

FROM THE PASTOR:

As we begin this new year, we remember our congregational theme for this year as we've encouraged one another to be courageous in our faith. *"Be strong, and of good courage, fear not, nor be afraid: for the Lord, your God, is the One that goes with you; He will not fail you, nor forsake you" (Deut. 31:6).*

In my daily devotions I came across what is for me a very thought-provoking, daily consideration:

Do not let any set of circumstances intimidate you. The more challenging your day, the more of My Power I place at your disposal. You seem to think that I empower you equally each day, but this is not so. Your tendency upon awakening is to assess the difficulties ahead of you, measuring them against your average strength. This is an exercise in unreality.

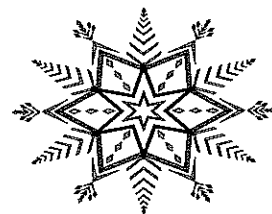
I know what each of your days will contain, and I empower you accordingly. The degree to which I strengthen you on a given day is based mainly on two variables: the difficulty of your circumstances, and your willingness to depend on Me for help. Try to view challenging days as opportunities to receive more of My Power than usual. Look to Me for all that you need, and watch to see what I will do. *As your day is, so shall your strength be. (Deut. 33:25).* (Taken from Sarah Young's Jesus Calling)

Each of the 365 days in 2012 can be started with that thought, and that faithful confidence, in mind. It's been a challenging 2011 - for the world, our nation, the Commonwealth, the Fredericksburg area, Redeemer Lutheran Church, each of us, and 2012 looks even more inviting with opportunities to take on and obstacles to get over. Each day we must faithfully look to the Lord for His empowering love and presence. We walk together with Him in faith, *"and God, with all His abundant wealth in Christ Jesus, will supply all our needs. To our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen." (Phil. 4:19,20).*

God has graciously blessed us with each of you, and we continue to look to Him for the fulfillment of our hopes.

A Blessed New Year,
Pastor Koehler

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Fredericksburg, VA 22408
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Website: www.embracedbyHim.org



Rest

Welcome to a new year in Christ the Lord! After a busy holiday season, all we often see at New Year is the light at the end of the tunnel—the finish line of weeks of stress, entertaining, and shopping. We and our bank accounts can finally take a Sabbath.

But we're Christians! Our temporal commitments may have taken a break, but our eternal commitments are still raging ahead. People still need homes and food and clothes! Most importantly, they still need the Word preached to their weary, shivering hearts!

Winter is getting colder and harsher, so we need to work that much harder to provide people with the care they need. There's no rest for the weary.

Not so.

Matthew 11:28 tells us there is always rest in Jesus Christ for the weary. "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." Psalm 107:35 reads similarly. "He turns a desert into pools of water, a parched lands into springs of water." God is all about the business of restoration and renewal.

This promise is for us as well as those who are far from Jesus. Christ is their rest from a life of sinful despair, as well as our rest from lives of service, **even if that service is for God himself.**

Jesus himself took breaks alone in meditation to rejuvenate. Make no mistake, though. "Rejuvenate" doesn't mean mud baths and stone therapy. Christ didn't rest because he thought, "I've been so good, I deserve a break." His breaks from serving were *for* serving.

We rest in Christ not because we deserve it, but because we *need* it. God knows what we need, and he gives us that rest in Jesus. When we rest, we can return to serve more effectively. We rest *from* service *for* service. Even in taking a break, always keep your eyes on the kingdom of God.

Rest so you can look forward to doing good. Galatians 6:9 says, "Let us not grow weary of doing good, for we will reap in due season if we do not give up." Again, in Romans 2:7, Paul writes, "To those, who by patience in well-doing, seek glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life." May doing good for the downcast never burden us.

God offers us full renewal and infinite strength in Christ to be a blessing and renewal to others by our actions. Our strength is not our own. It flows from the Holy Spirit of him who blesses us with every heavenly blessing in Christ.

Take a break and look for the opportunities ahead—opportunities to effectively serve the Lord and his kingdom. God will bless your rest and your mission for his good will.

1 Thessalonians 5:23,24 sums it up perfectly. "Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.

The Vicar

FROM OUR ASSISTANT PASTOR - Pastor Rob Carter

Work parties are behind you, family visits have been made, Christmas card list revised so you have added those who sent you one this year and dropped those friends and former co-workers who are no longer going to stay in touch with a card once a year. (Some may still send you messages on Facebook so this is not the emotional loss that it once was.) Next on the post-holiday to-do list for many is to make resolutions about the coming year. There are the traditional, lose weight, eat healthier, and spend more time working on your relationship with parents, spouse, and children. These may be the same goals that you have each year that as the days and months pass by you forget and do not thoughtfully and prayerfully revisit again until another New Year reminds you about your past year's resolutions. Goals you make each year but never seem to be able to follow through as life in its fast paced demands and distractions seem to draw you away from who you would like to be, towards who you end up becoming as you react, compromise, and find yourself settling for "just good enough".

For me the time to reflect on how I am falling short comes weekly when during the worship service we pause between confession and absolution to reflect on where we have failed to care for the least of our brothers and sisters, hurt instead of helped others, not lived fully as God intends us to with others. While I remember to ask for forgiveness in the rush and struggle of another week I seem to slip away from prayerfully working on the goals that I made at the start of a new calendar year.

As we begin 2012 I find myself looking at what I had resolved to work on over the past year, and with a hard look I see where life and my selfish desires have drawn me away from the good intentions that I had to honor God, my spouse and family, and the vocation that God has given to me. It is a time to pause and see where I am at in the important relationships in my life and building on the Hope and Joy of the Advent and Christmas Season to pray for God's help with the areas where I am struggling. To receive the same encouragement that Jeremiah gave when he told the exiles to Judah, **Jeremiah 29:11**, "*For I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD. They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.*" Because we cannot make those changes, grow in faith, and care for others on our own. It happens by God at work in our lives, and this is a work He takes joy in. Joy which we can feel as we meet those goals to improve our health, work on relationships, share with others the talents and treasures God has entrusted to each of us. As Paul has reminded us in his letter to the Philippians 3:13-14, "*No, dear brothers and sisters, I am still not all I should be, but I am focusing all my energies on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I strain to reach the end of the race and receive the prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us up to heaven.*" With that as our Goal, prayerfully focused for the next year we will be encouraged, reminded that we have been forgiven, and better able to build on the hope of the Advent and Christmas Season as we look toward the gift of everlasting life that Christ has made possible for each of us through his birth, life, death, and resurrection as we believe in Him.

India Update: Keep the IELC Middle School, the teachers and students in your prayers as we wait to hear from them. A letter was sent last month to them by surface mail and we continue to wait for a response.

MARCH FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM: We will depart from Redeemer Lutheran Church at 12:30 p.m. to participate in the March for Religious Freedom on Sunday, Jan. 8th. There is a sign up sheet outside the church office if you would like to participate. Please designate if you will carpool with us or meet the group at the Train Station. The March will depart from the Fredericksburg Train Station at 1:30 p.m., proceed down Caroline St., up to Amelia St. and down Washington Avenue to the Religious Freedom Monument.

MARCH FOR LIFE is Monday, January 23rd. For those riding together and departing from Redeemer, we will leave at 7:00 a.m. Sign up in the narthex and let us know if you will meet us at Immanuel Lutheran Church or depart from Redeemer. There will be a 9 a.m. worship service at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Alexandria, VA, with LFL Executive Director Dr. James I. Lamb delivering the sermon. After a complementary brunch at the church, everyone will travel to downtown Washington D.C. for the rally and the march from 7th St. to the U. S. Supreme Court building via Constitution Avenue.

TRAINING LUTHERANS FOR OUTREACH

Growing a Volunteer Team

January 14, 9 a.m.-11 a.m.

We ask our people to be good stewards of their time and talents. How well are we as church staff and leaders doing at being good stewards of the time and talents they give to the church? The answer to this question is related to the more-frequently-asked question, "Why don't we have enough volunteers?" The session covered in this web-conference are ones that help people serve. When we help each other serve, we are being good stewards of each other's time and talents.

This is an excellent session for all leaders of teams: Ushers, Visitation, Choir, Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, Nursery Personnel, Buildings & Grounds...invite your leaders to join us on Saturday, January 14th from 9 a.m.-11 a.m.

Karen Kogler, Director of Volunteer Equipping at St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Arlington Heights, IL is the web-conference speaker. She brings many years of experience of working with, motivating, and encouraging volunteers to this presentation.

This web-conference will be broadcast live to members of the Southeastern District.

There is no fee for this workshop but participants will need to register for both the live site and the webcast. If you are interested in attending let Pastor Rob or Don Rose know so that you can be added to the participant list. You may participate in this either at home, or join us at church.

Trivia Night

DINNER AT 5:30 P.M.

GAMES BEGIN AFTER DINNER

What you need to know...

- SPACE FOR ONLY 10 TEAMS – SIGN-UP NOW!
- MAX OF 8 PEOPLE ON A TEAM
- \$35 PER TABLE
- DINNER IS PROVIDED
- BABYSITTING PROVIDED
- PRIZES FOR BEST THEMED/DRESSED TEAM
- PRIZES FOR TRIVIA TEAM WINNERS
- LOTS OF USELESS KNOWLEDGE 😊

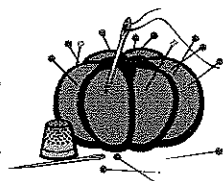


EMAIL ME AT FAMILYLIFE@EMBRACEDBYHIM.ORG WITH YOUR TEAM NAME AND MEMBERS. FIRST 10 TEAMS TO SIGN UP WILL PLAY.

CHERYL DURHEIM

DIRECTOR OF FAMILY LIFE MINISTRY

REDEEMER QUILTERS: The Redeemer quilters will meet on Saturday, January 21st, at 9:00 a.m. to resume making quilts for Lutheran World Relief. All ladies of Redeemer are invited to participate in this important ministry of making quilts for Lutheran World Relief and Veterans at the McGuire VA Hospital in Richmond. (A complete shedule for the year is included on a separate page in this newsletter.)



THE FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE will sponsor a Family History & Genealogy Seminar on Sat., January 14th, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the church Fellowship Hall. For more information please contact Carmen Billings @ 540-891-6568.

DURING DECEMBER WE WERE BLESSED to receive into our congregational family here at Redeemer the following new members:

Bill* & Lynda* DuVall
11607 Long Street Dr.
Spotsylvania, VA 22551-4601

Matt* & Diane* Bestick
Colby, Regan, & Kaitlyn
(listed in the directory)

Bernice* Holmes
(listed in the directory)

Amy* Newberger
(listed in the directory)



Susan* Diehl

Stephen* Buta
10328 Antietam Dr.
Fredericksburg, VA 22408

Amanda* Baldwin
404 Pool Dr.
Spotsylvania, VA 22551

Mary Jo* Lang
4115 Corbin Hall Ln.
Fredericksburg, VA 22408

DECEMBER PRESCHOOL NEWS:

We had a very exciting month of November preparing for Thanksgiving. The children learned many songs and made lots of crafts and learned about the first Thanksgiving. We talked about the importance of thanking God for all the things he has given us, and especially our families. We ended our study by enjoying a Thanksgiving feast brought in by our parents.

In December, we are looking forward to preparing for the birthday of Jesus. We will be making gifts for our parents and preparaing for a Birthday Party for Jesus, which will be on December 19 and 20.

Merry Christmas!

Our thanks to our members for their help during the month of January:

USHER SCHEDULE FOR JANUARY

Jan. 1 - One service - 11:00 a.m.:
Ed Grandowski (Lead), Tom Church, Jason Biscamp, Mike Evenson

EARLY:

Jan. 8 - Ken Petermann (Lead)
Jim Pittman, Kirk Hymes, Dave Hunter
Jan. 15 - Ed Grandowski (Lead)
John Uschold, Don Schumann, Mike Weiland
Jan. 22 - Mike Bush (Lead)
Tom Barlow, Dave Rhodes, Dave Bye
Jan. 29 - Tom Barlow (Lead)
Bill DuVall, Mike Weiland, Ed Minnich

If you are unable to usher on your assigned date, please arrange for your replacement. ****Note**** Additional ushers are welcome to participate in this important ministry. Contact Tom Barlow, 1st Service Coordinator, 804-742-5315.

LATE

Jan. 8 - R.O.M.A.N.S.
Jan. 15 - Mark Fife, Jerry Limerick, Mike Diederer
Jan. 22 - Ted Smith, John Hinz, Mike Mullinas, Ken Billings
Jan. 29 - Berner Johnson, Ted Smith, Brandon Sullivan, Ken Elam

Volunteers needed! Please call Mark Fife, 2nd Service Coordinator, 786-2336 and leave a message or email to chofudgeman1@yahoo.com if you can help.

ACOLYTE SCHEDULE FOR JANUARY

Jan. 1 - One service - 11:00 a.m.:
Ryan Tutchings & Josiah Koehler

EARLY:

Jan. 8 - Miqueas Vigil/Zechariah Vigil
Jan. 15 - Hayley Groover/Abigail Durehim
Jan. 22 - Eric Weiland/Tyler Fehrman
Jan. 29 - Devon Montgomery/Maeve Montgomery

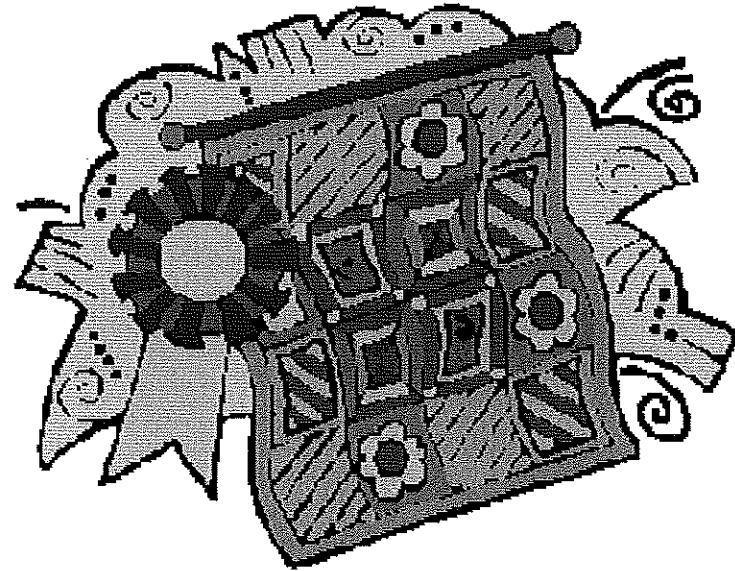
LATE:

Jan. 8 - Emma Leidy/Cara Gasperoni
Crucifer - Kacey Schwenzer
Jan. 15 - Josiah Koehler/Mathew Zimmerman
Crucifer - Christian Hovda
Jan. 22 - Tion Edmonds/Trejon Edmonds
Crucifer - Philip Wiltenmuth
Jan. 29 - Kacey Schwenzer/Emma Leidy
Crucifer - Cara Gasperoni

AVERAGE WEEKLY ATTENDANCE IN NOVEMBER:

	Church	Sun. Sch.
2011	335	115
2010	334	125
2005	305	134
2000	239	114
1980 (1st yr.)	53	33

**Redeemer Quilters Meet the 3rd Saturday of
Each Month in the Fellowship Hall at 9:00AM
Contact: Pat Barlow 804-742-5315**

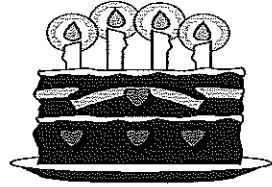


**Sat January 21st
Sat February 18th
Sat March 17th
Sat April 21st
Sat May 19th
Sat June 16th
Sat July 21st
Sat August 18th
Sat September 15th
Sat October 20th (Display quilts on pews)
Sun October 21st - Quilts displayed
Sat November 17th**

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS:

1 - Selena Pagan
1 - Abigail Rhodes
2 - Jim Bronz
3 - Aimee Medlin
3 - P.K. Gray
4 - Faith Marburger
4 - Louis Wiltenmuth
4 - Presley Medley
4 - Bill Anderson
6 - Barbara Pauls
7 - Hannah Hunter
7 - Cindy Kohl
8 - Mathew Zimmerman
9 - Dick Bogle
9 - Teri Grandowski

11 - Teresa Cerritelli
11 - Peggy Stallard
11 - Michael Fox-Moles
13 - Michael Biscamp



13 - Michael Eastman
14 - Mary Rathke
14 - Tim Bogle
14 - Alexis Ruthenberg
15 - Gabriella Pagan

16 - Joshua Stone
16 - Julie Smith
17 - Charlie Morgan, IV
18 - Doug Marqueen
19 - Dianna Harrington
19 - Ed Grandowski
20 - Michael Koehler
20 - Howard Kohl
21 - Mike Weiland
23 - Jonathan Cerritelli
24 - Jenna Sullivan
24 - Johnny Garrett
25 - Tori Gregor
27 - Kristopher Trowbridge
29 - Katlyn Maina

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES:

8 - Allan & Mary Rathke
30 - Richard & Diane Zaidan



We were blessed to be a part of the Lord's adopting into His family of faith through Holy Baptism:



BENJAMIN WAYNE

&

KURTUS ANTHONY

Sons of Carrie Ann White
on Sunday, November 27, 2011

MATTHEW THOMAS SMITH
Infant son of Michelle & Thomas
Brother to Sara, Caitlyn, & Karlie
on Sunday, December 11, 2011

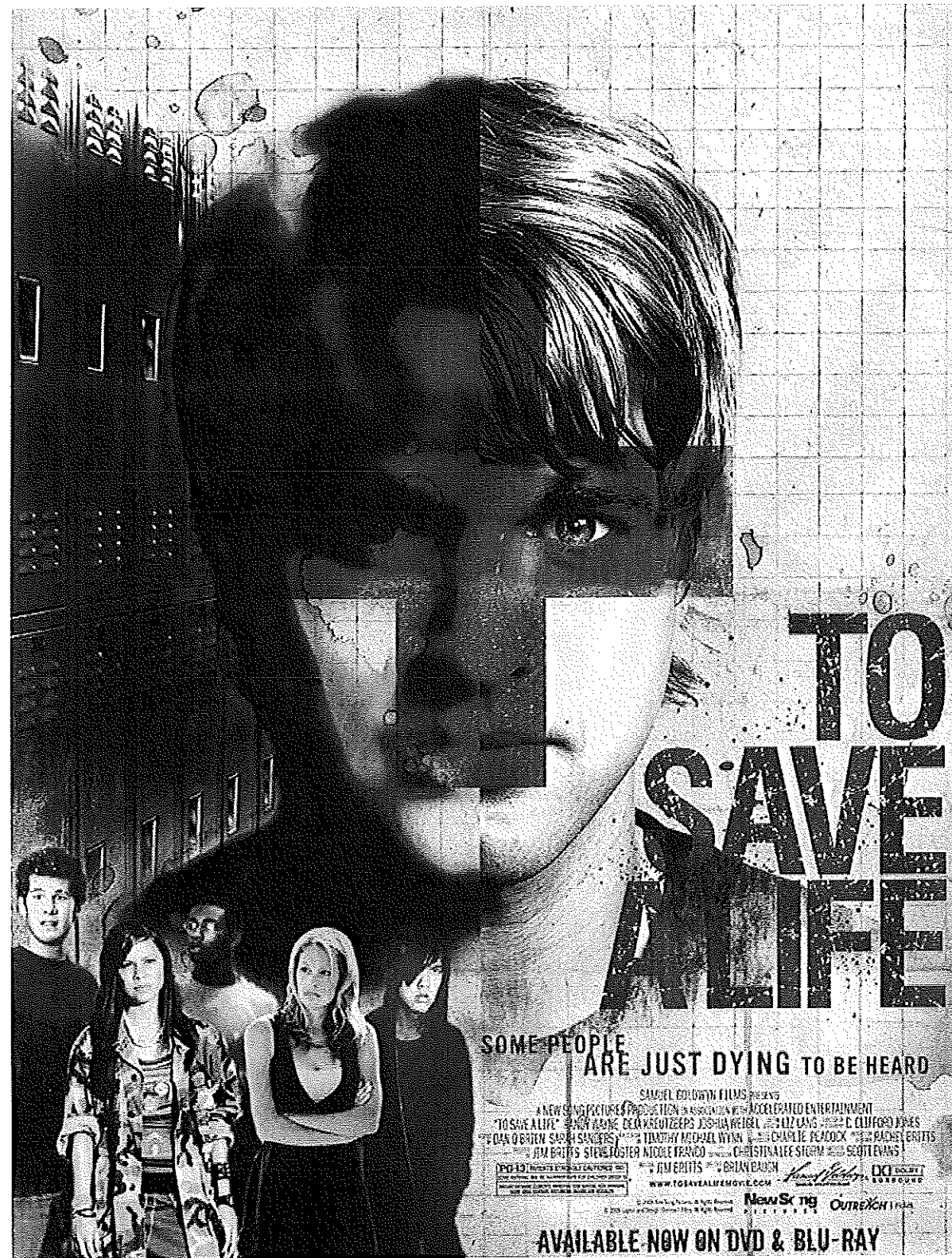


NEW ADDRESSES FOR:

Jerry & Ginger Limerick - 4513 Leighann Lane, Fredericksburg, VA 22408
Kate Jacobson - 10509 Running Cedar Lane, #601, Fredericksburg, VA 22407

Be sure to make the changes in your directories.





You are invited to a free viewing of *To Save a Life* at Redeemer Lutheran Church, 5120 Harrison Road, Fredericksburg, VA. The first showing is at 6p.m. for Parents on January 7th, and then for Middle School and High School students and their friends at 6p.m. on January 21st. This film portrays many of the pressures that are placed on children as they grow up in school and become members of different social groups, are bullied, and are tempted to not follow rules or to drink alcohol while underage. You can learn more about the film and begin to discuss the issues that it brings up from the material posted on its website <http://tosavealifemovie.com/>

From the Chair of Finance and Stewardship:

I apologize; I missed the deadline for November's CPR report, so here is September, October and November numbers.

	September	October	November
CHURCH OPERATING BUDGET	\$51166	\$51166	\$51166
OPERATING BUDGET CONTRIBUTIONS	\$43742	\$58248	\$42234
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)FROM BUDGET	(\$7424)	\$7082	(\$8932)
OPERATING BUDGET ACTUAL EXP	\$49291	\$52803	\$37854
SURPLUS/ DEFICIT FROM ACTUAL	(\$5549)	\$16444	\$ 4380

So, through November we have a surplus of \$11570 for the year. That includes the \$15000 grant from the Southeastern District for our Vicar program. We are now out of the summer "doldrums" and so I expect that we will break even or even have a little surplus for the year.

Mike Evenson
Chair of Finance and Stewardship

SINCE OUR LAST congregational newsletter, and with the cold weather of winter beginning to come upon us, we've had an increase in the number of families in our area asking for financial assistance from our Social Ministries Fund; we were able to help the following families, by God's Grace:

29 families with utilities	\$2,381.85
5 families with water/sewer	412.61
3 families with rent	340.00
2 congregation families	400.00
1 car gas for week	37.00
40 families with 71 children	\$3,571.46