

The Tidings



Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Sun Prairie, Wisconsin

January 2008

January Middle School Sledding Party

Grades 6-8

Saturday, January 12

Meet at Church at Noon with sleds and appropriate attire.



Souper Bowl Competition

Congregation vs. Kingdom Quest

From January 13 through February 3, 2008 we'll be collecting cans of soup for the Sun Prairie Emergency Food Pantry.

The goal is 400 cans from each team!!!



The congregation's Collection Box is in the narthex and Kingdom Quest Box is in the KQ Chapel.

Follow the Challenge Board each week for totals.

January Youth Event

Tubing and Retreat

Grades 8 - 12
January 25 & 26

Leave Friday after school
Return Saturday evening
Cost is \$18.00

Retreat is at St. John's Lutheran in West Bend, WI

Tubing is at Sunburst in Kewaskum, WI

Family Night at the Movies

Go as a group to see the new VeggieTales movie "The Pirates that Don't Do Anything" at East Gate on Friday, January 11. Contact Pete Imlah for tickets.

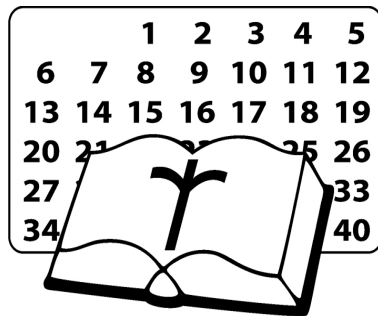
What the New Year Offers

- ☞ A fresh start in the totality of our life.
- ☞ A chance to do good things for others, especially older members of our family.
- ☞ An opportunity to plan better for the future, including the use of our time, talent and possessions.
- ☞ A challenge to read God's Word and live according to His plan.
- ☞ A chance to better control stress and anxiety in body and spirit.

Let Each Day Begin With _____ ???

A new year. A fresh start. The old has gone - the new has come. How will you begin each new day in 2008? Have any personal resolutions already been abandoned?

Why not begin each new day with the Lord? How is your personal devotional life? Do you have time with God and His Word? I believe one of the most vital ways to begin our daily tasks is in prayer. In Psalm 5 David lays out his plan in beginning his day: "Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God, for to you I pray. In the morning, O LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation." (Psalm 5:2-3)



Before any tasks are begun David lays his requests before His LORD knowing the LORD will answer and guide through-out the day. What a great way to begin each and every day! This sounds great but we all know that our good intentions in starting each day with the LORD often get sidetracked with phone calls and the busyness of life. I struggle myself to "keep on track" in daily Bible reading and prayer. I have had to force myself to get into a routine until it "stuck." A personal time of growth in His Word on a daily basis along with prayer would certainly strengthen faith and life.

Beginning next month I hope to have a "personal growth notebook" available which will include a guide for getting into the habit of daily reading and prayer. The plan includes:

- ✦ A Bible Reading Schedule designed to guide you in your Bible reading over a one year period. As you follow this guide you will read the entire New Testament and many interesting and thought-provoking sections of the Old Testament.
- ✦ -52 Bible Reading Diary pages, one for each week of the year. These pages will enable you to record meaningful messages each day that you read.
- ✦ -A Prayer guide for our congregation's needs as well as other concerns of Christ's Kingdom.
- ✦ -12 pages for keeping your Personal Prayer record.

In following this plan you will have 10-20 minutes a day in Bible reading and prayer. There will also be an opportunity once a month to get together and share our reading and prayer experiences and learn some additional techniques for better praying. I pray this is some-thing that sparks your interest in getting into the habit of being into His Word on a regular basis. There is no growth in faith without being in the Word!

*Let each day begin with prayer, Praise and adoration.
On the Lord cast ev'ry care;*

He is your salvation.

Morning, evening, and at night

Jesus will be near you,

Save you from the tempter's might,

With His presence cheer you

LSB 869 v 2

In Christian love,
Pastor Mueller

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

Go Light Your World

Our Challenge for 2008

"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:14-16

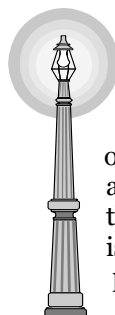
Following Christ goes far beyond private spirituality. It also involves a believer's public life, particularly through work, school and participation in the community. Jesus used two metaphors to describe that dynamic in Matthew 5: Salt (v.13) and light (vv. 14-16).

In Jesus' day, salt was used to preserve food like fish from decay. In the same way, believers can help to preserve society from moral and spiritual decay. Of course, in our culture, salt has given way to chemical preservatives (many of which have come under attack in recent years for their alleged role in causing cancer). So Jesus might use a different metaphor were He speaking today.

Perhaps He would talk in terms of an infection-fighting drug, such as an antibiotic like penicillin, or the sulfa drugs developed in the 40's that have proved so valuable in fighting meningitis and pneumonia. Christians can help to ward off spiritual infections and diseases in the larger society. We may not be able to transform our entire society, but we can be used by God to promote Christlike values and hinder evil.

In Jesus' day, the candle gave light to see during the night or in dark places. We use candles more today for the smell than the light and of course how many of us have had fires start in our bathrooms because of candles we had lit in them. So Jesus might use street lights instead of candles if He were speaking today.

The street light provides comfort, hope and security. With the large number of people today who are living in the darkness we believers are to be a street light in their lives. Through our relationship with Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior we have the comfort, hope and security only He can provide. Nothing in this world can provide these things. Our world is looking for these things in all the wrong places. We have the answer and we are called by God to share it with others. If you had the



cure for cancer would you keep it to yourselves. NO!!!
You have the cure for Spiritual Death!!! **Go Light
Your World!!!**

Peter R. Imlah



The Truth & the Dare: are you up to the challenge?

{The Truth} Parents desire love and respect from their children. That statement may seem back-ward to you. Maybe you've always assumed that it's the kids who need love and respect from their parents. Of course, you're right. what we have here is a "true love cycle" - parents who honor their teenagers are more likely to receive cooperation in return. And teens who try hard to cooperate with Mom and Dad often find it easier to gain their trust and earn privileges toward independence.

Studies show that teens who truly care about their imperfect parents are likely to be successful in life. That makes sense, because learning and practicing good communication skills at home will help prepare you for situations that you'll encounter at school, in peer relationships and on the job.

{The Dare} Make it happen: quiet time with God. Ask Him to help you to focus on the positive traits in your parents or caregivers. (The truth: imperfections and faults are easy to magnify in others especially those we live with.) Highlight the words of Proverbs 3:3-4 in your Bible:

"Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man."

70% of teens who get along well with their parents get good grades and are involved in their schools.

("State of Our Youth Survey," Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans; 2003)



Cross†raining

Middle School Youth Ministry

January Confirmation

- 2 Overview of the Sacraments
- 9 The Sacrament of Baptism
- 16 The Candidate of Baptism
- 23 The Fellowship of Baptism
- 30 Baptism Review/Mentors (6th Graders)

Soul†Fire

High School Youth Ministry

Sunday evenings at 6:00 p.m. in the youth room.

January

Heroes

(Little Known Heroes of the Bible)

- 6 **Joseph: More than Mary's Husband**
- 13 **Abigail: A Woman of Understanding**
- 20 **Barnabas: Investing in People**
- 27 No Youth Group

Super Bowl Party Coming up on February 3.

Volunteer for the Colonial Club Snow Shovel Brigade!

Area Seniors need help clearing snow from driveways and sidewalks this season. Can

you help? Call Lynn Pawelski, Volunteer Coordinator for the Colonial Club Senior Activity Center at 837-4611 ext 120.

A Christmas Program "Thank You"

Many thanks to all who attended the Bethlehem Christmas Program on December 16. Many people worked hard and shared their talents to bring us the message of the birth of Jesus. The children sang, read their parts, played the parts of biblical figures, and played in the youth praise band. Adults acted their parts also, from angels to air-planes, autos to innkeepers to King David. The choir not only sang their selections beautifully as did the adult praise band, but they also led the congregation in singing the songs of Christmas. From the small children playing angels and sheep, to an excellent portrayal of Mary and Joseph, it was truly a Christmas Program for the entire congregation and our guests.

I would also like to thank all who put in such a fine effort to make our first Christmas Program as a regular church service an outstan-ding success! I hope this tradition will continue for many years to come! We were so pleased to have enough gift bags for not only the Sunday School children in the program, but for the other children in church and the adults that took part. If you were unable to attend, we have a DVD available to watch which might give you some idea of what went on. Thanks also, to the Boards of Education and Lay Mini-stry, for making the decision to have this program on a Sunday so the entire congregation could be there to see it!

Rob Bailey
Sunday School Superintendent

A Vicar's "Thank You"

Dear Friends of Bethlehem,

Once again, thank you so much for your generous support of my seminary education. It has been a long road for us, and it's very exciting to finally be nearing the end. Your prayers and financial support along the way have meant more to us than words can express. Thanks and God bless you all.

Vicar Paul Spira

Parish Planning Council

November 13, 2007

Present: Brenda Detert, Keith McCredie, Pat Schommer, Tim Mielcarek, Pete Imlah, Randy Lange, Tom Barnet, Jim McCourt, Pastor Mueller, Bob Hickey, Betty Isaacson

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. and opened with prayer.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as distributed.

Treasurer Pat Schommer distributed the proposed 2008 budget with not much change from last year's. All board chairs should attend the voters meeting on December 2 to answer any questions regarding their board's budget items.

Peter Bushman will resign as Chair of the Board of Christian Education at the end of 2007.

Pastor Mueller reminded us of the midweek Advent services on Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. December 5, 12, & 19.

Pete Imlah reported that he attended a youth leaders conference in St. Louis. The Christmas program will be on December 16 with one service that day at 9:30 a.m. with a potluck to follow.

Evangelism Chair Randy Lange noted that the Family Fun Day was a great success despite the hot day. The assimilation team is meeting.

Fellowship Chair Brenda Detert reported that the Mystery Dinner was well received and got people talking to one another. Church decorating will be November 30 & December 1. The Committee would like to see china dishes purchased to serve 200 for more formal events.

Properties Chair Keith McCredie announced that the fall clean up day went well. An AED will be purchased for the church in 2008 as well as interconnected smoke detectors.

Stewardship Chair Tom Barnet urged use of the draft list and suggested putting volunteer opportunities on our website. Will need a new webmaster. The board will sponsor the Dec. 19th Advent dinner with chicken & biscuits.

Lay Ministry Chair Jim McCourt noted that late service time has been changed from 10:30 to 10:45 a.m. and Sunday School to 9:25. We have returned to the previous method of communion distribution – dismissing each table individually.

Some discussion on calling a second "lead" pastor. Job description will need to be very clear. Will probably call a special voters meeting in January, set up a call committee and then request voters to add the salary to the 2008 budget.

The contemporary group would like more speakers up in the front of the church for loudness.

Respectfully submitted,
Betty Isaacson

VOTER'S MEETING MINUTES

December 2, 2007

Meeting called to order at 12:05 PM by Executive Director Tim Mielcarek.

Pete Imlah opened meeting with prayer.

List for reception of 21 new members and removal of 28 old members read by Jim McCourt, Lay Ministry Chair. Motion made to approve and seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Motion to approve minutes of October voter's meeting made and seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Pat Schommer, Treasurer, presented proposed budget for 2008. Motion made and seconded to pass budget as presented. During discussion, motion made and seconded for an amendment to original motion adding \$1,500 to Lay Ministry budget to allow Pastor Mueller to attend Stephen Ministry Leadership Conference. Amendment unanimously passed, as did original motion.

Motion made and seconded directing Lay Ministry to find someone other than Pete Imlah to do the set-up of services for the projection system by February 1, 2008. Motion passed unanimously.

Lay Ministry agreed to update the congregation on the status of the proposal to call a second Pastor.

A discussion was held on the lack of attendance at Voter's Meetings. The concern was raised that a small number of members at a voter's meeting could make major decisions. This has been an ongoing issue and we will keep trying to come up with ideas to help increase the attendance.

Pete Imlah announced Peter Bushman's resignation as Chairman of our Board of Education. Pete wanted to give a public thank you to Peter Bushman for all he did during his many years of service.

Motion made and seconded to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously. Closing prayer by Pastor Mueller. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted By:
Jim McCourt, Acting Secretary

Volunteer Opportunity

Oakwood Village East

5565 Tancho Drive
Madison, WI 53718

Contact Kim Viney, 230-4238 or kim.viney@oakwoodvillage.net to volunteer for any of the following or for more information.

Village Mercantile –

Volunteers are needed for the Village Mercantile gift shop and grocery store in the Community Center at Oakwood Village East Retirement Community.

Volunteers are needed Monday-Friday 9:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m. or 12:30-3:15 p.m., or on Saturday, 12:45-3:15 p.m. New Village Mercantile volunteers receive training and a 20% discount on regular-priced gift shop merchandise on the day(s) they volunteer in the Mercantile.

Oakwood Knoll Music Therapy Volunteer

One volunteer needed to assist Oakwood music therapist with weekly Monday afternoon resident group, 1:30-3:30 p.m.

Volunteer Drivers

Volunteers needed to help take Apartments or assisted living residents to weekday medical appointments or on personal errands, Mon – Fri, a few times a month. Volunteer needs to use their own vehicle and monthly mileage reimbursement is provided.

Pet Visitors

Volunteers with appropriate, sociable pets to come in and visit with Seasons assisted living and Meadows and Knoll memory care residents once a week, any day of the week, mornings, afternoons or early evenings. Day and time negotiable based on your schedule.