

January 2012



THE MESSENGER

Newsletter for the Fisher-Bygland Lutheran Parish

THIS MONTH

-January 1, 2012 - Joint Parish
Worship at 10:00 AM at
Bygland Lutheran Church

-January 29, 2012 - New
members received

-January 29, 2012 - Annual
Meeting at Fisher Lutheran with
baked potato lunch

-February 5, 2012 - Annual
meeting at Bygland Lutheran
with potluck



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A Note From Pastor Karen

Manifest

How is God manifest in your life? You may be asking, "God is *what* in my life?" Manifest. It means "to make clear or evident, show plainly," according to *Webster's New World College Dictionary*. The season of Epiphany is all about God being manifest in our lives. It starts with Christmas. God has sent his son, Jesus, to be fully human. God has done this in order that we may know that God fully understands what it is to be human. God has made himself manifest in our lives by showing himself plainly to us in Jesus.

God sent the angels to the shepherds on Christmas night, making himself manifest to these lowly men. God sent Magi from the East to worship the child, making himself manifest to these scholars. God made himself manifest at Jesus' baptism in the river Jordan and then at a wedding in Cana, turning water into wine. God continued to show himself plainly when on the mountain he transfigured Jesus into dazzling white, in order that the disciples would know who Jesus is.

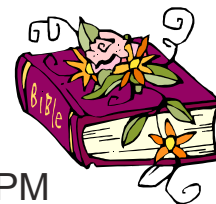
God continues to make himself manifest to us today in Word and Sacrament. God showed himself to us in the Bible. That is why Bible study is so important. I encourage all of you to participate in the Monday Evening Bible Studies being offered starting January 23. I also encourage the women to participate in the Gather Bible Study offered on the fourth Wednesday morning and now also evening of every month at Fisher Lutheran. A very easy way to read the Bible every day is to sign up for God Pause at luthersem.edu. It is a daily Bible devotion sent directly to your email. God uses all technology to make himself manifest.

God also shows himself to us in Baptism and Holy Communion. That is why regular participation in worship is so important. When we remember our baptisms, confess our sins, hear God's Word, receive the Lord's Supper, and praise God in song, we are blessed by God. God makes himself manifest to us.

God also wants to make himself manifest to others through us. God has richly blessed us with his presence in our lives. God desires to use our gifts, talents, and offerings to show himself to the world. Our congregational meetings will be held January 29 at Fisher and February 5 at Bygland. We will discuss the ministry God has called us to in the past year and the ministry God is calling us to in the coming year. Your voice and participation in the congregational meeting is very important. Come and share the ways that you believe God is calling you and our congregations into ministry in our community and world.

My hope and prayer for you this Epiphany is that God is manifest in your life and in the lives of others through you!

Parish News & Events



In And Around The Community...

✓ **Flood recovery work in Minot.** Faith Lutheran Church, Wolverton, MN, is putting together a crew to go to Minot, ND, the week of **Sunday, January 8, 2012 to Saturday, January 14, 2012** to do some flood recovery work. There would be a variety of projects depending on the number of people, but in general the work would include drywall and taping, painting, possibly laying floor tile, plumbing work, (installing sinks and stools, etc), other repair work depending on skill sets of participants, and general labor. As you can imagine there is no shortage of work. This effort is being coordinated with LSS of North Dakota. There is a church in Minot that has two rooms with air mattresses on the floor that could be used for accommodations. Or if you know someone in Minot perhaps you could make your own arrangements. You could commit for part or all of the week. If you have an interest, please contact Bev Israelson, Larry Ness, or Rev. Clay Ellingson at Faith Lutheran Church at 218-995-2556 or faith@wtc-mail.net.

✓ **Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekends** - Want to do something special for your spouse and show how much you care? Attend a Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekend and focus on just the two of you. Engaging presentations by both lay and clergy leaders give you tools and information while exercises and conversations with your spouse in the privacy of your hotel room revitalize romance, deepen communication, and nourish the spirituality in your marriage. The spring sessions are February 10-12 (think Valentines!) in Brooklyn Center, March 23-25 in Duluth and May 4-6 in Walker. Please register several weeks in advance. For more information, contact Dick & Judy Dehnel at 952-432-3105, Pete & Phyllis McMahon at 763-1575 or visit www.godlovesmarriage.org.



Monday Night Bible Study

Starting Monday, January 23, 7:30 PM

January 23 - Fisher; January 30 - Bygland

You are invited to participate in Monday Night Bible Study. These studies will be for the entire parish. We will alternate church locations each week, however the lessons will not be repeated. Our study will be:

Biblical Stewardship: Our Duty and Delight

*With Dr. Mark Allan Powell
Trinity Lutheran Seminar, Columbus, Ohio*

Stewardship means "belonging to God" - all that we are and all that we have comes from God. We are grateful to God for it all, and responsible to God for how we use it. There is a connection between stewardship and spirituality: generous giving as a spiritual discipline helps us to grow in Christ.

"Duty and Delight" are both motivating factors for giving - doing what we ought to do as responsible church members, and making cheerful sacrifices out of love for God.

The overarching theme of this course is, "This is good news!" The biblical message of financial stewardship is:

*promising and encouraging;

*not (usually) guilt-inducing;

*a way of life;

*for many of us, it just may be the way to a better life.

Session 1: Belonging to God

Session 2: What is a Steward?

Session 3: Treasures and Hearts

Session 4: Motives for Giving

Session 5: Duty and Delight

Session 6: Cheerful Sacrifices



Dr. Powell was the Bible Study leader at Synod Assembly two years ago and he is an excellent speaker. I know of two other congregations that have used this study and they highly recommend it!

~Pastor Karen

Bygland News

Council Minutes



The Bygland Congregational Council met on Dec. 14, 2011. Members present were Alan Halvorson, Randy Moe, Jon Wurden, Pastor Karen, Kathy Flaata, Marsha Ketring, and Ardis Maney. President Jon called the meeting to order, and Pastor Karen led us in devotions.

On motion by Alan, seconded by Marsha, the secretary's and treasurer's reports were approved. Randy reported that as of Dec. 11, 2011, offerings had totaled \$54,117 (69% of what is required to meet budget). An additional \$24,195 is needed by the end of December.

Pastor Karen reported that she has performed one baptism in the past month, that of Hayes Davis Thorson. Hailey Thorson and Bailey McMahon were approved by the council to become new members of the church. She also reported that she has turned in the second project required in her Dr. Of Ministry program.

Old Business: Council members discussed specifics of a new sound system for the church; sufficient money has been gathered through memorials, special donations, and the proceeds from the lutefisk dinner to pay for a system. On motion by Ardis, seconded by Jon, the council voted to purchase the system and installation from HB Sound and Light of Grand Forks. Council members will select/ask a few church members to be members of a task force to oversee the specifics and installation of the system. Jon and Pastor Karen will be members of the task force as will four other individuals who will be asked in the next couple weeks.

The parsonage is vacant and is available for rent. The property management company is working to rent it again as soon as possible, and have already had a couple requests as to its availability.

New Business: Jon reported that Dale Knotek will provide pulpit supply on Jan. 1, 2012, for the 10:00 joint service which will be held at Bygland.

Ardis reported that people donated 18 shoe boxes of daily living supplies which were delivered to the Northlands Rescue Mission in early December.

Pastor Karen reported that we will be serving the Bethesda Society lunch every other year instead of every year as in the past.

On motion by Kathy, seconded by Ardis, the Council members voted to disperse interest money from the Perpetual Mission Fund, as designated in the church constitution bylaws. Each of the following organizations will receive \$250: Third Street Clinic, Good Samaritan, Northlands Rescue Mission, East Grand Forks Food Shelf, Crookston Area Habitat for Humanity, Valley memorial Chaplaincy Fund, Women's Pregnancy Center, NW Minnesota synod Fund for Pastor Debt Relief, Feed My Starving Children, and Lutheran Social Services. (Lutheran Social Services was moved by Council decision from being a budgeted item to being potentially funded by the Perpetual Mission interest money.)

On motion by Ardis, seconded by Kathy, the meeting was adjourned, and we closed by praying the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Ardis Maney, secretary

Shoe Box Update

Bygland members provided 18 shoe boxes filled with daily living items for folks at the Northlands Rescue Mission. Thanks especially to the Sunday School children who provided many of the boxes. Good job!



Quilting

Quilting will be held on Jan. 4 and 18 (9:00 - 3:00).

Offerings Report

Offerings as of Dec. 11, 2011 = \$54,117 (69% of budget)

Offerings needed by Dec. 31, 2011 = \$24,195



Bygland Lutheran Sunday School News

The month of December has come and with that jingle of the season comes the joy of preparing for Jesus' birth. The Advent and Christmas seasons have had our Sunday School bursting with lots of praise, devotions, and experiences learning about the true meaning of the season. This is a season of powerful love that provides for each of us the ultimate gift of grace.

The Sunday School Christmas program was held on Sunday, 12-18-11. The story of the Christ Child was unfolded as the children enacted a living nativity. The Messiah is born! We will continue to follow the star, Christ, the true star of Christmas, the entire season through. A big thank you goes out to each child and family for participating in our program. It added passion to our Christmas Eve message.

Fisher News



Lutheran World Relief Quilting is scheduled for Monday, January 16, 2012, and also Tuesday, January 17, 2012 at Fisher Lutheran Church at 9:00 AM. Quilting materials are always welcome.

Bible Study will be on Wednesday, January 25, 2012, at 9:00 AM at Fisher Lutheran. The study for Session 5 "Confessing Christ" is found in the January/February "Gather" magazine. The Bible Study continues to focus on the Gospel of Mark, urging us all to "Follow and Serve". All are welcome to be a part of this very good discussion.

An evening Bible Study to be held the same Wednesday evening as the morning group is being considered. Please email Pastor Karen for any feedback regarding this at fisherbygland@rrv.net.

Reminder: Those of you receive the "Gather" magazine should check the address label to find out when you need to renew your subscription.

Annual Meeting Notice

The annual meeting of Fisher Lutheran Church will be held after the worship service on Sunday, January 29, 2012. A baked potato lunch will be served by the youth group with proceeds going towards the New Orleans Youth Gathering.



Snippets

What a gift the Sunday School children gave us with their Christmas program on December 18, 2011! Every bright smiling face was precious and helped to bring the Christmas message to life as we saw the donkeys, cows and sheep, the angels and the shepherds all portray their place on that historic night in Bethlehem. Thanks to Kelly Drengson for her leadership in writing and putting it all together, as well as the adult and youth helpers. The children did a great job and they deserve a big thumbs-up!

Our Sunday School numbers are growing and we have an abundance of young, energetic and spiritually hungry children that are so excited to learn about Jesus! Teachers are still needed for the winter and spring months. Anyone can teach...moms, dads, grandmas and grandpas, aunts, uncles, and friends, too! The best part is learning right along with the kiddos and absorbing the pure energy and excitement they bring for Jesus each Sunday. It's contagious and fun. Let JoDee Burkel know if you feel the calling. You'll be glad you did!



Fisher Lutheran November Council Minutes

November 2, 2011

Present: Bruce Newhouse, Caroline Tinkham, John McDonald, Phil Baird, Wanda Rutherford, Tyler Grove, Mike Prudhomme, Kelly Drengson, and Pastor Karen Young Trenne.

Meeting was called to order by President Bruce Newhouse. Devotions were done by Pastor Karen. The Secretary's Minutes from October were read by the council members. A motion was MSC to approve them. The Treasurer's Financial Report from October was reviewed and discussed. A motion was MSC to approve them.

Unfinished Business: Tami Newhouse, Sheryl Tinkham, and Wanda Rutherford are working on the Work Groups. Ecolab might move the bug light. The music needs to be programmed in for the chimes. As well as the lights need to be looked at for the outside cross. The covenant with the Youth Group has been accepted and signed except for one youth.

New Business: There will be a Joint Meeting of the Fisher and Bygland Church Councils at 7:30 PM on November 16, 2011 at Bygland Lutheran Church. The American Legion Auxiliary asked for use of the kitchen on November 10th. A motion was MSC to approve. Valley Memorial Homes will be making a presentation at the Annual Meeting. The Concordia Scholarship will be given again to Shiney Anderson. A motion was MSC to approve. Talk of broadcasting the Sunday service was tabled at this time. Pastor Karen reported on her pastoral acts in the month of October. There are 2 baptisms scheduled for November so far - Kyle and Karter Metzger. Pastor Karen will be taking vacation on January 1st.

Next Meeting: The council's next meeting will be on December 7, 2011, at 7:30 PM. A motion was MSC to adjourn the meeting. All prayed the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by Kelly Drengson

Fisher Lutheran December Council Minutes

December 7, 2011

Present: Bruce Newhouse, Phil Baird, Caroline Tinkham, John McDonald, Mike Prudhomme, Lori Morken, Tyler Grove, Kelly Dregson, and Pastor Karen Young Trenne.

Meeting was called to order by President Bruce Newhouse. Devotions were done by Pastor Karen. The Secretary's Minutes from November were read by the council members. A motion was MSC to approve them. The Treasure's Financial Report from November was reviewed and discussed. A motion was MSC to approve them.

Unfinished Business: Parsonage update: The renter has vacated the parsonage, cleanup will happen before renting out again, ads have been placed to find a new renter. Work groups have been updated. Amending the Bylaws has been tabled until 2012. Bell chimes are working, lights on the bell tower are working, and the bug light has been moved into the sanctuary. Lights on the front of the church will need to be looked at.

New Business: Furnace has been acting up - Grove Mechanical to come look at it. A motion was made to increase the amount provided to children attending Pathways camp. The amount was increased to \$200 per child for the week camp and \$100 per child for the 3 day camp. A motion was MSC to approve them. The 2012 budget was reviewed. Motion was approved and carried. The annual meeting is set for January 29, 2012 at noon. Valley Memorial Homes will have a presentation. The Youth Group will be serving a freewill lunch. Pastor Karen reported on her pastoral acts in the month of November.

Next Meeting: The council's next meeting will be on January 4, 2012 at 7:30 PM. A motion was MSC to adjourn the meeting. All prayed the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by Kelly Dregson



Pathways News

Know a great leader of faith? It is getting to be that time where we begin to put together our summer ministry team for next summer! If you know of anyone that would make a great servant leader of faith on our summer ministry team please encourage them to apply online at our website.

We have a variety of positions for those with a variety of gifts. For more information on these positions and to apply please visit our EMPLOYMENT PAGE at the website: www.pathwaysbiblecamps.com.

If you have questions about summer employment for Pathways, please contact Laura Morlock or Corey Breutzmann.

The Season of Giving

True giving is a wonderful feeling. Maybe it's the gift of time and service by volunteering to help those in need. Maybe it's through service at church. Perhaps it's the joy that comes with giving presents to your family and friends at Christmas. Maybe it's a gift that comes from your financial means.

Whatever it is, the true spirit of giving makes a difference in the hearts of the giver and receiver.

There are many reasons for you to be a giver of the life changing experience of camp. Nearly 75% of pastors and seminary students site an experience at Bible Camp as being a major part of their call to ministry. So many young leaders have on their resumes experiences as a trained camp counselor in outdoor ministry. And most importantly, countless young students, their families and campers of all ages understand the important inspiration that learning and experiencing God at Bible Camp makes in their lives.

It is easy to give this gift financially. You can join the Pathways Giving Club online at the website, www.pathwaysbiblecamps.com in just a few clicks. Or you can just as easily choose to give the gift of a week or 1/2 week of Bible Camp this summer. What a great gift that would make in the lift of a young camper who might not have the means! And, you can be certain in the joy that your gift is being used to change people's hearts for the sake of the Gospel.

Summer camp brochures will be arriving soon!