



# GLAD TIDINGS



Vol. 29, Iss. 10 Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Gaithersburg, MD  
December 2010 / January 2011

## Christmas Worship Events

Advent Wednesday Evening Prayer services on Dec. 1, 8, & 15.

Christmas Eve Services will be at 5 pm, 7 pm, & 10 pm on December 24.

On December 25, the Christmas Day service will be at 10 am, and there will be only one service (and no Sunday School) on Sunday, December 26 at 10 am.

The Advent link is <http://www.poplutheran.org/worship/advent.html>

The link for the Christmas page is <http://www.poplutheran.org/worship/christmas10.html>

## A Joyful Noise!

Dress Rehearsal (audience welcome) will be Saturday, December 11, at 6:00 pm.  
The Pageant will be Sunday, December 12 at 6:00 pm.



## Festival of Lights

Our first ever Christmas Cantata will be performed on Sunday, December 19 at 5 pm! Everyone is welcome to come and listen to this special music as we get into the Christmas spirit!

## Living Nativity

We're looking for volunteers to participate in this year's Living Nativity on the evenings of December 20-23 from 5:30 - 7:30 pm!

## Annual Meeting

Prince of Peace's Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on January 30, 2011 at 1pm. We need everyone to attend, so please mark your calendars!



## December/January Highlights

### Every Sunday

- 8:30 am Contemporary Worship
  - 9:45 am Sunday School
  - 11:00 am Traditional Worship
- Baby-sitter available during Services

### Every Tuesday

- 10:00 am Quilters

### Every Wednesday

- 8:45 am Prayer Time in the Sanctuary
- 12:00 pm Bible Study
- 5:30 pm High School Youth Group
- 7:30 pm Adult Choir

### Every Thursday

- 5:00 pm Youth Choir
- 7:30 pm Grace Notes

### Every Saturday

- 7:45 am Men's Group
- 5:00 pm Saturday Evening Worship



## From Pastor Steve...

Pastor Steve Buechler  
([pastor@poplutheran.org](mailto:pastor@poplutheran.org); 301-869-3666)

“And Mary gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn” (Luke 2:7).

Last fall, while I was on sabbatical, I got a chance to go to Bethlehem and to visit the traditional site of Jesus’ birth. Now of course, like many biblical places, we can’t be certain that the traditional site is, in fact, the actual site, but the history is interesting.

In the first few decades after Jesus’ death and resurrection, most Christians weren’t especially interested in where he was born. And because there was quite a bit of persecution of Christians, there was no way to mark or protect any sites Christians thought were sacred or special in any way. Yet, there was apparently enough interest in this particular site by early Christians that the Roman Emperor Hadrian built a pagan temple on the site in the mid 2<sup>nd</sup> century in order to desecrate it and discourage Christians from visiting the site. Later, in the early 4<sup>th</sup> century, Constantine’s mother, St. Helena, had the pagan temple torn down and built the first church on the site.

Today, the massive Church of the Nativity sits over the site, and because of the various temples and church buildings that have been built on over the centuries, it’s impossible to tell what was originally there. However, as you go down into the tiny little space that’s alleged to be “the spot” of Jesus’ birth, there’s a famous icon that shows Mary, Joseph, and Jesus in this little tiny cave. That is, the tradition is that the “stable” that stood here was actually a tiny cave - literally, a hole in the wall of a hill.

And while we don’t know for sure, that’s probably what it looked like. Wood, in that part of Israel, is very hard to come by, and people certainly didn’t build wooden structures for animals. And when you go into the “fields”

around Bethlehem, there are little caves and grottos in the hilly and rocky terrain that were indeed used for housing animals in the first century.

So it’s very likely that, when God sent his Son into the world, his first home was, literally, a tiny hole in the wall. And maybe that was part of God’s plan. For very often, people are tempted to look for God in big, flashy places that look much like the massive and ornate church now built over the traditional birthplace of Jesus. But many times, when God acts in our lives, God acts in the small places, the ordinary places, even the holes in the walls of our lives.

Truthfully, when I got to go to “the spot,” it wasn’t all that impressive. And probably that’s part of the point. For God often works in and through small, unimpressive, and ordinary places and events to make it clear that God isn’t just concerned with his own glory, but about regular, ordinary people like us!

Yours in Christ,



## New Grace Notes CD

Grace Notes, a contemporary praise band at Prince of Peace, has published a new CD entitled *All New*. As the title suggests, this CD contains songs not previously published by Grace Notes.



There are 20 tracks and almost 72 minutes of music. The cost of this CD is \$10 each or \$15 each for an autographed version. Cash or check payable to Neil Howard are accepted. Any

profits from the sale of this CD will go to the music ministry of Prince of Peace. There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex if you would like to order a copy. Contact Neil Howard at [nhoward@comcast.net](mailto:nhoward@comcast.net) for more information. This CD will be available beginning Saturday, December 4. (The older releases are still available by special order.)

## Recent Events

### Oct. 23: Auction



## Stewardship

### Creation Care

#### Mission Statement

Our mission statement is, "As we are called by God to be stewards of creation, the Creation Care Team shall promote appreciation, conservation, and sustainable use of natural resources in all aspects of congregational life and in the outside community through:

- a. Contemplation, prayer, and worship;
- b. Designing and implementing environmental education programs and activities;
- c. Regularly assessing and promoting practices that reduce the environmental footprint of our church;
- d. Advocating for environmental stewardship in the wider community."



The Creation Care Team meets the first Saturday of each month from 9 - 10:30am. Please feel free to join us if you are interested in helping out or even just want to see what is going on. Contact Pastor Sarah for more information at [pastorsarah@poplutheran.org](mailto:pastorsarah@poplutheran.org).

## Education

Susan Junghans ([KSjunghans@verizon.net](mailto:KSjunghans@verizon.net))

### Youth Ministry

#### Dec. 4: Parents' Night Out, 6-9 pm

Do you need to get a jump on Christmas shopping? Or maybe you just need a nap? If so, feel free to drop your kids off at the church for some pizza, fun, and fellowship! Sign-up is in the back. And as usual, we won't say no to volunteers!

#### Dec. 9: Faith-Full Families' Advent

**event** from 6-7:30 pm in the Fellowship hall. Families with pre-school - elementary age children, and their siblings, are invited for a potluck dinner, crafts, a Bible story, and fellowship. Sign up in the narthex to bring a dish (main dish, salad/side, or dessert), or just come!



Also, mark your calendars for a new Faith-Full Families event - Celebrating Epiphany! It will be held January 27 from 6 -7:30.

#### Dec. 19: Birthday Party for Baby Jesus!

During the Sunday school hour is our annual Birthday Party for Baby Jesus. This is a beloved tradition by the children at Prince of Peace. We will have fellowship, crafts, and snacks. It's a great opportunity for the little ones in your life to make a few gifts to keep or give away.

#### Jan. 22: Chili Cook-Off

Yet another tradition enjoyed by the HS kids, peers, and the entire congregation! The Chili Cook-Off will be held on January 22, 2011, so please be sure and mark your calendars for this don't miss event!



**Feb. 12:** And moving on to February, we will host a Valentine's Day Parents' Night Out! This will be on Saturday, February 12 from 6-9 pm. Plenty of time for a romantic dinner... Or once again, maybe just a nap!

Questions? Contact Judy Bruening at [jbb\\_4@verizon.net](mailto:jbb_4@verizon.net)

Please refer to the website calendar or the Youth Ministry bulletin board for details about events throughout the year. Also, don't forget that the High School kids meet weekly on Wednesdays from 5:30-7:30 PM. If you have any ideas or would like to volunteer, please call Kim Drissel at (301)349-2848 or email at [Drissels@comcast.net](mailto:Drissels@comcast.net).

## Fellowship

Lesa Sullivan ([lesasullivan@comcast.net](mailto:lesasullivan@comcast.net); 301-330-3686)

### Interested in Fellowship?

Everyone is welcome to attend the monthly Fellowship meetings which are held at the church the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month at 7:30. For more information, call Lesa Sullivan at 301-330-3686.

## Social Ministries

Jennifer Maloney ([maloney.jenn@gmail.com](mailto:maloney.jenn@gmail.com); 301-602-6358)

### The Giving Tree

#### November 28: The Giving Tree Starts!

Make Christmas a happy time for a needy child in our area.

Every Christmas PoP members share God's love, bringing joy to children and families through the City of Gaithersburg's Secret Santa program. School counselors identify the children,

who receive two gifts each. Last year, PoP provided gifts for 40 children. Look for the Giving Tree in the narthex. For more information, contact Kathy Rossmeisl at [klrossme@verizon.net](mailto:klrossme@verizon.net).

(Note: Gifts are due on December 12)



### Gifts of Hope

December 4/5: Gifts of Hope Market Opens, and shopping continues Dec. 12 and 19!

Looking for more meaningful ways to honor family and friends? Have you considered alternative giving? **Gifts of Hope** is the alternative giving program of the Metro DC Synod. Alternative giving

differs in that it involves buying a symbol of a gift and giving the symbol to someone. For example, traditionally, a child might give a small bottle of perfume to her teacher at Christmas.

Alternatively, the child might give her teacher a Christmas card that tells the teacher that a basket of books has been made available to needy children as a Gift of Hope. For more information, contact Ellen Michael at [rodandellen@comcast.net](mailto:rodandellen@comcast.net) or visit <http://www.giftsofhopemetrodc.org/>.

### December 5: Hospitality for Servicemen and Women and their Families

Would you like to add your support to the Bethesda Fisher House by providing a meal? For those of you who may not be familiar with Fisher House, it provides on base housing for military families visiting their loved ones who are at the Bethesda Hospital. There are 3 Fisher Houses at Bethesda; two of the houses serve 20 families and the other house serves 10 families. We are planning on delivering a meal on December 6. **You would need to have your dish available on Sunday, Dec. 5.** \*\*\*If you would like to provide an entree, vegetable, or salad for these homes, please contact Deborah Kalas at 301-718-7633; [dkalas@empowerit.com](mailto:dkalas@empowerit.com). All meals must be fully cooked and in containers that can be thrown away. The Fisher Houses only provide microwaves to warm the entrees up.

### December 8: Treats for College Kids Project Social Ministry and Youth

**Fair Trade Coffee Tasting and Sale:** In August 2010 Lutheran World Relief and Equal Exchange launched a new line of organic, fairly traded coffees especially for Lutherans! Come sample organic Sisters' Blend, Breakfast Blend, and Gumutindo (a new blend from Uganda). Limited quantities of these three varieties plus Hazelnut Crème and a sampling of fairly traded teas will be available for purchase starting Dec. 8!



### Refuge in Times of Trouble

If you know someone who is sick, in the hospital, or in need that is a member of the congregation, please let us know! The Social Ministries Committee can offer services such as food, cards, or other specific needs. We can't help if we don't know. Contact



Pastor Sarah Scherschligt at 301-869-3666 or at [pastorsarah@poplutheran.org](mailto:pastorsarah@poplutheran.org) if you need help or know of someone who does.

The Social Ministry Committee will meet Wednesday, December 1 at 7:30 pm at PoP - to evaluate feedback from the member survey and plan activities for 2011. All PoP members are welcome to attend. Contact Jennifer Maloney at [Maloney.jenn@gmail.com](mailto:Maloney.jenn@gmail.com) for details.

## Women's Book Group

### Christmas Book Group

Book group will gather Thursday, December 9, at 7:30 pm for the annual Christmas party. Please bring a wrapped, new or gently used book for the book gift swap after the discussion. Reina Panning hosts at her home at 9945 Valley Park Drive, Damascus 20872. We will discuss *The Noticer: Sometimes, all a person needs is a little perspective* by Andy Andrews. Monty Rainey, a reader, wrote on Amazon.com that "the story revolves around a very influential old sage who touches so many lives by simply giving the people he encounters a new perspective....Whether we choose to be happy or miserable all revolves around our perspective. One of the beauties of this book is that Andrews deftly applies the 'new perspective' principle to so many differing situations. You are sure to find more than a few examples of things that will relate to your own life." All PoP women are welcome. RSVP to Reina at 301-253-4064 or [mysticgypsygirl@gmail.com](mailto:mysticgypsygirl@gmail.com).

To be added to the book group list, send an email to Jennifer Maloney at [Maloney.jenn@gmail.com](mailto:Maloney.jenn@gmail.com).

### Future dates:

Thursday, January 13 - Linda Marmillion hosting and the book *The Art of Racing in the Rain*

Thursday, February 10 - Lesa hosting and the book *Cutting for Stone* by Abraham Verghese

Thursday, March 10 - Sandy hosting and the book *Infidel* by Ayaan Hirsi Ali

Thursday, April 14 - Nancy Morton hosting and the book *Driving with Dead People* by Monica Holloway

Thursday, May 9 - Nancy Wolejsza hosting and the book *Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot



Thursday, June 9 - Karen Kimmel-Miltzer and the book *The Girl that Kicked the Hornet's Nest* by Stieg Larsson (and discussion of all three books)

## Upcoming Events

**Jan. 22: Chili Cook-Off**

**Jan. 27: Faith-full Families**

**Jan. 30: Annual Congregational Meeting, 1pm**

**Feb. 12: Parents' Night Out, 6-9pm**

## Special Dates

- Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, December 7
- First Day of Winter, December 21
- Christmas Day, December 25
- New Year's Day, January 1
- Epiphany, January 6
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, January 17



## A Little Extra Something

• If you want happiness for an hour, take a nap. If you want happiness for a day, go fishing. If you want happiness for a year, inherit a fortune. If you want happiness for a lifetime, help somebody.

—Chinese Proverb

• Only when the clamor of the outside world is silenced will you be able to hear the deeper vibration. Listen carefully.

—Sarah Ban Breathnach

• If you add a little to a little, and then do it again, soon that little shall be much.

—Hesiod

• Have patience with all things, but chiefly have patience with yourself. Do not lose courage in considering your own imperfections, but instantly set about remedying them - every day begin the task anew.

—Saint Francis De Sales

• We must overcome the notion that we must be regular... it robs you of the chance to be extraordinary and leads you to the mediocre.

—Uta Hagen

## The Legend of the Poinsettia

Maria and Pablo lived in a tiny village in Mexico. Because Christmastime at their house did not include many gifts, Maria and Pablo looked forward to the Christmas festivities at the village church with great joy and anticipation. To honor the birth of Christ, the church displayed a beautiful manger that drew crowds of admirers. Villagers walked miles to admire the manger, bringing lovely, expensive gifts for the Baby Jesus. As Maria and Pablo watched the villagers place their gifts in the soft hay around the manger, they felt sad. They had no money to buy gifts for their family and no money to buy a gift for the Baby Jesus.

On Christmas Eve, Maria and Pablo walked to the church for that evening's services, wishing desperately that they had a gift to bring. Just then, a soft glowing light shone through the darkness, and the shadowy outline of an angel appeared above them.

Maria and Pablo were afraid, but the angel comforted them, instructing them to pick some of the short green weeds that were growing by the road. They should bring the plants to the church, the angel explained, and place them near the manger as their gift to the Baby Jesus. Then just as quickly as she had appeared, the angel was gone, leaving Maria and Pablo on the road looking up into the dark sky. Confused but excited, the children filled their arms with large bunches of the green weeds and hurried to the church.

When the children entered the church, many of the villagers turned to stare. As Maria and Pablo began placing the weeds around the manger, some of the villagers laughed at them. "Why are those children putting weeds by the manger?" they asked each other. Maria and Pablo began to

feel embarrassed and ashamed of their gift to the Baby Jesus, but they stood bravely near the manger, placing the plants on the soft hay, as the angel had instructed.



Suddenly, the dull green leaves on the tops of the plants

began to turn a beautiful shade of red, surrounding the Baby with beautiful blooms. The laughing villagers became silent as they watched the green plants transform into the lovely star-shaped crimson flowers we call poinsettias. As they watched the weeds bloom before their eyes, Maria and Pablo knew they had no reason to be ashamed anymore. They had given the Baby Jesus the only gift they could, and it was the most beautiful gift of all.

Today, poinsettias are a traditional symbol of Christmas, thanks to young Maria and Pablo and their special gifts to the Baby Jesus.

—By Stephanie Herbek



## Contact the Pastors

Pastor Steve and Pastor Sarah are working together to make sure that pastoral care needs are met. To be certain that one of them is always “on,” Pastor Steve takes Fridays off while Pastor Sarah takes Mondays off. You can reach both of them at the church office, or contact them by cell phone or email: Pastor Steve: 301-980-0160; [pastor@poplutheran.org](mailto:pastor@poplutheran.org); Pastor Sarah: 202-870-8363; [pastorsarah@poplutheran.org](mailto:pastorsarah@poplutheran.org).

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*Glad Tidings* is online at [www.poplutheran.org](http://www.poplutheran.org).

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