

## ***Newsletter Checklist--***

### ***Pastor's Article***

A new beginning and a changeless promise

There is something exciting about the freshness of a new year and a new beginning. We can make a fresh start and turn over a new leaf. We can open a new calendar with pages that have nothing written on them yet. The year ahead is full of possibilities and potential! We can leave the old behind and dream of new adventures and new projects. Such excitement and freshness is available to us every day, not only on New Year's Day. God's grace is new every morning: yesterday's mistakes and trespasses are forgiven and wiped out. We can begin each day with a clean slate. Each day is a brand new beginning!

But if everything were always new, then our life would be quite disorienting! Imagine coming home each day to a completely rearranged house. Imagine having to figure out again and again where the light switches are and the thermostat and the electric outlets and the linen closet and the medicine chest; imagine having to pull out five drawers before you find the silverware or the aluminum foil. That would be so exhausting. Clearly, there is something comforting and reassuring about things staying put and unchanged. This reassuring steadiness is also available to us every day: God's love for us is steadfast and unchanging. It will be there for us tomorrow as surely as it was there for us yesterday. Even in the greatest turmoil and upheaval, God's friendship for us remains unchanged.

These two qualities, the fresh beginning of each day, and the love with is without change, are like two wings that carry us through the year and even through life. These two qualities are expressed very beautifully in one of our Lutheran prayers:

*Lord God, you have called your servants to ventures  
of which we cannot see the ending,  
by paths yet untrodden, through perils unknown.  
Give us faith to go out with good courage,  
not knowing where we go,  
but only that your hand is leading us  
and your love supporting us;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

*- Morning Prayer -  
Evangelical Lutheran Worship pg. 304*

I wish you a blessed new year! May many of your dreams come true, and many of your projects succeed. May you always know yourself to be held in God's gracious embrace.

Pastor Bea

## **Congregational Meeting is on January 29, 2012**

The vote for our budget will take place at the congregational meeting on January 29<sup>th</sup> 2012 at 11:30 a.m. During this meeting we will also be electing two congregational representatives and two alternates to serve as voting members at the synod assembly and the district gathering.

## **Social Action Update**

Thank you to all who gave food and/or gifts for the Family Giving Tree. The Lord's pantry was very happy to receive the gifts and food, as will the children and families you helped to serve.

## **Second Mile for January is for our Sister Synods**

In the month of January, our second mile offerings will be divided among the Sierra Pacific Synod's companion synods: the Lutheran Church of Rwanda, the Lutheran Synod of El Salvador and the Taiwan Lutheran Church. Please keep these churches around the world in your prayers this month and consider an additional offering toward their ministries. The Sierra Pacific Synod is blessed to accompany these churches in mutual ministry as we proclaim God's creative, redeeming and sanctifying activity in all the world.

## **Festival of Nations--January 14@6PM**

CGSLC has had a rich tradition of celebrating our diversity. What began as an annual smorgasbord dinner eventually evolved into an International Potluck. In honor of our diversity and anniversary we revive this tradition with a fresh concept.

We will all be bringing dishes from our own traditions and heritages, but we are adding "Adopt a Table." Adopt a table, and you can decorate it with your heritage in mind. Just think of the different tables we will have, such as: German, Scandinavian, Far Eastern, American, French and Middle Eastern. If you don't want to decorate the table yourself, join in with others who share your heritage and you can adopt a table together.

## **CGS Mission and Resources 2012**

The process of developing the proposed 2012 budget has been challenging.

The draft budget presented at our November 20th congregational meeting made it clear that we, as a congregation, had to "sharpen our pencils".

To explore ways of mobilizing additional resources, reducing expenses, and to make sure our resources are going towards our mission priorities, the Finance Ministry held meetings on November 27th and December 18th so gather additional input from the congregation.

These were both well-attended and productive. I was especially impressed by the creative thinking around stewardship, volunteer work, and fundraising. Thanks to everyone's thoughtful comments, we've been able to significantly reduce the projected shortfall in a revised proposal.

Unsurprisingly, a few recommendations from the two sessions stand in conflict. Consequently, the Finance Ministry will meet on January 7th after the Calendar Planning Meeting to choose among the conflicting recommendations, and to verify that our 2012 estimates still make sense based on the actual 2011 expenditures rather than projections. All interested members are invited to attend. Of course, the budget proposal offered at the annual meeting in January will be open to further discussion and amendment.

I still fully expect the budget we present for approval to exhibit an unsightly (and dangerous!) gap that predicts serious financial trouble within a year or two. This gap is a direct consequence of the difference between what we say we want to accomplish (given the ways we're willing to accomplish it) and the resources (whether in volunteer-hours or in dollars) we are willing to commit. My sincere hope is that everyone will prayerfully consider their giving commitments of time, talent, and money for 2012, and make it possible to not only eliminate the gap, but for this congregation to actually grow in service and outreach.

Randy

## The "E" word

No word (other than perhaps "Stewardship" or "Passionate Spirituality") seems to evoke more discomfort among mainstream churchgoers. Yet all are crucial to the health of the Church.

In conjunction with this year's stewardship campaign we recalled how Jesus said that where our treasures are, there our hearts will be as well. It's not that our giving follows our hearts, but that our hearts will follow our giving, and that \*that's\* the wisdom of giving as a spiritual discipline.

I think the same applies to evangelism. It's not so much that our experience of faith calls us to evangelism (though it should), but rather that by practicing evangelism we will find our faith experience enriched!

Margaret V. and I have volunteered to kick-start CGS's Evangelism Ministry. Here's our top secret strategy:

- (1) we'll take action to improve CGS's visibility, along with the first-contact and follow-up experience for visitors;
- (2) we'll infiltrate the calendar planning meeting on January 7th;
- (3) we'll target a small set of events, perhaps one every other month or so, that has the potential being subverted to reach people beyond our membership;
- (4) we'll subtly brainwash activity organizers to match up the gifts we have to offer with the needs of the community, ever-so-slightly adjusting the "spin" of events to make the Gospel's message of welcome and service as clear as ever;
- (5) with statistics suggesting that there should be perhaps 20 people in this congregation with the gift of evangelism, we'll be ever-vigilant for latent evangelists, and do what we can to facilitate their coming-out.

We need your prayers, your ideas, and your help!

Randy

## Birthdays and Anniversaries

|            |         |   |
|------------|---------|---|
| January 3  | Paul    | T |
| January 13 | Suzanne | B |
| January 16 | Lynn    | S |
| January 16 | Cherle  | S |
| January 17 | Betty   | J |
| January 19 | Betty   | S |
| January 20 | Jean    | J |
| January 21 | Dorothy | S |
| January 22 | Alexis  | L |
| January 24 | Jean    | H |
| January 26 | Kris    | K |

## News from the Pews

Congratulations to Pastor Charles Witschorik who is now The Rev. Dr. Charles Witschorik! He earned his Ph. D. in History.

## Thank you Notes

We want to thank our extended church family in celebrating the arrival of Isaac Hugo. All the cards, gifts, advice, and love are truly appreciated. We thank all of you for everything that has been given, especially to Laurie and Linda for planning and hosting the baby shower. We can't wait for you to meet Isaac. Our overflowing love and gratitude,  
Lewis and Sarah

Dear members and friends of Christ the Good Shepherd:

Thank you for the generous Christmas Gift! And thank you for the privilege of being in ministry together with you. It is hard to believe that we have already completed eight years together! And thanks be to God who has called us to such amazing adventures together!

Pr. Bea

## CGS Library New books-January 2012

**\*Bell, Rob. *Love wins: a book about heaven, hell, and the fate of every person who ever lived.*** 234.23 Bell

**Blenkinsopp, Joseph. *Isaiah 1-39 (The Anchor Yale Bible Commentaries ; v.19)*** 224.1077 BI 1-39

**Blenkinsopp, Joseph. *Isaiah 40-55 (The Anchor Yale Bible Commentaries ; v. 19A)*** 224.1077 BI 40-55

**Blenkinsopp, Joseph. *Isaiah 56-66 (The Anchor Yale Bible Commentaries ; v.19B)*** 224.1077 BI 56-66

**Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *Theological education underground, 1937-1940. (Dietrich Bonhoeffer works ; v.15)*** 230.44 Bon

**Borg, Marcus. *Embracing an adult faith: Marcus Borg on what it means to be a Christian. A 5-session study DVD and accompanying study guide.*** DVD 230 Borg

**\*Charpentier, Etienne. *How to read the Old Testament.*** 221.61 Ch

**\*Cornwell, Patricia. *A time for remembering: the Ruth Bell Graham story.*** B 269.2092 Co

**\*Dickenson, Emily. *Final harvest: Emily Dickenson's poems.*** 811.4 Di

**\*Dyer, Wayne. *Wisdom of the ages: 60 days to enlightenment.*** 158 Dyer

**\*Dyer, Wayne. *The power of intention: learning to co-creat your world your way.*** 158.1 Dyer

**\*Fuerst, Wesley. *Key Bible words.*** 265.52 Fu

**Gutierrez, Gustavo. *We Drink from Our Own Wells: The Spiritual Journey of a People.*** 230.2 Gut

**\*Kreis, Bernadine, ed. *Up from grief: patterns of discovery.*** 242.4 Kr

**\*Moffat, Mary Jane. *In the midst of winter: selection from the literature of mourning.*** 242.4 Mo

**Oswalt, John N. *Isaiah (NIV Application Commentary)*** 224.1077 Os

**\*Petty, Jo. *Wings of silver.*** 248 Pe

**Spong, John Shelby. *Re-Claiming the Bible for a Non-Religious World*. 230.61 Spo**

**\*Stine, Julie Ann. *Dear friend: heart to heart talks with God*. 242 St**

**\*Tenney, Merrill. *Handy dictionary of the Bible*. 220.3 Ten**

**\**A Year in art: a painting a day*. 700 Year**

## **Children's books**

**\*Carle, Eric. *The very hungry caterpillar*. J [Fic] Car**

\*Denotes gifts