



# Lovilia CIRCUIT WRITER



## Special Holiday Edition

### Confirmation 2008



If you are in 7th, 8th, or 9th grade and would like to learn what it means to be a Christian and a United Methodist, then confirmation is for you. I am at present visiting families in the parish with young people in this age category. If you have not yet received a visit, contact me at 641-932-5243. I don't want to leave anyone out. We will have a potluck get together on Wednesday, January 3rd at 5:30PM at the Bussey church for all prospective confirmands and their families.

*~ Pastor Jill*

### Advent/Christmas Eve Services

Each week during Advent individuals and families from all three churches will be lighting our Advent wreaths during worship. On Christmas Eve, there will be three opportunities to worship. Below you will find the times decided on at a pastor parish meeting earlier this year.

- Lovilia - 4:30PM**
- Bussey - 5:30PM**
- Hamilton - 6:30PM**

### Open House

On Sunday, December 9th from 2:00-4:00PM, Kevin and Jill invite you to an Open House at the parsonage in Albia at 222 N. 10th. Come and enjoy refreshments, Christmas music and fellowship together. We look forward to seeing you there!

*~ Kevin and Jill Leveck*



## DECEMBER

- 1 - 7:00AM United Methodist Men (B) - Bussey women invited because we will decorate the church for Christmas following breakfast.
- 2 - First Sunday of Advent
- 3 - 6:00PM evening UMW Christmas party (L)
- 5 - 6:00PM UMW (B); 5:00PM Kids Club (L)
- 6 - 12:00noon - UMW (L) Men and women of the parish invited for lunch.
- 9 - 2:00-4:00PM Open house at parsonage in Albia  
4:00-6:00PM Parish Youth Christmas Party at Family life Center in Albia. Cars will leave from Bussey at 3:35 and Lovilia at 3:40PM.
- 11 - 1:00PM UMW (H)
- 12 - 6:00PM Choir (B)  
6:30PM Practice for parish musical (B)
- 15 - 5:00PM caroling in Bussey
- 16 - 11:00AM Sunday school program in Bussey  
6:00PM Parish Christmas Musical in Bussey
- 18 - 6:00PM Finance Committee (B)  
6:30PM Ad Council (B)
- 19 - 6:00PM Choir (B)
- 20 - 7:00PM Ad Board (L)
- 23 - 9:00AM Christmas program in Lovilia
- 24 - Christmas Eve services - 4:30PM Lovilia; 5:30PM Bussey; 6:30PM Hamilton.  
January 2 - 5:30PM confirmation potluck get-together at Bussey. Watch your bulletins for the second youth group activity and the date of the worship service at Westridge Care Center.

### Pass It On Youth



Thanks to all youth group members who participated in our annual CROP Walk. the weather cooperated and the fellowship was great! Seventeen people attended our hayride. Thanks to Ron Hoy for hosting it. He took us back into the timber to the "Hoy Boys" cabin where we roasted hotdogs and marshmallows and had chili and hot chocolate. What a great evening!

Come one, come all to our Pass It On Christmas Party on Sunday, December 9th from 4:00-6:00PM at the Trinity United Methodist Church Family Life Center in Albia. There will be cars leaving from Both Bussey and Lovilia (Bussey at 3:35PM and Lovilia at 3:40PM). Be sure to bring the signed consent slip attached to the letter you will receive the first week in December. Bring a friend or two to share in the fun.

We will have games, a \$5.00 grab bag gift exchange (so bring a gift) and plenty to eat. While there we will spend some of our time shooting baskets to raise funds for "Nothing But Nets", a project that sends mosquito nets to tropical areas where one person every thirty seconds dies from malaria. This is our chance to do something to help. You will receive a pledge sheet in your letter - if at all possible, get pledges from neighbors and family. For every basket we make, our group will donate to "Nothing But Nets."

So mark your calendars now and join us for food, fun, fellowship and service. At our party we will make plans for our second activity in December. See you there!



This is the last newsletter for 2007! To me, it seems as if it went by way too fast. In fact, at one point, I sailed right past the October newsletter and thankfully Jill covered for me quite well. (Thanks!) I hope you all have a great holiday with familv and friends. Don't forget the reason...

# Christmas Musical - December 16 at 6 PM

Since our last newsletter some changes have been made in terms of our Christmas musical. At the first practice it was decided that 'Cookin Up Christmas' was not the right program for our parish - SO 'His Very Own Star' will provide a memorable and fun program instead.

our next practices will be on November 28th and December 12th at 6:30PM at the Bussey Church. It's not too late to be a part of the parish choir. We have so many in our three churches that truly enjoy making a joyful noise to the Lord we should have no trouble filling the front of the church.

Don't forget to clear your schedules on the 16th so that you can come and ba a part of our parish time together. After the musical we will enjoy refreshments and fellowship in the basement of the Bussey Church.

## Leadership Development Conversations

On Tuesday, December 11 from 11:00-noon all clergy are invited to the South Central District Office to meet with the four conference leadership development ministers. Ideas will be bandied about and input of the clergy is welcome.



## Mission Minute...

Folks in the parish have done so much for others this year. What an outstanding witness to make! What a wonderful way to honor our Lord!  
Even as we bring mittens, hats, etc. for our mitten tree, and shoot baskets for "Nothing But Net", it's not too early to think of how we as individuals and as a community of faith can serve in 2008.

I have a feeling that it's going to be our best year yet!

## District Superintendent's Open House

December 9th from 1:30-5:00PM at the home of Reverend Bill and Judy Poland (402 Putter Ridge Place) in Oseola, there will be an open house for all clergy and laity.



## Financial

Our offerings for October 2007 were \$2,262.55. Of that total, \$3400 was from our special World Communion offering. According to our 2007 budget, we need \$2267.45 each month in order to break even. As you consider your special Christmas season giving, don't forget our church.

## Thank You!

Thank you so much for the beautiful porcelain figurine of Jesus washing Peter's feet and the \$50.00 for use at Barnes and Noble Book Stores that you gave me for pastor's appreciation month.. The figurine provides a lovely centerpiece for our dining room table and several of the books I purchased at the bookstore will be reviewed in Reader's Corner in the upcoming year.



# READER'S CORNER

Have you ever wondered what Mary and Joseph were thinking and feeling as the drama of Christ's birth played out in their lives? Elizabeth Berg does her pondering on paper in her novel *The Handmaid and the Carpenter*. Building on the facts we have in Scripture, she focuses on the relationship between the two young people and how love, trust and a faith in God carry them through the unexpected twists and turns of their life together.

The author takes us to a wedding in Nazareth, the home of Elizabeth, and the stable where the world is forever changed and she engages the senses so that you imagine you're hearing the laughter, seeing the baby leap in Elizabeth's womb and smelling the earthy animal scents that surrounded the manger. God sent His Son to be in the care of two very human parents whose faith was tested and strengthened time and time again.

this is a good book to curl up with when the holiday preparations reach a point where we forget the reason for the season.



## CROP Walk

The pledge forms are still coming in and being tallied. Thanks to all who walked, pledged and helped with the planning and feeding of our group. one fourth of the money raised will come back to our communities to support hunger causes and the rest will be used to battle hunger around the world.

## United Methodist Men

We will meet on Saturday, December first at 7:00AM at the Bussey church. While we enjoy Ward Bonnett's famous pancakes, we'll talk more about our participation in the PET project and how the money is coming in for the next palate of wood.

The ladies from Bussey are invited to eat with us because following the meeting the Bussey church will be made ready for the Christmas season.

## Thank You!

Kevin and I both appreciate the many messages of condolence that you have given us on the death of my father. no matter how much we think we're prepared, it's so very hard to say good-bye - even though I'm quite certain that daddy is in heaven and he no longer has Alzheimer's. Thank you for your concern and support!

~ Kevin and Jill Leveck

## Pastor's Column

Guest Writer: Kevin Leveck



As I write this, it has been a week since the funeral for Jill's father. As hard as it was to see him go, it was also a blessing to see the struggle finally come to an end. The last seven years were not kind to him, nor was it easy for those of us who knew him to see him disappear slowly before our eyes. Alzheimer's is a particularly painful disease that affects all within the reach of the one who is afflicted, and when death finally does arrive it can be seen as a friend, coming to relieve those who suffer. Though there were flashes of recognition and moments that revealed the man we knew and loved, by the time it was over we were hard pressed to recognize the man whom we knew as father, husband and grandfather. There was little left of the humor or the strength that was exhibited in the previous years of his life. A stranger would not have known how this man sacrificed himself for his family, holding down two full-time jobs for 35 years, just to make sure that his wife and children had what they needed. There would have been no echo of the playful banter that was traded back and forth between him and his wife during 60+ years of marriage, especially during the nightly card games that usually ended evenly matched. It would have been difficult to detect the intense pride he had in his children and grandchildren, all of whom returned that pride many times over. The tears that were shed during the memorial were but a token of the years of love and devotion that added up to a life well lived, of love given and received. No, the last few years were not kind to Clayton, or us; but the memories of better days and the bond of love fashioned over the years kept us going past the pain and frustration that comes with creeping senility. And we know that no disease, no matter how crippling or loathsome, could keep him from eventually enjoying the place that was prepared for him by a loving and powerful Savior. Someone was there to receive this man, to break the bonds of death and snatch him from the grave that threatened to keep him down. He has gone on to his greatest adventure, courtesy of the Lord that he knew and followed.

This may seem like a strange message, coming so close to Christmas. I prefer to think of it as an appropriate response to the promise that was begun long ago in that dirty stable. If Christmas is truly the beginning of the Good News, then all that was embodied in the Christ child is a reminder of the victory that comes to all who follow him. In that respect, Clayton kept Christmas in his heart all his life, devoting himself to the One who had redeemed him, and passing on that faith to his own. Now he enjoys the fruits of that faith, because the power of death has been broken by the birth of this One. We are reminded of the greatest gift that can be bestowed upon us, by the greatest One who ever lived. Perhaps it would be well for us, as we prepare for the inevitable celebration, to remember those who have gone before us, and express our thanks to that Child, for providing us the hope that transcends grief and suffering. Our loved one is safe in the arms of the One who began as a baby in extremely modest circumstances. Can you lift up your voice and do the same, as you prepare for the coming holiday?



LOVILIA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
BUDGET FOR 2008



CONFERENCE APPORTIONMENTS:

General Church Apportionments	\$ 722.00
Conference Ministries	\$ 3,002.00
Conference Mission Giving	\$ 930.00
Total Apportionments:	\$ 4,654.00

PASTORAL SUPPORT:

Taxable Salary	\$11,527.80
Health Insurance & Direct Billed Pension	\$4,227.57
Travel Allowance	\$1,000.00
Total Pastoral Support:	\$16,755.37

LOCAL EXPENSES:

Pulpit Supply	\$150.00
Water and Sewer	\$480.00
Electric and Gas	\$2,000.00
Office Supplies/Bulletins	\$500.00
Contract Laborer	\$1,500.00
Postage	\$25.00
Parish Fund	\$240.00
Miscellaneous	\$100.00
Total Local Expenses:	\$4,995.00

COMMITTEE EXPENSES:

Evangelism	\$100.00
Christian Education	\$100.00
Continuing Education	\$150.00
Total Committee Expenses	\$350.00

INSURANCE:

Property and Liability	\$1,300.00
Workman's Compensation	\$75.00
Total Insurance:	\$1,375.00

TOTAL BUDGET FOR THE YEAR 2008: \$28,129.37



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 LOVILIA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Question: Why does Santa have 3 gardens?

Answer: So he can ho-ho-ho.

Question: What do you call people who are afraid of Santa Claus?

Answer: Claustrophobic.

Visit the Lovilia United Methodist Church online at <http://lumc.webs.com>