

**REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH  
LCMS**

# **OBEDIENCE**



*From the  
Manger  
to the  
Cross*

**DECEMBER 2018 PUBLICATION  
VOLUME 11 ISSUE 12**

Redeemer **Reflection** Newsletter

*Loving People To Christ*

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Visit our website at: [www.redeemerjackson.org](http://www.redeemerjackson.org)**

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# REDEEMER REFLECTION

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## OBEDIENCE

by Pastor Michael Geml

*“And being found in human form, He [Jesus] humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”*

**Philippians 2:8**

Jesus became obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. In accord with God’s plan for our salvation, Jesus came to live in the flesh. His incarnation was truly humbling. He left the glories of heaven in order to live among us. He came as an infant born in the most humble of surroundings; meek and mild and lying in a manger. He humbly lived under the authority of His earthly parents, Mary and Joseph. But more than merely humbling, His obedience eventually brought to Jesus unimaginable pain, suffering, rejection, betrayal and death. That is what being obedient brought to Jesus.

That is not what we consider to be the fruits of obedience. Obedience in our lives usually is to our benefit. When we live in obedience to the law, we live in peace and need not fear punishment under the law. When children live in obedience to their parents, they can expect just rewards for such obedience. We live with the expectation that life will be reasonably fair



and that as we live in obedience to the various powers that be, we can reap the rewards of such obedience. And even if we don’t expect to be rewarded, at least we expect smooth sailing. So, where do we go when life runs contrary to expectation?

As the Church looks forward to the celebration of the birth of the Savior,

we are drawn to look into the manger to find meaning and security and answers to our most pressing questions. Instead of looking all around, God would have us look down. The face of the baby lying there is the face of the Savior. He is the One who would be perfectly obedient to the Father. In that obedience He would suffer and die in our place. The promise of the Savior comes to us to give us peace and eternal security. Even when our sinful disobedience rears its ugliness, it is met with the beauty of the Father’s love and the forgiveness won for us by the obedient One, Jesus Christ.

May we ever and always live in the peace of the Lord.

A blessed and Merry Christmas to all!

*Pastor and Ruth Geml*

# BETHLEHEM COMES ALIVE!

by Diane Siedzik



The Bethlehem Marketplace/Living Nativity will be enacted in the RAC (Redeemer Activity Center in our lower level) on **December 8** from **6:00—8:00 p.m.** Want to be involved? Have any questions? Ask Diane Siedzik, Craig Britton, or Kimber Walsh for more information on this event. Let's all set time aside for Christ this Christmas season.

Lots of people are needed to make this a fun and blessed evening where we tell again the real Christmas story and share the GOOD NEWS with our neighbors and friends.

This **IS** our Christmas Program every year and we'd love to have everyone come and be a part of this great Christmas tradition.

## YES, DAD

by Kimber Walsh

I know a child who responded to her parents' instructions with "yes, mom" or "yes, dad" even from a very young age. She always said yes first and then did what they asked her to do. Some may find this quite odd for littles. But I asked

her parents about it. They explained that obedience is the most critical thing for a young Christian to learn. They wanted their daughter's relationship with them to help her have a better relationship with God in the present and into her adulthood.

Isn't obedience often one of the most difficult things for us as God's children? We don't mind obeying Him when it comes to the "simple" stuff (i.e. the stuff we're already doing), but if He asks us to do something "hard" (i.e. the stuff we don't want to do; the stuff that requires us to change, etc.), we balk. What if we took a lesson from this young family's home and obeyed God when He tells us to do something or not do something? What if we responded with a simple, "yes, Dad" and then actually obeyed? Simple. But never easy for us poor sinners.



## FAMILY FAITH LIFE

by Kimber Walsh, Director of Family Life Education, CFLE, Redeemer Lutheran Church

Advent means "coming," and as we prepare for Jesus' coming at Christmas, there is much we do. So also, we should give our attention to the things that we do, think, and talk about as we prepare our hearts for Jesus' second coming. It's easy to lose sight of the fact that that's what this season is all about. It's easy for us to fumble our way into January and not realize

how or where December even went. So as you go about the busy tasks of the season, consider also how God is at work. Talk about the things of Him as you go along the way this Advent.

*“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the way, when you lie down and when you get up.”*  
*Deuteronomy 6:6-7*

- **Preparations**—There are so many ways that we prepare for things during Advent. We prepare our homes for celebrations, we prepare our cards to send to loved ones, we prepare our outfits for special occasions, we prepare our gifts for others, we prepare special treats, and the list could go on and on. As you prepare for the things of the season, talk about how we also prepare for Jesus. What does it mean to ready our hearts for Jesus to come? (Repent, read the Word, share the Gospel, etc.)
- **Hope**—Some people refer to this as the “season of hope.” Some might be referring to hope for gifts, hope for restored relationships, or delivering hope through a helping hand to someone else. Talk about what hope really means. It’s more than simply “wanting something.” True hope is trust and faith. Where do we place our hope? Why? How is hoping in this different from the things of the world?
- **Joy**—What brings you joy this time of year? What fills your heart in a way that it feels like it’s spilling over the brim?
- **Jesus**—Sometimes Jesus gets overshadowed by elves, gifts, and Santa. So, this year, make a point to talk with your family about Jesus each day. Talk about him and how Mary prepared for Him, marvel at how God can work such a wonder in a tiny baby, etc.

I enjoy looking for opportunities to see how we might talk about and think about God throughout each day and each season. It’s the challenge and responsibility that God has placed on us. Let’s point to him together!

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**Builders** is our monthly family life time—covering various topics and doing various activities that will build up your family and build up the body of Christ. Families and couples with children, single parents, parents with teens, couples without kids or grown kids, single individuals, grandparents with grandkids. When we say family, we’re talking about you and your situation!

We will meet on December 2, 3:30-6:00 pm. This month, we will be discussing Advent and ways to prepare for Christ this season. We will make Advent wreaths for your home. RSVP on the sign-up sheet in the narthex so plans can be made for supplies and dinner. Supplies are not guaranteed for anyone who does not sign up in advance.

Questions? Contact Kimber Walsh at [kimberwalsh@comcast.net](mailto:kimberwalsh@comcast.net) or 517-750-3100.

## Personal Care Community Event



On Saturday, November 10, we partnered with Trinity Lutheran Church to serve the Jackson community with a sock, underwear, hygiene items, and haircut giveaway. We also provided prayer, spiritual resources, kids' activities, and refreshments for our guests. We were able to serve nearly 200 people in the Jackson community and help meet their needs.



Thank you to all who contributed donations of goods, finances, and time to be a part of blessing the community in this way!

## CHRISTIAN CARE MINISTRY

by Nyla Arvy

*Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the*

December Newsletter

*Lord, knowing that in the Lord you labor not in vain. I Corinthians 15:58*

These encouraging words from Paul will sustain us all as we go forward serving our Lord and the Redeemer family.

Feeling blessed, it is with gratitude that I announce and welcome nine new volunteers who have committed to assisting in the compassion/care of members of the Redeemer family. This addition of care givers to our already seasoned volunteers will provide new energies to this ongoing ministry. Our new name is "Christian Care Ministry."

We now have a list of member shut-ins and will be coordinating visits with Pastor Geml, and making plans to contact those members for other care needs that arise during health recoveries.

Contact me anytime if needs arise that Christian Care Ministry can assist with at 810-923-8723.



😊 **Sunday, December 2: First Sunday in Advent**

😊 **Sunday, December 2: BUILDERS**

Family building time; reserve the dates for the future. The first Sunday of each month, **3:30—6:00 p.m.**, with a meal included. This is

for all who desire more “tools” for “doing family” the way God intends.

😊 **Tuesday, December 4: Budget Meeting**

This meeting is for both Ministry Council and Leadership Board members and will be held in the library at 7:00 p.m. Any member may attend.

😊 **Wednesday, December 5: Advent Services Begin.** Advent services will be held at 7:00 p.m. on December 5, 12, and 19.

😊 **Saturday, December 8: Living Nativity with Bethlehem Marketplace.** This community outreach event is open to the public. All Redeemer members are encouraged to come in period costumes to be Jewish market-goers to help make the display more authentic. It’s always a fun and rewarding experience, with the Handbell Choir adding a special holiday touch. See Diane Siedzik for more details and/or information.

😊 **Sunday, December 9: Annual Voters’ Meeting.** After the late service, at 11:45 a.m.

😊 **Monday, December 24: Christmas Eve Services will be offered at 7:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m.** Both will be candlelight services as we celebrate the birth of the *Light of the World*.

😊 **Tuesday, December 25: Christmas Day. Happy Birthday, Jesus!**

😊 **Sunday, December 30: 10:00 a.m. One Service.** No potluck. God bless your holidays as you continue to celebrate the birth of His Son.

😊 **Saturdays, beginning in mid-January: Upwards Basketball for Kids.** Start date TBA.

😊 **Thursdays, beginning January 24: 7:00 p.m. Joining Jesus Bible study:** A 12-week class facilitated by Craig Britton.

## IN OBEDIENCE

by Peggy Bennett  
Photos by Meredith VanDerWeide

In obedience to God’s call on our lives as members of Redeemer Lutheran Church, we joined with Trinity Lutheran and Thrivent Financial to serve our Jackson community with a hygiene and underclothes give-away on November 10 at Trinity Lutheran Church.

The weather was cold and blustery, but the warm hearts and caring hands inside the church welcomed many people in need of some of the small necessities of life. Along with the needed physical items, which also included haircuts, homemade snacks, and coffee; smiles and caring conversations were served to the public as well.

It was a privilege and blessing to be a part of this service opportunity, a chance to give back to our community and lend a helping hand with basic needs. We served about 200 people, and the thanks and good wishes we volunteers received in return far outweighed the time and

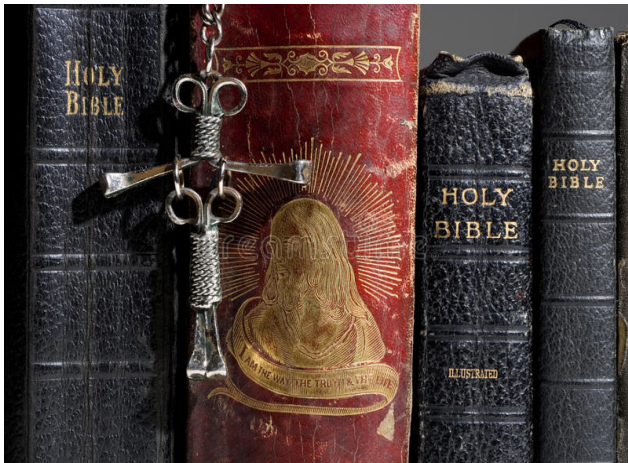


energy spent. What a wonderful way to spend a frosty Saturday morning serving our Lord! The thanks of many warmed our hearts and made us glad and grateful to be able to serve others together.



*But this is what I commanded them, saying, 'Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you will be My people; and you will walk in all the way which I command you, that it may be well with you.'*

Jeremiah 7:23




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## DECEMBER

|                   |              |
|-------------------|--------------|
| Sharon Rumohr     | 12/01        |
| Brennen Schnebelt | 12/01        |
| Evelyne Jones     | 12/02        |
| Bill Bartlett     | 12/03        |
| Matthew Mogle     | 12/06        |
| Robin Ellison     | 12/07        |
| Debra Moyer       | 12/07        |
| Russ Jean         | 12/08        |
| Dorothy Thomas    | 12/09        |
| Bill Mantek       | 12/11        |
| Marvel Jones      | 12/12        |
| Nyla Arvy         | 12/14        |
| Carol Faris       | 12/14        |
| Debbie Rockwell   | 12/14        |
| Loren Kielhorn    | 12/16        |
| Janie Boyle       | 12/17        |
| Cathie Miller     | 12/17        |
| LynnEtte Mueller  | 12/17        |
| Tom Polzien       | 12/17        |
| John Smith        | 12/17        |
| Art Knueppel      | 12/23        |
| Jim Siedzik       | 12/24        |
| <b>Jesus</b>      | <b>12/25</b> |
| Carol Rose        | 12/25        |
| Miriam Kleimola   | 12/29        |

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*Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people...*

Exodus 19:5

## AN OLD USED CAR

by Cathie Miller

You can both hear and smell her coming from miles away. Don't try to take her on an expressway. And, certainly never attempt to pass a truck with her. She is far too unique and classy to live up to these ordinary automobile standards of usage. Known simply as "Marie," she is our 1983 Mercedes 240D.

When our two boys were just out of car seats, Teddy decided we needed a bigger and safer vehicle. His German ancestry cried out to him when he spotted a slightly used, 1981 Mercedes 240D. The sound construction, and stellar reputation for endurance, appealed to his sense of thrift. The diesel engine gave it a quirky air. And, the body style of the "pale yellow" Mercedes was nothing less than timeless. The kids dubbed their new friend, Old Yeller. From young boys to young adults, Old Yeller transported them from place to place in Spartan luxury. It faced the searing heat of a Washington, DC, summer, as well as the treacherous ice and snow of countless Michigan winters.

The time came when Tom and Todd's teenaged legs grew too long for the back seat, and Old Yeller became mine to drive. I was a school secretary then, and the familiar yellow noisemaker became part of my persona. The principal always knew when I was close to the building, for he could hear me, and smell me coming, long before he saw me.

For nearly 20 years, the pale yellow Mercedes was a staple of the Miller household. And, when we finally had to "put it down," we felt as if we had lost a beloved member of the family.

So, it was with great excitement that Teddy very recently learned of an original owner, 1983 Mercedes 240D for sale in Minnesota. Our grandson found it at a local classic car dealership. Despite spending its life in the

Minnesota wilderness, it was in nearly perfect condition. Lovingly cared for, the German antique was the exact clone of Old Yeller, with the exception of its soft white color. The entire Miller clan was taken with the vehicle. Son Todd purchased her on my grandmother's birthday, thereby christening her, Marie. She briefly lived with him in Georgia, before making her way to her current home here in Jackson. Teddy is now Marie's caretaker. I am her biggest fan.



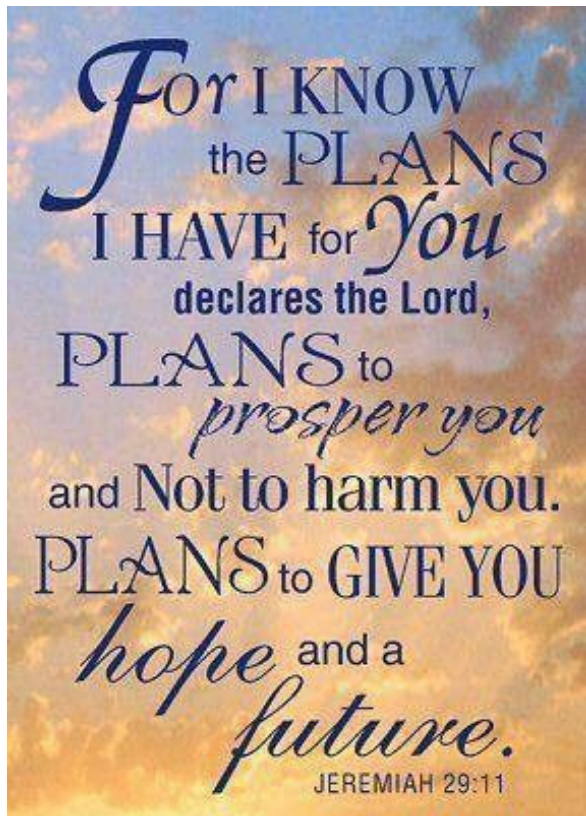
Marie makes no sense. She is old and worn, her "numbers" are not as good as they once were, and her life should have been over years ago. But, she is loved by the ones who claim her. For she brings back warm memories of the past, in a way no other object could. In a strange way, an old used car is like an old person.

As we age, we are beset with myriad numbers. Blood pressure, cholesterol, kidney function, visual acuity, triglycerides, and on and on. We may find that our miles-per-gallon figures are not too hot anymore. And, some numbers may be the harbinger of an even more serious and life-threatening disease. But, even so, there can still be a lot of life left inside us. Still a lot of roads left to travel. We must not let the numbers get us down. Because, like Marie, we are far more than numbers on a piece of paper.



Marie lives, and has a future, because she is loved. The same is true for you and me. No matter our age or medical infirmities, we are still alive and loved by the Father in Heaven who created us. By the Son of God who willingly suffered and died for us. By the Holy Spirit who claimed us as his own in Baptism. And, for as long as we are alive, the numbers simply don't make any difference. Because we are not just numbers on a piece of paper... we are children of God.

Therefore, we can face what lies ahead with hope, in the peace and certainty that He is our beloved Caretaker, for now and for all eternity. God holds the plans for our future in His mighty hands.



## TOPIC FOR JANUARY

The topic for January is *Treasure*. Do you have one thing that you treasure? When we think of treasure, what things come to mind?

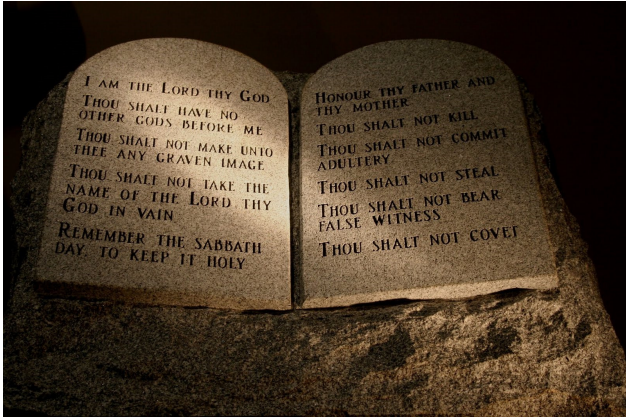


The *Reflection* newsletter is meant to help reflect our Lord in the daily life and actions of His people, including struggles, service to those around us, our community activities, and our worship services here at Redeemer. Please consider sharing God-sightings in the community or within our church with others through this newsletter. You, our people at Redeemer, are invited to be part of revealing our Lord's activities visible and tangible in our world today.

Send your articles or information to [bennitt49@yahoo.com](mailto:bennitt49@yahoo.com), by the 15th of each month, to be included in the following month's newsletter. Articles on the topics of Family, Prayer, and Outreach are always welcome and accepted for publication each month.

## UPCOMING TOPICS FOR 2019

|                   |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| January: Treasure | July: Honor       |
| February: Gift    | August: Edit      |
| March: Signpost   | September: Proof  |
| April: Substitute | October: Modify   |
| May: Savor        | November: Price   |
| June: Sanctuary   | December: Promise |



## OBEDIENCE

by Peggy Bennitt

Obedience to me has always meant doing as I'm told or following the rules. When I was told by my parents to do something, it was the law in our home. If I chose not to obey, that was an act of willful disobedience and there were consequences. As parents, they were the leaders in the home, and so, God's representatives, to be obeyed as I would obey God Himself. I know I never thought of it that way at the time. But I knew that God was not happy with me if I was disobedient—to Him, or to my parents.

*Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.*

Hebrews 13:17

In God's Word, we are reminded again and again to obey God. It is not a request, even though we like to think of it as such. Obedience is a command. Laws against murder and stealing were commands from God too, and are still governmental laws today. These are not suggestions, but laws punishable by prison or even death. Our obedience is mandatory and expected.

December Newsletter

As sinful human beings, we are not capable of keeping the law. Nevertheless, we are expected to follow God's commands and do the best we can possibly do to abide by His rules.

*"This is love for God: to obey His commands. And His commands are not burdensome..."*

1 John 5:3

God's commands are all for our own good. If we followed just the Ten Commandments perfectly, this would be a perfect world. Sad to say, we are anything but perfect.

The good news is, Jesus is perfect and as He stands for us as Mediator, God views us through His perfect Son and sees us as His perfect children. The wages of sin were paid in full.

Jesus was obedient to His Father, and through His obedience we receive Eternal Life. Thanks to our God for the sacrifice of His Son to pay that death-price for us all; law-breakers every one.

## OBEDIENCE IN THE RIGHT PLACE

by Craig Britton

Have you ever been assigned the task of speaking, or in this case writing, on a subject you feel you don't know enough about? Well, I can tell you that I have had a case of racing heart since I saw our editor's "prompt" or theme for this month's newsletter. Are you ready? OBEDIENCE.

Gulp. Perspiration. And as I wrote, a racing heart. Why? Because obedience in the walk with Christ is never where it should be in our lives, and I would wager, is not even enough thought about let alone practiced. Am I overly harsh? Am I like dear Doctor Martin? A bit on the scrupulous side? Perhaps. Perhaps not.

- 9 -

Volume 11 Issue 12

Now there is an “out” of sorts, although I do not want to come off as flippant in any way. And the out is better termed a “rescue.” And the rescue is a PERSON and His rescuing acts. Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. (Writer sighs)



So why all this nervousness about a subject so utterly matched by the Matchless One? Because in His divine obedience, an obedience that completely covers my DIS-obedience, there is a residue that accrues to you and me; those who infinitely benefit from this “rescue.” Let’s look: In Peter’s first letter, chapter one and the second verse we read,

*“Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto **obedience** and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you and peace, be multiplied” (KJV-emphasis mine).*

Do you see it there in bold? After His complete and perfect obedience, there is an obedience—an expectation of obedience—that is laid upon us all. Let me be clear: that

obedience is NOT a saving obedience, but one that shows to the world that I have been rescued. Now before we move ahead too quickly, which I often observe in myself, by saying, “Oh, the Lord’s taken care of it all,” let us look at the obedience here spoken of which is to be for us a source of real joy and, may I say, relief?

Peter, by the blessed Holy Spirit, couches the obedience expected of God’s children in a blanket of divine provision. But it is obedience on our part nonetheless. First, Peter points to this obedience as grounded in the fact that I am the elect of God. I can obey because God has chosen me to be His and in that very choice is immense provision. A provision that will take all eternity to understand. Next, Peter points us to the work of the Holy Spirit as He sanctifies us, sets us apart in that divine prompting to the very obedience of which he writes. You and I no longer belong to the “crowd” around us. A crowd who would just as soon consume and destroy us as it attempted to do with our Master. Remember dear old John recording Jesus as saying that if we as disciples sensed the world’s



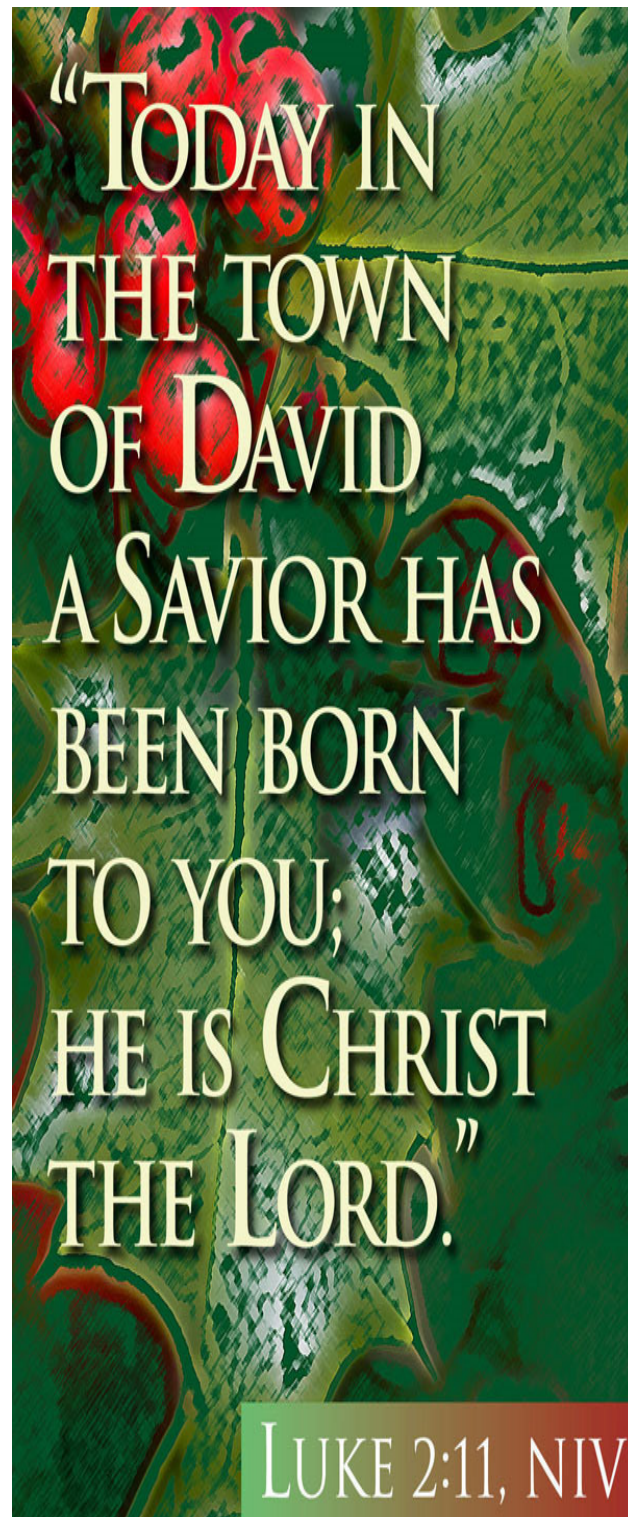
hatred that we are to remember the world hated Jesus first?

So, we are elect of God the Father. We are set apart by the Holy Spirit unto obedience. But Peter is not yet finished. The obedience is connected to the sprinkling of the blood of our Savior, God the Son. What a Trinitarian exultation! The sprinkling of the blood of Christ speaks of the ultimate sacrifice freely embraced by the Son. It speaks of complete fulfillment of all the type and shadow manifested in the millions of sacrifices in the Temple. And it speaks of Holy Baptism ... our Holy Baptism into the sonship that the Father has given us in His Son. Here, if we are tracking with the text, that racing heart may now experience divine rest, a Sabbath of sorts. And Peter has yet one more thing to add.

Peter now adds an Apostolic Blessing: "Grace unto you, and peace be multiplied." Now, it may seem that the obedience emphasized has been covered or swallowed in all this divine provision. Grace and Peace be multiplied to me? To us? Absolutely. The obedience expected of the adopted brothers and sisters of Jesus is not lost in the blessing of God. Rather it is lifted to its proper place. It is as if Peter is declaring, "Just look and be amazed that God's children by grace can and are taking on more and more resemblance to their older Brother."

And that's where we live today. Peter tells us elsewhere that the Holy Angels ache to grasp just what Christ has accomplished for these poor wretched sinners. His election, sanctification, sprinkled blood, filled and fueled by God's grace and peace, have indeed created an obedient family. Obedient by outpoured love in the true obedience of our Savior. Obedient in the glory of the very Person who makes it possible. Obedient from a heart that now needs not race, but from a heart that rests securely in the obedience of Another.

Soli Deo Gloria!



Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

# DECEMBER 2018



Men's Choir  
9:30 a.m.

1

2  
Divine Service  
8:00 a.m.  
Bible Classes  
9:20—10:20 a.m.  
Praise Service— C  
10:30 a.m.  
Builders  
3:30—6:00 p.m.

3  
Adult Choir  
6:30 p.m.  
Bell Choir  
7:30 p.m.

4  
Prayer Chapel—  
Hour of Prayer  
7:15 a.m.

5  
Craig's Country-  
side Bible Study  
1:30 p.m.  
Advent Service  
7:00 p.m.  
Praise Team  
8:00 p.m.

6  
Community Prayer  
7:00—8:00 a.m.  
Pastor's Bible  
Study  
2:00 p.m.  
Craig's Bible  
Study  
2:30 p.m. in S. A.

Men's Choir  
9:30 a.m.



8

9  
Divine Service  
8:00 a.m.  
Bible Classes  
9:20—10:20 a.m.  
Praise Service— C  
10:30 a.m.

10  
Adult Choir  
6:30 p.m.  
Bell Choir  
7:30 p.m.

11  
Prayer Chapel—  
Hour of Prayer  
7:15 a.m.

12  
Quilters  
9:00 a.m.-12:00  
Craig's Country-  
side Bible Study  
1:30 p.m.  
Advent Service  
7:00 p.m.  
Praise Team  
8:00 p.m.

13  
Community Prayer  
7:00—8:00 a.m.  
Redeemer Women  
10:00 a.m.  
Pastor's Bible  
Study  
2:00 p.m.  
Craig's Bible  
Study  
2:30 p.m. in S. A.

Men's Choir  
9:30 a.m.

15

16  
Divine Service— C  
8:00 a.m.  
Bible Classes  
9:20 a.m.-10:20  
a.m.  
Praise Service  
10:30 a.m.

17  
Adult Choir  
6:30 p.m.  
Bell Choir  
7:30 p.m.

18  
Prayer Chapel—  
Hour of Prayer  
7:15 a.m.

19  
Craig's Country-  
side Bible Study  
1:30 p.m.  
Advent Service  
7:00 p.m.  
Praise Team  
8:00 p.m.

20  
Community Prayer  
7:00—8:00 a.m.  
Pastor's Bible  
Study  
2:00 p.m.  
Craig's Bible  
Study  
2:30 p.m. in S. A.

Men's Choir  
9:30 a.m.

22

23  
Divine Service  
8:00 a.m.  
Bible Classes  
9:20 a.m.-10:20 a.m.  
Praise Service— C  
10:30 a.m.  
C-Communion at single  
1800 a.m. service on the  
30th

24  
Angels  
7:00 & 10:00 p.m.



25

26

27

28

29

30

31