

COUNTRYSIDE NEWS

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February 2004

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

COOPERATIVE WORSHIP



The Countryside Cooperative Ministry will be hosting a Cooperative worship service on Sunday, February 22, 10:00 a.m. at Zion Lutheran Church in Gowrie.

Representatives from the respective denominations will be joining us and there will be a Cooperative Choir.

Xi Eta Sigma sorority of Gowrie will host a ham ball dinner following worship. Any money collected in the freewill offering that is above costs will go back to the community. Please plan on joining us for an inspiring worship opportunity.



IMMERSION

Imagine a group of 13 and 14 year old boys and girls crowded around a bed in a care center. They take turns making the sign of the cross, praying, and reading from the Bible. When it is time for the blessing, they all place their hands on the person in the bed while one of them offers a blessing.

Imagine a group of 13 and 14 year old boys and girls scattered throughout a dining room in a nursing home. The leader of the group prays and reads from the



Nursing Home Ministry

Bible while each of the youth stand or sit next to a

resident. When it is time for the blessing, they place their hands on the residents and pray God's blessing upon them.

Eleven of our Cooperative youth and two leaders recently spent time at the Gowrie Care Center in scenes exactly like those described. They learned about the people who share their gifts to care for the residents at the Care Center. They met the people who live there. They offered God's blessing and also received it.

IMMERSION is one component of our confirmation program. It is a monthly experience intended to broaden the participant's understanding of the church. Other current components include: **FUSION** and **HEAD TO HEART**.

Countryside Cooperative Ministry Council

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

Countryside Cooperative Ministry Executive Committee

Byron Chalstrom, President
Larry Fatka, Vice-president
Loretta Daisy, Secretary
Steve Lane, Treasurer
Rev. Jim Davis, Administrative Pastor



"Today, of course, Paul would send an e-mail to the Corinthians."



On Sunday, February 22, we will commission 24 members of the Countryside Cooperative as Stephen Ministers. These 7 men and 17 women have been training since September 15, 2003, for this lay ministry of care and listening. They are now ready to care for others with the gifts they possess and the skills they have developed. At the 10:00 Cooperative worship to be held at Zion Lutheran on February 22, 2004, these people will be commissioned and they are asking you, their family, friends, and fellow church members to mark this date on your calendar and plan to be there. This will be a very special day for all of them and for the Cooperative's Stephen Ministry Leader, Cindy Youngquist.

This service of commissioning will offer the Countryside Cooperative the opportunity to show support for the Stephen Ministry of our churches by (1) praying for our Stephen Ministers and their Care Receivers, (2) accepting the care of a Stephen Minister to help you through a crisis or upset in your life, and (3) by referring others to the pastors or Cindy for the care of a Stephen Minister.

Please join in praying for and supporting our new Stephen Ministers of the:

Countryside Cooperative Stephen Ministry Class of 2003– 2004

Monte Albert	Zion	Gowrie
Dorothy Anderson	Zion	Gowrie
Grace Bilstad	Fulton	Roelyn
Donna Brundage	Faith	Harcourt
Dorothy Carlon	Zion	Gowrie
Bryon Chalstrom	U.C.C.	Moorland
Loretta Daisy	Fulton	Roelyn
Almeda Gordon	Zion	Gowrie
Bud and Donita Johanson	Zion	Gowrie
Steve Julius	Calvary	Barnum
Leanne Keith	Zion	Gowrie
Mary Krakau	Trinity	Boxholm
Mary Larson	Zion	Gowrie
Cheryl Meyer	Faith	Harcourt
Donna A. Moe	Fulton	Roelyn
Mary Orness	Zion	Gowrie
Joan Peterson	Faith	Harcourt
Kim Cockrum Rolfes	Zion	Gowrie
Ruth Elaine Sandeen	Zion	Gowrie
Evan Telleen	Zion	Gowrie
Everett Underwood	Fulton	Roelyn
Marjorie Wahlgren	Zion	Gowrie
Ron Walrod	Calvary	Barnum



Engaging, meaningful church experience in which youth are valued.

This summer, while setting up a demonstration of an LCD projector for Zion's council, I had one of those "Aha!" experiences that impressed upon me the importance of engaging children in order to create meaningful worship experiences for them.

Claire, Austin and Myles were running around the church while I was setting up the projector. Yes, I confess, I let my kids run in church. May God have mercy on my soul. I tested the projector by

playing "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" from an *I Worship* DVD. *I Worship* uses traditional lyrics set to contemporary music. The words for the lyrics are overlaid over moving background images that correspond to the lyrics. It is beautiful, uplifting and inspiring. Within 15 seconds of the time I hit the play button, all three of my children were sitting in a pew watching the video. They were captivated by the video of "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name."

They were captivated by the video of "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name."

I was amazed at their response. When "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" was finished, I played two more songs from the video. Their eyes remained riv-

eted to the screen – even Myles, who was only four. When the third one had finished playing and I shut the recorder off, Claire asked, "Is that all?" She obviously wanted to watch more.

I Worship has discovered a formula for taking a message that is centuries old and packaging it in a form that creates an engaging, meaningful experience for youth

and adults. While *I Worship* videos are not for everyone, my kids, many

other kids, and I find them to be inspirational.

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various others. He had lunches and dinners with various members of the six churches that make up our Cooperative. He attended services at each of the churches and *FUSION* as well as attending various functions and meetings of the Cooperative churches. He attended a meeting of our local Kiwanis Club of which Pastor Jim and I are members.

I received very positive responses from David and he indicated his surprise at some of the things going on in the rural area.

We are very grateful to the community and to all the members of the six churches for their warm response and how they made him feel at home.

I feel it was a successful event and I am looking forward to working with students again. I would also like to thank Greg Moe and Bruce Walrod for helping coordinate this event.

—Gene Thoma
Coordinator

RURAL MINISTRY LEARNING LAB

The purpose of the learning lab is to let seminary students experience some of the work that goes on in the rural areas. We wish them to experience the wonderful things happening in the rural areas as well as the problems we face. It is our hope that this experience may lead some of them to choose rural ministry rather than going to the urban environment.

On January 3, the first seminary student arrived to take part in the learning lab. His name is David Jordan. He is 37 years old and he and his wife of 12 years have 2 boys, ages 5 and 3. David began his career in the business world as an information technol-

ogy consultant working with computer programs for large businesses. David had thought of the ministry while still in high school but decided on a career in business. But God's call was so strong that he and his family moved to Dubuque where he enrolled in the Wartburg Seminary School.

David was with us for a period of 16 days but was able to return home twice during this time.

During his time here we filled each day with meetings with a county sheriff, a county nurse, a bank president, woman business owner, a rural hospital, farmers, Ag businessmen, small town mayor, a state representative, and

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The Pastor's Pen

A few years ago, a program called "Blue's Clues" became wildly popular among children. The intent of the producers is to engage children where they are. One episode of "Blues Clues" – twenty-two minutes—is devoted to snack time. While twenty-two minutes of snack time may seem like torture to adults, snack time is a huge part of the life of a preschooler. The producers of "Blue's Clues" believe the more kids are engaged – intellectually and physically – the more memorable and meaningful an episode will be. The host of "Blue's Clues," originally Steve, now Joe, actually speaks to the viewers inviting them to be involved in what is happening in the show. The success of the show speaks for itself.

Traditional forms for passing on the faith are often simply no longer effective. The way in which our children experience the world has changed. We must change the ways in which we seek to communicate the gospel if we hope to be effective in passing on the faith.

If we are to be successful in passing on the faith to our children, we need to be willing to learn how to create engaging, meaningful experiences in the church that become effective vehicles of the gospel. This involves learning to think and act differently, something not easily done.

FUSION, Immersion and Head to Heart are all ways in which we are attempting to create engaging, meaningful experiences in which our children are valued and through which the gospel is ex-

perienced. Whether it is in worship, prayer, learning or serving, we must offer our best in creating engaging, meaningful experiences of the church for our youth.

If you are interested in learning more about these ministries or are interested in becoming involved in creating engaging, meaningful experiences for our youth, please contact the Cooperative office. We would love to have you join us.

—Pastor Jim

Engaging, meaningful church experience in which youth are valued is the fifth of eight "Faith Factors" that will be the focus of this column for the next several months.

GOD SIGHTINGS

To explain this "God Sighting" I'm going to have to do a lot of quoting from something I barely understand—but who could say that they understand God anyway? The quotes are from an article in the January 2004 issue of *Discover* magazine entitled, "Space: A Very Noisy Place." Bob Berman is the author.

"Last September researchers using the Chandra X-ray Observatory detected sound waves blaring from a distant black hole. That news prompted a lot of double takes. After all, astronomers always say sound can't carry in a vacuum, and nothing, including sound waves, should be able to escape from a black hole. Even the makers of the movie

Alien knew that 'in space, no one can hear you scream.'"

Berman goes on to explain the basics of sound; how a disturbance in a medium jostles the atoms and they in turn jostle others and create an acoustic wave, a sound. The denser the medium, the more sound is transmitted, the more the atoms are spread out, the less.

"The concentration of atoms in an intergalactic nebula is fantastically low ...but sound can exist there too, provided something can spark a big enough acoustic wave. The Chandra results show that a supermassive black hole in the heart of the Perseus galaxy cluster, 250 million light-years from Earth, generates enough of a

sonic wallop to do the job. The sound does not come from the black hole itself but from a disk of hot gas swirling just beyond its edges."

"... Chandra researchers analyzed the activity at the center of the Perseus cluster and concluded that it produces a very, very low B-flat.

"Alas, we cannot experience this tone directly. The deepest bass note humans can hear has a frequency of about 20 cycles per sec-



HAVE YOU SEEN GOD LATELY? TELL ME ABOUT IT!

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VALENTINE'S DINNER



Are you tired of the same old Valentine's Day cards, candy and gifts? If so,

please join us for an evening of fine dining and entertainment.

The Countryside Cooperative High School Youth will be hosting a Valentine's Dinner on Sunday, February 15 at 6:00 p.m.

Dinner will include a smoked pork loin, baked potato, green beans, salad bar, dessert, and beverage. Entertainment will include Prairie Valley High School Jazz Band, Zion's Vesper Bells, and other local musicians.

Reservations are by advance

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God Sightings

ond. Each pulse from the black hole occurs *once every 10 million years*. The B-flat from Perseus lies 57 octaves below middle C. Only creatures with ears the size of galaxies could savor that meditative cosmic *om*."

Can you picture with me our great God relaxing in his cosmic recliner enjoying the songs of the universe that He created? Isn't it fun? Of course, it's just a silly picture in my head. What amazes me most is that although I always thought of all those scriptures that spoke of the heavens singing the praises of God as merely beautifully poetic language, it turns out that to the One who is forever,

ticket sales only. Tickets will be available at Zion Lutheran Church after service on Sunday, February 1st and 8th, by contacting Vicki Anderson at 352-3761, or Cheryl at the Cooperative Office.

Profits from the supper will be used to defray cost of the youth mission trip to Tecate, Mexico, scheduled for July.

On the mission trip the youth will stay at an orphanage interacting with the children, do work projects, visit an immigration shelter, visit a rural village, share a meal at a Mexican home, converse with local leaders, as well as study and reflect on their social ministry.

the universe is truly singing!

*Praise the Lord!
Praise the Lord from the heavens,
praise him in the heights!
Praise him, all his angels,
praise him, all his host!*

*Praise him, sun and moon,
praise him, all you shining stars!
Praise him, you highest heavens,
and you waters above the heavens!*

Let them praise the name of the Lord!

Psalm 148:1-5. see also Ps 89:5-6 and Isaiah 49:13

—Monte Albert
Zion Lutheran Church



SOUPER BOWL OF CARING

Sunday, February 1, 2004 is Souper Bowl Sunday. You may ask what is Souper Bowl Sunday? Well, more than a decade ago a Super Bowl Sunday prayer inspired the young people of a single church to do something more than celebrate a football game. They created a legacy that would help others—The Souper Bowl of Caring.

Today this youth-led grassroots movement has become an international event. Since going nationwide in 1993, more than \$20 million has been raised for people in need.



Neighbors in need

Catch the spirit of caring and share your caring spirit

with thousands of others across the world. Our Senior High Youth will be in church on Sunday, February 1st to collect dollars for the area food pantry. Every dollar dropped in a soup pot on February 1st helps people in need feel the power of God's love. Now that's something to cheer about!!!!

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From www.superbowl.org

***You may forget with whom you laughed,
but you will never forget with whom you wept.***



**FROM
THE
ASSOCIATE
PASTOR**

I fear that these articles I write are making my wife increasingly anxious. I think the wise thing for me to do as an intelligent, loving, and sometimes intimidated spouse is to give her license to edit my stuff. I have offered to change names to protect the identities of the innocent, but calling her 'Shirley' probably wouldn't fool all that many readers, and it would probably send my mother over the edge, thinking I was writing about another woman. (Though maybe I could write that off to genetics - my father always maintained that 'monogamy and bigamy were the

very same thing - it was having one wife too many...') And changing names when I write about Tony isn't even a real issue, since he is hardly ever innocent anyway. (I just realized that if you reverse his name, it spells "Y-not." Fate is ever a cruel mistress...)

I don't think Cheryl really objects to the conclusions of the articles - it's just that she (and others) find it convoluted and kind of frightening how I get there. I worked with a pastor who evidently felt the same way. When I handed him an article, he started reading it, looked up and said, "Do you ever READ this stuff?" Well, I do read it - I read this stuff over and over again, but it's rather like

choosing one word and saying it over and over again until it starts to sound foreign and strange to your ear. Annette (the secretary at Trinity) has asked me where I ever get my ideas - Tony has asked me IF I ever get ideas. And I'm coming to believe that Annette is just more diplomatic than Tony...

"God is so much easier than theology and church politics."

But I do believe that God really is in the smallest details, and that his revelation

is often much more accessible to me in the trivial than it ever is in the major issues of the day. I'm no great intellect - the questions that plague the world and threaten to divide the church are a mystery to me. And that's fine. I am not driven to enter the battle of

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FUSION

Kristina Ober, daughter of Joe and Barb Miller of Gowrie, was a recent guest at *FUSION*.

Kristina spent two years in Shizuoka, Japan teaching English and doing mission work for Navigators. She is currently doing mission work for Navigators at California State University in Long Beach, California.

Kristina shared how God has called her to use her gifts to reach out and touch others in the name of Jesus. Kristina uses her gifts to teach, lead small group studies and in a ministry of touch.

The most important thing Kristina has learned during these past years is that God is with her all the time giving her the courage and strength she needs to fol-

low where God is leading her.

—Pastor Jim

SOUP LUNCH AND BAKE SALE

The Faith Lutheran Women of the ELCA would like to invite you to a Soup Lunch and Bake Sale on Saturday, February 7th, 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. at Faith Lutheran Church, Harcourt.



Luncheon

They will be serving homemade bean, chili, and vegetable soups, pie, bars, relish, and a beverage. A freewill offering will be accepted.

ICE CREAM SUNDAY

Sunday, February 22, 3:00 p.m.-5:30 p.m., Trinity Lutheran of Boxholm will host an "ICE CREAM SUNDAY" benefit for the Groff family of Boxholm. (The Groff family were victims of a Christmas morning house fire.)

Join us, make your own sundae, and help us help the Groff family. A freewill donation will be taken with additional funds provided by Thrivent.

NEED A VISIT?

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



LEGACY



Remember and rekindle our legacy from God, our holy calling.

A Faith That Lives

I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you (2 Timothy 1:5).

How many Christians alive today have faith because of what

Parents need to fill a child's bucket of self-esteem so high that the rest of the world can't poke enough holes in it to drain it dry.
—Alvin Price

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Associate Pastor

words and ideologies, since there seems to be no real exchange of them – they are just tossed, from one side to another, like so many grenades that do their damage and leave nothing but holes as an aftermath. Thus, it is unlikely that you are ever going to hear my take on the Sexuality Study or the Lutheran-Episcopal Agreement – not because I don't care... Well, okay, maybe it IS EXACTLY because I don't care. I don't care what wars of words are being fought in the synodical or national church arenas – the battles that I care about are being fought HERE, and they have to do with friends dying, families struggling, and young people finding their way. I find that I don't have to care about who can appropriately serve or take com-

was handed down to Timothy by his mother and grandmother? That same faith was passed on through Timothy's and Paul's work and has lived for generations. Now it includes you!

This is a reminder that the faith living in us will not live on in others unless we help to pass it on. It is a legacy, a gift, an inheritance that we can invest and grow as part of a long, unbroken chain of grace and hope.

Healthy families, faithful congregations, even the smallest single acts of forgiveness contribute to the mission given to us by God.

munion at our rail, if I'm willing to let Jesus be the Host, and let Him feed anybody that He might have bled and died for. God is so much easier than theology and church politics. I try not to stand on one side or another of these ego-driven battles, but rather as close to Jesus as I possibly can in my human ignorance. And I take comfort in a prayer Jesus prayed: "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the people who are wise and smart. But you have shown them to those who are like little children."²⁶ Yes, Father, this is what you really wanted. (NCV-Matthew 11:25-26)

So I write about whatever strikes me, and hope that it's not my wife – Shirley.

—rod

MORE GOD SIGHTINGS

God Sightings is a collection of people, places and experiences that have provided people with an experience of the power of God at work in their lives. We invite members of the Cooperative to submit their *God Sightings* in order to help all of us be aware of the wonderful things God is doing in our lives.

- A son who faithfully visits his mother in the nursing home and continues to involve her in family, church and community activities.
- Three retired men doing duct work for Habitat for Humanity
- The people who volunteer to fold bulletins and newsletters each month.
- A child running and laughing in church while another is welcomed into the body of Christ.

Faith helps me see God. "Myles, God loves you and will always be with you." – Written to a 5 year old boy by a 9 year old girl.

COOKBOOK UPDATE

Due to the quick sale of our Countryside Cooperative Cookbooks, we have decided to place a one time reorder. If you or someone you know would still like a book, call Cheryl Meyer 354-5524, Cheryl Rasmussen 352-3645 or Marsha Samuelson 354-5358 and leave a message with your name, phone number and the number of books you need. We expect that the books should be here in time for the Cooperative Worship Service on February 22. Spread the word that more books are being printed.



Cooperative Phone Numbers:

Cooperative Office		352-3645
Rev. Jim Davis	Office	352-3932
	Home	352-5261
Rod Meyer	Office	846-6277
	Home	354-5224
Rev. Wahlgren	Office	352-3645
	Home	352-5245
Stephen Ministry	Office	352-3612
	Home	352-3798

Cooperative E-mail Addresses:

Cooperative Office:	ziongowr@wccta.net
Rev. Jim Davis:	elca506@wccta.net
Rod Meyer:	rodmeyer@lvcta.com
Stephen Ministry:	stephencoop@hotmail.com

Cooperative Worship Times

Calvary, Barnum	10:30 a.m.
Faith, Harcourt	9:00 a.m.
Fulton, Roelyn	9:15 a.m.
Trinity, Boxholm	10:30 a.m.
UCC/Cong., Moorland	8:00 a.m.
Zion, Gowrie	10:30 a.m.
1st and 3rd Saturdays	5:00 p.m.
FUSION Wednesday Evenings	7:30 p.m.

(at 1107 Market Street)



If you have an article or pictures that you would like to submit for the Cooperative newsletter, please send them to the Cooperative office and we will try to put them in as time and space permit.

Website Address: www.wccta.net/gallery/coop/