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# THE COUNTRY SPIRE

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Volume 34 issue 12

December, 2009

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### PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD

This is the theme that Pastor Rhonda and I want you to consider during the month of December:

“PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD”. In the Old Testament, especially in the prophets there are many passages that were preparing the hearts of the people of Israel for the coming of the Messiah. They didn’t always understand those themes and often misunderstood them. Of course when Jesus was born there were many that didn’t understand “the way of the Lord” that he brought.

In the month of December every year we celebrate the birth of Jesus, in song, in lights, in pageantry, in worship. Even in all the celebration, we too may misunderstand the “way of the Lord” that Jesus brought. So, during Advent, both on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings we will be considering some of the meanings of Jesus’ birth for our lives as we PREPARE OURSELVES FOR THE WAY OF THE LORD.

The first Sunday in Advent is the beginning of the church’s New Year. Beginning November 29 and then for the entire next year we move from our consideration of Mark’s Gospel to considering the themes of Luke’s Gospel. For Mark, Jesus life and ministry was the beginning of the good news of the Kingdom of God coming near us. For Luke, Jesus is the universal savior of all humanity. Luke’s telling of Jesus’ story presents His coming among humanity – in birth, life, ministry, suffering, death,

and resurrection – as a fulfillment of God’s promises of salvation, which brings peace and wholeness to all humankind. It is this Gospel of Luke we will be considering each Sunday morning till Christmas and for the next year.

During the Advent soup suppers and worship services -- Dec. 2, 9, 16, and 23 -- we will be focusing on a few of the Old Testament passages which were meant to help the People of Israel to PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD. We hope that these passages too, can be instructive for our lives as we PREPARE AND LIVE THE WAY OF THE LORD.

The worship service on Wednesday, December 23, the evening before Christmas Eve will be a special service of Country Gospel Holiday Music. The 4:00 Service on Christmas Eve will feature a Cantata by the Long Lake Lutheran Choir; and the 10:30 Christmas Eve service will be a traditional Candle Light Service.

All of this to PREPARE for us THE WAY OF THE LORD!



#### Inside This Issue

F.Cover	Pastor Dave’s Column
2-5	Council Report
5	Financials,
6	LLC Directory and Adult Ed.
7-8	Youth & Family Ministry News
9	Birth, Bapt & Ann in Nov./Pastoral Acts Oct.

10	Volunteers for December	Motion made, seconded and passed to accept the
11	December Calendar	treasurers report.
BCover	It's December!	

Long Lake Lutheran Council Meeting  
November 12, 2009

Meeting called to order by John Bartz @ 7:05 pm

**SPIRE DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup>**

**\*\*\*FIRM\*\*\*** Reports and articles need to be into the office by that date or they will not be included in the Spire.

John introduced Elaine Mustari, CPA. She attended the meeting to go over the financial report. Matt Hylen went over the time line of hiring Elaine to take care of the financials of our church. She will be taking care of the books on a trial basis for the next 3 months at a cost not to exceed \$3,000; this will take us to the annual meeting and close the books for the end of 2009. We reviewed the financial report with Elaine.

Motion made, seconded and passed to transfer the money from the Festival\Auction line to the general fund.

Motion made, seconded and passed to move the recycle\county market cards line to the general fund.

We will be getting new software in January of 2010. This software is recommended by the ELCA. There is a \$99 start up fee and a monthly \$40 service fee. This fee will be taken out of the office operating budget.

We are also looking at setting up direct deposit for salaried employees. This will eliminate the issuing of payroll checks.

There will be a 2010 budget meeting on the first Thursday in December to bring each committee's recommendations for the new budget.

A letter was received from Nelda, expressing her desire to help the council in any way she can. She expressed that she would like all reports sent to her via email as soon as possible so that she can get the information needed into the Spire and or the bulletin. She also mentioned that a family member from the funeral that was at our church on Tuesday, November 10<sup>th</sup> was very appreciative of Pastor Dave. She said his cooperative and caring manner meant a lot to her and her family.

Master Calendar reviewed.

Council representatives for the month of December are: 8am, Rose. 10:30, Tina and Steve on Wednesdays.

We discussed the nominating committee, and the need to get names for council positions that will be vacated at the end of the year. Candy McColley, Dale Findell and Tina Anderson are all coming off the council.

Stewardship drive is complete and Tony will be doing a tally and have that ready for the December budget meeting.

Minutes of the Special Meetings of the Council on October 21, October 22, and November 3 were discussed. Motion was made, seconded and passed to accept the minutes.

**REPORTS:**

Pastor Dave: He has been busy meeting with the transition team. He is very happy with how things are going with this group. They have reviewed the demographics of the area and have done a mission profile of the congregation and will have a report ready for the annual meeting. This report will in turn help the call committee. The call committee will then be elected at the annual meeting.

New Pathways is doing Christmas Baskets for people in need, they are doing 300 and Long Lake has committed to 50. Each basket will consist of vegetables, instant potatoes, hams, which Pathways will accept money for and purchase along with pie. We will set up a board with tags on it for people to take which will have the item they wish to donate. We received a letter from Carol Perrin expressing interest in being our Wedding Coordinator. This is

a volunteering position and will get a stipend from the wedding party. Since Carol has been interested in this for some time and has spoken to the council in the past, we thought it would be a good idea to have a coordinator since at this time we are in transition. We would like her to meet with the pastors to go over the wedding book and make any changes.

**Pastor Rhonda:** They had a great confirmation retreat at Luther Point. A wonderful event at Feed My Starving Children for the confirmation students. I conducted 5 weddings and had a successful dinner for the confirmands and families. We are starting a high school youth group on Wednesday nights. I confirmed four incredible young adults on Reformation Sunday. The Church presented 3<sup>rd</sup> graders with Bibles and I am conducting class on how to use them. In addition to these highlights, I have been busy with teaching, preaching, and the ministry of the church. I look forward to the holiday season and all that it will hold for our congregation.

**YOUTH:** The work camp for 2010 will be going to Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. There will be 12 youth, Pastor Rhonda and one other adult male chaperone. All youth activities are on the web site. Kim Schmidt attended the council meeting as a representative of the youth, 2 other youth will be taking turns coming to the council meetings, and they are Chance Laidley and Logan Anderson. She requested that a representative from the worship and music ministry team come to the confirmation class and talk about what kinds of things they can do to help in worship. Candy McColley will do this. The youth will be participating in the Thanksgiving Eve worship by ushering and reading. After the service will have a silent auction with the proceeds going to youth activities and work camp. They have a new T-Shirt design and will be selling T-shirts and sweatshirts as well.

**PROPERTY:** Written report from Steve read. Steve and his son, Derek installed a light above the security box in the Cornerstone making it easier to set and disarm the alarm. We received a snowblower from Lynn Perrin that needed some repairs, Steve has done those repairs and we now have a snowblower. He wanted to thank everyone for all the support and encouragement he has gotten concerning the Gospel group. Getting this group up and going has touched Steve and strengthens God's hold on him. Thanks be to God for giving us the

tools to make this happen! Our next Gospel service will be November 27<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 and a Country Gospel Christmas service on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of December at 7pm.

The squares group will be donating proceeds from the breakfasts they do the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month, towards getting power out to the garage and water out for the community garden.

We need to have people sign up for cleaning the Cornerstone. We have cut Lynn's hours to save the church money and we need to have people volunteer to do this. There is a sign up sheet in the Narthex.

**WORLD MISSION:** Missions for December are in house and will assist with the Christmas baskets.

**FINANCE:** Transitioning with the CPA. Elaine has noticed some inconsistency with the payroll and is researching this along with Matt. They will look into the possibility of direct deposit for payroll.

**WORSHIP AND MUSIC:** The Holiday schedule is complete and the congregation is getting an insert that gives the activities and times. Advent services begin December 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7pm with soup suppers starting at 5. The choir will do the first soup supper, but need people to help clean up and serve. The choir will be singing at all the Advent services. The choir will be doing a Cantata at 4pm on Christmas Eve. We will have a candlelight service at 10:30. There will be a 9am service with communion on the 25<sup>th</sup> and ONE service on the 27<sup>th</sup> at 9am. Kristy will be gone on the 25<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, Angie Olson will be playing. We will resume the regular schedule on January 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**EDUCATION:** Attendance is not good for the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade on Sunday mornings. Not sure why, but will continue to review this. They will be giving out Advent Calendars to all the families of the Sunday School children.

**WEB SITE...**Is up and running, check it out at [www.longlakeluth.org](http://www.longlakeluth.org)

Next meeting will be December 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7pm to go over the 2010 budget.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30pm

Respectfully submitted, Candy McColley

ahead. This would allow for time to get a job description in place and decide how the staffing should look at LLLC. Meeting was adjourned with plans to meet next evening, Thursday, October 22 with regards to plans and financial offer.

### Sunshine Circle

The December Meeting will be held on the 8<sup>th</sup> at Loretta's house at 1:30 p.m.

Thank you,  
Sunshine Circle

**"Two can accomplish more than twice as much as one, for the results can be much better."**  
**Ecclesiastes 4:9**



**WELCA**

All the church women are invited to join us at our WELCA (Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America) monthly meeting on December 17<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm.

### Special Meeting of the LLLC Council October 21, 2009

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: John Bartz, Tony Steiner, Rose Hass, Dale Findell, Steve Vigstol, Monica Ahlman, Candy McColley, Pastor Dave.

On Tuesday the 20<sup>th</sup>, Geri Fournier called Council President Bartz requesting to meet with him. At this meeting Mr. Bartz was told by Geri Fournier that she was giving her 2 week notice concerning her employment with LLLC. This notice commenced with that day and her last official day of work would be October 30<sup>th</sup>. John Bartz then contacted Council Members to set up a special meeting for October 21 concerning a staff position. At the special meeting the first order of business was to accept the resignation and two week notice of Geri Fournier, which was unanimously accepted by the Council. Geri Fournier was present at the meeting. She explained her plans for employment at another Church and everyone thanked her for her service. Geri Fournier then discussed with us an option of hiring her financial service company called Faith Accounting Services. She presented a 15 month contract with rates of \$250 per week and fees of \$500 for closing of the books. The Council then excused Geri so they could discuss the options and made plans to get back to Geri as soon as possible. In consideration of the financial proposal from Faith Accounting, we decided unanimously to make an offer of \$3000 for the next three months of work including the closing of the books. Council also decided to offer Nelda Remus a temporary position at LLLC to get through the transition time

### Special Meeting of the LLLC Council October 22, 2009

The Special Meeting of the LLLC Council was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: John Bartz, Tony Steiner, Steve Vigstol, Candy McColley, Rose Hass, Matt Hylen and Pastor Solberg.

John Bartz informed us that our offer was rejected by Faith Accounting. The counter offer from Faith Accounting was \$4500 for the 3 months we had offered. The accounting service asked again for a contract of 15 months. The church council then voted to reject both offers from Faith Accounting preferring to have a 3 month trial probationary period. John Bartz had also contacted Nelda Remus and she accepted the temporary position to start Tuesday, October 27. This was accepted by the council. Another motion was made to research other outside accounting firms to fill the financial services needed at LLLC. Meeting adjourned.

### **Council Meeting 11/3/09**

Meeting called to order at 5:00 pm

Present John Bartz, Tony Steiner, Candy McColley, Matt Hylen, Steve Vigstol, Tina Anderson, Pastor Dave Solberg, Ted Erickson, and Elaine Mustari.



The Gospel Team will leading worship on December 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**CONGREGATIONAL MEMBER & VISITOR GIVING REPORT**

<b><u>NEEDED MONTHLY:</u></b>	\$19,309.08
Contributions given ~Nov 1-15	\$ 17,343.65
Net gain (deficit)	\$(1,965.43)

<b><u>COUNTY MRKT. CARD PROCEEDS~Nov.</u></b>	\$ 87.50
<b><u>RECYCLING DRIVE TO DATE</u></b>	\$ 9,411.87

As the Finance Board representative of Long Lake Lutheran Church, I am regularly impressed with the financial blessings our congregation dedicate out of their personal budgets. This past summer was a particularly challenging financial time for our congregation, staff and Board. As a Board we had many meetings and prayers to find “just the right fit” for Long Lake Lutheran needs verses wants. After numerous meetings and painful financial cutbacks, we created an amended financial plan that appears to be working.

We are blessed with the generosity of the offerings the last few weeks and hope this generosity continues to replenish our financial balance sheet. The finance committee, along with the whole Board desire to establish additional policies and procedures to ensure these tough financial times are “softened” in the future (tough economic times will always return).

As the Board prepares the 2010 Budget, we will be thinking about the input many of you gave us in recent months. We will strive to create the 2010 Budget with our core ministries in the forefront and utilize input from our Transition Team.

I wish blessings to all of you as we enter this Christmas Season.

Matt Hylen, Finance  
Board Representative

**COMMITTEE CORNER**

The meeting was called to discuss the employment of Elaine Mustari at Long Lake Lutheran Church to do the financials and payroll. Ms. Mustari came as a candidate referred to LLLC council for being a CPA willing to do contractual work. Ms. Mustari gave us her resume, experience, and desire to do our financials work at LLLC. Her ability to do fund accounting was discussed and other special accounting skills that may be needed to handle church finances and payroll. She felt with her close proximity and accounting skills that she would be able to do a great job for our church. She had also done some homework on ELCA recommendations for financial work. The council expressed their desire to have a 3 month trial to see how this process would work. Ms. Mustari agreed that would be a good working arrangement to start and make sure all work would be done well and be satisfactory to LLLC. Council discussed the thought of using an outside source and how that would work. Pastor Dave told us that this is the trend in most churches now and healthy for congregations. Ms. Mustari agreed with this thought and said that this would also allow for some checks, balances and confidentiality. All agreed this would be a good trial period to see this process work. Council discussed with Ms. Mustari the tight budget of our church and trying to be fiscally responsible, which as a council is our responsibility. She agreed to our terms of a payment not to exceed \$3000 for a three month trial period. In this time she would take care of all financials, payroll, yearend responsibilities, budget discussions, and preparing financial work for our annual meeting. All were in agreement of responsibilities and duties to perform. Then we discussed her ability to work with current church staff. We also noted that she would have to report to council and work closely with our finance committee. Ms. Mustari discussed her ability to work well with others and her ability to make reports for council and their meetings. She assumed she would have to work with finance committee to start and learn the system in place. Final discussion was made as to when she could start and what her schedule would be like. All were in agreement on this schedule and how it would work. A motion was made to hire Ms. Mustari and have her start work as our financial person, this was unanimously supported. Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by

**YOUTH:** Will meet December 13<sup>th</sup> after Worship.

**EDUCATION:** Will meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of every month at 6:00 pm. In December, this will be the 10<sup>th</sup>.

## Friends of Ruth

Karyn Hansen lead us in a Bible reading from II Corinthians 9:6 for our devotions.

November 5<sup>th</sup> we had our meeting at the Fellowship Hall to finalize our plans for the Christmas Tea at the end of the month.

Friends of Ruth women talked about making a change in our meeting day /time, so that Mindy would be able to keep attending the meetings as a co-leader. We agreed to meet on the first Monday of the month, unless it's a holiday, at 6:30 in the Cornerstone. **So on Monday, December 7<sup>th</sup> we will meet at 6:30 p.m. in the Cornerstone. Remember to bring two dozen cookies for the cookie exchange.**

We are in need of these **Mid-wife kit supplies:**

2 gallon size plastic bags

t-shirts or onesies( birth to 3 mo.)

Towels□gently used or new

Snack bags

Thanks for your support!

\*Plans are being made for a fun excursion in January, so keep looking for details to come

**The Squares** Our group is up and running again! We are working on a deck for a member of our community, and serving breakfast on December 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>. Happy Holidays to everyone. Watch for our meeting date in January. Anyone who is interested in joining can call Will Remus at 763-444-9156 or Tony Steiner at 763-444-6768.



## LONG LAKE LUTHERAN CHURCH

3921 277<sup>th</sup> Ave. NW – Isanti, MN 55040

Website: [www.longlakeluth.org](http://www.longlakeluth.org)

### Staff

Pastor Dave Solberg	763-479-3059
E-mail address	cjnrev@frontier.com
Pastor Dave's Cell Phone	218-410-0204
Pastor Rhonda Hlavinka	763-783-3625
E-mail Address	pastorette01@msn.com
Pastor Rhonda's Cell Phone	763-229-4459
Church Office	444-5315

### Church Office

FAX Machine	444-8066
Nelda Remus, Secretary	444-9156
Lynn Perrin, Custodian	444-5607
Kristy Anderson, Organist	
Sherryl Mahrer, Parish Nurse	691-1733

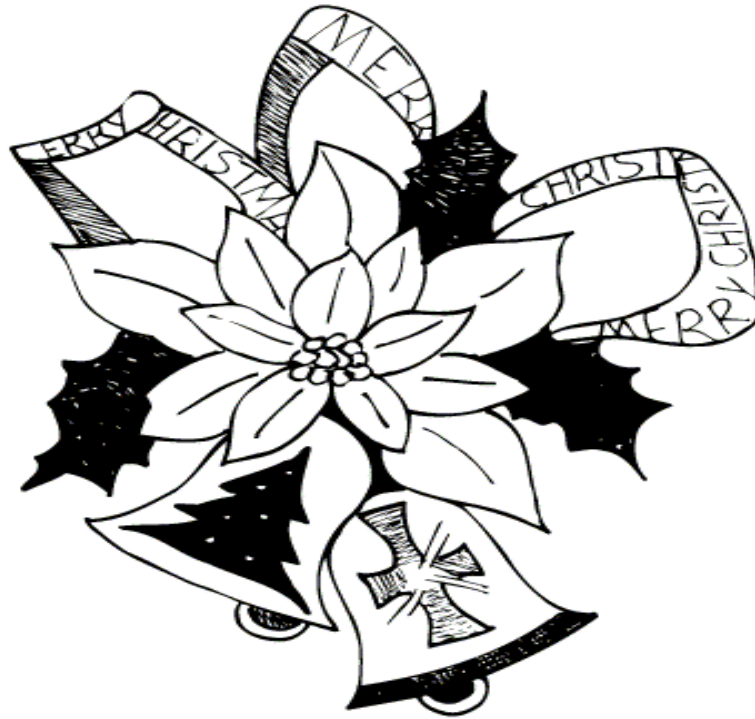
### Council Members

John Bartz, Chairperson	444-9731
Steve Vigstol, Property	360-1798
Matt Hulen, Finance	753-2149
Rose Hass, Congregational Life	444-5892
Monica Ahlman, Education	444-6462
Tony Steiner, Stewardship	444-6768
Candy McColley, Worship & Music	753-5187
Tina Anderson, Youth	612-747-6871
Dale Findell, Missions	689-2219

### Church Organizations

Rose Hass, Council Secretary	444-5892
Donna Larsen, Director Adult Choir	444-9975
Friends of Ruth: Karen Baker & Mindy Peterson	444-4383 444-8419
Women of the ELCA (WELCA): Betty Lundeen	444-5357
Serving Groups Coordinator Loretta Fornberg	444-5973
Sunshine Circle: Loretta Fornberg	444-5973
Becky Agranoff	444-4769
Lundeen Scholarship Committee &	

Cemetery Sexton: Philip Lundeen 444-5357



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Non-Profit Organization  
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