

COUNTRYSIDE NEWS

Volume 9 Issue 4

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January 2011

Calvary, Barnum; Fulton, Roelyn; UCC/Congregational, Moorland; Zion, Gowrie

Promise and Hope

A Message
from
Pastor Jim

One of my favorite Bible stories is of the woman caught in adultery. I can see her standing in the middle of a dusty road, hair disheveled, eyes filled with fear, and cheeks tear-streaked. Jesus is standing between her and a mob of men who are seething with anger. It's an incredibly dramatic moment. What will happen?

We know what happens. Jesus stoops to write something on the ground. When confronted by the crowd of hate-filled men, he replies, "Let any one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." The scene has reached its climax. No one bends to pick up a stone. Instead, they slowly turn and walk away.

Jesus looks at the woman, whose eyes are now filled with confusion and amazement.

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A New Year Prayer

Holy Father,
God of our yesterdays, our today, and our tomorrows,
We praise You for Your unequalled greatness.
Thank You for the year behind us and for the year ahead.
Help us in Your new year, Father, to fret less and laugh more,
To teach our children to laugh by laughing with them,
To teach others to love by loving them,
Knowing, when Love came to the stable in Bethlehem, He came for us,
So that Love could be with us, and we could know You,
That we could share Love with others.
Help us, Father, to hear Your love song in every sunrise,
in the chirping of sparrows in our backyards,

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COUNTRYSIDE MINISTRY'S VISION:

Striving to help others
experience
the love of Christ
in word and deed,
and offering hope
to individuals and
communities.

Countryside Ministry Advisory Board

Jim W. Carlson -----Zion
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NEED A VISIT?

If you or anyone you know could use a pastoral visit, please contact the Countryside office at 352-3645 so a visit can be scheduled.



STEPHEN MINISTRY



A New Year for Our Stephen Ministers

Stephen Ministry is a program matching specially trained lay members of a congregation with people going through a tough time. The care receiver meets weekly with the Stephen Minister, who provides one-on-one Christian care.

2010 has been a great year for the Stephen Ministry class. We have experienced awesome guest lecturers and have grown spiritually and enjoyed making new friendships.

Dec. 13th we again hosted the annual "Blue Christmas" with approximately 20 guests sharing in the evening. Rev. Phil Somsen and Rev. Jane Shepherd spoke about grief and how we can work through the sadness of the holidays.

A few weeks ago we heard Steve Roe speak about The Beacon of Hope, a new home opening in Fort Dodge for area homeless men. One of the things they really enjoy is a home-cooked meal. Almeda Gordon and I talked about the Stephen Ministers giving an evening and taking some beef burgers and sharing a meal with these men.

There are other things we have talked about for this new year but we need ou step up and say: "I will gladly help."

When you have a moment, call my cell phone, 351-0886, or the church offices and let the secretaries know that you are willing to help in 2011, so we can make plans and set dates. Thank you.

Cindy Youngquist,
Countryside Ministry's
Stephen Ministry Leader

*"Bear one another's burdens...
and so fulfill the law of Christ."
Galations 6:2*

Iowa

– a land
where
neigh-
bors
love one
another
and look

People in Poverty...

All Too Often

Invisible

to Society

out for each other, where community is more than a word, it's a way of life. Many of us have experienced this first-hand, and it is something we are proud of and thankful for. However, nearly 12 percent of Iowans are living in poverty. These children, families and individuals are our neighbors too. They live in our communities and struggle to get by day to day.

January is National Poverty Awareness Month; a time to remember those less fortunate. Throughout Iowa communities, Lutheran Services in Iowa empowers people to make positive choices for themselves and their families by providing them with the tools and resources they need to build on their strengths and strive for a self-sufficient lives. LSI's response to the love of Christ through service brings hope to thousands of Iowans every day, and our advocacy for those in need gives a voice to this all-too-often invisible group of people.

For more information on ways LSI provides hope to Iowa's most vulnerable populations, visit www.lsiowa.org.



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New Year's Prayer

in the stories of our old folks, and the fantasies of our children.

Help us to stop and listen to Your love songs,
so that we may know You better and better.

We rejoice in the world You loved into being.

Thank You for another new year and for new chances every day.

We pray for peace, for light, and for hope, that we might spread
them to others.

Forgive us for falling short this past year.

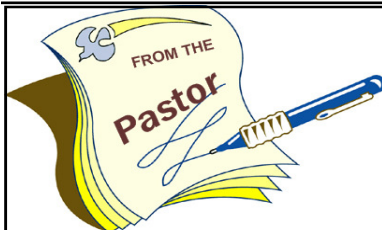
We leave the irreparable past in your hands, and step out into the
unknown new year knowing You will go with us.

We accept Your gift of a new year and we rejoice in what's
ahead, depending on You to help us do exactly what You want..

I say it again, we rejoice!

In Jesus name,

Amen.



(Continued from page 1)
Pastor's Message

“Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?”

“No one, sir,” she

answered.

Then Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on, do not sin again.”

What a glorious day that must have been for that woman. One moment she was confronted with condemnation and death, the next she was given a fresh start on life.

What beautiful words: “Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on, do not sin again.”

The New Year is quickly approaching and along with it comes the hope for a fresh start on life. How many of us don't have some sin or bad habit we need to turn from or a positive change we need to embrace? How many of us don't think to ourselves, “After the first of the year I'm really going to...”? The New Year almost always brings with it the

“Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on, do not sin again.”

promise of a fresh start for our lives.

As important as the dawn of a new year may be, as Christians we are reminded that each and every day can provide us with the fresh start on life we desire. This does not mean that we can go back and change our pasts, but it does mean that we can turn our backs on our pasts to face a future filled with promise and hope. The words Jesus spoke to the

woman on that dusty road are also intended for us, “Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on, do not sin again.”

Why wait for a new year or even tomorrow to face a future filled with promise and hope?

Why not take time today to leave a specific sin or bad habit behind or embrace a positive change and take a step along the path that leads to the life you desire?

Our God is a God of fresh starts. May you be blessed with the fresh start you need as you go your way.



HAVE YOU SEEN GOD LATELY? TELL ME ABOUT IT!



The Church of the Damascus Road Prison Ministry

We have a very small group of faithful people who continue to support our ministry with the Church of the Damascus Road. There is always room for more faithful people

to join us and make a difference to someone who has made a terrible mistake in his life. We need people who are willing to join the Countryside Ministry's Prison Ministry.

January's visit will be on the 12th. We leave from Zion at 5:30 p.m. but will make arrangements to pick people up in Moorland or Harcourt or meet them in the prison parking lot.

Anyone wishing to be included in this outreach ministry please call the Countryside Ministry office by the Thursday prior to the visit to reserve a spot.

A birth certificate proves you were born. A death certificate proves you died. A scrapbook proves you lived!

If you want to preserve your photos in a way that will let generations of your family enjoy them, then this club is for you.

Whether you are a veteran scrapper, are just testing the waters, or want to get started but don't know how, this club is for you!

Our next meeting will be on Saturday, January 15, from 9-3 at Zion Lutheran Church. Everyone who is interested in saving photos, newspaper articles and memorabilia for future generations is welcome to come. Why not make a scrapbook for a friend or loved one? Not sure where to start? A member of the club will be glad to help you get started.

If you have questions, please call the church office. Nothing will be sold at this event, so bring your own supplies and photos. You will need to bring your own lunch and beverage. Please call the Countryside Office (352-3645) if you plan to attend.



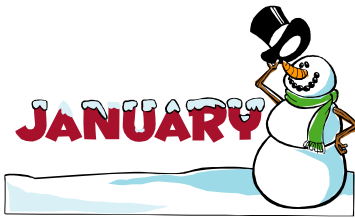
Countryside Ministry



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Rev. Jim Davis Office..... 352-3932
Home 352-5261
Rev. Wahlgren Office..... 352-3645
Home 352-5245
Cindy Youngquist, Office..... 352-3612
Stephen Ministry Home 352-3798

Countryside E-mail Addresses:

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Rev. Jim Davis: elca506@wccta.net
Cindy Youngquist:
stephencoop@hotmail.com

Countryside Ministry website:

www.countrysidecoop.org

Countryside Worship Times

Calvary, Barnum

- 1st Sunday at Friendship Haven..... 10:30 a.m.
- 2nd Sunday at Villa Care 7:00 p.m.
- 3rd Sun, Mal & Gloria Hunt home: 10:30 a.m.
- Fulton, Roelyn 9:15 a.m.
- UCC/Congregational, Moorland..... 8:00 a.m.
- Zion, Gowrie: 10:30 a.m.
- also, 1st and 3rd Saturdays 5:00 p.m.



Remember: The Alzheimer's Support Group meets on the last Wednesday of each month at the Gowrie Senior Suites beginning at 1:00 p.m. January's meeting will be on the 26th.