

Pilgrim Lutheran Church

BROADWAY AT FLOREY

KILGORE, TEXAS



December 2014/January 2015
“PILGRIMAGE”

Mission Statement: Pilgrim Lutheran Church is to glorify God in proclaiming the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ with Word and deed in our midst, in our community, and throughout the world.

Our more-than-virtual Savior

Dear Members and Friends of Pilgrim Lutheran Church,

When I used to teach at the university level, I, despite my age (!), was one of the more tech-savvy instructors. At Pilgrim, with the help and support of a number of people, we have tried to make our congregation’s website as well-designed and as useful as possible, and, in regards to achieving those goals, we frequently hear praise from our visitors and even from other pastors. There is always room for improvement, to be sure, such as our making our website more adaptable to browsers on smart phones and other mobile devices. Yet, I am less-ready to make use of other forms of social media, such as Facebook and Twitter. While even those media may be able to be put to good use, there are limits to how such technology can serve the Gospel of the forgiveness of sins by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, Who took on human flesh to die for us and so effect our salvation.

A couple of months ago a former Missouri Synod pastor wrote on his blog about an organization called Relevant Ministries International’s unveiling an electronic device application (or “app”) called “Absolution” that was said to “transform every phone into a handheld church” and be “like having your own personal God in your pocket”. The app was described as operating by asking the user three questions and then, depending on the answers, declaring, “God has heard your confession. Your sins are forgiven! Go in peace.”

Although there really is an organization called Relevant Ministries International, the former pastor’s blog post was entirely satirical, satire all the more effective perhaps because we have reached the point where the existence of such an app would not be all that surprising. (In 2011 the Roman Catholic church approved an app to help people prepare for confession but left absolution to a priest.) Yet, the idea of such an absolution app raises the question of whether such automated electronic media can administer a sacrament such as individual Holy Absolution. Somewhat similar questions were asked five or so years ago when a Missouri Synod astronaut took communion elements to the International Space Station. Without getting into all the complexities of either case, let me use these items as a point of departure to say that we have a more-than-virtual Savior Who deals with us in a more-than-virtual way.

To be sure, Holy Scripture describes a personal God Who dealt with His people in person. For example, St. John’s Gospel account describes well how the eternal Word of God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, Who was distinct from God the Father but shared the same

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substance as Him, in time became or took on human flesh (“was incarnate”, we say in the Nicene Creed) and dwelt (or “tabernacled”) among us (John 1:1-2, 14). His Incarnation is what we prepare for this Advent, celebrate this Christmas, and make known to the world this Epiphany! Those participating in our Midweek Bible Study especially should note the significance of the merciful and gracious dwelling of God among His people in the temple of the man Jesus’s flesh, especially as to how that presence of God relates to the forgiveness of sins. Likewise, St. Matthew’s Gospel account refers to the Blessed Virgin Mary’s Child conceived by the Holy Spirit as “Immanuel”, which means “God with us” (Matthew 1:20-24, itself citing Isaiah 7:14). And later, that Immanuel Himself speaks of His being with His Church as it gathers around Word and Sacrament forever (Matthew 18:20; 28:20).

Our personal God Who deals with us in person instituted the Office of the Holy Ministry to preach the Gospel and administer the Sacraments: Holy Baptism, individual Holy Absolution after private confession, and the Sacrament of the Altar (see, for example, Augsburg Confession V). Not just anyone publicly reads Holy Scripture or preaches the Gospel (see, for example, 1 Timothy 4:13 and Augsburg Confession XIV). People do not baptize themselves. Electronic devices do not effect Absolution after a person clicks on the right sequence of buttons. And, faithful stewards of the mysteries of God do not indiscriminately give out our Lord’s body and blood with bread and wine (1 Corinthians 4:1-2). Rather, our personal God deals with us in person through those people He places into the Office of the Holy Ministry.

While the purely preached Gospel and the rightly administered Sacraments all give the same forgiveness of sins, they are not all exactly the same. The Gospel has long been preached *en masse*, whether in person from a pulpit, over radio or television airwaves, or via the internet. (Although I do not usually make a practice of praying over the phone, I will when circumstances warrant.) Individuals are baptized individually, however, as also they are more-properly absolved individually, not from an app but from the pastor as from God Himself (see, for example, the Small Catechism V:1 and Smalcald Articles III:iv). And, the communion of the Church is not an individual and his or her smart phone or other electronic device but an individual’s union with Christ and so with fellow believers in and around His one Body and Blood in one bread and cup.

A virtual reality of a sort played a role in our former member Aaron Clubb’s introduction to his new bride Mary, but the pastor preaching at their wedding in October made clear that their marriage was not virtual but real, with all the sights, smells, and sounds that accompany two people living together and not mostly communicating over the phone and internet. Likewise our Lord Jesus Christ takes His Bride, the Church, in all Her messiness and cleans Her up with Word and Sacrament (Ephesians 5:22-32). As a result, in Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany, we in our messiness live together in the forgiveness of sins, letting technology serve a role helping lead people to but not replacing our Incarnate Lord, His Ministry, or His Church.

*His and your servant,
Pastor Galler*

Into flesh is made the Word, alleluia!
He our refuge and our Lord, alleluia!
On this day God gave us / Christ, His Son, to save us;
Christ, His Son, to save us.
(*Lutheran Service Book* 381:4)

Two months bring us three seasons of the Church Year

We might experience two different seasons in three consecutive months of our secular calendar, but, in the two months of two different calendar years for which this newsletter is intended, we will experience three different seasons of our Church Year and its calendar: Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany. What follows largely highlights our regular Sunday and special worship opportunities for those two secular-calendar months as they break out into the three seasons of the Church Year.

Please permit one other preliminary note. Every Sunday this Advent (and all of the Sundays of the 2014-2015 Church Year when Pastor Galler is present) Pilgrim is continuing to offer a full Divine Service with the Sacrament of the Altar. This Church Year we are following the liturgy of *Lutheran Service Book's* Divine Service, Setting Three (essentially the same liturgy that the congregation used two years ago as *Lutheran Worship's* Divine Service I and which many know from *The Lutheran Hymnal* pages 15 and following).

Advent

First, Advent is a season of preparing for Christmas. You may recall that our English word “Advent” derives from the Latin verb that means “come to”. In Advent, three “comings” of our Lord are variously in view: (1) His coming at His birth more than 2,000 years ago, (2) His coming to us now in His Word and Sacraments, and (3) His coming a final time in glory to judge the living and the dead. Our Advent hymns, Scripture Readings, and the like present those three “comings”—past, present, and future—in an almost-bewildering fashion. The same sentence might present one, two, or all three “comings” without order or distinction. Yet, our remembering His past coming serves our preparing for and recognizing both His present coming and His future coming.



Although preparing for the Christmas season can bring us joy, Advent is intended to be a penitential season of preparation for the celebration of The Nativity of Our Lord, Christmas, just as the more-severely-penitential season of Lent precedes the celebration of the Resurrection of Our Lord, Easter. For the season of Advent (and for Advent alone), the colored cloths (paraments) that adorn the furniture in the church (the chancel furnishings) are blue. Blue is a color of hope and expectation, often associated with the Virgin Mary and her festivals, but, as we use it, the color is also associated with penitence, yet it is distinct from the deeper color purple, which is used during Lent (and during Lent alone here at Pilgrim, though some congregations use purple for both penitential seasons).

The liturgical and calendar dates for the Sundays this Advent, along with descriptions and citations of their appointed Gospel Readings, follow below (according to *Lutheran Service Book's* 3-year Series B, which you might note draws primarily from the Holy Gospel according to St. Mark).

- First Sunday in Advent (11/30): Jesus enters Jerusalem in triumph (Mark 11:1-10)

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- Second Sunday in Advent (12/07): Jesus is proclaimed by John the Baptizer (Mark 1:1-8)
- Third Sunday in Advent (12/14): Jesus is the focus of the Baptizer's testimony (John 1:6-8, 19-28)
- Fourth Sunday of Advent (12/21): Jesus's birth is announced to Mary (Luke 1:26-38)

The Sunday liturgy of *LSB* Divine Service, Setting Three, will reflect some changes for the penitential season of Advent.

As has been our custom the previous three years, we also are continuing to offer Midweek Advent Vespers services on Wednesday nights at 7:00 p.m., this year we again use the Order of Vespers as found in *Lutheran Service Book*. Because of where Christmas falls in the week, we again this year will have only three midweek services, during which we will focus on the events leading up to Jesus's birth as narrated in the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke.

- Advent I (12/03): John the Baptizer's birth foretold (Luke 1:5-25)
- Advent II (12/10): Jesus's birth foretold (Luke 1:26-45)
- Advent III (12/17): John the Baptizer's birth (Luke 1:57-80)

Our Midweek Advent Vespers services are each preceded by a congregational meal at 6:00 p.m. All are invited to eat and worship!

Christmas

The penitential preparation of Advent leads us to the day it anticipates, Christmas, or The Nativity of Our Lord. To be sure, Christmas is an important day of the Church Year, a *sine qua non* (Latin for "without which not"), for, without the birth of our Lord, there would be no death and resurrection of our Lord. Yet, as important as our Lord's birth is, His death is more important, for not His birth but His death pays the price and so earns all people the forgiveness of sins and so life and salvation, which we graciously receive by faith.



Our chief observance of Christmas is not the better-attended Christmas Eve Candlelight Service of Readings and Hymns but the lesser-attended Divine Service on Christmas Day. The Christmas Eve Candlelight Service is much loved and deservedly so, but the Christmas Day Divine Service is the "Mass of Christ" for which the day gets its more common name. There hardly is a better way to observe our Lord's becoming flesh (John 1:14) than to eat that flesh in the Sacrament of the Altar, which eating of His flesh and drinking of His blood is necessary for us to have life (John 6:53)

The Christmas season consists of more than the one day for which it is named and its associated services. Given below are the liturgical and calendar dates for all our observances of the Christmas season, in most cases along with descriptions and citations of their appointed Gospel Readings (according to *Lutheran Service Book's* 3-year Series B).

- Christmas Eve (12/24 at 6:00 p.m.): Candlelight Service of Readings and Hymns (The Service includes the Sunday School children)
- Christmas Day (12/25 at 10:00 a.m.): Jesus is the Word made flesh (John 1:1-18)

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- First Sunday after Christmas (12/28): The infant Jesus goes to the Temple (Luke 2:22-40)
- Second Sunday after Christmas (01/04): The boy Jesus goes to the Temple (Luke 2:40-52)

For the entire season of Christmas, the paraments are white, a color more-frequently associated with festivals of Christ. White symbolizes joy, celebration, gladness, light, purity, and innocence—all of which meanings are appropriate for Christmas.

Epiphany

The use of white paraments continues into the Epiphany season, although only for two Sundays before green is used. Green is the color of growth, leaves, foliage, fruit, and life, suggesting spiritual growth, the kind that comes about by the pure preaching of the Gospel and right administration of the Sacraments. As God wills, such spiritual growth also can be accompanied by numerical growth, as He creates faith when and where He pleases in those who hear the Gospel.

The day of Epiphany itself, January 6th, is sometimes called “Gentiles’ Christmas”, as what we usually think of as non-Jewish magi brought three gifts to the boy Jesus, perhaps as late as two years after He was born (see Matthew 2:1-12). Unfortunately, we at Pilgrim do not hear the events of the day of Epiphany, since we do not at present observe Epiphany on its day and do not transfer its observance (the preceding Sunday is still in the Christmas season, and the following Sunday in the Epiphany season importantly emphasizes the Baptism of Our Lord). We could better observe Epiphany on its day with a Divine Service, for as God led the magi to the Word become flesh in the boy Jesus, so God leads us today to God become flesh in the bread and wine of the Sacrament of the Altar.

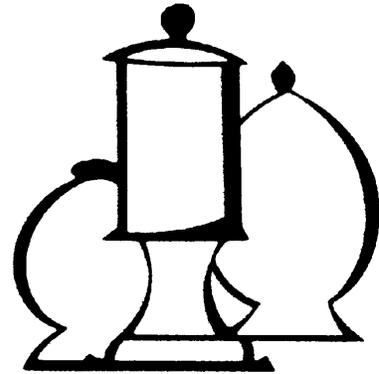
The following are the Sundays of Epiphany that fall in January 2015 and their Gospel Readings (appointed by *Lutheran Service Book*’s three-year lectionary series B).

- First Sunday after the Epiphany (01/11): Jesus is baptized by John (Mark 4:1-11)
- Second Sunday after the Epiphany (1/18): Jesus calls two disciples (John 1:43-51)
- Third Sunday after the Epiphany (1/26): Jesus preaches and calls fishermen as disciples (Mark 1:14-20)

In the 2014-2015 Church Year, there are three more Sundays after the Epiphany, but we will have information about them in next month’s *Pilgrimage*.

All members and friends are of course welcome in person to attend any and all of the services of these three seasons over the next two months. Also, you may read and usually hear sermons preached at Pilgrim at <http://www.pilgrimlc.org/sermons>.

Pastor Jayson S. Galler



THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING

Brady and Shannon Gage, for keeping the church grounds manicured.
All who assisted in any way with the Reformation Community Event.
Sharon Sampson and Barbara Wuthrich for all they do in the Church Office.



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

M/M Seth Hiltzman – December 01
M/M Jeffery Gill – December 14
M/M Ron Morton – December 15
M/M Don Nicol – December 17
M/M Wayne Miller – December 22
M/M Wendell Holcombe – December 26
M/M Carl Gardner – January 05
M/M Brady Gage – January 08
M/M Eric Freeman – January 15
M/M Danny Sampson – January 18
M/M Jerome Key – January

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Malaisa Smith – December 03
Emma Watts – December 04
John Morton – December 08
Toni Erickson – December 15
Andrew Adair – December 16
Barry Conway – December 17
Leroy Thomas – December 17
John Walker – December 18
Laticia Smith – December 21
Bryn Heil – December 25
Arlene Kuehn – January 01
Kathy Hudson – January 03
Matthew Smith – January 11
Ralph Hollander – January 16
Emma Morton – January 17
Maggie Land – January 20
Remo Gualtieri – January 21
Hannah Morton – January 23
Don Nicol – January 26



HELPING HANDS

Items desired for December are oatmeal, chili, canned soup, toothbrushes/toothpaste, and soap. A container for your donations is located in Pilgrim's Narthex. If you want to donate money above and beyond your regular church offering, you can send your check or money order to Helping Hands of Kilgore, PO Box 1576, Kilgore, TX 75662.

DECEMBER EVENTS

YOUTH CATECHESIS Tuesday, December 2nd, and Thursdays, December 11th and 18th, at 4:00 p.m. at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Longview. (There will be no Youth Catechesis on December 25th, due to its being Christmas Day.)

ANNUAL KILGORE CHRISTMAS PARADE: Tuesday, December 2nd at 6:30 p.m. Our float will line up in position #58 along East North Street and Lawrence Street. If you are going to ride in the parade, please be at the float by 5:30 p.m. to help finish preparing it for the parade. If you are bringing food for afterward (see below), you may leave it at the church before you go or bring it after the parade. Remember, if you are not in the parade, you still can watch and cheer on those who are.

CHILLI COOK-OFF? After the parade, December 2nd let's all meet back at the church for a chili supper. It will taste mighty good after a long weekend of turkey. Everyone is invited to attend, even if you didn't go to the parade and just want a good bowl of chili and to visit with your brothers and sisters in Christ. Also invite your friends with whom you maybe watched the parade. The sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in the Narthex. Bring crackers, Fritos, shredded cheese, chopped onions, salsa, pots of chili, and whatever else you can think of, maybe even a dessert. Who is going to claim the bragging rights for the best chili this year?

ADVENT SERVICES will be December 3rd, 10th, and 17th at 7:00 p.m., preceded by a meal starting at 6:00. Tree trimming will be after the service on the 17th.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING: After church, on Sunday, December 7th, everyone is invited, especially the children, to bring cheer to shut-ins (this will be the Sunday School's Quarterly Outing). Tifaney Sampson is providing chicken spaghetti and hot cocoa for lunch before we carpool to local nursing homes. For more information, contact Tifaney.

ELDERS Tuesday, December 11th, at 6:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Remember to read beforehand and come prepared to discuss AC/Ap XVIII p.40 and pp.197-198.

PILGRIM'S CHRISTMAS PARTY: 4:00 p.m. Sunday, December 14th, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Spencer Land. Our LWML society will provide meat dishes, and you can bring your favorite Christmas goodies. Driving directions follow:

Take 259 north from Longview towards New Diana. When approaching FM 1650, get in the left lane. At the top of the hill just past 1650, make the U-turn, and then take the first driveway to the right. (The driveway is almost immediately after you make the u-turn; it has stone pillars and a wooden fence at the road.) If you have difficulty, call Sarah Land at 903-932-2885. (The address is actually 10283 Hwy 259 Longview, but for some reason GPS reportedly never gives the right directions.)

All are invited to come and enjoy getting this time of social interaction with brothers and sisters in Christ. (The Christmas Party is our Once-A-Month Social Gathering for December.)

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE OF READINGS AND HYMNS: Join us December 24th at 6:00 p.m. (note the special time). We will hear the Christmas story, in part with the children's help, and we will be sing favorite hymns, as well as maybe make new favorites.

CHRISTMAS DAY DIVINE SERVICE: Join us December 25th at 10:00 a.m. (note the special time). What better way to celebrate the Word made flesh for you than by your eating that flesh?

EVE OF THE NAMING OF JESUS: Divine Service will be offered as usual at 7:00 p.m. New Year's Eve on Our Redeemer Lutheran Church (1300 Judson Road in Longview).



New banners adorn Pilgrim’s Sanctuary

Thanks to the handiwork of Elaine Navaille and Barabara Wuthrich, Pilgrim now has two new blue Advent banners adorning the walls of its Sanctuary. New banners for the “green” seasons were hung earlier this year.



The blue Advent banners feature the Greek letters Alpha and

Omega, which are ancient symbols of the themes of Advent. (As the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, Alpha and Omega are like “A” and “Z” in our English alphabet.) The banners highlight the Greek letters and the meaning the Bible gives them in connection to Christ, Who is first and last, the beginning and the end, as well as He Who was and is to come, is now, and He Who already came (see Revelation 1:8; 21:6; and 22:13).

The new banners are intended to match the blue paraments and candles Pilgrim has been using for years. (The congregation’s older Advent banners were purple and pink and pre-dated our use of blue and rose for Advent.)

Please let Elaine and Barbara know how much you appreciate their work to the glory of God, and encourage them as they consider tackling new banners for Lent, Easter, and the seasons beyond.

PILGRIM’S YEAR-TO-DATE PLATE OFFERINGS

Following a request from Pilgrim’s Board of Elders, Pilgrim’s Financial Secretary reports the following figures for 2014 as of November 23:

Plate Offerings received: \$97,550.74
 Plate Offerings projected: \$101,200.00

If after looking at your 3rd Quarter Financial Statement, you would like to catch up on your offerings for the year, remember that to have credit on your 2014 taxes you need to give your offerings by Sunday, December 28th.



**November
2014**

Investment	Fixed Rate ^Δ		Floating Rate ^Δ	
	Rate	APY	Rate	APY
One Year Note [✦]	.750%	.75%	0.250%	0.25%
Three Year Note [✦]	1.250%	1.26%	1.250%	1.26%
Five Year Note [✦]	1.750%	1.76%	2.000%	2.02%
Flex Savings			0.500%	0.50%
<u>Accounts For Congregations</u>				
Congregation Savings			1.000%	1.00%
Building Fund Savings			2.000%	2.02%

^Δ Rates subject to change. [✦] Subject to penalty for early withdrawal. Rates reviewed monthly. Texas District Church Extension Fund is a nonprofit religious organization; therefore, CEF investments are not SIPC- or FDIC-insured bank deposit accounts. This does not constitute an offer to sell or a request to buy. The offer is made solely by CEF’s Offering Circular.

Texas Church Extension Fund

1-888-951-1233 www.TexasCEF.org
 www.facebook.com/texascef

DECEMBER	
1	Luke 1:46-55 Revelation 1-2
2	Psalm 1 Rev. 3-5
3	Psalm 2 Revelation 6-8
4	Psalm 3 Revelation 9-11
5	Psalm 4 Rev. 12-14
6	Psalm 5 Rev. 15-17
7	Psalm 6 Rev. 18-20
8	Psalm 7 Rev. 21-22
9	Psalm 8 Isaiah 1-3
10	Psalm 9 Isaiah 4-6
11	Psalm 10 Isaiah 7-9
12	Psalm 11 Isaiah 10-12
13	Psalm 12 Isaiah 13-15
14	Psalm 13 Isaiah 16-18
15	Psalm 14 Isaiah 19-21
16	Psalm 15 Isaiah 22-24
17	Psalm 16 Isaiah 25-27
18	Psalm 17 Isaiah 28-30
19	Psalm 18 Isaiah 31-33
20	Psalm 19 Isaiah 34-36
21	Psalm 20 Isaiah 37-39
22	Psalm 21 Isaiah 40-42
23	Psalm 22 Isaiah 43-45
24	Psalm 23 Isaiah 46-48
25	Psalm 24 Isaiah 49-51
26	Psalm 25 Isaiah 52-54
27	Psalm 26 Isaiah 55-57
28	Psalm 27 Isaiah 58-60
29	Psalm 28 Isaiah 61-63
30	Psalm 29 Isaiah 64-66
31	Luke 1:46-55

JANUARY	
1	Luke 1:68-79 Mark 2
2	Psalm 30 Mark 3
3	Psalm 31 Mark 4
4	Psalm 32 Mark 5
5	Psalm 33 Mark 6
6	Psalm 34 Mark 7
7	Psalm 35 Mark 8
8	Psalm 36 Mark 9
9	Psalm 37 Mark 10
10	Psalm 38 Mark 11
11	Psalm 39 Mark 12
12	Psalm 40 Mark 13
13	Psalm 41 Mark 14
14	Psalm 42 Mark 15-16
15	Psalm 43 Genesis 1-3
16	Psalm 44 Genesis 4-6
17	Psalm 45 Genesis 7-9
18	Psalm 46 Genesis 10-12
19	Psalm 47 Genesis 13-15
20	Psalm 48 Genesis 16-18
21	Psalm 49 Genesis 19-21
22	Psalm 50 Genesis 22-24
23	Psalm 51 Genesis 25-27
24	Psalm 52 Genesis 28-30
25	Psalm 53 Genesis 31-33
26	Psalm 54 Genesis 34-36
27	Psalm 55 Genesis 37-39
28	Psalm 56 Genesis 40-42
29	Psalm 57 Genesis 43-45
30	Psalm 58 Genesis 46-48
31	Luke 1:68-79

The Bible is clear enough to read

Recently in our Sunday morning Adult Bible Class we discussed the Bible’s “perspicuity” or “clarity”, and that property of Holy Scripture is an important part of why, as I have been doing now for the past two years, I can encourage everyone to read (or listen to) a portion of the Bible each and every day, whether or not you follow a schedule of Daily Bible Reading such as that from *Lutheran Worship* (pages 295-296), which is reproduced at left and in a larger-print version available in the Narthex.

This particular Daily Bible Reading schedule takes us through the entire Bible over the course of a Church Year, and the schedule somewhat coordinates with the various seasons of the Church Year. So, it begins with December 1st and continues through to November 30th, with a psalm or other little song and about three chapters from a book each day. But, you do not have to begin on December 1st; you can jump in at any time.

As we read, you and I undoubtedly will find some Bible passages that are less-clear than others, and so we helpfully remember that the Bible’s perspicuity or clarity applies to what we need to know for salvation. The Bible indeed teaches everything we need to know for salvation (a property called “perfection” or “sufficiency”), and what we need to know for salvation indeed is in language all can understand.

Where differences in interpretation arise, the problem is not with God’s Word but with people’s own thoughts concerning God and religion that they read into Scripture or present as the truth of Scripture. Especially in such cases, important for a right understanding of the Bible is the Office of the Holy Ministry, which the Bible’s perspicuity or clarity does not make irrelevant but central.

Thus, I am more than happy to help with your Daily Bible Reading however I can. So, the newsletters from 2012-2013 included background information and overviews for each month; if you do not have a copy, they are available online or by request from the Church Office. Also available online are resources amassed when a congregation that I served previously followed this reading plan and I blogged daily on each assigned reading.

Some members and friends of the congregation have been trying to follow this schedule, and, like me, they no doubt can tell you how reading God’s Word every day is a blessing. Even if you and I have read all or parts of the Bible before, we can read it again and again. The Holy Spirit never ceases to apply the Word, law and Gospel, to our lives. Always be in the Word!

Pastor Jayson S. Galler



Christians and their families are vulnerable to addictions, just like any other fallen human being, but Christians and their families do not deal with the temptations and struggles alone. The Texas District LCMS Circuit #14 Retreat on February 7, 2015, at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Palestine will explore the Biblical roots of addiction—addictions such as substance abuse, anger, internet (including pornography and social media), sex, and love—and it will point to the grace-based community as God’s redemptive agent for healing. All are welcome to attend!

The Rev. James Otte has titled his engaging and interactive day-long workshop “No One Walks Alone: The Vulnerability to Addictions in Christian Families – A Lutheran Biblical & Psychological Approach”. He promises hands-on assessment and intervention tools, as well as resources available in East Texas.

Rev. Otte is a licensed professional counselor and part-time associate pastor at Messiah Lutheran Church in Plano, Texas. He previously served on the staff of a counseling center and Lutheran congregation in East Texas. He holds a master’s degree in education and community counseling from Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches; a master of divinity degree from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri; and a bachelor’s degree from the former Concordia Senior College in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

The Circuit #14 retreats are always informative and well worth the time and trip to Palestine. All the details for 2014 have not yet been set, but in 2013 registration was \$20 per person, and it always includes abundant refreshments and a delightful and hearty lunch. Advance registration is preferred to give those preparing the food (the Bethlehem LWML) the best possible idea of how many will attend, but registrations will also be taken at the door, usually beginning at 8:30 a.m. The retreat itself usually runs from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. (This year the Retreat will be followed by an official Circuit Forum to conduct Circuit business in preparation for the 2015 Texas District Convention.)

Circuit #14 of the Texas District of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod (LCMS) is comprised of twelve East Texas LCMS congregations, as far north as Longview, as far East as Nacogdoches, as far south as Lufkin, and as far west as Corsicana.

The banner graphic on this page was adapted from the uncredited image found at http://cdn.socialworkhelper.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/10_31_Addiction.bmp.

Please pray for our members, family, friends, and coworkers

OUR PILGRIM LUTHERAN CHURCH:

Hearts and minds open to God's vision and direction for our congregation
Proportionate first-fruit giving from our members

THOSE WHO HAVE STRAYED FROM THE FAITH:

Elizabeth & Ava Nicol (Don and Beth's niece and grand-niece)

THOSE WHO ARE STRUGGLING WITH HOMOSEXUALITY

ALL WHO ARE AFFECTED BY EBOLA

MEN IN THE SERVICE:

Garrett Caldwell (Gwen Heil's grandson)
Victor Guinn (Paul Guinn's son at Dyess Air Force Base in Abilene)
George C. Heil (Navy school in Charleston, SC)
Brian Holcombe (Carolyn and Wendell Holcombe's son stationed in San Diego)
Ross Land (stationed in Louisiana)

THOSE IN POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENTS AND THE MEDICAL PROFESSION

THOSE WHO TRAVEL:

Brady Gage
Tim Jeffers
Jerome and Sallye Key
David Navaille
Edgar and Barbara Wuthrich
All those travelling for Thanksgiving

SHUT-INS:

Bob Abraham (in an Alzheimer Center in Austin)
Leland Dean (with his daughter Gina in Bartlesville, Oklahoma)

THOSE WHO NEED HEALING:

Shannon Baker (Beth Nicol's cousin with cancer undergoing new chemotherapy)
Sabrina Davis (Connie Wilburn's friend, continuing to fight her lung cancer)
Alexandra Frericks (Sallye Key's relative, some progress with heart rehab in Atlanta)
Caryl Galler (Pastor's mother, waiting to see a neurologist for her leg atrophy)
Sue Gammon (Arcele Wilburn's sister, at Trinity Mother Francis)
Mark Harrington (Walkers' brother-in-law, chemo done for now)
Charlotte Herrell (Sharon Sampson's sister, starting chemo 11/28)
Bernice Hollander (Ralph's mother in a Wisconsin nursing home after hip surgery)
Kathleen Jennings (Heil relative's pastor's wife, surgery 8/20 and chronic pain)
Olin Johnson (Nicols' friend with Parkinsons, continuing to decline in nursing home)
Jerome Key (bronchial trouble and risk of pneumonia)
Laura Key (Jerome's step-mother, continuing to decline in nursing home)
Sallye Key (continual pain in her arms and also a broken bone in her foot)
Carl London (Connie Wilburn's coworker, upcoming colon and liver cancer surgery)
Lane Meador (Wilburn's 7-year-old paralyzed friend, rehab but complications)
Wayne Miller (recovering from what appears to be the flu)
Danny Sampson (ankle surgery set for 12/03, following-up on other issues after)
Betty Sewing (Sallye Key's step-mother in Denver, ongoing treatment for BOOP)
Sharabeth Upton (Nicols' daughter, severe pain in her legs, seeing specialists)

Prayer List continues on next page

Prayer List continued from previous page

Vince Vernon (Walkers' brother-in-law, has an open wound that is not healing)
Robert Wiles (Betty Miller's nephew, untreatable cancer, now on feeding tube)
Rhett Wilkins (3-year-old shirt-tail relative of the Wuthriches, recovery from infections)
Barbara Wuthrich (planning future treatment based on latest test results)
Tim Young (friend of the Navailles, brain cancer has returned, receiving hospice care)

MOTHERS EXPECTING CHILDREN:

Kristen Heil (our member George C.'s wife)
Kari Medlin (Angela Sampson's friend, had difficult pregnancy last time)

FAMILIES IN CRISIS AND ALL FAMILIES

Jerome Key, Junior, Family (one-year-old son still not baptized, various life changes)
Myers Family (friends of the Watts, son Jordan jailed and facing serious charges)

JANUARY EVENTS

BANNER/QUILTING PARTY Tuesday, January 6th at 5:00 p.m.

LWML will meet Tuesday, January 6th, at 6:00 p.m.

DEADLINE FOR VOTERS' PACKETS: All officers and board and committee chairs, please have your reports for the Voters' Meeting in to the Church Office by Sunday, January 11th.

ORLC INSTALLATION: Rev. Dennis Bragdon will be installed as the permanent, full-time called pastor of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in a special service at 3:30 p.m. on Sunday, January 11th. Former LCMS President and friend of the Bragdon family Rev. Gerald Kieschnick will be the preacher. Everyone is invited to attend.

MIDWEEK BIBLE STUDY resumes Wednesday, January the 14th, at 7:00 p.m. We will pick up the narrative of Salvation History as our Story with the book of Numbers. Join us then!

ELDERS Tuesday, January 11th, at 6:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall. (Reading assignment TBA.)

YOUTH CATECHESIS Thursdays January 15th, 22th, and 29th at 4:00 p.m. at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Longview.

KILGORE COMMUNITY BLOOD DRIVE Saturday, January 17th, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall, if it is available, or in the Carter BloodCare bus parked in our parking lot.

"WORD OF GOD" is the theme for the annual North Texas Confessional Lutheran Free Conference Friday evening and Saturday morning January 23-24 at Faith Lutheran Church in Plano. Two noted LCMS speakers will present, and there will be ample opportunities for worship and social interactions. All are welcome to join Pastor Galler at this conference open to all!

ADULT CATECHESIS Sundays, January 18th and 25th, Session #5 following the Divine Service on the 18th and Session #6 the Voters' Meeting on the 25th.

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES for February are due Sunday, January 25th.

COVERED-DISH MEAL AND VOTERS' MEETING Sunday, January 25th, following the Divine Service. We hope to welcome our new members from the last quarter!

ONCE-A-MONTH-SOCIAL GATHERING: Please contact Tifaney Sampson with your ideas for a fun outing in the month of January.

KIDS' PAGE

Nativity Word Scramble

1. STRA -----
2. MAGREN -----
3. MYAR -----
4. SEPHE -----
5. DOEYKN -----
6. AEGLN -----
7. JPHOES -----
8. JSSEU -----
9. KIGSN -----
10. STBALE -----

All these words come from the Christmas story. Can you unscramble them?





DECEMBER 2014

Pilgrim Lutheran Church

www.pilgrimlc.org
(903-984-4333)

Pastor's Regular Study Hours
 Tuesday 5:00–8:00 PM
 Wednesday–Friday 9:00 AM–12:00 PM
 Saturday Noon–3:00 PM

No Cleaning Volunteers?

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 M/M Seth Hiltzman (A)	2 Noon Kilgore Ministerial Lunch 4:00-5:00 PM Youth Catechesis 6:30 Christmas Parade followed by Chili supper	3 6:00 PM Meal 7:00 PM Advent Vespers Malaisa Smith (B)	4 Pastor goes to Plano Study Group Jack Watts (B)	5	6 10:00 AM Worship Service at The Willows
7 SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B) 9:15-9:30 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service followed by Meal for Christmas Carolers followed by Caroling at nursing homes John Morton (B)	8	9 2:00-5:00 PM Cleaning Ladies 6:00 PM Elders	10 7:30 AM Small Church Pastors' Breakfast 6:00 PM Meal 7:00 PM Advent Service	11 4:00-5:00 PM Youth Catechesis (at ORLC)	12	13 10:00 AM Worship Service at The Willows
14 THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B) 9:15-9:30 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service 4:00 PM Church Christmas Party M/M Jeffrey Gill (A)	15 M/M Ron Morton (A) Toni Erickson (B)	16 Andrew Adair (B)	17 6:00 PM Meal 7:00 PM Advent Service followed by Tree Decoration M/M Don Nicol (A) Barry Conway (B) Leroy Thomas (B)	18 4:00-5:00 PM Youth Catechesis (at ORLC) John Walker (B)	19	20 10:00 AM Worship Service at The Willows
21 FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT (B) 9:15-9:30 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service Laticia Smith (B)	22 M/M Wayne Miller (A)	23	24 CHRISTMAS EVE 6:00 PM Christmas Eve Candlelight Service (W)	25 CHRISTMAS DAY 10:00 AM Divine Service (W) Bryn Heil (B)	26 ST STEPHEN MARTYR M/M Wendell Holcombe (A)	27 ST JOHN, APOSTLE 10:00 AM Worship Service at The Willows
28 FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS (W) 9:15-9:30 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service	29	30	31 EVE OF THE CIRCUMCISION AND NAME OF JESUS	Communion Assistant – J. D. Sampson Acolyte – John Morton		



JANUARY 2015

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Communion Assistant – J. D. Sampson Acolyte – John Morton				1 CIRCUMCISION AND NAME OF JESUS Arlene Kuehn (B)	2	3 10:00 AM Worship Service at The Willows Kathy Hudson (B)
4 SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS (W) 9:15-9:30 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service	5 M/M Carl Gardner (A)	6 EPIPHANY 5:00 Banner/Quilt Party 6:00 PM LWML	7	8 M/M Brady Gage (A)	9	10 Reports for Voters' Packet due tomorrow
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;"> Pastor on vacation – an Elder will answer the church phone and contact the Pastor on call as needed. </div>						
11 THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD (W) 9:15-9:30 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Matins Matthew Smith (B)	12 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; margin: 5px auto; width: 80%;"> Pastor on Vacation </div>	13 2:00-5:00 PM Cleaning Ladies 6:00 PM Elders	14 7:30 AM Small Church Pastors' Breakfast 7:00 PM Midweek Bible Study	15 4:00-5:00 PM Youth Catechesis (at ORLC) M/M Eric Freeman (A)	16 Ralph Hollander (B)	17 9:00 AM-1:00 PM Kilgore Blood Drive 10:00 AM Worship Service at The Willows Emma Morton (B)
18 2 ND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY (G) 9:15-9:30 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service 12:15 AM Lunch & Adult Catechesis M/M Danny Sampson (A)	19	20 Maggie Land (B)	21 7:00 PM Midweek Bible Study Remo Gualtieri (B)	22 4:00-5:00 PM Youth Catechesis (at ORLC) M/M Jerome Key (A)	23 Hannah Morton (B)	24 ST TIMOTHY, PASTOR AND CONFESSOR Newsletter deadline tomorrow <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block; margin: 5px auto; width: 80%;"> North Texas Free Conference in Plano </div>
25 3 RD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY (G) 9:15-9:30 AM Refreshments 9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class 10:45 AM Divine Service Covered-dish Meal & Voters' Meeting followed by Adult Catechesis	26 ST. TITUS, PASTOR AND CONFESSOR Don Nicol (B)	27	28 7:00 PM Midweek Bible Study	29 4:00-5:00 PM Youth Catechesis (at ORLC)	30	31 10:00 AM Worship Service at The Willows

Pilgrim Lutheran Church
713 Florey Street
Kilgore, Texas 75662-3503

The Pilgrimage is a monthly newsletter for the members and friends of



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Pastor Galler and Sharon Sampson are the editors of **The Pilgrimage**. Barbara Wuthrich assists with producing and distributing editions. Everyone is welcome to contribute articles at any time. All copyright holders of excerpted or reproduced materials are hereby acknowledged, and such materials are used in good faith under fair use provisions.