



*CrossWinds*

## NEWSLETTER OF WINDS OF THE PRAIRIE

BETHANY : BETHANY-ELIM : GRACE : PEACE : ST PAUL

JANUARY 2011

### CONTENTS

First Word, p. 1
Notes from the Intern, p. 2
Preaching Schedule, p. 3
Pastor's Report, p. 3
WotP Council Notes, p. 4
Prairie Fire News, p. 5
Annual Meetings, p. 6
Intern Committee, p. 6
Winter Weather Alerts, p. 7
Home Communion, p. 7
Bible Study, p. 8
Stewardship, p. 9
Walking Together, p. 10
T.F.A, p. 11
Family Faith, p. 11
Bethany Notes, p. 12
Bethany-Elim Notes, p. 12
Grace Notes, p. 13
Peace Notes, p. 14
St Paul Notes, p. 14
Prayer Concerns, p. 14

### FIRST WORD

PASTOR STEPHEN RASMUSSEN

**The God who said, "Out of darkness the light shall shine!" is the same God who made his light shine in our hearts, to bring us the knowledge of God's glory shining in the face of Christ.**

**Yet we who have this spiritual treasure are like common clay pots, in order to show that the supreme power belongs to God, not to us. We are often troubled, but not crushed; sometimes in doubt, but never in despair; there are many enemies, but we are never without a friend; and though badly hurt at times, we are not destroyed.** 2 CORINTHIANS 4:6-9

I live here because I love winter. Or at least I love the idea of winter.

Deep in my mind I have this image of me in a rocker, with my golden retriever at my side, hot chocolate steaming on the table beside me, reading a good book in front of a woodstove with the fire blazing, the snow falling outdoors. The snowshoes are out on the porch, the chores are done and I'm in for the duration. The moonlight twinkles on the snow and all is the way God wanted it to be.

Reality is nothing like this. Instead, my daughter's car has stalled again a mile and a half from home. My wife is stuck in a snowbank, the snowblower's belt broke again, the four wheel drive pickup is still at the shop and there is more snow on the way. And I am 35 miles away from the farm. It's the truth. Really. You can't make this stuff up.

To be truthful, there are great blessings to this season. These long dark winter nights allow time for some reflection about those things which are really important. We have time to make amends for the failures and unfinished tasks of the previous summer. We have time to dwell on dreams, to plan, to dwell in hope for the future. We have time to deepen relationships with those we love, mending the broken connections with those we have offended. But will we take advantage of that time?

Paul writes to the Christians in Corinth, "...we who have this spiritual treasure are like common clay pots, in order to show that the supreme power belongs to God, not to us." Our lives are far from what we know they ought to be. We do fail, we don't hit the mark. God sets very high standards for us, and we know we do not measure up. Yet, as Paul reminds us, the light of Christ that shines in our hearts shines as in a broken clay pot, not in a diamond crystal vase. We do not reflect the divine light perfectly.

It is the time of annual meetings, when a church congregation looks to where it has been and where it might, with God's blessing, be in the future. We know that we could have done better, that we have let God down in some ways, and that our ways are not always God's ways.

CONTINUED ON FOLLOWING PAGE

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE But we meet in Epiphany, the time when the light of Christ in the darkness of our world is remembered. So it is a time to seek out the light of Christ in the heart of our neighbors, to join with them to make real God's future among us. That is what an annual meeting can be! I hope you do have time to enjoy the winter, to celebrate the light within, and to plan to a future that includes God's warmth and wisdom.

## NOTES FROM THE INTERN

By Vicar Jackie Braun

**If you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday. The LORD will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail...**

**ISAIAH 58: 10-11**

During finals week at SDSU, our family invited a group of college students over for dinner. At first it was quiet around the table, with more eating than talking. Eventually the dining room was filled with lively conversation, teasing and laughing. Briefly, they forgot their stressors, simply enjoying each other's company. Gradually, the conversation slowed and one said, "Well, I suppose I should get back to studying." Slowly, they made the transition away from the table, talking about the tests they have taken and the tests remaining. As they left, we offered blessings for the week ahead, we too filled by sharing our food and our table with them.

According to my Lutheran Study Bible notes (page 1994, for those who want to delve deeper), the translation of verse 10 in the Hebrew text is "if you pour yourself out for the hungry" which has a richer meaning, than the English translation of "if you offer your food to the hungry." One seems more relational; whereas the other, is more task orientated. In Hebrew the word for self or for soul is Nephesh. There is wordplay that happens in Hebrew so verse 10 reads something like this, "if you pour out your Nephesh (self or soul), and satisfy the Nephesh of the afflicted (58:10), the Lord will satisfy your Nephesh.

A command possibly but a promise most certainly. In the cup of the new Covenant, Christ is poured out for all of mankind, giving his body and his blood for all of creation, to satisfy the souls of the afflicted and thus satisfying the Lord. We the afflicted receive Christ and receive new life

and a secure salvation through Christ's death and resurrection. We being filled through Christ can pour our Nephesh out for others, and in so doing this, we too are filled.

I especially appreciate the idea of sharing our Nephesh, our self – because it means that I – well you too - can

simply be as God created us, as ourself. We can share what ignites our heart on fire, our fears and especially what brings us joy, hope and peace. We can cook a meal for a grieving spouse, or sew a quilt, offer to babysit, or take a nephew hunting or fishing, and in doing these simple ordinary every day things – we share our gifts, a bit of ourselves and fill another. Is there where we may find Christ revealed?

During the Epiphany season, the texts may invite you to come and see and consider who is this Christ and discover his light which shines into the darkness. We will also be invited to come and follow and to witness to the light that shines brightly in our midst, becoming a light illuminating into a dark world, pouring ourselves out only to be filled again.

As your intern, I have been blessed by so many in a variety of ways; hearing a word of encouragement, a critique of a sermon, receiving a pound the intern package – when that very item had been placed on my shopping list, and in sharing your source of hope and encouragement in times of chaos or challenge. I thank you for all that you have shared. As we move into the season of Epiphany, I eagerly await how Christ will continue to reveal himself to you, to us and in our communities and hearing the stories of how you carried the light of Christ out into the world – sharing and receiving in his grace and mercy.

# JANUARY PREACHING SCHEDULE

		Bethany (8:30)	Grace (8:30)	Peace (10:30)	St. Paul (8:30)	Bethany-Elim (10:30)
Saturday, Jan 1	Holy Communion	Braun				
Sunday, Jan 2	Holy Communion	Braun	Anderson	Anderson	Rasmusson	Rasmusson
Saturday, Jan 8	Holy Communion			Braun		
Sunday, Jan 9	Service of the Word	Braun	Rasmusson	Rasmusson Annual Meeting	Anderson	Anderson
Saturday, Jan 15	Holy Communion					Rasmusson
Sunday, Jan 16	Holy Communion	Rasmusson Annual Meeting	Anderson	Anderson	Braun	Braun
Saturday, Jan 22	Holy Communion		Rasmusson			
Sunday, Jan 23	Service of the Word	Anderson	Braun	Braun	Rasmusson Annual Meeting	Anderson
Sunday, Jan 30	Service of the Word	Braun	Rasmusson Annual Meeting	Braun	Supply	Supply

## PASTOR'S REPORT FOR OCTOBER 18, 2010 TO NOVEMBER 30, 2010

Worship	Education	Meetings	Pastoral Acts	Visits
6 - Sundays Worships @ 5 congregations	17 - Bible/Book Study	7 - Council/Meeting	3 - Funeral	38 - Home
8 - Nursing Home	5 - TFA	3 - WELCA	3 - Baptism	5 - Hospital
6 - Saturday Night	0 - Continuing Education	4 - WXY	2 - Counseling	
	4 - Acolyte Training	5 - Synod	0 - Wedding/ Blessing	
		0 - LCC	2 - Affirmation of Baptism	
		1 - Public Event		

### ROSTER UPDATES:

**Funerals:** Sigrid Nielsen of Lake Benton was laid to rest on October 30 at Grace Lutheran Church.

Lloyd Nielsen, formerly of Ivanhoe, was laid to rest at Bethany-Elim Lutheran Church on November 9.

Howard Krog of Lake Benton was laid to rest on November 19 at Grace Lutheran Church.

Agnes Severson of Minneota was laid to rest on December 13 at St Paul Lutheran Church.

**Baptisms:** The children of Tammy Hasert and Walter Hampton were baptized at St Paul's Lutheran on November 27. They are Deylin Donald Hasert, Madysson Hazel Hasert and Makayla Elizabeth Hasert.

**Affirmation of Baptism:** On October 31, 2010 at Bethany- Elim Lutheran Church, Miranda Jerzak, Emily Swanson, Hank Neyens and Tyler Epple were confirmed as adult members of the church.

On November 21 at Peace Lutheran Church, Anna Madsen was confirmed as an adult member of the church.

## THANK YOU FROM THE PASTORS AND VICAR

The Winds of the Prairie Ministry Family is such a generous and loving assembly of people. We have been overwhelmed with gifts and card so numerous we would be writing notes of appreciation until Lent. So please accept this note as our heartfelt expression of appreciation and thanks as we enter this new year and celebrate the best gift of all the birth of our Savior. Your thoughts, prayers and gifts will be a constant reminder to us of the strength of the body we experience together called the Church, which is the expression of God's Work with Our Hands.

Pastor Steve, Pastor Julie and Vicar Jackie

# THANK YOU FROM THE INVESTING IN IVANHOE COMMITTEE

WXY Youth Group,

Thank you for helping at the Holiday Bazaar. Many of you braved the cold to help vendors haul in their products, helped children at the craft table, picked up chairs, and hauled items back to cars—all with a smile on your face. Thank you for sharing your valued time—it was greatly appreciated!

## WOTP COUNCIL NOTES

MARY GISLASON, SECRETARY

DECEMBER 14, 2010

Members Present: Karen Richmond, Ron Madsen, Randy Noble, Sherry Rost, Mary Gislason, Phil Anderson, Ivan Kuhlman, Carol Dahl

Pastors Present: Julie Anderson, Steve Rasmusson and Vicar Jackie Braun.

Karen called the meeting to order with a representative from each church present.

Pastor Steve led us in devotions with a Psalm.

We reviewed what is happening in each church.

St Paul's Chili Feed went well.

Bethany-Elim is buying a cow and half the money for it has been raised. They had a Stocking Stuffer event. Their Sunday School program is this Sunday.

Arco had a Wreath Making event on Sunday. They brought them to shut-ins and to hospitals.

Ruthton Sunday school program is this Sunday. They are putting in a new furnace.

Lake Benton is having Sunday School program this Sunday. People are busy with the holidays.

A motion was made by Randy and seconded by Sherry to accept the Secretary's Minutes from the August 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting. It passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Mary and seconded by Carole to accept the Secretary's Minutes from the October 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting. It passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Randy and seconded by Phil to accept the Secretary's Minutes for the November 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting. It passed unanimously.

We went over the reports from the Intern, Mutual Ministry and Personnel Committees.

Pastors Steve and Julie presented the Pastor's Report.

Worship bulletins have been in use for a month. There have been a couple suggestions on the bulletins.

Carol Dahl brought in the Treasurer's Report for review. A motion was made by Ron to approve the Treasurer's Report and seconded by Ivan. It passed unanimously.

Tires have been purchased for the van. If anyone wants to make a donation towards them, they are welcome to.

Make sure that WOTP Budget was shared with the individual congregations.

### Policy Review.

A number of the congregations have gone with catering for funerals. The local funeral homes have appreciated when we bring the policies to them so they can present them to the family in their planning process.

The wedding policy is the same for all congregations.

**Church Use Policies.** A draft was provided that could be used as a guide to come up with each congregation's own policies. These policies would be made to protect each congregation. Items mentioned in the draft are, for example, if rent is charged there needs to be a written policy. If it is a donation instead of rent, it won't be taxed. It can be worded as such on the "Users Agreement". Attention also needs to be paid to protection and prevention for children and youth. There is also an Operational Ethics Policy. CONTINUED ON FOLLOWING PAGE

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

Church Mutual approves who will drive the van. Applications can be submitted and only Church Mutual will approve them.

Each congregation should review the agreement with WOTP.

Church records updates need to be given to Pastor Steve the first week of January.

We reviewed the terms of Board Members.

Ivan made a motion that was seconded by Mary that we purchase the 8 program licenses for Office ProPlus 2010. It was passed unanimously. It will save time when transferring information from computer to computer for the Pastors and Secretaries. The cost would be \$77.99 per program with a total of approx \$624.

Steve will be checking with Kelly Scheurman on looking for a program for keeping church records. He will find out costs and what programs are available.

## PRAIRIE FIRE: THE SPIRITED NEWS OF THE PRAIRIE CONFERENCE

REV. JULIE ANDERSON, CONFERENCE SECRETARY

22 congregations and ministries of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA make up the Prairie Conference who work together on missions locally and globally. The Executive Committee wants you to be informed of events, opportunities and celebrations.

In the season of preparing for the coming of God's promised salvation, we celebrate with two of our family the completion of their years of preparation for ordained ministry.

Bruce Berg was ordained December 19 at First Lutheran Church in Marshall. He is called to Good Shepherd Lutheran in Lake Wilson as an interim minister.

Juanita Harberts was ordained on December 18 at American Lutheran Church in Worthington. She is called half time to serve as the interim minister at Lutheran Campus Ministry at Southwest Minnesota State University in Marshall and half time at Prairie Star Ministries.

Lake Benton area churches were looking to help 10 families for the holidays. Each church is being asked to chip in \$500 towards this project. Rather than having all the money come from Grace, it was asked since there was money in the emergency fund, if WOTP would help out. It was agreed that it is a wonderful idea and that it could possibly be built on for all the WOTP area churches next year. This year it will just be for the Lake Benton area churches and they will fund it themselves.

Vicar Jackie brought up communion visits and was wondering how many would be interested in doing those visits.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, February 8, 2011 at Minneota.

The meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

Bruce and Juanita have been active in our conference as supply preachers and students of the ministry vocation. We are looking forward to continuing to be supportive of their new ministries.

We say good bye and good wishes for the future to two of our pastors as they leave our conference for new calls:

Rev. Katherine Rood of Our Savior's Lutheran of Canby is on her way to Glencoe to serve as pastor at Christ Lutheran.

Rev. Robert Dahl of First Lutheran in Marshall will be going to Litchfield, MN as an interim pastor at First Lutheran.

Mark your calendars for February 20, 2011 the date for the 2011 Prairie Conference Annual Meeting. We gather to cooperate as congregations who will be working together on the larger missions and issues of the Church. This is the place where resolutions are taken from the congregational level for examination and further consideration. Each congregation has representation and guests are welcome to learn more about this thing we call the ELCA expression of the Church.

# ANNUAL MEETINGS:

January is not only the beginning of a new calendar year but the time of year when we review our last year and set forth our goals and objectives for the new year. This is done at the annual congregational meetings to be held on the following dates:

**January 9 for Peace**

**January 16 for Bethany**

**January 23 for St Paul**

**January 30 for Grace**

**February 6 for Bethany-Elim**

Each year the number of confirmed members is taken from that year's report to calculate the financial commitments of each congregation. The councils have or are in the process of determining the most current reflection of the make up of the congregation. For 2011 budget calculation the following numbers were used and commitments determined. The complete budget will be discussed at the annual meetings.

	<u>Monthly</u>	<u>% of Mbrshp</u>		<u>Total Contribution</u>
<b>Bethany/Arco</b>	<b>\$ 2,807</b>	<b>14.6%</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>\$ 33,680</b>
<b>Bethany-Elim/Ivanhoe</b>	<b>\$ 4,282</b>	<b>23.4%</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>\$ 51,388</b>
<b>Grace/Lake Benton</b>	<b>\$ 6,102</b>	<b>34.3%</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>\$ 73,229</b>
<b>Peace/Ruthton</b>	<b>\$ 4,012</b>	<b>21.8%</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>\$ 48,142</b>
<b>St. Paul's/Minneota</b>	<b>\$ 1,380</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>\$ 16,561</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$18,583</b>			<b>\$ 223,000</b>

Doing some simple math for each congregation if on average each confirmed member were to give \$10 per week consistently there would be enough for all the needs and ministry in each congregation. If you want to continue the services that the church offers you and others, we each need to support the church financially whether you currently use them now or not. Like many things in life, the support of today comes back to you in the future because you supported the people of today.

## UPDATE FROM YOUR INTERN COMMITTEE

CHRISTY BREWERS

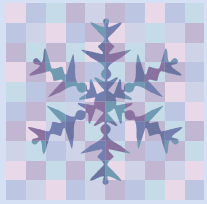
The intern committee held their December meeting at the home of Bernie Aronson on Dec. 9th. We covered suggested topics for the sixth month, along with some of our own. We began by sharing comments provided by our parish members written when Vicar Jackie is holding services. These comments and thoughts are an important part of our monthly meetings. They help Vicar Jackie focus on areas that may need improvement, as well as providing positive reinforcement. So many comments and suggestions offer insight that is valuable to her as she progresses during her year with us.

We are working on an evaluation form to be filled in by children (with parental help) who are present during the Children's Sermon. We felt it would be good to share their thoughts with Vicar Jackie. Please help us complete this important task.

Our committee would like to thank all of you who are willing to share your insights and ideas with Vicar Jackie. They are such an important part of an intern's learning year, and we encourage everyone to take the time to fill out a form when asked. (You may even volunteer!)

CONTINUED ON FOLLOWING PAGE

## WINTER WEATHER PROCEDURES AND OPTIONS



Just a review, to the best of our ability and technology in the due to weather consult the following media for notification:

**RADIO:** KMHL (1040 AM), KKCK (99.7 FM), KARL (105.1 FM), KARZ (107.5 FM), KLOH (1050 AM), KISD (98.7 FM), KJOE (106.1 FM) These are the stations of Marshall Radio and Christensen Broadcasting who are the providers in our area.

**ONLINE:** Websites at [www.windsoftheprairie.org](http://www.windsoftheprairie.org), [marshallradio.net](http://marshallradio.net), [www.keloland.com](http://www.keloland.com) for weather related announcements.

**TELEVISION:** KELO, KSFY, KDLT

If in doubt contact the president of the congregation or one of the pastors.

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

January will have us completing the mid-year report and presenting it to the Seminary. Each committee member has shared responsibility in this task. Questions are provided for us to answer concerning various areas of an intern's progress. We do not take this job lightly and will give our answers a great deal of thought.

Our next meeting will be held on January 20th due to conflicts the previous week. Our meetings routinely are held on the second Thursday of each month, with the third Thursday being our "back-up" date.

While we are diligent in performing our duties provided in our handbook, being a member of this committee provides unseen rewards. Each of us feels we are learning right alongside our intern. It is good to know we are working to help Vicar Jackie prepare for her future as an ordained minister and we have become a close and caring committee.

As stated before, please contact us if you have anything you would like to share.

Respectfully submitted,  
Christy Brewers, Chair

## HOME COMMUNION MINISTRY

VICAR JACKIE BRAUN



I never remember a time – when we couldn't fit everyone around my mother's dining room table – even if it meant adding a few more card tables at each end.

We always had enough food and somehow enough space. I also remember that at every gathering, a conversation of which family members, friends or neighbors that were not present. And if a person had died – they were still present with us as we remembered them through the telling of stories.

As a congregation we too gather to hear the story of our Lord Jesus Christ and remember the story of God's mighty acts and of the love shown us in the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. With thanksgiving we remembered that "in the night in which he was

betrayed..." We gather as a community of believers, we receive Christ's meal. The Lord's Table always has room for more, and enough food to feed all those who are hungry. At the Lord's Table, we are strengthened by His grace to carry the light of Christ out into the world, sharing His promise with others.

In the early years of the church, Christians would gather in homes to worship God and to celebrate the Sacraments. The early church Father Justin Martyr, described how the Presider blessed the sacrament and the deacons would distribute the bread and wine to those present and and to those absent. The deacons were lay "servants" who were set apart or consecrated for service to the leaders. The sharing was intended to reach beyond the physical limits of the community's worship space.

CONTINUED ON FOLLOWING PAGE

With the season after Epiphany, we will hear about the One who comes as a light into the darkness, the One who asks us to “Come and See” and to “Come and Follow.” Hopefully, we all will be challenged to see how we can share the light of Christ in our own lives with others, and extend the hospitality we receive through Christ, into the world – beyond the walls of our church building and homes. One way we will share Christ is through the Sacrament of Holy Communion with those individuals of Winds of the Prairie members who are homebound or in a congregated living environment. Currently, we serve at least 21 people who are unable to receive Holy Communion, within the walls of our church building. We hope we can match everyone with a home communion ministry team.

So you might be wondering what a home communion minister does?

- First, you will deliver Holy Communion and all that Christ offers to those who wish to receive communion, at least monthly, on Communion Sundays
- Second, you have available a special order of service for distributing communion in special circumstances which is scripted and you add the scriptures for the week as well as the prayer of the day. You will participate in training about the service and discussion on the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

## BIBLE STUDY

### GOD’S WORD WILL WARM YOUR BODY AND SOUL

There are multiple opportunities to gather with fellow disciples of our ministry to learn and study the Bible. No previous experience or training is necessary to be part of these gatherings.

#### BAD GIRLS OF THE BIBLE:

A study of some of the women of the Bible.

2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays at 10 am at Grace Lutheran

2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays at 10 am at Bethany-Elim

#### WEEKLY LECTIONARY READINGS REFLECTION

on Wednesdays at 8:30 am at the Buffalo Ridge Trading and Coffee Company.

**BOOK OF FAITH AND BREAKFAST** at Café in Ivanhoe at 7:15 am on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday. We begin with a study of Genesis.

- Third, you will be a sign of support and concern shown by the community for all of its members, serving as a bridge between home and congregation, by sharing news of congregational life and physically demonstrating a connection with the worship community, through the sharing of bulletins, devotions and caring conversations.
- Lastly, simply show up, care and be ready to see what just might happen.
- If you are interested in receiving communion in your home or interested in delivering home communion to someone, or know of someone who would be gifted in this area of ministry, please contact the Pastors or Vicar Jackie Braun by January 30, 2010.
- Commissioning of the home communion ministers is scheduled for the third weekend in February and delivering home communion should begin at the same time.
- There will be a training scheduled for those interested in serving in this ministry at the beginning of February. We will schedule the location and time of this training when we have a list of volunteers.

Please take some time to prayerfully consider if you feel gifted or called to participate in this meaningful service and ministry, which ties the fellowship of saints from Sunday morning communion into this time of sharing Christ and of ourselves in community.

**FRIDAY MORNING BREAKFAST** in Arco at 7:00 am continues to traverse through the Book of Acts.

**SATURDAY MEN’S STUDY** at the Buffalo Ridge Trading Company in Lake Benton (across from the Fire Hall) Saturday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 8 a.m. This is a non-denominational gathering, and all men are welcome to discuss issues and get acquainted over a cup of coffee, while studying the word of God! For information, contact J.R. Harris at (952) 288-4013 (email - [gettfree4god@hotmail.com](mailto:gettfree4god@hotmail.com)).

You are welcome to come to any of these studies. If anyone is interested in another time and place for a Bible Study contact a pastor for help in getting one together.



# STEWARDSHIP PERSPECTIVE 2011

If someone were to ask you what most reflected your mission and priorities in life most of us would have to show our monthly bills. Our bills reflect how and what we exchange the money we have received for our labors to live out our life and what our priorities are. What does your checkbook say about you and your mission?

The Bible gives us some guides or we may want to think of them as suggestions on how we share the blessings given to us as our vocation as Christians. In the covenant to Abraham the people are given a land and identity as the nation blessed and chosen by God. We are blessed to bless others, we are to be an agent or conduit for the distribution of God's abundant blessings. It is to be from the firstfruits, today we would say from the gross of the blessings, that the tithe, a 10% offering, is to come from as a response to God's faithfulness and an experience of grace and a discipline of the covenant. Making your offering the first priority of your financial commitments, instead of what is left over from the bills gives God another opportunity to bless you.

Below is a chart of percentage giving based on a range of incomes. Where does your household come out at? Will you commit to increasing by 1% your giving to the church for God's work?

Weekly Income	Tithe-10%	9%	7%	5%	3%	2%	1%
\$100 (\$5,200/year)	\$10	\$9	\$7	\$5	\$3	\$2	\$1
\$300 (\$15,600/year)	\$30	\$27	\$21	\$15	\$9	\$6	\$3
\$500(\$26,000/year)	\$50	\$45	\$35	\$25	\$15	\$10	\$5
\$700(\$36,400/year)	\$70	\$63	\$49	\$35	\$21	\$14	\$7
\$800(\$41,600/year)	\$80	\$72	\$56	\$40	\$24	\$16	\$8
\$900(\$46,800/year)	\$90	\$81	\$63	\$45	\$27	\$18	\$9
\$1,000(\$52,000/year)	\$100	\$90	\$70	\$50	\$30	\$20	\$10

The pastors of Winds of the Prairie Ministry have made it their personal example to show this form of stewardship. In 2010 they had their tithe plus taken off their base salary as their offering to Winds of the Prairie Ministry. This year they are doing the same thing to the total of almost \$34,000 which is over a 15% offering.

God shares abundantly with us and then asks that we voluntarily give 10% in return to share with those who are not aware or experiencing the blessedness. Therefore, when we are blessed and bless others they become blessed so they can bless others. The process continues until all nations are blessed by God with the abundance of the kingdom. It's God's economic method which is a mystery to us but which works to change the world, you are invited to be part of this system for building the kingdom.

## UPCOMING BLOOD DRIVE



TISHA BURCH

There will be a Blood Drive on February 15 at the RTR High School. Please check your bulletins for more information.

# WALKING TOGETHER...

PASTOR JANET COLBY

As the bountiful harvest of 2010 continues to be gathered, I am awestruck by God's abundant, steadfast nature. How can we *not* be humbled by the generous Hand of God reaching down to touch us with all that is encompassed and reflected in His amazing grace? And how can we not be exalted in knowing that He not only gives these great gifts to us, but invites us to *partner with Him* in distributing them—calling us to work together as companions in the bringing of His dream: that ALL people would know and share in the gift of His abundant blessings.

This invitation has been brought to greater reality to those of us who are called to live and work in that geographic area of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod known as the Prairie Conference. Living out God's call to mission to build the global body of Christ through the ELCA Companion Synod Program, the people of our Conference recently hosted the Rev. Dean P.S. Lwandle and Mr. Agrippa Ntombela from the Mfolozi Circuit of South Africa.

Nestled in the region of Kwa Zulu Natal, the Mfolozi Circuit reflects many of the same assets we share in, including rich, fertile land and deeply-loving people, committed to Christ and family values.

Exploring God's global mission has brought us to one another's homes and sanctuaries that we might meet, greet, and *grow together in Christ*.

We've worshipped *together*, prayed *together*, broken bread *together*, and shared the stories of each other's heartbreaks and joys.

Our Brothers were as overwhelmed by the depth of hospitality they received in "America" as they were amazed at the bounty which exists here.

The journey which brought them here on October 8<sup>th</sup> opened their eyes to how we farm: from the harvesting of crops with massive combines to the raising of livestock through precise feeding programs.

*Together*, we've shared the story of where we've been through visits to local historical centers and the Lower Sioux Indian Reservation.

*Together*, we've looked towards where we're going through the touring of our schools, libraries, hospitals, stores, nursing homes, businesses and the Courts.

*Together*, we've experienced God's presence through the gift of their preaching, and in fellowship through conversation, study, meals, ordination, confirmation, and worship.

*Together*, we've walked the farmland, shared the bounty of our gardens, and held not only the fruits of the fall harvest, but our hopes and dreams.

We trust in God to continue to reveal His own hopes and dreams for us. There is much work to be done, but it has now begun in earnest.

*Together*, the Prairie Conference Companion and Mfolozi Circuit Partnership Committees *thank you* for the sharing of your many gifts. To date, throughout the Prairie Conference, *you have given \$3,200.17 for the benefit of our Brothers & Sisters in the Mfolozi Circuit!!*

*Together*, we will identify new garden plots and use these dollars to cultivate the soil, enclose the plots with fencing, and plant seeds. The harvest which comes from these gardens will provide nourishment and sustenance to many who are without in our partner circuit.

*Together*, we will work to implement a pilot poultry project for the raising of chickens for distribution and consumption. The building of the necessary lodging for the chickens, as well as the daily care of the chicks, will further serve to bring much-needed employment.

*Together*, we are called to bring glory to God and build up the whole body of Christ. With God's help, and through his steadfast and abundant mercy and grace, we walk this journey.

*In Christ's Service †*  
Pastor Janet Colby

# TRAINING FOR AFFIRMATION



As the new year begins the TFA year continues. Each of the sites continues to learn the Small Catechism's many expressions of our faith. There is never a dull moment for each section is taught by a different pastor in their own unique style. The small groups are learning more each week about how to be a contributing member of a faith community. Our mentors and table leaders continue to fulfill the commitment of the congregation at the baptism of these children to teach them the faith along with the example of their parents. Continue to pray for our TFA students, leaders and mentors.

## JANUARY SCHEDULE OF INSTRUCTION

DATE	Tyler - 5:30 to 7:30	Lincoln HI - 5:30 to 7:30	Minneota -5:30 to 7:30
5-Jan-11	Saved by Grace Through Faith-Pastor Tom	Exploring the Commandments Part Four-Pastor Bogie & Steve	The Sacrament of Baptism Pastor Doris
9-Jan-11	<b>SPLASH Event at Bethany-Elim in Ivanhoe</b>	Hosted by the students at the Hendricks site	
12-Jan-11	Augsburg Confession:1 Pastor Julie	Creed Overview- Pastor Steve & Bogie	Word with Water-Pastor Doris
19-Jan-11	Augsburg Confession-2 Pastor Julie	Article One- Pastor Steve & Bogie	The Sacrament of Communion-Pastor Tom, Vicar Jackie
26-Jan-11	Augsburg Confession-3 Pastor Julie	Article Two- Pastor Steve & Bogie	Take and Eat-Pastor Tom, Vicar Jackie
2-Feb-11	Introduction to the 10 Commandments-Pastor Bogie & Julie	Article Three-Pastor Steve	Saved by Grace Through Faith: Pastor Tom, Vicar Jackie

## FAMILY FAITH

NANCY KROG

Blessing for a New Year

God of new beginnings, thank you for this past year – the joyful moments and the growing moments, the celebrations and the defeats. Give to all the strength to entrust this new year to you, knowing that with you there is a future filled with hope. Amen.

Bible Text:

*For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Jeremiah 29:11.*

Reflection:

New Year's is a celebration of the old and the new, the past and the future. Share or write in a journal about the past year. The following sentence starters may be helpful:

One of the many blessings of this past year was...

One of the disappointments of this past year was...

One of the ways I have changed over the past year is...

One hope I have for this upcoming year is...

When discussion and sharing is complete, say together, "I have hope for the future because I trust in God's purpose for my life".

Ending Prayer:

May this new year be filled with blessings and with grace, and may we always have hope for a new tomorrow.

Amen.

*(For Everything A Season, 75 Blessings for Daily Life, by the Nilsen Family)*

# BETHANY, ARCO

## WORSHIP ASSISTANTS FOR NOVEMBER

**USHERS:** Wayne and Dar Schreurs

**ALTAR GUILD:** Ardis Henriksen

## BETHANY NEWS

GAYLE RASMUSSEN

Happy 2011 ! Another year has passed .After the busy Christmas season, we now must prepare for another new year, planning and looking forward. Our annual meeting is on January 16, 2011, following worship services.

Thanks to our pastors, Sunday schoolers, and all members who helped with messages, music, and programs to make Christmas and the birth of Jesus a meaningful celebration

Our Advent event was a fun time, and we reached out to others with our wreaths.

I hope winter weather mellows and treats us better than last year.

We are planning more events on our first Saturday services, a Valentines party in February.

The council is asking any members if they would be lectors or communion assistants. Also we need two members to represent Bethany at the 2011 synod assembly. Give some thought to take part in making services more meaningful.

Don't spend your time worrying about your problems, but praise the Lord for his blessings.

# BETHANY-ELIM, IVANHOE

## SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS AT BETHANY-ELIM

NANCY KROG

Thanks to everyone who supported our Sunday School Stocking Stuffer fundraiser on December 5. We all enjoyed a delicious meal and stuffed our Sunday School stocking with healthy funds for the future! Thanks to those who supported the World Hunger bake sale, whether you baked goodies or purchased goodies to eat, your donation is getting us closer to purchasing a cow for a community in need.

Thanks to our amazing congregation who gathered on Sunday, December 19th to hear the Sunday School children tell the story of Jesus' birth in "The Big, Big Story". Kids you did a fabulous job, we are all very proud of you!

We will resume Sunday School on January 9th. Happy New Year!

## UPCOMING DATES

**January 13** – WELCA program planning, 1:30 p.m.

**January 26** – Women's Bible Study, 9 a.m.

## COOKIE WALK MODEST SUCCESS

The Bethany WELCA held their annual cookie walk in spite of the inclement weather. Members baked and brought in a lot of cookies. Some went on Sunday and more through the following week. The remainder are in the freezer and will be used with coffee on Sunday mornings.

We thank all the families for baking and contributing the Christmas cookies. Thanks also to those that supported us by purchasing the cookies. We hope all can enjoy their cookies.

## BETHANY WELCA

Bethany WELCA will not hold a regular meeting but members are invited to get together on Thursday, January 13 at 1:30 p.m. We will complete the planning of the 2011 program.

# GRACE, LAKE BENTON

## WORSHIP ASSISTANTS FOR NOVEMBER

**USHERS:** Wayne Fehrman, Michael Haugen, Derek Haugen, J.R. Harris

**ALTAR GUILD:** Judy Thomssen

## GRACIOUS WORDS

**DARREN NELSEN, GRACE PRESIDENT**

It's getting close to winter or it already feels like it. We are offering rides for people who do not want to drive to church on very cold, snowy or icy conditions. Please contact a member of our church council and we will arrange transportation to and from church.

Grace Lutheran will be having our annual winter fun event January 29th at the Hole in the Mountain park. It will

## GRACE LUTHERAN SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

**PAT JOHNSON**

On Dec. 19, we had our Christmas program "The King's Birthday" during the church service at 8:30 a.m. The children did a wonderful job telling the story of our Savior's birth. Included were traditional Christmas carols for the congregation to sing along with us. Pastor Steve joined in with a narration of "One Solitary Life" and how it has touched all our lives. Thank you to the children, our teachers - Tanya Berkenpas, Mindy Johnson, Tonia & Mike Czech, helpers - Julienne Prosch, Linda Sutherland, & Brandee Miller, organist - Karen Lichtsinn, and Pastor Steve for all your hard work.

Also a very special thank you to everyone that attended our program. It is deeply appreciated.

After our program, we had a party with pizza, cookies and bars, ice cream, and juice while we watched a nativity video during the Sunday school hour.

From all of us at Grace Sunday School - we hope you had a very special Christmas and wish you a blessed New Year.

## UPCOMING DATES

Jan. 2 - No Sunday school

Jan. 9 - Sunday school resumes

## UPCOMING DATES

**No GLCW meeting in January**  
**January 12 – GLCW Bible Study**

include sledding and if you don't sled anymore there are board games, cards, great fellowship with food in the heated Chalet. This is open to all churches and the public. Sledding and games will be at 2pm followed with the church service at 5:30pm. Please join us for this all ages fun event I hope to see you there.



# PEACE, RUTHTON

## SUNDAYS:

Sunday School 9:15 a.m.

Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.

## NOTES AND DATES:

### TUESDAY, JANUARY 4

St. Matthew Circle not meeting.

St Mark Circle meets at the Ruthton Senior Center.

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 9

Congregational Annual Meeting immediately following worship service.

### WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 12

2 pm – PLCW

5 pm – St. John Circle meets at the church

9 pm – Church Council

### MONDAY, JANUARY 24

9 am – Quilting Day

# ST PAUL, MINNEOTA

We want to send our sympathy to the family of Agnes Severson. Agnes died Friday, December 10, after a brief illness. She celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday in October and is an inspiration to us all. Blessed be her memory.

Saturday evening services at Minneota will be suspended during the winter months. They will possibly resume in March.

The church council members will be trained to give communion to shut-in members at the next council meeting. St. Paul's Annual meeting will be on January 23<sup>rd</sup>.

The offering at the Thanksgiving Ecumenical service at St. Paul's was given to the Marshall Area Food Shelf.

The Christmas Program will have happened by the time this newsletter is in print. (unless weather hinders) Megan Boerboom, Hannah Buysse and Mike Josephson... the students and mentor involved in Training for Affirmation were in charge of the program. Thank you.

May your 2011 be filled with blessings and the love of the Lord.

# PRAYER CONCERNS

## BETHANY (ARCO):

Pray for Elsie Barber and Carol Marin.

## BETHANY-ELIM (IVANHOE):

For Hilda Herschberger, Mavis Nielsen, Dave Lawrence, Dennis Amundson, Ken Swanson, Brenda Sheik, Becky Paluch, Kelsey & Robin Hoffman; Michael Kropp; Jackson Nelson (son of Ryan & Kate Nelson); Kristi Morelan, and Leann Wadsworth; Dareld Benz (brother of Mavis Nielsen); Nancy Resmen (sister-in-law of Bernadine Olsen); Linda Vlaminc (Sister-in-Law of Dave & Marlene Lawrence); and Mary Grace Nelson (daughter of Ryan & Kate Nelson).

## GRACE (LAKE BENTON):

Pray for Bud and the family of Joyce Knutson. Pray for Norma Burdick, Paula Jacobson (Daughter of Wayne & Annette Fehrman); Joe Harris Sr.; Earl Klitzke; Leann Wadsworth; and Chet Borresen

## PEACE (RUTHTON):

Pray for Herb Vinson, Sonja Petersen, Chet Petersen, Lavonne Fuhrmann, Cliff Kittelson, and Jean Lundholm.

## ST. PAUL (MINNEOTA):

Pray for Ordell Severson and the family of Agnes Severson. Pray for Lyall Gislason, Doris Richards, Clara DeRoode, and Crystal Gawarecki.

CONTINUED ON FOLLOWING PAGE

## MILITARY

Pray for the leaders of this nation and all the nations of the world that all may seek peace. Pray for those family and friends of the members of WOTP who serve in the military or reserve forces, especially Lucas Oerter, Scott Johnson, Anthony Nielsen, Jon Dougherty, Christian Vizecky, Jon and Jack Healy, Danielle Thomsen, Michael Colman, Ross, Ryan, Angela, and David Nelson, Allan Peterson, Brook Brown, Derrick Linneman, Todd Board, Kyle Sheik, Alyson Bylone, Steve VandeBerg, Jim Pedersen, Scott Lundberg, Aaron Darrel Lundberg, Justin Schmidt, Adam DeRoode, Pam Gregor, Paul Gregor, Jr., Corey Gregor, Christopher Gregor, Stephanie Christoffels, and Paul Gregor

## TYLER NURSING HOME:

Marjorie Meyer, Grace Lutheran  
Divine Providence Nursing Home, Ivanhoe:  
Mabel Dressen, Bethany Lutheran  
Elsie Barber, Bethany Lutheran  
Dr. Mary Bird, St. Paul Lutheran  
Pat Metzen, Bethany-Elim Lutheran

## HENDRICKS NURSING HOME:

Hilda Herschberger, Bethany-Elim Lutheran

## MINNEOTA MANOR:

Clara DeRoode, St. Paul Lutheran