

# THE BELLRINGER

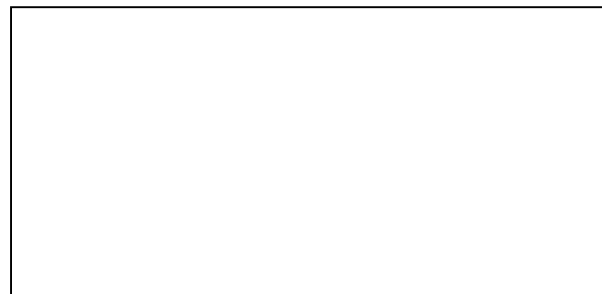
December  
 2011

# December



**SUNDAY WORSHIP ~ 10:00 A.M.**

*...warms the heart, feeds the soul.*



## All Church Christmas Caroling Sunday, December 4th

After worship we will gather together to enjoy pizza and salad. If you would like to come along, please bring \$4.00 with you to supply lunch. Dress for cold weather in cozy clothes and cheerful thoughts and smiles as we go around town to bring greetings of love and joy to our friends.

SIGN UP SHEET will be on bulletin board, or contact Pastor Cheryl with questions.



## PACKING DATES IN CHANHASSEN, MN

**Thursday,**  
 Dec 1 -- 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.  
 Dec 8 -- 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.  
 Dec 29 -- 9:30 to 11:30 am

If you have questions, please contact Joleen Carlson. Carpooling is available from Bethel UMC

*(Arrive 30 minutes prior to scheduled time).*

## Volunteers Needed at the Westonka Food Shelf

Hours are: Monday thru Friday 9 to noon, and 1:00 to 3:00pm. Volunteers are needed for two to three hours shifts every other week. *Need to be at least 16 years or older or come along with an adult.*

If interested please contact Shelly Sir at 952-472-5599

As you plan your journey to Christmas, please remember the Westonka Food Shelf **since even the wise ones would have packed some food to share with the Holy Family and their friends.**



## Advent Invitation From God ~ Psalm 80

People are talking or communicating with each other more frequently than at any other time in human history. Historically, phones, posted mail, and chats in our living rooms were common. Today, more and more, people seem to use texts, skype and twitter for example.

"Face time" used to mean looking into the eyes of another human being and using your senses to pick up on the nuances of expression, pauses, tone and inflection. With new technologies *any* interaction seems to be considered "face time."

The irony of our modern, cyber-connected world is that we're becoming physically insulated. Endless "conversations" can take place in the seclusion of one's home. In this society where the word "friend" has become a verb, too many people are feeling alone and isolated. It turns out that seeing words appear on a screen may not be as emotionally satisfying as exchanging ideas, tips and needs face-to-face with another person.

So I ask, when WAS the last time you had a "heart-to-heart" talk where there was real give and take? Can you remember a conversation that was focused not on logistics or problem solving, but an exchange of feelings, emotions or deeply held beliefs or spiritual matters?

If our "face time" with one another is dwindling, our time spent one on one with God is on the endangered list, too. Our busy world with endless to-do lists challenges the notion of the importance of quiet time with our

Creator. God's face is always directed toward us. Are we faced toward God?

Advent invites us to turn that life-draining pattern upside down. Advent celebrates the incarnational, Word-becomes-flesh God, face-to-face with God event. Advent announces that God was not willing to have a distant, arms-length relationship with us. Advent is all about God's willingness -- even insistence -- to be vulnerable, accessible, reachable and attainable through whatever means possible.

Was the star a distant memo? Didn't Gabriel, et.al., deliver a message? God chose a person to render face-to-face time with the created world in Jesus, the Christ.

Truly... anyone might reasonably be intimidated by the idea of approaching the omnipotent, omniscient Master of the Universe and speaking up. Yet even the most hesitant among us can be drawn into a conversation with a child. Place a baby in meager circumstances -- like, for example, in a manger -- and even the hardest of hearts will begin to coo or at least grudgingly smile. Invite passersby to come, worship and adore and lo -- a relationship is born.

*(continued on page two)*



**Advent  
 is about  
 time spent  
 face to face  
 with God.**



## Advent Festival Worship

**Sunday, December 18, 2011**

*What gift can I bring Him,  
 Poor as I am?*

Let us prepare our hearts, our minds and our souls to receive our Savior once more. Join the Bethel congregation on Sunday, December 18, at the 10 a.m. service, for a praise festival worship anticipating the arrival of our Lord Jesus.

The Season of Advent is a marvelous time of waiting, resplendent with the joys of music, meditation, prayer. Our worship service will feature music of the season brought to us by the Chancel Choir, Cathedral Bells, Cherub Choir and Youth Choir.

The children of Bethel will present the theme of the day, "What gift can I bring Him, poor as I am?" in story form. Watch the portrayal unfold as each child decides what to give baby Jesus -- and delight in their knowing what Jesus really wants from each of us!

As one of the Cherub Choir member said recently, "It is a strong and powerful thing!"

## Christmas Eve Candlelight Services

*Bring your family, friends and neighbors!*

**Saturday, December 24,  
 4:00 p.m. ~ Worship**

**10:00 p.m. ~ Contemplative Worship**

## Christmas Day

*Happy Birthday, Jesus!*

**Sunday, December 25, 2011, 10:00 a.m.**

**Pastor's Column (continued)**

"Let your face shine that we may be saved," is the call of people who are surrounded by technology but are still lonely for meaningful communication. It's the cry of people who may receive hundreds of texts every day but who still feel unheard. It is the yearning of the human heart which does not want simply to be told of love but needs to be transformed by love and hope for nothing less.

Folks all around us want just a sip of that hope. Just a taste. So, as you are about your days, preparing the way, look around and invite conversation with those you know well AND more particularly those who you do not yet know and reveal the light of God's love ....together ...as you plumb the depths of your relationship with God. The light will benefit you both.

God wants so much for us to be face-to-face with us. Won't you make one change in your life to let God in closer?

The beautiful imagery of the Psalm — God's shining face— is particularly poignant during this season filled with candles, stars and lights. God invites us to detour the trappings of the season which distract us. Embracing "face time" with God will help all of us to know that we're okay, that there's a future, that God is with us, that's there's more to life than tinsel.

We ALL need more face time...with God!

**Highlights of our last Church Council meeting of October 20**

- The Congregational Trust Fund Committee along with Margie Austin and Pastor Cheryl are working on a **learning series** to cover lifetime questions about our earthly legacies to be held in February-March.
- Work continues on our **Strategic Planning** with an emerging tool called **Vital Congregations** where churches are kept accountable to their goals after they establish them. Church Council will be working on this at upcoming meetings. Come and share your ideas. Church Council meetings are open to everyone.
- **Scheduling Change proposed:** Tina G and Katie K offered the suggestion that program committees meet after church on a particular Sunday to be followed by Church Council to simplify our meeting structure. Church Council will discuss at the next meeting, November 29.
- Given the loss of our **organ** much discussion was shared. This matter has been referred to the Board of Trustees for further conversation and research. The clavinova will be used in the meantime.
- **Annual Church Conference** meeting will be held on **January 15, 2012**, after worship and the our community **Open House will be held January 22, 2012**.

**The Bethel Memorial Garden**

"Remembrance and reflection in the beauty of life....."

Bethel Memorial Garden."



January / February Issue ~ Bellringer Deadline:

December 6th  
Receiving earlier contributions are always welcome!

The Bellringer is available via email. If you have not yet signed up to receive via email and would like to know more about how please contact the church office at 952-472-1522.

**Blood Pressure Checks**

On December 11, there will be Blood Pressure checks after Worship in the Frog Office.

**WORSHIP Highlights**

**November 27**  
**First Sunday of Advent**  
Advent Wreath: Bev Johnson, Sylvia Ogren

**December 4**  
**Second Sunday of Advent With Holy Communion**  
Advent Wreath: Ron Gramenz, Kate Fox  
Liturgist: Lisa Whalen  
Scripture: Mark 1:1-8  
Sermon: "Prepare!"

**December 11**  
**Third Sunday of Advent**  
Advent Wreath: The Hermanek Family  
Liturgist: Liz Friday  
Scripture: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11  
Sermon: "Bringing the Goode News"

**December 18**  
**Fourth Sunday of Advent Advent Festival Worship**  
Advent Wreath: The Maas Family  
Liturgist: Janice Hurd  
Scripture: Luke 1:26-38

**December 24—Christmas Eve**  
**4:00 p.m. Candlelight Worship**  
Christ Candle: The Oberdeck Family  
Liturgist: Steve Pinney  
Scripture: Luke 2:1-20  
Sermon: "The Christmas Nightmare"

**10:00 p.m. Contemplative Candlelight Worship**  
Christ Candle: Jake Stodolka  
Liturgist: Kate Fox  
Scripture: Luke 2:1-20

**December 25**  
**Christmas Day Worship featuring Christmas Carol singing Traditional Sunday**  
Liturgist: Dave Goode  
Scripture: John 1:1-14  
Sermon: "True Gift of Christmas"



**December 8th, 9th & 10th**

"Christmas Homecoming"

at Camp Kingswood  
\$25.00 at the door  
Reservations required,  
call Carolyn Miller at 612-578-6676  
[Carolyn216@comcast.net](mailto:Carolyn216@comcast.net)



**Poinsettia Order Form**  
See insert ~ Due 12/11/11

**SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES**

**Greeter, Hospitality and Altar Flower Sign-up charts** are located in the Narthex. Please offer to serve in one of these ways in coming months to make welcome new and old members and friends.

Also, please check the **Mission Outreach Board** in the Narthex. And, don't forget **FOOD SHELF** giving.

If your passion lies in the area of **caring for our children or teaching** on Sundays or in conjunction with other events, please speak with Tina Goralczyk.

**Bethel's Support Staff**

**Rev. Cheryl Goode**  
Pastor

952-472-5405 (work)  
612-202-0527 (cell)  
952-472-5405 (home)  
[bethelrev@mchsi.com](mailto:bethelrev@mchsi.com)

**Christina "Tina" Goralczyk, R.N.**  
Parish Nurse

Director of Christian Education  
952-472-8822

[tgoralczyk@mediacombb.net](mailto:tgoralczyk@mediacombb.net)

**"Jake" John Peter Stodolka**  
Director of Youth Ministry

651-283-8407

[jpstodolka@gmail.com](mailto:jpstodolka@gmail.com)

**Marjorie Austin**  
Director of Music

Organist/Pianist  
Choir Director  
763-229-0212  
[margie.austin@hotmail.com](mailto:margie.austin@hotmail.com)

**Mary Lou Kingren**  
Praise Team Director

612-695-1935

[loukingren@hotmail.com](mailto:loukingren@hotmail.com)

**Roxanne Eccles**  
Administrative Assistant

952-472-1522 (work)  
[bethelumc@mchsi.com](mailto:bethelumc@mchsi.com)

**Brandy Parker**  
Custodian

952-688-1509  
[brandyparker27@hotmail.com](mailto:brandyparker27@hotmail.com)

**Steve Pinney**  
Treasurer

952-472-9801 (home)  
[fpinney@frontiernet.net](mailto:fpinney@frontiernet.net)

**Dwight Davis**  
Financial Secretary

952-472-7814.  
[davism1@mchsi.com](mailto:davism1@mchsi.com)

**THANKYOU NOTES RECIEVED**

Dear Pastor Cheryl,

Thank you for your friendly note including a copy of the new church directory. I am glad to have that, although those I knew seem to be fewer and fewer. I'm glad to have the addresses of those I DO know. It makes me feel I am still part of the congregation I loved and it is good to know you still want to keep in touch with me!

Also, it is fun to keep up on the activities, the growth and future outlook of Bethel. We always loved being there. I am excited about the changes you have made. If possible, I will try to be there the 20th. I am adjusting to the reality that I cannot drive everywhere I want to go anymore. My thoughts and prayers are not as limited!

Cheryl, it is wonderful to have you take the time to write me a special letter. I'm really doing well and have much to be thankful for in loving support all around... My prayers are with you and Bethel Church.

Most Sincerely, and In Christ, MaryLou Woodward  
(wife of former Bethel Minister, Rev. Don Woodward)

**Rule of Christ Training—All are welcome!**

**December 7th (Wednesday) or 12th (Monday) —6:30 pm—9:00 pm**  
Call Pastor Cheryl with questions. Sign up BY December 1 by calling the Church Office.

Members of Bethel are invited to share in a training program called the **Rule of Christ** which is based on Matthew 18. The Rule of Christ work-

shop is a 2½ hour workshop designed to highlight and facilitate the development of strong, positive communications within the congregation, with a

particular focus on how to deal with situations where tensions arise in relationships. We use a workbook that walks/guides us through a healthy practice.

**QUILT AND CRAFT GROUP**

Our next gathering is scheduled for **January 21, 2012**

Call Katie Fox (472-5626) with questions.



**CHOIR SCHEDULE**

**Chancel Choir**  
Wednesdays  
6:50 p.m. – 7:50 p.m.

**Cathedral Bells**  
Wednesdays  
8:00 p.m. – 8:50 p.m.

**Praise Team**  
Wednesdays,  
11/30 and 12/7  
5:45 p.m.—5:45 p.m.

**Cherub Choir**  
Sundays  
11:10 a.m. – 11:40 a.m.

**Youth Choir**  
Sundays  
11:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Bethel's OCTOBER EXPENDITURES 2011	
MEN'S CLUB	0.00
ADMIN & FINANCE	3,802.93
STAFF PASTOR PARISH	9,815.58
CONGREGATIONAL TRUST FUND	0.00
MEMORIAL GARDEN	669.28
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	0.00
SHEPHERDING MINISTRIES	23.80
MISSIONS SOCIAL CONCERNS	0.00
WORSHIP WORK AREAS	75.00
TRUSTEE'S	1,484.31
OTHER	0.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>15,870.90</b>
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>12,013.48</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>(3,857.42)</b>

**DIRECTORY UPDATES**

Kingrens.  
(remove home phone listing)  
Mary Lou Kingren  
Cell 612-695-1935

Ken Kingren  
Cell 952-994-4993

Vern Nordstrom 952-472-2893

Rev. Donald & Carole Germain  
Winter Phone 952-475-8484

Ron Gramenz  
Remove email address