



CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CHURCH

755 Concordia Lane Steamboat Springs, Colorado 80487
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"Learning, Living, Sharing the Gospel"

December, 2014

No Room at the Inn

One recent summer vacation our family stopped for a night in Pinedale, Wyoming en route to Yellowstone National Park. It was a small, family owned hotel with a horseshoe shaped row of tiny rooms bordering the parking lot at the edge of town. It looked like the perfect place for the 'budget minded' traveler. At the front desk the 70-ish looking woman looked our family over and asked, "have you been camping?" "Yes" I answered, we've spent the last two nights camping in Winter Park, Colorado and we'd like a room tonight before heading up to Yellowstone tomorrow."

Her eyes narrowed and lips tightened as she looked at our dirty station wagon piled high with camping equipment and then she asked how long it had been since I'd had a bath. "Two days" I said, beginning to feel uncomfortably self-conscious. "\$275 a night" she said firmly, defiantly, almost angrily. It was clear she didn't want our business. But being a greedy soul, she was willing to condescend and allow us in for an exorbitant price.

As we climbed back into the car to leave, one of the kids piped up from the back seat and said, "Look on the bright side daddy, at least now you have your sermon illustration for Christmas this year."

"And Mary brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn" (Lk 2.7).

The Scriptures don't say *why* they had no room for Mary—let alone how long it had been since her last bath. But it got me to thinking, *what price do you and I demand before condescending to allow Jesus to come in?*

Many of us will allow Jesus to come into our lives, we let Him in to save us, but only after we've set some conditions and agreed upon the price. "I'll let Jesus in" some of us say in our hearts, "but He better not get my life messy by asking me to change the way I want to live *my* life!" "I'll rent to Jesus, but He'd better not get the bath towels dirty wiping away sin, or worse, He better not ask me to get *my* hands dirty helping other people to stay warm & fed, feeding them the life giving Gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ."

When Jesus comes to your house, do you ever narrow your eyes, look Him over, tighten your lips and say, "before you come in Jesus, you need to promise me you won't say anything that might upset the family. We don't want to hear what you have to say about Baptism, Holy Communion, homosexuality or the eighth commandment—it might offend a member or guest of the household! "I'll let you in Jesus, but you'll have to promise to behave. Don't ask *me* to tell any of the neighbors that you're here; don't ask *me* for money and for Pete's sake Jesus, just stay in your room and don't embarrass me by joining us on the sofa while we watch the nightly sleaze on tv!"

Just like the innkeeper in Pinedale, there are days you and I really don't want Jesus' business because it might make our lives a little messy. But being greedy people, we will accept Jesus' offer of eternal life and salvation, but only at an exorbitant price—"you may save me Jesus, just don't get in the way of *my* life and the way I want to live it!"

It is true, you know, having Jesus come and stay *is* messy. With His own righteous, innocent and holy blood, Jesus wants to wash you clean of all the grime and filth—not from camping—but from a life of sinful rebellion against God!

Jesus left heaven and came to earth so He could visit you—not on your terms, but *His*. When you and I pray to our Father who is in heaven and ask Him, '*Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven,*' God answers our prayer by sending His one and only begotten Son.

Jesus, God the Son, comes to you and moves in so that God's will may be done in *your* life even as it is in heaven. The whole process is messy, especially for Jesus who gets His hands dirty cleaning up your life and washing you clean, pouring out the abundance of His own Holy Spirit. When He's done scrubbing, cleaning and dressing you in His own righteousness, Jesus then dresses Himself in *your* filthy rags, carries them to the cross and puts them to death there—cursed by God and punished with death—leaving you alive in Jesus' place and clothed in Jesus' righteousness for a joyful eternity, reconciled with God.

When it comes to making 'room at the inn', we've got it all backward. The real story of Christmas is that *Jesus has made room for you* at the 'Paradise Inn'. Jesus made your reservation on the day of your Baptism. The Christmas story that begins in Bethlehem finds its fulfillment at the heavenly inn: "*In my Father's house are many mansions:*" Jesus promises you this Christmas, "*if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also*" (John 14:2-3).

Merry Christmas!
--Pastor Harmon



Happy December Birthdays

12-1	Judy Sherrod	12-20	Trevor Davis
12-10	Ellen Dalton	12-21	Raya Duryea
12-10	Susan McIntosh	12-22	Brad Nelson
12-10	Olivia Williams	12-24	Clare Tarcha
12-16	Jessica Fritz	12-26	Eryn Rinck
12-17	Dave Moss	12-28	Rebecca Duryea
12-19	Allison Williams	12-30	George Noyer
12-20	Ben Bradfield	12-30	Stacey Sandvik

Happy December Anniversaries

12-20	Kim & Charlyn Vance
12-21	Dave & Sherri McKnight
12-23	Ron & Donna Wentzel
12-28	Steve Gunberg & Sherry Carrier

Advent and Christmas Worship Schedule 2014

◇ **Advent Services 12/2, 12/9 & 12/16**
Soup Supper from 5:30--6:30pm & Worship Service upstairs at 6:30pm

◇ **Advent Soup Supper & Christmas Caroling 12/23**
◇ **Soup Supper 5:30-6:15pm and Caroling downtown following supper**

◇ **Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship:**
5:30pm , 7:30pm & 9:30pm (Holy Communion at 9:30pm)

◇ **Christmas Day Service (one service) 9:00am**



Christmas Poinsettias



Poinsettias will again be used to beautify our Sanctuary and Entryway as we celebrate the birth of Jesus as our Savior. If you can help us purchase the poinsettias, please donate \$15 or more and note "poinsettias" in the memo field. Checks can be left in the "flowers" mailbox above the coffee station. We will leave the poinsettias through Epiphany.

Concordia Members' Corner.....

Mission Trip to Denver to help sorting at the Operation Christmas Child Processing Center will be Saturday, December 6h.

Men's Bible Breakfast is December 13th at 7am at the Egg & I. Join us for fellowship, study and food.

Pancake Breakfast: The Sr. High Youth will be serving up pancakes, bacon, sausage and fruit between services on 12/14. Please come and fellowship and eat.

Sr. High Youth Mission Trip

Sr. High Youth will be heading to Denver to bring the Angel Tree gifts to the Sun Valley Youth Center children on 12/6.



Please return the Christmas gifts for the Sun Valley kids no later than 12/4.

Sisters in Spirit (S.I.S.)

Thank you for your donations of cookies, breads, crafts and other specialty items. We also thank all those who donated their hard work, time and talents to this special event. It was a huge success and raised over \$6,600 for missions!

Please join us on Saturday, December 13th for Christmas Caroling at Casey's Pond. We will meet in the front lobby at 11:20am and begin caroling at 11:30am

Concordia's Website

The address is: www.steamboatlutheran.org



Missed a Sunday? Do you want to hear the sermon? You can click on the sermon section and choose the audio sermon and listen to it at your computer! Also, find the latest news and events and the calendar which will keep you up-to-date on meetings and happenings!