

DECEMBER 2009 NEWSLETTER



LEARNING FROM OTHERS AS TRAVEL TOGETHER ALONG THE WAY

Learning from another

The following quote is from the book Anonymous by Alicia Britt Chloé.

Have you ever felt hidden? Have you ever moved to a new place or entered a new environment where no one knew who you were, what you could do, or what dreams ignited your soul? Have you ever crossed the threshold into another season of life . . . where you shifted from recognition to anonymity, from court to the bench, from standing as a leader to sitting as a learner again? Have you ever resigned or retired from a position or title and transitioned from being sought out to being left out, consulted to unconsidered, celebrated to celebrating others? In these hidden seasons, we are more familiar with being invisible than acclaimed. Concealed for months or years or decades, our potential seems to hibernate like a bear in winter, and over time we begin to wonder if spring will ever awaken again. Hidden hopes. Hidden dreams. Hidden gifts.



All of us are acquainted with chapters in life when our visible fruitfulness is pruned back, our previously praiseworthy strengths become dormant, and our abilities are unnoticed by the watching world. Like a flower whose budding glory is covered up by wet leaves, we sense the weight of hiddenness in our hearts and whisper, "I have so much more to give and be." But there is one who can see the beauty of that covered, smothered flower, God! And mysteriously his delight in that beauty is not diminished by its leafy camouflage. Neither would his pleasure be amplified by the flower's visibility. Good news indeed for the hidden.

Traveling together along the way

As we journey together, we learn and grow. What follows are some of Alicia's answers to questions posed in a recent interview. Under each question there is room for you to offer your own answers to the inquiry. Be blessed by her words and enlightened by your answers.

Alicia, what are your most treasured experiences? *Jesus interrupting my Atheistic worldview with His presence; walking down the aisle to meet Barry; backpacking through China; personal prayer retreats in the desert of Arizona; first slobbery baby kisses from my son and daughter.*

What are some of your most treasured experiences?

Alicia, do you have a personal mission statement? *God Himself is my treasure. His global cause is my own.*

Do you have a personal mission statement?

What is your current focus? *Relishing being wife and mommy. creating resources, speaking, and mentoring*

What is your current focus?



Giving and Receiving in a New Way

Pastor Zina

In recent days Karen Palomo told me a story that touched my heart. I hope it invites us all to rethink our Christmas giving traditions.

A mom and dad went to support their son as he played in his final junior high hockey game. When the boys from the home team took the ice their brand new skates gleamed and their special home jerseys were pressed and impressive. Their helmets and pads were state of the art, as was the arena and scoreboard in the field house. The members of the visiting team had no helmets, their uniforms were ill fitted, and their skates mismatched and worn. Their school had no field house and they had only one set of jerseys.

The home team trounced the visiting team and the game was over; but the experience remained. On the way home the son and husband wondered aloud what the real potential of the visiting team was and what they might have achieved *if* they were given the same opportunities.

Later that week the mother purchased a gift certificate, enough to supply the visiting team with helmets for the upcoming year. But she did not stop there. On Christmas morning as her husband and son opened their gifts, she pointed out a single red envelope with their names printed on the front. Inside was a note. It read, *“Your conversation about the visiting hockey players, and all of the **what if’s** of their lives, motivated me to purchase a gift for them, in your names. This Christmas you have one less gift from me. But a special team of young men will have helmets, given by you.*

The story did not end that Christmas. Each year, each member of the family set aside money that would normally be spent on gifts and used it to purchase something for someone in need. Each year, the most coveted gifts to open were those perched high atop the tree in red envelopes.

Three years later the father of the family passed away. The mother could not bear to put up the tree or to plan any festivities. Worried; her son, wife and three grandchildren decided they would not travel to the mom’s home, as usual but, instead they would invite her to spend Christmas with them. When she walked into her son’s house, she saw the tree and *six* red envelopes. On Christmas morning when all the other gifts were opened, her youngest grandchild pointed out the remaining red envelope and said, “Grammy, that’s got your name on it.” Inside was a note. It read, “This year instead of buying extra gifts for you, we put all of our money together and gave a scholarship to a junior high school far away. It was given in Grand Pop’s name. Now the team members at that school will always have what they need when they play hockey.” The experience remained. A third generation is now teaching a fourth the power of the red envelope.

And, the most anticipated Christmas gift still sits perched high atop the tree in a beautiful envelope of red.

Beloved of God,

We are a community richly blessed. This year, I would encourage you to consider carefully the gifts you give to those you love. Few of us, or those whom we know, need another “thing”. And, there is such great joy in being a blessing to another. Consider all of the opportunities to give to organizations noted on page 9 of the newsletter. Consider all of the places you know that are in need, especially this year. Consider these things and then begin a red envelope Christmas tradition in your home. If you will, I know heaven will rejoice and some other heart, here on earth, will be blessed.

2010 PLEDGE DRIVE UPDATE

As of November 18, 2009, we have received 33 pledges totaling \$115,126, which is 57.6% of our 2010 goal. Thank you to those who have already stepped up and made a commitment to the church for the upcoming year.

However, there remain a number of members and friends of the church who have not yet made their 2010 pledge. It may be that you are sitting on the sidelines waiting to see if you might be the one to “put us over the top”. But, as you can see from the numbers noted above, we are not yet near the top.

The Church Council plans the annual budget based largely on pledge income. With only the pledges of a few members, the Council is without the commitments necessary to plan an accurate budget or to meet basic expenses.

It is estimated that to run the essential aspects of Community Church in 2010 we must reach a budget goal of \$215,000. This will allow us to hire a new youth/ children’s pastor, a new organist to replace Liz Chase who will retire, pay the everyday bills of the church, meet our mission and outreach commitments and focus on programs to expand and grow the ministries of the church.

Some may think all is running smoothly and that their pledge is not needed. What is important to note is that the church operates with great fiscal restraint and yet, as it is, every dollar that we had in the 2009 budget is needed and more. There are several families who pledged in 2009 and have not pledged this year and, furthermore, there are some who have not pledged in the past several years.

This is the year for everyone to step up. This is the year to make a commitment so that we, as a church, do not lose the momentum we have built up over the last few years. This is the year that all must shoulder their part of the weight and help move us from being the best kept secret in Barrington to a more vibrant, more welcoming, more active church.

We are at a fiscal crossroads, and the Council Members whose names you see below want to encourage you to pray, to look deep within and to choose to challenge yourself, to stretch beyond what is easy and to help us make a positive difference in the lives of our members and friends and in the life of Barrington and beyond.

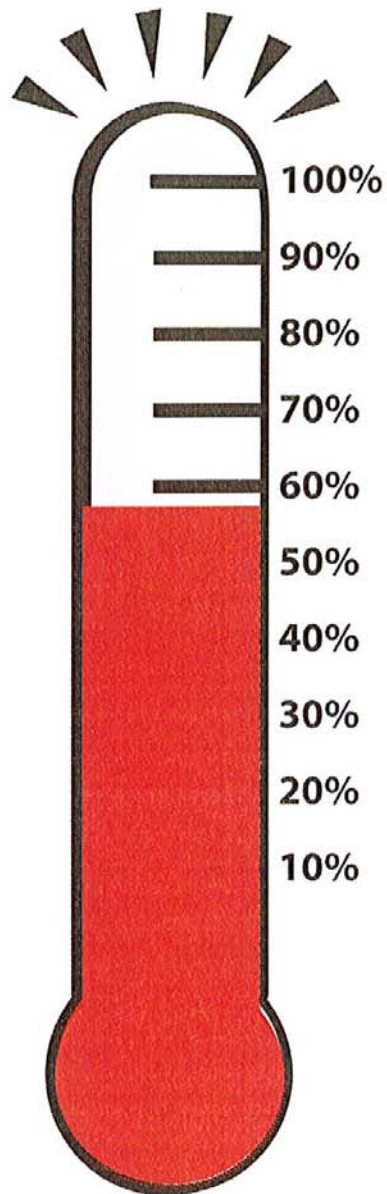
We are a church who gives unselfishly of our resources whenever we are asked. We are a church who cares deeply. This is the moment when we must turn that attention to the Church’s own well being and decide we will go forward with purpose and hope.

The following page illustrates the distance we need to cover to meet our 2010 pledge goal. We pray that you will feel encouraged, be hopeful and join us as we plan for the best year ever. May all work together for good as we move toward 2010.

Bill Akerstrom
Michael Campe
Jean Capellos
Laura Gilleland
JoAnne Jacobsen

Wayne Jacobsen
Bunny Jahnke
Steve Jahnke
Jayne Majzan
Ginny Newman

Ted Newman
Brenda Overby
Stu Overby
Clarke Robinson
Lynn Schreiner
Sandy Schroeder



**The 2010 Pledge Drive
Has Been Extended to
December 31, 2009**

Currently 33 individuals, couples or families have pledged \$115, 126 for an average pledge of approximately \$3480. If every person who pledged in 2009 committed the same amount in 2010, and if those who have not pledged before pledged 50% of the average pledge amount, we will make or come very, very near our 2010 goal.

We pray and trust that you will join us as we go forward toward a wonderful and successful 2010!



Hello Kids, Youth and Families!

Happy Advent! Advent is the season of preparation and waiting for the birth of Jesus! Every year we celebrate Advent, which means “coming”, by preparing our hearts: we ask for forgiveness and are renewed by God’s love as we focus on being in good relationship for God. We are also waiting. We wait to celebrate Jesus’ birth on Christmas and we wait for Jesus’ to come among us now.

This Advent, our families have the chance to wait and prepare together! Families with children will have the opportunity to build and decorate your own Christmas tree as you think about the meaning of Advent and talk about what Jesus means to you! Families with youth, a weekly devotion, including, a centerpiece for your dinner table provides you with an opportunity to read, reflect, pray and act throughout advent as you learn about the “characters” in the nativity story.

How to use your family’s resource:

- Spend time at dinner each evening participating in the Advent activity, reading aloud, answering the resources together, and sharing your own experiences of Christmas and Advent.
- Commit to honoring a special time each day to pray and walk through the resources you have together. Make this a special Advent tradition

Both of the resources for families are to be experienced both together as a family and alone as an individual. Take some time for quiet thinking or prayer and then join together as a family to talk about what you heard!

The youth group will also be supporting families in their Advent experience by working through their resource weekly during our youth group dinner at 6pm! Youth 6th-12 grade are welcome to join us!

Blessings this Advent! I hope your family finds the resources provided and the season at hand one of growth, excitement, and renewed relationship with God and one another!

Community Church
Christmas
Cookie Walk!
Saturday, December 12th
at 10:30am
Pick Your Own Cookies!
\$10 a box



Countdown To Cookie Walk!

Can you smell the wonderful scents of vanilla, cinnamon and chocolate in the air? Then it must be Cookie Walk time!

This time-honored Community Church tradition will be taking place on a new day and time this year: Saturday, December 12, 2009 from 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Our “official” Cookie Walk cookie trays are on the Narthex counter – please take a bunch home and plate your cookies there – you’ll save us lots of time and energy during those busy hours before we open to the public. The basement freezer is plugged in and ready if you’re an early baker and want to freeze your treats ahead of time, so dust off those aprons and let’s get baking!

In addition to the thousands of delicious cookies, we’ll be working with several Barrington-area groups to offer gift items for sale. This year, we’ll be offering holiday music CDs from the Chicago Master Singers, 2010 Calendars to benefit GiGi’s Playhouse, a Barrington-based group supporting children and families affected by Downs Syndrome, and the Kids Feeding Kids Cookbook, which features recipes for kids by kids. 100% of the cookbook profits will be donated to the Northern Illinois Food Bank – Youth Nutrition Program which feeds children in 13 counties in Northern Illinois.

Questions? Please contact any member of this year’s **Cookie Walk 2009 Committee:** Jayne Majzan, Cindy Alton, Pam Andruss, Claudine Athmann, Marge Boynton, Lindsay Campe, Jean Capellos, Sharon Hornig, Karen Palomo, Meg Simmons or Rev. Zina.

We hope to see everyone there!

Women's Fellowship "Soup"er service project!!

Community Church's very own Women's Fellowship group is partnering with Barrington Area Special Voices for a service project to help nourish the souls and hearts of area families with special needs. BASV works to provide advocacy, education, and social growth opportunities for children with special needs, and their families, in the Barrington area.



On December 5, 2009 the Women's Fellowship will provide a homemade piping-hot chicken noodle soup dinner with salad and a dessert for the families that come to the Kids in Action open gym event. This event has been one of BASV's most popular events regularly drawing over 40 families a month. It is a place where those families can have a much needed break, allows their children to have fun and make friends, and gives parents a chance to socialize and network.

What: "Soup"er dinner

When: 5 – 7pm

Date: December 5th

Where: Kids in Action 200 N Hough in Barrington

Are you able to make a pot of soup? Maybe while making a fruit cake you can whip up some cookies too to share at this event? Make an awesome salad? We'd love to have your help – remember many hands make light work!

Please contact Jean at 847—381-7933 for more information



OUR CHRISTMAS GIVING PAGE

Each December Barrington Giving Day invites families on the Free and Reduced lunch program residing in Barrington 220 School District to a Giving Day. Families receive food, warm coats, books, blankets, and gifts. Members of Barrington churches, schools, businesses and civic organizations have always been generous in their support of this day. Many thanks to those who have already given items!

Each year the need is greater.

Financial gifts are urgently needed and are used to purchase food, grocery food certificates, winter coats for children, books, blankets, and hygiene products.

Checks may be made payable to **Barrington Giving Day**
c/o John Paul Hills
Barrington Bank & Trust
201 S. Hough St.
Barrington, IL 60010



A box for donations will be available in the Narthex. The last pick up will be Wednesday December 10th

THE GIVING TREE



The response from all of you has been phenomenal as always! Almost all of the slips for the children at Kid's Hope United have been taken, but there are a few left if you haven't already gotten yours. We won't see their faces when they open your carefully selected gifts, but anyone who has ever been a child (that's all of us!) will remember the magic that those brightly wrapped packages brought us. Please be sure to bring your **unwrapped gift in a gift bag with your white tag attached** to the church by **December 6th**.

The "elves" have already started decorating the tree with hats, mittens and scarves to bring warmth to the needy also. Items for men, women and children are welcome and needed. Let's weigh the tree down with mittens and love! Thanks to all of you for your heartfelt generosity. These items will also be picked up on **December 6th**.



Christmas Boxes for Friends and Neighbors provides another chance to give. This year we would like to prepare 12-15 boxes to share with those in our community and families selected by Hough Street School. On the **first Sunday in December** the Deacons will accept your Benevolent Offering and use it to construct the boxes. We welcome you to write a generous check or bring \$25 Walmart, Dominick's or Jewel cards and place them in the offering tray. The Deacons will then use your gifts to fill the boxes to overflowing. We ask you to prayerfully consider all of the opportunities presented in this Newsletter and to allow God's Spirit to direct you to share with one or all of the worthwhile organizations or projects selected by Community Church. And thank you, thank you very much.

Birthdays and Anniversaries in December

December 3	Tim Hannahs Birthday	December 21	Hailey Campe Birthday
December 9	Brenda Overby Birthday	December 25	Carol Rice Birthday
December 11	Jeff Andruss Birthday	December 28	Judy Nolan Birthday
December 14	Cindy Alton Birthday	December 28	Lyn Hannahs Birthday
December 15	Megan Vickery Birthday	December 29	Michael Jahnke Birthday



The long awaited church directory is in its final stages and just about ready to be distributed. Many thanks to Sandy Mytys who has completed all of the work of compiling, editing, typing and formating. YEAH SANDY!!!

Your new, updated directory will offer easy access to home phone numbers, addresses and emails. Work phone numbers will not be included in the directory, but we will retain them in the office for use in the case of an emergency. Likewise, any cell phone numbers provided for our youth will not be included. This will allow us to insure their privacy and safety. Youth cell phone numbers will be retained in the office and used only with parental permission or in the case of an emergency. Birthdays and anniversaries will continue to appear on the monthly calendar.

The holder for your directory was distributed during the Fall Festival. Once your directory is delivered you will be able to slip it into the folder and all will be set. Please note, the folder has pockets so that you will be able to conveniently "file" updates to the directory in the pockets. If you were not here for the Fall Festival please let the office know and we will create a folder for you.



PARKING 101

Over the past few months the church parking lot has become a source of income and a source of confusion. Some who desire to park in our lot, instead of the local Metra lot, have contacted the office, applied for permission and been granted the right to park in the lot for a fee of \$30.00 per month. Others have simply taken advantage of the Church, parking in the lot on a regular basis without obtaining permission or paying a fee. Though we have left many notes on some cars, the owners have not been willing to comply with our request to pay for the privilege or parking.

Therefore the Council has approved a formal parking contract that will be extended to those who agree to pay \$30.00 per month (much less than the rate charged by Metra). Beginning in January we will ask people to pay for the privilege of parking on our property by the fourth Monday each month. They will then receive a window decal to display for the upcoming month, showing that they have paid their fee. We will also distribute decals to those who work in the building or are regular visitors during day time hours (Al Anon, KEEP Staff, etc.).

Once the program has begun, during the hours the office is staffed, if we see a car without a tag we will phone the towing company and ask them to remove the car. During the month of December we will place notes on all of the cars parked in the lot, giving all at least a month to comply with our new policy.

Of course, Church members and those who attend regularly are welcome to park in the lot on those occasions when you take the train into town or need a place to leave your car when you are out of town. If you plan to park in the lot during the hours the office is staffed (Monday - Thursday 8 AM - 3 PM) you must stop by and obtain a daily pass. When the office is not staffed we will not enforced this process. However, we will not share this information beyond the church. We are delighted to have a clear policy and will place it in the bulletin and the Thursday Flash when we are ready to enact it formally. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter and please watch your bulletins for updates.

CALENDAR PAGE

The Community Church of Barrington
407 S. Grove Avenue
Barrington IL 60010



Wonderful Wednesday is December 2nd & 16th . Be sure to mark your calendars. We have lots planned and are looking forward to seeing our Youth and Children!

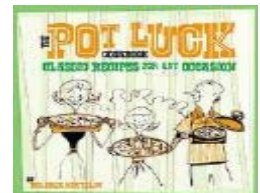
Poinsettias orders are being taken . Use the handy form in your church bulletins to order. They are the same price as last year—\$12.00.



Women's Breakfast

Women who breakfast will meet on December ??????

Potluck is on Wednesday, December 9th. Enjoy the beautiful decorations, good food and fellowship. Bring a dish to pass and your holiday self! Your family, friends and neighbors are welcome.



Each Sunday in Advent there will be a special gift for those who attend the service. Each one has a special connection to Advent and the joys of Christmas.