

# COMMUNITY CALL

Ministers: The People of God; Pastor: Rev. D. Matthew Stith  
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## ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on January 16 with January 23 set for a storm date. All committees and groups should have their yearly reports in by December 31 to give the clerk time to get the report ready to be distributed on January 9th.

Please make an effort to attend this important meeting of your church.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL CALENDAR



Jan. 2	Christmas Break No Sunday School
Jan. 30	Memorization Sunday*
Feb. 27	Memorization Sunday*
March 27	Easter No Sunday School
April 3	Memorization Sunday*
May 1	Memorization Sunday*
May 22	Last Day of Sunday School

\*K-5 students have you been studying your animal sections? Have you colored your ark?

## BUILDING TASK FORCE TO BE FORMED

For years, members and friends have lamented the lack of handicapped access in our present building. Earlier this winter a number of people expressed sufficient enthusiasm to address this issue and brought the matter before the session. At the December session meeting, a plan of action was presented by Jim Bjorklund and Andrew Thostenson. That plan was enthusiastically approved by the session with only minor alteration.

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The proposal, with the Session's modifications is printed on pages 7 and 8.

As you can see, over the next couple of months the Building Task Force will be engaged in: accumulating information, evaluating that information, summarizing the information, and then providing it to the church so that an informed decision can be made on funding and construction.

We will need help in this enterprise. Volunteers will be needed for work teams. If you want to participate or get more information, visit with either Jim (282-4942 or [jbjork@i29.net](mailto:jbjork@i29.net)) or Andrew ([athosten@ndsuxt.nodak.edu](mailto:athosten@ndsuxt.nodak.edu) or 492-0630). The first meeting of the Building Task Force will be at **7:00 pm at the church on January 12.**

**PER CAPITA**

The Presbytery of the Northern Plains has informed us that our per capita apportionment for 2005 is \$7,447.44. This is on the number of members (286) that we had at the end of December, 2002. This breaks down to \$26.04 per adult member. Of this amount we pay for expenses: to General Assembly-\$5.57, to Synod of the Lakes & Prairies-\$4.47, and to the Presbytery of the Northern Plains-\$16.00.

**Per capita is due January 1st.** Let's all use the envelopes in our offering envelopes box to get this paid so that it doesn't have to be taken out of the General Fund.

**JANUARY COMMUNION**

January Communion will be held on January 9th instead of the 2nd. Pastor Stith will be out of town on the 2nd.

**JANUARY DATES TO REMEMBER****BIRTHDAYS**

- 1-1 Jessie LaCoe  
 1-4 Wil Petik  
     Evan Thostenson  
 1-8 Ross Montgomery  
     Craig Pederson  
     Wayne Radebaugh  
 1-10 Elizabeth Meyer  
 1-11 Kristina Sterup  
     Nan Wiese  
 1-12 Richard Whitcomb  
 1-18 Grace Moorhead  
 1-19 Donna Gertz  
 1-21 Jenna Olson  
 1-22 Derek Leopold  
 1-23 Austin Montgomery  
 1-24 Nancy Stedman  
 1-26 Gail Matzke  
 1-27 Jennifer Clennon  
 1-28 Brenda Bjorklund  
     Brian Matzke  
 1-29 LaVerne Dahl  
     Kaylee Jo Sharbono  
 1-30 Pat Langfitt  
     Matthew Pyle

**ANNIVERSARIES**

- 1-4-49 – Robert and Dolores Meyer  
 1-9-82 – Brent and Boots Montgomery  
 1-16-81 - Martin and LaVerne Dahl  
 1-19-57 – Edwin and Harriet Diede

**2005 HEAD USHERS**

- |           |                  |
|-----------|------------------|
| January   | Dwight Steffen   |
| February  | Dale Matzke      |
| March     | Bob Gross        |
| April     | Dave Ruhnke      |
| May       | Brent Montgomery |
| June      | Larry Peihl      |
| July      | Jim Bjorklund    |
| August    | Terry Meester    |
| September | Chuck Thompson   |
| October   | Jack Smith       |
| November  | Derek Leopold    |
| December  | James Martin     |



## PASTOR'S PEN

Epiphany, 2005  
West Fargo, ND

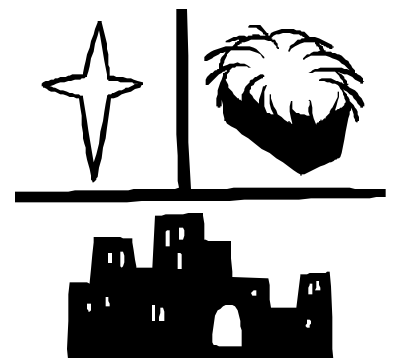
It is good to be home! The Stith family has just returned from a whirlwind holiday vacation, traveling by train to visit both Toni's and Matt's families in Indiana. We had a wonderful time, though we wished we had not been so rushed to see everyone and do everything. The travel itself, our first by rail, was a highlight for us, especially given Joram's particular interest (not to say "obsessive interest") in trains. There were a few hiccups, of course. The dining car was out of service for our outbound trip, having caught fire (!) somewhere near Whitefish, Montana, and the excitement of the trip, coupled with the middle-of-the-night departure from Fargo left us all a bit short on sleep. And, on the return trip, awful traffic in Chicago nearly caused us to miss the train altogether! We must have been a comical sight, literally sprinting through the train station, all our suitcases and boxes and bundles and car seats (and eventually our son) piled high on a luggage cart. We got into the station's parking garage at 1:50, and collapsed, breathless, in our compartment on the train at 2:07. The train left at 2:10. Whew!

This experience served as a reminder that travel is always, no matter how carefully planned, a bit of a risky business. But how much riskier it was for those best-known Epiphany travelers, the magi (or, as they are sometimes known, wise men)! You know the story. These learned men from far-off Persia,

seeing astrological portents of the birth of the King of the Jews, traveled for what would have been months, just to greet him and pay him homage. And in their era, the "adventure" we had getting to our train would have paled in comparison to what the magi faced. Endless miles, many through difficult and hostile terrain, with the constant threat of bandits, starvation, and disease. To travel any long distance in those days was to take one's life in one's hands. To do so with no certain destination, no guarantee of any fulfillment or gain at the end, was little short of madness.

But still, they came. I wonder if I would have had the courage, the conviction, the faith, to hang in there with them. A line from a song on one of my new Christmas CDs puts it pretty succinctly: "If it was a long, long road to get there, would you still come?"

As we enter this new year, with all of its untapped potential and all of its unseen dangers, I pray that we can muster up the faith and courage to stick to the journey, as the magi did so long ago. If so, perhaps we will all gather together next Epiphany, at the foot of the cradle, offering our most precious treasures and being, as were the magi, overwhelmed by the joy of the presence of our God among us.



## CLERK'S CORNER



The Session and Trustees met on December 15. The financial report and the minutes of the last meeting were approved.

James Bjorklund presented a proposal for establishing a Building Taskforce of 20 to 30 persons to undertake the task of accumulating information, evaluating that information, summarizing the information, and then providing it to the congregation so that an informed decision can be made on funding and construction to change our existing structure or provide new construction so that all people can share in the life of the church. Andrew Thostenson and James Bjorklund indicated their willingness to chair the committee and requested approval to spend up to \$5,000 to defray expenses incurred to get the information needed. They presented a time table to complete this assignment with a special congregational meeting to be called in the second half of May to endorse a course of action. They would provide timely reports to the Session and to the congregation. Their requests were approved.

The January date for Communion was changed to January 9th as Pastor Stith will be out of town on the 2nd. A tentative date for the New and Prospective Members Dinner was set for January 26, 2005 providing that everyone is free on that date.

Kent Meyer was removed from the roll of the church as he has been gone from the area for nearly 30 years. Richard Pyle was also removed from the roll in anticipation of his transferring back to the church from Faith Lutheran where he and his family are members. Steve and Sue Hanna and family were ac-

cepted as members by Certificate of Transfer from Mendenhall Presbyterian Church of East Grand Forks, MN.

Fruit baskets will be delivered before Christmas.

The Mission Goals approved by the congregation at a meeting on October 31 were discussed and the three goals in which members indicated interest are to be pursued. The Christian Education Committee will organize and oversee the Youth Action Planning Team, The Mission, Outreach, and Evangelism Committee will organize and oversee the Local Community Action Planning Team and the Congregational Care Committee will organize and oversee the Elderly and Infirm Action Planning Team. These teams will be comprised of those persons who indicated their interest at the congregational meeting and any other members who wish to be on the teams.

Jenna Barenthsen was awarded a Lucille Blakeway Music Scholarship to help with her tuition at NDSU where she is pursuing a degree in vocal music. The Session voted to hire Sue Leydendecker as the church organist starting January 1, 2005 under the current pay structure. A Special Meeting of the Session will be held on January 6 to discuss the report of the Personnel Committee regarding the Terms of Call for the pastor and salaries for other paid employees. The Personnel Committee will be conducting Performance Appraisals for all paid employees as soon as possible.

The Christian Education Committee requested that the Session consider hiring a Youth Director at the January meeting. The Nominating Committee reported that they expect to have a full slate of candidates for the Session, Trustees, and Nominating Committee before the

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annual meeting on January 16.

A total of 8 persons from the High Rise attended the Concordia College Christmas Concert courtesy of Community Presbyterian Church and Dixon Moorhead. The Congregational Care Committee's request to use the church for an evening this month to care for children while their parents enjoy a night out was approved.

The Service and Fellowship held a meeting with members of the congregation who have indicated their willingness to serve as greeters for visitors and prospective members to our church. Anyone interested in serving as a special greeter should contact Susan Gross or Pastor Stith.

The Wedding Policy will be discussed at the January meeting. Toni Stith was given permission to hold a Baby Shower on Sunday, January 9th from 2-4 p.m. in the fellowship hall.

A total of 131 persons were served Communion on December 5. The clerk reported that the Presbytery has sent out the information for Per Capita for 2005. The per adult member amount is \$26.04. Our total is amount due is \$7,447.44 on a membership of 286 as of December, 2002.

Delores Horn, Clerk of Session



### **COMING SOON TO A CHURCH NEAR YOU**

On December 12th and 19th, you may have joined us for Christmas programs prepared by our choirs and Sunday School children. Maybe you missed them. Maybe you'd like to enjoy them again. Soon you may be able to. Stay tuned for further details.



### **OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS**

Your chance has come. The Christian Education Committee still has positions available for Sunday School rotational teachers for the month of February. Sign up and you will have the opportunity to teach the same lesson to kindergarten/first graders, second/third graders, and fourth/fifth graders for three different weeks.

Sign up in the narthex now! This opportunity is too great to miss.

QUESTIONS? Contact: Melanie Hansen (mlh0606@hotmail.com or call 261-8476).

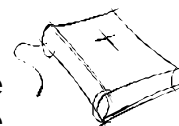
### **PLEDGE CARD**

In John 13, Jesus washed the feet of the disciples during the Last Supper. By this example of servitude He wished to tell us to extend His mission on earth. We are part of that mission now. When you pledge you time, talent, and treasure this year, please be reminded of our vibrant, growing church, our growing budget, and the need for your personal ministry, time, and talent as part of Jesus' ongoing mission.

Please complete the pledge card which you will find in this newsletter and return it, if possible, in the January 9th offering plate. Then, come, listen to, and help our mission develop in terms of budget at our congregational meeting.

### **AFTERNOON CIRCLE**

The new study books have been received and will be available from Delores Horn or at the January 11th meeting. We invite all women of the church who can to join us at 12:30 p.m. at Jigg's Restaurant for lunch and Bible Study.





## CHRISTMAS SPIRIT ALIVE DESPITE THEFTS

By now you have probably heard that before Christmas someone stole gifts from under the Giving Tree at church and also some gifts that had been given to take to the New Life Center for the men's Christmas gifts. What you may not have heard is what happened after this was made public.

When a member heard of the thefts, he immediately donated \$100 to purchase replacements so they could be delivered to the Holiday Clearing Bureau. A Fargo Firefighters group called and offered to replace the gifts after they had already been delivered to the New Life Center and the Holiday Clearing Bureau. Pastor Stith told them that they should contact the Holiday Clearing Bureau and see if they still needed gifts. He later learned that when they called the Bureau they were told that just that morning (after the other gifts had been distributed) the Bureau had received a call requesting help from a family. The Firefighters helped the Bureau to make Christmas a little better for that family.

Also the TOPS Club that meets in our church gave a \$100 donation to help replace the gifts. Again this was after the gifts had been delivered. In fact, it was on the Wednesday before Christmas. Thursday afternoon Pastor Stith received a call from a concerned person telling him of a family in West Fargo who needed food as well as Christmas gifts. Pastor Stith supplied the family with food vouchers from his Discretionary Fund and arranged with a church member to accompany the concerned person to buy gifts for the family with the \$100 donated by the TOPS Club.

God works in mysterious ways to perform His wonders!

## SOUL TRAIN GIVES THANKS



The Soul Train has had a fantastic first semester. We have gone to the Haunted Farm and Christian Rock concert, made presents for the high-rise, met with a youth group from Moorhead, collected canned food for the Salvation Army, had a Projectile Competition, and had a great time being together. We would like to thank everyone who has helped us and especially we would like to thank the following families for serving us meals.

Dwight and Lisa Steffen  
Larry and Vicki Peihl  
Roger and Melissa Barenthsen  
Rich and Faye Pyle  
Tom and Cathy Birrenkott  
Tom and Becky DeJong  
Don and Shelly VanCleve  
Youth group dinner:  
Ann Chale  
Marlys Martin  
Boots Misheski  
Andrew, Janine & Ella Steele

Progressive dinner:  
Matt and Toni Stith  
Tom and Cathy Birrenkott  
Steve and Sue Hanna  
Jim and Marlys Martin  
Marty and Debbie Matzke  
Anneus and Marj Meester  
Terry and Carolyn Meester

We will be meeting again starting on January 9 at 6:30 at the church. We would like to invite anyone who is in 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade to join us. A more complete schedule will be posted soon.

Have a joyous holiday season!  
Soul Train

# STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN 2005

*The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly,  
and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully,  
Each of you must give as you have made up your mind,  
Not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*

How will you share the time, talent, and treasure that God has given you?

After prayerful reflection on God's generosity to you, please fill out the information below and return it by January 9, if possible. Completed pledge sheets can be placed in the offering plate, left in the church office, or mailed to

Community Presbyterian Stewardship Campaign  
702 Sheyenne Street  
West Fargo, ND 58078

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Estimate of Giving 2005

Time: \_\_\_ I am/We are willing to give of my/our time to assist in the work of the church  
\_\_\_ In these specific areas: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ For whatever is needed.

Talent: \_\_\_ I/We will contribute my/our specific talents and/or information to the work of the church. I/We am/are willing to assist or advise in the following areas:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Treasure: \_\_\_ I/We intend to provide this amount of financial support for the work of the church.

\_\_\_ \$\_\_\_\_\_ per year OR

\_\_\_ \$\_\_\_\_\_ per month

**Per Capita \_\_\_\_\_ (\$26.04 per adult member)**