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THE GRAPEVINE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Bang the drums . . . Blow the trumpets . . . Clash the cymbals and CATCH THE SPIRIT OF LAMB OF GOD!

by Ron Tvedt, R.C. Fleeman and others on the CATCH THE SPIRIT Steering Committee

We are approaching the beginning of a new year ... a time when we as a congregation are usually asked to consider our financial support of the church. Typically, words like Stewardship and Discipleship are tossed around, but this year we are introducing a new concept that's bigger than those two words ... we are inviting everyone to CATCH THE SPIRIT OF LAMB OF GOD!

While you will hear about the need to provide financial support for Lamb of God and its various ministries, you will also hear about the uniqueness of Lamb of God and what it means to be Boldly Inclusive, Intentionally Challenging and Joyfully Christian.

In January we will hear about the opportunity to give of our financial resources, but we will also hear about what it means when we say we are boldly inclusive, intentionally challenging and joyfully Christian. It is one of the reasons that we are attracting new members. They feel that Lamb of God allows people to ask honest and searching questions about matters of faith.

One goal of CATCH THE SPIRIT ... is to have every person who is part of our church family attend a dinner in their neighborhood. During the month of January we hope to have 30 or more of these neighborhood dinners, hosted by members of the Lamb of God church family in their homes. This plan includes everyone who identifies with our church family ... even those who don't live here year round. You will be hearing more about this in the days ahead.

In February, we will invite everyone to EMBRACE THE SPIRIT OF LAMB OF GOD as we hear about the missions and ministries of our church and the impact that they have in the community around us. Each of us will be given an opportunity to become involved in a ministry or mission that appeals to us.

In March we will be encouraged to SHARE THE SPIRIT OF LAMB OF GOD by inviting others to join us at worship. Each of us will be asked to identify one friend, family member or co-worker who isn't already involved in a Church and then invite them to join us on a particular Sunday. We have something good at Lamb of God and we want to share it with others.

CATCH THE SPIRIT OF LAMB OF GOD in an emphasis design to move us beyond "church as usual", encouraging us to embrace the opportunities to share not just financial resources but our time, talent, experience and wisdom with our church family and our community.

So let's bang the drums, blow the trumpets, clash the symbols and CATCH THE SPIRIT OF LAMB OF GOD!

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Ron Tvedt - Deb Staub

THANKS FROM INTERFAITH CAREGIVERS!!

Bagzilla for December will be Sunday, the 4th. A coupon good for 20% off at California Pizza Kitchen at Coconut Point on Thursday, December 15 will be with the bag. The 20% of your bill will go to CAREGIVERS; you must take the coupon with you to the restaurant.

As this year comes to an end, we at CAREGIVERS want to thank all of you at LOG for your help during the entire year! We appreciate the food donated and other help that we receive from Lamb of God.

PROGRESSIVE DINNER . . . mark your calendars for the annual progressive dinner . . . Saturday, February 25, 2012. Watch for more information in A BUNCH OF NEWS and the next newsletter.

HELP NEEDED AT THE 9:00 A.M. SERVICE

We are looking for people to help greet, usher, assist with communion, assist with offering, children to help acolyte and people to help at the welcome desk at the 9:00 a.m. service. If you would like to help in any way please contact Barbara Tvedt at 267-7271.

THERE WILL BE NO DOMINOES/POT LUCK IN DECEMBER

JESUS BIRTHDAY TREE

THE HOLIDAYS ARE JUST AROUND THE CORNER AND THE **JESUS BIRTHDAY TREE** IS HERE. We have received names from the Head Start Program and the trees have been up since November 20th. We encourage you to take one of the lamb ornaments from the tree (each ornament has a child's name and what they would like for Christmas), write your name on the list under the tree, then return the wrapped gift to the church. **Make sure the lamb tag is attached to the gift when you return it.** Gifts must be returned no later than Sunday, December 11th. If you have any questions please contact Barbara Tvedt at 239- 267-7271.

LAMB OF GOD BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Bill Monsees: President - designconcepts@comcast.net

Judith Olson: Vice President - judithgran@arvig.net

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THANK YOU ... FEEDING THE 5000 VOLUNTEERS

Feeding the 5000 broke all records this year. The need was greater this year than any previous year since our Thanksgiving outreach began. At last count, **9600 meals were delivered on Thanksgiving Day**. There is no way to adequately thank the hundreds of volunteers who made this happen but we do want all of them to know that their efforts are most appreciated. We need to make special mention of some ... Tom and Anne Mullins, Art and Susan Nicoletti, Cheryl Frogge, Kayla Frogge, Kelly Sonnanstine, Karen Sonnanstine and all others who served on the committee.

Perhaps this quote from a letter that came to the church this week says it best ...

"I would like to thank all of you personally for the wonderful work you did in feeding over 9,000 meals to the needy. Of those 9,000 about 40 of the families belonged to [my school]. It is always tough when we have a vacation to know if my "kids" will have food on the table. Thank you for helping our entire community this past Thanksgiving.

... from a Lee County school principal

THANK YOU!

Kassie Monsees Graduation

We joyfully announce the graduation of Kassie Monsees!

Kassie will be graduating Magna Cum Laude from the University of Tampa on Saturday, December 17, with a BA in Electronic Media Arts & Technology and minors in Advertising and Communications. (She is very excited to be graduating a semester early!)

Please help us celebrate this amazing time on January 15 here at Lamb of God! We will have a cookout after church from 12-2pm in the Fellowship Hall. Everyone is invited!

Please RSVP to (813) 419-3566 or kassieloo@live.com by January 8th!

"It's been a long journey, and I wouldn't have made it through without the help of my family and friends at Lamb of God! Every one of you have supported me through almost every major event in my life, and I really hope you can come out and help me celebrate in January!" ... *Kassie*

Board of Trustees Openings

There will be three openings on the 2012 LOG Board of Trustees. The nominating committee asks that active members give prayerful consideration to offering their service as Board members. The primary qualification is that you are an active member and have been a member for at least one year by the annual congregational meeting on Feb. 12. We encourage both year-round and part-time members to step forward. An orientation meeting will be held with potential nominees, including anyone who interested in becoming a Board member in the future, in January. Please contact Geronimo Mulholland if you are interested by sending an email to mulhollandg@me.com or calling 239.810.3463. Please contact Geronimo by January 1, 2012.

The Life Of Jesus, Our Example

by Pastor Walter Fohs

GOD AMONG US THE LIFE OF JESUS, OUR EXAMPLE, MODEL AND TEACHER

Matthew 1:23

GOD IN US THE WORK OF JESUS IN YOU

Colossians 1:27

The more popular and well used word for the approaching Winter season is "Christmas". That works well for the secular world and over the years has become more than a Christian celebration, but also a vehicle for "saving" slumping commercial marketplaces.



A better word for Christians living in the 21st Century might be the more descriptive and less used word, "Incarnation", which means that God has put on flesh and chosen to actually live with people. Not only to "live among us" but also to be an example, model and teacher to show us how to live with each other and the planet. Jesus is my neighbor next door and my neighbor who lives on the other side of the planet.

Christians are invited to not only "believe" in Jesus but also to live like Jesus, and to grow the "Christ Consciousness" that lives in all of us. That makes each Christmas season an opportunity to review what we have learned from this current year of Jesus living in us and then to prepare for what Jesus will teach us in a new year of faith and service to our neighbors.

SAYING GOOD BYE ... On December 16th, Lamb of God will be saying good bye to **Deb Staub**, one of our valued employees. Many will not know who Deb Staub is but we have all benefited from her work over the last couple of years. She has been a teacher in the Preschool for several years, but has also served the church on a part-time basis. If you have attended a pot luck dinner or adult education event in the last two years, Deb most likely set up the room with tables and chairs and other items that were needed. She's made sure our bathrooms were ready for Sunday mornings and that our kitchens were fine cleaned after a big event, like this year's Feeding the 5000. Additionally, she has come to the church most evenings around 10:00 pm to make sure that our buildings were secured. Our prayers and best wishes go with Deb as she journeys to Baltimore to be with family.

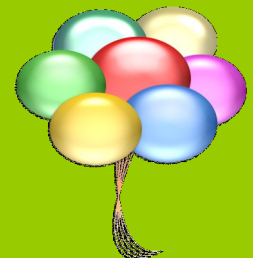
As she prepares to move, we are looking for one or two individuals to step in and take her place. If you are interested, or know anyone who is interested in an on-call, part time position of this nature, please contact R.C. Fleeman at (239) 9267-3525 ext. 222 or send an email to office@lambogodchurch.net.

HAPPY, HAPPY ... IN DECEMBER WE HONOR:

Judy Beaumont who will celebrate her birthday on December 10th

Robert and Peggy Jones who will celebrate their 60th anniversary on December 26th

And may Christmas bring everyone the gifts of love, laughter, and the blessing of peace.



If we missed your date or you do not want your name included, please call Marj Waskom at (239) 489-1134

Meet Our Newest Members

by Marj Waskom

Having had enough of cold winters in Chicago, **Sandi Pisano** “escaped” to Florida! She now works as an Occupational Therapist. It was one of her patients, Marilyn Bowman, who suggested she visit Lamb of God Church. It didn't take her long to become involved...she helped with Feeding the 5000 this year!



When not working, her five year old, **Rory**, is the love of her life. Sandi also finds time for riding horses. In fact, she did equestrian horseback riding while in college!

Sandi took a memorable trip with her mother a few years ago when they flew to the Dominican Republic and lived on a ship for a week. They had great fun swimming with the humpback whales every day!

Meet **Jerry and Annette Krumrie**. They have lived for several years in Lighthouse Bay and have become good friends with the Vatlands and the Boddies. They decided however, to have a house built, and just recently moved to their new place at Plantation Sommerset which is off Treeline Road.



The Krumries are from Minnesota. In fact, one of those cold winters convinced them to rent a place for a month in Florida. Each winter the stay became longer, and finally, after they sold their printing business, they moved to Florida.

Annette is a registered nurse and works one or two days a week at the FGCU Health Center. Jerry is an avid bike rider and also loves to shoot skeet. They too are active at LOG. This year they also helped with the Feeding the 5000!

Doris Stinnett was born in Kentucky, raised in Indiana, but never liked snow, so when the opportunity came in 2004, she moved to Orlando. A change in jobs brought her to Ft. Myers where she now is an office manager.

She has a son and daughter. Her daughter teaches locally and was nominated for the Golden Apple award and also selected Teacher of the Year in Language Arts.

When not busy with work or family, Doris has been a judge for the past eighteen years for the Miss Florida pageant. One year, one of the contestants played a full size harp as her talent. Doris became the “keeper” of the very heavy harp when the girl was involved with other segments of the contest. Needless to say, Doris recalls that event with mixed emotions!



As **Billy Gunnels** put it, “I was an army brat.” He was born in Germany while his parents were stationed there. So traveling around, has almost become a “way of life” for him. His wife, **Katrina**, was born in Canada but spent a great deal of time in western U.S. She met Billy in Utah. He explains that they met while she was eavesdropping on a conversation he was having with someone else ... Katrina doesn't dispute it!

Katrina is a teacher at Bonita Middle School. She works with exceptional children and also teaches English. Billy is a professor at FGCU and teaches Animal Behavior. When asked if he had any unusual experiences working with animals, Billy said that one time while he was doing research (trying to take blood samples), he had the misfortune to be bucked by a bison, a black-horned sheep and an alligator!

The family comes first with both of them. Son, **Billy**, aged 9, likes sports and is interested in history. Their daughter, **Prairie**, age 6, likes skating and cheerleading. Their youngest, **Troy**, is a smiling, loveable three year old!

Mission Trip To Nicaragua

by Judy Charland

Lamb of God members who will be traveling with the Mission of Hope to Nicaragua on January 1-8, 2012 are: Judy Charland, Bob Luther, Susan Nicoletti, Don Olson, and Bonnie Olson



Preparations for the 3rd Mission of Hope trip to Nicaragua in January have been under way since this summer.

This year the Mission team will focus on a variety of projects including:

- Visiting and interviewing families who have received Filtron water filters supplied by LOG members through the Alternative Christmas Water For Life Project.
- Delivering school supplies to Fe y Esperanza (Faith and Hope) Preschool as part of the "Pennies for Preschoolers" project at LOG. This preschool serves thirty children on the outskirts of the Managua dump, one of the poorest areas in Nicaragua.
- Assessing the progress of the Mission's stove project by visiting and interviewing families and meeting with local Nicaraguan coordinators.
- Visiting a Children's Hospital on Epiphany to deliver toys donated by LOG's Sunday's Cool program along with gifts for teens donated by our youth program at LOG.
- Meeting the nine educational sponsor children sponsored by families from LOG.
- Assisting locals with plans for supplying water at a farm operated by a disability center.

Many thanks to the Lamb of God Church Community for the blessings of your generosity, support, and prayers for us and for the people of Nicaragua.

Women of Faith Conference

What a great time we had at the Women of Faith Conference in October. There were 19 women who attended the conference. The speakers were great, the music was great, and the fellowship was first rate.



If you would like to attend the conference next year please contact Barbara Tvedt at ... (239) 267-7271.

Preschool At The Lamb News

by Gaye Williams, Director

Our preschool program is thriving as we prepare for the up-coming holidays. The last four months have been very busy. It is amazing how many events take place in the first quarter of the school year. We have hosted open houses for our families, curriculum night for our parents, participated in Oeey Goeey, raised money for St. Jude's Children Research Hospital through our trike-thon, learned about bees through our "Bee authentic" fundraiser, brought in pennies for North Country Mission of Hope, had portfolio showings, helped with the Feeding of the Five Thousand and last but not least our families bought gifts for the children named on our "Lamb Tree". Many of these events were successful because we have a very viable volunteer program. Our parents have given many hours of their time to enable the children to learn about the importance of giving to those in need and giving back to the community.

We wish you a very Merry Christmas and look forward to seeing everyone after the New Year!

Sunday's Cool & Youth Group News

by Kathleen Busbee

This month the focus has been on being thankful and working toward having an "Attitude of Gratitude." Why is this important? Sharing your gratitude improves your quality of life because it can only result in positive emotions. Learning to appreciate what you have also makes life more valuable and meaningful. It is important to develop an awareness of appreciating small everyday experiences. Adopting an attitude of gratitude helps us to focus on others, not ourselves.

Meister Eckhart, a German theologian from the 13th century wrote, "If the only prayer you said your whole life was 'thank you' that would suffice."

1 Thessalonians 5:18 – "Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God."

Psalm 107:1 – "Give thanks for the Lord, for he is good, his love lasts forever."

Colossians 3:15-17 – "And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are all called to love, show peace, and be thankful.

Let the words of Christ, in all their richness, live in your hearts and make you wise. Use these words to teach and counsel each other; and sing to God with thankful hearts."

Some ideas to put into practice could be: start writing down every day what you are thankful for into a gratitude journal, write a letter to someone telling them how thankful you are for them, try to see the positive aspects of all complaints, and turn the obstacles of life into challenges.

Harvest Fest Was A Fun Fest!

by R.C. Fleeman

Pastor Fohs invited my wife and I to join he and Susan at Harvest Fest this year. I grew up in a faith tradition that was pretty conservative, especially about things like dancing, drinking and raffles, all of which were going to take place at Harvest Fest. I was taught that those were things that “sinners” did! On top of that, my wife and I don’t dance in public because we don’t like to give people a reason to laugh at us. I guess however, we have to count ourselves as “sinners” because we accepted Walter’s invitation, we came and had a great time!

Gail, my wife, wanted to attend so she could meet some of the people at Lamb of God that I talk about (it’s all good ... okay, it’s mostly good) and ask if I really work as hard as I claim. I wanted to attend because I had heard about Cahlua and Cream for years but had never heard them in person. They were awesome. The food and the conversation were excellent and I have to say that it was a wonderful evening. As I scanned the room that night, it occurred to me that many Christians try to separate their faith from fun. **THAT’S WRONG!** I think Jesus would have enjoyed Harvest Fest ... after all, the scripture tells us that he attended a wedding ... a Jewish wedding. Without a doubt there would have been good food, drink and dancing at that wedding. In fact, we know they ran out of wine and Jesus helped the cause by turning water into wine.

One other thought about Harvest Fest was that I got to see many folks I know at Lamb of God in a different setting. There was no discussion of finances or church business ... instead folks were dancing and enjoying one another’s company. I won’t say more because I was advised that “What happens at Harvest Fest, Stays at Harvest Fest”. It’s enough to say that it was a fun event and, of course, proceeds from Harvest Fest went to the Church and Feeding the 5000.

Thanks to Linda Ritzert, Debi Braendle, Tom Mullins and all on the Harvest Fest Committee for another successful Harvest Fest!

One Thursday Morning!

by R.C. Fleeman

Several months ago, I told John Hirsch that I would go to the Guadalupe Center one Thursday to see what happens there. John is an active member of Lamb of God and volunteers frequently as a member of the Exterior Maintenance Team. He is also part of a group from Lamb of God that volunteers on the first Thursday of each month at the Guadalupe Center in Immokalee. It took a couple of months for us to get together, but on Thursday, November 3, I was able to clear my calendar and go with John and others from Lamb of God. The group included Al and Donna Clothier, John Hirsh, Jon Simons, David and Vickie Spowls, Russ Rees, Rich and Maureen Vath, and Clancy Waldera (Sue Waldera also stopped in while we were there). The folks from Lamb of God began working the minute they arrived. They set up the table, put food on the tables, and in general served the people who arrived for a hot meal. The food was good, and plentiful. There was hot soup, fruit, bread and something sweet to eat. The folks who came to eat were allowed to ask for “seconds”. The dining room at Guadalupe Center was set up for 72 people ... so double that and you get an idea of how many people were fed on that day because we fed people in two shifts. It was clear to me that for most of the people there, it was probably the only hot meal they would have that day. As always, small children were there, and in spite of what I perceived to be obvious poverty, the children infused the dining room with life.

While there, I was able to meet the staff and learn more about the center. I was also able to chat briefly with Maureen Vath. She and her husband, Rich, haven’t been members of Lamb of God for a long time, but they certainly have gotten involved. While I was traveling down to Immokalee, the folks in the car with John Hirsh and me let me know that Maureen was in charge of washing dishes. I thought that maybe they were joking with me ... after all, who really likes to wash dishes, or at least get them ready for the commercial dishwasher? It was true though ... Maureen knew how to get the dishes washed, and it was necessary. Most of the dishes from the first seating had to be washed and ready to go for the second group of folks that arrived. I asked Maureen why she volunteered at the center month after month and she said, “because I love these people.” Enough said!

The world is a better place because of the ministry of the Guadalupe Center ... and because of the folks from Lamb of God who support the work that is going on there. Perhaps one Thursday morning, in the not too distant future, you will join them too!

See pictures of the Lamb of God group at the Guadalupe Center. Got to www.facebook.com/LambofGodChurch

Lamb of God Church



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BOLDLY INCLUSIVE	INTENTIONALLY CHALLENGING	JOYFULLY CHRISTIAN
Embracing all people as they are, celebrating diversity and affirming the uniqueness of each person	Encouraging questions, exploring issues and finding new ways to live our faith as Christians in a changing world	Connecting people to a loving community of God's grace where all can be transformed and equipped for lives of service, praise and thanksgiving