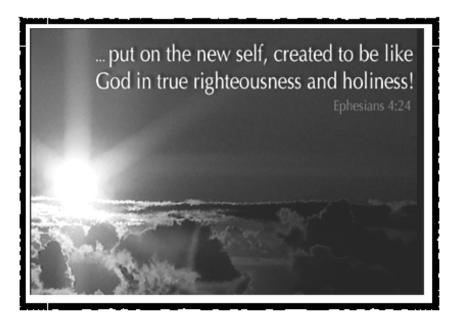
Living Word Lutheran Church LCMS

January 2008 Newsletter "Communicating the Love of Jesus



Worship Hours: Christian Growth Hour: 8:45 a.m. Worship Service: 10:00 a.m.

Living Word Lutheran Church

Located on the West of Spicer on Cty Rd 10 in old Prairie Meadows building PO Box 242, New London, MN 56273

Phone: 320-796-0742

Website: www.livingwordlutheran.net



Question "from" Pastor...

January's Question For Pastor column usually has a little "twist." This year is no exception. Instead of a question for pastor, you get a question from pastor.

Before we get to the BIG question, a couple little questions to point you in the right direction: Assuming you got some gifts for Christmas, could you tell what they were just by looking at the wrapping on the outside?

Maybe you could sometimes - if you already had an idea what you were getting. But chances are real good that most of the time you couldn't guess exactly what gift was waiting behind the wrapping. It's kind of like the old saying, "You can't tell a book by its cover." What's on the outside can really fool you when it comes to people or books or presents. Did you get fooled by some of the gifts that were on the inside of some packages? I know that happened a few times at our house. The gifts that people were expecting - like gift cards - we wrapped in big, odd-shaped boxes to keep 'em guessing.

The point is, appearances can be deceiving.

That's also true when it comes to the gift God gave us that first Christmas. Who would have guessed what was really wrapped up in the fragile flesh of an infant - especially one born in a cattle stall to a couple of "unknowns." The Christmas song "Mary Did You Know" says it well:

Mary, did you know That your baby boy Would someday walk on water? (How could she?)

Mary did you know That your baby boy Will save our sons and daughters? (Now, the angel did say that the baby would save His people from their sins. But the angel said that to Joseph, not Mary - and we all know how much husbands communicate with their wives. It's possible Joseph forgot to tell Mary the "save his people from their sins" part.)

Did you know that your baby boy Has walked where angels trod? When you kiss your little baby You've kissed the face of God.

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Mary did you know That your baby boy Is Lord of all creation? (Talk about not being able to tell a book by its cover: A powerless baby - ruler over all creation? Who could've guessed?)

This sleeping child you're holding Is the Great I Am (God in the Flesh!)

Did Mary know that God had wrapped all those things up in the baby that she had wrapped in cloths and placed in a feed trough? Appearances can definitely be deceiving.

Chances are also good that if you are reading this you do know that the very presence of God was wrapped up in that manger gift. Chances are you do know that God was born... to die... so you could live...forever.... when you repent of your sin and trust in Him.

But chances are also real good that there's someone you know who has been fooled by the human packaging. Someone you know who hasn't "unwrapped" that gift in the manger and found that it really contains the One True God. Someone who looks at the packaging and says, "That's a cute story," but never bothered to find out who Jesus really is. Or there may be someone you know who "unwrapped" that gift at one time, but has since put it "on a shelf in the closet" of their life.

So, here's my BIG question for each of you: Who is it that needs your help "unwrapping" the gift God gave us at Christmas - the gift of Himself? Who is it that you can pray for each day this year to discover the gifts God sent wrapped up in His Son? Who is in your life that hasn't gotten to really know Jesus or who has put him "on the shelf"?

For some of you reading this, you may be the one who hasn't yet unwrapped the baby and found God. For some of you reading this, you may be the one who has put the gifts "on the shelf." If that's the case, here are some questions for you to ask yourself: "What can I do to get motivated to attend worship more often?" "Is there a Bible study group I can get involved in?" "Is there someone who can help me grow and keep me accountable?" "What time will I set aside for personal Bible reading and prayer?"

For most of you, there is someone else in your life who needs to get beyond what appears to be a just a cute baby and find God. Who is that person? Will you pray for them daily this year? Will you pray for God to give you opportunities to share the love of Jesus with them in practical ways?

God will bless your efforts to share the Gift of His Son,
Pastor David

Send your questions to pastor@livingwordlutheran.net

Happy New Year (And THANK YOU!)

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From the Folks You Helped Send to the National Youth Gathering in Orlando Last Summer

From Peter Erickson:

Thanks for providing the help for me to go to the National Youth Gathering. It really helped me see things in a different way - especially things about heaven. It got me involved with a lot more people who are Christian and helped me to see that church is a lot more important than a lot of other things I do.

From Joe Johnson

Dear friends and family,

Thank you for making it possible for me to go on the trip to Florida with my fellow youth members. Thank you for your prayers and support. I really benefitted from the trip by getting closer to my youth group and fellow Christians. I also realized how many other Christians there really are. There were 35,000 youth alone (not to mention adults) who were at the gathering. I also had a long-term benefit from the trip: it reminded me how important it is to go to church - always. I heard a lot about respect and helping others. God also made some things more clear to me. Again, thank you for your support.

From David Geer

Thank you for the money you gave that helped me go on the trip to Orlando. One of the benefits for me was that it helped me

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get closer to God. I want the experience to always help me remember how important god is in my life.

From Danielle Skaggs

Thank you for your support and prayers and money that made it possible for all of us to go on that trip. I really benefitted from going on the trip by being able to learn more about God and being able to share my beliefs with other youth that went. I want this experience to make me look deeper into my faith in God and make it stronger and purer. Thanks again.

From Becca Dauk

Thank you very much for your support and prayers while my youth group was in Florida. Without your helpo it wouldn't have been possible. I learned that everyone is chosen by God to do something very special in their lives. I want this experience to be a reminder to me of what God wants me to do for him in my life.

From Allan Fuglie

I'd like to take the time to thank you for making possible my trip to the National Youth Gathering this summer. It was very moving and got me more deeply involved with other Christians. This experience is helping me change my habits, slowly but surely, for the better.

From Anthony Dauk

Thank you for supporting me and my youth group when we attended the National Youth Gathering. Without you my experiences would not have been possible. The gathering was great and was very beneficial in that it gave me a new perspective on life. I hope that what I experienced there will help me make good decisions in my future. Thanks.

Thank you again, and God bless you all for your generosity and prayers!

Pastor Dave, Pam Johnson and Bryson Wachter (adult leaders)

How have you seen God at work in Living Word in 2007?

For our Charter Sunday (January 20) we will put together a list all of the ways and people you've seen God work through this past year at Living Word. Please email your answers to Scott at c.wachter@charter.net (Or just write them out and give them to Scott)

A Minute For Parents...

Set an example by giving an "After-Christmas" Gift that keeps on giving.

(The same one God gave us at Christmas)

By now some of the Christmas presents you gave your kids have become broken. Others have been forgotten. Hopefully some are still in use. But the start of a new year would be a great time to resolve to give your children the present they really want most - your presence.

His presence is the present God gave us at Christmas. It's the one he has promised to give us until the end of time "And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Mt. 28:20

Of all the things my parents did to show their love, the things that stick in my mind most are the times they made a special effort to just "be there." Chance are the same can be said for you. And chances are that is what your kids will remember too.

How can you spend more time with your children - collectively and individually? After school? In the evening? On the weekends?

Maybe read them a story instead of reading the newspaper. Play a game with them instead of watching TV. Plan a special project that you can work on together. Have a "Date Your Kid" night once a week. Set aside one night as "Family night." Get their input on what they would like to do on those days. Sit down with them and plan what you will do then put it on the calendar.

"Being there" isn't limited to the kids that still live under your roof. When could you "be there" for your kids that are away at college? When could you "be there" for those children that live on their own?

Follow Jesus' example and give the gift of your presence. It says "I love you" like nothing else.

THANK YOU from the Marie Sandvik Center

I took all of your donations - the backseat and trunk of my car were stuffed full - to the Marie Sandvik Center in Minneapolis on Friday, December 14. They were so glad to get all the warm clothes and thanked me over and over! They were very much in need of the boots, too. God will bless you for your love and care of His needy children, young and old.

Lu Kiehm

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So That The World May Know...

We Have Land (Officially)!

On Friday, December 28, we made our final payment and closed on the 7.35 acres that will serve as the future home for Living Word Lutheran Church.

In case you haven't checked it out, the land is just to the north of the New London Township Hall on County Road 9 between New London and Spicer.



Praise God for providing this for us!

Worship Time Reminder

Beginning Sunday, January 6 . . . Our Year-Round Worship Schedule will be:

8:45 Christian Growth Hour (Sunday School/Adult Forum)

10:00 Worship

January 6: A Very Special Day

During our first 10:00 a.m. worship we will be dedicating (and getting lots of use from) our new Lutheran Service Book hymnals that have been donated by Zion Lutheran in Browns Valley.

Susan Johnson will accompany us on organ for this special day (and each 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month after that).

One of our goals in combining the two worship services was to create a greater feeling of family and fellowship. With that in mind we will celebrate with a special Epiphany (Gentile Christmas) potluck following worship on January 6.

Sunday Morning Coffee



Beginning in January we will put out a freewill offering container at after-service coffee time. Your freewill offerings will be used to purchase coffee when we run out. This will help us share the cost of providing the coffee for our fellowship time.

E-Mail Inspiration...

This was received from Rev. Mark Peske, missionary to Native Americans in northern MN. The poem really gets to the heart of God's grace. That the poem was even written is testimony to God's power.

Dear Friend.

A few days ago I drove to Appleton, MN to visit Mike Lemon, a man from Cass Lake who became a believer in Jesus shortly before he left for prison. It was very encouraging to see what good use Mike is making of the time there. He began an exercise program and has lost 50lbs and gotten his diabetes way under control. He has completed more than a dozen Bible study courses by correspondence, he has produced a flood of beautiful drawings and given them to various people, and he has witnessed his faith in Jesus to a number of other inmates.

I thought you might enjoy this poem that he sent me the day after our visit:

As I travel down the road of life The peaks of happiness, the valleys of strife Through crowded cities and barren lands I feel the presence of a caring hand.

When loads got heavy and I'd stumble and fall At times I couldn't see the other side of the wall While in the dark dungeon of deep despair A voice whispered. "Fear not, for I am here.

Come to me; let me help; just lean on me And see what it means to be really free! Come be born again, in life anew And see how great is my love for you."

And I dwell on my sins and awful mistakes And I feel in my heart it may already be too late But I cry out, "Oh GOD, what can I do?" "Nothing," he says, "I've already done it for you."

So he pulls me up with his mighty hand For I am part of his heavenly plan He never mentions the past I have done He only tells me, "Welcome home, My son!"

Thanks for your prayers, Mark

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Charter Sunday...

& New Member Reception on January 20:

It has been three years since Living Word was chartered as an official member of the Minnesota North District of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. We will celebrate by receiving a group of new members in worship. We will then celebrate with a special potluck meal following worship.

Make sure to join us as we thank God for our third year and kick off year number four.

New Schedules...

January Scripture Readers

If you aren't able to serve on your Sunday, please call someone and switch with them. Thanks!

January 6	Bryson Wachter	894-6378
January 13	Tris Mische	354-9046
January 20	Wndy Robbin	354-9049
January 27	Mona Hjelle	354-4315

January Fellowship Servers

If you aren't able to serve on your Sunday, please call someone and switch with them. Thanks!

January 6	POTLUCK DINNER	R - bring a dish to pass
January 13	Janet Towner	444-0125
January 20	Pam Johnson	354-3545
January 27	Laurel Iverson	354-4932

Annual Whist Night...

7:00 p.m. January 19, @ Pastor & Violet's



A GREAT FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITY:
It is always a night full of fun, laughter, competition and Prizes! Please bring a snack to share...Soft drinks and coffee will be provided. Prior experience is not required.
Don't know what whist is? Never played it?
No problem. We have PRIZES for doing the

worst as well as doing the best!

Talk to Pastor or Violet if you have any questions. Bring friends.

January 2008 - Living Word Church Calendar of Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
December 30 8:00 Traditional Worship 9:15 Growing in Christ Hour NO Sunday School Adult Forum: 10:30 Contemporary Worship 11:45 Fellowship 6:00 Sr. High Bible Study	31	January 1	Noon Study: Ephesians 6:00 Meal 6:30 Confirmation 6:30 All Stars 4 Jesus 6:30 Confirmation Parents	3	Men's Service Project This Evening & Tomorrow (tentative)	5 IMPORTANT NOTE: Tomorrow Begins Our New Time Schedule: 8:45 Sunday School 10:00 Worship
6 - NEW WORSHIP TIME & HYMNAL DEDICATION 8:45 Growing in Christ Hour Sunday School Adult Forum: God's Word in the Stars 10:00 Worship w/Lord's Suppor 11:45 Potluck Fellowship	7 Pastors* Conference @ Montevideo	8 NOON Bible Study @ Geneva Olson's "Ecclesiastes" 6:30 "What LC-MS Lutherans believe"	9 Noon Study: Ephesians 6:00 Meal 6:30 Confirmation	10 7:00 Elders' Team 7:00 LWML	11	12
13 8:45 Growing in Christ Hour Sunday School Adult Forum: Creation 10:00 Worship 11:45 Fellowship Noon Outreach Team Meeting 6:00 Sr. High Bible Study	14	NOON Bible Study @ Geneva Olson's "Ecclesiastes"	Noon Study: Ephesians 6:00 Meal 6:30 Confirmation	7:00 Mission & Ministry Team	18 S A S A S A S A S A S A S A S A S A S	ANNUAL WHIST NIGHT 7:00 @ Pastor & Violets
20 3rd ANNIV. CHARTER SUNDAY New Member Sunday 8:45 Growing in Christ Hour Sunday School Adult Forum: Creation 10:00 Worship w/ Lord's Supper 11:45 New Member Welcome Meal	21	NOON Bible Study @ Geneva Olson's "Ecclesiastes"	23 Noon Study: Ephesians 6:00 Meal 6:30 Confirmation	24	25	POLAR PLUNGE At Green Lake
27 8:45 Growing in Christ Hour Sunday School Adult Forum: Creation 10:00 Worship 11:45 Potluck Fellowship	28	29 NOON Bible Study @ Geneva Olson's "Ecclesiastes"	Noon Study: Ephesians 6:00 Meal 6:30 Confirmation	31	Feb 1	Feb 2

January 15-Minutes-A-Day

TCDAY'S LIGHT BIBLE READING PROGRAM: We finish the Gospel of Luke and head back to OT. (In parentheses are verses to focus on if you are short on time that day) Dec 30 Use the time today to worship and catch up on any readings you missed Dec 31 Luke 9:1-62 (9:37-45) Jan 1 Luke 10:1-42 (10:1-24)_____ Luke 11:1-12:59 (11:1-13) Luke 13:1-35 (13:22-30)_____ Jan 3 Jan 4 Luke 14:1-35 (14:25:35) Luke 15:1-16:31 (15:11-32) Jan 5 Remember to come to worship at 10:00 Today. (Sunday School @ 8:45) Jan 7 Luke 17:1-18:43 (18:1-8)______ Luke 19:1-20:47 (19:11-27) Jan 9 Luke 21:1-22:71 (21:5-36)_____ Jan 10 Luke 23: 1-24:53 (23:26-56; 24:13-32) Jan 11 Leviticus 1:1-17 (1:1-9)_____ Jan 12 Leviticus 2:1-3:17 (3:1-17) Jan 13 Use the time today to worship and catch up on any readings you missed Jan 14 Leviticus 4:1-6:30 (4:27-35) Jan 15 Leviticus 7:1-9:24 (8:1-36)______

Today's Light Devotional Readings

Jan 16	Leviticus 10:1-11:47 (10:1-20)
Jan 17	Leviticus 12:1-15:33 (13:38-46)
Jan 18	Leviticus 16:1-17:16 (16:1-34)
Jan 19	Leviticus 18:1-19:37 (19:1-37)
Jan 20	Use the time today to worship and catch up on any readings you missed
Jan 21	Leviticus 20:1-22:33 (20:1-27)
Jan 22	Leviticus 23:1-25:55 (25:1-43)
Jan 23	Leviticus 26:1-27:34 (26:1-13)
Jan 24	Numbers 1:1-3:51 (2:1-34)
Jan 25	Numbers 4:1-6:27 (6:1-27)
Jan 26	Numbers 7:1-8:26 (8:1-20)
Jan 27	Use the time today to worship and catch up on any readings you missed
Jan 28	Numbers 9:1-10:36 (10:11-36)
Jan 29	Numbers 11:1-12:16 (11:1-36)
Jan 30	Numbers 13:1-15:41 (14:1-35)
Jan 31	Numbers 16:1-18:32 (16:1-40)
Feb 1	Numbers 19:1-20:29 (20:22-29)
Feb 2	Numbers 21:1-35 (21:1-9)

What Did Jesus Bring at Christmas?

God's PRESENT to us at Christmas is the gift of His PRESENCE

Wrapped up in His Presence are these other gifts . . .



Comfort

- There's great comfort in knowing your sins can be forgiven.
- There's great comfort in knowing that in a world where everything changes, God's word never does. If He said it, you can bank on it. He won't change His mind.
- There's great comfort in knowing you aren't alone. God is there.
- There's great comfort in knowing that the God who is there is a God who loves you - no matter what.

Joy

- There is joy in actually receiving forgiveness of your sins.
- There is joy in knowing that because God kept His promise to come the first time, you can be sure He will keep His promise to return.
- There is joy in knowing that when He returns, you and all
 who believe in Jesus will rise in a renewed body to live forever on a renewed earth

Peace

- Jesus brought peace between sinful creation and a sinless God
- We receive that peace when we surrender to Jesus and trust Him for eternal life
- We receive that peace daily when we surrender our will to Jesus' will.

Love

- Love is essential for life. We do all sorts of hurtful things when we don't get it.
- Love is not something to just talk about. The Bible is clear that love is something that must be demonstrated with actions. Jesus is "Love With Skin On"
- Love is "Doing for others what they can't do when it is in your power to do it."
- God showed that real love when He came to earth to pay the way for us to get into heaven (something we could never have done due to our sin)

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We need each of these gifts not just at Christmas time but every day.

But how do we "unwrap" the gift of God's Presence and receive them?

Come to Worship - "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them"

Come to the Lord's Supper - God's presence comes to us individually in the most personal of ways.

Open Your Bible and Read - God is present with His wisdom, guidance and power for your life.

Pray - God is present to listen and answer with the best answer of all.

Today's Light Bible Readings...

During the Christmas Season we celebrated God coming to be with us. You may have noticed that lying in the manger was a Bible. God came to be with us in the person of baby Jesus. Jesus has ascended to heaven, but God is still with us in His Word.

This month in our Today's Light Readings we get to know Jesus through Luke's Gospel. Then it's back to the Old Testament books of Leviticus and Numbers.

If you haven't gotten started with our daily readings... Give yourself the gift of God's guidance and power this month. A NEW YEAR IS A GREAT TIME TO START.

If you've gotten sidetracked in your readings... Just jump back in. A NEW YEAR IS A GREAT TIME TO GET "BACK IN THE SADDLE." You can catch up the readings you missed later

January Discipleship Verse...



"May God be gracious to us and bless us and make His face shine upon us, that your ways may be known on earth, your salvation among the nations."

Psalm 67:1-2.

LWML (Lutheran Women's Missionary League)

We've heard that lots of people aren't sure what an "LWML" really is, so here's some basic info:



We are the organization that serves meals for wedding receptions and funerals. We are involved in charitable activities - like collect-

ing clothes for needy. We undertake and support mission projects. Our monthly meetings include a devotional time for spiritual growth and prayer.

One way we raise funds to support our local, state and national mission projects is through something called Mite Boxes. (Little boxes you keep at home to put your spare change in.) If you can't come to the meetings, but would like to drop your spare change in a Mite Box and turn it in to help support our mission projects, please contact Bonnie Hansen (796-5605) or Lu Kiehm (979-0097).

The organization is for all women of the congregation who are 18 years and older.

We meet the 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. (same time as Elders Team).

All women in the congregation are asked to join. Please come to our next meeting on January 10, and experience more of what the LWML (Lutheran Women's Missionary League) is all about.

THANK YOU

To Mona Hjelle, Bryson Wachter and Bonnie Hansen for organizing our Christmas Program! We appreciate your hard work. Thanks also to the teachers, parents and students who all did their parts.

THANK YOU

To everyone who remembered us this Christmas with cards and gifts. We greatly appreciate your support and partnership in the Gospel!

Pastor David, Violet, Anthony and Rebecca

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Men's Service Project...

We'll soon be starting a Men's Group. Our kickoff activity will be a weekend service project in SE Minnesota helping rebuild some of the flooded out homes. We plan to travel to Rushford on Friday evening. We'll put up some sheetrock, and do some painting and staining on Saturday and return home Saturday night.

We'll be staying at "Camp St. Mark's (The basement of St. Mark's Lutheran in Rushford has been converted into a domitory for workers.) Church members will provide three meals for us on Saturday.

We have tentatively scheduled this Service Project for the first weekend in January (Friday, Jan 4 - Sat, Jan 5). Please let Pastor or Kevin Welsh know if you can make the trip with us. It will be a fun time as well as an opportunity to share the love of Jesus in a practical way.

Have you searched the web with Goodsearch yet?

This past year Living Word Lutheran Church was registered on GoodSearch, (GoodSearch.com is a search engine that donates ad revenue, about a penny per search, to the charity its users designate. Use it just like any search engine, and it's powered by Yahoo!, so you get the same great results.

Living Word receives a direct donation every time someone uses GoodSearch to search the Internet. We had very minimal use this past year (probably two or three folks from Living Word used it regularly) and still received \$22.00. This coming year if we can have just a dozen people search using GoodSearch, we can earn \$200. So, remember, this year instead of "googling" something, "GoodSearch" it.

Just go to and enter Living Word Lutheran Church, Spicer, MN as the organization you want to support. It costs you nothing: Download the GoodSearch toolbar -

http://www.goodsearch.com/toolbars.aspx

Secret Paul's . . .

Please remember to pray for your person.

Send them a card to start the New Year.

Watch for details of an event coming in February where Secret Paul's will be revealed.

More Opportunities to Grow...

Wednesday Bible Study

Wednesdays @ NOON

Beginning January 2 At Living Word

"God's Intent for the Church - And Your Part in His Plan"
A Study of the Book of Ephesians

"Blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it "

Tuesday Noon Bible Study

Beginning January 8 at Geneva Olson's in New London

What Does Life Sometimes Seem "Meaningless"?
A Study of the Book of Ecclesiastes

Sometimes feel like life has no meaning? You're not alone. "Meaningless" is a term used no less than 37 times in the book of Ecclesiastes.

Join us as we take a look at what caused King Solomon to feel that way. And what you can do when you feel the same.

Sunday Morning Adult Study

Creation: Foundation for All we believe

Continues in January

We'll learn about evidence for the Biblical account of creation thing you never hear in the media that seems bent on convincing us of evolution.

Some specific things we'll cover:

- Did dinosaurs and humans co-exist?
 - + What evidence is there for a young earth (not billions of years old)?
 - + Is it illegal for Creation to be taught in public school?
 - + What was the world like in pre-flood times?
 - + Did God put the Gospel message in the stars?
- Please join us at 9:15 for coffee, baked goods and our study.

Senior High Study

Every other Sunday evening at 6:00

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Parenting Young Children

Sunday Mornings while the kids are in Sunday School

If you are a parent of a child of pre-school age through 4th
grade we'd like to invite you to a special class that meets during
the Sunday School hour (9:15 - 10:15).

WANTED...

Know Someone Who Fits This Description

- Leadership skills
- Strategic planning skills
- Organizational skills
- Well-respected in the church
- An authentic walk with the Lord
- Willing and able to give the necessary time for directing a 40 Days of Purpose' - like program

... If so, please tell Pastor David today.

(We are planning a special Christian Growth program called '50 Days Ablaze' and are seeking a director for the program.)

Take the Polar Plunge...

Saturday, January 26



We jump in Green Lake to raise funds for Special Olympics

THIS YEAR WE WANT A BIG GROUP, BECAUSE....

We would like to share a Gospel message with the spectators. For example, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whoever believes in Him shall not

perish but have eternal life." We plan on having each "plunger" (how's that for a title?!) wear one word of that Gospel verse on their t-shirt, so we share the message one word-at-a-time as we take the plunge. So, to use that verse we'd need 24 people. The fewer the "plungers" the fewer verses we will be limited to. (e.g. "Jesus wept." would be our only choice is all we have is two people)

Sign up by the sanctuary door or talk to Bryson Wachter