

Divinity Lutheran Church
Spring Meeting of the Congregation
May 16, 2010 – 12 p.m. - Sanctuary

AGENDA

Call to Order Leslie Crowe, President of the Congregation
Opening Devotions – Inside of Report Cover Pastor Doug
Approval of Minutes from the Fall Meeting
Financial Report Paul Klemme, Tony Chilia
Capital Improvement Campaign
Report of Nominating Committee
Election of Officers and Board Co-directors
Other Business – Personnel Committee Doug Smith
Adjournment

DIVINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
November 15, 2009

The meeting was called to order at 12:15pm by President Leslie Crowe. Pastor Doug led us in prayer.

John Sesock moved that the minutes from the May 17th Congregational Meeting be approved as presented. Ed Kahl seconded. Motion carried.

Tony Chilia presented the 2010 budget with comparisons to 2009 projected. The total is approximately \$390,000. There will be no merit increases from 2009 unless there are benefit changes. The board expenses are very similar to 2009. This budget shows a shortfall of about \$10,000. With our usual larger influx of funds in December, we should start 2010 with approximately \$27,000. Leslie stated we need to look at ourselves and be generous in December. We currently have \$17,000 in the bank. We have to think positively and see the wonderful things occurring with our youth. Marilyn Sesock moved to accept the budget as proposed. Ken Spanagel seconded. Motion carried. It was noted that the cost to heat the building is expected to be the best it has been in years.

Leslie now reported that we have some projects to address. As we know the arches on the chapel and outside the church have been repaired. The old seal was removed and repaired and this is what had caused the leaking in the chapel. Tim Wallace, a parishioner, has scraped and painted

in the chapel. Further exterior repair on the outside of the sanctuary building is needed. The deterioration in the arms allows water to seep behind the surface. They need to be stripped of sealer, power washed, old mold cleared away and then glaze applied. There is a blue band on the top of the tower which is deteriorating. Equipment has to be rented to go up and repair this. Total cost of this portion is about \$68,000.

There was a major leak in the roof over the Fellowship Hall. Since this one was an emergency, Pastor Doug contacted a parishioner who agreed to provide a check of \$2,300 to make this repair. There was a question about whether a warranty would be supplied on the repairs mentioned in the preceding paragraph. It was believed to be 5 years.

The next problem is the boilers need to be replaced in the old building. Efficient Heating & Cooling has recommended removing the two existing boilers and replacing them with four high efficiency boilers. We need to keep in mind they could go anytime. Keith has experienced fire coming out of the boilers. This estimate is \$48,000. Over time it should be paid back by the energy efficiency. Tony Maenza was most thorough in examining our plant. There was a question if the chimney had been repaired. It has not. We had one estimate of between \$3,000 and \$6,000. The top part needs to be replaced. A question was raised if we could do it ourselves. Answer was that we need a professional. There is concern that falling bricks could cause an injury.

Last item is that we had a quote for the roof over the education building. This was approximately \$49,000. The roof there is an original. We are looking at a total projected expense of approximately \$168,000. We have faced these challenges before. Forward in Faith was just getting off the ground when Leslie returned to Divinity. Leslie would like us to consider a motion to enter into a capital campaign to repair the exterior of the sanctuary building, replace the boilers and roof the educational wing. There was a question of prioritizing our needs. The answer was of course. A question was asked about taking out a loan. The answer was we would hope to pay as we go. We would initially appoint a committee to begin this process. Paul Klemme questioned if we didn't need a more concise program. We need to explain to every parishioner the need to spend this money. Leslie said we can get the proposals. Have them presented by the people selected to do the work. We will break down what is involved. Annie Klindworth questioned what kind of fund raising we would be doing. The Forward in Faith group that we had help from was very expensive. We have the information from that campaign and can use it now.

John Jacobson moved that we enter into a capital campaign to raise funds to replace the boilers, repair the exterior of the sanctuary building and roof the educational wing. Mary Kay Kahl seconded. Motion carried. Leslie said we will have people come in and talk to the congregation about the needed repairs. We have to take care of our house.

Marilyn Sesock presented a letter of concern about the situation of the release of Janet Schoch and the hiring of the new secretary. A copy is attached. Pastor Doug did not know about this letter of concern. He stated that the letter indicates Janet's perception of the situation and what follows is Pastor Doug's perception. Janet told Pastor Doug, Larry Jones and Leslie last spring that she would need time off. No action was taken, though it should have been. Janet missed a

lot of time in September with David's illness. When it came to the end of September, Janet notified them she would not be working the rest of the year, the reason being that she would have to care for her grandson, while his mother received the bone marrow transplant. She said she would prefer to find someone to work in the interim and come back next year. By the end of the second week of October it was obvious something had to be done. Larry was doing both jobs. Pastor brought the problem to Planning Council. When no action was taken immediately, he put the job description we already had on Craig's List. We received about 50 resumes. He and Larry picked out two of them the following Monday, interviewed two and hired one. Pastor Doug said the mistake he made was not contacting Doug Smith, Personnel/Vice President and he asked for forgiveness. He was in a hurry because we needed someone and he was frustrated. He had a visit with Janet face to face and told her he was hiring a secretary. She said she could come in for a few hours and bring the baby and do some training. Her interpretation was the person would be an interim. This was a misunderstanding of communication. Both of us first two conversations with Janet were face to face. When he hired Dawn, he left a message with Janet to call back. When she called back, he said there must have been a misunderstanding about hiring the secretary and Janet cried and hung up. He knows now he should have talked to her face to face the third time and that was a huge mistake and he asked for forgiveness. There had been previous issues with Janet, which Pastor Doug would not address. Doug Smith was aware of the issues.

A question was asked if the person responsible was at the planning council meeting. If so, he should have immediately been involved. Another question was asked if any other employee has been dismissed without having the benefit of the personnel process. Dave Worsencroft explained there were dismissal meetings.

Leslie said Janet had considered retirement in her previous discussions with Leslie. Marilyn Sesock said her concern is we have lost David as a member of the flock and he really needs Pastor Doug now. Pastor Doug told us he spent Friday morning with David and it was good for both of them.

We should indicate as we hire about future leave of absence, other possibilities that can occur. If you have it in writing, it is protection for both employee and employer. Now there was a question about Larry Jones. Pastor Doug has repeatedly talked Larry into staying longer. He felt Larry was good for another two years. Now there is a question about Larry's health.

Paul Klemme questioned if efforts were made to improve Janet's performance. His answer was no. This had not been done in two years and not in accordance with the constitution. This congregation and council as employers have to get back to standards, to the requirements of the constitution.

Marti Stephan asked if we can come to the point where we understand that mistakes were made. We are Christian and we can forgive. Can we come up with recommendations for healing and reconciliation?

It was explained there are lots of presidential responsibilities. Sometimes you are informed and sometimes not. What must come is forgiveness. What is done is done. We are fallible. We

must become more aware of correct procedures. We are sorry for what has happened, to continue to mull it over serves no purpose. We need to expect and be assured that it doesn't happen again. Marilyn is all for forgiveness, but Janet was released and we can't go back and undo it. Her concern is David and Janet who are a part of the fellowship here. Leslie said this has been a difficult problem and she has been agonizing over it. It is difficult to separate Janet as employee and person of a family in crisis. Marilyn wants them to continue to be a part of our church family. The decision is theirs. David is reconciled and we need to help Janet be reconciled.

Pastor Doug made the following points. 1) Janet is the first secretary he has ever had who was a member of the church. He feels this is a terrible situation to be pastor and employer. 2) The personnel committee is only 1 person, the Vice President. The constitution calls for 3 people to be appointed by Planning Council and not to be council members. We need a committee. 3) Our President and Vice President both finish their terms at the same time. They should never be co-terminus. Paul moved we should change the constitution to allow succession. Motion carried.

Mary Kay Kahl moved to adjourn. Paul Klemme moved that the entire issue of the recent firing and hiring in the church secretary position be referred to the Personnel Committee for its review and corrective remediation to rectify the employment issues and bring processes into compliance with the Divinity Constitution and Bylaw; that the Personnel Committee recommendations be brought before the Council and officers for its review and action consistent with the constitutional responsibilities detailed in Sections C11.02.01 and C12.05; and that all future hiring/evaluation/termination procedures regarding the non-pastoral staff strictly follow the procedures detailed in the Constitution and Bylaws of this congregation. Marilyn seconded. There was some discussion. The motion carried with several loud dissensions. Pastor Doug noted that the Personnel Committee cannot be appointed until the January Planning Council Meeting. Dan Taddeo noted that a lot has been learned today and it should all be productive in the future.

Mary Kay Kahl again moved to adjourn. Jim Votava seconded. Motion carried. We adjourned at 1:48pm with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, in His service,
Judy Jacobson
Recording Secretary

Attachment: To the ministers of Divinity Lutheran Church, a Letter of Concern

We the undersigned active members of Divinity Lutheran Church submit the following letter to be read at the congregational meeting, Sunday, November 15, 2009.

Dear Leslie Crowe, President of Planning Council, and all members of Divinity Lutheran Church
Re: Janet Schochs' dismissal as parish secretary over the phone.

Our constitution provides for a personnel committee that is chaired by the Vice President of the Planning Council, and for this time and place it would be Doug Smith. In part, in a brief description of this committees' responsibilities would include participation and consultation in the hiring and or firing of any Divinity employee. (other than the called pastor.)

As we are aware Janet Schoch had to miss a lot of work due to family illness. She was advised in verbal conversation with Larry Jones, parish administrator, her (immediate supervisor) to "take all the time you need" Although it can be understood and stated here, that the office could not function indefinitely without Janet at her desk.

While David was at the Cleveland Clinic, Pastor Doug visited and brought them needed spiritual prayers and comfort: he discussed with Janet her future plans, as far as returning to the church. We question the timing and place of this inquiry. Janet responded that she wanted, "to keep her options open".

At the very next council meeting, October 12, 2009. Pastor indicated that Janet would possibly be leaving, a discussion resulted in the need to get a job description written At this point it should be the personnel committee that would write this job description with the help of Larry Jones. During that same week, a job description was placed on Craigs Ust, and there were some 38 responses of resumes. On Monday, October 19, 2009 a person was hired. At no time was the personnel chair person aware that this had taken place, he was notified via email from Larry Jones.

On Tuesday, October 20, 2009 Janet went to the contemporary band rehearsal and upon leaving had a brief conversation with Keith. At that time Janet indicated to Keith that she might be able to return to work by January 2010. The next steps of communication are really questionable, but it appears that Keith told Larry Jones, and Larry Jones called Pastor. Pastor then called and left a voice message telling Janet that she was released/replaced, she returned his call and he then did ask her to clear out all of her belongings at the church.

Our concern rests in the fact that previously there was a concern about Maria, the choir director and personnel was involved and they met with her, offered her help and guidance and an employee of just one year was given an opportunity to remain employed. In Janet's case an employee of over 20 years, was released via a recorded phone message.

We are requesting an effort be made for reconciliation for this family. Their need for a pastor, and this church family continues to this day. This is an effort to communicate exactly what happened and that Janet did not retire, and is not on family leave. If proper procedures had been followed the end result perhaps would be the same, but the need for this letter would not exist. Proper procedures are in our constitution that protect the pastor in this kind of situation and remove him/her from the decision, so that he/she can continue to shepherd the flock. We are members of the flock, and it is our prayer that this is resolved to continue to include Janet and David Schoch in our fellowship.

Signed: Marilyn Sesock, Joyce Schindler, Jim Deily, Karen Hearld, John Sesock, Marlene Dray, Fredric Dray, Judy Jacobson, Paul R. Klemme, Marty Hof (signatures are on original document). I move that this letter be spread upon the minutes of this congregational

meeting, in its entirety, and whenever the minutes are reproduced or displayed that the letter be attached. Second . . .

Pastor Doug's Report to the Congregation

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

After 25 years of ordained ministry, one of the things I still enjoy doing most is Adult Bible Study. During the past year, our Monday evening and Wednesday morning studies have been especially enjoyable. The Wednesday morning large group pre-dates my 7 years here and continues to have fun in God's Word together. The newer and smaller Monday evening group is a group of women who are trying to straighten out Jerry Crowe and I on several issues. We, too, have fun together while learning new biblical insights and wisdom.

This spring we're studying Paul's letter to the Ephesians as part of the ELCA's Book of Faith emphasis. I share with you a quote from our Bible study . . .

"Agape" is the highest form of love. This is the type of love illustrated for us in Ephesians 1, whose author considers this love to be foundational for the church and the basis of Christian transformation. How can our hearts and hands and voices share this gift of love with others? Discuss ways your church works together in praise of God's grace. Is there anything you wish your church would do in love?

As Divinity members, each of us would answer these questions with different examples from our ministry together. Our Bible study participants have many examples of how we're sharing God's gift of love with others and wishes of how we could be doing more.

Let me share one powerful example of sharing God's love. At 6:30 this morning I arrived at Fairview Hospital where Brent Youngmann was preparing for a catheterization to dissolve a blood clot in his leg. While he was being prepped, his wife, Debbie and I sat in the waiting room visiting. Knowing that I had taken some 8th grade confirmands to help serve the April meal at the Redeemer Crisis Center, Debbie asked if there had been enough pork. She had baked the large trays of pork in her oven overnight to be taken to Redeemer. I assured her in the waiting room two days later that there had not only been enough pork, but the homeless and working poor who filled Redeemer's basement had commented on how tasty it was. Debbie and her mother, Donna, have been cooking this meal in their homes for years. We transport the meal to Redeemer where our members serve it every second Sunday of the month. Debbie was surely concerned about Brent's blood clot but she also was concerned that Cleveland's hungry folks were fed. Her gift of love is for her husband, for the folks at Redeemer, for the children she teaches at Pleasant Valley Elementary, for her own grown children, and for her church.

How does your church work together in praise of God's grace? How do we share this gift of love with others? Each of you can tell a different story from our Divinity ministry together. I encourage you to write your story down and gift it to me so that I can share it with others in a sermon, in a Digest article, on the Warmline, or wherever. It is through the stories of our life together that we are transformed into being the body of Christ (the Church) in our world.

"Is there anything you wish your church would do in love?" Our planning council is considering the possibility of a capital campaign for our building and grounds (roof, furnaces, parking lot, etc.) as well as funding additional ministry (staff position, bus,?). What could we be doing that we're not doing? How could we enhance our ministry together? What is our vision for the future? Write down your ideas and share them with a member of our planning council or myself.

As we look to the future, may God continue to bless us on our journey together. In Christ,

Pastor Doug

Report of the President of the Congregation and Planning Council

The past year has seen changes at Divinity and in the ELCA. Change causes us to be uncomfortable but can also lead to growth.

At the fall congregational meeting approval was granted to proceed with a capital fund raising program. The following projects were identified as needed to be funded:

- Caulking and sealing of the sanctuary building to reduce moisture-related deterioration
- Replacement of the oldest boilers
- Replacement of the roof over the educational wing and fellowship hall.

We have begun to meet in a small planning committee to determine how to raise the funds needed. Look for more to come. In the meantime the parking lot has developed a serious erosion problem and will need attention.

Our youth program began in earnest. Laura and her team have met the challenge. We are fortunate to have dedicated people working with our youth. Keep them in your prayers.

Additional Stephen Ministry leaders were trained and we anticipate another class to begin this fall. This ministry is alive and well and meeting the needs of our congregation.

An area of concern is the lack of new members. We have not had a class for some time. Planning Council is aware and we will challenge ourselves to find ways to attract new members.

The economy has been tough on some members of our congregation and therefore on our finances. We continue to monitor spending but are committed to the ministries established here at Divinity. We encourage our members to look at stewardship as an act of worship.

My hope for 2010 is that we continue to look for ways to bring people to this congregation by all means. Invite a friend to come to worship or an activity here. Many people come from outside the congregation for the events sponsored by Arts in Action. We need to be welcoming to all who enter our building. Christ wanted us to be fishers of men (and women) so let's go and do that. Peace.

Leslie Crowe
President of the Congregation and Planning Council

Report of Lay Visitation Minister

As I look back over the past year and review my responsibilities and opportunities, I realize that the year did indeed go by so very fast. I can never say that I get bored because there always seems to be a way or place for me to learn something new and grow in knowledge and

experience. Although formal training experiences did not present topics of interest that were not repetitive this past year, daily experiences did. The only group training that I attended was the Southwest Stephen Ministry Mid-winter Spiritual Retreat. The topic for that retreat was "Contemporary Issues in Stephen Ministry". In the area of Stephen Ministry, we did not conduct a class this past year, or have a group retreat at Camp Mowana, but instead Allan Hamula attended the week long Stephen Leader Training Program with Pastor Doug who went for a refresher course. A new training class for Stephen Ministers is planned for the fall of 2010. I do personally plan to attend the VNA, Visiting Physicians Association presentations of "Bringing Back Old-fashioned Medicine with a Modern Twist" beginning the end of April 2010.

My primary responsibility continues to be to our homebound Family, and it remains as it has in the past to be somewhere between 50 to 60 people. Some of our members have entered the Church Triumphant this past year, and after visiting with them for 8 years it is difficult to lose them. However, as it is each year, new names are added to my file and new relationships begin. They are always a blessing to me as visits are always a pleasure and sharing Holy Communion with them is such a privilege. Confidential conversations make the time feel like true Family time. I continue to go to wherever they are in residence, private homes, Nursing Homes, Assisted Living facilities, and sometimes Hospice Residential Centers.

We again had three gatherings for our homebound and caregivers this past year. Maundy Thursday, when they are invited to worship together at noon and then enjoy the lunch and fellowship that follows, a picnic in July when we "Celebrated our Freedom in the Rose Garden" (the church parlor) with cook-out style food, games, prizes and music and had a really good time just being together. We finish the year with a fun-filled Christmas party in Fellowship Hall complete with a wonderful holiday style meal, games, prizes and music. Holy Communion is given at these gatherings so they can commune together. They do receive Holy Communion in their homes, but this allows them that special feeling of being together like they used to be to take the Holy Meal. Santa even makes an appearance to spread his holiday spirit to the Christmas gathering. With thanks to Ed Kahl, John Smeets and Larry Jones who take and print the pictures, we are able to give them a personal picture to take home with them. Drivers are provided for them if they do not have their own transportation or someone they are comfortable inviting to attend with them. Attendance for these events continues to grow and the comments after the events always make the effort very worthwhile. These events are made possible due to the help received from the Boards of Parish Life and Witness.

I continue to manage the Stephen Ministry at Divinity. The curriculum schedule for a fall class as well as a retreat date for Camp Mowana has been established. Some changes have been made to previous schedules in an effort to be what I believe will be more effective training. The retreat is necessary because it permits very concentrated study on some very serious topics. I meet with the Leaders as necessary and continue to prepare the budget for this ministry, arrange the commissioning service and reception, prepare the commissioning packets, do the paper work involved and work with Pastor Doug to coordinate the caring relationships of this ministry. I continue to be very impressed with the dedication of those who are called to this ministry. They are really exceptional ministers and Divinity is blessed to have this ministry here. This is the first year that we have been able to go outside our walls after having someone visit here and then ask if they could be ministered to.

I address the new members at one of their three classes and I provide the information for the "New Member Packets" that each family receives. The packet includes a lot of information about the activities here at Divinity as well as information about our Lutheran faith.

Coordinating the Card Ministry continues to be one of my responsibilities, and I make sure we have a supply of the cards we use for significant birthdays, anniversaries, get well, new births, sympathy, Easter and Christmas greetings to the homebound, and to our Confirmands. We do have volunteers who assist with this ministry and their work is very much appreciated. I send personal notes, cards and make phone calls when it is appropriate to do so.

I personally think the Prayer Ministry at Divinity is like no other. Our Prayer Chains have so many very dedicated ministers that receive prayers and pray seven days a week. I know they have been doing this for almost 14 years now. The Prayer Shawls continue to be received with the love that creates them, and to date we have given away 311 shawls. I just cannot put into words the actions and gratitude of those who receive them. Nor can I aptly express the thanks of those who benefit from all the love and prayers. Marilyn Sesock continues to create the Grace Prayer Team schedule. I am a member of that team. We pray for the Pastor and the congregation on Sunday mornings. I plan the commissioning service for these ministries each year, as our ministers again commit to serving Our Lord in prayer. I also worked with Larry Jones to collect the thoughts and prayers for the Lenten devotional. Divinity really is a prayer conditioned church.

New opportunities for growth were presented when I was called upon to preside at the funeral of Joan Urbanowicz and to once again deliver the Christmas Day sermon.

I do help make hospital calls when Pastor Doug is not available as I did when he was on Sabbatical. Pastor Terry was here and I worked with him during this time.

I continue to read and look for ways to improve my ministry and that of our Stephen Ministry, and Prayer Ministry. My horizons are always broadened by those who stop in for a talk during the week. I have been here eight years, and I am still continuing to grow. I do thank God for this opportunity to serve and be blessed by the lives of those I am privileged to share.

*Loretta Cross
Lay Visitation Minister*

Director's Report on Youth Ministry

The 2009-2010 year began long before the students graced the halls of their respective schools. This year the youth met over the summer for an afternoon in Nike Park, as well as, trying their hand at Whirlyball for the first time. The Youth Board attended the Council retreat and soon after met to finalize the year's plans. In early September the Youth Board decided to organize a 9th Grade Orientation Dinner. This was a time to introduce 9th graders and their parents to the "goings on" of the Sr. High Youth ministry and their scheduled activities for the year. We had guest speakers, Kari Bleich (10th grader) and Natalie Eberhardt (9th grader) who shared with the group their experiences at various youth activities in recent past. Denise Kronenberger also shared with everyone a parent's perspective and benefits therein of ones involvement in the ministry. Overall, the experience is one that the Youth Board will do again this upcoming fall.

By October the youth and their parents were in full swing with Sunday morning classes beginning and the Fall Rummage Sale taking place in early October. The sale was a success and brought in well over \$1200 which was split 50/50 between the National Gathering and Summer Camp accounts. In November, the youth were busy and in service around the church and in their community. They helped pack Thanksgiving food baskets at Divinity and at Redeemer Crisis Center. By December, they were at it again and helped to pack food, organize Christmas gifts,

restock the crisis center's pantry, and more! They also found time to enjoy fellowship with one another when they elected to go back to Whirlyball for their Christmas outing. Over 20 youth and adults were in attendance!!! Meanwhile, the youth who are attending summer camp this year put on another great bake sale which raised \$345.00 towards the cost of camp.

After a much deserved break from the "hustle and bustle" of the season, the youth headed to the LYO Winter Gathering in early January in Independence, OH. It was a great weekend in which our youth did some amazing things...they made new friends, enjoyed great music, and a day serving at the Ronald McDonald House (RMH) in downtown Cleveland. All the youth agreed that the highlight of the weekend was spending time with the patients at the RMH while making crafts, drawing, playing foosball, and more. They left the gathering with a strong desire to go back and serve at the RMH again soon! The rest of January was chalk full of preparations for the following activities: Super Bowl Sub Sale orders, Spaghetti Dinner & Silent Auction Reservations, Service Hour Sundays (these occur the 3rd Sunday of each month from October – May), and prepping for the Souper Bowl of Caring! By the end of the month, the youth were in the kitchen assembling subs which were handed out on Super Bowl Sunday.

On February 7th 2010, Danny Kilkenny, Matt Smith, Haley Luther, and Melissa and Michael Bemer helped collect monetary and canned food donations for Lutheran World Relief Fund (for Haiti), the Hunger Fund, and the Divinity Food Pantry. Thanks to the Divinity family, we raised \$266.00 and collected 129 non-perishable food items. A week later the youth and their families pulled off an amazing feat by putting on the infamous Spaghetti Dinner and Silent Auction over Valentine's Day weekend. Many thanks were given to all the efforts of the youth, their parents, the Youth Board and donors! We raised over \$1800 which was split evenly between the following youth accounts: National Gathering, Summer Camp, Miscellaneous trip (i.e. Sky Ranch, Mission trips), and Youth Activities (i.e. Sr. High Overnighter, LYO). Before we all knew it we were gearing up for the season of Lent and with that campers and their parents served the Ash Wednesday meal. Their efforts raised \$342.00 towards the cost of camp. Then came the month of March!

March 2010 was no less busy than the previous months...The youth wound down their fundraising season with a final Lenten Meal (raising \$311.00 towards camp and the Colorado trip) at the beginning of the month and then looked towards the Sr. High Overnighter for a much needed break. The overnighter was well attended by 14 youth and their friends. They spent the weekend enjoying each other's company, splatter painting the Youth Room, playing games (and learning new ones), taking time to focus on scripture, and enjoy good food! They all definitely made the most of their time together and hope to do it again. Not long after this the youth attended the first Sunday Night Lutherans (SNL) Youth Night at Divinity on March 7th. The 15 youth in attendance represented 3 congregations in the Parma area: Divinity, Trinity, and Parma Lutheran Churches. The youth left that evening stating that they had a great time and would surely be back the next time. "SNL" Youth nights concluded for the year in May for a total of 5 gatherings. These Sunday evening gatherings will begin again at the start of the next school year and will be held twice a month.

As the youth moved in to April they were gearing up for the 9th Annual Habitat for Humanity Walk, as well as, more "SNL" gatherings and the possibility of helping build this year's Habitat house by late April/early May. May arrived and the youth were well in to the planning process for the Youth & Senior Appreciation Sunday that would take place on the last day of Sunday school class. Several Sr. High Youth helped make the Sunday's services a reality by utilizing their talents and giving of their time at both services.

In addition to these activities, many other things took place in the realm of Youth Ministry here at Divinity. Some of these included: the “reintroduction” of the Kids 4 Christ Ministry, the Youth Board was up and running with all their positions filled and functioning, a Youth Ministry Handbook was adapted for the ministry and its organizers use, the youth served their church family at the Thrivent Financial Dinner and Elections and all around the church on Service Hour Sundays (i.e. greeters, ushers, classroom assistants), youth joined the praise band and provided special music during services, they helped out Maria with the Children’s Choir...In short, the youth show no signs of tiring from their ministry as they will be volunteering at Vacation Bible School 2010 in June, heading off to Sr. High Camp (we have 5 high school students going this year!), and heading across the country to Colorado in August!

There are no words that can truly describe the “spiritual high” I receive from working alongside and witnessing these youth (and their parents) take on this vital ministry with a genuine desire to be fully present in the process and the actions needed to give it the best chance for growth and Christ-centered focus. We look to God to guide us through this next year and pray for strength to continue the journey . . .

Laura Ramsey
Director of Youth Ministry

Report of the Director of Music

The music ministry at Divinity had an active role in worship during the period April 2009 through April 2010. The vocal choir and the bell choir have presented selections during the choir season that have enriched spiritually the members of Divinity. We have expanded our offerings to reach more worshipers by having the vocal choir sing at 11 a.m. on the fourth Sunday of the month. We also have presented the Christmas cantata on a Saturday. The vocal choir and the bell choir have been present for Easter celebrations at both services. The vocal choir had a very appreciated Holy Week appearance, singing a gamut of anthems for Good Friday. Members of the choir have volunteered tossing on Saturday at 5:30 p.m. service and musical offerings have been presented on average once a month. A small group has presented a large selection anthems during the Good Friday *Tre-Ore* service, with no help from other churches. The choir has received multiple unsolicited notes from the members of Divinity for their work.

We are saddened by Steve Czapor who has resigned as choir accompanist since Lent. I have assumed both roles for now. We have suffered a setback with my accident just before Palm Sunday. The fact that the choir has become more united in their purpose has helped overcome those obstacles. Members have become accustomed with my style and have cooperated more with me and with each other. Still, I wish attendance at both choirs will be better and new choir/bell choir members will come forward to replace those who retire through aging/illness.

The choir members have volunteered as cantors when the choir was not present. Summer soloists have come forward and the summer choir has sung in July. Young people have been part of the music ministry. Thanks to Nicole Engelhart, flute; Paige and Mackenzie, drums; Marlene Dray, organ and piano.

The Children’s Choir has sung on schedule during this period. Children has participated actively in worship activities like ringing random chimes before the Palm Sunday service. I have tried to give them an age appropriate understanding of the worship in church and how music fits in with the spoken word.

Maria Voljin
Director of Music

Report of the Board of Finance

Financials – December 31, 2009

Income	\$393,296
Expenses	<u>\$418,009</u>
	\$(24,713)

Checking account balance as of December 31, 2008 was \$21,176

2010 Budget

Income	\$400,000
Expenses	<u>\$409,652</u>
	\$ (9,652)

Key Metrics

	2008	2009
Worship attendance	17,194	16,616
Sunday School attendance	2,236	2,329
General Envelope Offerings	\$390,008	\$349,560
New Members	30	22

Notes

- Comparing the key metrics above we see worship attendance was lower in 2009 by 578 or about 11 a week. Sunday school attendance grew by 93 in 2009, however new members were less by 8.
- We have analyzed the giving patterns of the congregation and will be reporting some general statistics around how we give.

*Tony Chilia, Paul Klemme
Co-Directors Board of Finance*

Report of The Board of Parish Education

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of many, it has been a very busy year filled with many accomplishments. We began the year by reorganizing and labeling the parish education office. We also began the process of updating and revising our Parish Education binder. The many roles and responsibilities of Parish Education have been discussed and reviewed and we feel that the latest revisions will assist with our goal of providing Christian Education for both the young and the young at heart.

Here are other examples of the fun we have had throughout the year:

- We began with Rally Day, where we kicked off our theme: We are All Pieces of God's Puzzle.
- We created cards for the Home Bound throughout the year.
- We also created Thinking of You cards for Christmas and Valentine's Day.
- We collected canned goods for our Divinity pantry.

- We decorated and donated lunches for Feed thy Neighbor Sunday.
- We celebrated Christmas with our Candy Cane Party.
- We collected socks and other items to be donated to people in need.
- Bibles were placed into our 2nd graders' hands during Bible Presentation day.
- We rejoiced with our 4th graders as they participated in their 1st communion.
- We recognized new members as our 8th graders were confirmed.
- We celebrated Easter and participated in our Easter Egg Hunt.
- We began outreach to our families of young ones.
- We provided updates of all programs on our website page.
- We began analyzing possible new Sunday School Curriculums.
- We updated the Cradle Role Curriculum.
- We began planning VBS for the summer, focusing on inviting the community to learn about God.

With all those accomplishments in just one year, it is exciting to envision what the next year will bring. Some of our goals for next year include:

- To begin a new Sunday School Curriculum
- To begin to reach more of our 2 year old learners by introducing them to Jesus through the *Little Lutheran* magazine
- To begin to develop adaptive curriculum for the benefit of all of God's children.
- To recruit more volunteers who share our dedication in educating our Divinity Family.

Rachel McDonnell, Cheryl Luther
Co-Directors Board of Parish Education

Report of the Board of Parish Life

One goal of Parish Life is to bind its members together in lives dedicated to the witness and service of all God's people. Parish Life also promotes, supervises and carries out scheduled and special events.

Parish Life has worked with other boards including Social Ministry, Parish Education, and Confirmation along with Divinity members to develop and strengthen fellowship and family life both spiritually and socially.

Along with the Women of the Church, Parish Life, supervises the upkeep of the kitchens. Parish Life orders and buys all the supplies and paper products in bulk for all church events.

Some of the activities/events Parish Life has been involved with this year are:

- Lenten dinners
- Helping with the Homebound Luncheons
- Coffee hours every Sunday
- Dinners/potlucks
- Helping with the packing of Brown Bag lunches for Redeemer
- Cleaning of the kitchens
- Care/Share dinner sponsored with Social Ministry where the community was invited to Divinity for a free meal.

- Posters were made and placed in each kitchen detailing the use and cleanup of the kitchens.

Three new people joined our board this year. A special thanks to all the members of our board for their dedication and the many hours of service.

*Jackie Difford, Erik Schumacher
Co-Directors Board of Parish Life*

Report of the Board of Social Ministry

- Coordinated 12 community meals at Redeemer Crisis Center
- Collected and delivered donated clothing, household items, toys, plastic bags and furniture to the Crisis Center.
- Taught one week of Redeemer's Vacation Bible School with the assistance of retired Parma School District teachers. We provided Bible stories, outdoor activities, crafts, games, refreshments, and funds for entertainment and other special activities.
- Actively recruited other congregations to assist with the monthly Community Meal.
- Presented information about RCC to Divinity New Member Classes.
- Volunteered for food packing at Thanksgiving and Christmas.
- Decorated, wrapped and delivered 150 coffee mugs containing candies and snack items. The congregation and Divinity Youth Group provided two pair of new socks to each person attending the December Community Meal.
- Decorated the Giving Tree with 150 ornaments and delivered the congregations donated Christmas gifts to RCC.
- Assisted at Redeemer's Christmas Outreach Program, distributing children's gifts and groceries to families.
- Presented bath items to each person present at the May Community Meal.
- Assisted Divinity's confirmation class on Clothe a Child Sunday, collecting, delivering and distributing donated clothing at the September Community Meal.
- Met with Parish Life to plan a Care/Share Dinner.
- Supported Parma Heights Food Bank with grocery donations.
- Operated Divinity's Food Pantry and distributed food baskets and gift cards at Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas and other times as needed by the local community.

*Jan Jasko, Lana Gray, Carole Naumann
Directors Board of Social Ministry*

Report of the Board of Stewardship

The 2009-2010 Stewardship campaign entitled "Make It Simple" resulted in 138 giving units pledging \$256,040. We used video from the ELCA and had temple talks during our pre-pledge period and a very strong supporting sermon.

The Time and Talent commitments had 138 responses and 186 service areas checked.

Both Mary Ann Filipow and I feel that a stronger push by the Board of Stewardship with the Time and Talent commitments at the same time as the rest of the stewardship campaign would bring more young Divinity members in to **active** positions within the church. We feel that this will result in more ownership in the mission of the church by our church family. The conclusion we draw is that pledging units will increase as well as total pledge dollars.

I propose that we offer economic education for our membership. Beginning with our youth it would be beneficial to offer a seminar about handling money. For our young families we should offer programs about insurance and investments. For our older members explanations about estate planning could be offered. The endowment fund should be explained. Lastly and most importantly career pathways and possible contacts for our college students or high school students.

The beneficial perspective our Divinity family will derive is that **our time, our talents, and our wealth** are on loan from God and we are stewards of **this loan**.

*David Worsencroft, Mary Ann Filipow
Co-Directors Board of Stewardship*

Report of the Board of Witness

The Board of Witness hosted a New Members Winter Luncheon on February 22, 2009 for 22 new members and a Spring Brunch on May 17, 2009 for 11 new members.

The Stephen Ministers attended the Southwest Stephen Ministry Mid-winter Spiritual Retreat. Allan Hamula attended the week long Stephen Ministry Leader Training with Pastor Doug who went for a refresher course. A new training class for Stephen Ministers is planned for the fall 2010. The curriculum schedule for the fall class as well as a retreat date for Camp Mowana has been established.

The Homebound/Caregivers luncheons were held on April 2, 2009 (Maundy Thursday) with a worship service and communion at noon followed by a sit down luncheon and fellowship; on July 1, 2009 with a picnic in the Rose Garden (Church parlor) where they were served with cook-out style food, played games with prizes and musical entertainment; and on December 9, 2009 with a holiday style meal, games, prizes and music. Attendance for these events continues to grow and the comments after the events always make the effort worthwhile. The Homebound Communion carriers faithfully take communion and tapes of Sunday worship services to those who request to receive them.

The Prayer Ministry at Divinity is quite extraordinary. The Prayer Chains have so many dedicated ministers that received prayers and pray seven days a week. They have been doing this for almost 14 years now. The Prayer Shawls continue to be received with love that creates them, and to date we have given away 311 shawls. The Grace Prayer Team continues to pray for the pastor and the congregation on Sunday mornings.

Arts in Action had an exciting year. In October, the Third Annual High School/Tri-C Concert was held with over 400 in attendance. We sponsored a Lenten dinner, had Rodney Barbour in Concert on our organ plus his masters class the following day. We also sponsored a "Grand Buffet Brunch." Portions of the donations from both meals went to the scholarship fund. In January we began offering a Music Fundamentals class to not only Divinity members at a reduced cost, but to the communities we serve. This is in partnership with Tri-C's Arts Prep Program. Arts in Action have provided excellent programming over the past four years and will continue to do so.

The Board of Witness and the Via de Cristo Community hosted the last of the Lenten suppers with 26 favorite ethnic dishes.

*Fay Maldari, Diane Conroy
Co-Directors Board of Witness*

Report of the Board of Worship

The music program continued to flourish under the direction of Maria Voljin. The children's choir rehearsed twice per month on Sunday mornings and has presented anthems several times during the year as scheduled. Musical games, clapping and ringing chimes have been part of the experience.

The dedication of both the bell choir and the senior choir members has increased allowing for growth to a higher level to master more difficult works. Although new members were added to the bell choir, the addition of new members to the senior choir continues to be a critical issue. Various vocal and instrumental soloists also enhanced our worship services. To enrich our worship experience, various settings were used during the traditional worship service, some being better received than others. We will continue to explore other settings in the coming year.

The Contemporary band, Chosen, added the following members this year: Rick Chmura on Electric Guitar/Bass Guitar, Billy Petersen on Percussion, Dennis Cushing on Bass Guitar, Alexandra Vago on Electric Violin, Jordyn Sesock and Natalie Eberhardt-vocalists, Ken Spanagel is doing more vocals and also can play the Bass as needed, Janet Schoch will also join us on vocals as she is available. We continue to appreciate the dedication of the following long term members, Steve Czapor on Keyboard/Organ, Chad Tracy on Electric Guitar and Danette Gunkelman on vocals. It has been an exciting year with the new members. We continue to challenge ourselves with finding and learning new music to lead Divinity in praise and worship.

New to the board is Jim Badowski who has taken over the scheduling of all lay assistants and communion bread bakers. Marilyn Sesock continues to head the dedicated members of the Altar Guild and Ed Pabst is responsible for scheduling ushers.

*Linda Engelhart, Danette Gunkelman
Co-Directors, Board of Worship*

Report of the Board of Youth

We are thankful for everyone that has helped with Divinity's youth during the prior year, especially Laura Ramsey, our Director of Youth Ministry who continues to work with our board on building an outstanding Youth Ministry here at Divinity. We are also especially grateful to our board members and guests who have supported and guided our board this past year.

Our Senior High Youth group has had a very busy and exciting year. During the summer, they attended the New Orleans National Youth Gathering where they worked on service projects during the day and celebrated their faith in the evenings. Our 9th graders were welcomed into the

program with an orientation dinner meeting that we will continue every year to help make the transition from confirmation a little easier. During the year they attended LYO, a retreat at Camp Mowana, a lock-in at the church, and various other fun activities. In August some of our youth will be attending bible camp while backpacking in the Colorado Mountains. In order to help with the costs of these events, they have taken responsibility for much of their own fundraising and have participated in such events such as the Rummage Sale, the Spaghetti Dinner and Silent Auction, providing dinners during Lent, making sub sandwiches for the Superbowl, car washes and various other fundraising projects.

The senior program is also about our youth giving back to others. We are currently looking into going on a mission trip for next summer. The youth have packed food baskets at Divinity and Redeemer, served meals at various events, participated in Clothe a Child Sunday and Souper Bowl of Caring and have been involved with numerous aspects of the church services from participating in the music program, helping with technology, and ushering to name a few. They participate greatly every 3rd Sunday of the month for our Service Hour Sundays program, and over 15 youth will be helping out next Sunday, May 23rd at both Sunday services.

Our confirmation youth continue to be guided by their teachers Karen Harold and Laura Smith along with Pastor Doug. These youth have been invited to a few Senior High activities such as SNL (Sunday Night Lutherans – Dinner and activities/games at Divinity) and Open Gym night to help with the transition into the Senior High Youth group. They also continue to enjoy their own activities and service work apart from the other youth of Divinity.

We are happy to report that our Kids for Christ program is up and running again and we have Rose Malcolm to thank for that. These younger youth (ages 9-12) meet monthly to do crafts and build relationships with each other. The goal is to help foster Christ-filled relationships well before they begin Confirmation.

As a board, we have worked hard to continuously inspire, teach and lead the young people of Divinity in the knowledge of the gospel. Our hope is that our work will result in our youth living responsible Christian lives and being leaders in their church and in their communities. We continue to ask for this congregations help in achieving this goal.

***Denise Kronenberger, Teresa Moe
Co-Directors Board of Youth***

NOTES

**Official Ballot – 2010 Elections
Divinity Lutheran Church
May 16, 2010 Congregational Meeting**

Vote for no more than the number of people indicated for the following vacancies by circling their name. You may instead write in a person's name if they have been nominated at the congregational meeting.

Officers: (Vote for not more than 1)

Vice President - 2 year term ending 2012:

Dave Boxler

Treasurer – 2 year term ending 2012:

Jim Deily

Co-Director to the Board of:

**Communications – 2 year term ending 2012
(Vote for not more than 1)**

Kathe Lisy

**Finance – 2 year term ending 2012
(Vote for not more than 1)**

Paul Klemme

**Parish Life – 2 year term ending 2012
(Vote for not more than 2)**

Erik Schumacher

Louise Hamula

**Property Management – 2 year term ending 2012
(Vote for not more than 1)**

Greg Simon

Stewardship – 2 year term ending 2012
(Vote for not more than 1)

Dave Worsencroft

Witness – 2 year term ending 2012
(Vote for not more than 1)

Diane Conroy

Worship – 2 year term ending 2012
(Vote for not more than 1)

Jeanne Mapes

Youth – 2 year term ending 2012
(Vote for not more than 1)

Jeanne Bemmer

Endowment Committee – 3 year term

Delegates to the Synod Assembly (Vote for not more than 4)

Leslie Crowe
Joyce Tallman

Jerry Crowe
Erik Schumacher

Nominating Committee (Vote for not more than 4)

Joyce Schindler

Marilyn Sesock
