

St. Paul's Lutheran Church January, 2010 'Newsletter'

HOW WILL GOD ANSWER YOUR CALL?

I'm not sure that I really like phone answering machines, but I have learned to live with them as part of our world today. I wondered the other day, "What if God had an answering machine?"

Just imagine that when you prayed, you heard the familiar excuse: "God is very busy right now. Your prayers will be addressed in the order in which they were received. Please stay on the line."

Imagine praying and hearing something like this: "Thank you for coming to God in prayer. Please select one of the following options":

- * Press 1 to make a confession.
- * Press 2 to complain.
- * Press 3 to make a request.
- * Press 4 for thanksgiving.
- * Press 5 for all other areas!

And then, after you made your selection, imagine hearing: "We're sorry. Because of the heavier than usual number of people praying to God at this time, please make your call at a later time. God does appreciate your contact!"

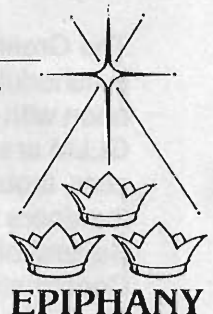
Can you imagine these kinds of responses as you come to God in prayer:

- * Our records show that you have already contacted God today; please wait and contact God again tomorrow.
- * To find out how many hairs are on your head, press 7
- * To know what your pastor is doing right now, press 8.
- * To find out if your relative is here, press 9
- * To learn answers to nagging questions, press 10.

I don't know how you feel about it, but I'm very glad that God doesn't resort to a phone answering type of relationship with us. He knows each one of us personally. He delights when we come to Him in prayer. God is never too busy or preoccupied. His line is never busy and you need to ring only once and he hears you.

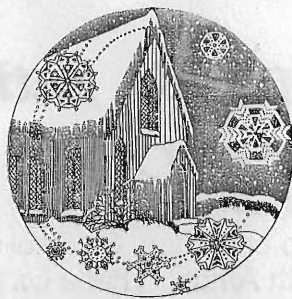
Are you listening for his call or will your answering machine talk to Him? If you listen carefully, you will hear God saying to you, "I just called to say, "I love you. I want you to know how very much I care."

January 6th is Epiphany Day. The color for Epiphany is white. It signifies light and brightness. Epiphany is usually associated with the coming of the Wise Men. Since the Wise Men were not Jews, the importance of the message of Epiphany deals with the sending Christ to the Gentiles. Therefore, the season has become a time for emphasis on the missionary task of the church or the idea of the spreading of the Gospel. Although the Bible does not tell us how many Wise Men there were, the legend fixes the number at three. Three crowns are a symbol we are familiar with. Also familiar is the Star of the East and the three gifts.



December Worship Attendance

Dec. 6	66
13	71
20	43
27	35



VOLUNTEER NEWS

Time again to thank the **special people** who gave their time and wheels to deliver Meals on Wheels in July and December. Thanks to Marvel Fredin for getting drivers for December. The volunteers are:

Marvel Fredin and Betty Setterman

Ellsworth and Elaine Thies

Rueben and Bonnie Meyer

Carol Trout and Elva Senske

Willard and Mary Zarnott

Mary Zarnott, Chairperson

A Prayer for the New Year

*God bless your year, God bless your life,
God grant you quiet peace!
God make His face to shine on you,
And all your joys increase!
God prosper you in all you do,
God keep you in His care.
God bless you, guard you, guide you, too,
Every day and everywhere!*

The annual meeting will be held January 31 following the worship service. A brunch catered by Curt and Tracy Hahn will be served before the meeting. The nominating committee is busying asking members to serve as delegates or on the Council. Contact Delroy Bierstedt or Cyril Brinkman, if interested.

The Green Lake Lutheran Ministries' annual meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 26th starting at noon with a meal. The programs and facilities at GLLM are part of St. Paul's extended ministry. Each year, thousands of campers and guests go through the doors to be inspired by the Gospel of Jesus. Several of our Confirmation Students will be going to Confirmation Camp this summer. St. Paul's dues for GLLM for 2009 were \$328.60.

The Spuds and Splits Fundraiser that was held on October 4 was a success. Without your help it couldn't be done. Our thanks to everyone who volunteered and who supported the dinner. Income and expenses were shared by 3 groups. 1/2 - SS...1/4- St. Paul's Youth...1/4- Trinity's Youth
Sunday School and Youth Organizations

Income:	\$257.50	St. Paul's Sun. School
	128.75	St. Paul's Youth Group
	128.75	Trinity's Youth Group
	\$515.00	

Expenses:	\$112.95	St. Paul's Sun. School
	56.47	St. Paul's Youth Group
	56.48	Trinity's Youth Group
	\$257.50	

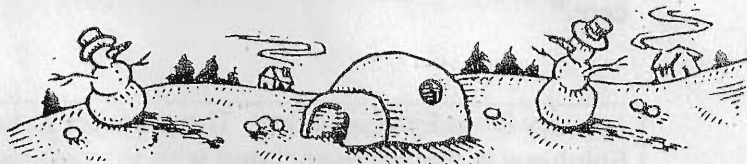
We thank the family of Elmer Franke for the \$512.00 family choice memorial which they designated for the Kitchen Remodeling Fund.

We thank the Church Women for giving \$500.00 to The Kitchen Remodeling Fund. This was from Thrivent's supplement funds which we received from the Salad Luncheon. The Church Women also gave \$1,100. to the Fuel Fund.

Thanks to the Council members and others who donated the peanuts, candy and fruit to the Children's Christmas bags. Nice treat.

Website: St. Paul's and Trinity's webpage is up and running. Thanks to the creativity of Dan G. Debock...we are now online. Log on to:

WWW.STPAULSGAYLORD.LUTHERANWEB.NET
WWW.TRINITYGAYLORD.LUTHERANWEB.NET



NEW YEAR PROMISE: To forget the mistakes of the past and to press on to the greater achievements of the future with a smile in your heart and on your face.

South Africa Partnership Trip

On January 11 six persons from our two churches, St. Paul's and Trinity, will embark on a pioneering venture to South Africa. These six (Jerry Franke, David Kahle, Mark and Karen Brandt, Margie and I) will join a group of thirty persons from churches in the Southwestern Minnesota Synod who will be visiting our brothers and sisters in Christ in the Southeastern part of South Africa.

Some have asked: Why go to South Africa? What is the purpose of this trip? What's in it for us in our local churches? Each of these questions deserves a thoughtful and compelling answer. First, we are part of God's church that stretches throughout the world. We were called by Jesus to go into all the world. In Christ there is no East or West. Second, churches in a particular part of South Africa called the Vryheid Circuit, have been designated as our official partners, as part of our ELCA global mission work. In support of our quest to get to know our Lutheran partners in Christ, two representatives from the Vryheid Circuit, Pastor Kumahlo and Moses Malango, visited churches in our Minnesota Valley Conference last June. Now, it is our turn to go there, to meet hundreds of fellow Lutheran Christians in their territory. Third, this partnership is designed for us to find important ways to serve each other. On this trip we will talk with pastors and lay persons about how the people back here in Minnesota can be helpful to them in relation to economic, social, educational, and religious needs. But we also know that they have much to offer to us. The Lutheran Church is growing rapidly in Southern Africa. Why? What are they doing that brings the love of Christ to more and more people? And South Africa offers a remarkable lesson in how people have sought to overcome years of hatred and suspicion under apartheid through forgiveness and love, rather than retribution.

Finally, we will all gain by becoming active in this partnership. When we return from South Africa, your representatives will be able to make suggestions as to how we can all play a role in giving help and support. We will all gain by reaching out to help particular people in a particular part of the world. And our personal lives are always enriched when we share the love of Christ.

There is one important role you can all play right now: Pray for us while we are on this journey. And pray for our South African partners and for our church members here in Southern Minnesota that we may all find new strengths, helpful knowledge, and new joys through this growing partnership.

St. Paul's Lutheran Church

"Proclaiming Christ, Uplifting People at the Crossroads"

Members from St. Paul's and Trinity Lutheran, traveling to the Vryheid Circuit of the Southeastern Diocese of the Lutheran Church of South Africa.



**Front Left: Pastor Bill Nelsen, Margie Nelsen, David Kahle
Back Left: Jerry Franke, Mark Brandt, Karen Brandt**

Thirty members of the Southwest Minnesota Synod will be traveling to South Africa leaving Monday, January 11th and arriving in South Africa late Tuesday evening, January 12th. They will leave to return home on Monday, January 25th and should arrive home on Tuesday evening, January 26th. As they make this journey, please keep them all in your prayers.

Only 84 days until St. Paul's Uplifting Celebration, March 28, 2010. Please contact a committee member (Kathy Bierstedt, Yvonne Franke, Curt Hahn Family, Rodney Lind, Michael Sprandel) to volunteer.

Hand Sanitizers have been placed around the church. Please use them to keep each other healthy! Thank you.

Kitchen Remodel Update: The dishwasher and water heater have arrived. Cabinets will be delivered mid January. Floor installation is scheduled. Soon to be decided- paint and counter top. Deadline for completion is March 1st. Volunteers needed, please contact Jerry Franke 507-237-2423 to see how you can help. Please keep this important project and everyone involved, in your prayers for its smooth running and timely completion.

The **M&M's** meet every Wednesday from 5 to 6 at the church. Please come join us as we use our talents singing praises to the glory of God while having fun.

Christ's Bell

THE BELL

I KNOW WHO I AM

I am God's child (John 1:12)

I am Christ's friend (John 15:15)

I am united with the Lord (1 Cor. 6:17)

I am bought with a price (1 Cor 6:19-20)

I am a saint (set apart for God). (Eph. 1:1)

I am a personal witness of Christ. (Acts 1:8)

I am the salt & light of the earth (Matt 5:13-14)

I am a member of the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:27)

I am free forever from condemnation (Rom. 8: 1-2)

I am a citizen of Heaven. I am significant (Phil 3 :20)

I am free from any charge against me (Rom. 8:31 -34)

I am a minister of reconciliation for God (2 Cor 5:17-21)

I have access to God through the Holy Spirit (Eph. 2:18)

I am seated with Christ in the heavenly realms (Eph. 2:6)

I cannot be separated from the love of God (Rom 8:35-39)

I am established, anointed, sealed by God (2 Cor 1:21-22)

I am assured all things work together for good (Rom. 8:28)

I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit (John 15:16)

I may approach God with freedom and confidence (Eph.. 3: 12)

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Phil. 4:13)

I am the branch of the true vine, a channel of His life (John 15: 1-5)

I am God's temple (1 Cor. 3: 16). I am complete in Christ (Col. 2: 10)

I am hidden with Christ in God (Col. 3:3).. I have been justified (Romans 5:1)

I am God's co-worker (1 Cor. 3:9; 2 Cor 6:1). I am God's workmanship (Eph. 2:10)

I am confident that the good works God has begun in me will be perfected. (Phil. 1: 5)

I have been redeemed and forgiven (Col 1:14). I have been adopted as God's child (Eph 1:5)

I belong to God

Do you know

Who you are?

Keep this bell ringing...pass it on
'The LORD bless you and keep you;
The LORD make His face shine upon you
And be gracious to you;
The LORD turn His face toward you
And give you peace...
Numbers 6:24-26

January

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
					1	2
3 8:30 am Worship 8:30 am SS 1:00 Autumn Lane 1:30 Oak Terrace 6:30 C. Council	4	5	6 5:00-6:00pm M&M choir practice 6:00 pm Confirmation	7 1:30 pm Communion Service at Oak Terrace	8	9
10 8:30 am Worship 8:30 am SS 8:30 am Coffee Hour	11 <i>South Africa Trip Begins</i> *****	12	13 10:00 am Naomi Circle 5:00-6:00 pm M&Ms	14	15	16 10:30-4:30 pm Website Training at GA College for 3 members
17 8:30 am Worship 8:30 am SS 8:30 am Coffee Hour	18	19	20 5:00-6:00 pm M&Ms <i>South Africa Trip Ends</i> *****	21	22	23
24 8:30 am Worship 8:30 am SS 8:30 am Coffee Hour	25	26 12 Noon GLLM annual meeting ***** <i>South Africa Trip ends</i>	27 5:00-6:00 pm M&Ms 6:00 pm Confirmation	28	29	30
31 8:30 am Worship 8:30 am SS 9:30 am Brunch 9:30 am Annual Meeting						

2010