

# ed.network

A networking newsletter for the Christian Education ministries  
of the Indiana-Kentucky Synod of the ELCA

## Thanksgiving or *Thanksgiving*?

By Judy Scharpenberg

If you asked about the main holiday in November, would you hear All Saints Day? Christ the King Sunday? Probably not; one of our secular holidays has become known as the main religious holiday in November: Thanksgiving. Perhaps Thanksgiving for you has taken on the same attitude as you find in the following short story:

I remember my first visit to Old Faithful in Yellowstone National Park. Rings of Japanese and German tourists surrounded the geyser, their video

### Christianity Today on Thanksgiving & Advent

By Karen Seykowski

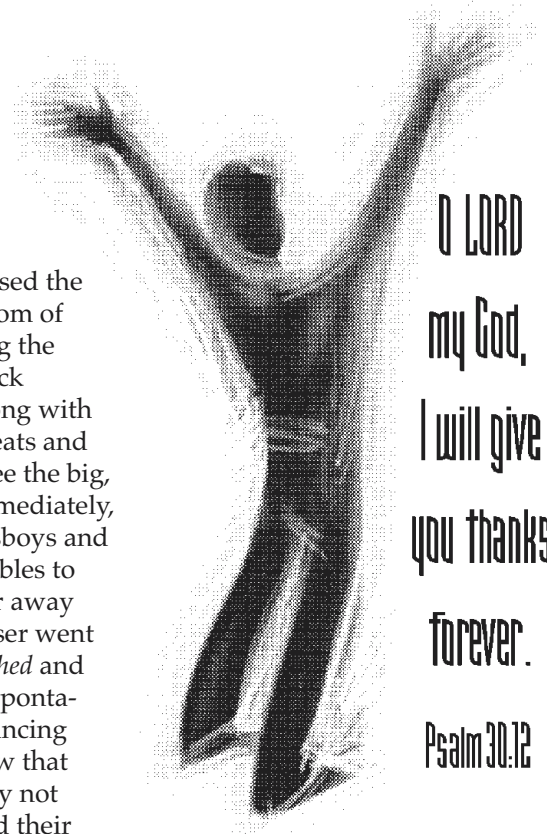
Visit [www.christianitytoday.com](http://www.christianitytoday.com) and type **Thanksgiving** or **Advent** in the search window. The results will be listed as a catalog of titles (each with a synopsis). Select a title and the related article will download.

You'll find 200 results which relate to all aspects of Thanksgiving - holidays, spiritual life, men, women, teens, parenting and you'll find 186 results relating to Advent including Christian history, meditations, and parenting.

cameras trained like weapons on the famous hole in the ground. A large, digital clock stood beside the spot, predicting 24 minutes until the next eruption. My wife and I passed the countdown in the dining room of Old Faithful Inn overlooking the geyser. When the digital clock reached one minute, we, along with every other diner, left our seats and rushed to the windows to see the big, wet event. I noticed that immediately, as if on signal, a crew of busboys and waiters descended on the tables to refill water glasses and clear away dirty dishes. When the geyser went off, we tourists *oohed* and *aahed* and clicked our cameras; a few spontaneously applauded. But, glancing back over my shoulder, I saw that not a single waiter or busboy not even those who had finished their chores looked out the huge windows. Old Faithful, grown entirely too familiar, had lost its power to impress them.

*-from Contemporary Illustrations*

Has this time of year become humdrum? Just another thing to do because the calendar or greeting card industry says so? We regularly forget or take for granted God's boundless,



O LORD  
my God,  
I will give  
you thanks  
forever.  
Psalm 30:12

unfailing generosity. He gives good and perfect gifts. *Perfect* meaning complete and not lacking anything. God knows what you need. Gratitude is a choice we make. It is a response that comes from deep within us. It is not superficial and cannot be confined to one day a year. So gratitude is an attitude that moves us from a day of Thanksgiving to daily *thanksgiving*.

**I'm Reproducible!** Please copy this issue of **ed.network** and pass on to:  
Christian Education staff, committee members, teachers and volunteers.

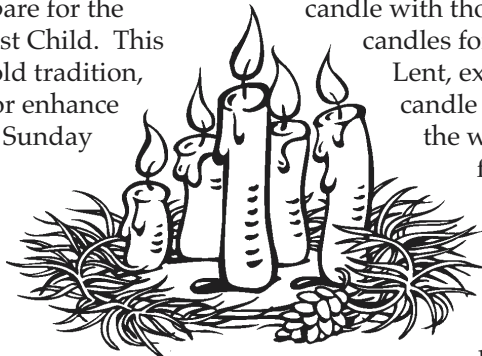
# Expanding on the Advent wreath tradition

By Judy Scharpenberg

Same-old, same-old? The Advent Wreath comes out this year on Sunday, November 30, with candles being lit, one additional candle each Sunday as we prepare for the coming of the Christ Child. This is a valuable, age-old tradition, but why not vary or enhance it this year in your Sunday School opening time?

1) Use the lighting of a candle throughout the year to signal a time for silent preparation for the opening worship of Sunday School.

2) Have a single large white candle ready to light for the Christmas/Epiphany season. You could even place it inside the Advent wreath



and light all the candles during the Epiphany season.

3) On Transfiguration Sunday (February 22), surround the white candle with thorns. Add five candles for the five weeks of Lent, extinguishing one candle each Sunday (not the white candle). A floral candle ring could surround the white candle at Easter. On Pentecost change it to a birthday cake with lots of candles for the birthday of the Christian Church.

4) Ribbons in liturgical colors will add another dimension to celebrating the various seasons of the church year

## Boundary Workshops for IN-KY Synod Leaders

■ October 18, 8:30 a.m.-

Noon, St. John Lutheran Church in Louisville

■ November 1, 8:30 a.m.-

Noon, Christ the King Lutheran Church in South Bend

■ November 8, 8:30 a.m.-

Noon, Bethany Lutheran Church in Indianapolis

■ Make up session:

November 19, 6-9 p.m., Synod Office in Indianapolis

In order to help our Rostered leaders and congregational leaders to reflect on the practice of proper boundary keeping, the Indiana-Kentucky Synod will once again offer workshops to inform our leaders of proper practices. The Synod offers workshops at no cost. For more information call the synod office at 317-253-3522. All rostered leaders are expected to attend and should contact the Bishop if unable.

## Fundraising opportunity

Augsburg Fortress is offering a **Fundraising for Your Faith** to help you raise funds for your church. Partner with them and receive selected books to sell and keep 40% of the proceeds of the sale to support your organization and sample copies of each book included in the program to donate to your church library. Check it out on their website at [www.augsburgfortress.org/fundraising](http://www.augsburgfortress.org/fundraising).

## Thinking ahead

Have you ordered your 2004 VBS Examination Kit, available now from Augsburg Fortress?

## - r e a d e r n e t w o r k - Safety policy for churches

The "reader network" will address a question from a reader with an answer from another reader/s. Then a new question will be posted for the next issue. To submit a question or an answer to next issue's question, please write the editor at the address below by November 15.

**Q** How do I get started with a safety policy for children's ministry at my church?

**A** Nancy Hebel, Principal of Saint John Lutheran School in Fort Wayne writes: Most safety and security plans are common sense, and there is a large difference between Sunday morning nursery policies, where parents are close by, and preschool or elementary school plans. Here are some general considerations:

- The courts say, the younger child, the more responsibility (and accountability) for the caregivers.
- The proximity of parents determines to some extent the information needed by caregivers.
- Medical information and emergency phone numbers are always necessary.
- Careful interviews, references, background checks, and training for each position are essential.
- There should always be two - or more - adults with children.

### Question for next issue:

What can my church do about dwindling Sunday School attendance?