

notes from Hosanna JANUARY 2009
HOSANNA LUTHERAN CHURCH **Volume 23 Nbr. 11**
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HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

People seem to be sending more "feel good" stories these days. By "these days" I don't mean only the days before, during and following Christmas - I mean, really, over the past several years. The international scene has not been politically stable in quite some time; the global economy is on the brink of calamity and our own Canadian minority government appears to be a little on the shaky side. All of this adds up to more than a little stress and I think people start to look for and send "feel good" stories. I rather like it. My email box at home seems to receive these several times a week. I must admit though, I look at the sender in order to help me determine whether I take the time to open, read and consider sending them on or if I hit the delete button without another moment's thought.

I think the news media has caught on to this idea, whether intentionally or not. For example, one recent gift I received from a friend was a NBC news video. The newscaster, Brian Williams, concluded his newscast on Nov. 10 with a story about how Canadians were gathering spontaneously on bridge decks to honour the motorcades of fallen Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan as they made the trek down highway 401. It even mentioned people renaming it "the highway of heroes." It was a significant salute from one American newscaster to a country gathering to salute its fallen soldiers.

Another one, received a week before Christmas, involves the plight of a whale off the California coast. It was a front page news story, according to my friend who sent it. A fisherman spotted a female humpback whale just outside the Golden Gate Bridge that had become entangled in a spider web of crab traps and lines. Hundreds of pounds of traps plus hundreds of yards of line rope wrapped around her torso, tail and body, had her struggling to stay afloat. She even had a line tugging in her mouth. A well - placed call to an environmental group had a team in the water working to free her within several hours.

The report goes on to say that when free, the whale swam in what seemed like joyous circles and then returned to each individual diver, nudging and pushing them in an acknowledgement of thanks. My friend concludes by saying, "may you, and all those you love, be so blessed and fortunate as to be surrounded by people

who will help you get untangled from things that are binding you. And may you know the gift of giving and receiving gratitude."

The sentiment has quite a biblical ring to it and is a sentiment that can be a part of anyone's life. None of us knows what's in store collectively or individually as a new year begins. Yet it seems to be the practice of many, if not most, to reflect and give thanks for the year past and to look with hope to an even better year ahead. I hope the "feel good" stories continue, though I hope the need for them diminishes to the point where they are sent purely out of gratitude.

One of the first fruits of faith is gratitude and one of the first acts for a person of faith living out of gratitude is to help each other to become untangled from the things that bind. I pray we each are able to recognize and receive information about what binds us as people of God and, in turn, to receive with gratitude the efforts of others to unbind us.

Grace and peace to you and to your families and loved ones in this New Year.
Pastor Ron Flamand

OUR PRAYER CHAIN

To request prayer for yourself or for others, contact:
Del Bennett, Dan Wold, or the pastors at 780-484-3932.
If you are interested in being part of the prayer chain,
please also contact any of the above.

**For all Worship Assistants
and others interested.**

**On January 18, there will be an adult forum designed
as a workshop for all those who are worship assistants,
and all those who may be interested in what
worship assistants do. This is a time for us to review
and remind each other of our duties and responsibilities.**

Thank You !!!

My sincere thanks go out to all those who had anything to do with our Advent and Christmas services in the way of worship volunteering (worship assistants; communion assistants and readers; Altar guild; ushers; and offering counters, including the coordinators for these groups - Cindy Schriener, Lois Flakstad, Barb Ulmer, Dan Wold, John Campbell and Pat and Morley Becker); arranging chairs, participating in the music, decorating the sanctuary, typing bulletins, or just being a great support. Our services would be meaningless without you. **Epiphany !!!** What did the magi ponder on their long journey home? Did they consider their astonishment at finding the king they were seeking not in Herod's palace, their first stop, but as a baby in a humble house in the little town of Bethlehem? How were they different when they arrived home?

The time after Epiphany ends with the transfiguration. The surprise the wise men experienced at the beginning of Jesus' earthly life continues at its end. (S&S, 2007, pg. 68)

This year, Epiphany, January 6, is on a Tuesday, and there will be a special service celebrating the Epiphany of Our Lord at Trinity Lutheran Church, that evening at 7:30 p.m. Congregations of the Northern Cluster, in which we are included, are all invited to attend.

The season of Epiphany in 2009 is longer than it was last year, ending with the Festival Celebration of the Transfiguration on February 22.

In our services at Hosanna, we will be celebrating the Baptism of Our Lord on January 11, with Holy Communion at both services, a Children's Emphasis on January 18, and a Lutheran World Federation Emphasis on January 25.

May Jesus Christ, the light of the world, fill your hearts in this special season. God's blessings in this new calendar year!

In Christ,
Evelyn, Director of Worship and Music

El Salvador Support Group Report

The El Salvador Support Group has decided to provide financial support in 2009 to nine students associated with our sister parish of Divine Redeemer in San Miguel, El Salvador. This is the same number of students that we supported in 2008. However, an additional student is attending secondary school, where the costs are greater.

It is quite an ambitious commitment, which will amount to about \$5,000 in 2009. It is made possible by general and individual congregational support, as well as through fundraisers such as the pupusa sale earlier this fall and through the involvement of Hosanna volunteers who raised money by selling coffee at the Just Christmas and elsewhere. A very generous donation of \$1,000 from the Hosanna Quilters also "put us over the hill" and has ensured that we will be able to meet our commitment to our students in the coming year. Thank you, Quilters!

Here is the list of students we will be supporting:

Elementary

Jessica Chavez Olivares - (age 13) Grade 8

Virgilio Rodriguez - (age 12) Grade 4

Kevin Gomez (age 11) Grade 6

(Note, older children sometimes are in lower grades because they have had to withdraw from school for a year or two.)

High School

Alexis Melgar - 3rd year high school

Raul Granados - 2st year high school

Wendy Hernandez - 1st year high school

Ivania Machado Olivares - 2nd year high school

University

Alexis Aguirre - 2nd year university - medicine

Jairo Fuentes - 2nd year university computer studies.

Education represents a great path of hope for these young people.

In addition to the support for the students, we assist Pastor Miguel with a monthly stipend of \$150 and also provide for an Emergency Fund which allows him to meet special needs of members of Divine Redeemer who may need extra assistance for school (text books or supplies) or medicines. These funds come out of Hosanna's El Salvador Parish Fund. That fund is reasonably healthy at the moment. The heavier demand is on the El Salvador Student Fund. We are always grateful for support made through offerings.

As you may know, through individual donations by a number of individuals within and outside Hosanna, we have been supporting Pastor Miguel's son Saul (or as they call him Saulito) for eye surgery. Saul has had his first eye operation, which we understand went well. We had been informed earlier that the second eye would be operated upon in December but the operation now apparently has been postponed until January. We understand the money already forwarded for Saul is sufficient for the second operation. (Please check out photos of Saul on the ESSG notice board next to the office.)

Finally, we would like to draw your attention to a special ecumenical service on Saturday March 21 to mark the 29th anniversary of Archbishop Oscar Romero's assassination. Members of the Salvadoran community in Edmonton specially have asked Hosanna to be part of this event and our Council has agreed to officially link Hosanna to the event. Pastor Ron has agreed to participate. The Salvadoran community have been active supporting our initiatives and we hope that we can count on a good turnout from Hosanna for the special service, which will take place at Providence Centre on the southside. Stay tuned for more details.

Lois Flakstad
Chair, El Salvador Support Group

EDUCATION and FAMILY MINISTRIES

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School for children age 3 through Grade 6 meets every week from 10-11 am in the Peace Hall, at the north end of the church. Registration forms for new students are available at the Coordinators' desk every week. Children are welcome to join at any time during the year!

Sunday School resumes on Sunday, January 11th.

Many thanks to all those who helped with our Advent Activity Day and Birthday Party for Jesus:

- craft and snack helpers
- leaders of songs and games
- teachers, coordinators

as well as the Christmas Program:

- Taylor Schaerer (piano)
- Evelyn and the handbell ringers
- Wesdyne Amyotte (painting the backdrops)
- Heather Ulmer & Andrea Vogel (opening leaders extraordinaire!)
- Sunday School Teachers - Chelsea Chapman, Dayna Ewart, Jamie Geissler, Liz Tanti, Laura Nielsen-Kerr, Cindy Schriener, Corinne Pagee, Lorelei Campbell
- Sunday School Coordinators - Gaylene Layden, Penny Phillips, Naomi Gienow
- and all the Sunday School children!

Thank you to all who have been supporting our current mission project. Sunday School offerings for Advent through Epiphany will go to support the Koh Kandal School Project in Cambodia which aims to provide library books and learning resources to the teachers at the school. Because many students have to travel great distances to go to school and feel pressure to spend time working in the fields, the project will also initiate a bicycle loan program to encourage the students to attend elementary school and continue on to high school. For more information about this project, check out the website www.mvinge.com.

ADULT FORUMS 10:15 a.m. in the Social Room.

January 11th - Taking Care of Ourselves

The Stewardship Committee presents its 4th annual "stewardship of personal well-being" Adult Forum. You will hear informative and inspiring presentations from Hosanna members on things that they do to take care of themselves and to promote healthy living. Be sure to come early as this is always a well attended Forum. If you are looking for inspiration to help you keep those New Year's Resolutions, this is the event for you!

January 18th

- Presented by Worship and Music

Come hear what's involved in being a worship assistant in our services, as we meet to review and remind each other of our duties and responsibilities.

January 25th

- Fellowship time - no adult forum.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

This month's study will be held on Friday, January 9, 7:30pm at Sonja Carmichael's. Continuing with our theme "The Cinderella Syndrome", we will look at what the Bible has to say about "My Picture Perfect Family". Bring your Bible (any version is fine) and join this casual group for study, fellowship and dessert! Come once, come often - we would especially like to invite new women to this group. It's a great chance to get to know others in the church.

FELLOWSHIP TIME FOR PARENTS

On the last Sunday of each month between services, parents of children of all ages are invited to meet for a time of fellowship, to get to know each other better and to support each other in raising faith-filled children. This month the plan is to meet on January 25 in the Sunday School classroom that is set up with couches. For more information, please talk to Kirstin Veugelers or Sonja.

Thursday Morning Bible Study

This study, led by Pastor Cliff, will resume on Thursday, January 8, 10 - 11:30 am (after Morning Prayer) New people are invited to join this group that looks at the lessons for the upcoming Sunday. Come as often as you are able.

"The Lion King" A Faith and Fun Event Friday, January 30, 7:00pm

When Simba is born, everyone comes to honour him. However, as Simba grows up, he has a lot to learn about how to be a good king.

Bring the whole family to watch The Lion King video and talk about what it means to be king - and how Jesus is the greatest king of all!

Popcorn and drinks will be provided.

** If you have the Lion King video that you would be willing to let us borrow for this event, please contact Sonja as soon as possible. Thanks.

Coming in February! ... Dates and times TBA

Winning at Parenting ... without beating your kids!

Barbara Coloroso's video is a humorous approach to mealtimes, bedtime, chores, discipline, allowance, fighting and other parenting issues. This video has practical ideas for all ages - from toddler to adolescent, with the focus on starting young so that foundations are in place by time children reach the challenging adolescent years. After watching portions of the video, we'll have the opportunity to share and discuss some of her powerful messages on raising children.

YOUTH GROUP NEWS

HAPPY NEW YEAR! Thank you to all those who helped make centerpieces for Family Christmas, and thank you also to all who helped decorate the Christmas Tree last month.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

FRIDAY JANUARY 9—SKATING AND HOT CHOCOLATE 7:00-9:30

We'll meet at the church at 7:00 and then head over to Hawrelak Park to do some skating. We'll then come back to the church to warm up with some hot chocolate and have a devotion to end the evening.

SUNDAY JANUARY 18, 2009—MUFFIN MORNING 10:00

Our most popular fundraiser is back in 2009! Stop by and support the youth.

FRIDAY JANUARY 23, 2009—PROGRESSIVE SUPPER 6:00-9:30

Back by popular demand, we'll meet at the church at 6:00 and embark on a travelling feast. You won't know if you'll be starting with dessert or salad until you arrive at your first location. We'll meet back at the church for pick up at 9:30.

YOUTH FORUM:

Starting on Sunday January 11, 2009 we'll delve into the mysteries of the Bible. We will be screening an adventure film about an archeological expedition that uncovers some amazing truths about Mount Sinai. Be sure not to miss it! We meet from 10:15-10:45 in the Conference Room each Sunday.

NEEDED:

1VOLUNTEERS - We can always use an extra helping hand! If you are interested in working with the youth this year please contact Lindsay for more information.

2MUFFIN MAKERS -Please sign up on the youth bulletin board if you are able to bring muffins on **SUNDAY JANUARY 18, 2009** or at any other time during the year, or e-mail lindsay@hosannalutheran.ab.ca.

3E-MAIL LIST - As we live in a technologically advanced society, I would like to compile a list of parent and youth e-mails so that I can make sure to get a hold of everyone when there are important youth announcements or upcoming events. Please write your e-mail legibly and put it in my mailbox. Thank you!

4DRIVERS - We rely on the help of parents in this area. If you are able to drive at any time throughout the year, please sign up on the youth bulletin board and look forward to a phone call.

5COOKS—For our progressive supper (**FRIDAY JANUARY 23, 2009**) we'll need some willing volunteers to host our youth in their homes for various meal courses (salads, appetizers, main course, and dessert). If you are interested please contact Lindsay for more information.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A PARENT OF THE YOUTH TO HOST US.

HAPPENINGS AT HOSANNA

SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING Sunday, January 4th.

There was a special congregational meeting held on Dec. 14 to elect delegates to the National Convention. Unfortunately, when ballots were counted, there was a tie for the second delegate, and as we no longer had a quorum, another vote could not be held at that time to break the tie. Therefore, another special congregational meeting has been called for Sunday, January 4th, immediately following the 10:00 am worship service. The purpose of this meeting is to elect the second delegate plus an alternate to represent Hosanna at the ELCIC convention in Vancouver in June 2009. Only two names will be on the ballot: Marlene Grinde and Margaret Sadler, who were both nominated at the Dec. 14 meeting. Colleen Vogel has already been elected as one of our delegates. A quorum is required for this official meeting, so plan to attend; the meeting should not be lengthy.

CONGREGATIONAL ANNUAL MEETING:

Sunday, January 25, 2009, 1:00 pm (after the second service).

ANNUAL REPORTS are due in the church office **NO LATER** than Monday morning, January 12, to be included in the printed booklet. Reports are expected from all committees and ministry areas, summarizing the 2008 year, and need to include Financial statements if applicable. Reports may be written by the chairperson, council liaison or a committee as a whole. Talk to Johanna or Nordahl if there are any questions.

OFFERING ENVELOPES for 2009 have been distributed in the mailboxes. If you didn't get a set or need additional sets for other family members, please let the church office or Ailsa Flynne know. We have ordered less envelope sets this year, so anyone that had an envelope number over 260 has been assigned a new number for 2009.

SEEKING OFFICE HELP during Johanna's vacation February 5 to 20. If you can offer a morning, an afternoon, for one day or a few days, please talk to Johanna to schedule your time. Answering the phone, answering the door and dealing with e-mails will be the main tasks. (We are finally using the vacation gift received November 2007 - thank you to all!)

COUNCIL NOTES

**COUNCIL MINUTES are available for anyone interested,
kept in a binder above the black counter.**

Once again, the Spirit of Christmas has been evident in numerous ways in recent weeks thanks to the efforts of many minds and hands. Those many contributions have included activities ranging from decorating the Christmas tree and helping at Family Christmas, as well as participating in Advent services, and directing and acting in the Sunday School pageant. Thanks to all.

On behalf of Council, I particularly wanted to acknowledge by name the contributions of Walter Adolf and John Campbell, both of whom are stepping down following a number of years of providing special Christmas-related ministries.

The Christmas tree is such a traditional element in our sanctuary at Christmas. This year, as in years past, Walter has led the selection and set-up of the tree. However, he has decided this will be the last year that he will be involved. Thanks, Walter, for your leadership in this regard this year and in the past.

Lining up and prepping ushers is important to life at Hosanna throughout the year but particularly during the busy Christmas period. Effective in the New Year, John Campbell has decided to pluck his usher co-ordinator hat out of the ring. (We understand he is keeping his other hats in the ring, notably participation on the Stewardship and Community Meals committees.)

Similarly, thanks to Lisa Omerzu, who has been our Indoor Custodian for three years. Lisa is stepping down so that she can travel. Thanks and bon voyage, Lisa!

Sound System

Council met Dec. 10, a bit earlier than usual in the month. The main order of business consisted of a detailed presentation from Mark Vogel on behalf of the Property Committee. Mark outlined his research into upgrading of Hosanna's sound system. The latter has been a matter of concern for some time and it generally is agreed the system needs to be brought into the 21st century.

Council decided to move on the recommendations presented by Mark. We will be engaging All-Star Productions to provide the sanctuary system as well as enhancement of the sound system serving the Peace Hall. This is a big-ticket item but will not be paid from the general budget but rather from the "undesignated account" - made up largely by generous bequests made to Hosanna in recent years. The new "present" will not arrive in time for Christmas but will definitely bring a new sound to Hosanna in the coming year. (If you have questions about the sound system, Mark, members of Council or myself will try to answer them.)

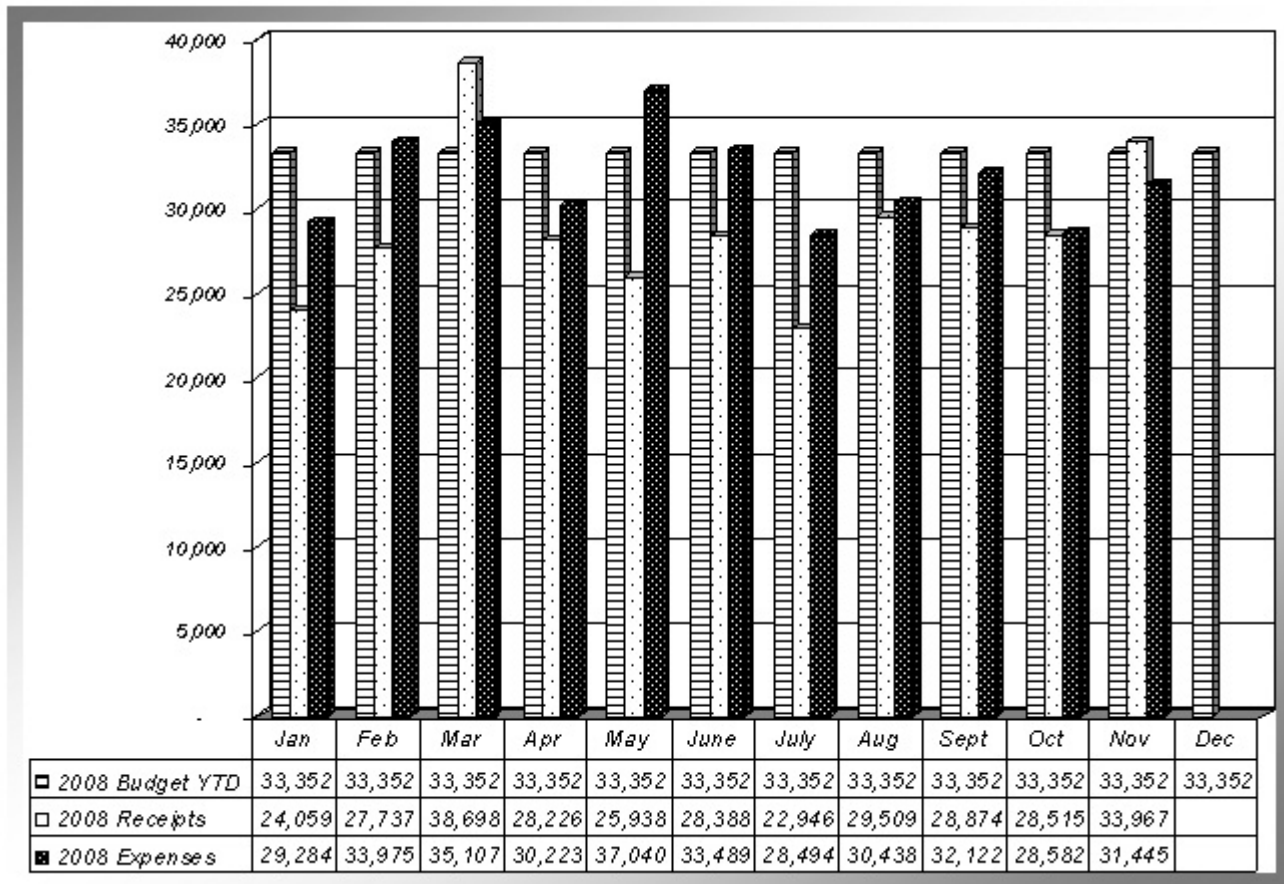
Faith Life Support

A couple of years ago, Hosanna was approached and agreed to become a Faith Life affiliated congregation. This meant that Faith Life would provide up to \$1,500-worth of matching grants to qualified Hosanna fundraisers approved by Council. In 2008, through no real fault of our own, we appear to have missed the boat. While we had three matching fundraisers (by the El Salvador Support Group, Youth and Paving Stone Fund) approved, they were scheduled for later in the year. By the time they took place, they were too late as Faith Life informed us that its designated matching funds had been exhausted. In other words, the early birds got the worm. While there is no guarantee that Faith Life matching funds will be forthcoming in 2009, Hosanna groups should seek Council by February for approval and then plan to conduct their fundraising as soon as possible in the New Year if they plan to seek a matching grant.

Council thanks you for your support in the past year and looks forward to continuing to work with you in 2009 to make Hosanna a supportive community of faith.

Nordahl Flakstad, Council Chair

HOSANNA 2008 RECEIPTS & EXPENSES vs BUDGET



PROPERTY ITEMS:

Plumbing repairs: Thank you to Erven Rendflesh and Alex Rophan for replacing a set of kitchen taps. It wasn't such a simple job, as the pipes are old, but they got it done! Thank you

WINTER CLEAN UP: There is lots of stuff taking up valuable space at the church, which we need to make some decisions about, what to keep or what to toss. The basement is full, there's stuff in other nooks and crannies and storage spots. We are seeking a few people who can help with organizing, putting things on shelves, or making decision on throwing things away. Can you help with that? Please phone Johanna to let her know your willingness to help and a date to do this will be decided. .

To the ECO station or to the dump? If you can offer a van or a truck, some muscles and some time, to take a load to the ECO station or to the city dump. it would be much appreciated. . Junk includes an old TV, a broken down sofa, and cans of paint, and whatever we find after Winter clean up. Let Johanna know if you can offer your vehicle and/or time for this. Dump costs will be reimbursed.

Do you have mechanical or just ordinary fix-it skills? We are always on the lookout for volunteers to fix leaky taps and toilets, replace plug-ins, weather stripping, light bulbs, change oil in the mower, "fix the doors and mend the hinges" etc. etc. Let the office know of your willingness to help on an on-call basis and you will be added to our list so we are not calling the same people each time.

POSTAGE STAMPS are collected in a box under the mailbox and given to the Canadian Bible Society (CBS) for their fund raising. Thanks to Lorraine Benner who has arranged delivery of the stamps over the past few years; she is no longer able to do that. If you live near or drive by the CBS offices on your way to work, this might be a simple task for you to do every few months. CBS is on 109St at 84 Ave. Let Johanna know.

COMMUNITY MEAL COMMITTEE

Next Community Meal: JANUARY 24, 2009

Give-away Table will again feature SOCKS and UNDERWEAR.

Success of the meals has necessitated upgrading some kitchen equipment so thanks go out to Kari for finding and purchasing the best deals in soup pots, muffin pans and baking trays. No more burnt pots or pans for the kitchen clean-up volunteers to fight with! Thanks Kari.

We wish to express our appreciation to the many volunteers who have helped at the five meals we served during the year. It wouldn't happen without your help! Hope you'll mark JANUARY 24th on your new calendar!

With Thanks,

The Committee: John, Gerry, Sonja, Johanna, Daphne, Karen, Lyndon, Kari

January SOUP & BUNS at the Jasper Place Health & Wellness Centre

There was a great response to the November Adult Forum that presented this program to our congregation. We will again serve "soup & buns" on Saturday evenings at the Jasper Place Health and Wellness Drop-In Centre (JPHWC) as we did last year. During the winter months, the JPHWC is open most evenings as a warming centre for the homeless. Perhaps hot soup and a full belly will help them through the night.

We have a commitment from other West Edmonton congregations to help provide a hot meal each Saturday evening in January, February and March. Members from Good Shepherd Catholic Parish, Trinity United Church and Spirit West United Church will join Hosanna in cooking, serving and carrying out this very worthwhile project.

The first date for which Hosanna is responsible is Saturday, Jan.10th. The soup is made at the church, transported to the JPHWC for serving there. We already have most of the volunteers in place, and only need one or two more servers at JPHWC from 5-7:30pm.

Donations of items for the soup are also needed. We will start with leftover food items in our freezer, but need some canned and fresh vegetables to complete it. Along with the soup, we serve ham and buns; we already have the ham but need 6-7 dozen buns. A sign up sheet is posted on our bulletin board with all the details of what is needed; please fill it in as you are able.

February 7 is the next Hosanna Soup Day; watch for a sign up sheet later in January for what's needed on that date and others later in February and March.

"WHY AM I GIVING?"

Do you ever ask yourself this question? If so, good for you! This question is at the heart of our own personal stewardship ministry. If we don't take the time occasionally to examine and explore issues like this in our faith lives, then our actions can begin to become mechanical and thought - less. Like an exercise workout is good for the heart and lungs, a spiritual workout is good for our Christian faith. And it helps to exercise spiritually on a regular basis, just as it's necessary to have a regular physical workout in order to attain good physical health.

Here are some thoughts collected from a variety of stewardship materials to give you some points to consider in your "workouts":

1. "When people fail to see the church as a ministering body, they are simply keeping the organization afloat. Giving does not feel good when it is used simply for survival." (Don Joiner - Coming Up Short in December)
2. "I enjoyed placing the envelope in the plate. I was excited about what my offering was helping my congregation accomplish." (Charles Lane - Ask, Thank, Tell)
3. "Stewardship, as Jesus taught it, emphasizes the need to give because of our gratitude to God - not because the church has bills to pay or because giving is our duty as a member." (Herb Miller - Money Isn't/Is Everything)
4. "If we reason only from what gifts we already possess, then we believe in a God who only works in the past. But we should trust that God will continue to work in the future and trust that God will provide the gifts necessary to accomplish what God intends. When we do, we can go to work as stewards of God's household, trusting that the master's mission will be fulfilled." (Rolf Jacobson - Stewards of God's Mysteries)

Enjoy your workouts!

The Stewardship Committee