



*1. Praised be you, Jesus Christ that you have been born as a man from a virgin - this is true- at which the host of angels rejoices.*

*2. The only child of the eternal father is now found in the manger, in our poor flesh and blood eternal goodness has clothed itself.*

*3. He whom the whole globe of the earth could not enclose now lies in Mary's bosom; he has become a little baby who alone maintains everything.*

*4. The eternal light enters here, it gives the world a new splendour; it shines in the midst of the night and makes us children of the light.*

*5. The Father's son, God by nature, became a guest here in the world, and leads us from the*

*vale of sorrow he makes us heirs in his hall.*

*6. He has come on the earth in poverty to have compassion on us, and in heaven he makes us rich and like his dear angels.*

*7. He has done all this for us to show his great love, at this all Christendom rejoices and thanks him for this in eternity.*

*(Martin Luther's nativity hymn translated by Francis Browne, April 2003)*

#### 4th Sunday in Advent on the KwaZulu / Natal North Coast

Dear friends and relatives,

wishing you a very blessed Advent and Christmas + even if you can't experience it in the glorious African summer You may hopefully have a peaceful time under God's grace and mercy in the light of the heavenly gospel of his son's historic incarnation in Bethlehem!

We just spent a glorious week on the north coast of KwaZulu/Natal. Good friends invited us to stay in a holiday abode of theirs. As a family we had wonderful days of rest and adventure together. The children have concluded all their exams. Angelica has once again handed in a major section of her work and the Seminary is on vacation. So it's a good time for us to go on holiday even if only for a couple of days.

In the church everything is geared towards the celebration of the Holy Nativity of Our Lord and Savior. A township congregation is going through a burdensome vacancy, so I have been tasked to lead Christmas worship there, preaching God's word and administering the sacrament of our Lord Jesus Christ. Hopefully we can find a good solution for this congregation at the upcoming church council meeting.

Our son Christoph was invited to the "Christ Academy" at the Concordia Theological Seminary in Ft. Wayne during our winter (June/July). An American friend made that possible using her "frequent flyer miles." Before and after he visited other friends and brought back good memories accumulated all over the USA. He was almost as full of these recollections as our dear father returning from his graduation having been awarded his honorary doctorate by CTS Ft. Wayne together with President Harrison there in May. Even in the 4th quarter when our dad was teaching History of the LCSA at the Seminary, we looked at the pictures and shared stories of that memorable time. Yet again we had a very blessed time with our parents. MaWeber keeps Angelika out of the kitchen, garden and laundry and gives her time to carry on with her academic stuff. Although I found no opportunity to learn Zulu or Tswana under our Dad's supervision, it was still a great help to us that they again gave more than 6 weeks to be with us. My intention to learn Zulu/Tswana has not completely vanished from my wish list. Let's see if I can do that yet.

Friederike has passed her driving license first shot. She had driving lessons and drove regularly with Angelika to the university of Pretoria. Christoph does countless trips for his siblings to school and drives everyday errands for us even though he continues working in the video shop and also plays enthusiastically in his band – now more on keyboards than on the bass guitar. Together with his sister, he studied German again with his mother doing her proud. It is really a special privilege to study with your mom and on the other side being able to teach your children at that level. So we are very grateful that this is possible for our family through Angelika's appointment at UP. Next year our oldest plans to continue learning the biblical languages, while our daughter continues to follow diligently in the footsteps of her mother. She focuses on German and French. Let's see if they'll get an opportunity to be teachers in future. It seems we as a family are into languages for some time now. Probably natural for citizens of a nation with eleven official languages and still struggling to find a common voice.

Detlev is expected to do his "Abitur" in 2012 while at the same time doing his "Matric". Matthias is very close on his heels doing St.9. We are grateful that this "combined qualification" is possible for German-speaking South Africans at the German school in Pretoria (DSP). While Matzi is out almost every night for sports and youth work at St. Johns, Detlev continues to play French horn in the orchestra. Both enthusiastically read this and that. Detlev has even read a six-volume biography of famous Germans.

All three boys ride their bicycles to school or to university. This enables us to continue working a little longer both at the university or at the seminary. Afterwards we like to go to the gym where on Thursdays we do some yoga and otherwise do some fitness exercises. That's another good reason to be at home more often even though some of my trips have been quite enlightening, whereas others are just a

necessary chore. I was particularly delighted to have Angelica join me when I was invited by our sister Church to their Synod in Berlin, Germany. We took this opportunity to visit Gdansk by train and enjoyed a few days off in my mother's fatherland. In Tanzania, I was a guest of the "Lutheran Heritage Foundation." The publication of the Lutheran confessional writings in Swahili was celebrated. For me this was a highlight of 2011 – right under the Kilimanjaro mountain in the midst of a vibrant Lutheran Church with numerous parishes, seminaries and even amongst 70 Lutheran sisters in a convent at Moshi. A deeply touching and moving experience - not least because they were spent closely with Dr. Wilbert Kreiss. We often sat together discussing church stuff in German – mainly Francis Pieper, but also francophone Africa, confessional Lutheranism and other fascinating topics. When I arrived home, I heard he had passed away the last night even as I had left before dawn.

Although we had no opportunity this year in the winter to go hunting, a good friend invited our family to spend some days on his Buschveldfarm. In our spring (October) we were able to go to have some wonderful days in the bush without hunting rifle, but with the camera. The evenings at the campfire, the walks through the bush and the trips to the Vaalwater baobab or the Limpopo crocodiles are unforgettable memories still!

Oh yes - Angelika and I turned 50 years this year. We celebrated this extensively with friends and family. At first with the newly confirmed niece Christiane Rencken down in Wartburg, because her parents invited us to celebrate this occasion with them. To that occasion I invited former classmates, but were especially grateful that both our parents and most of our siblings could be there too. The next weekend we continued the festivities at our home in Murrayfield. While Papa Weber led the devotions in Wartburg, our friend and brother in the holy ministry missionary Heinrich Voges jumped in at home. Both times there were sheep on a spit. If we are to be 60 still, it will perhaps be a good time to try an ox instead. We had a great time with our friends and want to thank you once again for coming along and making these days so special for us!

Another year has rushed past and what has remained? May the Lord continue to be gracious and merciful to us as he has been over the past decades (half century!): forgiving us of all our sin every day and doing plenty of good to us every day in body and soul - out of pure fatherly goodness and divine mercy without any merit and worthiness on our part. Therefore I need to thank and praise him for everything, serving and obeying him faithfully. This is most certainly true!

With kind regards and sincere good wishes, Christmas greetings and blessings +  
Angelika & Wilhelm Weber from Murrayfield

