

THE EVANGEL

DECEMBER
2011



*Accepting God's Grace
Sharing God's Love*

*"So take heed to
yourselves and do
not be faithless."
Malachi 2:16*

Pastoral Ponderings

The MCS Turnaround Synod Initiative (The Joshua Team at Lebanon)

Thanks to all Lebanon members and friends who have supported the "Turn-around initiative" for the last couple years. You have done this through your financial support which allowed us to receive significant matching funds from the Metropolitan Chicago Synod. You also have prayed for the Joshua Team and been open to their ideas as they have researched and met. This article attempts to respond to the question, "So what has the Joshua Team learned?" thus far and "What comes next in our Turn-around process?" If this article leaves you with more questions, please put them out there to members of the team listed below.

Background The Turnaround Synod Initiative is an attempt to challenge, inspire, encourage, and equip declining congregations of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod (MCS) to grow and thrive. Lebanon Lutheran was the first congregation to join the initiative. The Lebanon Lutheran Church Council and later the whole Congregation affirmed that we wanted to participate. We formed the Joshua Team to guide our efforts. Here is what our participation has meant so far.

Main Ideas Have Emerged: "RELATIONSHIPS" One central idea continues to emerge as the Joshua Team has gathered, prayed, researched, and sought

to develop a plan for supporting our renewal. We could say it this simple way: Relationships, relationships, relationships! Everywhere we have researched and everyone we have talked to seems to echo the same message. Our visiting preacher in October, Rev. Red Burchfield, a former ELCA Mission Director, who coordinated the work of new start congregations and dozens of "turn-around" ministries, was very clear. He said, "It is all about relationship-building. It is both as simple and as challenging as that. We love because God first loved us, and came into relationship with us. "Do we have room in our lives for building new relationships?"

Moving forward Lebanon will grow and thrive as we develop new relationships, for the joy we have in Christ makes us interested in other people. And, in fact, we have already begun. Each of us is invited to practice this way of thinking and acting, which may also require us to change some of our normal "same-old, same-old" patterns. **Congregational growth is a by-product of our own individual transformation.** God's love changes us, and helps us to see our congregation, our neighbors and the word with new eyes.

So far at Lebanon Lutheran Church the whole congregation has taken several steps that help us move forward in

this transformed way:

Our Joshua Team has been researching, studying and practicing – Monthly gatherings of the Joshua team have been centered in scripture, prayer, learning and conversation. Our understanding of "change processes" has grown. We recognize that each of us must first be transformed so that we can practice our faith in ways that build relationships.

We have allocated funds to support ministry – This year we boldly allocated up to \$ 25,000 of our savings to support our annual budget so that we could have pastoral staff to help guide our renewal. We looked down the road and said we needed to invest in this process of transformation.

We hope to use less than the full amount that was approved.

Our Pastor has invited us to some new ways of understanding – Pastor John's approach to ministry at Lebanon began by helping us establish new guidelines for talking together. We recognized the importance of safety in conversation. This helped our Council meetings and congregational meetings become less combative. He also invited us to use "Mutual Invitation" as we shared, helping everyone to have a voice at the table. Bible classes helped paint the big picture of God's relationship with humanity: how God

Pastoral Ponderings continued....

loves, blesses and saves the world, and invites us to share that love as we develop new relationships in our church and community.

God has been at work helping us build new relationships – In 2011 we have received over a dozen new members. We also recognize that our “building-users” (Girl Scouts, NA, Cooking School, hall renters, etc.) are a gift from God and we are seeking to get to know everyone who walks through our doors.

Our Church Council has been reading – In September and October the Church Council read a new book, *A Door Set Open*, which invited us to recognize more clearly why we can live in hopeful ways. We also learned more about how Christians reach out in love to help mend the broken world around us.

The Synod has supported us with a major grant to build wider relationships in Hegewisch — The Fund For Mission of the MCS awarded Lebanon a major grant to help us build bridges to the other faith communities in Hegewisch, and together to develop training that will help us develop greater cultural competency in a diverse, ever-changing world. The first event is a day-long training on February 11, 2012.

The Metro Chicago Synod also provided matching funds – When we first joined the MCS Turn-around Initiative we were in a pastoral transition and in order to help us afford a pastor the Synod provided financial support that we matched. **That program ends in 2011.** Thanks to everyone who supported this program and helped us get the

matching funds.

We are thankful to our Joshua Team – The initial members of the Joshua Team (Lynn Ranos – chairperson, Lisa Ubik, Rick Ranos, and Ben David) has expanded to include folks who regularly attend or those who drop in when they are able and others who just want to find out what is going on. These folks include: Deb Watson, June Farrell, Joanie David, Bunny Korbelik, Kaylin Korbelik, Phyllis Harnisch, and Shirley Baysinger. You are always welcome at Joshua Team meetings. We meet with Teams from other MCS congregations once or twice a year. We will try and keep you posted each month about the varied aspects of this ministry. Please keep the Team and our congregation in your prayers.

Pastor John (for the team)

“Pray without ceasing.”
1 Thessalonians
5:17

Council Minutes

Minutes of Lebanon Lutheran Church Council
November 3, 2011

The meeting was opened by President, Rick Ranos. Absent was Ben David and Rebecca Byrne.

Devotions were given by Pastor Beck.

The Agenda was reviewed and Bunny Korbelik made a motion to approve, seconded by Joan Pearson.

The motion carried.

Pastor’s Time: Pastor showed a video on Stewardship by Adam Powell. ‘Fellowship is not just giving but living’.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and Ken Nelson made a motion to approve them, seconded by Shirley Baysinger. The motion carried.

Ministries: The Executive Committee met and talked

with David (our seminarian) about the history of Lebanon and a review of what was going on presently in the church.

Finance: Working with Task Force on Cottage meetings.

Christian Education: Tammy Davey and Jean Madigan will be working with children on a mission project. Pastor Joan will be back-up. The adult bible

Council Minutes continued.....

study class on Sunday mornings has had very good attendance.

Property: All the storm windows have been put up. Lawn tractor needs servicing before next spring.

Worship and Music: Christmas worship services discussed. Committee decided we will put our hymnals to good use and have the congregation use them for the liturgy.

Fellowship: Will assist with serving coffee and goodies for the Ecumenical Thanksgiving Eve service – sending out a plea for help with baked goods. Also committee will be serving coffee hour on the 11th of December when the choir presents their Christmas program. Choir members will provide the goodies.

Outreach: Committee did not meet.

Stewardship: Working on cottage meetings along with Finance Committee – preparing a schedule for all church members and intends to contact those who do not respond to the invitation to attend. The meetings will consist of mixer activity, a brief Bible study, and a small emphasis on Stewardship. Celebration (commitment) Sunday will be Nov. 20th.

Youth and Family: No report.

Joshua Team: Working on cottage meetings and the Building Bridges program in Hegewisch. Flyers regarding this have been sent to all churches in town.

Pastor's Report: Among other things, Pastor John listed the ministry goals he is committed to for the next 3 months of this year and next:

To be prayerful, engaging, open, relational, collaborative, Christ centered, Spirit led, and be a pastoral presence with the leaders and members of Lebanon;

To work with current council and committees in planning/ implementing the ongoing ministry of To assist and support our leadership (Council, committees, LCW, etc.) as we seek to strengthen our relational and spiritual vitality so that we may lead the congregation more effectively towards God's missional purposes;

To assist and support the work of the Joshua Team, and in particular, its work

related to the "Building Bridges in Hegewisch" MCS grant.

Joan Pearson made a motion to approve all the ministry reports and the motion was seconded by Shirley Baysinger. The motion carried.

Administrative/ Financial Report: The report indicated that finances were all in good shape. June Farrell made a motion to accept the report and Ken Nelson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Old Business: The members of the Ministry in Context Committee were named and they are as follows:

Joan David, Susan Walley, Dave Madigan, Tom Reynolds and Esther Kristoff.

The Youth Gathering in 2012 was mentioned and Pastor will be finding out if there is interest in anyone attending.

Celebration Sunday will be November 20th.

A discussion was had on the book "A Door Set Open". Remember our mission is to spread the word as we go through our turnaround.

New Business:

A discussion on Pastor Red's presentation, (How you have seen God this week?), and building relationships.

Copy of Constitution to members before our next meeting.

A new set of altar parameters need to be purchased, particularly for Pentecost (Red). The worship committee will move on this.

A discussion about date for Annual Meeting was held and the 22nd of January was the date that was set by council.

The next meeting of Council will be held on December 1st. David Buco will do devotions.

There was no further business and Shirley Baysinger made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Veronica Katschke. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Joan Pearson, Secretary

Lutheran Church Women

The Lutheran Church Women are having a catered Christmas lunch on **December 8, 2011 at 12:00pm.**

All Lebanon women are invited and encouraged to attend. If you are planning on attending our party, please

call June Farrell: **773-721-0180**

Cedars Group

The Cedars Group will enjoy a catered Christmas lunch on **December 21, 2011 at 12:00pm.**

We will be entertained by the *Hoosier Singing Grandpas*.

The cost for this great event is \$7.00.

All seniors, ages 55 and up, are invited.

If you plan on attending, there is a sign-up sheet in the narthex hall, or you can call June Farrell:

773-721-0180

“Please let me inherit a double share of your spirit.”

2 Kings 2:9

Need someone to clean your home?

Jennifer Schichner is now offering this service. She asks that you call her for a price, and there is a senior discount available.



Jennifer’s number: **773-403-8213**

She will clean homes in Hegewisch, and will also travel to the East Side.

Prayer Requests

At Home: Tim Geissler, Lorraine Overend, Edna Graf, Caroline Mueller and Eloys Geissler

In Assisted Living Homes:

The Pointe at Kilpatrick: Betty Vee Johnson
14230 S. Kilpatrick Midlothian, IL 60445
Sunrise Senior Living: Kathryn Polzin
12828 S. LaGrange Rd. Palos Park, IL 60461
708-923-6532

In the Military:

Ryan Kozlowski, Andrew White, Ricki Pickett, Rob Ellman

loves, blesses and saves the world, and invites us to



share that love as we develop new relationships in our church and community.

Endowment Committee

Lebanon's Endowment Committee will be meeting on **December 11th** following worship. As you may or may not know, our church has an Endowment Fund which accrues interest each year and this interest is disbursed every year at our annual meeting. A

committee is elected each year to make a recommendation as to how this interest is to be divided up, with input from the congregation. Any member who would like to make a suggestion is requested to put it in writing in a sealed envelope and turn it in before the meeting

to the office, the pastor, or a committee member. All suggestions will be considered and are welcomed. Thanks for your help....

Endowment Committee:
Tim David, Judith Geissler,
Carol Kaim, Lou Malevitis,
Joan Pearson, and Connie Rappaport

Cottage Meeting Make-ups

Cottage Meetings (make-up session for those unable to attend in November) will be held in the

Gathering Room. They will last about 90 minutes and will be lots of fun – at least the first 6 were.

Session 1 – Saturday, Dec. 3rd, 4:00 p.m.

Session 2 – Sunday, Dec. 4th, 12:01 p.m

Please note.....

Larry Henning Memorial service,
Saturday, Dec. 3, 10:30 a.m.

Confirmation Bowling,
Saturday, Dec. 3rd, 1 p.m.
(Olympia lanes) .
Confirmation Christmas Caroling

New local number to reach Pastor John:

773-998-2331



Thanksgiving Ecumenical Service

It was a wonderful experience to gather with members of many Hegewisch congregations on Thanksgiving Eve. Thanks to all who participated in the service, and especially those who helped out with the amazing dessert and fellowship that followed. A nearly full church made up of members from St. Florian, St.

Columba, New Jerusalem Church of God in Christ, Assumption Greek Orthodox, Trinity Lutheran (LCMS) and Lebanon Lutheran (ELCA) sang, prayed and worshipped together. A joint adult choir sang with gusto, and the Lebanon Bell Choir played beautifully. Thanks to Lynn Ranos

for her work with both choirs. This day also marked the 1st anniversary of Pastor John's time as Interim Pastor at Lebanon. To remember the day he preached a longer-than-normal sermon.

Pastor John

Celebration Sunday Response

Thanks to all who have responded with promptness and generosity as we are finishing our Fall Emphasis, "Signs of Your Gracious Love." Three things are going on as our financial leaders digest what you have told us about 2012.

First, the budget planning process will begin next week, base upon your responses to the question: "What percentage of what God has given me, will I give back to support the ministry of our congregation?" This is a spiritual

process and the congregation's processional offering on Nov. 20th was a symbol of our togetherness as we seek to answer this question.

Second, we will follow up with all who returned estimated giving cards, making sure we understood your intentions for 2012 correctly. This will be through a confidential letter from our Financial Secretary, Lisa Ubik. Please let her know if there is any discrepancy or mis-understanding.

Third, we will let any who have not yet responded with an estimate of giving know how important their participation is in both the spiritual process of answering the above question, but also the importance of this information for planning our 2012 budget. We are seeking to grow our budget so that we can continue to move forward in mission and ministry. Having the best information about member giving helps us be better planners.

Christmas Day service

**Christmas Day, Sunday,
December 25, 2011**

there will be a worship service

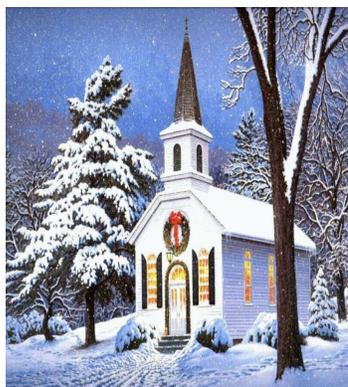
held at the usual Sunday service time-**10:00am**

Pastor John will be provid-

ing the music with his guitar, so it will be a little different than our normal service. Come out and enjoy!

Christmas Eve worship- two services

One of our richest traditions are the traditions surrounding Christmas and Easter worship. This year there is a new "extra" offering at Christmas. Some families with small children and others who don't like to be out late, may be glad to hear that an earlier service will be held at **7:00pm**, with our children's choir singing at that service. Our **10:00pm** candle service will be our main Christmas Eve worship service, with our Adult choir



starting the prelude singing at **10:00pm.**, and our instruments and Bell choir participating also.

For those who can't make that service, our earlier service is a nice option.

"O come, let us adore him,
Christ the Lord!"

*“Now to God who is able to strengthen you.”
Romans 16:25*

Office News

*If you need **Pastoral care**, remember there are times when the office will be unattended. Please leave a message. Messages and emails will be checked daily.

*Our **Food Pantry Box** is always in need of non-perishable food items, especially in this holiday season. The St. Vincent DePaul Food Pantry is always grateful.

*The Lutheran Church Women are collecting items to send to **our soldiers** overseas. There is a table in the narthex with information.

Don't forget to commemorate your special occasion with **Altar flowers** or **Eternal Light** contributions. If you are interested in providing Altar Flowers, please sign up for a date on the board in the hallway, then purchase your flowers at your chosen florist and bring them to church. Your commemoration will be printed in the bulletin. Eternal Light commemorations can also be printed in the bulletin, with your contribution helping defray the cost of the Eternal Light

supplies. Sign up is also located in the hallway.

*If you want me to remember any details, dates, etc., please write down these details **on paper, or in an email**. I have a hard time remembering all the details (especially on Sunday mornings!) Thanks, Pastor John

*Please save your **printer ink cartridges**. We can redeem them for CASH at Office Depot. They will accept 20/month.

Birthdays

December 1	Jennifer Ford
December 2	Luke Maley
December 4	Carl Johnson, Katie Ubik
December 6	Arlene Walley
December 9	Taylor Jaksich
December 18	Phyllis Harnisch
December 25	Carol Pawlowski
December 26	Evan Plemons



New Address for Lucia Schaffrick

Lucy has settled into Texas life near her daughter's family, but misses Lebanon very much. We have provided her address and phone number if you would like to

contact her:
Lucia Schaffrick
5111 Cherry Blossom Dr.
League City, TX 77573
AC-281-332-9523

Gift from Assumption Greek Orthodox Church

During the Sunday School hour on November 27, 2011, of the Assumption Greek Orthodox Church paid us a visit to present this beautiful stole to Lebanon. (see picture at right)

He stated this gift was in appreciation for our ecumenical efforts in getting all churches to participate in our annual Thanksgiving service.

What a gift!!



Advent Wreath Event

On Sunday, November 27, 2011 the Sunday School held an inter-generational event. All ages

gathered to make advent wreaths. With the help of Pastor Joan, all dug into the supply of greens and

candles and ended up with some great looking wreaths. We had lots of fun too!



THE EVANGEL

Readings for the Month of December

Second Sunday in Advent

December 4, 2011

Isaiah 40:1-11

2 Peter 3:8-15a

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

Mark 1:1-8

Prayer of the Day

Stir up our hearts, Lord God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming, strengthen us to serve you with purified lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Third Sunday in Advent

December 11, 2011

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Psalm 126

John 1:6-8, 19-28

Prayer of the Day

Stir up the wills of your faithful people, Lord God, and open our ears to the words of your prophets, that, anointed by your Spirit, we may testify to your light; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Fourth Sunday in Advent

December 18, 2011

2 Samuel 7:1-11,16

Romans 16:25-27

Psalm 89:1-4,19-26

Luke 1:26-38

Prayer of the Day

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that would obstruct your mercy, that willingly we may bear your redeeming love to all the world, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Christmas Eve

December 24, 2011

Isaiah 9:2-7

Titus 2:11-14

Psalm 96

Luke 2:1-14 (15-20)

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Christmas Day

December 25, 2011

Isaiah 62:6-12

Titus 3:4-7

Psalm 97

Luke 2:(1-7),8-20

Prayer of the Day

All-powerful and unseen God, the coming of your light into our world has brightened weary hearts with peace. Call us out of darkness, and empower us to proclaim the birth of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Monthly Financial Stewardship

Thank you for your financial offerings to your ministries these past months.

	October 2011	Year to Date
General Fund	\$7,036.52	\$74,674.86
Building Fund	\$1,495.00	\$15,139.50
Turnaround	\$324.00	\$4,040.50

Worship Participants

Date:	Assisting Minister:	Lector:	Acolytes:	Communion Assistant
Dec 4	Lynn Ranos	Jean Madigan		Lisa Ubik
Dec 11	Lou Malevitis	Judith Geissler		“
Dec 18	Carl Johnson	Carol Kaim		“
Dec 24	Kaylin Korbelik	Joanie David		“
Dec 25	Rick Ranos	Rick Ranos		“

Altar Guild

For the month of December: Phyllis Harnisch & June Greene

Counters

December 4	Phyllis Harnisch & Connie Rappaport
December 11	Phyllis Harnisch & Connie Rappaport
December 18	
December 25	Shirley Baysinger



Coffee Hour

December 4	Shirley Baysinger
December 11	Fellowship committee & Adult Choir
December 18	Lutheran Church Women
December 25	

November 2011

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 7:00pm Council meet- ing	2	3 2:00- 8:00pm Hall Rental
4 8:30am Sunday School/Adult Cl. 10:00am Worship 11:00am Christian Ed. Meeting 11:30-?? LCW Vendor Sale	5 4:00pm Girl Scouts	6 5:30pm Confirmation 7:15pm Adult Choir 8:00pm Bell Choir	7 6:00pm Narcotics Anonymous 7:00pm Girl Scouts 7:30pm Joshua Team	8 12:00pm Lutheran Church Women	9	10 2:00- 9:00pm Hall Rental
11 8:30am Sunday School/Adult Cl. 10:00am Worship 11:00am Worship Comm. & Endowment Com- mittees .	12 4:00pm Girl Scouts	13 5:30pm Confirmation 7:15pm Adult Choir .	14 6:00pm Narcotics Anonymous	15 7:00pm Finance/ Stewardship Committee	16	17 4:00- 9:00pm Hall Rental
18 8:30am Sunday School/Adult Cl. 10:00am Worship 11:00am Fellowship Committee 2:00-9:00pm Hall Rental	19 4:00pm Girl Scouts	20 5:30pm Confirmation 7:15pm Adult Choir 8:00pm Bell Choir	21 12:00pm Cedars Group 6:00pm Narcotics Anonymous	22	23	24 Christmas Eve 7:00pm Worship with chil- dren's choir 10:30pm Worship with Adult Choir prel- udes @ 10:00pm
25 10:00am Worship	26 No Scout	27 No Choirs	28 6:00pm Narcotics Anonymous	29	30	31 New Year's Eve

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**ACCEPTING GOD'S GRACE,
SHARING GOD'S LOVE**

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Lebanon Council:

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Lou Malevitis
June Farrell
Veronica Katschke
Ken Nelson
Shirley Baysinger
Bunny Korbelik
Joan Pearson
Ben David
Becky Byrne
Lisa Ubik

Pastor
Office Administrator
Adult & Bell Choir Director
Organist & Jr. Choir Director
Custodian

President
Vice President

Secretary
Youth Member
Treasurer
Bookkeeper

Lebanon Lutheran Church

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