

F O O T P R I N T S

The monthly newsletter of

Followers of Christ Lutheran Church

A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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FEBRUARY 2012

Dear Followers of Christ,

Our focus on evangelical outreach continues as we answer the question; "Where is your church?" What people are asking is, "Where is the building in which you worship, study and gather for service and other events located?"

When we started out as a congregation we worshipped in a middle school miles away from our present location. At that time 248th was a two lane rural road. There was no high school to the north, nor subdivision to the west. Since we started worshipping here in January 2005, Plainfield North High School has been built, thousands of people have moved into the area, and 248th has been upgraded to a modern three lane road.

The traffic that travels by our church building each day has increased dramatically over the years. In late 2010, we placed a modern, quality, fully illuminated sign on our property. This sign allows us to display messages to those passing by.

When I am out in the community visiting and inviting people and I describe to them where we are located, 9 out of 10 people immediately know what I am talking about.

Visibility in the community is important. We can be thankful for our location on 248th Ave, next to Plainfield North High School, that generates significant traffic flow past our building. We have much to be thankful for as a congregation. Our location is one of the positives we have going for us.

The sign message presently reads, May Jesus Christ fill our heart with peace, joy and love. That is a positive word of Gospel good news we share with all who travel by our church home.

Peace,

Ron

Matthew 28:16-20

GO – into world

MAKE – disciples

BAPTIZE – those who believe

TEACH – all who will listen

You shall be my witnesses.
(Acts 1)

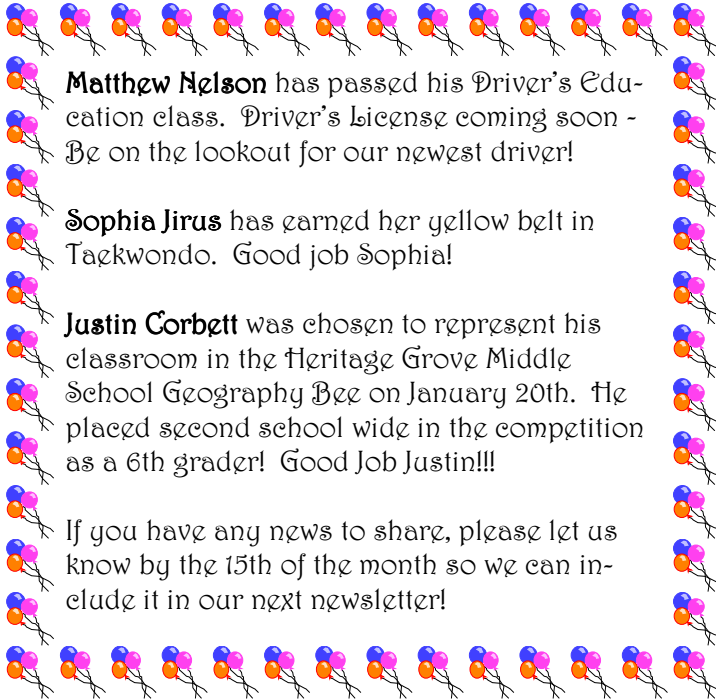


February 28 - Joseph Nelson



On February 12 the Sunday School Youth, their parents, and Pastor Ron will be visiting Lakewood Nursing and Rehabilitation Center for a Karaoke/Valentine's party. The children are making Valentine cards to pass out to the residents. We will be meeting at church at 2:00. Wear red, white, or pink for Valentines day!

Please consider joining us!



Matthew Nelson has passed his Driver's Education class. Driver's license coming soon - Be on the lookout for our newest driver!

Sophia Jirus has earned her yellow belt in Taekwondo. Good job Sophia!

Justin Corbett was chosen to represent his classroom in the Heritage Grove Middle School Geography Bee on January 20th. He placed second school wide in the competition as a 6th grader! Good Job Justin!!!

If you have any news to share, please let us know by the 15th of the month so we can include it in our next newsletter!



February 12th - Lakewood Karaoke/Valentines Party visit. Meet at church at 2:00

February 26th - Lunch and Ice Skating at Rocket Ice Arena in Bolingbrook

Stay tuned for more information!

Looking Ahead to



The Sunday School Youth will be singing during the church service on Palm Sunday. We will be hosting our annual Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, March 24th.



Lent Begins Wednesday, February 22nd

Mid-Week
Lenten Worship



Mid-week Lenten Worship Services begin with Ash Wednesday worship on Wednesday, February 22nd. Mid-week Lenten services will be held at 7:00pm on Wednesdays during Lent.

The services will be preceded by a soup/salad supper for those that would like to attend. The meal begins at 6:00pm.

The theme of this year's midweek meditations will be **Temptation**. We will focus on Jesus' temptation in the desert following his Baptism, his word to his disciples to avoid temptation and the strength we can draw from Jesus in our struggle against sin and the devil.

Plan to attend midweek Lenten worship services faithfully.

Lenten Dollar Folders

Lenten Dollar Folders will go to help the Baskets of Promise appeal of Lutheran World Relief.

Every week we will collect items for school kits that we will assemble during Holy Week and send to children in need around the world. Money received will help ship these supplies and purchase more supplies where they are needed.

The first week (that of February 26th) we will collect spiral 8 1/2 x 10 1/2 notebooks.

Through emails, written and verbal announcements, we will keep you posted as to what is needed on what week.



**Followers of Christ Lutheran Church building
was dedicated on February 6, 2005.**

**We give thanks that for the past seven years
our facility has served us well.**



As We Start the New Year

Men's Breakfast Group

The Men's Breakfast Group will meet on Saturday, February 11th at 8:30am. Randy Koster will be our cook. Following breakfast we will discuss tests for the coming Sundays.



February Birthdays

3rd Brooke Witsberger
 7th Joe Corbett
 28th Joseph Nelson
 28th Blanch Smith

Happy Birthday to our church family members who are celebrating birthdays this month. God's Blessings!



Women's Group

Followers of Christ Women's Group meets monthly for Christian fellowship, and service. The February meeting will be on Thursday, February 9th at 7:00pm.

All women of the congregation are welcome!!



The 2012 Flower Chart is now up. Sign up for dates you would like to reserve. The cost is \$10 for a Sunday



February Youth Group Events

- Sunday, February 12th at 2:00pm: Sunday School and Youth Group to Lakewood Nursing Home
- Sunday, February 26th at 11:30am: Youth meeting, lunch and ice skating.

Calendar 2011 Facts and Figures

| | Last Week | Year to Date |
|--|-----------|------------------|
| Attendance | 30 | 53 average |
| General Fund | \$3,341 | \$115,895 |
| Building Fund/Facility Improvement (Use Enclosed Yellow Envelope) | \$80 | \$7,411 |
| World Hunger/Disaster Assistance/ELCA/CROP Walk | \$10 | \$3,834 |
| Other (flowers, special gifts) Advent Dollar Folders | \$150 | \$4,262 \$290 |
| Mission Endowment (2011) | \$10 | \$2,643 |
| Mission Endowment Fund | — | \$4,598 |

DECEMBER UPDATE

Attendance at Sunday worship averaged **52** persons per week.

Contributions to the General Fund averaged **\$2,725** per week.

Contributions to the Facility Maintenance Fund totaled **\$305**.

Contributions to ELCA World Hunger/Flood Relief **\$255**.

Contributions to Mission Endowment Fund totaled **\$70**.

\$290 was donated through Advent Dollar Folders to go to LWT.

Thanks are extended to all persons for their faithfulness and generosity.

Attitude Is Your *Paintbrush* It Colors Every Situation

| <u>Sunday</u> | <u>Topic</u> | <u>Biblical Basis</u> |
|---------------|---|-----------------------|
| 2/5 | 4. The Attitude of Determination: "Take Dead Aim!" | Matthew 6:25-33 |
| 2/12 | 5. The Attitude of Humility: "Not All of This Is Me" | Acts 2:1-4 |
| 2/19 | 6. The Attitude of Perseverance: "Never Give Up!" | 2 Timothy 4:6-8 |
| 2/26 | 7. The Attitude of Open-mindedness: "Hiding Under the Couch and Hissing at What's New" | 2 Corinthians 5:17 |

Tuesday Evening Bible Class - Esther Bible Study Started January 31st at 7:00pm

An intensely personal look at God's providence in difficult circumstances, *Dancing with a Shadow* will take you through the often overlooked book of Esther to make sense of God's silence. The author discusses the uncommon features of this fascinating Old Testament book and how they apply to our lives: first, Esther makes no mention of God; second, the book makes no reference to miracles by God. And yet the events recorded there can only be attributed to God, and the book's outcome is clearly miraculous.

Discussion question, action steps, and studies of the main characters and themes in the story of Esther will help lead you to an accurate, insightful perspective on how God ordinarily works in our daily circumstances. Join Us!

Disciples of Christ Show Faithfulness Through:

- ✠ Regular worship & participation in Holy Communion
- ✠ Daily Bible reading and prayer
- ✠ Inviting friends and neighbors to worship
- ✠ Involving oneself in group Bible Study
- ✠ Giving 10% of their income to Christ and the Church
- ✠ Responding to the needs of the poor and oppressed



Be Faithful!

love
bears all things

Prayer Requests can be written down at the information table when you enter to worship. Throughout the week you can call them or e-mail them to the church and we will send them out to prayer chain members.



GLORY BE

“CONSUMER CHRISTIANITY”

In his book *The Empty Church*, historian Thomas C. Reeves says: “Christianity in modern America . . . tends to be easy, upbeat, convenient, and compatible. It does not require self-sacrifice, discipline, humility, an otherworldly outlook, a zeal for souls, a fear as well as love of God. There is little guilt and no punishment, and the payoff in heaven is virtually certain. What we now have might best be labeled ‘Consumer Christianity.’ The cost is low and customer satisfaction seems guaranteed.”

If we were only customers of Almighty God, we could be selective in our faith and reject anything we didn’t like. But that’s not an idea we get from Jesus. He pointed us to a cross, not to a spiritual check-out counter. He said: “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it” (Luke 9:23-24). Christ died on a cross for our sins, not for our satisfaction. And He calls us to trust in Him, then follow Him with a life of self-denial.

In a world where the customer is always right, it takes radical obedience to God to keep from buying into “Consumer Christianity.” -David McCasland

*When Jesus said to follow Him
Regardless of the cost,
He promised He would surely give
Much more than would be lost. -Sper*

“These small and perishable bodies we now have were given to us as ponies are given to schoolboys. We must learn to manage: not that we may someday be free of horses altogether but that someday we may ride bareback, confident and rejoicing, those greater mounts, those winged, shining and world-shaking horses which perhaps even now expect us with impatience, pawing and snorting in the King’s stables. Not that the gallop would be of any value unless it were a gallop with the King: but how else . . . should we accompany him?” (C.S. Lewis 1947).

“No eye has seen nor ear heard, . . . what God has prepared for those who love him” (1 Cor. 2:9). Scripture hints at the wonderful future that God has prepared for God’s people; more than these glimpses we cannot see. Viewing these truths in God’s word, it is as if the curtain that obscures the future is lifted for brief moments, and we peek inside at the glory to be.

What we do know is that there will be a radical transformation of all that we know.

“Lo! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed. For this perishable nature must put on the imperishable, and this mortal nature must put on immortality” (1 Cor. 15:51-53).

What is perishable will change clothing, putting on the imperishable instead. Mortal nature will be exchanged for immortality, death for life. Greater transformation could hardly be imagined.

“So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. . . . It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body” (1Cor. 15:42).

Like all the king’s horses in Lewis’s imagination, waiting with impatience in the King’s stables, we lean toward the future and wait for the glory that is to be. We have the Prince’s own promise that one day we will gallop, “confident and rejoicing,” with our King. All creation, too, waits with us, standing on tiptoe to catch a glimpse of that new day.

The future for God’s people will be infinitely greater than anything we could ask or think or imagine. We have the promise of Christ: “I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also” (John 14:3). And if that is all that we know of heaven, it is enough.

Lord, sustain us with your many and great promises as we wait for your future to unfold. Amen.

The above devotional reflection is by Susan Carloss.

Hunger Sunday—February 5th

HOW ARE YOUR GIFTS USED?

- International Hunger Relief and development (73%)
- Hunger Education and Advocacy (10%)
- Domestic Hunger Work (10%)
- Administration, Fund Raising, and Communication (Chicago-based 8%)

Development

Ending hunger is about more than providing food. ELCA World Hunger supports programs, projects and micro-enterprises that help communities lift themselves out of poverty for the long-term. Cornerstones of our sustainable development work include:

Agriculture and Livestock:

Small-scale farmers improve agricultural production and start raising animals, fruits and vegetables to nourish their families and communities.

Health Care

Hospitals, clinics and community health programs provide medical care for the poor and combat epidemics like HIV and AIDS, malaria and water-borne diseases.

Water

Water projects provide clean, safe water for drinking, washing and irrigating crops.

In addition to the financial gifts; we make food donations that are taken to the local food pantry.

Thank you for your faithfulness and generosity!

Mission Endowment Sundays, February 27th

The congregation approved the establishment of a Mission Endowment Fund at its May 2010 Annual Meeting.

Money donated to this fund is placed in the Vanguard Balanced Index Fund and the interest earned will be directed to mission projects approved by the congregation.

The fourth Sunday of every month will be Mission Endowment Sunday and a donation envelope will be placed in the weekly bulletin. When there is a fifth Sunday in a month, it too will be an Endowment Sunday.

Your 2012 envelope box contains one envelope a month for the Mission Endowment Fund.

The positive thing about the Endowment Fund is that your gift keeps giving every year because the principal donated amount generates interest that will be directed to mission projects, but the principal itself is maintained to generate future income.

Make a gift this month and help the Mission Endowment Fund to grow!

Endowment Balance
\$4,620

2012

Building & Facility Improvement Fund Donation Goal

\$15,000

2012

Be faithful in Building Fund

Thank You!

In the first 4 weeks of January
\$480 Was Donated

In 2012, we plan to go on natural gas and obtain a new hot water heater. Money from this fund will pay for these improvements.

The

Bulletin Board

† **Office Hours:**

Monday-Thursday: 8:30-12:00

Saturday: 8:30-10:30

† **The New 2012 Altar Flower Chart** is on the wall by the kitchen. Sign up for your favorite Sundays before they are taken. The cost is \$10 a week. *Thanks to Judi Motley who purchases and prepares our flower displays.*

† **Devotionals Available**—Our Daily Bread, Christ in Our Home, and Portals of Prayer devotionals are available on the hymnal cart. Pick up your copy!

† **Invite a Friend** to worship with you and pass on the name to the pastor for a follow-up call.

† **Mailbox**—Check it every week for materials.

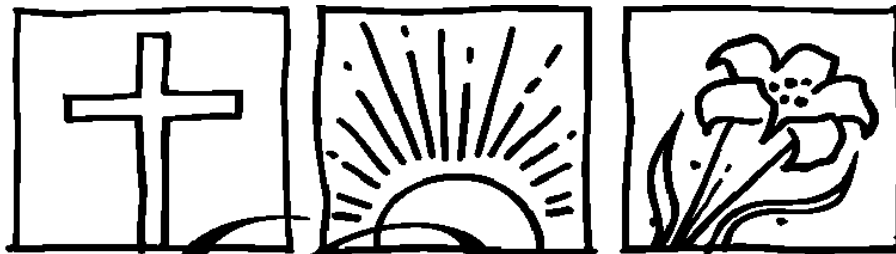
† **Men's Breakfast**—meets the second Saturday of every month at 8:30am.

† **Our Library** has many books that will deepen faith and inspire devotion to God. Look through it before you leave today.

† **Outreach Visitors** are needed to make initial and follow up calls in our community. If interested please speak with Ron.

† **Pastoral Needs**—Please let Pastor Ron know of anyone who is sick, in a nursing home or desires a pastoral visit.

† **Pray for Followers of Christ Lutheran Church every day and do all in your power to build up the congregation in love.**



LENT