

Notes from Nativity



Lutheran Church of the Nativity
Arden, North Carolina

Volume XXXVII, No. 7

July 2010

Making Christ Known:

connecting faith and life
for people of all ages
through

Worship

- + Sunday Morning
- + Music
- + Drama

Learning

- + Sunday Learning
- + WOW Wednesday
- + Bible Study

Caring

- + Fellowship
- + Home Communion
- + Crisis Meals
- + Prayer List

Giving

- + Community Partnerships
- + Mission Trips
- + Time, Talent & Treasure

Nativity Youth
Nativity Preschool &
Kindergarten
Women of the ELCA

July Treat: Music Week at Lutheridge

—Kantor Karen's Korner

It's July, so that must mean we'll hear music making from our neighbors across the highway, Lutheridge Conference Center. Music Week begins July 11 with the theme "Arise, Shine, Your Light Has Come." **We have 14 Carpenter's Crew campers attending** who will be under the direction of Michael Burkhardt.



Michael is known for his innovative and inspiring hymn festivals and for his creative work with children. He has taught at Carthage College,

Arizona State University, and Concordia University Irvine. He currently serves at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Livonia, Michigan as Director of Worship and the Arts. Michael will also serve as organist for the week and will be presenting a hymn festival at St. James Episcopal Church in Hendersonville on Thursday, July 15 at 8 p.m. This worship service is, of course, free and open to the public, and not one to be missed!! **Our children will be performing the next afternoon in the Faith Center at Lutheridge at 2:15, and Cantor Karen accompanies.**

We also have one middle school and one high school student camping this week at Music Week. The middle school clinician is Tamera Shook from Hickory, NC and the high school clinician is Michael Kemp from Ft. Washington, Pennsylvania. They, too will be performing in the 2:15 concert Friday afternoon.

Continued on page 2

Vacation Bible School July 19-23

9:00 a.m. to noon

—Amy Phillips

Learn Ministry Director

This month we will be holding our Vacation Bible School!

We are really excited with our green theme – ReNew!! We will spend the week focused on the Parable of the Sower

found in Mark 4:1-9. We will be exploring our own faith in Christ as well as how we can live out that faith. We are still accepting registration for kids ages 3 years old and 5th grade.



We will be hosting a Youth Encounter Team: Watermark this week! They will be leading our music during Vacation Bible School as well as participating in our worship services Sunday July 18 & Monday July 19.

We appreciate the help we receive from the congregation to make this week a success for the kids who join us. Volunteering your time, providing funds, and donating materials are essential for this ministry! THANK YOU!

Come out and join us on Friday July 23 for our closing program. We will gather at 11:35 p.m. for song and celebration!

More Learn Ministry on page 3

From Pastor Mark

It was seven years ago this month that my family and I enjoyed England, Scotland and Ireland as part of a sabbatical leave. Like



Pastor Sara last year, my sabbatical had been funded by a grant from the Lily Foundation. It was a time of renewal which energized me for another seven years of ministry at Nativity. In these past seven years we have grown in membership, acreage, program and preschool. And now with Vision 2020 as a guide for the years ahead, our future growth is to be that of deepening our discipleship. Big things are ahead, but frankly I am exhausted. Fortunately, my second sabbatical is a month away. A time of badly-needed rejuvenation begins August 2.

My goals for the three months are fairly simple: family, writing, worship and service. I look forward to having the time to fully focus on Kyle as he heads off to college; Evan as he begins his senior year of high school (and cross country season); Dana as she is free to travel during her September break; and, my parents as we tackle a list of long-awaited tasks. I also hope to take some time to write. I have no particular writing goal in mind other than beginning the discipline of writing for the sake of writing (so far my writing has been the assigned projects of my work or education). Worship is a wonderful gift on sabbatical. The renewing power of gathering with others on Sunday morning in communities where I have no leadership responsibilities is a blessing. Finally, in terms of service I hope to find a local

service organization through which I can continue to volunteer post-sabbatical. So far, all of my local volunteer time has been through Nativity-sponsored or Nativity-connected agencies. My church-based service on sabbatical will involve a trip to Haiti in October.

During my time away, the pastor-members of Nativity (retired and under call) are volunteering their time to assist Pastor Sara. I appreciate their generosity and know that you will too.

But prior to sabbatical, we have July together. If you need some time with me this month, please call or email.

In Christ
+ Pr Mark

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Kantor Karen's Korner

Cont'd from page 1

Also, attending this year's Music Week are five adults, who will be under the direction of Christopher Cock, Director of Vocal and Choral studies at Valparaiso University in Valparaiso, Indiana. Christopher is an active lyric tenor soloist and is known for his performances in Bach's B minor mass, Handel's Messiah, and the evangelist in Bach's St. Matthew Passion. He served as director of choirs for Lutheran Summer Music, the national Lutheran High School Music Camp. The adults will lead worship Friday evening (July 16) at Whisnant Chapel at 7:30. Come early for a good seat and good parking.

Again, thank you Nativity congregation for supporting this wonderful opportunity for 22 members to experience the joy of Music Week. Your contributions of over \$5000 to the music week camp scholarship fund for 2010 have made this possible. Please join these 22 members as they perform in concert and worship.

Hymn Festival with Michael Burkhardt

Thursday, July 15, 8 p.m.
St. James Episcopal Church,
Hendersonville

Youth and Children's Concert

Friday, July 16, 2:15 p.m.
Faith Center, Lutheridge

Adult Concert and Closing Worship with Holy Communion

Friday, July 16, 7:30 p.m.
Whisnant Chapel, Lutheridge

We continue our Memorial Day through Labor day worship schedule experiment of two Sunday morning worship services at 9 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. plus our Monday evening worship in the fellowship hall at 6:30 p.m.. Let us know what you think by contacting Cantor Karen at kareheart@nativity.ws or any member of our program staff: Pastor Mark, Pastor Sara, Amy Phillips, Jen Loizzo, or Michele Grush.

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Learn Ministry

Cont'd from page 1

[We are on summer break from mid-week learning and Sunday classes until September 12. To see more information about Learn Ministry, check out our website at www.nativity.ws and click on the "Learning" button. If you have questions or would like to get involved in planning, leading, teaching, or working behind the scenes, please contact me! Amy Phillips, Learning Ministry Director aphillips@nativity.ws]

It is a time for learning and growing! Throughout the spring and summer your program staff and volunteers have been discerning what Nativity's mid-week learning opportunities will look like in the fall. With our Vision 20/20 focus on small groups, we are looking at using this mid-week time as a starting place for testing out some of our small group ideas.

Children's music ministry continues to grow and will be meeting on Wednesdays with a new schedule. Carpenter's Crew (second grade through 5th grade) will meet together from 4:30-6:00 p.m. and use their voices and instruments during this time. Three year olds through 1st graders will gather from 5:15-6:00 p.m. for Building Blocks. Other possible mid-week ministries will be built around the Children's Music Ministry schedule.

"WOW" as we have known it over the past few years will not be returning. Yet, we are looking forward to where God is leading us into helping "make disciples" so that we can live our mission statement of "Making Christ Known."

Mark your calendars!

September 12 will be our learning kick-off at Lutheridge. Plan on coming out before worship in the chapel to hear about all the learning opportunities for the fall.

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WHO: 2010 Fletcher Relay For Life – American Cancer Society

WHAT: Relay Night. Food, games, entertainment, fireworks, remembrance, fellowship, and the opportunity to support the fight against cancer.

WHEN: 6 p.m. Friday, July 16 through 8 a.m. Saturday, July 17.

WHERE: Fletcher Town Park, Howard Gap Road, Fletcher.

Nativity's Kancer Kickers invite you and your family to join us for Relay Night. Come and enjoy the food, festivities, fellowship, and fireworks. Come also to support our cancer survivors. Come and participate in the luminary walk to remember those who have been victims of cancer.

The Kancer Kickers invite you to sign-up to walk in support of the fight against cancer. We also invite you to sign-up to support our walkers through your monetary donation – by the lap, by the mile – whatever you feel is appropriate.

If you have any questions, please contact Steve Davis, Peggy Mann, Doug Phillips, or any member of the Kancer Kickers Team. We hope to see you on the 16th!

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Congregation Council June meeting actions

✓ Approved Rick Jordan to fill the unexpired term of Melissa Wright as council member and treasurer through May 2011.

✓ Approved addressing the congregation immediately with the need for additional giving.

✓ Approved finding ways for members who choose to do so to give to Nativity and not any portion of their contributions being sent on to NC Synod and ELCA.

✓ Approved Pastor Bob Miller (2 yr term) and Ann Dasher (1 yr term) to the Mutual Ministry Committee.

✓ Approved the 2010 confirmation class for adult membership: Casey Auch, Christyna Dosumu, Alex Ferraz, Taylor Heidenreich, and Alycia Milton.

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Nativity Youth July events

Monday, July 12 – 7:30-9:00 p.m.
Summer youth program

Sunday, July 18 – A Day at Lake Lure. We will leaving immediately following the 9:00 a.m. service, have lunch and spend the day in the water! More details coming.

Mon-Fri, July 19-23
Vacation Bible School

Monday, July 26 – 7:30-9:00 p.m.
Summer youth program

Monday, August 2 – 7:30-9:00 p.m. Summer youth program

Monday, August 9 – 7:30-9:00 p.m. Summer youth program

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Women's group continues with health kits

July is "soap" month for Lutheran World Relief (LWR) health kits. So far this year, we have collected 90 hand towels, 129 wash cloths, 111 toothbrushes, 71 combs, 88 nail files, and 159 band-aids. To complete our health kits, we are asking for contributions of a 4-5 oz. bar of soap left in its original wrapping. The large bars of Ivory soap are just fine, but any kind of soap will work, as long as it is a large bath size bar. Please put the soap and other previously collected articles for the health kits in the large wicker basket in the hallway leading to the preschool playroom. We will accept items until October when the kits will be assembled.

There have been so many disasters this year beginning with the earthquake in Haiti in January that LWR's shelves were emptied. According to the *Faith in Action* newsletter from LWR, "Upon learning that we would need to divert part of the shipment originally bound for Sierra Leone, one of the most poverty-stricken countries in the world, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Sierra Leone Bishop Thomas Barnett responded with not only grace, but gratitude. 'Thank you,' he wrote, 'for letting us serve our desperate and needy brothers and sisters of Haiti together with you.' The generosity of people just like you combined with that of our partners in Sierra Leone allowed LWR to send health kits, layettes and quilts to survivors of the earthquake. As of this writing (May 2010), vulnerable people in Haiti have received 1,500 layettes; 289,585 health kits; and 25,830 quilts – gifts of your hearts and hands to theirs. Your generosity will enable LWR to continue to respond to needs in Haiti and all over the world."

You can be a part of this ministry with contribution of a large bar of soap or a whole health kit as you can contribute (Look for the complete list of health kit items on top of the wicker hamper). The need is never ending, but then with your help, love is also never ending.

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Prayer List

Every month a current list of friends and family members in need of healing is printed in the newsletter. Call the church office (684.0352), with your addition or deletion. Names will be kept on the prayer list for three months; you must call again to have the name placed back on the list.



Neil Boyd (husband/Sharon Boyd), Jamie Branson (relative/Nancy Seekamp), Margaret Brent (friend/Kari Schoening), Betsy Cole (cousin/Barry Copeland), Dottie Dukes (mother/Sharon Boyd), Mary Kay Furtado (friend/Gordon & Marge Freeman), Leeanne Gowen (sister/Julie Smith), Jack Grafing (husband/Norma Grafing), Naomi Howard (daughter/Ralph Storm), Tom Kerr (friend/Fred & Ann Friedrichs), Fred Landig (friend/Gordon & Marge Freeman), Elgin McGinnis (father/Lamar McGinnis), Danny McGowan (friend/Neal family), Shirley Morgan (mother/Juanita Fiehler), Gil & Trey Piddington (friends/Bob Patterson), Sonja Rizzo (cousin/Pastor Sara), Wayne Sanders (friend/Bob Patterson), Tanner Scott (relative/Jim & Allison Furman), Lisa Sorrells (friend/Leigh Holland), Brian Turner (friend), Samantha Wheeler (granddaughter/Norman & Myrle Gengler).

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July Birthdays

- 1 Megan Anderson, Lauren Fox
Susan Hunt
- 3 Bill Scronce
Jamie Vlahos
- 4 Fred Park
Pat Stimson
- 5 Richard Doster
Riley Johnson, Jim Musolf,
Carmella Warfle
- 6 Edna Hansen
- 7 Ed Ehlers, Camden Brown
Jennifer Loizzo, Galen Smitten
- 8 Adelaide Gillette, Kathy
Remsberg, Duane Tuttle
- 9 Emma Otten
- 10 Jessica Behm, Debbie
Hansman
- 11 Cheryl Brickner, Harold
Frisard, Evelyn Ridenhour
- 12 Kendra Jarvis
- 13 Thelma Nesbitt, Diane
Locotosh
- 15 Peter Carver, Christy Oehm
- 16 John Baylor
- 17 Aidan Boyle, Raymond Travis
- 18 Michael Cady, Laura Elia
Ann Hendrix, Gary Knock
Melissa Plemmons
- 19 Henk Colijn, Terry Van
Ostenbridge
- 20 Suzanne Bryson, Colin Gillette
- 21 Foster Bryson, John Wadington
Ella Woehl
- 22 Matt Brewer, Bonnie Duffner
Tom Houser
- 23 Jesse Canniff-Kuhn
- 24 Ann Colijn, Juanita Fiehler
Reagan Hunt, Flo Siebert
- 25 Charles Hull, Nola Propst
- 26 Amy Phillips
- 27 Sally Musolf
- 28 Robert Yockey
- 29 Dean Anderson, Brooke Davey
Betty Dennis, Phyllis Tompsen
Sarah Wadington
- 31 Emily Propst



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[Ed. note: This letter was sent first class to all active members of the Lutheran Church of the Nativity on July 17, 2010.]

Dear Fellow Members of Nativity:

Special thanks to the nearly 100 of you who attended our congregation forum this past Sunday night. What a great turnout! And we didn't even serve food!

We began our forum with an impressive report by our program staff on the progress of implementation of our Vision 2020 initiative. Many exciting things are in the works to increase our weekly attendance at worship. Much study is being done to develop small groups within our congregation. We heard several ideas and initiatives to make our congregation more welcoming. We heard of the many areas of our congregation where we are giving of time, talents and treasures outside our congregation. Our focus is on building disciples through worship, caring, learning and giving.

Next, we heard an exciting report about this year's North Carolina Synod Assembly by our four lay delegates. They highlighted the inspiring worship and singing, the stimulating messages that were given and the Bishop's reflections on our churches in North Carolina. A full report from this year's assembly can be found on the NC Synod's website (nclutheran.org).

Next, many questions that had been submitted about the impact of the ELCA's decisions regarding homosexuality were addressed. In summary, the ELCA adopted the Social Statement: "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust." Following this action, the ELCA adopted a resolution that would allow congregations that choose to do so, to recognize same-gender relationships. Also adopted is a

resolution that allows persons in same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders of churches that choose to call them. It was re-stated that our Congregation Council passed a resolution that affirms that Nativity continues to be a vibrant expression of the ELCA and that our annual budget reflects this on-going commitment. It was reported that five families have formally left Nativity as result of the ELCA decisions. It was reported that four congregations have dis-affiliated with the NC Synod. A total of 140 congregations nation-wide have voted to dis-affiliate from the ELCA. (This represents approximately 1% of the more than 10,000 congregations in the ELCA.) The congregation was assured that any and all decisions regarding same-gender relationships within our congregation would be presented, discussed and voted upon by the entire congregation.

Our forum was closed by a report of the many exciting things that are going at Nativity right now in every area. The upcoming youth beach retreat was highlighted.

On a more somber note, we must bring you up to date on our current financial picture. At this point in the year, we are observing a downward trend in our revenues. This is due to several factors: the overall recession of our economy has affected everyone in some way, several cancelled services in the early months of the year have not been "caught up" and the fallout from the ELCA's decision has adversely effected the giving of many members. Unfortunately, the mission and ministry of our congregation is taking the brunt of this by cutting those expenses

almost to nothing. Personnel and property management continue to be our largest expenses. Heading into the summer months, we do not have a comfortable level of "reserves" to cushion the usual decline in revenue that occurs during this time of year. Without a change in this trend, more serious cuts may have to be considered.

We are asking that all members of Nativity give urgent, prayerful evaluation of your financial response to the gifts first given to each of us by God. We ask that each member prayerfully consider increasing your weekly or monthly gift. We ask that each member make every effort to be current on your pledge. We ask that those members who are struggling to contribute to Nativity as result of the ELCA's decisions consider making your contribution to the Growing in Grace fund.

In response to several questions raised recently, our Congregation Council has taken action to find ways for members, who choose to do so, to contribute to the mission and ministry of Nativity without any portion of that gift going to the ELCA. Please be alert to those actions in the coming weeks.

This is an exciting time to be a member of the Lutheran Church of the Nativity! Let's make Christ known in this place and everywhere we go!

In Christ,

Fred Park, Congregation President

Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5.16)

Give Ministry

–Jennifer Loizzo, Give Ministry Director

Faith in God's Sufficient Provision

(source: Bible Study by Stewardship Partners)

People who lived through the Great Depression of 1929 seldom get over that experience. Because times were so hard and there were so many financial losses, they still live under the shadow that the worst can happen.

To some extent, the same thing is true of the World War II generation. This generation experienced "rationing" of gasoline, cars, rubber, shoes, sugar, and many other items. Anyone who experienced this time of great shortages still lives with the ghost it might happen again.

Expecting scarcity rather than sufficiency is certainly human. Scripture teaches us that God will provide for our needs if we put our trust in God. Part of our problems, however, is that our wants so far exceed our needs, that not even God can supply all of our wants.

Trusting God to meet our needs takes some practice, and many Christians have mastered this discipline by following one simple rule: You can't "out give" God! They do not hold back in their giving expecting the worst, rather they extend themselves in generosity expecting the best.

It isn't difficult to trust God with our salvation

because we know salvation is only through the cross of Jesus Christ. But when it comes to trusting God to take care of us, so that we can take care of others, doubt often enters the picture. When we can't clearly see how something is to be accomplished, when we aren't in complete control, our faith gets weak. We need to learn to trust God, because "With God, all things are possible."



Some ways to put this lesson into practice:

- 1) This week, buy what you normally would at the grocery store. Then take two items you thought you needed and give them to a food pantry.
- 2) Go one whole month without buying any kind of clothing for you or your family. After that month, try this for a longer period of time

replacing only what is outgrown or worn out.

- 3) Try "out giving" God. Double your offering for this week. Did you miss the money?

Some scriptures to reference are 2 Corinthians 9:8, Luke 6:38, Luke 5: 4-9, and Matthew 6:25-33.

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For the Record

Through June 2010	June Offerings	June Budget	Y-T-D Offerings	2009 Y-T-D	Y-T-D Budget
General Offerings	\$40,674	\$48,540	\$271,316	\$299,399	\$315,510
Still Growing	\$7,391	\$24,616	\$65,887	\$90, 582*	\$160,004

*Includes Growing in Grace and Still Growing in Grace number.

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CONGREGATION COMMUNIQUES

Dear Pastors and Nativity,

Thank you first for the luscious prayer shawl. I am grateful for the thoughtful gift, the knowledge that I am kept in prayer and the care and commitment demonstrated by those in the prayer shawl ministry and by those who have created at Nativity an environment where ministry thrives. Thank you all for your kindness and encouragement to me, and to Jamie, Casey and Emma, as I continue my M.Div. studies in the distributed learning program at Luther Seminary.

Sincerely, Christina Auch
M.Div. DL Middler, Class of 2014

The sign up for the intergenerational mission trip to southwest Virginia is now available on the west wall of the fellowship hall. Be sure to check out the pictures of previous trips. The trip this year is August 1-6. All are welcome. If you have questions, please contact John Pestoff or Jen Loizzo.

Ladies Lunch Bunch will meet on July 22 at 1:00 pm at Iannucci's Restaurant. Dot Carpenter is making reservations, so call her, 684-7563, and let her know you would like to join the group. New faces are a joy to see, so don't be bashful. More information will be in the *SonTimes*.

Young at Heart will meet July 12 at the home of Marvin and Carolyn Tennefoss. We will meet in the church parking lot at 11:00 a.m. and car pool to their home. This will be a potluck lunch and is always an enjoyable gathering. On August 9, we will meet in the Nativity fellowship hall with a potluck lunch and a program to follow. Mark your calendar and join us. All are welcome! For more information, please call Delores Curtis at 687-9185.

Please check the flower chart for the Sundays of summer. We have several openings. \$15 purchases ½ vase, \$30 purchases a full vase, and \$60 for 2 altar vases. The flower chart is located on a bulletin board near the north narthex right outside the "accordion" wall of the sanctuary.

Nativity's Yard Guard encourages everyone who cares about the church grounds to join them on Saturday, July 17, for the next outdoor workday. We begin at 8:30 a.m. and end at noon. We've been making progress with the trimming and weeding, yet it's a never-ending job and we would welcome any amount help. Can't come on Saturday? There are things that can be done at your own convenience. Just contact the church office. 684-0352. We are grateful for the many who have helped over the years.

Thank you to all who donated items or purchased items from the recent yard sale. Our yield for outdoor projects was \$428.15 which will go into the Landscape equity fund.

Husbands and Wives... Do you tune up your vehicle? You can't expect your marriage to run year after year, mile after mile without a tune up. A Marriage Encounter Weekend is the best "pit stop" you can give to your marriage. Visit our website at www.godlovesmarriage.org or you can contact Ed & Judy Raney, by phone at 843-707-7085 or by e-mail - raneyjl@gmail.com. The next Lutheran Marriage Encounter weekend is September 3 - 5, 2010 in Black Mountain, NC. Space is limited and the registration deadline is August 13, 2010.

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