

# *From Bethlehem to Bethlehem the International Peace Light*

**Peace Light flame available for distribution to the public**

**December 13, 2009, noon to 3:00 pm**

**Bethlehem Lutheran Church 490 4<sup>th</sup> Street North Bayport, Minnesota 55003**

Everyone is welcome to come to Bethlehem where the flame will be shared and distributed. If you wish to take the Peace Light flame away with you, a vessel is needed to transport the flame. Small candle lantern will be available at Bethlehem for purchase.

Special arrangements for Peace Light distribution may also be accommodated.

For directions, go to [www.bethlehemstar.org](http://www.bethlehemstar.org)

Boy Scout Troop 113, in Bayport Minnesota, is planning a rather amazing project again this holiday season. Scouts are taking part in an International Scouting program to distribute what is called the Peace Light that originates from the grotto manger eternal flame where Jesus was born in Bethlehem to the rest of the world. The flame is transported from Bethlehem to Vienna Austria where it is distributed throughout Europe. The Peace Light is something the Transatlantic Council in Europe started getting involved with several years ago. A few years ago, the Boy



Scouts of America-Greater New York Council Catholic Committee on Scouting of the Diocese of Brooklyn & Queens, Austrian Airlines and the BSA Transatlantic Council, found a way to bring the Peace Light flame from Vienna to New York City.

In the summer of 2008, some of the Troop 113 Scouts attended the International Scout Jamboree in Iceland where they met a few people from



Europe who are involved in the Peace Light program. Since then, they have been planning to be a part of the flame distribution from NYC through out North America. Last December, the first year, Roger Knuteson and another Scout Leader Joe Reding from Troop 113 drove to NYC to meet the flame at JFK. On the way back they stopped at the Boy Scout Councils in State College, PA; Toledo, OH; South Bend, IN; Chicago, IL (where they also met two Scouters from Mexico City who then drove it back to Mexico); Madison, WI and finally Saint Paul MN so they too can distribute the Peace Light flame to other Scouting Units and the communities that support them.

This year, the Peace Light flame is scheduled to arrive at JFK in NYC on December 4, 2009. Once again Roger and Joe will meet the Peace Light flame and drive it back along I-70 with planed stops in Harrisburg, PA; Pittsburgh, PA; Columbus, OH; Indianapolis, IN; Saint Louis, MO; Kansas City, MO and Des Moines, IA. A connection will be made with Sidney Chollett, a Scout Master from Columbus TX who will drive the flame to Wichita, KS; Oklahoma City, OK; Dallas, TX; Austin, TX; San Antonio, TX; and Houston, TX where he will pass the flame to a Scout Master who will take it to Baton Rouge, LA and also to our Mexico Scout friends who will take it back to Mexico City and this year, into South America.

The Peace Light from Bethlehem campaign was originally organized by the Austrian Broadcasting Company - ORF (Linz) - and was part of a large charitable relief mission -Light into Darkness, for children in need in Austria and abroad. Since 1990, there has been a great deal of co-operation between Scouts and Guides in many countries, which has allowed the light to travel throughout Europe. Each year, a child from Upper Austria fetches the light from the grotto in Bethlehem where Jesus was born. The light is then flown to Austria from where it is distributed at a Service of Dedication to delegations from across Europe who take it back, with a message of Peace, to their own countries for use at ecumenical services throughout the Continent. Scouts and Guides can then take the light on to houses of worship, hospitals, homeless shelters, old people homes, prisons, and places of public, cultural and political importance - to anybody who appreciates the significance of the "gift". A web site has been setup to help with this distribution effort. <http://www.PeaceLight.org>

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**Troop 113-Boy Scouts of America; Bayport, Minnesota**

**or Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Jean Groppoli, [www.bethlehemstar.org](http://www.bethlehemstar.org) phone 651-439-3450 x13**