

# The Promise

People of God

Seeking, Seeding, Serving & Spreading God's Love



The Monthly Newsletter of Covenant Lutheran Church—ELCA

## MESSAGE FROM PASTOR MARK

January 2012

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### Wishing you a Messy New Year

Preparing for the Christmas message this year, I noticed the Gospel of Luke is messy! Mary isn't even officially married to Joseph; yet she is pregnant; they have traveled from Nazareth to Bethlehem over 40 miles through Samaritan and Judean Hills that are not the safest areas to travel. Mary goes into labor in Bethlehem – but there is no proper room or bed for her; she gives birth – never an easy process under the best of circumstances and has to lay her firstborn infant not in a cradle built by grandpa but a feeding trough. In the middle of the night shepherds burst in upon them, people who smell like wood smoke and sweat and sheep, still shocked by what they saw in the sky. Joseph must have been on edge because these men would not have been the most welcomed intruders considering that in their culture they were considered rough and dangerous! The true Christmas story seems to be messy. If we quickly put ourselves into this situation; we sense pretty quickly it is no glittering Christmas card. It is real life...messy.

Christmas came to a family this year in an unexpected place. There was a young couple who I met this past fall. He was working at a local restaurant for minimum wages and his fiancée was a very young woman in her last four weeks of pregnancy – they were forced to move out of their residence, close to homeless they were toting a three-year-old. Burrowed into a motel room on the eastside of Stoughton with all their belongings and scraping up just enough money to purchase a bit of food from Quick Trip. The money ran out when they called and we helped them stay in that motel for another 10 days. After that they connected to START and together we began to build connections for them to move into an upper flat, helped her find a job at the hospital after the baby was born and saw to it that they had enough to eat in a healthy way using fresh food. Two members of our congregation helped them move to a new flat providing a few items of furniture that would be helpful for a young family. It was in the lives of this young couple and their precious children that you begin to see the real

meaning of Christmas. It is here with children who are hungry that the real meaning of Christmas takes shape. Life for this family is messy!

It doesn't take long to see in our lives – even important things do not always or even usually happen exactly when and where we want them to. There can be a tendency when things do not come together smoothly, to wonder what has gone wrong with our prayers or our relationship with God. My friends this is precisely why the "true" story of Christ's birth is far more helpful than the parody we immerse ourselves in.

Here is the Good News of Christmas—our God embraces our mess. This Son of God comes into your life no matter how messed up it may be. That's God's signature. His sign, God doesn't care how messy your life is. Your mess does not scare God at all. When we pause and reflect we see that Jesus started his life in a mess, wrapped in rags and placed in a manger and he ended his life in a mess, wrapped in rags after being hung on a cross.

As you celebrate the New Year this week remember that you are part of God's amazing love story. If you are one who loves another like God loves people; then you are attracted to those who suffer, who struggle and who are despised. You are God's people who are willing to enter the mess and get a little dirty. Maybe 2012 is the year to muddy ourselves in the love of God...So let me wish you a very messy New Year! You are loved – Pastor Mark

### MESSAGE FROM PASTOR GEORGE

just visiting with pastor george...DRAWN CLOSER TO GOD

On January 6, just after the 12 days of Christmas, we begin Epiphany. We witness God's light shining in and through and out from him. This brief season of the church year always calls me to think about ministry, about how Jesus draws us closer to God and to one another. A lover does that. A lover wants to deepen his or her relationship with the beloved. As Jesus heard at his baptism, "You are my Son, the beloved" (Mark 1:11a); in our baptism God also declared that love to and for us.

As pastor of senior ministry, I know that, no matter what our ages, Jesus never stops drawing us closer to God and to others whom God loves. As we enter this new calendar year (2012) and this new church season (Epiphany), I desire that all of us at Covenant welcome ways that Jesus draws us closer.

...**WORSHIP** brings God's living Word to us in songs, scripture, sermon, prayer and the holy meal.

...**STUDY** opens us to explore topics to help us understand how God communicates and works in this world. Sunday forums offer a variety of thoughtful themes. Our Neighbors' Faith: Islam will probe a religion that most of us do not understand very well; check out the article about this January-February course in this issue of The Promise. Also, consideration has begun regarding a journey to Holden Village near

Chelan, Washington, for a retreat week in September; watch for more information soon!

...**SERVICE** shows our humanness, caring for one another in our everyday lives and work, living out God's image in which God created us. Service happens in our involvement in ministries of the church, too. Service/mission trips take us to places hit hard by nature's destructive forces. Seven of us had a very fulfilling experience last November in Nashville as we partnered with Lutheran Disaster Response. Now Minot, North Dakota, needs help because of the terrible floods last summer. Late spring or summer seems the likely time for us to go. All skill levels can help. Lutheran Disaster Response awaits our response.

...**FELLOWSHIP** puts us in closer contact with other followers of Jesus. The next Senior Luncheon will happen Tuesday, February 7. Singles and couples of all ages can participate in "Getting To Know You" Meal Groups; Round 2 runs from February through June with sign-up in January.

Yes, Epiphany engages us with the light of the world, Jesus, shining in this world, seeking to drive out the darkness we know in many different ways. As we begin this New Year 2012, I encourage all of us to resolve to worship, study, serve and have contact with others who journey with Jesus. **And always remember the most important resolution: God has resolved to draw close to you in Jesus!** Welcome his light!

**MESSAGE FROM MARK DOLL,  
MINISTER OF FAITH DEVELOPMENT**

I sit here in the living room writing this on Christmas Day (I know that it's late to get it into the Promise, but I'll find a way) and having heard two Christmas messages, one from Pastor Mark, one from Pastor George, that I thought both did a wonderful job of capturing the joy of Christmas, the messiness of Christmas, and perhaps most importantly, the responsibility of Christmas.

I heard about responsibility to those in our community, and I heard about responsibility in our world. I heard about those needing homes in Stoughton, I heard about those fighting malaria in Africa. I heard about the obligation we have to make a difference. I heard about how that we have the resources, but we often fail to respond.

At the very same time, I'm almost exactly halfway through "A Hole in Our Gospel," by Richards Stearns, president of World Vision. This book is another incredible reminder of our responsibilities in the world – the responsibility to stamp out poverty, and all that goes with it. And one of the most moving sections of the book so far has been a quote from the singer Bono, who is speaking about AIDS in Africa when he says:

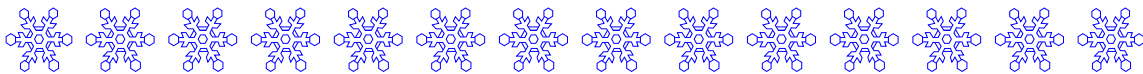
"Fifteen thousand Africans are dying each day of preventable, treatable diseases – AIDS, malaria, TB – for lack of drugs that we take

for granted. That statistic alone makes a fool of the idea many of us hold onto very tightly: the idea of equality ... because if we're honest, there's no way we could conclude that such mass death day after day would ever be allowed to happen anywhere else ... deep down, if we really accept that their lives – African lives – are equal to ours, we would all be doing more to put the fire out."

I am grateful for God's presence in the midst of the mess of our world. But, recognizing that presence challenges me to live up to my responsibility to act. We all have that responsibility.

In late February, we will be holding a 30-Hour -Famine, an event sponsored by World Vision, in which we will be raising money to fight poverty in Africa. No, the money we raise won't make a difference to the thousands of children in Africa who will die today, but what if everyone felt a responsibility to fight for the lives of those who will die tomorrow, the next day, and the day after, all from causes that we would never accept here in the United States?

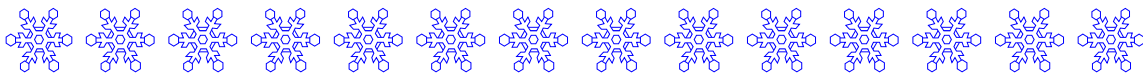
We've been blessed. As we often say in confirmation: Blessed to be a blessing. Let it be so!



**4TH ANNUAL FROSTY FAMILY FUN NIGHT  
MARTIN LUTHER CHRISTIAN SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE  
JANUARY 24TH—5:00 TO 7:00 PM**

OPEN TO THE STOUGHTON COMMUNITY. PLEASE JOIN US FOR "FROSTY ACTIVITIES" AND ENJOY AN ICE CREAM SUNDAE. VISIT OUR CLASSROOMS AND CHILDCARE FACILITY, MEET OUR EXPERIENCED TEACHING STAFF AND DISCOVER THE EXCEPTIONAL PROGRAMS MLCS HAS TO OFFER.

**4-YEAR-OLD KINDERGARTEN (4K)  
3-YEAR-OLD PRESCHOOL  
JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN (JK)  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL K-5  
CHILDCARE 6 WEEKS-12 YEARS**



### Gratitude is Good for Your Health

<sup>28</sup> *We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.* Romans 8:28

As we start the New Year, many of us make resolutions to improve ourselves or to start a new focus. I begin "officially" in a new role, as your Parish Nurse. With this new role, I have a renewed sense of gratitude. Gratitude seems to become more heightened around the holidays, when we stop to observe the richness around us - the beautiful world, our family and loved ones in our lives.

Studies show that grateful people have more energy and optimism, are more resilient in the face of stress, have better health and suffer less depression than the rest of us. People who practice gratitude are more compassionate, more likely to help others, less materialistic and more satisfied with life.

According to Prevention magazine, two psychologists, Robert Emmons, PhD, of UC Davis and Michael McMullough, PhD the University of Miami, conducted a study on gratitude and thankfulness. They divided hundreds of people into three groups, each of which was instructed to keep a different type of journal. One group recorded daily events, another recorded daily hassles. People in the third group made lists of what they were grateful for. This last group reported more alertness and optimism and better progress toward goals. These people also felt more loved. As my Grandma used to say, you catch more bees with honey than with vinegar, when you're appreciative and kind, others mirror that back.

Research on grateful people also finds that they report a sense of the "interconnectedness" of all life. The New Year is a great time to aspire to that state of mind.

It is easy to forget that just being alive is a blessing, and that the world is full of wonder and opportunity, even when life seems less than perfect. Practicing gratitude seems fitting during the Christmas season and New Year, because that is the true promise of the holiday season. Family time and holiday celebrations are an important focus, but gratitude can also be an attitude for life. When gratitude is the

lens through which we view the world, stress and aggravations recede. Our true nature of happiness shines through.

I am starting out this New Year with a heightened sense of gratitude toward my family, my church family! I hope that you share this feeling. When making our New Year resolutions, let's strive to put one obligation on the top of the list; to give thanks and practice gratitude...

Happy New Year!  
~Sue Richards, RN, Parish Nurse



### THANK YOU!

Thank you to Denise Pasold and Nancy Yaun for decorating the sanctuary so beautifully for Advent and Christmas!

### VALENTINE CRAFT NIGHT JANUARY 20, 2012

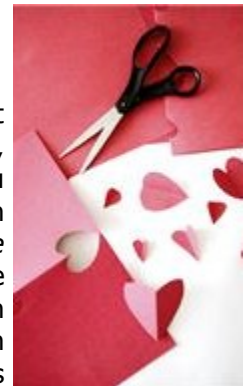
The annual Valentine Craft Night will be held Friday, January 20, 2012. If you would like to participate in this event, *please reserve your spot in advance* on the sign-up sheet located on the Hospitality bulletin board space in Covenant's narthex. (Sign-up is required so we can plan for materials needed.)

Age groups: Any (children must be accompanied by an adult)

Fee: \$2 per person

Invite a friend or two! Anyone is welcome to join in the activity (just please make sure to include all names on the sign-up sheet so we can plan for materials).

Please contact Denise Pigarelli at 873-0296



## SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWS

### Newborn Health Kits

During the month of December Faith in Action asked the congregation to support Newborn Health Kits and on Christmas Day our treasurer wrote out a check for \$1004 and placed it in the manger. Through this congregation's generosity we can now purchase 83 Newborn Kits. This gift is applied towards our goal of 500 kits in 2012.



The birth of a baby should be a happy experience. In some countries, however, it brings new worries and problems. What if the baby is ill? How do we keep the baby warm? How do we feed another mouth? When the newborn arrives it may be with the assistance of the local midwife - if there is one in the area, and if the family will accept her assistance. We at Covenant have the opportunity to provide "Newborn Kits" to areas in the world where they are needed so that the midwives and the new mothers may feel that they are not alone, that someone cares, and that they can welcome the babies into a safer world.

Covenant has given many Newborn and Health Kits as partners with the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin to support Global Health Ministries. Our Faith-In-Action emphasis seeks to double what we've done in the past. Our generous gifts during Advent to this special Faith-In-Action goal enable our Social Justice Ministry Team to purchase needed items and assemble kits to take to Synod Assembly in May. Thank you so much! Please help Covenant meet and perhaps even exceed our goal of 500 kits! Brochures with details of kit contents are available on the table in the narthex. The cost for one Newborn Kit is \$12 and the cost of one Health Kit is \$15. These amounts are based on purchasing in "bulk" through cash donations.

### THANK YOU

Dear Members of Covenant Lutheran Church,  
Thank you so much for the wonderful warm clothing that you recently donated to the customers of Dane County Department of Human Services, Stoughton office. We appreciate so much your generosity and thoughtfulness. It will help to keep youth and families warm!

Thank you for your caring!

Fondly,  
Staff & Customers of DCDHS, Stoughton office

Dear Members of Covenant LDR Team,  
Thank you for your response to the middle Tennessee disaster. We thank you for your payment of \$350.00 to assist in helping us continue to provide housing and hospitality for our LDS sites at Faith Lutheran Church, Christ Lutheran Church and Mercy House.

Your volunteer time and energy and willingness to assist us in the time of recovery is appreciated by so many people—some who have been able to thank you and others who silently or in other ways want to express their gratitude.

May God's peace and love guide you and keep you—to continue to be a blessing to others. Thank you!

Blessings,  
Kathy Thoreson, MSW, Executive Director

### ELCA GOOD GIFTS

We experienced a very joyful Christmas this year giving away several pigs, sheep, and lots of chickens, a raft of ducks, and a trio of goats to people around the world. It was a messy jubilant experience naming these barnyard animals after people



we love and adore. We know in our hearts that each of the families in the world who received these sources of life – were reminded of the "true" Christmas story where Jesus was born in a messy stable. This gift brought peace to each one of us. We would like to thank our Social Justice team for suggesting it during December!

To all of you who blessed us with tasty reminders of your love, beautiful greetings and gifts given to the food pantry, ELCA Good Gifts, and River Pantry in our names this past Christmas; we say thank you for touching our lives with joy. There is so much delight giving to another child or family on behalf of someone you love! We are so grateful...

Mark and Peggy

## 2012 ADULT SERVICE/MISSION TRIP INFORMATION

In November six members of Covenant joined Pastor George for a service/mission trip to Nashville. They have expressed interest in another service/mission trip in 2012. Pastor George has contacted Lutheran Disaster Response in North Dakota. He received this letter which he shares with all of us at Covenant:

*Thank you for contacting Lutheran Disaster Response. We are excited to hear about your interest in coming to assist with the flood recovery efforts in Minot, North Dakota. There is still a lot of work to be done, so we appreciate your willingness to lend a hand!*

*Currently we are finishing the "muck & gut" of homes and the "button-up" phases in preparation for the breath-taking North Dakota winter. The remaining sanitizing jobs will be continued in the spring. We are now transitioning into the "rebuild" phase, that is, assessing the work to be done to bring the homes back to a safe, sanitary and secure environment for the essential living space in preparation for the rebuild phase. This phase has a great need of skilled volunteers (i.e., persons with experience in construction, carpentry, electrical work, plumbing, etc). If you would not consider yourself "skilled", we may put you to work in other areas or pair you up with a more skilled person.*



*Please note that all electrical and plumbing work must be done either by the homeowner or someone licensed and bonded in the state of North Dakota.*

*When you know the dates you can come, contact us so we can reserve room in the free housing available at local churches. At each housing location, you will be provided with an air mattress so please bring your own bedding. We also have free showering options, but please bring a towel. While these arrangements may not be 5-Star accommodations, after a hard day's work, it hopefully will seem adequate. These housing locations are in Minot and the surrounding areas, so be prepared to make a short drive each morning. On Monday - Saturday, the housing locations will provide breakfast and we will provide a sack lunch for the noon meal and offer a free meal in the evening.*

*Sincerely,  
Becky Wynia, Volunteer Coordinator*

Plans need to begin this month for us to serve in ND late this spring or early summer. Those who served on Covenant's LDR Team in 2011 (Pastor George, Linda Muller, David Nelson, Dan Oakland, Richard Shilts, Greg Vodak, and Penny Vodak) will happily share their perspectives. The cost of lodging with the meals included is \$20.00 per person. If you have any interest or want to learn more, contact Pastor George at 576-4916 or [pastor-george@chorus.net](mailto:pastor-george@chorus.net) or speak to him or a 2011 team member following worship the weekend of January 7-8. A meeting will be scheduled for later in January.

## RECYCLE THE WARMTH BLANKET DRIVE

Covenant will again be participating in the Society of St. Vincent de Paul's 20th Annual Recycle the Warmth Blanket Drive. This drive helps St. Vincent's provide free blankets, pillows, sheets and other bedding throughout the year to those who seek their help.



The drive will take place Friday through Sunday, January 27-29. To participate, you may purchase new blankets or donate your gently used blankets and bedding and place them in the large collection bin in the narthex at Covenant on the weekend of the drive. Donation receipts and envelopes will also be available on the Social Justice table.

Your generosity is greatly appreciated!

## SUNDAY SCHOOL

We had a great first half of the year, wrapping up with two tremendous Christmas programs on December 18<sup>th</sup>. With Christmas Day and New Year's Day falling on Sundays this year, and with no education programming those two weeks, it's easy to forget about Sunday school. **PLEASE DON'T!!!** Sunday school resumes on January 8<sup>th</sup> with our fourth Family Worship Service, a very special service as we celebrate "The Baptism of Our Lord" Sunday, with some special surprises. Don't miss this special service! Classroom Sunday school resumes on January 15<sup>th</sup>.

## OUR NEIGHBORS' FAITH: ISLAM

Pastor George states, "The first immigrants to this land came from nations in Europe where Christianity flourished. In the past several decades people from Asia, Africa and the Middle East have come; many of the most recent immigrants come from nations where Islam dominates. Who are Muslims? What do they believe? How much are they alike? How are they a threat or a blessing? What do we have in common with them, if anything? How do we differ? Can we live together in harmony in this country, on this planet?"

The Group Learning Task Team for Senior Ministries of Covenant has planned a six-week course on Islam from 9:30 to 11:00 am each Wednesday, January 11 through February 15. Video presentations and group discussions will give everyone a chance to share information, fears and hopes as we learn more about Islam, the faith of some of our newest neighbors.

Plans for January include:

January 11 (Session 1): Islam Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow

*Like Judaism and Christianity, Islam is one the great monotheistic faiths that traces its ancestry to Abraham.*

January 18 (Session 2): The Five Pillars of Islam

*Explore the core beliefs that unite all Muslims which are hallmarks that distinguish Islam from all other faiths.*

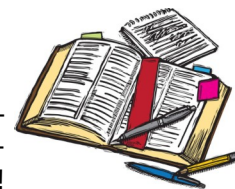
January 25 (Session 3): Muhammad—Prophet and Statesman

*In Medina, 622 B.C.E., Muhammad emerges as prophet, political ruler, military commander, chief judge and lawgiver of Muslim community.*

All are welcome to participate in one or all six sessions—no minimum age or pre-registration requirement!

## CONFIRMATION & PEER MINISTRY

Confirmation and Peer Ministry have had a great beginning to the year as well! Both resume on Wednesday, January 4 at 7:00 pm. In late December, progress reports were sent out for all confirmation students – if you did not receive one for your youth, please contact the church office.

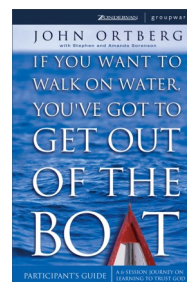


## SPECIAL ADULT FORUM ON ISLAM SUNDAY, JANUARY 29 9:15 am to 10:15 am

Ms. Rohany Nayan, a Muslim woman and Graduate Fellow at the Lubar Institute for Study of Abrahamic Religions (LISAR) at UW-Madison, will share insights into Islam during an open-mic session from 9:15 to 10:15 am. All in Covenant can join in the discussion to learn more about Muslims; attendance at the Wednesday sessions is not a pre-requisite!

## MEN'S BREAKFAST

The next Men's Breakfast will be on Saturday, January 14 at 7:30 am. Our study is the book *If You Want to Walk on Water You've Got to Get Out of the Boat!*, by John Ortberg. We meet on the **2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month from 7:30-9:00 am**. Bring your appetite and willingness to support one another. This is open to all men of the congregation (post confirmation).





### FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT FRIDAY, JANUARY 6 DOLPHIN TALE

*In an inspiring story of the bond between animals and humans, a boy named Sawyer discovers an injured dolphin, who is brought to a marine hospital and named Winter. Unfortunately, her injuries cost Winter her tail, without which she may not survive. But with Sawyer's devotion, a marine biologist's (Harry Connick Jr.) expertise and the brilliance of a prosthetist (Morgan Freeman) charged with creating a new tail, Winter may receive a second chance at life.*

Also stars Ashley Judd and Kris Kristofferson

Please join us in the Covenant Cinema on Friday, Jan. 6. The warm-up begins at 6:30, the movie starts promptly at 7:00, and the evening wraps up by 9:00. Popcorn and lemonade are provided, and it's all FREE!

#### WE THANK GOD FOR YOU...

Covenant's Youth would like to thank all of the members of our congregation who supported us in our "Bake In" fundraiser in December. Because of your generosity, we were able to raise \$463 which will be used to support our 30-Hour Famine efforts and provide us funds for future events and activities.

We would also like to recognize the following congregation members for their specific contributions to the "Bake In", which allowed us to have a very fun and successful evening.

Mary Soehner and Mary Grenie for kindly donating baking supplies.

Denise Pigarelli, Tammy Herman & Bird Bahnsen for organizing, preparing and cleaning up after a wonderful breakfast.

Chris Doll, Tammy Herman, Keith Poirier & Bird Bahnsen for helping in the kitchen during the chaotic baking hours.

Mark Doll for supervising in the wee hours of the morning.

We are truly blessed to have such a loving and faithful church family at Covenant.

"Bake In" Participants included: Erik Herman, Garrett Kluever, Sam Dirks, Dalton Bahnsen, Isaac Eugster, Noah Doll, Erik Hansen, Hannah Hobson, Tia Sundby, Raven Poirier, Julia Olson, Marissa Schimelfenig, Payton Kahl, Kelsey Taebel, Joe Nelson, Aaron Brown, Bryan Wendt and Braden Poirier.

#### 30 HOUR FAMINE February 24-25

What is a 30 Hour Famine you ask? Great question! Here's a little bit of the answer:

- It's a lock-in
- It's a learning experience
- It's a fund-raiser to fight world hunger
- It's a chance to experience something you've probably never tried before
- It's a night of games, movies, conversations and more
- It's a night without food (yes, really)
- It ends with a celebration meal!

The 30 Hour Famine is an overnight event for 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade youth, and you do not need to be a member of Covenant. Information will be sent out in early January to all those youth. We are also very much in need of adults to participate in this event – if you are interested in being part of this tremendous experience, please contact Lynn Poirier at 873-3204 or Mark Doll at 873-7494.



## COUNCIL NEWS



On December 11 we elected four new council members: Greg Clark, Christie Unzicker, Marijo Vols and Heidi Weber. Here are their hopes for Covenant:

Greg—growing attendance and helping the community grow in faith.

Christie—that Covenant stays active within the Stoughton community (i.e., Food Pantry, Our Daily Bread).

Marijo's—offer support groups such as Grief Support.

Heidi's—better the relationship between elders and younger members, increase new membership each year and for the congregation to become a stronger knit group.

### THANK YOU!

On January 22 we will take time to say thank you to four outgoing council members who have served so faithfully these past 3+ years: Council President Scott Dirks, Executive Council representative Justin Corbit, Secretary Kevin Samuelson and Council Liaison to Building and Grounds Brian Skonning. They have served well, take time to remind them how much you appreciate their service when you see them at worship or the congregational meeting in January.

“Well done, good and faithful servant!”  
Matthew 25:21, NIV



### ANNUAL MEETING—JANUARY 22, 11:30 AM

At our congregational meeting on January 22 we will extend our thanks to these faithful servants, present and adopt the budget for 2012, approve a new and updated constitution, introduce our Parish Nurse and educate the congregation about her position. In addition to these exciting aspects of the Annual Meeting as perusal we will have staff, team and ministry reports from 2011. Our Leadership Development Team did a wonderful job preparing people to serve in elected positions on behalf of our congregation, see below:

- Covenant Lutheran Church Endowment Foundation: Lori Hedman, Mark Herbst & Don Warren
- Skaalen Home Liaisons: Laura Spencer & Carolyn Carroll
- Lutherdale: Dawn Hanson
- South-Central Synod of Wisconsin Assembly: Bruce Helland & Julie Pankow-Helland
- Health Team: Lois Craig & Penny Vodak

Finally we need a little help. Only two areas need to be filled. **We need three volunteers for Audit Committee and two volunteers to serve on the Leadership Development Team** (A well polished group of people who will mentor you with responsibilities). If you have the gifts and talents to assist in these areas, the Leadership Team (Julie Pankow-Helland, Randy Weber, Richard Shilts or Pastor Mark) would like to talk with you.

### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

On December 4 Covenant welcomed the following new members:

**Dave, Maria & Samantha Austin**  
**Rob, Katie, Kailey (Bright), Hannah, Alexandra & Samantha Bridgwater**  
**David & Chassity Ehr**  
**Jenny Peterson**  
**John, Lori, Amanda & Katelyn Schlimgen**  
**Gary, Donna, Kelsey & Matt Tarpinian**  
**Courtney Toso & Hailey Brown**  
**Josh Wrhel**

We are looking for twelve people who would like to extend a welcome to people visiting our church for the first time. We have a dream of training twelve sets of two to visit and welcome the stranger in our midst. This past October we trained the first group of *Hospitality Greeters* at Covenant. We are offering the second training on January 8<sup>th</sup> after worship with brunch being offered to those who participate. We would like to commission all of the visitors on January 22<sup>nd</sup> at the 10:30 service. See the sign up and invitation in front of the hospitality center.



The goal is to have two people serve every twelve weeks to visit our guests with a hospitality bag of information, gift certificate to Fosdal's for a treat of fresh bread or dessert and a thank you for joining us at worship. It is also our intent to coach members of our congregation to staff the hospitality center in front of our sound room. In many ways this is an opportunity to welcome others in the name of our Lord.

The training will be conducted by our Faith in Action Hospitality Team - Julie Rice, Patty Anderson, Kelly Schieldt, Kathy Olson, Judy Roy and Denise Pigarelli. We will have a delicious luncheon prepared just for you. If you are at all interested, check out the display at the back of the church and sign up. We will welcome you!

Together we can say  
 "Welcome in the Name of Jesus,"  
 Your Faith in Action Hospitality Team

In the world of Jesus the five traditional acts or gifts of hospitality that were required for a guest once that person crossed the threshold into the home:

1. Offering a drink of water
2. Washing the feet of the guest
3. Greeting the guest with a kiss
4. Anointing or washing the head
5. Offering the guest something to eat

Covenant's training may not be as intimate as a kiss or washing another but it includes carrying a gift, a treat, a thank you and a welcome to our community. Are you interested?

Hospitality Visiting Team

### "Getting to Know You" MEAL GROUPS—ROUND 2!

Gathering around a table in a group of **seven to nine people** to share a meal provides a great way to get to know other members and friends of Covenant on a more personal and relaxed basis, one meal at a time. Each group **meets four times in four and a half months (February—mid-June)**. The only **agenda is a meal together to allow time for free-flowing conversation** (although some groups may choose to play games or cards or go to a movie or play or ???).

Members of each group take turns hosting their group in their homes or at a restaurant on a day and time the group decides. The host(s) prepares the main course and supplies the beverage, while the other group members bring appetizer, salad/vegetable, or dessert. If the host/hostess prefers, you can choose to eat together at a restaurant that the host(s) would select for their particular month.

We had seven groups in Round 1! Now anyone may sign up as a couple, single or two single friends for Round 2. No age limits apply! You will be randomly assigned to a group with people you may or may not know. This lets you get to know new people or get to know old acquaintances even better. It's amazing what we can learn about and from others over four meals together

Sign up on the bulletin board in the narthex or contact Pastor George for information at 576-4916 or at [georgec@covluth.org](mailto:georgec@covluth.org).

**January 29 is the deadline to sign up to be included in Round 2 for February through mid-June!**



# JANUARY WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

## Acolyte Schedule—January 2012

<b><u>Sunday, Jan. 1</u></b>	<b>8:00 am</b> Brandon Sveum & Cade Pasold <b>10:30 am</b> Nicole Hansen & Alex Pigarelli
<b><u>Sunday, Jan. 8</u></b>	<b>8:00 am</b> Dalton Bahnson & Joe Nelson <b>10:30 am</b> Katelyn Schlimgen & Megan Reese
<b><u>Sunday, Jan. 15</u></b>	<b>8:00 am</b> Alecia Chicker & Claire Schmaling <b>10:30 am</b> Shelby Purves & Jack Purves
<b><u>Sunday, Jan. 22</u></b>	<b>8:00 am</b> Kelsey Taebel & Kailey Taebel <b>10:30 am</b> Hannah Hobson & Hunter Brekke
<b><u>Sunday, Jan. 29</u></b>	<b>8:00 am</b> Bryan Wendt & Kyle Freeman <b>10:30 am</b> Kailey Bright & Bailey Vance

***If you are unable to fill your scheduled time, please switch with a friend.  
Please call the church office (873-7494) so names can be changed in the bulletin. Thank you!***

**January Altar Guild:** Jack & Eileen Nelson

**January Communion Committee:** Jeff & Julie Rice and Kelly Schieldt

## Saturday Schedule—January 2012

		<b><u>Ushers/Communion Assistants</u></b>	<b><u>Lector</u></b>
Dec. 31, 2011	5:30	Doll Family	Matt Doll
Jan. 7, 2012	5:30	Tim Osterhaus & Brenda Warren	Brenda Warren
Jan. 14, 2012	5:30	Lynn Tews & Christy Unzicker	Lynn Tews
Jan. 21, 2012	5:30	Becca Sundby & Beth Hilgendorf	Tim Melland
Jan. 28, 2012	5:30	Pigarelli Family	Denise Pigarelli

## Sunday Schedule—January 2012

		<b><u>Communion Assistants</u></b>	<b><u>Lector</u></b>	<b><u>Greeters</u></b>	<b><u>Ushers</u></b>
Jan. 1, 2012	8:00	Ann Nelson & Phyllis Hein	Ann Nelson	David & Ann Nelson	Nissler
	10:30	Michelle Walker & Sue Richards	Michelle Walker	Ralph & Wilma Baumbach	Heil
Jan. 8, 2012	8:00	Eric & Eve Christoffersen	Beth Gardner	Eric & Eve Christoffersen	Soehner
	10:30	George & Lois Craig	Lois Craig	George & Lois Craig	Herbst
Jan. 15, 2012	8:00	Tyler Wendt & Lauren Wendt	Tyler Wendt	Keith & Julie Hanson	Olson
	10:30	Greg Clark & Dawn Mulcahy	Greg Clark	Jennie Eddingsaas	Fossen
Jan. 22, 2012	8:00	Jeff Peterson & Max Mchone	Jeff Petersen	Shirley Kiesling	Nissler
	10:30	Scott Dirks & Peter Dirks	Scott Dirks	Ann Winecke	Soehner
Jan. 29, 2012	8:00	Richard & Karen Shilts	Cade Pasold	Richard & Karen Shilts	Soehner
	10:30	Meghann Fougrousse & Reghan Anderson	Meghann Fougrousse	Marcia Trentz	Heil