

The Voice of the Good Shepherd

December, 2008

From The Pastor

Greetings in Christ!

Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas are joyous times of worship and service. I look forward to sharing in these seasons with you. Our nation needs a word of hope right now and "Turkey Day" and "Santa" and "Rudolph" do not fit the bill. The message of the Gospel points to the real meaning and hope for our time. Our worship times all help set the tone for a joyous celebration of what God has done for us in Jesus.

During Advent and Christmas our worship will center on the theme: **PRAYER POWER**. Each week the focus will be on increasing our prayer and devotional life.

Nov. 30 - Advent 1 - **PRAYER POWER:**

"Putting God to Work" Isaiah 64:1-9

Dec. 7 - Advent 2 - **PRAYER POWER:**

"Revival in the Heart" Isaiah: 1-11

Dec. 14 - Advent 3 - **Guest Speaker: The Rev. David Mangiante**

Dec. 21 - Advent 4 - **PRAYER POWER:**

"Ready, Get Set, Pray" Luke 1:26-3

Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve – 7:00 p.m. FAMILY WORSHIP with emphasis on young children.

Sermon: 'J' is for Jesus -- Luke 2:1-20

Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve – 10:00 p.m. TRADITIONAL SERVICE

CANDLELIGHT AND CHORAL COMMUNION

PRAYER POWER:

"The Light of Jesus' Presence" Luke 2:1-20

The Advent and Christmas seasons are a natural time to invite someone to come with you to Good Shepherd. These seasons offer hope and encouragement to us all. You can help make this a special time for someone you know and love by offering them the lasting gift - The Gift of New Life in Jesus.

Pastor Ed

Tree Decorating

After the service on Sunday, December 21, the members of the Altar Guild will decorate the sanctuary Christmas Tree and arrange the poinsettias. After you've had your coffee, please join us. If everyone could take a few minutes to hang several ornaments, it would be a big help.

Council Meeting Minutes (*Draft copy, not reviewed by council*) **November 10, 2008**
(submitted by Garry Westerweller)

In attendance were;

Pastor Ed, Gil Vatter, Mike Carp, Lou Medici, Andy Mathisen, Garry Westerweller, Tom Tehve,

Meeting opened with prayer and devotions led by Pastor Ed.

Minutes of the October 13, 2008 meeting were unanimously approved.

The following committee's presented their respective reports to Council:

Treasurer's report: Presented to Council by Tom Tehve. Copies were distributed and reviewed by Council. Discussion ensued regarding the need for clarification of which gas bills to pay, Intelligent Energy or PSE&G.

Christian Education Committee: Noted Thank-You letter received from Heffer International Group for our donation.

Evangelism Committee: Gil presented a description of this committee for Council Review. It read as follows:
Stimulate and lead all members of the congregation in continuous and, from time to time, concerted endeavors to reawaken the spiritually indifferent and to reach others with the Gospel. The Committee shall concern itself with deepening spiritual life and shall periodically study the congregation in the context of its surrounding community. This committee shall be responsible for community relations and education, including press releases, advertising, etc..

No Chairperson has been found yet for this committee. We are actively seeking volunteers.

Fellowship Committee: Debbie Blackburn has a Christmas Party in the works. Several interactive game activities are being worked on by Garry and Debbie in an effort to get people to mix and mingle with their fellow parishioners.

Finance/Stewardship Committee: Lou reported that the pledge letters have been mailed. Lou will report to the congregation as to the number of pledges he receives back. (No dollar amounts will be disclosed) The 2009 Budget will be presented at the December Council Meeting, after pledges are received

Property: Tom reports the grounds are getting better but a general clean up is still needed. Gil reported that he is going ahead with the Narthex enhancement committee. Plans will be reviewed to spruce up the Narthex with particular concern to the crying area. Estimated presented to Council for Winter snow plowing.

Social Ministry: Gil reported that October food donations were distributed between Lunch Break and St Marks. November will be distributed between the Calico Cat and Lunch Break. November is canned Meat Month. Noted was the fact that Lunch Break feeds 2000 people per month. Also this year marks their 25th anniversary. Also noted were the receipt of two thank you letters from Lunch Break and one from the ELCA for our recent donations.

Gil presented a request to Council that Narcotics Anonymous would like to utilize some Church Space on Friday nights. Mike Carp voiced concern that we should review our own needs first as he would like to re-start the youth program. Gil will review the possibility of a different night with them.

Noted that we should reserve \$1000.00 of available funds designated for Advent type programs till next year so as to receive matching Thrivent Funds. Mike added that Gil said he would like to get more matching funds for World Hunger.

Gil is looking into the procurement of a giving tree for Christmas that we can set up in the Church so that the congregation can fill specific needs for less fortunate families.

Worship and Music: We have an immediate need for a musician this Sunday. Andy is trying to work this out. Altar Guild needs new bodies. Same people have been doing it for years. We are also looking for families to light the Advent Wreath.

Youth and Family: Mike is diligently working to restart the youth group. He is also considering a monthly Saturday Men's group.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Ed has met with the Little Lambs Children. His study groups have been having very good attendance. Confirmation classes are going strong. Pastor also proposed to utilize a choral communion at the late Christmas Eve Service.

Announcements, Updates and Old Business:

- Sunday December 7th, will be Good Shepherd's Christmas Party
 - Gil will invite the principles of the German School to the party along with everyone from Little Lambs.
- The German School will set up a table in the Narthex after the December 7th service to sell some of their goods.
- On December 14th, the German school kids will sing at the church service
- The German School will be celebrating St Martin's Feast on Sunday November 16th.
- On Friday, November 14th, Little Lambs will be holding a basket bazaar fund raiser
- On Friday, December 5th, Little Lambs will have their fund raising book fair at Barnes and Noble.
- On January 11th, 2009, A benefit concert will be held at Good Shepherd by the NJ State Youth Orchestra.
- Crop Walk had three walkers participate and it generated \$535.00 in donations. This amount will be sent on to Thrivent for their matching funds program.
- Super Bowl of Caring will be on Super Bowl Sunday. All food and funds collected will be distributed to local food banks.
- November is National Hospice Month. They ask we include hospice work in our Church prayers.
- Visitor's procedure was read and approved by Council
- Donation of \$50.00 was approved to the Holmdel First Aid Squad.
- Bishop Hansen will be holding an open forum at St. John's in Summit, December 6th from 1:00 to 3:00 PM.
- Brief discussion held on setting up a tracking method to advise congregation and Council when earmarked donations are distributed.

Next Council Meeting will be Monday December 8, 2008

Meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

NARTHEX ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

The Marines need a few good men and the Church council needs some people to staff an ad hoc committee to improve the appearance of the narthex.

The narthex is the first thing a visitor sees, when entering the church and may be one of the things remembered about the church.

If you want to participate, please talk with any member of the Church council or PASTOR ED.

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Entering the house, they saw the child with Mary, his mother, and bowed to the ground in homage to him; then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts: gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Since October, we have been bombarded with a variety of Christmas advertisements in our daily papers, in magazines, and on our radios and television sets. It has been impossible to enter most stores without hearing "Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer" and "Frosty the Snowman". Without exception, the retailers and the special

interest groups are exerting pressure on us to either give them some of our money or buy the products they want to sell. Each Christmas season, the advertisers seem to begin earlier and, each Christmas season, they push harder to separate us from as much of our money as possible.

This year, their work is cut out for them. Many Americans are facing the holiday with smaller incomes or with no jobs, and, therefore, no income at all. To our non-Christian friends and neighbors, their inability to buy lots and lots of presents will turn Christmas into a sad time of the year. For us, as Lutheran Christians, however, it is a unique opportunity to make a gesture toward returning Christmas back to the intent of the fathers of the early church. The celebration of the birth of Jesus has always been one of the highpoints of the church year and, gift giving aside, it is always a joyful time, a time to sing the old carols, a time to be with family and friends and a time to remember the good news from Bethlehem.

This year, as I wish each one of you a very merry Christmas, I ask you to follow the advice of some of the billboards and the bumper stickers I see around New Jersey; make gift giving a secondary part of your celebration and PUT CHRIST BACK IN CHRISTMAS again.

Gil Vatter

Pat Schmidt wanted to let everyone know that the Special Appeal for the Food Pantry at their church in Runnemede received \$4,766 PLUS the \$1,600 from Thrivent. What a really good response! So Remember BRING SOME FOOD TO CHURCH THIS WEEK!!!

SOCIAL MINISTRY REPORT (submitted by Gil Vatter)

1. Many local supermarkets are giving free turkeys during the holiday season, based on purchases. If you earn a turkey you cannot use, please consider donating it to one of the local food pantries. See any member of the Church council.
2. November was "canned meat month" at Good Shepherd. The congregation responded with canned tuna, salmon, chicken, beef and turkey, all of which is needed by the local pantries.
3. In November, all collected food was shared by Lunch Break in Red Bank and Calico Cat in Middletown.
4. The Social Ministry thanks the members and the board of directors of the NEW JERSEY STATE YOUTH ORCHESTRA for their participation in our food collection program. The addition of NJSYO to our November effort and the interest of the congregation, allowed us to present a much larger amount of food to LUNCH BREAK and CALICO CAT.
5. We will participate in the SUPER BOWL OF CARING on February 1, 2009. For details, see MIKE CARP.

AROUND THE PARISH (submitted by Gil Vatter)

1. The NEW JERSEY SYNOD website is "up and running". Check it out at www.njsynod.org.
2. The Good Shepherd CROP WALK effort produced \$535 and will grow to over \$700 with the help of THRIVENT. Thanks to MIKE CARP and ANDY MATHISEN who headed up the program and did a lot of walking.
3. Thanks to MIKE CARP and BILL NEMCIK for the great paint job in PAT DUNN'S office. What a difference.
4. Not a single person was early on Sunday November 2, the end of DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME.

5. See you all at the parish CHRISTMAS PARTY, Sunday December 7 at 5:00 PM.
6. About 20 to 25 people attend PASTOR ED'S study of the book of Daniel each Wednesday at 1:00 PM or 7:00 PM.
7. PASTOR SUSAN NAGLE was installed as Pastor of the Church of the Savior, Paramus, on December 7. Sue as a former student intern at Good shepherd.
8. BARBARA BENSON'S limp is improving day by day. Still not ready for the New York City Marathon.
9. Mark Sunday January 11, 2009 at 2:00 PM for a concert by the NEW JERSEY YOUTH ORCHESTRA. Proceeds will go to the LITTLE LAMBS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Special Christmas Fellowship Event with Handel's *Messiah* – December 21

(submitted by Pat Miller)

When was the last time you heard the full, glorious *Messiah* sung with an orchestra? The Monmouth Civic Chorus has been doing portions of the *Messiah* every year, but not the whole thing. (And it's been several years since we all went to hear Jo Ellen!) Sure, you could go to Carnegie Hall for their annual *Messiah*, but you would have to go all the way to NY late at night on a week night and pay up to \$100 for a ticket.

This year the Monmouth Civic Chorus will be doing the whole thing in concert on the afternoon of Sunday, December 21, at the Count Basie. It will be just as good as the Carnegie Hall version. Plus, it is in the daytime, and you only have to drive as far as Red Bank.

And then, we will all come back to the church afterwards for pot luck dinner and fellowship. (This is not the same as the Good Shepherd Christmas party; that is on a different date.)

Here is what the Asbury Park Press had to say the last time MCC did *Messiah* in 1998:

“Mark Shapiro, a gifted musician and conductor, led this performance Saturday at Red Bank's Count Basie Theatre before a sold-out house. ... This "Messiah" was blessed with fine soloists and some truly magic moments. ... And finally, there was this wonderful chorus. Purity of tone, excellent clarity of line, subtle dynamic changes...a beautiful collaboration between a conductor and his singers.”

We are looking forward to a similar experience. Won't you join us? The concert will be at 3:00pm the afternoon of Sunday, December 21 at the Count Basie Theater in Red Bank. Tickets are \$20 and \$30 with the group discount. And don't forget the Count Basie will soon reopen with a majestic, completely redecorated interior. This is your chance to see it.

There will be a signup in the Narthex, or contact Pat Miller at 732 671-5917, or patmiller@comcast.net for tickets.

As we in MCC like to say, “It won't be Christmas without it!”

Poinsettias for the Altar

The Sunday after Thanksgiving, November 30th, is the first Sunday in Advent. As we all begin our many preparations for Christmas, please consider giving a poinsettias to beautify the sanctuary. The sign-up sheet is in the narthex near the coffee server. Or you can call the church office (732-842-4596) with your information. The cost of each plant is \$15.

GOOD SHEPHERD "SPONSORS" PROGRAM

The Good Shepherd "sponsors" program was established to help support the kitchen at St. Mark's Church in Keansburg. During 2008, the "sponsors" supplied over \$900 to the pantry and the program will be offered again in 2009.

There were twelve "families" supporting the program this year, including the attendees at the Ladies Luncheon Group. If you would like to become a sponsor for 2009, please speak to Patty or Gil Vatter.

SHEPHERD HELPS LOCAL PANTRYS FEED OUR NEIGHBORS

During 2008, the Good Shepherd congregation helped several of the local food pantrys in their effort to feed our needy neighbors in this part of Monmouth County.

LUNCH BREAK in Red Bank has been receiving coffee every month as well as a share of the food which the congregation brings to the church.

CALICO CAT food pantry in Middletown received household goods in June and, every other month, a share of the food which the congregation brings to the church.

ST. MARK'S food pantry in Keansburg has received, every other month, a share of the food which the congregation brings to church. The Good Shepherd "Sponsors Program" has also sent over \$900 to the pantry as well as a matching gift of \$700 against last years gifts, through Thrivent

A FEW NOTES FROM THE SENIOR CHOIR

The Senior Choir has begun work on music for Advent and the christmas season. You are in vited to join the choir on thursday at 7:30 PM for rehearsal. Come and see how much fun it is.

On future Sundays the choir will sing:

"Crown Him King of Kings" - J. S. Bach

"Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus" - Earlene Rentz

The Senior Choir was pleased to sing "When Thou, My Righteous Judge, Shall Come" accompanied by Edward Kim, piano, Robert Kim, violin, Jonathan Park, cello and Kirsten Mathisen, clarinet on Sunday November 9,

Voice Newsletter Articles

(submitted by Nancy & Clem Hergenhan)

If you have articles or announcements for the Voice please email them to us at the addresses below or call us.

If you wish to receive the Voice via email, please send us your email addresses, or call us.

Home phone 732-946-9084 clem@csfcorp.com nancyh@comcast.net

December 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 7:00 Finance Cmte Mtg	2	3 1:00 & 7:00 Bible Study 6:00 Conf Class	4 7:30 – 9:00 Choir Practice	5 ALL DAY - LL Bookfair at Barnes & Noble	6
7 10:00 Service 5pm Family Christmas Party	8 7:00 Council Mtg	9	10	11 7:30 – 9:00 Choir Practice	12 Blood Pressure Screening All Day	13
14 10:00 Service	15	16	17	18 7:30 – 9:00 Choir Practice	19	20
21 10:00 Service with Sunday School Christmas Story. Decorate tree after service	22	23	24 7pm Family Service 10pm Candle Lighting Service	25	26	27
28 10:00 Service	29	30	31			