

March - April
2007

The Cornerstone

Community Christian Reformed Church

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PREPARING FOR *Easter*



~ *Please Remember* ~

The next deadline for
The Cornerstone will be
APRIL 15TH.

The cut-off date will be
APRIL 18TH.

CORNERSTONE TEAM

You may e-mail any articles, up-coming events, information, etc. Doing this electronically is a big help. Thank you for your efforts and information

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Adult Bible Study

The adult version of Sunday school meets every Sunday morning at 9:30, in the council room. Our focus is simply God's word - up close, personal, and in-depth.

The format is a question and answer approach using the **Discover Your Bible Series**, which is designed to draw group members deeper into the meaning of the Bible. The study guides are appropriate for everyone - from new believers to mature Christians. As we read and study together, we look at how to apply the Word of God to our daily, modern life. The discussions can be lively (fueled by coffee and donuts!).

Currently, we are studying Luke and have just entered the chapters where we are essentially walking with Jesus and his disciples through the final week of his life on earth. The summit of the Christian message and salvation is close at hand. I invite you to join us in that walk.

John Erro



Ballard Family Spotlight



Wes Ballard was born in Modesto on December 9, 1973 and grew up in Riverbank. Holly was born in Modesto on February 18, 1974 and grew up in Modesto. They both moved to Oakdale in the 7th grade, but did not meet until High School. Shortly after meeting, Wes had a dream that the two of them got married and had two children. Following this dream, he contacted Holly and the two of them soon began dating. They were engaged in July of 1999 and married July of 2000. Holly attended dental school where she earned her RDA. Wes and Holly are now self-employed with a sheet metal fabrication business.

Wes and Holly have three children. Samantha was born on October 7, 2002. She is now four years old and loves to play dress-up! On May 20, 2004, Samantha was joined by a little brother, Morgan. Morgan loves anything to do with daddy and dirt bikes! On September 10, 2006, Spence came into this world to join their family. Spence is now 5 months old and loves to eat and sleep. Holly is now a stay-at-home mom to their three children and likes to do Creative Memories (scrapbooking) when she has the time. Wes enjoys dirt bike riding and spending time with family.

Wes and Holly originally came to this church when they brought Samantha to Vacation Bible School in 2006. Samantha loved it! The family was looking for a church to come to and decided to visit on a Sunday. Everyone was so friendly that they instantly knew this was the church for them.

*A big thank you to the Ballards for sharing their story with us!
Welcome to our church family!*

Youth Ministry

The Youth Group would like to convey our heartfelt thanks to all of those who attended our Open House. Your support was overwhelming! A special thank you to Denise Hitch, Steve Salie and Susan Rich for sharing their experiences with the Youth. Thank you for joining the Battle!

In Christ,
Tim Fontaine
Director of Worship & Youth Ministries



CHILDREN & WORSHIP

Date	Session	Leader	Helper #1	Helper #2
March 4/07	#32 Jesus & the Children	Donna Bandsma	Joyceyn Tanis	Gary Osmundson
March 11/07	#33 Jesus & Bartimaeus &	Lenneke Bulk	Becky Hoekstra	Steve or Beth Salie
March 18/07	#34 Jesus & Zacchaeus	Lenneke Bulk	Samantha Franscella	Mindy Johnson
March 25/07	#35 Jesus the King	Ming Lin	Johanna Dickson	Lori Smith

Date	Session	Leader	Helper #1	Helper #2
April 1/07	#36 Jesus' Last Passover	Ming Lin	Deanna Rossier	Jack Hoekstra
April 8/07	#37 Jesus is Risen & Feast	Nancy Osmundson	Bailey Hitch	Beth Salie
April 5/07	#38 The road to Emmaus	Nancy Osmundson	Caitlin Hitch	Kurt or Becky Hoekstra
April 22/07	#39 The Good Shepherd & the Wolf	Donna Bandsma	Lori Smith	Samantha Franscella
April 29/07	#40 The Good Shepherd & The Lord's Supper (1)	Donna Bandsma	Brett Taylor	Ada Oosterman

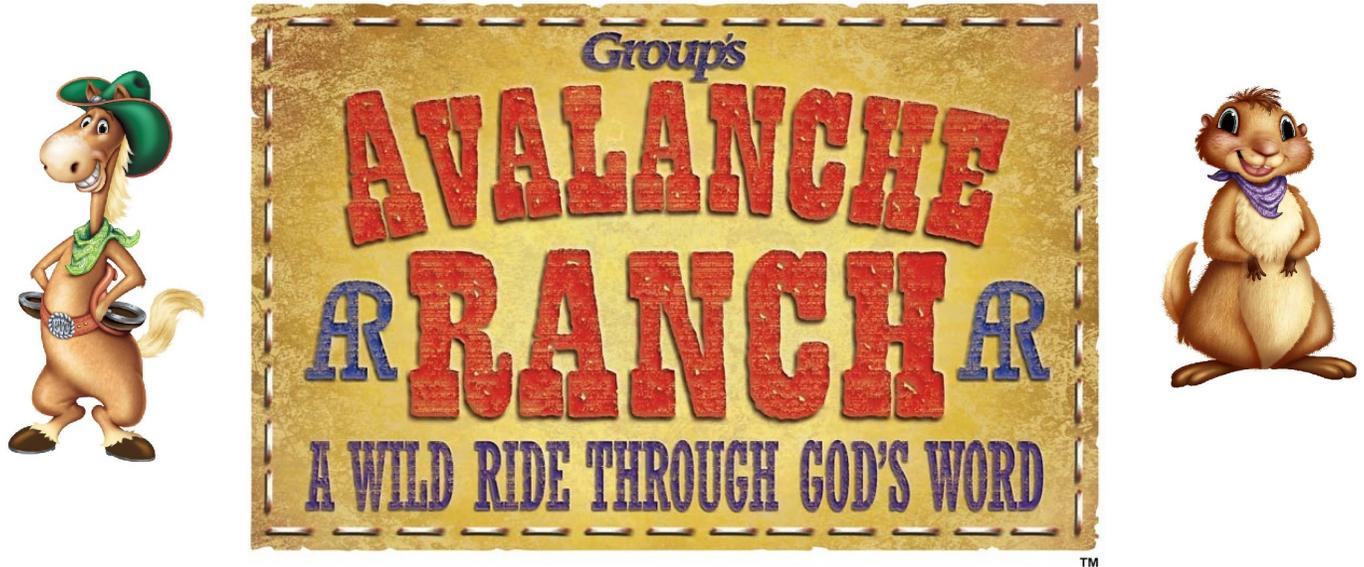
If you are unable to serve at your scheduled time, please find a replacement.
If you are unable to find someone please contact **Lenneke Bulk @ 848 2309**

As we have shared before, Children and Worship is that special place in our Church where children from 4 years old through 2nd grade are coming together during the Worship Service to hear and experience the Word of God. It is such a blessing to have our own routine there and get to know more and more of what God's Word is all about. Although we are young, we certainly can worship. In the meantime we learn also, that it takes quietness and respect for one another to create an atmosphere of sanctuary. And while those things can be hard for young people, **WE ARE LEARNING**. Some days are better than others, as you can understand.

Again, thanks to all the people involved who help to make this program function - all the parents who show up so faithfully, the young people that volunteer, and last but not least the three leaders who make everything happen during that hour. It takes a lot of preparation and commitment from them. May God be your witness that you are a faithful servant to Him.

Lenneke Bulk





Coming to a ranch near you!

Looking for a ranch crew young and old to round up
all those little buckaroos from our community!

Round-up starts at the Rodeo Parade on Saturday, April 14th. We'll rope 'em in at the parade and invite them back for a week long ride through God's word!

Event: Oakdale Rodeo Parade

Date: Saturday, April 14, 2007

Purpose: Invite & Excite!

Event: Vacation Bible School

Date: July 9 - July 13th, 2007

Purpose: Outreach & Teach!





Home-hosted Small groups

Contact: Myer & Clary Lanting	Sun 7 p.m. weekly	*Fruits of the Spirit	209-847-6889
Contact: Willie & Jolene Bylsma	Sun 6:30 p.m. 2x/month	*Fruits of the Spirit	209-847-3362
Contact: Dr. Ralph & Margitta Sikkema	Sun 6 p.m. 2x/month	* <u>Purpose Driven Life</u>	209-848-9132
Contact: Donnie & Joellene Schwandt	Sun 6 p.m. Weekly (except 1 st Sunday of the month)	*To be determined	209-847-1543

The Home-Hosted small groups are all about meeting needs and changing lives. We offer a variety of groups to choose from and each one is designed to create a sense of community so that everyone has somebody who loves them and cares for them.

It can be difficult to get to know people on a deep level and establish loving and caring friendships in a large, growing church like ours. This is why the Home-Hosted small group ministry is committed to helping those in our church family and those who come in through outreach to experience genuine and authentic fellowship and spiritual growth like the believers in the New Testament church experienced.

It is our hope that you find a group where you can connect with others and grow in your relationship to God.

“Two are better than one; because they have a good return for their work. If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!” – Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

Key Values:

- You will understand the Bible better in a small group & have accountability to grow.
- You will begin to really feel like part of God’s family.
- You will be able to handle stress and pressure better because of support.
- You will have a natural way to share Christ with friends, relatives, and work associates

Call us and let us know if there is anything we can do to help you get plugged into a small group.

Home Hosted Small Group Testimony

Our home hosted small group is getting ready to gear back up and get started. We were a very active group meeting every week, but our group split to add some new faces and we seemed to have gotten off track for awhile. We are ready to get back on board and are hoping to add to our numbers. We are meeting on Sunday nights @ 5:30 p.m. (except the first Sunday, when the *Married and Loving It* group meets). Some of us have children so we do have child care. We meet at Kurt and Becky Hoekstra’s home and are led by Donnie Schwandt. We are a fun loving group that wants to feel connected and are eager to have God in our lives daily. If there is anyone out there that is interested in getting connected and our group sounds like a good spot for you, please give Donnie a call @ 847-1543.

A.I.M.

The Holidays are over and it is time to get back in the swing of things. We are planning a crazy dinner for the first week of April and lining up a few outings. We are going to try to have some kind of outing about every 3 months. So, stay on the look out for something fun to do.

The A.I.M. (Adults in Motion) is a group of adults who like to do things together. Age doesn't matter. We are open to any suggestions so anyone hearing of something interesting and fun can set it up. There are about 30 people, couples and singles. Some of the highlights from last year; dinner and a play in Jamestown, a visit to San Francisco to see the Blue Angels during Fleet Week. As you can see we are all about fun, and if you are new or old to our church we would love to have you join us. We will keep you informed through the Bulletin and Cornerstone. Any questions contact Don & Myra Salie 847-3737 or Don & June De Witt 848-3953.

Soup and Pie Supper



Oakdale Cadets and GEMS held their annual Soup & Pie Supper on January 31st. We had a great turnout and everyone enjoyed sampling delicious soup (made by members of the congregation) and pies. We missed Cliff Lease's clam chowder, but Jim Postma of Café Bliss stepped in and saved the day with his own excellent recipe. GEMS and Cadets worked hard bussing the tables, serving the soup and pie, and helping with the clean-up. The event raised a little over \$2,500. This money will be used by each club for materials and supplies, counselor training, camps, and other outings.

The Cadets and GEMS truly appreciate everyone in the congregation who supported this event. Thanks to everyone who cooked soup, brought a pie, helped with set-up or clean-up, invited their friends, or just showed up and enjoyed the delicious food and the good fellowship!

Usher's Schedule

March 4	Dennis Becker	Ralph Sikkema	April 1	Bill Hoekstra	Eldon Aeilts
11	Rien Groenewoud	John Erro	8	Tom Herter	Leonard Terpstra
18	Bill Struiksma	Travis Struiksma	15	Jake Oosterman	Dennis Hitch
25	David Alger	Tony Dykxhoorn	22	Dan Murihead	Andrew Muirhead
			29	Dirk VK	Jim Blom

BUILDING COMMITTEE

We have bats in our belfry again so we had Sierra Bat Exclusion (Batman) come out again. The bats found a new place to get into the attic so we rented a 60' lift for a day and Pastor Gary (Robin) helped Batman seal up the fascia above church on the south side with silicone and steel wool. They left three exits open and covered those with netting so the bats can get out but not back in. This summer when we rent a lift again, to paint the bell tower, Batman will take away the netting and seal those holes.



“Robin” is having way too much fun!

“Batman” is on a search...



The bathroom task force met with a contractor and developed plans to upgrade the men and women's bathrooms and enlarge the nursery bathroom to accommodate handicapped people. It shouldn't be too costly because we are not moving any bearing walls. We are waiting for bids and we will present those to Council as soon as we get them.

We have bids on replacing the sign in front of church with two lighted signs. One will be a large sign on the west side of church that will have the service times and that we will be able to put up announcements easily. The other sign will be on the east side of church and will have our church name. We have a bid but we are still working on the letter type.

We had the carpets cleaned after the Soup & Pie dinner and have some people looking at replacing the carpet in the fellowship hall and foyer.

COFFEE HOST SCHEDULE

March – April 2007

MARCH		
4	Don & Myra Salie	845- 2144
11	Gary & Amy Osmundson	847- 3737
18	Donnie & Joellene Schwandt	847- 1543
25	Jack & Ellie Hoekstra	847- 5872
APRIL		
1	Steve & Beth Salie	847- 3580
8	Bryan & Rosemary Kamper	847- 7344
15	Dennis & Monika Becker	845- 9822
22	Andy & Grace Westerhoff	852- 0205
29	Tom & Connie Herter	848- 1790

If you are unable to serve on your Sunday, please arrange for a substitute and notify Jane Erro, 847- 2029, or Robin Muirhead, 847- 4644. Thank you!!



Men's Breakfast

The men's breakfast on Saturday, January 13th was an enjoyable time for all. Thank you to Michelle Tanis for a wonderful meal. The purpose of the breakfast was to kick off a new year of men's ministry and also the start of a new book being used by the Saturday morning group. The Saturday morning group meets from 8am-9am each week. We are discussing the book "The Pursuit of Holiness" by Jerry Bridges. This book has already proved to be a valuable tool to study what the Bible teaches us about our responsibility to lives that are holy. Just as a gymnast never stops concentrating on maintaining their balance while on the balance beam, so we need to continually balance the idea of living under God's grace and fulfilling our responsibility to live in righteousness. Meeting with like-minded men on a regular basis to discuss your ideas is one way to keep that balance in your life. If you feel that you could use some help balancing the things in your life, please join us Wednesdays at noon or Saturdays at 8. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Gary at 847-5692 or Lauren Tanis at 847-3520.

PRAYER MINISTRY UPDATE

Our church is definitely turning into a Prayer Devoted Church. And the Ministry Team we would like to share with you how God IS answering prayers and is giving us more challenges to be the Church He wants us to be.

With the actual “signs” that the Lord is watching us, caring for us and BLESSING us we should not fear and boldly continue the paths we are on. The future is only one step away and HE IS LEADING.

- The notepads in the pews are not only being used to put names down. But people are responding to the invitation to put their prayer requests from that moment down. Praise God that He provides another alley to put our lives before Him in a very personal way.
- The Email Prayer Network is being used by so many people and thanks to Jolene Bylsma who usually sees to it that all the mail goes out, many of us are comforted with the thought that we are not alone in the prayers to really matter to us. Thank God for this amazing tool.
- People are sharing, that matters they fervently prayed for, HAVE BEING ANSWERED. And it is up to us now to acknowledge God. That’s why we plan to have short spotlights on our church screens with people telling their experience how the Lord answered their prayer. It’s one thing to see God’s Hand in things, it’s another to give Him the Praise!
- Right now we are starting to implement the “Prayer Partner“ idea. At Coffee Break the ladies drew names from a hat and they are committed to keep that person in their prayers for a period of time. They are very excited about it. It is another way how we can truly care for one another.
- The Home Bible Study groups will be next to have personal Prayer Pals.

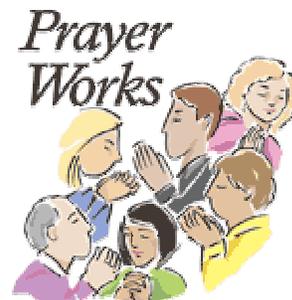
AND WHEN ALL GOES WELL, THE WHOLE CHURCH WILL BE INVITED TO BE NEXT!

We hope that by reading this, you will also be in awe that God is definitely opening new alleys to our church. If, for some reason, you don’t feel part of this excitement and feel disconnected, please don’t hesitate to contact one of the Prayer Ministry members and with the Lord’s Help we will try to meet your needs.

In His Love,

Pastor Gary, Myer Lanting, Tim Fontaine,

Jolene Bylsma, Lenneke Bulk



WEB HIGHLIGHTS



This month I like to highlight just 2 areas of our web site:
Daily Devotion/Bible Reading and the Small Group Bible Studies.

On the home page (which is the page that shows up first after you typed in www.oakdalecrc.org) at the right side towards the top is an area that I use quite frequently: Daily Devotion and Through the Bible in 3 years. This is an area that is automatically updated every day (for the techies under us: via an RSS feed), which helps you to read the whole Bible in 3 years. You can jump in any day, you don't have to wait 'till we start with Genesis 1. This gives you an opportunity to finally make good on those New Year promises that you have been saying all those years! Go ahead, give it a try.

There is also a Daily Devotion, which has often some challenging thoughts on issues that we encounter on a daily basis.

On the left side (or what we call the side menu) below the heading "Church Ministries" we find Small Group Bible Studies, which has information about the on-going in-home Bible studies. Here you will find the names and contact info of the people leading these studies, and the name of the study they currently are involved in. Please, do not hesitate to give them a call if you want to join one of the Home Bible studies!

Not all of the menu items are working at this time yet, but the web site is just a work in progress. One of the items that we are close to be putting together is the Audio download area, available on the top menu and the side menu. This will enable you to download the sermon of previous Sundays either on your computer or on your Ipad (YES!!!). This way, when you are on vacation for 4 weeks in e.g. the Netherlands, you can still listen to the sermons of you favorite pastor! Oh, the joys of technology!

Hopefully we will be announcing next time some new areas on your web site. Use it and share it with your neighbors and friends.

Rien Groenewoud

Nursing Home Schedule

March

Laural Crest Manor

Leader: Myer Lanting

Pianist: Nancy Osmandson

Support Family: Jake Oosterman

April

Oak Valley Care Center

Leader: Bill Hoekstra

Pianist: Carolyn Hoekstra

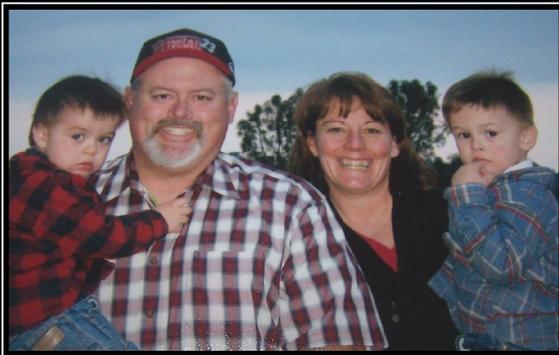
Support Family: Dirk Van Konynenburg

Little Lambs Schedule – March & April 2007



Clary L		3- 18- 07		847	6889	
Ming L		*4- 8- 07		848	1420	
Michelle T		4- 1- 07		847	3520	
Caroline H		*3- 25- 07		847	3454	
Ellie H		4- 15- 07		847	5872	
Julie V		4- 22- 07		883	9193	
Samantha F		4- 29- 07		874	3474	
Nancy O				847	6673	
Mindy J	3- 4- 07			845	8216	
Sue Rich	3- 11- 07			847	2981	

* Dates are out of sequence due to conflicting schedules.



Leonard Family Spotlight

One of the newest families to our congregation is the Leonard family. Todd & Glenda started attending CCRC in July of 2006 and became members in December. They started attending after one of Glenda’s friends had told her about our church.

Todd was born on June 11, 1962 in Concord, CA. He grew up in Walnut Creek where he played football and wrestled. He graduated from Berkley in 1985 and is currently the IT manager and assistant controller for a truck company in Manteca. He has been with this company for almost 14 years. Glenda was born November 14, 1966 in Exeter, CA. She grew up in Madera and graduated in 1985. She has an A.S. degree in fire science from Columbia College. Glenda currently is a fire Captain with CDF. She started working for CDF three days after graduating from high school. She became a Captain in 2001 and currently works at the Baseline camp in Jamestown.

Todd and Glenda met at a cousin’s wedding in 1991. They were both in the wedding party. They had a long distance relationship where Glenda lived in Fresno and Todd lived in Pleasant Hill. They married exactly one year after they met and honeymooned in Hawaii. The Leonard’s have two young boys, Jack and Matthew. Jack was born in Modesto on November 17, 2003. He is three years old and loves to ride on his quad runner, likes shooting baskets and is the best chicken catcher in the county. Matthew was born on April 19, 2005, also in Modesto. He is one and a half and likes to jump in water puddles, play with his brother and play with Thomas the Train.

The family lives on a ranch where they love to raise their Boer goats. They also race go karts on their property and enjoy their children. Todd is a big fan of Nascar and they have attended many races in various states. They also like to camp and fish. When the Leonard’s were asked how they would like to be involved in our church they said they would like to participate as much as they can. They would truly like to meet new friends and fellowship with other church members. Todd’s favorite book in the Bible is Job, because no matter what happened to him, he praised the Lord and never lost his faith.

We would like to thank the Leonard family for sharing their story so we can get to know them better. We would also like to extend a HUGE welcome to them into our church family!

March Birthdays

2 Jeff Jongsma
 3 Brian Haan
 10 Emily Muirhead
 15 Jolene Bylsma
 15 Myron Kamper
 15 Dorie Van Nieuwenhuyzen
 16 Jordan Erro
 18 Lindsey Vierra
 20 Megan Dickson
 21 Melissa Dickson
 22 Stephanie De Visser
 22 Phyllis McCoy
 25 Jane Erro
 25 Charles Murphy
 26 Eldon Aeilts
 27 Fred Rich
 28 Alice Roest

April Birthdays

2 Brum De Visser
 2 Michael Lin
 4 Brittney Tanis
 6 Jessica Myers
 7 Patricia Myers
 7 Brenda Redd
 8 Melanie De Visser
 13 Donna Bandsma
 13 Caroline Hoekstra
 16 Zachary Van Konynenburg
 19 Myer Lanting
 19 Ursula Buescher
 24 John Erro
 25 Heidi De Bie
 25 Brian Timmerman
 27 Mike Osmundson
 29 Brett Taylor
 29 Rachael Taylor
 30 Weston Hebenstreit

Anniversaries**March**

3 Walter & Lenneke Bulk
 3 Dr. Ralph & Margitta Sikkema
 5 Frank & Deanna Rossier
 11 Leonard & Kathy Terpstra
 13 Henry & Lena Burtschi
 20 Willie & Jolene Bylsma
 22 Tom & Susan Bird

**April**

3 Darrel & Sylvia Ruiten
 5 Mike & Nancy Osmundson
 23 Tony & Marie Dykxhoorn
 26 Donnie & Joellene Schwandt
 29 Lee & Alice Roest

March 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>4</p> <p>Sunday School 9:15 H.S. Education 9:30 Adult SS Class 9:30 Worship Service 10:30 Rest Home Visit 2:30 Married & Lovin' It 5:00 Home Hosted Small Groups</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Cadets 7:00-8:30</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Coffee Break/Story Hour/Child Care 9:30 Worship Committee Mtg 7:00</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Men's Life 12:00 Youth Group 7:00-8:30 College & Career 7:00 Choir Practice 7:30</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Men's Bible Study 8:00 Worship Team Practice 10:00</p>
<p>11</p> <p>Daylight Savings Sunday School 9:15 H.S. Education 9:30 Adult SS Class 9:30 Choir Practice 9:45 Worship Service 10:30 Home Hosted Small Groups</p>	<p>12</p> <p>Gems 6:30-8:00</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Coffee Break/Story Hour/Child Care 9:30 Deacons Mtg 6:00 Council Mtg 7:00</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Men's Life 12:00 Youth Group 7:00-8:30 College & Career 7:00 Choir Practice 7:30</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Prayer Ministry Meeting 9:00 a.m.</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17 St. Patrick's Day Men's Bible Study 8:00 Worship Team Practice 10:00</p>
<p>18</p> <p>Sunday School 9:15 H.S. Education 9:30 Adult SS Class 9:30 Worship Service 10:30 Home Hosted Small Groups</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Cadets 7:00-8:30</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Coffee Break/Story Hour/Child Care 9:30 Education Committee Mtg 7:00</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Men's Life 12:00 Youth Group 7:00-8:30 College & Career 7:00 Choir Practice 7:30</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Library Work Day 3:00</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Men's Bible Study 8:00 Worship Team Practice 10:00</p>
<p>25</p> <p>Sunday School 9:15 H.S. Education 9:30 Adult SS Class 9:30 Choir Practice 9:45 Worship Service 10:30 Home Hosted Small Groups</p>	<p>26</p> <p>Gems 6:30-8:00</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Coffee Break/Story Hour/Child Care 9:30 Deacons Mtg 6:00 Elders Mtg 7:00</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Men's Life 12:00 Youth Group 7:00-8:30 College & Career 7:00 Choir Practice 7:30</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Gem's Camp (5th—8th graders)</p>	<p>31</p> <p>Gem's Camp (5th—8th graders) Men's Bible Study 8:00 Worship Team Practice 10:00</p>

April 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Palm Sunday Gem's Camp Sunday School 9:15 H.S. & Adult SS 9:30 Worship Service 10:30 Rest Home Visit 2:30 Married & Loving It 5:00 Home Hosted Small Groups	2 Cadets 7:00-8:30	3 Coffee Break/Story Hour/Child Care 9:30 Worship Committee Mtg 7:00	4 NO Men's Life Youth Group 7:00-8:30 College & Career 7:00 Choir Practice 7:30	5	6 Good Friday Communion Service 7:00 p.m.	7 Men's Bible Study 8:00 Worship Team Practice 10:00
8 Easter Sunday Sunrise Service 6:30 NO Sunday School NO H.S. 9:30 NO Adult SS Class Worship Service 10:30 Home Hosted Small Groups	9 Gems 6:30-8:00	10 Coffee Break/Story Hour/Child Care 9:30 Deacons Mtg 6:00	11 Men's Life 12:00 Youth Group 7:00-8:30 College & Career 7:00 NO Choir Practice	12	13	14 Men's Bible Study 8:00 Worship Team Practice 10:00
15 Sunday School 9:15 H.S. Education 9:30 Adult SS Class 9:30 Worship Service 10:30 Home Hosted Small Groups	16 Cadets 7:00-8:30	17 Coffee Break/Story Hour/Child Care 9:30	18 Men's Life 12:00 Youth Group 7:00-8:30 College & Career 7:00	19	20	21 Men's Bible Study 8:00 Worship Team Practice 10:00
22 Sunday School 9:15 H.S. Education 9:30 Adult SS Class 9:30 Worship Service 10:30 Home Hosted Small Groups	23 Gems 6:30-8:00 (last regular meeting)	24 Coffee Break/Story Hour/Child Care 9:30 Elders Mtg 7:00	25 Men's Life 12:00 Youth Group 7:00-8:30 College & Career 7:00	26 Library Work Day 3:00	27	28 Men's Bible Study 8:00 Worship Team Practice 10:00
29 Sunday School 9:15 H.S. Education 9:30 Adult SS Class 9:30 Worship Service 10:30 Home Hosted Small Groups	30					

Celebrate Jesus

In America, unchurched people who come to Christ usually go through a long "preconversion phase" some lasting a year or two. Why? When unchurched people walk into our building, they're at a different starting point than the unchurched of fifty years ago. The truly unchurched are relativists and cannot perceive how Scripture could be authoritative in their lives.

They need a safe and often long process, in which they build confidence in the church, establish the authority of Scripture, and cement relationships. We have to honor that phase. Unchurched people today distrust the church, and they need to come and just watch for a while.

The biggest difference between a church successful in outreach and one that is not is willingness to begin with people, and patience with them during the early stages of spiritual formation. A church will fail if it tries to assimilate today's unchurched person only through events and programs. The effective glue is relationships—friends bringing friends and including them in church life. Research has shown that of ten people who visit a church and stay, nine were brought by a friend. It would make sense then to invest our efforts in helping one another to bring and include our friends in our spiritual journey, not just church events.

A question I would like to ask each of you is: "What would your friends be most interested in to come and hear? Or, what questions are they asking?" I would like use your responses to create messages geared toward people without church experience on special occasions like a "Friendship Sunday." In the weeks following, we could make one call to that guest, but we would make three phone calls to the bringer and ask, "Are there specific issues we can help you with?"

The unchurched will come back to a church that feels safe. For them, this is the most important ingredient. If they don't feel safe with you, they will not stay around long enough to hear the truth.

Here are a few ways we make unchurched guests feel safe:

We explain what we mean. The number one complaint among the unchurched is they can't understand what's going on or what preachers are saying. We try to make no assumptions about what visitors will understand, and we work hard to talk the language of those unfamiliar with church.

We explain why. Postmoderns resist directive-type communication. I've found it works better to speak persuasively, sometimes taking twice as long to explain a point. "If you believe this, so-and-so occurs; if you believe that, such-and-such happens."

We don't rush people. People feel safe when we love them and don't try to force decisions for Christ too soon.

Don't be surprised by their problems. Unchurched people assume churches don't want people with sin problems. They assume those who come to church are perfect—or hypocritical enough to act like they are. We all know we aren't perfect, in fact our church is a hospital for sinners. When your jaw doesn't drop at their sins, they feel safe. When the pastor is transparent in sermons, it gives seekers permission to have problems.

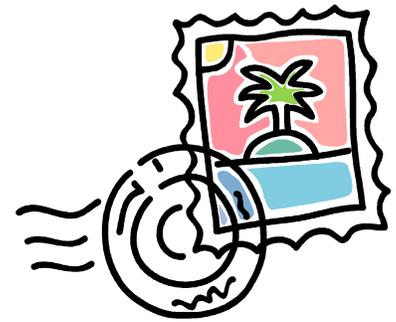
We give nonthreatening invitations. We don't give altar calls at church, because many unchurched people have seen them on TV and don't like them. Still, we often give an invitation for a "fresh start" and offer them a Bible and follow-up. We gently encourage them and nudge them closer to Jesus. We're interested in people making decisions that are theirs, not imposing our wishes upon them. I hope as we "Celebrate Jesus" and what makes him attractive to so many people over these next months, people will be bringers-and-includers and get their friends to a church they know is relevant and safe. And sooner or later, a good percentage of those friends will return.

Maybe we've been making this harder than it really is.



Hello everyone!

Well, I am living in Chino, CA and I am still getting used to the traffic and clutter down here! It's interesting though that I live now where my parents were raised and started our family. The area can be breathtaking (when the smog breaks) and living an hour from the mountains and an hour from the beach means there is always something to do.



I work at a salon in Chino Hills where I do facials, waxing, and eyelash extensions. I've been working there for 2 years now and I enjoy getting to know so many new and interesting people. My husband, Steve, has his own business doing concrete and masonry, so I also spend some time keeping track of different aspects of that. I am still taking classes at the local college too. It is more of a personal goal than a professional, so I'm taking my time there.

We are attending and in the process of transferring our memberships to Crosspoint CRC in Chino. It took awhile for both of us to get used to a new church, and agree on one, but we have now found our church home. Crosspoint went through a rough patch last year, but the Lord used it to draw us and many other people closer together. While we do have 2 other pastors, our church is in the process of searching for a new head pastor.

We spend a lot of our free time working on our house. We've now realized that it is a continuous job and we might never finish! Steve is involved in a few different sports leagues and I just watch. Actually to socialize, but he likes to think that I watch!

Well I hope to see you all soon and God Bless!

Adri Douma (Lanting)

Church Cleaning

The church is so nice and clean. We have had compliments on how it looks. I would like to thank all the volunteers who are doing such a great job, it is paying off. Some of the money we are saving will go towards remodeling the bathrooms (which is in the works as we speak) and new carpet. Once again Thank You and keep up the good work!!! If there is anyone who would like to help with the cleaning, there are a few areas we could still use someone. Call Myra Salie @ 847-3737.

A Family of Believers Coming Together for HIM!

Ephesians 4:12-13

“To prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God...attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.”

God calls us to work together to become one in Christ, to build each other up. We as a church family can be tremendous support to one another as well as working together to further His kingdom. For us to do this we need to serve together and be together regularly.

As a lot of you know in the past year we have changed how our church serves. For many years we had “service groups”. Everyone from the congregation was assigned to a “service group” each year and the group was given a 3 month time period where they were responsible for serving for our congregation. The “service groups” worked for many years, but now we have moved on and have taken a new look at what God is calling our church to do and how we can do it more efficiently.

Our church now has committees or teams in all the areas where service is needed, (for more information on these areas, refer to the *Church Ministries and Opportunities to Serve pamphlet*, provided in the foyer). All of these areas are ways for the people of our congregation to get involved right here at CCRC, by using the gifts that God has provided us to help our church function as a body of believers. The changes that have been made to how we serve at CCRC have allowed everyone to serve where they are gifted and where they have a passion. It seems to be working out very well.

There is one other area that our past “service group” provided us with. It was the organizing of congregational activities/fellowship and service projects. Our new layout has that in mind and we are eager to continue with it and make it even more active. Doing your part takes some brainstorming and some planning, but rest assured it won’t happen very often, so don’t get worried yet.

This is how it works. Each small group that meets in our congregation will be assigned a 3 month period of time to plan a congregational activity, service project or help with an already scheduled event to provide the service needed to make it happen. An example would be, the Education Committee provided service for the Kick Off Sunday BBQ this past September. They organized and planned the event. We also had the Men’s Life Group in charge of serving refreshments at the Christmas program this December. Our most recent activity is through Coffee Break. These ladies are working on collecting and donating clothes and shoes to teenage mothers for them to continue going to school. They are opening this service project up to the entire congregation (for more information on this refer to the article on donating to a service project on page 19).

Below is a list for the 2007 year to help people start brainstorming and getting prepared for their time to serve. As you can see, with the number of small groups in our congregation, you will not be required to do this very often. What we are hoping is that your group will take this opportunity to really brainstorm and come up with something that will bring our congregation together. It can be fun and fellowship (bowling or a Sunday potluck) or serious (serving meals in a homeless shelter). Whatever your group’s choice, we ask that you do something that the entire congregation can be a part of. Of course we don’t require they are a part of it but we want the opportunity for everyone to be involved.

January-March	Coffee Break
April-June	Youth Group & College and Career
July-September	Adult Sunday School & Education Committee
October-December	Home Hosted Small Group-Ralph & Margitta Sikkema

If there are any questions, please call Becky @ 847-9154.



Congregation-wide service project headed up by Coffee Break:



Robin's Clothes Closet

Assisting pregnant and parenting teenage moms.

Donations needed: New or gently used school clothes and shoes, or cash/gift card donations.

Sizes needed: Various sizes 1-16

For more information, contact Robin Snyder @ 847-3225

For more information about service projects or congregational activities refer to the article on page 18.

NURSERY SCHEDULE MARCH - APRIL

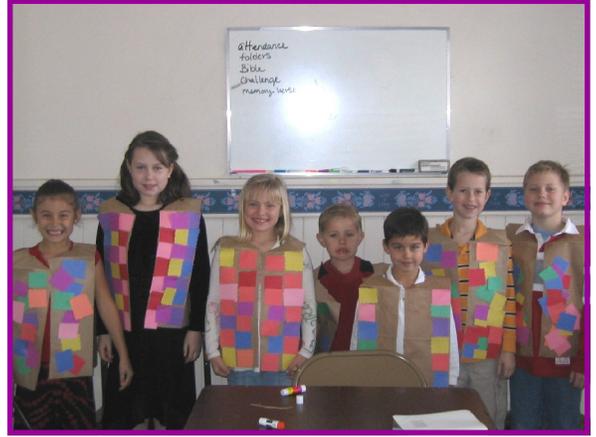
MARCH 4	HOLLY BALLARD DEANNA ROSSIER	ANDREW MUIRHEAD
MARCH 11	TIFFANI STRUIKSMA JOHANNA DICKSON	BRITTNEY TANIS
MARCH 18	HOLLY BALLARD LORI SMITH	BRETT TAYLOR
MARCH 25	JENNY STUEVE AMY OSMUNDSON	EMILY JOHNSON
APRIL 1	KIM JONGSMA BECKY HOEKSTRA	JOYCELYN TANIS
APRIL 8	ELLIE HOEKSTRA SAMANTHA FRANSCCELLA	ANDREW MUIRHEAD
APRIL 15	TIFFANI STRUIKSMA JACK HOEKSTRA	BRITTNEY TANIS
APRIL 22	LAUREN TANIS HOLLY BALLARD	BRETT TAYLOR
APRIL 29	MARGE JAASMA GRACE WESTERHOFF	EMILY JOHNSON

Sunday School

Helping to grow a new generation of children who understand grace!

As we continue our journey through the Bible, we realize time and again that life without Christ is hard. We are currently studying the Old Testament and the hardships and testing of faith that the people had to go through!

Since Christ had not come yet, God tested their faith in grand ways. There was a fear of God in the descendants of Abraham. And yet, today, we don't have to be afraid of God. We have to focus on the grace we have been given through Christ! We can be saved from our sin because of the sacrifice Christ has made for us. For me, this realization on a day to day basis can cause chills down my spine!



Here are some exciting milestones for Sunday School:



- The Kindergarten through 2nd grade class has raised enough to buy a pig for a family in India. For our offering we are raising money for CRWRC (Christian Reformed World Relief Committee). In India, a pig can be a real life piggy bank. Poor families can raise a pig and for extra cash sell its offspring if necessary. Each family that receives a pig agrees to give one offspring back to CRWRC so that they may give another family this real life piggy bank.

- It has been exciting for the teachers to understand how much God prepared his people for the coming of Christ. We have also been trying to pass on this teaching to the kids as we realize how Christ and the need for Christ is a part of every story in the Bible. The people of Israel needed Christ as much as we need him today!

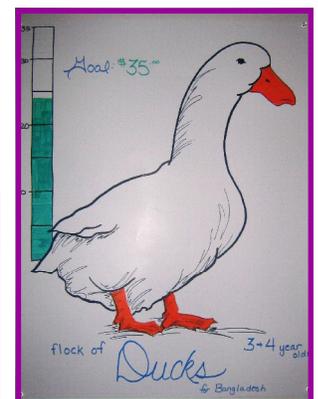
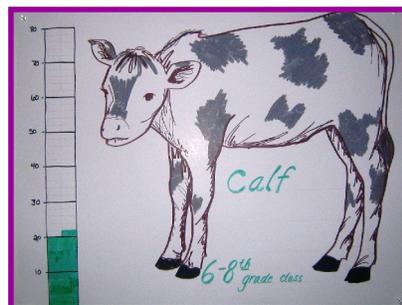
- The other classes are raising money for 2 calves and a flock of ducks. They are on their way to reaching their goal by the end of the year!!!

We want to thank all the parents for your commitment in bringing your kids. It is truly a blessing to see your children's smiling and cheerful faces on Sunday morning. Please contact me if you have any comments or suggestions for the Sunday School Program.

May all the Glory and Honor be given to God!

In Christ's Service,

Ellie Hoekstra
Co-superintendent - Sunday School





Dear Oakdale CCRC family,

Hello everyone! I was asked to write a little update on my life and so here it goes. Tom and I just celebrated our 1 year anniversary in December which is hard to believe. I still can't believe I'm married and living down here in Tulare, time just goes by so fast. Well, I have been working at the local hospital in Tulare for a year now in the ER as an LVN and am finishing up school to be an RN which I'll be done in May. So it's been really busy for me and I'm

so excited to finally be done with school. Tom still works for Wells Fargo managing dairy loans. He travels to Idaho for a week every few months but he really enjoys it. It's been a little bit of a stressful year for him considering milk prices weren't so good. We also bought a house in Tulare last summer and we have had such a great time making it our home together.

We joined First Visalia CRC Church and well we are trying to find more time to get involved but the days are just too short sometimes. I just started playing piano in the morning and evening services. I was a little nervous the first time because that church is so big but it went well. It felt good to sit at the piano again. I do miss Oakdale Church because it really is a family there, I miss the closeness to everyone but I know part of that is because a lot of you watched me grow up there. I find at the church I'm attending now we kind of get lost among all the people and you stick to the group you know. I know that just takes time though and involvement. We also joined a small group bible study which has been so wonderful. We have it every Monday night and we are actually just reading through the whole Bible. It's been a great learning experience and we have really connected with the people in our group. One great thing about this area is that there are a lot of young couples to hang out with and they have really taken us in and making us comfortable to this area.

All in all God has blessed us and fulfilled our lives so much here in Tulare. Although it's Tulare and probably not my first choice of areas to live, God has been continuously working through our lives and we are so grateful for all that we have and what our lives have become. So if any of you are passing through we are only 2 miles off of the 99 and our coffee pot can easily be turned on! We hope to see you soon.

Sincerely,

Laura Koolhaas (Bylsma)

Easter Preparation



Sunday, April 1	Palm Sunday Worship Service	10:30 p.m.
Monday, April 2 - Friday, April 6	Week of Passion	
Friday, April 6	Good Friday Communion Service	7:00 p.m.
Sunday, April 8	Easter Sunday Sunrise Service	6:30 a.m.
	(United Methodist Church)	
Sunday, April 8	CCRC Easter Service	10:30 a.m.

ALL POINTS BULLETIN



WANTED....IN MEXICO! **YOU!**

(Yes, that means YOU! no....don't look at the next guy... I'm talking to YOU!)

When? June 11th 2007 (Monday) to June 16th 2007 (Saturday)

Requirements: You must be alive.... and breathing. You must be of sound mind...(well.....sort of sound is OK too!) and you must have an open heart to let GOD use you and the gifts He blessed you with in a way you cannot begin to imagine. HE will use even the least of our talents...to further His kingdom!...and believe me....you do NOT want to miss it!!

This experience will rock your world! You know you want more information....so just talk to Brenda Struiksma...or call her at 765-2307.

All ages are invited to participate. So...grab your spouse, your family, maybe a friend or two, or how about that long lost cousin you haven't seen for awhile....& come on.....let's go change some lives!

For more information about Rancho Santa Marta, please see article on pages 24 and 25.

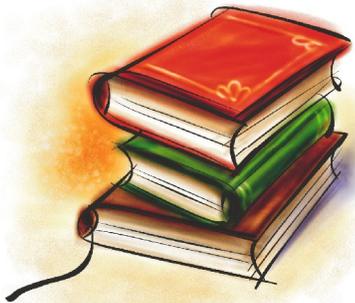
College and Career

Here's what's happening in the College and Career bible Study on Wednesday nights! We start off with a great meal, prepared by Ming Lin-and sometimes Ellie Hoekstra (Thank you Ming and Ellie for your commitment to our group! Everyone appreciates these home-cooked meals!). During the meal we have a time of catching up with each other. We have been through the book of John and are currently going through the book of Acts. We use the Warren Wiersbe's "Be" book series (I really recommend these books to *anyone* wanting to get a great overview, some insight and history to any book of the bible!). Then we have a discussion time-we've had some really terrific discussions that help make everything in the scriptures life-applicable. For anyone interested in joining our group, please know there is no 'homework' - I know that you are all very busy! Also if you can only come a few times a month or even once a month you won't be 'behind' or not be able to catch up...every week is a new discussion and you can join in at any time!

My hope for the future of this group is to get connected with other groups of like-minded Christians - here in Oakdale and in Modesto. To have some fellowship with others in this age range. Our next study will be in the book of Revelations. Please pray for these 'kids' as they are in the thick of this world, trying to live for Christ, while the world around them doesn't usually share their value systems or even tolerate their desire to live for our Savior! If you have any questions about this group, please give me a call at 845-9145.

In HIS service,
Danielle Fontaine

Library Committee Report – Feb. '07



We have had the pleasure of introducing a few people to the library in the last few months. If you haven't visited us, please stop by to "check us out". Michelle Tanis came to our rescue and has entered all the new books in the computer. We will be able to get books processed and placed on the shelves at a much faster pace now. Thank you very much to Michelle for her service!

We really do have a lot of good informational books as well as many wonderful works of fiction. We also have videos for youth and children and Bible Study Video series. You may find something you would like to view in your small group Bible study. It makes our job seem more worthwhile when people actually check books and videos out!

We hope to see you there soon!

Struiksuma News

We need to start the January newsletter sharing about our Christmas at the ranch. As we do every year we choose the children's names randomly to form our Christmas day groups. The kids look forward to this day where they get special attention with the groups they are placed in. We ended up hosting 6 children along with Tali & Rocio and their daughter **and** Jerónimo, Reyna with their two daughters, Joy and Maxx **and** us 6. We loaded up (really loaded up) a van and headed for the beach. Christmas at the beach in Mexico! It was a very nice day and we had a great time walking the coast. We were able to keep the kids for lunch and dinner after which they reluctantly went back to their homes.



We have been meeting regularly with seven of our teens at our home, having prayer meetings, teen theme talks, outreaches in the community, sharing at churches using mimes, etc. Our desire is to see these young people develop a passion for

Christ. We want to offer them opportunities

where their faith will grow. Many of our teens who leave the ranch have a hard time adjusting to the world. They haven't dealt with the junk of their past and the world and its ways suck them right in. We need to pray for these young people that God would help them heal their inner wounds and then grow into spiritually mature Christians. This is our hope and dream for them.



The small but mighty group! Hooray for the mighty eight from Anaheim CRC! The group was small but much was accomplished. Thanks for the help. We always need help the week-end before our February Missions Emphasis Month starts. The ladies were involved in the props department. This year the decorating committee wanted a 16 ½ feet 3-D cardboard cross made in front of the chapel. Quite a task but they accomplished it. We'll get a picture of it next newsletter. The guys placed some cabinets in the new girls' dorm and were involved in an animal project for Rod. The project was a storage shed for chopped hay. Rod bought a used hay shredder/chopper which shreds the bale down to a substance that the cows or sheep will eat without any waste.



The situation for the livestock right now is pretty serious. As of the writing of this letter we have had less than an inch of rain at the ranch. There are enough bales in the barn to feed the animals for another month. Right now they are eating the dry weeds in the fields from last year. We desperately need some rain. The fields are currently being planted so now we need to pray that the heavens open up and drench Santa Marta!

As always it is a test of faith to be here. We thank-you for your prayers and support.

No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly. Psalm 84:11c

Bless the Lord in all you do,
The Struiksmas



27th Annual Golden Bear Pinewood Derby



Saturday, February 10th, marked the 27th Annual Golden Bear Pinewood Derby. Seven churches with over 125 cadet cars and 13 counselor cars were off to the races. Trophies were given for the fastest cars in the junior division (4th grade and under), senior cadets (5th grade and over), and the counselor division. Awards were also given for the best looking cars and there were some great ones out there.



We started off the night with a spaghetti dinner (proceeds pay for Cadet camporees) prepared by the many clubs within the Golden Bear Council. Our counselors and cadets were there to help with preparing, serving, clearing tables, emptying garbage and of course cleaning up too. Thank you to all who helped make the dinner a success.

The evening progressed into the old gym at Ripon Christian High School where the track was set up and the bleachers were full of kids, parents and grandparents.

The kids from our cadet club have been working hard on their cars. Each boy is given the same block of wood and is able to draw out and design what he feels will be the fastest car out there. The boys put lead in their cars to weight them down, they sanded, painted and decorated them and were ready to go.

We had the privilege of entering eleven cadet cars and 2 counselor cars in this derby. All in all the boys did very well with Chance Bender

making it to the finals. Joshua Tanis made it, not only to the finals, but received an honorable Mention award for speed. We also had a junior cadet, Bryce Dickman, who received an Honorable Mention award for best looking car. Congratulations to everyone!

The boys are also going to have an opportunity to race their cars one more time. The cadet club will hold their own race right here at church, where the boys can race their cars against the cars in their own cadet club.



Good luck boys!

COUNCIL NOTES - JANUARY

- Accepted transfer of membership of Tony Rosales and two children, Toby and Anna Maria from the Escalon CRC.
- Approved the transfer of membership of Anne Pierini to the Escalon CRC.
- Reviewed the Thanksgiving and December offerings. Pastor Gary led in a prayer of thanksgiving for the generous giving.
- Building Ministry Team will begin a detailed plan for the remodeling and refurbishing of the bathrooms.
- Received written reports from Pastor Gary and Tim Fontaine on their work.
- Put together names for consideration for the Pastoral Search Team.
- Approved the formation of a Children's Choir to be led by Mindy Johnson and Michelle Tanis.

COUNCIL NOTES – FEBRUARY

- Approved the budget reports for December of 2006 and January of 2007.
- Heard testimonies of faith from Mindy and Emily Johnson and approved them for membership. Mindy and Emily will be making Profession of Faith on February 25 and also Emily, Bryce, Drew, and Colby will be baptized on that Sunday. Praise the Lord.
- Next Classis meeting will be March 6 in Merced with Pastor Gary and Bryan Kamper as our church delegates and John Erro and Myer Lanting as alternates.
- Approved transferring \$5,000 from the General Fund to the Bathroom Renovation Fund.
- Reviewed bids for our bathroom renovations and for new church signs and will get other bids for these projects.
- Received written reports from Pastor Gary and Tim Fontaine on their work.
- Approved celebrating Communion approximately once per month and will try to have a set Sunday each month where we can also do the Baptisms and Professions of Faith. This came as a recommendation from the Worship Ministry Team since many people, when they are involved in Children and Worship, Little Lambs, Nursery, or are absent, are now missing Communion because of it's infrequency.
- Approved purchasing a used professional style video editing system for \$1,000.
- Approved the hiring of Mindy Johnson as Administrative Assistant.
- Finalized names for the 'Transition Team' for our pastoral search process.

Greeter's Schedule

March 4	Darryl & Sylvia Ruiten	April 1	Fred & Susan Rich
11	Darryl & Sylvia Ruiten	8	Fred & Susan Rich
18	Kurt & Becky Hoekstra	15	Tony & Marie Dykxhoorn
25	Kurt & Becky Hoekstra	22	Tony & Marie Dykxhoorn
		29	Bill & Caroline Hoekstra

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