



## THE CHURCH DOOR

Dr. Martin Luther Evangelical Lutheran Church

December 2007



To several people I have been talking up the Slovak food at Nativity Lutheran in Windsor, which I had the pleasure to partake at last month's SZS Western Conference meeting there. Jan Ward said she would like to have a taste of that food, too. She said, "What do you think about a bunch of us going over then some Friday to eat?" I sounds to me like a good idea and fun thing to do. So what do you think? Want to form a caravan?

I believe that the day must be on a Friday because that is the day that Nativity sells their food to the public and that they stop at about 5:00 PM. The travel time from Muskegon is a little over three hours. A concern is identification for reentry to the US. Currently, and as I understand it, until sometime in the summer of 2008 a valid driver's license and official birth certificate are required to prove your identity and citizenship if you do not have a valid passport. It is unclear to me if we would be able to bring food back with us into the US. If you are interested, let me know and we can begin further discussions.

I tasted the food at Nativity Lutheran and saw that it was good, and I was enthusiastic in talking to others about it. The Psalmist says, "taste and see that the Lord is good." (Psalm 34:8). That is the beginning point of telling others about the Lord. You don't have to ask the person's religious background, nor do you have to ask if they are a church member. In fact, when I was speaking about the good food I did-

n't ask anything about the person's eating habits. I simply shared my experience. If they have experienced food like that we had something in common about which we could talk. It is the same with the Lord. If the person has tasted and saw that the Lord is good then you have something in common. If on the other hand, they have not tasted, they will not know for sure what you are talking about until they taste for themselves. That's when you can invite them for a taste, to come and see for themselves.

We have tasted and have seen that the Lord is good but we don't seem to have the enthusiasm to talk to others about it. Perhaps it is because we have a steady diet of the Lord. There are many "out there" who are malnourished with respect to the Lord. Remember that the Christmas season makes is a good time to invite someone to come with you to the Lord's house. Many people begin to feel a little empty this time of the year. I think that they begin to feel that way after having feasted on food aplenty at Thanksgiving and are finding that they are still hungry for something that mere food cannot fill.

So, share with someone the good taste you have found in the Lord. Invite someone to come with you to church. As for the Slovak food in Windsor, you may have to come and see. Shall we go a caravanning?

*God's blessings to all the saints at DML,*

*Pastor Dennis*

## Annual St. Nicholas Tree Benefits Muskegon Rescue Mission

Once again the Eve Circle is asking DML members to donate items for area children in need.

Pick a paper ornament from the St. Nicholas Tree and bring in items of clothing and/or toys for the boy/girl on the ornament.

Our B.I.B.L.E. Club children and teachers will deliver the presents in time for Christmas. The tree will be displayed through December 16th (to be confirmed later) in the lounge.

### Suggested items:

Warm clothing  
Sweatshirts and sweatpants  
Socks  
Hats  
Mittens  
Underwear  
Long underwear  
Pajamas  
TOYS!





## Church Council Minutes October 2007

President Tom Whitehead called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

Pastor led devotions from the *Living in God's Amazing Grace: Thanks Be To God!* Devotional Guide.

**PRESENT:** Randy Borreson, Pastor Stroh, Russ Tilden, Tom Whitehead, Jeff Ward, Jan Wolf. **EXCUSED:** Cindy Borreson, Emogene Cotal, Polly Eagle. **ABSENT:** Brian Doane

**SECRETARY'S REPORT:** Secretary's report for September was presented in printed form. Corrections: 1) Brian Doane was listed as both present and absent, update to indicate he was absent. 2) Under Pastor's report update on Clif Hellman, replace "get work" with "getting worse".

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** The Treasurer's Report's for September 2007 were presented in printed form. Questioned \$10 or \$20 for Seminarian. Cindy to provide correct balance at next meeting.

**PASTOR'S REPORT:** A written report was submitted.

Hospital visits: Beryl Connelly 9/18; LaVern Borreson 10/6; Stephen Hellman 10/15; Beulah Justian 10/1; Ray Johnson 10/6; Clif Hellman 10/15

Pastoral Activities: Committee Meetings: Worship & Music, Mutual Ministry, Parish Ed, Finance. Habitat House Blessing and build, met with Pastor's Anderson and Michnay at lunch to bid farewell to Michal, attended Priscilla Pedersen's birthday party at DML, Dorcas, Eve, Men's Club. Pastor's Bike Ride rained out.

Transfers In/Out: Requested transfer of Rev. Anderson and family to DML.

Personal Activities:

Elected to Muskegon Habitat Board,

Mediation, Habitat Board Meeting  
Items Needing Attention/  
Informational Items:

Try to reschedule Pastor's Bike Ride to 10/21

Canceled Thursday Bible Study due to low attendance.

Committee Reports

**Property:** Did not meet. Tom commented on parking lot repair being the next major project for the committee.

**Evangelism:** MAP (Mission for Area People) food collection through end of year. Had 83 people at Flu Clinic.

**Finance:** Resuming Noisy offering to be used for Seminarian until Council changes. Worked on Budget to be presented tonight.

**Parish Education:** Took (12) students into Lounge on Sunday and showed religious videos with discussion afterward. Dawn Snider, Jan Ward, Tom Whitehead are leading.

Social Ministry: No report.

**Stewardship:** Had meeting. First week will be on ministry. Russ will discuss his involvement in Habitat. Celebration cards will be handed out by ushers to be filled in my members of congregation.

**Worship & Music:** Met last month to set-up services and will be meeting on 10/23.

**Executive Committee/ Mutual Ministry:** Meeting on 10/27. Did not meet in September.

Special Committees

**Dorcas Circle:** Preparing for Bazaar.

**Eve Circle:** Making necklaces for Bazaar. Has been talk of Dorcas and Eve merging. The women will work out details.

**Men's Club:** Only 3 people at October meeting. Next meeting is 11/3.

**Thrivent Habitat:** The house is going good. Karen Lightfoot in accident; van was totaled. Insulation will be done this Saturday with a chili lunch. Painting will be done the first Saturday in November. There was 65% of Lutherans at the build.

All five (5) churches will have a Chili Cook-off. There will be a "Best of the Best" Chili Cook-off for the winners. Check on matching funds from Thrivent for this cook-off.

Petitions and Communications  
None.

Unfinished Business

Pandemic Presentation – To be held on 11/6/07 at 7 pm, presented by Red Cross.

\$2,000 gift from St. John's – tabled to November meeting

New Business

2008 Budget – Jan Wolf motion to present budget as presented by Finance, second by Jeff Ward. Approved.

Annual Congregational Meeting, 11/4/07 – 3 terms expire this year; Randy Borreson, Brian Doane, Russ Tilden. All are eligible to be nominated. Randy is will to remain on council. Will have to find 2 people to cover other opening. Tom indicated that Dave Justian is willing to go onto Council. Randy and Russ will look for another person.

Meeting adjourned at 9:02 pm with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Borreson, Council Secretary



## Church Council Minutes November 2007

President Tom Whitehead called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.

Pastor led devotions from the *Living in God's Amazing Grace: Thanks Be To God!* Devotional Guide.

**PRESENT:** Cindy Borreson, Emogene Cotal, Polly Eagle, Pastor Stroh, Russ Tilden, Tom Whitehead, Jeff Ward, Jan Wolf. **EXCUSED:** Randy Borreson **ABSENT:** Brian Doane

**SECRETARY'S REPORT:** Secretary's report for October was presented in printed form. Emogene asked about rescheduling Adult Bible Study; perhaps to Sunday afternoon. Cindy will place insert in bulletin asking if there is interest in a Bible class and then which day of the week; morning, afternoon, evening.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** The Treasurer's Report's for October 2007 were presented in printed form. Teachers will ask children to collect Noisy offering.

The fund balances as of October 31, 2007 are shown on page 4.

**Pastor's Report:** A written report was submitted.

Hospital visits: Wally Roach, Dorothy Anderson, Wally Roach, Beryl Connelly, Clif Hellman

Pastoral Activities: Committee Meetings: Mutual Ministry, Worship & Music, Property, Evangelism, Parish Ed, Finance. Attended Dorcas, Eve, Men's Club, Bazaar, Stony Lake Conference Reformation Service at Lebanon, Pandemic Flu seminar, Pastor's potluck to welcome Rev. Tom Montgomery as pastor at Trinity, New Era, and Western Conference meeting at Windsor. Began confirmation classes with 3 students.

Transfers In/Out: Rev. Anderson and family to DML.

Personal Activities: Attended Mediator training

Items Needing Attention/  
Informational Items:

11/25 Mission Sunday with proceeds going to Slova Publication (Word). Cindy to put in bulletin.

Request from Eve & Dorcas for disbursement of Bazaar funds.

Install Council Members.

Informational Items: Vacation 12/27 thru 1/3

Stewardship program went well.

Thank you to Jeff Ward, those who gave temple talks, those behind the scenes, and for clean-up after dinner.

### Committee Reports

**Property:** Met in October, discussed stove fan issue in kitchen.

**Evangelism:** Met in October, continuing with collection for MAP through December.

**Finance:** Met last Tuesday. Discussed Gene Broge's question at Congregational Meeting regarding investment fund usage. We are reducing amount allowed to take from investment fund by \$900 a year. Our conclusion is that we are in good shape, we have a plan, and we will put in Newsletter what the plan in and we have been doing well. Out of the 5 years we have taken \$5,000 less than what we were allocated. Tom will try to meet with Gene to discuss.

**Parish Education:** Met Monday. Jan Ward, Dawn Snider, Tom Whitehead teaching a month at a time. Using videos and they are going over very well. Lauren Stroh is taking care of the Christmas Drama. Several of the kids are looking for-

ward to going to church, so something is going right.

**Social Ministry:** Christmas Baskets for area families. Cindy will put information in bulletin and newsletter for names from our members who know someone who needs assistance. Polly will talk to the congregation about it on Sunday.

**Stewardship:** Just finished this year's drive. Will be sending letters to those who have not completed their commitment card. Thank you to everyone who spoke. Cindy to send Jeff list of names and provide % increase over last year's giving.

**Worship & Music:** Met Saturday and planned worship through the end of the year.

**Executive Committee/ Mutual Ministry:** Met on 10/27, are scheduled to meet this Saturday.

### Special Committees

**Dorcas Circle/Eve Circle:** Both groups have asked for \$400 each from the proceeds of the Bazaar.

**Men's Club:** Next meeting 12/1.

**Thrivent Habitat:** Dec 3, brainstorm meeting on Chili Cook-off. There will be 21 participants (3 from each church and 3 from Habitat). The winning church will get to hold the "Traveling Chili Bowl" for a year until the next contest. Habitat having potluck in 2 weeks that Pastor will be invited to. For this year, we are at 75%/55% for Lutherans and over 30% of Thrivent members. Next year Thrivent will have 1 house; ¾ of the people want to work on it in April.

### Petitions and Communications

Nancy Hulka — Request use of hall on Sunday, 1/13/08 around noon - birthday lunch for Tom Hulka.

Marcia Kitchka — Request to use



kitchen on Friday, 12/7 & Saturday, 12/8. Bill & Emily to teach their children and the cousins how to make sausage. She will set-up, teardown, and clean-up and request to use fellowship hall and kitchen on Thursday, 12/20 from 9 am to 1:30 pm for her 5<sup>th</sup> grade class. This would be the 3<sup>rd</sup> year she has done this at DML. She will set-up, teardown, and clean-up.

Sexton Fees will be waived as long as they leave the facilities in the condition they found them.

#### Unfinished Business

Annual Congregational Meeting, 11/4/07 - elected 2 out of 3. Randy had asked about possibly "job-sharing". Donna Whitehead has indicated she would be willing to serve the open position.

\$2,000 Gift from St. John's - via Pastor the Bishop indicated that St. John's wanted the money used for Mission. That was not in the letter, but we were leaning towards that anyway. Finance Committee recommends that we do not rush into spending the money, but think about ways to use; Good Samaritan fund, Random Acts of Kindness, etc.

#### New Business

Installation of Council will be on 12/16/07.

T-Coil Loop system for sanctuary and fellowship hall. Hearing Wellness Center installs systems in churches at cost. Tom will contact them to get a quote. Pastor will contact another contractor to get a 2<sup>nd</sup> bid. These will be available for the December council meeting.

DML as Red Cross Shelter. Possibly just a warming shelter in case of blizzard, although other uses possible. Council requested Tom get more information; possibly have someone from the Red Cross come over and look around and see if we could be useful for them.

Advent Dinner for 12/2 - Cindy & Jeff will work together.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,  
Cindy Borreson,  
Treasurer

## Financial Information—October 31, 2007

### ASSETS

#### Cash & Bank Accounts

#### Funds for General Operations

Checkbook	\$710.48	
Savings - Reserve	\$3,809.86	
Total Funds for General Operations		\$4,520.34

#### Funds for Special Purposes

Savings—Designated		
Building Fund	\$5,696.33	
Evangelism	\$154.00	
Eve Circle	\$670.22	
Dorcas Circle	\$1,053.71	
Bazaar	\$2,371.13	
Kitchen Fund	\$620.87	
Men's Club	\$319.62	
Youth Group	\$285.39	
Thrivent: 2 x 4	\$104.00	
Seminarian	\$140.00	
Gift from St John's	\$2,000.00	
Total Savings—Designated		\$13,516.27
Savings - Memorial	\$3,172.38	
Savings - Taxes	\$340.36	
Total Funds for Special Purposes		\$17,029.01
Total Cash and Bank Accounts		\$21,549.35

#### Investments—Designated for Housing Allowance

LB Money Market—Cash	\$1,849.97	
LB Fund	\$24,077.81	
LB Income Fund	\$37,129.27	
Total Investments		\$63,057.05
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>\$84,606.40</b>

### LIABILITIES

WH—Federal Tax Liability	\$943.26	
WH—State Tax Liability	\$180.69	
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>\$1,123.95</b>

## Summary Information for October

Average Attendance for October = 66

Offering Needed to meet 2007 Budget \$8,804.33

Amount Received toward Budget \$7,241.41

*Note—in September \$1,100.00 was transferred from Reserve to help pay bills. No transfers in October.*



## **DORCAS CIRCLE**

### **Annual Christmas Lunch at Red Lobster**

Monday, Dec 3 at 1 pm

The Dorcas Circle ladies will meet for their annual Christmas Lunch/Meeting at Red Lobster.

They invite anyone who wishes to join them for food and fellowship.

A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board. Please bring a \$3 donation for the Annual Christ Gift for our missionary in Slovakia.

Please contact Ann Hamil 231-798-2414 for additional information.

## **MEN'S CLUB**

Breakfast Meeting

Saturday, December 1,  
9:00 am at Mickey's.

Setting up the Christmas tree and stringing the lights at DML will follow the meeting.

Contact Russ Tilden at  
231-798-1032 with questions.

## **EVE Circle**

Sponsor of the

**St. Nicholas Tree**

Regular meeting 1st Tuesday of  
the month,

December 4 at 6:30 pm.

The DML Christmas Tree will be decorated on Sunday, December 2 following worship.

Everyone is invited to help.

Please contact Betty Proksa  
231-798-7485 for additional information.

# **Christmas Program**

Here We Come to Bethlehem

We are looking for volunteers to participate in the Christmas Eve Program. There are sign-up sheets on the bulletin board. If you have any questions, please contact Lauren Stroh.

## **Stewardship Committee**

Thank you to everyone for the excellent response we have had for Stewardship this year.

Special thanks to Jeff Ward for heading the drive and to his committee.

Your response shows the dedication and commitment of everyone at DML.



## **Worship & Music Committee**

Please see the bulletin board for information on the "skits" that are scheduled for the candle lighting. If you have any questions, please see Lauren Stroh.



## *Worship Servants*

## *Hymns & Lessons*

### December 2—1st Sunday in Advent

*Deacon* Laurie Tilden  
*Lector* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Acolyte* Nathaniel Johnson  
*Nursery* Alice Doane  
*Ushers* Mike Sellon & Russ Tilden  
*Tellers* Tom & Donna Whitehead  
 Gordon Eggleton

#### Lessons

Isaiah 2:1-5  
 Psalm 122  
 Romans 13:11-14  
 Matthew 24:36-44

#### Hymns

#31—Wake, Awake, for Night is Flying\*  
 #32—Fling Wide the Door\*  
 #629—All Earth is Hopeful  
 #34—O Come, O Come, Emmanuel\*  
 #27—Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending\*

### December 9—2nd Sunday in Advent

*Deacon* Andrew Kitchka  
*Lector* Cindy Borreson  
*Acolyte* Matthew Kitchka  
*Nursery* Polly Eagle  
*Ushers* Brad Johnson & Ray Vanderstelt  
*Tellers* LaVern & Irene Borreson  
 Randy Borreson

#### Lessons

Isaiah 11:1-10  
 Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19  
 Romans 15:4-13  
 Matthew 3:1-12

#### Hymns

#29 - Comfort, Comfort Now My People\*  
 #323—O Lord of Light Who Made the Stars (v 1—4)  
 #36 - On Jordan's Banks the Baptist's Cry\*  
 #629—All Earth is Hopeful  
 #58—Lo, How a Rose Is Growing

### December 16—3rd Sunday in Advent

*Deacon* Cindy Borreson  
*Lector* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Acolyte* Andy Doane  
*Nursery* Lauren Johnson  
*Ushers* John Moore & Tom Proksa  
*Tellers* Tom & Betty Proksa  
 John Moore & Tom Whitehead

#### Lessons

Isaiah 35:1-10  
 Luke 1:47-55  
 James 5:7-10  
 Matthew 11:2-11

#### Hymns

#633 - Awake, Awake, and Greet the New Morn\*  
 #632—The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came  
 #627 - My Lord, What a Morning\*  
 #629—All Earth is Hopeful  
 #701 - What Feast of Love  
 #766—We Come to the Hungry Feast

### December 23—4th Sunday in Advent

*Deacon* Jeff Ward  
*Lector* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Acolyte* Emily Johnson  
*Nursery* Nancy Johnson  
*Ushers* Emogene Cotal & Jan Wolf  
*Tellers* LaVern & Irene Borreson  
 Randy Borreson

#### Lessons

Isaiah 7:10-16  
 Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19  
 Romans 1:1-7  
 Matthew 1:18-25

#### Hymns

#198 - Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence\*  
 #28 - Savior of the Nations, Come\*  
 #629—All Earth is Hopeful  
 #56 - The First Noel  
 #25—Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers

### December 30—St. Stephen, Deacon and Martyr

*Deacon* Tom Whitehead  
*Lector* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Acolyte* Nate Johnson  
*Nursery* Jeff Ward  
*Ushers* Eugene Broge & Brian Doane  
*Tellers* Emogene Cotal & Janet Wolf  
 Donna Whitehead

#### Lessons

2 Chronicles 24:17-22  
 Psalm 17:1-9, 15  
 Acts 6:8--7:2a, 51-60  
 Matthew 23:34-39

#### Hymns

To Be Announced



## Annual Bazaar

Thank you to all the dedicated volunteers involved in the Annual Bazaar which raised a record-breaking \$2,369.80. The Break-down is as follows:

Bake Sale	\$1,439.10
White Elephant	\$275.35
Crafts	\$344.35
Lunch	\$312.00

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans will contribute an additional

amount of \$1,300.00 for “Care of Congregations”.

**To everyone who supported the Annual Bazaar,  
THANK YOU!!!**

Thank you to the Thrivent members for the additional work required of you to apply for Thrivent funds.

Tillie Jandris would like to issue a deep, heartfelt thank you to everyone who provided baked goods for this year’s Bazaar. Due to everyone’s hard work, the Baked Goods table had another recording breaking year!

Thank you, thank you, thank you—without everyone’s support this would not have been

# Christmas Schedule

The Christmas program will be during the Candlelight Service on Christmas Eve.



**December 24, 2005—7:00 pm**  
Christmas Eve Candle-light Service

**December 25, 2005—11:00 am**  
Christ-Mass Service  
The Holy Eucharist



## 2008 CONGREGATION COUNCIL

### 2004 – 2006 Term

Jeff Ward—1  
Polly Eagle—1  
Janet Wolf—1

### 2005 – 2007 Term

Cindy Borreson—1  
Emogene Cotal—1  
Tom Whitehead—1

### 2006—2008

Randy Borreson—2  
David Justian—1  
Donna Whitehead—1

Thank you to Randy Borreson, David Justian, Donna Whitehead, and Jeff Ward for agreeing to support DML as Council members. Installation will be December 16.

**All 2007 Members are asked to attend the December 17th meeting to elect officers and Organize committees. It is important that we support our elected Council.**

When asked to serve on a committee, please agree; your involvement makes it easier for ALL of us to carry the responsibility of fulfilling the Gospel and seeing to the care of DML.



Those in need of healing:

**Dorothy Anderson**

850 Seminole Rd. #E5  
Muskegon, MI 49441-4340

**Beryl Connelly**

2770 Sternberg  
Fruitport, MI 49415

**Ann Filka**

2093 Barclay  
Apartment 212  
Muskegon, MI 49441

**Ann Hamil**

1356 Brookwood  
Muskegon, MI 49441

**Stephen Hellman**

3029 Hilton Park Rd.  
Fruitport, MI 49415

**Clif Hellman**

2328 E. Columbia  
Muskegon, MI 49444

**Linda Hurtubise** (Vietta Hippchen's sister-in-law)

**Tom Hulka**

3389 Lakeshore Dr.  
Muskegon, MI 49441

Cheryl Jimenez (Shane Garrow's mother)

**Ray Johnson**

2328 Emens Ave.  
Muskegon, MI 49444

**Beulah Justian**

4388 S. Virginia Drive  
Muskegon, MI 49444

**Maxine Pedersen** (Priscilla Pedersen's daughter)

**Vicki Peterson** (Barb Majersky's daughter)

**Nancy Rizzo** (Anne Markgraf's daughter)

**Wally Roach**

1350 W. Hackley  
Apt 323  
Muskegon, MI 49441

**Jean Ryan** (friend of Lauren Stroh)

**Donna Stratton** (Cindy Borreson's aunt)

**Paul Suchovsky**

1562 Hilltop  
St. Joseph, MI 49085

## Remember our friends and family members in the Military

God of Compassion, we pray for military personnel offered for the sake of others and separated from family and loved ones. Care for them; meet their needs. Grant them courage, compassion, strength, and all they need for the living of these days. Sustain them through their every trial. Remind them of the humanity they share Even with those who are called "the enemy"; Through Jesus Christ our Lord we pray. Amen

**SSgt. Kevin Sellon** (Mike and Carol Sellon's son) – United States Army—Serving in the US

**PO1 Russ Tilden, Jr.** (Russ & Laurie Tilden's son) – United States Navy—Stationed at Oceana Naval Base, Virginia Beach, VA

**TSgt. Harvey Wagenmaker** (Tom and Betty Proksa's nephew) – United States Air Force—Stationed at Fort Campbell, KY

**SPC Robert Borreson** (Randy and Cindy Borreson's son) – United States Army Reserves

**Sgt. Kenneth Hawkins** (Tom and Betty Proksa's nephew) – United States Army—Serving in Iraq

**Private Lynzie Heiss** (Ron Heiss's daughter) – United States Army—Stationed at Fort Lewis, Washington

**LCPL Corey Judson** (Virginia Kolarik's grandson) – United States Marine Corp—Serving in Iraq

If you'd like to add a name to this list, please contact Cindy Borreson.

Especially at this time of the year, remember our family and friends in your prayers. If you can, why not send them a Christmas Card so they know they are not forgotten. The addresses of our members are included, if you would like to send a card to the others, please see their family member for the address. Do you have a loved one you would like included in the prayers or added to our prayer list? Please contact Cindy Borreson at 616-846-2477 or by email at cborreson@charter.net and she will see they are included.



## Christmas Baskets

As in year's past, we plan to provide Christmas Baskets for an area family (or families). We are asking for names of people that you know could use help this Christmas; a family member or friend that you know will have a hard time providing for their family this year.

Please contact Polly Borreson (or any member of Council) and give her information so we can try to help those who mean so much to us.

We raised \$181 last week at the Stewardship Dinner and will use the proceeds from next Sunday's Advent Dinner also for these baskets. If you would like to provide adding funds, please place it in the offering plate and indicate "Christmas Baskets" and it will be used for that purpose.



### Reminder

All Council Members  
2007 & 2008

are asked to attend the December 17, 2007 meeting at 6:30 pm.

Election of officers and distribution of committee responsibilities will be taken care of this meeting.

### And the winner of the Afghan Raffle is...

Sharon Rolison, daughter of Sue Galekovich, who selected the blue afghan. Thank you to everyone who purchased tickets from Tillie; \$300 was raised for Dorcas to use for church work.

## Advent Dinner

Next Sunday, December 2nd—following Worship

The Council members will provide Salisbury Steak, Mashed Potatoes and Gravy, Vegetable, Rolls, and Beverage.

We are asking members of the congregation to provide Salads and Desserts.

Everyone is invited—please invite family and friends.

This is a great time to enjoy the fellowship of your DML family.

Freewill offering will be received with proceeds used for Christmas Baskets for area families.

If you have any questions, please contact Jeff Ward or Cindy Borreson.





## *Calendar Observances—December 2007*

### **Friday, December 3—Francis Xavier, missionary to Asia, 1552**

Francis Xavier was born in the Basque region of northern Spain. Francis's native Basque language is unrelated to any other, and Francis admitted that learning languages was difficult for him. Despite this obstacle he became a missionary to India, Southeast Asia, Japan, and the Philippines. At each point he learned the local language and, like Martin Luther, wrote catechisms for the instruction of new converts. Another obstacle Francis overcame to accomplish his mission work was a propensity to seasickness. All his travels to the Far East were by boat. Together with Ignatius Loyola and five others, Francis formed the Society of Jesus (Jesuits). Francis spoke out against the Spanish and Portuguese colonists when he discovered their oppression of the indigenous people to whom he was sent as a missionary.

Pray for churches and missionaries in Asia, spiritual heirs to Francis Xavier.

### **Sunday, December 4**

#### **John of Damascus, theologian and hymnwriter (c. 676–c. 749)**

Born to a wealthy family in Damascus and well educated, John left a career in finance and government to become a monk in an abbey near Jerusalem. He wrote many hymns as well as theological works. Foremost among the latter is a work called *The Fount of Wisdom*, which touches on philosophy, heresy, and the orthodox faith. This summary of patristic theology remained influential for centuries.

### **Monday, December 6**

#### **Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, c. 342**

Though Nicholas is one of the church's most beloved saints, little is known about his life. In the fourth century he was a bishop in what is

now Turkey. Legends that surround Nicholas tell of his love for God and neighbor, especially the poor. One famous story tells of Nicholas secretly giving bags of gold to the three daughters of a father who was going to sell them into prostitution because he could not provide dowries for them. Nicholas has become a symbol of anonymous gift giving.

In some countries gifts are given on this day, and may include a visit from Nicholas himself. One of the ways Nicholas can be remembered is to have the congregation or families within it gather to prepare gifts that will be given anonymously as a way to remind us of the tradition of giving gifts as a sign of God's love given freely to all.

### **Tuesday, December 7**

#### **Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, 397**

Ambrose was a governor of northern Italy and a catechumen when he was elected bishop of Milan. He was baptized, ordained, and consecrated a bishop all on the same day. While bishop he gave away his wealth and lived in simplicity. He was a famous preacher and is largely responsible for the conversion of St. Augustine.

He is also well known for writing hymns. On one occasion, Ambrose led people in a hymn he wrote while the church in which they were secluded was threatened by attack from Gothic soldiers. The soldiers turned away, unwilling to attack a congregation that was singing a hymn.

### **Saturday, December 11**

Lars Olsen Skrefsrud, missionary to India, 1910

Lars Olsen Skrefsrud was born in Norway in 1840. When he was nineteen years old, he and some

friends robbed a bank. In prison he began to read religious books. Visits with a pastor who came to the prison revived Skrefsrud's earlier desire to become a pastor. In 1863 he began work among the Santals of northern India. His work among them included providing a written language, translating the gospels and the Small Catechism, and writing hymns in that language. He also taught agriculture and carpentry methods to raise the Santals' standard of living. The Christian community he founded there continues to flourish.

Consider ways in which Skrefsrud's life echoes the prophetic work of Isaiah and John the Baptist, who prepared the way of the Lord. In what ways can a congregation's proclamation of the gospel and its work for justice point the way to the coming Christ?

### **Tuesday, December 13**

#### **Lucy, martyr (d. 304)**

Lucy was a young Christian of Sicily who was martyred during the persecutions under Emperor Diocletian. Apparently she had decided to devote her life to God and her possessions to the poor. Beyond that, however, little is known for certain about Lucy. However, her celebration became particularly important in Sweden and Norway, perhaps because the feast of Lucia (whose name means "light") originally fell on the shortest day of the year. A tradition arose of a girl in the household, wearing a crown of candles, bringing saffron rolls to her family early in the morning on the day of Lucia.

### **Tuesday, December 14**

John of the Cross, 1591; Teresa of Avila, 1582; renewers of the church

John and Teresa were both members of the Carmelite religious order. John met Teresa when she was working to reform the Carmelite Order



## Calendar Observances—December 2007 (con't)

and return it to a stricter observance of its rules, from which she believed its members had departed. John followed Teresa's lead and encouraged others to follow her reform. He was imprisoned when he encountered opposition to the reform. Both John and Teresa's writings reflect a deep interest in mystical thought and meditation. Their emphasis on contemplation can guide us in our Advent worship as we watch for the coming Christ.

Both John and Teresa believed that authentic prayer leads to greater love of neighbor and service to those in need. Teresa wrote, "Christ has no body now but yours . . . yours are the eyes through which he looks in compassion on the world." In one of John's poems, "The Spiritual Canticle," he cried, "Oh, that my griefs would end! Come, grant me thy fruition full and free!"

### Thursday, December 16 Las Posadas

Las Posadas, "the lodgings," is celebrated in homes of Mexican heritage and is becoming a popular parish practice as well. Families or groups of people wander through the neighborhood to mark the journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem. They knock on doors, asking to come in, but a rude voice says that there is no room. The visitors either respond that Mary is about to give birth to the king of heaven, or they sing an Advent carol foretelling his birth. Eventually the door is opened, and everyone is welcomed into a great party of traditional Mexican holiday food and singing.

The traditional songs of this celebration are included in *Libro de Liturgia y Cántico* (284-86). Las Posadas can be a strong reminder of Christ's humble birth among the poor and the importance of extending hos-

pitality.

### Tuesday, December 20 Katharina von Bora Luther, re- newer of the church (1499- 1552)

Born to an impoverished nobleman, when Katharina (Katie) was five her mother died and she was sent to live in a convent. She later took vows as a nun, but around age twenty-four she and several other nuns who were influenced by the writings of Martin Luther left the convent. Six children were born to Katie and Martin. Though initially Luther felt little affection for Katie, she proved herself a gifted household manager and became a trusted partner. She was so influential that Luther took to calling her "my lord Katie."

### Tuesday, December 21 St. Thomas, Apostle

Thomas is perhaps best remembered as "Doubting Thomas." But alongside this doubt, the gospel of John shows Thomas as fiercely loyal: "Let us also go, that we may die with him" (John 11:16). And John's gospel shows Thomas moving from doubt to deep faith. Thomas makes one of the strongest confessions of faith in the New Testament: "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:28). From this confession of faith, ancient stories tell of Thomas's missionary work to India where Christian communities were flourishing a thousand years before the arrival of sixteenth-century missionaries.

Though we hear about Thomas each year on the second Sunday of Easter, Thomas can also serve as an Advent saint. He watched for the risen Christ and looked for the signs of Christ's incarnation. In Advent we, too, watch. We look for the coming of Christ in our lives, his

risen presence in the sacraments, and his incarnation soon to be celebrated at Christmas.

### Sunday, December 26 St. Stephen, Deacon and Martyr

Stephen was a deacon and the first martyr of the church. He was one of those seven upon whom the apostles laid hands after they had been chosen to serve widows and others in need. Later, Stephen's preaching angered the temple authorities, and they ordered him to be put to death by stoning.

The Christmas song "Good King Wenceslas" takes place on the feast of Stephen. The king sees a peasant gathering wood near the forest and sends his page to invite the peasant to a feast. The song, with its theme of charity to the poor, can be a way to remember Stephen, who cared for widows and those in need.

### Monday, December 27 St. John, Apostle and Evangelist

John, the son of Zebedee, was a fisherman and one of the twelve. John, his brother James, and Peter were the three who witnessed the light of the transfiguration. John and James once made known their desire to hold positions of power in the kingdom of God. Jesus' response showed them that service to others was the sign of God's reign in the world. Though authorship of the gospel and the three epistles bearing his name has often been attributed to the apostle John, this tradition cannot be proven from scriptural evidence.

John is a saint for Christmas through his proclamation that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, that the light of God shines in the darkness, and that we are called to love one another as Christ has loved us. According to an early story about

*Continued...*



John, his enemies once tried to murder him with poisoned wine. On this day, many Christians in Europe will toast one another with the words "I drink to the love of John."

**Tuesday, December 28**

**The Holy Innocents, Martyrs**

In a culture where Christmas is over-commercialized and sentimentalized, the commemoration of the Holy Innocents, Martyrs on the fourth day of Christmas must come as something of a shock. How could the birth of a baby be the occasion for the death of anyone? Yet these martyrs were the children of Bethlehem, two years old and younger, who were killed by Herod, who worried that his reign was threatened by the birth of a new king. St. Augustine called these innocents "buds, killed by the frost of persecution the moment they showed themselves." Those linked to Jesus through their youth and innocence encounter the same hostility Jesus encounters later in his ministry.

Remembering all innocent victims and taking up the words of the prayer of the day, which ask God to "frustrate the designs of evil tyrants and establish your rule of justice, love, and peace," can mark this commemoration.

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**Mission Statement**

The mission of Dr. Martin Luther Evangelical Lutheran Church is to:

- confess Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior,
- rejoice in worship and fellowship,
- grow in the Word,
- witness to our community,
- and serve others.

# Christmas Poinsettia Order Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Plants \_\_\_\_\_ (\$9.00 per plant)

Deadline for ordering is December 1

Make checks payable to "Dr. Martin Luther Church"

Please include your payment with your order

You may take your plant home after the Christ-Mass

• S E A S O N A L •



Focusing on Christ  
at Christmastime



## The Church Door

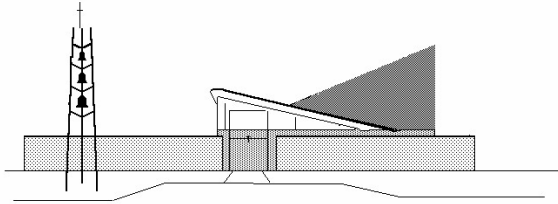
The "Church Door" title is taken from the "Theses Door" of the Castle Church which has made Wittenberg so famous.

Just as the "Theses Door" was used as a bulletin board for notices in Luther's time, this newsletter can also be used by our members to communicate with each other and to our guests about church events. Published monthly it is available the last Sunday of the month.

Please contact Cindy Borreson (616.846.2477 or cborreson@charter.net) to insert articles for next month's newsletter.

# December 2007

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 9 am Men's Club @ Mickey's Restaurant
2 <b>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent</b> 9 am Choir Practice 10 am Holy Eucharist 11 am BIBLE Club Advent Dinner following worship	3 <b>10 am Dorcas Circle 6:30 pm Evangelism</b>	4 <b>5:30 pm Property Committee 6:30 Eve Circle</b>	5	6	7	8
9 <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent</b> 9 am Choir Practice 10 am Holy Eucharist 11 am BIBLE Club	10 <b>7 pm Parish Ed Committee</b>	11 <b>6:30 Evangelism Committee 7:30 pm Finance Committee</b>	12	13	14	15
16 <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent</b> 9 am Choir Practice 10 am Holy Eucharist 11 am BIBLE Club	17 <b>6:30 pm Congregation Council</b>	18 <b>7 pm Worship &amp; Music Committee</b>	19	20 <b>6:30 Stewardship Committee</b>	21	22 <b>9 am Mutual Ministry (@ Mickey's)</b>
23 <b>4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent</b> 9 am Choir Practice 10 am Holy Eucharist 11 am BIBLE Club	24 <b>Christmas Eve</b>  Candlelight Service 7:00 pm	25 <b>Christmas Day</b>  Christ-Mass 9:00 am Holy Eucharist	26	27	28	29
30 <b>1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Christmas</b> 9 am Choir Practice 10 am Holy Eucharist 11 am BIBLE Club	31					



**Dr. Martin Luther Ev. Lutheran Church**

1860 E. Hile Rd.

Muskegon, MI 49444

# The Church Door

The Newsletter of  
Dr. Martin Luther Evangelical Lutheran  
Church

**December 2007**



THE SEASONS OF ADVENT and CHRISTMAS

**Dr. Martin Luther Ev. Lutheran Church**

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THE CHURCH DOOR

December 2006

The Seasons of Advent & Christmas