

Good News

A Publication of Emanuel Lutheran Church
Volume XXX11 No. 4
April 2007

Empowered by the Holy Spirit, Emanuel's mission is to witness
to the good news of salvation through Christ to individuals, the community
and the world through discipleship and service.

I asked Jack Robbins to write a statement of faith to include in the newsletter. He did so and his witness that follows is both profound and moving.

My hope is that more people (perhaps YOU) would be willing to write what faith means to them. That is, how has faith made an impact in your life? How has faith changed you? What has faith seen you through? What difference does having faith mean to you?

Some people will read what Jack has written and say, "I couldn't write something like that," or "What I have to say would not be very interesting." The truth is that you can bear witness to the love of God through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in ways that no one else can. Just speak from your heart.

As Paul reminded us recently in one of our lessons on a Sunday morning, you are ambassadors of Christ. You are His spokespeople.

Please prayerfully consider writing a statement of faith to share with the rest of the congregation. I would like to have one every month in the newsletter. Let me know if you are willing to do so. I believe strongly in the "priesthood of all believers" as did Luther.

Have a joyous Easter. And as Jack attests to in the following article, may you know and proclaim the resurrection that Christ freely gives us all.

See you in church.

Pastor Jim Castello

What Pastor Castello asked me a while back if I would write about how I express my faith, I didn't hesitate long before I said yes. As time went by and I thought about what I would write, I realized I may have said yes too quickly!

Faith is such a personal thing and if I was going to write this, I would have to be honest and truthful to myself and find out exactly what I feel my faith is, let alone how I express it.

Hebrews 11:1 tells us that faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. It seemed that much if not all of my faith was based on my past experiences of God's faithfulness to me. Well, with this being Emanuel's 125th anniversary maybe the past is the place to start.

There are three things that happened in my past that helped me define what my faith is and how I express it. The first was being blessed to have the opportunity to witness my mother's death at a time when my faith was non-existent. It wasn't so much in the words we spoke, but in the way she showed her confidence that the faith and hope she had of a heavenly kingdom with our Lord was about to become a reality. Even through the pain she smiled a lot. That put a spark in my heart that began to renew my faith.

The second was when I went through my divorce. My faith flew out the window. There was only darkness and despair and I was so vulnerable to Satan's joy. I disappointed family and friends and this congregation because I just didn't care. There was no hope. Well, again God showed His faithfulness to me by using that vulnerability and hopelessness to lead me to the Divorce Care program. He showed me how His love and compassion could lead me through and out of the darkness and how I could use that love to help others who were hurting even more than I was. This program really changed my life and it let that seed of faith finally put some roots in my heart.

The third situation that happened was when I was fired from my previous job. I had never been fired from anything in my life. I didn't lose my faith, but I was very confused. I had learned how important prayer can be in Divorce Care, but I usually prayed for others and not myself. So I prayed for God to guide and lead me to where he wanted me to go. I remember specifically praying for a job that I could really enjoy and that it didn't even matter how much I got paid (Be careful what you pray for!)

Well, after a few weeks of puttering around the house, my former mother-in-law told me St. Paul's was looking for a 2nd shift custodian. I thought why would I want to be a janitor? No thanks. After a few more weeks of job hunting and not finding anything interesting, I was getting desperate (and running out of money!). I asked my mother-in-law if the job had been filled yet and she said no. Well, I decided to put in an application to at least have a job until I found something better. Two days later I went in for an interview and was hired on the spot. That was five years ago and I could not be happier with my job. It showed me that prayer is perhaps the best way to express my faith. It put the roots of that seed of faith so deep in my heart, they can never be pulled out!!

So there you have it! Some of the most meaningful ways I express my faith are allowing myself to be vulnerable and know that God will keep me safe and use it for His good and to keep my prayer life strong and active. You may think that when you see me smile and say hello that I'm just a nice, friendly guy, and I hope that's the case. But I'm really just trying to express and strengthen my faith.

Happy anniversary Emanuel! May the seeds of faith that God planted here continue to grow in His love and in our love for each other.

Jack Robbins

Worship Schedule for Holy Week, Easter, & Confirmation

Thursday, April 5

Maundy Thursday - worship with Holy Communion 7:30 p.m.

Friday, April 6

Good Friday - Tenebrae service 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, April 8

Sunrise service 7:00 a.m.

Easter breakfast 8:00 a.m.

Sunday School 9:15 a.m.

Festival worship with Holy Communion 10:30 a.m.

Sunday, April 15

Worship 8:00 a.m.

Sunday School 9:15 a.m.

Confirmation service with Holy Communion 10:30 a.m.

EMANUEL GOOD NEWS, a monthly publication of the Emanuel Lutheran Church
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Pastor - James L. Castello (419-592-0847) jameslcastello@yahoo.com

Missionaries to Hong Kong - Pastor John & Barbara LeMond

Congregation President - Laura Ellis

Women of the ELCA President - Rita Schweinhagen

Prayer Chain Co-ordinator - Carol Castello (419-592-0847 or cjcast@earthlink.net)

Worship & Music Coordinator/Organist - Angela Tonjes

Bell Choir Director - Hugh Schink

Living Spirit Director - Marv & Julie Mt.Castle, Holly Mohring

Parish Secretary - Patricia Mohring

Sunday School Superintendent -

Altar Guild Chairman - Julie Kohout

Good News Preschool Director - Judith

Demmel

Custodian - Jack Robbins

Church Office Hours

Monday - Thursday 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Friday 8:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Sunday, April 22, 2007

125th Anniversary Celebration of

Emanuel Lutheran Church, Napoleon, Ohio

Worship 8:00 and 10:30 a.m.

The worship services will be filled with our praise and a multitude of special music.

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Sunday School Hour 9:15 - 10:15 a.m.

You are cordially invited to join us in the basement for the

"The Sunday School Song and Prayer Festival"

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Sunday Celebration Highlights

A potluck will follow the 10:30 a.m. service.

Special door offering with proceeds designated towards the Renovation Loan

Keepsakes will be available for purchase.

*To Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus
to all generations for ever and ever! Amen.*

Ephesians 3:21

Building our past - Sharing our future 125 years of God's Grace

Confirmation

April 15, 2007

At the 10:30 service on Sunday, April 15, nine young men and women of our congregation will affirm their baptismal covenant. These young persons will be confirmed on that day:

Samuel Henry Elling
Benjaman Riley Flogaus
Konner Elliott Gerken
Gregory James Hall
James Paul Nation
Emily Christine Schwab
Dylan Michael Slee
Alison Michelle Storch
Danielle Jolynn Williams

Help us celebrate Emanuel's 125 years

Please look through your old photos, slides, movies, negatives, and digital media for images that have to do with Emanuel's 125 years. They can be dropped off at the church office. Your photos will be returned after they have been copied. We will select some of these for our Newsletter Photo Page each month. These photos can also be viewed on Emanuel's Web page: <http://www.emmanuelnapoleon.org>. Choose **What's New** and then choose **Newsletter Photo Pages**.

We are also looking for photos of these past interns: Pastor Robert Hartenfeld (1960), Pastor Paul Bockelman (1961), and Pastor Robert Laughlin (1968). If you have any of these pictures, please drop them off at the church office. They will be returned to you.

Renovation Loan

Special Door Offering – April 22, 2007

The 125 Committee, along with Church Council, has set a goal – pay off the renovation loan in our 125th year. To accomplish this goal we need to collect an additional \$18,000 this year. A special door offering will be collected at both the 8:00 and 10:30 services as part of the 125th Anniversary celebration.

Our 10:30 worship services will be broadcast on radio station WNDH 103.1 FM during the month of April.

SOUL FOOD

every Wednesday at 5:30 p.m.

Menus for April:

April 4 - Beef Roast with Potatoes & Carrots

April 11 - Chicken Enchilada Casserole

April 18 - Ham Loaf & Meat Loaf, Lipton Onion Potatoes, Candied Yams

April 25 - Baked Potato Bar

As always, menus subject to change!

Help is always welcomed, even with the simple duties of dishes and clean-up; just check out the sign-up sheets on the bulletin board by the church office. Celebrations of birthdays and anniversaries are always welcome, too; please feel free to bring a cake to recognize your special occasions at any time. Please plan to come enjoy a simple meal each week and enjoy the fellowship – definitely food for the body and the soul!

Council Chat - March 19, 2007

- The May donation will go to Maumee Valley Youth Center. It is possible a representative may speak about the center on April 29.
- The Sunday School children will partake in a Palm processional on Palm Sunday.
- A poster board of pictures featuring items that will be sold at an upcoming auction has been posted on the bulletin board near the office.
- Highlights for Emanuel's 125th Anniversary celebration scheduled for Sunday, April 22, 2007 were detailed. These highlights are also noted in this newsletter.
- By the recommendation of the synod, Emanuel will create and post a written policy for internet use.
- Statements of Faith will be a new feature in the monthly newsletters. Pastor Castello is spearheading this feature and encouraging writers to inspire us with their faith journeys.

Summer Sunday School begins May 27

Splash into Summer Sunday School and Dive into fun as we visit the Great Bible Reef. The Summer Sunday School session begins on May 27. We will decorate the basement and transform it into our Reef.

Each Sunday there will be stories, songs, games, crafts and even science experiments. You won't want to miss a Sunday!!

To volunteer to teach a Sunday, contact Michelle Slee 419.533.2290 or mslee@sauder.com.

Vacation Bible School - July 29 - August 3

Yahoo Buckaroos!

Mark your calendars now for Emanuel's VBS - July 29 through August 3. We are going to visit Avalanche Ranch and take a wild ride through God's word. This is fun you won't want to miss.

Palm Sunday Processional

We will be having a Palm Processional at both the 8:00 and 10:30 services on April 1. Children who would like to be in the processional should meet in the basement before the service.

- Thank you for all the cards and prayers and expressions of sympathy for my family during the illness and death of my father. A special thank you to my Sunday School class for all the prayers and cards, and also to a wonderful pastor. Leo & Juanita Clausen & families
- We wish to thank all the members and friends of Emanuel Lutheran Church for the cards, gifts and the many happy birthday wishes for my 90th birthday. Thank you very much.
-Ann & Orville Schnitkey
- Thank you who made our 60th anniversary such a memorable one with cards, gifts or kind words of congratulations. Bless you all! -Larry & Lois Wiechers
- We would like to thank all our friends at Emanuel for all the kind words, prayers and cards sent our way during Mom's illness and passing. It meant so much to us to know how much everyone cares. A special thank you to Pastor Castello for visiting Mom and bringing communion to her.
Kevin & Kathy Sonnenberg
- Many thanks to all who remembered me with cards and prayers during my recent stay at the hospital and nursing home. Thanks also to Pastor for his cheerful visits. I am still much in need of your continued support. -Ruth M. Eickhoff
- The Bell Choir would like to thank Ken and Nancy Lange for their monetary donation towards the purchase of our newest bell tree. Your support is truly appreciated.
- The Bell Choir would like to thank Julie Delventhal for our Annual Pizza Hut Lunch. We are so thankful for the continued support from Jim, Lynne and Julie and are blessed whenever we can be together with them.
- Bless you for collecting food for our food pantry. We rely solely on the donations of others to help those in need in Henry County. -Thank you, Shalom Food Pantry, Holgate

In 3000 B.C. Persians used colored eggs to herald the arrival of spring. Thirteenth century Macedonians were the first Christians on record to use colored eggs in Easter celebrations.

Giving/donation corner

_ Thank you to everyone who so generously supports the giving donation corner throughout the year. It has been truly magnificent seeing the overflowing of items that everyone donates month after month. All of the organizations are extremely grateful.

The April donations will benefit Mom's House (*see below*) and the May donations will benefit the Maumee Valley Youth Center.

If there is a needy organization that is near and dear to your heart that you would like to see the members of Emanuel support, you can suggest them to Ryan Hoffman or Carol Castello, or even better, join us for our monthly meeting April 5. We would love to hear any new ideas on needy organizations or any new events or activities that you would like to see at Emanuel. Thank you so much!!

-Ryan Hoffman and Carol Castello

Through the month of April we will be collecting items in our "caring corner" for Mom's House of Toledo, Ohio.

In 1983 Mom's House was founded by Peg Luksik as a single facility in Johnstown, PA. Her idea was simply to offer single parents facing an unplanned pregnancy a viable and practical alternative to the despair of abortion and the tragedy of welfare. Since then Mom's House has evolved into a national organization with headquarters in Johnstown and nine other locations in four states.

The Toledo location was established in 1993. The original location on Noble Street was licensed for 10 children, but after opening, it quickly became apparent that we were reaching just the "tip of the iceberg" with regard to the need in our community.

After a few years, plans for expansion became a top concern. In 1998, with the support of the St. Vincent's Hospital and many others in the Toledo Community, we were able to successfully raise funds to build a new state of

the art facility currently located on Franklin Avenue, while remaining debt-free. Although the facility has allowed us to accommodate three times the number of children, we still have a long waiting list of mothers wanting to enter the program.

Mom's House gives honor and glory to God by treating each person, born and pre-born, as a unique and priceless gift of a loving Creator. Mom's House touches hearts with God's loving grace.

The mission and philosophy of Mom's House is to prepare young mothers for the challenges of balancing educational goals with responsible parenting. We provide free quality daycare for their children while they attend school, in addition to offering a staff who provides loving extended family support; a tutoring program; a counseling program; weekly parenting classes; and a scholarship program.

Our philosophy of a "hand-up, not a hand-out" empowers these young women to help themselves. In return for our services, our

clients must attend school full-time, maintain passing grades, volunteer at Mom's House each week as well as embrace the mission and philosophy of the program. We realize these are lofty goals and a lot for one program to accomplish, but we feel the challenge is small in comparison to the need it addresses in the community.

Mom's House is a non-profit, non-sectarian agency with no restrictions to race, creed, color or national origin. Eligible full-time students and their children ages 6 weeks through pre-school are accepted into the program. Our facility is licensed by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and is recognized by their Step Up to Quality initiative.

Our current wish list of items includes:

Snacks: pretzels, cereal, graham crackers, yogurt, crackers, juice, fruit, etc.

Large Diapers

Baby Wipes

Paper towels - rolls and tri-fold

Laundry Detergent

Garbage bags - large and small

Office Supplies: copy paper, gift cards, pens, stamps, etc.

Children's gifts: new clothes (sizes 6 mo - 5 T), new toys, new books

Mom's gifts: toiletries, grocery store gift cards, school supplies

Batteries (all sizes)

For more information you can check their website at www.momshousetoledo.org

We are looking for person(s) to make baby blankets for our newest little ones. Please call the church office if you are willing and able to help in this area.

Membership News

New address:

Kevin & Kathy Sonnenberg (as of 4/3/07)
55 Duquesne
Napoleon, OH 43545

Please let us know of any family birth announcements, etc. so we can celebrate with you!

Remember our members in nursing homes and assisted living facilities with prayers,
cards, visits.

(Reim Eickhoff has moved from Alpine Village to the nursing home.)

Lutheran Home (1036 S. Perry St., Napoleon)

Reim Eickhoff

Margaret Fahy

Marge Gathman

Alfred "Petey" Ruetz

Marie Heuer

Irma Overhulse

Alpine Village Assisted Living (1032 S. Perry St., Napoleon)

Christine Rath (#412)

Miriam Smith (#303)

Carl Bockelman (#319)

Country View Haven (R858 Co Rd 15, Napoleon OH 43545)

Don Walters

Cincinnati (c/o Steve Wittenberg, 7225 Camargo Woods Dr., Cincinnati OH 45243)

Esther Wittenberg

Otterbein Portage Valley (20311 Pemberville Rd., Pemberville OH 43450)

Hildegarde Reiser (#313)

Health Ministry

Judy Hoffman

United Way of Henry County's Coming Alive – An Exercise Challenge

APRIL 23 - MAY 20

Coming Alive is a 4-week-long contest designed to increase activity levels of participants. Community groups will be in competition with other community groups competing for prizes

Coming Alive is open to individuals who live in Henry County but work outside the county, senior citizens, and individuals who do not work outside the home. Individuals must form a group of least 4 people to be eligible to enter the contest. People who work in Henry County must participate through their worksite.

Emanuel will again be involved in this program. Pat Mohring and Judy Hoffman are the coordinators.

You may enter the contest by filling out an entry form. Forms will be available in the bulletin insert or at the church office. Completed forms will be due by April 4 to the church office.

We hope to have many of you participate again this year.

Coming in May

We will be a part of a program called "Faith in Pink." This effort is being launched to address the high breast cancer mortality rate among women in the 18 counties of Northwest Ohio. Churches are being asked to participate by sharing health information with our members. We will have the opportunity to celebrate survivors and honor those who have lost their battle. If you would want to be a part of planning this effort, call or contact Judy Hoffman at 419-748-8242.

Bloodmobile Dates in April

Wednesday, April 4, 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. Patrick Henry High School

Saturday, April 7, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Harley-Davidson Sales & Service

Monday, April 23, 1 p.m. - 7 p.m. Battle of the Badges @ Napoleon AMVETS

Wednesday, April 25, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Henry Red Cross Chapterhouse

Thanks to all who purchased the 64 beautiful Easter plants which will adorn our sanctuary on Easter morning!

Burnice Agler - in loving memory of Russell, husband

Tiffany & Ed Biederstedt - in honor of Blake & Alexandria

Norm & Kathy Bostelman (2) - in loving memory of Harold Bostelman and Otto

Hahn; in honor of Heidi Bostelman, and Jeff & Susie Wagner

Dianne Bowen (2) - in loving memory of Herbert Eickhoff; in honor of Ruth M. Eickhoff

Elinor Brown - in loving memory of John

Leo & Juanita Clausen (2) - in loving memory of our parents, Cyril & Agnes Bauer; Lorena & Bryon

Shock, Albert Clausen

Joan Collier (4)

Carma DeCair & John Tipping (2) - in loving memory of Joe DeCair and Nedra Tipping; in honor of our children

Harold Delventhal - in loving memory of Mary Delventhal

Julie Delventhal (2) - in loving memory of Norm Delventhal

Michael & Mary DeWit (2) - in loving memory of Elmer (Pete) Cordes, Tom Cordes; in honor of Linda Smith

Hazel & Maxine Eickhoff - in loving memory of Alvin (Ike) Eickhoff

Ruth C. Eickhoff - in loving memory of Norbert Eickhoff

Shelley S. Higbea (10) - in loving memory of George & Donna Higbea; in honor of Cathy & Bill Glanz

Doug Hoffman (2) - in honor of our children and grandchildren

Tom & Barb Hoffman (4) - in loving memory of Robert & Lulu Arps, Art & Estella Hoffman; in honor of Lauren and Ryan & Andrea

Joe & Julie Kohout (2) - in honor of Erica & Ryan

Norm & Sue Kruse (3) - in honor of our kids and grandkids

McGinnis Family - in loving memory and honor of loved ones

Ron & Donna Lee Meyers - in loving memory of Rob Philip

Donald Mitchell - in honor of Jesus Christ

Maggi & John D. Mohler (2) - in loving memory of Marcie & Daris Mohler, Suzanne Lange Shumaker, Marie Sauer, Mary Hoeffel, Hermie Reiser, Lillian Reiser; in honor of Florian Sauer

Randy & Deb Nation (2) - in loving memory of Patsy Nation and Dion Burner; in honor of my parents, our children and grandchildren

Rog & Deb Rex

Jack Robbins (2) - in loving memory of Lester & Wilma Robbins

Don & Carolyn Schmidlin - in loving memory of loved ones

Ann & Orville Schnitkey - in loving memory of Hoover & Schnitkey families

Dave & Nanette Schwab & family (2)

Rupert & Rita Schweinhagen (2) - in honor of Sandy, Tammy & Brett, Eric & Melanie & Olivia

Alan & Shelly Storch - in honor of our family

Mark & Angela Tonjes - in honor of our three terrific sons: Zach, Dylan & Seth

Charlotte Wangrin

Lila Wernecke - in honor of our grandchildren, Brett, Nick, Devin, Gavin, Colin & Lilly

Mike, Gayla, Jessica, Laura, Sarah, Carl Yaney - in honor of Art & Denelda Rohrs

Statistics

Date	Attendance	Communed	Offerings
February 28 (7:30) Lenten service	153		\$1,361.00 Bldg Fd - \$50 in honor of Orville Schnitkey's 90 th birthday
March 4	112 + 135 (247)	108	\$5,220.99 Bldg Fd - \$890 Bldg Fd mem - \$10 (F. Kloos) 14 for Christ - \$14 World Hngr - \$5
March 7 (7:30) Lenten service	151		\$704.00
March 11	108 + 133 (241)	113	\$4,980.10 Bldg Fd - \$140 Bldg Fd mem - \$75 (W. Genter) World Hngr - \$15
March 14 (2:30)		6	
March 14 (7:30) Lenten service	147		\$757.00
March 18	132 + 151 (283)		\$4,296.04 Bldg Fd - \$150 "14 for Christ" - \$14 World Hngr - \$26 Tables - \$90

News from around the Community

- "Join us for the 3rd Annual St. Luke Bake-Off on Palm Sunday, April 1, 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m. Famous baked goodies for sampling, along with ham sandwiches, chips, and drinks. We promise there will be more than your stomach can hold. There will be a free will donation to help the youth group members get to the LCMS National Youth Gathering in Orlando in July."

WELCA News

-Rita Schweinhagen for the WELCA Board

Do you remember these?

Here are the past Bible study topics that we've covered in *Lutheran Woman Today*. Did your circle journey with the thousands of women throughout the organization who studied these books and topics together?

<u>Year</u>	<u>Topic</u>		
1988	Mark	1998	Luke
1989	The Psalms	1999	Revelation (Jan '99–May '99) and Genesis (Sept '99–May '00)
1990	Women in the Bible	2000	Acts
1991	Stewardship	2001	Lord's Prayer
1992	Matthew	2002	John
1993	Corinthians	2003	Forming Community with Paul: 1 Thessalonians, Philemon, Philippians
1994	Hebrews	2004	The Parables
1995	The Ten Commandments	2005	The Fruit of the Spirit
1996	Messiah Among Us	2006	Hope in God in Times of Suffering
1997	Exodus		

Sometimes it's good to think about all the Bible studies we've had the opportunity to study. This month we will be considering the God to whom we pray in times of suffering. All are welcome. Just check the calendar to see when the circles are meeting.

It's not too late to send your reservation in for the 2007 Spring Assembly at St. Martin's in Archbold on Saturday, April 14. The time is from 8:30 - 12:30; cost is \$5.00 (which includes lunch). The speaker is Henry County's Extension Educator, Nancy Stehulak. Let's go as a group — we will be meeting at the church parking lot at 7:45. Registration forms are on the bulletin board next to the church office. Please consider!

Also for you to place on your calendars is the Northwestern Ohio Synodical Convention on June 16 at St. Mark's in Bowling Green. More on this coming later.

Our next General Meeting will be a picnic on June 7. Emanuel's Bloodmobile will be held June 25 from 12 - 6.

There's always lots to do, ladies. Thanks for all you have done already.

And please don't you ever forget: God loves you and I love you. What a great feeling!

Worship participants in April

Ushers

8:00 Mike Yaney, Mike Mohring,
Jack Ruby, Lee Weirauch
10:30 Karl Wiechers, Gary Bostelman,
Rupert Schweinhagen, Larry Ashbaugh

Lay assistants

8:00 Sandi Weirauch
10:30 Nancy Schink

4/5 Maundy Thursday: Betsy Mix
4/6 Good Friday: Ed Peper

Altar Guild

Julie Kohout & Andrea Hoffman

Acolytes

8:00 Stephanie Ruby & Meredith Hoops
10:30 David Yunker & Justin Allison

4/5 Maundy Thurs.: Dylan Slee & Ben Flogaus
4/6 Good Friday:
Candles: Danielle Williams & Emily Schwab
Readers: Konner Gerken, Ben Flogaus,
James Nation, Greg Hall, Dylan Slee,
Sam Elling
Pascal Candle: Konner Gerken
Organ: Danielle Williams

Altar Flowers

April 1 - Virginia Dillon
April 8 - Ben & Judy Michaelis in loving memory of Barbara Michaelis
April 15 - in honor of Alexandria Biederstedt's 9th birthday
- in loving memory of Melle Landversicht
April 22 - Alan & Shelly Storch in honor of Neil's 11th birthday
April 29 - Ed & Tiffany Biederstedt in honor of their 17th wedding anniversary

Open dates

July 22, 29 September 30 November 4

Altar flowers cost \$20. This amount should be placed in the offering plate and designated for altar flowers. Flowers are automatically ordered from Cattails. If you have a special flower, color or container request, Cattails can customize your arrangement. Price of the arrangement can be increased also. If you wish to make your own arrangements, you should notify the church office a couple weeks ahead of the designated Sunday.

K.F.C.
Kids For Christ

We are looking into taking part in the Henry County Solid Waste District's annual litter roundup this month. We will probably do our "picking up" on Sunday afternoon, April 29, with a "post-pick-up party" at the Castellós' afterward.

Even with the public skating canceled unexpectedly at the BGSU ice arena last month, we still enjoyed an ice-filled afternoon as we ventured to the dam at Grand Rapids, watching the ice floes over the dam, hiking the canal trail, and topping the afternoon off with ice cream!

Wanted
Your Spartan product Bar Codes

We can earn "cash for trash" by saving the UPCs from any Spartan brand products (purchased at the Pharm and/or Food Town). There is a collection envelope posted on the bulletin board for your UPCs.

Club Christ
High School Youth

Holly Mohring

Due to lack of interest, Club Christ events have been postponed for the moment. Please keep an eye on your mailboxes for updated famine information, still tentatively planned.

We are hoping to visit soon with future Club Christ-ers to welcome them to the fold and will once again have a breakfast or pizza party in May to say goodbye to our old members and hello to the young'ins. Keep your eyes peeled for information that will come along regarding our last few events!

My Mexico Trip ...

Carol Castello

In January I was privileged to travel to Mexico as part of “Ubuntu University II”, in immersion experience/mission trip coordinated through the ELCA Youth Ministries and the Augsburg Center for Global Education with a grant from the World Hunger Program. I had applied for this trip back in September and was one of a group of 24 adults, college students, and high school youth who traveled to Mexico for a two-week program that included new cultural experiences as well as meeting with Mexicans from diverse backgrounds to learn more about hunger, poverty, and justice issues. Our group members came from Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Minnesota, Maine, California, Arizona, Indiana, New Jersey, Nebraska, Illinois, and me from Ohio.

Our trip was an extension of the theme of the 2006 National Youth Gathering, “Cruzando: Journey with Jesus”, and our daily devotions and personal reflections were all centered on how we journey with Jesus each day in our own individual lives. Our travels in Mexico were based in three areas as we moved steadily from familiar surroundings to situations that were totally foreign to us: from Mexico City, the largest city in the world; to Cuernavaca, a city in the state of Morelos; to Tlapa, a small town in the state of Guerrero, one of the poorest and most oppressed regions anywhere. We traveled from the cities, where our obvious “U.S. American-ness” made us the target of beggars and pickpockets, to the Sierra Madre Mountains, where it protected us from the harassment of paramilitary squads.

People have asked me, “How was your trip?” And it remains a difficult question to answer. To call this a “mission trip” was to put a simple “label” on it for me so that people might have a vague idea of what it was all about. I have discovered that that

isn’t at all true. “What did you do there?” is the second most common question, because people tend to think that a “mission trip” involves rebuilding homes or helping with medical needs or “doing” something. We simply, yet profoundly, met with people and talked with people and listened and learned.

It wasn’t until I went to Mexico that I realized how very little I know about this neighbor to our south. And of course, the whole issue of immigration was a large part of our experience, as well as hearing first-hand about the affects of NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Agreement) from the Mexican perspective.

One of the most impactful devotions was a journey with the suffering Christ through the agonies of His crucifixion. Through it, we discovered that it is the suffering Christ Who journeys most with those who live on the margins, with the poor, with the migrants, and with those who lack opportunities that we, in our privilege, take for granted. We were challenged to remain uncomfortable with those issues that disturbed us and angered us, the injustices, and the “burden of privilege” which we know. One of the most moving speakers was a woman from El Salvador who was forced to flee that country under threat of death and settled in Mexico City, where she ministers to the poor people in her neighborhood without the support of any pastor and dreams of returning home again.

As Christians, we are clearly called to journey with Jesus and are asked to embody his ministry. We are asked to celebrate with people, partake in meals with people, pray with people, and accompany people in their struggles. That is what we “did” in Mexico.