



Shepherd
OF THE PRAIRIE
LUTHERAN CHURCH
Caring For All God's Children

Congregational Newsletter January 2013

ACOLYTE TRAINING

Have you heard? A new service ministry is beginning for our 4th and 5th grade students at SOTP. Starting February 3 at the 9 a.m. worship service, a 4th or 5th grade student will serve as an acolyte.

You ask “what is an acolyte?” The word “acolyte” comes from the Greek work “acolytos” which means helper or server. Under the direction of the ushers, the student will light the altar candles at the beginning of the worship service and extinguish them as the last song is being sung. At times, Pastor may ask for their assistance during the children’s ministry or actual worship service.

A training session will be held at SOTP on Saturday, **January 26 from 10 to 11 a.m.** If your child would like to serve, please email Pastor Mark at pastormark@sotp.org or by calling the church office at (847)669-9448.



A schedule will be forwarded following out training session. Thanks so much for all you and your family are doing to make Christ known throughout the community.

The Worship Ministry Team

Important Dates in January

Jan. 1..... New Year's Day, Church Office Closed	Jan. 14.....Ministry Meeting Night
Jan. 2..... Men's Fellowship Breakfast	Jan. 15.....Prairie Points Quilters
Jan. 3..... Prairie Crafters	Jan. 16.....Book Chatters
Jan. 6..... Grafton Food Pantry Collection	Jan. 17.....Mary/Martha
Jan. 9..... GEMS	Jan. 18.....SOTP Bowling League
Jan. 10 Prayer Shawls	Jan. 21Council Meeting
Jan. 11 Scrapbooking	Jan. 23.....GEMS
Jan. 12 Leadership Retreat	Jan. 27Annual Meeting, Merry Widows, PADS
	Jan. 29.....Prairie Points Quilters

A Note From Pastor Mark

Dear Christian Friends,

The Gospel according to John tells us that “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being.”

God has always been in control and always will be, no matter what we see happening in our world today. John was sent to testify to the light, this light shines in the darkness and the darkness will not overcome it.

The light spoken of in our scripture today has many facets: Jesus is the light of the world. His truth lights the way for people to live in peace and joy. Living in the light is a life filled with joy and Godly direction when we submit our lives to Jesus. It is the light that reveals truth to us as we read the Bible. It can be the sudden understanding in a situation that gives us clear leading and direction.

God wants us to have an abundant life. God will meet all our needs, and give us the gifts we need to function and prosper. But we also live in a world filled with darkness and temptations.

It is evident that there is a battle between darkness and light, good and evil, going on all around us. As believers we are in the midst of this struggle.

God knows this and God knows us. God understands that although we try, sometimes we simply fail and sin. When we do, our Lord does not wash his hands of us, but holds them out to lift us up. When we make sinful choices we do damage to ourselves and our regrets can run deep.

We have a New Year ahead of us. Our God is a God of understanding and second chances. God sends the light into our lives to reveal truths to us. Let us allow God to do a work in us to begin a fresh new year.

God bless you and your family as we together walk in the light through this New Year.

Pastor Mark

A CELEBRATION OF MINISTRY

On **Sunday, January 6**, the Day of Epiphany, we will take time in both Sunday worship services to celebrate the ministry of Patty Driscoll-Shaw. Patty is retiring and this will be Patty's last day with us as Lay Ministry Coordinator and we need to pause to give thanks for her faithful ministry.

Please join us on this very special day to give God thanks and praise.

ANNUAL MEETING

Members of Shepherd of the Prairie, please remember to place on your calendars the Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting will take place on **Sunday, January 27, following the 10:45 a.m. worship service.** All voting members of the congregation are encouraged to attend this



very important meeting. The church constitution requires that 20% of our voting members are required to transact the business of the church. On Sunday, January 20, the Church Council invites you to bring questions related to the Annual Meeting, especially items to be voted upon, to an informational open house in the Adult Education room in the west wing of the building.

END OF YEAR GIVING STATEMENTS

End of Year Giving Statements will be prepared after January 7. The statements will be e-mailed to everyone who has an e-mail address. If you requested a printed copy in the past, your statement will be available for pick-up at the church office. Please let us know if you have a new email address so your profile can be updated. Any questions please call Sue Wehnes at (224)569-2808.

Youth Culture News

Faith At Home

Adapted from *Faith Begins at Home* and *Faith Begins @ Home Dad*, published by Regal. Copyright © (2007, 2010), Regal.

If we want our children to have a faith that influences the way they live their lives — and the critical life decisions they make — then in our homes we need to be modeling faith through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

I once led a workshop with David Anderson titled "Nurturing Faith of Teenagers." I set the stage for the workshop by helping the parents identify the characteristics of teenagers as well as the issues they commonly face today. Dr. Anderson then took it a step further by asking the parents, "How many of you wish your teenager had a stronger faith?" Every hand in the room went up. He then made a comment that I'll never forget. He said, "While it's good that everyone desires that our teenagers have a stronger faith, the truth is that what we see in our teenagers' faith is a mirror image of our own faith. So, the issue is not their faith, but your faith."

The makeover in your family begins with a makeover in your own heart. If you want your children to have a personal relationship with Christ, you need to have a personal relationship with Christ. If you want God to make over your family, the makeover must begin with you. You need to move from having knowledge about God in your head to establishing a personal relationship with God in your heart. Only then can God affect how you live your life, raise your children and make life decisions. So ask yourself:

- Are you going to observe life God's way, or are you going to ignore God's way?
- You have been given the greatest gift you could ever be given: a son or daughter. What are you going to do with this gift?
- What do you think when you hear that your child's faith will be a mirror image of your faith?
- What example will you set for your child?
- How are you going to live your life, and what will your children remember about you?
- What type of faith would you like your children and grandchildren to have?

Take every chance you can to practice faith-talk with your children — and remember that faith-talk doesn't need to end when they grow up on their own. My dad once said to me, "You never stop being a parent." In the same way, faith-talk is a never-ending dialogue with your children. You can make a lasting impression on your children and the generations of children that follow.

TRENDS

SELF HARM—The film “Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close” focuses on eleven-year-old Oscar Shell, a grieving boy who is working through the loss of his father in the collapse of the twin towers on 9/11. At one point in the movie, viewers learn that young Oscar resorts to self-harm as a way to numb his emotional pain. Scenes of this little boy pinching himself until he bruises reminds us of the millions of kids suffering emotional brokenness and the growing tendency to resort to self-harm as a coping mechanism. A recent study published in the journal *Pediatrics* reports that children as young as seven are engaging in cutting and a variety of other forms of self-harm, with almost eight percent of third-graders reporting at least one instance of self-harm. It’s important to know that girls are three times as likely as boys to hurt themselves. We need to get help for our hurting kids. And, we need to teach our kids to cast all their anxieties on Christ, because He cares for them.



Latest Research

TALKING ABOUT ALCOHOL—Sitting down and talking about right and wrong is one of the most powerful teaching tools we have at our disposal to use with our kids. A new study from the Netherlands confirms this fact, especially as it relates to alcohol consumption and abuse. It seems that alcohol abuse is a huge issue among children between the ages of twelve and sixteen in the Netherlands. About three-quarters of kids in that age group admit to drinking. But teenagers who said their parents set and enforced strict rules about drinking were less likely to drink or be tempted to drink if they found themselves in a situation where alcohol was available. And the longer that a child delays drinking, the less likely it is that they will grow up to have problems with alcohol. Our kids get all kinds of pro-alcohol messages from media and marketing. Drinking is portrayed as fun and the adult-thing to do. Parents, talk to your kids about the legal and moral issues related to alcohol-consumption. Discuss the dangers and then set rules. And if the rules are broken, enlist consequences.

CONFIRMATION PARENTS

This is for you! Join us **every Wednesday evening from 6:30-7:45 p.m.** while your confirmand is in class. Whatever he or she is studying that evening, that's what we'll be doing too. This is a great opportunity for you and your child to walk together on your spiritual journeys. Upcoming topics in January:

January 9--the Ten Commandments (There's more here than meets the eye!)

January 16--the book of Judges (Somebody's got to take charge!)

January 23--the story of Ruth (Love is a many splendored thing!)

January 30--the stories of Samuel and Saul (Believe me, you don't want a king!).

Looking forward to having you with us!

Pastor Bill

START THE NEW YEAR WITH ADULT EDUCATION!

A new year. New beginnings. New resolutions (or rather old resolutions renewed!). There is something about starting over that captures our attention. Perhaps this is what the four evangelists had in mind when they sat down and began to write their gospels. Matthew--"An account of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah...." Mark--"The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ...." Luke--"Since many have undertaken to set down an orderly account of the events that have been fulfilled among us...I too decided...to write an orderly account...." And John--"In the beginning was the Word...." God was up to something new and they wanted to be a part of it.

Thus we come to a new year--2013: a year that has never been in the whole history of creation--and will never be again. Of course, 2013 flows out of what was--2012-- and flows into what will be--2014. But, January 2013 is still a new beginning.

So how about trying something new yourself? How about trying out one hour a week with some of the folks here at Shepherd of the Prairie who gather each week to see what God is up to? For the past several weeks we've been finding that out in Luke's gospel. That will continue into January. What comes next? We'll be taking a couple of weeks to look at our new red cranberry worship book, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. These hymnals have been in our sanctuary for a couple of years. Some of us use them weekly. Some of us have never opened one. But they're a great resource, not only for worship, but for our life outside of church, especially for our life of prayer.

So come join us! We meet for one hour, at **9:00 and 10:30 a.m. every Sunday, on Tuesday evenings at 7:00 p.m. and on Wednesday mornings at 11:00 a.m.** It would be a wonderful way to begin anew in your journey with Jesus! A great way to see what God is up to!

Pastor Bill

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Are you ready to have some winter fun? On Monday, **February 4**, the Mission Ministry Team will again be offering you the opportunity of helping out at the Northern Illinois Food Bank (NIFB). Those of us who volunteered in November had a great time and really had our eyes opened to what a huge and important operation it is. They collaborate with 700 network partners to serve more than 60,000 different people in need of food assistance each week. For more information, I encourage you to go to the NIFB website



**VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED**

(www.northernilfoodbank.org). We have committed 20 people to help from **1:00 - 3:00 p.m.** We will be sorting and packing food in boxes for distribution to local food pantries. We will plan on car pooling from the church at 11:30 a.m. You can sign up with Renae at the church office or call Sid Sorensen at (224)858-4168. There is a consent form which also has to be completed. **Last day for sign up is January 23.**

I noticed the last time that there is a Nick's Pizza place on the way home and, for those who wish, I thought we could stop and enjoy some conversation, pizza, and a beverage. Please consider joining us.

*Thank You,
Sid Sorensen & Mission Ministry Team*

EAT, MEET, AND GREET!

Once again the Senior Shepherds have posted a yellow sign up sheet in the Crossroads for the winter season Supper Club.

Four times during January through April 2013, we will be sharing hospitality and food within small groups of 6 to 8 people. Groups are made up from the sign up list. Singles are welcome. Each group determines what, when and how they will meet. Often one home hosts the main meal while others bring salad, desserts, etc. Some groups decide to "eat out" or "order in" for one or all of their meals; it is up to the folks in that particular small group.

Sign up as soon as you can. Groups will be determined by mid January.

For more information or questions please contact Sandy Hupert at (224)569-6041 or email sandyhupert@gmail.com

WELCA

Thank you to all who attended the first “Happy Birthday, Jesus” celebration and contributed to a very special day with family and friends, rejoicing in the birth of our Savior! May God bless our churches with all of their endeavors and opportunities in bringing us closer to HIS purposes for all of us.

SCRAPBOOKING Come and organize all those pictures you have! Join us on **Friday, January 11 from 6—11 p.m.** at the church. Bring any supplies you need to get scrapping! Card makers are welcome, too! RSVP to Renae by January 4 at renae@sotpmail.com.



FRIENDS BIBLE STUDY ATTENTION LADIES! Friends Bible Study will begin our new study from the book *Miracles, Signs of God's Glory* by Douglas Connelly. He writes, “Most of us could use a miracle. Some physical condition, relationship problem or financial crisis could be fixed rather quickly with just one miracle. When we open the pages of the Bible, our desire of a miracle intensifies as we read astonishing stories of God’s power poured out. What do these events have to do with us? How can we experience the power of God in the struggles we face every day? This study guide will help you discover how God works in the world.” Please plan to join us for the first lesson on **Monday, January 7, 12:30-2:00 p.m.** at the church. We are excited about our new study and the fellowship we share as we get to know each other better. A friend is a gift you give yourself! If you have a friend interested in Friends Bible Study, please invite her to join us! For more information, please contact Barb Hoch at (847)669-6652.

MARY/MARTHA BIBLE STUDY will begin the new year with a meeting on **Thursday, January 17 at 1 p.m.** at the church

PRAYER SHAWL SNIPPET FROM CENTREGA HOSPITAL

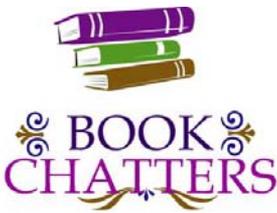
The chaplain was called to help support a woman who was grieving the loss of a child in her life. “Tears began to pour out when I told her that each stitch included prayer for the one who would receive it. Her response was heartfelt.”

BOOK CHATTERS

Book Chatters, after a hiatus, will be meeting again at **1 p.m. on January 16** at the church. Anyone interested in pre-reading a book and then joining in a two-hour discussion, is invited to ward off winter and cabin fever by joining us. We'll even have a pot of coffee to enjoy.

Make that tea in January! Why? We will be discussing Jamie Ford's *Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet*. This is a book about Asian Americans in California at the beginning of World War II, and tea just seems the fitting beverage, ethnically speaking.

Ford's book is a gripping, easy read and will provide several topic avenues for discussion: ethnic relations, the Asian communities of California during WWII, lost love, parent and child expectations and (mis) understandings. A full two hours' worth of topics to explore.



Local libraries have the book which is also carried by local bookstores and by Amazon. Get a copy and enjoy a good read as you hunker down to enjoy winter in northern Illinois. Then join us January 16 – we'll be looking for you.

Gail Barnard, Discussion Leader

PRAIRIE POINT QUILTERS

If one of your New Year's resolutions is to try something new, please give the Quilters a visit. We meet the first and third Tuesday of each month at the church. Because the first Tuesday is January 1 (New Year's Day) we will not be meeting, but will meet on the **January 15 and 29 at 9 a.m.** We will continue to sew many beautiful quilts to be sent around the world. Please help us give joy to so many of God's children.

~Co Chairs, Elaine Brody & Ruby Haerle

ALTAR GUILD—JANUARY

- * **Saturday:** Volunteers
- * **Sunday 9:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.- Set-up:**
Adele Wogstad & Dee Pedersen
Alternate: Gretchen Lane
- * **Sunday: 10:45 a.m. - Take-down**
Sandy Hupert & Jan Koerner

Thank you to all our behind-the-scenes volunteers.



ALTAR FLOWERS FOR 2013

The 2013 Altar Flower Chart is now available for sign-up on the bulletin board in the Crossroads. You can have flowers on the altar in honor of a special occasion, such as a birthday or anniversary, or in memory of someone special. We have **two** bouquets available per weekend. If a date you desire is already full, we ask that you find an alternate date. At the current time, the flowers are \$25.00 per arrangement each week. If there is a price increase, you will be notified as soon as we are informed. You can make your check out to SOTP and put "Altar Flowers" in the memo line. Please be sure to mark if you would like to take the arrangement after the second service on Sunday morning



COMMUNION BREAD BAKERS FOR JANUARY

January 6—JoAnn Ward
 January 13—Jodi Dowell
 January 20—Kim Stowell
 January 27—Jeanne Henley

Saturdays
 January 5, 12—Sally Schuett
 January 19, 28—Judy Spencer



If you are interested in baking bread for Communion or have any questions about this ministry, please contact Pat Fiorese at (847)687-9164 or email a3ptkicker@sbcglobal.net.

WORSHIP GREETERS FOR JANUARY

	Saturday 5 p.m.	Sunday 9 a.m.	Sunday 10:45 a.m.
Jan . 6	Stevie Massei	Ron & P.J. Knudsen	Bob & Carolyn Malm
Jan. 13	Kay O'Shanna	Sharon Neubauer, Janet Larrison	Bob & Carolyn Malm
Jan. 20	Lois Kenyon	Roy Rankin, Judy Spencer	Bob & Carolyn Malm
Jan. 27	Doris Kopp	Melissa Juergensen, Barb Niemiec	Bob & Carolyn Malm

FOOD PANTRY

Items needed this month for the Grafton Food Pantry:
jello, pudding, tomato paste, coffee, deodorant, shampoo, juice, baking needs

Thank you so very much for your generosity.



THANK YOU

Many thanks to all for your good thoughts, prayers, support, cards, beautiful flowers and generous memorials upon the death of my mom, Edna Sinnett. It was a long journey, but she is home with her Savior and I thank God for that!! So many of you came to the wake and service and it was such a comfort to my entire family. Special thanks to Micky for taking over everything and anything at a moments notice and for bringing my BELOVED Spirit Ringers to play "Jesus Loves Me" at my mom's service. Also, thanks to the Adult Choir and my Beginning Adult Bells (Bells for Dummies...as they call themselves). I could especially feel your presence throughout all of this. I cannot express how much all of your love, care, and kindness means to me.

*Thank you ,
Jane McMullen*

OUTREACH

The Outreach Team would like to thank you for inviting your friends and family to attend our Christmas services. SOTP was filled with joy and excitement as we shared the Good News of the Christmas story. Each family attending the Christmas Eve services received a gift from the Outreach Team. We hope you enjoy your gift and that it will become a tradition and part of your family's Christmas celebration.

Each of you is a very important member of the Outreach Team. A great New Year's resolution would be to continue to invite others to worship with you every Sunday! We would like to say "Thank You" for eagerly sharing your love for Jesus.

Wishing You a Blessed New Year!

*From Your Outreach Team,
Barbara Hoch, Chairperson*

SOTP IS ON THE RADIO ---- WELL...

Are you aware that there is a little radio station in Dieke Park, Huntley? It can be found at huntleyradio.com. Since this radio station is in the process of being recognized by the FCC, it is streamed on the computer, but not on a radio station venue yet. Pam Fender, a member of SOTP, does ½ hour interviews for a program that is aired each Tuesday & Thursday at noon and at 6 p.m. and Saturday at noon. She thinks our interview will be aired around Christmas. We'll pass it on to all when we know.

We were invited to introduce SOTP and express what this church means to each of us. First and foremost SOTP is a place of HOME. SOTP members Donna Kelly, Neal Mejdrich, Kelli Herron and Patty Driscoll-Shaw expressed a depth of God's presence in and through the congregation. We acknowledged that we are drawn to this church for prayerful services and for nurturing fellowship by "Caring for Gods' Children of All Ages." Our mission ministries facilitate our care for our sisters and brothers locally and globally. We identified our location and times of services as well. Finally, we asked the question of ourselves: "If a visitor comes into SOTP for Sunday Service for the first time, what will they see, sense, and feel as they depart?" What do you think?

Patty Driscoll-Shaw, Lay Ministry Coordinator



BUILDING FUND UPDATE

Month	<u>December 2012</u>
<u>Loan Balance</u>	<u>\$1,217,696.35</u>
Estimate Payoff Date	5-1-2022

OFFERING COUNTERS FOR JANUARY



- ◆ Warren Brody
- ◆ Ralph Wehnes
- ◆ Mary Trodahl

SIMPLY GIVING PARTICIPANTS

If you are currently participating in the Simply Giving Program (EFT) and will be making a change to the amount or frequency for 2013, you will need to contact the church office to make the change. Email Renae at renae@sotpmail.com or call (847)669-9448. If you would like to sign up for Simply Giving, please call the office.

FINANCIAL RECORDS

Shepherd of the Prairie Lutheran Church only keeps financial records on members and non-members that have envelopes assigned. If you are not a member and want envelopes, please contact the church office.

2013 ENVELOPES

When you pick up your 2013 envelopes, please check to make sure the number on the box is the same as the number on the envelopes. If you don't find your 2013 envelopes, please contact Ralph Wehnes at (224)569-2808 or the church office.

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Evan Reincke
- 3 Vik Bekeris, Phil Casablanca,
Jessica Panella,
Gretchen Rossman
- 4 Mark Miley
- 5 Sandy Petersen
- 6 Nel Quam, Elaine Neukirch,
Denis Minutillo
- 8 Liss Kundich, Elizabeth Rojas
- 9 George Sebastian,
Aidan Conway,
Michael Parmele
- 11 Bob Broz
- 12 Jack Trevino, Evelyn Olbrich
- 13 Robert Petersen,
Larry Newbanks,
Kurtis Arndt
- 16 Nancy Zunker, Steve Conway
- 17 Rick Behm, Emilie Ulmer,
Christian Kasal
- 18 Joan Smith, Steven Brown,
Connor Martin
- 19 Jeff McNeal, McKenzie Fulcer,
Eliott Burg
- 20 Loretta Brindell, Pam Luedtke,
Tim Torkelson
- 21 Shannon Mejdrich
- 22 Tracy Blanchard,
Melody Emery,
Katie Torkelson,
Shayne Piskule, Hailey Trudeau
- 25 Claudia Morgan,
Kevin Hennessey
- 27 Marilyn Schnake
- 28 Audrey Schmidt, Bradley James
- 29 Matthew Vitner, Justin Prather,
Brayden Riebock
- 30 Patrick Fleener

Our Vision:
**"Caring for God's Children of All Ages
 By Growing Disciples Who Make
 Disciples"**

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Michael Waal
 Organist/Piano Accompanist
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Kristy Warnke
 Prairie Ringers, Little Lambs

Sandy Martin
 Cherub Choir

Carol Waxenberg
 Blessings Choir

Denise James
 Joy Ringers

Diana Reincke
 Sunday School Director

Sue Wehnes
 Contributions Secretary

Tammy Uteg
 Music Librarian

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Larry Newbanks, President
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Theresa Molgren
Wayne Schmidt