

Grace Note, December, 2009

Pastor's Letter

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

[Romans 15:13](#)

"Oh the places you'll go!"

Dr. Seuss.

As we move through Advent and Christmas, it's sobering to realize that 2010 is almost upon us. I don't know about you, but I'm looking forward to it. 2009 was a hard year in many ways. Our national and local economic troubles have hit everyone hard. There has been an air of uncertainty across the country as jobs disappear, and once thriving businesses struggle to survive. Churches, including our own, have felt the pinch... and it hurts. Coming off a year like that can be disheartening. It's tempting to give in to fear and despair. It's easy to focus on the darker side of things.

But I believe this cloud has a silver lining.

Over and over again I see that when things are going very well, people get comfortable and a bit lazy. When life is "going your way," it's easy to "go your own way" when it comes to God. When you have all you need, you begin to forget how much you need the Lord. But when times are tough we see again our need for a Savior. When we can't go on by ourselves anymore, we turn to the one who can keep us going.

A person recently asked me why God seemingly gives good faithful people so many hardships to bear in life. My response is that those hardships are part of the reason they are good, faithful people. When life is a struggle, we have to turn to God to give us strength.

I believe this year was a wakeup call for the people of Messiah. I know that God can use the difficult situation we find ourselves in to spur us to greater faith and more decisive action. The time is right for a revival of the Spirit. We can't "coast" anymore. We need to raise our heads and look for the Spirit at work.

I have great faith in the people of this congregation to do what needs to be done. But I have greater faith in our God who promises that when we look to the Lord for help, we will be given what we need. When I look to the year ahead, I am filled with hope. When I look at the possibilities the future holds I am filled with anticipation. God is alive and active; I believe Messiah is ready to take the next step.

As Dr. Seuss once wrote:

So... be your name Buxbaum or Bixby or Bray or Mordecai Ali Van Allen O'Shea, you're off to Great Places! Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting. So... get on your way!

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Bill Milner
- 5 Nancy Reichenbach
- 6 Laverne Carver
Mike Perry
Kimberly McCord
- 8 Jerry Wantz.
- 9 Lindsey Kovach
Susan Rozewski
- 11 Robert Argo
Nicholas Bradach
Larry Rieck, Jr.
- 12 Jessica Milner
- 15 Carol Lindeman
- 17 Jay Imel
Jennifer McTernan
Ethel Vincent
- 19 Chris Nuss
- 22 Carol Pearson
Carol Soltesz
- 25 JESUS
- 26 Tina Cannata
- 27 Kelly Broerman
- 29 Kirk Maharg
Tyler Studly
- 30 Jack Makee
Christine Treu
- 31 John Swartz



ORDER POINSETTIAS.....Our sanctuary will be filled with poinsettias and Christmas greens during the Advent and Christmas seasons. If you would like to give a poinsettia(s) in honor of or in memory of someone, please list the name(s) on the special "Flower Offering" envelopes which you will find in the pew racks. **The deadline for ordering is December 10th.** The cost of each plant is \$6.00, and they may be taken home after the 11:00 p.m. service on Christmas Eve. If you are unable to worship with us but would like to donate a poinsettia, please call the church office (440



HANGING OF THE GREENS and decorating of the sanctuary for Christmas will take place on Saturday, December 12th at 9:30 a.m. Help is needed, so please come and give us much time as you are able.



ALL OF YOUR FINANCIAL GIFTS for the year 2009 must be in by December 31st according to IRS regulations. We urge all members to complete their contributions for the year so we can end with a balanced budget.

ALL GIFTS PLACED IN THE "CHRISTMAS" OFFERING ENVELOPES will be given to Lutheran Children's Aid and Family Services. Use the regular December offering envelopes for pledge gifts.

FAITH CIRCLE ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PIZZA PARTY.....Thursday, December 10th at 12:00 noon (note meeting is one week early). Pizza, salad, and dessert will be provided.

TOYS FOR NEW COVENANT are being collected through December 7th. Bring new or gently used toys.



THE 2010 FLOWER CHART has been posted on the bulletin board in the hallway. When you sign up please note your telephone number so that Dorothy Schneider, our Flower Chairman, can contact you for your bulletin message and to see if you want a plant (\$15) or cut flowers (\$25). This is an opportunity to recognize an anniversary, birthday, celebrate a special event, or remember someone who has died. See or call Dorothy Schneider (216 382-8657) if you have questions.



**Remember
in
Prayer**

PLEASE PRAY for Phyllis and Lawson Anderson, Lisa Perry, Carol and Nils Pearson, Barbara Budzinski, Adam, Alma and Fred Fanto, Jack Ferree, Murawski Family, Jeremy, Margurite Gardner, Gladys Elliott, Ann Marie Grossman, Robert Kalvesmaki, Linn Chan, J. D. Sidley, Taylor Nuss, Kayla Braidic, John Rusnak, Eunice Hassink, Leslie Needleman.

OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY goes to Bette, Karyn, and Ken Schmidt and their family and many friends on the the passing of Karl Schmidt, a beloved member of Messiah Lutheran Church for 48 years. Pastor Fox presided at his funeral on Monday, November 16th.

WE ALSO EXPRESS OUR SYMPATHY to the family and friends of Darla Beckman. She and her husband, Carl and sister-in-law, Marilyn Zeitz, joined Messiah in 1983. Pastor Fox conducted her service on October 25th at Gattozzi & Son Funeral Home in Chesterland.



ANNUAL CONGREGATION MEETING.....At the meeting on November 22, the 2010 budget was approved and the following persons were elected: Vice President/President Elect (2 year) – Karen Dlugosz; Treasurer (1 year) – Chris Butler; Secretary (1 year) – Jill Levine; Council (3 years) – Laurene Pride, Stephen Trier; Audit Committee (3 years) – Christine Maharg; Audit Committee (1 year) – Mel Maharg; Nominating Committee – Jayne Imel, Kelly Lucas, Wanda Hansler.

THE MEN'S LUNCHEON IN DECEMBER will be held on December 18th at Milano's Restaurant, located at Cuyahoga County Airport on Richmond Road.

FROM THE LIBRARY

The Literary Ladies of Messiah will hold their next meeting on Tuesday, December 8th

at 2:00 pm in the conference room. We will view *Inherit the Wind* – the original 1960 version with Frederick March and Spencer Tracy. Come join us. Our book for January will be *The Chosen* by Chaim Potok., written in 1967. At that time, the Christian Science Monitor wrote: "It is a simple, almost meager story about Jewish people who are far from typical – yet the warmth and pathos of the dealings between fathers and sons, the understated odyssey from boyhood to manhood, give the book a range that makes it worth anybody's reading."

**CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICES
AT MESSIAH**

5:00 pm Family Candlelight Communion Service

11:00 pm Traditional Candlelight Communion Service

ALL CREATION SINGS – from the Messiah Choir

This year's Christmas Cantata by the choir was "discovered" last summer. It was compiled by Herman Treu, our former choir director of 40 years, Pastor Robert Cline, former Pastor of Messiah, and Bob Hodgkinson, former choir director at Messiah, in 1992. What a marvelous tribute to these three men and their love for Messiah and music! So please join us on December 13, 2009 at the 11 o'clock service as we celebrate the Season with familiar songs of Christmas.

CHURCH WOMEN UNITED invites the women of Messiah to the Annual Christmas Tea on Friday, December 11th at 12:00 noon at the Church of the Saviour, 2537 Lee Road, Cleveland Heights. Our donations for Transitional Housing and Domestic Violence will be presented. Bette Schmidt, C.W.U. Rep.

WELLNESS NOTE

EARLY LIFE FACTORS AND RISK OF BREAST CANCER

Epidemiologic investigations conducted by our group and others have suggested that during childhood and early adult life breast tissue is particularly sensitive to factors that influence the likelihood of developing cancer many years later. For example, if the breast is exposed to multiple x-rays or other types of radiation during this early period, the risk of breast cancer rises steadily with higher doses, but after age 40 radiation has little effect. Also, we have seen the being overweight before age 20 is paradoxically associated with a reduced risk of breast cancer for the rest of a woman's life, although subsequent weight gain and becoming overweight after menopause increases risk of breast cancer in these later years.

These findings led us to develop sets of questions focusing on diet and physical activity during the high school years. We included these in our 1997/1998 NHS questionnaires. In addition, to assess the validity of the recalled dietary data, we invited a sample of mothers of NHS II participants to also complete a questionnaire about the high school diets of their NHS 11 daughters. Strong correlation between the mother-daughter reports supported the validity of our dietary data. We have now begun to examine the relation of high school diet and activity patterns to subsequent risk of breast cancer. We have seen that higher intake of red meat during the high school years is related to a greater risk of premenopausal breast cancer. Also, higher levels of physical activity during high school were associated with lower risk of breast cancer before menopause. This is particularly important, as many schools do not include regular physical activity in the curriculum and many girls are now quite inactive during these years. During the continuation of the NHS II we plan to examine the relationships of high school diet and physical activity in greater detail as our findings to date support this as a particularly critical period of life for the prevention of breast cancer.

Source: NHS News, Nurses Health Study Newsletter, Volume 216, 2009

EXCERPTS FROM MINUTES OF CHURCH COUNCIL NOVEMBER 17, 2009

Elise Hassink presented the council with a proposal to use the funds from the Mariana Treu memorial to purchase dedication plaques for the benches in the courtyard. Motion by Carrie Skaggs to approve the use of these funds to purchase the plaques. Seconded by Sue Joliat. Passed unanimously.

Elise also presented a letter and schedule from the Capital Improvement Campaign Committee. Carrie Skaggs made the motion to approve the schedule as presented by the committee. Seconded by Sue Joliat and passed unanimously.

Pastor's report: in October, 12 hospital visits, 4 office visits, 11 other than office visits. Beckman funeral, Trunk or Treat, new members dinner and tour of Lakeside Homeless Shelter.

Treasurer's report: see attached. Deficit growing.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Property: Minor Work Day was held. Cleaned the fellowship room. Pipe fixed in ladies bathroom. Electrician will be called for parking lot light.

Christian Ed: Sunday School is going well. Kids will do the service on Nov 22. Dec 20 is Christmas Pageant. Kids helping Kids will help 2 local families this year.

Youth: 12 kids, 3 adults went to the Historical Society for an exhibit on Racism/ Standing Up for What's Right. Will meet next Sunday.

Social Ministry: 40 regular Angel food orders. Collecting toys, mittens and hats. Will start Souper Bowl collections in January.

Stewardship: 2010 commitment pledges on 11/15 - \$ 94,608

2009 commitment pledges

\$ 97,091

Fellowship: Journey to Bethlehem will be presented every other year. Planning a winter event.

Finance: Will meet soon to discuss investments.

OLD BUSINESS

We will put something on the web page concerning the rental of space left open by the co-op. Karen Dlugosz will investigate the price of an ad in the Sun Messenger. Jill Levine will make a sign for the front.

NEW BUSINESS

The contract for the gas supplier is for 6 months. Terry Trentinis renegotiated the current contract, saving the Church approximately \$1,600 over the next six months. Terry asked that we make sure and re-check the rates in 6 months for the best pricing.

December Meeting will be December 15, 2009. We will have a pot luck supper at 6:00PM, spouses and new council members/spouses are invited. Meeting will follow at 7:00PM.

