



# Christ The Servant Lutheran Church

## *2009 ANNUAL MINISTRY REPORT*

*Presented February 28, 2010*

*God's purpose for Christ The Servant Lutheran Church  
is to grow spiritually in Jesus Christ  
and use our hearts, hands, and gifts to serve all people.*

### *Guiding Principles*

*Jesus is the risen Lord.*

*Everything is done with prayer and Scripture.*

*Everyone is important.*

*God works through us.*

*All things are possible with God.*

*People are more important than things.*

*We are stewards of God's gifts.*

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# Ministry Persons Partial Overview

## **Staff**

Pastor .....The Rev. Dr. Peggy Ogden-Howe  
Office Administrator ..... Holly Tripp  
Accountant..... Elicia Pitman  
Childcare ..... Tracey Oberbacher  
Choir Director..... Evelyn Barthold  
Organist..... Herb Schaaake

## **Congregational Council**

Andy Waite .....President  
Don McLaughlin ..... Vice Pres/Treasurer  
Lori Shelton .....Secretary  
Delta Holl ..... Member  
Ruth Johnson ..... Member  
Scott Payne ..... Member  
Elicia Pitman, ex-officio..... Accountant  
Pastor Peggy, ex-officio.....Pastor

## **Christian Education**

Synette Payne, Heidi Thiele....Co-Christian Ed Coordinators  
Heidi Thiele .....2- and 3-year-olds  
Melanie Hensel ..... 5-to 9-year-olds  
Hannah Tarver ..... 5- to 9-year-olds  
Mary Rosenboom..... Elementary Music  
Martin Converse ..... Elementary Music  
Carlton Wendel .....Adult Forum

## **Ministry Coordinators (not a complete list)**

Altar Guild ..... Karen Boyer  
Childcare .....Heidi Thiele  
Empty Bowls..... Jill Waite  
Green Team ..... Sarah Fredericks  
Instrumental Ensemble..... John Rosenboom  
Interfaith Ministries ..... Nettie Zehms  
Lutheran Campus Ministry..... Pastor Celene Welch  
Memorials Committee ..... Rudy Menn  
Men in Ministry..... Henry Howe  
Quilters..... Yvonne Poppe  
Servant's Garden.....Monty Naylor  
Thrivent..... John Rosenboom  
Worship Leaders ..... Carolyn Kacena

# Congregational Health and Growth

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## Pastoral Report to Congregation

In the gospel of Luke, Jesus expends intense energy encouraging his disciples. In the face of all anxieties known to humanity, in saying, Jesus counsels his disciples, “Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (12:32).

We are the Father’s “little flock,” the community belonging to the Messiah. This is our joy and our privilege to be his flock. How has Jesus, the Messiah, blessed us during 2009?

In fulfilling God’s purpose statement for Christ The Servant Lutheran Church, we thank God that we fulfilled the first part of our purpose statement: “**To grow spiritually in Jesus Christ.**”

- † Worshipped weekly with two services on Sunday morning
- † Worshipped quarterly with “Service of Prayer for Healing”
- † Continued strong lay participation in worship planning and leadership
- † Received the report of the Contemporary Worship Planning Team’ research
- † Developed the New Worship Service Team which planned the “Servants’ Celebration Service” to begin in January 2010
- † Enjoyed music and fellowship at “Hanging of the Green” service first Sunday of Advent
- † Increased understanding of the Bible and discipleship through Christian education for adults, children and youth, including one inter-generational learning time
- † Adopted of “Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love” policy for managing conflict
- † Continued discipline of Christian learning for women and men in ongoing Bible study and fellowship in Kaffee Klatsch groups and Lutheran Men in Mission Saturday breakfasts
- † Participated in a second Natural Church Development survey, highlighting “Gift-based Ministry” and “Loving Relationships” as our strongest qualities, and “Passionate Spirituality” and Inspiring Worship” as our weakest qualities.
- † Displayed cross and alleluia banners, sewn by Linda Naylor
- † Discussed the feasibility of enlarging facility following report by the Long-Range Planning Team and Building Consultant for Mission Investment Fund, Hank Wellnitz
- † Sent Ariel Jennings and Sam Gaines, with sponsor Mary Jennings to the ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans
- † Endorsed of Janice Heidlberger as candidate for ordination and establishment of the Seminary and Theological Education Fund
- † Addressed the implications of the ELCA social statement, “Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust,” before and after the adoption of the statement and changes in ministry policy for rostered leaders
- † Focused on developing children and youth ministry for passing on the faith
- † Adjusted to hopeful and disappointing results in support of youth ministry
- † Voted to place American and Sunday School flags at the front of the sanctuary, amidst controversy

With energy and imagination, we fulfilled the second part of God’s purpose for this congregation: **To use our hearts, and gifts to serve all people.**”

- † Blessed by council leadership: Monty Naylor, president; Don McLaughlin, vice-president/treasurer; Donna Kulle, secretary; Lily Gholston, Michael Peterson, and Andy Waite, members.

**Pastoral Report to Congregation, cont'd.**

- † Provided childcare for Sunday and midweek services, hired Tracy Oberbacher as new childcare provider, supervised by the Childcare Coordinator, Heidi Thiele
- † Organized for CTS and the community a workshop, “Stewards of Children,” for prevention of sexual abuse of children
- † Committed the congregation to being a “Safe Haven for Children”
- † Provided Confirmation for three youth and fifty percent of funding for youth attending summer camp
- † Continued support of Lutheran Campus Ministry-Denton with hot meals on Wednesdays, leadership on the local and synod Boards; welcomed students at luncheon in August;
- † Informed congregation about caring for creation, encouraged purchased of washable plates, bowls, and stacking coffee cups; planted trees and shrubs on CTS property; participated in two events to pick up trash through the Green Team
- † Initiates “Denton Faith Communities Caring for Creation” community group
- † Improved stewardship of resources and storage in “7X7” campaign, thanks to Jill Waite and Andy Waite
- † Continued agricultural enterprise of “The Servant’s Garden,” providing fresh vegetables for “Our Daily Bread” soup kitchen; front page story in *Denton Record-Chronicle*
- † Harvested blackberries and made jam to sell for funds to help people in need
- † Established an emergency aid ministry of supplying gas and food cards
- † Organized highly successful “Empty Bowls Project,” widening support through a booth at the Denton Arts and Jazz Festival
- † Contracted for a new exterior monument sign with LED light display, installed January 2010, managed by Monty Naylor
- † Greeters trained at a “Master Greeter” workshop and scheduled for both services on Sunday
- † “Welcome Center” installed at main entrance, thanks to Henry Howe
- † Raised the most money at the golf tournament for the Nelson Center, thanks to Carolyn Kacena
- † Established a Mutual Ministry Committee, to enhance professional development of the pastor and the congregation
- † Organized Thrivent garage sale in September, thanks to Nettie Zehms
- † Initiated digital media installation and explored technological communications with digital and video recordings
- † Enjoyed many potluck and soup suppers, especially managed by Carolyn Smith
- † Distributed revised “Participation in Ministry” forms
- † Supported global artisans through the Lutheran World Relief bazaar
- † Expressed appreciation for work of public servants through “Bake Your Thanks”
- † Rejoiced at installation of a new roof over party of the main building

There have been changes in staff. In January, Evelyn Barthold assumed responsibilities as Music Director and Elecia Pitman began work as the congregational accountant. In August, Janice Heidlberger resigned as Office Administrator to begin studies for a Master of Divinity degree at Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago towards ordination, and Holly Tripp was hired.

***Pastoral Report to Congregation, cont'd.***

There have been changes in financial support as a result of the weak economy, in worship attendance following the vote to change ELCA ministry policies, and in membership, as a few moved away and a few chose to belong to CTS. At the close of 2009, CTS counted 322 members, 130 active participants, and 95 average weekly worship attendance.

My work of pastor beyond CTSLC has involved serving as a member of the Board of Directors for LSTC, president of the Denton Area Hospital Chaplaincy Board, member of the Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod Public Witness team for environmental advocacy. I meet with local clergy and promote CTSLC at Denton Chamber of Commerce events.

For twelve days in January, my spouse Henry and I participated in a “World of the Bible” learning tour to the Holy Land. I attended a conference on youth and family ministry.

At all times and in all circumstances, Jesus bids us, “Do not be afraid.” Let us keep focused on being disciples. Let us continue our following Jesus, using God’s wisdom to put ourselves and the resources God provides to the best possible service in Jesus’ name. Let us be renewed in our trust of Jesus’ promises of inaugurating his reign when he was raised from the dead and ascended into heaven. May his power and presence empower our serving with him now.

*Your servant in Christ,  
Pastor Peggy Ogden-Howe*

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## Financial Report for Christ The Servant Lutheran Church

Available on printed version.

***Financial Report to Congregation, cont'd.***





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## Memorials Committee

The Memorials Committee is comprised of Rudy Menn, Chair, Geneva Vahlenkamp, and Yvonne Poppe. The Memorial Fund is available for individuals wishing to make a contribution in memory of a loved one or to honor someone on a happy occasion. Chairs of various ministries who identify a need for congregational use may recommend those needs to the committee or the Congregation Council. Expenditures are approved by the Congregation Council. This past year a request for \$500.00 was requested for purchase of dishes for the church. This request was approved by the committee and church council. Other expenditures consisted of purchasing supplies for the quilters, which is taken from designated funds especially for the quilting for Lutheran World Relief. Our hearts and prayers go out to all those who lost loved ones this past year. Acknowledgements and thank you notes are sent to those who contribute to the fund and to the families who have lost a loved one, or in honor of a special occasion.

*Yvonne Poppe*

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## Office Administrator

My first five months at Christ The Servant Lutheran Church have flown by and I am excited at the prospect of months to come. Since my arrival at this church in August, everyone has made me feel welcome and has been quick to assist - and I thank each of you for that!

Through learning the processes of the job, there have been a few changes. The Web site has been updated with a new Events Calendar on the home page to make information about the many events here at CTS more accessible.

Small changes to the format of the bulletin and inserts make it easier for people to worship and to know about upcoming events, volunteer opportunities and needs.

In October, we upgraded the internet and phone service to Verizon FIOS, giving CTS the fastest and most reliable internet and phone service available, which all helps the office run smoother.

CTS continues to pursue new ways to make our presence known in Denton, and I look forward to expanding on the social networks and online opportunities to make the life of the church present to the Denton area.

I continue to be assisted in the bulletin production by Dean and Tracey Dahlin and Terri Glasner. Their willingness to fold and staple bulletins each week is very much appreciated.

I know that 2010 will hold many exciting things and I look forward to the new year with you all.

*Holly Tripp, Office Administrator*

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## Seminarian

During the winter and spring of 2007-2008, I felt that God might be calling me into a public role in the life and ministry of the Church. By the summer of 2008, I began to discern this vocational call for ordained ministry in the ELCA and learned about the process of following that call. The next year was filled: I wrote autobiographical essays and faith statements. I completed a psychological and academic evaluation. I applied for scholarships. I applied for seminary! I asked all of the members of Christ The Servant Lutheran Church to provide congregational prayers and support, and I met with members of the NT-NL Synod Candidacy Committee.

In the spring of 2009, I was endorsed for financial support by the Seminary and Theological Education Fund of CTS, and I worked to raise funds from family, friends, and colleagues. And in May 2009, the NT-NL Synod granted me positive entrance into Candidacy for ordained ministry in the ELCA. So, on a teary-eyed, August 21, 2009, I resigned from my position as Office Administrator at CTS, leaving a job and people I who were dear to me.

I followed God's call on a journey to Chicago, Illinois, to temporarily settle in for two years, undertaking intensely academic seminary studies at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, and fulfilling candidacy requirements such as spiritual direction, growth in faith among peer seminarians, leadership development, clinical pastoral education, and ministry in context. Although my first semester of seminary was a difficult time of transition and rigorous academic studies, it was filled with marvelous experiences of new cultures, new insights into scripture, new people and places, a new language (biblical Greek!) and a new way of living ecologically, without cars and without a toaster!

So, as I hone my skills of toasting bread via gas stove, frying pan and olive oil, I am reminded of the words of Christ the Lamb of God who speaks the good news, "See, I am making all things new" (Revelations 21:5). In our daily baptism of renewal into Christ through whom all things are created, we are free to love and serve the neighbor in all of God's creation, even to the point of toasting bread in a new way that might be less energy-consuming and carbon-producing.

Looking forward to my second semester of seminary at LSTC, I am filled with the hope of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, proclaimed to all of creation: "See, the home of God is among mortals" (Revelations 21:3). Emmanuel, God with us!

*Janice Heidelberger, Seminarian at Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago*

## *Worship and Music Ministries*

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### Altar Guild

The Altar Guild assisted in preparing the sanctuary for seasons of year as well as special services such as: baptisms, healing services, etc.

Several additional members joined the group giving us a larger number of people to assist in the preparation of our worship services.

Linda Naylor donated a beautiful new banner which she created herself.

Carolyn Kacena is now handling the scheduling in order to avoid confusion.

We are a dedicated group enjoying our service in making the worship service as meaningful as possible.

We look forward to our service in 2010.

*Karen Boyer*

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## Music Ministry

The choir sang faithfully for many of the services at 11:00 and on several festival days for the 8:30 service as well. On November 29, the choir led the church's first Hanging of the Green service by singing *The Holly & the Ivy*, a cantata which celebrates the beginning of Advent. On December 20, several choir members joined other church members to carol joyously for six of our homebound members. On Christmas Eve, the Instrumental Ensemble played the prelude for the 5:00 service and joined in with the organ on several of the carols during the service. The weather told us to celebrate the Christmas Eve 11:00 service on Sunday the 27th instead. So the beautiful pre-service concert began at 10:30 AM, and the lessons from Luke with associated carols was followed by a lovely candlelight service in the daylight. Throughout the year, many talented soloists and instrumentalists have shared their music at the 8:30 service and have enhanced other services as well. We at Christ the Servant are richly blessed with musicians and always welcome more.

*Evelyn Barthold, Director of Music*

## *Bible Study and Fellowship Ministries*

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### Christian Education: Children

The 2 to 3-year-old Sunday School has 3 kids. An average of two are there each week. We color, glue, play play-dough, read bible stories, and practice repeat prayers. The 5 to 9-year-old class is taught by Melanie Hensel and Hannah Tarver. All the kids sing before each Sunday School class with Mary Rosenboom and Martin Converse. They put on a Christmas pageant at the end of the year. The kids enjoyed the music and the skit.

We are using the Spark Bibles and Spark Sunday School Lectionary Curriculums for both of these classes.

*Heidi Thiele*

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### Lutheran Men in Mission

The Christ The Servant Lutheran Men in Mission group consists of all of the men of the congregation. The goal of Servant Men is to provide a focus for men's ministries, Bible study, service, and fellowship. During the past year the men sponsored a noontime prayer service during Lent. This developed into a noontime Bible study based on the text for the coming Sunday and the whole congregation was invited to participate. The service projects focused on building and grounds maintenance and other individual helped offered by the men.

Men's ministry includes all of the acts performed by the men of the congregation for the glory of God. These range from the men who play instruments during the worship services, the men who usher, those teaching Bible studies, working in the Servant Garden, serving on the Council and other boards of the church, assisting with the Empty Bowls, working at the garage sale, sharing the monthly men's breakfast, being the role model for their children by attending church with them. The list could go on. Every thing that a man of the congregation does to support the ministry of the congregation is a man's ministry.

*Henry Howe*

## *Community Service and Social Ministries*

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### Briarwood Retreat Center

Briarwood Retreat Center is the outdoor retreat and camping center of the Northern Texas – Northern Louisiana Synod (the synod to which Christ The Servant belongs). The Center, set on over 70 acres of wooded land, is less than 20 miles from the church and provides an ideal setting for the summer camping program. Summer camps are open for youth who have completed grade 2 through 12 and for college students as well. Special retreats are offered during the year for elementary youth, Confirmation students, parents, care givers, and senior citizens. More information is available on the Briarwood web site at [www.briarwoodretreat.org](http://www.briarwoodretreat.org). Contact Henry Howe if you would like to arrange a personal escorted tour of the Retreat Center. He would be delighted to take you.

*Henry Howe*

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### Green Team

In 2009 the Green Team worked to clarify our vision and undertake feasible projects with a significant benefit to creation. In our effort, we are guided by our guiding principles: 1) honor God as Creator of all, 2) seek God's wisdom in prayer and Scripture, 3) be responsible stewards of energy resources, 4) develop community by including others, 5) nurture sustainable ecosystems.

In the spring we had monthly challenges to the congregation on the topics of water conservation, energy conservation, and carpooling, among other topics. We also planted four crepe myrtles (donated by Debbie Taboada and Don McLaughlin) along the East side of the parking lot. Special thanks to Don McLaughlin for his dedicated watering of these plants and trees planted in 2008. We also appreciate Monty Naylor's continued work on water conservation in the Servant's Garden.

During the summer we reflected upon the strengths of each member of our group and rededicated ourselves to 1) using these God-given talents effectively and 2) to prioritizing concrete projects over merely giving out information. To this end, we have participated in a stream cleanup sponsored by Keep Denton Beautiful and planned an epiphany light bulb exchange to occur on Sunday January 24th. A significant amount of our time in the fall was spent helping to form the new group Denton Faith Communities Caring for Creation. This group, spearheaded by Pastor Peggy, is a new interfaith group dedicated to caring for creation.

This fall Jim Nuber began planning a field trip to Hagerman Wildlife Refuge, hopefully to occur this spring. In 2010 we also plan to have a free energy audit of the church done and will use this information to strategize about concrete future tasks. Additional goals for the future also include participating in a highway cleanup and planting some more flowers, possibly wildflowers, at the church. On these and other projects, we appreciate Nancy Blumel's organizational efforts. As a relatively small group, we also hope to reach out to members of the congregation for help on particular projects. Please let us know if you would like to join our group or partner with us on a project!

*Sarah Fredericks, Green Team Leader*

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## Interfaith Ministries - Apple Tree Project

The 2009 Interfaith Ministries Back to School Project was very successful. We helped more than 1,000 students this year.

I had ten workers who helped sort and put clothes in backpacks, and we put in 185 hours. There was 100 Churches and organizations involved in this project.

Thank you to each and everyone of you who took apples and made donations to the Apple Tree Program, Vern and I thank you. Your kindness and generosity help make this much needed program in Denton a great success.

*Nettie Zehms*

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## Quilters for Lutheran World Relief

The quilters have had another busy year. On April 16, 2009, we boxed 175 quilts and took them to Bethel Lutheran Church, Dallas. Our thanks to Vern Zehms and Fritz Poppe for helping box the quilts and weigh them (741 lbs) and take them to Dallas. There they are loaded on a semi-truck and taken to the Lutheran World Relief distribution center. We have been informed that the need is very great for these quilts especially now because of the earthquake in Haiti. Several quilts were also given to Denton County Friends of the Family. What a worthwhile project this is.

Now my plea for more help! We have lots of fabric, from generous donors and we have 5 new sewing machines, lots of scissors, thread, and pins just waiting to be used!

Several of our very faithful helpers have experienced health problems this past year and we miss them very much. The 2nd and 4th week of each month, on Monday and Tuesday from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm is when we meet to work. Several of us also work on them at home and then bring to church for finishing. Since this project was started at CTS in 1985, 3,768 quilts have been made and sent to needy recipients.

*Yvonne Poppe*

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## Servant's Garden

Started in the fall of 2004 "The Servant's Garden" has just completed its fifth full year in 2009.

The mission of the CTS garden is to be good stewards of our resources and use the fresh vegetables from the garden to feed the needy and hungry.

This past year we delivered 2101 lbs of fresh produce to Denton's "Our Daily Bread" and "Salvation Army" kitchens. In addition, the blackberries that were harvested were turned into 150 jars of jam. The sale of jam raised \$750.00 for the "People In Need" fund. This fund supplies Quick Trip gasoline cards and Sonic food vouchers to those in need.

Since the beginning of the Servant's Garden we have donated over 5900 lbs. of fresh produce and the sale of blackberry jam is funding food and gasoline vouchers.

The Servant's Garden incorporates sustainable gardening practices. No toxic chemicals are used for pest control.

If you are interested in working in the garden please call Monty Naylor at 940-368-8034 or E-mail [montynay@gmail.com](mailto:montynay@gmail.com).

*Monty Naylor*

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## Thrivent Garage Sale

The Thrivent Garage Sale was held in September of 2009. It was not as successful as in years past but we still made enough money to buy a video camera for the church, some shelves for storage, donate \$500 to fund the contemporary service, and donate monies to Interfaith, Apple Tree, Hope, Friends of the Family, and our church's family fund (for members in need of financial help). This coming year we will see changes in the Care in Congregations and Care in Communities funding and in the congregational coordinators' duties. I do not have all of the details about these changes yet. When I know more, I will let the congregation know.

*John Rosenboom*