

December 2009 & January 2010

*FREE
Advent Devotion
Booklets available
at each entrance
to the church.*



“Understanding Signs!”

Another pastor visited a large city in China and found great humor in the terminology used on certain signs. An elevator was called “A Lift.” An electrical panel for circuit breakers was labeled “The Switch Room.” A highway overpass was called “A Flyover.” He loved the common-sense warning he saw on the escalator: “Mind your hands and your elbows.” In Stanley Market the litter signs read, “Don’t Rubbish!” There was a sign at an empty swimming pool under repair which read, “Outdoor pool under overhaul.” The pedestrian crossing at the airport got him wondering which airline workers they were talking about: “Slow Staff Crossing.” But perhaps the sign in the gas station that took the most explaining was this one: “No Naked Lights.” It meant: “No open flames.”

Signs sometimes require further explanation. The sign the angel of the Lord gave in Luke 2 required no further information. Luke 2:10-12 reads, “But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.’”

After that angel spoke those words, and after a great company of the heavenly host appeared with that angel praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom His favor rests,” the shepherds went to Bethlehem and found Mary and Joseph and the Baby, who was lying in a manger as the angel had given that sign. The shepherds needed no further explanation who they were going to see. The shepherds needed no further explanation to find the Christ-Child. The sign the angel had given was clear and concise...The Savior of the world...Christ the Lord... had been born!

We don't need any other signs than the sign recorded in Luke 2 to understand the great gift our heavenly Father has given us in Jesus. Jesus was born in that manger of Bethlehem to be our Lord and Savior. He came into this world so that He could live the perfect life in our place...fulfilling all the commandments for us. He gave His life on Calvary's cross for the sins of all people. Jesus rose from the dead to give new life, eternal life now and much fuller with Him in heaven.

Thanks and praise be to God for the gift of His Son. Thanks and praise be to God for His clear gift of salvation! Thanks and praise be to God for the opportunities we have daily to share this clear gift with others!

In Christ,
Pastor Braun



Three **Wednesday evening Advent worship services** will provide a focus for the season's celebrations. The services on **December 2, 9 and 16** all begin at 7:00 p.m. and will be preceded by a supper served at 5:30 and a short hymn-sing at 6:50 p.m. Child-care for Nursery-age children will be available. On December 16th the 4th thru 8th grade children will present their Christmas program during the Advent service.

CHURCH RECORDS

Average Weekly Attendance	<u>2009</u>	<u>2008</u>
November	334	322

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY by Roxann Leckband

Family Night for December will be on December 20th from 5:00-6:30p.m. Please bring an hors d'oeuvre to share. Child care and children's activities will be provided. The January family night will be on January 17th from 5:00-6:30pm. Please bring a dish to share. Child care and children's activities will be provided.

Mom's Group will be held from 10:00-11:30 a.m. on December 4th, 11th and 18th and January 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th. The moms will have a time of Christian fellowship and time in "the Word" while the children will have a Bible lesson, craft, singing and snack. Moms of pre-school and younger come and join us; we would love to have you.

Noon Senior Fellowship will be held on **December 14th from 12:00 -1:00 p.m.** Our December theme will be the "Blessings of Christmas". Please bring a non-perishable food item to be

donated to the local food pantries. The menu will be ham, au gratin potatoes, green beans and a dinner roll. The January Senior Noon Fellowship will be on **January 11th from 12:00-1:00 p.m.** We will have a New Years's theme, looking to the year ahead and remembering the past. The menu will be pork loin, mashed potatoes and gravy, corn and dinner roll. You may bring a dish to share, give a free-will offering or just bring yourself. We just want you to come. It would be helpful if you could call the church and let us know if you are planning to come by the Friday before, but even the Monday morning of the dinner is helpful. **DO NOT** stay home if you did not phone and decide you want to attend. We look forward to seeing all of you.

Sunday School Christmas rehearsals will be December 5th and 12th from 1:00-2:00 p.m. for 4th-8th graders. These rehearsals are for the program the children will be participating in during the December 16th Advent worship service.

Sunday School rehearsal will be December 19th from 10-11 a.m. for the Pre-school thru 3rd graders. This rehearsal will be for the program the children will be participating in at the Family Christmas Eve service at 5:00 p.m. on December 24th.

Please have your child here for the program rehearsals at the designated time as the sooner we begin, the sooner we will finish. If you know that your child will not be participating in the programs, please phone or e-mail Roxie. This makes coordinating parts much easier.

Parents/guardians and children: **December 6th from 9:15-10:30 a.m. we will be presenting "Journey to the Manger"**. This is a family Sunday School event. The children will be taught the events of the Christ's birth, complete a Christmas craft and enjoy food and fellowship. Each family will be given gift and a craft to complete at home. **Adult Bible Class will NOT take place this Sunday.** We look forward to seeing all of you. May God richly bless you and your family with the true meaning of Christmas.

Youth Servants for the month of November were Mindy Kuhl, Brandon Reimersma and Tanner Rogers. These young people helped with cleaning an apartment and washing windows for some St. Matthew's members and someone from the community which needed assistance. Thank you to these people for their service.

A benefit for David Folkers will be held on **December 6th from 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.** at the Reading Community Center. The benefit is to help David's family defray medical costs from a lengthy hospitalization and multiple surgeries. David has been an active member of St. Matthew's youth group. If anyone could provide a dessert/pie please sign up or phone the church office. Sign up sheets are posted at the North and South entrances. The desserts may be brought to the church by 3:00p.m. on Saturday, December 5th and they will be brought to the Reading Community Center or you can bring a dessert to the center by 12:00 on December 6th. If you can provide some help

with the dinner that would be great as well, please contact Roxie.



Serving in December will be: Phyllis H. and Sue F. for the 8 a.m. services; Ruth R. and Sandie S. for the 10:30 a.m. services and the 10 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service. Serving for the 5 p.m. New Year's Eve service will be Ilona B. and Jean B. **Serving in January will be:** Iva B. and Velma C. for the 8 a.m. services; Eunice K. and Lori F. for the 10:30 a.m. services. **There will be no meeting in December.** Our next meeting will be January 25th at 10:30 a.m. in the Fireside Room. If you would like to be a part of the Altar Guild, please contact Ilona B., 376-5069.



CHRISTMAS EVE

"Christmas Eve Family Service" (5:00 p.m.)

A wonderful time for family and friends to gather around the Word of God, to sing the great songs of Christmas, and to celebrate our Savior's birth. The children of our Nursery through 3rd grade classes will perform their Christmas Program!

"Candlelight Song Service with Communion" (10:00 p.m.)

Favorite hymns, Holy Communion, beautiful music, the Word of God, and the soft glow of candles combine to make a worship service that praises Jesus and touches the heart.

CHRISTMAS DAY

"Festival of Christmas" (10:00 a.m.)

Glad thanks resound as we celebrate the birth of our Lord. Christ is born! Nothing can ever be the same! Sing the sacred songs of Christmas, hear the tidings the angels proclaimed, and join with fellow worshipers in proclaiming the Messiah's praise.

Sunday, December 27th

8:00 a.m. Traditional Worship

10:30 a.m. Contemporary Worship with Communion

NEW YEARS EVE

"New Year's Eve Worship Service" (5:00 p.m.)

A great way to end the year, and begin the new! What a blessing God has in store for us as we remember that HE is in control, and that He rules over all things well!

NO Services on Saturdays, December 26 and January 2.

(NOTE: As always, excellent Nursery Care will be provided during ALL of the special Holiday Services, except the 10 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service.)

WEEKDAY BIBLE STUDIES FOR WOMEN

The Miriam Circle will meet on Monday, December 14th at 1:30 p.m. at Helen Sandersfeld's home. The Mary Circle will meet on Thursday, December 17th at 1:30 p.m. in the Fireside Room. The Martha Circle will meet at Vernice Kuhl's home at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 17th. Sorry – no information received from the Martha, Hope or Sarah Circles.

SUNDAY MORNING COFFEE FELLOWSHIP

You are invited to the Coffee Fellowship each Sunday morning following the 8 a.m. service. A free-will donation is received to benefit the various projects.

On the first and second Sundays of the month, there is opportunity for those church committees/groups wishing to host a coffee hour. Please sign up on the sheet in the church basement when you plan to host the coffee hour. ***Please sign-up at least two weeks in advance.***

The third Sunday of the month, the LWML sponsors the coffee hour as a fundraiser to help support Seminary Students, Joel & Candy Brassfield. *On that Sunday there is also a door offering following the church service, which also goes to support the Seminary students.*

The fourth Sunday of the month, the youth sponsor the coffee hour. Proceeds go to support their various activities.

LWML NEWS

ALL ladies of the congregation and their guests are invited to the December LWML Christmas Party Potluck Dinner on Thursday, December 3rd at 6 p.m. in the basement Fellowship Hall. Please bring a dish to share and a \$3 gift if you wish to be included in the gift exchange. The Hope Circle will host the December 20th coffee hour. There will be no LWML meeting in January. The Martha Circle will host the coffee hour on January 17th.

YPOG (Youth) NEWS

The youth will be participating in the David Folkers benefit on December 6th by providing dessert/bars. The youth will also be helping at the benefit beginning at 12:00 noon.

Our December fellowship and servant project will be on December 20th. Everyone please meet at the church at 3:00 p.m. to go caroling at the adult assisted living housing. We will return to the church for games and food. Please bring a non-perishable food item for the local food shelves.

Our fundraiser for December is frozen soup sales. The soups on sale are Chicken Wild Rice, California Medley, Chicken Tortilla, Broccoli Cheese, Cream of Potato, Wisconsin Cheddar, and Chicken strips. The soup will be sold by the gallon. The soup can be defrosted and put in smaller containers and refrozen. Chicken strips will be sold in 5 lb. and

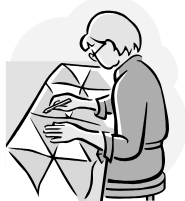
2.5 lb bags. The orders need to be received by December 4th. All youth have an order form or you can contact Roxie and leave a message at the church. The soup will be delivered to the church December 16th.

The youth will be hosting two Advent suppers. On December 2 they will be serving Chicken Wild Rice and Cream of Potato soups, ham sandwiches and dessert. The Advent Supper on December 9th will be California Medley and Chicken Tortilla soups, sandwich and dessert. Come and enjoy these meals along with supporting our youth.

The January 3rd Youth meeting agenda includes the Sweetheart Banquet, January youth Sunday and the fellowship event for January. Please contact Kim or Roxie with other agenda items.

The fundraiser for January will include hoagie sales. And youth will assemble the hoagies.

On January 3rd from 4:00-5:00 p.m. a mandatory Youth meeting will take place for all those attending the National Youth Gathering. Please meet in the Youth room.



QUILTS TO SEW

Hey you quilters - quilt kits for our Spring 2010 High School graduates are available. The Kits are located in classroom #209's closet and a Sign-Out sheet is on the closet door. Classroom #209 is located on the floor with the church offices (next to Colleen Braun's office). A goal for having the quilts finished and returned to the church is April 24th. If you finish sooner, please return the quilt as soon as you can, to allow time for washing the quilts.

Instruction sheets are located in each kit. The kit has been changed a little. No seam matching or clipping is required! All kits **MUST BE SIGNED OUT**, so we know where they are at. Thank you for your help.

HUMAN CARE NEWS

Thank you to Jim Arnt for driving the church van for November for the 10:30 worship service. If anyone is interested in providing this service in the coming months, please contact Rita S. (376-9833) or the church office (376-6168).

Community Christmas Baskets

Donations can be made until Wednesday, December 2nd here at St. Matthew. Volunteers are needed to sort, pack, and deliver baskets. If you would like to help, please call either Diane W. (372-2419) or Pat R. (376-4525). Thank you to everyone that supported this project. Our committee referred 10 families or 31 people.

Congregation Caring Tree

Please check out the Caring Tree located in the Great Hall and select an ornament. Purchase the requested item (cost is between \$10-\$15), wrap the gift and return it to the church office by Wednesday, December 16th. The Human Care Committee will deliver the gifts before Christmas. Please make sure and attach the selected ornament to the gift.

Our Soldiers

Our soldiers will be receiving Christmas greetings and phone cards from our congregation. A special "Thank You" to Cindy B. for sponsoring the Veterans' coffee hour and donating to the Human Care Fund. Your support and time was greatly appreciated. Thank you to others that have made contributions for our service people.

Human Care Committee Meeting Dates:

- Wednesday, December 2nd at 6 p.m. (set-up Caring Tree)
- Friday, December 18th at 4 p.m. (deliver gifts)

- Wednesday, January 13th at 6 p.m. (organize soldier packages)
- Wednesday, January 27th at 6 p.m. (assemble and mail soldier packages) Youth will be providing Valentine Cards for the Soldiers.

HUMAN CARE COMMITTEE (continued)

Anyone that has any requests or concerns, please feel free to attend one of the meetings or consult with any committee members. Members are: Marianne Behrens, Ilona Benson, Beverly Kness, Jeanette Varuska, Alice White, Cindy Brunk, Margaret Schroeder, and Rita Shirkey.

ANNUAL VOTERS' MEETING

The Annual Voters' Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 24th. Please watch for further information in the weekly bulletins. All active confirmed members 18 years old and up are encouraged to attend and vote. The agenda will be posted on the church bulletin boards closer to the actual date of the meeting.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

ALTAR FLOWERS – if you would like to provide flowers for the altar on a specific Sunday please sign up on the flower calendar in the Narthex. If you have any questions, please contact Iva B., 727-4381 or Bev in the church office, 376-6168.

DEADLINES REMINDER – If you wish to have a notice or announcement in the **Sunday bulletin** – the deadline to have it into the church office is Wednesdays at noon (with the exception of holiday weeks). Any announcements/articles for

the **monthly newsletter** need to be into the church office by the 20th of the month. All these deadlines are posted in the weekly bulletins and monthly calendars included in the newsletters.



***Worship Service Helpers
for December 2009 & January 2010***

ACOLYTES

- Dec. 2 (7 p.m.) Michael P.
- Dec. 6 (8 a.m.) Brendan S.; (10:30) Austin S.
- Dec. 9 (7 p.m.) Jessica A.
- Dec. 13 (8 a.m.) Eric F.;(10:30) Stephen D.
- Dec. 16 (7 p.m.) _____
- Dec. 20 (8 a.m.) Summer R.; (10:30) Tyree M.
- Dec. 24 (5 p.m.) Alexandra S.
(10 p.m.) Torey R.
- Dec. 25 (10 a.m.) Joshua VanW.
- Dec. 27 (8 a.m.) Morgan S.; (10:30) Mason K.
- Dec. 31 (5 p.m.) Brigid H.
- Jan. 3 (8 a.m.) Amber P.; (10:30) Shelby F.
- Jan. 10 (8 a.m.) Brendan S.; (10:30) Caleb K.
- Jan. 17 (8 a.m.) Michael P.; (10:30) Austin S.
- Jan. 24 (8 a.m.) Jessica A.; (10:30) Stephen D.
- Jan. 31 (8 a.m.) Eric F.; (10:30) Tyree M.
- Feb. 7 (8 a.m.) Summer R.; (10:30) Torey R.

NURSERY HELPERS

Dec. 2	(7 p.m.) Tyree M.
Dec. 6	(8 a.m.) Summer R.; (10:30) Torey R.
Dec. 9	(7 p.m.) Alexandra S.
Dec. 13	(8 a.m.) Morgan S.; (10:30) Mason K.
Dec. 16	(7 p.m.) <i>Need an Adult – kids involved with Christmas Program during the service.</i>
Dec. 20	(8 a.m.) Brighid H.; (10:30) Shelby F.
Dec. 24	(5 p.m.) Amber P. (10 p.m.) <i>NO NURSERY</i>
Dec. 25	(10 a.m.) Caleb K.
Dec. 27	(8 a.m.) Brendan S.; (10:30) Austin S.
Dec. 31	(5 p.m.) Stephen D.
Jan. 3	(8 a.m.) Jessica A.; (10:30) Tyree M.
Jan. 10	(8 a.m.) Eric F.; (10:30) Torey R.
Jan. 17	(8 a.m.) Summer R.; (10:30) Mason K.
Jan. 24	(8 a.m.) Morgan S.; (10:30) Shelby F.
Jan. 31	(8 a.m.) Alexandra S.; (10:30) Austin S.
Feb. 7	(8 a.m.) Joshua VanW.; (10:30) Caleb K.

** Please be sure to mark your calendars. If you cannot fulfill your scheduled date, please find a replacement and **call the church office with the change.***

***PARENTS** – Thank you for supervising in the nursery while your student is scheduled for that service. If you cannot be with your student, please contact the church office, we have a list of substitute adults willing to fill-in for supervising.

THANK YOU

GREETER SCHEDULE for December 2009 & January 2010

*If you cannot fulfill your scheduled date, please find a replacement and call the church office with the change.
THANK YOU FOR SERVING!*

Dec. 2	(7 p.m.) Doug & Rhona K.; Lucille H.
Dec. 6	(8 a.m.) Jan & Daryl Q.; JoAnne G. (10:30) Marvin & Corky S.; Marlene J.
Dec. 9	(7 p.m.) Vern & Marilyn M.; Ilona B.
Dec. 13	(8 a.m.) Bill & Jeanette S.; Gene & Iva B. (10:30) Joel & Kim R.; Gene & Cheryl S.
Dec. 16	(7 p.m.) George & Bonnie H.; Crystal B.
Dec. 20	(8 a.m.) Tom & Christine P. Family; Sue F. (10:30) Byron & Marlene B.; Ken & Eunice K.
Dec. 24	(5 p.m.) Ray & Vernice K.; Alan & Gail D. (10 p.m.) Leonard & Marjorie R.; Joel & Julie L.
Dec. 25	(10 a.m.) John & Bonnie T.; Don & Emma F.
Dec. 27	(8 a.m.) YOUTH (both services)
Dec. 31	(5 p.m.) John & Marlene M.; Dan & Ruth R.

(January 2010 on next page)

GREETER SCHEDULE continued

If you cannot fulfill your scheduled date, please find a replacement and call the church office with the change.
THANK YOU FOR SERVING!

- Jan. 3 (8 a.m.) Gary & Velma C.;
Harold & Berdina H.
(10:30) Don & Lorna B.; Bruce & Bev K.
- Jan. 10 (8 a.m.) Ron M.; John & Jan G.
(10:30) Dale & Vickie L. Family; Bob P.
- Jan. 17 (8 a.m.) Ken & Audrey S.;
Myron & Sandy M.
(10:30) Mike & Cindy F.;
Roger & Ardis B.
- Jan. 24 YOUTH (both services)
- Jan. 31 (8 a.m.) Paul & Kelly K.;
Robert & Elizabeth O.
(10:30) Dan & Laurita R.; Burdell & Jolene K.
- Feb. 7 (8 a.m.) Tom & Eileen S.;
Keith & Margaret S.
(10:30) Dorothy J.; Norman & Darlene K.

