



# Prairie Faith Parish Nurse News~~December 2022

Body

Mind

Spirit



For some of us, 2022 has been filled with darkness. You may have lost a loved one and are still coping with that **death**. Maybe you are living with the **diagnosis** of cancer or some other medical condition that puts a question mark over the future. Others may be dealing with a **divorce** or a shattered relationship, living with a **difficult work situation**, struggling to conceive a **baby**, living with **loneliness and isolation**, or experiencing **financial difficulties**. Or perhaps this season is a time that is difficult for other reasons.

For many people, the approaching Christmas holiday does not bring with it the joy and happiness that is depicted in movies or in greeting cards. Typical holiday festivities—caroling, decorating, buying gifts, Christmas parties, family gatherings—leave little room for our feelings of pain or grief, and we experience feelings of isolation. Our spirits sink as the days grow shorter. We feel the darkness growing deeper around us.

In response, the parish nurse ministry holds *The Longest Night Service*, offering a somber, gentle space for the community to gather on the **winter solstice**, the longest night of the year. *The service is simple: candles are lit, scripture is read, and the focus is on personal needs, in an atmosphere of quiet contemplation.* This worship experience is a way to acknowledge the reality of difficult or painful life circumstances, while still recognizing that part of the reason for Jesus’ coming was to bring hope and comfort, to heal the sick, to seek the lost, to restore the broken and the broken-hearted. This is a quiet meditative time for remembering, sharing our hurting places with God, and preparing our hearts for the coming of Christ.

Those who do experience this season as a happy time can also find meaning in The Longest Night Service, as it serves as a time of quiet retreat from the hectic nature of the commercial aspect of the season and guides worshippers back to the real meaning of Christmas.

*The Longest Night Service will be held on Wednesday, December 21, 2022 from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Bethlehem Lutheran Church.* The service will be followed by an opportunity to pray or meditate in the sanctuary for those who wish to do so. Please help spread the word in the community to friends and neighbors, and feel free to call Nancy or the church office with any questions or concerns or to request a ride.

*“I am weary with my crying out; my throat is parched.  
My eyes grow dim with waiting for my God.” Psalm 69:3*

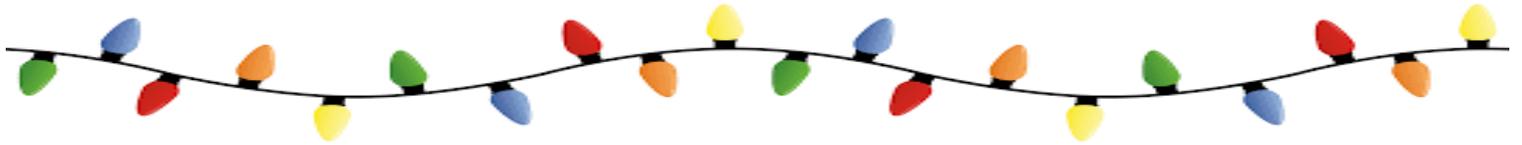


The parish nurse ministry serves the community, regardless of any church affiliation. Feel free to call or email to: schedule a confidential appointment to discuss your health/wellness questions, schedule transportation to a medical/dental/counseling appointment if you need a ride, request a prayer shawl for someone in the community going through a difficult time, locate community health resources, request other parish nurse work, or discuss your ideas for the health ministry! 😊

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785-743-2005 (leave a message, please)



The Trego Community General Public Transportation Van (out-of-town van) will again offer a **Christmas Lights Tour of WaKeeney**. Available evenings include Saturday, December 10; Tuesday, December 13; Saturday, December 17; and Tuesday, December 20. **Call 785-743-8014 to schedule**. There is no fare charged for these tours but donations toward operating expenses are always appreciated!

## IS IT A COLD OR FLU?

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS	COLD	FLU
Symptom onset	Gradual	Abrupt
Fever	Rare	Usual
Aches	Slight	Usual
Chills	Uncommon	Fairly common
Fatigue, weakness	Sometimes	Usual
Sneezing	Common	Sometimes
Chest discomfort, cough	Mild to moderate	Common
Stuffy nose	Common	Sometimes
Sore throat	Common	Sometimes
Headache	Rare	Common

#FIGHT FLU 

With a very few exceptions (check with your physician), it's recommended for most people over the age of six months to get a flu shot every fall. Influenza is a viral infection that attacks your respiratory system — your nose, throat and lungs. Influenza, commonly called the flu, is not the same as the "stomach flu" viruses that cause diarrhea and vomiting. Flu viruses spread mainly by tiny droplets made when people with influenza cough, sneeze or talk. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby. A person might also get flu by touching a surface or object that has the flu virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose or eyes. **The first and most important step in preventing flu is to get a flu vaccination each year.** There are also everyday preventive actions (staying away from people who are sick, covering coughs/sneezes with a tissue or coughing/sneezing into your elbow, and frequent handwashing) to help slow the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses. **It's also important to stay home when sick to help prevent spreading illnesses to other people.**

***If you haven't gotten your flu shot yet this fall, please take a few moments and stop by the health department, a participating pharmacy, or your doctor's office to get your flu shot soon—it's not too late!***

*Lord, do not let us do more  
If in doing less we might do it better.  
Do not let us acquire more  
If in living with less we might know Thee better.  
We are easily swayed by size,  
Equating quantity with quality,  
Wealth with security,  
And applause with popularity.  
Forgive us for spreading ourselves thin  
For the sake of appearances.  
Permit us to amend our ways  
Lest we miss the Baby in the stable,  
The Lad in the carpenter's shop,  
The Teacher on the hillside,  
And the Christ on the Cross.     Amen*



*(Author of prayer: E. Lee Phillips)*

