

CELEBRATION NEWS

December, 2009 - Volume 20 - Issue 8

Elected for 2010

At the recently held Congregational Business Meeting, the following people were elected to serve in the year 2010:

Pastorate	Elaine Gregg, Ginger Robertson, Marcia Brougher	
Secretary	Fay Beers	
Head Deacon	David Robertson	
Librarian	Beth Slasor	
Auditors	Joan Wooderson, Jo Fenn-Martin	
Facility Mgmt. Team		
	3 year terms	Jason Van Beek, Dick Chlebina
	1 year terms	Jim Brougher, Dan Willetts
Fund Raising Team		
	3 year terms	Stuart Skene, Karla Van Beek

Let us continue to support those that we voted for with our prayers and service.

Budget Approval Needed

A **Business Meeting** is scheduled for **Sunday, December 6th at 9:45 AM** to approve the 2010 Proposed Budget. Copies of the budget are available so you will be able to peruse it and be ready with questions and/or changes. Your support is needed as this determines how our offerings will be distributed in 2010.

Christmas is the light that burns eternally. It is a glow that warms the hearts of people wherever the message of Peace on earth to those of good will is believed.



Is Your Stocking Full?

After a year of 'stuffing' your little red Christmas stocking, it is time to give it away! Remember the stocking that you were given at the beginning of 2009? It should be bursting at its seams after you put your December contribution in it.

When you have added your final monies, bring it to church on **December 20th**. You will be able to give your "gift" as part of a special Christmas Offering during the morning worship. Mark your calendar so you won't forget to bring the stocking with you to church - or forget to come to church that Sunday!

As a member of the Fund Raising Team, **Nancy Skene** will gather any remaining stockings during December and the first two weeks of January, 2010. The monies will be counted, and total amount raised in this project will be announced. Please do not leave the stuffed stockings in the office or other places in the church.

It is hoped that you have enjoyed watching your stocking fill during the year. Thank you and Merry Christmas!

It's Simply Christmas Nature

As we rush through our daily lives, it seems to be our nature to take precious little time for reflection. It would appear that God understood this when he plugged the Sabbath practice in to the life of the Jews. I'm guessing that it is from their influence that we have placed almost "forced" times when we must take stock of our lives. Of course, we modern folk do our best to dress them up with all manner of shopping, partying and general rushing around, but still, this time of year just seems to lend itself to taking stock, looking back, and rearranging priorities.

We are indeed a blessed people. It does not take all that much to see that as a congregation of God's people we are most fortunate. For all of our collective whining, arguing, complaining, restlessness.....we have so much in the way of blessings to share. At the end of the day, at the end of the year, we do indeed genuinely CARE for one another and the community around us. This is a wonderful place and time to be at work in God's kingdom. And YOU are a wonderful group of His people to be laboring with!

I wish for all of you continued blessings as you endeavor to find your passion for God. Let the blessings of THIS life help us each to rally to God's call to be a shining light to others who would find Him. It is simply in our "Christmas Nature"!

Merry, Merry Christmas,
Jim Deering, Administrative Pastor

Enjoy the Potato Bar



The **Youth** will putting on a **Potato Bar** after church on **Sunday, December 13th**. Plan to stay after church and enjoy a baked potato with your choice of toppings. Salad and dessert are on the menu, also. Come and support the youth in their effort to raise funds for upcoming activities. See you at the 'bar'!



HAPPY BIRTHDAY, *Jesus!*

*After their bedtime story and kneeling beside their beds,
The children with hearts o'er flowing, quietly bowed their heads.*

They prayed:

*Dear Jesus, Mommy told us that your birthday's almost here.
We've learned so much about you throughout this passing year.*

*She said I could have given you my quilt for your manger bed,
And you could have had my pillow underneath your little head.*

*We know about the things you did; your love-filled ministry.
You caused the lame to walk again and made the blind to see.*

*You were so very kind and good, but it made us want to cry
When Daddy said they nailed you on a cross, so you would die.*

*We're glad that you're in heaven now and watch over us each day.
You guide our footsteps and our lives so please hear us when we say;*

*We love you dear Lord Jesus, and at Christmas once again,
We wish you "Happy Birthday"; in your name we pray, Amen.*

Written by Evelyn Masek, Carolyn Deering's mother

Witness of Ministry

I, Glenn Day, write this witness to the congregation of the ministry of **Our Father's Cupboard** so that all will know of YOUR good works.

It is a two and sometimes three day effort to get the food distributed from the Cupboard to those in need. The volunteers are relentless in their commitment to this ministry.

Ninety families (average four in a family) have been fed each week over the past few weeks. Along with the food, some clothing and furniture have been distributed, and assistance in finding shelter and spiritual counseling have been offered. Blessings have been provided with this ministry. We share with you the warm hugs and thank yous that we receive on behalf of the congregation and friends of the congregation.

My testimony to you is of God's power and love through the ministry of **Our Father's Cupboard**. May God continue to bless and magnify our ministry among His children.

Glenn Day, Evangelist

Celebration News



Pictures taken by Lee Peters

Joyful sounds came from the Fellowship Hall on Thanksgiving Day as 58 people enjoyed sharing in the **Thanksgiving Dinner** held at the church. All ages were represented from young to 'mature'. Old and new friends appreciated the time to work together. An abundance of delicious offerings were savored by one and all. Blessings abounded as another Thanksgiving Dinner came to an end.



Two friends who came to help as a thank you because of the kindness they were shown.



Walls Were Moved!

Facility Management Team organized a group to change the space allocation in the storage building. Walls were moved to enlarge *Our Father's Cupboard's* space by 75%. This gives those working much more space. More electrical outlets were added for appliances, also. Now half of the storage building will be used for **Our Father's Cupboard** and the other half will be used for church storage and items for the Annual Yard Sale. Thanks to all those who relocated the walls and did the electrical work.

Give Thanks

Give thanks with a grateful heart, give thanks to the Holy One; Give thanks because God's given Jesus Christ, His Son."

As I write this we are about to celebrate Thanksgiving, and I do indeed give thanks with a most grateful heart!! The Lord has blessed me in so many ways I cannot even begin to count them. When this newsletter comes out, we will be looking toward another celebration...the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Again, I give thanks with a most grateful heart to the Holy One for the precious gift of His Son.

At this time I also want to take the opportunity to give thanks to the congregation for all of the love and support that you have shown me over the last three years as I have served in Pastoral Care. You have been in my thoughts and prayers, and I have carried you on my heart. May God continue to bless each and every one of you is my prayer.

Carolyn Deering, Pastoral Care Pastor

NOEL HALLELUJAH MERRY CHRISTMAS HAPPY NEW YEAR

The Cupboard Expands

Thank you all for the support and help you have given **Our Father's Cupboard**. The Cupboard has needed more room and the Facility Management Team has made that possible by expanding the room we have. The Cupboard has been seeing a growing number in need of food, clothing and household goods. The average number each month of those receiving services from out of the Cupboard has been between 90-100. This is a lot of families that need help. The Cupboard always needs help on Thursday and Friday of each week. New volunteers are needed so that the work load can be lightened on those coming each week. Come and help out, you may enjoy it! You are always welcome.

Patty Bovee-Benjamin and
Mark Bee, Coordinators

What's Your Message?

When you say *Merry Christmas*, what image comes to mind - a baby in a manger, a jolly Santa, a peaceful Currier and Ives snowy landscape? The greeting cards we send and receive at Christmas can be a window into our hopes and values. They give us a way to connect with family and a small canvas onto which we can sketch our image of what Christmas means most deeply. What is your message this Christmas?

NOEL HALLELUJAH MERRY CHRISTMAS HAPPY NEW YEAR



Christmas Eve WORSHIP

After the shopping, baking and preparations for Christmas Day are winding down, we encourage you to come to our joyful **Christmas Eve Worship at 7:00 PM**. The service will bring a smile to your face as our children and youth present a program to celebrate the gift of Jesus Christ.

This year we ask you to bring a "gift" of nonperishable food, diapers, and other items that can be distributed to our clients who come to receive these "gifts" from **Our Father's Cupboard**. The pantry wagons will be in the Sanctuary so you can fill them up.

Please set aside this time to gather in the spirit of The Good News, Jesus the Christ.

Our **Local Operating Budget** for 2009 is \$60,031. Through October we should have received Contributions of \$50,005 or 83% of the budget to meet planned Programs and Operating Expenses. We are short \$6,392 from where we should be at this time.

Income through October 2009	\$43,613
Expenses through October 2009	<u>46,804</u>
Balance ending October 2009	\$-3,191



FINANCIAL UPDATE

Our Father's Cupboard

Income through October 2009	\$8,453
Expenses through October 2009	<u>6,441</u>
Balance ending October 2009	\$2,012

We thank you for your continuing support to the Community of Christ.

Bob Beers, Congregational Financial Officer

All Are Called

Evangelist **Glenn Day** has been "assigning" the priesthood members Bible study assignments to read between meetings. This month we are studying the book of Romans. I just happen to be reading a book, The Pursuit of Holiness by Dr. Jerry Bridges, a well known author who is involved in collegiate ministry that begins with a passage from the sixth chapter of Romans - *For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace*. It was quite radical for these men, having been commissioned by Christ, to continue His ministry and form His church to suggest that the laws of Jewish tradition and faith were not necessarily what God wanted them to obey. It was instead, by the grace of God through Jesus Christ, that their sins would be forgiven. They no longer needed to live under the rule of the Morals Police in the form of the ruling Kings and Pharisees. Such risk takers!

We like Paul, Peter, Timothy, and all the other faithful disciples are called to be the bearers of the Goods News of Christ Jesus. Are we willing to be the risk takers in times of turmoil and despair? Can we share the hope in God's grace and salvation to those who do not believe? God says, Yes! In the coming year, may we all move forward in faith and obedience to answer the call of the God of Grace that we all serve.

Ginger Robertson

Celebration News



Journey to Bethlehem

As we continue our Advent journey to Bethlehem, we are reminded that nothing came easy for Mary and Joseph as they traveled to this busy crowded town to be counted in the yearly census. With the birth eminent, they found nowhere to stay and little support. Would the response had been any better had the innkeepers of Bethlehem known that Mary carried in her the Messiah, the Savior of all mankind? Maybe, but through God's miracles, the birth of Jesus was spread throughout the land. Bands of Angels - brightly shining stars - those who saw these signs became witnesses to this precious gift. We, too, even today can be witnesses to the living Messiah. Let our voices ring out just like the Angels: *Alleluia! Christ was born, and he lives today in the hearts of mankind! Alleluia!*

Prepare the Way is the theme of our Second Sunday of Advent (HOPE). Prophets foretold the message of God that the Messiah would come to save us from our sinful ways. With that prophesy came the warning that all must be prepared to receive him. Priest **Scott Cramer** will help us to understand what we must do to prepare ourselves for the second coming of Christ. Priest **Heather Devine** will preside over this December 6th Communion Service.

On the Third Sunday of Advent (JOY), December 13th, Elder **Jim Deering** will encourage us to *Proclaim the Good News*. John the Baptist was sent by God to proclaim the good news that Jesus, the Son of God, would bring salvation to all who would receive Him and be baptized in his name. That message is just as important today as it was then. Teacher **Fay Beers** will preside.

Elder **Marcia Brougher** brings us the message of how *The Lord's Word is Fulfilled*. This is the fourth Sunday of Advent (PEACE), December 20th. As we anticipate the celebration of Christmas, we remember that God's promises to us are covenants that we hold sacred. He came to earth in the form of a baby, His Divine Son, to live among the people of that time. How could those people have understood the events that would follow when this man, Jesus, fulfilled his Father's will? How can we? Teacher **Nancy Skene** is planning this service of celebration.

What would it have been like to have lived in that time when Jesus was born? According to scripture, *All Who Heard Were Amazed* at the news of this virgin birth. Evangelist **Bob Slasor** will share God's message of how we, as Christians, can grow spiritually in our relationship with Christ. High Priest **Nanette Dizney** is presiding over this December 27th service, the first Sunday after Christmas.

As always, we invite all to join us on Wednesday evenings to fellowship and offer our prayers and praises to our Lord. Coffee and light refreshments are available to expand this into a time of gathering for sharing our love and friendship.

May you all have a blessed and Christ-filled Christmas season. **Ginger Robertson**, Worship Coordinator

Donate Ink Cartridges

If you don't have any use for your empty ink or toner cartridges from your printer, please donate them to the church. Any cartridges/toners donated to the church will be used for Staples Rewards. Printing the bulletin each week and two to three times a month enclosures, plus printing the congregational directory yearly does mean we go through a lot of ink. As you know, ink is not cheap. So if you aren't participating in a reward program yourself, we would appreciate your old cartridges/toners. We recently received a reward summary for 4 cartridges and received \$12.00 towards the purchase of new ones. That would really help with the printing budget for next year.

Place your old cartridges/toners in a plastic or paper bag and give them to **Elaine Gregg**.

Elaine Gregg, Communications

A Quote from a Serviceman

I felt peace in the soldiers to my left and right, who have shown me the power of brotherhood and the meaning of sacrifice.

During this Christmas season, let us remember those serving in the military all over this earth who are giving so much for peace.

The question asked this month, December, was *Tell about a special gift you received for Christmas*. The following answers were received.

Bona Lee - A special gift I received for Christmas goes way back in my memory. I was probably six years old, and I recall an early Christmas morning having the first sight of the decorated Christmas tree AND a cupboard, table and four chairs for me and my dolls to play on. It looked just like beautiful new furniture to me. I learned later that my dad had made all of this out of used boards that he was able to find. It was made so well and just for me as I had two brothers. This was toward the end of the depression. A lovely memory!

Remembering
a special
gift



Patty Day - This is easy as it was right after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack in New York. I, like everyone, was very upset. I felt very disconnected to my family - mainly my mom who was living in Florida while I was living in Pennsylvania. My Christmas gift from my wonderful husband that year was a surprise visit from my mom and her husband that Glenn had secretly arranged. It was the most special Christmas!

Denise Chlebina - One of my most favorite Christmas gifts is my charm bracelet I received from my grandmother. Each charm has a special meaning.

Melinda Creel - A few years back I received a special gift from both Patrick and Kaitlyn. It was a beautiful pair of earrings that they picked out together, and they were even willing to bargain with the jeweler. They only had so much money, but they really wanted to get these earrings for their mom. The jeweler was nice enough to help them out. Every time I look at those earrings, they mean more to me. First, my children agreed on something, and second, it came from their hearts with love.

Passing on the Gift

The angels sang songs of peace on earth
The night the Savior was born,
But we live in a world of violence and chaos;
Many hearts are troubled and torn.

Jesus offers us the gift of his peace
(Not the type the world can give).
It bathes on with calmness within
In spite of the conditions in which we live.

God blessed those who became peacemakers -
They radiate to others an inner joy.
It testifies to the sufficiency of his grace
That outward circumstances cannot destroy.

Often hope is only a guarded, longed-for wish
Till it's surrendered into the Savior's hand,
Assured that he is Lord over all circumstances,
I can rest securely; I'm part of His plan!

Stressed-out people keep trudging along
Mindful of all their commitments to fill.
Then softly a serenity filters into weary hearts,
Replacing a despair with his peace be still.

Lord, I pray during this special season
Keep me focused on you and things above;
That everything I am and do may bring you glory
For it is my gift of love.

--Dorothy Cooley

NOEL HALLELUJAH MERRY CHRISTMAS HAPPY NEW YEAR
Merry Christmas Happy New Year

I MAY NOT BE A "WISE MAN," BUT AT
LEAST I NEVER GOT SO LOST I HAD TO ASK
HEROD FOR DIRECTIONS.



DID YOU KNOW ???

◆ **Jim and Carolyn Deering** had a jolly good time in England staying at an English family's home, and **Jim and Marcia Brougher** had the opportunity to get to know the Douse family as they were staying in Deering's home here in Florida? The exchange went well, and they all will do it again!

◆ **Carol Law, Don Fant, Nanette Dizney and Karen Palko** attended the Florida Mission Center's MissionFest at Deerhaven Retreat Center?

◆ **Bettie Chlebina**, and her three daughters: Andrea Cooper, **Jane Kelley** and **Nancy Skene**, traveled around Spain and have many stories to tell about their adventures?

◆ **Jerilyn, Megan, and Denise Chlebina, Jolene and Elaine Gregg** enjoyed a week in the Smoky Mountains with the trees in fall colors at the Skene's cabin with four other female family members, two from Wisconsin and two from Missouri, for a rare opportunity to be together and enjoying doing and being?

Some Information You Need to Know

☞ Please **DO NOT** bring cups with drinks into the sanctuary. One little drop can leave ugly stains on the carpet. Keep cups in the fellowship hall and classrooms, and if something gets spilled, clean it up. Cups or bottles also should not be placed on tables in the narthex. Remember to treat our church facility with tender loving care.

☞ The storage building is due for an interior cleaning. The plan is to sort through what is in the building and then build shelves to increase our storage space. So if you have any items you have left in the building that you need to claim, please do so by the end of the year. Everything else will be put in the yard sale area or removed. Thank you.

☞ When decorating or just putting up signs or banners on the walls of the church, please **DO NOT** put nails in or use scotch tape to do so. There are removable hooks (of different types and for different weights) that should be used. They are the 3M Command type that can be used without destroying the walls when removing. These hooks can be found on a shelf in a box in the janitor's closet. They are marked HOOKS. When you are taking down your decorations or such, please remove the hooks and return them to the box so they can be used again. Let us be good stewards over our building.



December

- 03 Genevieve Wenzel
- 07 Daryl Quinn
- 09 Bob Slasor
- 13 Rosalee Long
- 16 Michael Vaughan
- 22 Jerilyn Gregg-Chlebina
- 22 Jack Wilkins
- 26 Jim Brougher
- 29 Shirley Clow
- 30 Cody Morgan
- 30 Carol Law
- 30 Nancy & Lee Peters (anniv)

January

- 02 Roberta Hamilton
- 02 Lonnie Cooper
- 06 Nancy Skene
- 09 Lee Peters
- 13 Nanette Dizney
- 13 Kaitlyn James
- 17 Heather Quinn
- 19 Patrick James
- 20 Elaine Gregg
- 21 Heather Devine
- 22 Kay & Dale Budd (anniv)
- 24 Danielle Johnson
- 26 Bill Caudle
- 26 Patti & Larry Bell (anniv)
- 27 Betty Simpson
- 30 Dawn Kolquist

Celebration News is a publication of the

COMMUNITY OF CHRIST

5817 33rd Street E

Bradenton FL 34203-5413

Church Phone: 941/751-5441

website: cofchristbradenton.com

Newsletter Editor: Elaine Gregg, 351-1072

Please address suggestions and comments to:
Elaine Gregg, 8075 36th St Cir E, Sarasota 34243

Community of Christ
% Elaine Gregg
8075 36th Street Cir E
Sarasota FL 34243-6309

Address Correction Requested



There are many families in need of food on a daily basis. Let us give them a holiday gift of not having to worry about food during the Christmas season.



Our Father's Cupboard on December 13th.

NOEL HALLELUJAH MERRY CHRISTMAS HAPPY NEW YEAR



And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:

Glory to God in the highest heaven, And on earth peace, goodwill among people!

Luke 2:13-14