



The Viewpoint

Volume 55 No. 1

January 2008

Remember:

Congregational Meeting January 27th

More information on Page 2



Inside this issue:

(Ministry Teams are Highlighted in **Bold Print**)

Pastor's Message	1
Generation 2 Generation	3
Christian Education	4
Congregational Care	6
Outreach Ministry	8
Peace & Justice Ministry	8
Stewardship	10
Worship & Music Ministry	11
Youth & Family Ministry	12
Prayer Ventures	14
Birthdays & Anniversaries	16

Hear the Word of God

By: Pastor Jan Ruud

In these last days of Christmas, we continue to celebrate Jesus as the Word of God who became flesh and dwells among us, full of grace and truth. Then, when the season of Epiphany begins on January 6th, we look for God to enlighten us and teach us through the living Word of scripture. The readings each Sunday will address the questions that still reside deep within all of us: "Who, indeed, is this Messiah who we welcomed at Christmas?" "What signs should we be looking for as we seek to know where he is found in the world around us?" "Where is he calling us to serve today, and why is it important to answer that call in trust and obedience?"

The answers begin to unfold on the very first Sunday of Epiphany. We call it "Baptism of our Lord Sunday" because the scripture readings always point us to the story of Jesus' own baptism in the Jordan river. To me, it is the perfect of occasion to remember not only who Christ is, but also who we are and how we are called to live as the baptized people of God. That brings us back to the baptismal covenant we are holding up during this year of focus on the theme of "Generation 2 Generation." During Advent and Christ, we remembered the call to "live among God's faithful people." The next words in the baptismal covenant call us to "hear the Word of God and share in the Lord's supper."

If Christmas is the time to welcome God's Word made flesh, then Epiphany is the time to hear what he has to say to us and to the whole world. During Epiphany, there's a beautiful Gospel story about the time a young boy

named Jesus opened the Word of God to the adults who were gathered for worship. For them, hearing the Word of God meant not only hearing the words written on a scroll, but hearing the living witness to these words from one who was standing in their midst. That fits my own experience. I can read and hear the Word of God on my own, but when I read it and hear it among God's faithful people there is a broader and richer dimension to this encounter. I remember a children's sermon I preached many years ago where the two young listeners became the proclaimers of God's Word to all of us. It was the day of Epiphany, and I was showing them a picture of children from many different races. My goal was to link it to the story of the Magi and to talk about the gift of diversity. It got turned upside down when both of them admitted that they couldn't see any differences in the children in my picture. At that point, I simply ended the children's sermon in the same way we end the reading of scripture each week: "The Word of the Lord."



Prepare the Way



Congregational Meeting January 27

When we gather for our congregational meeting this January, we will have three very important aspects of our mission before us: 1) Our plan for leadership and the process of calling of a new pastor; 2) Our plan to link ministry and facilities through the construction of new space and renovation of existing space; 3) Our plan to fund the overall ministry of St. Mark's with the gifts we receive. We need to have everyone present as we make these important decisions. Please mark your calendars today and plan to attend. The meeting will begin at 12:15 p.m. in the sanctuary and we will serve light snacks prior to the meeting. Childcare will be provided.

There are many ways that you can prepare for this important meeting:

- Attend Adult Forums that are offered on the three Sundays lead-

ing up to the meeting. Here you will have the opportunity to learn about these plans and to share your own thoughts and vision. You can read more about this in the Christian Education section on page 5 of this newsletter.

- Attend one of the special "Vision for Mission" meetings on either Saturday, January 19 or Saturday, January 26 from 10:30 a.m.—noon. We will take time to look at the motion being brought to the congregation by the Church Council regarding the construction and renovation of facilities and the proposed Ministry Funding Plan (budget) for our congregation's ministry in 2008.
- Take time to read the 2007 Annual Report which will be available on January 19. It highlights all the ministry we have accomplished in 2007, and it contains the vital information you will need about our plans for 2008.

Attitude

The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do.

It is more important than appearance, giftedness, or skill. The remarkable thing is – we have a choice every day of our lives regarding the attitude we embrace for that day.

- Charles Swindoll

- Share your enthusiasm, your concerns, and your questions with any of our staff or congregational leaders during the month of January. We welcome and honor the input of everyone.

- Thank all of the faithful people on our Church Council, Building Committee, Grace Upon Grace Committee, Financial Task Force, and Ministry Teams who have worked hard on this for many months and years.

Pray for the grace and the guidance of God for all of us at St. Mark's as we move forward in faith.

We look forward to seeing all of you at 12:15 p.m. on Sunday, January 27!

A Baptismal Covenant: *To Hear the Word of God*

By: Ingelaurie Lisher—Director of Youth & Family Ministry

On Sunday, January 13 we come together as a worship community and different generations to remember the Baptism of Jesus. We also receive new members into the life of our congregation. When these new members affirm their faith, we also share in the same baptismal promise and are reminded to "hear the word of God and share in the Lord's Supper."

During the seasons of Advent and Christmas we found many ways to worship, pray and serve together while we continued our focus on Generation 2 Generation. The season of Epiphany and beyond will provide wonderful opportunities for us to explore together God's call to us to "live among God's faithful people." If we look at the next lines of the baptismal covenant, we see



"hear the Word of God and share in the Lord's Supper." These words coincide with "live among God's faithful people." In my own experience I have found that it is easier to hear the gospel of Christ and share in Holy Communion when I am actively part of a community of faith. In my role of Director of Youth and Family Ministry, I especially try to pass this message on to the youth of

our congregation.

In Pastor Ruud's article he states, "If Christmas is the time to welcome God's Word made flesh, then Epiphany is the time to hear what he has to say to us and the whole world." God's Word is no longer for the people of Israel but for the Gentiles as well. (Eph. 2:6) In addition to Sunday and Wednesday evening worship, there are other ways that we can hear and experience the Word together. Fellowship takes place through bible studies, Sunday School, through devotions at committee meetings and activity and service events. In these activities questions are being asked and the Word is being explored and lived out.

Generation 2 Generation is given the gift of the Word of God. Our response is to live it out and share it with all who we encounter along the way.

A Prayer for Our Nation

Gracious Father in heaven,

You have a plan for each of us and for the world - bigger than our eyes can see or comprehend. We feel today as though we have had our eyes opened wider than ever; we feel frightened, we feel angry, and some in this world, God, feel as though You have turned Your face away from us.

But God, You are there! You are surrounding us in Your everlasting love and care. You are with those who are trapped, and with those who are searching for the victims. You were with those who perished, and they are now with You. Help us to remember that it is You who carry us through the rough times of our lives.

Help us to know it is okay for us to grieve, and help us to remember to turn to You when we are overwhelmed with emotion in the next days and weeks and even months.

Vengeance is Yours, God, not ours. We ask Your special blessing on our leaders, that they would make the decisions You would have them make. Place Your hand upon their hearts, and Your words on their lips.

"I am pressed but not crushed, persecuted not abandoned; struck down but not destroyed. I am blessed beyond the curse, for His promise will endure this; His joy's gonna be my strength. Though the sorrow may last for the night, His joy comes with the morning. I'm trading my sorrows, I'm trading my shame, I'm laying them down for the joy of the Lord." (From the song *Trading My Sorrows* written by Darrel Evans)

To You, God, be all glory and honor, forever and ever! Amen

Christian Education

Confirmation Ministry

January: **TRUTH**

16: Dinner and class

5:45-7:15 p.m.

30: Dinner and class

5:45-7:15 p.m.

February: **PRAYER**

23-24: Retreat 11:00 a.m.

Saturday-1:00 p.m. Sunday

Thanks to Pastor Becca Parkins, Linda Faaren, Laura Gross, Jody Smith and Janet Grant for leading the confirmation youth on our outing to the Tacoma Lutheran Home on December 16.

Christian Education Team Meeting

January 13, 2008

at Noon

Preschool News

Over the holidays, we have had a very happy and productive time at St Mark's Preschool. In November we participated in the food drive. The children learned that there are other children who don't always have food to eat. They were very happy to give. We also had our first fund raiser of the school year. We raised \$425 selling Butterbraids pastries. Thank you to all who bought some. The money will go towards a computer for the children.

Sunday School

By: Linda Wimberley

January 6th brings a new season of FUN to our Education wing. We are thrilled to have all of our fall teachers back. We'll be working with the same lectionary based curriculum as in the fall and hope everyone will be more comfortable with it this time around.

We would still like to split our preschool class into two groups. If you are interested in teaching the little ones please contact Linda Wimberley at 988-6882.

Last fall we tried to involve parents by asking them to assist in their child's class. Not many of those slots were filled, but we encourage you to talk to your child's teacher and find ways you can help. We know many of you are involved in other Sunday morning activities, but we'd like to see Sunday school become a team effort.

On December 9th we enjoyed a WONDERFUL performance by some very talented students in our Christmas program "Light of

the World". A huge THANK YOU goes to this year's director, Eileen Tellefson, for instructing our kids throughout this program. Also we'd like to thank Danielle Lemieux for suggesting the program and teaching the Joyful Noise and Jubilation Choirs some of the songs, so we could be better prepared. Thanks to the parents and grandparents that stuck around to help at Saturday's practice and those who helped out on Sunday morning. Finally thanks to the Education team for all of their behind the scenes work including costumes, supervision, communication, treats and crafts.

Attention all thrift shoppers!!!!

Our Christmas costumes could use some sprucing up. While you are out and about in 2008 please be on the lookout for headbands, crowns, waist ties or anything you think might work for program costumes. Also, keep your eyes open for pumpkins - stuffed, straw, big, and little. We'll need those for an event coming up in April.

January will bring themes of ice and winter weather. The children have enjoyed the snow we have had so far and are looking forward to more.

We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year!!

Laura Oellerich, Anne Bettger, Teresa Handy, Linda Burr and Jessica Beecher

“Preparing the Way”:



Sunday Morning Adult Forums in January

By: Pastor Jan Ruud

Join us at either 9:45 a.m. or 11:00 a.m. in the Fireside Room for a series of Adult Forums that will help us prepare the way for our congregational meeting on January 27 and ministry together in the new year.

Sunday, January 6: Leadership Development at St. Mark's

Join Pastor Jan Ruud and members of the Leadership Development Team as they talk about the process of equipping all people for ministry at St. Mark's. Hear about the many ways in which this extends to staff, church council, ministry teams, and individual members of the congregation. You will see the new Organizational Chart adopted by Church Council and learn more about the proposed job description and the call process for a new pastor at St. Mark's.

Sunday, January 13: Linking Ministry and Facilities at St. Mark's

Join members of our Building Committee and Ministry Leaders for a close look at the latest designs from our architect that will be presented to the congregation at the special meeting on January 27. Learn how

this will enhance our ministry with children, youth, and adults and ask questions that will help you understand the process. You will get a visual tour of the proposed new addition, the upgrades to our sanctuary, and the renovation of existing space.

Sunday, January 20: Our Ministry Funding Plan

Join members of our Church Council, Finance Team, and Grace Upon Grace Leadership Team for a look at the proposed Ministry Funding Plan (Budget) for 2008 and the Financial Plan for our Grace Upon Grace building program. This will be your opportunity to learn and to ask questions related to this important part of our congregation's overall mission. Be sure to pick up a copy of the 2007 Annual Report ahead of time. It will be available in the Narthex, beginning on Saturday, January 19.

We hope you can be with us on these special occasions when we look at what it means to be the Body of Christ in mission.

SCRIPTURE CAKE

(Bake at 325° F. for 1 hour and 30 min. Makes one 10-inch tube cake.)

3 c. sifted all-purpose flour (*1 Kings 4:22*)

3 tsp. baking powder (*Galatians 5:9*)
tsp. salt (*Leviticus 2:13*)

1 tsp. ground cinnamon
tsp. ground nutmeg

tsp. ground cloves
tsp. ground allspice (*1 Kings 10:2*)

1 c. (2 sticks) butter, softened
(*Judges 5:25*)

2 c. firmly packed brown sugar
(*Jeremiah 6:20*)

2 Tbsp. honey (*Exodus 16:31*)
6 eggs (*Luke 11:12*)

1 (8 oz.) pkg. Pitted dates, chopped
(*Deuteronomy 34:3*)

2 c. raisins (*1 Samuel 30:12*)

1 c. walnuts, chopped (*Solomon 6:11*)
1 c. milk (*Judges 5:25*)

1. Sift flour, baking powder, salt cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves and allspice onto waxed paper.
2. Beat butter, sugar, honey and eggs in a large bowl with electric mixer at high speed, until light and fluffy.
3. Sprinkle c. of the flour mixture over the fruits and nuts. Add remaining flour mixture alternately with the milk to the fluffy butter mixture, beating until smooth. Stir in fruits and nuts. Spoon into a greased and floured 10-inch pan.
4. Bake in a slow oven (325°) for 1 hour and 30 minutes or until top springs back when lightly touched with fingertip.
5. Cool in pan on wire rack 20 minutes; loosen around edge and middle with knife; turn out on rack; cool completely. Wrap in foil or plastic. Cake slices best the next day.

Congregational Care

Learning the Practice of Prayer: *A Weekend Retreat*

By: Pastor Charlie Mays

As part of St. Mark's Lenten emphasis on prayer, Pastor Charlie Mays will offer a weekend retreat on "Learning the Practice of Prayer" using Richard Foster's classic book, *Prayer: Finding the Hearts True Home*. During the retreat, participants will be introduced to several forms of Christian prayer through readings, discussion and practice.

The retreat is scheduled for Friday, February 8 beginning at 6 PM and concluding about 3 PM on Saturday, February 9.

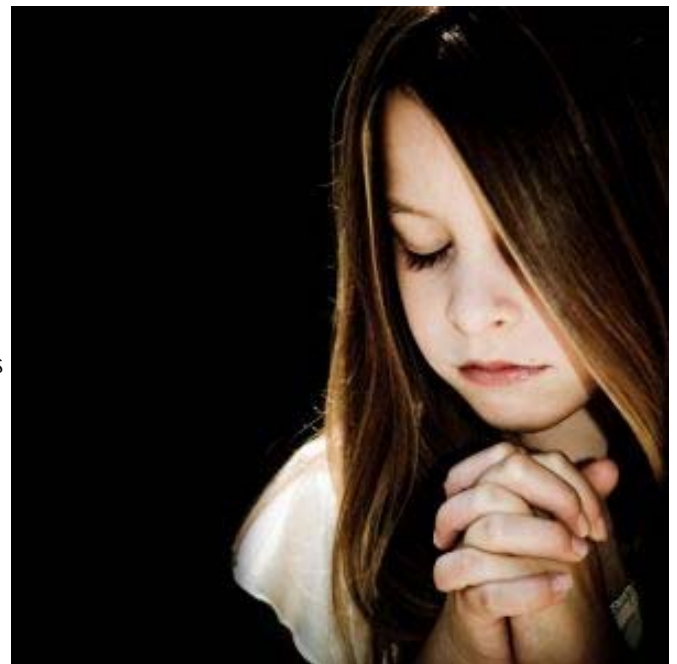
Foster, a Quaker theologian and best-selling author, provides an excellent and comprehensive survey of 21 forms of Christian prayer. He groups the sections around three movements (inward, upward, and outward) which address three human needs (transformation, intimacy, and ministry). Foster presents the best thinking of various church traditions to help people feel drawn to prayer and a restored and deeper relationship with

oneself, God, and others. The book is a comprehensive, yet accessible introduction to prayer and the retreat will introduce us to the three movements that it describes. We will learn about three samples of such prayers experience them by using them during the retreat.

On the inside cover, Forster writes: "The truth of the matter is, we all come to prayer with a tangled mass of motives--altruistic *and* selfish, merciful *and* hateful, loving *and* bitter. Frankly, this side of eternity we will *never* unravel the good from the bad, the pure from the impure. But what I have come to see is that God is big enough to receive us with all our mixture. We do not have to be bright, or pure, or filled with faith, or anything. That is what grace

means, and not only are we saved by grace, we live by it as well. And we pray by it."

There will be more information about details such as where to buy the book, costs, and locations, etc in next month's newsletter and bulletins. We invite you to begin now to think about this opportunity to deepen your prayer life.



Caregiver Support Group

By: Karen Grams



Some of you have received letters from us in regard to a support group for caregivers. Some of you have had a chance to indicate interest and a preference for meeting day and time. We are anxious to get started. The first meeting of the support group will be Wednesday, January 16th, from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. We are open to changes in needs and preferences

so your input is still important. We also want to extend our invitation to anyone who feels they could benefit from a caregiver support group. If we missed you in our initial contact, please let us know of your interest. We look forward to meeting this particular need in our congregation. I hope to see you on January 16th.



Recognizing a Stroke The 60 Second Test

A Bystander can recognize a stroke by asking four simple questions:

Ask the individual to **SMILE**

Ask the person to **TALK**, to speak a simple sentence (coherently)

Ask the person to **RAISE** both arms

Ask the person to "stick" **OUT** his or her tongue to determine if the tongue is "crooked", if it goes to one side or the other.

If the person has trouble with ANY ONE of these tasks, call 911 immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher.

A stroke is a medical emergency. Strokes happen when blood flow to the brain stops. Within minutes, brain cells begin to die. There are two kinds of stroke. The more common kind, called ischemic stroke, is caused by a blood clot that blocks or plugs a blood vessel in the brain. The other kind, called hemorrhagic stroke, is caused by a blood vessel that breaks and bleeds into the brain. "Mini-strokes" or transient ischemic attacks (TIAs) occur when the blood supply to the brain is briefly interrupted.

American Stroke Foundation and National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke

Living with Mental Illness in Your Family



By: Pastor Charlie Mays

cover and claim the value of their own experience and the strength that comes from mutual support especially in a faith community. At the close of the retreat, participants will decide if they have a need or desire for further retreats.

Pastor Charlie Mays will offer a retreat on Saturday, January 12th from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. for families who have a loved one living with mental illness. The retreat will introduce family members to information on brain disorders, medications, care giving, dealing with the stigma, finding resources, and identifying hopeful trends for the future of people who suffer from mental illness.

The retreat will help people dis-

Charlie is a certified teacher of the National Alliance on Mental Illness Family to Family class. He strongly encourages people to use the resources that are available through the local NAMI affiliate, NAMI Citizens Guild of Western Washington.

For further information or to sign up for this retreat you can contact Charlie when he is at the church on Wednesdays, call him at home [425 379-7067](tel:4253797067) or email him at charlie_mays@msn.com.

Weekend in the Snow

This year's annual trip to Trollhaugen Lodge (near Snoqualmie Pass) will be on the weekend of **March 28-30**. This is for anyone who wants to spend a fun weekend in the mountains with other members of our church family. The cost for lodging is \$30 per person and participants bring their own food. Pastor Ruud will lead devotions and Sunday worship. You can learn more about the lodge by going to their website <http://sonsofnorway2.com/trollhaugen.htm>. A sign-up sheet will be posted in the narthex in mid-January. We are able to accommodate 45 people at the lodge this year, so make sure and get your name on the list as soon as possible.

POINT OF LIGHT PASS ON THE TORCH

Pass on the torch, pass on the flame;
Remember whence the Glory came;
And eyes are on you as you run,
Beyond the shining of the sun.

Lord Christ, we take the torch from Thee;
We must be true, we must be free,
And clean of heart and strong of soul,
To bear the Glory to its goal.

O Lord of life, to Thee we kneel;
Maker of men, our purpose seal!
We will, for honor of Thy Name,
Pass on the torch, pass on the flame.



- Allen Eastman Cross

Outreach Ministry

Faith Journey

Welcoming People into Community

By: Pastor Jan Ruud

On Sunday, January 13 we will welcome new members into our congregation at all three worship services. Most of the people have been enjoying a time of spiritual growth and renewal in one of the Faith Journey groups since early October. They will continue to meet with their Faith Companions for the rest of the this month, focusing their hearts and minds on what it means to be "called" by Christ into service at this particular time in their lives. Pastor Ruud will begin hosting new Faith Journey groups for guests at St. Mark's January. There will be Sunday group that meets for lunch at 12:15 p.m. in the Fireside Room (beginning on January 20) and a Wednesday group that meets at 6:15 p.m. (beginning on January 23). Childcare is offered at both times, and a soup supper is served from 5:45 - 6:15 p.m. on Wednesdays.



Viewpoint Submissions

The Viewpoint deadline is the 15th of each month. Please email your submissions to Lisa Lindholm at lisa@smlutheran.org. You may also submit a hard copy to Jan Pence in the church office. When writing your articles include as much information as possible. When will the event take place? Where will it be? Who is the contact for the event? Think of *The Viewpoint* as an outreach tool. Imagine your article from the standpoint of a St. Mark's visitor. Is all of the pertinent information included?

Peace & Justice Ministry

Let the Journey Begin: *Mexico Mission 2008*



By Pastor Jan Ruud

Once again, we will be going down to Mexico at the end of June to build houses for needy families and to share the love of God with children and adults in the local community. The dates for this year's trip are June 20-28. This mission trip welcomes participants who are High School age or older. Pastor Ruud will be hosting a special Interest Meeting on Thursday, January 24 at 7:30 p.m.

in the Fireside Room. This is for people who want to learn more about this opportunity and for all those who want to be a part of this year's Mexico Mission Team. A sign-up sheet will be circulated at the meeting and then posted in the narthex on the following Sunday. In the meantime, any questions about the trip can be addressed to Pastor Ruud at jruud@smlutheran.org.

Life in Kumamoto is moving full steam ahead (as usual). Last week the students took their finals for the second trimester. Unlike most American school, finals are not at the very end of the school year here. We still have two weeks left. Remarkably the students are all still very eager to participate in class.

I have started Christmas lessons, which are very fun (for both the kids and me), but can be difficult because there is so much to cover. In Japan, Christmas is celebrated very differently. People special order cakes from the local grocery store, sit down to a traditional meal of Kentucky Fried Chicken, and then go out with their significant others. That's right, in Japan, Christmas is date night, which is second only to Valentine's Day. For the Japanese, the big family holiday is New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. They eat special food for three or



Greetings from Japan

By: Lisa Hutson

four days straight and even have a special greeting. It roughly translates out to "I am happy to see you in this new year, let's continue to work together and build our relationship." Thankfully it is much shorter to say in Japanese.

groups we have supported in the past. In January the offerings will go to the ELCA Hunger Fund.

Katherine Stime, the director of the ELCA Hunger office, says, "Whether it's time or money, many of us wrestle with aligning our resources with our priorities. The wise stewardship of these treasures challenges us in our call to 'Go and do likewise.' In my home, supporting our congregation and ELCA World Hunger is a priority, but so are child care and groceries. In this global community, we are intricately connected to people living in poverty, and I struggle with knowing that my lifestyle and stewardship decisions impact my neighbors around the world. But it's a reminder to me that my resources are not really mine but gifts from

This week my students are writing letters to Santa. Whenever I announce this at the start of class they get so excited and start discussing what they want. Many students ask for peace or to end poverty. Of course they ask for cute new shoes and shiny new bicycles as well. I think my favorite response so far is probably from a junior in the highschool. He asked to keep his hair because both of his grandfathers and his father have all gone bald.

I would like to give one final update on Yuka. At the start of this week, she returned to school! She seems to have settled in just fine and all of her classmates are excited to have her back. It really was amazing to hear how quick and smooth her recovery went.

I hope you have a good Advent Season and a very Merry Christmas.

God intended to make a difference in the world." I would encourage everyone to learn more about this critical ministry by going to www.elca.org/hunger.

A hearty thanks for your offerings of \$747.38 in November. This offering went to Nativity House in Tacoma.

Love Offerings

By: Norm Orth

Hunger offerings are love offerings. Jesus said, "Love your neighbor as yourself" That doesn't mean warm and fuzzy feelings toward everyone. It means meeting our neighbor's basic needs. Jesus spells it out well in Matthew 25. Read it again beginning with verse 31. I force myself to do that when my old self talks to me and says, "You just can't afford that Norm." That does happen to me and perhaps all of us.

At our recent Peace and Justice ministry team meeting we discussed who the hunger offering recipients should be in 2008. We decided every other month those offerings would go to the ELCA World Hunger Program. In the alternate months it will go to local

**Food Bank
Suggestions for January**

**Pasta, Sauce, Macaroni
& Cheese, or Rice**

Stewardship Ministry



Parents and Guardians

By: Scott Moor, Mission Endowment Committee

As we conclude the Christmas season, we are reminded of Joseph, the Guardian of Jesus. In my opinion, Joseph's role in the Christmas story is under-emphasized.

For all of the fathers reading this article, think about Joseph's situation for a moment. Remember that Jesus was born in the stable. There were no hospitals, no epidurals, no physicians, no midwives, and no "Birthing for Dummies" books; just you, Mary and the barn animals. How much exposure and training has Joseph had to the birthing experience? My guess is none, as usually only other women were present to assist the birth mother. Fathers and others were sent to the proverbial waiting room. Oh, by the way, the child to be born will change the basic fabric of the universe. Feeling the pressure of the situation yet?

After the birth of Jesus, Joseph's role of guardian really kicks in. He is told in a dream to take Mary and newborn Jesus to Egypt. They are there for two years until Joseph is told it is safe to return home. Traveling and staying a foreign country is a tough assignment for most people. I can only image what it was like for young, newly married couple with a newborn baby. Joseph and Mary then raise Jesus, and eventually their own children, faithfully in the ways of the Jewish tradition, teaching them the occupations of carpentry and home-making.

In reading these stories, you see how critical it was that God select an appropriate guardian for Jesus. As parents, we have that same vital responsibility to choose guardians for our own minor-aged children. The legally recognized way of recording this selection is with a will.

Care of Creation

By: Tom Hulst

The Care of Creation Committee has confirmed Friday night January 18 at 6:00 p.m. at the church for the second annual Family Movie night. Last year we featured the film *Inconvenient Truth*. A special film geared to children was also provided. This year we will show the PBS film *God and Global Warming* to continue our "congregational conversation" on this topic. A film for young children will also be shown that evening. A dinner of lasagna, salad, and drinks will be provided. Dinner will start at 6:00 o'clock and the films will begin at 7:00 p.m. Hold the date of **Friday, January 18** and join other members in a family night out at the movies--at church.

Choosing guardians can be a tough task. First you have to acknowledge your own mortality and then find people willing and able to raise your children with the love, care and values that you would use yourself. The next step is to see a lawyer, so that your wishes will be documented and legally recognized. Continue to stay in contact with your children's guardians, so that all involved will become familiar with each other, should the unexpected happen.

St. Mark's Mission Endowment Committee is planning to host future sessions on wills, guardianship and other estate planning tools in 2008. Please be watchful for future communication and make arrangements to attend. Wishing you hope, peace and love in 2008.

Worship and Music Ministry

THANK YOU to all musicians for all your hard work and dedication throughout the month of December. Your efforts greatly enhanced worship throughout the Advent and Christmas seasons. Have a blessed holiday season!

- Danielle J. Lemieux



All Music Groups

Start-up for all practices in January/February is as follows for all groups:

- **Worship Team**: Tuesday, January 8th, 6-6:45 p.m. (band), 6:45-8 p.m. (vocals)
- **Youth Music Drama Team**: Thursday, January 10th, 5:30-7:30 p.m.
- **Chancel Choir**: Monday, January 14th, 7-8:30 p.m.
- **Bells of St. Mark's**: Tuesday, January 15th, 8-9 p.m.
- **Celebration Ensemble**: Saturday, February 2nd, 9-11 a.m.
- **Babies of St. Mark's, Joyful Noise, Jubilation, Children's Chimes, St. Mark's Ringers**: Tuesday, February 12th, regular practice times

***If you are not currently part of an ensemble and would like to join us in January, please contact Danielle Lemieux, Director of Music Ministry, at 752-4966 ext. 105 or danielle@smlutheran.org. To find out more about each group, please visit www.smlutheran.org and click on "Music."

PLU Sunday

Sunday, January 6 is "PLU Sunday" at St. Mark's. Our preacher at all three services will be Rev. Lee Kluth, who is the Director of Church Relations at PLU. This is a great way for us to celebrate our partnership with this fine school and to give thanks for all of the ways that PLU continues to equip people for service in God's world. We hope you can join us.

Worship and Music Team

We will meet on Monday, January 7th at 4:00-5:30 PM in the Fireside Room.



Sounds of Brass Concert

Come join Brass Unlimited and friends as they present their 10th annual concert of brass ensemble music on Sunday, January 27th at 3:00 PM in the St. Mark's Sanctuary (after the semi-annual congregational meeting). Trumpeter Ben MacDonald, from the Olympia area, will be the featured soloist. Admission is free – a freewill donation will be taken to help production costs. ALL ARE WELCOME!!!

To find out more about Brass Unlimited, please visit their website at www.brassunlimited.org.

Stewardship: December 2007

Date	Attendance	Amount
November 18	356	\$ 9,804.42
November 25	312	\$10,021.89
*December 1		\$530.00
December 2	342	\$13,747.58
December 9	475	\$18,186.05
*December 15		\$2,675.00
December 16	552	\$10,973.87
*Simply Giving receipts		

Youth & Family Ministry

Thanks to Jody Smith for helping out with JR/SR ALYVE Broom Hockey on December 8th. We attended this event with Emmanuel Lutheran and Mason Methodist Churches. And to everyone who participated in the lighting and reading of the Advent Wreath and candles.

Youth and Family Ministry Team Meeting—Monday, January 7 6:30-8:00 p.m. in the Library.

Kid's Club, JR ALYVE, SR ALYVE

- Kid's Club! (grades 2-5) will resume on Tuesday, February 12th at 5:15 p.m. in the Youth Room.
- JR ALYVE Youth Group (grades 6-8th) Tuesdays from 5:45-7:00 p.m. in the Youth Room. January 15. Dinner provided.
- SR ALYVE Youth Groups (grades 9-12) Wednesdays January 9 and 23, February 13 and 27 5:45-7:20 p.m. in Youth Room.



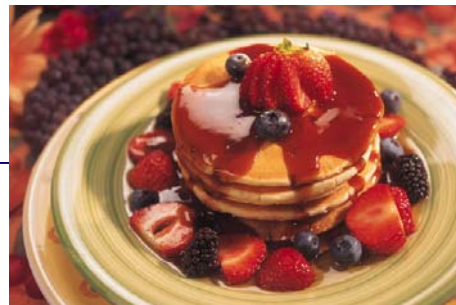
Western States Youth Gathering (July 28-August 1) deposit due—Sunday, January 13. All youth grades 9-12th are invited to attend this Gathering in Anaheim CA. Please contact Ingelaurie Lisher or Lisa Lindholm for more information.

Middle School Mission Trip to Montana—July 13-20 for youth grades 6-8th(outgoing) Sign up on the youth board if you would like to attend. Informational meeting: Tuesday January 22 at 6:30 p.m. in the youth room.

Confirmation—See page 4 for more information.

A look ahead at February:

- **JR ALYVE (6-8th) Snow Day!** Saturday, February 2 more details coming soon.
- **SR ALYVE (9-12th) Scavenger Hunt!** Friday, February 8th with Emmanuel, First Lutheran Mason Methodist Churches.



Shrove Tuesday Pancake Feast

Tuesday, February 5, 5:30-7:00 p.m. Pancakes, music, and a pancake flipping relay. Fun for the whole family.

Coloring Page





1 The Name of Jesus

Give thanks for the thousands of workers who, in the name of Jesus Christ, offer hope and healing in the wake of natural disasters around the world, especially those continuing to offer relief to the victims of Cyclone Sidr in Bangladesh.

2 Pray for safe travels and good conversations for Lutheran ethicists who teach at colleges, universities and seminaries, as they hold their annual meeting January 2-4 in Atlanta.

3 Pray for Pastor Julie Rowe, communications assistant for Bishop Munib Younan of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land. Pray also for the ELCJHL and its witness in a turbulent region.

4 Pray for Judy Perry as she assists in medical work among mothers and infants in the People's Republic of China and engages in health worker training with Evergreen Foundation. Pray for all medical workers and those who care for the ill and suffering throughout Asia.

5 Praise God for the refugee ministry of St. Andrew Church in Cairo, Egypt, served by Kathy Kamphoefner and Paul Pierce. Thank God for Abigail Sylvester, director of the adult education program for this refugee ministry.

6 Epiphany of Our Lord

Merciful God, we remember with hope the gift of peace. Grant your peace upon Saudi Arabia, the other countries of the Arabian Peninsula, Iran and Iraq, that the power of your love may be known.

7 Pray for yourself, your congregation and all parts of this church that together we may open Scripture and join the conversation around the Book of Faith initiative, and that this may bear fruit in all our daily lives.

8 Pray for *Lutheran Partners* editor Bill Decker, the publication committee, the writers and the readers, that this publication for ELCA leaders may communicate and invigorate the mission of Christ across this church.

9 Ask God to guide and support women and girls who help sustain and encourage the gifts and responsibilities of other women and girls.

10 Pray for the blessings of the Holy Spirit on Pastor Andy Krey and the development of a maritime mission at the Port of Savannah, Ga. Pray for the multiplication of local volunteers with the passion, skills, and energy necessary to plant the seed of God's hope among seafarers.

11 Pray for Pastor Stephen Deal, who assists the ELCA in its accompaniment of churches throughout Central America. Pray for Martha Giron, Steve's spouse, as she helps the Costa Rican Lutheran Church train women in arts and crafts and sewing so they can generate income for their families.

12 Thank God for the people who have been appointed to start new ELCA congregations: Pastors Lit Wu, Streamwood, Ill.; Paul Anderson, Marshall, Wis.; Grant Stevensen, St. Paul, Minn.; Perucy Butiku, Hollis, N.Y.; Gretchen Mertes, Renton, Wash.; Christopher Markert, Cypress, Texas; and lay leaders Steven Zittergruen, Iowa City, Iowa; Joseph Alsmann, Lee's Summit, Mo.; and Guta Yadeta, San Lorenzo, Calif. Ask God to fill these developers with faith, trust and stamina.

13 Baptism of Our Lord

Lord, who through a vision to your servant John of Patmos revealed yourself amid the seven churches of Asia, encouraging, reproving, and challenging those first Christian communities; continue to walk with today's churches in Cyprus, Greece and Turkey.

14 Pray for all military chaplains, that they be blessed abundantly as they bring ease to the stressed and suffering, and as they minister to the wounded and dying.

15 Pray for Krystal Overmyer, communications assistant for the Costa Rican Lutheran Church, who facilitates delegations visiting Lutheran brothers and sisters in Costa Rica. Thank God for the companion relationship be-

tween the Southwestern Texas Synod and the CRLC.

16 Pray for strength and endurance for those congregations serving communities affected by recent disasters, including Hurricane Katrina, California's fires, and floods in Minnesota and Washington.

17 Pray for the courage and strength to live in ways that honor the image of God in all people.

18 Confession of Peter

As the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity begins, offer prayers of thanksgiving for its 100th anniversary and for the prayers for unity that have been offered through these years.

19 God's Church consists of many parts in addition to congregations. Pray for the institutions of which you are a part, and for the wisdom and courage to follow God's callings.

20 Second Sunday After Epiphany

Almighty God, grant your wisdom and love upon the people of Algeria, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia, that they may live in peace and harmony.

21 Pray for all the participants at the January 19-22 Transformational Leaders Gathering in Orlando, Fla. May this be a time of education, refreshment, and mutual support for those who lead congregations through renewal, transformation and redevelopment processes.

22 Give thanks for the continued ministry of Drs. Helmut and Rotraut Diefenthal, who spend 10 months a year at Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Center (KCMC) in Moshi, Tanzania, and for the companion relationships that exist between ELCA synods and dioceses of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania.

23 Pray for local observances and services of prayer for Christian unity and the theme that we share together, that we may "pray without ceasing."

24 Pray for the board of Finlandia University, for President Philip Johnson and other administrators, for faculty, students, alumni and supporters of all 28 of the colleges and universities related to the ELCA.

25 Conversion of Paul

Let us pray for dialogues among churches and Christian communities, for better understanding and for the opportunity to reflect on the implications of sharing "one Lord, one faith, one baptism."

26 Give thanks to God for Kevin Baker, Kristina Diaz, Kirsten Dumke and James Weber, ELCA Young Adults in Global Mission program, and their willingness to serve the people of Argentina.

27 Third Sunday After Epiphany

Gracious God, we remember the Christian communities in China, Hong Kong SAR, and Taiwan, and give thanks for the vitality and growth of the churches. We lift up to you ELCA synods who work and pray with them, especially the Sierra Pacific Synod and Southwest California Synod.

28 Pray for Jane and Pastor Ted Zimmerman in their ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong (ELCHK). Ted teaches New Testament at Lutheran Theological Seminary and assists with pastoral leadership of one of the congregations of the ELCHK.

29 Pray for your congregational, synodical, and churchwide leaders to have the courage and strength needed to confront the injustices of sexism, racism and classism, and to advocate for justice.

30 Remember Barbara and Pastor John LeMond as they serve within the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong. John teaches world religions at Lutheran Theological Seminary, Hong Kong, and coordinates interfaith programs with the Tao Fang Shan Centre.

31 Thank God for the ministry of the schools of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Jerusalem and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) as they reach out with God's love to all people, even in the midst of hardships. Pray for Sylvia Countess, who is assisting Dr. Charlie Haddad, the director of ELCJ schools.

January Birthdays

January 1	Linda Durant Chet Novak Janet Rasmussen	January 18	Jay Schauble	January 28	Dave Bettger
January 2	Barbara Holme Matt Oellerich Margaret Spaulding	January 19	Caleb Crocco Margaret Witte	January 29	Roger Olsen
January 3	Susan Merchant	January 20	Amelia Villegas Lori Wollen	January 30	Cheyenne Diaz Caresse Lemieux Jared Wright
January 4	Greg Paulson Andi Shouse	January 21	Rod Hanke Conner Kurashima	January 31	Matthew Doyle Debra Spaulding
January 5	David Bates Marcy Bennett Kim Bucklin Jayme Gotcher Hilde Mason Art Larsen Karen McDougall Roger Willis	January 22	Alex Koisch John Koisch, Jr.		
January 7	Karis Crocco Madison Gotcher Leslie Postovoit Marie Schultz Larry Storset	January 23	Janet Grant Linda Jornlin Linda McKellar Steve Ryan		
January 8	Katherine Harris Johnathan Rancipher Carol Woods	January 24	Carol Burnett Doug Chaney Matthew Martinazzi Tim McCarthy John Mitchell, Jr. Scott Newsom		
January 9	Jonathan Irwin	January 25	Allison Hamner		
January 10	Katherine DeLorme Linda Faaren	January 26	Anna Ahrens		
January 11	Anthony DeLorme Cole Bowden	January 27	Jerry Hagedorn Alison Lindsey-Iverson Kristin Martinelli Martin Stewart		
January 12	Chuck Droubay				
January 13	Nancy Diaz				
January 14	Dawn Chiasson Andrew Geary				
January 15	Ilyone Estvold Cindy Nelson				
January 16	Haley Hruza Otto Tollefson				
January 17	Martin Duenhoelter Doris Larsen Shannon Merchant				



January Anniversaries

January 1	Kirk & Mary Stenger David & Barbara Ostrander
January 3	Alvin & Thelma Loen
January 4	Richard & Elaine Rodning
January 8	Joseph & Lorryne Zelazny
January 14	Rick & Sharon Norman
January 15	Rod Hanke & Joan Torfin
January 22	Greg & Ann Paulson
January 24	John & Elizabeth Koisch

Pastoral Acts

Address Changes –

Justin & Jayme Gotcher
4540 6th Ave.
Tacoma WA 98406

Dottie Kent
6020 Highland Pkwy., #27
Tacoma WA 98406

Ellie & Ivan Larson
1301 N. Highlands Pkwy., Apt. 101
Tacoma, WA 98406

Pat & Thelma Parnell
P.O. Box 82737
Kenmore, WA 98028
206.965.9051

Death –

Jean Weaver
Died November 30, 2007
Memorial Service—
December 7, 2007

COUNCIL MEMBERS MAY 2007 THROUGH APRIL 2008

PRESIDENT	JOHN SUMMEROUR	857-8872
VICE PRESIDENT	BARBARA OSTRANDER	208-6828
SECRETARY	SUSAN NEWSOM	759-1417
TREASURER	THELMA PARNELL	206-607-7694 or 253-759-0347

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

AUDRY HANDY, 759-5242

CONGREGATIONAL CARE

KIM MEADE, 759-9817

OUTREACH MINISTRY

MARTIN DUENHOELTER, 565-5634

PEACE AND JUSTICE

KEVIN HAYES, 460-1795

STEWARDSHIP

SCOTT MOOR, 566-4927

WORSHIP & MUSIC

SONJA YEAGER, 761-3018

YOUTH & FAMILY

ALICIA LAWVER, 396-1214

STAFF

General Office Email—office@smlutheran.org (253-752-4966)Pastor Jan Ruud—jruud@smlutheran.orgPastor Otto Tollefson—otollefson@aol.comPastor Charlie Mays—Charlie_mays@msn.comJaneen Smith—Coordinator of Ministry—janeen@smlutheran.orgDanielle Lemieux—Director of Music Ministry—danielle@smlutheran.org

Phyllis Bachman, Organist/pianist

Cooper Sherry, Organist/pianist

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Anne Bettger, Director of Preschool

Becki Christian, Custodian and Hospitality Coordinator

Careese Lemieux, Youth Music Drama Team Leader

Teresa Handy, Nursery Attendant

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A Place for Grace

We're on the Web!
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Our Mission Statement

St. Mark's is a people and place for God's grace. We are a baptized and believing people claimed by Christ. Therefore, we call all people to Worship and Witness, Learn and Serve, Share God's Word and Sacraments, Reach Out with Words and Deeds of Love.

Worship Opportunities at St. Mark's

Holy Communion is celebrated every Sunday at our morning services.

Sunday, 8:30 a.m. —

This worship service draws on a wide variety of musical traditions for both hymns and special music - from Scandinavian Folk Tunes to Asian or Latin American songs of praise; from medieval chants to African American Spirituals - celebrating the rich variety of music that God has given to the Church.

Sunday, 9:45 a.m. —

The singing at this service is led by a band which includes piano, drums, bass guitar, and often another lead guitar or acoustic guitar, blending contemporary music with historic elements of worship that are in all of our services.

Sunday, 11:00 a.m. —

People often call this the "traditional" worship service because we sing well-known hymns from our new Evangelical Lutheran Worship Hymnbook. The Chancel Choir leads the singing, with organ and piano.

Wednesday, 7:30 p.m. —

Taizé Prayer Service: a quiet service centered in contemplative singing and prayer. Candlelit, meditative, renewing, restful peace in the midst of your busy life! The name of the service comes from a community in France, where Christians from all over the world gather for renewal.

