



# NORTHDALE NEWS

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### Dear friends in our Savior,

This time of year is supposed to be all about peace. The problem is that this is one of the busiest and least peaceful times of the year. There are presents to buy and then wrap. There are Christmas cards, letters and pictures to get sent to people you haven't seen in a long time. There are Christmas parties at work and programs for the kids to go to. The Christmas tree and lights and decorations have to get put up. There are relatives coming to visit so cookies need to be made and the house cleaned up. What is supposed to be a time of peace is often anything but that.

Then add to this busy season all the problems that don't go away because it's Christmas. The terminal cancer doesn't take a break because it's Christmas. The feelings of loneliness over losing a loved one don't go away because it's Christmas—in fact, they often get worse. Money problems are exacerbated at this time of year with all the things you want to get for the kids or others but just don't have the money to do so. This is the time of year when Murphy strikes too. Something will go wrong with the house or the car. The kids will get sick or need to be taken to the walk in clinic. Something will happen at work that will send you into a tailspin. Once again, what is supposed to be a time of peace is often anything but that.

So what peace do we find at this time of year regardless of what may be happening to us or in the world around us? The prophet Micah proclaimed nearly 500 years before Jesus came, "*And he will be their peace.*" (*Micah 5:5*). Jesus is our peace. Our peace comes from remembering what this season is truly all about. It is about so much more than the secular celebration of parties and gift giving. It is about more than sharing happy times and good meals with family. It is about God displaying his love by keeping his promise to send the Savior into the world. It is about celebrating the little child who was born in Bethlehem and on a mission that ended at the open tomb after a stop at Calvary's cross. It is about the peace of seeing God's love for you and me on display and in action.

This is our peace: in Jesus, our sins are forgiven and we are right with almighty God in heaven. This is our peace: death has been conquered and no longer holds any power over us. This is our peace: regardless of what we have to face we have the peace and joy of knowing that our God will never abandon or forsake us. This is our peace: being confident of his promise that he will never let us be tempted beyond what we can bear and that when we are tempted he will give us the strength to stand up under it and provide a way out. This is our peace: in all things, our God will work for the good of those who love him. This is our peace, regardless of what kind of cross we are asked to face here, when life on this earth is over, we will be with God forever in heaven.

This is the peace of Christmas. This is a peace that passes all understanding and will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. This is a peace that is yours no matter how busy this season gets, no matter how many things go wrong, no matter how many things you have to do. Your peace is knowing that God loves you in Jesus and will be with you always. Through this busy season, keep your heart focused on what this season is truly all about: the peace that is yours in Jesus your Savior. May his peace keep you always.

Pastor Vannieuwenhoven

## STEWARDSHIP CORNER

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### One Size Fits None

If you have even a generic estate planning document in place, such as a will, you are in a better position with your plans than most people, since less than half of people even have a will. However, you are a unique individual, and one size does not fit all when it comes to estate planning. There is no one like you with the exact same possessions and plans to provide for your family and the Lord's work after you're with our Lord.

That is why WELS offers the services of local Christian giving counselors to help each household prepare a multi-faceted estate plan covering their personal situation and goals. A giving counselor can help you consider things you might not have thought about. Once he works with you to determine the specifics of what you would like done, he can help you find a reputable, Christian estate planning attorney near you who will take care of the final steps of making your plans official.

In addition, WELS offers a booklet titled, "Estate Planning for the Christian Steward," to help you prepare for your meeting. Topics include writing a Christian preamble, considering the people in your life and the blessings God has given you, and determining your planners. There are tear-out forms you can use to provide your planners and your family with all the information they need.

This is all available to you at no cost or obligation. The goal is to assist fellow Christians with formally documenting their wishes to support their families and the Lord's work. To receive a copy of the estate planning booklet or to speak with our congregation's Christian giving counselor, call WELS Ministry of Christian Giving at 800-827-5482.

## MISSIONS HIGHLIGHT—

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As the number of Hispanics in the US grows, so does WELS desire to share the Gospel specifically with these ethnic groups. Over 75% of WELS congregations are located in areas of concentrated Hispanic populations. Different approaches can be used to reach the Hispanic demographic in your area. Established congregations are informed of opportunities and available resources through Hispanic Consultant, Rev. Tim Flunker. Rev. Flunker develops community profiles, creates outreach plans and trains interested individuals. English Improvement Opportunities (EIO), community events, and "welcome wagons" are examples of relational outreach which can create opportunities to share the Gospel.

Palabra de Vida (Word of Life) Lutheran Church located in Detroit, Mich., is one of many WELS congregations located in an inner-city setting. It serves one of the largest ethnic groups migrating to the United States-Hispanics. Hispanics and Latinos are from a variety of countries that span South and Central America, as well as the Caribbean. Even though Spanish is the official language, those who define their culture in the USA are becoming more aware that English is important to learn. The second generation of immigrants always move to using English greater than 50% of the time. Inner-city work, especially amongst Hispanics, presents unique challenges. Palabra de Vida has teamed up with other WELS congregations for a combined effort in continuing outreach and ministry to the Latino community.

## Thanksgiving Food Drive



Every November, we gather food to give to Metropolitan Ministries to help people who don't have the means to provide fully for themselves or their families. This not only praises God as we use what he has given us to help others, it provides some very real help for people in need. We will be gathering food throughout the month of November and into the start of December. Please bring non-perishable food items and place them on the tables provided either in the church or the school building. We'd love to have everyone participate to be able to show our love to those less fortunate than us. It is a great way to say thanks to God for the blessings he has given us.

## Thank You

Thank you to everyone who has grabbed their newsletter from their mailbox each month. Since we have been distributing them through the mailboxes, we have been able to save 50% of the postage that we normally spend. So this is an encouragement to everyone to check your mailboxes regularly and grab your newsletter when it is there. We will mail them after

Thank You

## NEW BIBLE INFORMATION CLASS

Pastor Vann will be starting his next Bible Information Class on Tuesday, February 6. The class will meet from 6:30-8:00 p.m. for 13 weeks. The Bible Information Class is an overview of all of the main teachings in the Bible. It is a great introduction for someone who is interested in learning more about what the Bible teaches. It is a great way to share with a friend or relative what our church teaches. It is also a good review for our members of all those truths that were taught at Catechism class so many years ago. This class is also required for anyone who wants to join our congregation. If you are interested in attending, or if you have a friend or neighbor interested or that you would like to invite, please talk to Pastor Vann about that. The class is a free class and a great way to dive deep into the truths of scripture. If you need some more information, please talk with Pastor Vann.

## South Atlantic District Sponsored Recruitment Trips

Our South Atlantic District Commission on Youth Discipleship is sponsoring a number of different recruitment trips to our WELS Schools in the north. If you have a student who is interested in attending any of these schools these are great opportunities to visit the school and talk to the faculty firsthand. If you have any questions about these trips, please speak to Pastor Vann and he will be glad to answer them for you.

### Martin Luther College, Wisconsin Lutheran College, & Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

For: Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors in high school

Host: Pastor John and Julia Boggs Contact: RevJohnBoggs@gmail.com, or via cell phone @ 561-517-1053.

When: January 25-29, 2018 Cost: Flight minus \$150 reimbursement

### Luther Preparatory School

6th, 7th & 8th grade students (parents are encouraged to attend)

Host: Pastor Paul Horn Contact: 270-304-1682 or revhorn2004@gmail.com

Dates: March 8-11, 2018

Cost for student: Flight minus \$150 reimbursement

Cost for one accompanying parent: Flight minus \$100 reimbursement (housing not guaranteed)

### Michigan Lutheran Seminary

6th, 7th & 8th grade students (parents are encouraged to attend)

Host: Pastor Harmon and Shelly Lewis Contact: [savinggracepastor@gmail.com](mailto:savinggracepastor@gmail.com)

February 26-March 2, 2018

Cost for student: Flight minus \$150 reimbursement

Cost for parent: Flight minus \$100 reimbursement (housing not guaranteed)

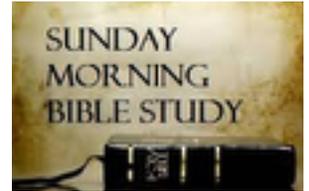
## SENIOR WINNERS



The Senior Winners Group meets at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, December 20 for Bible Study and Fellowship. This group is open to anyone who has attained the age of 55 years or more. If you have any questions, please speak to John Kim, Sr. Otherwise, please come and join us.

## SUNDAY BIBLE STUDY

As we continue in this celebration year in honor of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, we are currently studying some of the important truths highlighted by the Reformation of Martin Luther in our Sunday Morning Bible Class. We'd love to have you join us for this study. We meet at 9:25 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall.



## Electronic Giving Options

You can now stop writing checks for your offerings and do all your giving to Northdale Lutheran online. We are using called 'Pushpay', which allows for simple giving through a variety of ways, including mobile and online. Pushpay currently accepts Visa, MasterCard, American Express, and Discover, as well as ACH (bank account) gifts! To get started, you can use one of the 3 following options:

Visit our website at [www.northdalelutheran.org](http://www.northdalelutheran.org) and click on the 'Give' link at the top menu.

Text NORTHDAL to 77977

Visit our e-giving website directly at <https://pushpay.com/pay/northdalelutheran>

If you have any questions, please direct them to contact Jeff Berg at (727) 534-1679 or [jeffrey.berg@floridamoves.com](mailto:jeffrey.berg@floridamoves.com). We're excited about this easy way to give, and think you'll love it too!

## Christmas Dinner/White Elephant Gift Auction

Our annual Christmas Dinner/White Elephant gift auction is scheduled for Sunday, December 17th after the 10:30a.m. worship service. We encourage everyone to put this on their schedules to attend. This a fun fellowship day where everyone brings anonymously wrapped gifts for Pastor to auction off. The money raised goes to support our Women of Northdale who help to make sure what we have paraments, banners and other materials that enhance our worship. Please bring a main dish, and a salad or a dessert. There will a sign up sheet for meals in the church entryway. And don't forget your white elephant gifts! If you would like more information about this please see Aimee Hardman or Jean Roate.



## SUNDAY SCHOOL



Sunday School is available for all of our young children ages 3 through 4th grade every Sunday. We encourage all of our families to participate in our Sunday School program. Sunday School begins in the 1st-2nd grade classroom in the school building. If your children have never attended, you are invited to just show up on a Sunday and we'll help you with where to go.

## MINISTRY LEADERSHIP TEAM

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The following are highlights from the Ministry Leadership Team meeting on November 27, 2017:

- The meeting began with a devotion by Pastor Vann
- There was no Membership Action taken at this meeting:
  - Profession of Faith – Lori Swenson
  - Transfer In –Shannon Thomas from Zion Lutheran Church in Gainesville, FL
  - Death—Del Haupt
  - Our Total Membership is 224 with Communicant membership at 170.
- Pastor reported that He will be attending the Cypress Pastors Conference which will be held on January 22-23, 2018 at Open Bible Lutheran Church in The Villages, FL. He has been assigned the Exegesis Paper for that conference on I Corinthians 12: 12-26. Pastor will also be adding one extra trip for Campus Ministry in February and will be expanding his trips to add some counseling in for the campus ministries supported by the Campus Ministry committee. There is some extra work, but it will not take away much from his work at Northdale Lutheran.
- Mark Thiesfeldt reported for the School Ministry Board. We had a visit from Mr. Opperman (Principal from Bay Pines Lutheran). He is our new school counselor this year but he also just accepted a call outside of our district. It was a beneficial visit and is always good to have a different set of eyes have a look at our school. Mark visited his school just before Thanksgiving. The Board is looking at the playground (swing set especially) and at some point we are going to need to replace it eventually. The Board wasn't able to meet but are trying to handle things over email. Enrollment is still at 63, but one student will be withdrawing after Christmas break.
- Steve Ward reported that Jessica Kingsborough has volunteered to head up a visitor follow-up team. He reminded everyone that Movie night is this coming Friday.
- Chris Teeples reported that Sunday Bible study is on the Reformation. BIC has their last class tomorrow – one couple finishing (and one who will start meeting with Pastor on Mondays. A new BIC class will be starting soon with one other person. Pastor will also be starting one in February. Worship greeter start-up hasn't happened just yet. As Chris assembles the usher schedule, he will put together the greeter schedule. The worship schedule feedback form has been circulated after service and on the daily devotions. It would be helpful to have them filled out online as paper forms will be entered online by staff. It has been nice having the organ back for service. Pastor mentioned that Member Care team meets this month. One thing they're going to do is invite members who haven't been seen in a while to our Christmas services. Stewardship did not meet last week. The offering envelopes order has been finalized. Mike asked if we have a Time/Talents form that has been recently circulated so we can find out skills of our congregation and when people are available to help out.
- We had no financial update. We are still working on setting up our brokerage account. Jeff will be working with Rick to try and get our Sun Trust brokerage account opened. Chris will work with Rick to get a financial update prior to our next MLT meeting.
- Mike Laurin reported that the Land and Facilities team has been meeting each month (4 total participants). Several of the smaller projects have been addressed. Mike is looking for a handyman/repair person to address some issues as a result of the hurricane. The driveway was going to be patched but Mike spoke with Gus who has a job that will be close by and his crew will go around the edge of the driveway cracks to make the repairs. Mark reported that the kindergarten classroom would like to be cleaned twice a week. Lynn reported that the middle of the week is getting pretty dirty and the once/week cleanings on weekends isn't sufficient. Request was made to look into the costs of having the area cleaned a 2nd time each week and Mike will touch base with the cleaning crew.
- Pastor & Steve met this afternoon with the local architect (Chris Warren). He seemed sharp enough and eager to work with us. He believes that he will be able to work with the drawings we already have and won't have to start from scratch. They are expecting that bid from the architect shortly. MLT has agreed to have Steve continue with securing the quote from the architect. Once we have these revised drawings, we will be able to send out to contractors for competitive bids.
- We are hosting the Military Contact Pastors Conference January 30-February 1, 2018. The Military Conference will cover the expenses for the meeting. Pastor will try to cover it with the \$250 gift card and working with CABA businesses. He may also ask the congregation after services to help with special offerings.
- Pastor Vann is seeking approval to look into some new options for church management software. We would look into the possibility of a web hosted software. This came out of evangelism as we are looking for a prospect database that is a user-friendly contact database. We are at a crossroad with Shephard's Staff software. The latest version of software is \$500/yr to maintain the license. One we are looking at is [www.breezechms.com](http://www.breezechms.com). One consideration is that do we want our member database in a cloud-based platform.
- Next Leadership Team meeting scheduled for January 29, 2017 at 6:30 p.m.

## Mid-week Advent Worship

This year, we will be holding one mid-week advent service. This special mid-week service will be on Wednesday, December 13th. We will offer the service at both 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. We are encouraging all of our members to plan for this special service. Our mid-week Advent service will be a service of reflection and meditation as we ponder the coming of our King and reflect on Jesus Christ as the Light of the World.



## Christmas Worship Schedule

It is time to once again be thinking about our Christmas worship of our Lord and King. What joyous days of celebration these are for God's people as we ponder God's love in the miracle of Jesus becoming flesh. We invite you and any guests you might want to invite and/or bring to join us for each of these special opportunities to gather before God and worship him for his goodness in sending Jesus to be our Savior. Our Christmas Worship is as follows:

### Christmas Eve Worship: Sunday, December 24

8:00 & 10:30am - Worship (*as normal*)

9:25am - Adult Bible Study

11:30am - Fellowship

5:00 p.m. Children's Service

7:00 p.m. Candlelight Service

### Christmas Day Festival Service: Monday, December 25 10:00 a.m.

### New Year's Eve Day: Sunday, December 31

8:00 & 10:30am - Worship (*as normal*)

9:25am - Adult Bible Study

11:30am - Fellowship



## Choir Practice Begins

Our Choir will begin practicing to sing for our holiday services. They will practice after our 8:00 a.m. worship each week at 9:00 a.m. in December leading up to our services. Anyone is welcome to sing with the choir. If you have any questions, please speak with Mark Thiesfeldt.



December 2017

## **STAY CONNECTED...**

**to your school.**

**to your teachers.**

**to your youth.**

### **Basketball Season**

Our second sports season of the school year is now underway. We have 14 5th-8th graders out for basketball this year. Mr. Thiesfeldt is serving as head coach and Mr. Haring is assisting. We have a full schedule of games against some local schools and against our fellow SALSA (WELS) schools. Stay tuned to the Northdale Lutheran Facebook page for game results and photos.

### **Metropolitan Ministries Christmas Project**

Each year we select a donation project at Christmas time. We have been so blessed to receive God's greatest gift to us, and this is a great opportunity to give back and share the Christmas spirit of giving. Our recipient this year will be the Metropolitan Ministries, a Tampa-based organization that supports those less fortunate in our community. If you would like to make donation to this project please contact Mr. Thiesfeldt.

### **Recruiting for 2018-2019**

It's not too long before we will begin making our preparations for the 2018-2019 school year. Recruiting is already underway as parents are looking for schools for their children for next year. If you have know of anyone who is looking for a school for their children, please refer them to Mr. Thiesfeldt. He will be glad to meet with them and share information about our school with them. We are thankful for all who help to promote our school to our community.

### **Christmas Break**

May God bless your Christmas Celebrations! Friday, December 22nd will be a half day of school with noon dismissal and no lunch at school. Then school will be closed the next two weeks. Classes resume on Monday, January 8th.

### **Scrip Ordering for Christmas**

Looking to get your Christmas shopping done easier than ever before and support Northdale Lutheran at the same time? Try out Scrip! You can order gift cards for an almost unlimited variety of all your favorite stores and use them as Christmas gifts. You get the full value gift card to use as a gift and Northdale Lutheran gets a percentage back (some businesses give as much as 10-15%). Get your orders in by Monday, December 4th and contact Mr. Thiesfeldt for more information. Thanks!

**Northdale Lutheran Church and School  
(WELS)  
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Tampa, FL 33624**

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**Northdale Lutheran Church and School (WELS)  
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**Office Phone: 813-961-9195 Fax: 813-961-2435  
Web site: [www.northdalelutheran.org](http://www.northdalelutheran.org)  
E-mail: [info@northdalelutheran.org](mailto:info@northdalelutheran.org)**

**Pastor Charles Vannieuwenhoven: 813-850-7520  
Principal: Mark Thiesfeldt: 941-209-0010  
Teachers: Chris Haring: 517-202-7283  
Aimee Hardman: 813-464-5113  
Lynn Marggraf: 262-613-3020  
Amy Vannieuwenhoven 813-850-7520**

**Sunday Worship: 8:00 & 10:30 a.m.  
Communion Services: First and Third Sundays of the month  
Sunday School & Teen Bible Class: 9:15 - 10:15 a.m. (September through May)  
Sunday Bible Class: 9:25-10:15 a.m.  
Fellowship: 11:30 p.m.  
School hours: 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. M-F**