

Joyful Noise!

A monthly column
with all the noise
that is news about
Music & Worship at
St. John Lutheran
Church

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Advent Adventure

Similar words with similar derivations and definitions. According to *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language*,

Advent: The coming or arrival, especially of something extremely important

Adventure: An unusual or exciting experience

Yes, Advent is meant to be an ADVENTURE, an EXCITING time as we wait and watch for the COMING of something (someone) extremely important: Jesus Christ! The Savior, the Messiah, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords!

The Jews certainly knew what to expect and when to expect it; they had all the ancient prophets giving them the signs hundreds of years in advance. Were they ready? No, they MISSED IT! The Star in the East, Angels singing, a child born of a virgin in a manger in Bethlehem. Ooops, sorry - they weren't expecting

their king to arrive in such humble means, and so, they are STILL WAITING, 2000 years later!

What about YOU! Do you realize what we're doing in this exciting season of Advent? We read the prophets, and light candles, and sing strange songs that don't have anything to do with CHRISTMAS. WHY? Because it's ADVENT; a time to



PREPARE for the coming of something extremely important!

Last month I wrote about "Falling Back" and how the themes of Reformation and All Saint's and Thanksgiving were inviting us

to LOOK BACK to the past. ADVENT now invites us to LOOK FORWARD to the FUTURE in one of TWO WAYS. We RELIVE the days of old as we read the ancient prophecies that predicted Christ's first coming AND we look to the future when he will COME AGAIN. So - COME to ADVENT Worship and prepare your heart and mind to receive the true Gift of Christmas!

New Look!

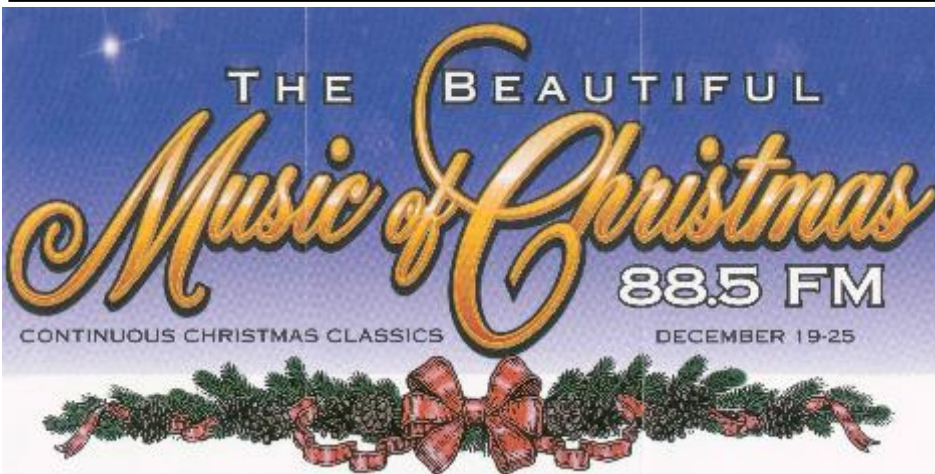
Hopefully, you've noticed that this month's Joyful Noise has a NEW LOOK. I've been reading "how to" articles for desktop publishers, and the professionals agree that three-column formats are easier to read. Hope you find it so.

Christmas Eve Concert & Service

The late evening Christmas Eve service will start 30 minutes EARLIER than last year. Arrive by 10 p.m. to hear 30 minutes of live prelude music performed by the many talented St. John musicians. The worship service, including the Gospel Choir, carol singing, communion, and candle-lighting, starts at 10:30 p.m..

Watch your bulletins for details regarding service times for the other services that day, since





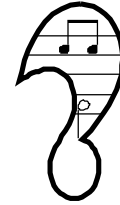
If your idea of "Good" Christmas Music is "Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer", skip to the next article, but if you enjoy the BEST Christian and popular Christmas songs and carols, tune in **WBNH FM 88.5** every weekday morning from 7 AM - 9 AM starting December 1st. Start your day with the joyous songs of the season! Then, beginning December 19th, they will play Continuous Christmas Music 24 hours a day through Christmas Day. The two hour morning music returns until New Year's day.

Christmas Trees - Sacred or Pagan?

Some denominations discourage Christmas decorations and trees, claiming that they are based on Pagan "Winter Solstice" celebrations. Lutheran tradition tells us that Martin Luther first "invented" the Christmas Tree in Germany. He found sacred symbolism in the beauty of its branches and way light reflected off its icicles in the snow. Today, we use this popular symbol as a way to teach our children about the TRUE MEANING of Christmas.

- P The **SHAPE** points to heaven - where Jesus came from and rose to.
- P The branches are ever-green, reminding us of **EVERLASTING LIFE**.
- P The **TRUNK** reminds us of the **CROSS** on which Jesus was crucified.
- P We top our tree with a **STAR** or an **ANGEL**, both of which appeared on that first Christmas night.
- P We place **GIFTS** under the tree, remembering the wise men who came to worship the newborn king.

- P We use **LIGHTS** and **TINSEL** signifying that Jesus is the **LIGHT** of the world, and **WE** are called to let our lights **SHINE**.
- P We decorate with balls of:
 - P **Gold & Silver** (representing the gifts of the 3 kings),
 - P **Blue** (God created the **HEAVENS** and **EARTH**),
 - P **Red** (for the **BLOOD** he shed for us),
 - P **Green** (He came that we might have **LIFE**), and
 - P **Purple** (Royal color for the King of Kings).
- So...Let your Christmas Tree lights **SHINE** as witness to the true **GIFT** of **CHRISTMAS**.



What happened to my Hymn Request?

ALL hymn requests are presented to Worship Committee to help pick hymns. We meet every-other month. Of course, if you request "How Great Thou Art" the same day we are singing it, you might have to wait a while before we sing it again. Every request we've received has been used in some way, unless it was for a song we couldn't



What are YOU doing NEW YEAR'S EVE?

"Spend NEW YEAR'S EVE at CHURCH? Are you CRAZY?"

Could be, but 27 people came to our 1st New Year's Eve party/watch-night service last year and had a great time! Now that the Y2K scare is over, why don't YOU plan to come this year! Games / Snacks / and Fellowship start at 8 PM, and we end the evening with a short New Year's meditation service ending precisely at mid-night as we **ALL RING BELLS** to welcome the New Year (Bells are provided - or **BRING** your



Until Next Month: Remember "*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given...And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*" (Isaiah 9:6).

Soli Deo Gloria (To God alone be the Glory)

Donald L. Bauer, Choral & Contemporary Music Director