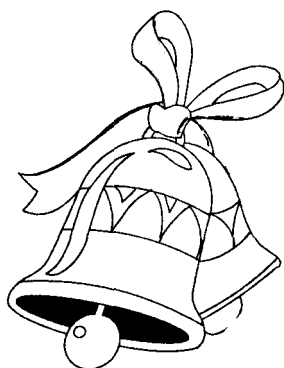


January 2007 Newsletter



Christ Our King Lutheran Church,
2150 Dundas Street West,
Mississauga, Ontario L5K 1R5
905-822-8931
coklutheran@christourking.ca
www.christourking.ca

From the Pastor,

What do you see as you step into a New Year? For the past weeks, whether you were reading newspapers or magazines, whether you were listening to your radio or watching television, the message was pretty much the same – here's where we have been this past year, this past decade, this past century, and here is what is in store for us. On one hand we see scientific progress. Yet we find ourselves in the midst of a declining moral climate. Changes are rampant, challenges are numerous, and crises seem insurmountable. How then do we step into the New Year?

God's people live wisely. Ecclesiastes 7:11 says, "Wisdom, like an inheritance, is a good thing and benefits those who see the sun." God's Word calls us to live wisely. Wisdom is knowing how to live. The question then is, how do you and I as God's people live wisely in the New Year?

First, look. Keep looking – keep gazing on the Lord Jesus. After all, he is your Saviour. There is no one else. A grandmother was reading nursery rhymes to her three-year-old grandchild. She read: 'Humpty Dumpty sat on the wall. Humpty Dumpty had a great fall. All the king's horses and all the king's men Couldn't put Humpty together again.'

The little girl piped up, "But Jesus can." You and I sit on a wall. We have had some pretty big falls. All earthly philosophies and man-made ideas can never put us together again. But Jesus can! Why? Because of who he is – God's Son, the Word made flesh, the light shining in the darkness. He is also our Saviour because of what he has done for us. He lived the perfect life for us. He suffered. He died. He rose again for us.

As the apostle Paul reminded the church at Ephesus, God chose us in Jesus. In Jesus we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our sins. And the apostle's prayer is for you and me to have the Spirit of wisdom and revelation so that we may know Jesus better and thus live wisely. As we step into the New Year, we have a great need for Jesus. Because we daily sin, we have a great Jesus to meet our needs. Keep looking to him. As you do, you will live wisely.

Second, listen. We are not always good at listening. Some of us are hard of hearing. All of us at times are heard of listening. We are even guilty of selective listening.

I am reminded of a four-year-old boy named Tim. One evening as the family was eating their evening meal, he stood up on his chair and shouted, "Pass the butter." You know what happened. His mother said, "There's no supper for you, young man, until you learn your manners. Go to your room." Later that evening the father called the family together in the living room. He said, "I bought a new tape recorder today. I turned it on while we were eating dinner. Let's listen to our conversation." As they listened, they heard a little voice say, "Please pass the butter." A little while later they heard the same voice say, "Would somebody please pass the butter?" Finally, exasperated, "Pass the butter!" With that they apologized to Tim and asked his forgiveness for not being better listeners.

If we are going to live wisely in the New Year, the call is to listen. First, listen to God. He speaks to you in his Holy Word. Spend time with the Scriptures in your home and in the life of this congregation. He speaks to you through the voice of the church. Do not avoid being a part of weekly public worship. He speaks to you through the wonders of nature. Enjoy the world that God created for you – its purpose, its meaning, its benefits. He also speaks to you through the happenings of life. Help one another reflect on the trials and tribulations, the opportunities and challenges of daily living to discover, to rediscover, what God's plan is for us.

Yes, listen to God, but also listen to one another – in your homes, in your congregation, in your community. All of us have ideas and thoughts to share. God has given to each of us gifts, abilities, and talents to promote his Kingdom.

Finally launch – embark on a ship – set sail into the future giving yourselves, by the power of the Holy Spirit, fully to God and to his ministry for you. God's word continues to remind us who we are and whose we are and what we are called to be and to do. You are to rejoice in the lord. You are clothed with garments of salvation. You are to proclaim God's message to people. You are to be a lamp to people living in darkness. You are God's very own child. You are to have a love for all people. You can experience riches and strength for your daily tasks through God's Spirit living within you. Launching out with such an attitude will find you living wisely. Begin the New Year with a desire to keep on looking, listening, launching. The road of the future will not be easy, which is all the more reason to live wisely for God's sake, for God's cause, for God's kingdom, for your own welfare, for the welfare of God's church.

Peace and Joy in Jesus

Pastor Flohr

**From the Principal's Desk
Greetings from Lois Munz
Christ Our King Lutheran School
Friday, December 22, 2006**



The beloved truths of the miracle of Christ's birth were once again told with exuberance by the children of Christ Our King Nursery School and Kindergarten on the evening of Tuesday, December 19th, 2006.

Shepherds, who were told by the heavenly host of angels to go to Bethlehem, visited the Christ Child. Mary and Joseph kept a watchful eye as sheep, dogs, a donkey and a cow sat watching reverently. Wise Men bearing gifts made their way to pay homage to the newborn King.

This was the tableau that was assembled as narration was provided and then the children sang and played musical instruments to further tell the story.

The audience of family members participated by singing verses of familiar hymns to join in the celebration.

Then it was party time! Refreshments were served (thank you Margaret Hoffman for helping) and everyone had a chance to chat and give and receive Christmas greetings. A craft was available (thank you Madolyn Scharrer, Susan Vernon and Youth for helping) for the children to assemble and take home.

It indeed takes a community to raise a child, and our children are blessed to have this church community as their supporters. Thank you to all who in some way contributed to the evening: the list is indeed long. There were church members in the audience; Nursery School and Interim School Board members brought food and helped with details; Pat Brezynskie did the programs; Pastor Flohr led the devotional part; Barb Jurgens provided the music; parents brought food as well as accompanying their children; and the teachers showed their dedication by having the students well rehearsed. However the most thanks goes to the children themselves, for they put their all into the performance. *"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."* (Mark 10:14)

Our new staff member, Jennie Concannon, was present on Tuesday evening as well. She willingly took on some tasks immediately (helped with costumes and handed out candles) and then mingled with the parents, introducing herself and getting to know families.

We are acutely aware that our gracious God walks with us every step of the way on our journey of providing a Christian educational setting. We will continue to be concentrating on recruitment, both for a half-time teacher and for new students as we begin a new school term.



May God continue to be with us all as we begin in the year of our Lord 2007.

NEWS FROM THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

**“We three kings of Orient are, following the great holy star,
Field and fountain, moor and mountain, journeying from afar.
We have seen the Holy Child, and His mother, meek and mild,
God’s salvation, light of nations, Jesus the Holy Child.
Oh, star of wonder burning bright, glowing, shining through the night.
Tell the story, sing His glory! We are carriers of the LIGHT!”**

Such was the wonderful message that our Sunday School children brought to us in song and verse on Sunday, Dec. 17th at their special Christmas service called “CARRIERS OF THE LIGHT”. Family, friends, visitors and congregational members were treated to an uplifting musical presentation of the wondrous birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The children did an awesome job and learned their parts very well. The congregation also enjoyed the musical talents of several of our precious children and our wee little ones delighted the audience with their costumes and verses. Our Sunday School children should be commended for an excellent job and for all of the time and energy that they put into making this special service once again a tremendous success. The staff and teachers would also like to thank the children’s parents for supporting their children for this event and for bringing them to several Saturday morning practices along with coming out the morning of the programme. Even though our Sunday School numbers have declined in the past few years, the children nonetheless shone like carriers of the light and delivered a most memorable celebration service to those who were in attendance.

Many thanks go out to our musical director, Ruth Verlinden, for all of her hard work, time and dedication that she put into this production. She was, as usual, most instrumental in bringing all of this together and for giving the children the opportunity to demonstrate their musical talents in singing and playing. On behalf of all of the children, their parents and the Sunday School teachers and staff, we would like to extend a hearty “Thank-you!” to Ruth for this work of love.

We pray that once the Christmas holidays are over our children will once again return to their weekly study of the Word through Sunday School instruction. We ask that you would continue to keep the Children’s Ministry in your daily prayers and to continue to support our precious children as they learn and grow in the faith.

God’s richest and bountiful blessings for the New Year! May the year 2007 be one filled with peace, joy, good health and happiness!

In His Service,

Donna Prusha



Sunday School

LWML NEWS

The Christmas Season is upon us and hopefully all of us will take the time to reflect upon the extent of God's love toward us that He sent a Saviour "meek and lowly" in the Baby born in Bethlehem.

The LWML ladies along with the Fellowship Committee enjoyed the opportunity to put together our Advent Supper. We were also thrilled that our adopted Sem Student, Adrian Toms and his wife, Beth were able to join us!

We were able to assemble 10 Christmas baskets and purchase 8 poinsettias to give to our shut ins during our visits. We thank everyone who was so generous in supplying items for baskets and helping to purchase these beautiful well-received potted flowers .

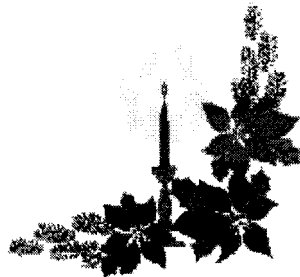
Looking ahead to the New Year, we have put up a poster inviting all ladies to attend the Ontario District LWML Convention to be held in Stratford May 11th to 12th. Please consider learning more about the workings of the LWML and being uplifted by the super Bible Studies offered at this convention.

In addition, another poster, which lists and allows for tracking of the LWMLC Mission Grants for the 2006-2009 biennium, is on display on our bulletin board.

Our January meeting takes place on Jan. 15th. This will be a Mission Work Night(trimming stamps, preparing Campbell Soup labels etc.) Please join us for this evening of work and fellowship.

The mission project focus for this month is that of providing Scholarship Funds for Lutheran Bible Translators. We pray:

Lord of the universe, during this season when we celebrate the birth of Your Son, our Saviour, open our minds and hearts in appreciation of Your love and grace which You have revealed to us through Him. Renew our spirits as we reflect on His coming and what it means for us and for our salvation. Enable us to share this Good News through support of Lutheran Bible Translators. May our gifts help train individuals in this organization so that it can carry out its work of translating Your Word into different languages. May Your light shine so that people everywhere will have the opportunity to learn about Jesus as their Saviour. This we ask in Your Beloved Name. Amen.



News from the Board of Evangelism

We have a number of exciting events coming early this year! Please, get out your calendars and mark these important dates!

For starters, on **Saturday, March 3rd**, we are pleased to be welcoming back the Corcordia Lutheran High School choir from Fort Wayne, Indiana! This group, led by their director Patrick Winningham, came to COK two years ago, and we enjoyed their concert very much. They also enjoyed visiting us, as Patrick's recent email stated, "I am very excited that we are able to return to Christ Our King for our choir tour this year. The experience two years ago is something that the senior/Grade 12 students still talk about!"

This time, we will be hosting a concert on Saturday evening, billeting them at our members' homes, and also having them joining us for early worship on Sunday morning. We will once again need many host families to volunteer to billet them Saturday night, and a sign-up sheet for this will be posted in the narthex shortly. There are approximately 50 people to billet, but... we did it before – I'm sure we can do it again!

Then on **Saturday, May 12th**, we are pleased to host the new Crew band "Wayfarer" for a concert at the church. They too will be staying to join us on Sunday morning. More on this band will be coming soon!

These 2 events are great opportunities to invite friends to come to our church and to meet with other members as we enjoy Christian music and fellowship! Let's try to fill the church!

Finally, coming up soon on Thursday, January 11th at 6:30pm is our next Men's Group Bible Studay at the church. Please be sure to email Martin (prusha@sympatico.ca) if you are able to attend!



FOR UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN
UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN.

As the old man read from the paper in his trembling hands, he slowly sank to the floor, his body wracked with sobs.

The uniformed military officer knelt down to hold him as he read that his only son, whom he loved more than anything else, had been killed in a fierce battle overseas. He had died rescuing another soldier who had been wounded.

As the days flowed into weeks and the pain in his chest began to subside, the old man reflected on his life. He had built a tremendous fortune from the business he had begun decades before. It had enabled him and his son to indulge in their favourite hobby, acquiring priceless works of art. This now seemed so unimportant, almost trivial to him.

Most of his reflections centred on his now dead son, that handsome boy who loved life, who loved people and who loved his father more than anything else. How he missed the times they were together; how he missed even more the times they would no longer be together. As Christmas approached the thought of Christmas without his son brought the intense grief and pain back again.

On Christmas day the doorbell rang. The old man opened the door to find a soldier there, leaning on a cane and holding a package in his other hand. After inviting him in, the soldier introduced himself and told the old man he was the one who had been saved by the brave son. They spent much of the day together; reminiscing about the one they both missed so much. It was obvious how much the soldier loved him ever since they had met in basic training. Tears rolled down his cheeks even now as he spoke. Finally he took the package, handed it to the old man and told him he was an artist. He opened it to find a picture of his son painted by the soldier himself. While art critics would not have considered it great art, the soldier had captured the essence of his son perfectly. His joy of living and loving shone through the portrait.

The old man hung the picture of his son above the mantel, the most prominent place in his house, where he could see it as often as possible. He cherished it and his love for his son grew even more as he heard more stories about his son's bravery; many other soldiers had been rescued from danger before a bullet cut him down and stilled his caring heart. The other great masterpieces meant less and less to him, becoming almost insignificant as time passed, while his son's picture became his pride and joy, the greatest work of art in his entire collection. He told friends and neighbours alike that this painting was the best gift he had ever received.

Eventually the old man died and with no one to inherit his priceless collection it was to be auctioned. The auction took place on Christmas Day, the day he had received his greatest gift, the portrait of his son. Dealers and representatives from museums and galleries around the world came to purchase the masterpieces. As the gavel struck the lectern, the first painting was uncovered. It was the portrait of the old man's son. Angry mutterings arose from the crowd. Why bother with this picture? It was nothing great or special! No one would want it! Let's get on with the real art!

The auctioneer said the instructions in the will were that this picture was to be auctioned first. Calling for a bid of \$100 he was met with a deafening silence. Gradually the asking price fell until it reached \$20.

Finally a friend of the old man asked the auctioneer if he would take \$10. He said he had known the boy since he was very young and loved him as if he was his own. With no other offers coming the auctioneer declared it sold to the gardener. In the next instant he struck the lectern and declared the auction was over. Howls of protest arose. "What do you mean it's over? We didn't come here for a picture of some old guy's son! What about all of these other paintings? There are millions of dollars of art here. We demand to know what's going on!"

"It's very simple." the auctioneer replied. "According to the will of the old man, the father, whoever takes the son...gets it all." The father's love for his son was so great, so all encompassing, so tremendous, that he willingly gave everything that would have belonged to the son to the person who would take the painting of the son he loved.

Our Heavenly Father's love for His only begotten Son is so great, so all encompassing, so tremendous, that He willingly gave Him up to suffer and die in our place and, as a result, forgives all our sins and gives eternal life to whoever believes in His Son as their Saviour and Lord. Whoever takes the Son...gets it all!