

Some final thoughts about Christmas

First, I would like to express my profound gratitude for the generous gift you gave to me as a congregation this Christmas. You have always been gracious in your support of me and of our ministry together here at Abounding Grace, and I deeply appreciate it.

As the Christmas season draws to a close with the celebration of Epiphany, I thought you might enjoy these reflections on God's actions through Mary by Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa.

Working through ordinary people like Moses and Mary, [Archbishop Desmond] Tutu said, God can accomplish extraordinary things. Tutu drew laughter from the congregation as he reconstructed the exchange between the Angel Gabriel and Mary:

Knock, knock.

“Come in.”

“Hello, Mary.”

“Hello.”

“I'm Gabriel, the archangel.”

Mm-hmm.

“God asks, ‘Will you be the mother of his Son?’”

And she says, “Whhh-what? You know in this village, you can't scratch yourself without them knowing that you've done so, and you're asking me to be what? An unmarried mother? No, no, no, no, no, no. I'm a decent girl. Try next door.”

“We would have been in a real pickle,” Tutu observed. “Mercifully for us, she said, ‘Behold, the handmaiden of the Lord.’ And God was able to accomplish a splendid work. The Incarnation could happen. Jesus could be born, and our salvation be set under way.

“For God, you are someone who is indispensable. There isn't anyone quite like you. There isn't anyone who can serve God quite like you. There isn't anyone who can replace you. And God depends on you.

“There's a story that we were told at one of the Lambeth Conferences a number of years ago,” Tutu continued, “of a Russian priest who was not very sophisticated, and a young, brash physicist rushed up to him and said, having totted up all the normal arguments for atheism, this guy then says, ‘And therefore, I don't believe in God!’

“And the little priest said, ‘It doesn't matter. God believes in you.’

“God believes in you,” Tutu finished quietly. “God believes in you.”

—Archbishop Desmond Tutu, in a sermon at the Cathedral of St. John in Providence, Rhode Island, February 20, 1999 (Episcopal News Service).

God believes in you as well.

Pastor Keith

Abounding Grace Council Meeting – November 12, 2018

PRESENT:

Jay Froehlich
Tim O’Leary
Vickie Luthro

Gerri Eberle
Paul Surhoff
Mark Westlake

Karen Paye
Walter Brewer
Pastor Keith

GUESTS:

Madge Brewer
Sharon Surhoff
Ken Luthro

Meeting called to Order at 7:02pm by President Jay Froehlich.

- Motion made, 2nd and passed to approve the agenda.
- Members shared “highs & lows”
- Pastor Keith led us in bible study (Mark 13) & prayer

October Minutes

- Motion made, 2nd and passed to approve the October Minutes as corrected. Corrected spelling, page 2 under new business, is “Hermosillo”

Treasurer’s Report

- Motion made, 2nd and passed to accept Treasurer’s Report as questioned.
- Amount balances for Holiday Mission Coins, Sunday Dollars, and Pastor Discretionary Fund seem to be higher than expected; this will be investigated by Tim along with Judy for possible error.

Pastor’s Report

- Pastor’s work at St Michaels & All Angels has given him better insight on the reality of how to conduct Worship service for the Hispanic community
- Best shot for main line churches growth is by reaching out to bi-lingual, Latino families

Old Business

- **Roof Update** – Roof repairs underway once more, plan to finish all roofs by Christmas
 - Palm tree has been removed
 - Shed and overhang roofs are finished
- **Stewardship Update** –
 - Pledges to date \$88,971, estimated total for 2019 is \$95,202
 - Pledges are down \$12,000 over last year as 2018 was \$107,256
 - Budget Committee to be established by Tim O’Leary along with Gerri Eberle, Bill Aurand, Jay Froehlich and Pastor Keith
- **Starting a Hispanic Service** –
 - Synod hold on new missions at this time
 - Pastor to meet Bishop Deborah Friday, November 16th to discuss Synod changes

Abounding Grace Council Meeting – November 12, 2018

- Services need to be bi-lingual to reach all ages in households

New Business

- **Benevolence to Synod –**
 - 2018 pledge as approved by the congregation will be paid immediately as funds are currently available
 - Concern voiced since 2019 pledges down, possibility future synod benevolence need be lessened
- **Thanksgiving Service –**
 - Worship scheduled for Wednesday, November 21st at 7:00p.m.
 - Pie Social in the Narthex to follow immediately after service
- **Angel Tree –**
 - Tree set up before Sunday, November 25th
 - Unwrapped gifts for children ages 0-18
 - Gifts to be taken to AVIVA Children Services for distribution by Vickie Luthro
 - Last day to bring gifts, Sunday, December 9th
- **Advent Services – midweek**
 - Only 3 Wednesday evening services this year: 12/5, 12/12, & 12/19
 - Soup supper in Fellowship Hall at 6:00p.m. Sign-up sheet for setting up, bringing food, and clean up to be posted in Narthex by Vickie
 - Advent service in Sanctuary at 7:00p.m. Marty Haugen's Holden Evening Prayer Service
- **Hanging of the Greens –**
 - Sunday, December 2nd following Sunday Worship Service
 - Decorating sanctuary and narthex for Christmas

Motion to adjourn was made, 2nd and approved. Meeting adjourned at 8:29pm

The Lord's Prayer was recited

Next Meeting scheduled December 10th at 7pm.

Respectfully submitted by Vickie Luthro

JANUARY 2019 UPCOMING EVENTS

JANUARY 11TH THE LUNCH BUNCH IS GATHERING in Fellowship Hall at noon to celebrate the New Year! We invite everyone to come share your favorite New Year dish and resolution story! For more information, please contact Sheryl Felde at 885-5325.

JANUARY 14TH IS OUR COUNCIL MEETING FOR THIS MONTH. Starting at 7pm in the downstairs Classroom Room we will be discussing ongoing issues, finances and up-coming events. *Everyone is invited to attend.* If you have something you would like discussed, please let Pastor Keith or Jay know so they can add it to the agenda.

JANUARY 19TH THE FLUTE CIRCLE PRESENTS THE DYNAMIC TRIO IN CONCERT! The Dynamic Trio, also known as Travis Terry, Steven Rushingwind and Odell Borg are a unique combination of talents ranging from flute crafting to award winning artist, will be presenting a workshop from 2-4pm (hosted by Odell Borg) and then a concert from 6:30 to 8:30pm. Please contact Paul Surhoff at 908-917-2307 or psurhoff@gmail.com for ticket information.

JANUARY 29TH THE PRIMAVERA LUNCH TEAM MEETS IN FELLOWSHIP HALL FOR LUNCH PREP. These lunches are for the working fellows from Primavera and your help in assembling them would be really appreciated! Can't come at 10am to practice being a sandwich artist? How about helping to provide the ingredients! Please see the signup sheet in the Narthex.

FEBRUARY 3 WE WILL HOLD OUR ANNUAL CONGREGATION MEETING. It is so important for the members of our church to be present at this meeting where we will plan our future for 2019. We must have a quorum in order to vote on such things as our budget, synod assembly reps and council members. Please plan about an extra hour for this meeting which will be held immediately following the service. **WE ARE LOOKING FOR COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES.** This year we have 4 people leaving the council and who will need replacing. Being a council representative is not hard; you have to attend a meeting once a month and you have to genuinely care about the welfare of the congregation. Please prayerfully consider this service to your church. For more information, please see Pastor Keith or Jay.

OUR QUARTERLY FRY'S COMMUNITY REWARDS CHECK HAS ARRIVED! This quarter our members, by simply shopping at Fry's and by designating us as their preferred Community Rewards recipients, have earned Abounding Grace an additional \$59.45! A honest thank you to everyone for this simple, almost effortless gesture that does make a difference here. If you would shop Fry's and would like to become part of their Community Rewards program, please see Jay in the office. It takes about 5 minutes and costs you absolutely nothing. For those of you who are already enrolled, please update your enrollment with them. Need help? Again, please see Jay.

ON-GOING EVENTS and ANNOUNCEMENTS

HAPPY JANUARY BIRTHDAY to

1/2 Paul Surhoff
1/4 Chris Christman
1/11 Cheryl Emtman
1/19 Carol Leveratt
1/24 Sharon Garner
1/26 Joyce O'Leary
1/30 Mike Armier

DOROTHY BASS TELLS THE STORY of a mother who has a rather wonderful way of teaching her children to be attentive to signs of God's activity around them. At the end of each day, instead of asking her young kids, "How was your day?" or something similar, she asks them instead, "Where did you meet God today?" "And they tell her" Dorothy says, "one by one: a teacher helped me, there was a homeless person in the park, I saw a tree with lots of flowers in it. She tells them where she met God, too. Before the children drop off to sleep, the stuff of this day has become the substance of their prayer." Where do you see God each day?

A SINCERE THANK YOU from Pastor Keith, Steven Natoli and Jay Froehlich for your very generous Christmas gift. It is our honor and pleasure to serve this congregation and we appreciate each and every one of you for the gifts you give to us in so many different ways throughout the year.

DO YOU HAVE ANY ORGANIZING SKILLS? If so we could use you to organize our annual rummage sale! Held in the spring, this is a great way to 1) raise some funds for the church, 2) get rid of your unwanted treasures, 3) make sure that the community comes by and visits our facilities. If you are able to help out, please see Jay in the office.

WE ARE SAVING BOTTLE CAPS- any type, color or size of plastic bottle caps will work. They are being sent to a shelter in Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico to help pay for housing and diagnostics for cancer patients. This program came to our attention through one of our local Girl Scout troops. It is such an easy donation to make, we all have plastic tops of one sort or another in our daily lives; a small commodity that can make a big difference to someone else. Please consider putting yours in the bowl in the Narthex instead of a trash bin.

DO YOU NEED FREEZER PACKS? Pastor Keith has an abundance of freezer packs (used to keep food cold) and is looking to re-home some of them. If you are interested, please see him or give him a call at 780-9207.

IF YOU NEED A RIDE FOR ANY SERVICE, PLEASE CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE AND WE WILL MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR YOU!

WE WANT YOUR INPUT/ THOUGHTS/ OPINION on how we are doing with our Sunday Service. On the podium in the Narthex by the guest book we have put some simple feedback forms for your convenience. Signatures after you fill them out would be great (just in case we need clarification) but not a requirement. The forms go to Pastor Keith (in person or slot #50 in the mailboxes) and are not made public. Please give us both positive and negative feedback. Your opinion is important!

DO YOU EVER HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE READINGS? The Thursday Bible Study at 11:30 led by Pastor Keith, is a deeper study of the following Sunday's readings and usually last 60- 90 minutes. It an excellent way to learn the history and context of the readings as well gaining a more meaningful look into what it is that our Lord is trying to teach us. For more information, please call the church office.

PRAYER CHAIN- Our church has a Prayer Chain. Anyone with a prayer request, please call **Shirley Berner at 885-4892**. Also, anyone that is interested in helping on the Prayer Chain please contact Shirley to lighten the load. **If you have someone on the list that should be taken off or someone to add, please contact Shirley Berner and Jay Froehlich in the office.**

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN

John Stum (son of Paul & Martha Stum), Audrey Neymeyer (granddaughter of Cheryl Emtman), Clay Hardwick (grandson of Jane Dunfee), James Simpson (from Aspire), Levi Thompson (grandson of Dave Kitner).

SUNDAY HOSPITALITY TABLE – Who doesn't like to have a chance to sit down with a cup of hot coffee (or tea), a sweet treat, and for a little while, just chat? It could be with a friend you've known for a long time or someone you just met. It's a nice feeling, isn't it? Well that's what we try to provide right after each Sunday service. Here's a place to talk about the sermon or the music. Here's a time to discuss an event that just occurred or will be coming up soon. You may think that you're just giving yourself a little refreshment time, but don't forget the person you greet with conversation. Could it be that person needed somebody to share their thoughts with as well? Could it be you're a blessing to someone and you never knew it?

PLEASE PRAY FOR ABOUNDING GRACE AND OUR FRIENDS

Sarah Williams (niece of Cheryl Emtman), Jeannie Van Sickle (daughter of Mark Westlake), Robert Lloyd, Eric Leland, Peter Leveratt (brother of Carol Leveratt), Alice Yaskanich, Kathie Josephs, Betty Hetler, Mark Westlake, Susan Martinez, Walter Brewer, David Glarborg (son of Estelle Glarborg), Police Officer Mike Duffrin, Don and Nancy (brother-in-law and sister of Kathy Peters), Will Trembley (son of Artesia Runge), Anthony Huggins, Michelle Benedict (niece of Roland and Shirley Berner), Marion McGrew, Joyce O’Leary, Claudine Williams, Karen Paye, Holly Charland (niece of Paul and Sharon Surhoff), Cheyanne Davis (daughter of Pastor Keith and Lynn Hardy), Gary George, Sharon Surhoff.

THE PEACE CANDLE – Our church carries on a tradition that began in Russia, of lighting a candle each week on our altar as a symbol of our prayer for peace in our world. We invite visitors from other congregations to take a Peace Candle along with the literature of its history to your home church to continue the tradition. If you would like to take the Peace Candle to your home church please mention it to the Pastor or an Usher and we will be happy to “pass it on.”

Mary, Did You Know

**Mary did you know that your baby boy will some day walk on water?
Mary did you know that your baby boy will save our sons and daughters?
Did you know that your baby boy has come to make you new?
This child that you've delivered, will soon deliver you
Mary did you know that your baby boy will give sight to a blind man?
Mary did you know that your baby boy will calm a storm with his hand?
Did you know that your baby boy has walked where angels trod?
And when your kiss your little baby, you have kissed the face of God
Oh Mary did you know
The blind will see, the deaf will hear, the dead will live again
The lame will leap, the dumb will speak, the praises of the lamb
Mary did you know that your baby boy is Lord of all creation?
Mary did you know that your baby boy would one day rule the nations?
Did you know that your baby boy is heaven's perfect Lamb?
This sleeping child you're holding is the great I am**

Songwriters: Buddy Greene, Mark Lowry © Warner/Chappell Music, Inc., CAPITOL CHRISTIAN MUSIC GROUP For non-commercial use only.

January 2019 Sign Up Sheet

	Jan 6	Jan 13	Jan 20	Jan 27
Altar	Jay Froehlich	Deb Kutina	Deb Kutina	Deb Kutina
Greeter				
Reader	Bill Aurand	Brendan Victorson	Vickie Luthro	Shirley Williamson
Prayers	Bill Aurand	Brendan Victorson	Vickie Luthro	Shirley Williamson
Communion Assistant	Vern Victorson	Brendan Victorson	Ken Luthro	Destiny Vasquez
Acolyte	Penelope Vasquez	Emi Victorson	Penelope Vasquez	Emi Victorson

USHERS- Sharon and Jack Garner

COUNTERS- Ardis Grob, Don Mummert

January 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6 Worship 9:30am <i>-Food Share</i> <i>-Home</i>	7	8	9	10	11 Noon Lunch Bunch	12
13 Worship 9:30am <i>-Ask Pastor</i>	14 Council 7pm	15	16	17	18	19 The Dynamic Trio Flute Workshop & Concert 1- 9pm
20 Worship 9:30am <i>-10:30</i> <i>Healing Service</i>	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 Worship 9:30am <i>-Celebration</i>	28	29 Primavera 10am	30	31		

Monday

Office closed

Overeaters Anonymous 7:00

CAP 7:00

Tuesday

Office closed

Cub Scouts 7:00

Flute Circle 7:00

Wednesday

Food Pantry 9-11:30

Boy Scouts 6:45

Thursday

Quilters 9-11:30

Bible Study 11:30-12:30

Food Pantry 9-11:30

Alcoholics Anonymous 7:00

Friday

Food Pantry 9-11:30

Dancing Dogs 4:00

Saturday

Siloam Compassion Church 3pm

Sunday

Siloam Compassion Church 2pm