

SEEDS OF GRACE

A Monthly Publication of Atascocita Lutheran Church
7927 FM 1960 East, Humble, Texas

December 2009

Volume 14

Number 12

Christmas Eve Worship Gatherings December 24th

4:00 P.M.

Children's Christmas Program
With Holy Communion



"...You will bear a son, and
you will name him Jesus."
Luke 1:31

6:00 P.M.

Candlelight Worship
With Holy Communion



Candlelight
Service

8:00 P.M.

Candlelight Worship
With Holy Com-
munion

11:00 P.M.

Candlelight "Midnight Mass"
Ushering in





Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we continue our journey through the season of Advent, we again focus on preparing for the birth of the Christ child. This past month or so, I have been doing a lot of preparation in a different way. For those of you who are unaware, we have our house up for sale. This is something that Linnae and I have been considering for at least a couple of years. We finally decided that this is the time, especially since our son, Jesse, moved up to Minnesota a few months ago.

For those of you who own homes, you know the constant upkeep that needs to take place, the never ending expense of repairs and upgrades. With that being said, we have been so fortunate and grateful for the house that has served as a home for Linnae and I and our children during their formative years. However, we have come to the conclusion that we don't need 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, and 2 living areas for just the three of us. Therefore, we have decided to "downsize" (using the catchphrase of the day). This does not mean that we will be moving out of the area. We will be looking for a townhome or small house to rent in the Atascocita/Kingwood area.

As some of you know, I am not gifted when it comes to "fixing" things. When I try, I end up doing even more damage in many cases. We believe that renting will give us the opportunity to do more things together as a family, plus enable us to be better stewards of our time and money.

Preparing to sell a house is a big job. It takes much time and energy. So it does with any big event. Of course, as a family of faith, we are currently preparing for what we understand to be the biggest event in all of history. God takes on human flesh and comes to us as a baby in a manger. The baby becomes a child, and the child becomes a man. And the man will change the world forever.

Our Scripture readings during Advent talk about what this means: The shaking of the heavens and the earth, the wars and rumors of wars, a prophet calling out in the wilderness. These signs tell us the time is near. It is time to prepare.

So as we prepare for the many things that are happening in our lives during this holiday season, let us also prepare for the coming of our Lord. Take time to worship, to pray, to repent, to share, to serve. These things will make us ready and acceptable to God when he comes to us again and again and again, in the here and now, each and every day.

Pastor Gary L. Anholt



***His name shall be called...
Prince of Peace.***

Isaiah 9:6

"I've always wanted to know..."

What is an Advent wreath?

The Advent wreath is a symbol to focus our attention at this season of hope and expectation of the coming on Christ as a baby in the manger and in glory at the end of time..

With its roots in the pre-Christian practices of northern Europe, Christians adopted this in the Middle Ages by using fire and light to represent Christ's coming into the world. Using this same symbolism, the Advent wreath developed a few centuries ago in Germany as a sign of the waiting and hopeful expectation of the return in glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.* The wreath, a circle, came to represent the eternal victory over death through Jesus Christ. The evergreens were a sign of the faithfulness of God to God's people, even in death, and the lighted candles were a reminder of the light of Christ brought into the world.



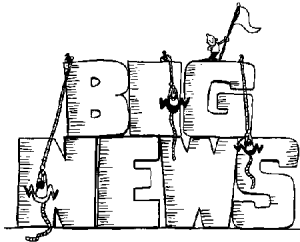
WORSHIP ENRICHMENT
TEAM

ADULT LEARNING DURING ADVENT

There will two (2) electives for Adult Life-Long Learning on Sunday mornings during **ADVENT 2009** (November 29-December 20).

Option #1—**ADVENT REFLECTIONS**, a four week Bible Study, taught by **Pastor Anholt**, is a part of the Book of Faith emphasis of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Biblical texts with Advent themes will be considered as a part of the spiritual discipline of the season.

Option #2 — **THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS INVENTORY**, to be led by **Sharon Sledge**, will provide participants with an opportunity to assess their God-given spiritual giftedness and discern how best to acknowledge, employ and best evaluation personal life based upon the knowledge gained.



Upcoming: Dedication

Pastor, the music staff, the Worship Environment Team, the Worship Enrichment Team are all working together to make plans for the dedication of our renewed and expanded sanctuary space. Conversations are in progress. Anyone in the congregation who has questions or comments to share should contact **Claudia Brookover** who will share them with the group. (czbrookover@aol.com or 281 - 358 - 6539)

Contributions for the ALC Mission, Special

OCTOBER 2009

Date	Mission Plan Support	Faith Venture	Designated
OCT 4	5,168.00	1990.00	300
OCT 11	4,352.00	515.00	0.00
OCT 18	4,749.00	5450.00	0.00

We're on the web!
alutheranchurch.org



Fall Festival Benefit: God's Work, Our Hands in Action

Well, our hands were certainly busy on October 10, and our planning and hard work has enabled us to make a positive difference in the lives of many of our neighbors, both two-legged and four-legged. We raised \$6,400 at the Festival and, with a matching gift of \$1,600 from Thrivent, we have \$8,000 to disburse to a number of local charities. This is \$2,000 more than last year and, in today's economy, demonstrates that what we're doing is important and those in our community will continue to support our efforts.

This year's proceeds will benefit the following organizations: Chrysalis School, Cub Scouts, Family Promise of Lake Houston, FamilyTime, Golden Beginnings, HAAM, Team Happy Hour 3-day Komen Walk, and Twyla's Friends.

I would like to thank everyone who volunteered their time, talent and treasure to make this year's Festival the best in recent history. I particularly want to thank the Fall Festival Leadership Team for making the benefit possible: **Monica Barnett, Ben Beauchamp, Kristin Bieber, Judy Cargill, Heather Espenlaub, Jennifer Gronwaldt, Ken Holder, Leann Hutto, Judy Johnson, Matthew Johnson, Rick Kauffman, Chris Lund, Erik Mikesell and Geoff Potter.** Special thanks also to **Larry Baker** for ensuring our grounds were in good shape, **David Berthold** for making sure our big sign was put up amidst the construction, **Judy Christiansen** for doing our other signage, and **Fred Swavelly** for putting our numbers together and writing those all-important checks.

Thanks also go to some of our good neighbors who provided their services and support. These include Tin Roof Barbecue, which once again let us borrow their barbeque cooker; Ronnie Veron, who provided storage and preparation resources for the meat; Bishop's Kwik Kar, which promoted the Festival on their sign; *The Tribune*, which provided a beautiful, free color ad; Walmart and Panera Bread, which donated gift cards for the raffle booth, and several individuals who donated items for the raffle booth.

I will be stepping down as the Fall Festival team leader after five years in order to pursue other opportunities to serve. I also feel it is important to give other people a chance to serve in this ministry and bring to the table a fresh perspective and new ideas. We started out small five years ago, and have added many good things along the way, such as the kids' zone, book nook, pumpkin patch, music, and indoor dining. I know there is someone out there who has the creativity and inspiration to take this to the next level. Here is your opportunity! Please contact **Joy Berthold** at 281-812-1280 or via email at mencrv@aol.com.

Contributions for the ALC Mission, Special/Designated & Other

SEPTEMBER 2009					
Date	Mission Plan Support	Faith Venture	Designated	Sunday School	Total
SEPT 6	5,440.00	2320.00		1.50	7,761.50
SEPT 13	5,390.00	1,300.00	400.00	9.00	7,099.00
SEPT 20	3,034.00	780.00		3.00	3,817.00
SEPT 27	4,841.00	1000.00	1290.00	10.00	7,141.00
Totals	\$ 18,705.00	\$ 5,400.00	\$1,690.00	\$ 23.50	\$ 25,818.50

Are you curious? Do you wonder what is going on with the construction?

Check a display of photographs. They are posted at the end of the hall (by the coffee bar, in the 'mini fellowship' area). Check often because there are new shots weekly.

Look for the construction man announcing "Beyond These Walls ..."



STEWARDSHIP NEWS

NOW LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE...! (October)

Contributions slowed a bit again in October. Through the end of August every month in 2009 had been a better one for income than in 2008. The October income for support of the 2009 Spending Plan for Mission was down \$707.00 from last year. Actual income for the mission was **\$ 17,772.00**. FYI – November income is improved through the first two weeks of the month!

Giving for **FAITH VENTURE 2007** was **\$8,815**. When ALC begins paying the new mortgage sometime in mid-2010 the monthly amount will be approximately \$8,800. Please be regular and regular with your **FV07** offerings.

Average worship attendance in October was 146 per week.

MISSION MOMENT – December's focus is upon the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's **WORLD HUNGER APPEAL**. For several decades the national church has been coordinating the comprehensive effort to improve technology, education, and other nutritional dimensions for hungry persons both in the United States and in countries around the world. Offerings made the World Hunger Appeal both inform and feed the recipients of the generosity of ELCA Lutherans. You can learn more about this marvelous multi-dimensional ministry by going to the website: www.elca.org and searching for World Hunger Appeal.

The **2009 PONY EXPRESS** Saddlebag relay for stewardship education and response is coming to a conclusion as this article is being written. As of the middle of November 84 2010 Estimates of Giving had been received with a **\$ 256,880** committed to fuel the mission and ministry plans for the year. This compares to 53 commitments for a combined **\$179,554** in last year's effort. Thanks for your continued participation in our combined effort to be more discipleship centered than membership oriented!

UPDATE on FAITH VENTURE 2007 – This is an advance notice that the Building Task Force and the Stewardship Work Group will be delivering a publication in November that will advertise special giving opportunities related to the new and renewed facilities project. Among the items to be listed will be the opportunity to make contributions to underwrite the cost for the new altar furniture, seating and other worship related items and special projects. Each item will be described briefly and denote the amount needed to pay for that item. Contributions may be made as a gift to honor a person(s), in memory of a person(s), to recognize a special personal or family event, or a "Given to the Glory of God" designation.

In Loving Memory of the Rev. Robert D. DeYoung

Memorial Service

December 7th, 2009

Noon

Our Savior's Lutheran Church

1800 21st Ave.

Greeley, CO 80631

Condolences may be directed to his wife ~ Ms. Rosalee DeYoung and family
2017 74th Ave., Greeley, Colorado, 80634-9692

In honor of his memory and in lieu of flowers, donations may be made to
Heifer Project International at <http://www.heifer.org/myregistry/rdeyoung> or
Heifer Project International, 1 World Avenue, Little Rock, AR 72202

Robert Douglas DeYoung passed away Thursday, November 26, 2009 in Greeley, Colorado. He was born on August 26, 1934 to Irving and Helen (Foster) DeYoung in Los Angeles, California. He grew up in Santa Monica, California and attended Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa. It was there that he met his wife of 53 years, Rosalee Gebers DeYoung. They were married on June 3, 1956 and had six children, Judee, Jill, Bob, Kerry, Kris and James. He was ordained a Lutheran minister in 1959 at Wartburg Seminary. This was a call he answered tirelessly for 50 years, never missing a single service. His ministries took him and his family from Dickinson, North Dakota to Omaha, Nebraska; Grand Junction, Colorado; Parker, Colorado; Mount Prospect, Illinois; Humble, Texas and finally Dallas, Texas. Three of those congregations, Lutheran Church of the Master, in Omaha, Nebraska; Joy Lutheran in Parker, Colorado and Atascocita Lutheran in Humble, Texas were missions that he started from the ground up. These churches continue to flourish today. He was blessed with the gift of gab as well as perseverance, which allowed him to accomplish nearly everything he set out to do.

After Bob and Rosie retired, they finally landed in Greeley, Colorado and he continued to stay busy serving churches when called upon to help. He got where he needed to go in his faithful Toyota Paseo, with more than 299,000 miles on it. He and Rosie loved to travel (occasionally in the Toyota) and spend time with the kids and grandkids whenever possible. He also enjoyed socializing with the OPUS group (Old People Up to Something) and many other friends.

Bob is survived by his wife, Rosie, his children, Judee and husband Roger of Salina, Kansas; Jill and husband Mike of St. Charles, Missouri; Bob and wife Ruby of Los Angeles, California; Kerry of The Woodlands, Texas; Kris and husband Casey of Austin, Texas; James and wife Annette of Golden, Colorado, and his brother Rev. John DeYoung of Sugarland, Texas. He was Pop-Pop to his eight grandchildren, Kelly and husband Kirk, Joe, Emily, Ian, Katie, Cooper, Abbi and Kimberly.

Atascocita Lutheran Church Leadership Team Meeting - November 6, 2009

Present: Craig Anderson, Joy Berthold, Robert Graham, Pastor Anholt, Judy Cargill, Fred Swavely, Larry Baker, Kari Galloway

Opening Prayer: Pastor Gary

Treasurer's Report: Fred Swavely

§ YTD 10/31/09 giving is down by 2%; expenses are under budget by about 8%; available cash on hand (excluding designated funds) is \$22,173. ALC is very fiscally sound.

§ September and October giving has been showing a downward trend.

Mission Planning for 2010: Craig Anderson

§ Response to Pony Express program has been phenomenal. As of this date, 74 commitment cards have been received totaling \$231,000. Last year, we had 53 cards turned in for a total of \$180,000. And there are still several cards outstanding.

§ Leadership team members were asked to have their final budget numbers to George Brookover no later than November 23.

Sexton Position: Pastor Gary/Larry Baker

§ Larry will develop a job description for the sexton position and begin communicating that we are looking to fill this position.

§ Kari will assist in the search for suitable candidates.

Construction Update/Mission Investment Fund/Faith

Venture: Craig Anderson

§ Construction is progressing well.

§ Randy Krueger, in his new role as Faith Venture treasurer, is working to get all of the financials in order.

§ A construction financial update was distributed at the meeting for review.

§ We need to start thinking about Faith Venture Part II, which will commence in October 2010.

Adult Learning Planning Team Update: Pastor Gary

§ This ad hoc group came together to develop education options for adult learning on Sunday mornings.

§ Two classes will be offered on Sunday mornings and are currently scheduled through May 2010.

§ The group had been seeking rental space for additional classes, but it was recommended that no such action be taken until the building is completed as there will be additional space available at that time.

Easement Update: Craig Anderson

§ There has been no response from the current owners of the adjacent property and no further communication has taken place.

§ The current easement agreement expires in February 2010..

Nominating Committee: Craig Anderson

§ The leadership team members were asked to begin thinking of possible candidates to serve on the Nominating Committee. We need two candidates from early service and two from late service.

§ Craig, Joy and Sid will be leaving their current positions in January. Judy and Kari have served two terms each and can choose to serve for another two-year term or step down in January.

§ The leadership team will vote on Nominating Committee members at the December 3 meeting.

§ The congregational meeting is scheduled for January 24, 2010.

Miscellaneous

§ Larry will schedule the sewer line repair over the Christmas break so Chrysalis School is not impacted by the playground being dug up. The \$1,200 cost will come out of the emergency repair fund.

§ Office renovation may be on hold until early 2010 due to construction work being done in the narthex. The Hoyts will donate flooring and the Sledges are looking for cabinets. Many individuals have volunteered to help with the work.

§ Joy provided a Fall Festival update. We raised \$6,400 at the Festival and, with a matching grant of \$1,600 from Thrivent, we will have \$8,000 to be disbursed to local charities, \$2,000 more than last year. We are currently waiting for the funds from Thrivent before making disbursements.

ALC Web Site: Pastor Gary

§ Pastor reminded all team leaders that they need to be updating their portion of the ALC web site. Our new web master, Roy Pearson, is a great resource, but he needs to be getting information from the team leaders.

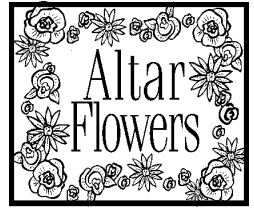
The meeting ended with the Lord's Prayer.

The next leadership team meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 3 at 7:00 pm.

Celebrating Their ANNIVERSARY

- Dec. 2 Robin & Marie Wilkinson
 5 Russell & Tami Barras

Altar Flowers Given With Love



- Dec. 6 by the Swendsen family
 in memory of Bill Swendsen
 13 by Tommy & Joy Cook in memory of Adela Teichelman
 20 by Larry & Joan Baker in honor of their 26th wedding anniversary
 27 Open

Celebrating Birthdays

- Dec. 2 Pat Muehl
 Jerry Weeks
 3 Tristan Hutchinson
 4 Irene Morace
 5 Zackery Cargill
 Tyler Croskey
 9 Janet Beauchamp
 Claudia Brookover
 13 Brenda Wiley
 14 Allen DeWoody
 15 Tim Trautman
 21 Todd Evans
 Isaac Graham
 22 David Alley
 26 Rita Foisie
 28 Carol Gray
 29 Delores Ewing



Sign up in the narthex to give altar flowers. Our church florist will make a beautiful arrangement. Cost is \$40.

Baptisms

Addison Faith Hutto
Baptized on November 15, 2009

IF YOU HAD A BIRTHDAY OR AN ANNIVERSARY DURING THIS MONTH AND YOUR NAME DOES NOT APPEAR ON THIS LIST, PLEASE CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE.

Homes for our Troops Basket Project

Thank you, members of ALC, for your generous donations to the basket project for Homes for our Troops. The basket had a value of \$200 and was auctioned for \$200. An additional cash donation of \$315 was made in the name of Anthony Thompson, the wounded Iraq war veteran. The entire event raised approximately \$20,000 toward this family's new home.

It is through your generosity that Atascocita Lutheran Church was able to make this much appreciated contribution.

"What's Going on at HAAM?"

Angel Tree: We have signed Atascocita Lutheran Church up to help at the Angel Tree in Deerbrook Mall on Fridays, December 4 and 11. Our shift runs from 12-8. Any volunteers who would be able to man the Angel Tree table for a two-hour shift within that time would be appreciated. For more information or to sign up, please contact Vicki Lund or Claudia Simon.

HAAM Volunteers: HAAM is currently overflowing with people in need of assistance and in desperate need of volunteers during the day. If you would be interested in helping out, again please contact **Vicki Lund** or **Claudia Simon**, and they can put you in touch with the volunteer coordinator at HAAM.

ATASCOCITA LUTHERAN CHURCH
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ATASCOCITA LUTHERAN CHURCH

Our Vision: