



Emmanuel News Notes

January, 2009

Pastor Lookingbill ponders. Epiphany

Sometimes in the recent Presidential election Barack Obama’s emergence as a candidate was referred to as an “epiphany.” Now, when I hear such a clear theological tone announcing a person of distinction, there must be some special hope, perhaps even a sense of fulfillment attached. In this case of President-elect Obama, it seems that a majority of those voting in the United States of America were able to put aside old issues of race and familiar political names to support a new “epiphany” promising change in a world of misery.

It may very well be correct to call this emergence in American politics a kind of “epiphany.” The word comes from the Greek for “appearing” and has the sense of an appearance of a divine person or person of supernatural powers. The rapid emergence of Barack Obama on the political scene as the Senator from Illinois is surprising to many of the political power brokers who lobby in the halls of congress. In the case of the President-elect, this may mean less a person of supernatural powers than one who appears with new hope for a nation that seems to have lost its vision?

In the Christian world, “Epiphany” has been one of the oldest festivals of the Church. Centered on 6 January as the Feast of the Epiphany and spreading over the weeks following, the Church has celebrated the “appearing” of Jesus as the Messiah, the Christ, Hope for all in the world! This is especially related to the visit of the Magi, the “Wise men from the east,” as they are reported to be in the Gospel of Matthew. These “kings” from Persia perhaps, bring gifts fit for a King, the gold, frankincense and myrrh. The fact that these kings are not Jewish is notable; that such honor is bestowed on a boy born in Bethlehem south of Jerusalem from “kings” from a foreign country signals that a new “reign” is coming. Acting like foreign dignitaries attracted to a national celebration, the visit of the wise men is meant to portray the significance of this birth to all the nations of the world. This boy, this child, this Son represents a new Hope!

In many ways, the nation that welcomed Jesus into the world was filled with terror and suspicion. The “zealots” were ready to fight the Roman government, even to the death, as evidenced by the several uprisings on the first century A.D. When Pilate was ready to release one of the prisoners on Passover, he presented a “zealot” in Barabbas along with Jesus. There was betrayal, and not only of Jesus, in the times ruled by “Herod the Great.” Herod may very well have been a great builder, notably in Jerusalem, but also in Caesarea Maritima, Caesarea Phillipi, the Herodian, the Machaerus where John the Baptizer was imprisoned, and Masada. But, Herod was also a brutal murderer, killing his wife and some sons, and one of the high priests to whom he took a severe disliking – he drowned the high priest in his pool!

The nations that welcomed Jesus at his Epiphany were looking for more than the standard fare of leadership for the age. They were looking for a Hope that there could be shalom, a peace that brings security and justice to homes that are suffering. When Jesus was born, there was fear that the brutal violence of the Roman overlords would never release the people from their plight. The age old promise of a King who would rule as David had, in times of prosperity and calm, with justice and righteousness for all the nations, was about to come to fulfillment. Jesus, the King of Kings, would bring in a reign of godliness and healing.

The appearance of the Christ has been the most important Hope that the world has known. Jesus came to heal those suffering, to comfort those in mourning, to teach those who have ears and to bring courage to those who are faint of heart. His Epiphany brings light to a world of shadows, where the truth of the Lord is always appearing where the faithful celebrate this great Life.

In Christ’s Service,

Jan P. Lookingbill, Pastor

DATES OF NOTE

- Jan 4 Congregational Brunch (page 2)
- Jan 7 Bible Encounter resumes (page 2)
- Jan 8 Interfaith study at Har Shalom (page 2)
- Jan 10 AIM at Christ Lutheran (page 8)
- Jan 10 Youth Lock-in
- Jan 11 Cantata at 11 a.m. service
- Jan 12 Fun Bunch
- Jan 21 Prayer service with Our Lady of Mercy (page 2)
- Jan 23-25 Ski Trip (page 5)
- Feb 1 Souper Bowl Sunday (page 5)
- Feb 1 Congregational meeting (page 2)

WORSHIP

Sunday 8:30 & 11:00
Sunday School 10:00 a.m.

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE ENCOUNTER IN EPIPHANY

Beginning on 7 January, the Wednesday Morning Bible Encounter will feature a study of some of the Love Songs of the Old and New Testament. In the Writing that is known as the Song of Solomon, both Jewish and Christian traditions have found an expression of the love between God and God's people. In the New Testament, we find some of the most beautiful of love poems in Paul's letter to the Corinthians where "faith, hope and love abide." Join us on Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. in the Christian Education room, bring a lunch and enjoy a favorite dessert by one of the members of the group.

THE INTERFAITH STUDY WITH HAR SHALOM CONTINUES ON 8 JANUARY

Rabbi Leonard Cahan and Pr. Lookingbill will continue their Interfaith Study on Elijah and Elisha at Har Shalom Synagogue on 8 January at 7 p.m. At the previous two meetings, the two prophets were introduced and the work of Elijah has been studied. Elijah has convinced Ahab the King that the Lord God will rule the lands, but he has not convinced Ahab's foreign wife Jezebel! Elijah is afraid and flees south to avoid the anger of this Queen! Throughout this study, it is of interest how Elijah is featured at Jewish traditional feasts as well as in Christian New Testament writings. Even when Elijah is not specifically mentioned in the New Testament, there he stands behind the story of Jesus, the Messiah. Join us this January for our next session as we deepen our understanding of the impact of these two visionary prophets.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING FOR BUDGET AND FINANCE SET FOR 1 FEBRUARY 2009

Members of the Congregation are urged to attend the annual meeting for budget and finance which has been set for 11 a.m. on the first Sunday in February (1 February 2009). Attend the discussion sessions on January 11 and January 25, watch for the annual report and proposed budgets, study them, and come to the meeting prepared to vote intelligently on these important items. **There will be a breakfast served by the Parish Life Committee at 8:30 a.m., a single worship service at 10 a.m., followed immediately by the congregational meeting at approximately 11 a.m.**

Feast of the Epiphany Brunch Sunday, January 4

Celebrate the Epiphany season with a Sunday brunch after the late service on the Feast of the Epiphany! Join Emmanuel members and families for fellowship on January 4 as we begin the new calendar year and celebrate Christ as the Light of the world. You may leave your gold, frankincense, and myrrh at home and instead contribute your favorite food items for the brunch as the gift-giving season continues. The Parish Life Committee will coordinate the brunch.

Hot dishes are especially needed and should be baked Saturday and refrigerated overnight. Side items, such as breads, muffins, fruit, cheese, crudité's, and other finger brunch food, as well as desserts, are also needed. All food items may be stored in the kitchen of the Fellowship Hall before Sunday Services.

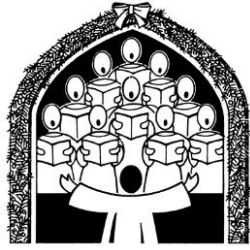
Sign-up sheets for the January 4 brunch will be available in the Narthex beginning in December. Please let the Parish Life Committee know many persons in your family are planning to attend and what you will bring to share. If you have questions about the brunch, please contact Sheila Murtland at (301) 983-2683 or lakenheathway@aol.com.

Annual Prayer Service with *Our Lady of Mercy*. January 21

The opportunity for joint prayer and study with our brothers and sisters at Our Lady of Mercy continues as we meet at Our Lady of Mercy for our annual Service of Prayer for Christian Unity at 7:30 p.m. on 21 January 2009. Bishop Emeritus Dr. Theodore Schneider will be the preacher for the evening.

Emmanuel News Notes is published eleven times a year by Emmanuel Lutheran Church, 7730 Bradley Blvd, Bethesda, Maryland 20817, Telephone: (301) 365-5733; Fax: (301) 365-9236 Email: info@elcbethesda.org website: www.elcbethesda.org

Pastor:	Rev. Jan P. Lookingbill
Youth & Family Ministry	Rev. Robert L. Lewis
Council President	James McGee
Parish Administrator	Katherine Burrell
Director of Music	Dingwall Fleary
Joyful Praise (Children's) Choir	Susan Drumm



Epiphany Cantata

Choir to present its cantata In Epiphany season

The Adult Choir, under the direction of Dingwall Fleary, will present its cantata on **January 11** at the second service. This cantata, *Nativity Suite, a Cantata for Christmas* by Benjamin Harlan, will celebrate the joys of Christmas and the revelation of Epiphany. The choir and musicians hope these festive carols and beautiful Christmas songs will provide a suitable musical summation of the season and will help to carry us to the rigors of lent and the anticipation of Easter.

Woodcarvings from Palestine On display: January 11

A collection of woodcarvings from Palestine will be on display and available for purchase in the Narthex on January 11. This collection of artwork and other materials benefits Christians in Palestine.

GIFTS OF HOPE and THE GIVING TREE prove popular

Ginger Boone, chair of the outreach committee has reported that Emmanuel's support of the two special holiday giving efforts, *Gifts of Hope* and *The Giving Tree*, has been "simply over the top." At press time, it was obvious that many contributions had been made, but the final tally won't be available until after the New Year. Each of these giving opportunities serves to support ministries for the less fortunate. Thank you for your generosity.

Advent Devotional Booklet

Many thanks to the multitude of authors who contributed to the success of the Advent Devotional Booklet. Jane Rosenquist and Katherine Burrell are to be commended for their skills and persistence in producing another such aid for personal devotion.

Christian Education Notes

SUNDAYS

Sunday School - 10 a.m. in the Atrium and Classrooms

The pre-K to sixth grade Sunday School classes will meet in the Atrium at 10 a.m. with opening songs and prayers. The seventh and eighth grade classes will meet in room 10 for a look at the week's scripture lessons and how they can be viewed in light of the previous week's events. The High School class will meet in the youth room and begin a study using movies, contemporary music, and TV shows.

January 4, No Sunday School Lesson

January 11, New Year's Sunday School Bash (The Sunday School's New Year's breakfast will be in the Fellowship Hall that day, to get folks back in the routine of Sunday study.)

January 18, Group Lesson on Missionaries (MLK weekend)

January 25, Regular Sunday School Lesson

February 1, Regular Sunday School Lesson *during the Annual Meeting*

Bible Study - 10 a.m. in the Parlor

Kristi Johnson and Diane Swenson are continuing the Adult Bible Study during the Sunday School hour. You are welcome to join them anytime. Grab your cup of coffee and bring a Bible.

Adult Forum - 10 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall

The Adult Forum is an opportunity to have a Christian discussion on the issues of the day. All are invited.

CONFIRMATION

January 5, Monday beginning at 4:30 p.m.

January 12, Monday beginning at 4:30 p.m.

There are no Confirmation Classes on January 19 and 26 since the Montgomery County Schools are not in session.

OTHER CHRISTIAN EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Wednesday Morning Bible Study with Pastor Lookingbill from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Bring your lunch and enjoy a discussion.

The regular Wednesday Evening Study with Pastor Lookingbill will start up again in February.

STEWARDSHIP REQUIRES CONSTANT ATTENTION

As always, but especially now with the current state of affairs in the financial sector and the threats to the economic well being of us all, the continued support of members of the congregation is critical to the mission of this congregation. Pledging and meeting those pledges is a great help. The stewardship committee has reported that the congregation has done relatively well in meeting its budget for 2008. It is important that it should do even better in 2009, if only to stay abreast of the problems that we will face during the year.

Stewardship is not only meeting our budget (or being realistic and prudent in adopting a budget that is within our reach), it is also a condition of our attitude toward our living space, our community, our church, our country. Can we pass on to our children the benefits of life that we have enjoyed? We can if we take care of what we have and if we correct our errors where we have gone astray.

Consider the value to us of our congregational programs, of our worship life, of our worship space, of our communal fellowship, of our joy in God's presence. Remember them when it is time to place your offering in the plate. Remember them, too, when attendance at a worship service may not be possible.

Emmanuel to improve parish communication — it is hoped

Emmanuel has a List-Server Email list that we use to notify our members of special events or any emergencies in the life of the congregation that may have happened during the week. Examples would be: reminders of important meetings, notification of the death and memorial service of a member during the week, the cancellation of an event due to weather or other circumstances.

If you would like to be on this email list, please let the office know by calling (301) 365-5733 or sending an email to info@elcbethesda.org.

Altar and Columbarium Flower Charts for 2009

The new flower charts are here and are posted outside the church office. Please stop by and sign up for the Sunday you would like to remember or honor a loved one, or to recognize a special occasion.

From the Council President:

Greetings

Best wishes for a Happy and Blessed New Year!

Today I was struck by two overlapping insights.

Today we celebrated the feast of Sankta Lucia. It is always a delight to see the young girls process up to the altar with their candles, all so earnest but so eager.

I hope someday some one will explain to me how a fourth century Italian saint became part of the Swedish Christmas.

Nevertheless, I was struck by this line in the narrative. "Lucia ...gave her money away to the poor and (therefore) was suspected of being a Christian." I wonder how many of us today in the 21st century would be "suspected of being a Christian" because of our charitable giving.

Later today, I got part of an answer to that question. I tuned into a public radio discussion of the book, *Passing the Plate: Why American Christians Don't Give Away More Money*, by Christian Smith.

According to Professor Smith on the show, "Interfaith Voices," collectively, Christians today would not meet the fourth century suspicion test for Christianity. And the more people earn, the less they tend to give as a percentage of their income.

All of this is on my mind as your Church Council prepares the 2009 budget. Last year we presented a very lean budget. Now, a few weeks before the end of the year, we are prayerfully optimistic that we will end the year with a small budget surplus – the first in several years.

As we have done in the past, we will have open budget discussions between services on January 11th and January 25th.

We have cut expenses to the bone. We have deferred maintenance on plant and equipment. We have asked staff to lower their salary expectations. We laid off one staff member. There is very little left to squeeze out of the budget.

To meet projected expenses in 2009, we will rely on your generosity. These are difficult times. We do not want to be unrealistic in our budget expectations.

There is much truth in the phrase: giving is its own reward. That is so much more true now as the economy struggles.

Now is when we say to the world, "Suspect me!"

Peace and Joy

Jim McGee

1920Jimmy@gmail.com

Observations

- Have you noticed how the congregation seems to hold its collective breath as the acolyte lights the advent wreath candles or the pascal candle at the baptismal font? Will it light? Will the acolytes taper go out? Will the candle stay lit? Once the flame is burning, things seem to go on as though there was never any question. Why did it seem so critical at the time?
- How solemn the last moments of the service seem. The hymn has ended, the organ is quiet, and we stand in total silence as the candles are put out. It is as though all the focus of the day is gathered in that last moment when the acolyte douses the flame. Are we acknowledging God's presence? Is it the reluctance of the congregation to leave? Is it thanks? Then comes the dismissal and our heartfelt "Thanks be to God" and the sound level rises as the organ plays the postlude, conversations erupt, and friends are greeted. Maybe we *need* that moment of reverent and solemn silence.
- Now, we are in Epiphany season and the altar is white. Soon, though it will still be Epiphany, the altar will be green, signifying that we are in neither festival nor penitential time. All too soon, Lent will be here again as we work our way towards Easter. The seasons of the church are as persistent as nature's and, it is to be hoped, just as fruitful.

SPECTACULAR YOUTH SKI RETREAT

January 23 - 25 2009
Seven Springs Ski Resort

All youth (and some adult volunteers) are invited to come on the SPECTACULAR Youth Ski Retreat on the weekend of January 23-25, 2009 at Seven Springs Ski Resort, Somerset, PA. We will depart from Emmanuel at 5 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 18 and stop at McDonalds in Breezewood, PA for supper (bring money.) We will sleep Friday and Saturday nights at Trinity Lutheran Church in Somerset, PA, ski all day Saturday and Sunday, and return to Emmanuel around 7 p.m. on Sunday, January 20.

You do not have to know how to ski to come on this trip. We will teach you. In fact, it's a great way to learn how to ski, and many of our youth have learned to ski on previous years' trips. The cost is \$180 per person, which includes transportation, lodging, food Saturday and Sunday, and lift tickets. Adult volunteers are needed to help with driving and to assist as mentors. A large van is needed to transport the skis, boots, and poles.

Sign-up packets are available in the Narthex.

If you have any questions, contact Pastor Lewis (301-365-5733).

Souper Bowl Sunday February 1, 2009

Our youth will hold soup-pots at the church doors on "Souper Bowl Sunday" again this year. They will join more than 15,000 youth groups in churches across the country collecting money to help feed and house the needy. In 2007 we collected \$400 and \$581 in 2008 for the work camp. This year we will be collecting to help with the cost of the work project we will be doing in New Orleans this summer. This year you will also have a chance to cheer on one of the teams in the Super Bowl by placing your donation in collection pot for that team. You can also choose to donate to the "I don't watch football" pot.

In 2008, Emmanuel's youth joined 14,465 other youth groups to raise \$10,244,799 to help those in need. On Super Bowl Sunday, we will report the amount raised to the Souper Bowl of Caring Headquarters so they can announce the total amount raised during the radio broadcast of the game (we are still hoping that they will announce it during the TV broadcast). Since "Souper Bowl of Caring" became a national grassroots event in 1993, more that \$51 million has gone to help those in need.

Please support the youth of Emmanuel in this effort to "love our neighbors" by dropping a few dollars into the soup-pots on "Souper Bowl Sunday."



"Guess who got voted to be a sheep in the Sunday school program for the fifth year in a row?"

Parish Vital Records

Birth

Trent Edward Sarin, born 20 November 2008, son of Erica and Eric Sarin, grandson of Ellen and Prem Sarin

James Thomas Ling, born 15 December son of Gordon and Katie Ling and grandson of Ann Ling

New Members

Joshua Doron Freilich, son of Erin Freilich, by baptism 23 November 2008

Annika Madison Nyquist, daughter of Paul and Christina Nyquist, by infant baptism, 23 November 2008

Andrew Peter Miles, son of Mark and Christina Miles, grandson of Eileen Miles.

Hospice Care

Ursel Kehl

Deaths

Jill Day in St. David's Hospice, Llandudno, Wales, friend of Annette and Mike Poston

Mary Jo McCoun, friend of the Salive family

Frank Gettle, Jr., Deborah Kalas' father

Irma Weber, died 29 November 2008, mother of Sandy Violand

Garrett Feldman, died 16 December 2008 age 20 months, son of Kathryn and Lee Feldman

First Communion 23 November 2008

Abigail Russo Audas
Joshua Doron Freilich

Congratulations

Greg Condon awarded the rank of Eagle Scout at a Court of Honor December 21



Christmas

2008

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." ~ Luke 2:15

Let's go! Now! When angels came to some shepherds with a brilliant message one night long ago, the shepherds had a brilliant idea. Let's go! Let's see what God is doing!

The unknown dangers of the night did not hold them back. Perhaps they knew that some of God's best work is done under the cover of darkness — the creation of all things, wrestling with Jacob, Israel's escape from slavery.

Or maybe they didn't. Maybe all they needed was the announcement of what God was up to this time. This time God would be conducting a rescue like none before — saving the whole world, bringing peace and goodwill. Once again it's an undercover operation — God hidden deep in the flesh and working "under the sign of opposites" (as Martin Luther called it). Arriving as a baby in diapers, God's Son recruited tax collectors and fishermen, social misfits and despised sinners in a rescue mission that culminated in the hidden power of the cross.

What if the shepherds had yawned, "That's interesting, some other time," and remained sitting in the night, in the dirt, in the comfort of predictable hardships and familiar enemies? Would promised joy have found them anyway?

Let's not test that speculation with our lives. Let's go! Let's see what God is doing!

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

Pastor Lewis———resolve

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

I realize that you may be reading this after the first day of the new year, but I have a suggestion for a new year's resolution. "Don't give up!" Let me explain.

Many, many surveys tell us that 95 percent of Americans claim to believe in God. However, church attendance has been sliding in recent years. Our competition is not other faiths, it is a rising tide of religious books and television shows that invite people to practice a kind of self-help spirituality.

What we are up against is big business. Lynn Garrett, the religion editor of Publishers Weekly, the trade magazine of the book publishing industry, recently wrote that the "religion and spirituality" category in publishing has been one of the fastest-growing since the early 1990s, and is currently in the top three in market share, along with fiction and crafts. "Many people are pursuing a private form of spirituality," she says, "and these books are a key element."

Television plays a role as well, with shows like *Saving Grace*, *Eleventh Hour*, *Eli Stone*, *Heroes*, *Life on Mars*, *Battlestar Galactica*, *Lost*, and the upcoming *Kings* providing spiritual stimulation for religious seekers. The problem is that these programs are basically entertainment, and they do not tend to push people to move beyond their comfortable lifestyles. In a spiritual marketplace that offers resources ranging from New Age guidebooks to religious classics, a person can now find support for any perspective or any passion that feels good. One thing is certain, with so much specialized literature and TV options, our culture is fragmented into untold numbers of interest groups and subgroups that we can very easily lose ourselves in a tiny world of like-thinkers or like-believers.

There is a danger, however, when faith comes to be seen as only an individual, private matter. There is no limit to the narcissism of a spirituality that is completely cut off from scripture, tradition and a community of faith. And so we, as members of a congregation, have something truly valuable to offer - a community of support and accountability. We offer the knowledge of someone standing beside you, praying for the same things, hearing the gospel spoken and talked about, a community of those who care for each other with opportunities to learn more about God and ourselves.

So, don't give up. Keep inviting your friends and neighbors. Keep bringing your kids (even if they come kicking and screaming). Keep the faith. We have a true treasure to offer the spiritual seekers all around us.

Now back to my beginning. Make a new year's resolution to bring someone to church. Or, make a new year's resolution to attend church more often. Maybe you could even make a new year's resolution to attend one of the activities or programs that you have never attended at Emmanuel or have not attended in some time. Don't give up. Don't give up on your friends, your family or yourself. But most of all, don't give up on God — because God will never give up on you.

PAX,

Pastor Robert L. Lewis, Jr. +

*May your new year be
Rich in blessings,
Filled with love,
Endowed with good spirits,
Friendship, fellowship,
And the joy of God's
Presence.*



Remember the
Epiphany Brunch
on
January 4
And
The Epiphany Cantata
On
January 11

Youth and Family Ministry Calendar

This calendar includes all Youth and Family Ministry Events, not only those for youth. Events advertised for "Youth" include those from 7th grade to 12th grade. Family events or "everyone is invited" are appropriate for all ages. Fun Bunch events are for older adults.

January 10, Saturday, 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Together in Mission - Christ Lutheran, Bethesda

Renew and Re-energize at this annual event hosted by the Metro D.C. Synod's Division For Congregational Life. This event is for everyone interested in helping Emmanuel continue to develop and reach our vision of congregational life. The cost of the event is \$20 and includes breakfast (8 - 9 a.m.) and lunch. Contact Pastor Lewis for more information.

January 10, Saturday, 6 pm - Sunday 9 am

Youth Lock-in

This is the first Youth Lock-in of the new year. All youth are invited to this lock-in that will be full of surprises as we spend the first part of it away from the church.

Bring a snack to share, and \$20.

We will wake-up and breakfast in time to make Sunday School and attend the 11 am Cantata service.

January 12, Monday, Noon

Fun Bunch Lunch

The Fun Bunch will gather in the Fellowship Hall for lunch and a program. Lunch will be catered, with donations accepted to cover the cost.

January 23- 25, Friday 4:30 p.m. - Sunday 7 p.m.

Youth Ski Retreat

Come join our annual Youth Ski Retreat as we head off to hit the slopes at Seven Springs. Packets for the ski retreat are available in the narthex. The cost is \$180 per person. Adult volunteers are still needed. More information is found elsewhere in this issue.

February 1, Sunday 11 a.m.

Annual Meeting

All youth should attend this important event in the life of our congregation. Youth who have been confirmed are voting members of the congregation and should participate in the decisions that will steer our congregation for the next year(s).

February 1, Sunday, 8:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Souper Bowl Sunday

The youth are collecting for "Souper Bowl" on Super Bowl Sunday. We need youth volunteers before and after each service (SSL Hours). For more information about the "Souper Bowl" see the write-up below.

February 8, Sunday, 12:30 - 1:30 p.m.

Gathering Meeting

All youth and adults going to the 2009 Gathering in New Orleans should attend this mandatory meeting.

February 15, Sunday 12:30 p.m.

Youth "Get Together" at the Hunleys'

All youth are invited to the Hunleys' after the second service for a "Get Together" and fellowship. The Hunleys' home is located at 8206 Kenfield Court in Bethesda.

Mark Your Calendar

February 20- 21 - JAM-IN Lock-in at Mar-Lu-Ridge

February 24 - Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

March 8 - Chili and Pie Cook-Off

L.Y.F.E. Assurance Sale Resumes February 8, 2009

The Lutheran Youth From Emmanuel (L.Y.F.E) will begin selling LYFE Assurance to benefit our church in the future. This is a fund raising event for the youth and adults who will be attending the 2009 ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans. By purchasing LYFE Assurance you will become a stockholder in the future of our church by helping to fund leadership training, stewardship development, mission awareness, Christian values, and discipleship in our youth.

Stock shares will be \$25 each (no limit on how many shares of stock you can purchase). Stockholders will receive a bi-monthly progress report before the Gathering. They will also receive news and a postcard from the youth while we are in New Orleans. In the Fall of 2009, stockholders will be invited to a stockholders dinner to learn about their investment.

Hope Floats Rubber Ducks

The sale by the youth during the Christmas season of rubber duckies went so well that we will be selling Mardi Gras themed rubber duckies starting the last week of January. Duckies will be two dollars a piece.

Hope Floats for New Orleans as the Lutheran Youth From Emmanuel (L.Y.F.E.) prepares to send a team to give the people there a hand-up as well as learn leadership skills for the future good of the church

Dinner Club

During the first week of January, we will be contacting all those who signed up for Dinner Club and make the group assignments and contact hosts. We are asking each group to meet sometime between January 9 and 19, 2009. We are also asking that each group come up with a theme that ties into the movies since the Oscar nominations will be announced later in January.



When I stand before God at the end of my life, I would hope that I would not have a single bit of talent left and could say, "I used everything You gave." — author unknown

Greetings!

As this arrives, you, as I am also, are sorting the memories of the many experiences – pleasant, and less than pleasant – during the past year, and, no doubt, cleaning and straightening up from the Christmas holidays. From my family to yours, the very best wishes for this new year.

There is only one major musical event during January, and it is the annual cantata presentation by the choir, augmented by several singers and a small orchestra. Titled *Nativity Suites*, it is a cantata which reviews the highlights of Advent and Christmas, and sets the stage for the season of Epiphany as well. The work brims with familiar festive carols and sprinkled with very memorable new songs and narratives which celebrate the season. This will take place only once at the 11:00 service on Sunday, January 11, 2009. The choir and I will be most happy to have you share this wonderful program with us.

I am pleased to announce that in February, however, there will be two very special opportunities for hearing and participating in great music. The first is The Service of Lessons and Carols will take place on the first Sunday of February, which happens to be February 1, 2009. Kristi Johnson and I are finalizing a service which incorporates the best of numerous examples we have researched, which we are certain will prove to be most meaningful to everyone in attendance.

At the end of February we will have the annual talent program we call Treasures of Emmanuel, It will be held on Saturday, February 28th at 7:30 PM. I won't give it all away, but as a teaser, it will have a post-Mardi Gras theme with no (few!) holds barred, featuring Resident Master of Ceremonies, John Drumm, Joyful Praise and Emmanuel Ringers as you've never heard them before, performances by many of our precocious kids, dueling pianists (Jessica Botsford and Yours Truly), and much, much more! This will be an evening of fun and entertainment for everyone.

I look forward to sharing the services and events with you.

Until next time, I am

Faithfully yours,

Dingwall Fleary
dingwallfleary@verizon.net



Winter brings all sorts of interesting things. Around here, it may mean heavy snows or maybe just an occasional dusting. And sometimes, when predictions are ambiguous, it is wise to be sure that your shovel is handy and that your broom is accessible. Many of us come from somewhere else, usually where winter is less variable and frigid temperatures more certain. It is not becoming to talk disparagingly about Marylanders' ability to drive in the snow, especially if you recall how traffic has its woes when the first snowfall of the

Washington has tales to tell, too, about how the weather has made life difficult in January. In 1961, when Kennedy was inaugurated, the city would have been paralyzed if the government had not borrowed snow removal equipment from the suburbs. The borrowed equipment and the National Guard made the whole parade and whoopla possible—but the cost to the suburbs was substantially impassable roads. Then, in 1985, it was so cold and miserable that they moved the actual swearing-in to the Capitol Rotunda and cancelled the parade

Why, I remember that when I was a child, I had to walk five miles through drifts of snow to get to school, uphill both ways.

Which brings to mind the story of how Paul Bunyan invented split-pea soup. Paul and his crew were logging in northern Minnesota one winter when the cold weather really settled in. The road on which supplies were brought to camp was a very long one because it had to go around several lakes. It froze hard enough so that the supply train could be hauled right across the lake, thereby shortening the time it took to get to camp considerably. Paul decided to improve things even more by using Babe the blue ox to pull an even bigger sled across the lake. The sled was loaded with hams and beans and onions, and, because he'd gotten a good deal from the supplier, many bags of dried split peas. Paul, however, had not counted on the extra weight this stuff created and as Babe easily hauled the supplies over the lake, the ice began to crack and, just in the nick of time, Paul was able to cut the harness as the sled fell through the ice. Babe was safe, but the supplies were in the lake, apparently lost forever. Paul studied on this problem for a while and then had his men build fires all around the lake which they kept burning hotly for days. The ice melted and soon the lake began to boil. The wonderful aroma of boiled ham and gently simmered peas began to permeate the woods. Before too long, the cooks sent out boats on the soupy lake and began to ladle the soup out to the lumberjacks. It was a happy crew that sat down to dinner on pea soup that winter—of course they had it for lunch and breakfast and dinner for days on end. If you go to Minnesota, you'll find that one of their ten thousand lakes is still called Lake Peasoup—or so we're told.

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