



THE MESSENGER

2550 Gettysburg Ave.

Clovis, CA 93611

 St. Peter Lutheran Church—Clovis, CA

January 2020

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Early Childhood Ministry Update

During the month of December, activity continued with the plans and preparations to open our Christian pre-school next August. Here's an update:

- Karla Opperman accepted our call to be the director and lead teacher for our new pre-school. She has been involved in the final adjustments to our state application, is planning to travel to Clovis in March for her spring break, and will be making plans to move after the current school year.
- The state application has been submitted to the state office. It may take up to 90 days for them to have an on-site visit and approve our ECM license. After that, we may officially begin formal advertising and accept registrations.
- Our fund drive for start-up costs is almost at an end. The costs for this new ministry were set at \$105,000. We are still open for receiving monies for this, as a short wish list can still be funded for playground shade and a sink for the new classroom.
- Our ECM Governing Committee will be meeting regularly in 2020 to set policies and tuition, among a number of other necessary tasks. They will be working with Miss Opperman as they do their work.

Alana Grace Dubin Baptized

On Sunday, December 8, Alana was received into God's family through Holy Baptism in our church service. She is the daughter of Justin and Sarah Dubin. May God keep Alana in her baptismal covenant of grace all her life!



On December 14, St. Peter held its first "Live Nativity." About 30 members helped out or played a role as almost 200 people from our neighborhood came to see the Christmas account with live characters and music.

Check out the back page for more pictures, along with pictures from our Christmas Children's service!





Dear brothers and sisters at St. Peter,

This is the next article in our current series on
"Knowing Your Scriptures!"

"The minor prophets: Pointing to the Sun"

The times in which the OT prophets lived were gloomy days for God's people. During this period the northern kingdom of Israel fell to Assyrian invaders (722 B.C.). Jerusalem, capital of southern kingdom of Judah, was destroyed by the Babylonians (586 B.C.). For 70 years the Jews lived in exile in Babylon. Eventually, they were allowed to return to their homeland. Yet their land never again attained the glory it had once enjoyed.

Most tragic of all, the prophets preached among a spiritually bankrupt people. Unbelief, greed, social injustice, dishonesty, adultery, broken homes, and even child sacrifice were the order of the day. The prophets' times were not unlike our own.

Amid such darkness, the prophets were beacons of hope. While they warned the ungodly, they also comforted believers.

The golden age of prophecy

The 12 "minor" prophets are designated by this term because of shortness of their writings. Some directed their words to the kingdom of Israel, others to Judah, and some to the surrounding nations. Most of the first six minor prophets lived in the eighth century B.C., known as "the golden age of prophecy."

Hosea, a prophet in Israel, portrayed God as a husband who remains faithful to an adulterous wife, just as Hosea did in his personal life. In spite of Israel's unfaithfulness, God's love was constant. Though the nation would be punished, it would also be restored.

Joel prophesied in the southern kingdom. He describes a terrible locust plague, followed by a drought. This was a picture of God's judgment on the great "day of the Lord." Through Joel, God foretold the birth of the Christian church on Pentecost: *"I will pour out my Spirit on all people"* (2:28).

Amos, a shepherd and farmer, lived in Israel during a time of brief material prosperity, but within a generation the Assyrians would destroy Israel. This prophet's description of famine in the land could well describe our own day: *"Not a famine of food or thirst for water, but a famine of heard the words of the Lord"* (8:11). Luther called this book's strong language "violent." But even here God offers hope: *"Seek me and live"* (5:4).

Obadiah lived about 850 B.C., the earliest of the literary prophets. His book is the shortest in the Old Testament, a mere 21 verses. It is directed against the nation of Edom, constant enemies of God's people. Obadiah predicted Edom's destruction. But he looked ahead with hope: *"On Mount Zion [Jerusalem] will be deliverance."* This was fulfilled in the salvation Jesus brought.

Jonah also directed his work to a foreign nation, Assyria and its mighty capital, Nineveh. Rather than preach to this heathen nation, he tried to flee his God-given assignment by boarding a ship headed in the opposite direction. Jonah was thrown overboard and miraculously kept alive inside a large fish. When he finally did preach to Nineveh, the city repented and was spared God's judgment. Jesus referred to Jonah's three-day experience in the belly of the fish as a picture of his own death and resurrection (Matthew 12:40).

Micah apparently worked closely with Isaiah, as parts of their books match almost word for word (Isaiah 2:2-4, Micah 4:1-3). Micah's book contains the amazing prophecy of the birthplace of the promised Savior in Bethlehem (5:2). It's been said that Micah had Amos's zeal for justice and Hosea's heart of love.

Seventh Century prophets

The next three prophets worked during the seventh century before Christ, shortly before Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians and the Jews were taken into exile.

Nahum wrote *"an oracle concerning Nineveh"* (1:1) about 150 years before Jonah. By this time Nineveh was no longer repentant and Nahum foretold its imminent doom. In 612 B.C. the haughty Assyrian empire fell to the Babylonians. God overthrows those who oppose him and his people. This is the comfort that Nahum, whose name means "comfort," offers believers.

Habakkuk asked God why would God allow an idolatrous nation like Babylon to flourish and overrun his people. Habakkuk's answer was that God would not do this. Babylon's glory was to be short-lived. It, too, would fall. Habakkuk is famous for the statement, *"The righteous will live by*

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SPRY

St. Peter Recycled Youth (SPRY) is a fellowship group for those 50+. SPRY meets on the 3rd Saturday of each month for dinner and a meeting. SPRY will meet for their regular dinner on January 18, hosted by Pastor and Vicki Schewe.

SPRY members dues are \$15.00 per member and need to be turned in by Jan 20th. Please make the check out to OWLS. Please see Inge Stutz if you have any questions.

Sisters in Service Update

- ♥ The quarterly SIS meeting will be Sunday, Jan 26th.
- ♥ The pastors Winter Conference will be held at our church on Monday and Tuesday, February 10-12. SIS has been asked to provide snacks. Look for a sign-up sheet soon.
- ♥ February is our annual SIS heart luncheon. Details coming soon.
- ♥ Thank you to everyone who donated towards the care package sent to our missionary pastor, Joel Heckendorf. A wonderful package was sent with many goodies representing our valley.
- ♥ SIS would like to encourage all ladies in the congregation to attend the quarterly SIS meetings. Please see Mary Sanchez if you have any questions.



Birthdays

January 8 Madeline Armstrong
January 10 Jonathan Farley
January 10 Niki Schulz
January 11 Leo Schulz
January 11 Laurynn Bornemann
January 13 Ellen Gates
January 13 Kaity Hood
January 13 Joan Hevron
January 22 Michael Engel
January 28 Andrew Schulz
January 30 Justin Dubin

Anniversaries

January 10 Amilcar & Robyn Jones
January 24 Marilyn & Sam Hood

Those Who Serve—January

Ushers

Barry Burghardt & John Barber

Flowers

5-Ellen Gates
12-Bornemann Family
19-Sweetman Family
26-Stutz Family

Altar Guild

Marilyn Hood & Joan Hevron

Coffee & Dessert Hosts

5-Brittney Blankenship
12-Ellen Gates
19-Mary Sanchez
26-Inge Stutz

Lawn Mowing Teams

5-Winter Schedule
12-Jeff Hansen & Don Sweetman
19-Winter Schedule
26-Jeff Carter, Ken Hoffmeyer, Justin Dubin

Church Cleaning

5-Amanda Carter
12-Jeff & Helen Hansen
19-Jo Hobensack
26-Ken Hoffmeyer

Luther Hall Cleaning

5-Jan Carter
12-Barry Burghardt
19-Jo Hobensack
26-Ken Hoffmeyer

New Resident Mailing

Joan Hevron

thank you!

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faith"(2:4). The New Testament refers to this truth as the foundation of Christian faith.

Zephaniah foretold the downfall of Judah. Though God's judgments are harsh, he holds out the promise of eventual restoration to his people. Christians continue to find assurance in Zephaniah's words: "*The Lord your God is with you, he is mighty to save*" (3:17).

After the exile

The last three prophets carried out their work in Jerusalem, after the Jews returned from exile in Babylon.

Haggai urged the Jews to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. The people were more interested in making their own houses comfortable than in finishing God's house, which, lamented Haggai, "*remains a ruin*" (1:4). Haggai's appeals met with success and the work was finished. He continues to remind us to put God first in our lives.

Zechariah, a contemporary of Haggai about 500 B.C., also urged the Jews to rebuild the temple. He pointed ahead to the king who would come, "*righteous and hav-*

ing salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey" (9:9). On Palm Sunday, Jesus fulfilled that prophecy. Zechariah also foretold Christ being sold for 30 pieces of silver (11:12,13). Luther called Zechariah "one of the most comforting of the prophets."

Malachi was the last Old Testament prophet. He scolded the Jews for their easy divorce practices and their selfishness and unwillingness to give to the Lord. He rebuked the priests for failing to preach God's word. Finally, he foretold the coming of John the Baptist, whom he called a second Elijah, and Jesus Christ, "*the sun of righteousness*." Between those prophecies and their NT fulfillment came 400 years of silence.

In their day, the minor prophets were often ignored. Sadly, this is still true. Modern believers do well to read and take them to heart. The brevity of these books makes for easy reading. Their themes are timeless—sin, judgment, forgiveness, and salvation in Christ.

Next: The period between the Old and New Testaments.

Pastor Roland Cap Ehlke, "Northwestern Lutheran," May, 1993.
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WELS-ELS-LCMS continue annual informal discussions

Representatives from WELS, the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS), and the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS) met in Jacksonville, Fla., for the eighth in a series of annual informal doctrinal discussions. These are "informal" doctrinal discussions, an indication that we recognize that a restoration of fellowship is not anticipated in the near future. Rather, these meetings are intended to provide a forum that increases mutual understanding of each synod's doctrine and practice and to establish good lines of communication between the synods. The discussions have been helpful in identifying where the synods agree and where differences remain. Topics for this year's discussions included the doctrine of justification (with a focus on objective justification), an area in which the three synods are in complete agreement. Also discussed were the doctrines of the ministry and prayer fellowship, where some differences remain. Another meeting is planned for next year and will include continuing discussion of the topics of prayer fellowship and the ministry, as well as a discussion of the WELS statement on the roles of man and woman, "*Male and Female in God's World*."



Funding secured for theological education facility in Vietnam

Through the support and prayers of WELS members, WELS has surpassed its goal of receiving \$2 million to support a theological education facility in Vietnam. This funding will pay for the land, building construction, and the first two years of operating expenses.

The communist Vietnamese government invited WELS in 2018 to build this facility in Vietnam's capital city of Hanoi to train leaders of the Hmong Fellowship Church (HFC).

To date, more than 550 WELS congregations have given offerings to this campaign, and another 2,300 individuals and groups have offered special gifts or commitments.



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
January 2020						
			1	2	3	4
5 9:00 Worship (comm) 10:15 Family Bible Hr. 11:30 Catechism	6	7	8 6:30 Bible Study 7:30 Board of Elders	9	10	11 8:00-11:00am Clean Up Church Campus 10:00 Parkinson's Support Group
12 9:00 Worship 10:15 Family Bible Hr. 11:30 Church Council 11:30 Catechism	13	14 10:00 Mornings with Mommy	15 10:00 Mornings with Mommy	16	17	18
19 9:00 Worship (comm) 10 15 Family Bible Hr. 11:30 Catechism	20 Pastoral Circuit meeting	21	22 6:30 Bible Study	23	24	25
26 9:00 Worship 10 15 Family Bible Hr. 11:30 Voters and SIS meetings 11:30 Catechism	27	28 10:00 Mornings with Mommy	29 10:00 Mornings with Mommy	30	31	

Bible Classes:

Sundays (10:20 am) “In the Footsteps of Paul” We’re discussing early New Testament churches and cities, based on Pastor Schewe’s trip to Greece and Italy last spring. Come see some pictures and learn from the book of Acts!

Wednesdays (6:30 pm) “Noah: Obedient Builder”
We have just a couple sessions left of this look at the OT believer Noah and the lessons he teaches us.

Thank You!

Pastor, Vicki, and family would like to thank you for the cards, greetings, and gifts you gave during the Christmas holidays. They mean so much to us and remind us of how blessed we are to serve in the Lord’s kingdom among and with you. Thank you!

Pictures from the “Live Nativity” and the Children’s service:



If you would like to include information in a future newsletter, please contact Natalie Bornemann at secretary@stpeterclovis.org