

Wednesday, December 23, 2020

Dear Members and Friends of Desert Hills Lutheran,

Merry Christmas. Tomorrow is our big day, five services with three kinds of music. A couple of years ago we had over 2000 people attend the five services. I think we will be below that number this year. I'm kidding, I know we will be.

*Matthew 18:20. "For where two or three are **gathered** together in **my name**, I am there among them" (NRSV)*

I'm just so thankful that those of us ready for in person worship can gather, and those not ready can share the experience online.

When I was growing up, we worshipped on Christmas Eve night. This was at First Lutheran in Albert Lea, Minnesota. At the end of the service a candle was given to each family. There was always a whole bank of lit candles at the front of the church. I was the oldest so for a few years I would try to bring the lighted candle for our family from church to home. I took it on with great seriousness almost as if the light going out diminished Christmas. It was the walk to the car that did me in most years, too windy.

This memory makes me think now of how to keep the flame going. For a majority of our congregation Christmas Eve will be celebrated alone or with another or very small group in the home. This might be the perfect year to light a candle during the worship service online, letting the candlelight be the light of Christ.

Remember that Christmas Day worship will be online only. If I don't see you on Christmas Eve, may you have a blessed Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Pastor Martin