

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.

Editors: Pastor Cartwright, Marlys Cartwright, Jean Smith, 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.

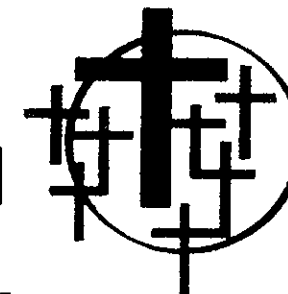
Sunday Worship: 8:00 and 10:30 AM **Education Hour:** 9:15 AM

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

CHRISTOGRAM

Concordia Lutheran Church

DECEMBER, 1999



A Note From the Pastor...

GREETINGS IN THE NAME OF OUR ADVENT KING!

To the Members and Friends of Concordia:

Are we preparing for war? Are we preparing for a recession? Are we preparing for an earthquake in the Midwest? Are we preparing for a dry (or wet) winter? Have you prepared for next year's spring planting? Have you prepared for the coming week in the classroom as a teacher or student? Do you have that play prepared? Have you prepared for that upcoming athletic event?

Advent is a season of preparation. The world demands that we prepare for Christmas by spending, partying, running, going, borrowing, worrying, etc. The world is one great big "Inn" that has very little (if any) room for the Christ-child.

Even our congregation here in Steamboat Springs must deal with the pressure of extra holiday preparations and pressures. The challenge for

Let us prepare for this child to be born into our lives again.

each of us, as well as our congregation, is to find a meaningful way to prepare ourselves for the coming of the Christ-child.

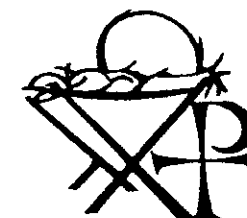
Our Advent services provide this opportunity. Our special Children's Christmas play is another way to prepare the heart. Regular Sunday Worship is a prime way to prepare the heart for the coming "One." Advent services are held each Wednesday evening prior to Christmas. Encourage your

children to participate in the Christmas program.

War may break...the earth may quake...the rivers may rise...the snow may fly...the credit cards may wear out...the wallet may wear thin...yet, into this busy world comes the peace of mankind. Jesus is born! He quiets the busy "Inns" of our hearts and lives. He says to each of us...peace! Let us prepare for this child to be born into our lives again. Perhaps for some it will be the first time.

In Christ,

Tim
 Pastor Cartwright



DECEMBER, 1999

Concordia Lutheran Church **CHRISTOGRAM**

inside...

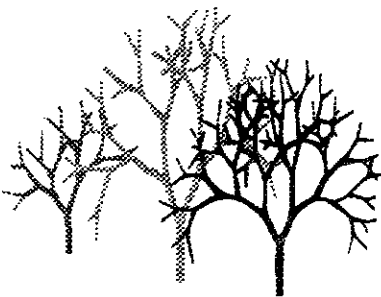
"Strengthening The Bond - The Power of We"
 "Calling All Members - December Care Team"
 "I Am Christian"

Thoughts from the DCE - Marlys Cartwright

CHRISTMAS TRANSFORMATION

From all of us on the Concordia Staff, our prayers are for you to have a Blessed Christmas. May all of us, common and ordinary, be touched by the Spirit in ways that are uncommon and extraordinary.

A Lutheran pastor and church leader, Herbert Chilstrom, wrote the following piece 10 years ago, which I would like to share with you as my last Christmas devotion of the 1900's. My hope is that these words will stay with us as we enter ministry into the year 2000.



I must have passed it at least a hundred times. But why should I have noticed a small

clump of trees that had sprung up from the roots of their mother? Furthermore, they were box elder - a nuisance tree. Bot much good for anything but to be the home of pesky box-elder bugs.

But on that bright Christmas morning, those scraggly shoots demanded my attention. The temperature was minus 25; the wind chill factor a minus 55. Steam from the Pelican River wafted up into the air. The brisk wind took those minuscule droplets of vapor and stroked the lowly box elder clump with icy particles of frost until every tiny branch became a masterpiece of an artist,

The sun, like a spotlight on that blue-skied morning, was just lifting itself over the low horizon. What was worthless had been transformed into a thing of beauty. I could hear every branch singing, "Look at me! Look at what God has done to me! Me - worthless and unnoticed - look at how beautiful I am!"

"And Mary said, 'My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Might One has done great things for me, and holy is his name'" (Luke 1:46-49)

Mary, undistinguished in every way. Mature beyond her years, yet a very ordinary saint. A common young woman from an unexpected. Passed by and unno-

ticed. The wife-to-be of Joseph, a carpenter by trade. You might encounter her a hundred times on the streets of Nazareth and not see anything unusual in her.

Mary herself does not understand how such an ordinary person can become the Mother of our Lord. The angel has the answer:

"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore, the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God."

It was not Mary who made herself worthy to be the Mother of the Promised One. No, it was the Spirit, blowing gently through her spirit, that brought the transformation. Until now, no one noticed; now, all would notice and call her blessed.

Christmas is a time for hope for all of us. It is when ordinary, unnoticed fold can take heart. "If anyone is in Christ," Paul wrote, "there is a new creation; everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new." (II Corinthians 5:17)

We need not try to be anything than what we are. The work of transformation is not ours. The Spirit of God blows through the branches of our life, sometimes broken and scarred, to make us a thing of beauty.

A WORD FROM OUR PARISH ADMINISTRATOR . . .

by Jean Smith

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."

The Advent season is upon us and Christmas is only weeks away. Already, a sense of loss is starting to set in for me - the emptiness and dread of not being able to manufacture a 'perfect' Christmas. I used to see Advent as a time of preparation - the preparation of the home, the decking of the halls, the making of the traditional bakings, the purchasing of the 'perfect' gifts for loved ones. I would spend hours picking out the perfect tree. The frenzy to create a 'perfect' Christmas had begun.

How many of you have tried to create the perfect Christmas holiday only to be disappointed and weighed down with the feeling that Christmas can no longer be perfect because of personal loss? I have lost a loved one and the holidays now fill me with a sense of dread. How did my perfect Christmas go by the wayside, and why this sense of despair and depression when the Christmas season comes closer?

We humans are creatures of tradition. Although it is a good thing to set special days apart and to celebrate them because of their great spiritual worth, we sometimes get caught up in the trappings of creating our own perfect Christmas holiday, instead of focusing on the

perfection which is intrinsic in Christmas - the gift of God's Son, the babe born in Bethlehem for all of humanity. The first Christmas was not perfect. Our Savior was not born into a perfect world. Imagine the disappointment of giving birth to God's Son in a manger, into a place of meager surroundings. Christ was not born into a place of perfection. There were no trees, no lights, no traditional bakings, nor a perfect family gathering.



We can not hope to always shape Christmas into the perfect event. As people who experience loss, grief, and failure, it is inevitable that we will not always be able to create the perfect holiday. When you are faced with adversity - when a loved one dies, when family relationships are strained, when the job is lost and the financial means aren't there to purchase the perfect tree and the wonderful presents, what then? Christmas 'holidays' can make our losses all the more poignant and painful. This is when you need to remind yourself of the perfection that Christmas always

brings. God's promise to send a Savior to us, for us, and to be with us, has been fulfilled. Therein lies the true joy and celebration of Christmas.

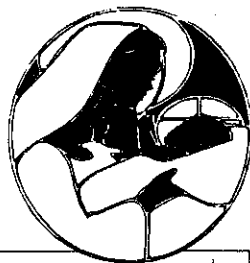
I now appreciate Advent as a time to prepare - not my home, or the prefect environment for a holiday, but as a time to prepare my heart, a time to pause and reflect on the enormity of this perfect gift, this 'God with us.' This is the perfection of Christmas that can never disappoint or elude us. God gives humanity a perfect gift - Jesus, our God made flesh. God comes to us as a babe, into our imperfect lives and broken world with a perfect promise of salvation and love.

God's promise to be with us in all circumstances is the perfect Christmas that we can all rejoice in. Let the angel's proclamation speak to you this day. "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David, a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord." Our Emmanuel has come to both the grieving and the joyful people of God. He continues to walk with us daily in the midst of our varied experiences. Be comforted and encouraged by this good news during the Advent and Christmas season. We are blessed. Rejoice in the perfection of God's love for you embodied in Jesus, our Savior.

Tenets, Tidbits and Trails . . . the Elder's report

Isaiah 9:6

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.



Luke 2:9-12

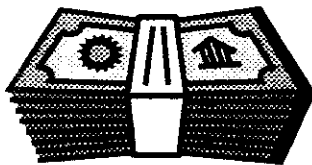
An angel of the Lord appeared to them (shepherds), and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David, a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you; you will find a baby wrapped in clothes and lying in a manger."



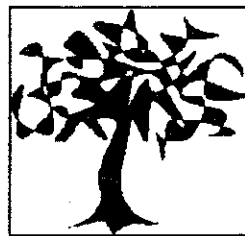
As I think of the recent birth of our second child, William, I can't help but think how helpless Jesus was and what ordinary circumstances surrounded Him. Here was Jesus born to an unwed teenager in a barn far away from his home. Baby Jesus would have needed to root around for his mother when he was hungry and would certainly need a frequent change of diaper. At first glance, it would be difficult to label Jesus with titles like Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace. But the God in heaven did shine around people of that very day in that very region with good news of Jesus' birth. May these bits of hope from Isaiah and Luke be treasured in your hearts during this wonderful season.

Mike Beurskens
Elder

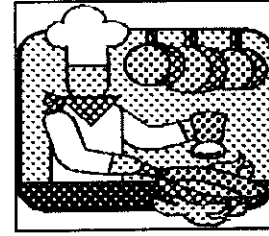
SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE THROUGH LUTHERAN BROTHERHOOD



Two different scholarship programs for Lutherans are again being offered through Lutheran Brotherhood this year. Lutheran Brotherhood members are eligible for \$500, \$1,000 and \$2,000 per year based on the type of institution attended. Application deadline is January 15th. Scholarships in the amount of \$800 and \$1,500 are available for students attending Lutheran Colleges, universities, or Bible schools. To request scholarship application information, call 1-800-328-7168



There will be no Parent Support Group meeting in December. Please plan to attend the Advent services and Christmas holiday services



Men's Breakfast
Saturday
December 11, 1999
7 - 8:30 AM
Invite A Friend!



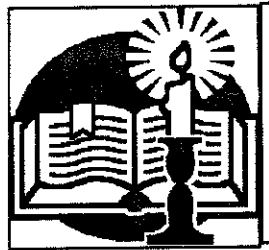
Discovery Bible Study
Wednesdays - 7:00 PM
at the Church
(Childcare Provided)



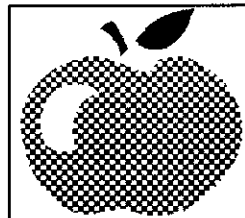
Tuesday Morning
Bible Study
at the Church
6:30 - 7:30 AM
Bring a Friend!



Monday Mom's Playgroup
1:00 to 3:00 PM
(new time!)
Meet at Ellyn Myller's
652 Ruby Square
(childcare provided)



Thursday Morning
Women's Bible Study
9:00 AM at the church
library
(Childcare Provided)



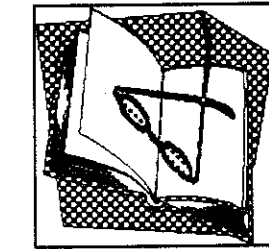
Recovery Study
Thursdays 7:00 PM
at the Church
Invite a Friend!



The next LWML gathering
will be January 22, 2000
This will be a "New
Beginnings" Brunch at the
church



PARENTS OF TEENS
Sunday, December 12th
5:30 - Meal
6:00 - session on how to
help your teen cope
with challenges



BOOK CLUB
will meet at the home of
the Cartwright's, 579 Grand,
December 6th
at 7:00 PM
Book - "The Color of Water"

THE ADVENT WREATH & CANDLES

The 1st candle is the Angel candle, representing Jesus' second coming. This is the candle of HOPE.

The 2nd candle is the candle of Bethlehem, symbolizing the Savior coming to earth as a child. It is the candle of PEACE.

The 3rd candle represents Prophecy, reminding us of Biblical passages of Advent. It is the candle of LOVE.

The 4th candle represents the Shepherd, signifying Jesus entering our hearts by faith. It is the candle of JOY.

The 5th and white candle is the CHRIST candle symbolizing PURITY.

Tuesday Bible Study: Meet and study the Word of God prior to work. This study begins at 6:30 am and is done promptly at 7:30 am. 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!



December 1999



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.

Sun *Mon* *Tue* *Wed* *Thu* *Fri* *Sat*

			1 Soup Supper - 5:30 PM Prayer - 6:30 PM Worship 7:00 PM	2 Womens Study - 9:00 AM Choir - 6:00 PM Bells - 7:00 PM Recovery - 7:00 PM	3	4 Journey - 10:00 AM Sunday School Rehearsal 3:00 to 4:30 PM Worship - 5:30 PM
5 Worship 8:00/10:30 AM Educ Hr - 9:15 AM Confirmation - 4:30 PM	6 Playgroup - 1:00 PM Outreach - 6:30 PM Womens AA - 7:00 PM	7 Bible Study - 6:30 AM Elders - 7:00 PM	8 Soup Supper - 5:30 PM Prayer - 6:30 PM Worship - 7:00 PM Confirmation - 7:00 PM	9 Womens Study - 9:00 AM at Elaine Stroncek's, 850 Aspen Choir - 6:00 PM Bells - 7:00 PM Recovery - 7:00 PM	10 Strengthen The Bond - 6:30 PM - church	11 Men's Breakfast - 7:00 AM Sunday School Rehearsal 3:00 to 4:30 PM Worship - 5:30 PM
12 Worship 8:00/10:30 AM Educ Hr - 9:15 AM Christmas Prog - 10:30 Confirmation - 4:30 PM Youth Group - 5:30 PM Parents/Teens - 5:30 PM	13 Playgroup - 1:00 PM Womens AA - 7:00 PM	14 Bible Study - 6:30 AM Church Council - ?	15 Soup Supper - 5:30 PM Prayer - 6:30 PM Worship - 7:00 PM	16 Womens Study - 9:00 AM Choir - 6:00 PM Bells - 7:00 PM Recovery - 7:00 PM	17 Christmas Open House, at Jean Smith's, 40519 Stmbt Dr, 5-10 PM	18 Worship - 5:30 PM
19 Worship - 8:00/10:30 AM Educ Hr - 9:15 AM Wedding - 3:00 PM Caroling - 4:00 PM Youth Group - 6:00 PM	20 No Playgroup Womens AA - 7:00 PM	21 Bible Study - 6:30 AM	22 Prayer - 6:30 PM Discovery - 7:00 PM	23 Womens Study - 9:00 AM Choir - 6:00 PM Bells - 7:00 PM Recovery - 7:00 PM	24 Christmas Eve Worship - 5:30/7:30/10:00 PM	25 Christmas Day Worship - 10:00 AM
26 Worship - 9:00 AM ECC - 12:45 PM	27 No Playgroup Womens AA - 7:00 PM	28 Bible Study - 6:30 AM	29 Prayer - 6:30 PM Discovery - 7:00 PM	30 Womens Study - 9:00 AM Choir - 6:00 PM Bells - 7:00 PM Recovery - 7:00 PM	31 New Years Eve Worship - 7:00 PM Holy Roller Tourney - Snowbowl 9-midnight	

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.



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!"

I AM CHRISTIAN

From The Internet

When I say...I am Christian
I'm not only saying "I am saved."
I'm whispering, "I get lost."

When I say...I am Christian
I don't get puffed up with pride.
I'm confessing that I stumble
And need someone to be my guide.

When I say...I am Christian
I'm not trying to be strong.
I'm professing that I am weak
And pray for strength to carry on.

When I say... I am Christian
I'm not bragging of success,
I'm admitting I have failed
And cannot ever pay the debt.

When I say...I am Christian
I'm not claiming to be perfect.
My flaws are too visible,
But God believes I'm worth it.

When I say...I am Christian
I still feel the sting of pain.
I have my share of heartaches
Which is why I seek His name.

When I say...I am Christian
I do not wish to condemn
That's not my place
I only know I'm loved.

Spiritually Responsible Giving

When you invest funds into Lutheran Church Extension Fund, you are involved in spiritually responsible investing. The money you invest, is used in extending the Lord's work such as building churches, starting new missions, building and expanding parochial schools, helping congregations purchase an organ, put on a new roof, etc.

This is not a contribution. Rather, it is an investment in the Lord's work. It's still your money, you still get the interest. The major difference is that your investment will help further the Lord's work in the Lord's kingdom. If you have questions or need further information, please contact Clair Erickson, 879-4419 or 879-5867, and he

PARENTS OF TEENS FORUM

December 12, 1999, Dinner - 5:30 PM,
Meeting - 6:00 PM

A survey of 3500 Minnesotan teenagers asked kids to rank 55 options for coping with pain. The girls chose watching soap operas, shopping, or talking on the phone. The boys chose driving fast or playing video games that blew things up.

The goal of our December session (on Sunday, December 12th) is to discover how you can help your teen "weather"

the challenges he or she faces. Before coming to the meeting, think of one struggle you had as a teenager (big, little, funny or sad) to share with us. The key verse from Ephesians 3:20 "God can do far more through us than we can imagine." In parenting teens, we need not let our fears control us! Thank you to the 25+ parents who've committed to supporting each other in this journey of parenting teens into adulthood.

NOVEMBER STATISTICS

November Average Sunday Attendance

1991.....	114
1992.....	165
1993.....	185
1994.....	215
1995.....	213
1996.....	238
1997.....	269
1998.....	252
1999.....	275

November 1999 Sunday Attendance

Week #1.....	129 (E).....	128 (L).....	257 (T)
Week #2.....	119 (E).....	172 (L).....	291 (T)
Week #3.....	130 (E).....	137 (L).....	267 (T)
Week #4.....	139 (E).....	144 (L).....	283 (T)

THANKSGIVING

1991.....	85	1995.....	162
1992.....	105	1996.....	171
1993.....	102	1997.....	148
1994.....	156	1998.....	206
		1999.....	153

YOUTH GROUP NEWS...

YOUTH SPONSORED CHRISTMAS CAROLING

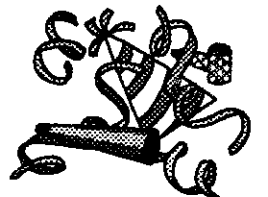
We want to make this year's Christmas caroling the biggest ever! The youth have invited the Confirmation Class and

Congregation to join with the Youth Group for an hour of caroling at the ECC and for some of our older members. So come sing with us! Meet at the church on Sunday evening, December 19th from 4:00 to 5:30 PM (including hot chocolate at the church afterwards!) Make this a special family Christmas event and bring small children, too! At 6:00 PM, the Youth will have a supper for the Youth Group with a gift exchange and a Christmas movie! Don't miss the fun!



NEW YEAR'S EVE AT THE SNOWBOWL

Youth sponsored extravaganza to say farewell to the 1900's and welcome 2000 AD! \$5.00 per person for an evening of bowling, door prizes, apple-bobbing, and celebration! (fun and friendship) Sign up ahead of time. Invite your family and friends to sign up too! 9:00 to Midnight Make it a full evening. Begin with the last New Year's Eve Concordia Service of the Century at 7:00 PM. Then come to the snowbowl at 9:00 PM. See you there. (Purchase of food available at Snow Bowl concession stand)





Poinsettias will again be used to beautify our chancel celebrating the birth of Jesus. They will be purchased through the flower chairman at a cost of \$7 each. Orders must be received by December 5th.

Please use the order form which will be in the Sunday bulletins on November 28th and December 5th. Thank you -

Elaine Stroncek

ALL NEW FLOWER CHART

The Flower Chart for 2000 is up on the moveable bulletin board. Sign up early for the dates you would like to remember a birthday, anniversary or just a thank you to God for blessings received. The cost is \$12.50 per vase, payable to Concordia Lutheran Church. On the Sundays you provide flowers, you may take them home following the late service.



STRENGTHENING THE BOND

Join us for an evening of dining and conversation. Introducing "The Power of We," a workshop on communication in relationships

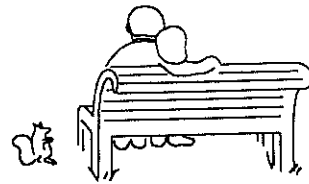
Friday

December 10, 1999

6:30 PM

Concordia Lutheran Church
Fellowship Hall

Cost is \$15.00 per couple
Tickets must be purchased by December 5th



Brothers & Sisters in Christ

Adjacent is the approved 2000 budget showing the increases from the 1999 budget. The budget has been increased from \$166M in 1999 to \$240M in 2000, a 31% increase. This increase in the budget reflects another area in which our congregation is growing, along with an increased congregation size, increased worship attendance, the addition of a new service, and the completion of the building project. If you have any questions regarding this budget, please feel free to get ahold of either of us.

Bart & Nancy Kounovsky
Treasurers

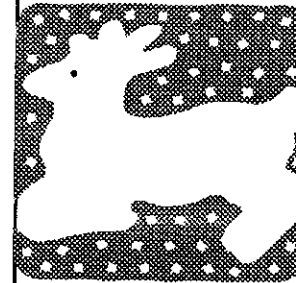
Actual 1999

Elders - \$0
Trustees - \$22,075
Education - \$6,650
Outreach - \$12,000
Worship - \$2,700
Stewardship - \$0
Gen & Adm - \$37,550
Wages & Ben - \$85,970
Total \$166,945

Approved 2000

Elders - \$1,000
Trustees - \$31,500
Education - \$9,650
Outreach - \$12,500
Worship - \$2,950
Stewardship - \$1,500
Gen & Adm - \$51,390
Wages & Ben - \$130,533
Total \$240,783

LWML NEWS ...



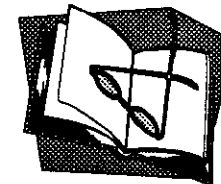
There will be no Concordia Women's Guild meeting this December. Since this time of year often becomes overwhelming, the Executive Board decided to forgo our monthly meeting and Christmas brunch. We hope this decision will allow people to set their minds on the reason for all the festivities and attend the Advent services and other special worship opportunities. But mark your calendars now for Women's Guild's "New Beginning Brunch," on Saturday, January 22nd from 10:00 Am to noon in the Fellowship Hall. All women are invited. Each day is a new start, washed clean and forgiven. But maybe you're still carrying some old baggage, some regrets. Why not start the New Year, the new millenium, with a new spiritual beginning? Here's a chance to be encouraged in your faith. We look forward to seeing you all.

A HUGE thank you to all who helped and donated toward the "Christmas Cupboard" - the bazaar, cookie caper, book fair, brunch, and cookbook sales. It was tons of fun and a great success! The Christmas Cupboard has brought in \$6,900.00 thus far.

BOOK CLUB

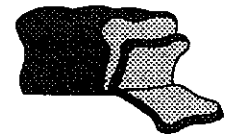
Monday, December 6th at the Cartwright's, 579 Grand at 7:00 PM.

We will be discussing the bestseller, "The Color of Water." Men and women are invited. If you need a copy of the book, call Luther, 870-9675. It's great to read! See you there!



"CONCORDIA COOKS!"

is the now available. Consider buying one for \$12.00 for Christmas gifts, friends, family, and/or secret sisters. The "name the cookbook" contest was won by Janice Noyer - her prize - a free cookbook! The books are also available at the Tread of Pioneers Museum.



Calling All Members!

December is an All-Congregation "Care Team" month. With the additional services and everyone's busy schedules, I am requesting that ALL members consider participating this month as: greeters, ushers, and/or readers at December's early, late and special Christmas services. Sign up at the bulletin board above the coffee pot. Be sure to refresh your memory as to what the specific duties include. Thank you very much for your participation.

-Sandra Hogrefe