

Celebrating

the Missions and Ministries

of Our Saviour's Lutheran Church



This month's highlight:

Social Ministry

Refections on Bethel Christmas Giving

by Dick and Linda Rosholt

When our family first started in the Bethel Christmas Family Sharing ministry in the 1980s, our daughter was young and helped us shop for gifts for the kids closest to her own age. Each year thereafter we tried to choose a family with at least one child near her age. The shopping was always our favorite part of this ministry and a great way to start off the holiday season in the true Christmas spirit. The shopping, wrapping, and packing of all the gifts in boxes and taking them to Our Saviour's for delivery to Bethel has become a holiday tradition in the Rosholt family. Our Saviour's has a long tradition and commitment in dollars and service to reach out and make a difference in the lives of others. As a Lutheran community, we believe we are saved by God's grace and responding to that grace with generosity is a big part of being a disciple of Christ.

Last year, 185 Bethel families were recipients of this faith relationship with families from Our Saviour's. While you don't ever meet your Bethel family, or get to see their faces on Christmas morning, you still can feel the spiritual connection and how much this relationship means to the Bethel families and to your family as well. What you may not know is that some of the families do write thank you notes and here is a small sampling of the connection:

"My family and I are greatly blessed thru the open arms and hearts that God has used his angel – 'you' – to so carefully and caringly sow seeds of love. May God continue to bless you to care for others." – Single parent of two children

*"The joy that was brought into my son's eyes on Christmas morning by your wonderful contributions is the type of kindness that should be extended year around. Your gifts make me think of the old African proverb – it takes a whole village to raise a child."
–Single parent with one child*

"You all are truly heaven sent and God will bless you for not only helping a family that was less fortunate, but for also having a HEART!" – Single parent of four children

"I just want to say thank you...those Christmas gifts were truly a blessing. I've never seen anything like it in my life. We had so much stuff that we blessed other people with some of our gifts." – Single parent of two children

"I didn't have a dime to even purchase gifts for my children. God saw fit to supply all our needs...I hope one day I will be able to be one of the people who adopts a family as well." – Single parent of three children

When we believe we are saved by God's grace, we are compelled to respond to Him by growing in faith and giving all that we can in thanks for that love. Both Our Saviour's and Bethel families grow in faith and in our relationship to Jesus through this ministry. Our family invites yours to join in the Bethel Christmas Family Sharing ministry this year. It's a great way to start your holiday!

Opportunities in Social Ministry at OSLC

Public Action to Deliver Shelter (PADS) – PADS is the largest Social Ministry program at OSLC. We have hosted a shelter for the homeless in our building since 1990, every Saturday night from October through April. OSLC is one of 18 congregations in the northwest suburbs that host a site one night per week. In addition to providing a safe, warm place to sleep, the PADS program offers a hot dinner and breakfast, plus a sack lunch for our guests. It is not uncommon for us to house 40 or more guests per night. To do so, we need approximately 30 volunteers per night to staff three shifts, prepare and serve meals, and clean the building for Sunday School and worship. To volunteer, you must be 16 or older and receive training. For more information, contact Dave Petersen at 847-577-0248.

One-on-One Relational Conversations – To strengthen our congregation and enhance our relationships among parishioners, OSLC will engage in an intentional listening ministry during January through March, 2009. Other congregations that have undertaken this program have found fresh ideas, raised common concerns, and identified new leaders. We are looking for a cross-section of 30 people who are willing to be trained in specific listening skills, and over a hundred people who are willing to be interviewed. Interviewers will compile what they've heard and report to the congregation. Interviewer training will be Saturday morning, January 10. Confidentiality will be respected. If you are willing to become a trained interviewer or are willing to participate in a one-hour interview, contact Pastor Rippert at srippert@oursaviours.org or 847-255-8700.

Habitat for Humanity – Come join us as we build a new home for a family in need! Along with other partners, OSLC provides volunteers and funding to build homes in the Elgin area. Working alongside the recipient family, Habitat volunteers provide the sweat equity that turns that family's dream of an affordable home into reality. You don't need to be a skilled tradesperson to contribute (although those with advanced skills are welcomed, too!). Volunteers 16 and older can hang drywall, lay tile, paint, and do a variety of other jobs. Our point person for Habitat is Roger Mattson at 847-845-1340.

United Power for Action and Justice (UPAJ) – UPAJ is a broad, faith-based coalition of congregations and community groups in the Chicago area who advocate on behalf of social justice issues in Illinois. Affordable health care is one of their main current topics of interest. OSLC's contacts are Carol Anagnostopoulos at 847-398-2329 and Chuck Hug at 847-577-6596.

Love-in-Action – Periodically throughout the calendar year, OSLC collects goods to support people in need. This includes food for local pantries, clothing items (socks, underwear, etc.) and toiletries for PADS, school supplies for Lutheran Social Services of Illinois, and snacks and other items for our troops serving overseas. Watch for Love-in-Action bags distributed after worship.

For more information on OSLC's extensive Social Ministry programs and to get involved, contact Ken Westlake at 847-394-0810 or Pastor Rippert.

Over the years, the people of Our Saviour's have supported

Social Ministry

through the annual budget (including staff leader salaries) as follows:

2005	2006	2007	2008	2009*
\$83,382	\$95,513	\$97,956	\$98,400	\$105,000
5.63% of actual	6.37% of actual	6.11% of actual	6.00% of budget	6.02% of budget
				*proposed