



# THE FLAME

THE NEWSLETTER OF HOLY SPIRIT LUTHERAN CHURCH

*“Celebrating and living God’s Message”*

*Jan 2008*

7234 Fenton Rd., Grand Blanc, MI 48439 (810) 424-6707 [www.holyspiritlc.net](http://www.holyspiritlc.net)

## From the Pastor’s Desk

### Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

As I write this article, I am sitting next to a pile of advertisements from the Sunday paper. In this pile, there are many different promises that the purchase of toys, clothing, jewelry and furniture will bring happiness, love, an end to stress, and fulfillment in our lives. Other ads show amazing banquet tables laden with foods that are “simple to prepare” and guaranteed to melt the hearts of all who eat them. The holidays are a seen filled with consuming – purchasing so many gifts that we need to spend the rest of the year trying to get rid of all of our clutter, and eating so much food that we have to turn around and diet to lose our added weight.

As you read this, you might already be on the New Year’s side of the holidays. With the coming of New Year’s Day, people are planning their new year’s resolutions. Our over-consumption dictates many of these New Year’s goals, with plans to diet, to make a house-hold budget, to clean and organize our homes, or to connect with friends or relatives we did not see over the holidays. As we look back at the previous year and the holidays themselves, many of us are confronted with guilt and regret over things we have done and things we have failed to do. New Year’s is a time to take stock of the past year and our lives as a whole. While looking ahead into a new year can be a hope-filled process, it can also be a dark time of despair and depression as people feel powerless to make the changes they know that they need to make.

As Christian people living a Christmas faith, we have good news to speak to those sitting in darkness and fear.

*“For unto you is born in Bethlehem a Savior, who is Christ the Lord....The people living in darkness have seen a great light, for he is the light of all people...”*

While guilt and regrets may still plague us and threaten to fill us with despair, we have a God who offers us a new beginning. Scripture says that, “Any who are in Christ Jesus are a new creation.” In our baptisms, we were given a rebirth, a new beginning. As we face the new year, God promises us each the chance to confess our past failings and start again.

Throughout January, as a church we celebrate Epiphany, the season of light. The season of light is a time when we focus on the ways in which Jesus is revealed to the world – through his baptism, through calling the disciples, through his miracles and compassion, and finally through his being lifted up on a cross. In the end, Jesus Christ, the light of the world came to save us and show us the way to follow the ways of God. May the New Year be a time to take stock of our lives and commit ourselves to following Jesus, the one who loves us and gives us all a new beginning.

Happy New Year!

## MUSIC NEWS

After a short break the choirs at Holy Spirit are beginning their rehearsals again at their regular times. SonBurst rehearses at 5:30 on Wednesdays, Kids Ring and Sing rehearses 6:00, Youth choir rehearses at 5:00 on Sunday evenings before Confirmation and the Adult Choir rehearses Thursday evenings at 6:30.



We enjoyed a wonderful Christmas Program with participation from the adult choir, the youth choir, Kids Ring and Sing and SonBurst Ringers and Singers. Although we suffered an unusually large snowstorm that morning we still enjoyed around 200 in attendance. I would like to thank all who have helped with the children's choirs since the fall and with the program on December 16<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you to our narrators Stacey Jameson and Matt Fonger who gave their time to learn their narrations and to rehearse with us.

Thank you to all the choirs for rehearsing faithfully every week and presenting a beautiful musical. Thank you to the parents who faithfully bring their children in every week to rehearse on Wednesday evenings.

Thank you to Jeri and Richard Steward who have been invaluable to me throughout the year as Jeri has helped in many ways with Kids Ring and Sing and Richard has made sure the sound is set up correctly for their presentations and taken care of other problems which might arise. Both of them also helped to move the chairs in the sanctuary and arrange the choir area into the proper configuration for the program.

Thank you to Alex Murray and my husband Jim who also have helped move chairs in and out of the sanctuary.

Thank you to Amy Cochran and Danielle Stenke who make sure SonBurst Ringers and Singers are organized and who bring them into the sanctuary when it is time for them to present their music. Thank you to Pastor Will for making our musical not just a musical, but an entire program that included celebrating Advent and congregational involvement throughout the entire service. Thank you to Rick Shaffer, Jim Nash, Owen Nash and Melanie Piggott for providing instrumental accompaniment to our music every week.

And, last but certainly not least, thanks to all of you who support our music program with your kind words of encouragement from week to week and who faithfully support us with your attendance when we present a special program.

This is a good time to get involved in our music program. We would love to have new members in all our choirs and additional instrumentalists. If you are interested in becoming involved and haven't already spoken to me email me at [jpik49@comcast.net](mailto:jpik49@comcast.net), [music@holyspiritlc.net](mailto:music@holyspiritlc.net) or call me at 655-6764.

## **The Start of a New Year**

Dear congregation,

As I write this, it's the middle of December, and the Congregational Council has just finished their final meeting of the year – a get-together hosted by Pastor Will and Danielle at their home. It was a great meeting, since there was really very little business that needed to be covered, but there were a lot of funny stories and fellowship shared by all. Thank-you Pastor Will and Danielle.

Getting back to business, I'd like to thank everyone who participated in our Year-End Congregational Meeting back on December 16<sup>th</sup>. It was wonderful to see such a large group interested in the health and activities of our church. If you weren't able to attend, I'd like to let you know that the 2008 proposed budget was passed without any consternation. Also, if you weren't able to attend but would like to review the material that was covered, please let me know.

As we move into a new year, it's time to start taking actions on the plans we've been developing. One of the Congregational Council's first orders of business in January will be to review the Goals and Initiatives we had previously developed, and start laying out the plans and activities necessary to accomplish them. We'll take a look at the tasks that need to get done, the resources we have, and determine the resources we need. I'm sure some of our plans will require forming some new groups and teams to work on special projects. And I'm sure we'll have plenty of opportunities for many of you to get involved – either a little or a lot!

I am truly excited about this coming year and the plans that we have. I look forward to working with the CC members and other members of the congregation, to make the changes that we need, to further continue our growth and presence in the community, sharing the Good News.

In Christ,

Bob Kuerbitz – President

### *Young At Heart*

*GREETINGS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL*

*A big thank you goes out to all 32 of you who made our Christmas Party a Wonderful Celebration. We enjoyed the tasty Turkey Dinner and Desserts, along with exchanging gifts, fellowship and of course our guest speaker, Carolyn Eaglin, who made us aware of the growing problem of Identity Theft.*

*We wish to thank you all for the nice Christmas Gifts you gave us, we will definitely enjoy them.*

*Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2008; at 10:00 a.m. We will be having a Game Day. This means we will be playing cards & games, if you have a favorite game you enjoy playing and would like to teach some of us how to play, bring it along. Also please bring a dish to share. WE JUST WANT TO HAVE FUN!*

*Please remember to sign up on the kiosk if you will be attending. Hope to see you there.*

### **Church Properties Year End Report**

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of this congregation for all of their help in keeping our church looking good and being attractive to the community. If we are proud of our building and grounds that will send a powerful message as to why we are here. If we can get people to look at our sign, they just might look past that to our property and think that it looks inviting. We spend a lot of money in heating, cooling, lighting, mowing, and plowing. But you have given your time and labor to clean windows, trim trees, weed flowerbeds, plant gardens, shovel snow, paint pictures on the walls, hang blinds and pictures, decorate, keep the baptismal font clean, clean the light fixtures, and more. If you recognize yourself in that list, then we thank you and the congregation thanks you.

The highlight of the year for Church Properties was the need to expand our parking lot. That was our biggest expenditure of the year and wouldn't it be wonderful if we need to do it again next year!

In 2008 we will strive to keep Holy Spirit Lutheran Church a clean and welcoming place to be.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jeff Watson  
Alex Murray  
Alan Cochran



### **WORSHIP COMMITTEE**

With the Advent Season coming to an end, hopefully you found the time to attend the Wednesday night Advent Services. Thank you to , Chris Utter, Stacey Jameson, Melanie Piggott, Sandy & Clay Willoughby for their willingness to serve by performing the Advent Dramas. They were informative and thought provoking. The Christmas Concert was excellent and well attended inspite of the snowstorm. Everyone who performed did a fantastic job. A special thank you to Pastor & Jean Pike for all the time and energy they both put in to make the service meaningful. Another special thank you to Ed Loney, Diane Gregg, Melanie Piggott and Stacey Jameson for the dramatic readings during our Sunday morning worship. They each are "Faithful Flames" for the work they have done to make our service's meaningful during the Advent season.

The 2008 Worship schedule has been mailed and thank you to everyone who serves each and every week in their specific roles in worship. We need all of you and appreciate all you do for Holy Spirit. If you have a conflict and cannot serve please call the church office with your replacement.

Thank you to Michael Brooks for his service as Usher Chairman as he is stepping down. He has done a fantastic job with the ushers and now we need one of you to step up and take his place. This will be mainly to train new ushers and organize necessary meetings. The scheduling is done by the Worship Committee, so no need to worry.

As always, any comments, suggestions or thoughts can be addressed to Pastor, myself or anyone on the worship committee. We are looking forward to an exciting year in 2008.

In Christ,  
Jan Wenstrom

## Everyday Stewardship

### Paper Recycling is Coming!

In mid-January, Holy Spirit will become a collection place for the Abitibi Paper Retriever, a large green dumpster that will be placed near the front of our parking lot. Not only will the green paper retriever allow us to be better stewards of the paper we use at church, but it will give many people in our community a place to recycle the paper that their own communities do not allow them to recycle. Even better, the church can earn money each month for the paper collected.

Here are the types of paper that can be placed in the Paper Retriever:

- Newspapers (preferred because of heavy weight)
- Magazines (preferred)
- Junk mail
- White Office Paper

Please do not bring in phone books. Also, please try to hold onto your recycling until the dumpster appears, as we do not have sufficient storage in the garage for everyone's recycling. Thank you for being good caretakers of creation. **NO CARDBOARD.**

### Do You Know Someone Who is Hospitalized and Homebound?

If you or someone you know becomes hospitalized or homebound and you would like pastoral care, please contact the church office as soon as possible. Pastor Will or one of the care callers would love to provide a visit. However, we only know a visit is needed, when we are contacted. Also, upon admission to the hospital, you are given the opportunity to list your membership in a church. Please list Holy Spirit, and then we may receive a call from the hospital alerting us to your admission.

### Would you like to receive your copy of *The Flame* by email?

In an effort to reduce the amount of paper we use, as well as the cost of postage, we are considering a change in our pattern of distributing our newsletter from first class postage to email. Not only will this save us postage, but it will also allow you to receive it as soon as it is completed. During January, you will have the opportunity to sign up to receive the newsletter via email. Please consider utilizing this new form of distribution.

### Habitat for Humanity Begins Soon!

This coming year, Holy Spirit will once again join with Thrivent Builds and Habitat for Humanity to build two homes in the Flint area. The land has already been set aside for this year's build in Burton, in a development across from Meijer off Center Rd. If interested in being a part of this year's build, please sign up on the opportunity to Serve board. In March, there will be an organizing meeting and kickoff for this year's builds, which are slated to begin in June.

 *Happy New Year* & *Happy New Year* 

### New Computer Software Taskforce

The church office is in the process of upgrading its office software. Please consider serving on a new software task force to research and purchase the software. If interested, please sign up on Top Opportunities in the bulletin or email Diane ([info@holyspiritlc.net](mailto:info@holyspiritlc.net)) in the church office.

## Financial Update

On Sunday, December 9, 2007 the Congregation approved the year 2008 budget.

Budget highlights are as follows:

Income:

1. Income from pledges, visitors and new members	\$ 267,000
2. Interest earned	\$ 4,000
3. Building fund (for mortgage payments)	\$ 6,000
4. Projected 2007 positive cash-flow	\$ 13,500
<b>Total Income:</b>	<b>\$ 301,000</b>

Expense:

1. Base Church Expenses	\$ 274,000
2. Mortgage Payments	\$ 27,000
<b>Total Expenses:</b>	<b>\$301,000</b>

Recap (so far) of the year 2007:

Estimated total income:	\$329,000
Estimated total expenses:	\$315,500
<b>Projected Year-End Cash-Flow</b>	<b>+ \$ 13,500</b>

On behalf of the entire Church Membership, the Finance Committee wants to extend its thanks and gratitude to Ed Chan. Ed has served as the Stewardship Director for the past several years. His leadership, commitment and guidance have been invaluable and most appreciated. Ed's current health condition requires him to step down from this position.

The current Finance Committee meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6:30 PM. If you have any questions or concerns about this summary, please feel free to contact any of the following finance committee members. We are thankful for this opportunity to serve the congregation.

**Finance Committee Members include:**

Paul Wenstrom	Director
Bob Kuerbitz	Congregation President
Bill Lundquist	Treasurer
Jerry Tucker	Member at Large
Sue McComb	Purchasing Agent
Vacant	Stewardship Director
Rev. Will Stenke	Pastor

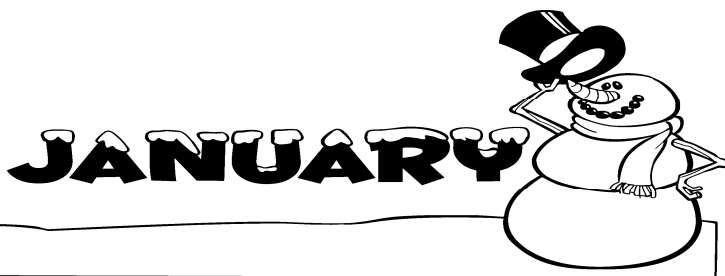
## Average Monthly Worship Attendance for November

	2006	2007
8:00am		46
10:30am	193	158
Total	193	204

*Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,*

*Danielle, the children and I would like to extend our warmest thanks and appreciation for all of the gifts and cards that we have received during this holy season. They remind us the joy of community and being part of the family of Christ. May God continue to shower blessings upon us all as we move into a new year of serving and living for Christ.*

*All Our Love,  
Pastor Will, Danielle, Emily, Sara, and Nathaniel*



## YOUTH NEWS

In December, funds were raised through a bake sale to buy homeless packs (hats, gloves & blankets) for EMS and police officers to offer to those who don't make it to shelters. Shortly after our return from the Gathering, the HS Youth and parents will be meeting to plan a calendar of events. Ideas include sledding, movies and bowling. Please call Melanie Piggott at 814-6107 if you have any questions.

## BAPTISMS:

December 2<sup>nd</sup> –Scott Owen Kaplan



- 1/2 Jennifer Durbin
- 1/3 Erika Haddon
- 1/4 Pat Hughes
- 1/4 Margaret Mitchell
- 1/4 Clay Willoughby
- 1/8 Emily Stenke
- 1/10 Kyle Robinson
- 1/10 Kyra Robinson
- 1/12 Paula Owen
- 1/12 Tanner Porter
- 1/20 Wayne Brandon
- 1/24 Melanie Piggott
- 1/30 Marcus Shaffer
- 1/31 Garrett Freel
- 1/31 Cindy Reese
- 1/31 Marilyn Wildey





## **THE FLAME**

**HOLY SPIRIT LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
7234 FENTON RD.  
GRAND BLANC, MI 48439

**FORWARDING AND ADDRESS  
CORRECTION REQUESTED**

**HOLY SPIRIT LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
7234 FENTON RD.  
GRAND BLANC, MI 48439  
OFFICE: (810) 424-6707  
**Website: [www.holyspiritlc.net](http://www.holyspiritlc.net)**  
**Email: [info@holyspiritlc.net](mailto:info@holyspiritlc.net)**

**8:00 am Worship with Holy Communion**  
**9:15 am Education Hour for Children, Youth, and Adults**  
**10:30am Worship with Holy communion**