

# The Tidings

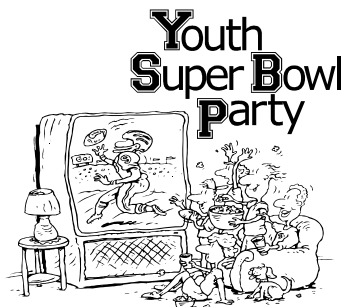
February 2006

Bethlehem Lutheran Church Sun Prairie, Wisconsin



## It's the 'Souper' Bowl!

From now through February 5 the youth will collect cans of soup for the Sun Prairie Food Pantry. Their goal is 500 cans!! Please bring cans of soup to church and place them in the big blue box in the narthex.



On Sunday, February 5 (TBA) Jr. and Sr. High Youth Groups will meet at the Sun Prairie Youth Center (lower level entry) for a Super Bowl Party with other youth groups in the Sun Prairie Youth Network.

## Come and Sing!

Have you been thinking about joining the church choir? Now's a great time as they begin working on the new season's music. Basses and baritones are especially needed!

Rehearsals are Wednesday evenings at 7:00 in the balcony - just show up. Questions? Call director Jim Isaacson 837-7788.



## Leave for Love

How long has it been since you got a sitter and went on a date with your spouse? The Sr. High Youth Group is offering

**Child care**  
**Saturday, February 11**  
**4:30-8:30 p.m.**

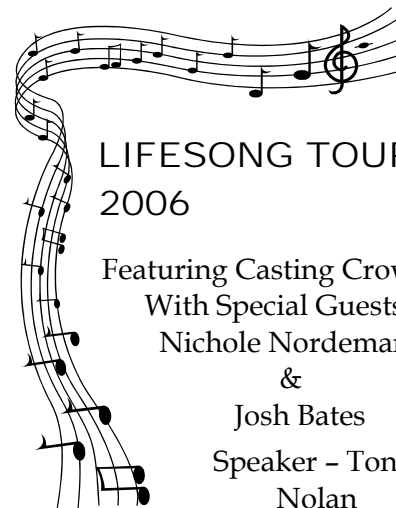
to give parents a chance to go out on a Valentine's date! The hot pink Sign-up/Registration sheet can be found at the Purpose Place in the hallway. A donation for their services will be accepted. Children will watch a movie, eat dinner, do crafts and more.



## More Stephen Ministers Needed

*"Come, follow me." Jesus said, 'and I will make you fishers of men.' At once they left their nets and followed him."*  
Matthew 4:19-20

Is God calling you to be a Stephen Minister, but you are hesitant? Don't hesitate - leave your "nets" and join us in His service today. Help us to care for those that are hurting. We need at least one more Stephen Minister candidate to start up the next class. We are especially in need of male Stephen Ministers. Contact Anna Maenner, Kathy Divine or Ardie Nelson by February 5.



## LIFESONG TOUR 2006

Featuring Casting Crowns  
With Special Guests  
Nichole Nordeman  
&  
Josh Bates  
Speaker - Tony Nolan

Thursday, March 23, 2006  
7:00PM

Coliseum at the Alliant Energy Center  
Group Tickets are \$20.50/person

I will order group tickets on February 1. If you'd like to go please let me know and give me a check made out for \$20.50 to Bethlehem Lutheran Youth.

- Peter R Imlah

## Whatever Happened to Sin?

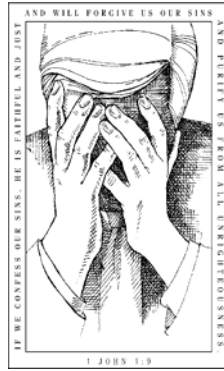
The late Lutheran theologian Gerhard Forde noted that in too much of the contemporary church, we have substituted sentimentality for truthful conversation about our sin:

Sentimentality leads to a shift in focus, and the language slips out of place. To take a common example, we apparently are no longer sinners, but rather victims, oppressed by sinister victimizers whom we relentlessly seek to track down and accuse... We no longer live in a guilt culture but have been thrown into meaninglessness-so we are told. Then the language slips out of place. Guilt puts the blame on us as sinners, but who is responsible for meaninglessness?... Since we are victims and not really sinners, what we need is affirmation and support, and so on. The language slips and falls out of place. It becomes therapeutic rather than evangelical... A theologian of the cross says what a thing is. In modern parlance: a theologian of the cross calls a spade a spade. One who "looks on all things through suffering and the cross" is constrained to speak the truth... It is curious that in spite of attempts to avoid offense, matters don't actually seem to improve.

We seek affirmation, but we seem to experience less and less of it... Perhaps a return to calling a spade a spade has its place.

(Gerhard Forde, "On Being a Theologian of the Cross," *Christian Century*, October 22, 1997, pp. 947-949)

As we approach the season of Lent let us remember the words



of St. Paul: "Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance; Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners-of whom I am the worst." 1 Timothy 1:15

Jesus came to save "sinners" - NOT "victims!" Thank God for His mercy and grace! Thank God for His love and peace given through His Son! Let us approach our lives through the Cross and see where our sins were laid once and for all!

Your shepherd in Christ,  
Pastor Mueller ><>

*"For I resolved to know nothing while with you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified." (1 Corinthians. 2:2)*

## Teaching Your Children Honor

Ephesians 6:1-2 are verses Christian parents love to quote to their children. "*Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 'Honor your father and mother' - which is the first commandment with a promise.*" God wants children to be obedient, of course, but notice that qualifying phrase "in the Lord." That means you have to instruct them in the things of God if they are going to know how to obey. In other words, your children need the right biblical information and the right application. You can't leave them to themselves or think someone else is going to teach them.

Now, you can't know what is right until you know what God said about it. So you need to be

hanging around where the Bible is being taught and be in the Word yourselves as parents.

Dad, it is primarily your assignment to instruct your children in how they ought to live under God's authority. The best way to do that is to make sure you're submitted to the Lord's authority yourself.

That's key, because remember, even though they will move out from under your authority someday, your kids will always need to be under God. So God tells children to honor their parents. Here is a great place to begin teaching your children what it means to obey you in the Lord.

Children need their parents, especially their fathers, to help them understand that we are the adults and they are the children, and children are to respect adults. In time, they are going to get that right. But in the meantime, we parents need to be consistent in teaching honor, expecting honor, and encouraging honor. Paul said



there are two good reasons for this. First because it's right. God says in effect, "When you teach your children according to My ways, it pleases Me. And when I am pleased, I will bless you." The second reason is that this commandment carries a blessing of long life (see v.3). Teaching our children to obey us is the healthiest thing we can do from them!

### Something to talk about:

Being under authority isn't easy for kids to learn, because no one wants to be under anyone else's authority. How are you doing in honoring the authorities in your lives?

**Peter R Imlah**  
Youth & Family Minister

## February 12 is Boy Scout Sunday

Scouts from our congregation will play an active role in the early service on Sunday, February 12. Boy Scouts, Webelos, Cub Scouts, Tiger Cubs and Leaders interested in participating should contact Jay Waldschmidt at 846-7631 or wally@chorus.net. This way I can plan the service activities and presentation based on how many scouts and leaders I know will be present. Scouts and leaders will have a 1 hour practice on Sat. February 11 starting at 9:00 AM. If you can't make the practice, you must meet with Jay to find out what we will be doing if you wish to participate.



Angel Tree Thanks

I would like to thank everyone who helped make the Angel Tree program a success again this year. It was such a blessing to see so many in our congregation give of their time and treasures to purchase gifts for kids that needed a "hand-up" this Christmas season. As always, I would like to give special thanks to the Confirmation class and their parents who generously gave of their time and talents to purchase, wrap and deliver the gifts to the Angel Tree families.

This year the Angel Tree helped 33 families with 81 kids receive 162 Christmas presents. I pray the evangelism materials included with the presents helped introduce them or bring them closer to the greatest

Christmas gift of all - our Savior!

It was another fun year working on the project with everyone and I and my family look forward to doing it again next year.

God be with you today and always.

Hunter Waldschmidt

## LWML News

The Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML), an auxiliary organization of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, supports each woman in her relationship with Christ and empowers her to use her God given gifts in ministry. Women members of Bethlehem are also recognized members of LWML and together are part of the 200,000 volunteers in the United States and Canada that make up LWML. Women at Bethlehem meet monthly on the first Monday at 7:00 p.m. to do special projects which benefit mission programs world-wide. Our next meeting is February 6. All women and confirmed girls are invited.

**Contact Person:** Gerry Olson  
608-241-0885

**Projects:** Best known for their Mite Box project, the women also gather to make quilts and trim used postage stamps. One of the big projects is sewing and tying standard size quilts. The group averages 80 quilts a year. In October the quilts are sent to Lutheran World Relief along with donations of used clothing and new wrapped soap. Quilts, used clothing, soap, layettes, school kits, and health kits were

sent to 27 countries or provinces around the world.



LWML is famous for their **Mite Box Project**, that little container is used to collect pennies, nickels and dimes to support mission projects - 75% goes to District and 25% to National. Based on the Biblical story of the widow's mite, the mite box is intended for contributions above and beyond to church or Synod. Our "mity mites" add up to millions of dollars when put with other fellow Christian men and women across the nation. You can pick up a mite box label at the cookbook table that will fit an empty frosting can.

The cookbook sale has been a great success! We still have some extras - cost is \$18 each if you buy 1-2 copies, or \$15 each for 3 or more. Profits go to a fund to support our youth in their ministries.



## Stamps for Missions

Please save used postage stamps from your everyday mail! LWML appreciates donations of used stamps from our church members. The money raised by doing this easy task goes to local Mission projects that have a cross-cultural emphasis. You may drop them in the box by the Sentry receipt basket in the all.

All stamps should have 1/9 to 1/4 inch of envelope around them. If the stamps are trimmed when turned in, it makes our job easier.

**Commemorative stamps, high value stamps and all foreign stamps are acceptable. These should all have the border around them.**

Stamps **not** accepted at this time are the common stamps such as all Christmas, love, flag, flower and fruit stamps.

## Post Abortion Healing

Hope is available for those who struggle from the after-math of abortion. A Bible Study and support group begins on Monday, February 27 sponsored by Whole Heart, a ministry of the Care Net Pregnancy Center. To register, call Cassie at Care New (608) 259-1105 or email at [cassiem@carenetdane.org](mailto:cassiem@carenetdane.org) by February 20. All contact is confidential.



## Volunteer Opportunity

The Schools of Hope Literacy Project in Sun Prairie seeks volunteers to improve literacy and math skills in children in grades K-5. Volunteer opportunities are available at Westside and CH Bird Elementary Schools in Sun Prairie.

Training for volunteers will be held on Tuesday, February 14 from 10:00 a.m. - Noon at the Sun Prairie District Office, 501 S. Bird St. in the Training Room.

For more information call Ellen Breeden at C.H. Bird School 834-7381 or Leanna Trunzo at Westside 834-7560.

## Instant giving

After Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf area, a Catholic priest at Auburn University learned that people in Bayou La Batre had an urgent need for shoes. The following Sunday at a worship service, he told the students about the need and asked them - if they could - to bring shoes as soon as possible. He would deliver the shoes himself.

Guess what? At the end of the Mass approximately 200 students brought the shoes they were wearing to the altar and left them. They walked back to their dormitories barefooted.

Sounds like something saints would do, doesn't it?



## Please Call the Church Office If...

- % You or a loved one are hospitalized
- % You experience the loss of a loved one
- % You have need for Christian support
- % You have a change of address
- % Your phone number has changed
- % Your committee or group changes a meeting date or time
- % A member become homebound

- % You change your name
- % Members of your family are students attending school away from home or living at a different address

## Parish Planning Council December 13, 2005

Present: Tim Mielcarek, Steve Anacker, Pastor Mueller, Pete Imlah, Anne Meyer, Mike Ferguson, Pat Schommer, Dennis Dary, Tom Heumann, Betty Isaacson

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m. by Executive Director Tim Mielcarek. Pastor Mueller opened with prayer.

Financial Secretary, Tom Heumann presented the council with the results of the 3-year Phase II pledge period. Response has been generous, but we still have a \$900,000 mortgage to pay off. A letter will be sent out to remind members to continue giving towards debt reduction.

The 2006 Budget passed unanimously at the voter's meeting. Another part-time paid position has been established to help with communications.

There was a nice article in *The Star* about the Keep Christ in Christmas signs and a lot of signs have been going out.

Pam Hickey and Mary Kazda are the new co-chairs of the Fellowship Committee.

The church office will be closed on December 26<sup>th</sup> and January 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Betty Isaacson

**Parish Planning Council  
January 10, 2006**

Present: Tim Mielcarek, Pastor Mueller, Pete Imlah, Mike Ferguson, Mike Grulke, Steve Anacker, Peter Bushman, Pat Schommer, Anne Meyer, Betty Isaacson

The meeting was called to order at 5:32 p.m. by Executive Director Tim Mielcarek and opened with prayer by Pastor Mueller.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as distributed.

Treasurer Pat Schommer announced that we spent less than we took in last year. We are in the process of establishing a brokerage account with Thrivent to be able to accept gifts of stock. It was recommended that a recap of the 2005 financial year be given at both worship services sometime soon.

The next voters meeting is scheduled for Sunday, February 26 at 11:45 a.m. (It has since been changed to March 5.)

Pastor Mueller noted that he will attend the District Convention in June. If we wish to do so, we need to nominate a circuit counselor by Feb. 8. March 6 is the deadline to nominate a district president and vice president. Overtures for the convention are due by March 15.

Pete thanked everyone for a fun birthday party. His main focus in the near future will be small group ministry. There are some staffing gaps in Kingdom Quest that need filling. Sr. Youth are collecting soup for the food pantry on Super Bowl Sunday (Feb. 5) and will also host an evening of childcare for parent's to go on a Valentine's date on Feb. 11.

Mike Grulke has accepted the chairmanship of the Board of Evangelism. They now meet on

the first Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m. Pam Hickey and Mary Kazda are co-chairs of the Fellowship Committee. The board is looking at submitting a float for three parades this year: DeForest, Cottage Grove and Sun Prairie Flags of Freedom. They are also looking at getting some clothing with the Bethlehem logo on it to sell to members. A musical concert is also a possibility this year.

Board of Christian Education Chair Peter Bushman will head up a survey of small group leaders to discuss different possibilities and aspects of future small group studies at Bethlehem. Expectations of the confirmation program are also being looked at.

Board of Stewardship Chair Anne Meyer requested that the Time and Talent surveys be entered and results available within the next two week so volunteers can begin to be called upon.

Mike Grulke is our new delegate/liaison with MALSA. Our other delegates are Tricia Burlage and temporary delegate Paul Baumann. There may be a MALSA benefit on Feb. 11.

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Betty Isaacson