

Pastor's Monday  
December 3, 2007

Make no doubt about it – Advent is here! I think I got a little too excited yesterday morning at the late service... it just seems so good. The tree, decorated but not lit, in deference to the season of Advent. The Advent wreath that used to hang from the old church's ceiling (it was Dave Butheras' job to hang it) now on a beautiful black wrought iron stand just off the baptismal font with one of its purple candles lit seem to shout – “Advent is Here! ...don't miss it!” ...and yes, please don't miss the opportunity to prepare your heart to receive the new born baby this Christmas. Preparation is what it is all about.

So many of the stories of Christmas are stories of preparation. Except for some very unusual circumstances, preparation always involves conversations. And except for some very unusual circumstances, there are always conversations following an important event, say, like a birth, or wedding, or death. Those conversations reveal a lot about those who talk; what is important to them, how they see things, their feelings and their attachment to, or lack of attachment to those involved. There are many conversations in and around the Christmas story. On Wednesday evenings, following supper (6:00 PM), our Advent services (7:00 PM) with the sung Holden Evening prayer will present some of those conversations. This Wednesday we'll hear the conversation between the two Dads whose lives were changed because God chose them to be part of his plan.

On Sunday mornings our Advent Sermons will present Images of Hope from the Old Testament readings in Isaiah. In a world struggling to find hope, the Hope of the world is presented already by Isaiah long before his birth.

Consecrated Stewards. Thank you for participating in the Consecrated Stewards commitment process. If you have not turned in your RESPONSE CARD, please do so as soon as possible. We have had good response. My concern is that all members of Zion take seriously their responsibility to be stewards of what God has entrusted to them. Your commitment and your following through on that commitment is a concrete way that you show your gratitude for what God has given you. It is also the way that our congregation is able to maintain its facilities and ministries...and supports mission work here in Alaska and around the world.

Eva Lose is now hospitalized and slips further and further from life in this world. We pray that our Gracious Heavenly Father will mercifully take her to Himself. Almost 11 months ago she was diagnosed with terminal liver cancer. She engaged life and her work at Open Arms with her students with incredible energy and vitality until the ravages of the cancer gradually took away her strength, then her stamina, but never her spirit. The last seven weeks have been difficult. The doctor back then indicated that she had five to seven days to live, those seven days have turned into almost seven weeks. My thanks to Lenetta Colbert, our Open Arms director and Julie Benson, Open Arms Board chair for their direct involvement with the husband Gary and Eva. Also Rachel Galbraith, Gary Michael's catechist from last year, and Rachel's husband Bill and daughter Samantha have opened their hearts and home to Gary Michael, Eva and Gary's 14-year-old son. Please keep this family in your prayers.

Blessings to all of you. See you Wednesday for supper and/or Advent service.

Pastor