

The Staff

The newsletter of the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd

January 2007

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

Make the Most of the Year Ahead



happen to us but rather to use life as a gift to make things happen.

So what do you want to happen in 2007 and what can you be doing to make that dream a reality? Life is God's gift to us to enjoy. God's people should be the happiest people of all. Fun is okay. Fun is good. Fun is even healthy.

Somewhere I read that children laugh more than one hundred times each day. By the time we get to be adults, we're laughing on average only eleven times a day – a good day. Sure, adulthood is full of heavy responsibilities, many of which are not fun. Still, we need to be people of joy. We sing about joy, and we read in our Bibles about joy! How can we live it and experience it for ourselves?

When we're not accustomed to having fun, letting go to do so can be a little scary, a little risky. Ride the roller coaster! Go to the movies. Smile when you sing "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee." Take a risk.

Do something new. Do something demanding. Take on the research project. Write that article or that book. Apply for that promotion. Retool if you have to. Take a risk. Do something creative. Learn to paint or sing or sew. Learn a new language.

Learn how to operate a blackberry or a computer. Take the risk.

And do something for faith's sake. We need to be people who take faith risks. That's the exciting thing about our walk with Christ. He's always leading us to something new or someone new. Maybe you realize in your heart of hearts that you want to know and understand more about the Scriptures. But it involves risk. For one thing, you may find out more than you want to know. You may discover something about God you'd never had to think about before. You may find yourself inspired by the example of Jesus and you'll have to change the way you live and relate, think and behave. It's a risk.

Remember what the Scriptures say: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge God, and God will make straight your paths." (Proverbs 3:5-6)

There it is. The antidote to the risk of risks: trusting God and God's wisdom and leadership and direction in place of our own insights. That's a huge risk for every one of us. We trust our imperfect ways of reasoning more than we trust God. Still, the promise is, if you will acknowledge God – that is, seek God's direction – in all your paths, in regard to everything you do, then God will make your paths straight.

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page – Make the Most

We'll still have to walk the pathways off the main road in order to get where God wants us to go, but God will see to it that if we keep looking to him for directions, the pathways will get us to where we need to be without detours.

The Apostle Paul had some great words of encouragement on this subject: "And my God will fully satisfy every need of yours according to God's riches in glory in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:19)

With all of these promises, and living out our faith, risking great things for the kingdom, we can find fun and joy in all the things we do in 2007!

Always in Christ,
Pastor Bill Qualman



Confirmation Fellowship Event

Hey Confirmation Students! Your activity this month will be a group fellowship event to take place at the church on January 21 starting at 3:30 PM. There will be fun, games, food and prizes and a chance to reconnect with your fellow confirmation friends after the busy holiday season. We will start with some fun fellowship, take a break for pizza, and then roll right into the learning event that is scheduled for 6:00 PM. Please bring \$5.00 for pizza and your materials for the learning event and join us for a great time! See you then!

Amber Brown



Our Church's Financial Update

A brief update on your contributions from your Financial Secretary:

Did you know: If you forget your giving envelope and want to place a check or cash in the Offering Plate (and have it credited to your Contribution Statement), for your convenience we will have in the Narthex a blank box of envelopes. Please feel free to use them and write your envelope number on it if you know it. If you do not know it, just place your check in the envelope. This will help us in recording it.

Building Fund:

In the last few months, several people have asked me about the Building Fund and whether or not we can still contribute to it and where the funds go. Yes, we still have the Building Fund and your contributions are going to either:

- 1) A major capital expenditure on our existing building (as an example, a new roof) or
- 2) phase two of our vision (for example, expanding the Sanctuary which could be a few years away.)

Your contributions are not going to pay for the expansion of our Child Care or Sunday School Building which is completed under phase one of our vision.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Prayerfully,

Tony Puricelli
Financial Secretary



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.



Happy New Year!

We at the alleys are ending the first half of our bowling year. As of this writing let me fill you in on the

standings:

1st place- UnStoppable- Wayne and Beth Krawiec and Vin Stefanelli

2nd place- Pretty Lucky Bowlers- Bill and Laurie Burke and Rob Magazzu

3rd place- Shanghai Rollers- Tara Lange, Tony Onorato and Jon Artache

4th place- Triple Threat- Jim Hatcliffe, Brigitte Meitzner and Dean Olson

5th place- Lane Rovers- Bob and Carol Hahl and Marie Bergfeldt

6th place- Old Goats- Betty and Don Cousens and Paul Jordan



LOST, the NJ District Winter Youth Gathering – about 10 youth and adults will be heading out to Camp Lebanon to share in faith, fellowship and fun with others from the NJ District. Please keep us in your prayers as we travel and spend time learning about God's awesome love as He reminds us we are never LOST.

PLAY REHEARSAL – We will start rehearsals on January 7th, right after the 10:30 service. If you have signed up and have a part, please be sure NOT to miss any rehearsals. Dinner theatre is on March 10th. The play is March 9th, 10th, and 11th. If you have any questions, please see me.

Alicia De Sena



FROM THE ALLEYS

7th place- Ugly Ducks- Doreen and Ron Humiston and Beth Meyer

8th place- 9 and A Wiggle- Bob and Sandy Shipley and Norm Sigmund

9th place - Alley Gators- Julio and Mary Artache and Tom Rutan

10th place- Holy Rollers- Danny and Steve Onorato and Steve Weiss, Sr.

On December 4th, Don Cousens took over men's high series with a 726 night. Carol Hahl holds women's high series (574) and women's high game (222). Rob Magazzu 279, is still the men's high game to beat.

Submitted by Laurie Burke

Christmas 2006

**Peace is knowing you are loved;
Joy is having someone to share it with.**

Dear Friends and Family,

Wishes for peace and joy are often exchanged at Christmas. Isn't the deepest, real Peace the result of knowing you are loved by God Eternal? He who went so far as to come to this earth to live a humble life and die in our place? When other love seems at times fickle, we can always depend on Jesus who is Love Himself! And what greater Joy than to share His wonderful love with others, including YOU!

This year was not as "eventful" for us as past years, but we will share a few highlights... In August, Wayne passed the university's English language proficiency exam (equivalent to the TOEFL) which allowed him to be fully accepted into the Master of Divinity program at the seminary. This was a big milestone after two years of mostly self-taught preparation using various materials, so that now he can focus more on his theological studies. This is his second part-time year at the seminary and includes a course in Greek. As the kids get older and he becomes more comfortable with English, he will take a heavier load.

In September, my brother Gerhard and wife Tingyu welcomed their first child into the world, a great celebration after ten years of marriage! Wayne and I are honored to be little Jonathan's godparents. So far we have only seen him twice (they live two hours away in Toronto), so we look forward to the family reunion at Christmas.

Meanwhile, our two boys are growing like weeds and are as rambunctious as can be. They cherish each other's company, and when one doesn't come up with some mischief, the other does. They love to climb, romp, listen to music, read, and of course, play with cars. Nicholas (3) is often busy talking

and singing in his pretend world, when he's not trying to "help" me do something. He understands German and a fair bit of Chinese, though he'll only answer in English. To our amazement, he recently drew a few recognizable self-portraits without anyone teaching him.

Immanuel (20 months.) loves sorting things, dancing to music, and repeating words and sounds he hears. One of his games is turning round and round in circles and still walking away on his two feet! His latest word is "now." He has become tall and slim like his brother, and almost as shy in public! Though I take them to two different playgroups and Sunday School, they are always reserved with others around – unless it is only one or two other kids. So, I try to find playmates for them in the neighborhood and among the church and seminary community.

With frequent illnesses this past year, I did not get very ambitious. Keeping house and keeping the boys entertained and healthy has been my main focus. Wayne and my parents living close by have been a great help to me. Now that I have more energy back, I am enjoying singing in the church choir for the Christmas season and inviting some friends to our home.

From our family to yours ...

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

**May the Peace of Christ reign in your hearts and
Joy in your Savior accompany you throughout
2007!**

Anastasia, Wayne, Nicholas & Immanuel

Anastasia Wilch-Zhang
384 Glenridge Ave., Apt.4
St. Catharines, Ontario
L2T 3K7, Canada

T.R.I.M.

Transformation and Renewal in Ministry

What Does God Want Us To Do?

It's a simple enough question. What does God want us to do? The answer isn't a long laundry list; it's actually rather simple in and of itself - God wants us to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ.

How do we do that? How does Good Shepherd become an effective congregation, equipped for actively sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ? At the last T.R.I.M. (Transformation and Renewal in Ministry) meeting, we discussed what it means to be an effective congregation. Effective congregations are Relational Organizations. What does that mean?

They have a spiritual relationship with God
They have relationships to other people
They have a relationship to a larger cause
That larger cause is the relationship to the Cross through the death of Jesus Christ.

All of that sounds pretty easy. I'm sure you are saying to yourself that this is nothing new. Good Shepherd has all of the things listed above. Sure we do, but believe it or not, it's the second point that becomes the stumbling block. To become effective, we need to make the church work for others outside of the current membership. We can't just continue to ensure the things we do work for those already here. We can't remain in our comfort zone, just because it has always worked. Sure it may work for those already here, but those already at Good Shepherd have to find a way to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ to those outside of Good Shepherd. It's what God wants us to do, it's His directive; "Go and make disciples of all nations..."

Did you know that we are facing a second and third generation of Pagans in the United States? In NJ, it's the second generation. More children are being brought to church by their grandparents because the parents don't attend themselves. But for the majority of the country, children are just not attending because their grandparents had not brought their parents to church. People just don't understand "church" anymore. More and more people don't know God personally. They can't tell you the "old" stories. They don't know what Christmas and Easter are really all about.

So what about the future? So what happens if we don't reach the current generation? What happens to the next generation? Basically it's simple, the future comes C.O.D. No, it's not Cash On Delivery its Change Or Die. If we don't change, more will die unsaved. We are told in the Bible, "the wages of sin is death." Without the saving Grace of Jesus Christ, we are dead. If we don't share that saving Grace with others, they are dead. 155,000 people die every day, and 100,000 of those die unsaved. What an alarming number!

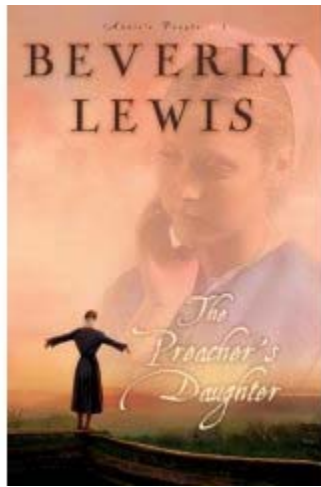
So, what can we do? We as a congregation need to re-establish our Vision. We need to re-start the life cycle of Good Shepherd. As we form our new vision through the T.R.I.M. process, we need to ask ourselves, "Why would God want to gather people at Good Shepherd?" You see the Holy Spirit calls, gathers, and enlightens. Therefore, why Good Shepherd? That is exactly what those who have attended the T.R.I.M. meetings are asking themselves.

The T.R.I.M. Vision Committee is beginning the process of breaking down the demographics for the 5-mile area surrounding Good Shepherd. We have to better understand and get to know our community in order to create the Vision. What do we offer those who live around Good Shepherd? How can we do things differently? Do we need to do ministry differently or are we already reflecting the community? Will some of the things we do make the current membership uncomfortable? What price do we pay to reach the unsaved? We are not looking to re-shuffle the deck, by pulling new members from other churches. We are looking to reach a portion of the 100,000 that die unsaved every day!

Become a part of the process! Become a part of the Ministry! Become a part of God's plan to reach the unsaved through the ministry at Good Shepherd! Let your voice be heard! Become involved with T.R.I.M. Help those who have already started the process Transform and Renew Ministry in Old Bridge.

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 7:30-9:00 pm (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 9th to discuss A Preacher's Daughter, by Beverly Lewis.

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. 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

Good Shepherd Children's Center



WHAT'S NEW AT SCHOOL

HAPPY NEW
YEAR!!!!

Our Christmas Program was a huge success!!! The kids were great. I am extremely proud of them. Everyone worked so hard to make December 9 a very special and memorable day. Pastor Qualman also participated by leading each of the three performances in prayer.

The kids will slowly get back into their routine after coming back from Christmas break, and things will settle down around the school, for a short time anyway.

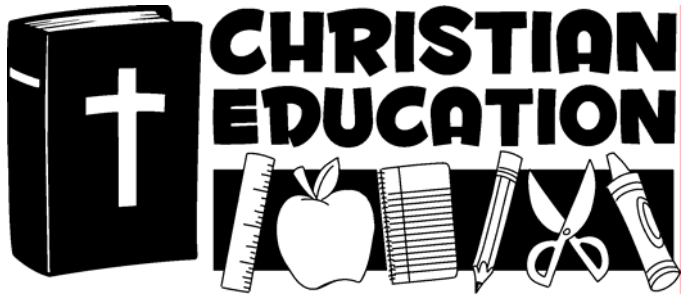
Not much to speak of this month since we were closed for the holidays. I enjoyed being home and spending extra time with my family and friends, cooking more family meals, and seeing people I don't ordinarily get to see.

Remember, the Christmas spirit doesn't have to end because December is over. Read to your children and grandchildren, all the time. Make an effort to keep at least one resolution you made as the new year rang in, and if you are considering adding a pet to your family, consider adoption first.

Open house for September registration will be held on January 13th, 2007 from 9:00 – 1:00. Please stop by if you are interested in signing up your child for the Care Center.

Lorraine Campo
Director
GSCC





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

A New Life of Change

Typically, the New Year launches new attitudes, proposals, promises and resolutions...some of which are well intentioned (I will read my Bible every day) and others that are rather superficial (I will never eat chocolate again!) We all want to start the New Year off "right"...a chance for a fresh start. But why do we wait for the calendar to tell us to make some changes or to start anew? God's calendar does not go by months...his mercies are new every day (Lamentations 3:23) and every time we come to Him in repentance, He grants us forgiveness, right then and there- not three months and twelve days after we've confessed. As humans, we feel that a fresh start to our lives is the prescription for change. But as Christians, that prescription for change is weekly, daily, and sometimes hourly. How often have we committed and confessed a sin, only to do it again moments later? The Lord is constantly working change in our lives and it doesn't start on January 1. It starts when we commit our lives to Him and to living His will and His commands. Forgiveness is the gift we can open daily if we need to, and as we accept that gift, we are committing to change and to a fresh start.

Most of you have heard the phrase- "the only thing constant is change"...How true that is and how I'm seeing it in my own life as I get older and raise a family. Nothing stays the same. What a blessing this is, as children of God, that we don't stay the same. Could you imagine how immature and petty

we would be if we approached life with the mentality of a 3-year-old? What if we never grew up? What if we never learned? What if we never moved on? Change happens as a natural progression of life but also as a constant and ever present reminder that we must grow up, learn, and move on. Life circumstances either "make or break you" but these are the teaching moments of life that will help you on your road of change. How will you handle it when you lose your job? What will happen if your child is diagnosed with a dreadful disease? How will it affect you when your marriage breaks up because of infidelity?

Nobody likes strife and strain in their lives but consider that these are the moments when the Lord beckons you to Him so that your pain, your pressure, and, ultimately, your change occur in Him. What mercy we receive at His feet when we go to Him totally and utterly broken. There is no timetable for this- life's difficulties aren't all scheduled for the first day of the year. But as we grow, learn and move on--and yes, as *we* change--we can cope with our *life* changes and know that there is peace, grace and forgiveness with our King. He knows where we need to be changed and He has a plan for that change. Our part comes when we trust that our Father knows best.

May you approach this New Year of Change with confidence, excitement, anticipation and growth as you come closer to becoming the person God created you to be. Remember that the "New Year" for a Christian is every day...forgiveness *is* a fresh start.

For Your Information



Happy Birthday to...

Adam Lo	1/1
Jordan Kaplan	1/1
Todd Smith	1/2
Bonnie Olsen	1/3
Christina Sereda	1/4
Candice Riggs	1/4
Andrew Junco	1/5
Dave Virelles	1/6
Jeffrey Lisk	1/6
Katrina Clapsis	1/7
Amy Ford	1/7
Jason Cocklin	1/7
Kevin Prenderville	1/8
Melissa Siclari	1/9
Matthew Qualman	1/9
Douglas Kim	1/10
Robert Frank	1/10
Jessica Beltran	1/11
Alyxa Dill	1/11
David Schulmeister	1/12
Jennifer Kaplan	1/12
Matthew Gergasko	1/13
Katherine O'Connor	1/13
Scott Weiss	1/14
Ed Roynesdal	1/15
Erika Meitzner	1/17
Kim Raba	1/17
Joseph G Kotora	1/18
Ed Siclari	1/18
Mark Holmes	1/18
Edward Siclari	1/18
Patricia Virelles	1/22
Nicholas Stefanic	1/22

Roy Ebersole	1/23
Kathy Schulmeister	1/23
Jaclyn Gryszka	1/23
Wayne Borkowski	1/24
Catherine Butterwick	1/24
Mitchell Kaplan	1/24
Kyle Ebersole	1/25
Leela Mallepalle	1/25
Christine Kim	1/25
Paul Garg	1/27
Michael Johnson	1/27
Katelyn MacLean	1/27
Barbara Freeborn	1/28
Brendan van Riemsdyk	1/28
Authur Staudinger	1/28
Jessica Shipley	1/28
Allyson Gonzalez	1/29
Jessica Van Handel	1/29
Nicole DeVito	1/29
Ruth Culmone	1/30
Carol Hahl	1/31
Alicia DeSena	1/31
Shawn Chornobroff	1/31

Happy Anniversary to.....

Dawn & Robert Kotora	1/1
Betty & Don Cousens	1/22
Carol & Tom Cunningham	1/24

The Staff is published monthly for members and friends of The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd

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Mr. Ed Roynesdal

Little Sheep &
Hand bell Director
Mrs. Amber Brown

GS Children's Center
Director
Mrs. Lorraine Campo
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Jack Arthur Ford
Arrived on December 27th, 2006
9 lbs, 4 oz



Proud parents are Amy and A.J.
Big sister is Audrey.



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

Laurie Troutman – daughter of Child Care Teacher

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

Women's Ministry



The Women's Ministry is Here!

Princess Retreat 2007

We are in the 6 week countdown to the Princess Retreat 2007 which is February 9 & 10, 2007. Although we have collected deposits, it's still not too late to sign up! Last call for the retreat is January 21, 2007 so grab your girlfriends and \$49.00 and join us for an unforgettable weekend! We already have over 50 women attending- there is room for 66 women total- so don't miss out on this! In addition to workshops and small group prayer time, there will be time for personal crafts (bring any current crafts you're working on- holiday scrapbooks, winter knitting, etc) or if the weather permits, outdoor winter activities.

Crossroads Retreat Center boasts a gorgeous 250 acres, so bring your cross country skis and your sleds for some outdoor wintry fun. There's even time for a nap! Or curl up by the fire with a good book or schedule a massage! That's right ladies- this is a full service retreat! The Crossroads Assistant Director is a professional massage therapist and is offering massages throughout the weekend at 25 % off! Space is limited for this luxury, so contact me today to schedule your massage. Of course we offer chocolate for breakfast, lunch and dinner if you'd like- so all in all, this is a splurge-and-treat-yourself-to-a-great-weekend-because-you-deserve-it-after-the-hectic-holidays opportunity. ☺

If you have signed up for the retreat and owe money, you have until January 21, 2007 to pay your balance. Watch for your retreat packet in the mail which will include an itinerary, packing list and arrival and departure times. Can't wait for this weekend! See you then!

Amber Brown

We are kicking off the New Year as only women can...with great fanfare, panache, parties and a healthy dose of chocolate! January 12 is our official kickoff for the Women's Ministry with our *Ladies' Luau*. The fun and festivities of this night will continue right into the *Princess Retreat* three weeks later on February 9 and 10, 2007. Then we will host monthly meetings and activities which will include a new craft club, appropriately titled, *Crafter's for Christ*, as well as a chance to work off the holiday pounds with Christian aerobics classes called *Fit Him In*. We will also be scheduling community service activities and focusing on discovering who we are as women in Christ.

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

Now, as for the guys... yes, you are important too! We understand that you may be feeling a tad left out as the women around you are whooping it up for Christ. Never fear! You will not be alone for long! Already in the works are plans for a Men's Ministry, but in the mean time consider the many blessings of the women around you as they learn and grow in Christ. With this growth, we become better moms and wives...we might even bring you your slippers at the end of your hard day at work (did any one ever really do this?) And with this growth we become better coworkers...we might just treat you to your fourth cup of coffee for the day. All of these will be done, not to our glory, but to God's, knowing that we are being nurtured and loved by other women. Nobody knows a woman better than another woman! Through the nurturing of other women we are comfortable and confident in who God created us to be. And with that confidence and peace comes a joyful service to others. So hang in there guys- your turn for a Ministry is coming.



Ladies' Luau

Come bask in the "Warmth of the Son" at our *Ladies' Luau* on January 12, 2007! This fun night of fellowship will be the kickoff for the year for our new Women's Ministry. This fun and festive night will be a great opportunity to learn about the new plans and path for the Women's Ministry as well as make new friends and greet old ones, play games, win prizes, eat some yummy treats and have a group devotion and prayer. There is no cost to attend this event and we encourage you to bring friends, neighbors and co-workers. Because we want to focus on the needs of our fellow women, we understand that child care issues may pose a problem. Unfortunately, we are unable to accommodate child care needs for this night but we are working on having child care available for future events. We ask that any one that attends this event be at least 18 or older. If you have any questions or you would like some more information, please see Amber Brown.



"I made a New Year's resolution to eat more fruit, but surely I can't be expected to go through with it after that!"



Monthly
Prayer
Gathering

The next Prayer Meeting will be Tuesday, February 6th, 2007 at 7:15 PM.

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

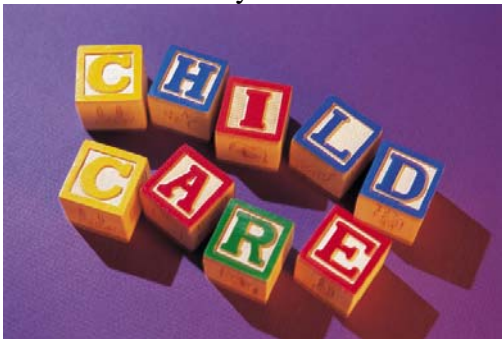


SPECIAL DATES TO REMEMBER

Child Care Center Open House

January 13th, 2007
9:00 – 1:00

If you are thinking of enrolling your child in the Care Center, this is a chance to come and see what they have to offer.



Confirmation Fellowship Event

Sunday, January 21st, 2007 3:00 – 6:00
Learning Event to follow.
Please bring \$5.00 for pizza, and don't forget your books for the learning event.

Coffee House January 20th, 2007 6:30 – 10:00



T.R.I.M.

Saturday, January 27th, 2007
8:30 – 12:30

Breakfast will be served
Child care provided.

Please join us to discuss where Good Shepherd can get more involved with our community

Groth Report

December 2006

Matthew 1:1-6 - This scripture reading is the genealogy of Jesus, and for my purpose I want to focus on: *Judah and Tamar were the father and mother of Perez and Zerah* Matthew 1:3 *Salmon and Rahab were the father and mother of Boaz.* Matthew 1: 5 *Boaz and Ruth were the father and mother of Obed.* Mathew 1:5

Isn't this an unusual set of verses for a Christmas letter and December report? It is amazing how God's Word speaks to us in different ways at different times. Working cross-culturally gives opportunities to see ourselves as "foreigners." It also gives us an opportunity to work with people that we might term "foreigners." What a striking message it us for us to realize God's love and acceptance of foreigners!!! I must admit that with this background I read the genealogy of Jesus with a new perspective. Jesus had "foreigners" in his background. Although they were not Israelites, the witness of that "chosen nation" allowed them to be a part of Jesus' family. It is also important to read the stories of Tamar and Rahab and realize that God loves and accepts what some might view as outcasts and sinners and makes them part of his family. Jesus' family tree helps us to view that in a real way!! More important in it reminds us at this time of the privilege we have to share Jesus with others so that they can be part of the best family of all—God's family. This Groth Report will be a bit different than most because it will update you on our mission in Cambodia and our family all in one.

Thank God for the prayers of so many of you in our Christian family. I am feeling better. My ankle is healed. My MS symptoms have subsided greatly and with the help of my physical therapist I am walking around quite well. So many of you have been so faithful in your prayers and concerns. We ask for your continued prayers for God's blessing of good health and grateful thank you's to Him for the blessing of healing.

We have been privileged to see our family unite as Christians during this healing time. We have

enjoyed time with our daughter, Kristyn, at Thanksgiving, and we are thankful for her supportive church family at Community of Hope. The joy that she brings to the nursing home residents where she works makes a parents' heart glad!! She will be busy playing her violin at church this Christmas and planning her trip to Cambodia in March.

Getting to spend a little more time with our son Jason and his wife Cara and our two grandchildren Madelyn and Caroline has been an unexpected blessing. God puts good in all things!! We have gotten to know Madelyn and Caroline a little better and even got to take Madelyn to see the Nutcracker. It is such a blessing to have a son who calls and prays with his mom!

And what could be better than daily chats with Kara. As a stay-at-home mom she has been able to come down for "cheer up" visits with Kahlan and William. Watching the climbing of Kahlan and William's quick crawling is some of the best therapy of all. Matt truly understands the importance of family and has been so good to take time off for a family weekend and Thanksgiving time. Not easy when he is working so hard with the new business - Kahmann Electric.

Now we are eager to return December 31 to the family we have left behind in Cambodia. It will be time to work with our new intern at Battambang, Greg, and to begin to get so many new ideas and programs going there. It will be a time to visit Sihanoukville and meet with church leaders there to begin a Sunday School teacher training. We also will begin a new leaders training for twelve leader/servants of God.

We ask for your prayers for our safe return, good health, and the Holy Spirit's blessing on the work in Cambodia. Pray that the family of God is blessed with new members and that as always His kingdom will come among us. Christmas blessings to you and your family as the Newborn Child encompasses us all and makes us a family of love, peace and unending joy.

Chuck and Jeanette Groth

The Lutheran Church of the Good
Shepherd

www.lc-goodshepherd.org

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The Rev. William A. Qualman, Pastor

GS Children's Center

732-679-8887

Mrs. Lorraine Campo, Director

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

2nd and 4th Sunday - 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

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God's love at work here!