

The Christogram is a monthly newsletter of Concordia Lutheran Church, Steamboat Springs, Colorado. Deadline for newsletter items is the fourth Sunday of each month. We welcome contributions of news items, art work, and other appropriate articles.

Editor: Pastor Cartwright, Marlys Cartwright and Cindy Svendsen

The Weekly Bulletin is printed on Thursday mornings. News items for the bulletin should be submitted by 9:00 am on Thursdays.

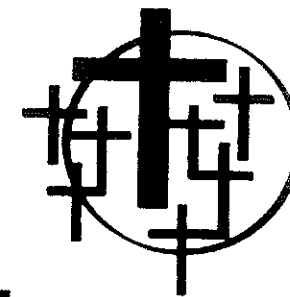
Sunday Worship: 8:00 and 10:30 AM **Education Hour:** 9:15 AM

Concordia Lutheran Church
755 Concordia Lane
PO Box 770428
Steamboat Springs, CO 80477

CHRISTOGRAM

Concordia Lutheran Church

December 1998



A Note From the Pastor...

To the members and friends of Concordia;

Greetings in the name of the Christmas King!

"Comfort, comfort my people," says your God. "Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for." (Isaiah 10:1-2)

"She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1:21)

"Shop until you drop!" The mall owners of America are pumping the people with this catchy phrase. Suddenly, there is a sense of virtue attached to the "athletic" effort of spending until your Mastercard numbers no longer make their imprint on the carbon.

It is "vogue" these days to decorate your Christmas tree with as many receipts as possible. Receipts from Wal-Mart, Penney's, Macy's, Target, K-Mart will all decorate the imitation tree that adorns your holiday

home.

Phrases like "Battle of the Bulge" describe your trunk in the mall parking lot. The "Dog Days of December" have arrived! For true meaning to the holidays, "Shop until you Drop!" Into this barrage of phrases, I'll drop a phrase . . . "Jesus is the Reason for the Season."

"Comfort, comfort my people Speak tenderly . . . Your hard service is over . . . Your sin has been paid for."

The prophet Isaiah pushes a "slogan" into the halls and malls of our lives. Into credit card mania and the spending mentality, we hear these words. "Comfort, comfort my people . . . Speak tenderly . . . Your hard service is over . . . Your sin has been paid for." Flash that slogan across the Norwest time and temperature sign. Matthew provides us with an eternal phrase . . . "Name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

When you have dropped from all that you've shopped . . . STOP! Jesus, whose name means **He will save** (the reason for the season), he has paid for our sin!

God used his timeless flashing billboard, the sky, to direct us to the Babe in a Bethlehem manger. That lone star punctured the dark night sky some 2,000 years ago.

In those days there were no credit cards, yet people indeed spent their lives. There were no malls, yet people gathered in mass searching for meaning. There were no advertising agencies, yet phrases abounded diverting the hearts attention away from the true meaning in life.

Meaning in Christmas is found only in Christ. May that meaning fill your home this season.

In Christ,

Pastor Cartwright

December 1998

Concordia Lutheran Church **CHRISTOGRAM**

inside...

"December Worship Schedule"
"1999 Flower Chart"

"Monthly Calendar"
"Holy Communion" - Don Patterson

Gratitude

We had too much fun at our "Thanksgiving" Thursday Women's Bible study. We studied Colossians 3:17, "And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God, the Father, through Him."

From there, all twelve of us wrote notes to hospital staff, school staff, ECC staff, fire department, street crews, youth leaders, Lift-Up, Church community leaders, students, and others who work oftentimes unnoticed and unthanked in our midst.

Among other things we listed at the top of

our list of blessings: faithful supportive husbands, family, Christ-centered Church, Pastor and DCE, loving Church family, health and strength, teenagers, colors - especially red, garbage collectors, home, schools, good food, children, diversity of ages and gifts in the Body of Christ, music, friendship, and the Amazing Grace of God!

In December, we continue our study on prayer and celebrate Christmas at Elaine's on Thursday, December 10th at 10-11:30 AM. Meet at church at 9:45 AM.



Until One is Committed

Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness. Concerning all acts of initiative (and creation) there is one elementary truth, the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence moves too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one's favor all manner of unforeseen incidents and meetings and material assistance, which no man could have dreamed would have come his way.

Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it.

- Goethe-

News From Youth Group . . .

November was a full month of opportunities. Judy Plumb and Diane Weber began our evening with a delicious chili dinner, Pastor led us in a topic discussion, and we voted unanimously to send \$1,000 of our hard-earned money to support people in the disaster area of Central America.

During our November 18th Bible study with Joanne and Marlys, we sent thank-you cards to some favorite people.

Winners of our Youth sponsored volleyball tournament were: Lia Utu, Tyler Link, Laurie Buelow, Jan Fritz, Andy Wirth, Pastor Cartwright, Bette Vandahl, and Taylor Patterson.

Thanks to the 25 youth who participated in Youth Ministry this month!

LWML News . . .

The "Concordia Christmas Cupboard" was again a huge success thanks to the many volunteers and the endless hours of preparation. As of today, 11/23, \$5,500 was raised between the bazaar, the cookie caper, the brunch and the book fair. The women of Concordia should be proud of their accomplishment and the amount of money they are able to send to missions near and far.

The December meeting will be held at Judy Plumb's home, 365 N Steamboat Blvd, 870-8040, on Saturday, December 19th at 10:00 AM. All ladies of Concordia are welcome! This will be the Christmas Brunch and Secret Sisters will be revealed at this time. Please bring a small gift to exchange with your secret sister. If you have any questions regarding secret sisters, call Cindy at the church office.



Christmas Surprise!

To give a personal touch to the gift my daughter brought to her Sunday school teacher, I decided to send homemade Christmas cookies. I baked the cookies a few days ahead and put them in one of the empty margarine tubs I use to store food. The Sunday before Christmas I hurriedly took the tub out of the refrigerator and wrapped it in bright Christmas paper. Adding the red bow, I thought it made a pretty present. After church we were all hungry, so my husband offered to get lunch. "There's some tuna left over from yesterday," I told him. After searching the refrigerator for a few minutes, he said, "The only container in here is full of Christmas cookies." To my horror, I realized I had given my child's Sunday school teacher the leftover tuna!

Karen Cogan
Houston, Texas

☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆
 ☆ If you haven't seen ☆
 ☆ the "Behold, Grace ☆
 ☆ Overflowing" video ☆
 ☆ created and produced ☆
 ☆ entirely by Kim an ☆
 ☆ Thong Truong of ☆
 ☆ Concordia Lutheran, ☆
 ☆ it's still not too late! ☆
 ☆ The office has several ☆
 ☆ copies to check out for ☆
 ☆ your viewing pleasure. ☆
 ☆ See yourself and others ☆
 ☆ of Concordia on the ☆
 ☆ big screen today!! ☆
 ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆ ☆



DCE, Marlys Cartwright - Keynote Speaker at Southwest Pacific District President's Commission Conference, Nov 14th

Meeting at St Paul's Lutheran Church in Orange, CA, District President, Kramer, opened the day with worship. Marlys then had four sessions based on Hebrews 12:1-3.

The purpose of the conference was to inspire us all, regardless of race, culture, gender, or age, to "run the race" - of faith with vitality, courage, and vigor.

Session one - because we have Christ, His Word

and Sacraments;
Session two - because we have each other;
Session three - because we have gifts and abilities to use;
Session four - because God gives us His grace to throw off all those things that would hinder.

Particularly exciting to note at the conference were the 36 different ethnic Lutheran Ministries that are thriving in the Los Angeles area. It was truly heartening to see the com-

mitment of women and men in their joyous service to Christ and community.



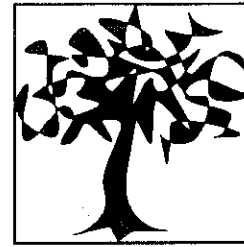
To Concordia Friends and Family

Merry Christmas from the Cartwrights!

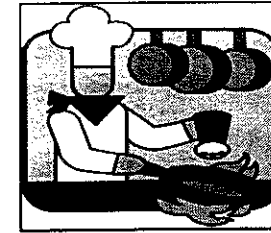
We have reminders of your friendship all over our home and office. Two of our favorite cards say:
"Don't let your hearts grow numb. Stay alert. It is your soul which matters." and
"Hope is a thing with feathers that perches in the soul and sings the tune without the words and never stops at all."

Your friendship has kept love and hope alive and well in our lives, especially because we see and experience Christ in you!

Thanks, Pastor, Marlys, Katie, Kia & Kelly



Parent Support Group
December 4
6-8 PM
Begin with potluck
Special time for kids
Special topic for parents



Men's Breakfast
December 12
7 - 8:30 AM
Bring a Friend!



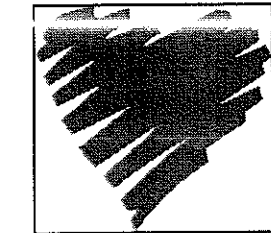
Discovery Bible Study
Wednesdays - 7 PM
at the Church
(Childcare Provided)



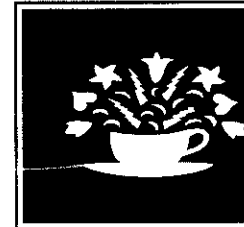
Tuesday Morning
Bible Study
at the Church
6:30 - 7:30 AM
Bring a Friend!



Monday Morning Moms
10 - 12 AM
Meet in Church Basement
(Childcare Provided
during Book Study)



Thursday Morning
Women's Bible Study
10 AM at Mary Dombey's
775 Amethyst Dr
(Childcare Provided)



Recovery Study
Thursdays 7 PM
at the Church
Invite a Friend!



Christmas Services
Christmas Eve 12/24
5:30/7:30/10 PM

Christmas Day 12/25
10 AM

December Worship Schedule

Advent Services: December 2 - soup supper 5:30 PM, worship 7 PM
December 9 - soup supper 5:30 PM, worship 7 PM
December 16 - soup supper 5:30 PM, worship 7 PM
Christmas Eve: Worship services - 5:30, 7:30 and 10:00 PM
Christmas Day: Worship service - 10:00 AM
New Year's Eve: Worship service - 7:00 PM



December 1998



Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

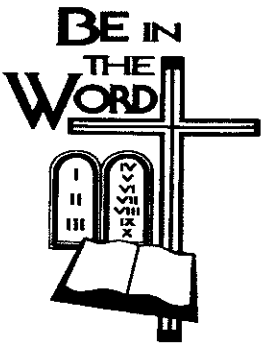
		1 Bible Study 6:30 AM Contact 2:15 PM	2 Soup Supper 5:30 PM Advent Service 7 PM	3 Womens Study 10 AM Choir 6 PM Bells 7 PM Recovery 7 PM	4 Parent Support Group 6 PM	5 Journey 10 AM
6 Worship 8/10:30 AM Education Hr 9:15 AM Confirmation 4:30 PM	7 Playgroup 10 AM Womens AA 7 PM Elders 7 PM	8 Bible Study 6:30 AM Church Council 7:30 PM	9 Soup Supper 5:30 PM Advent Service 7 PM Confirmation 7 PM	10 Womens Study 10 AM at Elaine Stroncek's Choir 6 PM Bells 7 PM Recovery 7 PM	11	12 Mens Breakfast 7 AM Journey 10 AM
13 Worship 8/10:30 AM Education Hr 9:15 AM Confirmation 4:30 PM Youth Group 5:30 PM Childrens Service 10:30	14 Playgroup 10 AM at Julie Ranieri's Womens AA 7 PM	15 Bible Study 6:30 AM	16 Soup Supper 5:30 PM Advent Service 7 PM Youth Drama 7 PM	17 Womens Study 10 AM Choir 6 PM Bells 7 PM Recovery 7 PM	18	19 LWML Brunch 10 AM at Judy Plumb's
20 Worship 8/10:30 AM Education Hr 9:15 AM Caroling & Christmas Party 6 PM	21 Playgroup 10 AM Womens AA 7 PM	22 Bible Study 6:30 AM	23 Discovery 7 PM	24 Christmas Eve Worship 5:30/7:30/10 PM	25 Christmas Day Worship 10 AM	26
27 Worship 8/10:30 AM Education Hr 9:15 AM ECC 12:45 PM	28 Playgroup 10 AM Womens AA 7 PM	29 Bible Study 6:30 AM	30 Discovery 7 PM	31 New Years Eve Worship 7 PM		

Friday Parent Support Group (Usually the first Friday of each month from 6-8 PM.) Concordia Lutheran has a support group for Parents with young children 2nd grade to newborn. If you have older siblings they are welcome to come. This will provide a time for parents to make friendships within the church and the studies will help you find strength, direction and hope as you fulfill God's calling in your life as a parent. The evening begins with a simple potluck. After dinner, childcare will be provided and parents can get together for a video and discussion or a Bible study which focuses on parenting issues.

Sunday Extended Care Center Worship (ECC)
 On the fourth Sunday of each month our congregation is responsible for the care of the worship service at the ECC. The Pastor leads this service with congregational volunteers. There is a need to visit with the residents at the ECC. It is a great way to learn compassion and service. The residents always appreciate a kind contact from visitors.

Tuesday Bible Study:
 Meet and study the Word of God prior to work. This study begins at 6:30am and is done promptly at 7:30am. The format is one of discussion and reflection on God's Word. A good cup of coffee or tea is ready for you upon arrival. Give this study a try!

Wednesday Discovery Bible Study:
 This Wednesday evening study opportunity has been put into place for a midweek spot of spiritual refreshment. A person can come once a month, twice a month, or every week. It is a relaxed atmosphere for learning, discussion and fellowship. Please, come and enjoy some great "Discovery!"



Unlikely

"There were some shepherds in that part of the country who were spending the night in the fields, taking care of their flocks. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone over them. They were terribly afraid." (Luke 2:8-9)

What do I love about the Christmas story? I love the fact that it was highly unlikely!

Unlikely - that the King of all creation, maker of all that's good in this world, was born in a ramshackle manger. So enormous was God's love for us, that He gave up everything to take on every evil, inside and out, that would ever "do us in."

Unlikely - that He chose a simple ordinary young virgin named Mary to serve as mother.

Unlikely - that shepherds, not statesmen, elite or impressive, were the first people to be informed about the Savior. Unsophisticated, uncouth, highly unlikely that God should choose such "ordinary" folks to be the messengers of His birth into the world.

Why is this encouraging to me?

Because, bottom-line, no matter how unlikely it is - it's true, it happened! The God of power - the Lord of might - has fingerprints! That's how close the Lord has come! He is truly Emmanuel - God with us!

Now we see the world with new eyes. Things that we used to believe as "highly unlikely" are now truly possible because of the incredible Mercy of God, in Christ. Now, even if you believe it is highly unlikely that you, yourself, or a loved one would be included in the great Joy and Peace that Christ has brought, then I have Good News - "highly

unlikely" is not in God's vocabulary.

Joy and Peace,

Marlys



1999 Flower Chart

Thank you to everyone who provided flowers this past year.

The 1999 flower chart will be up on Dec 6th. This is a way to remember birthdays, anniversaries, or any other occasion.

Cost of the flowers is \$12.50. Make checks payable to Concordia Lutheran Church and place in the altar flower folder to the right of the mailboxes.

Also, poinsettias will be used to beautify the chancel at Christmas. You may order one or more by Dec 6th and pick them up following the last service on Christmas Eve. Cost is \$6. Order forms will be inserted in the Sunday bulletin or see Elaine Stroncek or Cindy in the office.

Feel like sending a card or letter to a lonely, home-sick, first-year college student? Their addresses are below:

Jennifer Fritz
Emerson College
80 Boylston T312
P O Box 38
Boston, MA 02116

Kelly Hanson
103 Pinon
1159 Mesa Avenue
Grand Junction, CO 81501

Wade Hendricks
Colorado University
Cheyenne/Arapahoe Hall
Room 67
Boulder, CO 80310

Janel Kammerer
1113 Westfall Hall
Fort Collins, CO 80521

Nick Plumb
c/o WB #1975
1902 N Cascade
Colorado Springs, CO 80496

Erik Svendsen
P O Box 4544
USAF Academy, CO 80841

Lisa Warner
University of Wyoming
White 603
Laramie, WY 82070

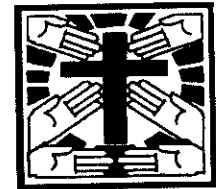
NOVEMBER	
November Worship Statistics	November 1998
1991.....114	Week 1.....116(E).....124(L)
1992.....165	Week 2.....108(E).....166(L)
1993.....185	Week 3.....128(E).....136(L)
1994.....215	Week 4.....137(E).....120(L)
1995.....213	Week 5 (not available at printing)
1996.....238	
1997.....269	
1998.....258	



On November 8, 1998, during the early service, the following people were welcomed into membership at Concordia Lutheran:

Terese Burmeister
Larry, Amanda & Christian Calistro
Penny Falk
Jim & Wendy McCreight
Sandra Pokay
Ryan & Tina Tape
Ken, Beth, Lauren & Connor Walsh

Please give these new members a warm welcome! We are so fortunate to have them join our congregation! Concordia is truly blessed by their presence.



Holy Communion

submitted by Don Patterson



When I first became a Christian and learned about communion, I knew that I did not believe in the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation (the doctrine that the communion wine and bread literally are transformed into the blood and body of Jesus), and therefore I believed that it was basically a symbolic ceremony. The Christian churches and organizations that I was in fellowship with took communion reverently and seriously, but it was understood that it was symbolic.

During the Protestant Reformation, one of the key issues that divided the reformers was their understanding of communion. John Calvin and his followers, in their rejection of Rome's non-biblical additions to Christianity including the doctrine of transubstantiation, held that Christ's words, "this is my body which is broken for you" and "this is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for you" were largely symbolic. Martin Luther strenuously disagreed and argued that they should not throw out everything that Roman Catholicism taught just because it was taught by Rome. Although Luther rejected the idea of transubstantiation, he taught that there is a real presence of Christ. "Christ gives us his body in, with, and under the consecrated bread and wine." (Small Catechism, article 291)



Presbyterian churches are descended from the Calvinist line of the reformation, so it is somewhat ironic that I first heard of a real presence of Christ in the elements in a Presbyterian church. Why is our understanding of communion important? I think that we often receive from God what we expect to receive. If we expect little, we receive little. If we believe that there is a real presence of Christ in the elements, we are bound to approach the altar with more awe and more expectation. Our Lord commands us to partake of this Holy Meal frequently, yet whenever we do something often, there is a danger that it can become routine and ordinary to us. There is nothing ordinary or

Although bread and wine are ordinary substances, they become absolutely extraordinary when there is a real presence of Jesus in them!

routine about meeting the Living God at the communion rail! Although bread and wine are ordinary substances, they become absolutely extraordinary when there is a real presence of Jesus in them! Lutherans have a valuable heritage in our understanding of communion, we should remember it every time we come to the communion rail. We should come to the altar expecting Jesus to be there. We should expect to have God's grace communicated to us in a real, special, and mystical way every time we partake of the Lord's Supper.

The words of institution begin with "On the very night he was betrayed . . ." yet Jesus began teaching about communion much earlier in his

ministry. In John 6:53-54, Jesus said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day." The Mosaic law forbade cannibalism, human sacrifice and the drinking (or eating) of blood (even animal blood). The idea that they must eat Jesus' flesh and drink His blood was a hard teaching for Jewish people to understand and accept. When He said this, most of His followers deserted Him; even to the point that He asked the twelve disciples, "Do you also want to go away?" (John 6:66). Jesus, with perfect understanding and foreknowledge, knew that people would desert Him because of this teaching. I don't think He wanted people to abandon him, but this teaching was so central to His ministry that He had to teach it whether people could bear to hear it or not. Surely, communion must be more than a symbolic memorial service, but rather a central part of Jesus' ministry. There is something about it that is vital to our well being.

We have been invited to dine with the High King of all creation!

Although I believe that Christians who do not believe in the real presence of Christ in the elements lose something, I also believe that there is a real presence of Christ in their communion service even though they don't believe it. It is not our belief in "the real presence" that causes there to be real presence, it is the promise of our Lord and

His work on the Cross that assures us that He is really there. Many churches view communion as symbolic, but as long as they believe that Christ was sacrificed for their sins and made atonement for them, their communion service is still valid. They may miss something because of their weak view, but they are still believers and real grace is still communicated to them through the bread and wine. I would not hesitate to take communion in such a church and I do not think we should forbid believers, who may not share our view, from communing with us. I'm sure not all Lutherans agree with me on this point, but I doubt that our Lord wanted communion to divide us.

The sacrament of communion is a great gift. If we were to receive an invitation to have dinner at the White House, who would refuse (politics aside)? There is something far greater than dining with the President here; we have been invited to dine with the High King of all creation!

Don Patterson



Note: Pastor Cartwright will be asking certain individuals of our congregation to write an article on a particular area of faith. Your thoughts do not need to be "perfect". It is hoped that we can all benefit from the study and reflection of others.