

December 2008

The Messenger

The Good, the Great, the Bad, the Sad

In life, we constantly experience the good and the bad. In every situation there are things that are good and things that are bad – things happy, things sad. When we celebrate the birth of Christ, we must keep in mind His Cross. But pain of the Cross reveals the glory and salvation of His Resurrection.

At our most recent Congregational Business meeting I shared items of good news and bad news, things great, and things sad. Good news includes use of the website. Every month almost 300 unique visitors examine our site. Each sermon is downloaded more than 20 times. In fact some sermons have been downloaded more than 60 times and one sermon is approaching 100 downloads! People are constantly checking the site's calendar, announcements and pictures.

Another piece of good news was the success of our ministry fair. The joy, participation, and the worshipful experience has begun transforming our church. In the weeks and months following the ministry fair, I have frequently heard people say, "I can't do everything, but I can do something. This is my something! I'm so glad!"

Pastor Joyce Cosman embodies good news. She has re-envisioned and re-created our ministries of care so that many hands are making light work helping people when they need the church the most. In addition, 60+ continues to be a great experience for older folk to connect. In this area, we younger folk would be wise to imitate our elders.

But there is some bad news. Attendance is down. One family left after overhearing a conversation in which members were speaking disrespectfully about our church and our worship. Visitors are unsure what to make of our new worship format. In addition to attendance, giving is down. We are behind in receipts from 2007. However, if we receive about \$8,000 per week (which we can do!), we should finish 2008 with a very small surplus (which is good news!).

And then some sad news: at the end of the year, Wes Hardin will be moving to Milwaukee to continue his fire science education and pursue employment opportunities with fire departments there. He is grateful for his time with us, and God has blessed us through him. Wes' faithfulness with the Worship Band will continue to bear fruit far into Broadway's future. Please pray for Wes as he prepares to move.

In spite of the bad and sad news, there is great news. Add the updated look and new media of our second-floor education wing, to the inexhaustive energy of Michelle Gustafson and Cheryl Ecklund plus several high school volunteers, the result is our Wednesday night children's ministry, Crosswalk, is booming! The staggering thing is most of the children who attend Crosswalk are unchurched, and several now come on Sundays for Worship and Sunday School – some come with but most come without their parents! Perhaps other kids will bring their families if we are willing to share the love of Christ with them and reach out to them.

Likewise our Middle School and Senior High ministries, Roots and Overhaul, have experienced growth from the neighborhood. Derek has befriended nearby kids who appreciate Broadway's skateboard-valuable structures. He has also built a student-led worship band, and we are considering a launch of a Saturday night, youth-oriented worship experience. Check out the bulletin and the website for coming details.

So in spite of the bad and the sad, great things are happening at Broadway. As we prepare to celebrate the coming of our Lord, let's remember Isaiah 9:2:

*The people walking in darkness have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of deep darkness, a light has dawned.*

So let us walk in the light of Christ,
Pastor Eric

Crosswalk Kids News

What's going on up there?

If you've wondered what's been going on upstairs over the past couple of month, you've had good reason! The answer...LOTS! Crosswalk kicked off the season in September continuing on the "WHATEVER" theme that we started at Skills Camp. The whole idea is no matter what you do "do it all for the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31). This summer we looked at five people who led very different lives, at very different times, with very different gifts. The two things they had in common were that they chose to serve God however they were able and God was glorified through their lives. So far, we have looked at two individuals this fall who have also chosen to live "WHATEVER" lives. Eric Liddell, the Olympian turned missionary, and John Bunyan, the preacher-prisoner who wrote Pilgrim's Progress. The kids are being challenged to live out their faith, to stand on the firm foundation of God's Word and to use their gifts and circumstances to please God. If you are a literary genius or a really fast runner, you can serve God, but you can also serve Him by humbly serving others and telling others the good news that Jesus came to set us free from the burden of sin. In the upcoming months, we will be learning about William Tyndale's, Gladys Aylward's and Jim Eliot's "WHATEVER" lives!

We have a lot of familiar faces upstairs this year, as well as some new ones. Did you know all of the small groups upstairs are led by some fantastic high school students? Christina Wales and Eric Saunders lead the 4th and 5th grade, Colton Gann and Amanda Saunders lead the 2nd and 3rd graders, and Taylor Bamberger and Max Anderson are the K-1st grade leaders. In addition to these wonderful leaders, Tyler Whitney, Cheryl (and occasionally Carl) Ecklund, Michelle Gustafson, and sometimes Jason Street are committed to making Wednesday nights happen for all these kids. And who are these kids? Crosswalk is an active and exciting outreach for Broadway Covenant Church. Out of the over 30 kids we have regularly in attendance, only **NINE** have parents who regularly attend Broadway! **TWO** kids who come attend another church that has no mid-week children's programs, and **ONE** child has begun to bring his family here on Sunday mornings! **SIX** kids are now a regular part of Sunday mornings, often here for Sunday school and worship. These kids come alone, without any adults. They walk here or are dropped off. We all have a real opportunity for ministry here...if you should see one of these young friends on a Sunday morning – will you please greet them warmly, let them know you are glad they are here? Will you please pray for them and for all the people working to make Wednesday nights happen? Will you please offer a little grace and maybe even a little kind assistance to help them as they learn appropriate church behavior? We want them to feel at home here and know that they can be a part of the family of God.

Finally, there are lots of big physical changes going on upstairs! New carpet, new games, new technology and new paint are all ways that we are trying to update our space up there and make it a fun and exciting (and eventually, clean) place for kids to be. Please join us in thanking the many people who have worked and continue to work so hard to make this a reality! Doug Swanson, Jon Brown, Bill Forsen, Jeff Irelan, Carl and Cheryl Ecklund, Keith Holmertz, Matt Gustafson and Troi Knott, to name just a few. We would love to have you all come up to check it out when everything is done. Please pray that would be soon!

Crosswalk Jr. A BIG thank you to Mary Beth Adams and her helpers, Amy Bertrand and Jennifer O'Marrah! Mary Beth has been faithfully leading our preschoolers on Wednesday nights as they have been learning stories from the Old Testament. These little ones have been learning great truths about Creation, Noah, Moses and David (to name a few), along with songs, crafts and snacks just for them. After Christmas, the focus will change to the New Testament. What a joy it is to help these little ones lay a strong foundation of truth to build on for the rest of their lives.

Ministry Opportunity - It would be really wonderful to have a place for little ones younger than preschool age on Wednesday nights. If you would be willing to be on a rotating schedule for a nursery, please call the Church office or Michelle Gustafson.

Camp - Kids, is CAMP at Covenant Harbor or Covenant Point on your Christmas list this year? Registration will begin in January, so now is the time to start thinking about and saving for camp!

Missions Corner

As Christmas approaches let us remember those who don't have enough food to eat or are homeless. Four organizations in Rockford who minister to the them are **Grounds For Life Ministries, Rock River Valley Food Pantry, Rockford Rescue Mission, and Carpenter's Place.** **Grounds For Life** was started about 16 years ago by Al & Doris English. They provide food, hope and encouragement for those who don't have a place to live or a job. There are several people from our congregation who help serve breakfast twice a month. **Rock River Valley Food Panty:** They provide emergency food assistance to an average of 2200 families every month. They receive enough food for 6 meals for every family member in the household. They give a jar of peanut butter to each family. We have a box at each entrance to collect peanut butter. We have collected 102 pounds of peanut butter so far in 2008. **Rockford Rescue Mission:** They provide food and shelter, medical care, Bible Classes, and general life skills for the homeless and hungry. They help people overcome their addictions and improve their education. **Carpenter's Place:** They provide a day room where people can come and seek shelter in a positive environment. They serve about 90-100 guests a day. There are case managers available to help guests obtain a recovery plan for their lives. **Coins for Congo:** We emptied \$126.18 from the church bank to go towards the projects there. A total of \$296.52 has been sent in 2008.

Prayer and Praise:

Jim & Barb Mikrut, Mexico

- Praise that the pastors and churches in their communities are learning to serve together.
- Pray that they would make good of every opportunity to boldly share the gospel.
- Pray that the pastors who have not been participating would have a new passion to serve.

Bob & Joyce Widman & MARC

- Praise that they flew people to a spiritual revival meeting where many came to know the Lord.
- Praise for getting the staff needed to make the necessary repairs on the airplanes.
- Pray for the funding for the new digital manuals required to perform maintenance on airplanes.

Missionaries Broadway Supports:

Robert & Joyce Widman	Johnna Hayward
Leonid & Leanna Regheta	Peter & Ruth Dutton
Tim & Andrea Johnson	Jim & Barb Mikrut
Steve & Ellen Peterson	David & Judy Dolan
Byron & Sue Bruckner	

Christmas Card Banner

We will be having our Christmas Card Banner again this year. You can send one card to the church for all of your church friends and make a donation to missions for the amount you would have spent sending out cards to everyone.



Sunday Smorgasbord

We look forward to seeing you at our annual smorgasbord on Sun., Dec. 14th at noon. We'd like you to bring your appetite and one dozen cookies. The cost is \$7.50 each or \$28 for a family of 4 or more. Invite friends and family for this "God Jul" gathering. Have a great holiday. Nancy & Dennis

60 Plus

60 Plus will meet at Thunder Bay Grille on Tuesday, December 16th at 11:30 a.m. Call Peggy Frint at 815-398-1813 to make your reservation.

Covenant Harbor's Christmas Dinners

Enjoy a candlelight dinner and holiday music by Sterling & Brass, the Lake Country Brass Quintet on Fri., Dec. 5th or Sat., Dec. 6th. Tickets are \$35 and available by calling 262-248-3600.

Grounds for Life Christmas Program

Come help us prepare the Christmas Program for the homeless on Wednesday, December 10th beginning at 9:00 a.m. at Grounds for Life (3rd & Kishwaukee St.) Please call Paula Rasanen at 815-226-9025 if you can volunteer.

Rockford Christian Fellowship Band

The RCFB will perform twice in the month of December. First, on December 6th at 7:00 PM they will gather with several community bands at First Assembly and then on Sunday, December 21st at 6:00 PM in the Salvation Army Temple.

News from the Library

These series of fiction books were recently donated to the library and are ready to be checked out. "The Mitford Years" by Jan Karon
"The Yada Yada Prayer Group" by Neta Jackson
"The Cape Light novels" by Thomas Kinkade
Come in, check one out and enjoy! We are open before and after Sunday services and on Wednesday afternoons from 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.

Birthdays

- 3 Florence Boyer
Ruth Carlson
Julia Heinzeroth
4 Carl Ecklund
Emily Schweiger
6 Crystal Burdick
7 Maggie Kasicki
13 Beth Holmertz
Judy LeGault
17 Jill Page
19 Christiana Melin
20 Nancy Ilgen
28 Kim Anderson
Kay Forsen
Althea Myers
Jeanine Parker

Anniversaries

- 22 Eric & Cari Filkin
27 Gary & Lois Ecklund
Paul & Susan York
28 Fred & Darlene Pearson

Remember in Prayer

Doris Dahlgren in the Health Center at Fairhaven.
Lois Ecklund home recovering from surgery.
Mae Kolnes at P.A. Peterson.
Lillian Rabe at home recovering.
Eleanor Holmertz recovering at St. Annes.

Thank You

To our Broadway Church Family,
The family of Leonard Mikkelson wants to thank everyone for their support during Len's illness. Thank you for the visits from Pastor Eric, Joyce and others. The prayers, phone calls and cards were so appreciated. He is now free from pain and with our Lord. Thank you so much. Connie Mikkelson, Colleen & Gene Felts and family

Financial Update from Treasurer

Dave Holmertz

I have estimated the amount of donations needed during Nov. and Dec. to pay all of our bills and missions commitments. That amount is: \$63,000
Received in the first 4 Sundays of Nov. (\$20,764)
Needed for the next 6 Sundays \$42,236
This averages \$8,447 per Sunday.

Student Ministries

Greetings from Teenland! This time around, Children's Ministries had some news to share which is fantastic, so they get the full page. Check it out to see what happening upstairs at Broadway! As far as Student Ministries goes, things are going well! Overhaul's worship band is developing more each week. It's been fabulous times and the passion and energy are great. Talktimes in both groups are great...Roots is starting in on the subject of the Holy Spirit while Overhaul is finishing up the fellowship principle. On November 14th and 15th, both groups had their own game night here at church. Overhaul met here at 6pm on the 14th. There were games from anarchy ball to jenga to globular to chess (both Lauren and Kevin beat me). Vinny's provided 2 hurricane pizzas to enjoy. It was a great night. Roots met the next night. We had a sweet game of floor hockey in the fellowship hall. Uno was a popular game and sardines (hide and seek in the dark) became a favorite. It was the overall consensus that the front basement is creepy in the dark...I agree! Another hurricane pizza was delivered and devoured. Both groups had a blast and there were no major injuries...just bumps and bruises...kinda ☺. Overhaul again met at Grounds for Life on November 11th to participate in the homeless breakfast ministry. Thanks guys for participating!! Keep December 9th and 26th open as those are the next times we're going. Overhaul's cell group is still going strong! We study James each Wednesday morning at 6AM at Stockholm Inn. On November 12th, Roots headed out into our neighborhood and distributed 500 postcards about our Thanksgiving basket donation needs. Then a week later, they headed out again and collected 350 items in 1 hour. Not bad! Overhaul is doing their share on the 23rd so we'll see how they come in. Thanks to our community for their partnership in this ministry! Also, remember to keep the compassion cash coming and be praying for our little ones in Tanzania: Asia, Boke, and Najimu! As we head into the Christmas season, remember that it's not what you get, but rather what you give!

Peace,

Derek



All Women's Christmas Banquet

"O Holy Night"

Tuesday, December 2, 2007 - 6:15 pm

Don't miss this chance to join us for a wonderful evening. Tickets are \$10 and will be on sale before and after the service on November 30. This is wonderful outreach opportunity. Plan to invite your family, friends and co-workers. It's always a blessing to all who attend.

Pecans

Once again this year, Women Ministries is selling pecans. We have "Fancy Mammoth Whole Pecans" (1 pound bags) and Chocolate Covered Pecans (12 ounce bags). Each sells for \$8.00 per bag. Contact Carolyn Augenson 815-3980-6814, to get your supply.



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Return Service Requested