

# Along The Way

## THE WHISPER OF ADVENT...

Years ago, I was the mission pastor for the new congregation, All Saints, in Oshkosh. One morning, without warning, I woke up without my voice. It was Stewardship Sunday! This was the Sunday I was to deliver the keynote stewardship sermon. I had worked on this sermon for weeks. What I would say would hopefully inspire and energize the congregation. I believed (yes, I was young then) that a lot depended on my words. But there I was with no voice to give life to my sermon.

It was too late to find a replacement so I went to church, determined to deliver at least a shortened version of my stewardship thoughts. I reminded myself that the liturgy, the hymns and the scripture read that morning would also carry the message, perhaps better than what I had to say.

We were a relatively small worshiping community anyway, but I had the ushers explain the situation and then invite everyone to come forward and sit close together so that it would be easier to hear. And people did. Furthermore, the congregation, normally a chatty bunch, quieted down without prompting.

When it was time for the sermon, I was struck by how the whole group, including the children, leaned forward, straining their ears to better hear what I preached in a whisper.

A whispered sermon delivered to this ready and attentive congregation was received in full measure and I am told it touched hearts.

Sometimes the best way to get someone's attention is to whisper. Advent is God's whisper of Good News into our noisy world. Perhaps we prepare best, for the coming birth of Christ into our world by listening. December may be the best time to dial down the cultural noise in our lives. Turn off the TV; step away from the computer.

SHHHH...LISTEN. Jesus is coming.

SHHHH...LISTEN. Jesus is coming soon.

See you in worship.

Grace and Peace,

*Pastor Cath Mode.*

# Youth News

## **Christmas Project Youth Event**

We're getting ready for Christmas...

This is our 3<sup>rd</sup> year of making gifts for members who have lost a loved one in 2011. It's just one way that we share God's love during the holidays.

**When?** Wednesday, November 30

**Time?** 3:30–5:30 pm

**Cost?** \$3 per youth

This event is open to all youth in Grades 6–12. Bring your friends!

**Donations needed:** 12 quart-size mason jars with new lids, 36 individual packets (not the ones you get when you buy a box) of hot cider and/or cocoa mix, and cash donations to help cover the cost of our supplies. We need all donations in by Wednesday, November 30.

## **Breakfast Anyone?**

That's right, it's that time again... We're going out for breakfast on Sunday, December 11. Meet at church by 9:15 am – we'll head to a local restaurant and be back to church by 10:30 am (just in time for worship).

**BYOC – Bring Your Own Cash!**

Parents, drivers are needed. Contact Marcie at [mkimmes@our-saviors.org](mailto:mkimmes@our-saviors.org) if you can help out.

## **Youth Mission News**

Have you heard the news? We're going to Joplin, MO to help with tornado clean-up. The dates of the trip are June 24-29, 2012. This trip is open to all youth in grades 6 & up.

More details to come next month...

## **Confirmation News**

**Grades 7 & 8:** There are no classes on Wednesdays during December. Class will resume on Wednesday, January 4.

**Did you know...** The offering that we collect on Wednesday evenings helps to sponsor two students in India?

## **LOOKING AHEAD...**

Wed., Jan. 4 – “Sleigh Ride” Youth Event at Cavanaugh’s

Wed., Jan. 18 – Unity Service at the PAC

Sat. & Sun., Feb. 5/6 – YOUTH WORSHIP WEEKEND

***Reminder: We must have a completed permission slip on file for ALL youth attending any youth event.***

# Sunday School News!

This month's story line:

## Christmas, Jesus' Birth

This is the season when we remember Jesus' birth. Our Sunday School children will be practicing for their Christmas program and celebrating Christmas.

We hope that you will be able to join us on Sunday, December 11 at 10:30 am for the Christmas program.

Sunday school rotations include:

Video—Kristin Oyler  
Extra Help—Katie Ricketts  
Extra Help—Suzanne Hietala

Next story line: The Last Supper

A thank you goes out to Kelly Arens, Kristin Oyler, Kristi Armstrong, Ann Pokel, Amy Hansen, Jennifer Hogenson, Kerin Harrington, Cary Myska, Christine Rondeau, Kelly Shannon, Lonnie & Chad Baldauf, Rebecca Danke, Lisa Vante, Melissa Harrington, Alan Dordel, Karen Whitmer, Suzanne Hietala, Debbie Baldauf, Sarah Kimmes, Matthew Terry, Rachel Terry, Joan Terry, and Vicki Meinke.

You have touched the lives of our children!

**God Bless!**

Don't miss out on all the fun!  
Join us on Sunday at 9:15 am in the sanctuary.

**See you there!**



## Youth & Sunday School Calendar

### Dec. 4

9:15 am Sunday School

9:15 am Grade 6 Confirmation Class

### Dec. 7

No Confirmation Class

7:30 pm Youth Band Practice

### Dec. 10

9:00 am Christmas Program Practice

### Dec. 11

10:30 am Sun. School Christmas Program

### Dec. 14

No Confirmation Class

7:30 pm Youth Band Practice

### Dec. 18

9:15 am Christmas Celebration

### Dec. 21

No Confirmation Class

7:30 pm Youth Band Practice

### Dec. 25

No Sunday School or Confirmation

### Dec. 28

No Confirmation Class

3:30 pm Youth Event

7:30 pm Youth Band Practice

## 2011 CONTRIBUTIONS

All 2011 contributions must be received no later than

**December 31**. If mailed to the church, the envelope must be postmarked by December 31.

In addition, unless clearly marked otherwise, contributions received during services the weekend of December 31 - January 1 will be credited to 2012 giving.



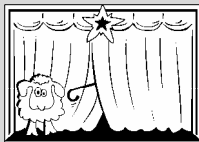
## Hanging of the Greens!

Join us for decorating the church and the trees for the Christmas season.

**Fri., December 9, starting at 5:30 pm.**

We will have snacks, but eat supper before you come. Many hands make the task easy. A sign-up sheet will be on the bulletin board in the Gathering Area.

Contact Ardy Kreuter with questions at 722-6930.



Sunday School

**Christmas Program**

**Practice**  
**Saturday, Dec. 10**  
9:00 to 11:00 am  
(meet in the Sanctuary)

**Program**  
**Sunday, Dec. 11**  
10:30 am

## Celebrate The Child Who Is The Light

Lessons and Carols Weekend  
December 17 & 18

All of the Our Savior's choirs  
will be performing!



## Worship Schedule



### Christmas Eve

**Saturday, December 24**  
3:00 pm, 5:00 pm, & 10:00 pm

### Christmas Day

**Sunday, December 25, at 9:00 am**

*The church office will be closed  
December 23, December 26,  
December 31, and January 2.*



## Family Caroling Event

Join us for an Our Savior's Christmas season tradition!

We will go caroling to our homebound and nursing home members on Sunday, December 11.

We will gather at church at 3:45 pm and plan to be finished around 5:45 pm. We hope the whole family, as well as choir members, will share their voices.

A sign-up sheet will be on the bulletin board in the Gathering Area.

This event is sponsored by the Worship Team.

Contact Ardy Kreuter with questions at 722-6930.



# Angel Sale!

Stained glass angels will be sold after the Saturday worship service on December 3 and between worship services on Sunday, December 4.

Just in time for Christmas giving. All money received will be donated to the OSLC Help Fund

## Offering Envelopes



## 2012 Offering Envelopes

*Most envelope numbers will change in 2012.* Please do not begin using your 2012 envelopes until January 1.

Do not use 2011 offering envelopes after the first of the year. This will ensure that you receive credit for your Contribution.



## “SINNERS TO DINNER” DECEMBER 10

Sinners to Dinner will be going to O’Charley’s in Appleton for dinner following the 5:00 pm worship service on Saturday, December 10.

Dinner is “Dutch Treat” and everyone is welcome and invited to join us when it works into your schedule.

Please contact Roberta Golden at 920-722-5476 or by email (roberta\_golden@hotmail.com) by Friday evening, December 9, so we can make reservations. We hope you can join us.

**Organized by the  
Worship Ministry Team**

## Two Newsletters In One!

This month you may have noticed that we have inserted a copy of the Hands of Christ newsletter.

We decided it would be more cost effective to insert their newsletter into ours than to have them publish one of their own.

Plus, what better way for us to get to learn more about each other!

## Men’s Breakfast Group

December 10

8:00 am

at Perkins in Neenah

# V.A.R.S.I.T.Y.

Does anyone remember what the letters in the name stand for? I found this article in the archives and thought it would be nice to introduce it once again. Voluntary Association of Retired Seniors Invigorating Their Years!

This group has been meeting for over 40 years! Wow, that is a long time. The original purpose for this group was to develop and expand acquaintanceship, friendship, and Christian fellowship among the interested retirees of our church.

Now that you have a bit of background history, we would like to thank you for attending our various brunch gatherings and our latest get together to hear Dave Dexter’s talk about the Neenah Historical Society. It was an enjoyable time of fellowship. Thank you all!

We do have a planned activity for **January 24, 2012**, at 11:00 am. Our Savior’s member, Kevin Schmitting, is on the board for Beaming. “What is Beaming?”, you might ask. This organization uses horse therapy to rehabilitate veterans and people with disabilities. Kevin Schmitting will tell us more about this special non-profit organization.

We hope to see you all there for V.A.R.S.I.T.Y.

## We’re On Facebook!

Check out the Our Savior’s Facebook page at **Our Savior’s Lutheran—Neenah, WI.**

We will post regular updates, Pictures, events, and other fun stuff happening at Our Savior’s.

You can also access our Facebook page through our homepage on our website at [www.our-saviors.org](http://www.our-saviors.org).



## ANNUAL REPORTS

Council members, staff, and Committee Chairs, please submit your annual report to Cheryl Timm at [ctimm@our-saviors.org](mailto:ctimm@our-saviors.org) by Tuesday, December 20.

### IN THIS SEASON OF GENEROSITY, PLEASE CONSIDER MAKING A GIFT TO OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH.

Every day we sort through piles of requests for year-end donations from charitable organizations. Though we can't give to everything, there is joy and meaning in giving to programs that can make a difference in people's lives.

Please consider doing the same for your church home. We so appreciate your pledges and offerings, given weekly, throughout the year. Regular giving to the unified budget helps us continue doing what we do so well.

A year-end gift could go a long way in ensuring a strong start in 2012 and even enabling us to extend our ministry.

You can make a difference in people's lives through Our Savior's.

Any additional gift is appreciated. May God Bless You Richly in this Advent/Christmas Season.

## Rebekah Circle

Rebekah Circle will meet on Tuesday, December 13, at 7:00 pm at the home of Ardy Kreuter, 2103 High Meadows Lane, Neenah.

All women are welcome.

### Snowbirds!

Are you getting ready to head south for the winter? Please contact the church office at 725-3956 with your winter address and your departure & return dates so we can send your church mail to you.

## It's Cold & Flu Season Again!

At Our Savior's we care about you and your health. Here are some tips.

It's okay to not shake hands while passing the peace. Bumping elbows, flashing a "V" peace sign, or the "how ya doin" head bob are all acceptable. Taking Communion in one kind (bread alone) is okay.

Our communion wine and bread is handled with the utmost care to keep it sanitary, and all assistants sanitize their hands before handling them. While we do our best to keep sanitizers available throughout the church, it may be a good practice to bring you own small bottle in your purse or pocket.

If you are feeling ill, please do not come to worship or volunteer task. We will miss you dearly and pray for you, but by staying home you are preventing the germs from spreading to others and helping yourself get better and back to church quicker.

## Help Warm Hearts and Touch Lives with Thrivent Choice<sup>SM</sup>

If you are a member of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, you have a new, easy way to help support what matters most to you—even Our Savior's.

Through Thrivent Choice<sup>SM</sup>, a new charitable grant program, members can help choose where Thrivent Financial distributes some of its charitable funds each year.

The program has two components: Voting Events and Choice Dollars<sup>SM</sup>.

Through Voting Events, all members age 16 and older can vote to help choose where Thrivent Financial distributes funds among a short list of national organizations. Voting Events occur one or two times each year.

Eligible benefit members also are designated Choice Dollars.

By directing Choice Dollars, members can request funding for thousands of Lutheran organizations nationwide, including Our Savior's.

Potential designated Choice Dollars amounts that can be directed range from \$25 to \$500 for each eligible member.

If you are eligible to direct Choice Dollars, you can direct them **right now**.

If you are uncertain about your eligibility, visit [Thrivent.com/thriventchoice](http://Thrivent.com/thriventchoice) or contact your local Thrivent Financial representative.

## No Election But Great Turnout!

A *huge* thank you to everyone who volunteered their time and/or donated items for this year's Chili Supper!

This was our 21st year putting on this community event; and even though there wasn't an election this year, we still had a wonderful turnout!

Here is how we did:

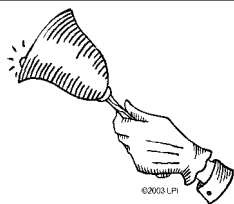
- 725 Bowls of chili served
- \$1,422 raised (expenses subtracted)
- 4.5 Nescos of chili bottled and sold
- 22 Nescos of chili used (we made 26 Nescos)
- 140+ Number of superstar volunteers that helped before during and after the event.
- 450 people served (in three hours)
- 28 quarts of leftover chili that was donated to the Special Olympics for an event they held the following weekend.

The proceeds will be given to our mission recipients: Lutheran Campus Ministry, Lutheran Disaster Response, and Guatemala Missions.

There are too many amazing people who volunteered or donated items to name them all—but please know that each and every one of you helped make this year a special one.

A special thanks to the Christian Action group for their help with coordinating and Ardy Kreuter and Pam Garman for all the extra time they put in.

*Alley Shepeck*



## Attention Bell Ringers

Mark your December calendar early this year to ring the bells for the Salvation Army's Red Kettle Campaign.

As of this printing, there are still slots available on:

**Saturday, December 3, from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm**

**Saturday, December 17, from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm**

You can sign up for one-hour or two-hour shifts. Again, we will be at the Neenah Shopko store, both pharmacy entrance and the main entrance. The majority of the Salvation Army's donations are received during the Christmas season which is why the Red Kettles are so important. Thank you for your past support of this worthy cause. God bless you.

Any questions, please contact Bonnie Vogt at 725-6993.

### Fair Trade Thank you!

Thank you to all who bought items at our Fair Trade Fair during the chili supper. We sold \$523.75 in items. That money will go back to the underprivileged artisans and farmers who made or grew the products sold. You've helped them to continue providing a living for their families.

### 2012 FLOWER CHART

The 2012 flower chart is posted on a bulletin board in the office wing.

When signing up, please be sure to indicate center arrangement, side arrangements, or both.

Payment and wording for the bulletin must be received by noon on the Wednesday prior to the weekend the flowers will be on the altar.

### Still Time to Sign Up for the January Mission Trip!

There is still time to sign up for the mission trip to Tuscaloosa Alabama, January 7-14.

This trip will be unique as you have the option of flying to Alabama or joining the group who is driving a van to Alabama.

The trip is open to anyone 18 and older. The cost is yet to be finalized but will be around \$300 per person and includes all transportation, housing costs and most food.

Information is in the Gathering Area and forms are located in the racks outside Alley's office.

Contact Alley Shepeck at 725-3956 or [ashepeck@our-saviors.org](mailto:ashepeck@our-saviors.org) for more information.

# Vicarious Experiences

By Vicar Ed

Fall... I love this time of year. Late afternoon sunlight paints ordinary neighborhoods with gold, a certain crispness displaces the more languid summer air. And even we who live and work in climate-controlled spaces prepare for change.

I love the rhythm of this part of the church year, too. We leave the season after Pentecost, stepping over the threshold of Christ the King Sunday into the season of Advent, a new liturgical year.

As days grow shorter and the world around us darkens into winter, we use the colder month of December to anticipate and celebrate the coming light and warmth of Christ. We know that this growing darkness is not our final destiny, that our winter will indeed end, as unlikely as that may seem in January and February.

Because we know the light and warmth of Christ does not leave us just because it's darker and colder. We know that Christ has been and is always with us. But our colder, darker liturgical waiting prepares us again for the holy new dawn, the coming springtime of our Savior. Just as surely as we know spring follows winter, we know that Christ will come, does come again to us, in this season as a helpless baby in a manger, someday as a king in glory.

Blessings on us all as we make our way into Advent.

Vicar Ed Baseman

## Stories To Tell



## Gifts To Share

Each month the Stories To Tell; Gifts To Share column will share a story from one or two of our members that focus on stewardship in action or how God has worked through one of us to make a difference. If you have a story to tell, tell it! Contact any one of the following: Pastor Mode, Vicar Baseman, Alley Shepeck, Dean Doersch, Pat Arens.

I find joy in supporting the ministry at Our Savior's. Actually I have found my hobby, my passion here. For 30 years I have made baby kimonos and receiving blankets for LWR layette kits. I spend all my free time sewing them, and I love to look at them and get a warm feeling when I think about who will get them. I look forward to and get a lot of pleasure from this. I never get bored in life; I wake up thinking about sewing these baby things. Even my kids are happy that I do this.

***Carol Spice, member for 30 years.***

Being a part of Our Savior's ministry is important to me. Over the years I have received overwhelming support from the people here. Whenever I want to do something, a ministry or if I need to overcome something, people over here support me and accept me.

***Mother of 3***

## Memorials & Honorariums

\$1878 in memory of Sally Prah

GENERAL OPERATING FUND	YTD through	YTD through
Income	\$294,323.79	\$309,422.95
Expenses	\$325,065.17	\$310,729.73
Over / (Short):	(\$30,741.38)	(\$1,306.78)

### SEE WHAT YOUR STEWARDSHIP OF TIME, TALENT, AND TREASURE HAS ACCOMPLISHED... on just another weekend at Our Savior's, Neenah.

There was no church festival scheduled, no long-awaited "big event" but the spirit was alive and well, as usual. Yet on this average weekend:

- Three worship services were offered; all included Holy Communion, sermon, prayers, praise, scripture and confession and forgiveness.
- Money collected during the offering raised support not only for our ministry but ministries around the world, through the ELCA.
- The Chancel Choir and Joyful Noise sang in worship.
- Eight kindergarteners and their parents attended a class on prayer. The children stuffed "prayer pillows" for their beds at home. The pillow cases had been made by a nonmember but long time friend of the congregation, a woman who enjoys quilting group. The children were also honored at worship.
- Members brought in bags of food for our food pantry.
- The confirmation students studied Old Testament Joseph.
- Sunday School children learned about the meaning of Advent.
- Adult Forum studied Max Lucado's book, Fearless.
- The men's breakfast group met on Saturday morning.
- *Sinners to Dinner* went out to eat after church on Saturday.
- Our intern, Vicar Ed Baseman, preached in worship, giving him valuable experience for his future as an ordained pastor.
- Christian Action sponsored a fair trade Global Mission Fair in the Gathering Area.
- The Foundation met and gave away \$2,000 to partnership ministries: Lutheran Campus Ministry.
- A "noisy offering" was taken to purchase Christmas hams for the Brigade gift baskets.
- A Pre-baptism class was held for parents who will be having their children baptized soon.
- Fellowship before and after all service, welcoming visitors and old friends.
- Our building was used by a Hispanic AA group for their weekly meeting.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!**

ATTENDANCE		
October	2010	2011
Week 1	243	329
Week 2	289	242
Week 3	284	301
Week 4	290	357
Week 5	256	243
Weekly Avg.	272	294

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12-20-2010