

The Spotlight

Volume 31, Issue 12

December 2011

Is There Room in Your Heart for Jesus?

"O come to my heart, Lord Jesus, there is room in my heart for thee."

This refrain from Hymn #127 - "*Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne*" - always gives me pause. Even though I love singing this song at Christmas I wonder in moments of reflection how much room there really is for Jesus in my heart. I'd like to think a lot but I'm at a loss on how to measure the space.

I know there's a lot of room for "me" in my heart. The visible side of both my public and private life pretty much tells that story. And when you add all that's going on in my invisible life, the life of my mind and heart, well - that's something you'll never see or know unless I tell you. As St. Paul's words to the Corinthians expresses it - no one knows the thoughts of a man except the man himself, (1 Corinthians 2:11).

In other words you only know me to the extent that I reveal myself to you. And when it comes to revealing how much room there is in my heart for Jesus - well I'm going to tell you a lot, but the truth might be something else. You see, if I tell you what's going on inside my head, that makes me really vulnerable. Vulnerable to you and to criticism and that's risky.

On the other hand, if we never take risks in revealing ourselves to one another,

er, how are we to truly care for one another in the body of Christ?

Sometimes I feel like I'm at a crossroad in life and ministry. I perceive one direction leading to more openness and compassion and the other direction to being more closed and critical. Both roads are dangerous but the one leading to openness and compassion has fewer pot holes.

I also have a sneaky feeling that the more open and compassionate a person is, the more room there is for Jesus in one's life. I don't have a lot of experience in this matter, but I suspect to be more open and compassionate helps shift the focus from being self-centered to other people centered. And when our focus is on other people, Jesus steps in to fill in the empty spaces of our lives thus creating more room for himself.

So come to my heart, Lord Jesus, there IS room in my heart for you AND others.

Pastor Mark



Searchers Still Working

The Youth and Family Minister Search Committee has been busy. We have been meeting weekly to pray, finalize the Job Description and develop our SRCC Church Profile. Both of these documents have been posted on the SRCC Web site and the Covenant denominational job posting Web site, called CovConnect. The committee has received several inquiries and is in the process of evaluating those and contacting the applicants. Our timeline is that we would like to interview candidates and select one to present to the congregation by the

second quarter of 2012. If you know of any who may be interested in the position, direct them to the SRCC Web site (if s/he is not in the Covenant Ministerium) or to CovConnect. Both sites have instructions for contacting our committee. Remember to pray for this process, the committee, and the candidates. If you have any questions call me or any of the committee members.

Dave Danielson,
for the Search Committee

Community Opportunities

December events at Autumn Ridge

Saturday, December 10, 5:30 PM

A Children's Christmas musical,
For the Glory of the King

Saturday, December 17, 5:30 PM

Handel's Messiah which includes a sing-along. Bring your own score or pick up a copy at the door.

There is a poster on the bulletin board with other services and times.

Mini-Carefest December 17: 8:30-Noon

Gather a few family members or friends and join us as we deep clean at Century, Kellogg, and John Adams public schools. Sign up online today at www.rochestercarefest.org.

Christmas Eve Services at Rochester Covenant Church

5 PM Family Service

10:30 PM Candle Light Service

Rochester area Women's Connection Luncheon at Clarion Inn

Sponsored by Stonecroft Ministries

Tuesday, December 13: 11:45 - 1:30

Music by Second Wind

Speaker: Nancy Reiman on the topic, "Timeless Christmas Traditions"

Call Jan, 288-1144 for reservations, \$10

The Miracle 2012

A Recreation of the Life of Christ

Auditions for this community-wide musical are Friday, January 6, 5-9 PM and Saturday, January 7, 1-5 PM and 7-9 PM at Bethel Lutheran Church. Actors, dancers, singers, musicians, and crew people are needed. Come prepared with sheet music to sing and dance at the auditions. The shows will be March 16, 17, 18, 23, 24, and 25. This is a great outreach opportunity for our community.

Young Life St. Cloud Update from Todd & Lisa Myra

Young Life St. Cloud has had an exciting fall! After talking over my sports photography idea with the principal at Apollo, our target high school, I bought a professional zoom lens to allow me to take great shots of the action at sporting events. I started going to soccer and football games, taking hundreds of pictures. I then brought my pictures into the school and prayed for a way to start connecting with the athletes I was taking pictures of. During homecoming week, I saw one of the football players wearing his jersey, #23. I knew I had a bunch of pictures of #23 so I went up to him, introduced myself and offered to show him the pictures I'd taken. From there everything just took off and I now have kids crowded around me at lunch handing me their thumb drives. I download their pictures and let them have them for free.

Mission Bulletin Board

Check out the mission bulletin board for updates from our missionaries. Recent letters are posted from Ken &

It has been a REALLY great way to meet kids! My other leaders have also been able to come with me at these lunch-times to meet these new kids. In only a few weeks we have gotten to know over 20 brand new kids! This weekend we are going to a snowboard competition as our first event outside of school with this new group of teens. This week I'm starting into the basketball and hockey season. It is keeping me busy but it is paying off and is awesome!

I'm also excited to tell you that we continue to hang out with "Luke" who we wrote about in our last newsletter. He came to camp last summer and heard the gospel for the first time. He's a great kid that comes from a terrible home. We had the chance to have him over for Thanksgiving dinner and it was a blessing to get to share with him an afternoon with a loving family. We are praying that he'll give his life to Christ.

We are also praying for 7 new committee members so that we can be a group of 10. We'd also like prayers for new leaders on fire to share the gospel with teens- we're especially in need of another girl leader to focus on some junior high girls that we've been getting to know.

Thank you so much for your partnership with us!

Todd & Lisa Myra

Jessica Olson, Pete & Cindy Ekstrand, Dave & Judy Dolan, and Rick & Brenda Naatz.

New Library Books to Help Relate to Muslims

When our missionary, Ken Satterberg was here, he recommended three books to help us in our conversations with our Muslim neighbors and friends and understanding their culture. You'll find these books in our church library under Missions. Check them out.

A ***Muslim's Heart*** by Edward Hoskins provides Christians with a crash course in relating to their Muslim friends, neighbors, and coworkers.

Muslims, Christians, and Jesus by Carl Meadearis shows how common ground is the best foundation for friend-

ships and for hearts turning to Jesus. He gives practical information and fascinating stories showing culturally sensitive ways for Christians to get to know Muslims on a personal level.

Miniskirts, Mothers and Muslims by Christine Mallouhi is a witty book that reveals the conventions that govern Muslim society and describes the unwitting mistakes Westerners can make when meeting Muslims. She talks about status, the place of women, the veil, stereotypes, segregation and restrictions, family life, hospitality and witness.

Cooking Safely Workshop

You recently may have heard of the "Church Lady Bill " which went into effect August 2011. In order to remain in compliance with this new law, churches are required to have at least one "food-safe" educated volunteer at each church fellowship meal. Since I am a certified food manager I am qualified to educate volunteers to provide this service. The more people who are educated, the easier it will be to continue to have Fika, fellowship coffee hour, CHIC fundraisers, summer picnics and other fellowship meals. You will also find the education

useful for improving the safety of food prepared in the home and other locations.

Please mark your calendar for January 15 at 3:30 PM to come to Julie Warner's home, 4248 48th St. NE, to participate in a Food Safety Workshop. I guarantee a good time of fellowship and some tasty treats. If you have any questions, please contact Julie at 288-4127 or at warner.jul@gmail.com. I'd appreciate knowing if you plan to attend.

Bon Appetite!

Julie

Alaska Christian College Christmas Project

Once again this year we have the opportunity to help students at Alaska Christian College with scholarship money to support their educational and spiritual goals. Pick up a flyer, choose a student card and envelope from the stand in the hall. Return the bottom half

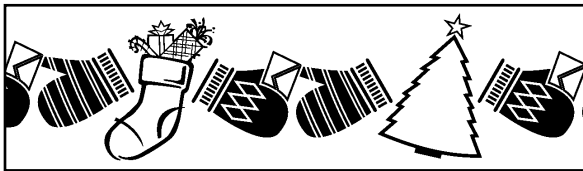
of the card in the envelope with your gift. Your prayers are appreciated for the student you choose. Thanks for supporting students who lack resources and need encouragement to make a better life for themselves.

December Youth Events

December 14: 7-8:30 PM
Middle & High School Youth Group

December 17: 4:30 - 7 PM Middle School Christmas Party in the Youth Building
6:00 - whenever - High School Christmas Party. Both groups will be together from 6-7 for dinner. Please bring a side dish to share.

December 28: Middle School Broomball



January Dates

January 1: 8:50 AM First Sunday Fika
9:30 AM Worship
11:00 AM All Church Prayer

January 2: 4:30 - 8:00 PM CHIC Fundraiser at Pizza Ranch in Stewartville. All tips and 10% of all sales will go to support CHIC students who will be bussing tables that evening.

January 8: Mission Moment by Rick & Brenda Naatz, SIM missionaries to Nigeria

January 29: 12:00 PM CHIC Lunch
1:00 PM Congregational Annual Meeting
Election of new leadership and review of 2011

A new Women's Bible Study will start in January on Tuesday or Wednesday evening, Believing God by Beth Moore. Watch for more details or contact Jeanette Lorang.



- 1 - Chuck Lucas
- 1 - Danielle Hanson
- 2 - Grant Reimer
- 7 - Lee Bredeson
- 16 - Marty Wolfe
- 17 - Lynda Capps
- 19 - Shaylan Johnson
- 27 - Marilyn Riegler
- 30 - Charles Taylor

December Anniversaries

- 23 - Dave & Jeannie Byer
- 27 - Lee & Tricia Bredeson
- 27 - Matt & Patty Iott

Greeters

- 4 - Heikes
- 11 - Driscoll
- 18 - Halbmaier
- 25 - Stewart

Set-Up

- Hanson
- Hokanson
- Huebner
- Iott

Bible Quiz Results

Novice League: Ella Ouverson's team, Flowers of the Field placed 1st with Ella placing 2nd for individuals.

Little League: Faith Boyum, Sam & Evan Ouverson's team, Doubled-Edged Sword place 2nd with Faith placing 3rd and Evan placing 4th for individuals.

AB League: Kohl Hanson placed 2nd and Grace Boyum tied for 3rd place for individuals.

Other SRCC quizzers include Ashton & Taylor Hanson and Rebekah Novinger.