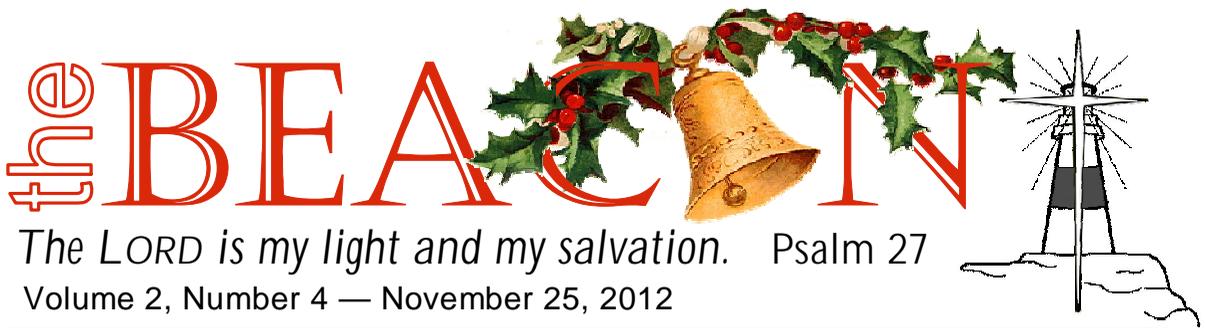


THE BEACON



The LORD is my light and my salvation. Psalm 27
Volume 2, Number 4 — November 25, 2012

Lighthouse Lutheran Church
501 Third Avenue, Freedom, PA 15042
www.lighthouselutheran.org

The Reverend Dennis R. Whalen, Pastor
Morning Worship 9:00 A.M.
Sunday School 10:30 A.M.

Much has happened at Lighthouse Lutheran since the last *Beacon* was distributed.

On September 9th, our Rally Day celebrated the return of Sunday School with singing, crafts, and Bible games. Several profitable Sunday School sessions have followed, for which we are thankful.

The Evangelism Committee continues the effort to place Christian children's books in doctor's and dentist's offices and hospitals, encourages our members to participate in the Unionville Clothes Closet, Unionville Food Pantry, C.A.S.T., and Yellow Ribbon Girls, and is providing much-appreciated aid to needy local people. A prayer circle is in operation for those in need of immediate prayers. Be sure to read the first installment of Carol DeHaven's series of articles on evangelism in this issue of *The Beacon*.

Lighthouse Lutheran's second golf outing, this one hosted by the DeHavens, was held on September 30th at Rolling Acres Golf Course with a dinner following at Fire Mountain in Chippewa.

Oktoberfest, an event owing its success to the very able guidance of Lorrie Kuny and the efforts of the Fellowship Committee, was held Saturday, October 13th. We were happy that several people from the surrounding community attended the event, which included games for children led by Cindy Morris and Karen Frantz, music, a free raffle of gift baskets, and, of course, many choices of delicious food.

Reformation Sunday was celebrated on October 28th. The 2013 Ministry Proposal was presented and approved at the congregational meeting, followed by a delicious luncheon.

On November 6th, a large luncheon was delivered to Freedom's poll workers by members of the the Evangelism Committee on behalf of Lighthouse Lutheran Church.

Five new members of our congregation, including Naomi Lucaric, Marsha Bischoff, Jim Frantz, and Karen Frantz, were honored on Sunday, November 11th.

On Saturday, November 17th, Kurt DeHaven offered the second of his very valuable CPR certification classes.

We are now looking forward to the seasons of Advent and Christmas. Lighthouse Lutheran's second Christmas Eve Candlelight Service is scheduled for 11:00 P.M., December 24th. You are welcome to be a member of the choir which will help celebrate the birth of our blessed Lord.

Pastor Whalen's Message

Christmas is a time of year that I look forward to. Our extended family gathers for food, laughs, and the celebration of many traditions together. Since starting Lighthouse Lutheran Church, I now also have a larger church family with which to share new traditions and joys during this season. At Lighthouse, our love for the Lord and one another is contagious, and this is especially noticeable during the Christmas season. The sanctuary is decorated so beautifully, and, in child-like expectation, I anxiously await the large wreath to be hung high above the altar. For me, my eager anticipation is culminated during our midnight Christmas Eve service that has been known in Lutheran churches as "The Christ's Mass at Midnight on the Nativity of Our Lord." The candlelight, the singing, and the joy of each one present fill the entire sanctuary as we give thanks to God for the glorious birth of His Son, Jesus Christ.

Speaking of the birth of Jesus, I have recently found myself engrossed in the study of Jesus coming into this world. The theological term for this is the Incarnation. The Incarnation is a Latin word which literally means "in flesh" or "to be made flesh." John's Gospel is very clear that "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14), thus, Jesus continued to be God, yet humbled Himself and became one of us. I must be honest with you; I have a hard time wrapping my small brain around this supernatural event. God became man! Why would an all-powerful, all-knowing God lower Himself and become one of us? Once again, John's Gospel is quite clear on the answer. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16). He did this out of love for you and me.

As I ponder the mystery of the Incarnation, I begin to realize something that has escaped me in the past. First, many people in the world search aimlessly trying to find God. Some join groups that have long lists of things that "must be done" in order to find God. Others seek God in rock stars, actors and actresses in films, or professionals in sports. Day after day they desperately pursue finding their "god." As the world continues to disappoint, they ultimately make themselves god of their own world. Yet, deep in their hearts they know that something is missing. Second, almost all of these people fail to realize that it is God who is doing the seeking. In my mind, this is the whole point of the Incarnation. The Son of Man, Jesus Christ, came to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10). We live in a world where people are so busy seeking their "god" that they fail to comprehend the great mystery of the Incarnation – God came to find them. Finally, God continues to seek out the lost. It is true that the Word and Sacraments are means to faith, but Jesus sent His Holy Spirit to continue seeking out the lost and point them toward Christ.

The Incarnation is a subject that I will probably never fully understand until I am with Christ. However, each day that I spend studying this topic brings new blessings into my life. I will leave you with this thought. I recently saw a bumper sticker that read, "Wise men still seek Him". I completely agree that Christians are indeed wise and continue to seek to know Him more and more every day. Yet, a more poignant and accurate bumper sticker for the world we live in would be, "God is seeking you." Are you willing to be found?

THE HEALTH NOOK

Tinnitus, or ringing in the ears, is a common yet poorly understood problem. Tinnitus is not a disease. It is a symptom that is frequently associated with hearing loss. Tinnitus is defined as “a phantom sound or the perception of sound within the human ear, in absence of external auditory stimulus or sound in the environment.” Approximately 50 million people experience tinnitus in one year. Only 16 million will seek medical treatment.

People who are impacted by tinnitus can be led to a life of depression, anxiety, or other inability to lead a normal life. Tinnitus can affect a person’s ability to be productive at work or become involved in social activities. It also affects concentration, sleeping habits, emotional stability, and functions of our daily activities. Many people will need to make lifestyle modifications so that the symptoms of tinnitus will not ruin their lives.

The causes of tinnitus are not understood by science but there are risk factors that are known. Tinnitus can be related to adverse reactions from certain medications, infections, or injury to the ear. Tinnitus is not only a symptom of minor disabilities; it can also be a symptom of more serious conditions. Even though tinnitus is not truly understood, we cannot take these symptoms lightly. Those who have the symptoms of tinnitus should seek medical attention.

Tinnitus management is based on the underlying cause of the symptoms. The symptoms may be mild, and the removal of the cause, such as infections or medications, can result in the resolution of tinnitus. The most common medication that can be the cause of tinnitus is aspirin when used in excess.

Tinnitus can also be a symptom of hearing loss or other diseases. Management of tinnitus include healthy diet, exercise, a physical exam, and a hearing exam. When sleep disturbances are the cause of tinnitus, a full sleep evaluation should be done.

Do not think that tinnitus is a normal condition of life. Remember, this symptom should be evaluated and treated. A visit to your healthcare provider will provide the appropriate evaluation and treatment.

In Mark 4:24 Jesus warned, “Take heed what you hear. With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you; and to you who hear, more will be given.” Our Christian lives are based on hearing the word of God. Let us take care of the gift that God has blessed us with so that we can continue to hear His word.

If you have any questions regarding tinnitus or any other health questions, please ask your Parish Nurses, Bert Amsler or Kurt DeHaven.

Kurt DeHaven

Reference source for this article from:

The Nurse Practitioner, The American Journal of Primary Healthcare

EVANGELISM 101

What is Evangelism? *Webster's Dictionary* defines Evangelism as "a preaching of, or zealous effort to spread the Gospel." The English word "evangelism" comes from a Greek word, translated in the noun form meaning *gospel* or *good news*. When translated in the verb form, the meaning changes slightly to *announce* or *bring good news*. The Greek word is also translated as *preach*. Thus, evangelism is simply the announcement, proclamation, and/or preaching of the Gospel (1 Cor. 15:1-4), the Good News of and about Jesus Christ. Therefore, the Gospel is a message, communicated in verbal (Luke 7:22) and/or written (Luke 1:1-4) form.

Evangelism, the communication of the Gospel message, includes a Warning, an Explanation, and a Call.

- Evangelism includes, Warning people about sin and the consequences of sin (John 16:8, Acts 24:25, Rev. 20:11-15).
- It includes an Explanation of God's remedy for sin—the Gospel (Acts 8:29-35, Romans 3:21-26, 2 Cor. 5:21).
- And it includes the clear Call to repent, to turn from sin and to turn toward God, and believe the Gospel, by faith.

Evangelism was not only the objective of the Apostles, but also of all the faithful. Everyone in the Church has evangelism as an important objective.

Evangelism starts with a person's Baptism, when he feels the Light of Grace. It is reinforced when we receive Holy Communion, as we keep our eyes focused on the Lord's commandment, "For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes again" (1 Cor. 11:26). We see this clearly after the persecution that followed the martyrdom of Stephen, when the faithful were forced to leave Jerusalem. We read, "Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the Word" (Acts 8:4).

We need to raise the awareness of the importance of the evangelism of the faithful. EVANGELISM IS IMPORTANT. When evangelism ceases, Christians wither and are cut off for not bearing fruit (John 15:1-8). Churches are removed from their relationship with the Lord, and die (Rev. 2:1-5-3:1-2). Thus, evangelism is the Spirit of the Church. Just as the body without the Spirit is dead (James 2:24), so are Christians without evangelism dead!

Evangelism is essential, not just for savings of souls who need the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but also for the souls who have the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

To sum it up, evangelism is sharing the Gospel, as commanded by Jesus in the Great Commission when first given to his Apostles (Mark 16:15-16). He wants the Good News to be proclaimed to every person in the world. Evangelism is sharing the Gospel by all Christians, not just evangelists. Our duty as the people of God is to proclaim His praises (1 Peter 2: 9-10).

On October 7, Donna Buss received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. Following morning worship, a reception was held in the fellowship hall. Donna is shown here enjoying the company of her granddaughter.



New Members, including Naomi Lucaric, Marsha Bischoff, and Karen Frantz were honored during the worship service on November 11 and at the reception following in the fellowship hall.



Ethiopia—A Land of Contrasts

Ethiopia, Tsena Dinssa's homeland, is a large country in east central Africa. It is more than one and one-half times the size of Texas. Looked at another way, Ethiopia is about the same size as all of New England, plus New York, Ohio, Indiana, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. You will notice from the map that Ethiopia (in green) is a landlocked country surrounded by (moving clockwise) Sudan, Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia, Kenya, and South Sudan.



Ethiopia consists of a very large highland of mountains and plateaus divided by the Great Rift Valley, which is surrounded by lowlands and semi-desert areas. There is a wide variety of climate, soils, and vegetation, including deserts in the east and tropical rain forests in the south. Lake Tana in the north is the source of the Blue Nile. Most of the country is covered by the Ethiopian Highlands which, because of their altitude, have a climate which is cooler than might be expected of an area entirely within the tropics. The capital, Addis Ababa, has a healthy, pleasant climate year round.

Ethiopia has been called the water tower of eastern Africa because of the fourteen major rivers pouring off its highland areas, although only 1% is used for the production of electricity and 1.5% for irrigation.

Agriculture accounts for over 40% of the gross domestic product. Ethiopia produces more coffee than any other African country and is the tenth largest producer of livestock in the world. Other exports include leather products, gold, and oilseeds.

The population of Ethiopia is in excess of eighty-four million, containing over eighty ethnic groups speaking ninety individual languages. The two largest groups are the Oromo (34.5%) and the Amhara (27%). According to the 2007 national census, Christians make up 62.8% of the population (43.5% Ethiopian Orthodox, 19.3% other denominations); Muslims 33.9%; traditional faiths 2.6%; other religions 0.6%. A small ancient group of Jews, the Beta Israel, live in northwestern Ethiopia. The Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus (EECMY) is a national church in Ethiopia, the largest Lutheran Church in Africa with some five million members.

MEMORIES OF OKTOBERFEST





ALL THIS FOR ME

If Christ came back for Christmas
And saw the gifts and tree,
Would He be happy with the fuss,
And ask, "All this for me?"

Or would He wonder if we knew
About His humble birth,
Of how He came in peace and love
To walk upon this earth.

We scurry round to find the toys
And grown-up gadgets, too.
Do we forget that God gave first,
His Son for me and you?

So in this Advent season,
As we prepare the way,
Let's welcome Jesus in our hearts
And ask that He will stay.

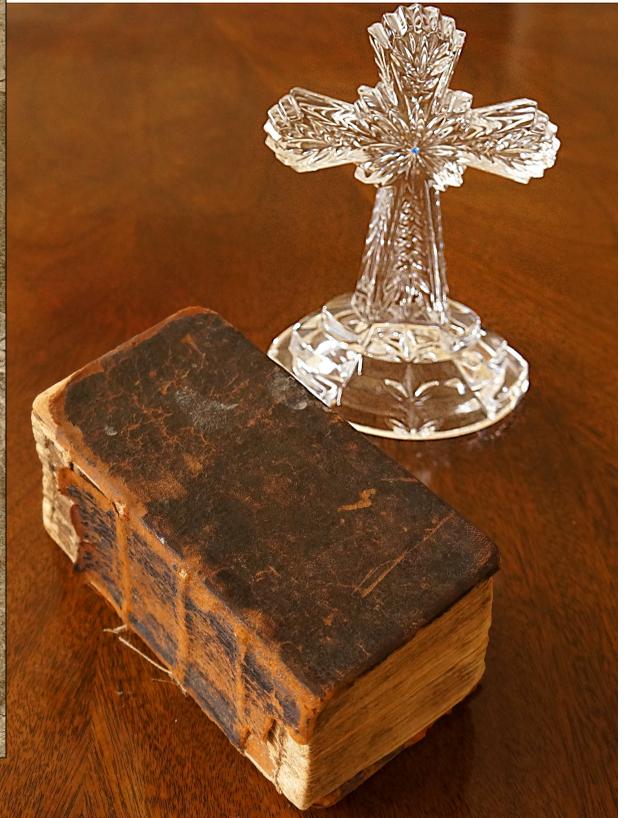
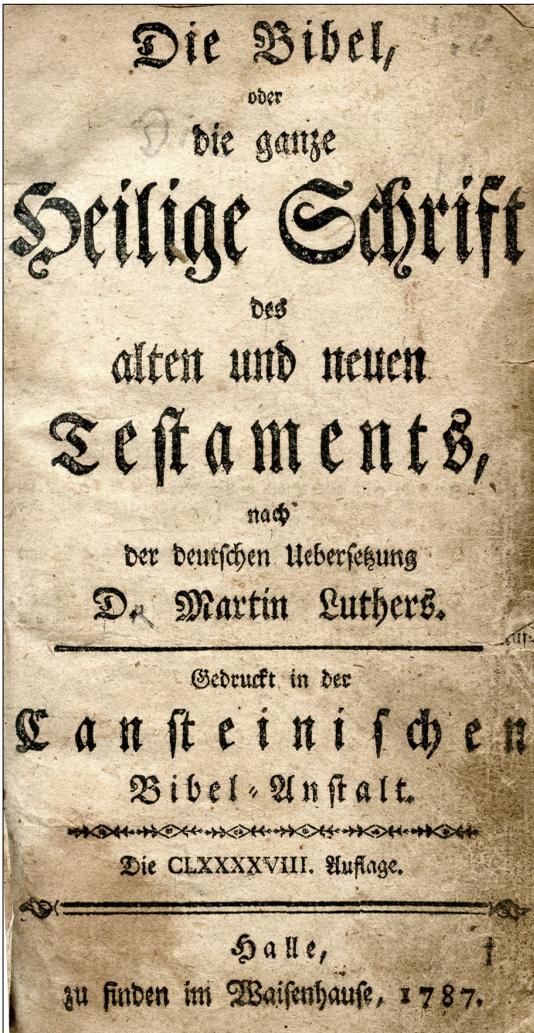
Our hearts will open to the need
Of others we can see.
Then Christ could truly feel the joy,
And say, "All this for me!"



Dolores Fruth

A short time ago, our dear brother and sister in Christ, Norm and Bert Amsler, shared with me an antique Bible which had been passed down in the Amsler family through several generations. It had been printed in Halle, Germany in 1787 and is a version of Martin Luther's translation of the holy Scriptures into German. The bulk of the volume is taken up by the Old and New Testaments and the Apocrypha, but at the back of the book there is a list of Scripture readings for the worship services of the church year, and just before Genesis there is an article, the subject of

which is the proper reading of the Scriptures. The advice given therein has been so uplifting to me that I felt led to share it with the congregation and friends of Lighthouse Lutheran Church. – Mel Roush



AUG. HERM. FRANKEN'S
SHORT TEACHING
ON HOW ONE
SHOULD READ THE HOLY SCRIPTURES
TO HIS EDIFICATION

If the seeker would read the holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to his building up in God, he must take care with all diligence that he not have in his heart any secret false grounds or any unrighteous reason why he reads the holy Scriptures, because those learned in the Scriptures and the Pharisees also read the holy Scriptures and yet were not improved thereby. They intended to attain eternal life but were not willing to come to Christ that they might have that life (John 5:39-40). Such false grounds and unrighteous reasons are they, if one reads the holy Scriptures either for simple time-passing (because here and there some history is found, which the natural mind moderately enjoys) or if one pursues the reading of the holy Scriptures as a purely outward activity, as though the reader already stood firm in his Christianity, and reads a chapter here and a chapter there, thinking that by so doing he offers to God an especially good work, as many people think, believing that they diligently read God's Word, though their minds and entire lives do not conform in the least with the Word of God. Or if one approaches the holy Scriptures with the purpose of being Scripture-smart and attaining much knowledge, then love of self, ambition, and many other pharisaical vices are fostered. And this is nowadays the purpose of many learned people, wishing to be masters of Scripture but knowing neither what they say nor what they assert (1 Timothy 1:7). Yes, this is quite the perverse way of men, that they busy themselves more over useless questions or high secrets than laying a proper grounding in repentance and faith. Whoever has these or other similar misguided notions in his heart about the reading of the holy Scriptures, he can, with all his knowledge of Scripture be damned to the abyss of Hell, even though he know the whole of Scripture by heart.

The seeker brings to the reading of the holy Scriptures an upright and genuine desire that he, through the holy Scriptures, might be instructed to his spiritual bliss through belief in Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 3:15) and that he therefore might believe and live by reading the holy Scriptures as though led by God Himself. In summary: When you betake yourself to the holy Scriptures, it must be your only upright purpose that you would be a faithful and pious Christian, not in appearance, but in the true strength that you can be assured that you please God and will enjoy Him with eternal joy.

Prayer must be first, and a seeker ought to petition God after this or similar fashion before he reads in the Bible, not with the mouth alone, but with a truly devout heart—O You eternal and living God, how can we thank you sufficiently that you have so graciously revealed

to us in your Word your holy will, that from it we might learn how to be faithful, pure, and blessed! So give me now your Holy Spirit, that He might open my eyes to see the wonders of your statutes; that He would work and increase in my heart and mightily lead my will that I might rejoice in your witness and believe in You from my heart and keep your Word.

Luther writes that the Gospel is so clear that it needs little explanation, but rather needs only to be meditated upon to be applied and taken deep into the heart. And there is no need for anything other than a still heart, just as the sun sees itself clearly in still water and powerfully warms it, which turbulent and flowing water does not allow. Thereby you will be enlightened, see Godly grace and wonder, so that your heart is on fire, enlightened, becomes devout and joyous, and you find wonder on wonder.

Prayer and meditation work together. If meditation is stalled, then you must pray. When prayer will not flow, you must meditate a little on the words. Meditation will spring from prayer and be increased; and through meditation you will be awakened to prayer. Bernhardus says, "No one arrives suddenly at the top. By climbing, and not by flying, one reaches the uppermost rungs of the ladder. Therefore let us climb up as though by two feet, namely through meditation and through prayer. For meditation teaches and shows us what we lack. Prayer, however, nourishes and renews us in God the Lord so much that we want for nothing. Meditation shows us the right way. Prayer, however leads us in that selfsame way." And in another place he says, "Meditation is illumined through prayer, and in meditation prayer becomes fervent. It is a sweet and loving conversation and a blessed exchange, where namely prayer and meditation come together so that one regulates the other." And once again, "Prayer without meditation is a cold and lazy thing. Meditation without prayer is barren and worth absolutely nothing." Whoever knows to take in earnest this reminder of the blessed Bernhardus in reading the holy Scriptures will never read the holy Scriptures without great benefit.

And the dear cross is now a very powerful means to rightly understand the holy Scriptures, indeed, to taste and to feel. Prayer, meditation, and trial are the three parts which make a truly God-taught man. As soon as any adversity confronts you, be it without or within, believe that the Counselor is there and wishes to know what you have learned from the holy Scriptures. So cast about quickly for a passage that fits in with your distress and concern. If you find none, as soon as the opportunity arises, Bible in hand, read a Psalm, or wherever else your devotion carries you. You will soon find that which can strengthen you. However, you should always have many good verses of holy Scripture available whenever the need arises. Having found, then, a verse that takes your thoughts from the outward distress (God will give you the grace), turn to such a verse and ponder it devoutly in your heart. How it will be to you a fountain of living water! How much deeper an understand-

ing it will give you beneath the cross rather than before the cross! Finally, know that so much as you die to the world, so much will you see and understand in the holy Scriptures. However, so much as you live after the senses of the flesh and the world, so much will you be blind and without understanding in the holy Scriptures. The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, give us the Spirit of wisdom and revelation of the knowledge of Him, and enlighten the eyes of our understanding, that we may realize what is the hope of our calling, what is the richness of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the overflowing greatness of his strength toward us who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which He has accomplished in Christ, that He has awakened Him from the dead and set to his right in Heaven, to Whom be honor and praise from now to eternity, Amen.

James 1:12 Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love Him.

1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation He will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

Romans 8:28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

Philippians 4:6-7 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Rom 8:35-39 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

John 16:33 I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.

Church Council Meeting Highlights

October 15, 2012 7:30 P.M.

as taken from meeting minutes.

Pastor Dennis Whalen, Norman Amsler, Dee Eppihimer, Tom Kuny, Cindy Morris, and Carol Nicoletti were present.

Following devotions, the minutes of the August 20, 2012 council meeting were approved as presented.

Dee Eppihimer presented the August and September, 2012 financial reports. The treasurer's reports will be filed for audit.

Pastor Whalen presented his report for August 21, 2012 through October 15, 2012. Naomi Lucaric has joined the congregation of Lighthouse Lutheran. A copy of the pastor's report is attached to the minutes.

Council received the minutes of the September 5, 2012 and October 2, 2012 Fellowship Committee meetings. The next meeting is scheduled for November 6.

Council received the minutes of the October 2, 2012 Evangelism Committee meeting.

The Evangelism Committee has requested permission to install a prayer box on the outside of the church building. It was moved by Pastor Whalen, seconded by Norm Amsler, and carried to approve the installation of such box.

The Evangelism Committee has suggested placing a model lighthouse on the church grounds. The suggestion was tabled and will be revisited in the spring.

Cindy Morris's and Carol Nicoletti's terms expire this year. As they are not running for re-election, Pastor Whalen will ask for nominees during the congregational meeting.

The 2003 Ministry Proposal was reviewed. Pastor Whalen will make the changes and distribute the proposal to the congregation on Sunday.

The next council meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 19, 2012 at Cindy Morris's home.

The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

MUSINGS

As the Christmas season approaches, I'm reminded of Bishop Fulton J. Sheen. Bishop Sheen was a popular Catholic cleric who had a television program back in the 1950s and '60s, on which he held forth, eloquently, and in prime time, on great religious themes. His show was watched weekly by millions of viewers. Times have changed.

Perry Como was also a popular TV personality of that era. He hosted a weekly variety show, and at every Christmas season in those days, Bishop Sheen was invited to deliver a homily to Mr. Como's audience.

On one of those Christmas shows, Bishop Sheen gave us an image of the holy Child lying in the manger at Bethlehem. He said that the Babe whose tiny hands could not quite touch the huge heads of the cattle was the same One who had thrown out the galaxies into the vast universe. He was, as I have mentioned, an eloquent man, and that image has stuck in my mind for more than fifty years.

These days, we are invited by those who make science their religion to consider the greatness of the universe and compare it with our own small, insignificant selves. You've heard it before—the desperate attempt to classify mankind as an accidental product of a cosmic magic show presided over by . . . no one. They mean to put us in our place.

Well, the reality of the Christmas story puts us in our place—right in the center of God's love and grace. Merry Christmas!

Mel Roush