



Highlands Ranch, Colorado

December 2006/January 2007

The CHRONICLE

ST. LUKE'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Inside This Issue:

- Capital Campaign.....3
 - Servant Spotlight.....5
 - Puppet Ministry.....6
 - Children's Ministries.....8
 - Music & Drama.....9
 - SLY.....10
 - Financial Update.....11
- and much more!*

Oh! Christmas Tree



On Friday, Nov. 24, the Ransick and the Stephens' families went to Buffalo Creek, CO (Pike Nat'l Forest) to cut down the church's Christmas tree. They walked and walked until finding the perfect tree for Fellowship Hall.

The tree that was cut down was more than 30 feet tall. It took all of both families to get this tree to fall. (They broke three saws!)

Once the tree was down, it took everyone to carry it back to the truck to be loaded onto the Stephens' trailer. It stuck out on both ends more than 5 feet. It survived the long journey back to Highlands Ranch where other church members helped them unload and get the tree into the church.

They had to cut another 5 feet off the tree to get it to stand up straight.

It was decorated by church families at the "Hanging of the Greens" on Nov. 25th.

SUNDAY Dec. 10 (Advent II)

8:00, 9:30 & 11:00am **Candy Cane Sunday**
"The Star of Bethlehem" – Rev. Janet Forbes

7:00-8:30pm **Puppets: "The Littlest Gifts"** Our own Puppet Ministry brings to life the messages of Christmas in a unique way

FRIDAY Dec. 15

5:30-8:30pm **Churchwide Caroling Party** Come with us as we venture out into the community to share the songs of the season with those who are unable to come to us—Families welcome!

SATURDAY Dec. 16

9:00am-noon **Parents' Holiday Haven** Providing childcare for ages 3-9 years old for parents needing last-minute holiday preparations

9:00-11:00am **Children's Christmas Pageant Rehearsal** All children are welcome to be a part of the Pageant

SUNDAY Dec. 17 (Advent III)

8:00, 9:30 & 11:00am
"An Advent of Angels" – Rev. Janet Forbes
 Featuring John Rutter's *Gloria* with the Chancel Choir and Brass Ensemble

9:30-10:30am **SLY Pizza Bake at Boston's**

4:30-8:30pm **SLY at Zoo Lights and Gift Exchange**

6:00pm **Children's Christmas Pageant** Sunday School children illuminate the Christmas story through songs and readings

TUES. Dec. 19 & WED. Dec. 20

9:30-10:30am **Little School Christmas Program**

SUNDAY Dec. 24

Christmas Eve (Advent IV – No Sunday School)
 8:00, 9:30am & 11:00am – **Worship Services**
"Every Day a Gift" – Rev. Dave Money

1:00 & 3:00pm – **Children's Services** with candlelight featuring the Puppet Ministry, Youth Choir, Children's Choir and Youth Handbells

5:00 & 7:00pm – **"God With Us"** – Rev. Janet Forbes
Carol and Candles Services featuring the Chancel Choir, Adult Handbell Choir, and Brass Ensemble with organ

10:00pm – **Contemplative Communion Service** with candlelight

SUNDAY Dec. 31

(New Year's Eve – No Sunday School)
 8:00, 9:30 & 11:00am **"Hitchhiker's Guide to a Small Part of the Galaxy"** – Rev. Les Ludlam

SUNDAY Jan. 7, 2007 (Epiphany – Communion)

8:00, 9:30 & 11:00am
"Home By Another Way" – Rev. Janet Forbes Our 15 ft. tall Magi present their gifts to the Christ child in a family worship experience

9:30am **Commission Stephen Ministers**

8:30am-12:30pm **Guatemalan Breakfast Missions Fundraiser**



The Celestial Season

When the Holy Child is born into our hearts,
 there is a rain of stars, a rushing of angels,
 a blaze of candles – a time when heaven and earth kiss.

JOIN US – CHRISTMAS AT ST. LUKE'S



Sunday Worship Services:
8:00am, 9:30am & 11:00am

Sunday School:
(Adult, Youth & Children)
9:30am & 11:00am
Nursery available for all services

Church Office: 303-791-0659
Fax: 303-470-5615

St. Luke's Youth.....x45
Childcare Reservations.....x47
Email: office@stlukeshr.com
Website: www.stlukeshr.com

Staff:

Rev. Janet Forbes.....x13
Senior Pastor
Emergency: 303-241-9312

Rev. Dave Money.....x33
Associate Pastor
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Rev. Pam Rowley.....x32
Pastoral Care
Emergency: 720-348-1528

James Ramsey.....x23
Director of Worship & Arts

Carrie Mallory.....x35
Associate Dir. of Music Ministry

Kay Coryell.....x43
Assistant Music Director

Chris Wilterdink.....x14
Director of Youth Ministry

Ann Smith.....x19
Assistant Youth Director

Jenita Rhodes.....x27
Director of Children's Ministry

Lynne Butler.....x11
Assistant Children's Ministry Director

Kristina Linn.....x40
Childcare Ministry

Lynda Fickling.....x20
Director of Servant Ministry

Bonnie Funk.....x10
Administrative Assistant

Dave Cupp.....x24
Director of Finance

Kay Swanson...303-791-1982
Director of Little School

All articles, photos and notices for the February issue of *The Chronicle* are due January 15th.

Editor:
Sharon Oliver
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Rev. Janet Forbes
Senior Pastor

CONFESSIONS OF A CELESTIAL SEASON SEEKER

When the Holy Child is born into our hearts, there is a rain of stars, a rushing of angels, a blaze of candles, a time when heaven and earth kiss.

The decorations had been featured prominently in stores for months. The pre-Christmas sales began as soon as the Halloween masks came down. The shelves had been stocked to overflowing. The very streets of the city proclaimed the coming holiday with larger than life snowflakes lining the lamp posts and circling the capital. I searched among the clothes and toys and decorations, but in the midst of them all something was missing.

Soon wreaths began to appear on the doors of homes, and lights of many colors gleamed from rooftops and trees. Nativity scenes made of glass or pottery, wood or brass stood silently on coffee tables. Mock forests of evergreens grew up overnight in parking lots on County Line. I searched among the wreaths and lights and nativities and trees, but in the midst of them all, something was missing.

Before long, Christmas cards began to season the mail. Then came the presents which shed their plain brown outer skins to reveal brightly colored packages from distant relatives. Soon our tree was dressed in lights and ornaments, many of which were gifts and remind me of friends far away. I searched among the cards and gifts and thoughts of friends, but in the midst of them all, something was missing.

Ah, and the parties! The night was cold and the home in which the party was held radiated with the warmth of Christmas cheer. The food was good and the company was even better. This, surely, was what I had been searching for – what Christmas was really all about.

We were among the last to go, leaving behind the stacks of holiday plates and crumpled paper balls we had made from our napkins. We walked out into the frigid dark of night. Still I felt an empty place in my heart, aching to be filled. As my hand touched the icy handle of the car door, I heard something that seemed to shatter the darkness like ice. It was the cry of a baby. Looking past the beautiful home into the side of the dark hills beyond, I saw the faint light of a stable. I could see dimly the animals, and a man and woman with some ragged field hands bent over a manger looking into it as if it held the hope of all the world.

Suddenly it came to me. I had been to the wrong party. Had I misread the invitation? Had I come to the wrong address? The party I had been seeking had taken place in a stable. I went home and slept well that night. I had found the Christmas I had been looking for so long.

And my wish for all of us is that we may each find that Christmas child as we pass through the wilderness of our world. I searched among the animals and the poor gathered in a stable to celebrate the birth of the child and in the midst of them all, there was nothing missing.

Watch for the star! *Listen to the angels!* The Celestial Season is upon us.

Janet

Angel-Filled Advent

*Wouldn't it be wonderful
if Advent came filled with angels and alleluias?*

*Wouldn't it be perfect
if we were greeted on these December mornings
with a hovering of heavenly hosts
turning their harps and brushing up on their fa-la-las?*

*Wouldn't it be incredible
if their music filled our waking hours
with the promise of peace on earth
and if each Advent night we dreamed of nothing
but goodwill?*

*Wouldn't we be ecstatic
if we could take those angels shopping,
or trim the tree or have them hold our hands
and dance through our houses decorating?*

*And, oh, how glorious it would be
to sit in church next to an angel
and sing our hark-the-heralds!*

What an Advent that would be!

What Christmas spirit we could have!

*An angel-filled Advent has so many
possibilities!*

(Ann Weems, Kneeling in Bethlehem)

Capital Campaign Due-Diligence Study Underway

St. Luke's continues to set the pace in dynamic ministries for adults, youth, and children in Highlands Ranch and the surrounding neighborhoods. As we approach the celebration of our 25th year as a congregation, God calls us to anticipate the needs of our growing family as we live the teachings of Jesus, striving to make the world a place of love, acceptance, justice and hope.

After exploring several consulting companies, leaders from the Executive Committee have chosen Tyler Associates, Inc. of Irving, Texas to guide us through the necessary steps to explore funding capital improvements. This group comes highly recommended and has an excellent reputation for working with United Methodist congregations and causes.

In an effort to fully educate the congregation about the ministry needs, Tyler Associates will conduct a due-diligence study during December and January. Every member and friend of St. Luke's will be asked to fill out a survey. The questionnaires will be collected and analyzed by our consultants. Their report will provide our leadership with an objective evaluation of our readiness to move forward.

Why Should We Plan for a Capital Campaign?

First, demographic studies report that the millennial generation (currently ages 7-29) is the largest generational cohort in history at 76 million. This optimistic, internet-savvy, multitasking, multicultural group of young people is being raised at the most child-centric time ever. Their parents' high expectations and showers of attention are birthing self-confidence and leadership. It will be the role of the faith community to partner with parents to fuel their moral responsibility and spiritual growth. This will mean that St. Luke's will be called to excellence in youth and young adult ministries for the next decade. This call raises questions about staffing, program resources, and facilities.

Second, our maturing sense of spirituality and deepening life of prayer is calling us to the creation of dedicated sacred space for the work of spiritual formation, Stephen Ministry, and sacraments of baptism and communion.

Third, the fiscal health of a growing large congregation is at risk as we manage the significant mortgage debt from the sanctuary construction in 2000. At the same time, our 21-year-old fellowship building is showing its age and is in need of refurbishment, especially floor coverings.

Fulfilling the Vision of a Capital Campaign

It is estimated that approximately \$2 to \$2.5 million will be needed to address these concerns.

The four areas under consideration include:

- 1. The Addition of a Youth Center/Multi-use Education Space** – *This two-story expansion off the west side of the narthex would provide gathering and breakout space for Senior and Junior High ministries as well as meeting space for expanding adult education.*
- 2. Construction of a Memorial Prayer Chapel** – *Through memorial gifts from donor families, we would construct a prayer chapel and memorial window to the east of Classroom C. This chapel design was on the original design of St. Luke's and would greatly enhance both sacred space and street appeal. The chapel would be used for prayer, adult education, counseling in spiritual direction, Stephen Ministry, weekly communion services, small weddings and funerals.*
- 3. Refurbishment of Fellowship Building** – *Carpeting in narthex, fellowship hall, offices, children's ministries.*
- 4. Reduction of Mortgage Debt** – *The \$2.1 million loan was completed with KeyBank on August 28, 2001. It is a 10-year loan with the monthly payment computed on a 20-year amortization schedule, which leaves a final balloon payment of approximately \$1.5 million due on August 1, 2011 – less than 5 years away. The monthly payments are approximately \$19,250 depending on the number of days in the month. The current principle balance is approximately \$1.9 million. Paying off this loan or a great portion of it frees up much needed money to support our general program budget with the addition of an Associate Minister in adult ed, ministry development, young adult and men's ministries.*

Participate in Congregation Survey and Information Forums

Every member and friend of St. Luke's will be invited to participate in giving feedback concerning these matters. Information about the project proposal and confidential survey will be mailed in early December. Information forums are scheduled for:

- WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13 at 7:00pm
- SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17 at 9:30am & 11:00am

in the Fellowship Hall.

You may access information at www.stlukeshr.com

The Executive Committee will continue its work aimed toward developing a scope of the campaign that meets the needs of the church as reflected by congregational input. Keep St. Luke's in prayer during this time of discernment and due-diligence.

Epiphany Sermon Series: The Apostles' Creed January 14-February 11

*I believe in God the Father Almighty,
Maker of Heaven and Earth,
And in Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried.
The third day he rose from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth at the right hand of God
the Father Almighty:
from thence he shall come to judge
the quick and the dead.*

*I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body
and the life everlasting. Amen.*

The Apostles' Creed is an early statement of Christian belief. It is widely used in both worship and teaching. The creed appears to have been originally formulated to refute Gnosticism, an early heresy, which denied the humanity of Jesus.

I grew up repeating this affirmation weekly in worship. However, there are not a few people for whom the Apostles' Creed is a problem, either because they feel that they do not fully understand its affirmations, or because there are certain of its articles which they feel in honesty that they cannot accept.

In this sermon series, I want us to consider what we believe about this relationship that is Jesus the Christ. What do we affirm? What do we question? How do we think about these early statements of faith? How do we feel when we stand within a community of faith and affirm shared commitments?

Pope Benedict XVI, during his visit to Bavaria in September last year, spoke about the Apostles' Creed in an outdoor service. He asked the people to seek their "essentials." I like that notion. What are the essentials of this relationship that we seek with God, with Jesus, and with each other?

**Let's stretch our minds.
Let's enlarge our hearts.**

—Rev. Janet



Lynda Fickling
Director of
Servant Ministry

We are Called to Serve Serving Opportunities December 2006

Real spiritual growth is activated as we serve others.
Biblical Passage this month ~James 2:14-17

Join one of our Christmas Teams!



Shuttle Drivers: Drive people (in your own vehicles) who attend the 1:00pm, 3:00pm, 5:00pm or 7:00pm services to and from the parking lot across the street (Northridge Rec. Center). Contact Ken Fong 303-346-7057 kffong@att.net **Spiritual Gifts: Hospitality, Helps*

Parking Lot Attendants: Youth are needed to direct traffic in our parking lot for the 1pm, 3pm, 5pm or 7pm services. Contact Chris Wilterdink 303-791-0659 x14 or chris@stlukeshr.com **Spiritual Gifts: Hospitality, Helps*

Refreshments: Help serve and maintain our Hot Cider and Cookies table! Needed in between our 1pm (includes set-up), 3pm, 5pm or 7pm (includes clean-up) services. Contact Lynda Fickling 303-791-0659 x20 or lynda@stlukeshr.com **Spiritual Gifts: Hospitality, Helps*

Greeters: We are the hosts and our mission is to make our guests feel a warm hello and welcome! Contact Karmie Hilleary 303-683-4696 karmie@comcast.net or Val Goodstein 303-799-0907 valgoodstein@hotmail.com **Spiritual Gifts: Hospitality, Helps*

Ushers: Assist in welcoming into the Sanctuary and various duties during the service. We have many, many folks on Christmas Eve and need all the helping hands we can get! Contact Shawn Slade 303-660-6113 denverslade@msn.com or Dick Frame 303-791-4251 rframe5492@aol.com **Spiritual Gifts: Hospitality, Helps*

Guest Service Station: Great way to meet people and be helpful at the same time! Positioned at the foyer, you are the information central for St. Luke's. Choose to serve one Sunday a month – before or after the service you attend. Contact Lynda Fickling 303-791-0659 x20 lynda@stlukeshr.com **Spiritual Gifts: Helps, Hospitality, Evangelism (welcoming those in Christ's name!)*

*As we list the Spiritual Gifts, you may have one or more than one in each area. For further information regarding your Spiritual Gifts/Passions contact Lynda Fickling lynda@stlukeshr.com or 303-791-0659 x20. Realize your potential for living a God-centered life! See notice on page 6 for our "Servant by Design" class starting January 10, 2007.



Week Ending November 24, 2006

- | | |
|--|--|
| Gerry Wright (Gail Abernathy's mother) | Maureen Genger (Sharon Scholle's friend) |
| Carolyn Dean | Avis Stanley (Joy Damsgard's mother) |
| Nancy Rawls (Betsy Keyack's sister) | Jim Hertel (Sandi Thompson's father) |
| Dorothy Lloyd (Sheri Shea's mother) | Kathryn Bauer (Elaine Carlstrom's mother) |
| Bob Lanham (Ann & Jan Lanham's son/brother) | Loyle Mason (Jim Ramsey's gr. uncle) |
| Lisa Maciejewski (Jennifer Jiang's sister) | Tammy McLeod (Betty & Amiel Smith's friend) |
| Erienne Romaine (Raap family friend) | Brian Day (Eileen Law's nephew) |
| Karen Gumz (Sandy Thompson's friend) | Mark Roper (friend of the Miyaki's) |
| Wendy Walker (friend of Sheri Shea) | Daryl Schiff (Marya Arnett's uncle/ Lynn Butler) |
| Sturgis Wetherington | June Hutchins (Mike Hutchins' mother) |
| Jerry Heinz (Rachel Nolder's father-in-law) | Janice Van Hoosen (Jay Van Hoosen's mother) |
| Bill Lee, Jr. | Jan Sutcliffe (Leigh Ramsey's sister) |
| Grant Larson | Karen Esue (Pam Taylor's cousin's sister-in-law) |
| Linda Kercheval (sister of Tony Palizzi) | Betsy Riner (Susan Stanley's friend) |
| Richard VanderKooy (brother-in-law of Rick and Robin Fort) | Peter Thompson |
| Janet Blatchford (friend of Samantha Leahy) | Peggy Dunnigan (Kristina Linn's grandmother) |
| Jan Winter (friend of Jenny Stevenson) | Wilma Ashbaugh (friend of Marilyn Ayers) |
| Louis Pressel (Carolyn Warden's cousin) | Rex Bass (friend of Nancy Cushing) |
| John Poole (friend of Joy Damsgard) | Brent Webber (friend of the Harry Cushing family) |
| Chris Goldsberry | Pam Allison (Mary Godsey's sister) |
| John Sudol (Joyce Carnes' cousin) | Susan Johnson |
| Jessie Meyer (friend of Gail Abernathy's) | Paul Dunlap |
| Dwight Griggs (Susan Hooke's father) | Cheryl Grey (Lisé Takayama's former sister-in-law) |
| Dick DeWire (friend of Pat Ludwig) | Edith Brewer (Sharon Scholle's mother) |
| Joey Miyaki | Sandra York (Pam Rowley's friend) |
| Kim Friel (friend of Lynda Fickling) | Carol Merrill (Sherry Merrill's mother) |
| Amy Curtis' sister, Kay | Joe Forbes (Janet Forbes' brother) |
| Beth Turner | David Hartman (Jill Wright's brother) |
| Pam Taylor | |
| Al Bierman (Sandi Thompson's friend's husband) | |
| Walt Brewer | |
| Julia Muse (Karin Weispenning's friend) | |
| Jenni Keefer (Mike Hutchins' daughter) | |
| Landon Orcutt & family (Linda Walker) | |
| Joseph Streaty (Jon Streaty's brother) | |
| Eric Edelen (Lisé Takayama's nephew) | |
| Bob Streaty (Jon's brother) | |
| Norm Keller (Candy Keller's father) | |
| Julie Monroe (former member, friend Laurie Gilbert) | |

Sympathies:

- To Lisa Lehnus on the passing of her friend, Nancy Deardorff, Nov. 17.
To Linda Holmes on the passing of her father-in-law, Milton D. Holmes, Oct. 30.

Jim and Lisa Hajek would like to thank their friends at St. Luke's for their thoughts, prayers and concerns at the recent tragic passing of Jim's father in South Dakota. "You are our Colorado family, thank you for being there for us."

LATEST "HEARTS FOR MINISTRY" RESULTS

As of November 29, we have received 320 pledges for a total amount of \$836,145. This is a good response, considering we only had \$799,445 at the end of the second week last year. If you have not turned in your card to the office, please do so or email davecc@stlukeshr.com with your pledge. We are in the process of finalizing the budget for next year and need to know how much has been pledged in order to come up with the final numbers. We need about \$270,000 more in order to fund the preliminary budget that was presented at the beginning of the Hearts for Ministry campaign. That is an achievable number with the rest of the pledges turned in. Thanks!

Servant Spotlight:

Lisa Lehnus *by Jill Wright*



Lisa Lehnus, a Kankakee, Illinois native, graduated from Northwest Missouri State University in 1984. After finding an inauspicious job market in the Midwest, she headed west to Denver and soon became employed by First Trust Corporation—now known

as Fiserv—where she's been ever since. Lisa enjoys travel, having recently returned from a three-week trip to Italy; her dogs, Bonnie and Clyde; golf; volunteer work and gathering with friends.

A member since 2002, Lisa shares some of her thoughts about St. Luke's:

Why did you choose St. Luke's? Believe it or not, I found St. Luke's in the yellow pages! As a lifelong Methodist I was searching for a church in the south metro area as I had been attending several different ones and hadn't yet found a church to call home. I knew the first time I attended a worship service here that this was a special place. The energy and excitement of the worship services, the fellowship during special events and knowing that Christ is our focus confirm to me that St. Luke's is indeed a special place.

In what activities are you involved? I volunteer with SLY on Sunday nights. I enjoy the energy of and interaction with the youth. Sometimes, I believe I take home more from the evening's activities than do the youth. I have a renewed energy each time I leave the building on Sunday night. I have participated in Mission Trips with St. Luke's, including a wonderful opportunity to teach English to several families in Poland with Betsy Keyack. I am co-chair of the Fellowship Events Team (FET). I enjoy event planning and have found my "sweet spot" volunteering with the FET. The FET is a group of people who know how to work hard and host a first class event. It's an honor for me to work with the talented and amazing people throughout the church when planning and executing a St. Luke's event, whether it's breakfast for 40 or dinner for 200.

Any other messages, stories or anecdotes you'd like to share? I love the opportunity for fellowship and friendship here at St. Luke's. I really feel fortunate to have met some awesome people here. It's important to me to honor my own core values as well as our core values of being Invitational, Relational and Missional; I truly believe I can grow in my walk with the Lord living those values. St. Luke's, a place I call home!

Words I try to live by: In John Wesley's words, *"Do all the good you can, By all the means you can, In all the ways you can, At all the times you can, To all the people you can, As long as you ever can."*

Latin Chants & Lederhosen—Finding a New Passion

by Susan Hooke

It meant so much to be a part of this year's Wesley Players production of *The Sound of Music* on various levels. Not only was it special to share this adventure and time with my daughter Samantha who played Gretl, but personally it was a fulfillment of a dream—to act and sing. I feel like I have unearthed this passion of Drama Ministry in me that was lying there dormant for many decades. I can accredit the talented and fearless SLY kids (past and present) that I have worked with for years for inspiring me—Youth Sunday, Youth choir and other shows that St. Luke's has put on. In the past I always thought "Gosh, that looks fun, I wish I could do that!" Then last year both my kids were in *Fiddler on the Roof*, and I helped out backstage on show nights. I felt the energy, fellowship and camaraderie and knew that the next year, I was determined to be a part of it. I was hoping to share *The Sound of Music* experience with both my kids, Ryan and Samantha, but I am afraid the lederhosen scared my 11-year-old son off this year!

Not only is it important to be doing missional work and helping others less fortunate than us, but I think it makes it all the more meaningful when it is something you truly have a passion for and enjoy. It seems more like the gift given to me rather than the gift I was giving! Time flies when you are having fun, and this is how it felt being a part of *The Sound of Music*.

Ironically, my parents traveled to the region where the play takes place on a cruise down the Rhine River in September and brought back "Edelweiss" memorabilia that will be forever cherished because of our 2006 *SOM* seasoning. As I took ticket reservations for the shows and the dinner, my enthusiasm grew even larger. One of the most thrilling, and yet silly, experiences for me was dressing up in my nun habit and taking reservations or "blessing" people around church and making a "guest" appearance at the dinner on Saturday night. I really got into character and enjoyed this new persona.

Having been raised Catholic, it was very reminiscent for me to teach my fellow "sisters" the sign of the cross and other Catholic traditions. It also brought me closer to my mother sharing my *SOM* experiences (she had a very hard time at first, eight years ago, with me attending a Methodist church.) I think it has helped us both heal and see the goodness of my journey with Christ here at St. Luke's. I will admit, the play consumed our lives for many months but it was in a VERY good way! I thought I would never get those Latin chants and songs down but finally the mental block lifted, and I enjoyed learning the challenging songs. You will still find me singing them around my house or driving down the road today. The vitality of it all kept me going for weeks with very little sleep. I am hooked!

However, the most amazing thing I experienced are the friendships that we made and the fellowship that we felt. A multitude of people put numerous hard working hours into this production—sets, costumes, orchestra, directors, sound and light techs, makeup team, dinner crew, parents, grandparents, cast... and it was all so rewarding and inspiring to me to see the dedication of so many people and that they did it so VERY willingly! We were all working together with the same excitement and energy and lent a hand where needed. We became one big happy family sharing stories and laughter. During pre-show time in the makeup room, another actor told of a trying time in her life after a close friend told some untruths about her at work. Another friend helped her to feel better and find courage by taking her shopping and trying on various frivolous outfits. That courage was found in those hours playing dress up in the store without a dime being spent, and a proud confident woman emerged empowered to face the public at a corporate event. This story was shared as a few of us were talking about having confidence to try something new, like being a part of the *SOM* production. The message I got from this was not only confidence to go on when someone has wronged you, but also forgiveness of those that trespass against us.

So much goodness happens in front of and behind the scenes when we unearth the gifts that God has given us and put them to use. Not only will we be able to help others but we will also receive a message, MANY messages from the fellowship, friendships, and work. We can receive this if we are courageous and get involved and try something new. I encourage you to live outside your comfort zone and try something new like The Wesley Players productions, a mission trip, a disciple class, choir or SLY. You will learn something new about yourself on many different levels, and you may find a new passion!

The Littlest Gifts: A Puppet Perspective

by Michelle Mallory

When puppets talk, people listen. We take notice, even if it is to hear again a familiar story, and especially if its moral imparts the meaning of Christmas. This season at St. Luke's, hear again and delight in the story, as told by a new cast of characters—that is, puppet characters.

Our own Puppet Ministry knows the storytelling power of puppets. On December 10 they will debut "The Little Gifts," an original Christmas production written by Steve Collins. The motley puppet cast includes kids, kings, and creatures, all eagerly awaiting the moment when they bring to life for you a message that speaks to the heart.

As the story goes, two kids Johnny and Polly, receive a school assignment to give something special that comes from the heart. Now, Johnny and Polly, who are thoroughly overexposed to the commercial side of the season, struggle as many of us do, to recognize what they have to offer. Their journey leads them from the City of Angels to the Big Apple. Along the way, there is a brush with high-flying sheep in the "Manger Zone" and an interpretation of "Little Drummer Boy" that could have you stomping and clapping in synch with the characters. For best results, don't hold back!



Steve explains that he draws inspiration for this ministry from St. Augustine, who said, "To reach people, you have to teach them (*docere*), delight them (*flectare*), and move them (*movere*)."

"Puppets add to the delight that makes a serious message more meaningful," adds Steve. For this script, he was inspired by the idea that children often think because they are little they don't have a lot to offer—but they do. "This message speaks to the child in all of us."



Others involved with this production are also inspired to share their gifts. "I'm doing costumes!" exclaims Marge Harper, St. Luke's resident costumer—shown "in action" at left. "No matter what size the talent, I make costumes." She is drawn to the ministry because it instructs, entertains, and uplifts at the same time. Plus, she muses, "Puppets can say things real people can't!"

As for 5th grade teacher Doug Johnson, who narrates the show and is one of the percussionists, he sees it as another way to help deliver a poignant message with humor and excitement. He says, "We are blessed with many talented kids. It's fun to work with them side by side on something creative."

Meanwhile, 11-year-old Ryan Hooke is motivated to hone his puppeteering and lip-syncing skills, and enjoys the camaraderie of the Puppet Ministry. But he also understands the ministry's purpose. "You can teach people about God's messages in different ways. This show is a fun way." "The Little Gifts" is one way to add fun—and meaning—to your Christmas season. It is just that simple, at least from a puppet perspective.

Don't miss
"The Littlest Gifts"
 presented by St. Luke's
 Puppet Ministry

When: December 10, 2006,
 7:00-8:30pm

Where: St. Luke's Sanctuary

Why: To enjoy a fun-filled evening for all ages that brings to life the messages of Christmas from a puppet point of view!



Thoughts About My Church & Stewardship

My church is special to me because of the friendships I've formed. I've met many wonderful, supportive people through my involvement in St. Luke's ministries. For me, the church really is the people.

My favorite thing about my church is the huge number of opportunities to get involved, to be an active member in this body of Christ. It was never enough for me to drop by St. Luke's for one hour a week. I needed a steady dose of fellowship with other people of faith, and I got it through my involvement at St. Luke's. Recently, I discovered a new ministry that has lit a fire within me—family missions. When you discover a new passion and calling, it doesn't get much better than that. And, I may never have found it if I wasn't already active in St. Luke's ministries.

I would encourage others to be involved with ministries at St. Luke's because it opens up so many possibilities: new friendships, new passions, and new opportunities to grow in your faith.



-Jan Ballard

ADULT ED

"Servants by Design"

LifeKeys is a spiritually-based comprehensive program for discovering your • Life Gifts • Spiritual Gifts • Personality Type • Values • Passions. In other words, explore a multi-faceted approach to understanding the best ways to add meaning and purpose to your life!

This is an 8-week course. Workbook cost of \$8.00 and book \$14.00.

Begins Jan. 10, 2007

Wed. 6:30-8:30pm

in the Conference Room. Facilitator
 - Lynda Fickling 303-791-0659 x20 or
 lynda@stlukeshr.com

Class size is limited, so sign up early!!

Senior High Youth Get Outside Themselves

by Amy McMullen

The senior high retreat was a memorable experience filled with fun activities and learning for both the youth and the leaders who were involved.

The senior youth group went on an overnight retreat to Allenspark, Colorado, near Estes Park. The theme for the weekend was "Get Outside Yourself." It presented a way to get the youth members to think from perspectives other than their own. "Learning to 'get outside ourselves' really helped me to communicate with the other youth" said Kenzie Shafer, a senior at Highlands Ranch High School. "It really helped me to understand where everyone else was coming from."

Many activities were planned around the topic of 'Getting outside yourself.' The opening activity on Friday night helped to show how people can see things differently. The leaders had each of the students draw a picture of themselves. Then they had their peers draw pictures of each other to see the differences in the features they focused on and how they saw each other. More often than not, the two drawings ended up quite different looking proving how different perspectives can be. Learning this first lesson was quite exciting, but not the only fun that took place. There were talent shows, card games, lots of singing, and a good old game of 'Honey I Love You So Won't You Please, Please Smile?' "My favorite activity was Capture the Flag" said Jensen Meier, a senior at Mountain Vista High School. "It was fun that we all were able to participate and it was cool how we tied the game back to the bible."

The weekend wasn't all fun and games, though. The senior youth focused hard on growing deeper in their faith. In order to do this they broke into smaller groups of mixed people. "Small groups were great because they gave us a chance to get closer to everyone, including God, and have some good discussions about our faith," Kenzie said. The small groups were given Bible verses and stories to read. Often times these were good topics of discussion, but on Saturday night they got a little more creative in their exploration of the Bible. "I loved acting out modern versions of the classic Bible verses," said Caitlin Bauer. Indeed, everything showed up in these fun skits from a ditsy blond girl who stole all her father's money, to a "Gangsta' Jesus" and "John the Baptismo."

Everyone agreed that it was a fun and rewarding trip overall. Even the newbie's felt comfortable joining in. "Everyone was so nice and welcoming," commented Caitlin Bauer, a freshman at Mountain Vista High School, and a first-timer on a senior high retreat. "No one excluded us because we were new or young." The welcoming spirit is quite exceptional among our youth group. Infact a highlight of the trip was when they made each other care cards that had simple compliments and showed their appreciations for one another. "The trip itself was great," Kenzie said. "But it was the atmosphere that I will remember most. Everyone was so caring and accepting. I guess that is what being a Christian is really all about." As a whole, everyone would agree that this was a very fun, rewarding, and life changing experience.



LITTLE SCHOOL News



Kay Swanson
Director of
Little School

December & January News

The snow is flying and so is the time at Little School. We are already three months into the school year and we can't believe that Christmas is fast approaching. The children are all abuzz, learning their Christmas songs for our wonderful program, colorful crafts abound and excitement is certainly in the air. We have so much to do to get ready for baby Jesus' birthday that this is one time of the year the teachers do NOT pray for snow days! This month in Chapel we will be talking about our theme "Put Your Best Foot Forward," and looking at what kind of shoes were worn in Jesus' time, and how his parents put their best foot forward. The children will be learning about customs around the world, and we will celebrate St. Nicholas day by putting out our shoes for surprises! Pajama day is always fun and we eat pancakes and have a visit from good old Santa! Our month will end with our fabulous **Christmas Musical Program on Dec. 19th and 20th 9at :30am.** Ms. Laura (Mother Abbess) always charms us with her musical carols and songs, truly a gift to our parents for sure!

Little School will be on break from Dec. 21st until Jan. 2nd. School resumes on January 3, 2007--Happy New Year!

IMPORTANT JANUARY REGISTRATION INFORMATION FOR FALL OF 2007!

Hard to believe that registration for fall is already upon us! DON'T MISS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO REGISTER FOR CLASSES AS THEY FILL UP VERY FAST! Registration forms will be available at the church office beginning January 14 for church members. They are due back NO LATER than January 29th for early consideration. Registration for current families will be sent home January 16th (Tues.), due back NO LATER than January 26th! DO NOT DELAY!!!!

NEW FAMILIES ARE WELCOME TO TOUR LITTLE SCHOOL BEGINNING THE WEEK of January 8th. TOURS AND REGISTRATION FORMS WILL BE AVAILABLE ON WED AND THUR. MORNINGS AT 10:00am. Please try to use these days for tours so that we can give you our undivided attention! Registration forms for NEW families ONLY are also available on the church website www.stlukeshr.com - click on preschool. You may also email us directly with questions (much faster response) at littleschool@stlukeshr.com REGISTRATION WILL CLOSE FEB. 1ST!

May God shine on your holiday season and grant you love, laughter and good health in the New Year!
*Blessings, ms. Kay ☺
and all of our staff!*

NEW MINISTRIES

College Ministry Forming

Thursday, December 21 those folks 18-23 (or thereabout) are invited for snacks to Chris Wilterdink's home to discuss what College Ministry will become here at St. Luke's. New small groups? New classes? Retreats? Mission Trips? Come and find out what the plans will be! RSVP to chris@stlukeshr.com.

Young Adult Ministries to Launch in 2007

On December 1 a group of staff members and young adults (20's to 30's) (yeah, they're adults!) met at Chris Wilterdink's house to learn how to roll their own sushi(!) and brainstorm what the Young Adult Ministry at St. Luke's will become. Keep your ears to the ground looking for exciting opportunities in 2007 for young adults.



Jenita Rhodes
Director of Children's
Ministries



Lynne Butler
Assistant Children's
Ministries Director



Kristina Linn
Childcare
Coordinator

PEAK Adventures –Sunday School at 9:30

A new rotation of workshops will begin December 3 and go until January 14. *The Journey to Bethlehem* unit uses the Bible story included in Luke 2:1-21 and Micah 5:2-5a. People in biblical times waited with anticipation for

the coming of the Savior. During Advent, we wait and prepare to celebrate the birth of the promised Savior, Jesus. The coming of Jesus is the gift of Christmas, something we can remember and celebrate all year. Children will explore these concepts:

- Prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus.
- Hear Old Testament prophets foretold the coming of the Messiah
- Hear as Christians, we believe Jesus is Messiah
- Recognize Advent as the name of a special time in the church year
- Hear as Christians, we recognize Jesus as God's greatest gift to all people
- Be able to locate the account of Jesus' birth in Luke
- Hear and be able to tell the story of Jesus' birth
- Discover what it means to say God is with us

Enjoy the Holidays and please remember there is **No Sunday School on Christmas Eve, Dec. 24 or New Year's Eve, Dec. 31.**

Discovery Club

With a fantastic new director, Kera Tofoya, and the wonderful nursing student volunteers from Regis University and Arapahoe Community College, Discovery Club is off to another exciting year. Discovery Club is a respite program for special needs kids and their siblings that provides engaging activities for the children and a much need time off for parents. Last month, a Mad Scientist all the way from Transylvania came to entertain the child with weird experiments, gooey gack and even a search for lost planets. We meet 10:00am-4:00pm on the third Saturday of the month, October-May. Easter Seals of Colorado is the main sponsor and coordinates each month with several agencies including Tri-County Health, The ARC, Douglas County and, of course St. Luke's. Please invite families you know who might benefit from this program to call Nancy Hanson at 303-233-1666 x 237 or email at nhanson@eastersealscolorado.org and register their children to attend this program.

Acolyte Mid-year Training

For any third through sixth grader who is interested in becoming an Acolyte in our Sunday morning worship services, we will have a special training session on Sunday, January 21 in the Fellowship Hall from 12:15 to about 1:00pm. Please contact Jenita Rhodes if your child is interested in attending.

Sly, Jr. still going around the world!

Our theme this year is Around the World in Eight Sundays, and our balloon will take us to several more exciting places to show us how St. Luke's is reaching in mission to serve people beyond our walls. **During our November gathering, SLY, Jr. wrapped and packed 65 boxes to send to children all over the world for Operation Christmas Child!**

On Sunday, December 3, from 6:00-8:00pm, we will visit El Salvador and celebrate with a Las Posadas, (A parade of the Nativity) great food and some traditional Spanish game, (hint: one uses a bat and it isn't base ball!) Come see how many of the Hispanic peoples around the world celebrate the birth of Jesus. **Feliz Navidad!**

On Sunday, January 7, 6:00-8:00pm we will take a trip to Poland to celebrate the New Year. We will be generating and collecting ideas of how we can be even more INVITATIONAL, RELATIONAL AND MISSIONAL through the year. Some of these ideas may be used in Mission Mania during the summer, so think of what you would like to do. **Happy New Year!**

And mark your calendars for February 3-4: Sly, Jr. LOCK-IN Friday 6:00pm to Saturday 10:00am. *Come for a quiet evening of reading and needlepoint with a bedtime of 9:30pm...NOT!!!* We will continue our travels with a look at the countries that have been served through UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) and The Children's Fund for Christian Mission. We will be packing hygiene bags for the homeless in our own city of Denver. Bring wash cloths, bars of soap, shampoo, lotion (hotel samples are great), small tubes of toothpaste, toothbrushes, combs, gloves and hats are also great to include. Start collecting now! Ask friends, neighbors or classmates to help and bring your sacks of stuff to the lock-in. There will be more fun crafts, games and maybe even some sleep! Friends are always welcome – one friend for the lock-in, please and YOU MUST LET ME (Miss Jenita) KNOW YOU ARE COMING AND HAVE A PERMISSION SLIP ON FILE. See you there.

December 10th – Candy Cane Sunday

Many years ago a candy maker wanted to make a candy that would symbolize the true meaning of Christmas –the birth of Jesus–and the Candy Cane was invented. On December 10, St. Luke's Children's Ministry will celebrate Candy Cane Sunday by giving each child a Candy Cane and a book mark that explains it's special meaning. It is our hope that amidst all the other joys of the season we will never forget that God loves us so much that he sent us Jesus to teach us and be our example of how we can live Godly lives and serve as Jesus did everyday, all year long.

Season's Blessings from the Children's Ministry Staff of St. Luke's: Kristina, Lynne and Jenita.

CALENDAR

Sun. Dec. 10

*Puppet Ministry Program –
"The Littlest Gifts"*
7:00pm in the Sanctuary

*Candy Cane Sunday in Children's
Sunday School*

Sat. Dec. 16

*Discovery Club, Respite Program
for Special Needs Children and
their siblings*

Sun. Dec. 17

*God & Country Program
12:15-1:30pm*

*St. Luke's Children's Christmas
Pageant 6:00pm*

Sun. Dec. 24

*Regular Worship Times -
No Sunday School*

*Christmas Eve Services:
1:00 & 3:00 (Children's)
5:00, 7:00 & 10:00pm*

Mon. Dec. 25

Merry Christmas!

Sun. Dec. 31

*Regular Worship times -
No Sunday School*

Mon. Jan. 1

Happy New Year!

Sun. Jan. 7

Epiphany Sunday

*SLY Jr. 5th & 6th Grade
Fellowship 6:00-8:00pm*

Wed. Jan. 10

*Children's Ministry Fellowship
Team Meeting 9:30-11:00am*

Sun. Jan. 14

God & Country 12:15-1:30pm

Tues. Jan. 16

*Children's Ministry Education
Team Meeting 7:00-8:30pm*

Sat. Jan. 20

Discovery Club, Respite Program

Sun. Jan. 21

*PEAK Adventures 9:30
Elem. SS 4th Rotation –
Jesus and the Children*

*Acolyte Mid-year Training
Fellowship Hall 12:15 – 1:00*

Fri/Sat. Feb. 2 & 3

*SLY Jr. 5th & 6th Grade
Fellowship Lock-in
6:00pm Fri.-10:00am Sat.*

MUSIC & DRAMA



James Ramsey
Director of
Worship & Arts



Carrie Mallery
Associate Dir. of
Music Ministry



Kay Coryell
Assistant
Music Director

Auditions!

Neil Simon's play "God's Favorite"
January 6 from 10:00am-noon
January 7 from 1:00-3:00pm
"God's Favorite" performance dates
are March 16 and 17.

Weekly Schedule for Music Ensembles

(Musical Groups to start up the week of January 7th.)

tuesday

6:30pm Youth Handbell Choir
7:30pm Tintinabulators

wednesday

6:30pm Kidz Prayz I and II
6:30pm Cherubs Choir
7:00pm Tone Chimes
7:30pm Sunrise Band

thursday

6:30pm Women of Note
7:00pm Grace Notes
7:30pm Chancel Choir

saturday mornings

8:00am Flute Ensemble
9:00am Brass Ensemble
9:40am Ministers of Swing
10:30am Wind Ensemble

sunday

8:30am Children's Choir
4:00pm Youth Jazz Orchestra
5:00pm Off-Notes Youth Choir

Bluegrass/Old Time Gospel Group (Matt Rose) - tbd
Rhythm Saints (Mel Scott) - tbd

All are invited to join the music and drama program. Questions about any ensemble, please contact Jim at 303-791-0659 x23 or jim@stlukeshr.com or go to our website www.stlukeshr.com to read descriptions about each group.

SPIRIT OF ST. LUKE'S

The Sound of Music raises \$20,000 for Missions!

More than 1,800 people attended the four performance of 'The Sound of Music. A little more than \$20,000 was raised for the five mission projects! Because we hit our goal, other mission projects will benefit as well! Below are two wonderful testimonies to the mission work of St. Luke's from Ken Gaipa (Pier I) and Julie Miller (The Haven) sent to Brad Martin regarding The Sound of Music.

"Anytime, that I have had interaction with you or members of your congregation I leave more hopeful. Your church provides so many wonderful opportunities for its parishioners to grow in God's spirit and recipients of your efforts receive many blessings. Both your church and you embody the Christian spirit and serve as a beacon of hope in a world that often has much darkness. The Peer I and Haven family is fortunate to have St. Luke's as part of our fabric as we assist those in need. Peace and blessings to you and yours" –Ken Gaipa

"Thank you so much for such a wonderful evening. I had no idea what a fabulous production we were going to see. My kids had a great time and both really enjoyed the play. Most of all, thank you for staying involved with the Haven programs long past the time agreed upon by Leadership Denver. You have truly become a part of the Haven and Peer I family and our clients are so lucky to have the support of you and St. Luke's. Thanks again and please thank the Missions group and Janet Forbes for us as well. Sincerely" –Julie Miller

Transforming the Sanctuary into 1930's Austria

By Joan Goddard



When Dave Laurvick was recruited by Jim Ramsey to be the Lead Set Designer for *The Sound of Music*, he knew this would be an undertaking. Dave then assembled an incredible team and through hours of team work, deliberation, and use of engineering skills, the set began to take shape. This is an opportunity to be part of a larger ministry team where everyone pitches in and does their part. Dave said, "It was challenging to fit 23 scenes into only five separate acting areas." We had to maximize space when designing the set, and were limited by a small budget. But, when it came down to the end product, everybody did their part to create a unique and extra special set design.

Yvonne Amrine (pictured at right) and her good friend and neighbor Nancy Craine simply set out to be some of the painters for the set of *The Sound of Music* but ended up being Artistic Designers instead! Yvonne told Nancy that painting the set would be one of her last opportunities to immerse herself in the fellowship and creativity of the spirit of St. Luke's before moving to California. Nancy felt it very enriching to see how St. Luke's shares community. It was a great opportunity for these two friends to share quality time on top of a ladder.

Bill Goddard was asked to help with *The Sound of Music* set by Dave Laurvick. Unsatisfied with how the living room set of his 11th grade *Sound of Music* production came out, Bill volunteered to work on the living room and grand staircase. "The quality of the acting is so good I wanted to make a set that reflected the same quality as the actors," said Bill. He likes the challenge of figuring out complicated things and the set of *The Sound of Music* was right up his alley. It is great to create something that can be used for the next year's set. Typically though, Bill just enjoys helping out St. Luke's in ways that involve his family.



Nametag Update: Beginning in January, we will be offering new nametags if you wish or you may keep the old style (just write on the friendship pad that you need a new old(!) one and then you may pick it up on Sunday in the office.) The cost of the new ones will be \$3.50. The new nametags will be hard plastic with magnetic backing. I will be taking orders in December, so look for the table in the narthex! Remember, we no longer have the nametag holders in the church. Please take your nametags home with you and remember, if you need a new paper nametag, just mark the friendship pad and I will have one ready for you the next Sunday to pick up in the office! –Lynda Fickling, Director of Servant Ministry

✦ Thanks for **Pumpkin Patch Success!** Net proceeds from the Pumpkin Patch was \$17,244.05!! We logged 816 volunteer hours which calculates to over \$21 per hour per volunteer! 29 youth earned a full mission trip credit (\$100) and an additional 17 youth qualified for a partial credit (\$50).

DON'T MISS!

December 2006

- 12/3 – No SLY AM – *Cantata Sunday*
- District Worship 5:30-8pm
- District Worship © Smoky Hill UMC
- 12/3 – Confirmation Information meeting © noon in Fellowship Hall
- 12/6 – SLAM 6:30-8:30pm
- 12/10 – Jr. & Sr. High SLY AM 9:30am
- Bible Boot 9:30am (9-12 Grades)
- SLY PM 4:30-8pm Christmas Video Scavenger Hunt
- 12/13 – SLAM 6:30-8:30pm
- 12/17 – Jr. High & Sr. High SLY AM 9:30am
- Bible Boot 9:30am (9-12 Grades)
- SLY PM 4:30-8:30pm
- White Elephant Gift Exchange & ZooLights
- 12/24 – No SLY AM – *Christmas Eve*
- No SLY PM – *Christmas Eve*
- 12/31 – No SLY AM – *New Year's Eve*
- No SLY PM – *New Year's Eve*

January 2007

- 1/7 – Jr. & Sr. High SLY AM 9:30am
- Bible Boot 9:30am (9-12 Grades)
- SLY PM Spring KickOff
- 1/10 – SLAM 6:30-8:30pm
- 1/13 – Jr. High Ski Day
- 1/14 – Jr. & Sr. High SLY AM 9:30am
- Bible Boot 9:30am (9-12 Grades)
- SLY PM 6-8:30pm Dance © Littleton UMC
- 1/17 – SLAM 6:30-8:30pm
- 1/21 – Jr. & Sr. High SLY AM 9:30am
- Bible Boot 9:30am (9-12 Grades)
- Confirmation Begins 11am (8 grade and up)
- SLY PM 6-8pm YLT Planned
- 1/24 – SLAM 6:30-8:30pm
- 1/28 – Jr. & Sr. High SLY AM 9:30am
- Bible Boot 9:30am (9-12 Grades)
- Confirmation 11am
- SLY PM 6-8pm YLT Planned
- 1/31 – SLAM 6:30-8:30pm
- 2/4 – Jr. & Sr. High SLY AM 9:30am
- Bible Boot 9:30am (9-12 Grades)
- Confirmation 11am
- SLY PM 6-8pm YLT Planned
- 2/9-11 – Faith & Sexuality Weekend with St. Andrew Youth Group (JH & SH)
- 2/16-19 – Sr. High Ski Retreat



Ann Smith
Assistant
Youth Director

Chris Wilterdink
Director of
Youth Ministries

CHRIS'S CORNER

Merry Christmas! Now... are you ready for next year?

December and January are busy times for SLY, I can't believe it's already time for the annual Christmas Video Scavenger Hunt (Dec 10 4:30-8pm!) or the White Elephant Gift Exchange & Zoolights (Dec 17 4:30-8:30pm!) again. These annual events always make me look back at the year that we experienced together, but they make me look ahead too; wondering what the new year will bring for SLY... It's time for a new year, so let's get it started!

Confirmation classes will begin on January 21, these classes are for all youth 8th grade and up and their parents. You can register up until our first class on the 21st. We have a Jr. High Ski Day upcoming on January 13, and the Sr. High Ski Retreat following shortly thereafter on February 16-19. For the 2nd year in a row, we are going to offer a Faith and Sexuality Weekend in conjunction with St. Andrew's Youth Group, and of course the brand new Spring Break Mission Trip for Sr. High going to Mississippi the last week of March. These programs are going to be awesome, but they are nothing if you and your friends don't make them into something. Friendships and relationships create the foundation that SLY stands on to become meaningful, so there is something we need to get right before the New Year begins.

Ann Smith, who has been an integral and awesome friend to work with as a part-time staff member has found full-time employment outside the church, and she will take that position because it feels like a perfect fit for her and her family (plus, now she gets paid full-time hours for working full-time hours). *We felt incredibly blessed to have you work with us for the past year and a half; Ann, so thanks for all you've done; and thanks in advance for all of the things you and your family will do for SLY.*

Ann's position as Assistant Youth Director is now open, and we are taking applications with the hope that we can fill the opening by the beginning of January 2007. We'd like very much to ring in the New Year with a new youth assistant who's heart overflows with love and energy for youth ministry, and have them begin their ministry here by sharing in the Confirmation experience. Applications are available in the main office, and the interview process will begin this December. Ann has agreed to help in the interviews, as have some of our youth. Let's get this New Year started right!

SLY's Parable of the Talents – Matthew 25:14-26

"He called together his servants and entrusted his money to them while he was gone. He gave five bags of silver to one, two bags of silver to another, and one bag of silver to the last, dividing it in proportion to their abilities. He then left on his trip...After a long time their master returned from his trip and called them to give an account of how they had used his money."

What if St. Luke's entrusted you with \$10 to take care of? What would you do with it? Forget about it? Spend it on yourself? Invest it somehow to give money back? During the Hearts for Ministry Campaign, SLY tested this parable out. On October 29, 51 youth and adults came to SLY PM for Pumpkin Games and a Costume Contest. After all the carving and competition had wrapped up, we gathered for devotion. Using the Parable of the Talents, Chris circled everyone up and gave out \$10 per person from the Youth Mission Fund to watch the parable play out in real life; asking youth and adults to not only return the money after 3 weeks, but to also think about how they could use their talents to increase that amount for the Youth Mission Fund. Chris sent \$510 out the door at the end of October with 51 people. What did they do? We found out on November 19...

Karen Bobkowski purchased candy bars and resold them at school - \$30; **Katie & Meaghan Johnson** made muffins that their Dad took to work - \$35.50; **Hans & Kristen Wangsness** brought their money back intact - \$20; **Evan Oliver** (pictured above right) juggled at the church on November 19 - \$36; **Chris Stephens** played clarinet outside church on November 19 - \$24.93; **Madison Smith** made Rice Krispy treats and sold them around her neighborhood - \$22.75;



(continued on page 11)

FINANCIAL UPDATE



Dave Cupp
Director of Finance

NO "Oops" for October!

Thanks to you, we were just a few dollars short of receiving the income from your giving during October that was planned. Better yet, the first couple of Sundays in November are indicating we may exceed our goal for November. That's good news. If the trend continues we will be able to overcome the "oops" we experienced in August and September and meet our break-even target for the year. Please check where you are for your giving at this point in the year, and make sure you meet your giving goal before the end of the year.

With everyone working together, I'm confident we will reach our goal. Thank you!

The message to staff and those who are responsible for spending continues to be that it is okay to spend what you have to within your budgeted amount—but, don't try to figure out ways to spend more than is absolutely needed. Keep in mind that if you purchase something this year it goes against the 2006 budget, even though we may receive or not have to pay the bill until 2007.

Year-End Planning: It isn't too soon to start analyzing your year-end tax situation. I have a some suggestions that may be helpful:

- This year December 31 is on a Sunday. Offerings we receive on that day will be recorded as 2006 contributions, even though we will not count and deposit them until January 2. Any offerings received on or after January 1, via mail or in person, will be recorded as 2007 contributions.
- If you plan to transfer stocks or bonds to St. Luke's for your contributions, you should get that started well in advance of December 31. Sometimes it takes a few days or weeks for the transfer to post. If the transfer is posted to the St. Luke's account on or before December 31, it will be counted as received in 2006. We have an account at Schwab, which you can use for these transfers. Contact me for the account number and assistance.
- If you are age 70½ years or older and have an IRA, you can roll over up to \$100,000 per year to St. Luke's tax free. This is especially helpful if you are in a situation where you don't need the income, but must take a mandatory distribution from your IRA. Contact me or your tax professional for more information.

Electronic Funds Transfer Program (EFT): This program continues to grow. Each month we have more participants in the program both for general pledges and for grocery certificates. Don't forget that you get a free \$25 certificate if you sign up for the grocery certificate EFT program. See the announcements about this free certificate program for details.

MISSIONS



Sharon Williams, Jane Staller and daughter, Sarah, at the Annual Daddy Bruce Thanksgiving Basket event. The event was held on November 19 at Epworth UMC in Denver in memory of Daddy Bruce Randolph (his restaurant is a couple of blocks away, where he used to cook Thanksgiving dinner for the community every year). Over 6200 baskets (boxes) were given away, and about 20 people from St. Luke's came to help.

TRUSTEES CORNER

You Made a Difference!

Our Trustees organization at St. Luke's would like to take this opportunity to extend our warmest holiday wishes to all of our volunteers who stepped up to help us care for our church home this past year. Because of you our work days were successful! You mowed, pulled weeds, picked up trash and perked up our flower beds. You cleaned the darkest corners, straightened closets, washed floors, dusted and polished, ran our carpet cleaner, washed and stained our deck. Through the storms, you swept sidewalks and shoveled snow. You changed light bulbs and ballasts, fixed door latches, changed furnace filters, painted walls, and lovingly cared for everything from our sanctuary to our nursery. You gave St. Luke's the gifts of your time and talent as you quietly completed work orders from our files. You made such a difference!

For everyone who made time for St. Luke's, we Thank You! May your holidays overflow with the caring spirit and generosity you've shared with us all year long!

SLY (continued)

(continued from page 10)

Karin Wesson and **Steve Treat** took their money and used it as a reminder to add change into their own "tip jars" - \$35; **Jenna Wesson** made bags of candy corn and sold them in her neighborhood - \$21; **Lucas Heyse** bought car washing supplies and washed his family's cars - \$30; **Sarah Heyse** donated her babysitting money - \$15; **Gina Thompson** donated money from raking her aunt's yard - \$20; **Anthony Mason** bought rakes and raked his neighbor's yards - \$12 (and he's still got the tools if you need a raker!); **Darian Sidebottom** had the toothfairy's help - \$15; **Emily Seale** told her Dad about the devotion - \$15; **Matt Ransick** told his parents about the devotion - \$20; **Linda Streaty** showed up with \$15 for Trevor (no idea how he made it!); **Laura Northrop** came with \$20 to donate; **Keith Newby** didn't buy a lunch at school one day - \$12; **Bennett McIntosh** vacuumed his house - \$20; **Kyle Bobkowski** donated his sales commissions for the week from his job - \$43; and **Jordan Fickling** made portraits outside church on Nov. 19 - \$20; **Kimberly Goddard** donated her \$10 to *The Sound of Music* missions fund, which doubled because of the matching donor.

Out of 51 people (\$510 dollars), 22 people came back with \$482.18; what an amazing feat! How do you treat what isn't yours to begin with? God gave you incredible talents, what are you doing to use them? If you came to the costume contest, and didn't come back, what did you do with your \$10? It's amazing what you can do with God, make sure you are using your talents!



The CHRONICLE

St. Luke's United Methodist Church
 8817 S. Broadway • Highlands Ranch, CO 80129
 303-791-0659 • www.stlukeshr.com

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St. Luke's United Methodist Church welcomes you to our Christian family, where we share life. Wherever you are in your faith journey, you are accepted and encouraged to grow spiritually.

Join us in growing together toward full humanity through living the teachings of Jesus: Love, Acceptance, Justice and Hope.



St. Luke's First Annual Children's Christmas Pageant will be held on Sunday, December 17 at 6:00pm.

Our Sunday School children have been working hard on songs, Scripture and readings. We welcome you to come and see them perform. Bring a plate of cookies to share afterward.

DECEMBER 2006 / JANUARY 2007 CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
December 17 "An Advent of Angels" 8, 9:30, 11am: Worship 9:30am: SLY Pizza Bake 4:30pm: SLY Zoo Lights 6pm: Children's Christmas Pageant	18	19 9:30am: Little School Christmas Program	20 9:30am: Little School Christmas Program 5:15pm: Grief Support Group	21 6pm: College Meeting	22	23
24 CHRISTMAS EVE "Every Day a Gift" 8, 9:30, 11am: Worship 1 & 3pm: Children's Service "God With Us" 5, 7, 10pm: Candlelight Services (10pm Communion)	25 CHRISTMAS DAY Church Closed	26 Church Closed	27	28	29	30
31 NEW YEAR'S EVE "Hitchhiker's Guide to a Small Part of the Galaxy" 8, 9:30, 11am: Worship	January 1 NEW YEAR'S DAY Church Closed	2	3 WNL	4	5	6 10am-noon: Auditions for Drama Ministry- God's Favorite
7 EPIPHANY "Home By Another Way" 8, 9:30, 11am: Worship 8:30am-12:30pm: Guatemalan Breakfast noon: YLT 1-3pm: Auditions 6pm: SLY PM	8 6:30pm: Women's Night Out	9	10 WNL	11	12	13
14 8, 9:30, 11am: Worship 6pm: SLY PM	15 MLK, Jr. DAY Church Closed	16	17 WNL	18	19	20 10am: Discovery Club