



**DECEMBER 2009 ISSUE**

*Christmas Is Coming, Christmas Is Coming*

With the approach of the Advent season and the arrival of Christmas just around the corner my mind is already thinking about all the implications of the season for the church.

We have to have everything in place and ready to go by the first Sunday of Advent, which is a full four weeks ahead of Christmas. I'm not going to bore you with "Advent means" stuff but I will challenge you with some important things to keep in mind this Advent/Christmas season. Here are some things to think about.

For one thing get ready and be ready. That's the first message of the season. Be ready. Be ready to celebrate the joy of the Savior's birth anew in your life. Be ready for the big day!

For another thing to remember and insist upon is that it really is "Christmas" we are celebrating and not "Winter Holidays" or whatever other titles our secularized society wants to put on it. Once I find a mall or a business that won't acknowledge what the name of the season is I just go elsewhere with my business. It is Christmas; Period!

Third, Advent/Christmas is a religious holiday. I like the reindeer and the snowmen and the little drummer boy and the angels but it is important to remember that Christmas is about the birth of the Savior. Don't let anyone take that away from you. Speak to it. Think about it. Center yourself in the spiritual nature of the season. No matter what focus your heart on growing closer to the Lord and to the church.

Fourth, the Advent/Christmas season is one of the most important times to invite your friends, neighbors, family and co-workers to church. This is one of the two best times of the year (the other being Easter) to bring people to church with you. I love the sign that is in the narthex of our church "Evangelism is everyone's responsibility". It's true – bringing others to the Lord and growing the church are our first and most important call and it's a call that belongs to all of us. Who have you brought to the church today? Who are you sharing the love of the Lord with? What have you done lately to help grow our church? This is the time of the year to bring people to the church.

The birth of the Savior is so important, so central, and so essential as to who we are and what we are about that I hope every one of you will take the time, the energy and the effort to share the beauty and the power of the story with others. I hope every one of you can experience once again the joy, the power, the meaning of coming to the manger and falling on your knees and worshipping the child in the manger. O Come Let Us Adore Him!

*Dr. Chance*

## NEWS AMONG OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Our thoughts & prayers are with:

Mary Purcell

Wentworth Wilder

Dorothea Fildes

Dorothy Kenney

David Watterworth

Ralph Hockman

Jim Hood

Libby Hood.

Wendell Jaquith



## BIRTHDAY & ANNIVERSARIES

December



- 1 **Jim Wine**  
**Edwina Meheux**  
**Nicholas Lastre**
- 6 **Mary Barkdoll**  
**Libby Hood**
- 7 **Norm Laine**
- 8 **Anthony Benson**
- 9 **Marge Skucas**
- 11 **Mandy Aguilar**  
**Jeff Price**
- 12 **Hope OConnor**
- 15 **Kristin Brooks**  
**Claudette Demetries**
- 18 **Hazel Brown**
- 19 **Emily Compton**
- 20 **Ashley Owen**
- 21 **Dan & April Compton**  
**Tony Costa**
- 22 **Carolee Norton**
- 23 **Margie Flaherty**
- 25 **Galen & Virginia Queen**  
**Dyane Marshall**
- 26 **Gwen Mott**
- 28 **Craig Hensley**  
**Jonathan Owen**
- 29 **Donald & Holly Brooks**

### **SPECIAL THANK YOU'S...**

Thank you so much for the overwhelming love and support during this time. No question that a spirit strengthened by love and prayers heals faster as mine has.

Thank you so very much. May God bless you.  
Mario Mendoza

With knee surgery over and recovery doing well, I would like to thank everyone for their prayers, cards, visits and phone calls. Hope to see you soon!  
Nell Rys

Sincere thanks for the many thoughtful cards, notes and phone calls received during my illness. They have been great reminders of how important it is to know that people care and of the special church family I am blessed with.

Mary Sigel

# NEWS FROM OUR MINISTRIES



## FELLOWSHIP

**Amy Buckingham, Chairman**

The Thanksgiving Dinner was a huge success! Thanks to all who helped!!!

I bet you can't believe that December is almost here! We have some wonderful opportunities for you! The annual Christmas Carol Sing-a-Long will be held Tuesday, December 15 at 7:00 p.m. A word has been placed with the North Pole requesting a short visit from Santa! Bring a plate of cookies to share, and bring friends!

Please sign up to host a fellowship hour! There are a few openings this year, and even more next year!

Note for the children's pageant: Please bring your children to Sunday School! We will be working on the annual Christmas Pageant starting next week! If you have angel costumes or animal costumes, please bring them in!



## WORSHIP

**Arlyn Sanchez, Chairman**

I can't believe the year is almost over. We are in the middle of a very significant season in church. We will have the Advent Nativity and Candle lighting ceremony every Sunday in December. We will also have a Christmas Eve service at 7:30 p.m. Hope to see everyone there. From my family to yours, have a blessed and Merry Christmas and may the New Year bring you health and joy.



## EVANGELISM/MEMBERSHIP

**Karen Shpiece, Chairman**

THE HOLIDAYS ARE UPON US!! I think that's the good news and the bad news! The bad part....I don't know if I'm ready! The good news....THE HOLIDAYS ARE UPON US!! What a joyous time of year...and ready or not, here they come. These holidays, Thanksgiving and Christmas, present the PERFECT time to invite a friend, neighbor, or co-worker to our church. The building is beautiful....the children are adorable in the nativity scene...the messages are meaningful. Take a moment to think of someone you know would enjoy our Sing-A-Long....a favorite of everyone's! It's the easiest thing in the world to bring someone to! No pressure. Just good fun, music and cookies! Please help share the good word this holiday season and bring someone to church.



## PROPERTY

**Joel Owen, Chairman**

Many much-needed projects continue to be completed thanks to Jeff Price. He has worked continuously painting, repairing and remodeling the basement hallways, classrooms, and other areas. It looks GREAT! Jeff has been a real blessing to the church. The Carpenter's Club has also completed projects such as the food pantry renovation and the outside storage shed organization. Special thanks to Rob Schneider, Kim Crane, Orlando Lastre, Andy Mott and Ashley Owen.

We are looking for people who would like to join the Carpenter's Club for fellowship and work on Wednesday nights or Saturday mornings. Please contact me if you are interested.

## ***From Our Music Department***

Have you ever been so happy about something that you just wanted to shout? In our sedate society most of us refrain from shouting and settle with just feeling like. I submit to you that it is good for us to express our strong feelings, particularly the positive ones. Singing can afford us both an opportunity and a vehicle for doing that. There is a saying in opera that when it is too important to say it then sing it!

We are soon to experience the Thanksgiving season followed by the joyous Advent Season. What better times of the year could there be to enthusiastically if not vehemently express to God and each other the intense feelings of thankfulness and joyfulness which pervade not only the seasons but our hearts.

Come lend your voices and talents with your fellow church members in the choir to the unbridled expression of effusive praise in the imminent holiday season.

We currently have a very faithful few in the choir. When illness or any exigencies of life thin our ranks we need more members so we can continue to render the quality of musical worship which is incumbent on us in our relationship to a great and loving God. YOU are needed and necessary. To paraphrase Paul, " I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God that you present your bodies a 'singing' sacrifice to God!!!!"

Jon Gilbertson



## ***From The Church Office***

On Sunday, November 15<sup>th</sup> the church celebrated my 29 years of service during worship. I can't thank each and every one of you enough for the beautiful flowers, card, and gifts that I received! The fellowship was also held in my honor and the food was wonderful. My thanks to all who helped plan, organize and bake such good food!

I have been truly lucky to have a job with such a wonderful boss and so many great people to work with! Again thank you for everything and may God bless each of you!

Debbie

## **GAD A BOUTS UPDATE**

The Gad's December meeting, Wed. Dec 2, has been cancelled. Please mark your calendars for our next monthly meeting Wed., Jan 6, 2010, 10:30 a.m. Bring a friend ...and a dish for a pot luck lunch at 12 noon.

Have you made your reservation and paid for our Christmas luncheon at O'Donnell's Thurs., Dec 10? If not, please call Helen. The deadline is Monday, December 7.





# WEEK OF COMPASSION UPDATE

How our WOC dollars are at work for others-

## *Hope, Healing, and a Hand*



## **A Courageous Compassion Partnership**

From its beginning, the Disciples Hurricane Recovery Initiative has adapted to emerging needs and new challenges. Since September 2005, Disciples have given over \$4.4 million to Week of Compassion in response to Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Ike. At the same time, Disciples continue to answer God's call to "Get Dirty for Jesus!" Nearly 11,100 Disciples volunteers representing 1,124 mission groups have contributed 437,000 hours to the mission of disaster recovery. The value of this volunteer labor is itself worth \$8.9 million. The hours are equivalent to rebuilding 175 homes and repairing 10 Disciples congregations.

While the Disciples Hurricane Recovery Initiative winds down at the end of this year, God does not appear ready to let the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) off the hook. Disciples Volunteering, in partnership with Week of Compassion, is poised to help Disciples continue to answer God's call to respond to those hard hit by disaster and partner in mission with neighbors in need. The work of the Disciples Hurricane Recovery Initiative will continue across the Gulf Coast. The work doesn't end there, however. Disciples Volunteering: Disaster Response is expanding its vision. As communities continue to experience and recover from natural disaster, Disciples Volunteering: Disaster Response calls volunteers to be present, offering hope, healing, and a hand in their recovery.

## FOOD CLOSET NEEDS STOCKING...

We are now restocking our "Food Closet". We need your help!

Some items we need:

- Cans of tuna
- Cans of beans
- Cans of soup
- Cans of vegetables
- Cans of spaghetti
- Juice boxes/bottles
- Boxes of potatoes/rice

Get the latest dates possible for a long shelf life.

Don't bring in what you wouldn't eat please!