

The Call

A Publication Of
Spirit of Peace Lutheran Church

December 2011

Spirit of Peace Lutheran Church (ELCA)

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(Seventh Day Adventist Church)

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*Deadline for
January Newsletter
December 18, 2011*

Spirit of Peace
Lutheran Church
ELCA

~presents~

The Spirit of Christmas

"The Joy"

**If you see no other show this season
SEE THIS ONE!!!**

Sun, Dec 11 at 5:00 PM

FREE at Spirit of Peace
349 E. North Shore
Big Bear City

(Seventh Day Adventist Church Bldg)
Just west of Paradise Way on North Shore Way

For info
878-2650

Directed by KJ Barto 2011

From The Pastor

Timothy Edmondson

“Among
you
stands
One
whom
you do
not
know.”

John
1:26

Dear Friends—

John the Baptist uses a curious turn of phrase in one of the Gospels. He begins by saying, “I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ as the prophet Isaiah said. . . I baptize with water.” And then he says about Jesus even before he met Him, “among you stands one whom you do not know.”

Jesus the Stranger. That theme stuck with Him all of His earthly life. At His birth He came as a peasant’s baby; utterly unknown and only honored by a few.

Later on there were fleeting moments of recognition: once by John the Baptist when Jesus came to be baptized; once by Peter who said, “You are the Christ, the Son the Living God!” who as we also know, later denied knowing Him. Maybe now and then by the Pharisees who hated Him precisely because they did for an instant, sense who He was. The Roman centurion at the foot of the cross recognized Him and said, “Truly, this was the Son of God.” Fleeting moments, but otherwise, for the most part, no one really knew Him. His life was that of an unknown alien.

Even His own parents were bewildered by Him. While Jesus was a boy He wandered off to the temple to the dismay of His parents who did not know where He was. When they found Him, Jesus said, “Did you not know that I must be about my Father’s business?” Even then, one gets a sense that they didn’t realize who their son really was.

Jesus’ disciples mistook Him for a ghost one day as He came walking to them on the water. Even this John who says in our Gospel, “Among you stands one whom you do not know,” before he was beheaded, sent messengers to Jesus asking if he was really the Messiah or should they be looking for another.

After the Resurrection Jesus was not recognized. Mary Magdalene thought He was the gardener. The disciples on the road to Emmaus didn’t know Him. From the beginning to end, the Gospel is the story of a Stranger on earth.

Even now He is a stranger to our familiar assumptions, alien to our cherished prejudices, foreign to our insulations from the anguish of the world, an unwelcome intruder into our lingering notions that we can transform human existence ourselves by science, government programs, or genetic engineering, or free public education, or group dynamics, or positive thinking, or whichever fad of self-improvement is available at the time.

Perhaps we need to look more carefully at the occasional greeting card that portrays a Japanese Jesus or an Eskimo Christ. Maybe it would help if in white churches we put a black baby doll in the manger. Or if in the pageants, we portrayed Mary and Joseph as Indians, the shepherds as Argentine cowboys and the three kings as Russian politicians. At least it might remind us that the Child is not someone familiar. He is different; He is the Stranger in our midst.

A contemporary writer gives us this vivid illustration:

We are closer to the truth if we recognize God’s sheer vulgarity!—the vulgarity of God who created human beings with the freedom to reject Him; the vulgarity of a God who splashes the sunset with colors that no decent painter would ever put side by side; the vulgarity of a God who won’t stay in heaven, but gets down in the muck of the world; the vulgarity of God who was born in a cave—among cattle and died on a gallows between crooks.

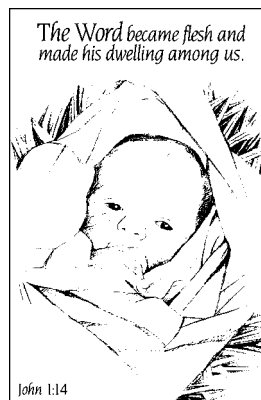
Too commonly we create for ourselves a familiar Jesus, a prettied-up Jesus, sweet and tame and prim and proper. When that happens, we do not know the One who stands among us.

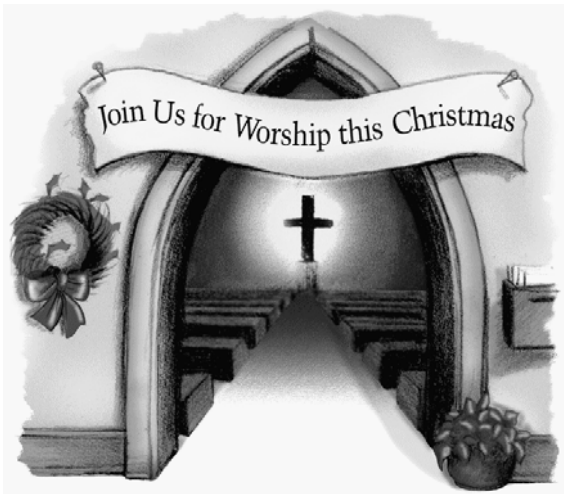
He was strange to the people of His time—strange! At first, the common people heard Him gladly because He was so strange, a novelty in their drab lives. But in the end, He was too much for them, too strange, too different. They had to do something about it. The cross was what they did.

Do we really know the One who is coming in just a few weeks? Not unless we recognize Him as the Stranger. That is the reason for the manger, the star and the angels and the shepherds and the Magi. They are not meant to decorate the familiar, but to proclaim the mystery of the unpredictable One, the God whom we cannot control or pin down or wrap up. When you and I are in the presence of the mysterious Son of God, the mystery becomes more mysterious. God does not shrink when we know Him, He expands. God does not become smaller, He becomes bigger.

Have you put God in a box? Think you’ve got Him all figured out? Do you really think you know the baby in the manger? Then this Christmas, meet the God who is bigger than you could ever know, the Jesus who is mystery Himself: The One whom you do not know.

Deep Peace,
Pastor Tim





Christmas Eve, 6:00 pm
 A Service of Lessons and Carols
 with Communion

This beautiful worship experience will include plenty of special music and all your favorite carols. Come and hear the Christmas story as the Christ-Child is born into the manger of your heart. As is our tradition, we'll gather in candlelight at the end of worship and sing "Silent Night."



Get Off to a Good
 Start!
 New Year's Day
 Sunday, January 1st

Since all the New Year's Day festivities take place on Monday, January 2nd (Rose Parade, Rose Bowl, etc), don't miss starting off the new year by being in worship. The theme of that day will be *New Beginnings*.



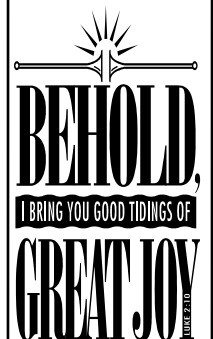
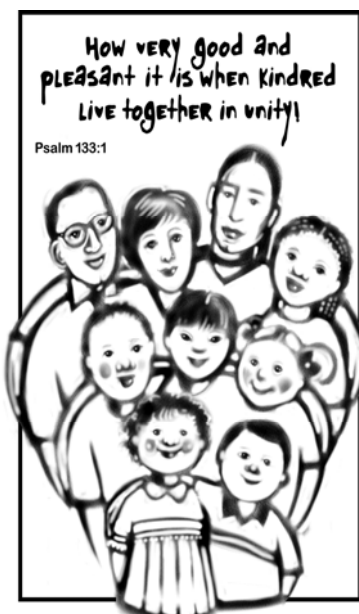
5:00 pm

Hot hors d' oeuvres and
 Warm Beverages



Christmas Day
 Falling on a Sunday
 this Year

Since Christmas Day falls on a Sunday this year, we will be having our regularly scheduled worship at 9:30 am. Come and join your brothers and sisters in Christ on this Christmas morning for more Christmas joy! The message will be presented in a unique format. Plenty of Christmas carols too!



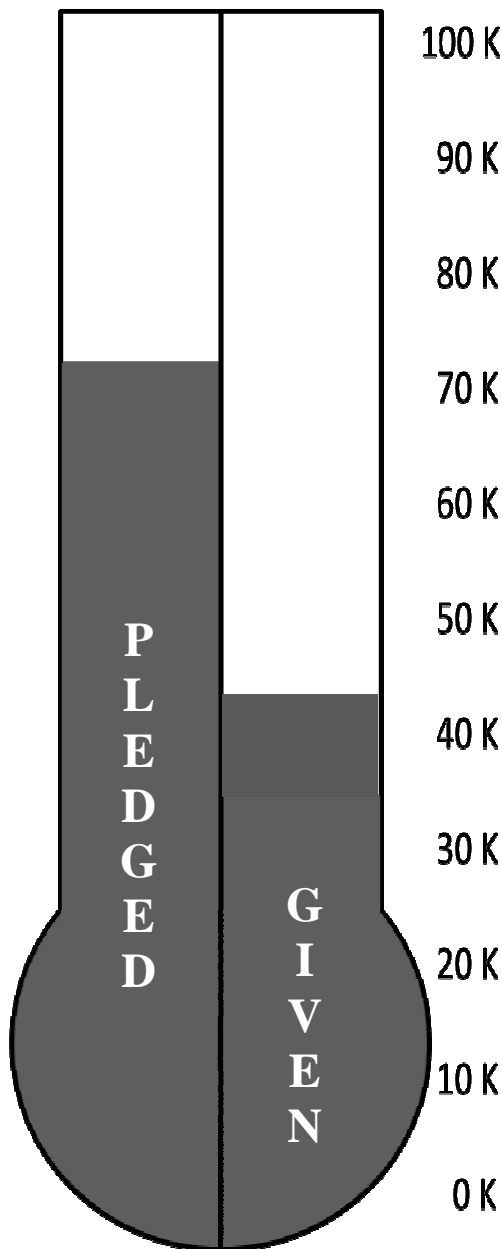


“Build Us Up!”

Getting Ready for the Future God Has Planned

Goal: Raise the Building Fund Balance to \$100,000

This will enable us to enter into a lease option, loan process, or other space possibilities that might become available down the road of ministry. When we reach our goal we will be better prepared to move forward with a strong financial foundation. This is the next step of faith we take together as a young mission congregation. “Build us up, Lord!” Amen!



Pledged YTD:
\$74,290
Received YTD:
\$41,904

Still Time to Get on Board

Gifts are matched dollar for dollar so every gift counts! Give a few dollars if that’s all you can afford or more if you are able. The goal is to have everyone participate in this moving forward step of ministry.

All gifts given are placed in the building fund which is a restricted fund. Your contributions will only be used for the specific purpose of securing property or a building of our own.

Make a pledge by contacting the church office. Pledges are paid over a period of time — between now and Easter of 2012.

Family Fall Festival Raises Over \$1100

Thanks to all who supported this event that raised money for our mission and ministry. What a fun afternoon! Special thanks to Diane Clark and Kay Cedergreen, chairpersons of the event, and to all our excellent chefs who inspired the culinary world with their chili recipes. Congratulations to 1st prize winners, Jason and Danessa Barto for their vegetarian chile (an oxymoron?) Thanks also to Sandy Szabo who coordinated the children’s activities.

The highlight of the event was a concert by the amazingly talented Mike Cross, who dazzled everyone with all styles of piano music. His charm and wit kept us smiling!



Special Thanks to the Elberts’

...for hosting our wonderful Thanksgiving Eve celebration. They graciously opened up their home and provided the meal. Others too provided some food. It was all quite delicious. After the meal, we gathered for communion (‘Eucharist’ which means “thanksgiving.”) This is becoming a wonderful tradition in our church family!

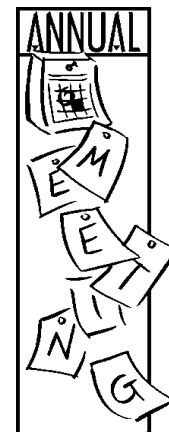
Congregational Meeting



Congregational Annual Meeting Sunday, January 29th, 2012

Immediately following Worship
Agenda to include:

Annual Reports, Election of Council Members/Nominating Committee and Audit Committee, 2012 Budget, and a look forward to 2012



Annual Reports Due by January 16th

If you serve as a Church Council officer or are a member of Church Council that leads a particular ministry, or if you lead any other ministry at Spirit of Peace, you are asked to submit a written report for the congregational meeting in January. The report need not be long and can include names of those who participated and what was accomplished in the year 2011. Plans for 2012 can also be included in your report. Please submit your reports to the church office by Sunday, January 16th. Thank you and thanks for the way you serve as a leader of this congregation!

Help Reduce Our Year-End Deficit. . .

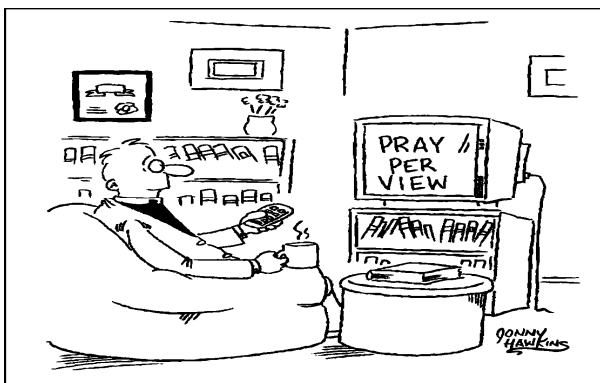
We anticipate that 2011 will finish with a financial deficit, causing us to rely on reserve funds. Our goal is to reduce that deficit substantially between now and December 31st. Keeping up with your offerings and making up any offerings that have fallen behind will be a tremendous help. Of course, it is understood that for those who have experienced financial hardship in their own households, this will not be possible. For those who are able, year-end gifts will go a long way to benefit our congregation's financial health and will serve you well for tax purposes. Thank you for your faithful stewardship to this ministry. Your generosity allows us to fulfill our mission. By God's grace and with your help, we will continue to move forward in development, perhaps at a slower pace, but nonetheless, remaining faithful to the call God has placed in us.

Gospel Message Reaches Living Rooms In the Bear Valley. . .

Have you heard? We have a brand new television ministry that airs every Sunday morning at 9:30 am on local Big Bear TV station Channel 6. Every Sunday we tape our morning service which is then edited and played in a half hour time slot the following Sunday. This venture is being funded through a generous donation of one of our members. No funds whatsoever are being taken out of our general fund. We're giving it a try for 3 months and then we'll decide whether or not it's a ministry we'd like to continue.

While a television ministry provides exposure of Spirit of Peace to the Bear Valley (Channel 6 says it has about 2300 viewers), the number one reason to be part of a media ministry like this is for the purpose of sharing the good news of Jesus Christ with those in the valley who are unchurched, never-churched, or who are shut-in.

Don't think for one second though that a Sunday morning ministry means you can sit in your pajamas and sip your coffee in front of the television instead of being physically in worship! Come to worship and smile for the camera! Oh, and one other thing. . .does anyone have some powder for Pastor Tim's shiny head? The glare is bothersome for the camera ☺



UPcoming
EVENTS

Spirit of Peace
Lutheran Church
presents
A Family Affair
**Small Business
&
Craft Holiday Faire**
Enjoy a spaghetti luncheon
*Come see what our church family
has to offer your family
this holiday season*
Dec 4th
after worship
2011

Mike Cross Playing Your Favorite Music Near You...

We so enjoyed Mike Cross at our Family Fall Festival that we want to have him back for an event that will feature his musical talents. In the meantime, you can go see him at a couple local spots:

“Chocolates, Books & Jazz”
December 7th, Wednesday
A fundraiser to provide books and music education for kids at the historic “Gold Mountain Manor.” Admission is \$10 per person which goes to the string program in our local schools. Contact: 909-585-6997.

Jazz Nite Thursdays
8 to 11 pm
At the Club Bombay on
Pine Knott Ave

**Book on Islam Available
What Non-Muslims Should Know**

Not able to attend the Sunday morning class on the religion of Islam but would like to know more about the topic in light of the influence Islam is having on the geopolitical environment? We’ve got extra books available for you to purchase and read on your own. A donation for the cost of this easy-to-read book is \$13.

- Chapters include:
- “Islam is a Diverse and Complex Faith”
 - “Islam is a Religion of Orthopraxy”
 - “Muslims Respect Judaism and Christianity”
 - “There is No Institutional Hierarchy in Islam”
 - “There is No Clear Separation between Religion and Politics in Islam”
 - “Jihad Does Not Mean “Holy War”



“God Can Do It: We Can Help”

**Commitment Sunday,
December 4th**

If you weren’t able to return your pledge card on our Commitment Sunday, you may place it in the offering plate on another Sunday or mail it to the church office.

Thank you for your faithfulness!

Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord ...
1 Corinthians 15:58



News About Garret Turney

We've all been praying for little 3 year old Garret, recently diagnosed with two tumors, one in his brain and one attached to the spinal cord at the base of his neck.

We will continue to pray for him and ask for healing.

We will also pray for Emily and Eric, and Gretchen and Anja, and others of Garret's family — that God may surround them with care and give to them strength.

Keep up to date on Garret's condition by going to www.caringbridges.com. Create an account (easy to do). Then type in his name. The family updates the site regularly and you can leave messages of encouragement for Garret and his family.

Healing

- Garret Turney
- Barry Schlieder —brain aneurisms
- Earl Gentry —undergoing tests
- Sandra Mullins —back injury
- Skip (friend of Linda Griffith's) —colon cancer (strength for Keith and Bea)
- Sharon Shipley —recovering from neck surgery
- Kathryn Dickerson —relief of pain/discomfort
- Richard Johnston (Warren's brother-in-law) —healing cancer surgery
- Daphne Mitchell (family of Linda Wilson) —brain stem cancer
- Dean Angerhofer —shoulder
- Dan's 3 year old friend —cancer
- Linda Brady (friend of Kathy Kerr) —breast cancer
- Phyllis (friend of Kathy Kerr) —melanoma
- Hobie (friend of Jim Lyon's) —cancer
- Carole (daughter-in-law of Jane & Jack) —chemo/radiation
- Carlos Noyola (friend of Linda Wilson) —lung cancer
- Sue Melchor —brain tumor
- Elizabeth (granddaughter of Linda Wilson)
- Virginia Mitchell (Linda Wilson's Mom) —osteoporosis
- Roger Frost (friend of Adams') —cancer
- Fran Palmer (friend of Clarks) —cancer
- Renee Marquez (friend of Cyndi Bauer) —Leukemia
- Marian Bacon (friend of Linda Wilson's) —brain cancer
- Andy Mearse (friend of Bartos) —chronic pain
- Candy Seimers (family member of Sandy Groon) —cancer
- Lori Baltus (Linda Wilson's friend) —severe cancer
- Alma Bauer (Paul's mom)
- Joe LaMura (friend of Judi Hollander) —cancer
- Anni Ruther (Doris Angerhofer's mother) —chronic pain

Strength, Comfort, Guidance, Peace, Direction—

- Setsuko Ploch —at the death her husband, Dan, our dear brother in Christ
- Dianne Finnecy —seminary student
- Ron & Jacquie (KJ's brother/sis-in-law)
- Christine/Anthony (Janet Webber's daughter/grandson)

Safety & Protection—

- Travel: John & Sharen Bartley
- Those in the military: Anthony Pierce (going to Marine bootcamp); Nick Caretto (Army); Peter Caretto (Marines); Sam McCullar (Navy); Tim Lauer (Navy Submarine); Scott (Rick Coehlo's friend), LCpl Tyler Craig (Wendy Craig's son in Angola, Africa), Austin Amelsberg (Army), Sean Parrish; Sgt. William VanSickle, Marc DiConti and Son; 2nd Lt. Michael Nguyen (Air Force); Prvt 1st Class Devin Barto (back from Iraq); Prvt 2nd Class Davin Barto, Brian McCoy; Tom Hastin (Jr Navy Seal); Travis Hastin (Army Ranger); Chelsea Barto



Prayer and Praise Page

*"If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer."
Matthew 21:22*

- 12/5 Shirley Giesking
- 12/7 Joanne Deacon
- 12/8 Jim Lyon
- 12/12 Marianne Hamilton
- 12/22 Charles Gehrke
- 12/23 Alan Leutloff
- 12/25 Pastor David Babcock
- 12/25 Jesus



Prayer concerns are usually submitted through the prayer cards in the pew notebook on Sunday morning. You may also call the church office as well. Prayer is powerful!

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Office Location and Hours:
41619 Big Bear Blvd. Suite 1A
Big Bear Lake
9 am—12 Noon Mon.—Wed.
9 am—12 pm Fri.

Worship Location:
349 E. North Shore Dr.
Big Bear City, CA 92314
(The Seventh Day Adventist Church)

Christmas Eve Worship
At 6:00 p.m.
With Fellowship Preceding
At 5:00 p.m.

A Little About Us:

We are a Christ-centered, Bible-based community of faith that welcomes all people and serves God by serving the needs of those in the Bear Valley.

We are part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

"The Call" is published monthly by

**Spirit of Peace Lutheran Church
P.O. Box 2997
Big Bear City, California 92314**

**RETURN SERVICE
REQUESTED**

**Mailed on
December 5th**

**Come on over to
my house this
Christmas, and
bring the kids!
Love, God**