



HCC Connections

...to inspire people with love for truth, passion for righteousness, and enthusiasm for service.

February 2010



Special points of interest:

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- Christmas Giving Thanks - p5
- Food Bank News - p6
- 2010 Stewardship Campaign report - p11

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Cabaret and Dinner Set for February 6th

To get the year started right, Judy Connelly, along with other friends of HCC, are spicing up the **annual Cabaret!**

On Saturday, February 6th, the party will begin at 4:30pm with a spaghetti dinner and dessert buffet all for just \$5 per person or \$20 per family. We'll conduct a raffle ticket "auction", too, for which we've already received many wonderful items. All proceeds from the evening will go into a special fund to help pay for long-term repair and maintenance projects at our church.



The highlight of our time together, of course, will be the many offerings of entertainment, musical and otherwise, provided by our adult choir and other individual members and friends of our congregation. The choir's efforts will feature various Broadway tunes and who knows what other varie-

ties of performance will swing the rest of the celebration along?!! As you know if you've been to one of these Cabarets before, it won't be a surprise if you're surprised! Tickets to this must-be-there fun time will go on sale after worship on Sunday morning, January 31st. They'll also be available at the Cabaret. See you there!

Haiti Earthquake Relief

In worship on Sunday, January 10th, we began receiving a special offering in response to an emergency appeal from our United Church of Christ to help the thousands of people devastated by the recent earthquake in Haiti. The money will go to assist the relief and recovery work being done by our Global Ministries and Church World Service partners who already had been in place in ministry with and to the Haitian people. **We'll continue to receive that offering in worship through Sunday, February 6th. We also invite any of our members and friends to send contributions to it by mail. Checks can be made out to Haslett Community Church with a note to "Haiti Relief" on the memo line.**

Mid-week Lenten Services

For the first half of February we'll continue in the season of Epiphany during which we especially celebrate the light of God shining in and through the life of Jesus. On **February 17th**, however, the Lenten season will begin with our observance of **Ash Wednesday**. Lent is a time of particular emphasis on our need for honest self-examination that allows us to turn once more to God for the gift of forgiveness. In that forgiveness we receive renewed energy for the love of God, our neighbors, and ourselves that's at the heart of our Christian

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Pastor's Corner

Turning to God Parties

(Twenty-second in a series on connecting with God in the ordinary)

Recently in our January worship on the second Sunday after Epiphany we reflected on St. John's story of Jesus at a big wedding party at Cana. This month on February 6th, just before the fifth Sunday after Epiphany and not long before the start of Lent, we'll celebrate another of our church's cabarets, thanks to the inspiration and leadership of Judy, Barbara, our adult choir, and other members and friends of our church who are happy to step up and play or belt out a tune or two for our entertainment. These February cabarets have become our own nod toward the Mardi Gras of our Christian tradition, a festival that calls on us to eat, drink, and be merry, not because tomorrow we die, but because as Christians we always have the best reason to celebrate. Jesus partied and we party because we have joy- the deepest and truest joy that comes in our connection with God.

The party tradition of our faith goes way back into the Old Testament. Check out the book of Deuteronomy, chapter 22, verses 22 to 29. In laying out for the people of Israel the regulations for their tithe offering,

Moses makes clear how it's supposed to be used. He says, "In the presence of the Lord your God, in the place that he will choose as a dwelling for his name, you shall eat the tithe of your grain, your wine, and your oil, as well as the firstlings of your herd and flock . . . But if, when the Lord your God has blessed you, the distance is so great that you are unable to transport it . . . then you may turn it into money. With the money secure in hand, go to the place that the Lord your God will choose; spend the money for whatever you wish- oxen, sheep, wine, strong drink, or whatever you desire. And you shall eat there in the presence of the Lord your God, you and your household rejoicing together" (verses 23-26).

Moses then makes sure it's understood that the tithe is meant to provide party provisions for everyone. Verses 27-29 say, "Every third year you shall bring out the full tithe of your produce for that year, and store it within your towns; the Levites because they have no allotment or inheritance with you, as well as the resident aliens, the orphans, and the widows in your towns, may come and eat their fill so that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work you undertake."

Party, party, party our faith says because in the joyous and lighthearted sharing of fun, food, drink, music, dancing, laughter, and companionship we remember the kind of God we have and the kind of future our God has in store for us.

Party in worship, party at Jesus' table, party with cabarets, with game nights, on ski, camping, and mission trips, at chicken barbecues, around Thanksgiving tables, and in each other's homes, because partying gives us a foretaste of what God has waiting for us in the final coming of the Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Back on the second Sunday after Epiphany in remembering Jesus' celebration with the wedding party at Cana we recalled that in our Scriptures the wedding feast is the primary image of God's salvation. A marriage banquet is the picture of what our redemption in God's kingdom is meant to look like.

The Kingdom, of course, is not yet here in its fullness. The horrors of the earthquake in Haiti are only one of the most recent reminders that until it is, unjust suffering, pain, and death remain deep in the fabric of our world and give us constant reason to mourn and weep. We remember, too, that Jesus himself was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," a man who knew and suffered even more sharply than we do the jagged edges of this world in which God's reign is not yet complete.

But Jesus knew, too, that it wouldn't always be this way. Later in John's gospel he says, "When a woman is in labor, she has pain, because her hour has come. But when her child is born, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy of having brought a child into the world. So you have pain now;

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but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you" (16:21-22).

All of creation is caught up in the labor pains God has in bringing to birth the new heaven and earth that God has promised. In the midst of this suffering, shared by every creature, our joy as Christians remains because through our acts of love we help to bring the birth along. Our joy remains because we keep anticipating the great and final joy that will

be ours when the baby at last is born.

Therefore, as Jesus partied, we party. We celebrate the Kingdom love in which we have the joy of helping the birth along. We celebrate the ever-loving God who assures us that this sweet Kingdom baby of the new heaven and earth will at last be born. When it is, all creation will rejoice in joy that will last forever. So amen and party on!



Lenten | Cont. from page 1

life. The mid-week Lenten services we'll offer beginning on Ash Wednesday are meant to lead and strengthen us in that practice.

On Ash Wednesday, the 17th, those services will be at **7am & 6:30pm**. Those will be identical services of about 25 minutes long and will feature the traditional imposition of ashes for those who choose to receive it. Then on **Wednesday, February 24th and most Wednesdays in the following month, March 3rd, 10th, 17th, and 24th** we'll offer services at **6pm** that will consist of **simple prayers, brief Scripture readings and reflections, and musical meditations**. Those services will be about 20 minutes long and will be **followed each week by a soup supper provided by this year's high school Youth Mission Trippers and their families**. The free will offering taken at the suppers will go to support this year's trip. We urge everyone to come and join in these additional opportunities for worship and fellowship in very special time of our church year.

Social Calendar

**Adult Game Night/
Euchre Tournament**

**February 27th at 7 p.m.
at the Church**

Join us for an evening of fun with our first Euchre Tournament! No need for a partner because it's every person for themselves in this fast pace competition! Don't know how to play or feel that your skills are rusty? Not to worry - there will be a beginner division so all can learn and play! There will be prizes for winners and for the biggest losers! All we ask of you is to bring a treat to share and be ready for an evening of fun! Sign up on the Social Committee board in the Friendship Hall.

Upcoming Social Dates

**May 8th - Women and Girls
Brunch**

**August 6 - 8th - Camping
Weekend**

Laity Sunday

On February 14th we'll celebrate this year's **Laity Sunday**.

Through the initiative of our Spiritual Life Committee, our entire worship service that day will be led by lay members of our congregation. As Protestant Christians, emphasis on the gifts and ministry of lay people in the life of the church has always been a central part of our heritage. We've recognized from the beginning that all Christians, both lay and clergy, are indispensable members of the body of Christ and that the sharing of each of our gifts for ministry is necessary to the health and vitality of the church as a whole. The gifts shared by our lay leaders on February 14th will honor that fact. Even more importantly, they will help us once again to worship God.





This column is left blank intentionally to protect the privacy of our members.

CROP Walk 2009 Record Setting HCC Generosity!! Burrus breakfast planned...

Wow! We had a great ending for last year's CROP Walk. With the final tally in we've learned that Haslett Community Church walkers and their sponsors gave \$10,718, a 14 percent increase over 2008. This reflects the efforts and dedication of many people to the "Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty" (CROP) program. Hundreds of people from around the Lansing area participated in the Walk and thousands contributed to making it a success. HCC walkers, with your help, solicited after church, knocked on doors and even used the internet for pledges.

A number of HCC people deserve special thanks again



this year for their help in making this event happen—Bob Purosky, Mary Trebilcock and Richard Ledebuhr provide leadership in the Lansing area. A number of others were there to provide refreshments during and after the Walk. The following people took pledge envelopes: Amy Baumgartner, Becky Leefers, Becky Harris, Bill Burrus, Bob Purosky, Chris & Paula Fry, Claude McKenzie, Fred Schmidt, Gary Gulliver, Graham Riley, Jill Meyers, John Trebilcock, Julia Purosky, Julie Fedewa, Kathy Swearingen, Kurt Kirchoff, Larry Leefers, Lynn Khadija, Mary Trebilcock, Michele Booher, Rachel Linnemann, Ruth Linnemann, Sophia Kirchoff, Tara Mahon and Tom Nelson. And scores of HCC folks made donations. Please offer a prayer of thanksgiving for them.

We also thank Bill Burrus for promising to prepare a nice breakfast for church members if we reached the lofty \$10,000 goal...we did, and he will after his return from Arizona! More details upon his return. So maybe the Cubs will win the pennant for him this year. Again thanks to everyone for the gifts you shared. The power of one, plus one, plus one . . .

Larry Leefers and Brother Bill Burrus

TONS OF GRATITUDE

Thank you, thank you, thank you for everyone's contributions to the Christmas Giving Project. It is hard to adequately describe the experience and appropriately name individual contributors. Join us in this "ABC" recounting of our collective endeavor, a blessing for all involved.

A-appreciation for everyone involved

B-Bibles provided to each family via the Gideons, coordinated by George Swanson

C-countless hours put in by core team members Nancy & Paul White, Sylvia Davis, Ruth Linnemann, Betsy McLernon, and Mary Nelson

D-donations of cash and gifts from the congregation, and community individuals, organizations, churches, and businesses

E-energy of everyone working together

F-food drives from multiple Haslett and Okemos schools, scouts, churches

G-gifts for 192 children and their parents - purchased & wrapped, over 1100 items total

H-ham or turkeys plus Christmas dinner ingredients and a week's worth of groceries for 75 families

I-interviews to determine the gifts needed done by

Kathy Campbell, Phyllis Eckenrode, Deb Eggleston, Paula Fry, Ruth Linnemann, Jill Meyers, Mary Nelson, Betty Robinson, Suzanne Rock, and Mary Trebilcock

J-just the right stocking stuffers, perfectly matched to age and gender of each child by Kelly Flagg with the help of a stuffing crew, contributors, and middle school youth

K-kitchen crew who assemble perishables led by Wendy Johnson

L-lots of flea market donations well organized by fast working volunteers guided by Mary & John Trebilcock

M-many tasty cookies baked for the volunteer crews to munch and enjoy

N-nothing left undone as the building returned to order for worship services

O-open arms of the greeters and distribution crew who helped recipients feel welcome

P-people who packed, moved, and loaded food and gifts with a willing spirit



Q-quiet, behind the scenes work for hours to sort food drive donations by Fred Schrepfer, Tom Nelson and crew

R-recycling several truck loads of cardboard left from the hundreds of boxes managed by Chip Frenz & Richard Ledebuhr

S-shrewd shoppers Sylvia Davis, Mary Ann Dillingham, Ruth L., Chris McKimmon, Mary N. and Mary T. who searched for sales and hard to find gifts.

T-tons of food acquired and hauled to and from the basement under the direction of Nancy & Paul White

U-underwear and socks provided for almost every one of the 192 children

V-volunteers by the dozens, over 100 different people, many for multiple roles and hours

W-wrapping of gifts done by individuals, a Saturday crew organized by Pam Artuso

X-an x-traordinary project we all accomplished together to spread Christmas to people in need

Y- youth group members who shopped and wrapped gifts

Z-zest and enthusiasm from all involved that made it possible to accomplish everything!

Food Bank News

Thank you to every-one who donated their time, food and/or money to the Haslett Food Bank in 2009. We could not have done it without you. 213 different families were served food and personal need orders during the year for a total of 631 visits. In addition Christian Services made over 80 referrals for personal need orders. 76 families were part of the Christmas Giving project. Only 18 of those families made a visit to the food bank during the year.

We receive a great deal of support from local churches and organizations as well as 100's of individuals who donate. Here is a list of some of the organizations who supported the food bank in 2009:

- Haslett Boy Scouts
- Haslett Girl Scouts
- CROP Walk
- Haslett Public Schools
- Okemos Public Schools
- St. Luke Lutheran Church
- St. Martha's Catholic Church
- Red Cedar Evangelical Church
- Christ the King Anglican Church
- Chapel Hill United Methodist Church
- Okemos Presbyterian Church
- Haslett-Okemos Rotary Club

- Order of the Eastern Star Chapter #267
- American Legion Auxiliary Unit 269
- Sons of American Legion Unit 269
- Society of St. Vincent De Paul/St. Thomas Aquinas Church
- Capital Area United Way-designated donation
- Haslett and Okemos Public Libraries
- Parkwood YMCA
- Haslett & Okemos L&L Stores
- Okemos Meijer's Store - Simply Give and Community Rewards
- Kroger Rewards
- Capital Region Community Foundation - grant
- Michigan Conference United Church of Christ - grant
- R.E.Olds Chapter of the Oldsmobile Club of America
- Meridian Senior Center

We are fortunate to live in a community that supports us in so many ways. We also frequently receive words of gratitude that our congregation has been willing to provide the space and everything required to provide a food bank for our community.

Happy New Year

Betsy McLernon

CULVER'S NIGHT OUT BENEFITS FOOD BANK

... for I was hungry and you gave me food....Matt. 25:35

Invite your family, friends and neighbors to Culver's at 5140 Times Square Place in Okemos and make a donation to our Haslett Community Food Pantry. Culver's offers "benefit nights" where they donate 10% of sales from 4 pm to closing to a requesting charity. Via the Mission Outreach committee, we have requested that **the third Monday of each month benefit Haslett Community Food Pantry**. So, bring a gaggle of hungry people to Culver's on the third Monday of each month, beginning February 15th, and "feed the hungry". That's the third Monday of each month. Ways to remember... three wise men, three blind mice, three strikes, the Trinity three-in-one, three outs, square root of nine is three, three wishes, whatever works for you. Better yet, put it on your calendar right now! Here are the dates: **2/15, 3/15, 4/19, 5/17, 6/21, 7/19, 8/16, 9/20, 10/18, 11/15, 12/20.**

Everyone enjoys a night out now and then. This way you can not only support our food bank but support a business that wants to give back to the community. Hope to see you Monday, February 15th, at Culver's. That's the **THIRD Monday of each month**. See you there!

Spiritual Life

Opportunities for Adults

The adults of the congregation are invited to join in these many activities sponsored by the Spiritual Life Committee. You are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities for personal and spiritual growth.

The Spiritual Life Committee members are Becky Leefers, Michele Booher, and Don Ricks. Please contact any of us with questions about these programs and events.

New Programs This Year

Wisdom Heart is a 10 week class to teach you how to have less stress and more enjoyment in your day to day life by helping you to live your life lined up with your deepest values.

The next class will be held on Tuesdays, starting February 9th from 5:30-7:00 PM in the HCC sanctuary. The class will be free to regular attenders and contributors to HCC. While people from the larger community are also welcome to register and will have the opportunity to make donations to HCC in response to this wisdom heart offering. To register see the Social committee bulletin board, email wisdomheartlife@yahoo.com, or call Lisa Davidson 749-4075.

Bible Study: The UCC Bible study based on the Book of Acts will be used for these sessions, meeting after worship (11:00am) on **February 7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th**. Kim Huston is the organizer of the

group and she can be contacted at kimahuston@gmail.com or 339-2610 (before 3:00pm or after 7:00pm).

Religion and Science: Based on a DVD that considers the question of whether we must reject belief in God to accept the findings of science, this group will begin meeting on Sunday, **February 21st**, 6:00 – 7:30pm. Further meetings will be held in March and April. Questions can be addressed to the facilitator of the group, Jim Linne-
mann, at 339-6138.

The Power of Forgiveness: Based on a DVD that considers the psychological and physical effects of forgiveness, this group will meet on Sunday evenings, 6:00 – 7:30, beginning in April. Questions can be addressed to the facilitator of the group, Joyce Bischoff, 339-9935.

Sermon Discussion

Continuing on **Sunday, February 28th**, Kurt Kirchoff will lead a discussion of the previous weeks' sermons. This once-a-month discussion will occur in the Sanctuary after worship. Questions can be addressed to Kurt at 339-8383.

Men's Group

The Men's Group has been meeting for breakfasts, book discussions, barbeques, and a fishing trip up north. Dave Vitti has an email list of all those interested in the Men's Group. Contact him at 339-5731 or vitti@msu.edu to be included on this email list or to ask questions.

Spiritual Development: Practicing our Faith

This group will continue meeting on **February 21st**, after worship. Don Ricks is leading us in a discussion of the book, *Winning with People*, by John Maxwell. The discussion will continue on the chapter *The Boomerang Principle: When We Help Others, We Help Ourselves* (p. 230-238) and a new chapter *The Learning Principle: Each Person We Meet Has the Potential to Teach Us Something* (p. 78-87). Another aspect of the discussion will be centered on our observations of people living their faith. Questions can be addressed to Becky Leefers at 337-0560.

PeaceCircle

PeaceCircle was begun as a way to get to know our neighbors, especially those from different religious and ethnic backgrounds. The premise is that by beginning peace gestures on our local scale, the ripples can be felt globally. Already, those coming to PeaceCircle have met many new friends and have learned much about other religions. World Peace is an awesome goal and PeaceCircle is reaching towards that. Information about future meetings will be in the Sunday announcements. Please contact Joyce Bischoff at 339-9935 or Becky Leefers at 337-0560 with any questions.

Retreat

The Spiritual Life Committee has begun discussing having an adult retreat – a time for adults from the church family to get away from the daily routine and to focus on our spiritual journeys. Let us know what you think about this idea!



Thanks to these individuals who have recently served the church in special ways:

Commendations to...

- To our **Social Committee** for all its great work again in putting together a terrific ski weekend.
- To our outgoing Council members for their special service on our church's governing body: **Tim Hiller**, Moderator, **Paul White**, Financial Stewardship, **Bill Burrus**, Youth Ministry Team, **Joyce Bischoff**, Spiritual Life, **Janeile Cannon**, Church and Society, and **Mary Anne Dillingham**, At-Large Member.
- To our outgoing Financial Stewardship committee chairman, **Dave Vietti**, for his long and dedicated service in that position.
- To **Hugh Sloane** for the donation of his painting of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, which now graces the walls of our Church School wing.
- To **Paul, Dave and Chris Frye, Claude McKenzie and Dick Ledebuhr** for the fall clean up.
- To **Pat Dalton** for the removal of the Christmas wreaths.
- To **Ruth Linnemann** for overseeing the Christmas giving project.
- To **Dick Ledebuhr and John**, our custodian, for taking down the Christmas tree.
- To the **high school youth** for taking down the Christmas ornaments.
- To the **choir** for the Appalachian Christmas Cantata.



**Members
in
Ministry**

The following tasks need volunteers for this month. Can you help fill in the blanks?

FEBRUARY 2nd

Women's Coffee hosts (2):

FEBRUARY 7th

READER:

USHERS:

GREETERS: Jill Meyers
Peggy Garver

COFFEE HOSTS:

FEBRUARY 14th

READER:

USHERS:

GREETERS:

COFFEE HOSTS:

FEBRUARY 21st

READER: Kaye Gardner

USHERS:

GREETERS:

COFFEE HOSTS:

FEBRUARY 28th

READER: Cheryl Edwards

USHERS:

GREETERS:

COFFEE HOSTS:



YOUTH News & Events

One of my new year's resolutions was to spend more time reading, both fun novels but also devotionals. I started with one of my favorite authors, Sarah Arthur, who wrote a devotional for coffee lovers like myself called, "The One Year Daily Grind." In the beginning she talks about how for coffee lovers like me, it is so difficult to get through a day without coffee and yet it can be so easy to get through a day without cracking open a Bible or taking the time to sit in prayer.

This morning's devotional reading seemed especially relevant to this season of Lent that we are about to enter into. Sarah admitted that when she was younger she really struggled with going to church. "It was tough to get up early on Sundays... Sitting there nearly comatose in the sanctuary, exhausted and numb. I couldn't exactly muster a worshipful attitude. It just didn't seem right or even honest to praise God when I didn't feel like it."

But one day, her college roommate said something to her that has stuck with her for many years, "Well maybe that's why the Bible talks about bringing the sacrifice of praise (Hebrews 13:15). Because **it costs us**. It doesn't come easily. We don't (always) want to do it, but we do it anyway as a kind of offering."

Since then Sarah's attitude towards worship has changed. On mornings when it is difficult to get up, she remembers her friend's words, "My feelings don't change the fact that God is deserving of my praise." She changes her habits so that, **the Sabbath actually means something: a day of rest not recovery.**"

This month we enter into Lent, where we contemplate Jesus' sacrifice. Over these coming weeks, think about what you can sacrifice. Maybe it's in giving something up for Lent as many people often do, or maybe it will look a little more like Sarah's sacrifice of changing habits so that she could, so that you can bring "a sacrifice of praise."



Middle School Retreat @ SpringHill!

It's not too late to join us on retreat

February 26 - 28th!

We will meet at the church at 4pm on the 26th and we will return to the church by 4pm on the 28th.

The cost is \$125 per person, but there is "scholarship" money available~ just talk to Erin.



High School Youth SUPER BOWL Party

February 7th @ 6pm.

Debbie & Gary Gulliver have invited the high school youth into their home for the Super Bowl. Please bring your favorite munchies & drinks (there will be a sign-up at youth group).

The Gullivers live at 5610 Cornell Road, in Haslett. Please give Erin a call if you need a ride!

Erin



Children's Ministry

Hello Friends:

The schedule for the children in February is as follows:

- 7th, 14th and 28th: Jesus Stills the Storm.
- 17th: Ash Wednesday.
- 21st: Communion: all children upstairs.

We are covering an exciting Bible story this upcoming month. The children are wonderful and we need your help! Volunteer to teach in one of our rotating workshop rooms or volunteer in the nursery. It is a great joy to give of yourself to these kids - they really appreciate it!! Contact Erin Heisler or Susan Witkus at Erin.heisler@att.net to get involved.

Here's a preview of our February story from Mark 4 with a few thoughts and a prayer to get us started: After a long day, Jesus and his disciples climbed into a small fishing boat and headed for the far shore of the Sea of Galilee. Jesus went to sleep in the back. The worried disciples spotted a wild storm crossing the lake toward them. The wind howled and whitecaps broke over the boat. This was one scary ride! Soon the boat was swamped with water. They panicked - they were sinking!

The terrified disciples were shouting, bailing water and fighting with the sails. They finally woke Jesus "Don't you care if we drown?" Jesus looked at their concerned faces and then out at the storm. He then simply scolded the wind and told the waves to be still. An instant, eerie calm settled upon the lake. Jesus looked at his disciples. "Why are you so afraid?" "Do you still have no faith?"

Do you trust Jesus in all situations, no matter how scary things get? Jesus is always in perfect control of every situation. So remember to calm down, because you are with Jesus.

Prayer: I am glad, Lord, that you have power to do anything. I know that whenever I have a need, you can help. Thank you. Amen.

Susan

Just for KIDS

But the Greatest of These Is LOVE!

God shows love to us every day and in many ways. Fill in the blanks below with the missing letters to see how God loves us perfectly!

“For God so lo _ ed the world,
 that he g _ ve
 his on _ y
 begott _ n
 So _ ,
 _ hat whosoever
 believeth _ n Him
 should _ ot perish,
 but have _ verlasting life.

—John 3:16, KJV

Answer: valentine

2010 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN REPORT

As we all cannot help but know, 2009 was a challenging year for mid-Michigan's economy, and 2010 does not look to be much better. Nonetheless, while HCC's 2010 Stewardship Campaign was not the spectacular success the Financial Stewardship Committee had hoped for, our church family responded quite well to the unique, one time special need presented by Pastor Kurt Kirchoff and Stewardship Campaign Chair Paul White during the 2010 Stewardship Campaign, which, combined with other sources of revenue, will allow HCC to fully fund our proposed 2010 budget.

We have received \$248,000 in pledges, an increase of \$10,000 from 2009. We have received pledges from 130 "pledge units", compared to 126 pledges last year.

Of these 130 pledges:

- 68 pledges were increased by a total of \$21,690, or 15.94%.
- 40 pledges remained the same.
- 7 pledges were reduced by a total of \$3,400, or 21.41%
- 15 pledges are new, from pledge units who did not

pledge in 2009, totaling \$19,575

Eleven pledge units who pledged a total of \$27,644 in 2009 did not pledge this year. There are, of course, many reasons for this, including deaths, persons moving away, or persons who are experiencing financial uncertainty. And some of these persons intend to still contribute to HCC in 2010, but just are not pledging.

I want to thank everyone who pledged for 2010, as well as everyone who supports Haslett Community Church through your financial gifts.

Paul White, 2010 Stewardship Campaign Chair

A Special Christmas Card

Shortly after our January newsletter was prepared we received a Christmas card addressed to our entire congregation from one of our members, Leah Rumsey. Leah is a student at Kalamazoo College and presently is studying in Egypt. She wanted to share these words of Christmas greeting with all of us at HCC:

"Dear Friends, I have been in Cairo studying Arabic for the past semester, but was able to travel to Israel/Palestine over Eid al-Adha. I was especially excited to visit Bethlehem in the West Bank and wanted to send you my Christmas greetings from this special city. My friend and I stayed at a hostel run by Christians (Palestinian Christians are especially concentrated in this area, so there are only slightly fewer Christians than Muslims) who really helped us a lot and showed us not only the Church of the Nativity, but also the security wall dividing the West Bank from Israeli territory because the situation in the West Bank is still very sad. I was also able to visit the holy sites in Jerusalem and will do some hiking before heading back to Cairo to finish up my academic term and take finals. After I finish my tests, my family is coming to visit for a couple weeks. Then I will spend six more weeks taking one final Arabic class and working as an English teacher before I return to the U.S. in March. I plan to spend at least a week or two in Haslett before going back to Kalamazoo, so I look forward to seeing you all then. Until then, I hope you all have a Merry Christmas and a wonderful holiday season."

Best wishes, Leah

Women's Coffee

All women of the congregation are invited to join in the fun and fellowship at the occasional gatherings of the Women's Coffee. These get-togethers are held on the **first Tuesdays at 10:00 AM when hostesses sign up**. A sign-up sheet through May 2010 is in the display case next to the church office. We encourage those who wish to host to sign up soon. The next Women's Coffee will be held on **Tuesday, February 2nd and hosts are needed**. If you have not been to this get-together before, think about coming. The conversations are delightful!



Partners In Ministry

Thank you HCC congregation for the wonderful response to the recent distribution of Partners in Ministry surveys. It has been said that "the best way to eat an elephant is in small bites." Apparently, it worked! Those of you willing to continuing to serve in events and capacities are truly appreciated, and those of you who are perhaps new or have more time available than before, welcome!

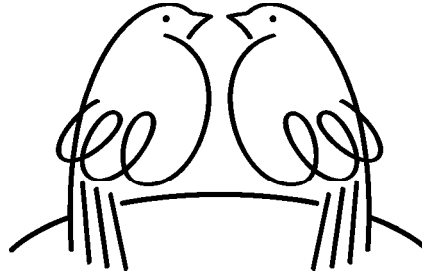
The next stage that I'll be working on (with help from two other individuals) is to establish what we hope will be a rotation of ushers, greeters, readers, and coffee hosts. One thought is that one or two people be designated as Head Ushers, willing to train the team. The goal is to eliminate the gaps in the calendar of Sunday worship as much as the weather (and holidays and summer) will allow. I know from past experience how important these roles are. The sunshine of a welcoming smile and a warm handshake make a difference, truly.

Additionally, it's never too late. If there were areas/events where you would like to be of service and missed a survey, lost the newsletter, or were abducted by aliens, you can still sign up. There's a link to the Partners in Ministry survey on our church web site, or I can be reached by email at mom2aws@msn.com, or at home by telephone (339-2051).

This was successful enough to warrant it as an annual event following Stewardship Sunday. Thankfully, elephants freeze well.

Donna Ellis

Be a Love Bird



Many stories about the origin of Valentine's Day have come down through the centuries. There's no definitive story, but most revolve around the imprisonment of Valentinus (St. Valentine) for his disregard of Roman laws.

Many legends are also associated with Valentine's Day. For example, because birds seemed to arrive and mate in some countries in mid-February, human couples came to be called "love birds."

In 1667, the first recorded Valentine card was printed. Today, people will give their sweethearts countless millions of cards and acres of heart-shaped boxes filled with candy. But why wait for Valentine's Day to share love with others? Remember Jesus' words in John 13:34 (NRSV): "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another."



Thinking of Lent

Advent prepares us for Christ's birth; Lent prepares us for the glorious act of Christ's resurrection. Churches have special services during the weeks of Lent, but it's what each of us does regarding our spiritual life that makes Lent most meaningful. Lent is a good time to read, study and inwardly digest the four gospels. (The word gospel means "good news.")

A college student decided to work his way through Matthew, Mark, Luke and John for his Lenten devotional time. Soon he was fascinated by the stories, such as the Pharisees and Sadducees trying to trap Jesus in debate. The brilliant Jesus handled every occasion with wisdom, leaving the authorities dumbfounded.

During his devotional time, the student was filled with laughter and amazement at the brilliant son of God, who was only in his 30s. Get to know the good news, and you'll understand the young man's amazement.





Haslett Community Church

Church Phone 339-8383 Church E-mail hcc1@att.net

Church Web Site: www.haslettcommunitychurch.org

Conference Web Site: www.michucc.org UCC Web Site: www.ucc.org

February 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 7 PM Mission Outreach Meeting	2 10 AM Women's Coffee	3 7 PM Adult Choir	4 2:30 PM Youth Choir 6:30 PM Haslett Women's Club	5	6 4:30 PM Spaghetti Dinner and Cabaret
7 9:25 AM Worship and Church School; nursery care provided 10:45 AM – Bible Study 4:00 PM – MS Youth 7:00 PM – HS Youth	8 7 PM Youth Ministry Team Meeting	9 7 PM Church Council	10 7 PM Adult Choir	11 2:30 PM Youth Choir 7 PM Social Committee	12	13
14 9:25 AM Worship and Church School; nursery care provided 10:45 AM – Bible Study 10:45 AM – Member Caring 4:00 PM – MS Youth 7:00 PM – HS Youth	15	16 8:00 AM Newsletter deadline	17 ASH WEDNESDAY 7:00 AM Service 6:30 PM Service 7:15 PM Adult Choir	18 2:30 PM Youth Choir	19	20 1-4:00 PM Circle of Friends
21 COMMUNION 9:25 AM Worship and Church School; nursery care provided 10:45 AM Bible Study 3:00 PM Inquirers' Meeting 4:00 PM – MS Youth 7:00 PM – HS Youth	22	23	24 6:00 PM Lenten Supper 7:15 PM Adult Choir	25 2:30 PM Youth Choir	26 / 27 MIDDLE SCHOOL RETREAT at Springhill 27 th Adult Game Night	
28 ANNUAL MEETING 9:25 AM Worship and Church School; nursery care provided 10:45 AM - Sermon Discussion 10:45 AM – Bible Study NO MS Youth 7:00 PM – HS Youth						

Newsletter articles are due the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 8:00 AM.

Pastor Kurt Kirchoff can be reached at 339-8383, ext. 11 or pastorkurt53@att.net Erin Heisler can be reached at 339-8383, ex 19 or erin.heisler@att.net

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HCC Connection

February 2010

Worship for February 2010

Sermon titles and Scripture readings include:

Sunday, February 7th, 9:25 am
"Science and God"
Genesis 1:1-3 & Psalm 19:1-6

Sunday, February 21st, 9:25 am
"Facing Temptation"
Psalm 91:1-6 & Luke 4:1-13

Sunday, February 14th, 9:25 am
Laity Sunday
(see article on page 3)

Sunday, February 28th
"I Have to Live Here, Too"
Psalm 98:1-6 & Luke 13:31-34

Haslett Community Church

Church Office Hours: 9:00 – 12:00, M-F PHONE – (517) 339-8383 Fax (517) 339-8526

www.haslettcommunitychurch.org

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Children's Ministry - Susan Witkus - susan.witkus@att.net

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Youth Ministry - Erin Heisler - erin.heisler@att.net

Worship and Church School, Sundays at 9:25 a. m.