

Pastoral Annual Report for 2010

I pray that as we take time to reflect on the blessings of our Lord over the past year that we can thank and praise God with thankful hearts. We trust in Him and his providence. I know that some in our congregation have experienced a particularly difficult year... some have lost loved ones, others may have lost their job or been scaled back in hours and wages. This is one of the purposes of Church... that we might find in our congregational family people who love and care for one another. All of us walk the same pilgrim path... how much more empowering and uplifting it is when we walk it together. Here in our congregation 2009 will be marked with some major building improvements that have kept our Trustee quite busy. We are grateful for their expertise in getting the project completed. But before I say more on that, as I normally have done let me break down our past year with the headings below.

n WORSHIP & CHURCH LIFE:

- § Our New Carillon System (one year old) in working wonderfully. It is so nice to hear the hymns chiming during the day. I would imagine we must all enjoy that as we come from the parking lot and cars and walk to worship hearing the bells.
- § Our New Hymnals (2 years old). Continue to serve us well. We appreciate people handling them with care. The longer they last the better. We use almost every worship liturgy in them by rotating services. We hope this combines the best of traditional services with variety. If you have gifts or talents that can add to our worship life... be sure to talk to me or Tammy so we can put you to good use (so to speak). If you have creative ideas that could help, something we are overlooking or something that you've seen elsewhere that inspired you — please share your ideas. And bulletins... I always like to look at bulletins from other places, so do share.
- § Our bi-monthly Monday worship service provides an opportunity to worship for those who are gone on the weekend or are shift-workers. We average between 20-25 in numbers.
- § A number of special services such as Holidays, Advent and Lenten Services.
- § Children sermons. Children Worship Tote Bags for our little worshippers.
- § A joint worship service each year with Immanuel, Courtland. This year at Immanuel January 24 at 9:30AM.
- § 7 Baptisms as of this writing. 22 new members (The January Voter's Agenda will have a complete statistical breakdown). Our elders continue to work steadily to encourage worship by regular members especially those who have become inactive or irregular in worship. We ENCOURAGE you to be faithful in your attendance. This is done not out of the letter of the law, but the spirit of love, care and concern. Sometimes a few have gotten upset that they were encouraged to worship more regularly. Please don't become upset if you are inactive/irregular in worship and you get a letter, call or visit. Better to know that you are remembered and that the elders/pastor of your congregation care about you to contact you and that they are doing their task faithfully.
- § Printed sermon copies and home visits with pastor as scheduled throughout the year.
- § Altar Guild and various volunteers (ushers/counters) that help with various details of worship life.
- § A fellowship time after worship to foster a warm and caring community within our congregation.

n BIBLE STUDY & EDUCATION LIFE:

- § Sunday morning Adult Bible Studies began with two topical studies: OT Festivals and Angels.
- § Sunday School (Preschool-High School) with rotating stations.
- § LWML Bible Studies, Faith, Hope and Charity, Working Women's Study, the occasional ad-hoc study topic.
- § An exciting VBS program this past summer with Camp Omega Counselors.
- § Our Confirmation Program. The program focuses on Old and New Testament Lessons for grades 5-6, and the Catechism, Bible, Hymnal for grades 7-8. And too group events including and servant event opportunities.
- § We have currently 11 students there that are members at Redeemer out of 56 total students. Parents within the congregation are encouraged to consider Christian schooling for their children.

n YOUTH LIFE:

- § Our youth groups (RAY and LYF) continue to be active. With monthly scheduled activities within our congregation, and too events that involve our circuit and district. The Board of Youth continues to plan activities and we encourage parents to bring their children/teenagers to these events and to be helpful in carrying them out by volunteering their own time and talent to make it a success.
- § The big event for youth this year will be the synod youth gathering in New Orleans this coming summer. We have eight young people planning to attend. The theme is BELIEVE. Check out the website: <http://www.lcmmsgathering.com/>

n MUSIC LIFE:

§ We are grateful for Tammy our Music Director. Thankful for Lucy Dolly our organist. And too for Marilyn Schauland and soon also Elizabeth Webb — a new member who attended MLC and is very gifted in music as well. A BIG thank you to the members of our Choirs, Hand Bell – Youth and Adult, and all who contribute their talents for special music in our worship services.

n SENIORS, SHUT-INS, NURSING HOME VISITING:

§ Every other month a chapel service at Oak Hills conducted by Pastor with Scripture, hymns and sermon.
§ Hospital, shut-in, nursing home visits by Pastor monthly with Holy Communion. CALL PASTOR if you are hospitalized or in need of special spiritual care. Do not assume he knows or someone has told him. CALL the OFFICE or HIM directly.
§ “Prayer Shawls” made for those undergoing illness or loss.

n CHURCH STAFF, COUNCIL, AND VOLUNTEERS

§ Thank you to Jaime, our parish secretary who does a wonderful job.
§ Thank you to Tammy for all the work she does. She wears many “hats” in our Church and does a great job.
§ Thank you to Jim and Jan Krapf who keep our building so nice and clean and presentable.
§ Thank you to wonderful volunteers who give of themselves on various boards and Church positions, as well as the many members who serve and volunteer on special Church fundraiser events, projects, jobs, or needs that arise.
§ Thank you to Jeanne Holten (Called and Installed this past year as Director), Cindy Wiederhoeft and all at Kinder Haus Daycare that provide a loving Christian environment for children from our congregation and community.

n BUILDING – MAINTENANCE – AND MISCELLANEOUS

§ New Kitchen, new handicap bathroom, new roof as well as all the other exterior work that went with this roofing project.
§ New paint in our halls and some of our classrooms. New carpet and chairs in our Sunday School video room.
§ A new look for our Church website address: www.redeemernewulm.net
§ A new church directory and visitor brochures.
§ Various out-reach and in-reach activities sponsored by funds of the Blicek Fund such as supplementing parochial school tuition for members, Sudanese ministry in Mankato, servant events, special music guests to our worship (Lakefield Barbershop Quartet for an Evangelism Sunday this past May).
§ Our Annual Christmas Bazaar and Cookie Sale.

Where are our future goals, vision, and growth areas?

- n Congregational worship continues to be the #1 goal. Worship attendance reflects our commitment and love for Christ and His Bride the Church for which he shed his blood. We are a congregation of 570 souls with an average worship attendance on Sundays/Mondays of 180 or so, thus about 32%. We desire and expect members on the roster of our congregation to be present in worship. The only exclusions should be shut-ins, nursing home, or those with medical needs that require home pastoral communion visits.
- n Our congregation strives to be holistic in ministry. Our desire is to always think of our congregation not as segments of different interests, but as one body under the Headship of Christ. Overall worship, activities, outings, special events are always geared with the mind-set of including everyone. This continues to be a goal to work towards.
- n Congregational Involvement . Although I believe this congregation does a good job of involving as many members as possible in various ministries (teachers, choirs, readers, and service groups) we can always improve. We give thanks for our Church Officers and Board members and volunteers in all capacities. Be sure to encourage them, and help them when tasks need doing. We are always in need of “new” members volunteering for various boards and positions of need.
- n Giving and Missions. Our general budget ran in the red this year \$24,000.00, plus we had to suspend mission dollars to deal with in-house budgetary needs. We pray that you would remember our congregational needs and ministry. Thank you to ALL who give so generously for the ministry of our congregation. Member offering boxes are given to all adults and/or families. Ask the church office for a box if you cannot locate yours in your church mailbox in the narthex.
- n Inviting people to Church! Share the good news by inviting a friend to Church with you. The Church of our Lord grows because people blessed by the Spirit, live and speak well of their Church-family, which causes others to desire to come and hear the Word and be a part of that Christ-family! Be sure to invite new neighbors and people in town to our Church and be kind, warm and welcoming to all who worship with and around you. Remember the stranger sitting next to you may be an angel in disguise (Heb. 13:2).