

BETHEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN
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<u>The Pastor's Desk:</u>	
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Five Advent traditions you may not have heard of:

Since the sixth century, the season of Advent has been set aside as a time of preparation for Christ's coming. The word itself is Latin for "coming towards" ("ad" meaning towards and "vent" meaning "to come.") Through the years, Lutherans have celebrated Advent through a variety of traditions like the Advent wreath, a hearty symbol of the everlasting God on which four candles symbolize Christ's light, or the Advent calendar, which often displays a colorful Christmas scene with each date of the Advent season printed upon a flap. In other cultures and Christian faith traditions, though, there are some interesting Christmas and Advent traditions, some with deep cultural roots and others with curious beginnings.

Here are some traditions you may not have heard of:

1. Posadas — The word "posada" means "shelter" or "lodging." This Advent custom, popular throughout the Spanish-speaking world, re-enacts Mary and Joseph's journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem and their search for lodging along the way. The ritual lasts for nine days (Dec. 16-24). A group of people travels from house to house on a route, taking the role of pilgrims seeking lodging. Those inside the homes are innkeepers who refuse them. At the last home all are invited in for prayer and refreshments.
2. Jesse Tree — a family tree to the extreme! Each day of Advent a homemade ornament is added to the Jesse Tree, a small tree or simply a bare branch. These symbolic ornaments can each represent a prophecy foretelling of Christ. Other variations include creating ornaments that represent the ancestors in the lineage of Christ.
3. The Advent Candle — In the late 19th century, Advent clocks or Advent candles began to make an appearance in many homes in Germany. Dates are marked in a row down the side of the Advent candle. Every day, the candle is lit and then burned down to the next date. By Christmas Day, the entire candle has been used.
4. Paper Lanterns — A tradition most likely adopted from Christian missionaries, in China, Christians light their homes with decorative paper lanterns. They might also decorate a "Tree of Light" with paper chains or flowers.
5. Candy Canes — Did you know that candy canes started as a way to teach children about Jesus? Legend has it that candy canes were invented by a cathedral choirmaster as a way to keep children quiet during a Christmas Eve service. The design of the candy, though, was meant to help children remember the shepherds who visited Jesus.

May the Grace and Peace of Our Lord and Savior Jesus, the New Born King, be With You Always!

God's Blessings Always

Rev. Donn Woolweber

ADVENT SERVICES

Our Advent Services this year will be held on the following WEDNESDAY evenings:

DECEMBER 6 hosted by Bethel
DECEMBER 13 hosted by Zion
DECEMBER 20 hosted by Bethel

Worship Services begin at 6:30 p. with a Soup Supper afterwards around 7:30 p.m. Please sign up so we know how many to set up for and what side dish or dessert you are willing to bring and share.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICE

Combined at Bethel—10:00 a.m.

Zion—3:30 p.m.

Bethel— 7:30 p.m.

CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP SERVICE

Zion—11:30 a.m.

PARTY TIME



Bethel will be hosting a CHRISTmas Party for Bethel and Zion parishioners and friends on FRIDAY— DECEMBER 15 beginning at 6:30 p.m. Wear your favorite sweater and come enjoy fun and fellowship. Games and refreshments will be provided. Bring a dessert to add to the food table. Sign up in the narthex.

ADOPT—A—RESIDENT FOR CHRISTMAS

All of Concordia's communities hold CHRISTmas parties for their residents and each resident receives a gift. The gifts are provided by loving and kind-hearted individuals who choose to "adopt-a resident." Each resident has a wish list. Zion and Bethel have committed to provide ALL personal care residents at Rebecca Residence with a Christmas gift. Pick up a name in the narthex. You can drop off your wrapped gift at Bethel by SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17.

HAPPY DECEMBER BIRTHDAY

BETHEL

Marilyn Heintz—07

Melanie Rehder—17

Rev. Woolweber—27

Heidi Todd—29

YOUR BIRTHDAY'S IN
DECEMBER?
MY BIRTHDAY'S IN
DECEMBER!
GUESS ALL OF THE
COOLEST PEOPLE WERE
BORN IN DECEMBER!



ZION

Tyler Tucker —08

Shirley Freyer—19

Rev. Woolweber—27

Fred Johnston—28

Nilaya Weismantle—29

HAPPY DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

BETHEL

16—Cindy and Curt Hetz

18—Jacob and Emma Swanson

28—Gary and Heidi Swanson

ZION

24—Chris and James Beatty



FESTIVAL OF LESSONS AND CAROLS

The Pittsburgh Lutheran Chorus under the direction of Ruth Molkenthin-Miller will once more present "A Festival of Lessons and Carols" to many of the locations of Concordia Lutheran Ministries.

DECEMBER 2 at Concordia Lutheran Ministries, Cabot at the Lund Care Center at 1:30 p.m. then at Oertel Care Center at 3:30 P.M.

DECEMBER 17 at Ridgewood Place at 2:00 p.m.

DECEMBER 30 at Concordia at South Hills at 2:00 p.m.

JANUARY 7 at Rebecca Residence at 2:30 p.m. and the at Highpoint, in the chapel at 4:00 p.m.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING



Bethel and Zion will join together in the CHRISTmas spirit to sing carols throughout the neighborhood around Bethel as we enjoy a ride in a *horse drawn wagon*. The fun will begin at 3:00 p.m. on SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23. There will be light refreshments following this annual event at 6:00 p.m.

CONCORDIA'S ANNUAL LIVE NATIVITY

The nativity will feature people from throughout the Concordia family, both staff and residents, and live animals. CHRISTmas music, hot beverages, cookies and a gift for children will be provided. Join us on SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10 in front of the Haven II building at 148 Marwood Rd. in Cabot. There will be performances are 15 minutes and will be scheduled at 4:30, 5:15 and 6 p.m. The event is free and guests are encouraged to dress warmly.



STAFF—OFFICERS — CONTACT PEOPLE at BETHEL

Minister.....Rev. Donn E. Woolweber
 Organist.....David Forsyth
 Greg Wehner, Isaac & Luke Swanson
 Office Secretary.....Donna Heintz
 Financial Secretary.....Fred Heintz
 Recording Secretary.....Fred Heintz
 Treasurer.....Dorothy Carlisle
 Altar Guild.....Charlotte Hornish
 Sewing Group.....Donna Heintz
 Front sign manager....Gary Swanson
 Children's sermons....Gary Swanson
 Audio /Visual Tech.....Al Todd III
 Handbell Choir Director.....Rev. Woolweber
 Java Jam Director.....Rev. Woolweber

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