

December 2011

Family of God Lutheran Church

The Beacon



Glory to God
in the highest
heaven, and
on earth
peace among
those whom
he favors!"
Luke 2:14

Pastoral Ponderings ...

Grace and Peace to you in this season of Hope, Well, the "Holiday Season" is upon us and that brings some wonderful things with it. For Christians who focus on the Lord and are involved in his church, it's all wonderful! We have so many great activities designed to involve you more deeply in the life of faith. We'd love to have you join us!

Advent Wednesdays at Family of God. Join us Nov. 30, Dec. 7 and Dec. 14 for a short, meditative midweek service during Advent. The theme you will hear throughout these Wednesdays is **Hope**. Each service should be about 30 minutes and include scripture, song and prayer.

"Winter's Grace", a Christmas Cantata, will be performed by our Alleluia Choir on Wednesday night, December 21st at 7:00 p.m. Be sure to come and bring your friends to this very moving and beautiful Cantata.

Christmas Program

Our Sunday School presents their Christmas program on December 18th at 9:30 a.m. this year.

Christmas Caroling party on the afternoon of December 18th.

Everyone's invited to meet at the church at 3:00 p.m. as we go Caroling to places around East Grand Forks. Cookies and hot chocolate to follow!

Christmas Services

Christmas Eve Candlelight worship will be at 7:00 p.m. this year and will include Communion and the Silent Night candlelight at the close of the service. Truly one of the highlights of our worship year! Then on Sunday, December 25th, we will be having Christmas Day service at the usual 9:30 a.m. worship time.

So much to do, so much to share, so much to enjoy. Blessings on this Holiday Season!

Pastor Sonja

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Church Office Hours:
Weekdays 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Telephone: 218-773-1433

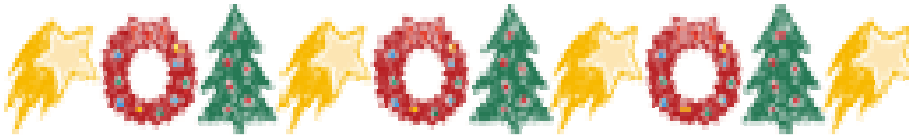
Pr. Sonja's Cell: 701-740-5123

Pastor Sonja Brucklacher
pastorsonja@familyofgodlutheran.org.

Office Manager: Shellie Lundebly
shellie@familyofgodlutheran.org.

Worship & Music: Julie Deziel
Web Design: Theresa Allard





December Birthdays

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Joy Austin	Dec. 8
Nicole Cariveau	Dec. 11
Joe Ziegler	Dec. 14
LouAnn Hanson	Dec. 16
Tammy Hanson	Dec. 19
Heath Stevenson	Dec. 19
Paulette Holman	Dec. 17
Marilyn Holt	Dec. 20
Kenny Paulson	Dec. 21
Tami Schumacher	Dec. 22
Paul Holje	Dec. 29



Memorial Fund Report

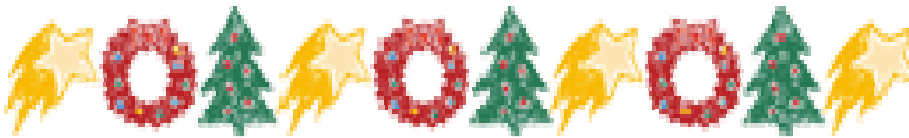
In Memory of:
Carl Finstrom

Given by:
Avis Larsen



Remember in Prayer. .

Avis Larsen, Ava Bartlett,
Elaine Sundberg, Alice Delisle,
Desi Ostenson and family , Gordon
Carlson, Wyn Owen,
Sonya Roemeling and Tim Magenau.



Worship Matters...

Season of Advent has begun ...

The season of Advent has begun as we begin the watchful waiting during these four weeks before Christmas. Advent is actually a season of penitence (much like Lent) and is a time when we should try and carve out quiet spaces in our busyness to prepare our hearts for the coming of the Christ Child. On November 30, we began "Wednesdays in Advent: A Time of Hope", a 30-minute time of reflection each week of the Advent season. Please note: the fourth Wednesday in Lent will be the Christmas Cantata presented by the Alleluia Choir.

Come and help "deck the halls" for the season ...

Following our "Hanging of the Greens" service on December 4th, you are invited to stay for a bowl of chili and then to help deck the halls for the season. It is a fun time! All are invited!

Reserve your Christmas Poinsettia for the Church Sanctuary ...

Poinsettias can be ordered for the Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion service. The order deadline is Monday, Dec. 19th. A sign-up sheet is available in the Narthex or call Shellie at the church office at 773-1433. The cost is \$8.00 per plant with a choice of Red, White or Pink.

Alleluia Choir presents Christmas Cantata ...

The Alleluia Choir will be presenting a Christmas Cantata on the Wednesday, December 21st at 7:00 p.m. "Christmas Grace" is a beautiful cantata ushering in the Hope that is ours in the coming of the Christ Child. Plan on making this a part of your worship plans this month!

Sunday School Christmas program ...

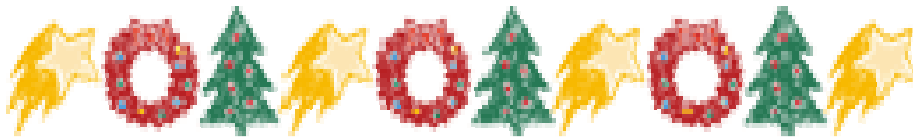
Mark your calendars for December 18th when the Sunday School kids will present a Christmas program. If you would like to help in any way, please contact Tracy Magenau.

Caroling Party ...

On Sunday afternoon, December 18th, everyone's invited to meet at the church before heading out to go Caroling. Last year we had about 18 who went caroling and much fun was had by all. Following caroling, we will head back to the church for hot chocolate and cookies.

Christmas worship services ...

The Christmas Eve candlelight service this year will be at 7:00 p.m. with communion. This year we will also be having a Christmas Day service since it falls on a Sunday. The Christmas Day service will be at our regular 9:30 a.m. time. **(Please note: there will be no coffee fellowship or Sunday School on this day).**



A Little of This and That ...

“Gather” Bible study ... (formally known as Lutheran Women Today study)

All women of the church are invited to the December women's bible study. This month's study out of “Gather” will be Session 4 of our year-long study: **“To Follow and to Serve: The Gospel of Mark”**. This month's study will focus on **“Beyond the Boundaries”** as we move into the middle section of Mark's Gospel. Now even more is revealed about who Jesus is in relationship to God. This session explores Jesus' power over hunger, storm, demons and infirmity. All women of the church and beyond are invited to the study at **9:30 a.m. on December 9th**. The coffee's always on and there's usually a goodie or two!

“The Greatest Story” Bible Study ...

On Tuesday, December 6th and Tuesday, December 20th at 7:00 p.m., you are invited to join the “Greatest Story” bible study. This course is for anyone who wants to get a big-picture overview of the Bible, it's story, and how that story connects with our personal stories. Through this study, you will embark on a journey that starts at the very beginning of God's good creation and quickly moves to describe the tragic effects of sin on a fallen humanity. You will be introduced to the first family of faith, who God blesses and calls to be a blessing to all people. This course will engage the participants in the biblical story through actual storytelling, visual sand art presentations, and reflections on selected psalms. **Come and join us for two Tuesdays a month.**

From Valley Memorial Homes ...

Greetings from Valley Memorial Homes,

Recent surveys to our corporate congregations indicated an interest in receiving more information about Valley Memorial Homes. In an effort to fulfill that request we will be sending you a question about Valley Memorial Homes with a simple answer.

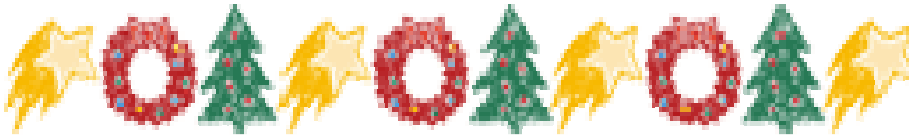
We hope you will share this information with your members in your monthly newsletter and/or worship bulletins.

Thank you so much for your consideration of this request. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at 787-7984 or email me at sbjornstad@valleymemorial.org.

Did you Know. . . .

- **Valley Memorial Homes operates five living facilities on three campuses?**
- **Valley Eldercare Center, a transitional care and skilled nursing facility is located near Altru Health System at 2900 14th Avenue South;**
- **Tufts Manor, an assisted living and basic care facility is located at 3300 Cherry Street and the 4000 Valley Square complex which provides a full continuum of care from Country Estates, an independent living facility, to assisted living at Wheatland Terrace, to skilled nursing at Woodside Village.**
- **For more information visit our website at www.valleymemorial.org or call Sue at 787-7984.**





December Sharing Your Gifts

Ushers

December 4 Bob & Barb Quamme
 December 11 Mark & Marilyn Holt
 December 18 Trevor Grainger
 December 24 Steve & Savannah Magenau
 December 25

Lector

December 4 Sue Clausen
 December 11 Bob Quamme
 December 18 Mary Schaffer
 December 24 Steve Magenau
 December 25 Bob Quamme

Liturgy Assistant

December 4 Mark Holt
 December 11 Barb Quamme
 December 18 Scott Erickson
 December 24 Lyn Pankratz
 December 25 Barb Quamme

Coffee Fellowship

December 4 Wendy Boushey
 December 11 Roberta Messelt
 December 18 Sunday School Kids

Communion Assistants

December 4 Sue Clausen & Trevor Grainger
 December 11 Sherri Erickson & Roberta Messelt
 December 18 Mary Schaffer & Lyn Pankratz
 December 24 Raygan & Charissa Schaffer
 December 25 Barb Quamme & Sherri Erickson

Acolyte

December 4
 December 11
 December 18 Kendra Magenau
 December 24 Kendra Magenau
 December 25

Altar Care

December 4 Sherri Erickson
 December 11 Sherri Erickson
 December 18
 December 24
 December 25 Sherri Erickson

Custodian December

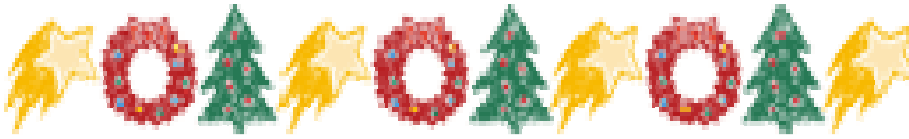
Week of Dec. 4-10 Richard Schaffer
 Week of Dec. 11-17 Marilyn Holt
 Week of Dec. 18-24 Josh & Desi Ostenson
 Week of Dec. 25-31 Marla Carlson

Accompanist

December 4 Julie Deziel
 December 11 Julie Deziel
 December 18 Julie Deziel
 December 24 Julie Deziel
 December 25 Julie Deziel

Removal of snow on Sidewalk

December 4 Joshua Ostenson
 December 11 Richard Schaffer
 December 18 Gavin Nelson
 December 24
 December 25



The Council did not have an October or November meeting, therefore there are no minutes for this month's Beacon.

A note from the Stewardship team ...

Many thanks to the congregation for their participation and vision in this year's stewardship emphasis, "Make it Simple". Understanding stewardship as a response to God's good and gracious gifts and not as a way to balance the budget or pay the bills, is important as we move forward into 2012, trusting God's guidance and faithfulness. Thanks to all who committed to the ministries of the church in 2012 by returning their Commitment cards either to the church office or in worship, where the congregation was invited to bring their commitment forward to lay upon the Altar on Commitment Sunday. "If you intend to make a Commitment this year, but were not able to bring your Commitment card to the church, it is not too late. Just bring your card to the church office and it will be included with the others."

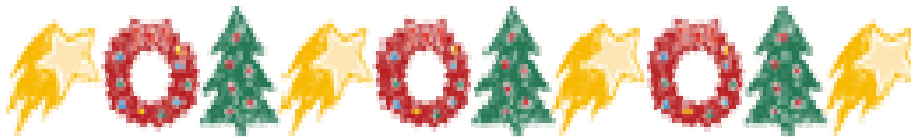
"Giving transforms us. It changes the way we see the world. And when the way we see the world changes, changing the world isn't far behind" J. Wallis



October Statistics
Average Attendance: 45
Income: \$5,498.06
Expenses: \$6,957.19
Deficit: \$1,459.13

Thrivent Choice Dollars ...

Thanks to so many who have designated their Thrivent Choice Dollars to the ministries of Family of God! Because Thrivent doesn't have a mechanism in place to let the church know who the dollars are from and where they would like the dollars to be designated, the church is asking if you would let us know if we should be expecting Choice Dollars coming to the church on your behalf. That way, we can be sure our record-keeping is accurate! Thanks so much!



December 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4 2 Advent 8:30 Alleluia Choir 9:30 Hanging of Greens Worship 10:45 Deck the Halls with chili lunch	5 7:00 a.m. Men's Group	6 7 pm The Greatest Story bible study	7 4:00 p.m. Confirmation 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice	8	9 9:30 a.m. Gather Bible Study	10
11 3 Advent 8:30 Alleluia Choir 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School 10:45 Coffee	12 7:00 a.m. Men's Group	13	14 4:00 p.m. Confirmation 7:00 p.m. Choir Practice	15	16	17
18 4 Advent 8:30 Alleluia Choir 9:30 Worship 10:45 Sunday School 10:45 Coffee 3:00 Christmas Caroling	19 7:00 a.m. Men's Group 10:30 a.m. Caregivers Group	20 7 pm The Greatest Story bible study	21 No Confirmation 7:00 p.m. Christmas Cantata	22	23	24 7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Worship
25 9:30 Christmas Day Worship with Communion No Sunday School	26 Office Closed	27	28 No Confirmation	29	30	31
Pastor Sonja on vacation Dec. 26th through Dec. 31st.						



Family of God Lutheran Church
327 5th Avenue SE
East Grand Forks, MN 56721

Phone: 218-773-1433

**Staff email: pastorsonja@familyofgodlutheran.org
shellie@familyofgodlutheran.org**

Come and worship with us!

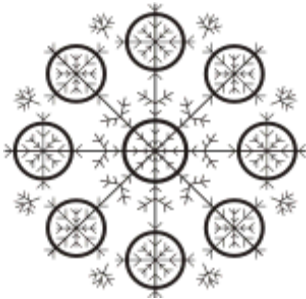
Sunday Worship with communion 9:30 a.m.

Sunday School 10:45 a.m.

Coffee/Fellowship 10:45 a.m.



***The Beacon* is now electronic!**
If you would like to begin receiving ***The Beacon*** by email,
just let the church office know!



**Pastor Sonja and Shellie Lundebly of
Family of God Lutheran Church**

**wish you a holy and joy-filled Advent Season. And may
you be blessed at Christmas and in the New Year to Come.**



AFTER THE WISE MEN LEFT, THERE CAME THE THREE POLITICALLY CORRECT GUYS