
COUNTRYSIDE NEWS

Volume 1 Issue 4

A Publication of Countryside Cooperative Ministry

December 2002

Calvary, Barnum; Faith, Harcourt; Fulton, Roelyn; Trinity, Boxholm; UCC/Congregational, Moorland; Zion, Gowrie

SIX CONGREGATIONS; 50,000 ACRES

We have a wonderful vision taking place right in our very own synod called the Countryside Cooperative Ministries. Six congregations — four ELCA Lutheran, one Presbyterian, and one United Church of Christ/Congregational (UCC) — are working together, trusting in the Holy Spirit, to sustain, supplement, and grow in rural ministry.

The players involved are the Rev. Jim Davis, administrative pastor; the Rev. Marlin Snyder, pastor; and Rod Meyer, lay staff. The clergy leadership became a

little more complex in mid-September when Pr. Marlin Snyder took another call in the Northeastern Iowa Synod. For a complete story of this ministry, see the Western Iowa Synod supplement in the November issue of *The Lutheran*.

History: The relationship initially began because Zion, Gowrie, a congregation that had been served by a pastor and intern for approximately 15 years, believed they needed more staff and continuity than the internship program provided. The problem, however, was with funding two full-time positions.

REV. FRERKING LEAVES COOPERATIVE MINISTRY

We are sad to announce that Rev. Norman Frerking has had to leave the Cooperative Ministry staff due to health related issues.

Pastor Frerking suffered a stroke on Sunday, November 17 that has resulted in his residence at a nursing home in a suburb of Omaha. Pastor Frerking's wife, Betty, will be staying with their daughter and son-in-law, Jusy and Bob Crick, during this difficult time.

Pastor Frerking served as Pastor at Calvary since 1985. He

has been preaching at Calvary twice a month, at the UCC/Congregational, providing pastoral care and moderating Calvary's session. His leadership in the formation of Countryside Cooperative Ministry is deeply appreciated.

Cards can be sent to:
The Rev. Norman Frerking
c/o R.T. Crick
800 Chisholm Trail
Papillion, NE 68046
Please remember Pastor and Mrs. Frerking in your prayers.

Countryside Cooperative Ministry Council

Byrum Chalstrom, UCC/Cong.
Loretta Daisy, Fulton
Larry Fatka, Trinity
Marc Greenfield, Faith
Steve Julius, Calvary
Larry Krakau, Trinity
Steve Lane, Zion
Shannon Miller, Zion
Ned Palmer, Zion
John Samuelson, Faith
Richard Silvey, UCC/Cong.
Everett Underwood, Fulton
Ron Walrod, Calvary

Countryside Cooperative Ministry Executive Committee

Byrum Chalstrom, President
Shannon Miller, Vice-president
Steve Lane, Treasurer
Loretta Daisy, Secretary
Rev. Jim Davis, Administrative
Pastor

Good news from Heaven
the angels bring
Glad tidings to the earth they
sing.
To us this day a child is given,
To crown us with the joy of
heaven.

—Martin Luther

The need for more staffing led to a conversation with Faith, Harcourt, in which the two congregations decided to try shared ministry. Pr. Davis began his ministry at Zion in August 2000. Rod Meyer was employed as lay staff in November 2000.

Several of the congregations were finding it difficult to get staff and provide programming without working together, which they had already done with ecumenical worship services and youth events. Davis says, "they were at a point where ministry was becoming survival-based, rather than mission-oriented." Zion was also facing a serious challenge in funding the kind of staff they needed to minister effectively. "This financial crisis created an opportunity for a new form of ministry to emerge," Davis says. "If we can make this switch, change our attitudes, use people's gifts — WOW, it is going to be a great thing! It gives us a chance to ask, 'What gifts do you have?' and 'Where can God use those gifts?'"

The Model They are Using: The six congregations are working toward identifying and equipping lay leaders who have passion for different areas of church work to use their God-given gifts for the congregation. The pastor's role is to work primarily with the leadership

of the churches, striving to ensure that each church is seeking vision for itself, the community, and its larger church, and to see that programming is taking place. Each congregation maintains its own denominational relationship. The pastors are shared by all six congregations, and their supporting expenses are prorated based upon worship attendance at each church. There is a cooperative council comprised of two representatives from each of the six churches.

Is it Working? So far, there have been a few bumps, and adjustments have had to be made with worship service times and attitudes, but the answer from the clergy is "yes!" Pr. Snyder says, "One of the most important, exciting things about this is the onset of cooperation. People who were kind of against it to begin with are now saying, 'hey, I think this is a good thing!' I took the overwhelming majority votes in each church to show excitement on the part of the congregations and I think it has been a positive change for most people."

This article was printed in the Western Iowa Synod Newsletter, the Western Iowa Synod Supplement to The Lutheran, and The Ecumenical Ship, a bi-monthly publication of Ecumenical Ministries of Iowa.

A VERY MERRY MUSICAL CHRISTMAS: PART X

Gowrie and the others from the area will present *A Very Merry Musical Christmas: Part X* on Sunday, December 8 at 7:00 p.m. The program will feature a wide variety of Christmas music.

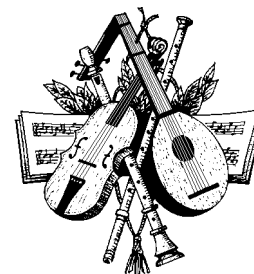
The concert will be held at Zion Lutheran Church. Refreshments will be served.

Join us for an exciting Christmas program. Come early, the seats fill up fast.



YOUTH ENCOUNTER

Captive Free, a team from Lutheran Youth Encounter will be with us the weekend of December 29th. They will be leading worship and hosting a concert on Sunday, December 29th. Worship will be at 10:30 a.m. and the concert will be at 7:00 p.m. Captive Free is an exciting, high-energy team of committed young Christians you are not going to want to miss. Mark your calendars and join us for worship and the concert.



COUNTRYSIDE NEWS

The name for the Cooperative newsletter will be *Countryside News*. The Cooperative council chose *Countryside News* from a number of submissions by members of the Cooperative.

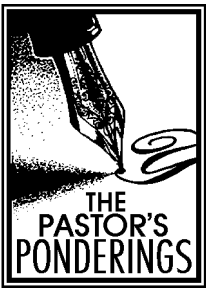
Thanks to Heidi Blair from Trinity, Boxholm the submitting *Countryside News*.

"May the joy of His coming touch your life and bring peace to your heart."

Luke 2:11

*Rev. Jim Davis and Family
Rev. Don and Marjorie Wahlgren
Rod Meyer and Family
Cindy and Jerry Youngquist
Countryside Cooperative Council*





Zion recently welcomed ten of their youth into confirmed membership. Each of them made a public commitment to

be faithful to Jesus. Faithfulness includes worship, study, participating in the sacraments, trying to do what is right in their lives and serving others by following the example of Jesus. Can you remember when you made those same promises?

I am ashamed to admit that I wasn't very faithful in keeping the promises I

made at my confirmation. Instead of trying to

follow Jesus, I left the church. After all, we only had to go until we were confirmed. I spent a number of years away from the church before finally returning one Advent quite a number of years ago. Upon returning, I discovered that I was accepted, loved and cared for by the members of my congregation. More importantly, I rediscovered a God who loved and cared for me more than I could imagine. Those were the very things I needed at that point in my life. I never dreamed, at that time, that one day I would be a pastor; but God does move in mysterious ways.

“There’s nothing more joyful than a baby.”
—Lucille Dippolito
Mother of 20 children

Advent is an important time for me. It reminds me of my need for a community of people who accept, love and care for me. It also reminds me of a God who loves and cares for me more than I often love and care for myself.

There are those of you who, like me, have wandered away from the church and, maybe, from God. I want you to know that there are people waiting for you to return; people who are willing to accept you and love and care for you no matter where you've been. More importantly, God is waiting to be rediscovered

God is waiting to be rediscovered by you so that you may experience the joy of his love and care.

by you so that you may experience the joy of his love and care.

Advent is a time when we prepare to meet Jesus anew. Maybe this Advent would be a good time for you to rediscover the God who comes to us offering us his love and care.

Join us this Advent and Christmas as we struggle to be faithful to those promises each of us made at our confirmation. Join us as we rediscover the wonder and mystery of God's love.

Pastor Jim



CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

There are many opportunities for worship in the Cooperative this Christmas season. Here is a list of special Christmas services. There is a time here for everyone. Join us and celebrate the birth of Christ.

December 22

Candlelight on the Prairie

4:00 p.m. Calvary, Barnum

December 24

Christmas Eve Candlelight

5:00 p.m. Fulton, Roelyn

Christmas Eve Candlelight

7:30 p.m. Faith, Harcourt

Christmas Eve Candlelight

10:30 p.m. Zion, Gowrie

Christmas Eve Candlelight

11:00 p.m. Trinity, Boxholm

December 25

Service of Carols

9:00 a.m. Zion, Gowrie



NEED A VISIT?

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

Countryside Cooperative Ministry
Box 63
Gowrie, IA 50543

Cooperative Phone Numbers:

Cooperative Office		352-3645
Rev. Jim Davis	Office	352-3932
	Home	352-5261
Rod Meyer	Office	846-6227
	Home	354-5224
Rev. Wahlgren	Office	352-3645
	Home	352-5245

Cooperative Email Addresses:

Cooperative Office: ziongowr@wccta.net
Rev. Jim Davis: elca506@wccta.net
Rod Meyer: rodmeyer@mail.lvcta.com

Cooperative Worship Times

Calvary, Barnum	10:30 a.m.
Faith, Harcourt	10:30 a.m.
Fulton, Roelyn	9:15 a.m.
Trinity, Boxholm	9:00 a.m.
UCC/Cong., Moorland	8:00 a.m.
Zion, Gowrie	10:30 a.m.
1st and 3rd Saturdays	5:00 p.m.