

WAY TO GO, WOH

OUR PROFOUND THANKS TO ALL WHO MADE OUR DECEMBER OUTREACH EFFORTS SO SUCCESSFUL! We extended the grace so abundantly given through the outpouring of gifts for Christmas assistance, the meal prepared for the homeless at Catholic Action Center and the many 'presence vs presents' alternatives that were given. As always, and even in these uncertain times, the generosity showed to many is a reminder of the remarkable gift we all share in this Christ child - a continual reminder of his love through us. Thanks to all for your efforts in sharing the love of Jesus with **ALL** others.

WORSHIP & ANNUAL

Our unique, combined "Worship & Annual" congregational meeting will be at 9am on Sunday, January 24th. We'll look at 2009 in review, take care of the official acts of the congregation—reports, elections, budget—AND celebrate Holy Communion together: the Body of Christ for the Body of Christ. Join us for an extraordinary experience.

ANNUAL REPORTS DUE

The 2009 Annual Meeting is just around the corner—on January 24th ----so annual summaries for WOH groups need to be in by January 3^d. The full report will be available on the 10th.

BUDGET REVIEW FOR 2010

On Tuesday, January 12th at 7pm the Church Council is hosting a forum to review the proposed budget for 2010. Bring your questions, concerns and comments. Our President, **JOHN McCULLEN**, will be available to answer questions. We look forward to a great discussion.

BLOOD MOBILE AT WOH

It's a fact that only 5% of the population gives blood, yet 90% of us will be in need of blood by the time we're 60 years old. What other activity can you do that can save 3 lives in 30 minutes?? **Take the time on January 31st** – it's quality time! The Blood Mobile will be at Word of Hope from 8:45-Noon - plan now to give of yourself. **GIVE THE GIFT OF LIFE!**



FROM THE PASTOR

It may seem cliché but the fact of the matter is January is often a time when we think about changes we would like to make in our lives. It may have to do with diet, health, finance, clutter, exercise, or some other lifestyle issue. Or maybe change has a more spiritual angle and reflects questions and yearnings that we've had for a quite some time but have just never wrestled them to the ground. I recently ran across a relevant quote from a favorite author, Brennan Manning, and decided it was too good not to share.

When I am in conscious communion with the reality of the wild, passionate, relentless, stubborn, pursuing, tender love of God for me, then it's not that I have to or I got to or I must or I should or I ought; suddenly, I want to change because I know how deeply I'm loved. One of the wonderful results of my consciousness of God's staggering love for me as I am is a freedom not to be who I should be or who others want me to be. I can be who I really am. And who I am is a bundle of paradoxes and contradictions. I believe and I doubt. I trust and I get discouraged. I love and I hate, I feel bad about feeling good, I feel guilty if I don't feel guilty.

Aristotle said we are rational animals. I say I am an angel with an incredible capacity for beer. [Duval note: Manning is an alcoholic.] It is the real me that God loves. I don't have to be anyone else. For 20 years I tried to be Brother Teresa. I tried to be Francis of Assisi. I had to be a carbon copy of a great saint rather than the original God intended me to be. The biggest mistake I can make is to say to God, "Lord if I change, you'll love me, won't you?" The Lord's reply is always, "Wait a minute, you've got it all wrong. You don't have to change so I'll love you; I love you so you'll change." I simply expose myself to the love that is everything and have an immense, unshakable, reckless, raging confidence that God loves me so much he'll change me and fashion me into the child he always wanted me to be. —Brennan Manning

Don't get me wrong, I really do believe in self help. I believe God has given us marvelous resilience, a tremendous ability to will great things, and a fantastic capacity for creativity; these are a natural holdover from God's invitation to be a partner with him in living our lives. But I am also firmly convinced that those gifts can actually work against us when it leaves us with the impression we can do it all "all by myself." (And over reliance on those gifts actually becomes a form of idolatry—that is, self worship.) For the deeper life and the changes which lead to a richer and more profound sense of calm and joy, meaning

and direction, only God's partnership can be effective. And that's the promise we can dare to trust.

Actually, I find it reassuring that for all the changes that really count, God does the heavy lifting. It sets me free to, as Manning says, "be who I really am." I suspect that's not just a joy for me but that it also happens to be the delight of the One who created us in the first place. Here's to living into that freedom in the new year amid the changes you would like to make.

**Why is it
that when we think about the future
we so easily forget/overlook the fact
that God will be just as loving and present then
as he has been in the past and is now?**

HOUSE-OF-GOD KEEPING

WE CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST...

I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound; in any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and want. I can do all things in him who strengthens me. Philippians 4:12-13 (RSV)

Here in January we are repeating an emphasis from our annual meeting a year ago. Our thinking is that the best promises in life are something we just can't get enough of. And especially in trying times, we need to hear it more than ever that God does God's best work through our weakness. Here's to that all-sufficient love.

HOUSE-OF-GOD KEEPING

THE ADVENT CONSPIRACY—An Update

And when they could not find them, they dragged Jason and some of the brethren before the city authorities, crying, "These men who have turned the world upside down have come here also, and Jason has received them; and they are all acting against the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus. Acts 17:6-7 (RSV)

During Advent we encouraged each other to proclaim "another king, Jesus" by the very way we celebrated with our "The Advent Conspiracy." We highlighted a project to provide fresh water for people in a third world illage. The final tally is yet in but as of this deadline we raised @ \$1,100—just about enough for a community rainwater containment system (\$1,250). What a great celebration! Thanks for your faithfulness.

MEN'S NIGHT OUT

The WOH Men are getting together on Saturday, February 6th for a Poker Night! The competition starts at 7pm - first hour will be Texas Holdem, the second hour Seven Card Stud and the third hour is the ??? Poker (any ideas?) -buy in is \$20. We'll be playing for prizes so bring your best game! **THERE IS NO POT LUCK ANYTHING** – just stop at the local grocery store and pick up a snack that can be popped into the oven. Invite your friends and neighbors to join in a great night of fun & entertainment! Contact **BOB COOK** (Robertcook3@hotmail.com) for information, suggestions or details. Watch the weekly sheet and clipboards for more information!

MIDWINTER'S NIGHT

DINING & ENTERTAINMENT

You'll want to mark this one on your calendar - A night to come in out of the cold and enjoy a candlelit dinner with pasta, salad and delicious desserts all in the company of friends & neighbors. Bring your favorite bottle of wine to compliment the evening's festivities. And plan to stick around for the after-dinner entertainment when we have the return engagement of the Gospel music group "New Life Voices" who will perform some favorites. Don't miss it - Saturday, January 30th at 6:00pm!

CHURCH CLEANING AT WOH



A very simple and workable plan has been developed that divides the facility into three sections - Side A: Fellowship Hall & Kitchen; Side B: Sanctuary & Entry; Side C: Education Wing. By doing this the work can be easily assigned. (Approximate cleaning time is 1 hour per week per section). You can sign up for cleaning a section (or more) once (or more) each month. It's a great way to give a little back to your church and your time can be tax deductible—contact **MARJORIE FLORO** or stop by the church office.

MIDDLE SCHOOL EVENT

The WOH Middle School Crew are braving the cold to go ice skating! Watch for details in the weekly sheet/e-weekly and be ready to join in the fun!



WOMEN'S WINTER RETREAT



We are all called to be many things to many people - mother, wife, teacher, friend. Jesus, too, was called to be many things but he set the example for us all to stop and take time to be with the Abba, Father. In January we are offering the ladies of WOH just such a chance. A time to take a break from the normal routine of life and experience God in the beauty of His creation at Aldersgate Retreat Center. It's a time to relax and recharge - a time to reconnect with friends and with the God who brings us through all our days. Mark your calendars for Friday & Saturday, January 15 & 16. Cost is just \$30/person and reservations are limited. We promise it will be a gift worth giving yourself! See **JANICE ADAMS** or **DARLENE TAYLOR** for details or to make a reservation. Watch the weekly sheet and clipboards for details!

"That evening, after the sun was down, they brought sick and evil-afflicted people to him, the whole city lined up at his door! He cured their sick bodies and tormented spirits...and while it was still night, way before dawn, he got up and went out to a secluded spot and prayed." Mark 1:32-33

FRIENDS

Our "diner's night" event for January will be a "Game Night" on Saturday, January 9th at 6:30pm. We'll enjoy some great dinner, try our hand at Wii or euchre or whatever sounds fun! The event will be at Word of Hope and hosts for the evening will be **Bob & Darlene Taylor**. Friends are asked to bring a simple casserole, bread or dessert and beverage of their choice. It's an evening to get folks together for a pleasant meal, meet new people and have a little fun. If you'd like to join in this "diner's night" get together contact **DARLENE TAYLOR** (272-8515) or watch the weekly sheet and clipboards for details!



WOH VACATION BIBLE CAMP



The date is set! This year's Vacation Bible Camp program will be the week of June 13-18, Sunday - Thursday. It's one of the busiest weeks around WOH – full of fun & energy! We will have the Luther Road staff on hand and we are looking for 1 - 2 people who would be willing to learn the ropes and be co-leaders. Interested? Curious? Contact **PASTOR** (272-8515) or **JENNIFER POLNISCH** (jap_signs@insightbb.com)

GET A BETTER LOOK...

We often include photos of recent WOH events in our newsletter. If you'd like to get a better look at those, check out our website: WWW.WORDOFHOPECHURCH.COM and click on "News & Events" where you'll find all the latest Newsletters and Weekly News updates. And if you'd like a copy of the WOH "One-of-a-Kind Christmas Story" DVD let us know. We'd love to share it with you!

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE...

is the 15th of each month. If you've got news to share, updates from your WOH team or "a view from the pew" please send it to TADWrig@cs.com or Darlene at dtaylorlormom5@aol.com. Darlene also coordinates the building use calendar, so if you are planning an activity at the church, make sure you get it on the calendar! There is a LOT going on here at Word of Hope, and every event is important to the ministry and outreach of our church!

WOH YARD SALE

The WOH Yard Sale is still a ways off, which means you have plenty of time to gather your odds and ends as you start that big cleaning project – we'll take it all! **April 24th** is the date so mark your calendars and tell your friends and neighbors! Contact **DARLENE TAYLOR** (dtaylorlormom5@aol.com). We'll be looking for plenty of help in April - the more the merrier!

CHURCH COUNCIL NOTES

The Church Council—**JOANNE BROWN, BOB COOK, MARJORIE FLORO, JASON LAMBIRTH, JOHN McMULLEN, CHARLOTTE WONG and JANICE ADAMS**—would like to thank the congregation for the opportunity to serve in this capacity. We very much appreciate everyone's interest and responsiveness to the issues for which we've invited and you've offered your input. This is truly a sacred responsibility which we share together in Christ. Thanks be to God. —John McMullen, president

INTO THE NEW YEAR

As you can tell from other items in this newsletter, there was a tremendous response to the various Christmas giving opportunities. Beyond the seasonal giving though, we heartily encourage each person to consider an area of ministry to become involved in for the coming year. Our hope is that each person will listen intently for that to which God is calling them.

On the financial front, our 2010 budget is ready for review. Copies are available and since we do have some difficult decisions to make, we urge you to become familiar with what is being proposed. Also, if you have not yet completed a pledge card there is still time. These can be placed in the container in the sanctuary or given to **MARJORIE FLORO**, Financial Secretary.

We invite you to look for ways to boldly live out your faith in the year to come. We know that God's promises are unfailing ~ that He has and will continue to sustain us through all that lies ahead. *TO GOD GOES ALL THE GLORY!*

THANKS KROGER SHOPPERS!

Many of our WOH folks and friends are Kroger Card holders and as you may know, each time those cards are reloaded, we receive a 4% check once those reloads total \$5,000. Last year we received these monthly rebate checks from Kroger: February - \$232.44; April - \$268.28; June - \$273.20; August - \$299.47; October - \$254.24; November - 263.32 for a total of \$1590.95 for 2009. Thank you to our many faithful Kroger shoppers who made this little extra possible.

Now, let's consider the year ahead – if 50 families at WOH each spent @\$100/week for gas/groceries at Kroger, each month that would total \$5000, which would mean a monthly rebate check of \$200 to WOH. And in the course of a year that would add up to an extra \$2400 (or more) added to our budget. If you are a Kroger shopper or purchase gas at Kroger then you are a candidate for the "re-loadable" Kroger gift cards. Gift Cards are available in the church office for just \$5. Please continue to use your rechargeable Kroger Cards. It's an incredibly easy way to support WOH on a regular basis!!

We can do all things in Christ who
strengthens us.

Philippians 4:12-13 (RSV)

Sharing the love of Jesus with all others and growing disciples.

WOH FOLKS

WE ARE VERY GRATEFUL for those who made Christmas Assistance so gracious again in 2010, **CHARLOTTE & VICTOR WONG, STEVE & LAURIE JOHNSON**, and all those who shared gifts, wrapped and delivered.

FROM OUR CHRISTMAS ASSISTANCE FAMILIES:

Thank you for your support this year on Christmas. Your church is greatly appreciated. It's because of people like you that my son is provided for. Thanks a bunch, Balinda

Thank you so much for making mine and my daughter's Christmas so much better. We greatly appreciate it. Hope you have a Merry Christmas. Jamie

WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS! On December 5th the following folks were welcomed into membership at WOH – **TENA, MEGAN & CASSIE ADAMS; HILDI & JADEN KORSE; TOM BROWNING** and **WILLIAM & MARILYN STEWART**. Take a moment to get to know these new WOH folks.

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE for your generous contributions to Eastern State Hospital. There was an abundance of clothing, magazines, jewelry, etc. that have been donated this year. Word of Hope has been blessed many times over and we have shared those blessings in our outreach to those in need.

WE EXTEND OUR SYMPATHY to the **WEBB FAMILY** upon the death of Dawn's grandmother, Luceal Schumacher.

WE ALSO GRIEVE with **WAYNE FRAZIER** at the death of his sister, **MAE**. Rest eternal grant them, O Lord; and let light perpetual shine upon them.



Congratulations to **BRYNN METZLER**, daughter of **KELLY & DENNIS METZLER**; **EMILY VANNOY**, daughter of **TINA & ALAN VANNOY**; and **CAROLYN WALKER**, daughter of **JANET WALKER**—all who celebrated their first Holy Communion on Sunday, December 20th. They were joined in this celebration by parents, family & friends. **May God's richest blessings continue to be poured out upon you!**

Thank You 

Gail, Darlene, & Pastor Duval would like to thank every one for your encouragement and many kind words during this season of Holy Days. Our ministry together truly is a thing of great delight.



The **Women's Christmas Luncheon** was a great occasion for fun & fellowship. Thanks to **MARJORIE FLORO** for organizing the event and to all forward to next year!

FOOD BUDGET

Angel Food Ministries is a non-profit, non-denominational organization which makes food available to folks for a reduced cost. They are able to do this by purchasing in bulk and making up set "packages" on a monthly basis. If you would like help making your food dollars stretch farther, we highly recommend you check out their website: www.angelfoodministries.com. Several WOH folks are already utilizing this service and find it very helpful.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

The Prayer Shawl Ministry continues as one of many 'behind-the-scenes' ministries at WOH. Since the beginning of this ministry 2 years ago about 16 people have experienced the warmth and comfort that these prayer shawls can bring. It is a deeply meaningful ministry both to the givers and receivers. These prayer shawls represent a reminder of God's promise that He is always with us – that He is the one who loves, comforts, consoles and strengthens us in all that life brings. We thank those who continue to make this ministry possible.



If you are interested in participating simply pick up the directions at the church office – no meetings, you work at your own pace. And once the prayer shawls are completed they receive a special blessing before being distributed by Pastor Duval.

REGULAR GATHERINGS AT WOH

Parent/Tween Group: Sunday, January 3rd at 6:30pm

Church Council: Tues, January 5th, 7 pm

Vision & Stewardship: Tues, January 7th, 7 pm

Prayer & Conversation: Mon, Sept 21st 7-8 pm.

WEEKLY FAITH GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

WORSHIP EACH SUNDAY: 8:15 Classic Grace

9:30 "TRUE NORTH"—Christian education for all ages

10:45 Celebration Service

6:30-8 pm "Bible Basics" Confirmands AND adults

LIVE THE FAITH, our small, care group meets on Wednesdays, 7-8 pm. **All are welcome**

LIFE LINE, our Sunday morning, between-worship-services, small care group with a variety of topics. **Walk-ins expected**

Pastor Thom Duval: 272-8515

Office times: Monday- Friday 7:30am-10:30am

Share the love of Jesus with **ALL** others and grow disciples

HOPE for the future—God's Vision for us

We accept and will live out God's call to be a Christ-centered, **growing**, place of **grace** for all. Day by day, we expect to welcome those whom the Lord will add to the number of his people in this place, doubling every 3 years. With **glad** and **generous** hearts we will be faithful stewards of God's gifts with financially sound operations and solid plans for future building. Day by day and together, we will devote ourselves to lives of prayer and praise, **going** out as apostles into the world and making disciples.

Grace—a welcoming, safe place

Growth —spiritual, numbers, facility

Glad/Generous hearts—financial & whole life stewardship

Go—outward focus on "the world"

BOOKS AT WORD OF HOPE



THE ROLLING USED BOOK SALE. The books on the shelf in the entryway are an ongoing used book sale. See something you like? Drop a donation in the box and take your new found treasure home. Like to

get rid of some books? Bring them in and add them to the shelves.

JOB OR MINISTRY?

How can you tell the difference between a job and a ministry? Some Christians merely have a job(s) in the church. Others are involved in a ministry. There's all the difference in the world! How can you tell the difference between a job and a ministry?

... If you are doing it because no one else will, it's a job. If you are doing it to serve the Lord, it's a ministry.

... If you're doing it just well enough to get by, it's a job. If you're doing it to the best of your ability, it's a ministry.

... If you'll do it only so long as it doesn't interfere with other activities, it's a job. If you're committed to staying with it even when it means letting go of other things, it's a ministry.

... If you quit because no one praised you or thanked you, it was a job. If you stay with it even though no one seems to notice, it's a ministry.

... If you do it because someone else said it needs to be done, it's a job. If you are doing it because you are convinced it needs to be done, it's a ministry.

... It's hard to get excited about a job. It's almost impossible not to get excited about a ministry.

... *If your concern is success, it's a job. If your concern is faithfulness, it's a ministry.*

... People may say "well done" when you do your job. The Lord will say "well done" when you complete your ministry.

An average church is filled with people doing jobs. A great church is filled with people involved in ministry.

If God calls you to a ministry, for heaven's sake (literally), don't treat it like a job. If you have a job in the church, give it up and find a ministry! God doesn't want us feeling stuck with a job, but excited, fulfilled and faithful to Him in a specific ministry. (Author unknown)

RECOVERY GROUPS AT WOH

We often overlook or take for granted some of the great things that happen here at Word of Hope. For instance, each week there are 3 "recovery groups" that meet here:

- Al-Anon—Sundays, 6-7 pm
- Alcoholics Anonymous—Sundays, 8-9 pm
- Narcotics Anonymous—Mondays, 7:30-9 pm

These meetings are a great resource to anyone in need—don't hesitate to recommend them. We pray God's blessings upon all who seek to strive for health and wholeness.

WOHLY-WORD OF HOPE LUTHERAN YOUTH

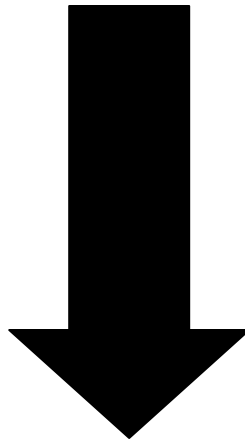
SUNDAY MORNINGS IT'S TRUE NORTH!! Don't miss this opportunity to join in some conversation and get-to-know-you time! It all **STARTS AT 9:30am!!**

WATCH FOR THESE YOUTH EVENTS COMING UP:

- **SUNDAY, JANUARY 3 – YOUTH TO LUNCH** at Fazoli's. It's a chance to bring a friend or your parent(s) along for the get-to-know you time. We'll all catch up on the youth news! *Bring money to cover your appetite!*
- **DATE TO BE ANNOUNCED –SH YOUTH TO SHRINER'S** We'll meet at church at 5:30 then head to Shriner's from 6-7:15 when we'll stop for some snacks 'de-briefing' about our experience.
- **SATURDAY, JANUARY 23 – KID'S NITE OUT ICE & SNOW BLAST!** 5-8pm.
- **SATURDAY, JANUARY 30 –SPAGHETTI DINNER & GOSPEL MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT** 6pm. We'll begin setting up AND cooking about 3pm so plan to be there early! Watch for more details to come!

Please Come and Join Us – All Are Welcome!!

See the monthly picture page!



TRUE NORTH 'FAMILY FEUD'

The two teams were Cain and Abel. Abel won (even though Cain said Abel cheated).
Kelly Metzler made an amazing cake for our Birthday Party for Jesus!



The WOH Crew
at
Catholic Action Center Breakfast

