“Pause and Wonder”

Four days from now, I will be joining nine other friends at the Grand Canyon to hike down the Bright Angel Trail and camp at the famous Phantom Ranch. I was invited to be a part of this expedition over a year ago. I marked the date on my calendar, but truthfully had not really thought much about the trip. Our group has gathered a few times to talk about the trip, yet still the rest of life always seemed much more pressing, so for the most part, it drifted off my radar.

Now the time is fast approaching. On Monday, I’m flying with two fellow adventurers to Phoenix. I packed my gear early and sent it off with another friend who is driving to the rim. At times, I find myself questioning whether I have packed all the right gear. I worry that my knees will hold up. If I’m not careful, my thoughts can move right over this moment and begin chewing on the agenda items waiting for me when I return.

I woke up this morning with two words on my mind: “Pause and Wonder”. I had wondered what might be the subject for my December newsletter. Feeling the deadline looming, I continued to call out to God for inspiration. I think the Creator spoke. I believe he landed two words in my sleepy consciousness that is to carry me forward – and perhaps all of us during this crazy paced yet “wonder”ful time of year.

**Pause and Wonder.** In the next few days, I could easily race down the trail, timing my travel, and trying to finish the trek by noon. I could worry about sore knees, food and water, or getting lost on the trail. Or, as I am now praying, I could pause and get lost in the companionship and conversations with friends. I could linger with the feel of the sun (or rain, or snow) on my face. I could live in the wonder and depth of God’s incredible, beautiful creation.

Do you need to “Pause and Wonder”? Most people I speak to comment how quickly the year 2017 has disappeared. We have been given this Advent Season, as a gift to prepare ourselves for the coming Christ Child. God’s greatest work in all of creation is before us. We can run, worry, and agenda the whole experience away if we are not careful. In my devotion this morning, the writer of Hebrews says, “You must warn each other *every day* while it is still “today”... (Hebrews 3:12). There are many things, *every day*, that can take us down the wrong trail. Let us take the next four weeks to “pause and wonder” at the wonderful moments God has placed before us. Moments with our loved ones. Moments with our friends. Moments to recognize the beauty in life, in creation. And in all these moments, to direct our praise to God – that through his Son, Jesus Christ, at his determined mark in time, He has marked for us salvation now and forever.

Mary, the beloved mother of God, did not miss the moment of praise. She paused and proclaimed after the angel Gabriel delivered God’s miraculous news that nothing is impossible with God. Mary replied, “I am the Lord’s servant. May everything you have said about me come true.” (Luke 1:38). A few days later, as she celebrated with her cousin, Elizabeth, Mary paused and in “wonder”ment declared, “Oh, how my soul praises the Lord. How my spirit rejoices in God my Savior! For he took notice of his lowly servant girl, and from now on all generations will call me blessed. For the Mighty One is holy, and he has done great things for me.” (Luke 1:46-49)

May we “pause and wonder” at the great things God has done as this special Christmas Season approaches. **Praising God for a “Wonder”ful Life!** Pastor Mark
Our Saviour’s Lutheran Church
of Stanwood
1876 — 2017

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A voice cries out,
“Prepare the way of the Lord!”
Help us, O God,
prepare our hearts to welcome and worship you.

Decorating
Our Church for Advent and Christmas
Decorating will be done on Friday and Saturday, December 1 and 2. Volunteers are welcome. For more information please contact Robin Erickson, 360-941-1593.

OSLC Annual Christmas Dinner
The Christmas Dinner will be on Saturday, December 9; come at 5:30 for appetizers with dinner starting at 6:00. The main course will be salmon or prime rib. Cost is $15 per person. Sign-ups will start November 26 through December 3. Please invite a friend to come.
Entertainment is going to be a live radio show that you won’t want to miss!
Anyone wanting to help please contact Linda Haskins at 360-774-0387.
We will be decorating and prepping food on December 8.

WORSHIP SCHEDULE
Traditional Worship ~ 8:45 am
Altar Communion 1st Sunday
Processional Communion 3rd Sunday

Coffee Hour ~ 9:45 am
Sunday School ~ 10:15 am

Contemporary Worship ~ 10:15 am
Altar Communion 1st Sunday
Processional Communion 3rd Sunday
2018 Offering Envelopes
Offering envelopes will be available on Sunday, November 26, and on Sunday, December 3, in the narthex. Offering envelopes are for anyone, member or friend, who would like to participate in the financial contributions to our congregation. Envelopes may also be picked up in the office any time after December 3.

OSL Preschool
Preschool is off to a great and busy start this year with all of our classes filled. We are so thankful and blessed by our preschool and church families as we continue to grow our Preschool program! We are busy preparing for our upcoming Preschool Christmas Program on Wednesday, December 13th, at 6:00 p.m. All are invited!

Wreaths are here! Thank you to everyone who helped support our Preschool once again. The proceeds will help with funding for a few different charities we have chosen as well as helping to raise money to remodel the Fellowship Hall in the years to come!

Platinum Chefs
The OSLC Platinum Chefs will meet for cooking and a time of fellowship on Friday, December 1, at 10 a.m. in the kitchen. Please mark the date. All men are welcome!

Van Trip
Skagit Gardens
Friday, December 15, 10:00 AM
Please see the sign-up sheet in the narthex. Questions? Call Robin Erickson, 360-941-1593

Urgently Needed
People are needed to schedule and sign up worship assistants for the 10:15 Contemporary Services. This is done monthly and involves contacting people from the Volunteer Lists. We only have two schedulers. Two more would be very helpful. “Many hands make light work.” If you are able to help please call Robin Erickson at 360-941-1593. Thank you.

Thank You!
Thank you OSLC family for the opportunity to serve as the Children and Family Ministries Director the past three years! I truly enjoyed this challenge and opportunity to share the message, “God loves you, Jesus died for you, and He has a plan for you” with many children and families! I thank you all for the support and encouragement you gave me along the way!

Thank you again for the opportunity!
With a thankful heart, Deanna Khoury

Congratulations and God’s blessings to Trent Austin who was confirmed October 29, 2017.
GROW (God Renewing Our Women)

December 12 6:30 PM at the church

All women are invited to attend a new once-a-month Women’s Evening Small Group: "GROW", 2nd Tuesdays of each month, 6:30 p.m. at the church. Take time from your busy schedules to grow in faith and be renewed by God’s grace! Set in the evening so women who have commitments during the day are able to participate, and only once a month, our hope is this will be seen as a time of renewal and fellowship with other women rather than something to add to our ever-growing to-do lists. You do not need to be able to attend every month to participate, just join us as your schedule allows. November's meeting was a great time of fellowship with nine women and we encourage more to join us.

In December we will start a study called Breathe; Making Room for the Sabbath, written by The War Room's Priscilla Shirer. One of the greatest challenges for women in our culture is taking time to cease from all the activities and just breathe. We are in bondage to busyness. We constantly strive to complete the limitless to-do lists that hinder us from experiencing all that God has for us. By neglecting time for tranquility, serenity, and renewal, we limit our Christlikeness and miss out on some of God’s greatest gifts. In the Old Testament, Sabbath was given to the Israelites as a gift, and it is still a gift to us today. If you are weary, worn out, and exhausted, then the concept of Sabbath will change your life. We invite any woman who needs to be renewed to join us! Need childcare, let us know. For more information please contact Elsa Schwartz 206-714-7717 or Becky Wietzke 360-722-4377.

Martha Circle

Martha Circle will hold their annual Christmas Luncheon on Wednesday, December 13th, at 12:00 noon in the Fireside room. A brief business meeting and Christmas presentation will follow. The regular study will resume in January. All ladies are invited to join in the afternoon activities. Contact is Elsie Pritchard, (360) 629-3940.

Quilting

In December OSL Quilters will be meeting just once, on December 5th, from 10—2 in the Fireside Room. Coffee provided. Please bring a sack lunch if you are staying until 2 p.m. No sewing experience necessary. Come as you can and leave when you need to. For information, contact Marilyn Templeton, 360-629-4779.

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Faith and Film

Coming in January!

Join us Tuesday, January 23, as we look at films through the lens of spirituality. Movies are a prevalent part of today's society, and many main-stream films contain demonstrations of many Christian themes including: faith, spirituality, forgiveness, hope, and redemption. In January we will explore these themes in the movie "Chocolat" starring Johnny Depp, Juliette Binoche, and Judi Dench. When a single mother and her six-year-old daughter move to rural France and open a chocolate shop - with Sunday hours, during Lent - across the street from the local church, they are met with some skepticism.

We invite you to watch the movie ahead of time, and join us for dinner and discussion.

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We invite you to watch the movie ahead of time, and join us for dinner and discussion.
New Year's Eve Worship
One Worship Service at 9:45 AM
Also, to be ready for the new year we will have a special presentation on Disaster Preparedness.

Boscovet Project
A mission team will leave for Kenya to work with the Boscovet Project on January 11, 2018 for two weeks. The scope of the Project continues to grow beyond clean water and animal health although those two initiatives and the Boscovet Hope Academy are still the main focus. For example, in the last year, the Boscovet Project has purchased almost 5000 avocado trees and 1000 pounds of soybean seeds to create an ongoing source of income for the individual Boscovet families as well as serve as a source of income for the Project. The Days for Girls outreach continues as a growing component as does the micro-finance program. To date, the Boscovet Project in conjunction with Our Saviour’s Lutheran has placed 33 wells in the small villages where the members live.

Anyone who has an interest in serving others in a new and different way and setting is invited to apply for inclusion on this year’s team. You can talk to me or any of the previous trip members if you have questions. Past participants from OSLC include Irene Nelson, Tom & Carol Curtis, Kim Johnson, Tracy Lamb, Ric Shallow, Ben & Kelsey Ulrich, Jaimi McCall, Hailey McCall & Joyce Zeigen, or Teresa Luce. And if you are able to come along, we will once again be bringing school supplies, clothing, feminine hygiene kits, medical supplies, and more. Contributions of supplies of funds to purchase items (especially school supplies and books) there are appreciated. Prayer support is also needed for Boscovet families struggling with health and economic challenges. Over the past 10 years the Boscovet Project has been blessed by the outpouring of support by this congregation. Thank you so very much.

Dan Haskins

Fleece Scarves — Thank You!
Thank you to everyone who helped with fleece scarves. This ministry would not happen without many caring, giving hearts supporting Christmas House and this special project.
In Christ, Ramona

COMING UP:
Church Council
December 11, 7 PM
January Newsletter Items
December 11
Annual Reports
December 18
Annual Meeting
January 28, 2018
Moments For Missions from your Missions Outreach Team

Your MOT has been busy with exciting requests! We have heard from Amrita, a mission supported by our church for years. This is an orphanage in Nepal. Very recently, Housing Hope asked for help with filling stocking and donate money to buy gift cards for children in our community that live in Housing Hope homes. This, too, has been an ongoing mission for our church!

*Do you have a desire to get involved beyond what God has already called you to do?*

Now, we have a new mission brought us by a member of our congregation: the opportunity to send Christmas cards to inmates at Washington State Penitentiary. For several years, this member has accepted sheets for ten inmates with their names/addresses in order to send a Christmas card to each one of them. What's required? Anyone who takes one or more sheets is asked to send a Christmas card to each name on the sheet. The one accepting a sheet(s) of names provides postage and cards. The "how to's" are printed each sheet. Usually a few words of encouragement, or a Bible passage is included for encouragement. Each card is signed with only your first name. The return address is also on the sheet so no one should put his or her home address on the envelope. *The more of us that participate, the more inmates that can be reach with encouragement and the love of Jesus.* We will have the sheets available by the middle of December. FYI: Many inmates are forgotten and receive no mail throughout the year other than the Christmas card. There are about 2500 guys at the corrections complex so we'll be making a small dent.

*And don’t forget Mission Fest 2018.* Mark Saturday, January 27th for a day to learn about missions and celebrate what God is doing. The theme this year is: *What is the Gospel?* Google: Missions Fest 2018 Vancouver and read about this free event. We want to take a van to Vancouver so we can explore together. Sign-ups coming.

**Sunday Morning Fellowship Hour**

Many enjoy having a cup of coffee, or other beverage, and a little treat during our Sunday Coffee Hour. To be able to continue this, we need volunteers. Please sign up in the church kitchen.

**Making Holiday Cookies?**

Our Sunday Fellowship Hour is a great time to share! Please also consider bringing some of your favorites to share! Extras can be placed in our freezer for later use.

“At least they saved themselves a co-pay.”
The Stanwood/Camano Food Bank Christmas House

Again this year, OSLC’s Caring Place becomes “The Stanwood/Camano Food Bank Christmas House” on December 13th—19th. The Christmas House serves all children — babies to high school — who live within the boundaries of the Stanwood and Camano Island School District, who are served by our local food bank. Parents are given the opportunity to make appointments for this “shopping” experience. All gifts at the Christmas House are free. Appointments may be made at the Stanwood Camano Food Bank.

We try to give each child the following **new** (not used) items:

- Toy/Gift
- Toiletries, i.e. Toothbrush, chap stick, deodorant, toothpaste, shampoo, brushes/combs
- One package for each child of socks and underwear
- Clothing item for top and bottom, i.e. shirt, skirt, pants, pajamas
- Hats, scarves, gloves
- Pair of shoes
- Children’s books
- Homemade quilts, blankets, receiving blankets
- Wrapping paper, scissors tape, ribbons, bows gift bags

If you’d like to help — purchasing gifts or volunteering is the best way to be involved.

Each year, the hardest age group to serve is middle and high school-aged children. We think it’s because people love shopping for the younger kids. Here are some gift ideas that have been really popular in past years:

- Movie theater gift cards (Stanwood Cinemas)
- iTune Cards
- Fast Food and other types of gift cards
- Stanwood School District Sweatshirts
- Pajama bottoms (flannel), hoodies, other “stylish clothes
- For all ages, we always run short on socks — but the families are so thankful to receive them.

Volunteers are an essential part for the success of the Christmas House; we will serve approximately 800 children in one week’s time. If you are interested in volunteering your time, please sign up in the fellowship hall or contact Mardi Jorgensen at 360-913-1551 or email mardij1@aol.com.

Donations may be dropped at the Stanwood Camano Food Bank or Our Saviour’s Lutheran Church.

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**Housing Hope Holiday Program**

The Stanwood Ambassadors for Housing Hope are collecting $25 and $50 gift cards to QFC and Haggen to bless our local Housing Hope families during the holidays. Donations may be given to Dee Jonson or Carol Jensen, or may be placed in the offering plate and designated for Housing Hope Lervick and Lincoln Hill. Contact Dee Jonson (360-652-7110) or Carol Jensen (425-422-2244) for more information.

There are approximately 70 children at Lervick Family Village and Lincoln Hill. Christmas stockings will soon be available for those wanting to put a smile on the face of a child. Please contact Carol Jensen for more information.

Please partner with us as we bless the homeless and low income families of Housing Hope.
Altar Flowers

Looking forward to Advent and Christmas, we are once again supporting the Stanwood Senior class grad night fundraiser by purchasing ten 6-inch poinsettias for the altar railing. Four large poinsettias from QFC will decorate the altar stands. Contributions of any amount are welcome; simply place your check designated “altar flowers” in the offering throughout November and December.

With grateful thanks for your continued support, Candyce Sylling and Lina Richert

Prayer Requests

Please help us keep our prayer list current by contacting the office with updates.

Please pray for...

Friends and family of Jim Lund; Ralph and Doris Hatlen and family in the loss of Ralph’s sister, Betty Hatlen Lee; Audrey Knutson; B. J. Winship; Brother Dave Rodenberger; Nicole and Beckham Coutermarsh (daughter and son-in-law of Matt and Ann McCune; Bud Hutter; Dale Tetlow; Sharon Richards; Scott and Steve Jensen (sons of Carol Jensen); Roger and Linda Lervick; Beverley Klatt; Sandi Torrez; Rob S. Ulbricht; Jo Hoag; Barb and Jim Sickler; Jim Neher; Emily Brower (friend of Angela Libengood); Johnny O’Brien (nephew of Mickey Henderson); Steve Bodnar (friend of Kathy Beauchamp); Christie Robbin (friend of Michael Brady); Lauren Pickens; Steve Dams; John Gedstad (brother of Alex Gedstad); Dave and Rosemary Edwards (friends of Ramona Snowden); John and Kathryn Shirlock; Dean Fox (brother of Bob Fox); Don Hickey (brother of Barb Sickler); Gordon Pedersen; Pat Jones; Wayne Larson; Al Orsland; Paul Walderhaug; Joel Thorson; Judy Anderson; Kip Gibson and family; Kenny Yoder (nephew of Donna Cook); Kim Anderson, son of Donna Hefty; Marilyn Shipley; Barbara Hillman (Mardi Jorgenson’s mother); Ray Erps; Ric Shallow; Cameron Cozzi; Doris Hatlen; John White; Jim Woodward (Charlie Sylling’s nephew); Samson and Johnny Gard (Grant & Phyllis Gard’s grandsons); Eldon Allen; Gretchen Orsland

Pastor Mark, OSLC staff, Our Saviour’s Lutheran Congregation, Homeless, Armed Forces, Josephine & Warm Beach residents, Government and Community leaders

Scripture Texts

To better prepare for worship:

December 3, 2017
1st Sunday of Advent
- Isaiah 64:1-9
- Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
- 1 Corinthians 1:3-9
- Mark 13:24-37

December 10, 2017
2nd Sunday of Advent
- Isaiah 40:1-11
- Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13
- 2 Peter 3:8-15a
- Mark 1:1-8

December 17, 2017
3rd Sunday of Advent
- Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
- Psalm 126
- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
- John 1:6-8, 19-28

December 24, 2017 (Morning)
4th Sunday of Advent
- II Samuel 7:1-11, 16
- Psalm Luke 1:46b-55 or Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26
- Romans 16:25-27
- Luke 1:26-38

Christmas Eve
- Isaiah 9:2-7
- Psalm 96
- Titus 2:11-14

Christmas Day
- Isaiah 62:6-12
- Isaiah 52:7-10
- Psalm 97
- Psalm 98
- Titus 3:4-7
- Hebrews 1:1-12
- Luke 2:1-20
- John 1:1-14

December 31, 2017
1st Sunday of Christmas
- Isaiah 61:10—62:3
- Psalm 148
- Galatians 4:4-7
December 1-2, 2017
Decorating of Church, Narthex and Fellowship Hall

December 9
Christmas Dinner

December 12
“GROW” Women’s Group

December 13
Martha Circle ~
Christmas Luncheon
OSL Preschool Program

December 13—19
Christmas House

December 15
Van Trip to Skagit Gardens

December 31
One Worship Service at 9:45 AM