

THE CURRENT WORD



LAKE NOKOMIS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

December 2007

"Tis the Season..."

November –December is a season to move from thanksgiving towards the hope and joy of God come to earth in new and wondrous ways.

Tis the Season... to draw closer together, to comfort and encourage one another. This is something special we are to celebrate and lift up in our faith in the face of a divided election and nation. More than ever, our prayers and work for God's healing and peace are needed. Thanksgiving is a time of bonding, remembering, gathering around food to truly give thanks for the grace of God in our lives and relationships.

Tis the season... of hope and joy in God's love and gift in Jesus. In that spirit, I would like to share the scriptures of the season as a special gift. You may wish to use them as a special Advent journey as you prepare for the Christ Child. May God's Blessings of New Birth and Rebirth be yours in this very special season.

Wayne

The Preparation

The Word becomes flesh

John 1.1-14

The Birth of John the Baptist Foretold

Luke 1.5-25

Mary and the Angel

Luke 1.26-68

Mary visits Elizabeth

Luke 1.39-45

Mary's Song of Praise

Luke 1.46-56

The Birth of John the Baptist

Luke 1.57-66

Zechariah's Prophecy

Luke 1.67-80

The Advent

The Birth of Jesus

Luke 2.1-7

The Birth of Jesus

Matthew 1.18-25

The Magi

Matthew 2.1-12

The Shepherds

Luke 2.8-20

Jesus Being Presented

Luke 2.21-35

Simeon's Song

Luke 2.25-35

Anna's Prophecy

Luke 2.36-40

The Escape to Egypt

Matthew 2.13-18

The Return

Matthew 2.19-23

Inside - news of the congregation, the presbytery, and the church in the world.

Presbytery News ~ **WHAT HAPPENED AT PRESBYTERY**
(Or, The View From In Front Of The Back Pew)

Anyone who has served on enough committees has heard of 'Robert's Rules of Order'. I hear about it all the time at Presbytery. If, as a church officer, you serve on any kind of committee/commission/board/task force/fact-finding team/implementation group outside of your own church's session, you will get as close to Robert's Rules of Order as a Marine does to his rifle. You will eat, sleep, drill and fight with Robert's Rules of Order. Robert's Rules of Order may save your life in combat someday... wait a minute; I'm getting a little carried away here...

Have you ever wondered who wrote Robert's Rules of Order? If you're like me, except in a legally sane way, you probably think it was written by some British parliamentarian with a name like "His Most Munificent Lordship, Lord T.A.C. Swynseth-Holcombe-Nesbitt Robert, 33rd Earl of Buttock-on-the-Hemp and Barrister to the Finest Trollops of Easttide" during the reign of George something when everyone wore powdered wigs, right? Nope. You'd be wrong.

It seems that in 1876, in the U.S. Army, there was this Brigadier General (that's a one star) named Henry M. Roberts. He was asked by his church fellows to preside over a church committee meeting. I'm sure he thought, "how hard can that be?"

Ah! Where to begin? A Brigadier General is traditionally either the commander of a brigade (today, about 4000-5000 people), or even the executive (or possibly commanding) officer of a division which is between 9000 and 11000 people. And vehicles. And tents. And weapons and bedding and soap and towels and bullets and horses and toilet paper and all of that stuff. A Brigadier General can be responsible for that much stuff.

Gen. Roberts was probably very good at that and was probably a veteran of the Civil War, so moving about large numbers of people and equipment in the chaos of battle was something at which this guy was probably an old hand. So how hard could it possibly be to keep order in a handful of little old ladies at church, right? [remember, though, church leaders in the 19th century were *men*...ed.] Being the fine officer and gentleman that I'm sure he was, he graciously accepted the challenge.

By the end of the meeting (especially if it was Presbyterian one) I'm guessing that the good General was a basket case. In any event he decided then and there, that there ought to be certain rules and regulations for controlling a meeting and he set them down in writing. This has been maintained for almost 130 years as "Robert's Rules of Order" *...continued*

From previous page...

If I sit near the back of Presbytery meetings these days and they are debating a contentious issue, I will often become aware of hushed, frantic whispers behind me as people go to the microphones to debate the issue at hand. If I turn around I will notice little quarterback huddles dispatching this person or that person to the microphone to tie up the debate in all kinds of technicalities which are usually drawn from the Book Of Order or Robert's Rules. It is used as ammunition, often in lieu of the respective merits of the issue. When I see the "debaters" being dispatched by their team captains I am reminded of the Witch in the Wizard of Oz commanding her flying monkeys: "Go! Go!"

It is the kind of stuff which I have witnessed at Presbytery for almost a decade and I thought you need to be aware of how some issues are handled. If you're going to become an Elder or especially a commissioner-delegate to anything else, I'd recommend getting close to Robert's Rules.

So much for the history lesson. ☺

Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church received another grant this year from the Connectional Ministries Work Group for ArtSpace and educational programs. We were one seven such churches which received a grant. Other grants were:

- Church of the Apostles – PCA Wholeness center
- Macalestar-Plymouth – Food pantry for needy families dealing with HIV/AIDs
- Knox, St. Paul – Homeless Ministry
- Kwanzaa – Lydia Women's Ministries (empowerment for African-American Women)
- Arlington Hills – Summer curricula (non-religious) for assisting immigrant community children
- Community Presbyterian (Plymouth) – Community center

Each grant was for \$2,000.00 apiece and every little bit helps.

LNPC also was one of a minority [7 of 70] of churches which, in spite of our budgeting, er, "challenges," still managed to get our per capita apportionment [AND mission pledge to the presbytery and national church] paid on time and the Presbytery recognized us for that. Good Work!

Presbytery approved two Inquirers as Candidates for the Ministry of Word and Sacrament. They are:

Mary Caplinger and Russell Lewis (who interned at Spirit of Life and has preached at LNPC).

This means that they may now begin seeking a call and upon receiving one may apply for ordination to the Presbytery.

With Love, Bill Fischer – Presbytery Commissioner

Notes from Membership - *If interested in joining this fun group or if you would like to share an idea or concern, please let one of us know! (Lisa Johnson, Joyce Tesarek Petrik and Diane Hansen from Session)*

Worth noting twice: We are pleased to announce that LNPC knows how to keep a covenant with the Church! We are one of only 7 [of 70] churches in the entire Presbytery that has been faithful to its pledge for mission (we even exceeded our pledged amount) and per capita giving. This is something of which we can all be proud.

During the Advent season, LNPC will be participating in several holiday giving opportunities. We will be collecting the Presbyterian **JOY OFFERING** which benefits the retired church workers, their spouses and families, and Presbyterian-related racial-ethnic schools and colleges. In addition, this year we will **be adopting a family from St. Joseph's Home for Children**. A list of family members and suggested gifts will be in the library. We will also have a Mitten Tree, with collections going again to Northrop School. Please plan to help us share in the richness of the season with those in our community and neighborhood who are facing challenges.

Keeping up-to-date: The Membership team is going through the LNPC official church roles and placing individuals on "inactive" list, if requested, in preparation for this year's budget cycle. **"Inactive"** is a membership category for those with limited participation in the life of the congregation. Inactive members are unable to hold office or vote, but may revert to active anytime on request. If you wish to change your official status to "inactive", please contact church office to update status.



ArtSpace, currently enjoying the amazing exhibit *Leap of Faith* - 3 through December 28, will welcome ***Color in the Season of Night*** - the bright geometric creations of local painter John Alme from January through March. The opening reception is scheduled for Friday, January 4th.

Messiah

St. John's Oratorio Chorus, in which members of LNPC have sung in past years, again presents Handel's *Messiah*, December 15, 2007 at 7:00 PM and Sunday, December 16th at 4:00 PM - 4842 Nicollet Avenue South.

Christmas Joy Offering



The Joy Offering receipts are split 50-50 between retired church workers, their spouses and families served by the Board of Pensions, and nine racial-ethnic educational institutions of the PC(USA). Did you know the denomination supports, among others, a college-prep school in Albuquerque (Menaul School) serving, historically, a Native American population; the Pan-American School in Texas serving a predominantly Hispanic population; Sheldon Jackson College in Alaska, which has served an Inuit population; and a number of historically African-American colleges in the south? The support of these schools "gives many students a "second chance," resulting in confident, competent, qualified men and women who emerge as leaders in society." Give generously.....

Advent at Lake Nokomis

Opportunities for worship and reflection return for the season of hope and light:

Meditation evenings: Thursdays, December 6, 13, and 20 at 6:30 p.m. the sanctuary will be open for reflection. A labyrinth will be available for walking, and calm music and candles will offer a place of comfort and peace in an often hectic time. Spread the word.

Blue Christmas: a service of comfort and healing will be offered Thursday, December 20, at 7:00 p.m. Encourage those for whom the festivity of the cultural season is out of synch with their own experience to come reflect on the gift of the Prince of Peace.

Christmas Eve: candles, carols, and stories of Christmas welcome the birth of the Christ. Monday, December 24, 4:00 p.m.



Food for Thought and Prayer:

... bringing issues and the church's theological struggle together...

[from PC(USA) newsservice]

Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.

Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me

- Emma Lazarus, 1883

While it has always been true that the plurality of immigrants have been the most economically challenged in their homelands - the 19th century wave of post-potato famine Irish immigrants and post-rice famine Chinese immigrants come quickly to mind - most immigrants have not arrived in this country looking for a hand out. They have always been willing to start at the bottom...

The 2004 General Assembly called for a "Comprehensive Legalization Program for Immigrants Living and Working in the United States" which directs Presbyterians to, in part:

- Advocate the establishment by law of a **comprehensive legalization program** for undocumented persons already living and working in the United States;
- Advocate the **reform of current immigration policies** and procedures to ensure a more timely and humane process, with special attention to family reunification and to those persons who have been waiting for their immigrant visas and for naturalization;
- Adamantly **oppose the exploitation of any and all workers** as a violation of the humane and just treatment due to all children of God.

Since July 2005, Julia Thorne, has served as the denomination's Manager for Immigration Issues/Immigration Counsel. She has visited presbyteries listening to stories, fears and hopes, teaching - helping distinguish between fact and fiction, and learning how communities are responding to issues of immigration.

The Office of Immigration Issues develops legal materials to receive and welcome into our faith communities people from other cultures and ethnicities; makes information available on reliable immigration services; and develops resources for pastoral care with immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, detainees, and others in our communities with immigration issues.



**PRESBYTERIAN
DISASTER ASSISTANCE**

PDA continues to bring healing around the world. Our support of One Great Hour of Sharing, as well as designated giving, is providing relief from the

cyclone in Bangladesh, wildfires in California, flooding in Mexico, Hurricane Noel (which in the last month has killed 116 in Haiti and forced the evacuation of 24,000 in Cuba), and ongoing work on the Gulf Coast resulting from Katrina.

Did you know the PC(USA) has a committee dedicated to ethical investment practices? The Mission Responsibility Through Investment committee is in the Peace and Justice program area. It is charged with monitoring the denomination's investments to make sure they support socially responsible pursuits in line with GA policies. Recently, the committee has, with other investors, used its shareholder position to lobby, and succeed, in having Time Warner Corporation create Ethical Sourcing Guidelines which set expectations for its suppliers regarding child labor, working hours and compensation, and coercion and harassment. In the coming months, the committee will explore the alleged fees charged migrant workers and their families in wiring funds to home countries. They will also focus on predatory lending, sub-prime lending and servicing of mortgages. Information to assist each of us invest ethically is available at www.pcusa.org/mrti.



UPDATE:

Anti-Slavery International, a non-governmental organization based in Great Britain, has announced that it is presenting its 2007 Anti-Slavery Award to the **Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW)**, a Florida-based farmworkers rights group that has been strongly supported by the PC (USA). The award recognizes the farmworkers group for documenting the cases of trafficking Mexican and Central American farmworkers for forced labor. CIW's efforts have resulted in prosecution of six slavery cases in the past decade and the liberation of over a thousand farmworkers held in debt bondage. The presenters said "the award offers the CIW a chance to gain international recognition for their work and to highlight the existence of slavery in developed countries in the year that we are commemorating 200 years since the abolition of the slave trade in British colonies." CIW has previously moved McDonalds and Taco Bell to have their suppliers pay increased wages, and provide better working conditions, for their laborers. They are currently pressing Burger King for similar support of farm workers.



Wayne Herstad - Interim Pastor
and Moderator of Session

2007 Session

Class of 2007: Bill Fischer
Joyce Tesarek Petrik
Barb Wilson

Class of 2008: Terry Gilbertstadt
Gary Johnson
Lisa Phillips Johnson

Class of 2009: Sue Hensel
Diane Hansen
Dick Gross

Presbytery Commissioners -
Bill Fischer, Sue Goodspeed
Dennis Johnson – Clerk
Butch Goodspeed - Treasurer

Staff:

Jan Johnson – *secretary*
Andrew Crow – *choir coach**
Andrew Tessman – *organist*
Rodney Seek (Best Way) – *custodian**
*(contract position)
Editor - Sue Goodspeed

Committees of Session: Administration (Gary, Dick), Worship (Sue, Barb), Membership (Lisa, Diane, Joyce), Education (Bill, Terry), Personnel (Terry, Lisa, Dick).

If you have any questions, comments, suggestions, interests or *anything* you'd just like to share, please talk with a Session member!

Board of Deacons: The Deacons function as a unit, sharing responsibility for visitation and ministries of presence with those in transition. Members are: John Bixby, Butch Goodspeed, Sue Goodspeed, JoAnne Hansen, Aleta Isaacson, Betty Johnson, Bobbe Larson, Georgia Mroska, and Marg Saxrud, and Kathryn Sathre, Parish Nurse Associate.

MISSION STATEMENT - LNPC

In gratitude for God's great love,
freed by the forgiveness we know in
Jesus Christ, and convinced by the Holy
Spirit of our need for Christian community,

we join together as a community of faith
to share Christ's love through worship,
sacraments and prayer;
to grow through education and mutual
support;
to prepare and receive empowerment
for faithful living.

and we go out into the world
to share the joy of God's love;
to open our faith community to others;
to work in the world for justice,
healing, and peace.

Prayer Network

We have been called to communicate with God through prayer. God encourages us to pray for one another and has promised to answer. To enable us to pray effectively for one another and for our church, the LNPC Prayer Network has been organized. Call Pat Erickson, coordinator (612-925-4418) with prayer requests.

Back in time for the end of the fiscal year - the Treasurer's Report!

Receipts:	October	\$9,628.82	Year-to-date	\$137,680.78
Expenses:	October	8,827.41	Year-to-date	109,523.07
			Budget-to-date	114,271.67

Receipts include a \$45,000 gift from the estate of Dorothy Swanson and a \$10,000 withdrawal from the Endowment Fund (does not include any principal).

The season of Stewardship extends past November. It involves our lives, lived to their fullest for the purposes and glory of God.

What's the next step??

Pastoral Process Proceeds ~

The Committee on Ministry approved the request of the Session of LNPC to elect a Pastor Nominating Committee. The Session has set Sunday, December 2, immediately after the 10:30 worship service, as a congregational meeting for that purpose. The PNC will be charged with representing LNPC on a Church Information Form, submitting that to the denominational offices in Louisville, and receiving Personal Information Forms from clergy interested in our position. They will, over the course of the next year or so, pray, read (and read and read), discern, pray, interview, discern, and ultimately offer the position of Pastor to one of the applicants. They will work closely with our representative from the Committee on Ministry - at this time, Rev. Margaret Thomas, who has joined Session for a couple meetings already, and who was a part of the ReVision congregational presentation on November 18th.

The PNC will keep the congregation informed regularly of its work. Look for their reports in this space beginning in January!

Order poinsettias to complete our Advent worship space!

Plants are available in red, white, or pink,
and each is \$14.00.

Sign up in the office, or call 612-721-4463.





