

**COUNTERS** – The counters for January are Ada Shockey and Neil and VerNae Rayman. We will meet at First National Bank on Monday mornings at 10:00 a.m. If there is a problem, please call the Parish Office.

The counters for February are Phyllis Leazier, Bob Miller and Jean Taylor.

## Blood Pressure Schedule



January 8      9:00 a.m.      Lori Zolla  
                          10:15 a.m.      Sue Schimpf



Did you know that the following friends and members were hospitalized during the last weeks? Mary Baker, Joe Zeigler, Cindy Barron, Lloyd Mostoller, Shirley Zellem, Evelyn Zolla, Margaret Ware and Neil Pile. Please hold them in prayer and remember them with your cards and calls!



The Community Ministry Fund contributions continue to rise with \$1,913,925 committed toward the building of the Community Ministry Center. At the present time \$1,862,726 has been received. The Community Ministry Center loan balance is \$57,667.

### St. Jude's Card Project

The Somerset County Workshop is currently collecting used Christmas, and all occasion cards to recycle for St. Jude's Ranch. The children at St. Jude's turn the card fronts into new cards that are sold in their gift shop. The children learn about recycling and running a business.

All kinds, including Christmas, general greeting and Easter cards are appreciated. Right now, especially birthday and thank-you cards are needed. The consumers at the Somerset Workshop will prepare the cards for shipping, including cutting and packing. Place the cards on the table in the Gathering Place.

St. Jude's cannot accept Hallmark, Disney or American Greetings cards because of trademark and/or copyright issues, since the cards are sold by St. Jude's. Therefore, the workshop will also sort the cards and use the remaining cards for craft projects.

**Wanted** – Persons (13 years of age and older) to be trained to run the sound system in the Hall for occasional events. Please contact the Parish Office or speak with Pastor Ed if interested or for more details.

### Retirees

The next meeting date for our Retirees Group is Thursday, January 19. Come for coffee and social time at 10:00 a.m. followed by a Bible study led by Pastor Ed at 11:00. A covered dish lunch is served at noon. Beat the winter blues by coming for conversation, study, and fellowship!

### Summary of Congregational Meeting Actions

- + The 2012 Ministry Proposal (budget) was unanimously passed. Note that while the total budget increase is just over 1%, the Current Fund portion of this new budget will require a 4% increase in income to meet expenses. The increases are in areas of "fixed" spending (i.e. utilities and salaries [1.5% increase across the board]). Please keep this in mind as you give prayerful consideration to your offering as the new year begins.

Current Fund giving for 2011 as of November 30 is 5.3% (\$10,773.00) less than in 2010. While we are current on all expenses, we have to be careful in ministry expenditures. Additional offerings to the Current Fund during the remainder of 2011 will help us end the year on healthier financial footing.

- + Elected to Council for a three year term
  - Richard Pyle – Property Ministry Team
  - Beth Schrock – Caring & Sharing Ministry Team
  - Jeanie Shaffer – Christian Ed Ministry Team
- + Council is still seeking someone to fill a seat and to serve on the Property Ministry Team. While property maintenance skills would be helpful, the ability to delegate tasks to the many, many volunteers caring for our facility would be highly advantageous. Please speak with Janis Ware, Council President or Pastor Ed if you are interested in serving.



**Made donations to the Community Ministry Fund in memory of:**

**Ann Graytok**

- Tootie Welker

**Jack Coulter**

- Randy, Sally, Noah and Alyvia Walker



**Janis Ware**

- Beth Schrock

**Al and Jackie Miller and Margaret Coulter**

- Randy, Sally, Noah and Alyvia Walker

**Noah and Alyvia Walker**

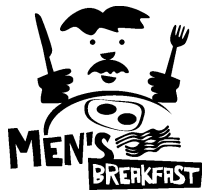
- Randy and Sally Walker

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**Bulletin of 2011 Ministry Reports**



Later this month pick up your 2011 Bulletin of Ministry Reports here at the church.  
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**Men's Breakfast for January**



Guys of all ages are invited to come out for our monthly men's breakfast on Saturday, January 28 at 7:30 a.m. A delicious home cooked breakfast usually of eggs, fried potatoes, bacon or sausage, etc. is provided. A brief devotional focus follows breakfast. Guys are on their way by 8:30 a.m. ALL men and boys from the congregation and community are welcome to attend. A freewill offering covers the cost of the meal.

**January Ministry Teams & Task Forces Meetings**

Council – January 3, 7:30 p.m. – Council will elect officers for 2012 & discuss the filling of the present open position.

FLC M.O.S.T. (Mission Outreach Support Team) – January 11, 7:00 p.m. – At its last meeting this group adopted the name as noted. Their mission is to encourage, assist, and support mission trips among our congregation. These trips will be both national and international. At the January meeting plans will be finalized regarding the place & date for the “Summer 2012 Mission Trip.” Presently the group is looking into going into doing servant work in either McDowell County West Virginia or Rodgersville, Tennessee. Watch for more details coming soon!

Youth Ministry Team – January 15, 7:00 p.m. – The advisory & planning team for junior and senior high youth ministry will meet in the library. Interested adults & youth are welcome to attend.

Visioning Task Force – January 17, 7:00 p.m. – Working on the goal of stir our congregation to look at what God is calling us to be about in this post-building & post-mortgage. This task force is presently working on setting up small discussion & information gathering meetings to which every member will be invited. The goal of these gatherings is to get feedback from members as to where they see God leading us in ministry at this time. Watch for more details!

Worship & Music Ministry Team – January 18, 8:15 p.m. – This team will review Advent & Christmas worship and begin to plan for Lent, Holy Week, and Easter.

Caring & Sharing Ministry Team – January 23, 7:00 p.m. – This team is responsible for over two dozen ministries that deal with meeting the needs within our congregation and community.

Finance/Stewardship Ministry Team – January 24, 7:00 p.m. – Building the Annual Ministry Proposal (budget), regularly reviewing the congregation's financial status, encouraging members to give of their time, talents, and treasures, and providing for an annual audit are some of the responsibilities of this team.

Property Ministry Team – January 26, 7:00 p.m. – This team is responsible for the care and maintenance of our facilities, grounds, as well as rental property.

# Thank You!

To the Heyer Classroom

Thank you so very much for the wonderful fruit basket. It sure didn't sit on the counter for very long. It was delicious! God Bless all of you and have a joyous holiday.

Bruce, Sherry, Rhianna and Ahleah Berkebile

Thank you for the fruit. It was delicious.

Roy Benson

We enjoyed the fruit very much. May someone be as kind to you as you were to us.

Thank you so much.

Kay & Tim Klonicki

Thank you very much for the delicious fruit basket. It was greatly appreciated. Also thank you for your prayers and support.

Joan Sembower

With warmest thanks, grateful hearts, and deep appreciation for your thoughtfulness for the fruit basket that was delivered.

Robert and Margaret Freeman

Thank you for the delicious fruit tray. Thanks for remembering me. It meant a lot to me.

Nina Stevanus

Thank you very much for the wonderful fruit basket. Your thoughtfulness was greatly appreciated.

With thanks,  
The Wayne Cornell family

Thank you so much for thinking of me. I always enjoy your fruit basket.

Your friend,  
Vivian Dick

Thank you for sending the fruit at Thanksgiving. Thank you!

Agnes Bailey

Many thanks for the beautiful arrangement of fruit that I received recently. It was quite a surprise as well as delicious.

Again thanks,  
Hilda Von Moose

Many thanks for the generous basket of fruit for the Thanksgiving season. I really appreciate your thoughtfulness. Special thanks to Harold Pile for delivery.

Margaret Ware

Thank you for the plate of fruit. Your kindness and thoughtfulness is appreciated.

Thank you Ada Shockey for delivering the fruit and your visit.

Mildred Fluck

Thanks for the fruit basket. Mother and I really enjoyed it. We really appreciated your thoughtfulness.

Carol Lease

Thanks so much for the fruit basket. I really appreciate your thinking of me.

Richard Pyle

Thank you for the Care Package! I really appreciate it! It will come in handy during finals week!

Elizabeth Barron

To the Friedens Lutheran Church,

Thank you very much for the turkey, potatoes and gift card. You will never know what a blessing it was. It was a prayer answered that very morning we got the gift. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Kay and Tim Klonicki

# Thank You!

To the Lutheran Church of Friedens,

Dear Congregation,

I just wanted to take a moment to say Thank You for the wonderful care package you sent me. It was very helpful in getting me through long hours of studying. It is great knowing I have a church family thinking of me and praying for me back home.

Thanks again,  
Kaitlyn Berkebile

.....  
Thank you so much for the food at Thanksgiving and gift card. It was wonderful to receive. God bless you all. Thanks again.

Kim, Melonie and Noah Smale

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Dear Friedens Lutheran Church Congregation:

I received a contribution of \$500.00 provided by your church to the Somerset Community Clinic and I wanted to take a moment to thank you on behalf of myself, the clinic staff and all its patients. The donation is such an incredible blessing. We are glad that you and your congregation see the value that this clinic holds to our friends and neighbors in the community. With so many counting on the clinic for medical care, it is a blessing to know that we are able to garner support from organizations like yours; it helps us in our quest to provide healthcare access for our neighbors who cannot afford health insurance.

We have a 100% volunteer staff so every dollar donated goes directly to the cost of running the Clinic. The expenses for our first 24 months of operations approximated a little over \$50,000 and included purchased medications, medical-surgical supplies, office supplies and other Clinic related items.

With support from individuals and groups like yours we will continue to provide this much needed service to your community. Once again, thank you for being part of this important initiative and helping to ensure our ongoing viability.

Lois Lafferty  
President, Somerset Community Clinic Board of Directors

Thank you to all the thoughtful and caring people who help us get into the church each Sunday morning. We can't thank you enough.

Also, thanks to those preparing the nice fruit baskets. We appreciate your thoughtfulness very much.

Nick and Verna Barron

.....  
Happy Holidays to all my church family at Friedens!  
I hope everyone had a great Christmas season.

I want to thank all of you for your generosity and prayers as I continue with my chemo treatments. I am truly blessed by our Gracious God and so very thankful for all he has provided thru family and friends here at FLC. God bless you all and again thank you for your continuous prayers for me!

Kathy Brant

.....  
Rick and I want to thank everyone for their phone calls of concern and offers to help during our recent fire. A special Thank You to Pastor Ed for his continued follow-up and the monetary donation that helped in the time of so much confusion.

We really appreciate our Church family.

Thank you All,  
Rick Reed and Mary K. Foy

.....  
Our fourth and final bloodmobile for 2011 to honor Joe Zeigler was held on December 31 in Friendship Hall. It was fantastic turnout but because of the bloodmobile being understaffed and running out of supplies the blood bank was shut down at 12:30.

We did have 45 productive pints – 4 deferrals, 3 incomplete pints. If we would have been open the full time. I'm certain we would have collected 60 pints.

Thanks for all who participated and had such a long wait. Also, sorry to those faithful donors who were turned away!!!

Joe, Erica and the kids came to the event to show their appreciation.

Thanks be to God for such a successful event.

Bev Mostoller, Bloodmobile coordinator

# Thank You!

To all my Faithful Volunteers who make hospital visits to Somerset and Conemaugh Hospitals. I say a big, big THANK YOU!!! These people take time out of their busy schedules to pay a visit and cheer the ill in some small way. I have around 23 volunteers who have made around 100 individual visits during 2011.

God Bless All,  
Bev Mostoller

.....  
Thank you all so very much for all of your help and support. Thank you all for your gifts and prayers. We are so very blessed to have a church family as wonderful as all of you are. Thanks to all that came and helped with the blood drive. You are all so kind to us. Keep your prayers coming and God Bless each of you.

Joe and Erica Zeigler



A sign-up sheet is posted in the Gathering Place. Please sign up to provide desserts for the week of January 30 – February 3. On Fridays instead of a dozen of muffins or cupcakes they will accept a pumpkin pie.

## Time to step down

Americans enjoy an abundance of freedoms. From what career we'll pursue to what we'll eat for lunch, we're constantly making decisions about what we want out of life. So it's hard to find peace when our plans go awry and our circumstances seem out of control.

A wise person suggested, "For peace of mind, resign as general manager of the universe." What if we stepped down and let God be God? He created the universe, after all. Shouldn't we trust him to run it?



## November Treasurer's Report

November 1 beginning Cash	\$1,977.57
Benevolence fund receipts	2,223.25
Current fund receipts	<u>15,888.57</u>
Total available cash	20,089.39
Benevolence fund disbursements	(3,406.23)
Current fund disbursements	<u>(15,201.66)</u>
Nov. 30 checking account balance	1,481.50
November 1 Memorial Fund	
Beginning Balance	\$5,014.30
Disbursements	(767.95)
Deposits and interest	<u>3.21</u>
Memorial Fund ending balance	\$4,249.56
November 1 Community Ministry	\$6,637.91
Fund beginning balance	
Deposits and interest	6,527.25
Disbursements	<u>(6,527.25)</u>
November 30 ending balance	<u>\$6,637.91</u>

## December Treasurer's Report

December 1 beginning Cash	\$1,481.50
Benevolence fund receipts	3,209.25
Current fund receipts	<u>20,248.74</u>
Total available cash	24,939.49
Benevolence fund disbursements	(452.93)
Current fund disbursements	<u>(20,753.50)</u>
Dec. 31 checking account balance	3,733.06
December 1 Memorial Fund	
Beginning Balance	\$4,249.56
Deposits and interest	916.06
Disbursements	0.00
Memorial Fund ending balance	\$5,165.62
December 1 Community Ministry	\$6,645.68
Fund beginning balance	
Deposits and interest	7,612.02
Disbursements	<u>(7,604.25)</u>
December 31 ending balance	<u>\$6,653.45</u>

**A New Year's Resolution to Move Ahead  
by 1% in Your Giving!!!**

Over two hundred years ago Thomas Paine wrote the famous line, "These are the times that try men's souls." In many respects most every time overflows with trying challenges. Especially during these last few economically precarious years the times have been exceptionally trying for senior citizens, young families, and everyone else in between.

Here at Friedens we have financially weathered the Great Recession fairly well these past years. In fact giving thanks to God we should say that we have weathered the economically trying times exceptionally well given our dual financial commitments to regular ministry expenses and the CMC monthly mortgage. We have always kept current on all bills and ahead on our mortgage.

Looking back on 2011 now it is clear to see that during the latter half of the year expenses were starting to eat away at the modest surplus we were normally able to carry in the Current/Building Maintenance Funds. By the end of 2011 with all bills paid and keeping careful watch over expenditures we ended the year in the black but under what we had hoped we will receive.

As 2012 while the overall budget has slightly decreased with the anticipated pay off of the CMC mortgage later this year, the Current Fund budget has increased by about 4%. The increase is due primarily to such fixed costs as fuel oil and electricity. Meanwhile, salaries across the board amounted to only a 1.5% increase once again this year.

Please consider increasing YOUR offering this year by 1%. If a majority of folks did make this modest increase we would be well "out of the woods" financially and more securely on sound footing. We will still need to be careful with expenditures as we continue to pay off the app. \$60,000 left on the CMC mortgage. But, this increase would be a big boost in the Current Fund to meet ministry needs for 2012.

What would a 1% increase in your regular giving to the Current Fund look like? You figure it out from the figures below. Give it a try for a month and see how it goes. That small increase if practiced by all of us will provide the needed cash for continuing to grow in ministries!

**Try a 1% Increase for 2012**

<b>Present Weekly Giving</b>	<b>1% Increase</b>
\$10.00	\$1.00
Total Weekly Giving	\$11.00
\$50.00	\$5.00
Total Weekly Giving	\$55.00
\$75.00	\$7.50
Total Weekly Giving	\$82.50
\$100.00	\$10.00
Total Weekly Giving	\$110.00

**Money received from Thrivent Financial for  
Lutherans and how it was spent**

<u>Project</u>	
Servant Week supplies	134.62
Van for Servant Week	119.85
Nail clippers for LWR health kits	55.00
Bus to LWR	229.00
Snacks for LWR trip	73.00
Tip for driver for LWR trip	60.00
Heyer Classroom	\$400.00
Thanksgiving baskets & Trilogy House	
Samaritan's Purse "Operation Christmas Child"	\$237.67
Meal for quilters	30.00
Birthingright, Inc.	\$402.43
Salvation Army "winter clothing"	\$557.49
Salvation Army "Angel Gifts"	\$404.11
Blankets for Lutheran World Relief	\$250.00
Trip to Lutheran World Relief New Windsor, Maryland	\$250.00
Somerset Community Clinic	500.00
Postage for shoeboxes	350.00
Operation Christmas Child	
S.A.M. Van	500.00
Winter coats – Salvation Army through the Daily American	700.00
Camp Sequanota – Holiday Bazaar	20.00
Pizza for volunteers for toy distribution	84.00
Children's Aid Home – stockings filled	\$273.32
Allegheny Lutheran Services Fall Festival	\$400.00
	<b>\$6,030.49</b>



## A Summary of Council – November 1, 2011

### **AiM Pernelle's Report**

- Bible study at Sequanota was attended by members of FLC and it was a good study. Next offering of this study will be advertised.
- Last meeting at the synod with the candidates was attended by AiM Pernelle.
- First Fun Friday took place last week.

### **Pastor Ed's Report**

- Special concerns Mary Baker, Sadie Harmon, Carolyn Tipton, Glenn Custer.

### **Worship and Music Ministry Team**

- Thanksgiving service being held Wednesday night, reminder to council members of their duties for this service.
- Midweek worship services start in November for Advent. Soup and Sandwich dinners will be held prior to the service.

### **Youth Ministry Team**

#### Senior High Youth

- Scavenger Hunt was a success and there were enough drivers to accommodate all of the participants.
- Sunday School has been well attended so far.
- The Holocaust Museum trip is coming and there is only one seat left to take to Washington D.C. They have been studying this so it will bring things together for them.
- December 17-18 Beth Pile will coordinate a Live Nativity here at the church.
- Sixteen kids and three adults will be going to New Orleans for the Youth Gathering this next year. Fundraising has been going well.
- Fundraising activities continue – Christmas cards will be sold, examples will be shared with the congregation.
- Fundraising dinner, called Jambalaya and Jazz dinner is to be November 20.
- Basket auction is going on as well and these will be announced at the dinner on the 20.

#### Jr. High Youth

- Catechism continues for these youth.

- Andy Coughenour will be leading some activities. He is back in the area and has been asked to assist in working with the youth.

### Elementary

- Fun Fridays, the first of this school year was held and there were 13 children who attended.
- November 11 is the next Fun Friday scheduled.
- This Friday there is a Kids Night Out. Seventeen kids are signed up with Jacy Walker and Kelly Miller. Through their studies at St. Francis they participate in local activities.
- Jr./Sr. high event is in November.

### **Caring and Sharing Ministry Team**

- Trip to New Windsor was a success with a total of 41 attending.
- Lay ministers will be commissioned this Sunday at both services. They will then begin serving this ministry. Pam Ream will follow-up with Pastor Ed for the remainder of her training. She had requested to wait until January to begin this.
- We will be ringing the bell for Salvation Army on December 3.
- December 6 is the date that the Salvation Army gifts are to be delivered to the church. December 8 the Salvation Army will be distributing toys from within FLC.
- Boy Scouts are beginning a food drive and will have a box in the Gathering Place.

### **Property Ministry Team**

- Snow removal contract was renewed. The first snowfall may be a courtesy snow removal. March was not included in the contract however November was, so we will have the contract changed from November 15 to March 15.
- Stained glass window from the Reformed Church was examined by Dennis, George, Mark and Jerry who went to see the window and it is quite large and not in perfect shape. It is currently on E-bay and a phone call has already been received however no bids as of yet. Opening bid is starting at \$500.00.
- Recycling bins have been put into place. Mark Ware is going to add signage to the bins so that the community is aware of what is acceptable. Burgmeier will not be profiting from this endeavor however if there is aluminum they will turn that in for a profit.
- The cornerstone has been sent for the carving to be completed. It may be returned prior to

November 12. Mark Ware is obtaining the box for placement in the cornerstone. It will be made out of copper with a sealable lid. Pastor Ed would like the old and new to be shared with the kids on Sunday during the kids sermon.

- Electric rate was discussed and First Energy seems to be the best choice for choosing the electric rates.

**Finance and Stewardship Ministry Team**

- Budget was provided to the council with the proposed 2012 numbers included. The end number reflects a slightly lower dollar budget than 2011. Various line items were discussed by members of council. There were some suggestions on the descriptive words for the various columns on the budget. Beth Schrock will make those adjustments.

**Staff Support Ministry Team**

- Policies were completed and need to be signed for their completion.
- Salaries should be re-evaluated after completion of the paying off of the mortgage of the Community Ministry Fund.

**Connecting Faith & Life Ministry Team**

- Work has begun on the Christmas Music Festival which will be January 6.
- Coffeeshouses have been planned and scheduled as follows: January 27, February 24, March 23 and April 27.

**Old Business**

- Anniversary Task Force will meet in April.
- A Cat’s Meow of the church is completed and will be available for members to purchase.

Amy Polakoski attended to discuss a Mission Team Committee. This is to support members who would like to continue in the mission work we feel we are called to do. These missions will be in the country and perhaps out of the country. There are a lot of questions in regards to deciding the direction of this group, fundraising, Mission Statement, areas of focus, amount of trips, etc.

It was decided that there would be one mission trip per year and the Mission Statement has been developed but is not completed. Other churches have been able to provide members with their processes and ideas on how to move forward with this project. The committee has decided that the fist mission trip

should be a domestic trip and there will be a lot of planning and decisions to be made. The committee will be meeting in two weeks to continue making plans.

The Council members were in agreement that this is a mission we should continue to work toward.

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**Monthly Food Distribution – YOU may qualify!!**

Last fall through the work of the Somerset Ministerium plans were made for fresh food items to come out of Pittsburgh for distribution to those in need in our area. During December a half dozen volunteers from our congregation helped for the first time with this distribution. The service we provided was traffic control & parking. Well over 400 people came out to the Somerset Area Junior High School to receive these groceries. That day the following items were given out: chicken, potatoes, sweet potatoes, cabbage, carrots, onions, celery, and apples. All vegetables were fresh.

YOU may be eligible to receive these groceries at the next food distribution to be held on Thursday, January 26 starting at 5:00pm. Watch the paper for more details. The line started to form prior to 4:00pm.

The eligibility guidelines are simply based upon income and number in the household. They are:

Household Size	Annual Income
1	\$16,335
2	\$22,065
3	\$27,795
4	\$33,525
5	\$39,255

Additional eligibility can be provided for individuals and/or families facing unemployment and/or a crisis situation. Since eligibility is based on an honor system no paperwork to determine the above figures is required.

This is a great opportunity for area folks who meet these criteria to get needed fresh produce and meat. If you qualify plan to attend the next distribution. If you have questions please speak with Pastor Ed.

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**Found** a 14K bracelet at the church. Stop by the office to identify the bracelet to see if it is yours.

# February

- 4 6:00 p.m. Council "Christmas" Get Together at Chuckwagon
- 5 11:30 a.m. Winter Congregational Meeting
- 11:45 a.m. Catechism for Grades 7 & 8/No Youth Group
- 7 7:00 p.m. Council
- 10 5:15 p.m. Grades 7 & 8 leave for Pittsburgh
- 11 6:00 a.m. Grades 7 & 8 cook breakfast for Homeless Shelter men
- 12 TBA "Valentine's Dinner" by the Youth
- 17 1:30 p.m. Fun Fridays!
- 22 11:00 & 7:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday – LENT begins!
- 24 7:00 p.m. Coffeehouse
- 29 11:00 & 7:00 p.m. Midweek Lenten Worship
- 6:00 p.m. Junior High Youth provide Lenten meal

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**Valentine's Dinner at "Heyer's Place"**



On Sunday, February 12 YOU are invited to bring your "special" someone to a very special dinner for Valentine's Day. By candlelight at your personal table you will be served a delicious meal of homemade lasagna, salad, scrumptious desserts, etc. by the wait staff of our senior high youth. Watch for more details and buy your tickets in the Gathering Place starting soon.

Profit from this meal will assist the youth in going to the ELCA Youth Event in New Orleans in July 2012.



January 27, 2012  
 7:00 p.m.  
 Friendship Hall

Brad Rae and "Crafty"  
 Variety including Folk, Country, Rock

February 24  
 "Swing City"  
 Swing and Big Band music

March 16  
 John Larimer and friends  
 Bluegrass

April 27  
 Keystone State Quartet  
 Southern Gospel Quartet

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**Eyes on God**

The move to our new home was very stressful on our puppy. As we sold our furniture and boxed up our belongings, he became increasingly anxious. When the big day came and the truck was packed, we took one last walk through the empty house. Unable to comprehend what was happening, our anxious dog stayed right at our feet. He could make no sense of his circumstances but trusted us to take care of him. During that traumatic time, he never let us out of his sight.

That reminds me of King Jehoshaphat's prayer when a mighty enemy advanced against him and the situation was desperate. Jehoshaphat prayed, "We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you" (2 Chronicles 20:12, NRSV). God came through for his people that day, and he'll come through for us, too, when all seems lost. Just stick close and keep your eyes on him.

---Kari Myers

## Youth Ministry Happenings for January

ELCA Youth Gathering Meeting for Parents & Youth  
Sunday, January 8 at 11:30 a.m. in the library  
ALL parents & youth attending the New Orleans  
event need to attend.

### Youth Group Fundraiser

Sr. High Youth are selling Snyder Snacks Gift Boxes. Cost is \$15.00 a box. It is a fundraiser for the Youth Gathering to New Orleans. This would be a Great Addition to your Super Bowl party while helping out the youth.

See any Sr. High Youth to order. The deadline to order is January 15. Make checks payable to Friedens Lutheran Church.

The Sr. High Youth will be putting together the gift boxes on January 30 from 9:15 till 10:15 a.m. in the Youth Room. The deliveries will be between January 30 and February 4. See Tina Shaffer if you would like more details.

Catechism for Grades 7 & 8  
6:00 p.m. January 8 & 22

Youth Group for Grades 6-8  
7:00 p.m. January 8 & 22

On January 8 we will prepare health kits to take to the Homeless Men's Shelter in February. Also, Andy Coughenour will be present to play basketball with the group.

Mentoring Meeting for Mentors & Grade 9 Youth -  
January 22, 11:45 a.m.

### Senior High Trip to Washington, DC

January 27 & 28 - Twelve youth and three adults will travel to Washington, DC to stay overnight at Luther Place Memorial Church's youth hostel. They will get up early on Saturday morning and work at the DC Central Kitchen and learn about urban hunger. Following that servant work they will spend the afternoon at the National Holocaust Memorial. They have been studying the Holocaust in Church School with teacher Marcia Maust.

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**Save the Date!**

Sequanota Day Camp at Friedens Lutheran Church  
Monday – Friday, June 18-22  
Children who have completed kindergarten – grade 5  
Details soon to come!

## Catechetics Schedule

Grades 7 & 8

Sunday, January 8, 6:00 p.m. – Catechetics Workshop Event followed by Middle School Youth Group

Sunday, January 22, 6:00 p.m. – Catechetics Workshop Event followed by Middle School Youth Group

Sunday, February 5, 11:40 a.m. – Lunch and Catechetic Workshop Event (concludes at 1:30 p.m.) – No Middle School Youth Group

Friday, February 10 – Saturday, February 11 – Catechetic Servant Event – Overnight to Pittsburgh to cook/serve breakfast at Northside Ministries

Sunday, February 26, 6:00 p.m. – Catechetics Workshop Event followed by Middle School Youth Group

Wednesday, February 29, 5:00 p.m. – Mid-week Lenten meal (prepare, serve, clean up)

Grade 9

On Sunday, January 22, from 11:45 – 1:00 p.m. the 9<sup>th</sup> grade youth and their mentors will meet with Pastor Ed as he leads the theme on Support/Stewardship. Youth and mentors will receive their February and March theme materials at this meeting.

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**Middle School Youth Group**

Grades 6-8

Sunday, January 8 – 7:00 – 8:15 p.m. – Make toiletry gift bags to take to Northside Ministries, group activities and closing devotions

Sunday, January 22 – 7:00 – 8:15 p.m. – Make Valentine treats/gifts for Shaffer's Assisted Living, group activities and closing devotions

Sunday, February 5 – No Middle School Youth Group

Sunday, February 26 – 7:00 – 8:15 p.m. – Activities to be announced.

**JOIN US AFTER SCHOOL**

Our next Fun Fridays! is January 13 with a snowman theme for our activities, games, and snacks. Bus passes need to be taken to school on Monday, January 9. Registration forms for all children (whether they ride the bus or come by car) and the \$5 donation per child must be in to the parish office by noon on Wednesday, January 11. Forms are available on the table in the Gathering Place. Please remind your friends of Fun Fridays! because it comes up quickly after Christmas and school vacation. If anyone needs a form mailed to him/her, please let AiM Pernelle know. The next Fun Fridays! will be on February 17.

**Holy Communion Classes**

On Sundays, January 8, 15, 22 and 29, Pastor Ed will be leading a class on Holy Communion with the 5<sup>th</sup> graders in Room 5 during the Sunday School hour. At the same time, AiM Pernelle will be leading a Holy Communion class for those in grades 1 and 2 as well as those in grades 3 and 4 who are not communing yet. This group will meet in Rooms 1 and 2. Those who are not communing yet will receive their first Holy Communion on Sunday, February 5. The younger children will receive a certificate and a book as a gift during the worship services on February 5 and the 5<sup>th</sup> graders will receive a Bible that morning which they will use during their years in catechism.

Children in kindergarten, grades 3 and 4 who are not involved in these Holy Communion classes will meet with Barb Halverson those Sundays. Their topic is on the Bible and they will meet in Rooms 6 and 7.

Rotation Sunday School classes will begin again on Sunday, February 5.

**Ultimate comfort**

“For each of us, the time is surely coming when we shall have nothing but God. Health and wealth and friends and hiding places will all be swept away.... To the man of pseudo faith, that is a terrifying thought, but to real faith, it is one of the most comforting thoughts the heart can entertain.”

--A. W. Tozer

I am the new year. I am an unspoiled page in your book of time.

I am your next chance at the art of living. I am your opportunity to practice what you have learned about life during the last 12 months.

All you sought and didn't find is hidden in me, waiting for you to search it but with more determination. All the good you tried for and didn't achieve is mine to grant when you have fewer conflicting desires.

All you dreamed but didn't dare to do, all you hoped but did not will, all the faith you claimed but did not have—these slumber lightly, waiting to be awakened by the touch of a strong purpose.

I am your opportunity to renew your allegiance to him who said, “See, I am making all things new” (Revelation 21:5, NRSV).

**Follow God's lead**

Have you ever watched a well-trained dog walk with its master? On or off a leash, the dog will slow or quicken its pace, turn left or right, or immediately stop at the soft command of his master's voice.

Such isn't the case with my pooch. Either he's straining ahead or lagging behind, darting after a bird or stubbornly lingering over an interesting scent. He isn't content to follow my lead.

Sometimes that latter scene resembles my own walk with God. At times, I rush ahead or lag behind, veer to the right or stumble to the left, oblivious of my Master's pace and direction. How much better to walk closely with God and let him lead!

“O Lord, God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and steadfast love for your servants who walk before you with all their heart” (1 Kings 8:23, NRSV).

“Our sanctification does not depend as much on changing our activities as it does on doing them for God rather than for ourselves.”

--Brother Lawrence

**Sunday School Adult Study**  
Beginning January 8

You're invited to come out this January for a journey of discovery surrounding the topic of "Jesus Man, Messiah, or More." We will be meeting in the library with interesting conversation and libations.

This is the excerpt from the back of the study guide, "Jesus – Man, Messiah, or More":

Who exactly is this man they call Jesus? And how can we find out for sure if what the Bible says about him is true – that He is more than a man; that He is the Messiah?

These are important questions to ask in a world that does not like to accept truth at face value – a world that says one person's truth is just as good as someone else's.

A group of scholars has set out to assist us as we answer these and other questions about Jesus – striving to help us grasp the truth about Him.

Mart De Haan, host of the television program "Day of Discovery," journeyed to Israel to team up with the scholars of The Institute of Biblical Research as they examined 10 years' worth of research and thinking on this issue. The result was a series of programs called "Jesus: Man, Messiah, or More?"

In this DayLight Bible Studies series, you can observe Mart and the IBR Jesus Study Group as they visit key biblical sites and then examine the historical evidence that verifies Jesus' story. As you meet together with interested friends in this Sunday school class, you'll have a chance to view the videos and discuss the findings presented. You'll find your faith solidified and you'll discover the answer to the question: "Jesus: Man, Messiah, or More?"

We look forward to meeting with you and chasing away those winter blues as we embark on this exciting journey.

Janis Ware

As God addressed Jesus at his baptism, he also calls u his beloved. What a blessing to live in God's love!

**Adult Sunday School Class**  
January

Mary and Martha: Balancing Life's Priorities

This is a five-part series by Alice Matthews where we will use our life experiences to bring a fresh perspective to the Word of God. We are very busy people. Multi-tasking is the norm. So much the norm that we lose sight of priorities and many times end up simply lost. We will look at Martha a very busy and overworked woman of the New Testament and Mary, her sister, who loves to learn at the feet of our Lord Jesus. We will use Ms. Matthews' insights and add our own to help class members see significance wherever they may be in life (Sessions 1 and 2) and to nourish hope for those who find themselves in a time of being lost (Sessions 3, 4, 5).

**Divine forgetfulness**

For humans, forgetfulness can be frustrating and worrisome. Yet it can be a blessing to be able to forget certain things.

Author Gerhard E. frost noted that "forgiveness is a beautiful form of forgetfulness" – a heaven-sent absent-mindedness.

For what is failure to forgive but the refusal to release a memory of someone's hurtful actions? Only by releasing old grudges and choosing to forget past wrongs can we find peace. For help, we can look to God as the ultimate example of "forgetting" sins.

**Sink or swim?**



People's stories about learning to swim often sound like this: "My dad tossed me into the water. I didn't have a choice—I flailed around until I found myself swimming!"

But an elderly Christian tells a variation of this story: "Wanting to teach me to swim, my father threw me off the dock into the lake. I sank." But then he goes on: "So my father jumped in with me."

The storyteller's wisdom shines in his application: "God doesn't toss us into life and leave us alone to sink or swim. By sending Jesus, God jumped right in with us to save us from death, hold us protectively and help us navigate life."

## **Developing a Closer Walk with God in 2012**

The Lord invites us to know Him better. What a privilege! If the joy of heaven is in knowing the Lord's presence without any sin to hinder us, surely seeking His presence now must be the greatest possible pursuit.

Do you feel your need to pray? A person who has no need to pray cannot be living by faith. Prayerlessness says, "I am sufficient in myself for everything required of me." But is that so? And do you not grieve God by your persistent self-sufficiency? The Bible says, "Without faith it is impossible to please Him." (Heb. 11:6)

The following suggestions are designed to help you spend an extended time in prayer and meditation with God. You may spend this hour alone or with others. The order is not essential, but does provide a helpful way to progress. This tool may be used daily or for special times of retreat with God. Some may wish to follow this hour with more intense Bible reading.

It is sometimes good to kneel or to lie down before the Lord. "Come let us bow down. Let us kneel before the Lord. "Come let us bow down. Let us kneel before the Lord our God, our Maker." (Ps. 95:6) Walking while praying can also be helpful, or sitting in a comfortable chair so that all the focus can be on God. Be sure and find a quiet place.

### **1. Come in Christ's Name**

The audience we have with the Father is entirely based upon the merits of Christ. In other words, it is solely because Christ lived perfectly, died satisfactorily, and rose again victoriously for us that we have the privilege of addressing the Father. Because God accepts Christ, He can accept us in Him." ...He made us accepted in the Beloved." (Eph. 1:6b)

Don't just say the words, but actually trust in Christ as your mediator. Express in some detail your dependence on Christ's worthiness and on His substitutionary work on your behalf.

"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ....For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father." (Eph. 2:13, 18)

## **2. Delight in Him**

Express your wonder and delight in God. Praise Him for His character and His power. Do not thank him at this time for His activity in your life, but focus on the person of God and His attributes: His love, Patience, Immensity, Strength, Holiness, Grace, glory, Knowledge, Wisdom, Goodness, etc.

"Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart." (Ps. 37:4)

### **3. Express Your Longings to Him**

Tell God what you desire above all other things. Express your deepest longings for fellowship with Him and for holiness of life, or whatever is in your heart. This is not a time to pray about everything you need, but to make known your deepest, long-term desires. You may wish to personalize Ephesians 1:15-23 as a guide.

"As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God." (Ps. 42:1-2a)

### **4. Read a Psalm**

You may wish to use one of the "Psalms for the day," according to the day of the month. Add 30 to the day of the month to arrive at 5 Psalms for the day (i.e. on the 15<sup>th</sup>, the Psalms would be 15, 45, 75, 105, and 135). It may be helpful to read the Psalm you choose out loud.

### **5. Sing to Him**

Use a hymnbook, recall a chorus or hymn from memory, or make up your own song from the Scriptures.

"Make a joyful shout to the Lord, all you lands! Serve the Lord with gladness; come before His presence with singing." (Ps. 100:1-2)

## 6. Intercede for Others

Remember...

Those who have asked you to pray for them  
The leaders of your church  
The missionaries you know  
The leaders of our country  
Those who are unsaved  
Your family members  
Your friends  
Those in trouble or grieving, etc.

“Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you...” (I Sam. 12:23)

## 7. Place Your Day Before Him

If you are praying in the morning, you may wish to place every aspect of the day before the Lord, one item at a time. “Lord, please give me patience with my daughter when she comes to breakfast, help me show her love and kindness.” “Lord, when I try to make that sale at 2:00 this afternoon, help me to speak as a Christian would speak, and give me wisdom.” By going chronologically through every possible event of the day you are learning trust Him in the details of life.

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.” (Pr. 3:5-6)

## 8. Petition Him for Other Special Needs

There are matters needing attention in your own life and in the lives of others, the church or your group. Tell these to God and ask for His guidance, deliverance, endurance, wisdom, or whatever it is that you need. It is at this time that you will want to deal with any repentance God is requiring. Expect him to give you grace to overcome. “Be zealous therefore, and repent.” (Rev. 3:19b) Ask with faith and genuine humility.

“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” (Heb. 4:16)

“...Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.” (Jn. 16:24b)

## 9. Meditate on His Word

To meditate means to ponder, reflect, contemplate, or think over slowly, the Words of God. If this is your only Bible reading time, continue reading the passage that is next for you in your plan. Read at least a chapter of Scripture. Look for the key verses and meditate on them, asking God to show you what they mean. Mark them in your Bible and ask God to help you remember what He is showing. Pray that He will give you a way to humbly share these truths with others. Read to obey.

If you are in a group, allow a period of quiet so that each person may read the Word. The leader may wish to suggest the passage for use with the group. If there is time, insights may be shared with each other.

“Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also does not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.” (Ps. 1:1-3)

## 10. Offer Thanks to Him

Even if there have been difficulties in your life, the Lord has been good to you. Express to God your appreciation for specific acts of kindness He has done in the light of what you truly deserve.

“Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name.” (Heb. 13:15)

### Beloved, rest

Busy. We’re all so very busy, and we consider that a virtue. We measure our days by how much we accomplish.

Long ago, the psalmist was aware of mankind’s workaholic tendencies. “It is in vain,” he wrote, “that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil; for he gives sleep to his beloved” (Psalm 127:2, NRSV).

Balance, beloved. God isn’t a slave driver. Work and rest in good measure, for God is pleased to give you both.

## **Information from our missionary in east Africa – Pastor Andrew Hinderlie**

2011 September – October Newsletter

As I write this I am sitting at the Arusha Cultural Center where for the price of a cup of tea or coffee you can get access to their free wifi internet unless, of course, it happens to be a day today or several days when the network is down, or if it's at our house when the mobile modem called "the Stick" doesn't connect or the electricity is out for half a day. How dependent we have become upon the internet as well as so many other things of life and yet how much of the world doesn't even know what Wireless internet is because a basic human need is not always available: education. In August and September here in East Africa schools started up again and students donned their blue and whites or pink and whites or other school colors, gathered their notebooks and pencils and other school required paraphernalia and if lucky and with resources were picked up by a school bus or driven by their parents to school. The vast majority, however, will walk or hitch a ride to their school, which may be miles from their home. The costs of education are not always visible yet they are there from tuition fees to the books to "Special fees". These costs are often above the ability of the average parent to cover. In some cases individual students costs may be covered by a local or international patron but in many the students and families may have to look to other means and one way is through their churches.

In Ethiopia many are helped by the Mekana Yesu Church or EECMY through programs such as the Orphas Program in Nekempte that gives children who may have one parent or guardian but who are otherwise without support the opportunity for education and even housing. One family that received such aid had one child who was the recipient but even so the whole family benefited to some extent and without it the mother said they would not be able to even live and only hoped that her other children would also get the opportunity. And in talking with many of the children I learned that despite their difficult situations, they all had dreams of something more whether it was becoming a doctor, truck driver or teacher not one saw their future as empty.

The Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church provides tuition assistance based on need to its members via

small scholarships that enables children to attend junior high school and even high school in some cases where otherwise there would be no possibility. One Masai father told me that during the dry season he can only get about \$5 – 10 for a cow which isn't enough to pay school fees so that without the assistance his child could not have gone to school. The young man is studying to be a veterinarian and plans to come back to his home area to work, his studies have already changed his father's ideas on how to raise cattle and even about the benefits of boiling the milk to stop the spread of TB. Another recipient said she would not have been able to consider going to be a doctor if the initial help had not been there. And this isn't a free ride, if there is a parent then they must contribute a percentage of the fees as well. Another said he would wish that he could hug the donors for the help that he received for his children's assistance. All I met were grateful for as many said, "now my child has a future."

In Rwanda I visited a school being built that even now is being used to teach young people, supported by the Lutheran Church of Rwanda, it will have dormitories in order to provide a place for children to board and the hope will be that the school will be able to support itself. Innovative in its own right, they use solar power as part of their way to make a green and low cost school. The director of the school is Robin Strickler, and ELCA Missionary.

What do all these church programs have in common? One name: The Evangelical Lutheran Church in American. Thank you for your continued support of us and our work and the ELCA. Keeping you in our thoughts and prayers and looking forward to being able to see many of you in the summer of 2012, blessings and peace.

The Hinderlies