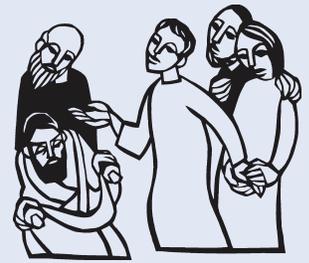




# the Spirit

DECEMBER 29/30, 2018



## life together



Jesus is suddenly twelve years old this weekend, Luke has taken us from the baby in a manger to a confirmation student who asks brilliant questions. The Christmas season has that power, we can feel like we are in a time machine as we celebrate the hopes and dreams of all the years. It is during these twelve days

of Christmas that we can return to W. H. Auden's Christmas Oratorio. Written during the second world war, in a time of great uncertainty, Auden names so much for our life and our longing. Two excerpts from the final section, before the closing chorus for you to ponder:

Well, so that is that. Now we must dismantle the tree,  
Putting the decorations back into their cardboard boxes —  
Some have got broken — and carrying them up to the attic.  
The holly and the mistletoe must be taken down and burnt,  
And the children got ready for school. There are enough  
Left-overs to do, warmed-up, for the rest of the week —  
Not that we have much appetite, having drunk such a lot,  
Stayed up so late, attempted — quite unsuccessfully —  
To love all of our relatives, and in general  
Grossly overestimated our powers....

There are bills to be paid, machines to keep in repair,  
Irregular verbs to learn, the Time Being to redeem  
From insignificance. The happy morning is over,  
The night of agony still to come; the time is noon:  
When the Spirit must practice his scales of rejoicing  
Without even a hostile audience, and the Soul endure  
A silence that is neither for nor against her faith  
That God's Will will be done, That, in spite of her prayers,  
God will cheat no one, not even the world of its triumph.

Yours in Christ Jesus,  
Pastor Peter

### End of Year Giving

As you look toward your end of the year giving, please note that your gifts need to be postmarked by December 31 to be credited for this year's tax purposes. If you are interested in making a stock gift please contact Obie prior to the gift so we can help facilitate the process.

### 100th Anniversary Year Highlights

Here are the upcoming key dates of celebrating our 100th Anniversary for you to note:

#### January 2019

12/13/14: Guest Preacher: Rev. Kristine Stedje and potluck on Sunday

#### February 2019

10: Annual Meeting  
17: Historical Hymn Sing

#### March 2019

3: Family Fun Event - 2DefyGravity

### Guest Preacher and Potluck

#### January 13

We welcome the Rev. Kristine Stedje on the weekend of January 12/13/14. Rev. Stedje is pastor at First Lutheran Church in Sioux City, Iowa. She was ordained at Central in 2014. She will preach for all the services and join us for a potluck on Sunday, January 13.

For the potluck, if you are coming with a crock pot, please drive up to the loading dock and volunteers will take them into the kitchen. Please don't forget to label your crock pot or serving dish, and cut your food beforehand. Our new kitchen has warming ovens if you need to keep your food warm and no need to bring serving utensils. We have enough.

Please bring a food item according to your last name:

- A-I: Salad
- J-R: Dessert
- S-Z: Main Dish

### Church Office Closed

Please note the church office will be closed on December 31 and January 1. If you are in need of pastoral care, please call the main church phone number, 612-870-4416, and the answering service will connect you to the pastor on call.

# news and happenings

## Guide to Prayer

### Listening for God

The one account we have of Jesus between his birth and his baptism by John in the river Jordan is when he is 12 years old and his family comes to Jerusalem for the Passover. If you know the movie, it is "Home Alone." There is parental anxiety, and a highly adaptive youth. It is worth pondering this week.

"Now every year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for the festival of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up as usual for the festival. When the festival was ended and they started to return, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Assuming that he was in the group of travelers, they went a day's journey. Then they started to look for him among their relatives and friends. When they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem to search for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Look, your father and I have been searching for you in great anxiety." He said to them, "Why were you searching for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he said to them. Then he went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them. His mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in years, and in divine and human favor." (Luke 2:41-52)

### Listening to your life

The whole account turns on one little word: assumption. The family assumed that Jesus was in the group, somewhere, as they departed. During Christmas and New Year's, it is a perfect time for us to reflect on our own assumptions. What do we assume about God? What do we assume about how life should or should not go? What do we assume about our primary relationships? The lesson concludes with Mary, once again treasuring all of this in her heart. She will need to reflect on her assumptions about Jesus as the gospel continues. By Easter Sunday, all assumptions will be shattered and renewed. Pause for a moment each day, light a candle to welcome God's presence. Take time to listen for God's invitation to reflect on your assumptions. Each day prayerfully ponder, treasuring all the ways God is at work in your life. Offer all of this to God in daily prayer.

## SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30

10:00 a.m. Worship

## MONDAY, DECEMBER 31

Building closed

## TUESDAY, JANUARY 1

Building closed

## WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 2

1:00 p.m. Bible Study with Preacher

6:00 p.m. Bell Choir

7:15 p.m. Central Choir

## THURSDAY, JANUARY 3

8:30 a.m. Street Voices of Change

9:00 a.m. Quilting for LWR

## FRIDAY, JANUARY 4

9:00 a.m. Quilting for LWR

## SATURDAY, JANUARY 5

5:00 p.m. Worship

5:45 p.m. Saturday Evening Fellowship

## Invitations in 2019

There are a number of wonderful invitations for you in 2019, ways to connect, be equipped, organize and invite. More details will follow.

### Spiritual Life Groups

In January you will have the opportunity to sign up to join a spiritual life group for the year. These will be small groups for intentional growth in faith, deepening of relationships and celebrating life together. You can form your own group of 6-8, or sign up to be put into a group by time of day or geography. Sign-ups will begin the weekend of January 5-6, with groups beginning in February.

### Reconciling in Christ – Statement of Welcome Discernment Process

You are invited to join a three-session discernment process, listening for God as we seek to become a Reconciling in Christ congregation by adopting a new and expansive welcome statement. Pastor Peter will lead each of the three discernment gatherings, and it is important to participate in each of the three times for prayer, conversation and engagement. Plan to attend on Sunday, January 6, 13 and 27 at 1:00 p.m. in the fireside room. The consensus arrived at in this process will be the recommendation at the Annual Meeting on February 10.



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**"SPIRIT" SUBMISSIONS**  
Submit items for consideration  
by Monday at 4 p.m. each  
week for the upcoming issue  
to [smasters@centrallmpls.org](mailto:smasters@centrallmpls.org)

**PRAYER REQUESTS**  
[prayers@centrallmpls.org](mailto:prayers@centrallmpls.org)

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