

TRINITY'S GOOD NEWS

Volume 11 Issue 1

January 2010

Dear Family and Friends at Trinity,

As I sit down to write this, Christmas is not here yet... but the anticipation is great! It's early in the morning in our home and not a creature is stirring, not even a Benen. The stockings are hung from a shelf with care, and there is wild excitement for Jesus' birthday and also something about Santa Clause (Marilyn is just 2 ½ and is just starting to pick up on this).

At church, anticipation is great as well! The trees are beautifully lit, the Advent wreath grows brighter and brighter each week, and our manger scene reminds us of just what exactly we are anticipating – Christ will be born into our lives and world again this Christmas! Our Christmas program was a huge success, with the joyful sounds of ringing chimes, angelic voices, and the reminder that we “give it up for Jesus” because God gave up everything for us.

All through Advent, I have really enjoyed discovering the traditions of Trinity and being a part of them. Now, with Christmas Eve coming, I feel like a 2 ½ year old, excited and giddy for the opportunity to come together, to be a part of deep tradition, to celebrate that once “Silent Night” when God became “God with us,” and to come to the Lord's table and be nourished again by the Christ is Christmas hope.

And I'm discovering that the anticipation goes far beyond Christmas – a new year is coming too! The New Year marks a milestone for me. I will have been your pastor for six months, and the New Year brings with it anticipation and great expectation for what is to come. I look forward to working with you as we strengthen our ministries. The youth are excited about upcoming activities, mission trips, and to be setting up a room to have as their youth space. The Sunday School students and teachers are charged from Christmas celebrations and are

looking forward to a new year. As a new year begins, I also look forward to working with you as we discover new areas of ministry, like starting a group for our “thirty-somethings-ish” (what's really in an age anyway?!). Ultimately, a new year is coming for us all to discover again just what it means to *celebrate Christ's love*.

But I've learned something else about anticipation and expectation. I've learned that, sometimes, expectations can put God in a box. Sometimes we want the things we expect so badly that we don't allow God to do the things we need. Sometimes, the things we think will happen are not the things that God is doing in our midst. So, sometimes we will be disappointed, and sometimes we will be surprised. Instead, maybe we are called to set some of our expectations aside, to let go of some of the things that we want, and trust fully in God to work among us, to bring life, to guide and lead us, and to show us again how to *welcome, encourage, and serve God's people*.

As I prepare to celebrate Christmas Eve with you, I am filled with excitement and anticipation! I want to set aside some expectations, put everything in God's hands, and be surprised each and every day by what God is doing in our hearts, our lives, and our community.

I am also very thankful. Thank you for the love and generosity you have shown to my family and I this Christmas. We are so grateful to be here and I am so grateful to be your pastor.

Christmas blessings,
Pastor Adam

January Birthdays

- 1/01 Greg Ufkes
- 1/02 Tonya Boyer, Wyatt Brown
- 1/04 Jeremy Ufkes, Chris Harrell
- 1/07 LaVerne Schudlach,
Greg Gronewold
- 1/08 Darin Klingler
- 1/09 Bud High
- 1/10 Merlin Gronewold
- 1/12 Travis Johnson
- 1/14 Rick Johnson
- 1/17 Taryn Geissler, Emalee Disney
- 1/18 Ryan Schardon
- 1/22 Esther VanHove, Paige Gutting,
Judy Cramer
- 1/23 Wesley Harrison
- 1/26 John Schwartz, Brian Flesner
- 1/29 Diane Schardon
- 1/30 Kim Nettles
- 1/31 Travis Duffy, Jason Hartweg

January Anniversaries

- 1/04 Jerry & Linley Bartell
- 1/16 Ed & Brenda Seaver
- 1/18 Denver & Danelle Smith
- 1/26 Gerald & Cindy Brown

Trinity Prayer Ministry

This **ministry at Trinity** is for anyone who wants to join us in prayer one day a week. Come to the Welcome Center at **7:00 a.m.** on Wednesday mornings. Prayer request slips are located in the pew racks. They may be filled out and put in the collection plates, or you may call Connie Schulz (357-6667) or the church office (357-2468) to request prayer. These names are used for the Prayer Ministry only and not in the prayer chain or Sunday morning prayers.

*Blood Pressure Checks by
Health Ministries Team*

The nurses of Trinity will be doing blood pressure checks for the congregation on the second Sunday of each month in the Welcome Center. These checks will be held before and after church.

Last call for Stewardship Packets!

If you have not yet returned your Stewardship packet, please do so as soon as possible! Thanks!!

Financial Update

As of November 30, 2009

Current

Amt. Budgeted YTD - \$130,924
Amt. Received YTD - \$107,742
Amt. Spent YTD - \$102,932
Current Fund Balance – \$16,394

Benevolence

Amt. Budgeted YTD - \$17,083
Amt. Received YTD - \$16,675

Thank you for your faithful giving as together we live out our mission of Celebrating Christ's love as we welcome, encourage, and serve God's people!

Welcome Center Update

As of November 30, 2009, the amount given to the Welcome Center totals \$438,070. Of this amount \$37,116 was given through November 30, which compares to \$35,461 given through November 2008. Total cost of the project was \$548,653. For 2009 we have paid \$3,538 in interest through October compared to \$5,805 in 2008. We have reduced the Marine Bank loan by \$49,428 so far this year, leaving a loan balance of \$42,599. In addition there are \$62,000 of our own funds on loan to the Welcome Center. Our payments are due monthly in the amount of \$2,412.29. Let's continue to work together as we pay down our debt as quickly as possible.

Thank you for your ongoing generosity.

Together, we are living out our congregation's missions of Celebrating Christ's Love as we Welcome, Encourage, and Serve God's people.

Church Council Highlights

December 10, 2009

Present: Merlin Gronewold, Angie Fecht, Connie Flesner, Kathy Graham, Delmer Schlueter, Mary Sargent, Galen Krieg, Linley Bartell, Kirby Fecht, Dave Hartweg, and Pastor Adam Dichsen. Absent: John Schwartz and John Dittmer

Merlin Gronewold called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Kirby Fecht led the devotions. Connie Flesner will have the devotions in January.

The minutes from the regular meeting of November 12, 2009, were reviewed. The Nominating Committee information was corrected. The terms of Angie Fecht, Kathy Graham, John Schwartz, John Dittmer and Kirby Fecht will expire. The nominating Committee is John Hartweg, chairman; Kathy Graham, Angie Fecht, Jack Ufkes, Eric Boyer and Stephanie Stott. Angie Fecht made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. Linley Bartell seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Petitions and Communications

Pastor Adam had received a thank-you note from Thrivent Financial recognizing and appreciating the work of David Hartweg, Dorothy Wetterich and Sally Swank.

A note was received from the Good News Radio, KMDY, thanking the church for their support.

Financial Secretary's Report

The Financial Secretary's Report dated November 30, 2009, was reviewed. Discussion followed. Linley Bartell made a motion to accept the Financial Secretary's Report. Kathy Graham seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

Dave Hartweg presented the Treasurer's Report dated November 30, 2009. There was discussion that included the healthy state of the current fund; the youth fund account and the insurance fund. Because of

such good giving, \$10,000 of the Welcome Center is paid off. Linley Bartell made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report. Angie Fecht seconded. Motion carried.

Committee Reports:

Christian Education (Angie Fecht) – Angie reminded the council the Christmas Program will be held during worship on Sunday, December 20, at 9 am. A special thanks goes to Traci and Daniel Harrell for all their work. Students of all ages will be participating in the program and chimes. Discussion followed about getting more young people to church and what their needs are. Interests of other age groups were also discussed.

Evangelism (Connie Flesner) – Connie expressed her thanks to the Evangelism Committee and all who brought or bought items. Over \$300 had been collected so far to give to the Ministerial Alliance for all their projects. We will try to have an ad in the paper for both the Christmas program and Christmas Eve services. Denise sends Connie the bulletin to put the calendar on the radio, WCAZ.

Fellowship (Mary Sargent) – Mary reported we need help with the Fellowship sign-ups. Very few have signed up for December and January.

Finance (Kathy Graham) – Kathy reported that the finances are up. A finance meeting was held on Monday, November 23. The finance committee had made recommendations on three requests for funds. Missions, theological schools and missionary schools are struggling. Discussion followed. Kathy Graham made a motion to give \$200 from the Marie Fecht Estate to the Global Missions, ELCA, and \$300 to Wartburg Theological Seminary and the remainder of the interest from the Ruth Ufkes Estate to Trinity Lutheran Seminary. Linley Bartell seconded. Motion carried.

There was a line by line discussion of the 2010 Budget Proposal Worksheet. Dave

Hartweg made a motion to approve the 2010 budget with the council changes. Kirby Fecht seconded. Motion carried.

Memorial (John Dittmer) – no report.

Property (John Schwartz) –no report.

Social Ministry (Galen Krieg) –Galen may have a new teacher for the Financial Peace program. It is recommended to begin in January. Vickie Livingston asked Pastor if the council could help with any unclaimed tags from the Angel Tree. Pastor Adam made a motion to provide up to \$150 to the Angel Tree, if needed. Kathy Graham seconded. Motion carried. Pastor discussed a need for a network for people needing extra work. This might include painting, small carpentry, etc. He is trying to make a more widespread database.

Stewardship (Delmer Schlueter) –Delmer said the Stewardship banquet went very well. Although it was not quite as big as last year, there was a good turn-out. He thanked all who helped with it. There was a very nice presentation from Jerry and Sharon Ideus.

Worship & Music (Linley Bartell) – Linley reported that several helped with the Christmas decorations on Sunday, December 6, after the church service. They enjoyed a nice meal afterwards. There will need to be another communion station on Christmas Eve. The acolytes are Kirby Fecht and Chris Holtsclaw. Mary Sargent and Angie Fecht will also help. Pastor reported that there will be a new training for acolytes, communion deacons and assisting ministers.

Youth (Kirby Fecht) –Kirby reported that the Youth went to Fun City and out for pizza on December 6. They took some “extras” and had a good time. Pastor mentioned there was a lot of fun and fellowship taking place. The acolyte rotation was also discussed.

Ministerial Alliance (Pastor Adam) – Pastor Adam reported that the Thanksgiving service was a success with good fellowship. It may

be held on a different night next year and not so close to the Hunger Fest. The Longest Night Service will be held on Monday, December 21 at Trinity, sponsored by HUGS. Bell ringing for the Salvation Army kettles will be held on Saturday, December 12, from 3-8 p.m. Ninety percent of the monies stay in Hancock County to be managed by the Ministerial Alliance.

Pastor Report—Pastor Adam presented a hand-out of the various activities, visits and meetings he has attended recently. This included the Adult Sunday School class, preaching at the Thanksgiving Community Service, the Youth Fundraiser, the Nursing Home Service and Bible study, wedding and the Carthage Round Table. The Dichsens will be on vacation December 26 until January 2.

Old Business:

Geographic Parish—There will be a meeting in January. Pastor Kurt Hoover, Immanuel, is interested in working with Trinity and the youth from both churches.

Youth –There was discussion about the Youth’s goals and a meeting place for them. There was discussion about a CD donation for the youth that will mature on December 14. It will be reinvested for 6 months with a no penalty for early withdrawal clause.

Share the Harvest—Pastor and Jerry Bartell have drafted a letter for the January 11, 2010, Share the Harvest meeting and meal to be held at Trinity at 6 pm. Joan Fumetti and Rose Moser will be in attendance. The purpose is to expand the project into a community project. Pastors, farmers, and local businesses will be invited.

Church Exterior—The roof, tower and stucco were discussed. There was also discussion about a church building maintenance item in the budget.

New Business

Annual Meeting—There was discussion about the annual meeting date. Galen Krieg

made a motion to hold the Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 31, 2010, after the worship service. Mary Sargent seconded. Motion carried. There will be a potluck held in conjunction with the meeting. Reports will need to be in to Denise by January 11.

The next council meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 14, at 7:00 p.m.

Dave Hartweg made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 p.m. Kirby Fecht seconded. Motion carried. The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Connie Flesner
Council Secretary

Donations for Shepherd's Pantry

The food pantry could use the following items that aren't always available each month from the state food pantry system:

Boxes of dry milk
Syrup
Laundry Soap
Baby Food & Formula

Shepherd's Pantry would appreciate any donations that members are able to make. Thank you for your help.

Address changes

Tim & Mandy Bruns
107 Willow Street
Carthage, IL 62321

Dean & Angie Fecht
1829 E. Cty. Road 900
Carthage, IL 62321

Melvin & Dorothy Wetterich
2089 E. Cty. Road 1800
Carthage, IL 62321

HUGS in hancock county

Linda Tobias will speak on "The Soothing Power of Music" at the January meeting of

HUGS, a support group for cancer patients or survivors, their caregivers and loved ones. The meeting is set for 5:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 5, at Memorial Support Services, 402 S. Adams St., Carthage (former hospital building). Tobias has been with Hancock County Mental Health Center and Mental Health Centers of Western Illinois for the past 26 years, currently as supervisor over prevention and psychosocial rehabilitation programs. She has a master's degree from Western Illinois University, Macomb, with special training in music therapy. HUGS supports people impacted by cancer by offering monthly meetings for fellowship and education. Financial assistance is also available through HUGS for any Hancock County resident undergoing cancer treatment, including up to \$200 a year in the form of either a gas card or a pharmacy gift certificate. For more information about HUGS, call Florine Dixon at Memorial Hospital, 217-357-8565.

Youth News

Our High School and Beyond youth group had a fantastic time in December! We went to Fun City where we learned that we have some aggressive and skilled go-cart racers, and that Pastor Adam can get a bit carried away in laser tag! We also had a blast at our Christmas party, with a digital scavenger hunt (searching Carthage to take pictures of snowmen, nativities, and people doing crazy antics in the snow), a super Bible Study led by Ramo Stott, white elephant gift exchange, and opening debut by some of our members in a band. As we look to the New Year, we will **continue to meet on the first and third Sunday's, from 5:30 till 8:00ish for Bible Study, food, and games.** We are also planning a ski trip, talking about setting up a space for youth activities, and are brainstorming for a summer mission trip. Thank you Trinity for your support, and we'd love to have more of our youth join us!

Adult Bible Study - "Opening the Book of Faith"

Have you ever wondered just how to interpret the Bible? Or maybe just how to sit down and read it to strengthen your faith? If

so (and I'm sure this includes everyone, myself included!) please join us! The Bible is a "Book of Faith." It is the Word of God, written by people of faith over hundreds of years. It is the Word of God that creates and nurtures faith in us. And it is read, interpreted, and studied by different people in different ways. Please join us for this Bible Study where we look at four key ways to read the Bible and put it to use. We will meet in the Church Library after worship at 10:30 (so we all have some time for snacks and fellowship!). This month, we will be looking at "God's Powerful Book" (Jan 3), "How Can Lutheran Insights Open Up the Bible?" (Jan 10), "How Can the Bible Be Studied?" (Jan 17), and then putting these practices to work on "Exodus 3:1-15" (Jan 24). There will be no study on Jan 31 because of our Annual Meeting. See you there!

Christmas Program Thank You

Thank you to all who participated in the Sunday School Christmas Program! Traci and Daniel Harrell did a fantastic job as directors. Janet Rahman and the chime ringers brought great joy through the music. Thank you to our adult helpers, Linda Hartweg, Lydia Gutting, Sandi Morrison, Mary Sargent, Steven Sargent, and Lance Stott. Thank you for our youth and children: Katie Biery, Anna Biery, Caitlin Clostermery, Marilyn Dichsen, Paige Gutting, Peyton Gutting, Rylie Harrell, Megan Harrell, Caroline Hartweg, Cody Higgins, Sophie, Kyle Jacoby, Katy Miller, John Morrison, Miranda Morrison, and anyone I forgot. You all have blessed our hearts by reminding us of the true meaning of Christmas – Giving thanks for, Jesus, God's great gift to us!

Thank You

Thank you so much to all who donated to the Craft & Bake Sale for the Christmas Open House. Thank you to all who purchased items & raffle tickets. Thank you to the Sewing Group for donating the beautiful quilt.

Thank you to the Evangelism Committee of Ron Schulz, Marcia Ewing, Paul Ewing and John Malloy for all your hard work. As of this writing, your generosity has brought in \$500 for the Ministerial Alliance to help with all their programs.

A Thank you from the Dichsen's

We are completely overwhelmed by the generosity and love you have shown our family this Christmas. Thank you so very, very much! And thank you for the way you have so openly included us in your church family as together we celebrate Christ's love. May God bless you this Christmas and New Year.

News From Our Sponsored Children

Dear Trinity Lutheran Church,

I hope you are all doing well in the company of your family.

I want to tell you that I am doing very well. I'm very happy because this year I'm graduating from school. I'm very enthusiastic on going forward because I already took the first step of my life.

My family is doing well and they send kisses and hugs. I have a beautiful nephew. His name is Jefferson. He is very cute and I love him a lot. He is 9 months old.

How are you doing? Having nothing else to say, I say goodbye. I wish you a successful life.

Love, Silvia

Poinsettias

If you ordered a poinsettia, please remember to take it home after worship on January 3.