



Bethesda Lutheran Church

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SERVE YOU! CALL US
FOR ANYTHING!

Bethesda Outlook

January 2011

"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness- on them light has shined" Isaiah 9:2

Sometimes as Christians we call Epiphany "Little Christmas", which is why I believe it is important for us to celebrate Epiphany. For many in North America the Christmas season of greens and lights and tinsel ends on January 1st as the decorations come down and trees go out to the curb or get put back in the box for another year. It is interesting to me that this happens just as the winter is getting genuinely cold and dismal.

Maybe this year we might venture into new territory as we leave our lights on and some of our decorations up as we continue to celebrate the unfolding of God who has come to us as Jesus, the word made flesh, and is present *for* and *with us*. Many of us have had a hard time seeing and finding the hope of a new light as our lives have been filled with many struggles. Struggles as the ways of the past will be significantly different this year with loss of jobs and illness among our families and friends and grieving as well for what has been lost. Many of us have struggled to celebrate with the loss of loved ones no longer with us. Yet, God is with us as this light found in a humble manger which has come into the world whether we recognize it or not, or accept it or not; to love all, to give hope for all and make the world whole again.

"The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it." John 1:5

Epiphany, which is January 6th, is also a season of light in the dark seasonal days of our world. ***We will celebrate Epiphany on Sunday January 2nd***. Throughout this season of light Jesus is revealed to us as repeatedly stepping beyond the accepted tribe, (those like us). The Epiphany season of the church year celebrates the discovery that ***Someone*** has come, sent by God. Come, to bring God's light into our lives, to make a difference in our lives and our community, to heal our brokenness and to reveal the unimaginable depth of God's love for you and I and ***ALL*** through this light of Christ.

In the readings of this season before Lent Jesus is consistently breaking down walls between tribes: between women and men, between powerful and marginalized, between Gentiles and Jews, family and stranger, clean and unclean, between all of us. Today our tribalism is and must be challenged by Jesus' fierce inclusiveness. We are called to question our defensive loyalty to family, school, denomination, neighborhood, class, religion, church and buildings, country or any other tribes of exclusion in the face of Jesus' life, teachings and actions. The Glory and love of the LORD was, is, and shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together.

HAPPY EPIPHANY ***Shine! Shine for all to see!!***

May you find the Epiphany light of promise and hope! May you share that Epiphany light with those far off from God in our world! In this Epiphany season may the light of the star and the glory of God be revealed to you in new and unexpected ways! May you light candles and pray for the revealing of God's light in your darkness and for the ever widening of God's love, hope and compassion in your lives. May you share that Epiphany light with those far off from God in God's world!

Pastor Malcolm

From Your Council President

My Lovely Congregation!

How wonderful it is to know that the Light of Our Lord has blessed us once again with a reassurance that the days will grow longer, our hearts grow wider and our relationships deepen with the coming of the New Year. Let us all remember our losses and let us remember our gifts, given and received!

Take a moment to read Matthew 25:14-30. It is the "The Parable of Talents." Do you remember it? It is all about taking the trip of life. It is about entrusting each other to carry on for each of us as we journey into the uncharted waters of life. Has not God given you at least five talents to invest? How will you honor those investments of life? What will be your return for such a venture? What if you feel that God has only given you two talents to invest? Is that less or more than five talents as far as a return goes? What if you decide to bury your talents because you have only one to give? Do you ignore that single talent! A single talent will multiply into TWO talents and that will multiply into FOUR talents and that will multiply into SIXTEEN talents! Invest in God with whatever you have to give. Embrace the

riches that unfold for you every day. Small is good. Small is safe. Small is smart. Small is a gift that grows larger and larger. It is the seed of a good life. God asks that we invest in human kindness at all levels and wait for the surprise of riches! Jesus' birth is the wait of life. Wait and see what God can do for you!

As we struggle with the budget for Bethesda Lutheran Church, please contemplate the enormous possibilities that God sets before us. Let us embrace abundance even if the "numbers" look bleak. Let us keep our prospects high and true disregarding the rising costs of financial challenges. It is wise to be prudent but it is also wise to dream big and know that our Lord and Savior will provide. Let us keep our buckets under the downspouts so that we might receive a life full of grace, peace, hope and faith. And, above all, let us keep those downspouts full of LOVE.

Reign on the world, and me Lord!

Your Council President, Dena Lee

Welcome to Bethesda !

Want to move more deeply as a Disciple of Jesus into the life of Bethesda Lutheran Church?

Please come to this informational gathering!

Sunday January 23rd ~ Noon – 1pm

Church Office Building Conference Room

Come and journey together for 4 sessions as we unpack what it means to be a Disciple of Jesus Christ and Christian Lutherans at Bethesda. An informational gathering will take place on Sunday January 23rd. We will have a time of conversation and a light lunch. Our first session and the remaining sessions will be decided by the group at that time based on our schedules. We will then formally welcome you as a disciple into the Bethesda Family in late February or early March at the 10:15am service

Whether you are new to faith, have been away from a church for a long time, or are simply seeking to transfer your membership from another congregation, all participants in the ministries of Bethesda are encouraged to learn more about *Following Jesus (becoming passionate Disciples)*.

Should you have any questions about this process, please feel free to contact Pastor Malcolm by e-mail (prmalcolmb@gmail.com) or phone (425-778-6390). Thank you for worshipping at Bethesda.

The members of Bethesda Lutheran Church share the Gospel of Jesus Christ through our proclamation, celebration, and sharing the love of Christ with our neighbors through an accepting, caring community.

Thoughts For The Month

by *Jeanne Krahn*

Celery is the solution you're looking for and it sure beats a shot of cortisone! You can eat a few stalks of fresh celery or you can brew a cup of delicious tea using celery seeds. Why? Because celery is filled with natural COX-2 inhibitors, a main ingredient in popular pain-relieving (like sore knees) and inflammation-fighting drugs, and celery doesn't come with a 2-yards long list of side effects and warnings. OK, how's that for a useful thought for 2011?

Advent began on the 4th Sunday before Christmas and continues until Christmas Day. Advent is derived from the Latin word "adventus" meaning arrived and refers to a "coming". It's a time of preparation for the coming of Christ and making room for Him in our hearts and homes. So I'm 1 out of 2—always He's in my heart, but we're way behind on preparing our home! But, hey! Christ-child comes ready or not and the gift-giving comes with Epiphany, our family twelfth night—arrival of the Magi, family and gift remembrances, so relax. How did this custom of gift-giving arise? Some have attributed it to 7th century central Europe. They believed that evil spirits came to earth during winter solstice to destroy the fertility of the land. People gave gifts to these evil spirits to keep them amused. (I've heard a few people doing similar things in this day and age.) Pope Gregory advised his missionaries to adapt this pagan custom to Christian worship. Pun time: Christmas is a time when some people try to forget the past and focus on the presents.

OK! OK! 'Nuf Christmas for you. Obviously we're still putting it all together. After two parties, one luncheon, and three memorials in ten days, too many up and down emotions at our ages—not conducive to the Christmas "do's". My sister-in-law lectures "if we'd stay home once in awhile, we'd get something done at home."

Well...with all the holiday festivities in your lives, did you expand your circle? Someone has said "technology has unleashed an ugliness in us", creating too much people problems of disconnectedness, loneliness, etc. Sometimes that baggage of old hurts isn't worth hanging on to—nothing left to gain, or to protect or to punish. Anyone in your family (or friends) not speaking to others for years? It usually hurts everyone around, doesn't it? Often carrying the grudge reaches the point of becoming more uncomfortable for everyone than dropping that baggage. After everything, what's your pay for boycotting? If one thinks about it, it's probably too uncomfortable for God to see humans acting this way, but He seems to be hanging in with us anyway. Perhaps God will even tolerate yet. Perhaps that way of "being" is too uncomfortable for everyone involved (even with smiles, or is it a smirk on faces), even God, to put God and other people through that. Let it go and expand your circle. Reap the benefits of staying connected! Nicolas Boathman's book "*Convince Them in 90 Seconds*" deals more with business connections on health benefits as he

refers to them but here's three "recipes" for us to ponder and act upon:


1. "Pay attention—for one day, make a mental note of the eye color of everyone you meet. You don't have to remember the color, just take notice. This will get you in the habit of looking people directly in the eyes, which relays confidence". Let's try it next Sunday when "passing the peace". Show we truly care.
2. Synchronize—put the people around you at ease by matching their body language and tone of voice.
3. Be open—make a habit of pointing your heart at the heart of everyone you encounter to display openness and build trust and comfort.

The awareness of the power of affection and caring to unlock human capabilities is at least 2,000 years old. Artist Bonnie Mohr has a touching print of our inspirational journey through life—thoughtful-isms for 2011—called "*Living Life*". "Life is not a race but indeed a journey. Be honest. Work hard. Be choosy. Say "thank you", "I love you" and "great job" to someone each day. Go to church, take time for prayer. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh. Let your handshake mean more than pen and paper. Love your life and what you've been given. It is not accidental. Search for your purpose and do it as best you can. Dreaming does matter. It allows you to become that which you aspire to be. Laugh often. Appreciate the little things in life and enjoy them. Some of the best things really are free. Do not worry—less wrinkles are more becoming. Forgive—it frees the soul. Take time for yourself—plan for longevity. Recognize the special people you've been blessed to know. Live for today, enjoy the moments."

Karen Armstrong, a former nun, a preeminent theologian and an ambassador for the United Nations Alliance of Civilization (there really is some!) author of "*The Case For God*" writes "Religion was never supposed to provide answers to questions that lay within the reach of human reason Religion's task, closely allied to that of art, was to help us live creatively, peacefully, and even joyously with realities for which there were not easy explanations and problems that we could not solve", etc. Interesting book on how conceptions of faith, belief, myth, truth, dogma and mystery have transformed through the ages leading to an increase in both of fundamentalism and atheism.

Whoosh, 'nuf heavy, heavy! Leaves your minds like cherries bubbling around in a sea of whip cream—ready to tackle the problems of 2011. For myself, I seek a world free of war and the threat of war, a society with equity and justice for all, a community where every person's potential may be fulfilled and an earth restored. Let's all then try what love and caring can do to mend a broken world.

Happy New Year!

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<h1>JANUARY 2011</h1>						1  NEW YEAR'S Day
2 Worship - 10:15am All Nations Harvest Church - 1:00pm Comm. Dinner prep. 3:00pm	3 Ruth/Miriam Circle 2:00pm @ J. Krahn's Community Dinner 5:30pm WAM Comm. Mtg. 5:30pm Facilities Committee 6:30pm @ J. Minnis' Girl Scouts - 6:45pm	4 Brownies 6:30pm Jammers rehearsal 7:00pm	5 Mtlk. Terr. Sr's. lunch - Noon Al-Anon Mtg. 7:00pm	6 Brownies 6:30pm Choir rehearsal 7:00pm	7 Mtlk. Terr. Sr's. lunch - Noon AA Mtg. 6:00pm	8 Hospitality Comm. Mtg. 10:00am Exec. Comm. Mtg. Noon
9 Worship - 10:15am All Nations Harvest Church - 1:00pm Comm. Dinner prep. 3:00pm	10 More Than Membership 10:00 am Sue's Bible Study 2:00pm Community Dinner 5:30pm Finance Committee 7:00pm	11 Jammers rehearsal 7:00pm	12 Esther Circle 10:00am Mtlk. Terr. Sr's. lunch - Noon Al-Anon Mtg. 7:00pm	13 Life Group 6:00pm Brownies 6:30pm Choir rehearsal 7:00pm	14 Mtlk. Terr. Sr's. lunch - Noon AA Mtg. 6:00pm	15
16 Worship - 10:15am All Nations Harvest Church - 1:00pm Comm. Dinner prep. 3:00pm	17 Community Dinner 5:30pm	18 Brownies 6:30pm Jammers rehearsal 7:00pm <u>NEWSLETTER DEADLINE</u>	19 Mtlk. Terr. Sr's. lunch - Noon Al-Anon Mtg. 7:00pm	20 Brownies 6:30pm Choir rehearsal 7:00pm	21 Mtlk. Terr. Sr's. lunch - Noon AA Mtg. 6:00pm	22
23 Worship - 10:15am All Nations Harvest Church - 1:00pm Comm. Dinner prep. 3:00pm	24 Sue's Bible Study 2:00pm Community Dinner 5:30pm Council Meeting 7:00pm	25 Twins Club 5:00pm Jammers rehearsal 7:00pm	26 Mtlk. Terr. Sr's. lunch - Noon Al-Anon Mtg. 7:00pm	27 Life Group 6:00pm Brownies 6:30pm Choir rehearsal 7:00pm	28 Mtlk. Terr. Sr's. lunch - Noon AA Mtg. 6:00pm	29 Men's Fellowship 8:00 am
30 Worship - 10:15am Congregational meeting All Nations Harvest Church - 1:00pm Comm. Dinner prep. 3:00pm	31 Community Dinner 5:30pm	<p>Help Bethesda reduce its printing and mailing expense by receiving Bethesda's newsletter via e-mail!! The newsletter is also available on our website. If you are interested in being removed from the mailing list, contact Jean Leavens:</p> <p>Phone: 425-778-6390 E-mail: jean@bethesdalcm.com</p>				

JANUARY



2 - Derald Porter	19 - Anny Glebe
Garry Swierenga	20 - Laurie Olson (Pearson)
4 - Marie Fay	21 - Audriana Hindman
8 - Sue Rasmussen	22 - Spencer Bueing
11 - Ray Rasmussen	24 - Zackery Goldsmith
13 - Dylan Olson	28 - Walter Smith
15 - Lillian Cunningham	30 - Joan Minnis

We want to give Roy Johnson a great big thank you for the beautiful holder he made for the Advent wreath and candles.

My Dearest Bethesda Family,

I am so blessed to have you all in my life! Your love for me and for Bill is so strong, it helps me be strong! Bill and I shared a wonderful life together. I am so grateful that God let me be Bill's companion for his final chapter. Even though he was a professed atheist, he recognized the gifts of love and acceptance that you gave to him. Bill looked forward to attending worship with me and with my dad and me. Your cards, kind words, emails, cookies, flowers, fellowship and more help me accept his passing with grace and peace. May the Lord bless and keep us safe with His loving Grace.

Peace. Your sister in Christ, Dena Lee-Cumming.

Brothers and Sisters in Christ - ***Thank You,***

Your generosity blesses me and humbles me and for that I am very grateful. Thank You I thank God for you daily and am grateful for who you are and all that you do to further God's mission to bless and heal our world. Thank you for your generous gift and your generosity of spirit.

Thank you again of behalf of Charlie and me for you concern and care this last fall as we lost our beloved Della and for you continued prayers for us.

It is a pleasure to serve with you in our mission field and to wonder with God how we are called to serve our world and community—

With gratefulness and love,

Pastor Malcolm and Charlie Brown

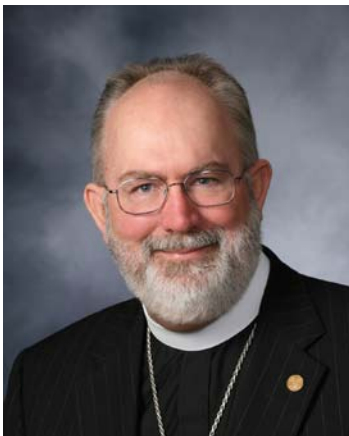
The Spirit

Volume 28, Number 1

News for the congregations of the Northwest Washington Synod of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

January 2011

Chicks For Ethiopia by The Rev. Wm Chris Boerger, Bishop



For, as I can testify, they voluntarily gave according to their means, and even beyond their means, begging us earnestly for the privilege of sharing in this ministry to the saints~ and this, not merely as we ex-

pected; they gave themselves first to the Lord and, by the will of God, to us,
(2Corinthians 8:3-5)

I have commented before that we need to be on guard to avoid the conflict between sharing the Gospel of Jesus and sharing God's compassion in acts of kindness.

I do hear people criticize the church either for only focusing on the physical needs of others or only focusing on the spiritual needs of others. This is a false dichotomy. We are called to do both.

Now we have a project that allows us to do both at the same time. Our Global Missions Committee is working to raise funds for a chicken hatchery in Ethiopia. This project will be built on the grounds of the former Haik Orphanage that we have supported in the past. It is another example of what our ministry of accompaniment can do in a sister church.

The project will accomplish the primary task of providing a sustainable food source to the people of this area. That is a reason for us to support this

project with our companion synod in Ethiopia. The uniqueness of this project is that it will also provide funds for training lay evangelists for the church.

Our companion synod has grown through the work of the trained evangelists. They need funds to continue this training. The "profits" from the hatchery will provide a sustainable income for this training.

One of the strengths of our culture is that we like to think big. We want projects that will do big things and fix major issues. That strength can be a weakness when we overlook the little things that the rest of the world depends upon.

The Chicken Hatchery is one of those "little things" that often are overlooked. Our relationship with this companion synod and the good work of the members of our Ethiopian work group has made us aware of this possibility.

I want to commend this project to you. If God has called you to help feed those who are hungry, here is an opportunity. If God has called you to help raise up workers for the harvest, here is an opportunity. I invite your support of this unique and yet simple project for reach out with food and with the Gospel.

(Editor's Note: Packets of information were delivered to each congregation in the Northwest Washington Synod containing a DVD and other materiel that explains how to participate in the Chicken Hatchery Project in Ethiopia. Please consider how you can be a part of this ministry. For more information contact Ken Halvorson at halvorson7@verizon.net.)

Here 'n There

- **Ballard First Lutheran in Seattle** received a thank you note from The Church of Steadfast Love because they had loaned their van for a trip to Holden Village. A couple of the comments were: "Because of your van, we got to see the beauty of this great state of Washington. Thanks so much." "Whoa! Smooth ride. Thank you for your generosity. It is much appreciated."
- If you give to **ELCA World Hunger** between now and the end of the year you can double your gift. Generous friends of ELCA World Hunger have joined forces to create a pool of matching funds to double your gift--dollar for dollar. Between now and December 31, all gifts from individuals will be automatically matched, up to \$250,000. Visit www.elca.org and click on hunger on the homepage.
- Members at **Bethany Lutheran in Seattle** are holding a shoe drive. Members bring new shoes or boots for children for two Sundays in December. The shoes/boots are blessed before they are delivered to the children at the Mukilteo ECEAO Preschool.
- Members at **Bethany Lutheran on Bainbridge Island** have donated more than 250 pounds of produce to Helpline. The produce comes from the garden at Bethany as well as members' gardens.
- **Holy Spirit Lutheran in Kirkland** donated \$1,050 to Hopelink. Hopelink offers vital services to poor, homeless and vulnerable people in the Kirkland area.
- **Faith Lutheran in Seattle** collected 963 pounds of food and \$2320 for the University Food Bank.
- **Kent Lutheran in Kent**, in conjunction with the City of Kent and Catholic Community Services, is once again opening its doors to families, women and men living in their cars, woods or on the streets during cold weather. Temperatures have to be below 32 degrees. And, **Our Saviour's Lutheran in Arlington** has partnered with Arlington congregations to offer a Severe Weather Shelter. The congregations take turns hosting the shelter.

Any Tuesday or Wednesday, when the temperature is below 32 degrees, you will find members with those in need in the sanctuary for the night.

- **Oak Harbor Lutheran in Oak Harbor** opens its doors to students from Oak Harbor High School (across the street from the church) for Mocha Monday. Members offer food, fellowship and a place to do homework. During October the congregation welcomed more than 100 students at a time.
- The Sunday School children at **Salem Lutheran in Mount Vernon** are collecting pennies to be donated to *Pennies for Peace*. The pennies will be presented to Dr. Greg Mortenson (author of *Three Cups of Tea*) when he speaks at Skagit Valley Community College in January. (Editor's Note: Mortenson will be speaking on January 27. Information can be found on the calendar on the synod's website at www.lutheransnw.org.)
- Last year members at **Central Lutheran in Everett** were able to gift 105 baskets of holiday food for Thanksgiving and Christmas. This year members are gifting 106 baskets to honor their 106th anniversary as a congregation.

The Spirit, a publication of the Northwest Washington Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), is intended for members, leaders, and clergy of synod congregations and organizations. Congregations are encouraged to copy *The Spirit* and include it in their own newsletters. *The Spirit* can be downloaded from the Synod website.

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Information for the February issue of *The Spirit* is due to the Synod Office by Wednesday, January 5.

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