



BROADCASTER

December 2022



WORSHIP ANEW
PROGRAM SCHEDULE

MOMENTS OF COMFORT

A SNEAK PEEK
INTO HOPE-FULL LIVING

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

WorshipAnew.org

A Christmas Carol

*It is good to sing praises
to our God.*

Psalm 147:1

What are some of your favorite Christmas memories as a child? One of my favorite Christmas memories was when my family lived in St. Paul, Minnesota, and my Lutheran school choir would go to various places around the Twin Cities to sing Christmas carols. One time, while singing at a mall, the local ABC news station was there and we yelled out to television cameras, "Good Morning America!" Another time, we sang at the downtown Radisson hotel. When we were done, the hotel staff treated the choir to a formal meal.

We're blessed to have a rich tradition of singing and music in the church. And today, I love to experience my own children singing in their school choir. Martin Luther once wrote, "Children must ... sing and learn music together with mathematics." Luther knew, as we do, that singing God's praises instills His Word into the hearts and minds of children.

Our viewers love children's choirs we have on Worship Anew. What a great way to see our faith being passed along to future generations. At the same time, these young people can share the faith with their elders.

At Christmas time we know that so many viewers of Worship Anew are experiencing a deep sense of loss during, what is often considered, a joyous season. Worship Anew comes into lives experiencing this pain and hurt with joy, comfort, and peace that is found in our loving Savior Jesus Christ.

As we journey throughout the Christmas season and look forward to the birth of the Christ child, music and singing is such a wonderful part of that experience. This includes the Christmas carols that are sung on Worship Anew. Oh, how beautiful it must have been when the angels sang to the shepherds on that sacred night. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased (Luke 2:14)."

Do you have any Christmas memories that are connected to singing Christmas carols?





My wife's family has a tradition of singing Christmas carols in between opening presents. I love that our home is filled with singing at this time of the year. I know that years from now I will treasure hearing my children singing songs that they're preparing for their school's annual Christmas program while going about daily tasks around the house.

Perhaps you have memories of attending a candlelight Christmas eve service or going Christmas caroling around your neighborhood. Whatever it may be, it is my prayer that you are able to treasure those Christmas memories as we celebrate the greatest gift of all, the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



Mathew Z. Leitz

Matthew F. Leighty
Executive Director

P.S. Whatever it may be, it is my prayer that you are able to treasure those Christmas memories as we celebrate the greatest gift of all, the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



Worship Anew in December

Year 2022 | Series C



December 4, 2022 – Second Sunday in Advent

Psalm 105:4-8 and Isaiah 40:3b; Isaiah 11:1-10; Matthew 3:1-12

“Repent!” - Sermon Text: Matthew 3:2

Rev. Shayne Jonker

You know it just wouldn't be Advent without this strange preacher of the Judean wilderness, John the Baptist. His message is quite simple and can be summarized in a single word: Repent! And the reason why we should repent is simple as well: the kingdom of heaven is at hand.



December 11, 2022 – Third Sunday in Advent

Psalm 146; Isaiah 35:1-10; Matthew 11:2-15

“Confused About Jesus?” - Sermon Text: Matthew 11:2-11

Rev. Paul Shoemaker

During Jesus' life, there was confusion about who He was and what His mission was. Clarity comes from Isaiah's prophecies and from Jesus Himself. Those same words clarify for us the identity and purpose of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.



December 18, 2022 – Fourth Sunday in Advent

Psalm 24; Isaiah 7:10-17; Matthew 1:18-25

“A Sign of the Times” - Sermon Text: Isaiah 7:10-17

Rev. William Mueller

We are almost to the joyous celebration of Christmas! Isaiah 7:14 gives us one of the most celebrated prophecies about the birth of Jesus – the prophecy of a miraculous virgin birth of our Lord. Jesus is, as Isaiah prophesied, Immanuel – “God with us.” The context of this prophecy gives us even more reasons to rejoice and celebrate!



December 25, 2022 – Christmas Day Observed

Psalm 98; Titus 3:4-7; Luke 2:15-20

“How Will You Return?” - Sermon Text: Luke 2:20

Rev. Dr. Thomas Ahlersmeyer

Want to make Christmas last longer than a day? Consider how the shepherds returned to their everyday lives after seeing the newborn Savior, Jesus Christ, in Bethlehem's manger. How will you return?



HOPE-FULL *A Look Inside* LIVING

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 22, 2022

"We Need a Little Christmas ..."

"... they shall call his name Immanuel (which means, God with us)."

Matthew 1:23

Thanksgiving is over, and the mall decorations are shifting from pumpkins to Christmas trees. The voice of Johnny Mathis croons, "We Need a Little Christmas."

Joseph certainly needed a little Christmas. News of his fiancé's pregnancy had left him flummoxed, since the baby was not his. But through the angel Gabriel, God revealed Mary's baby would be the promised Immanuel — God with us. Do you know someone who needs a little Christmas? The divorced dad, the recent widow, the service man stationed far from home, the patient in the hospice bed? God's promise is for them and for you. Because of Christmas, God is with us with love, forgiveness, and peace. We are not alone.

*Eileen Ritter
Byron Center, MI*

Lord, we need a little Christmas. Thank you for your promises of salvation through Jesus. Amen.

Reflect: As you prepare for Christmas, share your joy in God's gift to you — his Son, Jesus.

Read: Isaiah 9:2-7 and 2 John 1:3

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Hopefulliving.org or call **1-800-779-0846**

Life Is an "Advent-sure"

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I hope. Psalm 130:5

DECEMBER is ADVENT-SURE time for all of God's people, even in the midst of our on-going worries, conflicts, illnesses, family separations, and even deaths. Scriptures announce it. We as God's people live it out, and even Siri, our cell phone friend, defines ADVENT as the, "arrival of a Noble Person, namely, Jesus Himself!

Whether we are huddled together with family or not, whether we are mourning the death or illness of a close friend, or even if our usual "traditional" Christmas days look different this year, we still rejoice in the fact that Jesus, the Christ, is with us in all ways and at all times. Yes, no doubt about it, we are ADVENT-SURE and ready for surprising ADVENTURES, with our Lord right beside us! Let's spell A-D-V-E-N-T:

A Anticipate new ways to celebrate this year as we deal with a changing life-style.

D "Do Be Do Be Do" is our chant as we continue to Do the Lord's ministries while Be-ing His redeemed people;

V Visualize the real reason for Christmas, with or without the usual traditions and schedules.

E Everyone is invited to the celebration of life in Him.

N Now is the time to develop new customs and new ways of sharing Jesus in your world!

T Tell everyone what He has done, at Christmas and throughout 2023!

Dr. Rich Bimler

Ambassador of Health, Hope, and Aging (AH-HA!)

Ministry Consultant

Editor-at-Large of Hope-Full Living





GIVING STOCK FOR A GOOD CAUSE

Shelly, a retired nurse, inherited a significant portfolio of securities from her father. Over the years, Shelly became interested in investing. She sold some of her stock just as the market peaked and then bought again when it was at a low. Last year, she wanted to unload some of her low performers, but before selling at a loss she learned about the benefits of giving her stock to charity.

Shelly contacted us and was excited to learn that she could make a gift of her stock and receive an income tax deduction this year. "I loved the fact that I didn't have to sell the stock at a low or continue to hold onto it while it possibly fell even lower in the market," Shelly said. Best of all, she was thrilled that her gift would go to help us in our work.

This information is not intended as tax, legal or financial advice. Gift results may vary. Consult your personal financial advisor for information specific to your situation.

Planned Giving Brief

End of Year GIFTS & TAX PLANNING

With the end of the year approaching, a charitable gift can help you support the mission of Worship Anew and receive tax benefits.

In addition to gifts of cash, here are two charitable gift strategies worth considering: Appreciated Asset Gifts and Charitable Life Income Plans.

■ ■ ■ *Appreciated Assets Gifts*

Gifts of appreciated assets such as securities or real estate are an excellent way for you to help our cause. Securities may be transferred directly to us while real estate is transferred through a deed. These gifts will not affect your cash flow, and they provide the following tax benefits:

A charitable deduction to help you save on taxes

Bypass of federal and state capital gains taxes

Avoidance of the tax on net investment income

From a tax perspective, a gift of appreciated assets makes sense. You can make the capital gains taxes optional, achieve significant tax savings and support our work.

■ ■ ■ *Charitable Life Income Plans*

If you have low-yielding assets and are seeking higher income, a charitable life income gift such as a charitable gift annuity or charitable remainder trust may be worth exploring. In exchange for your charitable gift of cash or appreciated securities, you reap multiple benefits:

A charitable deduction to help you save on taxes

Bypass of federal and state capital gains taxes

Avoidance of the tax on net investment income

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God's Humanity

by Rev. Richard Koehneke

"Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Luke 2:11-12

Sometimes people will say, "There are so many religions. How can you know the Christian faith is right one?" My favorite answer is: "Because it's so different from all the others!"

All religious systems of the world say there is a god, or gods, or many gods. They are distant, powerful, unknowable. The only way to connect is by enormous effort on your part: rituals, prayers, sacrifices, pilgrimages, on and on. If you get it right, just exactly right, you just might connect with that distant, powerful, unknowable god or gods. It's up to you. The burden is on you. So say the religious systems of the world.

Christian faith says: There is one God. This one God is distant, powerful, unknowable by sinful man. Now comes the big difference: Because God is holy, and we are sinful, we cannot make the connection from our side.

Even our best efforts fall far short, because we are sinners, and God is totally holy and righteous. When you stop and think about it, would you want any other kind of God? How could you worship and serve a "god" who is sort of holy, kind of righteous, who puts up with evil, who looks the other way when people violate his commandments? Who could worship and serve such a "god"? We need a holy, righteous God – but how can I, a sinner, connect with such a God? How can you and I establish an eternal relationship with such a God?

Answer: I can't. You can't either. So God did it for us! He came into this world in the person of His Son. He humbled himself and took on our flesh and blood. God bridged the gap our sins had created. What we could not do for ourselves, God did for us. He took on our humanity, without our sins. He became a perfect, sinless human being with the name Jesus of Nazareth. The sinless Son of God took our place. He fulfilled the whole law of God on your behalf. He died a sacrificial death on the cross in your place. He rose from the dead to give you victory over the grave.



He ascended into heaven to prepare a place for you. He will come again on the Last Day – perhaps today – to claim his faithful people for himself, forever.

Christmas is about God becoming one of us to bring us back to Him. It's about God getting His hands dirty and bloody, loving us too much to not let us go to hell, loving us so much that He placed our sins upon His Son, crediting us with the holiness of Christ. In the person of Jesus, God got Himself physically, personally involved in this world. He got Himself into this mess of ours, to walk through it with us, to weep with us, to laugh with us, to comfort us, to challenge us, to call us to follow Him on the path to life that is truly life, life with Him forever.

This concept of GOD'S HUMANITY in Jesus – GOD'S HUMILITY – God becoming a baby lying in a manger and dying on a cross – is totally and absolutely unique in the world. The mind of man could not conceive of such a thing. Indeed, such a concept is shocking and blasphemous to adherents of some man-made religious systems.

They say, "God would never humble himself. God would never take on human flesh and blood. You dare not speak of God's humanity!" Yet that message is the heart and soul of Christmas: the outrageous, shocking, incomprehensible love and grace of almighty, holy God for sinners like me – like you.

We do not follow a religious system; we trust a real Savior! Our faith is not about rules and policies; it is a relationship with a person named Jesus Christ, a relationship established by God Himself to accomplish our salvation. At Christmas we rejoice that God came to us to save us from our sins. By faith in Christ we are able to celebrate the unthinkable and articulate the unspeakable: God's humanity, God's humility. That's how much God loves you and wants to bring you back to Himself – forever. A God-blessed Christmas to you!

Rev. Richard Koehneke retired as senior pastor of Holy Cross, Fort Wayne in 2009.

He served as one of the five regular preachers on "Worship for Shut-Ins". He and his wife Mary joined St. Peter's, Fort Wayne in 2010.

What will you pass on this Christmas?

Who will you talk to this Christmas? Are you excited to see a child or grandchild you haven't talked to for a while? For some of you, this might be a daunting experience. You may have a desire to share your faith to encourage a young person you care about; but maybe you don't feel equipped to do so.

From my experience in youth work, one of the biggest barriers to talking with a younger person is the strong sense of generational divide. Our world is changing so rapidly, it's easy to think that we have less and less in common with younger generations. Part of this is true. I've learned that most of the students I talk to now won't get 90% of the movie references I make. Yet, teenagers today still have similar struggles to what you wrestled with as a teenager.

The Fuller Youth Institute recently released a great book called "3 Big Questions that Shape Your Future." In it, the authors explore three fundamental questions that all youth wrestle with: 1. Who am I? 2. Where do I fit? 3. What difference can I make?

If you've ever struggled to answer any of these questions, you can relate to teenagers today. Don't let the generational divide scare you. You don't know exactly how youth today are struggling because you will never be that age again, and each individual experience is so different. Yet, you can work to put yourself into the mindset of someone who is working out some of the most fundamental questions about where they fit into the world.



If you have the great opportunity to interact with a young person over this Christmas season, consider these tips:

1 Talk while doing

Working or playing while talking can open conversation that might not happen if you're sitting across from each other. This is especially helpful when talking with boys. Sitting side by side while playing a game or working on a project together allows for long pauses without them becoming awkward. Questions also feel less interrogative if you're not making eye contact. Physical activity such as going on a walk are even better as they will help you relax.

2 Try not to sermonize

When we hear someone present a struggle that we've already been through, it's so natural to bring up all the solutions we know to solve the problem. Wouldn't it be irresponsible and uncaring to let someone be in pain when we know how to solve all their problems? I think you see where this is going.

Many youth have a natural tendency to shut down when being preached at. Now, if a youth asks you a question about your experience with the same issue, do share! But, unless you're invited to share your experience, rely more on asking questions. Try to get a clear picture before you offer any advice.

3 Consider this one of many

Enjoy the time you have in talking with a young person. Most likely, you'll have another opportunity to connect. Taking the pressure off yourself will allow you to be more relaxed and smile, which will allow for even better conversations now and in the future. Also, if something is shared in this conversation, it will show how much you care if you ask about it in the future.



How did that big project go you were preparing for? Which elective did you end up selecting? When you remember, you show how much you care. If, like me, you have a hard time keeping track of these things, consider keeping a conversation journal. You can also use this journal to record prayer requests.

These are just a few things to think about when having a conversation with a young person. If you have something that works that serves to encourage and open conversation, use that! The more open conversation can be, the easier it will be to share how much Jesus means to you and how you have a new life in Him. The more you hear a young person's stories, the more you'll be asked to share your stories about your faith and all God has done for you.

To learn more about Worship Anew's work to equip aging adults to live an abundant life in Christ, go to WorshipAnew.org. There you can be encouraged by God's Word through video and print resources and learn more about how you can support this vital ministry.

Thomas Moll
Content Manager at Worship Anew

Moments of Comfort

That is what the Scriptures mean when they say, “No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him.”

1 Corinthians 2:9

What helps you anticipate Christmas? Is it pulling out boxes of decorations? Is it making plans to visit or receive visitors? Maybe you begin to picture what your decorated home could look like or feel the joy of laughing with family and friends. You have an image of what is to come.

Sometimes we are struck with images that make us avoid anticipation: the first marriage anniversary without your spouse, another Christmas your children won't be able to visit. When anticipation leads to pain, we need something to look forward to.

We can try to picture what it would be like to be surrounded by all of our loved ones, those we can see now and those who have died in the faith.

We can attempt to visualize a life without pain or discomfort.

In 1 Corinthians 2:9, the Apostle Paul reminds us that God has something bigger and better planned for you, something that is beyond your imagination.

Moments of Comfort is a weekly video devotional of Worship Anew which ministers to the hurting and suffering we face in this life with the comforting message of God's Word. Our December Moments of Comfort videos will be written and presented by the Deaconess Kim Trombley. You can find all of our videos at www.WorshipAnew.org/MOC.

This Advent season, may you be blessed with a picture of things to come for you, an amazing child of God. Jesus died and rose for you so that you might not only picture the life without sin and pain, but actually experience it with Him forever.



Our mission is to engage and equip aging adults with resources to live a full and abundant life in Jesus Christ.

Worship Anew is produced by Lutheran Ministries Media

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