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Doctor of Ministry Project

Sunday Worship and Faith Practices in the Home: Making Connections

This document includes 14 separate pieces, as follows:

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Most of these separate pieces will be formatted appropriately, according to their use. The Devotional Handouts will include music song sheets as an insert (the songs are indicated in this text). Some of these separate pieces are redundant insofar as they pull out material from the larger Devotional Handout piece according to particular categories.

SUNDAY WORSHIP AND FAITH PRACTICES IN THE HOME: MAKING CONNECTIONS

Title: Sunday Worship and Faith Practices in the Home: Making Connections

Goal: To make explicit connections between worship and daily life (faith practices) in such a way that worship forms and informs daily living and, at the same time, worship reflects daily living (relevance).

Theological Assertions:

“And the Word was made flesh and lived among us...” (John 1:14). God is an incarnational God, who comes to us in the particularity of flesh and blood. God came to us in flesh and blood in Jesus of Nazareth, in a particular time and particular place. He grew up in a Jewish home as a carpenter’s son. It is clear, particularly from the Gospel of Luke, that Jesus and his family observed the “faith practices” of Judaism, which included not only the annual festivals, but also the daily prayers.

A central piece of the daily faith practices of Jesus was the “Shema,” meaning “Hear,” the first word of the Hebrew text from Deuteronomy:

Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you

are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. (Deuteronomy 6:4-9).

The “Shema” teaches us that the practice of our faith is not something reserved for corporate worship only; rather, it is a daily response to God. In addition, our faith practices are to be taught to our children daily in the context of the home and the everyday activities of the household.

The Old Testament prophets warn us about religious piety that is practiced only one day a week in worship and then neglected or forgotten during the remainder of the week. Faith practices that are genuine and have integrity are those which are carried from worship into daily life. The prophets were particularly concerned with justice and righteousness. Listen to the words of God, spoken through the prophet Amos to the people who sang sweet songs to God in worship and then neglected the faith practices during the rest of the week:

I hate, I despise your festivals,

and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.

Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings,

I will not accept them;

and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals I will not look upon.

Take away from me the noise of your songs;

I will not listen to the melody of your harps.

But let justice roll down like waters,

and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. (Amos 5:21-24).

Children have a special place in the church – in the Body of Christ. When the disciples of Jesus were arguing amongst themselves about who was the greatest, Jesus took a child and put it in the midst of them, then took it to himself. The child was the symbol of the weak, the powerless, the vulnerable, the voiceless. Later, Jesus admonished his disciples to be attentive to the children:

People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, “Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.” (Mark 10:13-14).

In the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, parents and sponsors make the following promises:

In Christian love you have presented *these children* for Holy Baptism. You should, therefore, faithfully bring *them* to the services of God’s house, and teach *them* the Lord’s Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments. As *they grow* in years, you should place in *their* hands the Holy Scriptures and provide for *their* instruction in the Christian faith, that, living in the covenant of *their* Baptism and in communion with the Church, *they* may lead *godly lives* until the day of Jesus Christ. Do you promise to fulfill these obligations?

Response: I do. (*Lutheran Book of Worship*, p. 121).

These promises are in keeping with the assertion that the household is the appropriate arena where the faith practices are taught and observed.

But our faith practices do not remain only within the home. Love of neighbor takes us outside our immediate household. Jesus' command to love our neighbors as ourselves means more than hospitality – more than opening our home to the stranger. It means encountering the stranger in all of life. Jesus answered the question, “Who is my neighbor?,” with the story of the Good Samaritan. Our love of neighbor takes us out of our way, making a claim on our time and our resources.

In addition, Martin Luther, who set off the Reformation in the 16th century, articulated the doctrine of vocation, insisting that all Christians live out our callings to be disciples of Jesus within the context of our everyday lives. What we do for a living is one expression of our call to discipleship. We practice our faith in all walks of life, and our profession is secondary to, under the umbrella of, our primary roll as disciples.

Faith Practices:

At Concordia Evangelical Lutheran Church, the faith practices lifted up by the ELCA are the primary emphasis for the year. These faith practices are:

- Pray
- Study
- Worship
- Serve
- Give

- Invite
- Encourage

All these faith practices are verbs – they are action words. They are not one-time events; rather, they are on-going - they are continuous. These faith practices are sometimes called “marks” of discipleship. Discipleship is a life-long journey, following our Lord, walking in his grace.

The Model:

During the Season of Advent, households will be invited to celebrate the seven faith practices in a way that begins in corporate worship on Sunday morning and then centers in the home. Each week during Advent, home devotional guides will be available that give suggestions for exercising the seven faith practices. Included will be ideas for service projects, special offerings, inviting others, encouraging one another, as well as making crafts. In addition, each week there will be a liturgy for lighting the Advent Wreath, including daily Scripture readings from previous Sunday as well as other related Advent texts, daily prayers, and songs from Sunday worship. The music for the home devotional guides will be available on cassette tape or CD, recorded by the choirs at Concordia.

In order to prepare for Advent, an Advent Fair for all ages will be held Wednesday, November 19, beginning with a supper at 5:30 p.m. After supper, there will be a welcome, prayer, and an explanation of the special Advent emphasis that we are entering into. This will be followed by a time of singing of some of the songs that will be used during the Advent season, especially focusing on the songs that will be used in the home

as part of this Advent emphasis. Then we will have about 90 minutes to make various craft items that will enrich our Advent season and assist in our daily Advent faith practices in the home. These include an Advent Wreath, Advent Tree (from the Jeremiah 33:14 text) and corresponding ornaments, Advent Banner, Advent Placemats, and Advent Prayer Pouch. We will close with singing one or two songs that we learned at the beginning and then praying the Lord's Prayer.

In January, there will be opportunities for evaluation. On Sunday, January 4, we will use part of the gathering time for Sunday School and Adult Forum to discuss the process, providing opportunity for verbal feedback. In addition, written evaluations will be available.

DEVOTIONAL HANDOUTS FOR EACH WEEK DURING ADVENT

First Week in Advent 2003

Memory Verse

“The Lord is our righteousness.” (Jeremiah 33:16b)

Project and Craft Ideas

God speaks through the prophet Jeremiah, saying, “I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David.” You are invited to make an Advent tree from a branch of a tree, or to construct one from dowels of wood. On each day of the week, you may hang an ornament representing various Old Testament ancestors of Jesus: Adam, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, and David. Throughout the remainder of Advent, ornaments representing other biblical characters can be hung on the tree.

Invite

Invite someone to participate with you in one of the household activities that incorporates at least one of the Faith Practices. For example, invite someone to dinner, using the Liturgy for Lighting the Advent Wreath as your table grace. Invite someone to be a part of your service project for the week. Or invite someone to worship with you next Sunday.

Serve

Bake cookies and make greeting cards for the poor and homeless, to be distributed at CHUM (Churches United in Ministry) and the Renaissance House. Perhaps include drawings of your family, the memory verse for the week or another Advent verse, and your first name. Bring these to church on Sunday, December 7.

Encourage

Make a deliberate connection with at least one person or a small group from outside your household for prayer, fellowship and spiritual encouragement. Use the “FaithTalk” cards with your family. Find ways to have conversations about faith within your family.

Liturgy for Lighting the Advent Wreath

Preparation: If there is more than one person in your household, assign various parts of this liturgy to different people. Be prepared to light one candle on your Advent Wreath at the end of this liturgy.

Song: Sing the song based on Mary’s Magnificat: “Canticle of the Turning” (see insert)

Reading: Read the Scripture lesson for the day.

Sunday: First Lesson: Jeremiah 33:14-16

God prophesies through the prophet Jeremiah that the lineage of King David will be restored by a “righteous Branch.” Christians see Jesus as this righteous Branch.

Monday: Psalm 25:1-10 (LBW vss. 1-9)

“To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul...” In this Psalm, we express our confidence in God and ask that we might know God’s ways and be led in God’s truth.

Tuesday: Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

The Apostle Paul expresses his deep affection for the Thessalonian Christians and closes his letter to them with the benediction that God might strengthen them. The benediction is also for us during this season of Advent.

Wednesday: Gospel: Luke 21:25-36

When God’s creation comes to fulfillment, there will be frightening events. Christians have nothing to fear, however, as our “redemption is drawing near.”

Thursday: Isaiah 2:2-5

God speaks through the prophet Isaiah about the day when there will be no more war.

Friday: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

The Apostle Paul give thanks for the Christians in Corinth and reminds them that God is faithful.

Saturday: Isaiah 64:1-9

The prophet Isaiah confesses the sin of the people on their behalf, asking God to tear open the heavens and come down. God is the potter, and we are the clay.

Song: Sing the Song of the Week: “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus” (see insert).

Prayer:

Sunday: Give thanks for the ancestors of Jesus; lift up the prayer concerns from worship and the persons whose names were drawn from the basket.

Monday: Preschool: Brook Huusko, Alexander May, Madilyn Roeser

Tuesday: Kindergarten: Mara Carey, Ethan Dahlke, Kylee Edmunds, Becca Holecek, Alex Holmstrom, Logan Melby, Katherine Stenehjem, Nicole Thomas

Wednesday: First Grade: Jacob Carlson, Ashley Fern, Jimmy Jorgenson, Madison Morse, Taylor Noreen, Jacob Parker, Jackson Purdy, Aaron Roeser, Mark Stenehjem

Thursday: Second Grade: Chuckie Bischoff, Kelsey Cherne, Paige Dahlke, Jacob Fugere, Carter Galo, Cassandra Holmstrom, Alyssa Melby, Eric Pillsbury, Kelsey Tessier, Derek Thomas

Friday: Third Grade: Ellie Anderson, Justin Cyr, Devin Dahlke, Lauren Ellwell, Stephanie Isaacson, Hanna Khalar, Jenna Purdy, Derek Swenson, Megan Tezak

Saturday: Fourth Grade: Chelsea Bastyr, Drew Dennie, Zachary Galo, Emily Hall, Benjamin Johnson, Allison Melander, Makenzie Morse, Nathan Olson, Elizabeth Pohl, Naomi Robinson, Emerson Smith, Alex Tessier, Dustin Wakefield

Offering: Each day, set aside a special offering that will go to the Renaissance House in Duluth. On Sunday, December, collect your offering, put it in a special envelope and bring it to church.

Prayer: Pray the prayer for the Lighting of the Advent Wreath:

We praise you, O God, for this evergreen crown
that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent.

As we light the first candle on this wreath,
rouse us from sleep, that we may be ready to greet our Lord

when he comes with all the saints and angel.

Enlighten us with your grace,

and prepare our hearts to welcome him with joy.

Grant this through Christ our Lord,

whose coming is certain and whose day draws near.

Amen

Lighting of the Advent Wreath: Light the first candle.

Song: Sing the song for the Lighting of the Advent Wreath: “Await The Lord With Hope” (see insert)

Second Week in Advent 2003

Memory Verse

“Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.” (Luke 3:4b)

Project and Craft Ideas

John the Baptizer appears in the wilderness to prepare the people’s hearts to receive Jesus. He is inviting people to a baptism of repentance. He shouts, “Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.” You are invited to make a banner with the words, “Prepare the way of the Lord.” Each day, you are invited to share ideas about ways to prepare to receive Jesus again at Christmas. For example, Sunday, members of the household can ask forgiveness of each other for any way in which they have wronged one another. Monday, write a card or letter to a relative whom you have wronged, saying you’re sorry and asking for forgiveness. On Tuesday, write a similar card or letter to a

friend or acquaintance. As the week progresses, think of other ways to prepare your hearts and home to receive Jesus.

Invite

Invite someone to participate with you in one of the household activities that incorporates at least one of the Faith Practices. For example, invite someone to dinner, using the Liturgy for Lighting the Advent Wreath as your table grace. Invite someone to be a part of your service project for the week. Or invite someone to worship with you next Sunday.

Serve

Help serve a meal at the Union Gospel Mission or the Damiano Center. Take clothing items to the Damiano Center.

Encourage

Make a deliberate connection with at least one person or a small group from outside your household for prayer, fellowship and spiritual encouragement. Use the “FaithTalk” cards with your family. Find ways to have conversations about faith within your family.

Liturgy for Lighting the Advent Wreath

Preparation: If there is more than one person in your household, assign various parts of this liturgy to different people. Light the first candle of the Advent Wreath at the beginning, and be prepared to light the second one at the end of the liturgy.

Song: Sing the song based on Mary’s Magnificat: “Canticle of the Turning” (see insert)

Reading: Read the Scripture lesson for the day.

Sunday: First Lesson: Malachi 3:1-4

God speaks through the prophet Malachi that a messenger will come to prepare the way before the coming of the LORD. Christians see the fulfillment of this prophecy in John the Baptizer, who prepares the way for Jesus.

Monday: Psalm: Luke 1:68-79

Old man Zechariah sings this song of praise, known as the Benedictus, at the birth of his son, John the Baptizer.

Tuesday: Second Lesson: Philippians 1:3-11

Paul writes from prison to the beloved Christians in Philippi, anticipating the return of Christ, reminding them that God has begun a good work in them, and that God will bring that good work to completion.

Wednesday: Gospel: Luke 3:1-6

John the Baptizer appears in the wilderness at a specific time in history, proclaiming the words of the prophets, "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

Thursday: Isaiah 11:1-10

The prophet Isaiah prophesies that the Messiah will come from the ancestry of Jesse, King David's father, to usher in a kingdom of peace, even among the animal species.

Friday: Romans 15:4-13

The Apostle Paul writes that Jesus, the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophesies, came to be a servant of his fellow Jews, and that God's promises of salvation are for all people, Jew and Gentile alike.

Saturday: Isaiah 40:1-11

God speaks through the prophet Isaiah, comforting the people who have been exiled in Babylon, telling them that their penalty has been paid and that their way back home to Judah will be made possible for them.

Song: Sing the Song of the Week: “Comfort, Comfort Now My People” (see insert)

Prayer:

Sunday: Ask God to prepare our hearts to receive Jesus at Christmas; lift up the prayer concerns from worship and the persons whose names were drawn from the basket.

Monday: Fifth Grade: Lars Anderson, Danielle Carlson, Dylan Cyr, Carmen Elwell, Peter Grunwald, Alisha Holecek, Molly Jazdzewski, Philip Johnson, Ashley Khalar, Paige McClain, Alyssa McLaughlin, Meredith Noreen, Jonathan Opacich, Tessa Purdy, Eric Stebe, Michelle Vargason

Tuesday: Sixth Grade: Holly Anderson, Josh Carlson, Lynsey Carlson, Kyle Holecek, Alison Janssen, Justin Luczak, Marta Melander, Andrew Melby, Kirsten Pohl, Rebecca Richards, Kerrick Robinson, Leah Simonson, Sarah Stebe, Blythe Vizanko, Joseph Westergren

Wednesday: Seventh Grade: Bjorn Anderson, Maija Edwards, Ryan Graif, Brian Grunwald, Shannon Henstorf, Emily Johnson, Paul Norlien, Jacob Postal, Prescott Robinson, Danielle Sullivan, John Sweezy, Jordyn Swenson, Jessica Wolleat

Thursday: Eighth Grade: Carley Boisjoli, Aaron Edwards, Emma Fromberg, Kjell Fromberg, Garth Heikkinen, Allison Luczak, Meredith MacDonald, Laura Sorensen, Jessica Vargason, Vanessa Yagoda

Friday: Freshmen in High School: Nathan Anderson, Dan Grunwald, Christina Janssen, Cam McClain, Megan McLaughlin, Nicole Niemi, Benn Noreen, Eric Ronning, Jim

Sweeney, Jacob Swenson, Cassie Tezak, Dan Tjepkema, Paige Vizanko, Kathy Westergren, Ken Wolleat, Nick Yagoda

Saturday: Sophomores in High School: Eric Berg, Christie Bergum, Michelle Boisjoli, Phillip Dennie, Bryan Dyer, Sterling Hartwick, Kelsey Kilpo, Cory Melander, Amy Pillsbury, Ryan Scharnott, Matt Sorensen, Dallas Sullivan

Offering: Each day, set aside a special offering that will go to the Union Gospel Mission. On Sunday, December 14, collect your offering, put it in a special envelope and bring it to church.

Prayer: Pray the prayer for the Lighting of the Advent Wreath:

We praise you, O God, for this circle of light

That marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent.

As we light the candles on this wreath,

Kindle within us the fire of your Spirit,

that we may be light shining in the darkness.

Enlighten us with your grace,

that we may welcome others as you have welcomed us.

Grant this through Christ our Lord,

whose coming is certain and whose day draws near.

Amen

Lighting of the Advent Wreath: Light the second candle.

Song: Sing the song for the Lighting of the Advent Wreath: "Await The Lord With Hope" (see insert)

Third Week in Advent 2003

Memory Verse

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.” (Philippians 4:4)

Project and Craft Ideas

This is the week of rejoicing. Our readings from Zephaniah, Isaiah and Philippians all invite us to rejoice – to give thanks to God for everything that God has done for us. Even though the Apostle Paul is in prison, he continues to rejoice. This week you are invited to spread the joy of Jesus to the people you love and also to someone you don't know. Each day, send a note or card to your relatives and friends with the words, “Rejoice in the Lord always!” (Philippians 4:4).

Invite

Invite someone to participate with you in one of the household activities that incorporates at least one of the Faith Practices. For example, invite someone to dinner, using the Liturgy for Lighting the Advent Wreath as your table grace. Invite someone to be a part of your service project for the week. Or invite someone to attend worship or to come to the Sunday School Christmas program with you on Sunday.

Serve

Make one extra note or card with the words, “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.” (Philippians 4:4). Sign your first name. Bring the note or card to church on Sunday, December 21, and it will be sent to someone in prison.

Encourage

Make a deliberate connection with at least one person or a small group from outside your household for prayer, fellowship and spiritual encouragement. Use the “FaithTalk” cards with your family. Find ways to have conversations about faith within your family.

Liturgy for Lighting the Advent Wreath

Preparation: If there is more than one person in your household, assign various parts of this liturgy to different people. Light the first two candles of the Advent Wreath at the beginning, and be prepared to light the third one at the end of the liturgy.

Song: Sing the song based on Mary’s Magnificat: “Canticle of the Turning” (see insert)

Reading: Read the Scripture lesson for the day.

Sunday: First Lesson: Zephaniah 3:14-20

God speaks through the prophet Zephaniah, inviting the people in exile in Babylon to sing and rejoice, because God will bring them home.

Monday: Psalm: Isaiah 12:2-6

The prophet Isaiah declares his trust in God and invites the people to joyfully sing praise to God.

Tuesday: Second Lesson: Philippians 4:4-7

Even under his circumstances of being in prison, the Apostle Paul invites us to “Rejoice in the Lord always...”

Wednesday: Gospel: Luke 3:7-18

John the Baptizer warns the people that their lives must bear witness to their repentance: “Bear fruits worthy of repentance.” Examples are generosity and honesty.

Thursday: Isaiah 61:1-3, 10-11

The prophet Isaiah prophesies good news to the people in exile in Babylon, with a theme of rejoicing. Centuries later, Jesus declares that he himself is the fulfillment of this prophecy. (Luke 4:16-21)

Friday: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

The Apostle Paul invites us to pray and give thanks in all circumstances, reminding us that God is faithful.

Saturday: Isaiah 35:1-10

The prophet Isaiah prophesies the return of the exiles in Babylon to their homeland, a time when all who suffer affliction will be made whole, and there will be joy and gladness.

Song: Sing the Song of the Week: “On That Day” (see insert)

Prayer:

Sunday: Give thanks to God for the Apostle Paul and his joy in the Lord, even from prison; lift up the prayer concerns from worship and the persons whose names were drawn from the basket.

Monday: Juniors in High School: Chris Anderson, Brian Cole, Troy Cushman, Cassidy Hammer, Kyle James, Dan Janssen, Elizabeth Jennings, Justin Maylin, Ryan Sweeney, Jorday Vargason, Andy Westergren, Corrine Wolleat, Alex Yagoda, Amanda Youngman

Tuesday: Seniors in High School: Tor Anderson, Ashley Hoppe, Amanda Jazdzewski, Allison Larson, Megan Olaon, Philip Richards, Tom Thompson, Steve Valppu, Kevin Willemarck

Wednesday: 2003 High School Graduates: Kyle Boisjoli, April Isaacson, Bob James, Eric Kilpo, Kris LeSavage, Mark Niemi, Jennifer Pillsbury, Lisa Richards, Bill Thomson, Bill Voltzke

Thursday: The home-bound: Linnea Bergman, Marilyn Goman, Bob Rasmussen, Dorothy Sahlin, Alma Steppan

Friday: Those in prison

Saturday: All those who received notes and cards from you this week

Offering: Each day, set aside a special offering that will go to local prison ministry. On Sunday, December 21, collect your offering, put it in a special envelope and bring it to church.

Prayer: Pray the prayer for the Lighting of the Advent Wreath:

We praise you, O God, for this victory wreath
that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent.

As we light the candles on this wreath,
strengthen our hearts as we await the Lord's coming in glory.

Enlighten us with your grace,
that we may serve our neighbors in need.

Grant this through Christ our Lord,
Whose coming is certain and whose day draws near.

Amen

Lighting of the Advent Wreath: Light the third candle.

Song: Sing the song for the Lighting of the Advent Wreath: "Await The Lord With Hope" (see insert)

Fourth Week in Advent 2003

Memory Verse

“My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.” (Luke 1:46b-47)

Project and Craft Ideas

We read in our lesson from Micah that Jesus will be born in Bethlehem, a small, unimportant town outside Jerusalem. Make a drawing of a stable with a manger. As Christmas approaches, add other features to your drawing. For example, on Monday, draw a cow; on Tuesday, a donkey. On Wednesday (Christmas Eve), draw the baby Jesus in the manger, surrounded by Mary and Joseph, the shepherds and the sheep, and a star over the stable.

Invite

Invite someone to participate with you in one of the household activities that incorporates at least one of the Faith Practices. For example, invite someone to dinner, using the Liturgy for Lighting the Advent Wreath as your table grace. Invite someone to be a part of your service project for the week. Or invite someone to worship with you on Christmas Eve.

Serve

Help someone in your neighborhood with snow shoveling or last-minute shopping or other preparations for Christmas.

Encourage

Make a deliberate connection with at least one person or a small group from outside your household for prayer, fellowship and spiritual encouragement. Use the “FaithTalk” cards with your family. Find ways to have conversations about faith within your family.

Liturgy for Lighting the Advent Wreath

Preparation: If there is more than one person in your household, assign various parts of this liturgy to different people. Light the first three candles of the Advent Wreath at the beginning, and be prepared to light the fourth one at the end of the liturgy.

Song: Sing the song based on Mary’s Magnificat: “Canticle of the Turning” (see insert)

Reading: Read the Scripture lesson for the day.

Sunday: First Lesson: Micah 5:2-5a

The prophet Micah prophesies that the small, insignificant town of Bethlehem will be the birthplace of a shepherd king who will rule Israel.

Monday: Psalm: Luke 1:47-55

Mary, who has just been informed by the angel, Gabriel, that she will be the mother of Jesus, sings the song of praise, known as the Magnificat.

Tuesday: Gospel: Luke 1:39-45

Mary, pregnant with Jesus, greets Elizabeth, who is pregnant with John the Baptizer.

Wednesday: Luke 2:1-20

On Christmas Eve, we read the familiar Christmas story.

Song: Sing the Song of the Week: “Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel” (see insert)

Prayer:

Sunday: Give thanks for the “little town of Bethlehem,” where Jesus was born; lift up the prayer concerns from worship and the persons whose names were drawn from the basket.

Monday: Give thanks for Mary and Joseph, and for the care they gave to Jesus as he grew up; give thanks for all parents who care for children.

Tuesday: Give thanks for Elizabeth and Zechariah, the parents of John the Baptizer; give thanks for all our relatives; pray for the safety of all who travel during the Christmas season.

Wednesday: Give thanks to God for the gift of Jesus, the Savior of the world.

Offering: Each day, set aside a special offering that will be given to the Young Mothers program. On Wednesday, collect your offerings, put it in a special envelope and bring it to church on Christmas Eve.

Prayer: Pray the prayer for the Lighting of the Advent Wreath:

We praise you, O God, for this wheel of time
that marks our days of preparation for Christ's advent.

As we light the candles on this wreath,

open our eyes to see your presence

in the lowly ones of this earth.

Enlighten us with your grace,

that we may sing of your advent among us

in the Word made flesh.

Grant this through Christ our Lord,

whose coming is certain and whose day draws near.

Amen

Lighting of the Advent Wreath: Light the fourth candle.

Song: Sing the song for the Lighting of the Advent Wreath: “Await The Lord With Hope” (see insert)

MEMORY VERSES

Memory Verses for Advent 2003

First Week in Advent

“The LORD is our righteousness.” (Jeremiah 33:16b)

Second Week in Advent

“Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.” (Luke 3:4b)

Third Week in Advent

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.” (Philippians 4:4)

Fourth Week in Advent

“My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.” (Luke 1:46b-47)

SERVICE PROJECTS

Service Projects for Advent 2003

First Week in Advent

Bake cookies and make greeting cards for the poor and homeless, to be distributed at CHUM (Churches United in Ministry) and the Renaissance House. Perhaps include drawings of your family, the memory verse for the week (“The LORD is our righteousness”) or another Advent verse, and your first name. Bring these to church on Sunday, December 7.

Second Week in Advent

Help serve a meal at the Union Gospel Mission or the Damiano Center. Take clothing items to the Damiano Center.

Third Week in Advent

Make a greeting card for someone in prison, as the Apostle Paul was in prison. Use the memory verse for the week, "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice."

Write your first name on the cards. Bring these to church on Sunday, December 21.

Fourth Week in Advent

Help someone in your neighborhood with snow shoveling or last-minute shopping or other preparations for Christmas.

SONGS

Songs for the Season of Advent 2003

Each Week in Advent

"Canticle of the Turning" (*Renewing Worship Songbook* R245)

"Await The Lord With Hope" (Bob Hurd, OCP 10236)

First Week in Advent

"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus" (*LBW* 30)

Second Week in Advent

"Comfort, Comfort Now My People" (*LBW* 29)

Third Week in Advent

"On That Day" (Scott Soper, GIA G-4622)

Fourth Week in Advent

"Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel" (*LBW* 34)

ANNOTATED TEXTS

Annotated Texts for Advent 2003

First Week in Advent

Memory Verse:

“The LORD is our righteousness.” (Jeremiah 33:16b)

Sunday: First Lesson: Jeremiah 33:14-16

God prophesies through the prophet Jeremiah that the lineage of King David will be restored by a “righteous Branch.” Christians see Jesus as this righteous Branch.

Monday: Psalm 25:1-10 (LBW vss. 1-9)

“To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul...” In this Psalm, we express our confidence in God and ask that we might know God’s ways and be led in God’s truth.

Tuesday: Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

The Apostle Paul expresses his deep affection for the Thessalonian Christians and closes his letter to them with the benediction that God might strengthen them. The benediction is also for us during this season of Advent.

Wednesday: Gospel: Luke 21:25-36

When God’s creation comes to fulfillment, there will be frightening events. Christians have nothing to fear, however, as our “redemption is drawing near.”

Thursday: Isaiah 2:2-5

God speaks through the prophet Isaiah about the day where there will be no more war.

Friday: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

The Apostle Paul give thanks for the Christians in Corinth and reminds them that God is faithful.

Saturday: Isaiah 64:1-9

The prophet Isaiah confesses the sin of the people on their behalf, asking God to tear open the heavens and come down. God is the potter, and we are the clay.

Second Week in Advent

Memory Verse:

“Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.” (Luke 3:4b)

Sunday: First Lesson: Malachi 3:1-4

God speaks through the prophet Malachi that a messenger will come to prepare the way before the coming of the LORD. Christians see the fulfillment of this prophecy in John the Baptizer, who prepares the way for Jesus.

Monday: Psalm: Luke 1:68-79

Old man Zechariah sings this song of praise, known as the Benedictus, at the birth of his son, John the Baptizer.

Tuesday: Second Lesson: Philippians 1:3-11

Paul writes from prison to the beloved Christians in Philippi, anticipating the return of Christ, reminding them that God has begun a good work in them, and that God will bring that good work to completion.

Wednesday: Gospel: Luke 3:1-6

John the Baptizer appears in the wilderness at a specific time in history, proclaiming the words of the prophets, “Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.”

Thursday: Isaiah 11:1-10

The prophet Isaiah prophesies that the Messiah will come from the ancestry of Jesse, King David’s father, to usher in a kingdom of peace, even among the animal species.

Friday: Romans 15:4-13

The Apostle Paul writes that Jesus, the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies, came to be a servant of his fellow Jews, and that God's promises of salvation are for all people, Jew and Gentile alike.

Saturday: Isaiah 40:1-11

God speaks through the prophet Isaiah, comforting the people who have been exiled in Babylon, telling them that their penalty has been paid and that their way back home to Judah will be made possible for them.

Third Week in Advent

Memory Verse:

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.” (Philippians 4:4)

Sunday: First Lesson: Zephaniah 3:14-20

God speaks through the prophet Zephaniah, inviting the people in exile in Babylon to sing and rejoice, because God will bring them home.

Monday: Psalm: Isaiah 12:2-6

The prophet Isaiah declares his trust in God and invites the people to joyfully sing praise to God.

Tuesday: Second Lesson: Philippians 4:4-7

Even under his circumstances of being in prison, the Apostle Paul invites us to “Rejoice in the Lord always...”

Wednesday: Gospel: Luke 3:7-18

John the Baptizer warns the people that their lives must bear witness to their repentance: “Bear fruits worthy of repentance.” Examples are generosity and honesty.

Thursday: Isaiah 61:1-3, 10-11

The prophet Isaiah prophesies good news to the people in exile in Babylon, with a theme of rejoicing. Centuries later, Jesus declares that he himself is the fulfillment of this prophecy. (Luke 4:16-21)

Friday: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

The Apostle Paul invites us to pray and give thanks in all circumstances, reminding us that God is faithful.

Saturday: Isaiah 35:1-10

The prophet Isaiah prophesies the return of the exiles in Babylon to their homeland, a time when all who suffer affliction will be made whole, and there will be joy and gladness.

Fourth Week in Advent

Memory Verse:

“My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.” (Luke 1:46b-47)

Sunday: First Lesson: Micah 5:2-5a

The prophet Micah prophesies that the small, insignificant town of Bethlehem will be the birthplace of a shepherd king who will rule Israel.

Monday: Psalm: Luke 1:47-55

Mary, who has just been informed by the angel, Gabriel, that she will be the mother of Jesus, sings the song of praise, known as the Magnificat.

Tuesday: Gospel: Luke 1:39-45

Mary, pregnant with Jesus, greets Elizabeth, who is pregnant with John the Baptizer.

Wednesday: Luke 2:1-20

On Christmas Eve, we read the familiar Christmas story.

PRAYER CONCERNS

Prayer Concerns for Advent 2003

The First Week in Advent

Sunday: Give thanks for the ancestors of Jesus; lift up the prayer concerns from worship and the persons whose names were drawn from the basket.

Monday: Preschool children

Tuesday: Kindergarten children

Wednesday: First grade children

Thursday: Second grade children

Friday: Third grade children

Saturday: Fourth grade children

The Second Week in Advent

Sunday: Ask God to prepare our hearts to receive Jesus at Christmas; lift up the prayer concerns from worship and the persons whose names were drawn from the basket.

Monday: Fifth grade children

Tuesday: Sixth grade Confirmation students

Wednesday: Seventh grade Confirmation students

Thursday: Eighth grade Confirmation students

Friday: Ninth grade High School students

Saturday: Tenth grade High School students

The Third Week in Advent

Sunday: Give thanks to God for the Apostle Paul and his joy in the Lord, even from prison; lift up prayer concerns from worship and the persons whose names were drawn from the basket.

Monday: Eleventh grade High School students

Tuesday: Twelfth grade High School students

Wednesday: 2003 High School Graduates

Thursday: Those who are home-bound

Friday: People in prison

Saturday: All the people who received notes and cards from you this week

The Fourth Week in Advent

Sunday: Give thanks for the “little town of Bethlehem,” where Jesus was born; lift up the prayer concerns from worship and the persons whose names were drawn from the basket.

Monday: Give thanks for Mary and Joseph, and for the care they gave to Jesus as he grew up; give thanks for all parents who take care of children.

Tuesday: Give thanks for Elizabeth and Zechariah, the parents of John the Baptizer; give thanks for all our relatives; pray for the safety for all who travel during the Christmas season.

Wednesday: Give thanks to God for the gift of Jesus, the Savior of the world.

PROJECTS

Project and Craft Ideas for Advent 2003

The First Week in Advent

God speaks through the prophet Jeremiah, saying, “I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David.” You are invited to make an Advent Tree from a branch of a tree, or to construct one from dowels of wood. On each day of the week, you may hang an ornament representing various Old Testament ancestors of Jesus: Adam, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, and David. Throughout the remainder of Advent, ornaments representing other biblical characters can be hung on the tree.

The Second Week in Advent

John the Baptizer appears in the wilderness to prepare the peoples’ hearts to receive Jesus. He is inviting people to a baptism of repentance. He shouts, “Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.” You are invited make a banner with the words, “Prepare the way of the Lord.” Each day, you are invited to share ideas about ways to prepare to receive Jesus again at Christmas. For example, Sunday, members of the household can ask forgiveness of each other for any way in which they have wronged the other. Monday, write a card or letter to a relative who has been wronged, asking forgiveness. On Tuesday, write a similar card or letter to a friend or acquaintance. As the week progresses, think of other ways to prepare your hearts and home to receive Jesus.

The Third Week in Advent

This is the week of rejoicing. Our readings from Zephaniah, Isaiah and Philippians all invite us to rejoice – to give thanks to God for everything that God has done for us. Even though the Apostle Paul is in prison, he continues to rejoice. This week you are invited to spread the joy of Jesus to the people you love and also to someone you don’t know.

Each day, send a note or card to your relatives and friends with the words, “Rejoice in the Lord always!” (Philippians 4:4).

The Fourth Week in Advent

We read in our lesson from Micah that Jesus will be born in Bethlehem, a small, unimportant town outside Jerusalem. Make a drawing of a stable with a manger. As Christmas approaches, add other features to your drawing. For example, on Monday, draw a cow; on Tuesday, a donkey. On Wednesday (Christmas Eve), draw the baby Jesus in the manger, surrounded by Mary and Joseph, the shepherds and the sheep, and a star over the stable.

ADVENT FAIR

Advent Fair

November 19, 2003

5:30 p.m.

Theme: “Prepare the way of the Lord”

Festive Meal (preceded by table grace)

Welcome and Brief Explanation of the Events of the Evening

Songs (chosen from the following list; handout)

- “Canticle of the Turning”
- “Await The Lord With Hope”
- “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”
- “Comfort, Comfort Now My People”
- “On That Day”

- “Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel”

Crafts and Activities

- Advent Wreath
- Advent Tree (Jeremiah 33:14)
- Ornaments for Advent Tree
- Advent Banner
- Advent Placemats
- Advent Prayer Pouch

Closing Songs (from above list)

Lord’s Prayer

LETTER TO THE CONGREGATION

[Letter to the congregation to be mailed November 5, 2003]

November 5, 2003

Dear Members of Concordia Lutheran Church,

Advent is coming, and we’re going to observe it in a festive, deliberate and thorough way.

Enclosed you will find an explanation of what’s coming.

It begins with an Advent Fair for all households, all ages, on Wednesday, November 19. A festive supper will be served at 5:30. There will be music and activities to help us prepare to celebrate the season.

Each week during Advent, we will be deliberate about living out our calling as Christians by observing the daily faith practices in the context of our homes. Weekly devotional guides linking Sunday worship with daily life will be available throughout the season. In addition, music to accompany the weekly devotionals, recorded by our choirs, will be available on cassette tape or CD.

All of this will help each of us to *“Prepare the way of the Lord.”*

I’m looking forward to seeing you at the Advent Fair November 19.

Blessings,

Pastor David

Enclosure: “Sunday Worship and Faith Practices in the Home: Making Connections”

NEWSLETTER ARTICLE FOR NOVEMBER

[Newsletter Article for November 2003 Issue]

Advent Fair is Coming!

“Prepare the way of the Lord!”

On Wednesday, November 19, we will gather for a festive evening of food, fun and song. A festive supper will be served at 5:30, followed by a time of song and crafts to prepare for Advent.

Craft activities will include:

- Advent Wreath
- Advent Tree and ornaments
- Advent Banner
- Advent Placemats
- Prayer Pouch

You will take your craft items home in order to help you to prepare for the Advent season, when we prepare our hearts once again to receive our Lord.

The Advent Fair is for all households, all ages. The nursery will be staffed for your convenience.

Don't miss this opportunity to *“Prepare the way of the Lord.”*

NEWSLETTER ARTICLE FOR DECEMBER

[Newsletter Article for December 2003]

Sunday Worship and Faith Practices in the Home: Making Connections

During the Season of Advent, we will be making deliberate connections between what we do on Sunday morning in worship and what we do at home during the rest of the week.

All of this is to help us “Prepare the way of the Lord.”

Each week during Advent you will be invited to observe the seven Faith Practices in deliberate, intentional ways, as part of your daily routine at home. These Faith Practices include:

- Pray
- Study
- Worship
- Serve
- Give
- Invite
- Encourage

Devotional materials will be provided each week during Advent to assist you as you to make connections between worship and the home.

Each week these devotional materials include:

- A memory verse
- Project and craft ideas

- Ways to invite, serve and encourage others
- A Liturgy for Lighting the Advent Wreath, including Scripture readings, songs and prayers

To assist you in singing the songs, cassette tapes and CDs with music for the season will be available, recorded by our choirs.

Each Sunday during worship, we will be invited to names of fellow worshippers from a special prayer basket and to pray for that person throughout the week.

In addition, each week there will be opportunities for giving to special projects, including The Renaissance House, the Union Gospel Mission, local prison ministry and the Young Mothers program.

All of this will help us to “Prepare the way of the Lord!”

BULLETIN INSERTS

[Bulletin Inserts for November 9 and 16]

Advent Fair is Coming!

“Prepare the way of the Lord!”

Wednesday, November 19

Festive supper at 5:30

Songs for Advent

Advent Crafts:

- Advent Wreath
- Advent Tree and ornaments
 - Advent Banner
 - Advent Placemats
 - Prayer Pouch

All households, all ages welcome.

The nursery will be staffed for your convenience.

“Prepare the way of the Lord!”

EVALUATION

Advent 2003

Sunday Worship and Faith Practices in the Home: Making Connections

Evaluation

How many people are in your household?

Did you attend the Advent Fair November 19, 2003? Yes No

If Yes, what are your comments about:

- The Festive Dinner
- The Songs
- The Crafts
- In general

Did you use the Weekly Devotionals? Yes No

If yes,

- What was most helpful?
- What was least helpful?
- Was there enough material to be helpful?
- Was there too much material to be practical?
- What were your best experiences?
- What might you change?
- Were the recorded songs helpful?

Your name (optional)