

# TRINITY'S GOOD

VOLUME 12 ISSUE 1

JANUARY 2011

Dear Family and Friends of Trinity,

Grandma and Grandpa (Karen's parents) just rolled into town last night for a visit. We were talking about how my dad's death has effected each of us, and Karen's mom was sharing how it has made her want to put her roots down – to really draw from her community and church as well as contribute to it. She and Karen's dad are retired and have spent more time on the road than at home as they traveled the country visiting their five children spread from Tacoma, Washington to New York City. "I feel a desire for something new," she said, "you know that verse about old wineskins and new? This year will be a year of new wineskins!"

Maybe you don't recall exactly the verse she was referring to... I looked it up also to refresh my memory ☺! It's from a parable of Jesus in Luke 5:36-38 (Lutheran Study Bible 1707) – *"No one tears a piece of cloth from a new garment and sews it on an old garment; otherwise the new will be torn, and the piece from the new will not match the old. And no one puts new wine in old wineskins; otherwise the new wine will burst the skins and will be spilled, and the skins will be destroyed. But new wine must be put into fresh wineskins."*

The idea is that Christ is doing something big, something amazing, something new, and we can't be filled with this something new and stay the same. We can't stay the same and apply a new piece of cloth, otherwise when it is washed and worn, it will shrink and tear away. We can't stay the same and fill ourselves with new wine (figuratively!), otherwise the wineskins will burst.

This Christmas, we were reminded that God *continues* to do big, amazing, new things in us through the gift of Jesus, the light and life of the world. But are we ready and able to hold it? Are we fit to be vessels of this new wine? Unfortunately, the answer for all of us is, "No." We are old wineskins, but fortunately, God doesn't give up on us! Through God's Word (Bible), water (baptism), and wine (communion),

God creates faith in us, faith that calls and empowers us to start each day fresh and strive to be new wineskins.

As we start a new year and undoubtedly countless New Year's resolutions will be made (and broken), how can I, you, and we as a congregation be better wineskins for God? How can we be filled with the light and life of Christ and carry it to share with others? I want to tend to my roots. Am I really drawing from the nutrients of God's Word, water, and wine in my life?

Over the past few months, I have placed a greater importance on God's Word in my life. I've been reading my Bible daily (you may remember the confession I made last summer about the dust on my Bible?) and it has revealed a power within me... the power of new wine (figuratively)! It has given me comfort in difficult times, direction in confusing times, joy in thankful times, and a thirst and desire for more.

In our congregation, the council has been discussing our need for God's Word and has been encouraging everyone to be more diligent in daily devotions. To pick up a Lutheran Study Bible (LSB) in the Welcome Center for yourself or a friend. To bring a Bible to church and read it during worship (the LSB page numbers are even printed in the bulletin now to make it easier!). We are even discussing the possibility of putting Bibles in the pews to help everyone sink their roots into God's Word during the weekly readings.

God is doing big, amazing, new things in our lives, congregation, and community. How are your roots? How is God calling and equipping you to be a new wineskin for Christ? May God fill you with much new wine (figuratively!) this year... and may we celebrate Christ's love as we welcome, encourage, and serve God's people!

God bless,  
Pastor Adam

## JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

1/01 Greg Ufkes  
1/02 Tonya Boyer, Wyatt Brown  
1/04 Jeremy Ufkes, Chris Harrell  
1/05 Morris Gronewold  
1/07 Vern Schmudlach, Greg Gronewold  
1/08 Darin Klingler  
1/09 Bud High  
1/10 Merlin Gronewold  
1/12 Travis Johnson, Carina Sebastian  
1/14 Rick Johnson  
1/17 Taryn Geissler, Emalee Disney  
1/18 Ryan Schardon  
1/22 Esther VanHove, Paige Gutting,  
Judy Cramer  
1/23 Wesley Harrison  
1/26 John Schwartz, Brian Flesner  
1/29 Diane Schardon  
1/30 Kim Nettles  
1/31 Travis Duffy, Jason Hartweg

## JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

1/04 Jerry & Linley Bartell  
1/16 Ed & Brenda Seaver  
1/18 Denver & Danelle Smith  
1/26 Gerald & Cindy Brown

## TRINITY PRAYER MINISTRY

This **ministry at Trinity** is for anyone who wants to join us in prayer one day a week. Come to the Welcome Center at **7:00 a.m.** on Wednesday mornings. Prayer request slips are located in the pew racks. They may be filled out and put in the collection plates, or you may call Connie Schulz (357-6667) or the church office (357-2468) to request prayer. These names are used for the Prayer Ministry only and not in the prayer chain or Sunday morning prayers.

## BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS BY HEALTH MINISTRY TEAM

The nurses of Trinity will be doing blood pressure checks for the congregation on the second Sunday of each month in the Welcome Center. These checks will be held before and after church.

## FINANCIAL UPDATE

As of November 30, 2010

### Current

Amt. Budgeted YTD - \$130,496  
Amt. Received YTD - \$103,144  
Amt. Spent YTD - \$123,882  
Current Fund Balance – (\$1,405)

### Benevolence

Amt. Budgeted YTD - \$17,542  
Amt. Received YTD - \$17,121

Thank you for your faithful giving as together we live out our mission of Celebrating Christ's love as we welcome, encourage, and serve God's people!

## DONATIONS FOR SHEPHERD'S PANTRY

The food pantry could use the following items that aren't always available each month from the state food pantry system:

Boxes of dry milk  
Syrup  
Laundry Soap  
Baby Food & Formula  
Paper Towels & Kleenex

Shepherd's Pantry would appreciate any donations that members are able to make. Thank you for your help.

## STEWARDSHIP PACKETS

There are still some stewardship packets needing to be returned. If you have not yet done so, please fill it out and return it to the church office as soon as possible.

## BUILDING RENOVATION UPDATE

As of November 30, 2010, the amount given for the building renovation totals \$19,011. To date we have spent \$29,120 for the brick work and windows, leaving an amount due of \$10,109 for this part of the project. Please continue to support this fund so we can avoid borrowing funds. Thank you for your ongoing generosity.

## **CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS DECEMBER 9, 2010**

Present: Merlin Gronewold, Mary Sargent, Dave Hartweg, Shawn Gutting, John Dittmer, John Adkins, Galen Krieg, Linley Bartell, Delmer Schlueter, Connie Flesner and Pastor Adam Dichsen. Absent: Erin Biery and Kirby Fecht.

Merlin Gronewold called the meeting to order at 6:59 p.m. Connie Flesner led the devotions. Linley Bartell will lead the devotions in January.

The minutes from the regular meeting of November 18, 2010, were reviewed. Linley Bartell made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. John Dittmer seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### **Petitions and Communications**

Merlin Gronewold had received a thank-you note from Ron Schulz for the opportunities to lead worship services in 2010.

### **Financial Secretary's Report**

The Financial Secretary's Report dated November 30, 2010, was reviewed. The unbudgeted receipts included prepaid pledges, the Welcome Center, Thrivent, Bibles, wreathes, Sunday School and a transfer. Linley Bartell made a motion to accept the Financial Secretary's Report as presented. Shawn Gutting seconded the motion. Motion carried.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Dave Hartweg presented the Treasurer's Report dated November 30, 2010. Discussion followed that included the insurance and renovation processes. John Dittmer made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented. Mary Sargent seconded. Motion carried. Dave reminded the Thrivent members to call and allocate their funds to Trinity. The web site seems to not be working.

### **Committee Reports:**

**Christian Education (Erin Biery)** –Pastor reported that 20-25 young people, including

the confirmation students, are involved in the Christmas program. It will be held on Sunday, December 19<sup>th</sup>. Susan Stott is helping.

**Evangelism (Connie Flesner)** –Connie discussed that the Christmas open house went well. There are still some items available on Sunday mornings. She had not heard from anyone interested in leading the Soup Kitchen. Pastor reported the Youth group had discussed it. Several ideas had been tossed around, including a restaurant-style serving to build relationships; having the meal on a monthly basis and using public transportation to help. Several WIU students may also be interested in helping. Pastor has also talked with the Health Department as to what would be involved. This is definitely a work in progress that hopefully could start in late January. An advertisement will be in the *Journal-Pilot* for the Christmas programs.

**Fellowship (Mary Sargent)** –Mary reported that nine people attended *The Ultimate Gift*. The next movie will be January 8. The meal will be at 5:30 and the movie will begin at 6:30. Cake will be served after the Christmas program and hopefully the baptisms in December. There are openings for refreshments.

**Finance (Shawn Gutting)** –Shawn reported that Mike Jurgens will meet with the Finance Committee and Church Council at the February meeting. The Finance Committee met on Tuesday, December 7. Several items were discussed and proposed. Shawn Gutting made a motion, on recommendation of the Finance Committee, to purchase ten \$10 gas cards from Circle K. These would be used by Pastor Adam to give to needing individuals. They would only be able to use these cards to buy gasoline. Dave Hartweg seconded. Motion carried. Shawn Gutting made a motion, on recommendation of the Finance Committee, to give \$250 to Lutheran Campus Ministry of Illinois for their support of students. Linley Bartell seconded. Motion carried.

Discussion about our support of the Child Fund followed. We currently support 4 children. There is an administrative fee of 20%. No one knows if that is a standard fee for all groups or excessively high. Shawn Gutting made a motion to continue the support of these 4 children, \$144 each, for six months. Linley Bartell seconded. Motion carried. The consensus was to continue supporting these children but to look for other options to support any additional children. Discussion followed about writing to our children. Linley had not heard from anyone after the note in the newsletter. She still writes to Derrick. Shawn said he and his family would write to one of the children. Pastor said perhaps the Sunday School children and the Youth group could also write.

Pastor discussed the Family Fair to be held on February 5, 2011, at the Hancock County Extension Center. It will include nutrition and family activities. The church will have a booth that will show the Faith 5, discussing one's highs and lows. Usually around 150 families with young children attend. Pastor would like to have a drawing for some Sparks Bibles to give away. Shawn Gutting, on the recommendation of the Finance Committee, made a motion to buy 11 Bibles for \$165 and purchase booth space for \$35 for the Family Fair. John Dittmer seconded. Motion carried.

Pastor Chris Hales, from the Carthage Assembly of God church, will be leaving to prepare for their mission in Prague in the Czech Republic. They will be building a church, literally, from the ground up. Between 75-80% of the people are unchurched. The Hales need to raise \$12,000 a month for all the supplies and building of this church through the Assembly of God World Missions. He and his wife Amy and their two children are asking for our prayers for this upcoming mission. Shawn Gutting, on the recommendation of the Finance Committee, made a motion to give \$200/month for a total of \$2400 as an

outreach project from the Marie Fecht account to the Hales' Assembly of God World Missions. Linley Bartell seconded. Motion carried.

The 2011 Budget was discussed. Dave Hartweg explained each item and questions followed. Pastor made a request to reallocate part of his salary to his housing allowance. Dave Hartweg made a motion to accept the budget as presented. John Adkins seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The Bibles for the church pews were also discussed. We would like to purchase 98 Bibles (three per pew, some for the choir loft and the East room) for a total of \$2450. As we take care of our bricks and mortar, now we would like to take care of our spiritual needs. The Finance Committee had a discussion about where the money should come from. We will have a presentation for the congregation at the annual meeting. Perhaps we could purchase Bibles in memoriam or honorarium as we did the hymnals.

**Memorial (John Dittmer)** –Pastor reported some memorial money has been given by the Nolden family.

**Property (Delmer Schlueter)** –Delmer asked about the snow removal process. Should we have this job open for bids as we do the mowing? We have been asking 2-3 people to do this job which is a lot of work. It was mentioned that the snow removal is a given just as others do other jobs.

**Social Ministry (Galen Krieg)** –Galen reported that several people wanted to participate in the Financial Peace University that were unable to attend this fall. The company had a special rate that if we bought 10 packets, the leadership packet (\$321) would be included for free. We needed the packet since the Jacobs had used their own packet teaching this last class. Those packets have been purchased and we will be reimbursed during the next class. The new

class will begin after the first of the year. We will be registered on the web site.

**Stewardship (John Adkins)** –no report.

**Worship & Music (Linley Bartell)** –Linley reported that she was very grateful for all the help in decorating. There was fun and good food after. The choir has been practicing their Christmas music. The choir is in need of new folders and would like to purchase some. Linley will look into this. Pastor reported that the family of Don Dichsen would love to donate a set of choir chimes to Trinity as a memorial. The family would like to honor Don's memory; since as a pediatrician, he loved children, loved music and loved visiting our congregation. The chimes have already arrived and will be used on December 19<sup>th</sup> at the Christmas program. The chimes will be dedicated in January.

**Youth (Kirby Fecht)** –Pastor reported the youth were excited to help and work at the soup kitchen. Their Christmas party will be on January 2. The high school youth and confirmation will have a ski trip to Dubuque on January 14-15. They will sleep at the Lutheran church in Dubuque.

**Ministerial Alliance (Pastor Adam)** –Pastor discussed the Thanksgiving Service offerings received \$605. The collection will go to the Carthage Christmas Food Club for around 100 food boxes. These will be assembled and delivered on Saturday, December 18. The Longest Night Service will be held at Immanuel Lutheran on December 18 at 6 pm. The Ministerial Alliance and CROSS will sponsor "Good Grief" on the Wednesday nights in January and February. They will look at the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm and how it relates to our lives.

**Pastor's Report** –Pastor discussed the reflection of God's light and love not only in our Nativity scenes but in our lives. We have two new members, Dave and Rhonda Vincent, joining on Sunday. We will have two, possibly three baptisms, in December.

He shared his written report of notable happenings and upcoming events.

**Old Business:**

*Church Building* –Discussion about the front door.

*Share the Harvest*—Over \$23,000, with two farmers yet to contribute, has been raised. This almost doubles last year's donations. It was voted to give one-half of the money to the Guatemala Project and one-half to the Haiti Project. The land is rented for next year with all the materials donated. There will be a meeting and dinner on January 17 to promote further growth.

*House*—The house east of the Parish Hall and south of the garage is for sale

*Nominating Committee*—Linley Bartell reported the committee will be December 15<sup>th</sup> since they were unable to all meet on the 8<sup>th</sup>.

**New Business:**

*Communion Assistants*—Shawn Gutting and Delmer Schlueter will help with the second table of communion for Christmas Eve. The acolytes will also help.

*Annual Meeting*—The annual meeting and potluck will be held on Sunday, January 23, 2011, following the worship service. The reports should be in by January 2, 2011.

*Youth CD* – The youth CD will be put into the youth account.

The next council meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 13, 2011, at 7:00 p.m.

Since there was no other business, John Dittmer made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:13 p.m. Dave Hartweg seconded. Motion carried. The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,  
Connie Flesner  
Council Secretary

## **ANNUAL MEETING**

The Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 23 following the worship service. There will be a pot-luck meal to start things off, so please bring a dish to share. Committee reports are due January 2nd and annual reports can be picked up on January 16th.

## **SOUP KITCHEN**

When the youth were on their mission trip in Mississippi this past summer, one of the many ways they served was by volunteering at a soup kitchen. They learned how to properly hold knives, cut tons of squash, hand out bushels of bananas, and make spicy french-fries. During the 14-hour drive back to Carthage, the suggestion was made, "Hey, let's start a soup kitchen in Carthage!" After months of rolling it around, it looks like the idea will bear fruit! We will be opening "Feast of Faith" on Sunday, December 30, in the Trinity Fellowship Hall. It will be a restaurant style setting where guests are met by a host, seated, and can order from an entrée and optional sides. Diners can leave a donation, help clean up afterward, or just say, "Thank you!" The idea is that it is not just a place to come for food, but a place to come to be fed on a deeper level -- to make friendships, to serve, and to be reminded that we are all God's children, children to welcome, encourage and serve as we celebrate Christ's love!

## **THANK YOU**

Thanks to all who helped with the Christmas Open House held here at Trinity. The money we have raised will go to the Ministerial Alliance to help the Shepherd's Pantry and those in need. Thanks to all who donated items, bought items and helped in numerous ways. A special thanks to Marcia Ewing, John Malloy, Ron Schulz and Kent Flesner for all their hard work. You all have been so generous with your time and talents. Thank you!  
Connie Flesner

## **DISCIPLESHIP CORNER**

A member shared with me how he has vivid memories of growing up in church, watching his dad read his Bible during the service. His dad would write notes in the margin and highlight important passages. This member grew up with a strong awareness of the importance of the Bible in his dad's life. Now, we often read God's Word as it is printed in bulletins and sometimes toss them away when we are done. I wonder, what are our little ones learning? In an attempt to make an impression on our children and to help ourselves become more familiar with the Bible, everyone is invited to bring a Bible to read along from during the service. We will try and allow time for people to locate the verse and are even printing page numbers from the Lutheran Study Bible (LSB) to help. So consider grabbing your Bible (or purchase a LSB) along with a pen and highlighter, bring it to church, and let's dive into God's Word together!

## **LOOKING FOR GOLF BALLS!**

Pastor Adam needs 168 golf balls for an upcoming project. If you have any old ones laying around that you won't use, please bring them to his office.

## **NEWS FROM SPONSORED CHILD**

Dear Trinity Lutheran Church,  
I would like to let you know that October 6th we recalled two hundred years of the revolution, where Tomas Borron fought for our freedom. We celebrated it having civic parades. Our president Evo Morales was present. Besides, there were serenades where musical groups took part. In my school we had a cultural period where we celebrated dancing and I saw everyone having lots of fun.  
I hope to hear from you soon letting me know what your line of work is and how you are.  
I say goodbye with a big hug wishing you the best.  
Sincerely yours, Alfredo Chouectilla