

The Cedar Chips

ONLINE

publication of Cedar Hills Community Church

January 2010

Reflections with Kent . . .

I bought my wife Mary a puppy for for Christmas; a 7-month old black lab named Sammy. He is adorable. I tried to surprise her but she figured it out. She even narrowed it down to the correct day. Clever girl.

Mary is a “dog person” and though we talked about waiting until spring to replace our beloved Baxter, she could not wait. We were dog-less for 25 days. The only reason it took that long was because I drug my feet while trying to orchestrate a covert adoption. I did it as fast as I could because I knew we had to have another dog.

One thing Mary shared when she admitted that she figured it out was that she knew my heart wanted to fill the desires of her heart. Because of this, she concluded that my behavior would be driven by my heart. Clever – by knowing our heart’s desire we can predict what we will do. (Heart knowledge and checking the <http://www.petfinder.com> history on my laptop which revealed scores of homeless labs hoping to take up residence on Orchard Drive.)



What is your heart’s desire for 2010? Many people have a tradition of making resolutions but these are notoriously poor predictors of behavior. Do you want to know what you will do in 2010? — Then know what your heart really longs for.

I think this is one of the reasons the Bible encourages us to guard our hearts above all things. (Proverbs 4:23) The guarded heart will lead to good behavior. The unguarded heart will lead to poor choices and disastrous outcomes.

Psalm 34:7 talks about how we can protect our hearts. **“Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart.”** I love that. James 4:8 gives some more perspective that might be helpful in the heart department: **“Draw near to God and he will draw near to you . . . wash your hands . . . purify your hearts . . .”** This sounds like a guide to great outcomes.

So, what is your heart’s desire for 2010?

Happy New Year,
Pastor Kent

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This Month's Vision

New Year's Resolutions

Jan. 3 – **Go Deep**

Make a New Year's resolution to know God more deeply by growing as a disciple deeply rooted in Jesus.

Telling the Truth

We are Gospel people who live and grow by Gospel Truth. In this series we will look at the Gospel as a love story. Our goal is to know the Gospel story and be transformed by it as we learn to speak the truth and live the truth.

Jan 10 – **The Gospel as First Century Story.**

Our faith is about a true story – the story of God.

Jan 17 – **The Gospel as Tragedy.**

The story involves a terrible reality that involves sin and death – even the death of God.

Jan 24 - **The Gospel as Comedy.**

The story involves a wonderful reality that involves forgiveness and life and resurrection.

Jan. 31 – **The Gospel as Fairy Tale**

The story is an unbelievable reality that seems too good to be true.

Feb. 7 – **The Gospel as 21st Century Story**

Our faith is lived out as an unfolding story that makes a difference here and now.

Feb. 14 – **Sharing the Gospel Story**

We must share the Gospel story because it is the good news of salvation.

Worship Times: 8:30 and 11:00

Growing Deeper

We believe God is calling us as a congregation to Go Deep. This focus will shape our ministry for the next season of our congregation's life. We are **GROWING DISCIPLES DEEPLY ROOTED IN JESUS.**

Please pray about how God can grow you deeper in your walk with Him.

Consistory News and Notes

At our December Consistory meeting we studied the discipline of living in God's unconditional love and prayed together.

We received reports from all three sub-teams that have studied how we can improve our communication:

1. Improved consistency and accuracy: We will be implementing recommendations that will help the consistory communicate consistently.
2. Sharing stories of Fruit: A consistory member will oversee the collection and sharing of stories about where we see God at work in the life of our congregation.
3. Calling for personal accountability: We approved a model for developing healthy communication which the Consistory will live into and teach the congregation.

We also heard the report of the study team which looked at our nominations process. We approved using the single slate in 2010 and will be rewriting the by-laws and exploring other ways to improve our nominations and election process. This team will continue its work in 2010

We discussed staffing issues and approved a study team to explore staffing levels, roles and needs. A report will be given in January about short-term changes that have been made with the Director of Team Ministry resignation including current staff responsibilities and potential needs and gaps in ministry. We also will study long-term issues as they relate to appropriate staffing levels and needs for our congregation.

It was reported that Pastor Kent's review was completed and that his 2010 goals will be submitted by Jan. 1.

For the 2010 Consistory Beth Brockett was elected as Vice President. Bruce Crowther was elected as clerk of Consistory.

Keep lifting us in your prayers.

Why we do what we do at CHCC!

1. We will be a community of believers devoted to the **Great Commandment** found in **Matthew 22:37-40**. We will love God and love each other.
2. We will be a community of believers devoted to the **Great Commission** found in **Matthew 28:18-20**. We will go into all the World to reach lost people and make disciples.
3. We will be a community of believers devoted to living in a **Great Community** as described in **Acts 2:42-47**. We will be authentic people, genuinely and radically connected to each other.
4. We will be a community of believers devoted to the **Great Calling** described in **1 Corinthians 12**. We believe that every believer is gifted for ministry and that every believer should be engaged in ministry.
5. We will be a community of believers devoted to the **Great Commitment** described in **1 Corinthians 10:31**. We believe in obedience, stewardship, and excellence.
6. We will be a community of believers devoted to the **Great Celebration** described in **1 Peter 4:11**. We do everything for the glory of God!

Open Hands Food Pantry

Open Hands Food Pantry News

Food pantries across the nation are dealing with supply and demand problems. There is less food available to give out, while an increase in people coming to use their services is going up. This is the case at CHCC as well. We are having troubles right now. We have recently decreased the amount we are putting in sacks and we may soon have to decrease it much farther or even turn people away empty-handed. There are some funds available to buy food at grocery stores, but this also requires individuals with available time to go shopping for the pantry. Right now this is difficult due to the large amount we are purchasing.

How can you help? Bring in your non-perishable donations. We can always use peanut butter, soup, and macaroni & cheese. We even need canned fruits and vegetables at this time. Maybe your place of employment would be willing to have a food drive for the Open Hands Food Pantry. Would you be willing to ask them about doing this? Please speak with Nathan Schnell (849-9221) or Jodi Joslin (265-3676) if you need more direction about how to get this set up where you work. Christmas is one of the best times of all to do a food drive.

The Open Hands Food Pantry is also looking for daytime shift volunteers to work from 10am-1pm on Wednesdays or Fridays. We could also use a few extra people who could be added to our list of people that can help pick-up orders at HACAP during the day. We have several volunteers that put in many hours for us who either will be or have already gone south for the winter.

Growing Disciples Deeply Rooted In Jesus

Growing...

1 Corinthians 3 reminds us that God **“makes things grow.”** Growth is a mysterious process unique to each person. Growth is God’s jurisdiction yet we are called to create a nurturing environment. We will engage in an equipping process which will focus on worship, scriptural reflection and service that calls all Christ-followers to the next level of spiritual growth.

...Disciples...

Matthew 28:19 tells us to **“Go make disciples...”** Disciples are those who walk with a rabbi so closely that they are covered with the dust he kicks up as they journey together. As we are covered with the dust of our rabbi Jesus, we are molded. We are shaped. We are made. We become disciples as we take up our cross to follow Jesus.

Ministry Management Team

Our key staff support for the Ministry Management Team over the past several years has been Marie Schulte. So, with her departure imminent, we took some time to reflect on how our church ministries have changed since she arrived. This review actually started for me as part of the last leadership retreat, when we reviewed all we've learned about healthy ministries, strong leaders, and how we'd worked to solidify our efforts to be team-driven and ministry-focused at CHCC.

I was on Consistory at the time Marie was hired to be our Director of Ministry Development five or six years ago. I must admit, at the time I didn't fully understand the position or what Marie was going to be doing, but her role was part of a vision to prepare for the growth of our church and ministry programs. Perhaps because of my time on Consistory, followed by several years as a Core Team leader, I think I finally get it.

We've become a church where ministries can exist, flourish, and reach people for Christ without needing the daily review and approval of Pastor Kent, staff members, or the Consistory. Now, of course, our pastoral leadership, our staff, and the Consistory are still as vital as they were before these changes, but are now freed up to cast our vision and provide leadership for our church rather than focusing on individual minute details of each church ministry.

I'll be the first to admit that doing ministry without first getting staff's okay on EVERYTHING was not easy for me at first. Like so many others, my background was one where 1) the pastor of the church would tell each group what to do next and 2) we wouldn't do it until he told us it was being done right. It has taken time, but all our ministry groups are getting used to doing God's work without having to get an okay from Pastor Kent, Doc, or Pastor Todd first.

The fruit of our ministry adjustments includes the addition of new ministries, the empowerment of church family to quickly respond to needs, and new outreach such as Stephen Ministers, the Open Hands food pantry, MOPS, and so many others. Is this the last structural change we'll see in our congregation? Probably not, because as God reveals his future plans for our church to us, we'll have more changes to identify and implement. (And that will continue to keep the Consistory and staff plenty busy.)

In the end, the key is reaching our community, country, and world for Christ. Each of us provide the hands and feet going out and reaching out to those who need to know Jesus. Our outreach is possible, in part, because of how Marie has guided the formation of new ministry teams and identified and trained so many leaders who are serving today. We'll miss Marie, and her departure clearly leaves a hole, but the Ministry Management Team remains dedicated to continuing to grow healthy ministries focused on reaching people for Christ and deepening the faith of those who are part of our church family. The input and involvement of everyone at CHCC is key in that effort.

Thank you Marie for helping to build a strong foundation for future ministry in our church and community!

Scott Drzycimski
Worship Core Team Leader

Growing Disciples Rooted In Jesus

...Deeply...

Galatians 5 describes the fruit of a well rooted follower of Jesus as ***“love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.”*** Spiritual growth brings radical change as our roots sink deeply into Jesus. As we grow we will recognize our spiritual heritage and our spiritual authority so that we will deepen our passion for God, our compassion for others, our desire for justice, reconciliation and forgiveness.

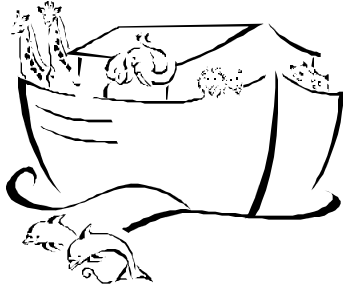
...Rooted...

Psalm 1 offers a guiding image for our understanding of spiritual growth and formation: ***“They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season...”*** We believe that all disciples should grow deep roots, sturdy trunks and strong limbs. When we grow deep, we bear much fruit. At every stage of growth there is a need for deeper roots.

...In Jesus.

John 15 tells us to remain in Jesus as a branch remains in a vine and in this abiding we find life. ***“Apart from me you can do nothing,”*** says Jesus. We grow by abiding in Jesus. We call disciples to a lifetime of intimate communion with Jesus. Growth begins and ends with Jesus.

Noah's Ark Preschool



News from Noah's Ark Preschool...

What a great month we've had at preschool. We were very busy learning about the very first Christmas. All the classes visited Pastor Kent and he told them about that special night that Jesus was born. Acting out the first Christmas was a big highlight for the children and their families. Thank you to everyone who attended.

Thank you to all the families that donated items to help preschool! I cannot believe how generous our families have been. Thank you for the teachers gifts, too.

Registration for 2010-2011 is going very well and now is **open to everyone**. Our morning 4-year old class is already full! If you know someone who needs information, have them stop by our office or call us at 396-3125.

In January, the 4 year olds will begin their testing. These tests are designed to be fun and playful and non-stressful. Testing will help the teachers give an accurate report card for parents so they may decide if Kindergarten or Alternative-Kindergarten is best for their child. It also helps parents identify some areas they may wish to work on with their child.

Our 3 year olds will hold their very popular "Teddy Bear Clinic" and focus on all the fun things about winter time.

Thank you for supporting Noah's Ark Preschool, we feel very blessed to be doing something that we love and sharing GOD'S word.

For the Staff,
Leslie Clauson, Director

Children's Ministries



A new team is beginning this month, the **Kid's Choir**. This Choir is for students in grades 3-8. The mission is to honor the Lord by singing praises to his name while gaining an appreciation for music and having fun!

As this is a new program, not everything is in place yet. Practices will be on Wednesday evenings, but practice times are not yet set. Performances are targeted for once a month during the Celebrate (11:00) service.



All Stars For Jesus resumes on January 6. Put the following dates on your calendar for the last 12 week session:

Jan 6	Feb 3	Apr 28
Jan 13	Feb 10	May 5
Jan 20	Apr 14	May 12
Jan 27	Apr 21	May 19



Pictured above: Noah's Ark Lead Teacher Jan Fick with student Taylor Whidden.

Discipleship Ministries

Making Disciples Jesus' Way: A Few at a Time

Last month, I wrote about the vision that will be guiding us the next number of years. It is a vision that calls us, as Jesus' disciples (yes, I'm talking about you), to be Growing Disciples Deeply Rooted in Jesus. As I continue to think about what that means for us to be a disciple deeply rooted in Christ I have been doing some reading about discipleship.

Greg Ogden is a discipleship guru. He has committed his life to helping churches produce disciples that have a deep rooted faith. One of the articles that I read by him is where I got the title to this article. After many years of trying to live out the single command of the church from Jesus – Go and make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19) – he discovered that one-on-one discipleship wasn't very effective. The most effective way for the church to grow disciples of Jesus that will result in a church full of self initiating and reproducing disciples is to do it the way Jesus did – a few at a time.

Ogden goes on to say that a one-on-one approach tends to lead to a hierarchy relationship where one is the teacher and the other is the discipler. This relationship leads to a dependency where the discipler is only able to learn when the teacher is there to teach. The relationship needs to be seen as side by side where everyone has come alongside each other mutually on the journey. This happens when there are groups of three or four learning together.

One key understanding to this mutual journey that three or four are on together is the distinction that disciples are made in relationships, not programs. In scripture we don't see Jesus embarking on a discipleship program for six weeks. His example is to walk with a group of people intimately in relationship.

Ogden says that being part of a disciple-making relationship produces a "hot house" of Christian growth. Hot houses maximize the environment conditions so that growth can happen at a rate greater than otherwise possible. For "hot houses" to exist we need to have open hearts with transparent trust with each other, around the truth of God's word, in the spirit of mutual accountability. When this happens we are in the Holy Spirit's "hot house" of transformation.

That is my prayer for us as we enter into the vision of disciples deeply rooted in Christ we would see people together in relationship in hot houses' of the Holy Spirit.

Blessings,
Pastor Todd
Pastor of Discipleship

Worship Ministries

What does deep worship look like?

This is a question we may be asking ourselves a lot in the next year. As a church, we are seeking to deepen our spiritual lives in every aspect of the journey possible. What is deep discipleship? Deep love? Deep faith? And I want to add to the list . . . what is deep worship?

I've found in my journey that the #1 factor between worship that is profoundly moving in which God works, and worship that is "hum drum" has to do with the power of choice. Do I CHOOSE to worship God on any given Sunday? Will I make a conscious decision within my heart to really mean the words I am singing, to take to heart the message I am hearing, to really declare my love for Him out of a place of love within me? Or will I just go through the motions?

Some of the coolest experiences of worship of which I've been a part have been those times when I was surrounded by others in the faith whose journeys and intimacy with Jesus were so real, so life-defining, that their cries to God were very serious. In a popular worship song we sing, "Draw me close to You, never let me go . . . You're all I want, You're all I've ever needed." When my walk with God is serious, when I seek Him in the morning and in the struggles of life, I can't help but sing these words with a new tenaciousness, and a seriousness. My worship takes on a new depth as I mean what I say because I say what I need. But all of this was prefaced by a choice on my part: Will I choose to follow God or not? Will I choose to give Him the honor, glory, power, blessing, and worth due His name? Or will I just go through the motions?

May this be a year where God moves us into greater depths of who He is in every aspect of the faith journey. May this be the year where God breaks down any misconceptions we have of who He is, replacing them with the refining truth of His word and His character and His love.

Lord, will You come into our hearts and show us those places we choose to withhold from you, and strive us forward to take us into new depths of who You are. May our worship be a pleasing sacrifice unto you.

Leah Van Maaren
Director of Worship

Caring for People

"Everyone cares...and everyone is cared for."

One of my friends, who shops regularly at Goodwill, was telling me about the special tags that call attention to bargain items in the store. This individual told me of recently purchased items of clothing which had tags with a certain color. THESE WERE REAL BARGAINS.

In the Cedar Hills Church on any given Sunday there are a lot of special tags which identify individuals who are real bargains: there are Greeters with Blue Tags who come before almost any worshippers arrive to greet and to give a sincere welcome to everyone who enters the building. They are Real Bargains.

Then there are Ushers with their big smiles who help worshippers find a place to sit. They are Real Bargains. Their tag reads USHER.

Individuals with Green Ribbons are members of the Connectors' Team whose function is to help newcomers connect with others. They are Real Bargains.

There is another group of people who are also REAL BARGAINS. These are our Stephen Ministers. They wear blue badges. Stephen Ministers are different from the Greeters. They are different from the Ushers. They are different from the Connectors. In what way you ask? Stephen Ministers provide care in a confidential manner and help individuals one on one.

Some of the situations in which Stephen Ministers are involved include: shut-ins; individuals who are grieving; individuals who are lonely; individuals who have lost their job; individuals who are terminally ill; and individuals who are having financial issues.

If you have the gift of caring and would like to wear a Blue Badge, why not find out if you could be a Stephen Minister? If you want to make a difference in the life of someone in the coming year, why not find out if you could be a Stephen Minister?

If you would like more information about the Stephen Ministry I would like you to do three things.

First, ask God if being a Stephen Minister is what you are called to do.

Second, ask a Stephen Minister what he/she does.

Current Stephen Ministers are: Sally Rohrer, Jackie Simmons, Lori Tonsfeldt, Maryls Cameron, Ken Viggers, Jean VanDivier, Tony Tonsfeldt, David Lodge, JoAnne Lodge, Bridgit Humphrey, and Tracy Spicer.

Third, give me a call and I will share with you what you need to do to become a REAL BARGAIN.

The Stephen Ministry is a REAL BARGAIN.

God cares for you,
Doc



Compassion Update

Did you know that:

- every three seconds, a mother, baby or toddler experiences death?
- some pregnant women are *encouraged* to stop eating protein because a smaller baby means an easier delivery?
- fifteen percent of babies in developing countries are born with low birth weight because of malnourishment?
- 24,000 children under age five die from preventable diseases every day?
- the *Big Six Baby-Killers* (diarrhea, pneumonia, malaria, measles, HIV/AIDS, and, malnutrition) result in the death of 1.5 million babies annually.

Compassion's trained Child Survival Specialists provide mothers access to prenatal care with dietary supplements and doctor visits to ensure both mom and baby are healthy. Will you join us to give them the best chance at life?

It's easy to help. Visit: <http://rescuebabiesnow.org/> where you can make a one-time donation or create a \$20/month donation to help a Child Survival Center make a difference. God bless you.

Craig and Debbie Mrkvicka
cr4compassion@mchsi.com
Child Advocates for Compassion

ASSISTANTS FOR JANUARY

Name Tags

January 3 Jean Strausser
 Joan Koele
 January 10 Carol Ruedy
 Dianne Martens
 January 17 Jean Vandivier
 Marcia Bruggink
 January 24 Selma Williams
 Darlene Irish
 January 31 Doug & Mary Jo Elam

Welcome Team

January 3 Leanne Moen
 Dianne Martens
 January 10 Jack & Kate Ulmer
 Mark & Amber Matson
 January 17 Carol Ruedy
 Alan & Cydney Lovell
 January 24 Gary & Jan Matson
 David & Susan Wise
 January 31 Karen Bronkhorst
 Tracy & Annette Sankot

Nursery

January 3 Sue Kleinmeyer
 Ryan & Nicole Lee
 January 10 Justin & Brenda Opperman
 Elissa Bowen
 January 17 Bill, Shannon & Hannah Mullan
 January 31 Danielle TeBockhorst

YEAR-TO-DATE FINANCIAL DATA (through November)

Budget
 Total Contributions
 Actual Expenses
 Net Income (Loss)
 Checking and Savings Balance
 Maintenance Reserve Fund
 Budget Reserve Fund

December Contributions (through December 20)

The Cedar Chips is available online and can be found there by following the Members link on the church website, <http://www.chccrca.org>

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN JANUARY?

WORSHIP

1/3 Communion Sunday
8:30 A.M. Sanctuary
11:00 A.M. Celebrate

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Sundays - Sunday School - 9:45 A.M.
Wednesdays All Stars For Jesus - 6:30 P.M.

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Sundays - Summit - 6:00 P.M.
High School Youth Group
Wednesdays - LINK - 6:30 P.M.
Middle School Youth Group

ADULT MINISTRIES

Sundays - Sunday School - 9:45 A.M.
Tuesdays - Spare Timers Team - 9:00 A.M.
Coffee, Donuts, Fellowship and 'Behind
the Scenes Work'
Wednesdays - Women's Bible Study - 9:00 A.M.
Thursdays - Mothers Of Pre Schoolers - 9:15 A.M.
(1/7 & 1/21)

MPR PRACTICE SCHEDULE

Sundays - Stage Right Worship Team - 5:00 P.M.
Mondays - Anchor Worship Team - 6:00 P.M.
Sovereign Sound (Bell Choir) - 7:00 P.M.
Wednesdays - Sanctuary Worship Team - 6:00 P.M.
Choir - 6:30 P.M.

MINISTRY TEAMS

1/4 SUMMIT Leadership Team - 7:15 P.M.
1/5 Ministry Staff - 10:00 A.M.
1/7 Deacons - 7:00 P.M.
1/10 Consistory - 4:00 P.M.
1/11 Stephen Ministry Leadership Team - 5:00 P.M.
LINK Leadership Team - 6:00 P.M.
1/16 Stephen Ministry Continuing Ed - 8:30 A.M.
1/18 Life Group Team - 6:30 P.M.
Celebrate Team - 7:15 P.M.
1/19 Large Staff Meeting - 11:45 A.M.
1/20 Open Hands Food Pantry - 6:00 P.M.
1/23 Loving Stitches Sewing Ministry - 10:00 A.M.
1/25 Sunday School Team - 6:00 P.M.
MOPS Steering Team - 7:00 P.M.
1/26 Adult Discipleship Team - 4:30 P.M.
1/27 Connectors Team - 5:15 P.M.
1/28 Ministry Management team - 6:30 P.M.

SPECIAL EVENTS

1/3 Consistory Ordination
Tuesdays Prism - 6:45 P.M.
Fridays Alcoholics Anonymous Meetings - 7:00 P.M.
1/17 New Member Reception
1/22 Boy Scouts Overnight
1/31 Sunday School Teacher Luncheon
New Members Workshop

Faith In Action Follow-up

Since Faith In Action Sunday, we've received several responses from those we served. A couple of those responses are printed below:

Olivet Neighborhood Mission
230 10th St NW
Cedar Rapids, IA 52405
(319) 364-7946

Cedar Hills Community Church
6455 E Ave NW
Cedar Rapids, IA 52405

Dear Congregational Workers:

On behalf of the Olivet Neighborhood Mission we want to thank you for volunteering, through Faith in Action Sunday, to clean the garden grounds and raking at the Mission. As I drove into the parking lot this morning to prepare before opening, it was great to notice the work you had done to help us prepare for the winter weather.

Your helping hands are appreciated, as we serve together in the ministries of the community.

Sincerely,

Jan Thomas, Director
Olivet Neighborhood Mission

"Neighbor Helping Neighbor"

To Nathan, Willis and Ladies,

Thanks for the kindness of helping at my home. We can't thank you enough for helping us clean up our yard (acreage) and helping with the burn pile.

Also, for putting up the blinds and cutting the trees.

I thank God for people like you!

Please accept this token as a gift for your kindness and our gratefulness!

May God continue to bless your church in stewardship.

My daughter is appreciative, too!

Sincerely ,
Tommie and Sara Kendall

The Bulletin Board



Ryan Muller Update:

Ryan has been promoted from Private First Class to Specialist. Address your mail to Ryan as: SPC Ryan Muller.

SPC Muller, Ryan
3HBCT, TF 2-69, B Company
FOB Kalsu
APO AE 09312

Thanks, Keith and Sue Muller



Thank You!!!

Boy Scout Troop 85 would like to thank the members of CHCC who attended our spaghetti dinner last month. With the help of your generosity, we raised enough money to buy some much needed new tents. Thank you very much for your support!



Thank You!!!

We would like to thank all those involved with the generous gift of meals for our family. We truly appreciate it and are enjoying the convenience of not having to prepare something on busy days!

Scott & Robin Joens



CEDAR CHIPS EMAIL REMINDER

If you would like a reminder when the Cedar Chips is available online, please contact the Church Office (396-6608) and ask to have your email address added to the church-wide distribution list.