



LUTHERAN PORT ELIZABETH

Friedenskirche Church of Peace



No: 2021.09e

Newsletter December 2021



December 2021 Thoughts

CORONAVIRUS
(COVID-19)

The Smallpox virus pandemic of years ago used to be of great concern. In 1967 the World Health Organization launched the Intensified Smallpox Eradication Programme across many countries.

In this respect the following link may be of interest:

www.historyofvaccines.org/timeline#EVT_118

To vaccinate? Trusting the science.

This short story received on social media: *A registered nurse (RN) was taking care of a sick unvaccinated patient, hanging antibiotics and giving other meds. RN: "Why are you so against getting a Covid vaccination?" Pt: "We just don't know what's in it !" RN: "I just gave you about 5 different meds and you never asked once what they were, or what was in them."*

Often when faced with a medical problem we seek the advice or care of a medical professional or specialist. Tests are done and a diagnosis is given. In order to get well again, we then trust the hospital, surgeon or specialist and the science that goes with the recommended treatment that we then undergo.

It is interesting to note the similarities of the human reaction to the Smallpox vaccine rollout of the day to our present Covid vaccine rollout. Those for and those against. Today the scientific world and the means it has at its disposal has progressed in leaps and bounds compared to the times of the smallpox pandemic. The phrase, *"Listen to the science"* seems to be the most common sense thing to do. Agreed, we have the right to decide whether to be vaccinated or not. This decision however comes with a responsibility toward self, family and others.

3 John 1 verse 2

Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you

Reinhard Walle
Committee Chairman

Christ and His Church invite you!
Christus und Seine Kirche laden Dich ein!

**"Life is like
a journey,
New Year's Eve
like a Milestone."**

Theodor Fontane
(1819-1898)

**"Only at the end of a
year do you know
what its beginning
was like.."**

Friedrich Nietzsche
(1844-1900)

**"Let us be happy,
like we rejoice when a
child is born. Let us
welcome the new year
with a smile!",
Charles Dickens
(1812-1870)**

**"Let us go with a fresh
spirit into the new year!
Old shall be our love and
faithfulness,
new shall be our hope.."
Hoffmann von Fallersleben
(1798-1874)**

**"The intention is good,
but the fulfilment
is difficult."**

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
(1749-1832)

**"If the old year was
successful, then look
forward to the new one.
And if it was bad, then
even more so."**

Albert Einstein
(1879-1955)



The church committee wishes
all members of the congregation and friends
a reflective Advent season,
a merry Christmas and
a strong start into a happy and
healthy new year 2022.

"But this is my joy, that I cleave unto God,
and set my trust in the Lord God,
to declare all thy doings."

(Church Father Chrysostom in the 4th century).



Pastor's Heart



Praise God! God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord!

Mark 11:1-11

This passage is all about Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. This text traditionally is read at 1st Advent, in preparation for the coming of the Lord. It is good news, it is the fulfilment of the prophet Zechariah's prophecy. Here the prophecy, Zechariah 9; 9. "See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation" has been fulfilled.

While in the USA many years ago I traveled together with Dr Harry Wendt and a Pastor from Indonesia. The latter told us that when government officials or Church leaders visit an Indonesian village, these people get a very enthusiastic welcome from the village people.

But often the villagers have such expectations of their guest that they do not listen to what he or she really has to say or can do, but see him/her through their own desires.

Did those who received Jesus with praises to God really believe in Jesus as their Lord and Messiah? Or did they see in him the chance to realise their own desires for national

salvation and for prosperity? Or did they find themselves shaped by his vision?

Do we see the coming Christmas season maybe also as a time where we cherish our hopes and see a chance to have our own desires fulfilled. Or do we, in preparation for this Christmas season, allow ourselves to be shaped by Jesus' vision?

Throughout the world, new huge church buildings are built. Why? To praise God, or our wealth? Bibles are distributed throughout the world. Why? So we can follow God, or show off our piety by holding it in our hands?

Do we praise God because he has brought us what we want? Or do we praise him because he has shown us a new way?

May this Advent and Christmas season help you to find the new way of God which he introduced when he became human in Jesus on that Holy Night which we celebrate with all Christianity over many generations.

He showed us the way of a loving servant, pointing beyond himself, namely to God. And when the angelic host sang, they sang glory to God in the highest, and knew that the way that Jesus brought into this world, is the only way to peace.

Many of you will be joining the "big trek" to the holiday resorts of our country. Some of you will be going abroad. Wherever you will be travelling to, travel safely.

Pastor's Heart

Make sure that your pets at home will be taken care of during your absence. Make sure that your homes are locked. Do speak to your neighbours, find out whether they plan to stay at home, or whether you can help them in looking after their premises. It will help to be watchful and will hopefully help to reduce crime over the festive season. See to it that your lawns are cut, lights are on at night, in and outside the house. Get someone to empty your mailbox, and remove the daily/weekly delivered newspapers from your drive-way. Keep a radio going on a time switch. Let your security company know that you'll be on leave.

Have a good holiday and a Christmas filled with peace. A happy new year to you all and do return safely and well rested from the holiday you deserved. And during it all wear your masks, wash your hands and keep a safe distance.

Warm Christmas greetings
from Pastor Andreas,
and Marianne Wernecke



**See, your king comes to you,
righteous and having salvation.**

Zechariah 9:9

Christmas Song



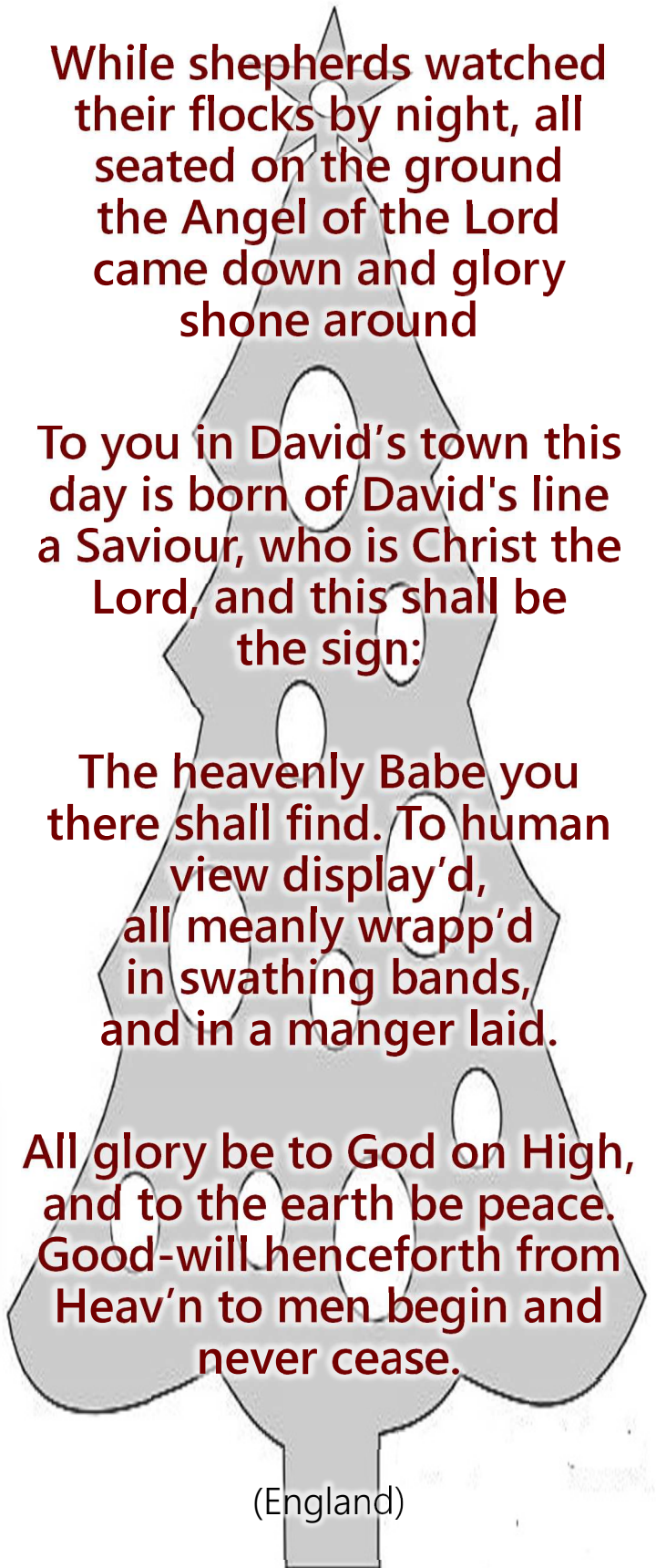
**While shepherds watched
their flocks by night, all
seated on the ground
the Angel of the Lord
came down and glory
shone around**

**To you in David's town this
day is born of David's line
a Saviour, who is Christ the
Lord, and this shall be
the sign:**

**The heavenly Babe you
there shall find. To human
view display'd,
all meanly wrapp'd
in swathing bands,
and in a manger laid.**

**All glory be to God on High,
and to the earth be peace.
Good-will henceforth from
Heav'n to men begin and
never cease.**

(England)



Watchword December 2021



***Sing and rejoice, O daughter Zion!
For lo, I will come and dwell in your
midst, says the Lord.***

Zechariah 2:10

The crime writer Agatha Christie tells in her life story: "I remember one of the teachers ... She was skinny and small and had a protruding chin. Quite unexpectedly one day (in the middle of a mathematics lesson) she made a speech about life and religion. All of you - every one of you - will go through a time of hopelessness. If you have never been in a desperate situation, you will never have become a true Christian or known a Christian life. To be a Christian, you must face life and defy it, just as Christ faced life and defied it.

You must enjoy the things He enjoyed ... But you must also experience, as He experienced, what it is to remain alone in the Garden of Gethsemane with the feeling that all your friends have abandoned you, that those you loved and put your trust in have turned their backs on you, and

that God Himself has abandoned you. Then hold on to the faith that this is not the end. If you love, you will suffer, and if you do not love, you will never understand the meaning of a Christian life.' After which she returned with her usual energy to compound interest calculations. But it is strange that these words stuck in my mind more than any sermon I have ever heard, and gave new hope many years later at a time when I was filled with deep despair," she recounts.

At the end of her book she writes:



***The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light .***

Isaiah 9:2

"Faith, love, hope, that is the name of the often quoted trinity. But perhaps we sometimes pay rather little attention to the third virtue. Of faith, one could say, we have often already had too much ..

That love is the essential, we know in



Watchword December 2021

our hearts. But how often do we forget that there is also hope ...? We are close to despair, to taking refuge in the words: 'What is the point of it all anymore?' Hope is the virtue we should cultivate more than anything else in this day and age."

There are depressing times behind us. The Advent season strikes new notes. It used to be a time of penance and fasting. Fasting days were observed. Women wore dark or black to church. The organ fell silent. Nowadays, Advent is a time we look forward to. We celebrate with all our senses, with our eyes, ears and nose. The smell of cinnamon, cardamom and mulled wine wafts from the kitchen. Fir branches and candles decorate the home.

The old Christmas carols are sung

again, even if we already falter at the second verse. And outside, the streets glitter with a thousand lights. And if we are already grey-haired Advent sceptics who have experienced everything so many times before, the children infect us anew with their an-



Arise, shine; for your light has come.
Isaiah 60,1

ticipation. But with all that warms our hearts, the most important thing is hope.

The prophet Zechariah speaks urgently to us this month. Although he has been through hard times and may still be in the middle of the mess, he does not look back. He does not bury himself in resentment, bitterness and lamentation.

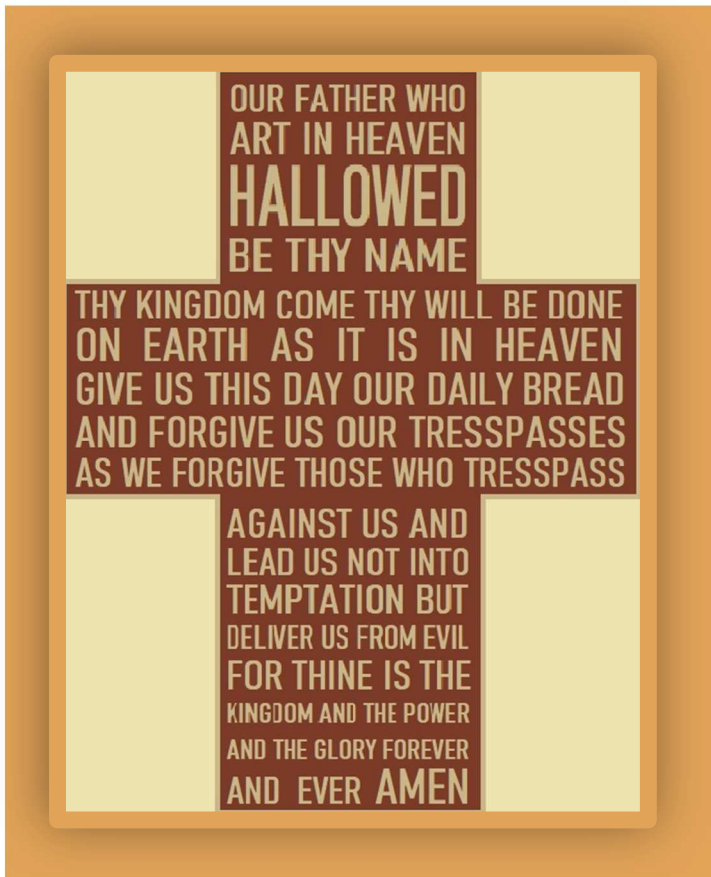
He does not leave the future to fear. Hope is his elixir of life.

Remember: God has not forgotten us. God gives us new courage, even in the midst of dark times. There is a much bigger space than my little life. "Rejoice and be glad, O daughter of



***The light of the righteous
rejoices***
Proverbs 13:9

Corona crisis and praying the Lord's Prayer ?



This request is framed from one side by the words about forgiveness, which I now translate thus:

"Let what has happened rest now,
so that it does not degenerate
into hatred and angry
recrimination, into bossiness and
newly stirred up enmities.
Let the dead be buried and
let me live in your strength,
you forgiving God!
Let me not look back,
but at you now!"

I place the request "Give us this day our daily bread!" in the centre and present and formulate it to me now like this:

"Give us daily the necessary
understanding,
the necessary patience,
give me courage, imagination
and humour,
strength for silence, gratitude
and intercession.
Show me the great inner space,
where I can breathe freely and
without fear (without a feeling
of being constricted)."

And now, like a frame, the next petition follows on from this, "Lead us not into temptation!" In its own way, it wants to keep a frightening future at bay. I now translate it thus:

"Let me consider what
might tempt me:
namely, impatience, anger,
small-mindedness,
depression, narrow-mindedness,
fear, that is, tightness.
Keep me in faith far from these
temptations
and let me remain open to you!"

A m e n

COVID Information

Dear members, dear friends

Under the present COVID-level regulations we are able to offer **live services** at our Church of Peace, but for those who cannot come, we **publish handouts** so that you can celebrate the service also at home. These are available at our WhatsApp-Group:



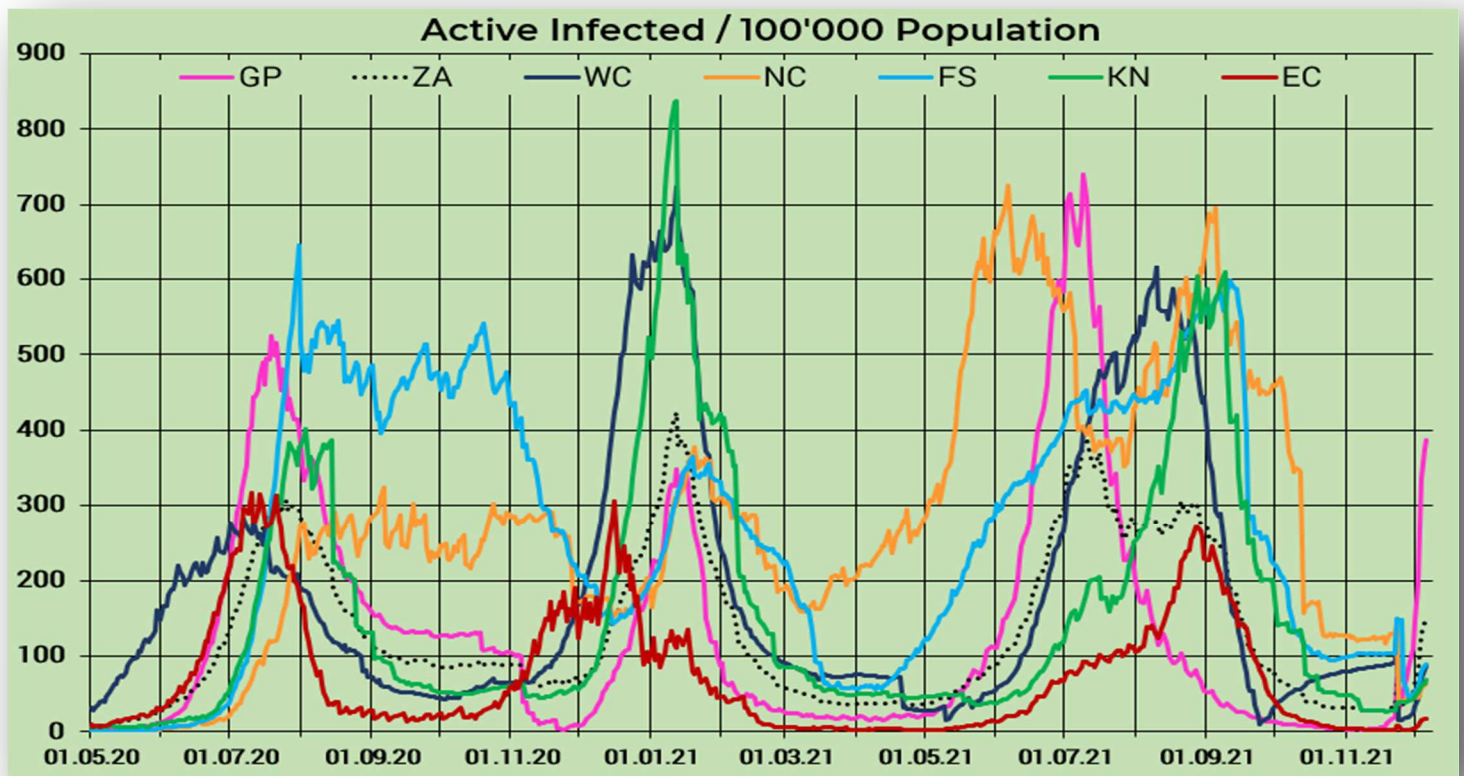
**Lutheran
Congregation**

If interested, please
send a message to
078 703 7003
(Henry Newmn)

The following regulations apply:

- ◇ Max. 45 persons per service
- ◇ Bring and wear your **face mask** the whole time. **Sanitize** and sign the **Register**.when entering the church
- ◇ 3 persons per pew (1-1-1) or for couples (2- -1), larger families from the same household can sit together
- ◇ every second pew remains free
- ◇ foyer and mezzanine have additional chairs 1.5 m apart
- ◇ The Organ will play and you can sing the hymns. The lyrics will be projected (no hymn books).
- ◇ Communion is received individually (disposable cups)
- ◇ No gatherings before/after service.

Below is an overview of the daily number of people actively infected with the Corona virus in the Eastern Cape (EC red) and the neighbouring provinces of the Western Cape (WC dark blue), Northern Cape (NC orange), Free State (FS light blue), KwaZulu Natal (KN green), and for comparison, Gauteng (GP, pink) South Africa as a whole (ZA dotted black). For better comparison, the data was scaled to persons with the disease per 100,000 inhabitants. The period is 1 May 2020 to 3 December 2021.



Kid's Page

Advent

It is a time when our hope is renewed in the 2nd coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. We look forward to his peace. The peace that only He can bring to this world. Therefore, we love Jesus so much and find great joy in His birth on Christmas day.

The advent wreath is round and is made up of green leaves. It is round to remind us of God's love and endless mercy that has no end and no beginning.

The green leaves represent the renewal and eternal life that Jesus has promised us. There are 5 candles on the wreath that symbolise the light and caring of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Each one has a special meaning. The **1st candle** is **hope**. When we look at this candle, we celebrate the hope we have in Jesus Christ.

The **2nd candle** is the candle of **peace** that we find in Jesus.

The **3rd candle** is the candle of **love**. This reminds us of our love we have for Jesus. He gave his life for us so that we can go to heaven when we believe in him.

The **4th candle** is the candle of joy. It reminds us of the wonderful joy we find in Jesus.

The **5th candle** reminds us of the **birth of Jesus**. The flame of this candle tells us that He is the light of the world.

Different names for Jesus

Cut out the cards opposite, make a hole, pull a string through and hang the cards on the Christmas tree.

Son
of
God

Messiah

Good
Shepherd

Emmanuel

Redemer

Saviour

Friend
of
Sinners

King
of
Kings



Nativity Story

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the **world** should be registered. All went to their own towns. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called **Bethlehem**, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. In that region there were **shepherds** living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an **angel** of the Lord stood before them. **Do not be afraid**; for see - I am bringing you good news of great joy: to you is born this day in the city of David a **Saviour**, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger. When the **angels** had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to **Bethlehem** and see this thing that has taken place. So they went and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them and all who heard it were amazed. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.

Birthdays December

8 December

Greyson | Meyer
Jutta | Rohwer

9 December

Antoinette | Bosman

10 December

Blake | Wright

12. December

Leo | Burgdorf-Fourie

13 December

Katelyn | van Wyk
Margrit | Burgdorf-Fourie

14 December

Grace | Erasmus

19 December

Hildegarde | Kivedo

24 December

Derek | Thompson

26 December

Darren | Lentz

28. Dezember

Katy | van Wyk

30. Dezember

Gerhard | Fröhlich

Divine Services December 2021

5 December 2021 09:30 (D)
Second Sunday in Advent



Watchword (Luke 21:28):

"Stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near"

"Head down and carry on" or "keep smiling, everything will be fine again" we say - a small consolation. We are often speechless when it comes to the suffering of others and also our own. The Good News applies most to the dejected and depressed, the rejected and the disadvantaged. Hold on; God sees the affliction and hears the lamentation. Those who wait for salvation do not hope in vain. Heads that are bowed down are encouraged today to look up, because there is more to life than what we see. Better yet, there is Someone, who is on His way to us, a Saviour, who is drawing near. Therefore,

"Now when these things start to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near"

Sermon

Isaiah 63:15-64:3

12 December 2021 09:30 (E)
Third Sunday in Advent



Watchword (Isaiah 40:3.10):

"Make straight in the desert a highway for our God, see, the Lord God comes with might."

Sometimes I search for God, but the path seems blocked. I cannot move on, standing in my own way. Move the stones out of the way! the third Advent encourages us. The focus is on John the Baptist, who prepares the way for Jesus with his call to repentance. Where Jesus comes, the world becomes brighter and lighter: dried out things begin to blossom, closed eyes open, lame limbs move. Nothing, neither valleys of sadness nor mountains of overconfidence, can hinder his coming. To pave the way for him is to stay awake and to get moving: to comfort the sad and to encourage those who have given up a long time ago.

After the Divine Service we will meet in the Church Hall for celebration of Advent:

Carols, Coffee and Cake

COVID restrictions/protocols are in place

Sermon

1 Corinthians 4:1-5

Divine Services December 2021

19 December 2021 09:30 (E)
Fourth Sunday in Advent



24 Dec 2021 09:30 (Fam E+D)
Christmas Eve



Watchword (Philippians 4:5b):

"Rejoice in the LORD always; again I will say Rejoice. The LORD is near."

Rejoice, you who are hungry!

Joy can be nice. Insignificant people begin to shine when they are looking forward to something: young mothers, who, like Mary, expect a child, lovers who are looking forward to their loved ones.

The fourth Advent speaks of most radical and changing joy. The Lord is near! The message cannot be kept to yourself. Like Sarah, who is promised a son at her age, and Mary, who praises God, who raises the low, and brought down the powerful from their thrones, we too can be infected with the joy of the divine yes to us - and thereby become kinder and more beautiful.

Watchword (Luke 2:10b.11):

"Do not be afraid; for see - I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord."

After the hustle and bustle of the preceding days, it is pleasant to return to the church on Christmas Eve, to regain our senses with candlelight and music and to hear the message of the Holy Night. Because of Jesus' birth, light breaks into the middle of the night - it does not take much to experience this on Christmas Eve. We hear the old promises of a King of Peace, who find their fulfilment in Jesus, the descendant of King David. He is Immanuel, God-with-us. The night of his birth recalls the deep mystery of God: in this poor little child, in Jesus Christ, he shows himself. Here and nowhere else is God's truth hidden.

Sermon

Luke 1:26-38(39-56)

Sermon

Micha 5:1-4a

Divine Services

25 December 2021 09:30 (E)
First Christmas Day



Watchword (John 1:14a):

"And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory."

For me, friends are people, I do not have to hide from, who like me, even when I say something stupid, and who do not look down on me when I make a mistake. Friends do like me the way I am. In Jesus God looks at us in a friendly way, he meets us at eye level, this is the theme of Christmas Day. The shepherds, who set out on the word of the angel, find out first: In the small, helpless child there is a God they need not hide away in shame from. They must not and need not lift themselves up to this God in order to reach Him, because He comes down to them. Yes, even more: in this child God makes them and all people His sons and daughters, heirs to his promise. And Christmas is only the beginning. Those who, like the shepherds, make their way to the manger, will return in a different way: moved and touched by the great love of God.

Sermon
Psalm 85

2 January 2022 09:30 (D)
First Sunday after Christmas



Watchword (John 1:14b):

"We have seen His glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth."

The encounter with the child in the manger can change people. In him the hope of salvation is fulfilled. Simeon and Hannah sing of this in the Gospel. With Jesus, the light has come into the world. Again and again, people have recognised this in amazement - like Simeon, who trusted the old promises and was allowed to see the Saviour with his own eyes. He has grown old and grey. But his eyes are young and shining into the distance. "You're crazy!" say some. "Give it a rest. Nothing will change." Friends have turned away shaking their heads, others have died bitter. Quietly, patiently, he continues to wait, trusting in God who does not forget his people. Year after year, day after day. As he holds the child in his arms, he opens his eyes in sudden recognition: He has not waited in vain. And even though this little one is weak and persecuted - Simeon sings: "My eyes have seen your Saviour".

Sermon
2 Corinthians 5:1-10

Prayercards December 2021

1 Dec Anne Tessendorf

2 Dec Anthea Daniels

3 Dec Arowa Coko

4 Dec Bernd Mächtle

5 Dec Chad Human

6 Dec Charlotte Andrews

7 Dec Chris Bürger

8 Dec Debra Dreier

16 Dec Kyle Angloher

17 Dec Leona Breitfeld

18 Dec Leonard Fourie

19 Dec Margrit Burgdorf-
Fourie

20 Dec Maya Breitfeld

21 Dec Michelle Harmse

22 Dec Morney Visagie

OUR FATHER WHO
ART IN HEAVEN
HALLOWED
BE THY NAME

THY KINGDOM COME THY WILL BE DONE
ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN
GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD
AND FORGIVE US OUR TRESSPASSES
AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO TRESSPASS

AGAINST US AND
LEAD US NOT INTO
TEMPTATION BUT
DELIVER US FROM EVIL
FOR THINE IS THE
KINGDOM AND THE POWER
AND THE GLORY FOREVER
AND EVER **AMEN**

9 Dec Dieter Lokotsch

10 Dec Eva Rieboldt

11 Dec Florence Arends

12 Dec Hans Rohwer

13 Dec Henry Newman

14 Dec Jordan Mächtle

15 Dec Joy Cairncross

23 Dec Roshni Bosman

24 Dec Rudi Harmse

25 Dec Ruth Rohrmoser

26 Dec Sandile Coko

27 Dec Sharon Tessendorf

28 Dec Sharon Walle

29 Dec Steven Harmse

30 Dec Theodore Goliath

Therefore, I exhort first of all that supplications, prayer,
intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all people.

1. Timothy 2:1

SACC - South African Council of Churches



The South African Council of Churches represented by General Secretary, Bishop Malusi Mpumlwana, attended on 30

November 2021 the hearings in KwaZulu Natal (KZN) hosted by the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) in reviewing the incidents of civil unrest in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) and Gauteng earlier this year.

Bishop Malusi's attendance was a demonstration of solidarity with the SAHRC in working to uncover the full impact of the unrest, on all the affected. The SACC in August expressed the hope that these hearings would leave no stone unturned in identifying the motivating lint that set fire to the ready context of poverty and want, and which resulted in millions of rands lost and businesses destroyed, with the loss of human life having been the ultimate price paid. The hearings are scheduled to allow for testimony from academics, journalists and the president of the South African shack dwellers' movement, also known as Abahlali baseMjondolo. Today the National Commissioner of Police, General Sithole, was continuing with his testimony.

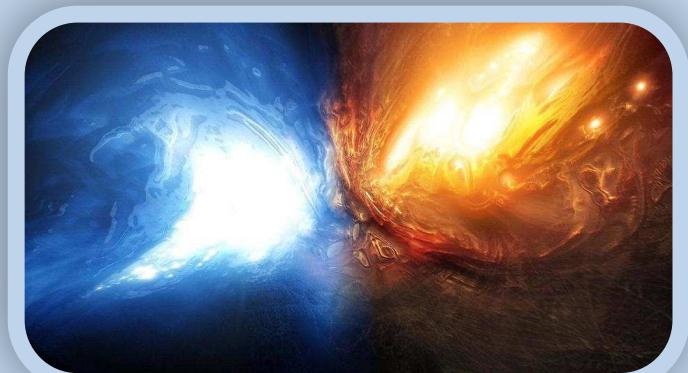
"Our presence here today is to support the work that began earlier this year", said Bishop Mpumlwana. Together, the SACC through its Local Ecumenical Action Networks

(LEANs), its provincial chapter - the KwaZulu-Natal Christian Council (KZNCC), and the active interfaith collaboration of the Hindu priests, the religious community has played its own role in active ministry on the ground in Phoenix. "

We have worked with community leaders and law enforcement to bring healing and peace to the area. We have met with the bereaved families, and heard of their pain, and met with business owners who have lost their livelihoods.

These hearings today serve to demonstrate that the countless injustices have not fallen on deaf ears, and this process seeks to acknowledge the pain, and make recommendations of how to remedy the situation, to allow us move past this point in our nation's history," said Bishop Mpumlwana.

The SACC will continue in its support of the SAHRC hearings.



Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from the sky.

Psalm 85:11

ELCSA - From the Bishop's Desk

God's guidance throughout this year

The year 2021 is almost gone without us noticing its full extent and the impact it had on all spheres of life. Being at home and in the home office most of the time, has brought with it different experiences. Opportunities to visit congregations were there, but it was different, as visiting with physical distancing and Covid-19 protocols in mind is different and not as personal as it used to be. Faces behind masks, what do they express? Do we even notice the hurt, anxiety, pain and loneliness? – It has been almost a year of indifferences. But, we lived it under the Lord's guidance and in His presence. The watchword for 2021:



***Be merciful,
just as your Father is merciful.***
Luke 6:36

How did it help and encourage you in everyday life? Did mercy, kindness, having pity on others and being compassionate prevail when the going got tough and the burden of the extraordinary times were wearing you down? How did it help you to respond to people and situations when you did not agree with them and when you questioned their motives? Did you remember how merciful your Father is, and also acted with mercy and not revenge?

Life goes on. We do not know for how long the pandemic will still be with us. But we know that God is with us, whatever may come. So let us continue to live and serve in His name. The watchword for 2022 gives us the assurance that the Lord is with us on life's journey. Jesus says:



***Anyone who comes to me
I will never drive away.***
John 6:37

It is comforting to know where we can go to and find solace and peace. May that be a real life experience to you as you live to His glory in His presence throughout the year 2022.

Synod held in Philippi 29 to 31 October 2021

A big thank you to the Philippi congregation for being excellent hosts during the synod meeting. From venue, to catering, to the many niceties - everything was prepared excellently in such a short period and with many pandemic-related uncertainties to contend with. The delegates all felt at home immediately, and were ready to engage in the important matters regarding being church here and now. The theme "Life, Faith, Hope. – Here! Now! Getting from disorientation to re-orientation" was very relevant, as we all struggled on various levels during the pandemic.

ELCSA - From the Bishop's Desk

A reflection on the book of Psalms by Pastor Felix Meylahn equipped us to use these prayers as a wonderful resource to live life fully during these uncertain times. Mrs Hanna Kotze, a social worker from Port Elizabeth, gave us tools to deal with trauma - not only in our own life, but also that we can journey with others who face situations of trauma.

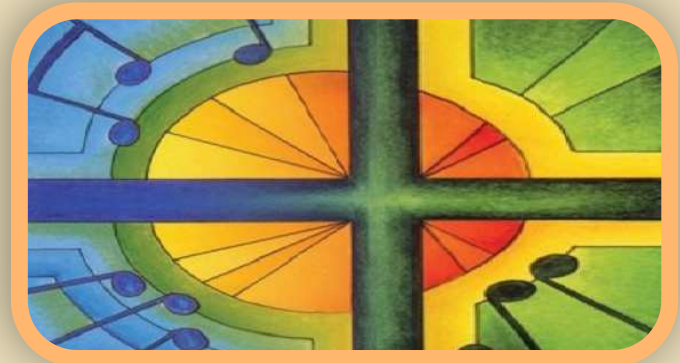
Many small group discussions created an opportunity to support and encourage one another.

All synod documents, the Bishop's Report and the other reports to synod are available on

<https://www.lutherancape.org.za/>

Please make an effort to have a look at what was discussed and decided! Good and constructive discussions enabled us to find amicable solutions on complex matters raised through the motions. A matter of concern is that a number of congregations are struggling financially. It was encouraging to see how, as church, we found ways to **be** church with and for one another by assisting generously. The dire country-wide and global economic situation has placed great strain on our congregations financially. But let us remember that we are not left on our own. We are God's church. May He give us wisdom and guidance to be good stewards of what belongs to Him.

Pastor Gilbert Filter was re-elected as bishop/chairman of Church Council and Pastor Hans-Peter von Fintel was elected as Deputy chairman of Church Council for 4 years. Pastor Claudia Nolte-Schamm was elected as ordained member of Church Council for 2 years.



Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving.

Colossians 4:2

We thank Pastor Felix Meylahn for the many years of dedicated service as a member of Church Council. We wish him much joy in his continued service as pastor of the Stellenbosch/Somerset West congregation and as tutor and mentor of the students of theology at Stellenbosch University.

Pastors' Convocation

The pastors met at the Andrew Murray Centre for Spirituality, a retreat centre of the Dutch Reformed Church, in Wellington from 26-28 Oct 2021. It was the first time the pastors met in-person since the beginning of the pandemic.

With four new colleagues joining the Convocation it was a good opportunity to build relationships and grapple together with matters on what it means to be church here and now. New and refreshing impulses stimulated the discussions.

A statement was drafted with the title: "What are we learning from Covid for the future of our church?"

This statement was endorsed by the Synod and subsequently shared widely on ecumenical platforms, the

Learning from Covid for the future of our church?

media and through the Lutheran World Federation. Much positive response has been received.

We encourage you to discuss it on congregational level and share your insights and thoughts on it. This document is available on

<https://www.lutherancape.org.za/> .

- ❖ to form new meaningful habits (e.g., daily prayer/devotions via WhatsApp).
- ❖ to rethink the whole concept of big church buildings and big gatherings (and maybe move again towards smaller house-type church services and structures).
- ❖ we can be more flexible and adjustable than we ever thought before and are able to make decisions much faster than we normally do in church.
- ❖ to embrace and enhance our electronic communication (and to make better use of digital opportunities in our ministries).
- ❖ that through social media we can reach more people than we would normally.
- ❖ that Holy Communion at home is possible.



*How very good and pleasant it is
when kindred live together in unity!*
Psalm 133:1

What are we learning from Covid for the future of our church?

ELCSA (Cape Church) Pastors' Reflections. Endorsed by the Synod of ELCSA (Cape Church) on 30.10.2021

Covid has taught us...

- ❖ to be able to adapt, re-think and re-imagine.
- ❖ to find new ways to be church with the people and to reach them in their situation.
- ❖ new ways of doing worship and fellowship.



*We have gifts that
differ according
to the grace
given to us.*
Romans 12:6

Learning from Covid for the future of our church?

Covid has opened and is opening our eyes to the following:

- ❖ Societal (collective) trauma is real.
- ❖ There is a long list of traumatic experiences: immense loss and resulting grief, fear and even anger, insecurity and vulnerability, loneliness, etc.
- ❖ Loneliness and depression due to social distancing, not meeting regularly and fewer opportunities to engage with others.
- ❖ Effective pastoral care will become even more important to the church's ministry.
- ❖ People need support and to be connected to a community/network that provides stability.
- ❖ We have to work on creating a sense of belonging and understanding.
- ❖ We have to find new ways of caring (via phone or other platforms).
- ❖ We have to visit each other. Especially the elderly and sick should no longer be isolated.
- ❖ We need to be able to touch and hug each other, especially at funerals and in times of distress.



*Why are you afraid,
you of little faith?*
Matthew 8:26

Relationships/communion are vital.

- ❖ There is a need for belonging, for intimacy, for meaningful communion – without fear or social distancing.
- ❖ Regular in person meetings are necessary.
- ❖ As church we need to sing, celebrate, worship, share meals and connect with one another.
- ❖ The church must work hard to provide genuine communion, connectedness, safe spaces – and this also across borders between races, cultures, classes, generations, language groups, etc. This also implies working towards real reconciliation in our communities.
- ❖ The mask has become something to hide behind, with the result that people become more brutal and less compassionate in

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what and how they communicate. In time we hope to put away the masks, so that we can understand people talking, read facial expressions and not hide behind them.

- ❖ We need to move away from a self-centred church with a clubhouse mentality to a more open and ecumenical church.

- ❖ Many – especially young people – are even less visible in church than before. Faith is becoming more and more “private” and less outward-looking. There seems to be “indifferentism” which has made us nearly incapable of compassion that goes beyond our own circles.

- ❖ Our focus cannot only be on our own communities; we must look beyond and promote an outreach heart in our congregations.



*I give you a new commandment,
that you love one another.
Just as I have loved you.*
John 13:34



*In God we live and move and have our
being.*
Acts 17:28

Community involvement is even more urgent than before.

- ❖ The church must become more involved in community projects and diaconal service: emergency relief, community development, prophetic (public) witness, ecumenical cooperation, etc.
- ❖ However, we observe that members have not shown much interest in helping the community.

Life is vulnerable.

- ❖ Covid has shown us how vulnerable life itself is, our environment, ecological crises, dwindling resources.
- ❖ We need to live with much more responsibility, sharing living space with others and with coming generations. This also

Learning from Covid for the future of our church?

entails mindful living, living with respect and in wonderment about life itself. This should be a deliberate part of the church's message.

- ❖ The church must be part of establishing a new, sustainable economy, with meaningful jobs being created and poverty alleviated. Greater equality/access to opportunities in many areas of life is urgently needed.
- ❖ We must assist in working towards a recovery of the damages done to our living environment, ecological awareness, less greed, more responsible living.
- ❖ We must return to a simpler life, with less consumerism and materialism.
- ❖ We must be part of building a more just, peaceful South Africa, with criminal and violent activities diminishing.



***But truly it is the spirit in a mortal,
the breath of the Almighty,
that makes for understanding.***
Job 32:8



***O send out your light and your truth;
let them lead me.***
Psalm 43:3

The church's voice must be heard.

- ❖ A discourse on God and God's role in We will have to work very hard to speak openly and in a credible way about God in this modern, changing world. We have to engage in the public discourse with much more credibility.
- ❖ this new world (and specifically the world of the pandemic) has mostly been absent from the current public discourses. The role of science and politics, the questions about economy and natural resources, even wild conspiracy theories and post truth reasoning have dominated the discourse on public forums. It silenced the voice of the church. And too often the bizarre responses of some churches/church leaders added to the church's voice not being taken seriously.

Learning from Covid for the future of our church?

**Digitalisation has its benefits,
but also limitations,
challenges and even threats.**

- ❖ Observed challenges/threats: No real feedback is given. Despite all the online offers, many yearned for the fellowship at church, as digital services do not provide the same community feeling as we would like. People may now get even more used to the idea of not going to church.
- ❖ Sacrament celebration not ideal.
- ❖ We need a place to encounter God. Digitalisation makes us lose a 'locale' where God has promised to meet with us in a special way.
- ❖ In conflict situations people shy away from face-to-face meetings and prefer virtual meetings.

Going "back to normal"?

NO!

- ❖ Covid has highlighted the flaws of what we thought was normal.
- ❖ The "Normal" we had before was not good. There are many serious defects of our "normal" civilization that have been made visible by this crisis.
- ❖ We hope that we will be able to learn the lessons of Covid and do something about the fault lines in our societies that have been exposed by Covid.
- ❖ Societal injustice, the great divide between rich and poor, gender-based violence including patriarchy, unbridled consumerism, individualism and egocentrism, ecological deprivation are the "normal" we do NOT want to return to.
- ❖ Instead, what do we want the "NEW NORMAL" to look like?
- ❖ Let us re-imagine the church's role and calling.

The ELCSA (Cape Church) Pastors:
Ronell Bezuidenhout, Beate Bidoli,
Michael Denner, Gilbert Filter, Felix
Meylahn, Claudia Nolte-Schamm,
Frank Schütte, Anja Spiske, Schalk
Treurnicht, Gideon van der Watt,
Hans-Peter von Fintel.



***We boast in our hope of
sharing the glory of God.***
Romans 5,2



Market-less Christmas-Market

Corona still has us firmly in its grip and so we were again unable to hold a Christmas market in November. This means that we are also lacking urgently needed income.

Some have already helped us with R 4'200 donations. Many thanks. We still need R 15'000 to balance our budget. Please consider donating the amounts you would otherwise have spent at the Christmas Market (raffle, shopping, food, ingredients for coffee, cakes and handicrafts).



Medium Term Loan

Prior to 2018, the outstanding stewardship payments to the Cape Church had totalled 165,433. The Cape Church obligingly converted this amount into an interest-free medium term loan. This loan has to be repaid in full on 28.02.2002. So far, due to your donations, we have been able to repay 124'698 ahead of schedule. Many thanks to all donors.

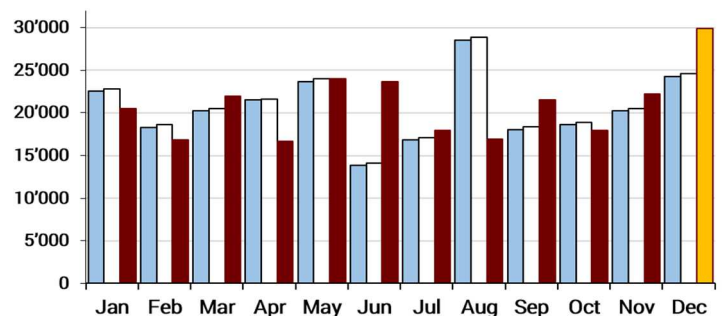
The church committee would like to have repaid the loan in full this year. We still lack the funds for this: R 31'940 (only R 8'800 donations have been received until 30.11.2021. Who can help us to get enough funds?

Dear members and friends

The following page shows an extract from our accounting system.

First of all, a very big thank you to everyone who increased church contributions and donations in November. As of the end of November, we have paid all stewardship contributions to the Cape Church in full. In December, unfortunately, we have to ask again for an additional contribution: if possible, we ask you to pay 10% more in December than in November (if you have paid for an annual contribution, we would be very happy to receive an additional payment of 5%). The chart below shows the monthly contribution payments (blue 2020 actual; white: budget 2021; red: actual 2021).

Contributions p.m. ■ 2020.Actual ■ 2021.Budget ■ 2021.Actual



For the December payment (yellow) we need R29'600 in church contributions. Urgent repairs were needed in the Church Centre, so that we clearly had some additional expenditure. Please have a look at the Children's Church room after the service and note how bright and cheerful it now looks and is nearing completion.

Henry Newman
Treasurer a.i.

Extract Book-keeping

Jan-Nov
Actual 21

Jan-Nov
Budget 21

Income	369'163	400'473	-31'311
Contributions	215'280	229'167	-13'887
Collections	29'120	33'028	-3'908
Donation	70'381	25'667	44'714
Events	28'485	37'125	-8'640
Rental Income	48'234	73'508	-25'274
Other Income	4'025	1'980	2'045

Expenditure	407'604	395'528	12'076
60% Post	277'210	277'200	10
outstanding payment	0		
Maintenance			
Building Maintenance	14'092	8'250	5'842
Maintenance Help	13'650	6'600	7'050
Maintenance Help	974	1'742	-768
Cleaning Costs	8'955	10'260	-1'305
Admin Costs			-
Insurances	19'469	19'470	-1
Water and Electricity	22'055	15'583	6'472
Security Costs	8'010	8'250	-240
Telephone	9'503	8'800	703
Bank Charges	3'579	4'400	-821
Licences	0	2'970	-2'970
Newsletter	0	1'100	-1'100
Travel Costs	4'800	3'667	1'133
Other Costs			-
Depreciation	13'247	13'200	47
Manse Help	8'000	8'800	-800
Substitute Pastor	1'800	0	1'800
Sundry	2'259	2'200	59
Audit fees	0	3'036	-2'760



Church Committee 2021

Pastor Anja Spiske	33 Luke Avenue, (Manse) pastor@lutheran-pe.org	Springfield 6070 041-367 1986 H
Reinhard Walle (Chairman)	4 May Way chairman@lutheran-pe.org	Sunridge Park 6045 063 685 0263
Henry Newman (Membership) (Treasurer a.i.)	81 Villiers Road, membership@lutheran-pe.org treasurer@lutheran-pe.org	Walmer 6070 078 703 7003
Auke Brand (Maintenance)	52 Bernard Road warden1@lutheran-pe.org	Lovemore Heights 6025 041-367 5287 082 824 7345
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Elizabeth Köpke	9 Woodville Road No E-Mail	Mill Park 6025 071 572 0433
Ryan Meyer	warden3@lutheran-pe.org	073 230 2513

Bank Details:

First National Bank,

Branch Code: 211217

Account: 534 200 32476

Walmer Branch

Lutheran Church

The congregation's Levy is paid to the Cape Church each month. The recommended contribution per family is **R 550** per month, however, all contributions, small or large help to our commitment. Please make your payments to the church by means of a deposit into the church's bank account or via electronic fund transfer (EFT) and provide **your details under the reference section**

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