

FAITH NEWSLETTER

December 2008 / January 2009

Dear Brothers and Sister in Christ,



At this point you're probably busily shopping for Christmas presents (unless you're like me and tend to put it off until the last minute).

Shopping for Christmas gifts can be a joy, but it's not always easy. Sometimes you don't know someone well enough to know what they would like. When it comes to the special people in your life, you want to find the perfect gift, which is not easy. And then you may have the perfect gift in mind, but you can't find it in the stores, or it ends up costing more than you can afford.

When it comes to giving gifts, our Lord does it best. His gifts to us always surprise us with their generosity. Everything we have comes to us as a gift from the Lord. Luther puts it this way:

"I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them. He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all I have."

Not only does our Lord give us all that we need each day, but He gives us more. He gives us Spiritual gifts as well - love, hope, peace, and joy to name just a few.

Most importantly, He gives us the gift of Himself. Sometimes the best gifts are the ones we make ourselves, or the gifts of service when we take the time to do something special for our loved ones.

Jesus came and gave all of Himself, even His very life for you. The Lord of heaven and earth gave everything He had out of love for you.

That gift is delivered to you every Sunday in the Divine Service. In the Lord's Supper, Jesus gives Himself to you. The altar is Christmas tree and the gifts of His body and blood are wrapped in bread and wine for you.

Every Sunday is a little Christmas. Come to the Lord's House to receive the gifts He has for you here.

*Given, not lent,
And not withdrawn - once sent,
This Infant of mankind, this One,
Is still the little welcome Son.*

Alice Meynell (1847-1922)

Merry Christmas!

Pastor Mark Birkholz



In and Around Faith Church

Ladies Aid

Our annual Christmas bazaar was again successful due to the hard work of our ladies. We might be small in numbers but the enthusiasm and fellowship we all enjoy makes it special. A special thank you for all the help in the way of donations, support and time. Your efforts enable us to give back to the church.

All ladies of Faith's congregation are invited to our annual Christmas party on Thursday, Dec. 4th at 6:30PM. Please bring a dish to share for the potluck supper. Chicken will be provided. We will be playing Bunco and we will have a grab bag. So don't forget your \$5.00 grab bag gift.

As another year comes to a close, we send our prayers to you for a blessed Christmas and a New Year of continued faith, happiness and good health.

Kathleen Nowak

Special Project

The voter's decided at the September meeting to establish a special project fund to provide for sealing the surface and striping lines in the parking lot, and repairing cracks in the church basement foundation to stop the leaks. A goal of \$5,000 to be reached by year-end was approved.

You may use the special project envelopes that will be available on the Literature Table in the Narthex or any envelope marked for the special project along with your name or church envelop number. To date \$2,000 has been received.

Thank you for your support.

LWML

Our activities are over for the year. The winter *Quarterlies* will be out soon and I hope all ladies will enjoy reading the articles.

Grace Scott

Altar Guild

The Altar Guild sends a big THANK YOU to Howard Johnson for installing the extra hardware necessary for us to put up more banners in the sanctuary. Many of you have told us how much you like them.

Also, our numbers are few and we would like to ask anyone interested in serving our Lord in a "behind the scenes" way to please join us. We believe it is the best job in the church! Please talk to anyone of us, we'd love to have you join us.

The Altar Guild will have their felt Christmas tree up in the Narthex for their annual fund raiser. Please take a bookmark or gift from the basket, sign a Christmas name tag and place your donation by check or cash in the basket.

Thank you and God's many blessings.

Diane Osmanski, Barb Tebo, Debbie Hochgesang and Shirley Burkett

Christmas Open House:

All members are cordially invited to an open house at the parsonage (9658 Melvina Ave) on Sunday, December 14 from 2:00 to 5:00 pm. Come and enjoy a time of fellowship and light refreshments as we prepare to celebrate our Savior's birth.

"An Evening with Jesus"

We are continuing with our once a month Bible School.

Thursday, December 18th from 6:00 PM until 7:30 PM we will be meeting in the Parish Hall for a celebration of Jesus' birth with Bible stories, crafts, songs and refreshments. If you are between the ages of 3 years and 12 years, you are invited to an exciting and fun evening. Bring a friend so we can all learn about the true meaning of Christmas together.

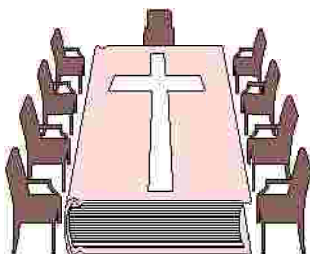
We will continue this event on Jan. 15, 2009 with a focus on Baptism.

Schedule of Dec. 2008 / Jan. 2009 Events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Dec. Event</u>
3	2:00 PM	Advent Service
6	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
7	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
10	2:00 PM	Advent Service
14	9:00 AM	Worship / Children's Msg.
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
17	2:00 PM	Advent Service
20	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
21	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
24	7:00 PM	Christmas Eve Worship
25	9:00 AM	Christmas Day Worship Communion
28	9:00 AM	Worship / Children's Msg.
	10:15	Adult Bible Class

Weekly Meetings

AA Groups	M & F - 6:00 PM Sat - 8:00 AM
Bible Study	Fri. - 10:30 AM
Girl Scouts	Tu - 3:30 PM F - 6:30 PM
ALANON	Tu - 7:00 PM
Choir	W - 6:30 PM
Ladies Aid	(First) - Th. - 7:00 PM
Adventure Crew	(First) - Sun. - 7:00 PM



<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Jan. Event</u>
3	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
4	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
11	9:00 AM	Worship / Children's Msg.
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
17	9:00 AM	Food Pantry Distribution
18	9:00 AM	Worship / Communion
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class
25	9:00 AM	Worship / Children's Msg.
	10:15 AM	Adult Bible Class

Midweek Advent Services

Come join in prayer and meditation in preparation for our Lord's coming. Services will be at 2:00 pm on December 3, 10 and 17. The starting point for our prayers will be the ancient Advent hymns: "Savior of the Nations, Come", "O Lord of Light who Made the Stars", and "O Come, O Come Emmanuel." In the midst of the busyness of the Christmas season, this will be a time to refocus our lives on what is most important.

Christmas Caroling

Come and spread Christmas cheer by singing your favorite Christmas carols with residents of our area nursing homes. We will meet at the church on Saturday, December 13 at 1:00PM to carpool. Our first stop will be International Village, to sing with Alma Risky. From there we will go to Smith Village, where Lois Werth's mother resides. We should be back at the church no later than 4:00PM. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor.



Dec. / Jan. Elders, Ushers & Lay Readers

Worship 9:00 AM Sunday

Dec. 7	Bill Weems Alden Ketchum Nick Trojanowski Glenn Werth
Dec. 14	Ed Neaves Bob Stegmann Howard Johnson
Dec. 21	Frank Oslakovic Gene Osmanski Mark Trojanowski Elise Trojanowski
Dec. 28	Richard Clark Mary Slepski Gail Henson

Advent Services Wednesday 2:00 PM

Dec. 3	Richard Clark Glenn Werth
Dec. 10	Frank Oslakovic Howard Johnson
Dec. 17	Gene Osmanski Alden Ketchum

Christmas Eve Worship 7:00 PM

Dec. 24	Richard Clark Bill Weems Frank Oslakovic
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Christmas Day

Worship / Communion 9:00 AM

Dec. 25	Gene Osmanski Ed Neaves Gail Henson Mary Slepski
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Worship 9:00 AM Sunday

Jan. 4	Ed Neaves Bill Weems Nick Trojanowski Dory Moeller
Jan. 11	Richard Clark A.J. Bray Glenn Werth
Jan. 18	Alden Ketchum Frank Oslakovic Howard Johnson Bob Stegmann
Jan. 25	Gene Osmanski Gail Henson Mary Slepski

Lay Readers 9:00 AM Sunday

Dec. 7	Bill Weems
Dec. 14	Debbie Hochgesang
Dec. 21	Gene Osmanski
Dec. 28	Ed Neaves
Jan. 4	Nick Trojanowski
Jan. 11	Elise Trojanowski
Jan. 18	Mark Trojanowski
Jan. 25	Gene Osmanski

