



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

Congregational Newsletter December 2013

SOTP Purpose Statement

“We care for God’s children of all ages by growing disciples who make disciples.”

IMPORTANT DATES IN DECEMBER

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| 1 Traditional & Contemporary Services, Adult Ed, Grafton Food Pantry Collection, Spirit Ringers Rehearsal | 14 Happy Birthday Jesus Party, Dress Rehearsal Christmas Program, Saturday Evening Service |
| 2 Friends Bible Study | 15 Children’s Christmas Program, Traditional & Contemporary Services, Adult Ed, Spirit Ringers |
| 3 Little Lambs, Prairie Point Quilters, Adult Ed, Adult Beginning Bells | 16 Friends Bible Study, Council Meeting |
| 4 Little Lambs, Men’s Worship Breakfast, Adult Ed, Cherub Choir, Blessing Choir, Jubellation Ringers, Confirmation Night, Adult Ed, Shepherd Voices, Adult Bell Rehearsal | 17 Little Lambs, Prairie Point Quilters, Adult Ed, Adult Beginning Bells |
| 5 Little Lambs, Prairie Crafters, Rejoice Worship Band, Adult Bells, Christmas Choir Rehearsal | 18 Little Lambs, Adult Ed, Book Chatters, Cherub Choir, Jubellation Ringers, Blessing Choir, Confirmation Night, Adult Ed, Shepherd Voices |
| 6 Spirit Ringers, Girl Scout Meeting | 19 Little Lambs, Mary/Martha, Rejoice Worship Band, Adult Bells |
| 7 No Saturday Evening Service, Orion Samuelson “This Week in Agribusiness” | 20 No Functions |
| 8 Traditional & Contemporary Services, Adult Ed, WELCA Christmas Tea, Spirit Ringers | 21 Saturday Evening Service |
| 9 Friends Bible Study, Ministry Meeting | 22 Traditional & Contemporary Services, Adult Ed, Spirit Ringers |
| 10 Little Lambs, Adult Ed, Adult Beginning Bells | 23 Friends Bible Study |
| 11 Little Lambs, Adult Ed, Blessing Choir, Cherub Choir, Jubellation Ringers, Confirmation Night, Adult Ed, Shepherd Voices | 24 Christmas Eve Service at 5:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. |
| 12 Little Lambs, Rejoice Worship Band, Adult Bells | 25 Christmas Day—Office Closed |
| 13 No Functions | 26 Office Closed |
| | 27 No Functions |
| | 28 Saturday Evening Service |
| | 29 Traditional & Contemporary Services, Adult Ed |
| | 30 Friends Bible Study |
| | 31 New Year’s Eve—Office Closed |

A Note From Pastor Mark

Dear Christian Friends,

Remember how we felt when we thought we were going to be duly honored or awarded a prize ribbon or perhaps awaited the arrival of an important guest, and we did our best to be presentable and had our words all picked out, only to have it all come to naught. Our name never came up, we were forgotten and the guest cancelled. All these expectations we have had built up in our mind never amounted to anything but a shattered dream.

Do you think that the innkeeper would have given Mary and Joseph a first-class room had he known the significance of their visit? Who would give a second thought to a pair of unknown strangers asking for a room when the sign said, "No Vacancy?" Either send them to the competition down the street or let them sleep in the stable was the best he could do. Well, certainly he didn't expect his establishment to be the birthplace of the world's Redeemer, did he? One wonders what he felt afterward.

In the same manner, how do we sometimes know to whom we have really talked or entertained in our home? Worse yet, whom have we turned away from our door when we had the

opportunity to be helpful? I think of the Bible verse from Hebrew chapter 2 - "Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it."

In all of us, our minds play tricks as we delude ourselves into thinking that we are more important than the next person even though God created us all equal and in God's own image to boot. However, since we have been given the freedom to think, we are often at odds as to what God would like us to do. We create the fictitious notion that there are certain things we expect whatever the reason we justify. We also do the same for others but discreetly not using the term, judgment.

As we begin our preparation for welcoming Christ once again, what are you expecting this season? Nice gifts, plenty of food, a good time, good health? On what are your expectations based? Who are those living on the fringes and need the welcome of the Savior through your life. Put your trust in God and live each day with the full expectation that when God comes, we are ready.

In thanksgiving and praise,

Pastor Mark

THIS WEEK IN AGRIBUSINESS CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

Shepherd of the Prairie will be featured on national TV this Christmas season as "This Week in AgriBusiness," hosted by Orion Samuelson and Max Armstrong, videotapes its annual hour-long Christmas show. For more than 20 years, Orion and Max have originated their Christmas edition from churches in 10 states and this year, the music program at SOTP will be in the spotlight with selections by the children and adult choirs along with the handbell choirs. The program will be telecast on RFD-TV four times during the weekend of Dec. 21, 22, 23 as well as 86 commercial TV stations across the country. RFD-TV is available on the Dish Network and DirecTV reaching 50-million homes and we will have the broadcast times available before the weekend.

The taping will take place at the church Saturday, **December 7th from 1:00 to 6:00 p.m.** with the children's choirs at the beginning followed by the bell choirs and the adult choir. We encourage people to be there to watch the production of a TV show and see how it all comes together. It is not necessary to be present for the full five hours so people can come and go during the session, but we want it to look like a full church during the entire session.

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS CHOIR

"A Country Christmas" Rehearsals will start for a special adult choir that will be participating in the television taping of "A County Christmas", Orion Samuelson's annual Christmas Special on the "Today in Agriculture" show.

The taping will be here at SOTP on **Saturday December 7, starting around 1pm.** (Exact time schedule will be announced as soon as it is confirmed.)

Rehearsals will be on Wednesday evenings. The schedule is as follows:

Wednesday, November 20 from 7:30 to 8:15 pm,
Wednesday, December 4 from 7:30 to 8:15 pm

Regular Adult Choir will be from 7:00 to 7:30pm, please feel free to join us before the Christmas rehearsals, we would love to have you!!!!

YOUTH CULTURE NEWS

Sticks, Stones & Words Do Hurt!

The sad saga of 12-year-old Rebecca Sedwick is just one more in a long line of recent news stories where cyberbullying led to tragic decisions and a host of changed lives. Sedwick is the young Florida pre-teen who was terrorized and bullied by several of her female peers who perpetrated a 24/7 barrage of online attacks. Unable to find a way to cope, the little girl jumped to her death off an abandoned cement factory early in September. Last month, felony charges were filed against two of her female harassers. . . ages twelve and fourteen.

You remember bullying don't you? In the old days (which really weren't that long ago!), traditional bullies would ply their trade on the playground or in the neighborhood. If you were on the receiving end of their taunts, you could find relief and refuge in the comfort and safety of your own home. Now that our kids spend less and less time outside and more and more time "living" in the virtual online world, bullying has taken on new forms with increased intensity that continues around the clock. A nasty note passed around the classroom stayed in the classroom and was seen only by the hands it touched. Now, that same note can be posted online and go viral – through the school, the community, and the world.

Cyberbullying occurs when a child or teen intentionally intimidates or sends unflattering or hostile messages or threats via digital media to another child or teen or about another child or teen in order to harass, hurt, stalk, frighten, extort, humiliate or harm that person. Cyberbullying always involves minors. If an adult is involved, the behavior is then classified as cyberstalking or cyberharassment. With more and more of our younger kids now venturing onto the digital frontier, cyberbullying is increasingly prevalent even at the elementary school level.

Here are five steps you can take with your kids to help prevent cyberbullying.

1. Pray for your children and their friends.
2. Build resilience to peer pressure by helping them understand what it means to find their identity and security in Jesus.
3. Teach your kids to treat all people with the love, grace, and mercy of Jesus.
4. Teach your children to take a stand in defense of bullying victims.
5. Educate your children about the consequences of cyberbullying others.

In today's world, sticks and stones aren't the only thing that hurt. Words hurt too. . . and they hurt badly. Keep an eye on what your kids are doing online and be sure to instill in them a deep respect for the words of Ephesians 4:29: "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."

YOUTH CULTURE NEWS

TRENDS

Selfies

The word “selfie” is a new word in our vocabulary. Selfies are those self portraits that we take with our cellphone cameras and then post online. We use selfies to show ourselves to the world, casting ourselves in the best light possible in the hope that we will receive positive comments and likes. Researchers say that selfies are a tool that young people use to seek approval and attention from their peers. But researchers are also saying that the selfie phenomenon has now opened the door for cyberbullying. Not only are teens opening themselves up to positive feedback when they post a picture of themselves online, but they are also making themselves vulnerable to negative comments and abuse. And even if there are no direct negative comments, a lack of any feedback at all can send the message to a kid that they haven’t been noticed and that they aren’t liked. Parents, love and affirm your kids so that they don’t become consumed with selfies. Help them to live for Christ rather than peer affirmation.



LATEST RESEARCH

Teens and Sex

The most recent data from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey that tracks what our ninth through twelfth grade students are doing offers some insight into how loosened sexual standards have influenced teenage behavior. As of 2011, over forty-seven percent of our high schoolers say they’ve had sexual intercourse. Over fifteen percent say they’ve had intercourse with four or more persons. During the three months prior to the survey, over fifteen percent had engaged in sexual intercourse. Over six per-cent admit to having intercourse before the age of thirteen. And once again, the research says that alcohol and drugs are oftentimes a part of the decision to have sex. Over twenty-two percent drank alcohol or used drugs before their last sexual intercourse. We want our kids to experience God’s great gift of sex at the right time, in the right place, and with the right person. Sex is for marriage; a life-long, monogamous, covenant union between one man and one woman.

QUICK STATS

From 2006-2010, 22% of first births were to women living in a cohabiting relationship, up from 12% in 2002. (National Health Statistics Reports)

One in five high school students and one in eight middle school students now crosses the street while distracted (texting, wearing headphones, talking on the phone, or playing with a handheld device). (Safe Kids Worldwide)



Operation Christmas Child

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Operation Christmas Child:

We can't thank our congregation enough for your amazing support of Operation Christmas Child. SOTP filled over 180 shoe boxes for children in need! Thank you to those who filled boxes, purchased items to put in boxes, donated money for items and shipping, packed and wrapped boxes, and prayed for the children who would receive the packages. We couldn't have done it without you.

YOUTH CULTURE HOT QUOTE

Marriage is dating for wealthier people. The cost of the license, the ceremony, the potential divorce are luxuries you can buy into.



27-year-old Virginia Ferguson, as quoted in the article "I Do... or Do I?" which looks at the delay of marriage and whether or not there are consequences to this delay.

A CUP OF CHRISTMAS TEA

Our annual Christmas Tea will be held on **Sunday, December 8th at 1:00 p.m.** Tickets at \$10 apiece will be sold in the Crossroads Area thru **Sunday, December 1st.** A "Tea Assorted Menu" followed by an Uplifting Program is planned. Make your reservation early as only 88 tickets can be sold due to limited space.



Our Christmas offering will be gift cards for Women and Children at Home of the Sparrow. You may purchase GL Scrip Gift Card from our Youth Fundraiser in the Crossroads. It will save you time and gasoline while rushing about during this busy season and benefit the Youth of SOTP.

POINSETTIA PLANT SALE

POINSETTIA PLANTS will be used to decorate the sanctuary and Crossroads during the Christmas services. The cost per plant (6" pot) is \$11.00. We have a choice of several different colors and will order a variety as needed. You'll be able to take home your choice of color after Christmas Eve



11:00 p.m. service or Dec. 27-29th. Order forms/envelopes are available from Altar Guild members at the table in the Crossroads. Complete the order form and leave at the table or put it in the offering plate. Checks and order forms must be included together. Questions: Sue Wehnes 224 569-2808. **DEADLINE TO ORDER: December 8th.**

2014 OFFERING ENVELOPS

The 2014 Offering Envelopes will be available for pick up in the Narthex/Crossroads starting November 30th. Please do not use the 2014 envelopes in 2013.

Offering Envelopes



THRIVENT CHOICE DOLLARS

So far this year Shepherd of the Prairie Lutheran Church has received \$2,024.00 Choice Dollars from Thrivent Financial to be applied to our loan principal.

2014 STEWARDSHIP PLEDGE DRIVE

As of November 17th here are the results of the 2014 Pledge Drive:

General Fund: 171 Pledges—\$370,480

Building Fund: 138 Pledges—\$176,008

We started our follow-up contacts to all members that we haven't heard from on November 25th. Watch for update in the January newsletter.

PRAYER SHAWL

Mary Tabatt will host our **December 12th** Prayer Shawl meeting at her home. Her address is 13551 Windy Prairie Drive.

Bring your Prayer Shawl work and Mary will treat us to cake and coffee.



PRAIRIE POINT QUILTERS

This has been a wonderful year for the two of us with the quilting group. We have enjoyed visiting with our old and new quilters as we put together so many much needed quilts. Final count will be announced shortly. It was great to have many donations of old and new material, sheets and help with sewing and tying from those who worked from home. We would like to take this opportunity to introduce two very capable ladies who will take over as co-leaders in January-- Dotty Lucia and Harriet Thompson who have worked very hard with us all year. They recently started a jar called Quarters or Change for Quilts that will help purchase supplies like needles, pins, cutters and thread. Again we thank the congregation and all our hard workers for their support.



Elaine Brody & Ruby Haerle

THE STUBBS FAMILY

The missionaries we helped support, are back in Tanzania after their home assignment in the states was completed. They are beginning their 8th year at Tumaini University Makumira. They have started a new school year and are busy with school and local choral work. Please visit their web site at www.Stubbsmission.info and pray for the continuing blessings of the Lord in their work.



WELCA:W4:WOMEN WHO WORK WONDERS!

Dates to reserve:

Annual Retreat: April 5th, 2014

Mother-Daughter Fashion Review/Banquet,
June 14, 2014.



DECEMBER ACOLYTE SCHEDULE

	9:00 a.m.	10:45 a.m.
December 1	Kylie Rankin	Rachel Miller
December 8	Annabel Johnson	Trevor Dowell
December 15	Brennen Clementi	Jared Grabs
December 22	Nate Allison	Chelsea Greene
December 29	Kylie Rankin	Josh Miley



Join the
Spirit of Life
Chorus
at our
Fall 2013
Concert Schedule

SUNDAY CONCERT SCHEDULE DATES:

November 24, 4:00 pm, Immanuel Lutheran Church, 630-879-7163

December 1, 4:30 pm, St Walter Catholic Church, 630-894-2461

For more information about the Chorus and our concert schedule, visit
www.spiritoflifechorus.org

MISSION DOLLARS AT WORK

In addition to the 10% budgeted benevolence dollars sent to the work of the larger church, one percent is spent on mission projects. Recently, gifts were sent to the following organizations:

Turning Point (\$500) -- Located in Woodstock, it is the only domestic violence shelter in McHenry County. They provide a hot line 24/7, 365 days a year. They serve @1700 clients a year, 200 of which are children. For more information, contact <http://www.mchenrycountyturningpoint.org/>.

Community Crisis Center (\$500) -- Located in Elgin, it provides emergency shelter for women and children in Kane County. They provide 24-hour crisis help and no-cost counseling, food and other help. For more information, contact <http://www.crisiscenter.org/>.

Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (\$500) -- Founded in 1867, LSSI is one of the largest faith-based social service providers in Illinois, and is an agency of three Illinois synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. To learn more about LSSI, contact <http://www.lssi.org/>.

Our SOTP special holiday offerings are gifted to mission work. Thanksgiving and Christmas offerings will be sent to the following:

Thanksgiving Offering:

1. Grafton Food Pantry -- (will receive 1/2 of the offering) SOTP generously donates food on the first Sunday of each month. However, to meet the needs of the more than 225 families they serve each month, the Pantry purchases about 75% of their food from the Northern Illinois Food Bank. Each \$1 has a buying power of \$4 at the Food Bank.

2. Northern Illinois Food Bank -- (will receive 1/2 of the offering) Each week they serve @62,000 individuals through food pantries and other agencies in Northern Illinois. Approximately, 25% of the food is donated by retail stores, @20% is donated from food manufacturers, @20% is donated by the government, and the rest is purchased from various sources. Many SOTP members have volunteered for our special work days. They've seen first hand the work being done to feed the hungry.

Continued on Next Page

MISSION DOLLARS AT WORK (CONTINUED)

Christmas Offering:

1. Turning Point -- (will receive 1/3 of the offering.) Domestic violence shelter located in Woodstock, IL.

2. Pioneer Center for Human Services -- (will receive 1/3 of the offering) The largest social service agency in McHenry County, they provide programming in the areas of developmental disabilities, youth services, traumatic brain injuries, mental health, PADS, and autism services. To learn more, contact <http://www.pioneercenter.org/>.

3. Home of the Sparrow -- (will receive 1/3 of the offering) Serving homeless women and children in McHenry County and Northern Illinois, they provide housing, parenting support, case management, educational programs. To learn more, contact <http://www.h-o-s.org/>.

FALL BAZAAR THANK YOU!

Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

Our bake sale was a huge success. We would like to specially thank Pastor Mark, the office staff, the prairie quilters, Friends Bible study, and everyone that baked all the delicious, pies, breads, cakes, cookies and candies. We also appreciated all the help in our little bake shop. Couldn't have done it with out you.



God Bless all of you! Alice Hallett & Joan Kimminau

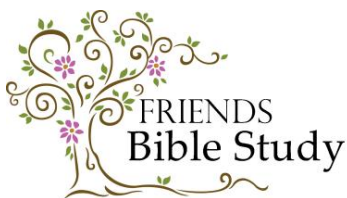
BANNERS

The banners on the wall in the Sanctuary represent our Advent season. The banners symbolize God's plan of salvation through Jesus Christ's birth, ministry, death and resurrection.



FRIENDS BIBLE STUDY

ATTENTION LADIES! Friends Bible Study meets on **Monday afternoon from 12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.** at the church. We will be studying from the book "Bad Girls of the Bible and What We Can Learn from Them" by the well-known author Liz Curtis Higgs. Liz breathes life into everything she does. Her messages are biblical, encouraging, sensible, and profoundly funny.



You are invited to join us at any time as we meet, pray, study, laugh and fellowship together. We have fun studying the Bible and getting to know each other better. Please contact Barb Hoch at 847-669-6652 for information on how to order your book. A Friend is a gift you give yourself! Please plan to join us and make new friends!

BOOK CHATTERS

Book Chatters will gather at 1:00 p.m. at the church on **December 18** for our monthly chat. Rather than adopt a single book to read in this super busy time of the year, we will plan to share some favorites. Knowing that for all Christians, Luke is undoubtedly high on the list of favorites, so we will end our session by reading the Christmas story in Luke. Prior to that, each member is



asked to brush up on their personal other favorite. There are many: Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, Baldacci's *The Christmas Train*, Debbie McComber's *Mrs. Miracle* book (s), Rivers' *Unafraid*, Clement's "Twas the Night Before Christmas," "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever," "The Christmas Quilt," and enough others to fill this page.

So here's the plan. Each chatter will decide which book/story/poem she/he wants to share their feelings about, show up with a dozen cookies (home baked or purchased), and plan on a fun time. I'll provide fixin's for tea and bags to take home the cookies we divide up after we've consumed what we want. In other words, a chatty party! Put it on your calendar right now.

ADULT EDUCATION

December--it's a time of endings and beginnings. December is the twelfth month of the year and on December 31, 2013 comes to an end. At the same time, however, December 1 brings with it the beginning of a new church year on the First Sunday in Advent.

But we Christians are a rather strange lot because we begin at the end! Advent begins with it the coming of our Lord Jesus. Not his initial coming as a babe born at Bethlehem, but Advent begins by looking with hope to his final coming as King of kings and Lord of lords. Advent begins with the prayer, "Come, Lord Jesus. Come quickly."

So with adult education for 2013. We conclude our two classes: the Gospel according to Matthew and Lutheranism 101. Our study of Matthew continues on **Sunday mornings at 9:00 and 10:30, on Tuesday evenings at 7:00, and on Wednesday mornings at 11:00.** And our study of the basics of the Lutheran faith continues on **Wednesdays at 6:30 pm.** But the week of December 15 all will be concluded. And we'll begin a brief hiatus as we celebrate Christmas and the beginning of new calendar year.

January will bring new opportunities for growing in our journey with Jesus. Be sure to watch for them in the January newsletter, in the Friday Flourish, and in the Sunday bulletin. A blessed Advent to you all!

OFFERING COUNTERS FOR DECEMBER



- ♦ Ralph Wehnes
- ♦ Warren Brody
- ♦ Harold Henkle

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST

On **Wednesday, December 5**, we will meet at Sammy's Restaurant at 9:00 am for breakfast. Sammy's is located on Route 47 in Huntley just north of the train tracks. All men of SOTP are welcome to attend.



OFFERING COUNTERS

If you are available on **Monday mornings**, you could join the ministry of counting the Church offerings. Once counters are trained, they sign up for counting a month (of their choice) at a time. Some do it once a year and others do it more often. If you are interested, contact Ralph Wehnes at 224-569-2808.

SUPPLIES FOR THE HOMELESS

During the cold weather months, we are collecting supplies for PADS. Individual Kleenex packets, chap stick, and travel-size toiletries are needed. Bring your contributions to church and place them in the special box provided in Crossroads.

Please help!



TYPHOON HAIYAN RESPONSE

The people of the Philippines are suffering from the destruction of one of the most powerful storms ever recorded. Pray for our sisters and brothers. You can also help by contributing to the Lutheran Disaster Response. Write your check to SOTP and in the memo line write "ELCA Disaster Response--Pacific Typhoon." More information on how our church is responding is available at www.ELCA.org/disaster.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY JESUS

You're Invited to

HAPPY BIRTHDAY JESUS PARTY!!

Saturday, December 14, 2013

11:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

Shepherd of the Prairie

Lunch, Games, Crafts, Caroling
and Story Time

Bring a pair of gloves as your gift.

THANK YOU NOTES

Our SOTP Family, Thank you for your prayers, support and love during Jim's open heart surgery and

recovery. There are no words to express our feelings when Pastor Mark walked into the ICU at 6:00 A.M. to

pray with us before Jim was wheeled to the operating room. The continued

visits from Pastor Mark, Pastor Bill, SOTP friends, cards, notes, meals and

phone calls were very much appreciated. We are truly blessed by a wonderful church family. God's love is never ending.

Peace, Jim and Barb Auwerda



Thank You 

To Pastor Mark, all our friends at SOTP.

Thanks to everyone for all your prayers and support for George and me. Your kindness in our time of need is so appreciated.

Blessing, Noretta & George Walker



Thank You 

STEWARDSHIP TALES

The “young” man said, “Gosh, I’d give more, but I’m not established in my work. And besides, I have a lot of mouths to feed.”

The “middle-aged” man said, “I wish I could give what I’d like to give, but things are so uncertain. I could lose my job to a younger man any day now.”

The “old-timer” said, I’ve got just enough to live on. I did my share when I was young. Now let the young people carry on.”

So who’s left? The kids? They’re too busy learning what they are supposed to do when they become “adults.”



GIFT CARDS

'Tis The Season...for shopping, that is!

Before you head out to shop for your Christmas gifts, please stop by our youth fundraiser table to check out the giant list of retailers who participate in the SCRIP gift card program. By purchasing gift cards from us to pay for your Christmas gift purchases, you will be contributing to our youth program without spending any extra money to do so!



Gift cards also make great Christmas gifts! It's time to pre-order your gift cards to make sure you get them in time to give them to your favorite people. We also have lower denomination gift cards available for stocking stuffers, teacher's gifts, or grab bags.

Please make sure you order your gift cards by **Sunday, December 15th** to guarantee delivery before Christmas.

Thank you for supporting our youth programs through our SCRIPS Gift Card Fundraiser!

WORSHIP GREETERS FOR DECEMBER

Saturday 5:00 services

December 7	No Saturday Evening Service
December 14	Jamie & Brian Bremer
December 21	Kay O'Shanna
December 28	Stevie Massei

Sunday - 9:00 service

December 1	Ron & P.J. Knudsen
December 8	Judy Spencer & Ann Lehman
December 15	Alice Murphy & Judy Sanford
December 22	Kino & Brennon Clementi
December 24	Elaine & Warren Brody
December 29	Sandy Lemke & Joanne Klinger

All Sunday 10:45 - services - Bob & Carolyn Malm

GIVING TREE

The Giving Tree is located in the Crossroads. Please take a tag, or more, buy the gifts and return to church, UNWRAPPED, by **Sunday, December 1st**. Place your gift in a bag and securely attach the tag to the outside of the bag. **New items only**. Boxes will be near the tree for you to deposit the gifts. Thank you for helping these families to have a blessed Christmas. If you have any questions, please call Barb Hoppensteadt at 847-669-0016..



USHERS

The Worship Ministry Team is asking for your help. Ushers are needed for the 104:45 a.m. Sunday service. If you are interested, please contact Ferdie Kimminau at 224-569-6739 or email ferdiekimm@att.net.



Thank you for your help.

SAVE YOUR JEWEL DINNERWARE STAMPS

Sunday, December 15, is the deadline for turning in your Jewel stamps. Bring them to church and place them in the special envelope on the bulletin board in Crossroads. The Mission Team will use them to purchase dinnerware for our next Exodus World Service sponsored refugee Welcome to America collection.

USHER MEETING—MARK YOUR CALENDER

There will be an Usher Meeting on **Tuesday, January 14, 2014**. The meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m.

FOOD PANTRY

Items needed this month for the Grafton Food Pantry:

Deodorant, Shampoo, Dish Soap, Salad Dressing, Ketchup
Mustard and Ready to serve soup



Thrivent donated \$500.00 to the food pantry for Thanksgiving dinners which were handed out on Saturday the November 16th. A big thank you to all the Thrivent members.

Help is needed on the **first Sunday of the month** at SOTP to load the vehicle and to unload at the food pantry just after the second worship service begins and on **Mondays at 9:30am and Tuesdays at 8:30am** at Grafton Food Pantry to help unload vehicles and put the food away. For more information contact Alice Hallett at (847)515-7556 or Michelle Rankin at (847)515-1428. Thank you so very much for your support.

SIMPLY GIVING—EFT (ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFER)

Four more family's signed up for "Simply Giving". We are close to 12% of our Congregation that is participating. It is a safe and secure program that keeps your pledge up to date. Stop by the church office and we can get you enrolled. Other great reasons to use "Simply Giving" are that it saves the counters time, your giving bypasses the counters and is posted automatically to your giving statement.



OFFERING COUNTERS FOR DECEMBER



- ◆ Ralph Wehnes
- ◆ Warren Brody
- ◆ Harold Henkle

ALTAR GUILD—DECEMBER

- * **Sunday 9:00 a.m.:** Caryl Fabian & Judie Symbal
- * **Sunday 10:45 a.m.:**
- * **December 1** Sandy Hupert & Barb Beaudette
- * **December 8** Linda Jahr & Donna Schnepff
- * **December 15** Merrily Burkland & Sandy Hupert
- * **December 22** Marlene Boehler
- * **December 24 Christmas Eve 11:00 p.m.:** Sue Wehnes
- * **December 29** Don & Jan Koerner
- * **Saturday evening 5:00 p.m.** Becky Tuzik & volunteers

Thank you to all our Altar Guild members for your continued help. Any conflicts with your date as scheduled please make a change with another member.



STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

The Stewardship Committee is needing additional volunteers. Please contact Ralph Wehnes, 224-569-2808 if you are interested.

Stewardship
A Way of Life

MONTHLY BUILDING FUND

MONTH:	<u>NOVEMBER 2013</u>
LOAN BALANCE:	\$1,012,796.77
ESTIMATED PAY OFF DATE:	07/01/2021

OPERATING BUDGET YEAR-TO-DATE AS OF OCTOBER 31, 2013

Budget	YTD Actual	YTD
General Fund Income:	\$399,438.83	\$429,470.00
General Fund Expenses:	<u>\$399,347.04</u>	<u>\$429,470.00</u>
Net Income:	\$91.79	\$0

General Fund Notes: Through October, operating revenue exceeded expenses. Expenses are under budget primarily due to the vacancy in our Lay Ministry Coordinator for most of the year. We are hopeful that with increased giving in the last two months, SOTP will be able to finish the year with a balanced budget and also fund our provisional savings.

Building Fund Year-to-Date as of October 31, 2013

Building Fund Income:	\$200,956.38
Loan Principal Payments:	\$108,834.32
Loan Interest Payments:	\$27,905.68
Principal Only Payments:	<u>\$45,000.00</u>
Total Building Expenses:	\$181,740.0
Net Income:	\$19,216.38

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 would like envelopes, please contact the church office.

SANCTUARY LIGHTS

Just a reminder: if you are going to turn on the sanctuary lights, please read the instructions above the light panel. Make sure you don't hold the button in as it may reprogram the setting.

December BIRTHDAYS

Birth date Name

- 1 Jacob Guttenburg
- 2 William Chapman, Mark Frendreis, Tess Miller
- 3 Marlene Tresp, Tim McMullen, Mike Ulmer
- 4 Nathan Sova
- 5 Raquel Hess, Jackson Moretti
- 6 Noelle Lukes
- 7 Daniel Black
- 8 Mike Maraviglia, Hallie Guttenburg
- 9 Donna Schnepff, Jim Lindquist
- 10 Dave Kosmen, Sophie Dowell
- 11 Gretchen Lane
- 12 Ericka Berti, Megan Juergensen
- 13 Judy Spencer, Devin Burg
- 14 Patricia Lidbury
- 15 Robert Carlborg, Katie Desiato, Macy Luedtke
- 16 Pat Fiorese
- 17 Richard Stashwick, Marty Bergman,
Nancy Ramirez, Seth Boster, Katie Ostrem,
Shane McGuine
- 18 Ella Trudeau
- 19 Susan Mattiucci, Emma Johnson
- 20 Enrique Rojas, Jack Bloomfield
- 21 Tristan Mathiesen
- 22 Chuck Little, Andrew Raistrick
- 23 Deanna Moore, William Waxenberg,
Daniel Wills, Alexandra Adams
- 24 Mary Ann Wiek
- 25 Jim Henley, Jake Satalino
Darlene Polzin, Matthew Ostrem,
Chelsea Greene
- 27 Carol Lilla, Darrel Thompson, Amy Johnson,
Shelby Kowalski, Hannah Retzlaff
- 28 Jim Carr, Patricia Mallow, Annette Boster,
Mike McCann, Taylor Wade
- 29 Robert Weldon, Chuck Lamb, River Bjorklund
- 30 Michael Grabs
- 31 Pat Milford, P.J. Knudsen

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

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Fax: 847-669-9455

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Director of Adult Education

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Greg Dowell

Youth and Family Ministries Coordinator

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Jane McMullen

Director of Music & Worship

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Dennis Lilla

Technology Support Manager

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Donna Kelly

Lay Ministry/New Member Coordinator

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Judy Spencer

Office Manager

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Michael Waal

Organist/Piano Accompanist

michael@sotpmail.com

Jill Gillming

Little Lambs

Sandy Martin

Cherub Choir

Michael Waal

Blessings Choir

Denise James

Joy Ringers

Michael Parmele

Sunday School Director

Sue Wehnes, Renae Greene

Contributions Secretary

Tammy Uteg

Music Librarian

Congregation Council

Bob McDuffee, President

Kathy McGuine, Vice President

Mike McCann, Secretary

Devin Burg, Treasurer

Adam Adams

Amy Brittain

Theresa Molgren

Larry Newbanks

Wayne Schmidt