

The

TLC Trumpet

Keeping you informed and sharing our experience, strength & hope in the love of Christ

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www.thanksgivinglutheran.org

December 2008

Greetings and Peace to You...

Okay, so I'm just going to say it outright. The stores have it right: They get Christmas out on the shelves as early as possible – sometimes even earlier – and they depend on Christmas for their survival.

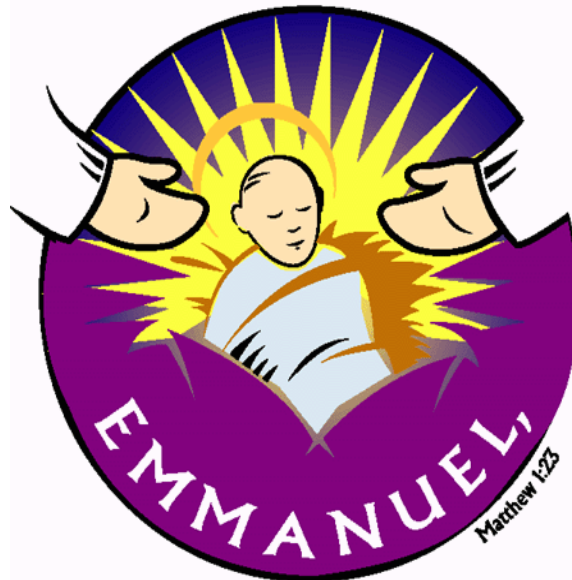
We would do good to do the same. Live Emanuel year round and depend on God With Us for our very survival.

May Christ be with you and bless you. Merry Christmas.

With immense and lavish and perfect and spiritual love,

*Love,
Pastor Jean*

"They Shall Name Him



**Which Means,
God Is With Us."**

November 5, 2008

Presiding Bishop's Statement on 2008 Presidential Election

Americans have chosen a new president in an historic election. I congratulate Senator Obama on his election to our nation's highest office, and express gratitude to Senator McCain for his continuing commitment to public service. I commend both for participating in our nation's democratic process, which serve our venerable tradition of the peaceful transfer of power.

We look to the future as a nation troubled by economic crisis and continuing wars. Such complex realities call for both humility and ingenuity. In the midst of these challenges, we as Lutherans also look to the future as a community of faith and a people of hope. We bring to the public square a longstanding and effective commitment to serve our neighbors and a conviction that government is instrumental in God's purpose for humanity when public officials work for justice, peace, order and the common good.

Scripture is clear about what should matter to us as Christians in public life: hospitality to strangers, concern for people in poverty, peacemaking and care for creation. From these core biblical values, I appeal to President-elect Obama to establish the following priorities for his administration:

a response to the current economic crisis with special focus on low-income people

a robust diplomatic effort to restore U.S. credibility abroad

a fulfillment of the promised U.S. funding share of the Millennium Development Goals

strong support of alternative energy research to end our dependence on oil and establish a new green economy

fair and humane immigration reform

serious re-engagement with a peace process for Palestinians and Israelis

I call on all members of this church to join me in committing to work with this new administration across the broad spectrum of our Lutheran partnerships and networks. Remain active in public service, be in conversation with each other and within your communities on these issues, and engage members of Congress and this administration through this church's advocacy ministry. Pray for President-elect Obama, Vice President-elect Biden, and their families, and for their work and service on behalf of our country.

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America





GET ACQUAINTED Progressive Dinner

The CCC Committee has carefully put together another holiday extravaganza that all adult members and guests will want to attend. For \$10 per person it features a 3-course catered dinner, plus much more.

The Committee believes that many members know each other only superficially. For example, what our job is (or was). But there is much more to know. Therefore, this Mixer has a “Get Acquainted” theme. We have devised a special way to “get acquainted” that will be revealed to you on December 6. You will also be treated to after-dinner live music by Windhorse Consort, straight from their recent success in Lodi.

Dinner will be a “movable feast” at various locations within the Church, beginning at 5 PM on Saturday, December 6. Because of our Get Acquainted feature it is necessary to know by Sunday, November 30, exactly who is attending. Sign-up by then . . . or you will miss out! And . . . you don’t have to bring anything except yourself!

CCC Committee



This Month's Birthdays

David Brown	12/3
Jean Flak	12/4
Jean Lebbert	12/9
Jean Harrison	12/10
(wow, all three Jeans in one week!)	
Kaylee McKenney	12/23
Kim Lehman	12/24
Bill Reed	12/25
Nathan Baggett	12/26
Karen Lehman	12/27

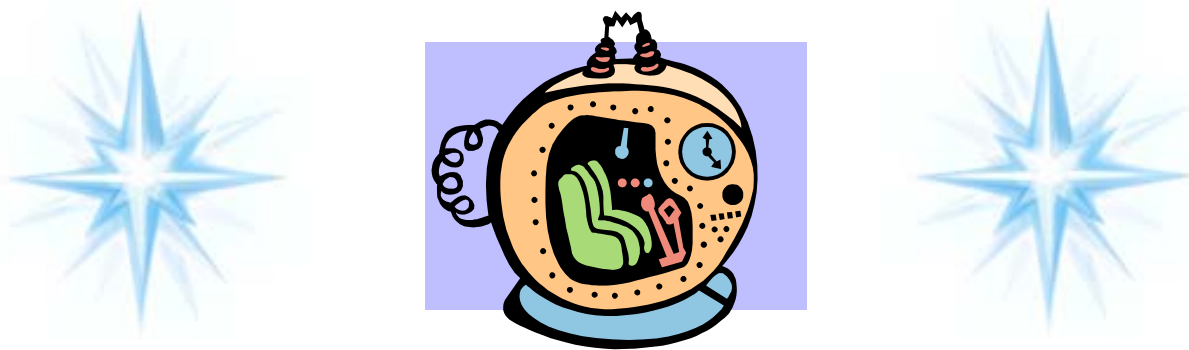
Traveling Through Time at TLC!

Rehearsals have begun, and young (and young-at-heart) actors have been recruited, for this year's "Christmas play" at TLC! Our play this year, entitled "**Time Travelers' Tales of the Carols,**" combines the story of Jesus' birth with the stories of a number of classic Christmas carols—you'll be entertained, and you might learn something too! We hope you will join in the celebration and share the joy of our Savior's birth with our players—the performance will be a part of the **7:00 pm service on Christmas Eve.**

Cast Members and Families—Please take note of the rehearsal schedule:

- Sunday Rehearsals, after worship (beginning approx. 11:00 am—during "Sunday school time:"
 - December 7
 - December 14
 - December 21
- Saturday, December 20, 3:00 pm: Special Set- and Prop-Making Rehearsal: We'll create our special set and prop pieces, rehearse, and have pizza afterward!

Contact a member of the "Directing Team" (Sandy Koppen, Jan Loewen, or Mary Thompson) for questions or more information!



Lutherans and Fair Trade Coffee

Lutherans across the U.S. are supporting small-scale farmers who care for creation as they farm. Through LWR Coffee Project purchases you help extend the benefits of Fair Trade to farmer co-operatives that train members in organic farming, water conservation, and restoration. In addition, for every pound of coffee, tea, cocoa and snacks purchased through the Project, Equal Exchange donates 20 cents to the LWR Small Farmer Fund. In Columbia, they help 451 farmers improve their organic farms and fertilizers. So even with a small increase in the price of a bag of coffee, I hope you will consider purchasing some for your own use or gift giving to help these small farmers.

Gloria Feiertag



A Little Bit of Catechism: A Few Words from Luther*

The latest installment in an ongoing series, brought to you by the Christian Education committee

October's headlines screamed of panic as banks failed, the stock market spiraled downward in a seemingly free fall, and Congress went into overdrive to come up with a \$700 billion (!) plan that they hoped would lend stability to markets and keep the U.S. economy from falling into Depression—and as this piece is being written, the world holds its breath waiting to see if any of it will work. Against this backdrop, it is pretty amazing to read Luther's *Large Catechism* commentary on the First Commandment—"You are to have no other gods." **Luther regarded the First Commandment as the most important of all, for "if the heart is right with God and we keep this commandment, all the rest will follow on their own."** The freshness, relevance, and power of Luther's words speak for themselves:

"What does 'to have a god mean' mean, or what is God? Answer: A 'god' is the term for that in which we are to look for all good and in which we are to find refuge in all need. Therefore, to have a god is nothing less than to trust and believe in that one with your whole heart. **As I have often said, it is the trust and faith of the heart alone that make both God and an idol....Anything on which your heart relies and depends, I say, that is really your God....**The intention of this commandment, therefore, is to require true faith and confidence of the heart, which fly straight to the one true God and cling to him alone. What this means is: 'See to it that you let me alone be your God, and never search for another.'"

To aid understanding, Luther cites some "everyday examples of the opposite:"

"There are some who think that they have God and everything they need when they have money and property....They, too, have a god—mammon by name...on which they set their whole heart. This is the most common idol on earth. Those who have money and property feel secure, happy, and fearless, as if they were sitting in the midst of paradise. On the other hand, those who have nothing doubt and despair as if they knew no god at all. We will find very few who are cheerful, who do not fret and complain, if they do not have mammon...."

"To have a God, as you can well imagine, does not mean to grasp him with your fingers, or to put him into a purse, or to shut him up in a box. Rather you lay hold of God when your heart grasps him and clings to him. To cling to him with your heart is nothing else than to entrust yourself to him completely."

In these scary economic times, the unreliability of "mammon" as a god becomes so, so, clear! Fortunately, God's presence among us and God's love for us are NOT dependent on the whims of investors, banks, or world markets—"For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:38-39) Amen!

*Source for Luther quotes and info: *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, Augsburg Fortress, 2000.



TLC Folks and Their Bibles: A Brief Look at Our Survey Results!

As a beginning step toward re-energizing and renewal for Christian Education at TLC, you might recall that back in September we had a special worship service where every member (kids as well as adults) were encouraged to fill out a four-part Individual Assessment survey tool available from the ELCA's recent publication, *Opening the Book of Faith*. The complete report of survey results is a bit too long to be included in the Trumpet—for the curious, complete survey results are posted on the bulletin board next to the mailboxes in the hall!—but a few themes/items stood out:

1) Nearly all of our participants (all but 1!) indicated that they own at least one version of the Bible (and 66% indicated that they own more than one version!), but most (63%) admitted that they “have a Bible but do not read it very often.” For the vast majority (74%) the primary use of Scripture is following along when Scripture is read in worship services.

2) Our participants' primary Bible memories involved pastors/teachers lecturing (84%) or leading discussions (79%) about the Bible, but interestingly, the next most popular memories (76%) were of *singing* biblical verses in songs and hymns.

3) The survey also made it clear that our participants are very interested in having our congregation be “a safe environment where people are not fearful but open to various meanings in a scriptural text” (63% checked this as part of their vision for the congregation.) The survey design doesn't allow us to determine whether this result indicates that people are concerned about safety because they feel unsafe now, or because they are interested in preserving the open and safe environment we have been working to create (Pastor Jean would love to hear any thoughts or insights you have on this topic!), but in either case, it is clear that providing a safe environment for questions and sharing will be an important consideration in planning all future educational offerings!

Because our members own a variety of translations, but most aren't being used much, we (Pastor Jean and Sandy Koppen, currently functioning as the Christian Education “committee”) thought a good first step would involve “reintroducing” our members to their Bibles through sharing and teaching on Bible translation—this class was offered on November 2 and was well-received by the 14 people who attended, an encouraging response! Planning is now underway for future educational offerings, suggested by survey information as well as by questions and ideas raised during the translation session. Watch for classes exploring the connections between hymns/songs and scripture, and for sessions on the formation of the biblical canon in 2009!

P.S. If you are interested in helping TLC develop and offer more Christian Education activities for all ages, consider joining the Christian Education committee! Talk to Pastor Jean or Sandy Koppen to express your interest.





The TLC Women's Group Meets

The women of Thanksgiving Lutheran Church will be gathering at the church on Wednesday, December 10, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. to make Christmas decorations to be given to the Women's Shelter in Santa Rosa. Please bring sequins, ribbon, and anything else you can think of to decorate ornaments. Various size balls and hangers will be provided. Bring a small plate of your favorite Christmas cookies - along with the recipe - to share. See you there!

A Note From the Stewardship Committee

The Stewardship Committee consisting of Keith Becker, Jean Flak, Jean Harrison, Mark Koppen and Mary Thompson wish to express to all of you our thanks for your response to the Stewardship Program. We have gone from 21 to 32 pledges and we have received pledges amounting \$40,000.00 more than the last time we received pledges. We are no longer a struggling congregation, but we are a vibrant one, doing God's work in our part of the world! We are more than pleased with the way you have received some of our ideas and thoughts. Watch for "Stewardship Thoughts of the Week" and more of Gift of G.A.B. (God's Abundant Blessings). Thanks for all you do at church and in the community. Keep up the good work!



Train of Thought

A poem by Natalie Koppen

How does one lose a train of thought?
How does a train run?
How do runners get so strong?
Do strong men have to work out a lot?
Why does my Dad work so much?
Why did my Dad marry my Mom?
Why do they say "Merry Christmas" instead of "Happy Christmas?"
When it comes to Christmas, is it really *only* the thought that counts?
How does one lose a train of thought?



Scripture Readings for December 2008

Dec. 7 2nd Sunday in Advent – Blue

The Gospel reading, from Mark, introduces John the baptizer, the voice in the wilderness (which echoes our Isaiah reading for this day. The Psalm sings of forgiveness and God's peace kissing righteousness (v. 10b). The 2 Peter passage instructs us to wait for the coming of God and that God's time is different than our time: one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years are like one day (huh?)

Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13; 2 Peter 3:8-15a; Mark 1:1-8

Dec. 14 3rd Sunday in Advent — Blue

The Gospel reading introduces John the baptizer in John's Gospel (a different John). Mary's magnificat, in our Luke reading, echoes the Isaiah reading for today. Our pericopes are making it apparent that there is a plan in the works and that God's promises get fulfilled. The Thessalonian reading resounds with affirmation.

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Luke 1:46b-55; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28

Dec. 21 4th Sunday in Advent — Blue

This is traditionally Mary's Sunday. In our Gospel reading, we hear about the annunciation. The 2 Samuel reading is about Nathan the prophet's bringing God's word to David not to build the temple (so is Mary's womb the temple for the Lord?). The Psalm sings of God's steadfast love of David. In the Romans reading, Paul concludes his letter speaking of the revelation of the mystery even to the Gentiles, to bring about the obedience of faith.

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26; Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-28

Dec. 24 Christmas Eve – 7 p.m. — White

We have our beloved Lucan nativity account as our Gospel reading and the beloved passage, "the people who have walked in darkness have seen a great light" in Isaiah. Psalm 96 has beloved passages as well: "Sing to the LORD a new song; Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; Ascribe to the LORD glory and strength; Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice. Titus, not to be ignored by all the familiar passages, sums up in a nutshell, the rest of time, from Christ's first coming until his final coming. Oh, would that this passage were as beloved and well-known.

Isaiah 9:2-7; Psalm 96; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14 [15-20]

Dec. 24 Christmas Eve – 10 p.m. — White

This service will consist of readings and carols that will take us again through our advent journey to this night and to the crib of Christ

Dec. 28 1st Sunday after Christmas — White

In our Gospel reading for today, we see contemporary prophets, Simeon and Anna, recognizing Christ in the infant, and, in that way, fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah we hear from in the First Reading. Psalm 148 could have been the inspiration for the hymn "Joy to the World." Maybe it was. I will have to look it up! The Galatians reading is another summary of the Christ event of salvation, to transfigure us into children of God.

Isaiah 61:10-62:3; Psalm 148; Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40



Getting To Know...

Jan Thomas-Crowhurst

Jan is a native of Florida but moved with the family to Chicago, Bakersfield, and finally to San Diego. She entered San Diego State and graduated in 1971 with a degree in Art and Graphic Communication . . . what we used to call Commercial Art. Ever try to find employment in Commercial Art?

Jan went to work for a small newspaper where she did all the entry-level stuff: typesetting, waxing, cut and paste, *etc.* By 1977 she had moved into advertising and she coordinated all the May Co. ads in the San Diego region, including radio and TV.

Various positions followed, giving Jan extensive experience in the writing and marketing of ads, usually involving newspapers. Her favorite job was when she formed an ad agency with a friend. They had contracts with five of San Diego's six shopping centers and handled all their ads and print media.

By 1994, after 27 years in San Diego, Jan was ready for a change. With family connections in Santa Rosa and a Press-Democrat job waiting for her as National Advertising Sales Manager, she made the move. On arrival, her first need was a home. She went to see a man about renting a condo. The man was David Crowhurst. She liked the condo and she liked the man. In 1995 they were married . . . in the old TLC Church on Airway. Jan credits her mother with discovering TLC and they both liked its small-church intimacy after all those years at large St. Lukes Lutheran in San Diego.

At TLC, Jan is a Council member and Past President. She has served on various committees, but her special talent is being a "starter." She has visions of things she would like to do . . . then she does it! In 2004 she thought TLC should have a newsletter. So she and the Lehmans founded *The Trumpet*. She thought there should be a club for older and retired folks. So she organized the H. H'ers. She thought there should be a Greeter at the door. Now there is.

David is the owner of Eagle Bookkeeping with clients all over Sonoma County.

Jan boasts of a stepdaughter, Jennifer, who is 30. She has an M.A. in Psychology and hopes to continue on to a PhD. Jenny is married and living in San Diego.

Jan took early retirement from the PD in 2004 and is pursuing her love of painting. She paints landscapes en plein air and feels lucky to live in Sonoma County where there are so many beautiful opportunities. When she is not painting and David is not golfing, they are frequently gallery-hopping . . . a favorite pastime.

Sammy Thomas Junior, a black and tan cockapoo, joined the household two years ago and is a constant companion and entertainer. The whole family loves taking hikes and visits to the beach.

George Land



Worship. Period.

Sundays of Advent prepare our hearts for Christ to come again, come in deeper, become incarnate.

Our Advent Sunday worship services will include a special Children's time that puts together the puzzle and wonder of Christ's birth story.

Our Scripture readings give voice to prophets and angels.

On Christmas Eve, we come together as family for a family celebration at 7:00 p.m.

The actors of TLC will perform "Time Travelers' Tales of the Carols."

At 10:00 p.m., we will gather for a holy time of scripture and carols; a guest organist will lead us in song.

And, yes, at each service, we will get to hold little candles and sing "Silent Night."

Come, All Ye Faithful. Come Let Us Adore Christ. O Holy Night, O Night Divine.

Pastor Jean Lebbert 707-327-6292

Church office: 707-544-0241

Worship:

Sunday morning at 9:30

Holy Communion every Sunday

Thanksgiving Lutheran Church

1225 Fulton Road

Santa Rosa, CA 95401

email: tlcsantarosa@sbcglobal.net

On the web: www.thanksgivinglutheran.org



TLC Council:

Deb Ferronato, Congregation President

Dave Flanagan, VP (term expires 1/1/09)

Jan Thomas, Secretary

Sandy Koppen (term expires 1/1/09)

Jean Harrison (term expires 1/1/09)

Jean Flak (term expires 1/1/09)

TLC Council 1/1/09:

Deb Ferronato, Jan Thomas, Jean Harrison,

Jean Flak, Joan Hax, Sharon Boschen

Next Trumpet Deadline!

The next TLC Trumpet deadline will be Thursday, December 25. Editor requests articles be no longer than 500 words, and using 12 point Arial font is a plus! Please email submissions to:

editor@thanksgivinglutheran.org

If you do not have email, place submissions (along with your name in case any clarification is needed) in the "Lehman" mailbox at TLC by Sunday, December 21.