



## Pilgrim Lutheran Church

BROADWAY AT FLOREY      KILGORE, TEXAS

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.

### DECEMBER 2012/JANUARY 2013 NEWSLETTER

## Come home for the holy days!

Dear Members and Friends of Pilgrim Lutheran Church,

The sluggish U.S. economy seems to have prompted retail stores both to put out Christmas items and to decorate for Christmas earlier than ever this year! Even right after Thanksgiving has always been too early for me from a Church-year perspective, where the Christmas season does not begin until December 25th and runs through January 5th (so we suppress Christmas decorations in the church as much as possible until at least the 24th and leave them up until January 6th). This time, the new Church year, with its opening season of Advent, does not even begin until December 2, the second Sunday after Thanksgiving! We will light the first candle on the church's Advent wreath then, and you can do the same at home.

The Church year's opening season of Advent, with its name from the Latin for "come to", is a season of coming(s). Though not quite in this order, we prepare for the annual Christmas celebration of God's coming in the human flesh of the baby Jesus, we have God's coming to us now in Word and Sacrament (especially Jesus present with His body and blood in the bread and wine of the Sacrament of the Altar), and we prepare for God's final coming on the last day (an emphasis Advent shares with the final Sundays of the Church year).

There is another "coming" on which we might reflect during these days after our country's Day of National Thanksgiving and around the Church's holy days in December and January. That other "coming" is our own and others' "coming" to church. What Al Stillman wrote in the 1950s about there being no place like "Home for the Holidays" is all the more true when it comes to a church home. Far better than "the sunshine of a friendly gaze" or "to be happy in a million ways" is for us here to receive in faith the forgiveness of sins the baby Jesus grew up to earn for us with His death on the cross and resurrection from the grave. If, as in the Stillman lyrics, one is willing to go from Tennessee to Pennsylvania for pumpkin pie, how much further should we be willing to go for food that benefits body and soul?

Some of our members and friends are quite regular in their attending services, and so in receiving that forgiveness in Word and Sacrament. Other members and friends are less regular, and then there are still others whom we have not seen in church for some time. Which are you? What members do you know whom you can encourage to come to their church home not just for the holidays but always? Whom do you know who does not have a church home whom you can invite to join us here? (Most new members come the first time because someone invited them.)

*Article continues on next page.*

If there is ever a time for or a subject of a “new year’s resolution”, now is the time and church attendance is the subject! Appropriate to Advent and its emphasis on repentance, we all can turn from our sins of our disregard for preaching and the Sacraments (in this case, Holy Absolution and the Sacrament of the Altar), we all can believe that God forgives those and our other sins, and we all can want to do better.

During the season of Advent, everyone is especially invited to come to our *Midweek Advent Vespers Services on December 5, 12, and 19, at 7:00 p.m.* (a meal precedes each service at 6:00, and our festival choir will rehearse about 6:30). As we did last year, we will use and reflect on the ancient “O Antiphons” and their various names for Jesus; this year we consider the names “Lord of Might”, “Rod of Jesse”, and “Emmanuel”.

*Special services are also planned for Christmas Eve at 6:00 p.m. and Christmas Day at 10:00 a.m.* Everyone is invited to those, as well. Epiphany, January 6th, falls on a Sunday this year, so we will get to observe that on the actual day. That Sunday begins the Epiphany season, which runs until Ash Wednesday, which this church year is February 13th.

No matter what day it is, what time it is, or where you are, you can be in God’s Word. You can read the Bible on the internet or from a smartphone or other portable electronic device. You can listen to the Bible from an audio-cassette or CD. As the new Church year begins, I encourage you to follow the plan laid out for you in this newsletter. The plan starts December 1 and will take us through the Bible in one year. I am providing background information for the months’ reading, and I am also happy to answer your questions about the reading as we go (I will try to set aside time at the beginning of the Sunday morning Bible class for you to ask your questions—but you are welcome to phone or email them to me in advance, if you like—they may get better answers that way.)

Let the Word of God dwell in you richly each day (Colossians 3:16). Come to the services here at Pilgrim in the Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany seasons and whenever else they are held. Let God bring forth the fruits of faith in your life, including the fruit of a confession of faith in deed and word (Hebrews 13:15) that He will bless to bring others here, too, where He will create faith when and where He pleases in those who hear the Gospel. Then, Pilgrim will be their church home, as well as ours, and we can all come home here for these holidays and the holy days all year through.

*His and your servant,  
Pastor Galler*

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## DECEMBER EVENTS

**KEY-HILTZMAN WEDDING** Saturday December 1<sup>st</sup> at noon.

**CHURCH CHRISTMAS PARTY** Sunday December 2<sup>nd</sup> at 5:00 p.m.

**ADVENT MEAL** before each midweek Advent service at 6:00p.m.

**CHOIR REHEARSAL** after each Advent meal and before the service (about 6:30 p.m.).

**ADVENT SERVICES** Wednesday December 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, and 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

**CHRISTMAS TREE DECORATING** after the Advent Service on the 19<sup>th</sup>.

**ELDERS** Tuesday December 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the office building.

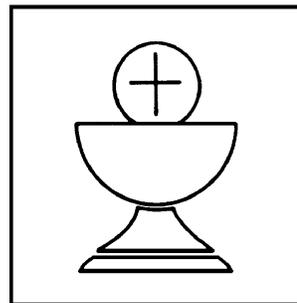
**CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE** Monday December 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.

**CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE** Tuesday December 25<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.

**NEW YEARS’ EVE SERVICE** Monday December 31<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 p.m. at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Longview

## Christ's blood again to be offered from one cup

On the night when He was betrayed, our Lord Jesus Christ instituted the Sacrament of the Altar while celebrating the Passover meal with His disciples. In all likelihood, they broke pieces from the same loaf of unleavened bread and drank from the same cup of wine. For centuries, the Christian church did as Christ and the disciples did, though over time individual wafers came to be used, perhaps as a matter of convenience and reverence. Individual cups only came to be used when American Protestant churches started using grape juice instead of wine (they had long before given up faith in Jesus's words that the wine was His blood, given as a salutary gift, which means a gift that promotes or is otherwise beneficial to health).



From what I understand, Pilgrim's history has included the use of a common cup, or chalice, a number of times over the congregation's sixty years. I am told that only more recently did the congregation stop using the chalice and introduce individual cups because two different chalices were stolen from the church and were not replaced.

Thanks to a generous gift, the congregation will soon again have a chalice and a flagon, or pitcher, to use with it. Such were offered when I first arrived in Kilgore more than one year ago, but the elders and I agreed to wait a year before resuming the use of the chalice. As God wills, we plan to dedicate the chalice and flagon on December 25, the Nativity of our Lord. Is there a better time to set apart a cup to contain the blood of Christ in the Divine Service, what is sometimes called the "Mass", than on Christmas Day, which gets its name from observing the Mass in celebrating the birth of Christ?

Aside from practicing as the early Church did, using a common cup to receive the real, physical blood of Christ also has great symbolism. For example, in 1 Corinthians 10:17 St. Paul sees all believers' partaking of one loaf as both making and portraying unity in the body of Christ. The same can be said of all believers' partaking of one cup. The one cup thus further connects better with the Holy Scripture, especially as it is quoted in the liturgy and hymns. For example, in the offertory "What shall I render to the Lord?" (*Lutheran Worship* page 169), we quote Psalm 116, "I will take the cup of salvation and will call on the name of the Lord". And, in the fifth stanza of "The King of Love My Shepherd Is" (*Lutheran Worship* #412), we sing the following connection between Psalm 23's "cup" and the Sacrament of the Altar: "And, oh, what transport of delight / From thy pure chalice floweth!" Note also that the use of the chalice will make more visible "The peace of the Lord" held aloft after the consecration before the distribution.

Our intent is for the pastor celebrating the Sacrament now to first distribute the body of Christ, which you are welcome to receive in your hand or on your tongue. Then for the blood of Christ, the assisting elder now will come by with the tray of individual cups, followed by the pastor with the chalice. If you desire an individual cup, feel free to take one at the time it is offered, but please do not drink it until the pastor comes to you and sees that you have it. The pastor will speak the distribution formula: "The blood of Christ, shed for you", to which you are encouraged to respond "Amen!" (You are also encouraged to so respond to the distribution formula for the body of Christ and to both the blessing and the dismissal of each table.) After your "Amen" to the distribution of the blood, you may consume it and place your individual cup into one of the rail's many open holes (please do not stack the cups). If you desire to drink from

the chalice, the pastor will hold it out to you, and you can gently grasp the base and guide it to your lips and tip it to drink (the pastor will hold onto the chalice the whole time).

Regardless of which vessel you choose to receive the blood of Christ from, remember that so receiving it is what matters most, for it gives us forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation.

*Pastor Jayson S. Galler*

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## *HAPPY ANNIVERSARY*

|                              |             |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| Mr and Mrs Jeffrey Gill      | December 14 |
| Mr and Mrs Alex Harantcavage | December 15 |
| Mr and Mrs Don Nicol         | December 17 |
| Mr and Mrs Wayne Miller      | December 22 |
| Mr and Mrs Wendel Holcome    | December 26 |
| Mr and Mrs Carl Gardner      | January 5   |
| Mr and Mrs Brady Gage        | January 8   |
| Mr and Mrs Erick Freeman     | January 15  |
| Mr and Mrs Danny Sampson     | January 18  |
| Mr and Mrs Jerome Key        | January 22  |



## *HAPPY BIRTHDAY!*



|                   |             |
|-------------------|-------------|
| Alex Harantcavage | December 1  |
| Malaisa Smith     | December 3  |
| Toni Erickson     | December 15 |
| Andrew Adair      | December 16 |
| Barry Conway      | December 17 |
| John Walker       | December 18 |
| Laticia Smith     | December 21 |
| Bryn Heil         | December 25 |
| Arlene Kuehn      | January 1   |
| Sarah McPherson   | January 10  |
| Matthew Smith     | January 11  |
| Ralph Hollander   | January 16  |
| Don Nicol         | January 26  |

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## **Be in the Word!**

Holy Scripture is priceless to us because in it we find Jesus, Who lived, died, and rose again that we might have the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. Jesus is in at least some way the center of all the Bible records. Jesus says the holy writings “bear witness about Me” (John 5:39 ESV). The things that are written in Holy Scripture are written, as St. John reports, that we “may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing [we] may have life in His Name” (John 20:31 ESV).



Being “in the Word” was a point of emphasis of the now-sainted Dr. Alvin Barry, a previous president of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and it is an exhortation we always do well to heed. Dr. Barry’s immediate successor, Dr. Robert Kuhn, also once suggested that renewing our commitment to the Word of God would be helpful for us in our Synod’s difficult days.

As individual Christians and as Pilgrim Lutheran Church, we would benefit from renewing our commitment to “Be in the Word”. To help us do just that, this newsletter and subsequent ones throughout 2013 will list daily readings and give background information for them. The list of readings itself is from *Lutheran Worship* (pages 295-299), where the following is given by way of introduction to the “Daily Lectionary”.

This outline is a devotional reading plan that covers the entire Sacred Scriptures each year. The selections are based on ancient models and are generally in harmony with the liturgical church year. The average reading is three chapters daily. A seasonal canticle is assigned for each month and is scheduled to replace the psalm on the first and last days of the month. All of the psalms are read twice a year.

The lectionary is in accordance with Martin Luther’s suggestions: “But let the entire Psalter, divided in parts, remain in use and the entire Scriptures, divided into lections, let this be preserved in the ears of the church.” Also: “After that another book should be selected, and so on, until the entire Bible has been read through, and where one does not understand it, pass that by and glorify God.”

By phone, by email, or in person, you can ask me questions about your reading (or listening!), and I will attempt to answer them at the beginning of each Sunday’s Bible Class. At <http://www.graceelgin.org/resources/lectionary/dlindex.asp> you can also check out internet-based resources amassed when a congregation I served previously followed this reading plan and I blogged daily.

In connection with your reading, you might want to make use of the traditional Collect for the Word:

Blessed Lord, Who hast caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning, grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of Thy holy Word we may embrace, and ever hold fast, the blessed hope of everlasting life, which Thou hast given us in our Savior Jesus Christ, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen. (*The Lutheran Hymnal*, page 14.)

In all this we know God’s Word accomplishes that which He pleases (Isaiah 55:10-11)!

*His and your servant,  
Pastor Galler*

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## New members welcomed

At the potluck meal before the Voters’ Meeting on November 11, a reception was held for the new members received during the preceding quarter. Shown with Pastor Galler is Paul Guinn, who transferred from Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Worden, Montana, on July 29th. Don and Beth Nichol were received by profession of faith on September 2nd. (They were unable to stay for the meal and meeting on November 11.)



## **OTHER NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**HEIL AND HERRICKS** are privileged to care for the altar and clean the church buildings for the month of December.

**ENGAGEMENT:** Tifaney Sweeden and J.D. Sampson became officially engaged on October 27, 2012. J.D. is the son of Danny and Sharon Sampson. They have a set a March 20, 2013 wedding date.

**WEDDING:** Samantha Key and Seth Hiltzman will take their wedding vows at noon on December 1, 2012. Samantha is the daughter of Cher Key and the granddaughter of Jerome and Sallye Key. The wedding will take place in a public service of the congregation. Everyone is invited to attend.

**FLOWER CHART:** A sign-up chart is located in the Narthex if you would like to provide flowers for the altar.

**WEDDING SHOWER:** Everyone is invited to the wedding shower of Samantha Hiltzman at 2:00 p.m. on January 12, 2013. It will be held in the Parish Hall.

**CHURCH CHRISTMAS PARY:** This year the party will be held at the home of Danny and Sharon Sampson. Their address is 2410 Clay Street in Kilgore. It will begin at 5:00 p.m. and the game will be on for those who wish to watch. The others just might go caroling down the street! The Lutheran Women’s Missionary League will provide a meat and cheese tray. Everyone is encouraged to bring a favorite side or Christmas goodie. Eggnog anyone?

**ADVENT MEALS:** There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex if you would like to volunteer to help with the Advent meals. Everyone is invited to participate by either bringing food, setting up or cleaning up. Come spend some time with your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

**2013 OFFICERS AND BOARDS:** The following is the slate of officers that were elected in November:

|  |  |
|--|--|
| President – Edgar Wuthrich   | Financial Secretary – Sharon Sampson         |
| Vice President – Paul Guinn  | Recording Secretary – Barbara Wuthrich       |
| Elders for a 2 years term – Steven Sampson, Danny Sampson, and Johnny Walker | Sunday School Superintendent – Danny Sampson |
| Elders with 1 year remaining – George Heil, J.D. Sampson, and Carl Gardner;  | Stewardship – Brady Gage                     |
| Trustees – George Heil, Matthew Smith, Brady Gage, and Edgar Wuthrich        | Social Ministry – Barbara Wuthrich           |
| Treasurer – Connie Wilburn   | Evangelism – Steven and Angela Sampson       |

**HELPING HANDS OF KILGORE:** See the bulletin for items requested in December and January. If you want to make a monetary contribution, send your check or money order to Helping Hands of Kilgore, PO Box 1576, Kilgore, TX 75662. A container for your items is located by the entrance to the church. Helping Hands can also use clean plastic bags and bread wrappers for distributing the items. Thank you for sharing the love of Christ with those less fortunate.

**CHRISTMAS GOODIE BAGS:** A volunteer is needed to make goodie bags for the children on Christmas Eve. If you would like to contribute candy, fruit, toys, or help offset the cost, please notify Danny Sampson. The bags will be handed out on Christmas Eve.

**OFFERING ENVELOPES:** Please pick up your offering envelopes located in the Narthex.

**SUNDAY MORNING REFRESHMENTS:** There is a sign-up sheet on the wall in the Parish hall next to the thermostat if you would like to take a turn providing refreshments.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER:** Would you like to see the light bulb go on in a child's eyes? "You can lead the little children To the Savior's waiting arms." (*Lutheran Worship*, hymn #318:2). The Sunday School department is in need of a teacher and 2 substitute teachers. Please contact Danny Sampson if you are interested.

**THE PORTALS OF PRAYER** for this quarter are in the Narthex. If you haven't already done so, please be sure to take home a copy.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:** We need help in contacting the following members to properly exercise spiritual care: Sarah McPherson, Chris Shanley and Aaron Vicaire. If you have any information, please notify the church office or email to [pilgrimsecretary@hotmail.com](mailto:pilgrimsecretary@hotmail.com). Any help would be greatly appreciated.

**PRAYER CHAIN:** Are you a part of the Pilgrim Lutheran Church Prayer Chain? Do you want to be? Are you getting notifications the way you want to get them (that is, by email or by phone)? Let Pastor Galler know.

**MARRIAGE FREE CONFERENCE:** Everyone is invited to attend the North Texas Free Conference hosted by Faith Lutheran Church in Plano. It will be Friday and Saturday, January 25-26, 2013. Five pastors will speak under the heading "Who needs marriage", including topics related to homosexuality, living together before marriage, and birth control. Sessions start Friday evening and continue Saturday morning. For more information talk to Pastor Galler who is schedule to preach at the Saturday Matins Service.

**PLAN NOW TO ATTEND:** The Circuit 14 Pastor-Lay Leadership retreat will be Saturday February 2, 2013 at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Palestine. The topic will be family vocations, presented by Dr. Gene Veith and his daughter, Deaconess Mary Moerbe, who recently published a book on that topic. Lunch will be included with your registration fee. Watch the bulletin for more details.

## **JANUARY EVENTS**

**INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS** will be January 6<sup>th</sup> during the worship service.

**LWML** will meet on the 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. in the Parish hall.

**WEDDING SHOWER** Saturday the 12<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. for Samantha Hiltzman.

**ELDERS** will meet on the 15<sup>th</sup> instead of the 8<sup>th</sup> due to a scheduling conflict.

**MIDWEEK BIBLE STUDY** resumes after Advent/Christmas/Vacation hiatus.

**POT LUCK AND VOTERS' MEETING** will be January the 27<sup>th</sup>.

## December's Daily Bible Reading

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

The first seasonal canticle, a liturgical song without a fixed meter, of the new Church year is the first of the four great canticles recorded in St. Luke's Gospel account: The Magnificat, called that for its first word in Latin, which we translate into English as "it magnifies". Mary sings this song when she visits Elizabeth and John the Baptizer leaps in his mother's womb at the presence of the Lord in Mary's womb. We can think of God's regard for us in our low estate of sin and His mercy promised to Abraham and his descendants, which we are, spiritually.

December begins with us reading the Revelation to St. John. Despite the singular (Revelation, not Revelations), the book is full of various letters and visions Jesus revealed to John, the so-called beloved disciple, who also authored the Gospel account that bears his name and three epistles that survive in the New Testament collection. John likely experienced and recorded this revelation while exiled on the island of Patmos (according to tradition, he was the only apostle who died of natural causes). Revelation begins with seven letters, one each to seven churches, most of which we read on the first day of the month. These letters are relatively straightforward, especially compared to the rest of the book.

With its placement at the end of the New Testament, Revelation may seem like a strange place in the Bible to start off the year of reading, but it fits well with the end-times focus of the first part of the Advent season, when we emphasize Christ's return in judgment. The book is especially comforting in its triumphant vision of the saints in heaven and its reassurance that nothing ultimately suppresses the Church. Concentrate on themes like that in your personal, devotional reading of this book, and do not get bogged down in trying to interpret everything. Note also that not everything in a work such as this, called "apocalyptic literature", is meant to be taken literally (especially not highly symbolic numbers like the 144,000 believers or the 1,000 years).

On the ninth of the month, we take up the Old Testament book of Isaiah. Isaiah prophesied near the end of Judah's existence before its captivity in Babylon, around the same time as the prophets Amos, Hosea, and Micah. This book is also a good one for the Advent and Christmas seasons, as it contains many prophecies of Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection (see especially chapters 7 and 53). Also found in Isaiah are the timely prophecy and words of John the Baptizer (see the beginning of chapter 40, one of my favorite chapters in the Bible). Yet, Isaiah, thought of as "the greatest of the writing prophets," also speaks to us, warning us of our sins and telling us of the forgiveness available through the Messiah. As Isaiah prophesied of the exile and return of the people of Judah, so he also prophesies of our exile in this place and our ultimate "return" to heaven. Note also the great scene of heavenly worship in chapter 6, from which the Church takes the Sanctus of its historic liturgy,.

The last day of December we begin to read the Gospel according to St. Mark. This theological life of Jesus is likely Peter's preaching as recorded by his assistant John Mark (see Acts 12:12, 25; 13:5, 13; etc.), probably while they were in Rome in the days before Peter was martyred there. Mark's first chapter also fits well with the Advent and Christmas seasons.

|    |               |
|----|---------------|
| 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  |
|    | Genesis 49-50 |

## January’s Daily Bible Reading

This second month of the Church Year again features a seasonal canticle that is one of the four great canticles from the Gospel according to St. Luke. In this case it is the “Benedictus,” Zacharias’ Divinely inspired first words after a long silence at the birth of his son, John the Baptizer. The canticle is called by its first word in Latin that we translate as “Blessed”. This liturgical song, often used at Matins, emphasizes the themes of God coming to His people to redeem them and the relationship between salvation and forgiveness.

January picks up with the reading of St. Mark’s Gospel account where December left off. The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark may well have been the last of the Gospel accounts to have been written. While reading, note especially the identification of Jesus the God-Man with the Good News (what the word “Gospel” means) that St. Mark reports. Moreover, St. Mark’s account makes it clear that Jesus is both Christ and Son of God (note well the converted Centurion’s confession in Mark 15:39). The role of Christ is further elaborated as one both of the glorious Son of Man and of the Suffering Servant (about whom we read last month in Isaiah 53). Events are linked in quick succession, and St. Mark seems to focus more on Jesus’ deeds than words (even as we today focus on God’s Word combined with His sacramental actions).

As you near the middle of the month, be ready for an abrupt ending. Most ancient copies of this Gospel account end at Mark 16:8. (There are various theories as to why it might have ended there and as to from where vv.9-20 came.) Martin Luther had no qualms about these verses, as he used v.16 in his *Small Catechism*. Many newer editions of the Bible put some sort of separation between verses 8 and 9, but these text-critical issues should not disturb our faith, as there is nothing foundational to our faith in vv.9-20 that we do not find elsewhere in the Bible.

In the middle of January, we switch from the New Testament back to the Old, reading the book of Genesis and wrapping it up on the last day of the month. Genesis, commonly held to have been written down by Moses but previously passed from generation to generation by the faithful believers, tells of salvation history from the beginning to the last days of Joseph (from where Exodus, which we will read in February, picks up the story). Especially important is the account of humankind’s fall into sin in Genesis 3, which also contains the proto, or first, Gospel in Genesis 3:15: that the Seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent, though the serpent would bruise His heel.

One writer says that “Genesis is foundational to the understanding of the rest of the Bible,” and no doubt it is true. Note well that in Genesis there is only one true God and that He opposes notions that there are other gods, no

gods, or that everything is divine. Note, too, that subjects and themes of the first three chapters of Genesis are reflected in the final three chapters of Revelation. We must marvel at the literary genius of our God who is Alpha and Omega, beginning and end, and Who inspired holy men of God to record His revelation, thereby giving to that record the property of inerrancy (being without error)—something to consider when the topic of evolution arises.



Cleaning Volunteers:  
Heil and Herricks

# DECEMBER 2012

Pilgrim Lutheran Church (903-984-4333)

| SUNDAY  | MONDAY  | TUESDAY   | WEDNESDAY  | THURSDAY  | FRIDAY  | SATURDAY   |
|---|---|---|--|---|---|--|
| <b>2</b><br>FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT (B)<br>9:15-9:30 Refreshments<br>9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class<br>10:45 AM Divine Service w/ Com.<br><br>5:00 PM Church's Christmas party at the home of Danny and Sharon Sampson | <b>3</b><br>6:30 PM Pastor at Rotary Board Mtg<br><br>Malaisa Smith (B)   | <b>4</b><br>7:00 PM Ministerial Alliance Breakfast<br><br>5:00-8:00 PM<br>Pastor in his study | <b>5</b><br>6:00 PM Meal<br>6:30 PM Choir<br>7:00 PM Advent Service                                    | <b>6</b><br>Pastor gone to North Texas Confessional Lutherans Study Group in Plano    | <b>7</b><br>9:00 AM-12:00 PM<br>Pastor in his study     | <b>1</b><br>Noon Key-Hiltzman Wedding<br>Alex Harantcavage (B)<br><br><b>8</b> |
|   |   |   |  | 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Pastor in his study  |   |  |
| <b>9</b><br>SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT (B)<br>9:15-9:30 Refreshments<br>9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class<br>10:45 AM Matins.   | <b>10</b>   | <b>11</b><br>5:00-8:00 PM<br>Pastor in his study<br>7:00 PM Elders' Meeting                   | <b>12</b><br>6:00 PM Meal<br>6:30 PM Choir<br>7:00 PM Advent Service                                   | <b>13</b><br>7:00 AM Small Church Pastors Breakfast                                   | <b>14</b><br>M/M Jeffrey Gill (A)                       | <b>15</b><br>M/M Alex Harantcavage (A)<br>Toni Erickson (B)                    |
|   |   |   |  | 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Pastor in his study  |   |  |
| <b>16</b><br>THIRD SUNDAY IN ADVENT (B)<br>9:15-9:30 Refreshments<br>9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class<br>10:45 AM Divine Service w/Com.<br><br>Andrew Adair (B)r  | <b>17</b><br>M/M Don Nicol (A)<br>Barry Conway (B)  | <b>18</b><br>John Walker (B)  | <b>19</b><br>6:00 PM Meal<br>6:30 PM Choir<br>7:00 PM Advent Service<br>8:00 Christmas Tree Decorating | <b>20</b><br>Circuit Pastors' Conference in Palestine                                 | <b>21</b><br>ST. THOMAS, APOSTLE<br><br>Ticia Smith (B) | <b>22</b><br>M/M Wayne Miller (A)  |
|   |   |   |  | 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Pastor in his study  |   |  |
| <b>23</b><br>FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT (B)<br>9:15-9:30 Refreshments<br>9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class<br>10:45 AM Matins.  | <b>24</b> CHRISTMAS EVE<br>6:00 PM CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE  | <b>25</b> CHRISTMAS DAY<br>10:00 AM Divine Service<br><br>BRYN HEIL (B)                       | <b>26</b><br>ST. STEPHEN, MARTYR<br>No Midweek Bible Class<br>M/M Wendell Holcombe (A)                 | <b>27</b><br>ST JOHN, APOSTLE AND EVANGELIST<br>1:00 – 4:00 PM<br>Pastor in his study | <b>28</b><br>THE HOLY INNOCENTS, MARTYRS                | <b>29</b>  |
|   |   |   |  | 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Pastor in his study  |   |  |
| <b>30</b><br>FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS (W)<br>9:15-9:30 Refreshments<br>9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class<br>10:45 AM Divine Service w/Com.   | <b>31</b> EVE OF THE CIRCUMCISION AND NAME OF JESUS<br><br>7:00 PM New Year's Eve Service at Our Redeemer, Longview |   |  |   |   |  |



# JANUARY 2013

Pilgrim Lutheran Church (903-984-4333)

| SUNDAY  | MONDAY                            | TUESDAY   | WEDNESDAY  | THURSDAY  | FRIDAY  | SATURDAY  |
|---|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|---|---|
|   |                                   | <b>1</b> CIRCUMCISION<br>AND NAME OF JESUS<br><br>Arlene Kuehn (B)                          | <b>2</b><br>No Midweek Bible Study   | <b>3</b><br>Pastor gone to North Texas Confessional Lutherans' Study Group in Plano | <b>4</b><br>9:00 AM-12:00 PM<br>Pastor in his study                   | <b>5</b><br><br>M/M Carl Gardner (A)                          |
| <b>6</b><br>EPIPHANY (W)<br>9:15-9:30 Refreshments<br>9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class<br>10:45 AM Divine Service w/Com.<br>Officers' Installation          | <b>7</b>                          | <b>8</b><br>7:00 PM Ministerial Alliance Breakfast<br>M/M Brady Gage (A)                    | <b>9</b><br>No Midweek Bible Study   | <b>10</b><br>Small Church Pastors' Breakfast<br><br>Sarah McPherson                 | <b>11</b><br><br>Matthew Smith (B)                                    | <b>12</b>   |
| Pastor Galler on vacation – an Elder will answer the church phone and contact the Pastor on call as needed.   |                                   |   |  |   |   |   |
| <b>13</b><br>THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD (W)<br>9:15-9:30 Refreshments<br>9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class<br>10:45 AM Matins<br>Rev Frank Starr – Guest Pastor | <b>14</b><br>6:00 PM LWML Meeting | <b>15</b><br>5:00-8:00 PM<br>Pastor in his study<br>7:00 PM Elders<br>M/M Erick Freeman (A) | <b>16</b><br>9:00 AM - 12:00 PM<br>Pastor in his study<br>7:00 PM Midweek Bible Study<br>Ralph Hollander (B) | <b>17</b><br>Circuit Pastors' Conference in Corsicana                               | <b>18</b><br>THE CONFESSION OF ST. PETER<br><br>M/M DANNY SAMPSON (A) | <b>19</b>   |
| Pastor Galler on vacation – an Elder will answer the church phone   |                                   |   |  |   | 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Pastor in his study                                |   |
| <b>20</b><br>SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY (G)<br>9:15-9:30 Refreshments<br>9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class<br>10:45 AM Divine Service w/Com.           | <b>21</b>                         | <b>22</b><br>5:00-8:00 PM<br>Pastor in his study<br><br>M/M JEROME KEY (A)                  | <b>21</b><br><br>7:00 PM Midweek Bible Study   | <b>24</b><br>ST TIMOTHY, PASTOR AND CONFESSOR                                       | <b>25</b><br>THE CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL                               | <b>26</b><br>ST. TITUS, PASTOR AND CONFESSOR<br>Don Nicol (B) |
|   |                                   |   | 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Pastor in his study   |   |   | Marriage Free Conference at Faith,                            |
| <b>27</b><br>THIRD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY (G)<br>9:15-9:30 Refreshments<br>9:30-10:30 AM SS & Bible Class<br>10:45 AM Matins.<br>M/M M                 | <b>28</b>                         | <b>29</b><br>5:00-8:00 PM<br>Pastor in his study  | <b>30</b><br>7:00 PM Midweek Bible Study   | <b>31</b>   |   |   |
|   |                                   |   | 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Pastor in his study   |   |   |   |