

December Calendar of Events

God Bless you this Christmas season

December 5	Sunday school Christmas program rehearsal
December 6	Services with Healing
December 8	LEAF articles are due
December 11	Decorate the church for Christmas
December 12	Sunday school Christmas program rehearsal
December 13	Advent Music Sunday
December 16	Blue Christmas Worship 7:00 pm here
December 19	Sunday school Christmas program rehearsal
December 20	Sunday School Christmas Program
December 24	Christmas Eve worship 6:00 & 10:00 pm
December 25	Christmas Day worship 10:00 am

- Please bring non-perishable food for Hope House on **Sundays**
- Please bring your aluminum cans and Campbell labels on the second Sunday, December 13th. **ONLY.**
- Dorcas Circle meets **Tuesdays at 9:00 am.**
- Sunday School at **10:00 am**—meets in church Sunday, December 13th. Christmas program is Sunday, December 20—10:00 am.
- God's Young Voices—meets **Sundays at 9:15 am.**
- Senior Choir meets every **Wednesday at 7:30 pm.**
- Health and Wellness meeting,
- Worship & Music meets **Tuesday, December 8th, at 7:00 pm**
- Good News Bible Study meets **Wednesday, December 9th at 11:30 am.**
- OWLS meet on Thursday, **December 10th, at 8:30 am** at Forum Restaurant
- Property committee meeting Tuesday, **December 8th, at 6:30 pm.**
- Christian Education meeting Tuesday, **December 8th at 7:00 pm**
- Evening Bible Study meets **Thursday, December 17th, 7:00 pm.**
- Friends meet **Tuesday, December 29th at 9:30 am.**
- Parish Nurse, Barb Estrada is here on **Wednesday mornings but not she will be here on the Friday of that week**
- **PICK N SAVE WPLC WE CARE NUMBER IS # 934480**



Decorating the church for Christmas begins at 8:00 am on Friday, December 11th.



Interactive Video Games: Improving Players' Health

Recently, I asked my grandchildren for suggestions for Christmas. The 8 year old immediately said he wanted a Wii video game. This led me to thinking about some of the information I've read about the health benefits of these kinds of games.

Researchers are now paying attention to the possible benefits that these systems can give to people of all age groups. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has awarded grants to explore how interactive digital games could be better designed to improve player's health. According to Deborah Tate, PhD at the University of North Carolina's School of Public Health, "young adults play video games as much as, or in some cases more than, children do. Since young adulthood is a time of decreasing physical activity and rapid weight gain, video games may provide a more active form of leisure than traditional TV for this age group."

Some of her research focuses on presence and intrinsic motivation. Presence is the perception of actual being in the game environment. Intrinsic motivation is the desire to do something for its own sake and not for a reward. Both presence and intrinsic motivation seem to increase the amount of time players spend with games. Through their research, they hope to understand how to make traditional games more active, and active games more compelling.

Other scientists are looking at whether these types of games can offer a legitimate workout. Players can dance, run, bowl, jump, do aerobics all in front of a screen and although they do not provide the amount of exercise as the real sport, they did show that the participants burned more calories than playing sedentary games or just watching TV. Some parents substitute playing

these games for part of the time they allow their children to watch TV. We also don't know that if success in gaming will stimulate a child or person to go out and try the actual sport, which would provide a more complete workout. This is another focus of research that is being done today.

Older adults are one of the audiences that exercise scientists feel could benefit from playing video games. The movement activity is helping people to maintain joint flexibility and range of motion that helps us stay more active, improve balance, and maintain or improve cognitive and perceptual skills. These games also provide fun social interaction between groups of all ages. If your grandchildren, nieces or nephews ask you to join in the fun of gaming, give it a try.

I probably will not get a Wii system for my grandchildren for Christmas, but if I do, it's staying at my house! Barb Estrada, RN, PN

MEDIGARE PART D 2009 INFORMATION

Open enrollment for the Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Plans begins Nov. 15th through Dec. 31st, 2009 for coverage beginning January 2010. As in years past, some drug plans may no longer be in existence or are changing costs or even the medications that are being covered in your plan. These changes may mean that you may have increased cost of the plan or may hit the "donut hole" at a faster rate.

If anyone is interested in reviewing your Medicare D plan using the Medicare web site, I would be glad to help with this. Please make an appointment during my office hours at Whitnall Park and I will be glad to offer assistance. Please bring your Medicare card, Medicare Part D card and an updated list of your medications and dosage in order to determine what Part D plan may best meet your needs.

Barb Estrada, RN, PN

Condensed Council minutes from October 27th, 2009

Members in attendance: Kris Laposki, Ruth Rice, Betty Hembrook, Van Johnson, Gloria Brinkmeier, Reg Simpson, Lou Graef, Donna Winiarski, Jennine Sonntag, Sandy Sannes and Pastor Michael Fazio. Absent: Jill Underberg

Pastor led devotions.

New Council members Jennine Sonntag, Lou Graef, Sandy Sannes and Donna Winiarski were introduced and welcomed.

January 2010 Youth trip to New Orleans – Jodi Graef is the only Youth Group member who will be attending the mission trip to New Orleans in January 2010. After affirming that members of the Youth Group who are NOT attending are in support of donating funds towards Jodi's expenses, a motion was made, seconded and approved to donate \$100 towards his expenses for this synod sponsored trip. Remaining \$950 in Youth Group funds will be used for other Youth Group activities.

Secretary's Report - Ruth Rice

Minutes from the 9-22-09 council meeting were approved as submitted.

Treasurer's Report

No new information from what was reported at the semi-annual meeting.

PASTOR'S REPORT

Pastor Fazio submitted a breakdown of all pastoral acts for 9/23/09 – 1-/27/09 which include leading worship and preaching at 10 services, attendance at semi-annual meeting, 2 weddings, 1 renewal of marriage vows for 50th anniversary, 1 healing service; 6 hospital visits; 7 pastoral counseling appointments; 3 home visitations; 12 home/hospital communions, 1 Blessing of the Animals service, 1 staff luncheon, participation in church clean-up day, participation in meeting to elect new Bishop for Greater Milwaukee Synod, Veterans Synod Taskforce Meeting and all regularly scheduled book groups, bible studies, confirmation classes and committee meetings.

Pastor also reported that he has been accepted into the Clinical Pastoral Education program (CPE) for parish ministry. An Enneagram Workshop was held on 10/22, and regular classes will be conducted in Elkhorn from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. every Thursday be-

ginning this November and running through May 2010. Pastor will be taking Thursdays as his day off during this period, so he will be attending classes on his own time.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Fellowship – Kris Laposki

- Many thanks are due to Sharon Hause and the Fellowship team for their work on Ralph Klute's 20th anniversary recognition.
- Much work is being done at present on the new pictorial directory.

Endowment – Betty Hembrook

Ron Labott was elected to be new Endowment Fund board member at semi-annual congregational meeting in October. Ralph Llanas has resigned from church council and Endowment Committee, so a new council representative to the board will need to be elected. Sharon Hause was appointed as Treasurer and Betty Hembrook as Secretary of the Endowment Fund.

Special guest Glenn Lemmenes summarized the financial market of the past year and reported our portfolio has increased 16.5% since 12/31/08. Discussion centered around re-allocation of some of our investments. The committee is taking into consideration how and where to re-invest a bond fund of \$15,000.

A written request for a monetary donation to be applied towards the WPLC mortgage reduction fund is expected to be forthcoming from the church council, and must be signed by the new council President. Although the request may be made in 2009, the actual donation will be made in 2010.

Finance – Van Johnson

Financial software as well as a laptop or PC and a printer for checks will be purchased and set up at the current Treasurer's home and will be transitioned to that of the new church treasurer at end of 2010. Explanation was given to new council members that checks are currently handwritten by the church Treasurer and anything over \$500 needs the second signature of a council representative. Suggestion was made to consider the possibility of electronic payment of bills and/or paying by credit card, and getting a 1% reduction every month.

Continued on page 5

Continued Council Minutes:

Several church members have volunteered to count weekly offerings on Sunday mornings. This has worked out well during the month of October and counting procedures will be reviewed at the end of the month.

Social Ministry – Gloria Brinkmeier

The November Social Ministry coffee hour contributions will be used for Thanksgiving food baskets.

12 people were recruited to work on social ministry projects at the recent Ministry Fair.

Over \$2,000 was raised for the Crop Walk.

Property – Van Johnson

Check out the floors in the basement – they have all been re-done and look very nice!

Front sidewalk to the main entrance still needs repair. Contractors submitting bids have been asked to price all segments of the work individually and on a combined basis to help the committee make a decision.

We have received a bid of \$4,800 for the work in front, but work in back (from the parsonage to the church building) is also needed. We are hoping to get everything done for a cost of \$5,000. NOTE: Friendship Circle has made a commitment to contribute up to \$3,000 towards this work.

The hole underneath the steps in front will be repaired by Pat Suderland's son.

Stewardship – Kris Laposki

Transition needs to be made from existing ad-hoc fund drive group to a permanent Stewardship Committee. An important goal will be to improve upon the budget preparation process, which is currently done fully "on faith".

Worship & Music – Ruth Rice

Congregational members have been asked to bring in photos of themselves or family members in uniform as part of our Veteran's Day observance. Also, Brian Lynch's father is the recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor and will be our guest speaker on November 8th.

Worship & Music and Christian Education are working together to resolve issues surrounding the new weekly Sunday School worship services in Hornburg Hall and God's Young Voices rehearsal and perform-

ance times.

Copies of the "2009 Worship & Christian Ed Planning Calendar" were distributed to all council members. Suggestion was made to post this on the kiosk in Hornbug Hall.

Evangelism/Publicity – Gloria Brinkmeier

The WPLC Ministry Fair was featured on the front page of the October 23rd edition of the Hales Corners Citizen.

Make sure to include approximately \$200 in 2010 budget for publicity opportunities.

Green Committee

This committee is being disbanded and removed from the list of committee reports. However, every committee should be looking at ways to become more "green" – it's part of our mission statement. This might include using real plates versus paper plates, glass communion cups versus disposable plastic cups, and recycling of paper products and aluminum cans, etc.

Farewell to outgoing Council Members

Kris Laposki, Ruth Rice, Kyle Sorvick and Ralph Llanas were thanked for their past service.

NEW COUNCIL OFFICERS:

President – Lou Graef

Vice President – Van Johnson

Secretary – Jennine Sonntag

Treasurer Liaison – Donna Winiarski

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS:

Christian Education – Jennine Sonntag (cannot attend meetings on 2nd Tuesday of the month)

Endowment – Betty Hembrook and Reg Simpson

Finance – Van Johnson

Fellowship – Sandy Sannes

Health & Wellness – Jill Underberg

Worship & Music – Donna Winiarski

Property – Van Johnson

Social Ministry – Gloria Brinkmeier

Stewardship – Sandy Sannes

Evangelism/Publicity – OPEN

Mutual Ministry – Jill Underberg

Respectfully submitted

Ruth Rice, retiring Council Secretary

Birthdays

- 1 Vickie Katschke
Clayton Olson
David Valleau
- 2 Bradley Metzger
Terry Mittelstaedt
- 3 Jerome Thome
- 4 McKenzie Henneberry
Beth Jaeger
Jolene Krychowiak
- 5 Shirley Meyer
Sean Musha
- 8 LaVerne Keske
Jennine Sonntag
Maria Sparacino
- 9 Elizabeth Skubal
- 10 Karen Adams
Wayne Duensing
Connie Honebein
Jake Ringwall
Celia Stollenwerk
Lauren Underberg
Howard Wiegert
- 11 Katherine Ewaskowitz
Holly Skubal
- 12 Mark Sorvick
- 13 Oscar Sorvick
- 14 Laura Rakow
- 15 Frank Brugger
- 16 Melissa Hoffmann
Kathleen Sonntag
- 17 Linda Duensing
Jessica Mlnarik
Robert Wamser
- 18 Robert Edmundson
- 19 Heather Hasenstein
- 20 Jessie Kaboskey
Cassidy Stein
- 21 Carl Medeiros
- 22 Crystal Ahles
Sara Kussard
Laurie Sorvick
- 23 Beth Borstad
- 24 Bernice Puls
- 26 Wendi Brugger
Matthew Fazio
- 27 Reg Simpson
- 28 Sharon Kaempfer
Susan Larson
- 29 Sharon Smith

- Lynn Stanton
- 30 Mary Ann Barrows
Jessica Heard
- 30 Robert Horcos
Donna Winiarski
- 31 Betty Mattice

Anniversaries

- 2 Gregg & Laurie Sorvick
- 6 Don and Shirle Holt
- 15 Elwood & Marybelle Potter **65**
- 17 Fred & Louise Ludwig **54**
- 27 William & Betty Senft
- 28 Jon & Janine King

2009 Christmas Cookie Exchange at WPLC

Sunday, Dec. 13th (following 1st Service) (Saturday, Dec. 12th, is an alternate date if participants are interested in a Saturday versus a busy Sunday) The number of people participating determines the number of dozens of cookies you need to bake and bring. Call Sharon Hause if you are interested in participating in the cookie exchange—262-679-2161—for more info go to the kiosk in Hornburg Hall.



I want to thank the many people who expressed interest and support of our Luther Manor partnership at the Ministry Fair in October.

I was asked specifically what items could be donated for the Resale Shop and also items used at Luther Manor. The Activity Department always needs greeting cards (old and new), trays from frozen dinners (used in the aviaries), yarn, pine cones, etc. Books are always welcome for the several libraries, puzzles and magazines (for the new Rehabilitation area). The Resale Shop takes most miscellaneous household items, bedding, women’s clothing, men’s clothing, but not suits or dress shirts (ties, yes), jackets, sweatshirts and walking shoes are especially needed as Luther Manor works with inner-city congregations on clothing needs. And finally, we can also use all those plastic bags you through away – needed not only for the Resale Shop, but Luther Manor has several in-house mini-marts for resident’s convenience. As always, cookies are always appreciated (place on Barb Estrada’s desk).

If you have items to donate, please put the in or near the green Luther Manor box next to the library door and I will take them to Luther Manor.

Thanks, Kathy Sonntag, Key Person



Please state the person you wish to honor and/or remember.

Honor _____

Remember _____

Your name _____

Poinsettia is \$10.00

Please order by **Sunday, December 6th.**

Social Ministry Update:



The Social Ministry Committee will again sponsor the *Mitten Tree* project for Hope House. Donations of

gloves, scarves, and hats for men and women plus warm mittens, scarves, and caps for children of ages are needed. These items are given as Christmas gifts to the residents of Hope House.

So please--check those Christmas sales or get the "needles clicking" to make mittens, scarves, and caps and load this year's Mitten Christmas Tree down with gifts! Thank you!

CROP Walk

Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty

Thanks to everyone who participated in Whitnall Park's 2009 CROP Walk project. The final results are in. Thirty-four persons walked on Sunday, October 11th (See the November Leaf for the names of the walkers and a group photo.), ninety-eight non-perishable food items were collected for the Hunger Task Force on that day, and \$1,418.15 was raised by Whitnall Park--including \$43 from the Youth Group's Coffee Hour on October 11th, \$63 from the Social Ministry Committee's Coffee Hours on September 6th and October 4th, and \$300 from the Social Ministry Committee's Fresh Garden Produce Table. An addition \$1,000 was given by Marilyn Schoenleber's brother, Richard Wilde of Long Beach, California, and \$200 by her son Charles specifically designated to ship Lutheran World Relief school kits and quilts from the joint Brethren/Church World Service/Lutheran World Relief warehouse in New Windsor, Maryland, to where they are needed. The grand total raised was \$2,618.15.

Whitnall Park raised enough money to receive all \$800 in matching funds promised by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. Thrivent matched each three dollars raised with an additional dollar. According to this formula at least \$2,400 had to be raised to obtain the entire matching grant.

Of the \$3,418.15 raised, \$1,600 will go to Lutheran World Relief to ship school kits and quilts and \$1,818.15 to fund the programs of Church World Service. Up to 25% of the CWS money will stay locally and will be used to support the anti-poverty ad-

vocacy work of the Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee. The remaining CWS money will help provide food and water, as well as resources that empower people to meet their own needs. From seeds and tools, to wells and water systems, to technical training and micro-enterprise loans, the key is people working together to identify their own development priorities, their strengths and their needs--something CWS has learned through some 63 years of working in partnership around the world. And one of Church World Service's close partners and collaborators is Lutheran World Relief, to which Whitnall Park has contributed quilts for 17 years and school kits for 9 years. Everyone in Whitnall Park can be proud of what has been accomplished over the years and resolve to do more in the future to meet the very desperate needs of the poor and hungry, disaster victims, and refugees throughout the world.

Blue Christmas Service



From Darkness...to the Light of Christ A Service of Healing at Christmastime

We are approaching the Christmas Season, the time of year that is happy, joyful, exciting and full of hope. Or is it? Many of us feel very stressed during the Christmas season. We may be feeling lonely, full of grief, depressed, or are suffering with a chronic or terminal illness, have lost a job or relationship, or just trying to deal with some unrealistic expectation of the season. **This year WPLC will again provide a "Blue Christmas" Service on Wednesday, December 16th at 7:00 pm.**

This worship service is designed to help us deal with any of those feelings that can be hurtful during this time of year. Please come and worship together and support others who may benefit from this healing service. Invite family members or friends to attend with you or encourage someone you know to come. *Offer a ride to someone who doesn't like to drive at night.* **A short coffee fellowship will follow the service.** **Thank you, Barb Estrada, RN, PN**

December 6 Second Sunday in Advent/Services with Healing

- 8:30** Assisting Minister **Ron Sonntag** Acolyte **Cody Suchla**
 Ushers **Ron Hause, Carl Hanson**
 Greeter **Karen Olson**
 Altar Guild **Jerrijo Cowman**
- 10:00** Assisting Minister **Ron Labott** Acolyte **Emily Brown**
 Ushers **Greg and Paul Saari, Katie Mason, Ron Noeske**
 Greeter **Kim Mason** Nursery **Samantha Llanas**
 Altar Guild **Kathy Fazio**

December 13 Music Sunday/Third Sunday in Advent/Toys for Hope House

- 8:30** Assisting Minister **Linda Shea** Acolyte **Brittney Henneberry**
 Ushers **John Hembrook, Ken Perkl,**
 Greeter **Dorothy Perkl**
 Altar Guild **Sandy Johnson**
- 10:00** Assisting Minister **Mike Sparacino** Acolyte **Scott Johnson**
 Ushers **Tom Laposki, Brian and Kristi Peyer**
 Greeter **Pat Noeske** Nursery **Heidi Martin**

December 20 Fourth Sunday in Advent/Sunday school Christmas program

- 8:30** Assisting Minister **Lou Graef** Acolyte **Jim Shea**
 Ushers **Jim & Linda Shea**
 Greeter **Jane Dillon-Perkl**
 Altar Guild **Jim & Linda Shea**

10:00 am Sunday school Christmas program at the 10:00 am worship only
Youth Group will be serving at this worship

December 24 Christmas Eve

- 6:00 pm** Assisting Minister **Linda Shea** Acolyte **Volunteer**
 Ushers **Jim Shea, Ron Hause, Carl Hanson**
 Greeter **Dolores Porath**
 Altar Guild **Jim & Linda Shea**
- 10:00 pm** Assisting Minister **Tom Laposki** Acolyte **Jenna Laposki**
 Ushers **Jerome Thome Larry Pfeil,**
 Greeter **Corrin Laposki**
 Altar Guild **Marilyn Medeiros**

December 25 MERRY CHRISTMAS!!

- 10:00** Assisting Minister **Jane Dillon-Perkl** Acolyte **Volunteer**
 Ushers **Ken Perkl, Duane Hause**
 Greeter **Sharon Hause**

December 27

- 8:30** Assisting Minister **Lou Graef** Acolyte **Mitchell Cowman**
 Ushers **Jim Gaffney, Duane Hause, Lyle Lance**
 Greeter **Evelyn Schubert**
- 10:00** Assisting Minister **Marjorie Pagel** Acolyte **Joseph Hasenstein**
 Ushers **Jerome Thome, Jerry Pagel, Walter Sievert**
 Greeter **Nancy Sherman** Nursery **Kathy Ross**

**From M.E., Kelly Brown
Minister of Education**

It is hard to believe that I am already saying Happy Holidays, but Thanksgiving and Christmas are just around the corner. During this holiday season, we will again have our toy collection for Hope House. Although this may be a struggle for some, we must remember that there are those that are struggling harder. For those who wish to contribute, unwrapped toys for all ages and price ranges will happily be accepted. Donations of wrapping paper, gift bags, tape, and bows would also be appreciated. **Donated items can be placed in the TOY BOX upstairs in Hornburg Hall from November 22nd through December 13th.** For those Sunday school children that wish to participate, we ask that they bring an unwrapped toy appropriate for their age and gender.



Our Sunday school Christmas program will be held on December 20th during second service. We invite those people who do not have children in Sunday school to also come and enjoy the program. Haley Just has taken on the task of program director this year, which is called Children of Bethlehem. Join us for fellowship following the Christmas program downstairs in Hibbard hall. Please watch for notes coming home regarding practices.

Sunday school rehearsals for the Christmas program will begin on **Saturday, November 28th from 10:00-12:00.** The first two practices may be for those with major parts only. You will be contacted if your child needs to attend. The other practices are: **December 5th, 12th and 19th.** *Thank you for your cooperation. We look forward to an excellent program.—Haley Just, Corrin Laposki, Jodi Graef, Becky Brown and Kim Brown*

December 2009

Whitnall Park Lutheran Church

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 9:00 AM Dorcas 1:00 PM Knitting & Crocheting	2 10:00 AM Barb Estrada, Parish Nurse is here 7:30 PM Senior Choir	3	4 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM Office hours	5 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM Christmas program rehearsal
	6 8:30 AM - 10:00 AM WORSHIP 10:00 AM Sunday school Services with Healing	7 Poinsettia orders are due	8 9:00 AM Dorcas 1:00 PM Knitting & Crocheting 6:30 PM Property Meeting 7:00 PM Christian Ed Meeting 7:00 PM Worship & Music LEAF Articles are due	9 10:00 AM Barb Estrada, Parish Nurse is here 7:30 PM Senior Choir	10 8:30 AM OWLS meet at the Forum	11  8:30 AM Decorating the church for Christmas 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM Office hours
13 8:30 AM - 10:00 AM WORSHIP 10:00 AM Sunday school 11:30 AM Confirmation Class ADVENT MUSIC SUNDAY	14 7:00 PM Dartball	15 9:00 AM Dorcas 1:00 PM Knitting & Crocheting	16  7:00 PM BLUE CHRISTMAS WORSHIP 8:00 PM Senior Choir	17 9:00 AM Assemble the LEAF 7:00 PM Bible Study	18 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM Office hours 10:00 AM Barb Estrada, Parish Nurse is here	19 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM Christmas program rehearsal
20 8:30 AM - 10:00 AM WORSHIP 10:00 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL PROGRAM 	21 7:00 PM Dartball	22 7:00 PM Council Meeting	23 10:00 AM Barb Estrada, Parish Nurse is here 7:30 PM Senior Choir	 24 6:00 PM - 10:00 PM CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP	25 10:00 AM CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP 	26
27 8:30 AM - 10:00 AM WORSHIP Sunday school will meet again on January 3rd	28 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM Office hours	29	30 10:00 AM Barb Estrada, Parish Nurse is here	31 Office is closed		



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It's been an interesting week around the Fazio household; Kathy and Matthew have spent the last 7 days in California visiting her mother and it's just been me and the girls (by "the girls" I mean our beagles, Buckles and Sweet Pea) holding down the fort. The interesting thing is that despite outward appearances, I'm an introvert at heart and typically have no problem spending time alone. But, this week has been quite lonely without my wife and son; no offense to Buckles and Sweet Pea who have been wonderful companions! I come home from the church or from visiting people, and no smells of food cooking, no toys or walkers to trip over, no little boy's arms up in the air waiting to be lifted up by his daddy...the house has been strangely odd and empty. The good news is that as I'm writing this article, I'm preparing to go and pick them up from the airport, and life as I enjoy it most will resume.

I've also been thinking this past week about the fact that we're entering in to Advent (by the time you are reading this, Advent is already in full swing), and we begin our journey toward Bethlehem and the hope and promise of the birth of Jesus. Christmas is truly a time of anticipation, expectation, newness and excitement; however, the harsh reality for many is that Christmas is also a time of loneliness, spent reflecting back to happier times when all of ones family and friends were present. We need to honor and respect those feelings of sadness during this time as well as those feelings of hope and eagerness for Christ's coming.

Here at Whitnall Park Lutheran Church, we're going to once again try to find an appropriate balance between the Spirit of Christmas with its light and joy, and the loneliness of remembering and grieving missed loved ones by holding our **Blue Christmas Service** on the evening of **Wednesday, December 16th at 7:00**. During this time together, we will honor and recognize our pain and loss, but also look toward the comfort and consolation that Christmas brings into our hearts. We will gather, hear the Word of God, sing a few hymns and offer prayers to our Creator...then following the service, we will gather for a brief time of fellowship and food in the Narthex (being Lutherans, you had to know there would be food involved)!

Our hope is that whether you are looking forward to Christmas with a childlike eagerness, or if you are dreading the first December 25th since the loss of a loved one, you will come together with your church family to offer love and support to each other during this amazing time of year. We have a special group of people here at WPLC, may we come together as a church on Dec. 16th and experience the love of Christ expressed through His faithful people.

Merry Christmas and God's Peace be with you all,
Pr. Michael