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RECHARGING CHRISTIANS; ENERGISING NON-CHRISTIANS; LIVING AS DISCIPLES, AND MAKING DISCIPLES

CHRISTMAS FAIR

Are you looking for that special something for Christmas? Or perhaps the kids would love to meet Father Christmas? If so, then, then why not come along to the Christmas Fair at Christ Lutheran Church on Saturday 24th November from 10.00 am. – 1.00 pm. We will have all your old favourites like Father Christmas, the raffle, tombola, home baked goods, and tasty refreshments. But we will also have those special items like Christmas crafts that will be sure to brighten up anyone's Christmas stocking. Admission is only 30p, so why not come along and see what you will discover at our Christmas Fair.

ORPINGTON CHORALE

If music be the food of life, then boy do we have a smorgasbord for you. On Wednesday 12th December at 8.00 pm. the highly acclaimed Orpington Chorale (you may have seen them on Songs Of Praise on the 11th of November) will be giving a Christmas Concert at Christ Lutheran Church. Renowned conductor Michael Blackley and 60 chorale members will be filling the sanctuary of our church with wonderful Christmas music. The concert will also include a good deal of audience participation. Tickets may be purchased at the Church or from any Orpington Chorale member for £5. This special event is always a very popular one, so be sure to get your tickets early and come along to enjoy the festive melodies of the Orpington Chorale.

ADVENT IS....

Perhaps your children or grandchildren have asked you why they have Advent calendars? Perhaps you might use this holiday item to instruct them on the real significance of Advent.

Advent comprises the four Sundays before Christmas Day, and it is a time of preparation in repentant hope and anticipation of the coming of Jesus Christ (both as a baby in Bethlehem and of His second coming to judge the living and the dead). Advent literally means "coming", and in Advent we celebrate the fact that Jesus came as a baby some 2000 years ago; we celebrate that He still comes to us today in His Word and Sacraments; and we celebrate the fact that He will come again in the future on Judgment Day.



The advent Wreath is a regular feature of this season. It is filled with symbolism. The four candles count down the weeks to Christmas. It is formed in a circle representing the fact that God has no beginning or end. Evergreen foliage is used to illustrate that Jesus brings life to us. The wreath is suspended between the floor and the ceiling showing that Christ has entered into our time and space to be our Saviour.

This year we will be celebrating Advent with mid-week Wednesday evening worship services. On

Wednesday 5 & 19 December we will gather at 5.45 pm. for worship, and on Wednesday 12 December we will be hosting the Orpington Chorale Christmas Concert at 8.00 pm.

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

Christ Lutheran Church will be holding a number of special services of the Christmas period and they are as follows:

Sun. 16 Dec. 11.00
Advent Communion Service

Sun. 16 Dec. 6.30
Carols by Candle Light.

Sun. 23 Dec. 11.00
Christmas Communion Service

Mon. 24 Dec. 6.30
Family Christmas Eve Service

Mon. 24 Dec. 11.00
Candle Light Service

Tues. 25 Dec. 10.00
Service of Lessons & Carols

POVEREST AFTERNOON CLUB

Have you wondered why the streets are so quiet on Monday afternoons? Well, the answer may be because people are coming to the Poverest Afternoon Club at Christ Lutheran Church. We meet fortnightly from 2.00 – 4.00 pm. We have a quiz, tea, coffee, and snacks, and a speaker usually follows this. For only £1, lots of laughs, some good information, and a nice cuppa can be yours. So why not come along and see what everyone is doing.

NEW CURATE AT CHRIST LUTHERAN



In August, Curate Gordon Naumann and his wife Marta, and daughter Hannah, joined the Christ Lutheran family. Curate Gordon is completing his last year of theological education with us as he focuses on practical aspects of the pastoral ministry. Your new Curate was born in Scotland, but he grew up in South Ruislip. For the past five years he has been studying Theology at Westfield House in Cambridge. Marta is a trained deaconess, and she spent a year working in a church in London. Their daughter Hannah (four months) is just busy being cute. We are thankful to God to have them with us, and we pray His blessings upon them as Curate Gordon completes his theological training in preparation for ordination into the Holy Ministry.

INTERNET OPPORTUNITIES

Have you ever wondered what a Lutheran believes? Ever been curious to hear what we preach, but afraid to come along? Well, here is your chance to check us out from the privacy of your own computer. Christ Lutheran Church has set up our own web site at www.christlutheranchurch.org.uk. The site contains a good deal of information about the church, our beliefs, and you can listen to pastor Jon's sermons on line – you can even download them from iTunes to your iPod. Let us know what you think.

POLICE SURGERY

“Where are the police when you need them”? Well, every other Thursday afternoon from 2.30 – 2.20 they are at Christ Lutheran Church holding a community surgery. They would love

to have you come in and chat to them about anything that is bothering you; they are here to help you. There is no need to make an appointment, just drop in and have a chat with your local Bobbie. They are here for you.

2008 DIARIES

The always-popular desk diary is back for 2008. If you would like a copy of this handy diary, please stop by the church and pick up your free copy while supplies last. It is handy, compact, and useful. Be sure to get a jump on 2008 with your Christ Church desk diary.

LAST WORD

One of the most enduring pictures many of us have about Christmas is the shepherds sitting on the hillside, tending their flocks, when the angels fill the sky and proclaim that the Saviour of the world is born in Bethlehem. We can imagine their terror at the glorious sight. But we can also imagine their joy when the words of the angelic visitors finally sunk in. It is a wonderful picture. But why did God choose to reveal the birth of Jesus to lowly shepherds? The shepherd was not held in very high esteem. Generally they were young, uneducated, and considered to be very unclean due to their work. What a very unlikely gang to reveal the birth of the Messiah to. But the One revealed to them was the Good Shepherd of John 10. He is the One who knows His sheep and calls them by name as He leads them throughout their lives. He searches for us when we are lost and picks us up and puts us on His shoulders and brings us home. While the shepherds on the hills around Bethlehem did not know it, the child they were going to adore was the Good Shepherd. But the baby was more than just a Good Shepherd; He was also the Lamb of God. John the Baptist declared Jesus to be “The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). It was no coincidence that many of the shepherds who tended their flocks around Bethlehem were watching over the sheep that would eventually end up as sacrifices in the Temple in Jerusalem. These sheep were offered up because of the sins of the people;

the sheep gave their lives as a sacrifice and substitute for the people who deserved death because of their rebellion.

And this little baby lying in the straw of the manger was also the Lamb of God. A perfect, spotless, sinless lamb who would offer himself as a sacrifice for all of us because of our evil. In fact, Isaiah 53 gives us a marvellous picture of Jesus being led like the lamb to the slaughter for the transgressions of His people. This Lamb of God was sacrificed in our place, and His blood now covers our sins. Thus when God looks at us now, He no longer sees our sins, but the righteousness of Jesus. Through faith in the Christmas child, God declares us innocent.

The picture of the shepherds on the hillsides is indeed a wonderful one. But it is even more extraordinary than we think because the baby they went to see was their Good Shepherd and their Lamb of God who took their sins (and ours) away.

Hope you have a CHRIST-filled CHRISTmas.



**A joyous
Christmas
to us all!**