

Wednesday, December 30, 2020

Dear Members and Friends of Desert Hills Lutheran,

I hope you all had a blessed Christmas. I was pleased with attendance both in person and on-line. There were 537 persons for the five Christmas Eve services, and I noticed a large number of guests at all services. Contrary to our culture, Lutherans continue the Christmas Season until January 6, which begins the Season of Epiphany. On Christmas Day we were listening to Christmas music on Sirius, but the next day the Christmas stations were gone. If we wanted we could hold the Christmas Celebration much longer, perhaps carry it on and off through the year.

There have been some years that I just couldn't wait until they ended, and 2020 is certainly at the top of the list. One of them for me was 1960. My parents had separated and would divorce, and I was seven and made the comment at Christmas, "I'll sure be glad when this year is over." My mother said immediately, "You'll be glad?" As a family with uncertainty, we welcomed the New Year of 1961. There are some that say that 2020 beats out even 1929 as a tough year. I know we are all praying fervently for a better year with less illness, more peace, less rancor, more small businesses starting or returning, less rioting, and the list goes on. Both for 2020 and our hopes for improvement in 2021, we must just keep returning to our Lord. On this Wednesday I'll close with Psalm 121.

A Song of Ascents.

*I lift up my eyes to the hills—
from where will my help come?
My help comes from the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.
He will not let your foot be moved;
he who keeps you will not slumber.
He who keeps Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.
The LORD is your keeper;
the LORD is your shade at your right hand.
The sun shall not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.
The LORD will keep you from all evil;
he will keep your life.
The LORD will keep
your going out and your coming in
from this time on and forevermore.*

Blessings and Merry Christmas,

Pastor Martin