



Country Chronicles

December, 2011

Cannon River and Cross of Christ

Lutheran Parish (ELCA)



From the Pastor

The first Sunday of this month begins the season of Advent for the church. It is a season of hope and expectation. We not only look forward to celebrating the birth of the Christ child at Christmas, but we also look forward to that final appearing of our savior and the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God.

These congregations have something else to look forward to as well. You will be employing a new secretary and calling a new pastor. There is a lot of anxiety around these big changes. All change brings anxiety. But this is a lot of change to deal with all at once and at a time of year that is filled with emotion and nostalgia and anticipation.

When Jesus was about to leave his disciples and go to the cross, he met with them and had a final meal with them. For the disciples it was a time of high anxiety and fear and not knowing what the future held. The gospel of John, chapter 13 tells us about Jesus' last hours with his disciples. He gives them a new commandment. He washes their feet and tells them to be servants to one another. It is so simple and so easy to forget. In times of great stress, love and serve. In times of great anxiety and anticipation, love and serve.

As a congregation and as individuals you will have many opportunities in the next few weeks and months to love and serve others. You will have a chance to welcome a new secretary and help her feel appreciated. You will have a chance to welcome a new interim pastor and make him or her feel appreciated. These are just two examples. Pastor James Vadis will be your supply preacher for the month of December. Rebecca Peterson is filling in until we find a church secretary. Here are two more disciples you can welcome and love and serve as they love and serve you.

Jesus left his disciples with one commandment: love one another. As your pastor over the last 6+ years I have felt tremendous love and support from both congregations. I have been richly blessed by loving and serving you. My hope is that whomever comes to serve you in the capacity of pastor and secretary, that they too, will experience what I was blessed to experience.

God bless you with hope amidst anxiety, peace amidst all the change and joy that will overflow in love and service. A blessed Advent season to you and Merry Christmas.

Your Fellow Servant,
Pastor Bob



Advent Service of Comfort & Hope

The Advent Service of Comfort and Hope will be held again this year at First English Lutheran Church, 511 W. Belle St., on Sunday afternoon, Dec. 18, at 4 p. m. This is sponsored by First English and First Congregational

U. C. C. and is a service of calm, peace, and healing as the winter solstice approaches. Through beautiful candlelight, harp music, anointing, and Celtic liturgy, all are welcome to come as pastors, musicians, and lay people lead us. There will be a soup supper following. This is a community event, open to all people who desire prayer and healing for themselves or simply a time apart in preparation for Christmas.



COMMUNITY ADVENT REFLECTIONS

The Red Wing area community is invited to First Presbyterian Church of Red Wing for a time of meditation and reflection during the often busy and hectic Advent Season. We'll have a freewill soup and sandwich lunch at 11:45am, followed by an "Advent Reflections" organ recital at 12:15pm each Wednesday:

Wednesday, November 30, 2011
Dennis Johnson – Guest Organist

Wednesday, December 7, 2011
William Wilson– Guest Organist

Wednesday, December 14, 2011
JoAnne McNamara – Guest Organist

Wednesday, December 21, 2011
Randall Egan – Guest Organist

For more information, please contact Pastor Gary Elg at 388-9584.

Effective Parenting Being a Servant at Christmas

Sometimes children believe that the whole world revolves around them. Parents, at times, contribute to a child-centered mentality and further reinforce this misconception. Kids can get the impression that parents, siblings, and even the family pets are there simply to make them happy. The result is demandingness and an unpleasant attitude.

One of the ways to counteract this tendency is to teach children to be servants and Christmas is a great time to start. Planning and giving gifts, preparing food treats for others, setting the table, and cleaning up Christmas messes are all ways to demonstrate servanthood. You might have your children take turns giving out the gifts that are under the tree instead of just finding their own and opening them up.

Listening to others, watching family members open gifts, saying thank you, sharing, and looking for ways to help are all ideas for kids to demonstrate a servant attitude at Christmastime.

Use the word "servant" and teach children about its positive meaning in life. Talk about how being a servant is really a gift to others. After all, Jesus became a servant by becoming a man and coming to earth as our Savior (Philippians 2:5).

Lights of Love

The Lights of Love 26th Annual Ceremony, sponsored by Fairview Red Wing Auxiliary, will be held Thursday, December 15th, at 6:30 PM at Fairview Medical Center. Lights in honor or in memory of your loved ones may be purchased by completing the forms available at the FVRW Gift Shop, the Professional and Community Center Lobby, Red Wing Library, Downtown Plaza, Smokey Row, Deer Crest, and Potter Ridge. Lights are \$4.00. Thank you for supporting the Auxiliary's work for student scholarships and patient services.



Combined Council Minutes

Members present: Pastor Bob Albing, Janet Daley, Dale Froyum, Marion Jaenke, Anna Amy, Cheryl Fox, Jason Orloske, Shawn Klahr, Mitch Jackson, Mark Hartman, Hans Schreifels, Jim Gustafson, LeRoy Peterson, Larry Iverson (SE MN Synod) Absent: Ron Hanson, Polly Valade, Diane Brage

Mark Hartman called the meeting to order.
Larry Iverson led devotions from 1Thes. 5

Christmas Service Schedule

A motion was made to have Christmas Eve Service at Cross of Christ on Saturday, December 24th at 4:30pm and Christmas Day Service at Cannon River on Sunday, December 25th at 10:00am. Motion passed.

Supply Pastor for Month of December

A motion was made to have the Transition Committee move forward with arranging for Pastor James Vadis to be supply pastor for the month of December. Motion passed.

Transition Committee Report

Committee received information regarding 4 interim pastors. Committee will review and interview in the near future.

Exit Interview with Pastor Bob

Councils conducted exit interview with Pastor Bob. Larry Iverson will compile responses and send copies to both council presidents.
Larry shared information on the next steps in the call process.

Secretarial Position Update

Five resumes have been received. A few are viable options. Jason will proceed with interviews and keep councils updated.

Meeting adjourned.
Respectfully submitted,
Rhonda Meyer, Parish Secretary

CANNON RIVER NEWS

Worship Attendance

October 2nd	36
October 9th	33
October 16th	32
October 23rd	23
October 30th	27

Christmas Program

The Cannon River Sunday School Christmas program will be Sunday, December 18th at 9:00 AM. Please join us following the service for coffee fellowship.



Annual Meeting:

Cannon River's Annual Meeting will be held Sunday, January 29, 2012. The Annual Report will be available 2 weeks prior, on January 15. Please have your Committee reports turned in to the Church Office by Sunday, Dec. 18th. Thanks!

CROSS OF CHRIST NEWS

Worship

Assistants for December

Greeters

4th Sanford Family
11th Sandy & Bob Luhman
18th Jackie & Dennis Martin
25th 10am Service at CR

Lectors

4th Rhonda Meyer
11th Anthony Nemcek
18th SS Christmas Program
25th 10am Service at CR

Altar Committee

Millie Niebeling

Council Person

Ron Hanson

Attendance

October 30th	61
November 6th	89
November 13th	113
November 20th	132

November Council Minutes

November 8, 2011

Minutes Not Yet Approved

Members present: Pastor Bob Albing, Janet Daley, Jim Gustafson, Hans Schreifels, Dale Froyum, Marion Jaenke, Anna Amy, Cheryl Fox, Jason Orloske
Absent: Ron Hanson

Marion Jaenke called the meeting to order.
Agenda was approved.

Pastor's Report

Pastor shared a list of members who need to be visited. We have new families interested in joining Cross of Christ. Pastor shared information from the Theological Conference on Gospel Hospitality.

October Council Minutes

October Council Minutes were approved.

Unfinished Business

*Pastor Bob's Farewell – Anna shared information regarding planning of the event.

New Business

*Information to Congregation – Cheryl will update congregation on call process and secretary search on Sunday. Information will also be included in the Chronicles.
*Call Committee – A list of interested individuals is being compiled.
*Next Council Meeting – December 13, 2011 at 6:30pm.
*Council Person for December – Ron Hanson

Committee Reports

*Finance –

A motion was made to have Thrivent Financial Choice Dollars remain designated to the parking lot for 2012 with review again next November. Motion passed.

A motion was made to accept the budget for 2012 as presented. Motion passed.

Financial reports were accepted.

*Property Management – Nothing new to report.

*Worship & Music – Christmas service times were decided upon at combined council meeting (Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24th at 4:30pm at Cross of Christ; Christmas Day, Sunday, December 25th at 10:00am at Cannon River).

*Vision & Expectations – No report.

*Learning & Youth – Sunday School Christmas program will be December 18. Family events were tentatively planned for the year. Planning for youth gathering continues.

*Service – No report.

*Missions – Loaves and Fishes sign up letter has arrived. Anna will pick a couple Sundays in 2012 and report back when confirmed.

*Witness – Plans continue with the Welch Settlement Community Picnic scheduled for July 2012.

*Stewardship – Committee spoke to the Sunday School children about being good stewards and handed out envelopes to the children. One more giving unit has signed up for Simply Giving. Committee will do Surprise Sunday in January with the Sunday School children.

*Personnel – Committee shared information received from visits.

Meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Rhonda Meyer, Parish Secretary

Annual Meeting:

Cross of Christ's Annual Meeting will be held Sunday, January 22, 2012. The Annual Report will be available 2 weeks prior, on January 8. Please have your Committee reports turned in to the office by Sunday, Dec. 11.

From COC Church Council

Dear friends in Christ,

As we transition from Pastor Bob and Mary leaving, please know that God, your staff, council and committees continue to work for the good of the congregation. Thanks to Rebecca Peterson for filling in as church secretary until the position is filled. Pastor James Vadis will be our supply pastor for the month of December. Confirmation classes will continue on Wednesday nights. They will be taught by Dennis Martin and Duke and Kathy Bjorklund. Worship and Music Committee has a plan in place for several of the upcoming church services. A transition committee has been formed to hire an interim pastor. A call committee is being formed for recruiting a new pastor. Rest assured that it will be business as usual.

This does not mean that you have to sit back and do nothing. There is a need for more ushers, people willing to visit shut-ins and our ill members, do community outreach, and serve coffee fellowship, just to name a few. We have at least four families interested in becoming new members. Anyone interested in being on the Service Committee or wanting to sponsor a family, please contact a council member. Please everyone continue to attend worship services, bring a friend or a neighbor, join a committee, keep making your pledges.

PRAY! PRAY! PRAY! As God has brought us to this, He will bring us through it.

Your Church Council

CHRISTMAS SMORGASBORD

Our annual Christmas dinner will be held on Thurs., December 8th, at 6pm in Dahlen Hall. Please bring a dish to pass; beverages and tableware will be provided.

After dinner, we will celebrate the season! We'd like to share your many talents during a program after dinner. **Please let Sue or Jackie know if you have a talent that you're willing to share – children and adults!** We'd love to hear from you! So, bring the whole family, invite a friend, and enjoy a wonderful evening of holiday celebration.
Sue Hill and Jackie Martin



Finance

The next finance committee meeting will be Wednesday, December 7th, at 7pm at church. Questions? See a finance committee member or Sue Hill, 651-437-8368 jimandsuehill@gmail.com

Missionary Support

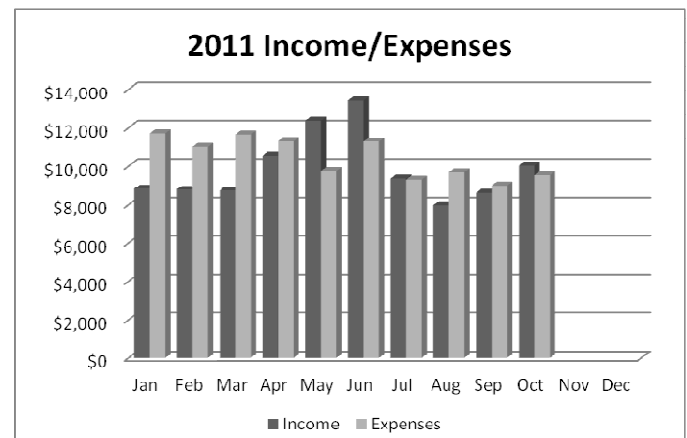
Our missionary support commitment for 2011 is \$1000. We have received \$738.40 to date. Please remember to use the envelopes in the pews for mission support.

Memorials

We received \$300.00 in memory of Jack Savage.



Cross of Christ Financial Report



	Income	Expenses
Jan	\$8,839	\$11,720
Feb	\$8,781	\$10,997
Mar	\$8,730	\$11,658
Apr	\$10,572	\$11,319
May	\$12,354	\$9,742
Jun	\$13,417	\$11,299
Jul	\$9,363	\$9,305
Aug	\$7,972	\$9,678
Sep	\$8,602	\$9,005
Oct	\$10,031	\$9,530
Year to Date	\$98,661	\$104,253

Stewardship Corner



Since January 2011 the Stewardship Committee has been challenging the Cross of Christ Congregation to help reach a goal of 25 “Simply Giving” units. We started out with 16 giving units and are happy to report that as of November, we now have **23 units!** That is great news! We have gained 7 more units. “Simply Giving” helps the Church, Finance Committee and Council make decisions:

- *It offers the ability to count on a certain level of income regardless of time of year or level of service attendance – it is a steady income.*

Only 2 more giving units are needed to help us reach our goal of 25. Please consider. It is easy to do and always remains confidential. Take time to look at the posters in the back of the church and Dahlen Hall. Read the testimonies from some individuals who already give by “Simply Giving”. The forms are there too. If you need any help with filling out the forms, you can contact Sue Hill our Church Treasure or a Stewardship committee member.

Not only does the Stewardship Committee speak to adults, on November 6th, we made a visit to the Cross of Christ Sunday School. It was Mission Sunday, and our goal was to talk with the children about being good Stewards and hand out a box of envelopes to each child.

At any age, we all have talents that we can do to help out. We asked them how they earned money; allowances, birthdays, babysit and help on farm were some of the answers. We continued the dialog with how they could use their money to help the Sunday School support their missions. We learned that it takes \$28.00 a month to support Alvan. The

attendance that day was about 21 children. As we did the math, they figured it would take more \$1.00 each to support Alvan. Not only does the church have commitments, the Sunday School does too. It was a good discussion and I must say there were some very impressive answers we got. You should be very proud of our Sunday School children. Last but not least, we will have our Stewardship drive in January 2012. Be watching for more information on this.

We are always looking for new members to join our committee! New faces and ideas are always great to see. Please let us know if you have interest.

Thank You, –Cheryl A. Fox, Dean Dinndorf, Jackie Martin (Stewardship Committee)

2012 Offering Envelopes

Your 2012 offering envelopes will be in the back of the church on **Sunday, December 11th**. Please consider whether or not you want to use the envelopes to make your offerings. Many people who have envelopes are choosing not to use them. If you don't want to use the envelopes for 2012, please let me know.

If you have chosen in the past not to use them, I won't put them out for you for next year. I don't want to miss anyone, so please contact me if I've made an error in neglecting to put out offering envelopes for you or a family member. **Please remember that the “Simply Giving” program is an option at any time. You can enroll by contacting me.**

Thank you, Sue Hill (437-8368)

Sunday School Missions Christmas Shoe Box Project

Last year, about 1,000 adults and children received a Christmas shoe box on Christmas Eve at the Marie Sandvik Center in Minneapolis. The Mission “Kids” will be filling shoe boxes so that others may receive a gift on Christmas. We need your help!

This project is open to the whole congregation! In the back of the church, you will find a “sample” shoe box and plenty of blue sheets of paper explaining the project. If you have any questions, just ask! **You're**

welcome to take a box, decorated by the mission kids.

Please return your box by December 4th. Thank you for sharing your love at Christmas time!!

Sue Hill



Upcoming Youth Events



On Saturday, December 10, from 11:30am to 1:30 pm we are looking for youth volunteers for a "Parents' Day Out." We are in need of youth to help with a lunch meal, crafts, supervising a movie, and playing the younger kids! If

you are interested in either of these events, please let us know by contacting Jason and Cassie Orloske at jascass1877@msn.com or Adam and Jackie Nelson at arnelson45@gmail.com or jfzahorsky@gmail.com.

Women's Bible Study

WELCA Bible Study group will meet for our Christmas outing at Liberty's Pizza in Red Wing on Tuesday- Dec. 13th at 10:00AM. Bring canned food for the food shelf instead of gifts. Meet at Cross of Christ at 9:30 to car-pool to Red Wing. Anyone in Red Wing needing a ride should contact Linda Chester at 388-1573.

Women's Retreat

Make your reservation now for the women's retreat on January 27-29. We are again heading to Good Earth Village for a Bible study called **I am She**, about living your life boldly. We will also have crafts, massages, and relaxing by the fireplace. Come get away and recharge yourself! We will all be signing up for a part of a meal to bring and a snack for Friday night. The cost is \$100.00; **\$50.00 is due by Dec 18 and \$50.00 is due on Jan. 22.** Please sign up at the back of the church or contact **Tracy Harth** at [651-212-6045](tel:651-212-6045) for more information. E-mail pooh823@charter.net. We will see you there.

The COC Sunday
School Christmas
Program will be
Sunday, December 18
at 10:30 AM

ATTENTION PARENTS:

There will be a Saturday Dress Rehearsal on December 10th from 9:30 to 11:30 AM-Please mark your calendars for this important day of preparation for the Sunday School Christmas Program! After the rehearsal, it is Parent's Day Out! (see below)

PARENT'S DAY OUT:

After the Christmas program practice on December 10th (see above), the youth group will be offering a "Parents' Day Out" until 1:30 pm (lunch and activities will be provided!). Use the time to finish up your Christmas preparations, shopping, or for some time for yourself knowing your children are being cared for and having fun at the church!! All children must be picked up at the church by 1:30 pm. Before leaving your children for Parents' Day Out, you will be asked to complete an emergency contact form. Also, if your child has any food allergies or intolerances, please let us know that in advance of Parents' Day Out. Please contact Cassie Orloske with any questions.



Cross of Christ Christmas Cards

Our church has been featured on a Christmas Card. The artwork is that of a local artist, Annette Bach. If you would like to purchase some cards they are \$1.00 each or a package of 20 regular cards for \$13.00, personalized 20 for \$14.00. Order them from Julie Schreifels, there is a display in the back of the church. If you prefer you can order them yourself off the web site www.mileskimballcards.com

Food Safety Meeting

If in any way you prepare or serve food for church functions, we encourage you to attend a short Food Safety Meeting in Dahlen Hall on Sunday, December 4 following the church service. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Jean Kehren at 388-1009 or Doris Gruber at 507-263-2105.



Women of the ELCA News

The next WELCA meeting will be on Thursday, January 5, 2012 at 7:00 pm.

ONE MISSION: THREE MISSION AREAS

Mission Growth: To provide a variety of learning experiences that strengthen each woman as a whole person, develop her potential, and equip her for ministry.

- **Women's Retreat:** January 27-29, 2012. This year's theme will be **I AM SHE**. Boldness is a call to action. As Women of the ELCA, women who are claimed and called by God, we believe that a life lived **boldly** is a faith-filled celebration and an investment in the world we want for ourselves and our children. *Come join us in discovering your bold.* There will also be fun activities, easy crafts, relaxing massages (extra), fantastic food, uplifting music, and the wonderful fellowship of your sisters in Christ all in the beautiful woodland setting of Good Earth Village. The cost is \$100 per person, **\$50.00 due by Dec 18 and \$50.00 due on Jan. 22**. Contact Tracy Harth to register TODAY! Phone 651-212-6045 E-mail pooh823@charter.net OR Sign up at the back of the church to register. We will see you there.

Mission Action: To enable women to articulate and act upon their faith as Disciples of Christ in all areas of life.

- **Prayer Shawls:** If you can knit or crochet at all you can make a shawl. These shawls are given to people in need of healing of any kind. We will discuss giving them to local people. Julie S. has the pattern or go to www.shawlministry.com/instructions.html
- **Hug Pillows:** Doris G. gave a brief description of some hug pillows she has. They are a great way to give someone in need a little pick me up. Distribution will be discussed further at our next meeting.
- **Food Shelf:** Fill the barrel in the back of the church for the local food shelves.
- **Taste of Welch:** Oct. 8th THANK YOU to all who helped and came to the Taste of Welch. Total profit was \$1796.97. Distribution of the following donations was voted on and passed at the



Women
of the
EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN
CHURCH
IN AMERICA

Nov. 10th meeting: \$300 to the Christmas Project, \$100 each to the Food Shelves in Cannon Falls, Hastings, and Red Wing, \$100 to the Habitat for Humanity House the Sunday School kids are "shingling", \$100 each to the Women's Shelters in Red Wing and Hastings, and \$100 to the Shepherds Center in Cannon Falls. This makes \$1000 designated to missions.

- **Soup Sale:** A suggestion was made to sell quarts of soup as a fundraiser, maybe around Super Bowl Sunday. What do you think?
- **Buy Fair Trade Coffee and/or Lucinda Pins.** See displays in the little room between the sanctuary and the hallway.

Mission Community: To enable each woman to value herself & others as created in God's image & redeemed through Christ; & to build up & celebrate relationships that are global, diverse, & interdependent.

- **Christmas Smorgasbord Thursday. December 8th at 6:00** Contact Sue Hill or Jackie Martin if you would like to help with this wonderful family event. Share your talents with us.
- **Craft Day:** There will be another craft day, tentatively set for May 5th.
- **Kitchen Safety Training:** Doris Gruber and Jean Kehren attended a seminar regarding food safety for volunteer organizations put on by the Minnesota Department of Health and others. Because our fellowship halls are attached to our church we are technically exempt from having to get permits to sell or serve food. However, it is important for the health of those we serve, including ourselves, that we practice some basic food/kitchen safety procedures when serving food to others. Doris will offer some food safety sessions. Watch for more specific information.

Officers for 2011-2013

President/ President Elect: Julie Schreifels/Tracy Harth
Secretary: Deb Sanford
Treasurer: Jean Kehren
Kitchen Committee: Judy Meyer, Diane Hermanson, Jean Kehren, Sandra Bjornson, & Doris Gruber.

The Cross of Christ Women of the ELCA needs YOU!! Renew, Respond, Rejoice!
God go with you!

Your sister in Christ,
Julie Schreifels

Character consists of what you do on the third and fourth tries.
