Joy to the World
Trisha Thomas
JOY TO THE WORLD was the theme for the Concordia University 1999 Christmas Concert held in the Buetow Memorial Music Center Post held in the Student Union at 7:30, Saturday December 5 at 3:00 and 7:30. The Jubilate Choir and Christmas Chorus, Bell Choir, Band, and Chamber Ensemble performed a variety of Christmas music.

There was a mix of traditional and non-traditional music. Of course, this is a truly special event. The audience was also able to participate by singing hymns such as "O Come, All Ye Faithful", and "Joy to the World."

The Christus and Jubilate Choruses sang parts of Johann Sebastian Bach's Christmas Oratorio, as well as carols from Poland, France and Africa. The Chamber Ensemble contributed the beautiful "Andante," also by Bach. The bell choir sang in the season with "Ukrainian Bell Carol" and the band played a medley of English carols.

All three concerts had a wonderful turnout, which added to the musical reward for the time and dedication put in by all performers. The concerts also featured soloists, both instrumental and vocal which added a beautiful contrast to the ensemble music.

The Christmas season at Concordia University has officially begun with the stunning Christmas Concert. Look for news on the upcoming choir trip to Poland in future issues!

Concordia Students Speak Out; Student Senate Listens
Sarah Johnson
On November 17 the student senate sponsored an Open Forum held in the Student Union. This event gave students an opportunity to state problems and concerns that they have about issues on Concordia University's campus. The event was attended by all performers. The concerts also featured soloists, both instrumental and vocal which added a beautiful contrast to the ensemble music.

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Dunn Brothers Draws Diverse Crowd

Jonna Stark

Back, but the shop exudes a nature of big coffee chains. Not only is it laid work. "I love the atmosphere here," says Anna, veteran of the coffee shops. "It is so much more laid back than the big coffee chains." Not only is it laid back, but the shop exudes a nature of originality that customers love.

Although Dunn Brothers recently became a chain, it still seems to keep a unique feeling of being a small shop again and again. "I cannot drink Caribou or Starbucks coffee," 21-year old customer Jen firmly states, "The coffee is not as good as Dunn's; plus, pretentious yuppies seem to hang out there." The quality of Dunn Brothers' coffee is probably because they have their own roast—and something that very few coffee shops have anymore. This roast allows them to keep the coffee beans very fresh because they can roast them every day.

Not only is the quality of coffee excellent, but the atmosphere of the place also makes this shop unique. From old and young, to punk and prep, Dunn Brothers attracts a unique blend of customers. Bob, 46, is sitting outside at one of the tables in front of the shop. His feet are up on the table and he is relaxing. In one hand he's holding a cup of coffee and in the other he's holding a half-smoked cigar. Bob has been a recovering alcoholic and drug addict for 23 years. He started frequenting this coffee shop 10 years ago when he moved to St. Paul. He tries to make it to the shop once a day. He loves Dunn Bros, diverse clientele and he also likes that it reminds him of an European bistro. "I've formed some very good friendships here in the course of 10 years," he says. Bob fondly recalls how he has seen kids grow up before his very eyes at Dunn Brothers. He says, "I've talked to high school students who regularly come in for coffee. And then a few years down the road they'd be in college. Then I'd see them bringing in a boyfriend or girlfriend. Before I know it, they're buying coffee with a wife by their side and a child in their arms."

For Bob, Dunn Brothers is a perfect place to read the paper or a book, contemplate life, or just unwind from his day. Bob also enjoys Dunn Brothers because it is so easy to strike up a conversation with anyone. He talks about a wide variety of subjects with others including spirituality and his Native American heritage. As he is smoking, a man walks out of the store with a latte in his hand and says goodbye to Bob as he walks toward his car. "That man," Bob says, "is an attorney. We share with each other parenting dilemmas and joys."

The List is Out

Carrie Wisbeck

In honor of the holiday season, we've compiled a list of some of our favorite Christmas movies. So, whether you're worn out from Christmas shopping or studying for finals, take a break and catch one of these classic Christmas movies:

**It's a Wonderful Life (1946)**
The perennial Christmas favorite. You've seen it a hundred times, but somehow it never gets old!

**White Christmas (1954)**
Another classic with Bing Crosby, Danny Kaye, and Rosemary Clooney. A good one to watch with the family—again.

**A Christmas Story (1983)**
Ralphie is determined to convince his parents, teacher, and Santa that a Red Ryder BB gun is not only safe, but also the perfect gift for him this Christmas. A much-loved film mentioned by many of our readers.

**Miracle Inn (1942)**
Bing Crosby, Fred Astaire in a happy little musical love story.

**Miracle on 34th Street (1947 and 1994)**
Twenty-three-year-old Saskia, another regular at Dunn's, and her father Lou Eijssen, 55, are sitting together at a table inside. Lou is from the Netherlands. He is visiting his daughter who lives in St. Paul and attends Macalester University. She may be studying and he may be reading, but they still feel they are getting quality time with one another just by being in each others' company. And of course, Lou Eijssen is enjoying some "good coffee" which comes in much bigger cups than he is used to in the Netherlands.

Not only are the coffee and atmosphere good at Dunn Brothers, but the live music every Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights continues to help crowd the quaint coffee shop. The performers include a variety of different music styles and talents, and the live music always draws a large and unique crowd.

Even on music nights—which tend to be a little more rowdy—the shop is still laid back and relaxed as the regulars continue in their daily Dunn coffee rituals. "I've worked here for four years," says Jamie, another worker, "I love being here. If I were to make the money, I'd definitely leave. But it's not; I stay because of the incredible people I meet. If you want to visit a place with quality coffee and a unique atmosphere, check out this shop on Snelling and Grand. Dunn Brothers opens at 6:30am and closes at 11pm on Monday through Friday. On Saturday, it opens at 7:30 and closes at midnight, and on Sunday it closes at 6:30am.

The Cattle are Bowling

Carrie Wisbeck

For your reading enjoyment—misheard Christmas song lyrics!

**A Christmas Story**

Misheard Lyrics: The cattle are bowling—or The cattle are mowing... Or The cattle are bowling...

**Feliz Navidad**

Misheard Lyrics: There's fleece on my dog or Her knees are knobby now! or E- leas on my dog or At least mommy died or Please never die

**Silent Night**

Correct Lyrics: Let every heart prepare...

**Away in the Manger**

Correct Lyrics: Feliz Navidad

**Silent Night**

Misheard Lyrics: Dashing through the snow with on horse, soap, and sleigh

**A Christmas Carol**

Correct Lyrics: Dashing through the snow in a horse open sleigh

**Silent Night**

Misheard Lyrics: Drown young virgin! or Ran you virgins, mother and child

Correct Lyrics: Round you virgin, mother and child

**Silent Night**

Misheard Lyrics: Silent night, hold me tight

Correct Lyrics: Silent night, holy night

**Winter Wonderland**

Misheard Lyrics: In the meadow we can build a snowman and pretend that he is partially brown, or In the meadow we can build a snowman, and pretend like he is sparse and dirty

Correct Lyrics: In the meadow we can build a snowman and pretend like he is Parson Brown

**Winter Wonderland**

Misheard Lyrics: Later on, we'll perspire... or Later on, we'll conspire...

**Winter Wonderland**

Misheard Lyrics: Walkin' round in women's underwear.
Sword, Concordia University

December 10, 1999

Letter from the Editor

Power of the press...that's what I'm planning now in the hopes that I will be happy...There have been several problems on campus as most of you are well aware of. I'm going to attempt to address some of them. First of all a rift has opened up between the student Senate and the faculty. Second, the students are not taken as seriously as the other team. Senate Student wants people to stop blaming them for everything, and the faculty ends up taking the heat. Third, there are no decisions being made, but without all the facts, we have no right to complain. I have printed letter after letter of the two sides, the Senate and the College, Now that all the sentiments are out, we should deal with it. How can we deal with it? First of all I think it takes a little tolerance.

Secondly, I think it takes a little understanding. Thirdly, there needs to be a little less selfishness; Concordia is not a place for one type of student. I'm not trying to blame anyone; I have been guilty of the complaining many times. It is the development of irritation. It is the development of deaf ears, and a penchant for inflicting pain. Perhaps Concordia is unsure of God's plan for the future, perhaps it is the simple human incapability for making good on a commitment. Or, perhaps it doesn't matter, for perhaps this has become the status quo.

With the past having been written, and while the future remains unknown, stare shamefacedly at your utter failure, and commit. Commit to challenging the new and improving the old. Commit to fessing any mistakes over which you still have jurisdiction, and commit to reform your thinking. If nothing else, pray that the Lord grants you the wisdom and strength of character needed to better govern this institution in the future. Joshua Whitcomb

Professor takes pride in students Schunk, Knell

Dear Concordia University Community:

I want you to know that I have always been proud of the students at Concordia University, but I can't remember a time that I was prouder of them than on this last Tuesday evening. I attended the student forum from 7-9 p.m. at the Student Union. This forum dealt with difficult and potentially divisive issues. I want to complement President Max Knoell, Student Senate President, and Jake Schunk, Student Senate Secretary for the professional way in which they ran the forum.

Further, I compliment the students of Concordia University who attended. They asked fair and challenging questions. Even more important was their redolent and respectful manner in which they addressed both the administrators and fellow student colleagues.

I realize that with all tough issues, everyone does not get everything they want. This will probably never happen. However, we need to continue the dialogue with each other. We need to dialogue so we can understand each other's points of view. Because if nothing else, things will change positively and we can reach our goals.

Last of all, I am comforted because I know we will be in good hands down the road, that is, if, the other night is any indication of the leadership abilities of the next generation. Thank you Concordia students. You make me proud.

From the President

Christmas: Past, Present, and Beyond...

When we meet after semester break we will have moved from the 1990's to the year 2000. For some reason, many fear that transition. I do not. There is no greater religious reason for the fear. If you count milliseconds by the birth of Jesus of Nazareth, the 2000th anniversary of his birth took place already 3 or 4 years ago. Some fear our computers. True, computers may glitch, but computers are tools. Concordia can not be a University for DCE students and pre-seminary students? Yes. Is there also a stereotype of Concordia soccer coach Bryan Doherty. What a shame that this destruction of promotion can be a good thing. We can make some changes in this school; however, none of these changes will be made by one person, or even one group alone. Senate is working on reformulating the forum idea so that it accommodates everyone, and can be more effective in making the changes. The students need to take the school seriously, as well as taking themselves seriously. Can anything be changed this year? No. Can anything be done on one or two things? Of course. Now is the time to get involved. If the student body is unable to handle change then the school will become stagnate. What is more important than the school becoming stagnant is being able to adapt to change when Concordia is in the past. Everyone that comes through the university is one their way somewhere. The world is constantly changing. Things can change for the better or the worse, you are in charge of how it affects you that it is time. The changes that Concordia University are going through right now can be exciting. As all changes are, they are rough in the beginning. It is incredible how much potential we have as a school right now. It would be terrible to ruin this. We are the ones who have been going to leave this legacy behind. It is the current student body who holds the key to the dynamics that this University is going to hold in the next several years. That is an incredible responsibility to hold, and a rewarding one. It is a responsibility charged to the students of the Christ-centered University. I realize that not all of the students are Christians—that's fine, this is your school too. It does mean that the school that you have chosen is a Christian University with a mission statement that centers around the Gospel, that needs to be respected.

Concordia is not an institution. It is a long thing. It is a made up of people who form the characteristics of what kind of school it is. Take pride in that, take pride in the Golden Bear. Let's look to the music, let's look to the plays. Theatre people, go see a volleyball game, cheer for your team. Church work students, it will be your Christmas present embraces family, friends, and the Concordia campus. I have enjoyed walking the campus at night. I have enjoyed the Christmas decorations shining from various residence hall rooms. I enjoyed putting the lights in front of our house to somehow brighten the long winter evenings. As the first semester ends, I do believe "LIFE IS PRAISE." What does the year 2000 and beyond bring? None of us knows. But where there is faith and love, there is also hope. Christmas should be a spiritual time. For those of us who are Christian, we believe the future is held in God's love in Jesus Christ. That love dreams of a time when the blind will see, the deaf will hear, the lame will walk, the poor will hear good news as the prophet Isaiah wrote so long ago. This Christmas, by the grace of God, I dream of a future where the homeless will have a roof over their head, the hungry will have food, and the unfed will know love. May God fill your holiday season and thoughts with pleasant memories from the past; precious experiences from the present and profound grace based hope for the future.

**Editor’s note** This letter refers to the very recent departure of Concordia University’s Men’s and Women’s soccer coach, Brian Doherty.

The Sword invites all opinions on this matter.

The Sword welcomes your comments. Your opinions reflect the author's opinion and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Sword editors or Concordia University.
Volleyball Team fought hard through season, ending with record of 9-33 for First year in NCAA II

Letter to the editor

Athlete gives his side of argument

The epitome of Concordia gone wrong...

I am writing in response to a number of vocal and public shots taken at the Golden Bear and athletics here at Concordia University. First off, I will explain who I am. I am, apparently the opposite of what many students want to have at this university. I am an athlete, which appears to be strike one, and I am not Christian, which is strike two. Strike three comes from my idea that the Golden Bear is good for athletics, as well as the University. With all these strikes against me, I am obviously the type of student that is "wrong with Concordia." I am the epitome of losing faith in the school I attend. This type of school. With that said, I should pack my bags and go? I do not think so. In the October Issue of The Sword, the Golden Bear athletic programs were harshly criticized. "I have seen a big drop off in the Christian atmosphere here at Concordia," was written. I am obviously the reason. However, I do not know exactly what a "Christian atmosphere" is. I have Christian friends. Does Concordia need Christians? No more Hanukkah parties for me. I volunteer, along with numerous other athletes, members of the Golden Bears, in numerous organizations on campus, and have been in the past. I guess Concordia really goofed when they let me be a peer advisor as well as a resident advisor. They let a non-Christian athlete have some authority as far as campus life is concerned. I will take my five ride (which does not exist at Concordia) and go home. I think making a big deal of the Golden Bear is good, not "the biggest waste of money at all time." Name for me another school that does not take pride in its athletic programs, and bashes it when pride is attempted to be instilled. The mascot needs work, but the idea is not bad. I do not own a single item of paraphernalia that says "Comets," but I do own a few "Golden Bear" things. Wait, I better return them. "What is our focus?" That was how the letter from the Sword in October ended. The focus is not me. I came to Concordia for the education and communication programs, but obviously I did not know the focus. I would not be here if there was no football team either. Gosh, I am out of place. I wonder if my friends know that I should not be here.

Also, in the last issue of The Sword, the Golden Bear was compared to the Golden Cali. To put it plainly, this comparison is far fetched on ideas that are completely ridiculous. I am a Golden Bear, but I do not follow it. I am proud to be an athlete, and represent the Concordia University Golden Bears. I do not worship the bear and I do not idolize the bear. I recognize what the bear is, and that is a mascot. It was also said that "The Golden Bear symbolizes a small school trying to be a big business, which is a lack of trust in God." What is wrong with aspiring to grow? Does God want us to have spirit? Are we not trying to expand, more God? Or am I not qualified to answer these questions, because I am a Christian, and cannot defend them? I have read this story from the Torah (some people call that the Old Testament). I recognize what it said. It is a stretch, at best, to say it compares to the Golden Bear. The bear is a symbol of spirit, and way to represent Concordia, in athletics and out of athletics. The calf was to be lifted up, making God more expansive. If you're missing out. No hockey skills necessary. There are five coed Hockey teams competing this year for the crown. There is currently a dynasty at stake for the team "Peat," the three-time defending intramural champions. Games are played Tuesday nights, so come see if any one can stop this unbeaten team.

Sports

Sword, Concordia University

December 10, 1999

Barbara Eckhoff

Concordia University offers a variety of sports throughout the school year, creating opportunities for the "all-star athletes" who couldn't find their shoes on the day of trials and for those who like to wear "Golden Bear" on their feet.

Barbara Eckhoff

Bret Pavlicek

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Men's Basketball starts season in Hawaii
Ready for NSIC Conference Play

Joe Austin

A 2-2 start, including a third place finish at the BYU-Hawaii Tournament, has the Golden Bear men's basketball team poised to tackle their first season in the NSIC conference.

The men began their 30 game schedule with a 79-77 victory at Mayville State on November 20. Endo Aranbarri led the attack with 19 points and three assists. Matt Oswald, Ben Kloeppe1 and Nathan McLeod added six rebounds each in the victory. The Golden Bears shot a season high 46 percent, and also set season highs in steals with 15 and blocked shots with four.

St. John's, the second opponent for the Golden Bears, proved to be too much on November 21, as the Johnnies defended their home court, handing CU an 84-62 defeat. Matt Oswald led CU in scoring with 16 points and also grabbed six rebounds.

For the next two games of the young season, the men boarded a flight and winged to Hawaii for the BYU-Hawaii Tournament. Once on the ground, their first opponent was the host team, BYU-Hawaii. Despite 16 points on 8-14 shooting from Aranbarri, and nine points and six assists from Josh Delich, the Bears fell short 92-75. The Bears would fair much better in the second game, securing a 3rd place finish with a 90-87 victory over Doane College. Several players turned in strong performances, including Brandon Oswald who scored 15 points on 9-13 shooting, including 4-4 from three-point range. McLeod shot 8-10 from the floor and 8-8 from the free throw line in scoring 24 point to lead the Bears. Delich scored 18 points and dished out seven assists. Aranbarri, who was selected to the all-tournament team, scored 16 points and added four assists.

The Bears played St. Thomas at the Metrodome on December 2 and host Crown College at home on December 3. Conference play started at Mankato State the 7 before hosting Winona State on the 11 and St. Cloud State on the 18.

Season Looks
Challenging for Women's Hoops

Melissa Bargfrede

The season looks to hold some challenges for the Golden Bears' women's basketball team, but along with challenges come opportunities for excellent games. Head Coach Crystal Flint-Holsman is back for her third year to lead the team, assisted by Concordia alumnus Connie Kiedrowski and newcomer John Motherwell.

Hard work and talent combine forces to build the 1999-2000 team. New freshmen as well as a great class of transfers make up the majority of the team. The only returning players this year are junior Elise Williams and sophomores Katherine Bates and Blair Nample. These three made up the core leadership last year for the team. Bates' capabilities at point and Williams' experience at forward will surely be counted on, as will the versatility offered by Nample, who played at several positions last year.

This Concordia squad opened its season at home on
Community Basks in Christmas Memories, Not All Go to Grandmother’s House

Margaret Koegel, fifth year administrative assistant

My favorite memory of Christmas is when my father was still alive. My family and I would go out to shop for my extended family. We would buy a lot of presents. Everyone was rushing all day, someone would always be fighting with someone. the turkey is always dry... So my mother took it upon herself to decide that she would spend Christmas Eve with her five children, at home, relaxing for the entire day. I don’t know if we have ever had so much fun and been so silly around each other. It was called “boundless”. Aimee Bruening, student

There were seven of us kids growing up and then my mom and dad. We always had trouble deciding how to open presents because there were so many of us and we all wanted to watch each other open each gift. We kids never had any money so it was always hilarious to see what kind of gifts our siblings would come up with, so to solve our problem, my creative brother came up with this idea. He put a bunch of little tags in a glass. There was a tag in the glass for every gift exchange possible. He always got to draw the first one and whatever the tag said is what went. For example, if he pulled out Mom gives to Dad, then my mom gave her gift to my Dad and we all watched him open it and then my dad would draw another tag which would read two different people. This would take us hours to do, but it was so fun and a great time to spend together.

One of my favorite Christmas memories is of my wife and our three children sitting in our living room around a well decorated Christmas tree singing Christmas carols and hymns. We would take turns choosing which song to sing to the music. Greichon Beerco, president’s administrative assistant

On Christmas Eve, my grandmother always invites everyone to our house for dinner and after Christmas Eve Service, we would all pile in the car and head out to see the Christmas lights. After we were finished with every single one in the living room for our own little program, which had been dutifully planned by my brother and me. Everyone had a part in the program. Grandma would choose the hymns we’d sing. My Dad would read the Christmas story from the Bible. My Mother would read “Twas the Night Before Christmas” in her most dramatic way. I would sing or play a flute solo and my brother would play a cornet solo. When we were small and had lines memorized from the church Christmas program, those would also be part of the program. We always closed with the Lord’s Prayer and Silent Night. Sarah Pieper, junior

Margaret Koegel, student

One of my favorite Christmas memories is being a child at home, relaxing for the entire day. I don’t know if I have ever had so much fun and been so silly around each other. It was called “boundless”. Aimee Bruening, student

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Ornd Music Theatre

seeks PT sales associate to sell tickets by phone. Sales & customer serv. exp. required. Must be computer literate. 30 hrs/wk, weekdays between 8:45am and 5:45pm, shifts are: full time, afternoons or evenings. $7/hr. Call 651-229-3619, fax resume to 651-224-1830, or email jobs@orndway.org. EEO/AA.

Make Christmas Earth User Friendly Tips for Saving While Saving Money

Margaret Koegel, student

Margaret Koegel is familiar with the day after Thanksgiving: bust out the credit card and put ourselves into hundreds, sometimes thousands of dollars of debt from shopping. During this shopping day of the season, lines form outside of some stores long before they open. During this time of reflection and renewal, most people tend to feel more overwhelmed and exhausted with all of the holiday activities. During this time of year, most everyone is short of time and in an attempt to show their love for others, they give. They give toys, clothes, pets, books, movies, music, stocks, bonds, and cash, cold hard cash. Let us not forget about sweet Aunt Mildred, who gives socks and underwear every single year. All of this giving may have a skewed connotation, and giving and giving and giving more may tell someone “I haven’t spent the time I had wished to this year, so this is my way of making you feel special, like an important part of my life.” We all know that the more material things we have, the less value any individual item has. With nothing has much value anymore, we give more in order to provide some sort of value. Where is the love?

Here are some ways to reduce consumption over the upcoming holiday season:

1. Brown grocery bags with simple decoration work for wrapping paper!
2. Purchase gift wrapping paper made from recycled paper.
3. Simply tie a bow around extra large gifts, opposed to wasting all of that paper.
4. Buy greeting cards made from recycled paper, OR use your laptop to send e-cards.
5. Use yourself as a gift (babysitting, an afternoon of cards, preparing a dinner, etc.); what a way to save some cash!
6. Give tickets (sporting events, theater, museums) or gift certificates to the recipient who will cherish the experience provided.
7. After the holidays, remember to collect all unused goodwill gifts and contact a Charity (for example, The Epilepsy Foundation or Goodwill) that could put these goods to some sort of use. Seasons greetings with a reminder to be friendly
If Only I May Finish the Race...

‘One Who Goes All Out’

De Carter

If Only I May Finish the Race...

I regret that after the beginning of the season I saw more volleyball practice than games. On the other hand, seeing student athletes in practice day after day, week after week teaches something about commitment that we could all learn from. If you have taken some time to get acquainted with volleyball, in either college or high school, you’ve probably been impressed. Both when players are well executed in a game and when they are practiced over and over again are impressive. In some ways, of course, the spike with its display of power and control is awesome. Then I think of trying to oppose a spike—a good block—well, no, I don’t want to think of that because of all that power coming at you. The willingness to block, yet alone the skill and its practice—impressive. But I don’t think that that is a Christmas issue.

The dig might be a Christmas issue. You’ve recognized the pads team members wear? It seems to me that for some digs the players deserve as much as it takes a football team. Now, as I understand it, any dig “counts”: if you keep the ball in play you’ve served your team. But I’m thinking especially of those all out, flat out, hit-the-floor-handed-desperate digs that save the point, that prevent the kill. What else would you call it than a dig, if God is in the manger where the sheep usually eat? Is this attacking all along the net and none of us but one is smart enough or fast enough to prevent the hill. There is one who goes all out, flat out, hits the dirt and gets hurt in the process, for the rest of the team. In a sense, God spent all of eternity practicing for the match that involved Adam and Eve. There was a court on the earth, but God chose to risk it and get himself dusty, to save the point, to make the win possible for the team.

and he had no pads when he hit the

Why Do We Have Advent Before Christmas?

Pastor Berke

One of the questions I hear from students all the time is “Why can’t we celebrate Christmas more before we go home on break? We don’t get to sing enough of the carols and Christmas songs that everyone else seems to be singing. What’s the Advent thing all about?” While I was asked to write about Advent, I’d like to explore the themes of Advent with you.

Recently I read an article about Advent in The Phoenix and there was a friend who says, “Every Advent I feel like a character in a bad detective novel. I know what’s going to happen, and yet I pretend to be stupid enough not to have figured it out. Good grief, everybody knows that Jesus is going to be born at the end of the story. After all, why else would the color for Advent be blue, but that we know the baby is a boy?” Frankly, I’d never thought about the color connection. I assumed it was the color of royalty for the soon to come King. However, over Thanksgiving break I preached at Hope Lutheran church and found out the color blue is the color of HOPE. Advent is our season of HOPE.

The four weeks of Advent are not weeks spent in denial. We are not looking forward to December 25. We are not looking forward to Christmas—not really. We are considering all the promises God has made to us and the promises He fulfilled in the incredible miracle of the Incarnation. God’s character is waiting in hope for God to send them the Messiah. We know that the Messiah came to us in Christ Jesus. But we are a “waiting people” just as they were a waiting people. We celebrate and affirm that “Our Lord has come!” (Which, by the way, is one meaning for the word Advent.)

We also cry out in hope saying, “Come, O Lord!” (the other meaning for the word Advent, which is a translation of the first century cry of the early Christians in Aramaic, Maranatha). You see, the word Advent is actually a play on words!

The glorious cry of Christmas that “God is With Us” enables us to sing glorious alleluias, happy carols, and joyous “God is With Us” enables us to sing glorious alleluias, happy carols, and joyous hymns of praise. Advent invites us to step back from the blatantly commercial aspects of the secular Christmas season to consider the state of our world and the desperate need all people have for the Savior God sent to us in Jesus. Advent encourages us to prepare our hearts for a meaningful celebration of the promise God kept at Christ’s birth and acknowledge there are promises God will yet fulfill. “Our Lord has come!” and “Come, O Lord” remain the cries of Advent.

Is it wrong to sing Christmas carols in this season? Not really, as we do know that God kept His promise and sent us His only-begotten Son. That is reason enough to praise God at all times. Does Advent pull us back from the desperate theory of this time of year to consider the true meaning of the gift of our Savior, Jesus, and the promises God will keep? If so, then Advent isn’t in conflict with Christ’s return? Yes. So let yourself be torn a bit by the quandary of this pun called Advent. “Rejoice greatly, O daugh-

Stephanie Gymn

A few reminders of spiritual life events during the week:

- Every other Sunday CMS (Concordia Mission Society) meetings are held at 5pm.
- Tuesday evening from 5:30-7:00 AEX meets in the President’s Dining Room for dinner, fellowship, and other activities.
- Thursday night at 9:00 the BCC community has Bible study on Tier III of the Student Union.
- Wednesday evening at 6:00 WOW (Women of Witness) has a Bible study in the Lower Dining Hall.
- Wednesday night at 8:00 DISH is held on Tier I of the student union.
- Thursday night at 10:00 Compline is held in the chapel.

Monthly Devotion

Happy New Year! Happy New Year!

Aimee Breuning

“A voice of one calling in the desert prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God. Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all flesh will see it. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.” Isaiah 40:3-5

Happy New Year! Happy New Year! Wow, what an exciting time. No, I am not talking about the millennium, but something far more exciting. This is the start of a new church year! There are no worries of computer break downs or explosives going off, only the pure excitement and anticipation of trumpets sounding and a cloud descending from the sky and a Savior returning just as he promised! The first four weeks of the “New Year” is called Advent. Advent is spent preparing for the coming of Christ. In these four weeks before Christmas, Christians look ahead to the return of Christ as they prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. It is not uncommon for people to skip over or misunderstand Advent as an extended Christmas season. With so much to look forward to, like parties and gift buying, not many realize that Advent even exists but Advent is very important. Christ’s arrival on this earth the first time was God’s gift to his people. Through Jesus’s suffering, death and resurrection, God has given us the hope of eternal life with him. As Jesus left, he promised to return to give those who believe another gift: He will come again with a new heaven and a new earth. As we celebrate the birth of Christ at Christmas, we celebrate the return of Christ in Advent. It is easy to be tempted by the ways of the world that lure us into forgetting what God has promised. With the hustle and bustle of all that happens during the “holiday season” it is easy to find ourselves on Christmas Eve forgetting that Advent ever was. However, as we get our gifts ready to put under the tree, and as we bake our cookies to share with loved ones, keep in mind the wonderful gift and the hope that is to come. God’s love for us is so deep that he would send us a Savior to live our life and die a horrible death, but then raised him to victory and promised to come back again. This is what we have to look forward to. Will it happen on January 1st? Does it matter? I only know that when God does return, the event will be more spectacular than any Christmas lights or
There are those who shy away from challenges. And then there are those who travel 9,000 miles looking for them. Peace Corps still needs 400 English teachers, 150 ag/environmentalists, & 200 business professionals for overseas assignments leaving between April and August—ALL majors can apply.