

# The Staff

*The newsletter of the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd*

December 2006

**Our Mission: To equip God's people for ministry with a vision to share God's Word**

## **NO SMALL WONDER!**



Little Nancy was almost four years old. Her parents and her three older brothers had tried to prepare little Nancy for Christmas by telling her about the real meaning of Christmas and why the family celebrated it. Well,

Nancy had a wonderful Christmas with lots of presents and new toys. A few days later, she was talking with her older brother about what a great Christmas she had, and said, "I sure hope Mary and Joseph have another baby next year!"

One of the great realities we celebrate this time of year is the once-in-a-lifetime birth of a Savior. All that he came to do for the world, all that was necessary for our salvation and the forgiveness of our sins were accomplished through his life, death, and resurrection! We need no other savior. All of Scriptures' promises pointed to him and were fulfilled by him! We need no other savior.

No wonder our joy is full and complete. No wonder the peace that the Good News brings passes all human understanding. All has been accomplished by the One born of the virgin in a stable in Bethlehem of Judea. No other birth has so changed the history or the outlook of our world.

A wife was wondering to herself if she had any hope of getting her husband to help her with the Christmas cards. The family was coming. There was so much shopping yet to do, gifts to wrap, the house to decorate, the cooking, and the cleaning.

She arranged the cards, stamps, and address book on the table, then hopefully she pulled up a chair and called to her husband, "Dear, would you help me get these out of the way?" He looked at the array on the table, abruptly turned away and walked into the den. His wife was disappointed to say the least. But then she heard a drawer jerk open and bang shut. He came back in the room with a big stack of cards, stamped, sealed, and addressed. "There's last year's," he said. "I forgot to mail them. Let's take a break and go out to dinner."

Even though we will be bringing out decorations from last year and years gone by, our celebration and joy is fresh and new each year! Our Lord comes to us with his saving love and presence in a powerful and personal way. This Savior never gets old. The great Gospel News never grows stale or stagnant. It comes to us right smack dab in the middle of our own realities to speak to us of the timeless and changeless salvation that was made a reality that special and holy night when Jesus Christ was born.

The world cannot squelch the enthusiasm and joy this brings. Look at the hymns and carols that have been produced. The world never tires of them.

May your Christmas celebration renew you all in his love, his special presence, his saving power, and his everlasting life!

Always in Christ,  
Pastor Bill Qualman



**Goodbye,  
God Speed  
&  
Thank You!** **FAREWELL  
AND GOD  
SPEED TO A  
GOOD FRIEND  
AND PARTNER  
IN CHRIST**

The writer of the Book of Ecclesiastes reminds us, "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven..." Life is full of ebbs and flows. Things change and nothing ever stays the same for long. Sometimes those changes bring us joy. Sometimes those changes bring us pain. Sometimes they are a mixture of both.

At the end of this year, Don Cousens will officially retire from his labors on our behalf. It will not be easy to see him and his wife, Betty, leave this family of faith. So much of our life together has been deeply touched and impacted by them both. In many ways, we have much to give thanks to God.

His work among us will not be soon forgotten and the seeds he planted will continue to give growth.

For me, Don has been my right-hand-go-to-man, a partner in ministry, a confidant, a troubleshooter, a historian, a problem solver, a comedian, a cheerleader, and most importantly, a dear friend. I will truly miss him!

This serious soldier of the cross will be leaving us but not the work of the Lord. Don is convinced that the Lord will continue to use him and Betty as they make a new home and bond with a new congregation. I have no doubt about that either.

So we wish them well. We thank God for their faithful service and the blessing of their friendship. We will weep only for ourselves knowing that they will be a blessing wherever they go.

On Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, we will thank and honor Don and Betty and wish them God speed. Please make every effort to share in the celebration.

Pastor Qualman



*From the  
Church  
Secretary*

*I would like to wish  
you all a very Merry Christmas,  
and a Happy, Healthy, New Year.*

*Marie*



"That's right, son - just gold, frankincense and myrrh. No video games."



## The waiting begins . . .

Our registration for the National Youth Gathering is in the hands of

the Youth Ministry team and now we wait to find out if we will be attending. For next summer's Gathering, we have a small but great group registered. Over the next several months, we will keep you updated on any news and developments we get about the Gathering.

Traveling to Orlando next summer are:

- Dan Bergfeldt
- Christian Hawley
- Becky Rutan
- Chrissy Sereda
- Bobby Shipley

Please keep us in your prayers as we make our travel plans, participate in Bible studies and fundraise.



## FROM THE ALLEYS

On November 27<sup>th</sup> we will bowl our 2nd position night. As of right now the first 4 teams are separated by only 2.5 points. In 1st place we have the Alley Gators with 41.5 points, then Pretty Lucky Bowlers (40), Triple Threat (40), and UnStopaBowl (39). The rest of the teams range from 35 points to our strong team, Ugly Ducks, holding us all up with 28 points. The High Game is still held by Rob Magazzu (279) and Carol Hahl (222), with High Series by Rob Magazzu (662) and Carol Hahl (274).



On Monday, December 18th we will have our annual bowling Christmas party. Everyone brings some goodies to eat and drink, and we have a grab gift (you have to bowl a strike to pick your gift). Come join us and cheer us on.

There will be *no* bowling on December 25th or January 1st.

Submitted by Laurie Burke



There is still time to register for *LOST*, the NJ District Winter Youth Gathering.

Here are the details:

**Dates:** January 26th - 28<sup>th</sup>

**Location:** Camp Lebanon, Lebanon, NJ

**Ages:** 7<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> graders

**What to expect:** Fun, fellowship, food, free t-shirt, workshops, servant events, Bible studies, variety show, music and much more!

Cost: \$99 (due December 17<sup>th</sup>)

Alicia De Sena

## T.R.I.M.

### Transformation and Renewal in Ministry

#### Is Good Shepherd an Island Congregation or an Engaged Congregation?

**Island Congregations:** The Membership base comes from people who used to live near the Church but are now living in outlying areas. In addition there are some long-term members who still live in community. Few are from the predominant ethnic background of community. Membership and worship attendance is decreasing. Inward maintenance is the focus.

**Engaged Congregations:** The Congregation is deeply engaged in the local community. There are numerous ministries with people in the geographic area. Many members are part of the predominant ethnic background of people in community. Congregational leadership includes a large proportion of community people. The hands-on caring and healing are conducted by lay leaders.

#### Here are some more interesting facts regarding Island Congregations VS. Engaged Congregations

| Island Congregations  | Engaged Congregations  |
|---|--|
| Small, powerful, long-term, controlling leadership core.  | Focus on reality-based person-to-person ministry.  |
| Focus on survival, maintenance of property, and finance.  | Permission-giving, entrepreneurial, shared leadership...training!  |
| Worship in traditional style comfortable to existing members. Lay involvement limited.  | Worship sensitive to ethnic needs, liturgically flexible. Lay involvement high.  |
| General knowledge of community problems but unable to identify strategies or name results hoped for.  | Accurate assessment of community needs and intentional plans to meet those needs with namable results.   |
| Very little intentional evangelism. Mostly done by staff. Entry points identified as "choir, Sunday School, etc..."   | Lay driven outreach with wide variety of entry points including "child-care, health services, small groups, healing ministries."   |
| Use of facilities "for members only." Great concern for what locals might do to "our building."   | Welcome community use of facilities in order to earn right to be heard in community. Willing to risk damage.   |
| Going it alone, literally a self-contained island in their community.   | Range of partnerships and networks: congregations, individuals, community groups.  |
| Focus on immediate survival needs. Loss of vision. Growth seems impossible. Shot-gun approach to ministry needs. We are here to "maintain a denominational presence." | Intentional, action-oriented planning. Limitations something God can overcome to make ministry happen. Few but specific foci for ministry. We are here "as cultivators of pathways to Christ." |
| Focus: those who have been faithful for so many years.  | Primary role of missionaries in one of richest mission fields on planet.   |
| Primary role of maintaining chaplaincy style ministry to parish constituency.   | Focus: disenchanting Christians or those who have never been in Christian fellowship.  |
| Culture and heritage of "founding fathers" is focus of fellowship and celebrations.   | Culture and heritage of community people is intentionally celebrated and upheld.   |
| Stay with past ministry orientation so that no one gets offended or upset by change.  | Sometimes find it necessary to lovingly help members opposed to being missionaries find a more appropriate church home.  |
| Ultimately wish to retain or regain past congregational success. Orientation is looking at past ministry blessings. "Help us preserve what we have and survive!"      | Ultimately wish to begin new ministries. "Our best ministry days are ahead." Orientation is toward future efforts and blessings. "Partner with us in new ministry ventures!"                   |

**Continued on next page**

## Continued from previous page – TRIM

As you read through the list you could probably put Good Shepherd on both sides. But what remains to be asked is, **where do we want to be?** Do we want to be an Island Congregation looking inwardly and taking care of our own? OR do we want to be an Engaged Congregation, with open doors welcoming in and supporting the needs of our community? The answer to that question lies with every member of this congregation. The place to discuss and answer these questions and many more is T.R.I.M. It is important that we all become part of the process. It

is important for every voice to be heard. Don't be left on an island all to yourself, join all those already involved in this most exciting adventure.

**How can I become involved?** Ask questions of anyone who has already become involved. Discuss these questions with other members on Sunday and throughout the week. Get excited about the process and share your ideas for ministry focus. Attend the T.R.I.M meetings and let your voice be heard!

Submitted by Beth Meyer

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## Letter from the Chairperson

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### *What Will Be the Best Gift Under Your Christmas Tree?*



***The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever.*** ISAIAH 40:8 NIV

How important is it to write out your thoughts and feelings? So many people keep journals and scrapbooks. They record their memories onto video tapes and CDs. I'm so glad God decided to put His thoughts and feelings into the written word! I love to know that He thinks about us constantly and carries us in the palm of His hand. I'm thrilled to learn about His character and read about the experiences others have had in His presence. Words have power.

When we take time to record memories, journal our prayers, and write down our thoughts, we truly give ourselves a gift to be opened over and over again. We can recall times of laughter, be encouraged by God's faithfulness in difficult situations, and feel a sense of comfort by expressing and managing the emotions He's given to us. It feels good to revisit

the joys and even the struggles in our lives, because God is working in us and building our trust through every circumstance. We never outgrow His gentle and wise instruction. We never graduate from the learning process.

As we begin another Advent and Christmas season, we might all use it as a little nudge to begin an "essay" on the days God gives us on earth. We might include words about Christ's birth, death and impact on our lives along with our pictures and video tapes. There is no special way to do this; simply it's an opportunity to appreciate the gift that God has given us and a chance to allow God to encourage our hearts and remind us of His unconditional love and continued faithfulness. Our journals, scrapbooks, videos and CDs can not only become one of our favorite reads and viewing pleasures, but also one of our greatest teachers.

In addition to it being something for you to reflect on, what about a copy set aside to give to your children, siblings, parents and grandparents? These gifts can be a great tool to teach our children and a great way to say thank you to the person who brought you to Christ. Take the ordinary scrapbook and make it extraordinary. Create a video or CD filled with God's Word and music. Create a Christmas present that really brings someone closer to Christ.

**Continued on next page**

## Continued from previous page – Gift

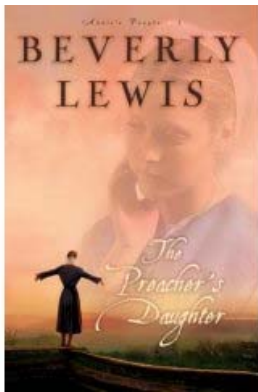
Make sure that Christ is definitely the center of your Christmas celebration this year and for many years to come. Incorporate God's Word along with your own in a gift that will continue to give year in and year out, year after year.

I pray that God blesses each of you richly this Christmas and throughout the New Year!

Submitted by Beth Meyer



## BOOK CLUB AND DISCUSSION GROUP



Calling all women who enjoy reading and talking!!!!!!!!!!

Please join our Book Discussion Group. We meet in the church library on the second

Tuesday of the month from 7:30-9:00pm (unless otherwise noted). We discuss a different Christian fiction or non-fiction book each time we get together.

**We are meeting again on Tuesday, January 9<sup>th</sup> to discuss, A Preacher's Daughter, by Beverly Lewis.**

Would you like to join us??? It's very easy to get involved:

1. Get the book and read it. Some of the books are in the church or public library or you can purchase them at Barnes & Noble, Borders or online.
2. Take one of the bookmarks for that book from the display in the church library to help guide you while you read.
3. **Take some notes when you are reading** – things you found interesting or items that might spark conversation.
4. Come to the church library on the night that book will be discussed and share your thoughts and insights with the group.
5. Remember, you can come for one book or all of them – it's up to you!!

Future meeting dates:

January 9, 2007 – **A Preacher's Daughter**

March 13 – Title to be announced

May 8 – Title to be announced

If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to call me at (732) 840-6894 or contact me at [Junedh1@aol.com](mailto:Junedh1@aol.com). This is an excellent way to get to know people in a very relaxed setting. We have a lot of fun each time we meet and always learn something new. Please join us!!!!

### ***June Hullings***

*She is trapped between the expectations of her Plain church and her forbidden yearning... For Annie Zook, the only daughter of an Old Order Amish preacher, the "Plain and simple life" is anything but plain and simple. She juggles conflicting desires and closely-guarded secrets - a "fancy" friend, a secret room, and an unthinkable dream...while a long-ago mysterious disappearance weighs heavily on her heart. Truth be told, only one other person knows about my fractured heart. My secret thoughts are safe with Louisa Stratford, an English girl who lives far away in Colorado. At twenty-two, she is engaged to be married, and for that I am most happy, seeing as how we're wonderful-good friends. Even though Louisa is fancy and I'm Plain, she's been reading my letters and writing back to me since she was nearly eleven years old. And if she hadn't sent that first drawing in her little letter - those delicate blossoms of forget-me-nots - so long ago, I might never have wondered if I, too, possessed any real talent... Yet if I were to abandon my paints and brushes in order to join church and marry, would I ever be truly happy? And yet... since I gave up the chance to wed a good Amish boy like Rudy, will I ever again know love? Oh, such a troublesome dilemma I face, and one that continually torments my soul.... 349 pages of great reading!*



## Faith, Family and Fun

*Fun ways to inspire your faith and encourage your family as you live and grow in Christ  
Compiled and written by Amber Brown, Coordinator of Christian Education*

### **Adult Education**

You may have spent years going through high school, college, grad school, seminars, training programs, conferences, conventions...so what else is there to learn? The Bible instructs us to “set our minds on things above” and so we are pleased to offer a well rounded and diverse Adult Education Program. Sunday mornings offers three different classes to participate in as well as our Wednesday night Women’s Bible Study (currently nurturing over 20 women) and on the first Tuesday of the month, Prayer Meeting, which allows time for focus, refreshment and much needed, dedicated prayer time. Surely there is something that will peak your interest and arouse your thirst for knowledge. What better way to cultivate your growing faith than with prayer, Bible time, fellowship and knowledge! There is information on the new Christian Education Bulletin Board, adjacent to the Fellowship Hall. Let’s learn and grow together!



### **MUSIC NOTES** “Choir Kickoff on December 6”

Now that the fall activities have settled down, choir practice will begin for the *Shepherd Singers* and the *Jubilation Bell Choir*. The *Shepherd Singers* is a vocal

choir for youth in grades 7-12 and practices Wednesday nights from 6:00-6:30. This contemporary choir kicks it up a notch by singing contemporary Christian music “karaoke style” on the first Sunday of the month and special holidays. The *Jubilation Bell Choir* is a handbell choir for youth in grades 9-12. You do not have to know how to read music or ring handbells—we’ll teach you everything you need to know. Come out to practice with this choir on Wednesday nights from 6:30-7:00. You may contact Amber Brown for more information. See you on December 6!



There is a “NEW” lost and found box in the kitchen with A LOT OF STUFF in it. Please take a look and see if you have “lost” anything. Items will be thrown away after a month or so.  
Thanks for your help! Marie

# For Your Information



## Happy Birthday to...

|                      |       |
|----------------------|-------|
| Jeffrey Craig        | 12/1  |
| Patrick Bowen        | 12/1  |
| Carlene Weiss        | 12/1  |
| Brandon Capurso      | 12/1  |
| Kaitlin Jordan       | 12/2  |
| Anthony DeMarco      | 12/4  |
| Demetrius Pate       | 12/4  |
| Katherine Bowen      | 12/7  |
| Joseph Grana         | 12/8  |
| Cara DiMaggio        | 12/8  |
| Susannah Rutan       | 12/8  |
| Kelly Doran          | 12/9  |
| Ed Siclari           | 12/11 |
| Joseph D'Esposito    | 12/11 |
| Allison van Riemsdyk | 12/12 |
| David Blakey         | 12/12 |
| Richard Toth         | 12/13 |
| Alexis Dill          | 12/14 |
| Brigette Meitzner    | 12/14 |
| Kimberly Hullings    | 12/14 |
| Tyler Capurso        | 12/14 |
| Nicole Onorato       | 12/15 |
| Priscilla Sessman    | 12/15 |
| Joan Gibson          | 12/15 |
| Rose Marie Cline     | 12/16 |
| Angela Evegán        | 12/16 |
| Joseph Vazza         | 12/16 |
| Rebecca Vazza        | 12/16 |
| Daniel Nathanson     | 12/17 |
| Lori Donaghue        | 12/18 |
| Daniel Onorato       | 12/18 |
| Mary Roynesdale      | 12/18 |
| Robert Pate          | 12/18 |
| Deborah Logan        | 12/19 |
| Cathy Hoehl          | 12/19 |

|                        |       |
|------------------------|-------|
| Rodger Wilmot          | 12/20 |
| Joseph Furlong         | 12/20 |
| William Ahrberg        | 12/21 |
| Joseph Guy Korota, Jr. | 12/21 |
| Robert Weiss III       | 12/22 |
| Dorothy Hatcliffe      | 12/23 |
| Christine McGrade      | 12/24 |
| Miriam Nieves          | 12/24 |
| Natalie Hoehl          | 12/25 |
| Valerie Tietchen       | 12/26 |
| Christian Hawley       | 12/26 |
| Joan Habinowski        | 12/27 |
| Thomas Conover         | 12/27 |
| Tom Jocus              | 12/29 |
| Matthew Van Fossen     | 12/30 |
| Anthony Onorato        | 12/31 |

## Happy Anniversary to.....

|                         |       |
|-------------------------|-------|
| Sharon & Jason Kiefer   | 12/13 |
| Laurie & Bill Burke     | 12/19 |
| Edward & Mary Roynesdal | 12/27 |

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*Those Recovering*

**Gunhild Nelson** –mother of Carol Hahl

*Those in Nursing Homes*

**Emmy Moore** –sister of Katrina Clapsis

*Those who are Shut-in*

**Yvonne Koenig**

**Irene Inneo**

**Josie Schubert** –mother of Mary Artache

*Those with Other Needs*

**Evelyn Kotora**

**Ruth Gunderson** –mother of Lynn Hughes

**Ray Monel** –father of Barbara Di Maggio

**Annie Acuri-Abbey** –friend of Sue Hawley

**Jake Johnson** –grandson of Pastor &  
Georgeann

**Gregory Pryor** –brother of Patrick Pryor

**Vincent Siclari, Jr.** –brother of Ed Siclari

**Jan Burkett** –grandmother of Amber Brown  
and Dani Sloan

**Terry Hayes** –mother of Laurie Burke

**Eric Brown** –son of Amber and Steve

**Dylan Brown** –grandson of Hatcliffes

**Marilyn Evenga** –sister-in-law of Alexis Dill,  
awaiting liver transplant

**Margaret Wrigley** –suffering with arthritis

**Betty Pallé** –mother of Bob Pallé

**Christine Olewine** –granddaughter of Lyman  
& Deloris Laub

**Trudy Conway**

*Those Struggling with Cancer*

**Carol Powell** – mother of Carol Sereda

**Marie Giacomini** – mother of Bill Burke

**Peggy DeMarco** – friend of the Kotora  
Family

**Nancy Musick** – cousin of Tony Hansen

**Beth Prudente**

**Joseph Spinelli** – friend of Toni & Pat Pryor

**Debbie Pryor** – cousin to Toni & Pat Pryor

**Ed Borkowski** – father of Wayne Borkowski

**Kathy Hill** – friend of Pryors

**Jimmy Walker** – friend of McGrades

**Kathi Farrell**

**Mildred Elliot** – mother of Laurie Coletti

**Ruth Cousens** – mother of Don Cousens

**Patrick (Patch) Rose** – brother-in-law of Marie & Dave  
Bergfeldt

*Those in the Military*

**Chris O'Shea** –nephew of Addie & Les  
Ebersole

**Chris Hill** –uncle of Stephanie Olson

**Jeff Borkowski**

**Brian Farrell**

**Gordon Houston**

**Rob Farrell**

**Darrin Brown**

**Jeff Kotora**

**John & Annette Kope** –brother and  
sister-in-law of Maryellen Boggia

**Patrick Galvin** –son-in-law of Ouges

**Joseph Puoplo** –nephew of Clines

**Brian Borkowski** –nephew of the Borkowski's

**Ashley Welsh** –niece of Mary White-Stevens

**Drew Williams** –friend of Hogan's

**Fabian Lopez** –friend of Russell Domis

**Dustin Brown** –co-worker of Beth Meyer

**Travis Borre** –friend of Lisa Gergasko

**Matthew Munoz** –friend of Siclari's

**Jon Griswold** –brother-in-law of Heidi  
Griswold

**Charlie Ratcliffe** –friend of Bill Burke

**Marc Artache** –nephew of Julio & Mary  
Artache

**Robert Bracero** –nephew of Julio & Mary  
Artache

**James McCabe** –friend of White-Stevens'

*And our Missionaries :*

**Rev. Chuck and Jeanette Groth in Cambodia**  
LINC – NJ

# Good Shepherd Children's Center

## WHAT'S NEW AT SCHOOL



Before I start to talk about December, I would like to tell you that the Care Center was involved with a program called "Adopt A Family."

This is a program that is near and dear to my heart that I have been working with for several years now. Families signed up for this program are not able to provide a wonderful holiday meal for their loved ones. The families of GSCC donated money and turkeys to provide not only these families with a big turkey dinner, but some of our own community families in need of a turkey as well. Thank you for your generosity.

December is a wonderful month here at GSCC. The children are very busy practicing for our annual Christmas Program, which will be performed on December 9, 2006 at 9:15, 11:00, 1:00. Come and join us for the fun, singing and refreshments. The anticipation of the holiday season is upon us, the stores are already decorated for Christmas, and the hustle bustle at the malls has begun. Let us not forget the true meaning of Christmas among all the ribbons, wrapping paper,

and holiday parties. It is the birthday of Jesus and a time for family and togetherness. Get your children into the spirit of Christmas by making ornaments, baking or donating to a local food pantry. Donate to a local animal shelter, or wrap a toy for a deserving child who may not get one. So many people dread the holidays for different reasons. We all have the power to make it brighter for someone we know, whether it be a neighbor or a friend, a kind word, a shoveled sidewalk or baked goods go a long way.

Remember, if you are considering bringing a new pet into your family this holiday season, there are so many unwanted pets in shelters just waiting for a permanent home. The Sayreville Pet Adoption Center is located at 1400 Main Street, in Sayreville, NJ (Next to the police station) 732-727-3895. GSCC held a fund raiser for them last year, and we were able to provide many pets with food, toys, collars, treats and towels. If you are not ready to adopt, they are always in need of donations, they are overflowing with animals, and are a "no kill" shelter.

Thank you and have a Healthy, Happy and Joyous Holiday Season!

Director, Lorraine Campo



## Family Life Fellowship

Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup> -

Meet at church at 2:00 PM. We plan on visiting some of our home-bound members in the area, nursing homes, and hospitals. After we are done, come back to church for something hot to drink and eat.



Christmas Caroling

## Women's Ministry



### **Princess Retreat**

If you missed signups for the **Princess Retreat**- we still have room for you! Although deposits have been collected, there is still time to get your name on the list and join us for an unforgettable weekend, February 9 & 10, 2007. This will be an annual event, but you won't want to miss the fun of the first one. We will celebrate the joy and honor of being a Princess of the King of Kings as only women can- with laughter, tears and chocolate! Call me TODAY so you're not left out of the fun!

### **Women's Ministry**

Let's start the New Year right with our official Women's Ministry Kick-Off- **A Ladies' Luau**. If you make any New Year's Resolutions this year- make being a part of the Women's Ministry one of them. The new Women's Ministry promises to be strong, fulfilling, faith-filled and fun, so come to the **Ladies' Luau** and "bask in the warmth of the Son" on Friday night, January 12, 2007 from 7:00-10:00. All women are encouraged to attend this festive night of games, a DVD presentation of renowned Christian comedienne, Chonda Pierce, prayer, door prizes and nibbles.

After our **Ladies' Luau** Kick-Off in January, we will roll right into the **Princess Retreat** in February, followed by months of scheduled activities like **Fit Him In** Christian aerobics classes (your body is temple of the Holy Spirit-

take care of it with spiritual and physical fitness and praise the Lord at the same time), **In His Defense**- a women's self defense class, **Crafter's for Christ**- a group that encourages any "crafty" women to celebrate her creativity and honor Christ and her community at the same time by making crafts for charity needs, current church projects or your own personal crafts. Do you knit, sew, crochet, scrapbook, stamp, make cards, arrange flowers, needlepoint...? This is a group for you! We will also have planned fellowship events like **Potluck Night** as well as service projects to provide to those in our area. Of course these events will be celebrated with prayer and chocolate (a combo that I've learned can pretty much fix anything!), so if one of your New Year's Resolutions is to give up chocolate...well...forget about it! ☺

There are so many issues that women struggle with and what better way to encourage and strengthen each other than through the power of education and prayer, for it is when we, as women, are strong that we can better serve others. We become better mothers, wives, friends, servants, leaders and citizens when we receive the nurturing power of other women through the uncontainable love of Christ. It is with the healthy education of our body, mind and spirit that we can come to a closer relationship with Christ and glorify Him for making us who we are (and who understands women better than other women!). I look forward to growing in this ministry with you. See you at the **Ladies' Luau** on January 12, 2007!

**Submitted by Amber Brown**



Monthly  
Prayer  
Gathering

The next Prayer Meeting will be Tuesday December 5th, at 7:15 PM.

This is a small group. We bring our cares and concerns, then we pray for each other and our cares, concerns and needs. Please join us for the next Prayer Meeting.



Dear Amber, We had such a great time!!!! In fact, Carly and I went on itunes and downloaded Natalie Grant and Zoe girl. We listen to the songs all the time. I think the Revolve Tour was a wonderful experience and we loved seeing the stars. We told

our friends and they think it would be fun to go maybe next year!!!! Also Lisa wrote us some letters and we are pen pals now!!! It's great!!! Love ya!!!!  
From, Carly and Paige Ferrerira



## SPECIAL DATES TO REMEMBER

### **CHRISTMAS EVE DAY**

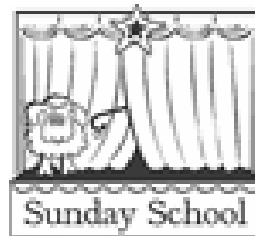
**ONE SERVICE AT  
9:30 AM**

**NO SUNDAY SCHOOL**

**7:30 PM Family Worship  
Service**

**11:00 PM Candlelight  
Service**

**Sunday School  
Christmas Program  
Sunday Dec. 17<sup>th</sup> @10:30  
AM service.**



**Christmas  
Program**



***What's happening with Christian Ed?***  
*Submitted by Amber Brown, Coordinator of  
Christian Education*

It has been such a blessing to me to come into my new position as Coordinator of Christian Education and see things take off! The Lord has so many plans for this congregation and I look forward to celebrating every one. We are growing and blossoming with new activities, new ministries, and new plans. Check out what's been happening and what's coming up...

***What does your life REVOLVE around?***

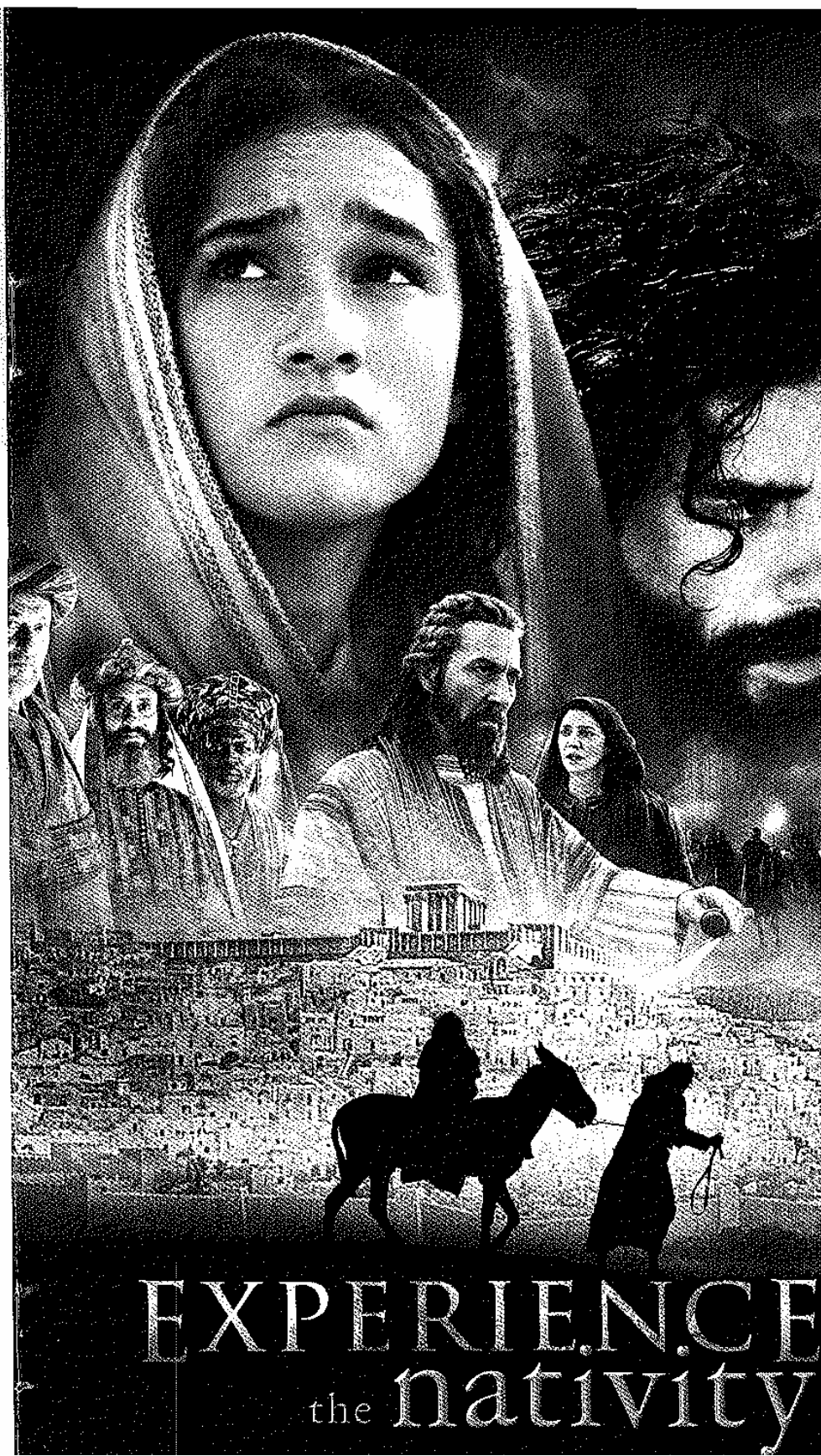
On November 3 and 4<sup>th</sup>, thirteen teenage girls traveled to Philadelphia accompanied by eight very brave adult Guides (you have to be brave to schlep to Philly with 13 teenagers!) to attend the *REVOLVE Tour*. For most of the girls, this was their first concert experience, and man, did we ROCK THE HOUSE! The *REVOLVE Tour* is an overnight Christian event that explores "what your life revolves around" with high impact concerts by *Tammy Trent* (she sure can dance), *Natalie Grant* (she's pregnant with twins?!) *Zoë Girl* (and one of 'em is from New Jersey- woo hoo!) *KJ-52* (did you say Christian rap?) and speakers *Chad Eastham* (the girls still have stars in their eyes..."he's soooo cute") and *Kimiko Soldati* (US Diving Champion who tells the real story about ...well, uh..."girl stuff").

In attendance was *Jessica VanHandel*, *Stephanie McGrane*, *Taryn McGrane*, *Sarah Qualman*, *Katie O'Connor*, *Maggie O'Connor*, *Danielle Stacy*, *Nicole Stacy*, *Carly Ferreira*, *Paige Ferreira*, *Alyssa Sardone*, *Emily Jocus* and *Kelly Doran*- and they celebrated with 10, 000 of their closest girlfriends as they laughed, learned and loved, all in the presence of the Lord. We talked about everything- especially guys, girlfriends and God and discovered that "it's not about me- it's about Him!"

The general consensus is that *Chad Eastham* was the favorite- but a close second was *Zoë Girl* and *Natalie Grant*. Chad shared his message and perspective of how guys see girls- how they *really* see girls- as well as "purity is precious" with his question- "Are you a treasure or a target?" Natalie shared her battle with bulimia and Tammy Trent shared her testimony of the tragic death of her husband. Even though these testimonies were "heavy" and sometimes hard to hear and comprehend, they were very *real*. Each speaker touched the girls in a different way- maybe because they are dealing with some of these issues themselves- but the constant tone of the weekend was that "no matter what you're going through and no matter what you've done, Jesus loves you, He forgives you and He thinks you are beautiful! How powerful for these girls to hear such a positive message when they are inundated by stick-thin models on magazine covers, harsh and ever present peer pressure, and TV sitcoms and ads that degrade women, the family model, and Christian life. This weekend proved to these girls that it's "cool to be Christian."

A very special thank you to our Guides, *Lara Pudwell*, *Lisa Qualman*, *Jenn Bergfeldt*, *Lisa Gergasko*, *Cynthia McGrane*, *Jill O'Connor* and our honorary "Mr. Mom" for the weekend, *Bill Sardone*. Thank you for your tireless leadership and endurance. I hope we didn't scare you off 'cause we need you next year! ☺ Thank you, also, to our very generous benefactors, who, with your financial and prayerful support, made this weekend happen!

We are planning to attend the *REVOLVE Tour* next November. If you were unable to go with us this year, put it on your calendar **now**: NOVEMBER 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Wachovia Spectrum in Philly. Tickets are already on sale- in fact; over 2,000 seats have already sold. Watch for details this spring and bring your friends too, 'cause this is something you won't want to miss! (For a sneak peak, log onto [www.revolutour.com](http://www.revolutour.com)) Check out the pix on the Christian Education board and ask the girls what a "spaghetti thing" is all about! ☺



## THE NATIVITY STORY

Saturday, December 9, 2006

Where: Regal Marlboro  
Cinema 8 Theatre on Rt. 9N

When: December 9, 2006 @  
3:30 PM (Matinee)

Please arrive at least 20  
minutes prior to the movie to  
purchase tickets and meet as  
a group in the lobby.

This movie is rated PG and is  
one hour 41 minutes.

Currently the movie is  
scheduled to show at 3:30,  
but please verify the time  
BEFORE arriving at the  
theatre. If the time changes,  
we will attend the last  
matinee of the day on the 9<sup>th</sup>.  
You can verify movie times at  
[www.fandango.com](http://www.fandango.com) or by  
calling the theatre at 1-800-  
326-3264.

Hope to see you all there.

Amber

# Groth Report

## November 2006

*In everything give thanks. I Thessalonians  
5:18*

*It may interest you to know that the first Thanksgiving decree was made by Abraham Lincoln in the midst of the US civil war. He didn't wait until the war was over or everything was settled to encourage the nation to be thankful to an awesome God. Perhaps many of us can identify with this situation. We are praying faithfully for outcomes that are yet unseen. Our devotion on Thanksgiving Day reminded us that God's Word doesn't say for all things but "in all things." So let's ponder that attitude of thankfulness that even psychologists say leads to a happier and healthier life.*

On this Monday after Thanksgiving my doctor visits find my health improving. My MS symptoms are receding, and now we are testing to see if I should take some preventative drugs. My ankle is healing well and although I still have my soft cast on I am much more mobile. The estimate is that we will be able to return to Cambodia in 2-4 weeks, God willing. Please say prayers of thanks and add those for continuing return to health.

We were able to spend Thanksgiving Day with our entire family. What an unexpected blessing!! We shared our thanks and our meal. We watched the grandkids' antics. The day was balmy and beautiful. The joy of being together was unsurpassed!!

I am always restless for a project, and so I am thankful to be working on a Mission Friends Cambodia while here. It is a fun

project to research and write. I am also thankful in my situation that I can take time to learn a few new computer techniques and apply them at once.

Then, too, the future holds exciting possibilities for working with the Ablaze component of Missions. My recent degree is now hopefully being used for the purpose I intended to glorify our Savior through work for Him. I'm happy the doctoral stuff is over and excited about putting to use the things I have learned.

Chuck has also been thankful for time to put things in shape here in our townhouse. Moving directly from Africa to Cambodia rather than returning stateside in between made interesting storage challenges and left things here in disarray. While he is a wonderful caregiver he has also put things in place and in shape while we are here.

Another note of thanks if for all of you. You have surrounded us with your prayers. You have kept us uplifted with your phone calls and e-mails. What a wonderful thing to be part of such a supportive Christian family.

So **in** everything we give thanks. We ask for your continued prayers and encouragement. We are anxious to get back to work in Cambodia but we also know—"God's time is best."

May you too find reasons to be thankful daily in all your diverse situations.

Love and peace in Jesus,

Chuck and Jeanette Groth

The Lutheran Church of the Good  
Shepherd

[www.lc-goodshepherd.org](http://www.lc-goodshepherd.org)

3139 County Road 516

Old Bridge, NJ 08857

732-679-8883

The Rev. William A. Qualman, Pastor

**Special Christmas Schedule**

**December, 24, 2006**

9:30 AM, 7:30 PM, 11:00 PM

December 25-Christmas Day - 10:30 AM

GS Children's Center

732-679-8887

Mrs. Lorraine Campo, Director

[gsc@lc-goodshepherd.org](mailto:gsc@lc-goodshepherd.org)

**Worship Services**

Sunday Communion Services

8:00 and 10:30 a.m.

Sunday School 9:15 a.m.

Adult Bible Classes – 9:30 a.m.

Youth Fellowship Meetings

2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday - 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

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**God's love at work here!**