



THE BETHEL BEACON JANUARY 2010

MISSION STATEMENT: We, the Bethel Lutheran Congregation, called by God, commit ourselves: to proclaim the gospel, to prepare our members for outreach and service, and to minister to human needs.



Pastoral Perspective	Page 2
Church Council, Not Too Late	
Reflections, Fight Hunger, Thanks, Baptism of Our Lord, Epiphany	Page 3
Pastoral Acts	Page 4
Pre-Baptism, 2009 Offerings	
Worship & Music News	Page 5
Winter Mission News	
Children's Ministry	Page 6
Confirmation News	
WELCA News	Page 7
Endowment Fund, Promise Dates	
Youth News	Page 8
Gifts/Memorials	Page 9
Stewardship Stats, Bethel Staff,	
Adult Education	Page 10
Moms/Kids, Ushering (New), IHN Volunteers Needed	
Relational Youth Ministry	Page 11
Summer Mexico Mission	
Insert - Staff Christmas Greeting	

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE AT BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH - 2009

Christmas Eve, Thursday, December 24

12/24	Festival Worship Services	3, 4:30 & 6pm
12/24	Candlelight Worship	11:00pm

Christmas Day Worship, Friday, December 25

12/25	Worship with Communion	10am
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ANNUAL MEETING OF BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

The members of Bethel Lutheran will come together for our annual business meeting on Sunday, January 31, 12 noon. Prior to the meeting, the youth will be offering their most delicious Sloppy Joe luncheon!

There are many dates for you to consider as we approach our annual meeting this year:

- January 7, 7pm – a meeting for Bethel members – how shall we move forward in ministry in light of ELCA decisions on sexuality?
- January 15 – deadline for all resolutions to be considered at the annual meeting—any resolution needs to be in the church office
- January 19, 7pm – Chapel Chat to consider any annual meeting item (including budget) not related to ELCA sexuality decisions
- January 26, 7pm – a meeting devoted entirely to any resolution for the annual meeting dealing with sexuality issues
- January 31, 12:00pm – annual meeting

It will be a busy month as we continue to discern our faithful path of service and mission in the world. Please join us.

2010 BUDGETARY ISSUES

Anyone who has paid attention to the mailed and electronic communications of Bethel or attended worship in December knows of the concerns that Bethel leaders have heading into 2010. We are grateful that many people have responded to the challenge. We still have a long ways to go.

Later than in an ordinary year, the council, while already having worked for weeks, will prepare a budget for communication to the congregation by January 15. That is the budget that will be considered at the annual meeting. We ask your prayerful support of Bethel in these weeks as we establish ministry priorities for 2010 and beyond.

NEXT BEACON

Articles Due:

Tuesday, January 19, 2010
by 12 Noon

Beacon Mailed:

Monday, January 25, 2010

PASTORAL PERSPECTIVE

A MATTER OF PERSPECTIVE

Dear Bethel Members and Friends:

For months the pastors of Bethel had planned to take a 48 hour retreat for intensive discussion about the mission and ministry of the congregation. We chose a time in which none of us had commitments that couldn't be otherwise well covered by our excellent Bethel staff.

The place of retreat was Wisconsin Dells—a wonderful accommodation at no cost to the church. We planned to cook all our meals in our unit so that we could devote all our time to building up the ministry and our own sense of collegiality.

Good thing we didn't have to get out. It snowed. About 16 inches. It was a picture postcard at Christmas Mountain Village. Life had almost come to a standstill that first morning we were there. Early in the morning I trudged through the snow to get to the main lodge. It was fun to talk with the workers who had struggled to get there and to enjoy a cup of coffee with them.

I had just trudged back to our unit in the snow when my cell phone rang. Kathy, my wife, was on the other end. The same 16 inches of snow had fallen in Rochester, and the snowblower would not start. It wouldn't even emit a decent cough of life. I could sense panic on the Rochester end of that telephone call.

Eventually Kathy maneuvered her way out of the deep situation. All would be well. But it reminded me that the same circumstances can be viewed so differently depending upon perspective. What I perceived as a Norman Rockwell scene was, in a different context, a threat to mobility. Other perspectives, including perspectives from those who make their living on the highways, could have included life and death.

A long time ago a pregnant woman and her husband were forced to travel to the town of their ancestry to be counted in a census. A hard trip for a woman about to give birth. When they came to Bethlehem, there were no decent accommodations, so they took up shelter in a stable. A baby was born. We have been celebrating that baby for 2000 years.

From our perspective, it makes for a

wonderful story of humility and divinity. Who but God could devise such a great plan?

From Mary and Joseph's perspective, would life look different? Were they worried about their new little son in the chill of the night air? Did they wonder how they would get him back home to Nazareth—a newborn on a hard return trip? Did Mary wonder more about the words that the angel had given to her about her Son?

It may help us to better appreciate the story this year if we look at it from more than one perspective. There were no pipe organs, velvet dresses, or natural gas furnaces at the birth of Christ. Into extremely humble, perhaps even adverse surroundings, our God came to be among us—to live with us in the flesh. That is some perspective.

Merry Christmas,
Pastor Norman Wahl

CHURCH COUNCIL NEWS

The following is from the 11/17/09 church council meeting. A copy of each month's council packet can be found in the Bethel Adult Library:

- Lutheran Social Services met with the three Bethel pastors. They are seeking a greater connection with Bethel.
- Thirteen staff members completed the AED/CPR training through the Red Cross.
- The annual meeting will be Sunday, January 31, 2010. Resolutions must be to the church council by January 15.
- There will be a Chapel Chat on January 19 at 7pm to deal with annual meeting issues, other than matters dealing with the ELCA sexuality decisions.

NOT TOO LATE TO HELP!

If you have not yet made a commitment to the 2010 church budget or would like to add to your commitment, it will help the leaders of Bethel. As soon as possible, please contact Janet Hoffmann or Chris Zabel in the church office (288-6430), or go to Bethel's website www.bethellutheran.com to offer your commitment for 2010. Thanks so much!

REFLECTIONS

This past October members of Bethel hosted three pastors and their wives who had traveled from Mexico with the executive director of Latin American Lutheran Missions, Pastor Dick Erickson and his wife, Barbara. Two of the Mexico pastors have had deep ties to Bethel mission groups that have traveled over the years to work in their churches with the children and also to help in constructing the buildings within which they currently worship. The mutual love and admiration of all who gathered for that evening meal was palpable...these are people who understand that God's love has no barriers of language or distance, but that being a brother and a sister in Christ connects us through the love of a gracious and generous God. Later in the evening the pastors and their wives sang songs for our confirmation students and the Spirit was alive in hands clapping and voice raised in Spanish words of praise. The youth couldn't help but join in singing.

This coming year will bring an opportunity to travel to Mexico again and renew and develop relationships with the congregations and leadership in various settings. It will be a time for us to sing, build and grow in our partnership in ministry. These are congregations with great needs and Bethel has so much to share...yet we are always blessed in the gifts they share with us, too. Because a mission trip takes a great deal of time to plan and involves the efforts of many people who take the time to travel - we would appreciate your prayerful and generous support as we go forward as Bethel's ambassadors. If you have an interest in traveling, please let me know ...our registration deadline & deposit are due January 10! It could be that this is a place God is calling you to serve with your gifts.*

I have found Bethel to be a place of great passion for mission. Thank you for the ways that each of you live out faith in your own mission fields. May God empower you in your serving.

In Christ's love,
Pastor Anjanette Rist

****There are two additional excellent youth mission trips planned for this summer. Please contact Michael Beckmann, Darcy Youngstrom, or Pastor Andy Nelson for more information. These two trips also have a January 10 deadline for registration and deposit.***

HELP FIGHT HUNGER

You can fight hunger at no cost! Visit the following web sites and click to participate. Site sponsors will donate to hunger charities based on the number of clicks: www.thehungersite.com; <http://www.landolakesinc.com/company/corporateresponsibility/foundation/default.aspx>. It takes only a few minutes and it is free!

THANK YOU!

Dear Personnel Team and Bethel Congregation:

Thank you for the recent celebration of my 45 years as organist at Bethel. I appreciate the recognition for what has been a wonderful experience. The kind words, gift and reception were very special to me. As Pastor Onkka so eloquently said at every congregational meeting, "I like it here." Soli Deo Gloria ...

Dale Mundahl

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you - to the many cookie and bar bakers and kitchen helpers that helped make the November 13 IHN (Interfaith Hospitality Network) Concert a great success! The freewill offering raised \$9,300 and the Thrivent match added \$2,500 for a grand total of \$11,800 for Interfaith Hospitality Network.

Thank you to the many Bethel members that sang, played an instrument and to those that helped with the reception. It was much appreciated!

BAPTISM OF OUR LORD

Each year in the Epiphany season, the Christian church celebrates the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River. In 2010 that is Sunday, January 10. All who have been baptized in the previous 12 months are invited back to remember their baptisms. As well, all of God's children remember God's promises to us in baptism: forgiveness of sins, life and salvation. Please be sure to attend these worship services!

MIDWEEK EPIPHANY SERVICE

Wednesday, January 6, 7pm

Epiphany is the day set aside in the church's life to commemorate and celebrate the visit of the Magi to the Holy Family and to ponder more deeply the incarnation of God. Please join us for this worship celebration!



___ Pastoral Acts at Bethel

We encourage you to share in the times of joy and sorrow with fellow members of God's family:

BAPTISMS

Go therefore and make disciples of the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Matthew 28:19

11/21	Chloe Vesterby Camryn Tottingham
12/20	Anders Meier

WEDDINGS

And now faith, hope and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love. 1 Corinthians 13:13

11/21	Nicole Ulwelling & Jesse Nelson
12/12	Blair Larson & Brian Becker

FUNERALS

*Listen, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable and we will be changed.
(1 Corinthians 15:51-52)*

12/7	Michael Giere
12/16	Eunice Hoffman

ARE YOU EXPECTING A CHILD? COME TO THE PRE-BAPTISM CLASS



Bethel holds a monthly pre-baptism class on the 2nd Sunday of the month and the **next class** will be **Sunday, January 10, 6:30-7:30pm** in room 115. This class is held for those planning baptisms - even if the baby isn't due for awhile, call Judy in the office and tell her which class you'd like to attend. Parents and

local sponsors are expected to participate in this opportunity to review the meaning of God's gift of new life. You are welcome to bring the child that is to be baptized as well. Even if this isn't your first child, we encourage you to attend one of the pre-baptism classes.

You must let the church office know the date you will attend the pre-baptism class to ensure that a pastor will be present to conduct the class. If we don't have anyone signed up for the evening, the class will not be held.

To **schedule a baptism**, please contact Judy Gittus, 288-6430 or jgittus@bethellutheran.com.



2009 OFFERINGS

December 31, 2009 is the last day to drop off offering envelopes in order for those offerings to be included on your 2009 giving statement (includes offerings through the mail). In addition, since stock transfers/gifts can take up to 2 weeks to process completely, these should be initiated by no later than December 17, 2009. If you have any questions, please contact Chris Zabel at 288-6430 or email him at Zabel@bethellutheran.com. Thanks!

WORSHIP AND MUSIC NEWS

Please share your voice and your talents by joining the **Chancel Choir**. We have many "snowbirds" leaving for the winter and need singers to replace them. Just show up at rehearsal on Wednesday nights at 7:30pm.

The orchestra needs string players and trombones. They rehearse Wednesdays at 6:30pm.

Thanks to Mary McLagan and her crew for the parking lot banners. And thanks to Kim Schliesman's team for the beautiful Christmas decorations around the church! Thanks to everyone who helps these two leaders keep the church looking so great!

THE GIFT OF WORSHIP

One gift with which God blessed us is the gift of music. Of all the activities in which I am privileged to participate at Bethel, conducting the ensembles is my favorite. But even if - as the saying goes - we can carry a tune only in a bucket - any time we sing to Him or in His honor, it is melodious to the ears of our Heavenly Father. Today we will read several passages in God's word that speak about music:

- God considers music so vital that in ancient Israel, He assigned people specifically to that ministry:

1 Chron 6:31: These are the men David put in charge of the music in the house of the LORD after the ark came to rest there. ³²They ministered with music before the tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting, until Solomon built the temple of the LORD in Jerusalem. They performed their duties according to the regulations laid down for them.

- Music is to be a regular part of our worship in our church:

Eph. 5:19 Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make

music in your heart to the Lord.

Psa. 149:3 Let them praise his name with dancing and make music to him with tambourine and harp. ⁴ For the LORD takes delight in his people; he crowns the humble with salvation.

Psa. 43:4 Then will I go to the altar of God, to God, my joy and my delight. I will praise you with the harp, O God, my God.

- Music is emotionally and mentally replenishing:

1 Sam. 16:23 Whenever the spirit from God came upon Saul, David would take his harp and play. Then relief would come to Saul; he would feel better, and the evil spirit would leave him.

I hope you will join me in thanking God for His gift of music, and sing a song to Him today.

Blessings for a wonderful new year,
Gary Thorn, Minister of Worship & Music



**BETHEL IN
MISSION**

WINTER MISSION TRIPS

Would you like to go south for a week in January? We can use a few more volunteers to join us in Bridge City, Texas during the week of January 9-16. We'll be repairing and rebuilding homes damaged in last year's hurricane. Everyone is welcome to come along - experience is helpful but not necessary. We also need 3-4 people to work in the kitchen that week.

We'll be taking a second trip a little closer to home, Feb. 15-20 - to Cedar Rapids, IA to work on homes damaged in last year's floods.

To join us, contact Larry Vomhof, 867-3809 or email, dvomhof@gmail.com.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY NEWS

THANK YOU CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

VOLUNTEERS!: The Children's Ministry Team thanks everyone who helped make the Christmas Program and Reception a lovely day! The children did a great job - with a lot of help from terrific teachers, shepherds and parents. Without many volunteers who helped with all aspects of the program, we couldn't make this happen. We appreciate everyone who was there to help with everything from setting up the sanctuary to making the receptions happen!

SUNDAY SCHOOL PARENTS: Remember, there is NO SUNDAY SCHOOL on December 27 or January 3. We will resume Sunday School on January 10th. See you in worship!

FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT: Join the Children's Ministry Team on January 17 at 6:30pm in Youth Hall for the movie *Ice Age*. We will have popcorn, and lemonade. Bring any movie watching accessories you might like - blanket, sleeping bag, etc. Kids have been known to show up in pj's so get comfy and snuggle up for a fun evening! If you want, bring a snack to share. As always, friends are welcome!

2ND GRADE STEWARDSHIP EVENT: The 2nd graders and their parents are invited to join the stewardship team and children's ministry on Sunday, January 24, 2010. We will meet in the Chapel during your regular Sunday School hour to learn about how we can share our gifts with others. **NOTE:** The 2nd graders will not have their regular Sunday School class on January 24. You will receive a letter in early January with more information. If you have any questions, please contact Daryl in the office, 288-6430.

Susan Larson will be leaving Bethel as the Children's Ministry Assistant on December 31. The Children's Ministry Team appreciates the work Susan has done here. She has accepted a position at Child Care Resource and Referral Head Start as a Home Visitor. Susan and her family will remain members of Bethel and look forward to continuing to be involved.

UPCOMING CHILDREN'S MINISTRY EVENTS FOR JANUARY AND FEBRUARY:

- Dec. 27, Jan. 3 - No Sunday School
- Jan. 27 - Family Movie Night - 6:30pm - Youth Hall
- Jan. 24 - 2nd Grade Stewardship Event - 9:00/10:30am - Chapel
- Feb. 14 - Family Movie Night - Watch for details!
- Feb. 28 - 1st Grade Bible BINGO - Watch for details!



CONFIRMATION INFORMATION

Remember, NO confirmation classes on December 23 or 30. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Mark your calendars for **Confirmation Youth & Parent night on Wednesday, January 6** from 7-8:30pm in the Sanctuary. This is a required confirmation event. The evening will include participating in the Epiphany service plus looking ahead to confirmation camp for our 8th grade students and the mentor program for our 9th grade students. We look forward to sharing this evening with our confirmation students and parents.

Confirmation Orientation for 6th and 7th graders and their Parents! It's time to begin a new group of students in our Confirmation program. If you have a 6th or 7th grader who is interested in beginning their Confirmation Journey, please plan to attend one of our two offered orientations on **Sunday, January 31 or Tuesday, February 2 at 7:00pm** in the Chapel. These orientations are very important to attend and so please make every effort.

If you have any questions concerning our Confirmation program, please contact Daryl Jans, 288-6430.

**NEWS FROM
THE WOMEN OF BETHEL**

Mission of the Month for January Women’s Shelter Inc. offers temporary safety and shelter for women and children who are in immediate need of a refuge. 24 hour staffing is available to help provide a myriad of services: medical, legal, support groups and information groups. For shelter, advocacy or information, call (507) 285-1010 or 800-438-6439. The focus of our mission in January is to supply paper products, feminine hygiene products and diapers that can be used by mothers and children who have had to leave home suddenly and are in need of these items during their stay in the shelter. Thank you so much for your contribution to ease their situation in a practical way.

Dates to Remember:

- Monday, January 11 – WELCA Board Meeting (Rms 4 & 5, Lower Level)
- Saturday & Sunday, January 23/24 — Thank Offering & Installation of Officers

A NOTE FROM BETHEL’S QUILTERS: What do you do when you have “extra” funds. Bethel’s Quilters found themselves in this wonderful dilemma after a very successful Quilt Sale. We voted unanimously to donate \$500 to Bethel’s Building Fund. It’s the Building Fund which has provided the quilters with a spacious, comfortable working area. We are pleased to return funds for the mission of the Building Fund!

ENDOWMENT FUND NEWS

Established in 1993, the Endowment Fund was created to encourage, receive and manage gifts that are intended to benefit Bethel’s missions. It has been our way of preparing for the future and responding to special needs that are not covered by annual pledges. All monies received in the funds are invested and only the earnings from the principle are used for funding requests.

The Bethel Endowment team reports the market value of the funds as of October 31 was approximately \$962,000. Contributions to the fund year to date are \$4,200.00 The fund value in October 2007 was approximately \$1,159,000. Due to the significant drop in value of the fund, disbursement requests from teams were tabled

earlier this year until recently when market values started to improve.

Disbursements from the fund since our last report in July include;

- \$1,200.00 from Onkka Seminary Scholarship Fund to support Kevin Hackney in his 1st year at seminary;
- \$1,000.00 from Social Global Missions to support Kids Against Hunger program;
- \$1,300.00 from Hirman Fellowship fund for Pastor Onkka’s retirement celebration;
- \$215.00 from Mundahl Music fund for a brass guitar for the Praise Team;
- \$920.00 from Spiritual Emphasis for “Christ in the Home” devotionals for distribution to Bethel families during Advent to promote family devotional time;
- \$600.00 from youth Activities for high school winter retreat transportation to Duluth;
- \$1,000.00 from youth Activities for transportation for mission trip to St. Louis in summer 2010;
- \$180.00 from Mundahl Music for 6 additional music stands;
- \$262.00 from Undesignated for candles / supplies for All Saints Day.

Save the dates The Endowment Team is pleased to offer two educational opportunities to the this spring: *Estate Planning Tools*, April 20, 7pm, and *Charitable Giving*, May 4, 7pm. Childcare will be offered. Mark your calendars and stay tuned for more information. For more information about the Endowment fund, please call Chris Zabel at the church office, 288-6430.

The Promise 2010 Performances

Friday, March 12	7-9:30pm
Saturday, March 13	7-9:30pm
Sunday, March 14	2-4:30pm
Friday, March 19	7-9:30pm
Saturday, March 20	7-9:30pm
Sunday, March 21	2-4:30pm

BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
SANCTUARY

810 Third Avenue SE, Rochester, MN
55904

507-288-6430

www.bethellutheran.com

YOUTH NEWS

Up-to-date information can be found at
bethellutheranyouth.com

New information is added every week and this is the place to get the most up to date information as well!



Youth mission trips

Calendar Updates:

- Sunday morning **Youth Forum** classes will resume on **Sunday**, January 10.
- **Frontline** will resume on Wednesday, January 13 with free time in Youth Hall from 7:30–8pm and dodgeball starting at 8pm.
- **Elevate** will resume on Sunday January 24 at 7pm!

Thanks to the Youth Team! As 2009 comes to an end we extend a big thank you to our youth team members! Throughout this year they have been extremely helpful with calling volunteers, organizing fund raisers, and helping with various activities! The Youth Ministry program at Bethel exist thanks to the help and support of this team. Team members are:

Jim Allhiser
Debbie Dixon
Juli Donovan
Mary Lammers
Paula Peters
Kori Petersson
Nancy Wolf

Thank you to the many volunteers that helped with various December activities. The lefse bake, Parent's Private shopping trip and cookie plates were all successful due to the work of many volunteers.

Registrations continue for the upcoming summer mission trips! Brochures are available at the youth board with more details about each of the following trips:

Where: Twin Cities Area

When: August 5-7

Who: Completed Grades 6-8

Contact Persons: Pastor Nelson or Darcy Youngstrom

Where: St. Louis, Missouri

When: August 1-6

Who: Completed Grades 9-12

Contact Person: Michael Beckmann

Where: Mexico

When: July 22–Aug. 1

Who: Completed Grades 7-12 (plus adults)

Contact Person: Pastor Anjanette

Registrations and deposit due by **Sunday, January 10, 2010.**



ANNUAL MEETING

Annual Meeting Meal - The Youth will be serving a meal before the Annual meeting on Sunday, Jan. 31. If you are interested in earning some service hours or money for a Bethel trip, keep an eye out for the sign-up at the youth board. All funds raised may be used toward any Bethel Lutheran Youth sponsored event, including Confirmation Camp.

GIFTS & MEMORIALS

- Organ Fund and Social Ministries in memory of Rod Daniels from family and friends
- Building Fund in memory of son Charles, sister, Margie Gilson, and friend, Pam Holmquist from John and Judy Walter
- Organ Fund in memory of Kris Lamberg's father, Odin Devick from Don and Kay Buske
- Organ Fund in remembrance of the wedding anniversary of Lucy and John Johnson from Peter and Carmelita Johnson
- Prayer Shawl Ministry in memory of Ethel Neubauer and Bell Tower Fund in memory of Ron Neubauer from Mike and Cindy Smith
- Social Missions Fund in honor of Jeanne Townsend from her daughter, Karen

2009 STEWARDSHIP GIVING

<u>General Giving</u>		<u>Building Fund</u>	
11/22	\$18,617.34	Offerings to Date (as of 12/13)	\$337,379.89
12/6	\$32,811.99	Total Pledged	\$457,363.00
12/13	\$16,015.79	Number of Families Pledging	421
As of 12/13/09:		<u>Simply Giving</u>	
YTD Projected Envelope Offerings	\$950,675.36	General Offerings Rec'd in 2009	\$239,140.13
YTD Actual Envelope Offerings	\$997,642.40	Building Offerings Rec'd in 2009	\$102,644.68
Difference	- \$46,967.14	% of General Offerings Rec'd 2009	26.5%
		# of Families Participating	180

BETHEL'S STAFF

Church Office - 507-288-6430

Pastors:

Norman Wahl	Executive Pastor
Anjanette Rist	Pastor of Visitation, Outreach & Missions
Andrew Nelson	Pastor of Education & Youth
Roy Satre	Assisting Pastor of Visitation

Office Staff

Judy Gittus	Communications/Membership
Janet Hoffmann	Administrative
Patricia McEwan	Education & Youth
Sylvia Ramaker	Receptionist/Secretary

Program Staff

Chris Zabel	Parish Administrator
Gary Thorn	Minister of Music
Dave Gross	Youth Music Assistant
Michael Beckmann	Youth Director
Daryl Jans	Children's Ministry Director
Darcy Youngstrom	Assistant Youth Director
Susan Larson	Children's Ministry Assistant
Avis Hagen	Shared Ministry & Small Groups
Lorrie Schuchard	New Member Coordinator

Custodial Staff

Bill Freytag	Properties Supervisor
Bryan Kohn	Custodial Supervisor
Tony Wright	Custodian
Dustin Christopherson	Part-time Custodian
Principal Organist	Dale Mundahl
Saturday Organist	Jim Bahler
Weekend Receptionists	Barb Larson, Lois Graif
Financial Secretary	Alice O'Groske
Nursery Coordinator	Shelly Savage

ADULT EDUCATION NEWS

BIBLE STUDIES AND MORE: All of our studies welcome new members and meet in various rooms (check the calendar on the kiosk in the Narthex):

- **Monday Night Bible Study** - 6:30pm in room 115 - study Sunday's lessons
- **Wednesday Early Morning Bible Study** (6:30am – read through the Bible) - room 115
- **Wednesday Morning Bible Study** (10am – studying Sunday's lessons), room 115
- **WELCA Bible study**, 10:45am on the first Thursday of each month, room 115

SUNDAY ADULT FORUMS: 10:30am in room 115 (unless otherwise noted):

- January 10 - "How to Get Through Unbelievable Grief: Writing to Recover" - Rochester author, Harriet Hodgson, will talk about loss, grief and recovery and how writing can help.
- January 17 - "Forgiveness: Giving and Receiving" - Chaplain Sylvan Hengesteg (Bethel member) will look at some practical helps to forgive ourselves and others.
- January 24 - "Leaving a Spiritual Will" - Hospice Chaplain Jeff Wallager will give us practical tools a spiritual or ethical will.
- January 31 - "Prayer 101" - Join Pastor Onkka as he talks about simple thoughts to uncomplicated prayer.

Faith 'N Friends - Ladies: We meet Tuesday, January 12, 2010 6:30-8pm, Music Room, continuing with the book, "God is Closer than you Think." We will be discussing Chapters 2 and 3, "Where is God in My World?"

MOMS AND KIDS

We will resume our study of "Finding God in the Present Moment" by Jean Maalouf on January 7. You may join us at any point in the study and there is no need for registration. We are a relaxed group of moms with children of all ages. We meet weekly on Thursdays in Room 115 for fellowship from 9-9:30 and Bible study with Pastor Anjanette from 9:30-10:30. Children

are cared for by loving volunteers in the nursery next door. Please join us for an informal time to enjoy motherhood in all seasons. We do not meet if Rochester Public Schools are not in session for any reason. Contact Heather Schenck, 261-1702, or Dawn Mitchell, 206-0310, for more information.

NEW USHERING CONCEPT

Simply Serving - new ushering

Concept: Presently our ushers serve 3 times a year for a month plus about 5 special services. This format doesn't seem to fit our busy lives so we are changing the make up of our usher teams. We are looking for some family groups willing to serve for 1 month (or 1 special service, i.e. Lent). We have 36 special services in addition to our Sunday services. Your group would include your whole family and we'd have veteran ushers there to help you. It's a way for the whole family to be involved in Sunday's worship - you pick the dates and we'll make the rest happen! If you're interested or have ???'s, contact Roger Durst, 282-4517 or rdurst2000@msn.com. No extra meetings, no previous experience required. See the Count Me Ins to sign up today!



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR IHN

Would you like to volunteer for Bethel's Buddy weeks? Four weeks a year we need a variety of helpers and could use more help. IHN stands for **Interfaith Hospitality Network**, a

mission to help homeless families achieve and sustain their independence. Faith communities work together to house and feed our guests.

Examples of duties are to be a van driver, cook a meal, host by sharing the meal and a few hours with the family at the host church, or stay overnight in the host church. Bethel's biggest need right now is for van drivers and people to stay overnight. Interested and want more details? Call Lynn Myhre, 282-7975. Join our great group of Bethel IHN volunteers!

Relational Youth Ministry

By Michael Beckmann

Who has been an important person in your faith life? Why? Was this relationship based on a means to an end? Something you did to meet a requirement or finish a program? Or was it a relationship based on sharing life together? Take a few minutes to think about this as you read on. I'll come back to this question in a little bit.

This past October I was in a class on Relational Youth Ministry at Luther Seminary in St. Paul. During this class we were asked the same question I just asked you. We were asked how our ministries for youth were set-up in our own congregations and asked to discover new ways to seek relational youth ministry opportunities. I hope to bring you more about my studies in the following months and have discussions on what relational youth ministry should look like at Bethel. But first let me tell you a story, one that was used in our class.

This story is commonly known as Paul Harvey's story called "The Man and the Birds." In the story a man's family pleads with him to accompany them to church on this cold Christmas-Eve night, but he refuses; he's in a crisis of faith. Sitting in his living room he notices outside of the window a group of little birds that appear lost and cold. Fearing that they'll freeze he dons boots and a coat and rushes out to direct them into his barn; but with every altruistic "shoo," the birds fearfully flutter in the other direction. He tries talking soothingly to them, but they don't understand English. After attempting a number of other techniques, he gives up. As he does the thinks, "If only I could become a bird myself, I could lead them into the warm barn." As soon as he finishes the thought, the church bells ring, and he realizes for the first time the significance of Christmas and Jesus' incarnation.

At first glance this is a great story and pulls at our heart strings. But is this story really about the incarnation of Christ? This story assumes Jesus needed to become human because it was the most effective way to "get us in the barn". Jesus just needed to become human enough to get us to a point and then he could go back to being God. What the story misses out is that Jesus was fully human, not just pretending to be human. In the story, Jesus would have been a bird sitting in the cold with us, fully bird and fully cold. This is

the act of love described in John 3:16, "God so **loved** the world ..."

This is not to say influence has no place in relationships. For example, I influence my children every day, but my influencing them is not the basis of our relationship. Amy and I didn't sit around one day and say "You know what I think we should have a kid to influence them." It was out of our love. Our influence comes as a secondary thing, we want them to learn how to love others and respect others, so we influence them to act a certain way. When our relationships are based on love, they become more authentic and pure.

Now back to the question I asked at the beginning. As you think about that relationship, was it based on love or influence? Maybe a bit of both? This is an intriguing question as we move forward in ministry to our youth at Bethel. As we share in their suffering and joy, may we be able to see our relationships with others as a relationship built out of love and not of influence.

If you would like to dig into this deeper, I would recommend a book by Andrew Root, entitled, *Relationships Unfiltered: A Handbook for Youth Workers, Volunteers, Pastors and Parents*. I have a couple of copies available in my office if you would like to stop in and talk some more.

Summer Mission Trip to Mexico

It's time for you to commit to a life-changing experience of putting your faith into action! The registration deadline and deposit of \$50 for the Bethel Mexico Mission Trip is Sunday, Jan 10th. Plan to travel to Saltillo, Mexico this summer - July 22-Aug. 1. Adults of all ages are welcome as well as families with children older than elementary school. Skills for construction work and adults who enjoy driving vans are appreciated members of the group but you need not have any specialized skills to go along ... just a heart for service to others in the model of Jesus' ministry. The estimated cost of the trip will be \$300-400 per person (includes a \$50 deposit fee, travel and most of the food for the week but does not include the passport fee). We'll be doing work on the actual structures of churches, leading morning VBS with many children, building relationships, joining in fiestas, exploring and learning together. Questions - contact Pastor Anjanette (288-6430) or rist@bethellutheran.com.

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I MAY NOT BE A "WISE MAN," BUT AT
LEAST I NEVER GOT SO LOST I HAD TO ASK
HEROD FOR DIRECTIONS.



**REMEMBER ...
CHRISTMAS LASTS 12 DAYS
UNTIL JAN. 6 - EPIPHANY!**

HAVE A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

*If you would prefer not to have
your name appear in any Bethel
publications, please contact the
church office, 288-6430.*

WORSHIP TIMES

Saturday	6:00pm
Sunday	9:00 & 10:30am

OFFICE HOURS

Mon-Fri	7:30am-5:00pm
Sat	8:30am-12 Noon
Sun	8:00am-12 Noon

**JANUARY 2010
BETHEL BEACON**

Staff e-mails can be found at:
www.bethellutheran.com

