>	<i>0%</i>	
<i>Total Other Financial Sources-Uses</i>	<i>3,630.43</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>3,630.43</i>	<i>0%</i>	
<i>Net</i>	<i>30,188.03</i>	<i>-357,945.00</i>	<i>388,133.03</i>		



SHARE POINSETTIAS IN DECEMBER

We would like to fill our altar with red poinsettia plants during December. Please fill out the order form below and return it to the Church Office no later than **Sunday, December 13th**. Please indicate below your wishes for the poinsettia after the Christmas services.

I would like to purchase a poinsettia for the church altar. Following the Christmas Day Worship I would like my plant to:

_____ Stay on the altar

_____ I will take it to a shut-in or take my plant home.

Given in memory/honor of:

My Name: _____

Make checks payable to Martin's Lutheran Church. \$15.00

December 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		<i>1</i> 5:00pm Soul Yoga	<i>4</i> 9:30am Quilters 4:00pm 7th Gr Conf 6:30pm 10th Gr Conf 7:30pm Bell Practice	<i>3</i> 2:00pm Rachel Cir. 5:00pm Soul Yoga	<i>4</i> Pastors Day Off	<i>5</i>
<i>6</i> 9:30am Worship ELW/Communion 10:30am Bell Practice 10:30am Virtual Sunday School 1:00pm Baptism 4:00pm Soul Yoga	<i>7</i> 10:00am Widows Grp	<i>8</i> 5:00pm Soul Yoga	<i>9</i> 9:30am Quilters 4:00pm 7th Gr Conf 6:30pm 10th Gr Conf 7:30pm Book/Bible Study 7:30pm Bell Practice	<i>10</i> 10:00am Bible Study 12:00pm Ministerial Mtg 5:00pm Soul Yoga	<i>11</i> Pastors Day Off	<i>12</i>
<i>13</i> 9:30am Worship PW 10:30am Bell Practice 10:30am Virtual Sunday School 4:00pm Soul Yoga	<i>14</i> 7:00pm Council	<i>15</i> 5:00pm Soul Yoga	<i>16</i> 9:30am Quilters 4:00pm 7th Gr Conf 6:30pm 10th Gr Conf 7:30pm Bell Practice	<i>17</i> 5:00pm Soul Yoga	<i>18</i> Pastors Day Off	<i>19</i>
<i>20</i> 9:30am Worship CBW 10:30am Virtual Sunday School 2:00pm Time to Color 4:00pm Soul Yoga	<i>21</i> 10:00am Widows Grp	<i>22</i> 5:00pm Soul Yoga	<i>23</i> 9:30am Quilters No Confirmation	<i>24</i> Christmas Service times TBD	<i>25</i> <i>Christmas Office Closed Christmas Service times TBD</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>27</i> 9:30am Worship SOW 10:30am Virtual Sunday School 4:00pm Soul Yoga	<i>28</i>	<i>29</i> 5:00pm Soul Yoga	<i>30</i> 9:30am Quilters No Confirmation	<i>31</i>		

Funny Things Are Everywhere by Charles Hoffacker

There's an interesting quote - from an unexpected source - that applies to this First Day of Advent, from a book you may have read to your children or grandchildren, or that you may remember from your own childhood. The book is by Dr. Seuss, and is entitled 'One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish.' The quote to consider today is brief:

From there to here,
from here to there,
funny things
are everywhere.

Funny things are everywhere! And there are two things funny about this First Sunday of Advent, the start of a new church year. The first of them is that, here at the start of a new year, we don't look back to the beginning, but we look forward to the end. Here on the first day of the new church year, we do not focus on the past, but we anticipate the future where Christ promises to meet us.

The second funny thing about today is related to the first. When we look forward to the end, when we anticipate the future, we do not treat this conclusion as some distant, far-off event. It is near at hand. It may be as close as the next second. So imminent is it, in fact, that the future comes and takes up residence in the present. The Christ who will arrive with power and great glory at the end of time comes to us also before the end of time.



MARTIN'S AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH
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WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Dec. 6

9:30am-Worship (ELW)

Dec. 13

9:30am-Worship (P&W)

Dec. 20

9:30am-Worship (CBW)

Dec. 24

TBD-Worship

Dec. 25

TBD-Worship

Dec. 27

9:30am-Worship (SOW)

MISSION STATEMENT

Named, claimed, and sustained by God, Martin's Lutheran is a worshipping community which gathers together to hear the Word, learn about God's love, and to provide support for one another. Together we respond to Christ's command to share the Good News and to serve our neighbors -- across the street and across the world.