

WELCOME TO *St. Stephen the Martyr, ELCA*

Service Times: Saturday - 5:00 p.m.

Sunday - 8:00 a.m. & 9:30 a.m.



*the* **MARTYR MONTHLY**  
JANUARY 2008 NEWSLETTER

*St. Stephen the Martyr*  
*Lutheran Church, ELCA*

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OFFICE HOURS:  
9-2 M-Th  
9-12 F

**SSM STAFF**

Gail Brodersen-Heins, Pastor  
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Bob Brownell, Maintenance  
Bob De Frank, Sunday School  
Superintendent  
Janet Snyder, Organist



**IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER  
IN JANUARY**

**January 1**  
New Year's Day

**January 3**  
7th/8th Grade Confirmation at SSM resumes

**January 4**  
6 pm New Year's Potluck

**January 6**  
Epiphany of our Lord

**January 19-20**  
Prayer for Christian Unity

**January 27**  
10:40 a.m.—Annual Congregational Meeting  
A brunch will be served afterward by the Youth Group.

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**PASTOR GAIL'S COMPUTER NOTES...**

**...FORWARD INTO THE NEW YEAR**

As members of St. Stephen the Martyr, we enter the year of our Lord 2008 with excitement! We want to give thanks to God for the blessings of the past year, including prayers answered and challenges faced!

One of our challenges as a congregation has been the formation of a FORWARD PLANNING COMMITTEE, commissioned by our Council under the visionary leadership of then-president Bill Gray. This vision has come to reality in the work of a very talented committee: Jim Arneson, Bob DeFrank, Tim Falksen, Bob Gleason, John Muroi, Eric Sanders, Julie Starks, and Pastor Gail.

This group has been meeting for months. We have discovered interesting things about our congregation: that 34% of our members live in Franklin, 22% in Greendale, 16% in Greenfield, and about

30% come from further away. We learned that our weekly attendance since 1998 is up 30%! That's exciting! But it has dipped from that high about 5% in the last three years. That's a challenge for all members to change.

One of the most exciting figures we can share is that nearly a quarter of our members (150) are under the age of 18! What does that say about a priority for youth ministry? Another fact is that we are "an active bunch, 250 of our 615 members are involved in some activity in addition to worship!"

Our committee has listened to our charter members. We have listened to a Synod consultant. Now it's time for all of you to get involved!

During the season of Lent (early this year-beginning Feb. 6) we will ask every confirmed member to participate in a Bible Study and a small group in-home discussion session. We want to hear from as many as possible where you believe that God is leading this congregation and what you believe are our "mission priorities".

We will need members willing to be telephone callers, discussion guides, in-home hosts, and Bible study leaders. There will be many times of the week, day and evening when you can participate, depending on your schedule. Mid-week Lenten services will be brief, with time for Bible study and discussion before and after worship.

The future of our church is a precious and exciting vision. That future is in God's hands, but also in ours. I close with wise words from the skit presented Dec. 15 and 16th by Julie Starks and Bob DeFrank:

Julie: "We need all of you to be part of this VISION. To get you thinking, consider these two phrases from a church consultant on growth:

"The purpose of the church is to connect people to God and equip people for ministry."

Bob: "The church is created for the sake of the world, and not the world for the sake of the church."

Stay tuned! These are exciting days for St. Stephen the Martyr.

Your partner in the Gospel,

**Pastor Gail**

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

SAVE THE DATE!

# Notice of Annual Meeting

**SSM Annual Congregational Meeting  
In the Fellowship Hall  
Sunday, Jan 27th, 2008  
10:45 - 12:15**

Followed by a light lunch served by our youth.

Your council needs your input at this meeting. We will be sharing ideas on the ways in which we can build our church, our own Christian lives and how we can better impact our community and the world in which we live. We will also be discussing the next steps of the Forward Planning Committee.

As is our custom, a brunch will be served by our youth at the conclusion of the meeting.

It is important that all confirmed members of St. Stephen the Martyr attend and vote at this annual meeting. It is your opportunity to have a voice in our church. We hope to see you there!



## **WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY JANUARY 9 & 23 @ 10:15 A.M.**

SSM women & friends, you are invited to join us for a Daytime Bible Study. The study is based on the readings for the following weekend worship service. Come to discuss and share your thoughts on the most important book of all, the Holy Bible! Join us on the Second & Fourth Wednesday of each month.

## **Loose Ends Luncheon**

Greetings for the New Year 2008! We begin our year with lunch at the Olive Garden on January 9th @ 11:45 a.m. - South 76th Street. It will be nice to have a relaxing lunch with no thoughts of completing crafts! We welcome all women of St. Stephen.

We'll meet at church at 11:30 if you want to carpool—let us know if you need a ride. If you need a ride, call Toni Wilson at 421-9496. Sign up sheet is on the kiosk in the narthex.

### **Piecemakers Quilting Group**

We will meet on Monday January 21st at 6:15 p.m.

### **Knit Wits Knitting Group**

Meets January 7th @ 6:30 p.m.

## **Family Ministry News**

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

|        |          |                               |
|--------|----------|-------------------------------|
| Jan 3  | 7:00 PM  | 7/8th Grade Confirmation @SSM |
| JAn 20 | 7:00 PM  | Revolution!                   |
| Jan 27 | 12:00 PM | Annual Meeting Luncheon       |

### **YOUNG ADULTS SERVING IN THE GULF**

Four of our members are travelling January 2nd through the 10th with a group of young adults from our synod to New Orleans. Melissa Stevens, Ali Gleason, Courtney Farrell and Kevan Penvose will be helping to rebuild homes damaged by Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Nearly two and half years after the storm, much work remains to be done and many people are in great need of help in their recovery efforts. We give thanks that four disciples of Christ from our church have heard his call to serve him by working along side the people of Louisiana. Please keep everyone in your prayers as we look forward to hearing about the experience of these four disciples when they return home.

### **CONFIRMATION STUDENTS**

7th and 8th Graders and Parents: Confirmation resumes on Thursday, Jan. 3 at 7:00 p.m. at St. Stephen the Martyr. Students and Mentors, keep working on those 'Mentor Packets'!

### **CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM**

A Blessed and Enjoyable Evening!

The Sunday School Children's Program on December 16th was a huge success. All in attendance were thrilled by their music and enthusiasm of the 48 kids that participated. Thanks go out to director Stephanie Mayer and accompanist Kelly Sachse for their excellent work. An offering was taken for Heifer International. The children will decide how the funds will be disbursed.

Also, the children brought hats, gloves and mittens—gifts for the Christ child. These were taken to Brown Street Academy in Milwaukee for distribution. Thanks also to all the Sunday School teachers, helpers and Bob DeFrank, Sunday School Superintendent for delivering the gifts to the academy.

### **LIBRARY NEWS**

We have some new books in our library. January is a great time to snuggle up with a good book and some hot cocoa and grow in your faith as well!

Enjoy some wonderful faith-filled books for yourself and don't forget to check out some books or videos for your children and teens from our youth area.

Contact our Discipleship Coach, Kevan Penvose: 414-258-0858 [stillerz7@yahoo.com](mailto:stillerz7@yahoo.com)



**Next Music & Worship Meeting**  
Wednesday, January 9th @ 6 pm

With the year 2008 dawning we have numerous opportunities for you to serve SSM. Please consider starting the new year by volunteering to serve SSM as a communion helper, usher, greeter or lay reader. Help is always needed and appreciated!

If you would be interested in serving on the Music and Worship Committee call Karen Rasmussen at 421-5170.

A thank you to Christopher Owens, Stephanie Mayer and the musicians that made our Dec. 8th, Advent Concert a resounding success. The offering of \$669.30 has been divided between the Piano Fund and the Hunger Task Force.

Thanks to the members and friends of SSM who contributed so generously.

### **WHY DO PARAMENT COLORS CHANGE?**

Continuing the series...

The color for the twelve days of Christmas (Dec. 25-Jan. 5) is white, symbolizing the light and purity of Christ.

The season of Epiphany, the coming of the kings to Bethlehem begins January 6th and continues to Lent, Feb. 6, 2008. The first and last Sundays in this season are festivals and white is a reminder of the light of Christ. The second through the eighth Sundays after the Epiphany use green paraments as a symbol of our growth in knowing Jesus as Savior of all the world's people. With the start of Lent, the paraments will be purple.

### **CLERGY OF THE GREENS PASTORAL EXCHANGE FOR WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY- Centenary Year JANUARY 20th—25th**

On Sunday, January 20th, please welcome the Rev. Carla McCook, Pastor of St. Thomas of Canterbury Episcopal Church, Greendale. Pastor Carla will preach at the two Sunday services. I will preach on Saturday night.

Pastor McCook is a native Floridian. She was ordained in 2004, and served as Assistant Pastor at St. Paul's Church in Salem, Virginia before coming to St. Thomas of Canterbury on Labor Day of 2006. Pastor Carla has been married to Shane McCook for 14 years. They have a son, Sean, a daughter Morgan, and are expecting a third child in May, 2008!

The ELCA and the Episcopal Church in America are in "full communion", meaning that pastors from each denomination may preside at the Sacrament of the other church. This is great blessing, and something to celebrate as we pray for Christian unity in this special week and all year around.

Please make Pastor Carla feel welcome!

### **FLOWERS & ETERNAL CANDLES:**

The 2008 Flower Chart is posted on the office door. If you desire to bring a donation of flowers for a special occasion, i.e. in memory or honor of someone or to decorate the sanctuary, please sign up for your desired date and let us know what the occasion is for. Simply bring or have the flowers delivered on the date you sign up for.

If you would like to provide the eternal candle for a month, the cost is \$25, sign up on the flower chart, place your check in an envelope, mark it "eternal candle" and put it in the offering for that month.



### **SSM FIRST FRIDAY POTLUCK— Celebrating 2nd Anniversary!**

Join us for a winter potluck as we welcome a New Year to worship the Lord. We'll get the coffee and hot chocolate brewing to warm your tummies and some fun stories to warm your hearts!

Friday, January 4th at 6:00 p.m.  
in the Fellowship Hall.

The main dish will be lasagna. Bring a salad, bread or dessert to compliment. Please be specific about the dish you will bring when you sign up.

Surprises await you as we enjoy a festive evening. This celebration is for ALL MEMBERS OF ALL AGES, especially those who live alone.

Sign up on the poster on the office bulletin board, indicating what you will bring. Members and friends are welcome!

### **A GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL!**

The hors d'oeuvre and dessert reception held on December 8 following the Christmas Concert was a huge success. Thank you to everyone who helped with the planning, as well as those who helped with

set-up, serving and preparing appetizers and desserts for all to enjoy. It was a perfect finish to a wonderful evening. God bless~  
Shelly Rosenstock, Fellowship Committee

## Human concerns

Next meeting is January 3th at 6:30 p.m. Call Shirley Lieske with questions: 761-0734

Hunger Banks can be returned January 5 or 6.

*He who is kind to the poor lends to the LORD,  
and He will repay him for his deed. Proverbs 19:17*

### THE STAFF OF LIFE - SSM FOOD PANTRY

...because hunger never takes a vacation...

We are most thankful for the generous gifts of food and money given to the food pantries over the year. May we continue to grow in our mission to feed the hungry in this new year of our Lord, 2008. We will be collecting for Central City Food Pantry in January.

The amount you give is not important, the sharing you do is what is. God sees your gift and will bless you. May He bless each and every one who helps feed the hungry.

- Human Concerns

### I WAS IN PRISON & YOU VISITED ME

If you stopped by the church on Saturday Morning, December 15th, you could smell cookies baking.

Thank you to those who baked &/or provided cookie batter. We baked over 500 cookies for the women in the Waukesha County Jail who will be incarcerated at Christmas. I am sure that the cookies will be greatly appreciated by these women who believe that no one cares.

We had a great time, & there was some discussion about going into the cookie baking business!

Barbara Czerwinski,  
Human Concerns Committee

*"Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world." James 1:27*

## Stewardship

Thanks to all that have fulfilled their 2007 financial commitment and those that have pledged their support for 2008. Stewardship Pledges for 2008: 135 pledge cards returned

General Fund \$ 212,940.00

Building Fund \$ 44,524.

Total Annual Pledge \$ 257,464.00

This is about 6.6% higher than last year's pledging.

Through your commitments, St. Stephen the Martyr can help support nearly 300 ELCA missionaries and volunteers in forty-seven countries. Thank you for your continued support of the ministries of SSM!

### OTHER NOTES

#### MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Men's Bible Study is meeting January 9th & 16th @ 8:00 a.m.

#### NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

*Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice! Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do. Remember, the Lord is coming soon. Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. (Phil. 4:4-9).*

*A Message By Woodrow Kroll*

Many people start off a new year by making resolutions. Often, they focus on the physical--"I will exercise at least an hour every day." Or we might choose to try and improve our minds--"I will read one book each month." But do we make resolutions for our spiritual lives? These five words can offer a powerful but simple framework to give our spiritual lives direction for the year.

**REJOICE!** Today's theme verse is a natural for Christmas. But we can rejoice over Christ every day of the year. That's why the apostle Paul includes "always" in the command. Because of God's love and grace, there's never a time when we run out of things for which to rejoice.

**REMEMBER!** Philippians 4:8 reminds us of all the wonderful things we can remember and think about. If our remembering is focused on what's good, we will continually see God at work in our lives throughout the year.

**PREPARE!** Philippians 4:6 tells us to reject anxiety but turn to prayer, supplication and thanksgiving. If we want to look fearlessly into the future, we have to continuously trust the One who holds the future. We can count on His company and guidance. The ultimate preparation is prayer.

**LIVE!** Philippians 4:9 instructs us to "do." We are to live active, obedient, involved lives for the Savior. After we read, think and plan, we have to do. The Christian life isn't withdrawn but fully engaged. If we're following Jesus, we'll be in the thick of things!

**LOOK!** Philippians 4:5 includes a wonderful little phrase: "The Lord is at hand!" What could be better than to live each day of this New Year acknowledging that the Lord is near? His return is promised. Whether we meet Him here or meet Him there, the wait isn't long. It's worth living with that truth on our minds. We can continually look for His return, even as we are deeply involved in this life.

The idea of composing New Year resolutions may seem like a waste of time. Perhaps you've failed in yours so often that you've given up doing them. But this simple list of basics can keep you on track. Better a resolution that "keeps you" than a resolution you fail to keep.

## CONDENSED MINUTES— DECEMBER 18,2007

(A complete set of Minutes can be found on the Bulletin Board in the Narthex)

All Council members were present except E. and J. Arneson, J. Bugajski, K. Giensenschlag and C. Malinowski. Pastor Gail Brodersen-Heins was present. K. Penvose was absent.

**Approvals:** The Secretary's minutes from the November 13th, 2007 meeting were approved as written. The Financial Secretary's report was reviewed and accepted. The Treasurer's report was reviewed and accepted. J. Miller reported that we are \$5600.00 short in year to date offerings.

**Pastor's Time:** Pastor gave a big thank you to K. and B. Rasmussen and the Music and Worship Committee for the preparation and presentations of the Advent and Christmas seasons. She thanked C. Owen and all of the musicians for the December 8th concert, as well as S. Rosenstock for the reception afterward. Pastor Gail thanked S. Mayer, K. Sachse and the S.S. staff and parents who planned and carried out the wonderful SS Children's Christmas program held on December 16th, 2007. The Christmas season will end on January 6th with a presentation from the wise women in the S.S. program. She presided over the funerals of two members, M. Menzel on November 13th and L. Labott on December 10th, 2007. She reported that the Memorial Committee met on December 9th and is working on a revised wish list for its Special Giving brochure. She asked council committee chairs to share this information at their meetings and if they have appropriate items, please forward this information to either the Pastor or S. Petricek.

**Old Action Items:** The Council spent the majority of the meeting reviewing the proposed 2008 budget. The Council approved the 2008 budget with a maximum spending of \$326,000.

**New Action Items:** Pastor Gail reported on the progress of the Forward Moving Team. The Committee is planning listening sessions, in home visits by members and bible study sessions, all to coincide in February, 2008, with the start of Lent. Pastor recommended that members read her January article in the Martyr, to get more information. J. Muroni discussed the upcoming Annual Meeting scheduled for Sunday, January 27th, 2008. Council members were asked to prepare their yearly reports and S. Larson will work with the youth to prepare a luncheon following the Annual Meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:22 P.M. The next Council meeting will be held on January 9th, 2008.

Respectfully submitted:  
Shellee Lubus, Council Secretary