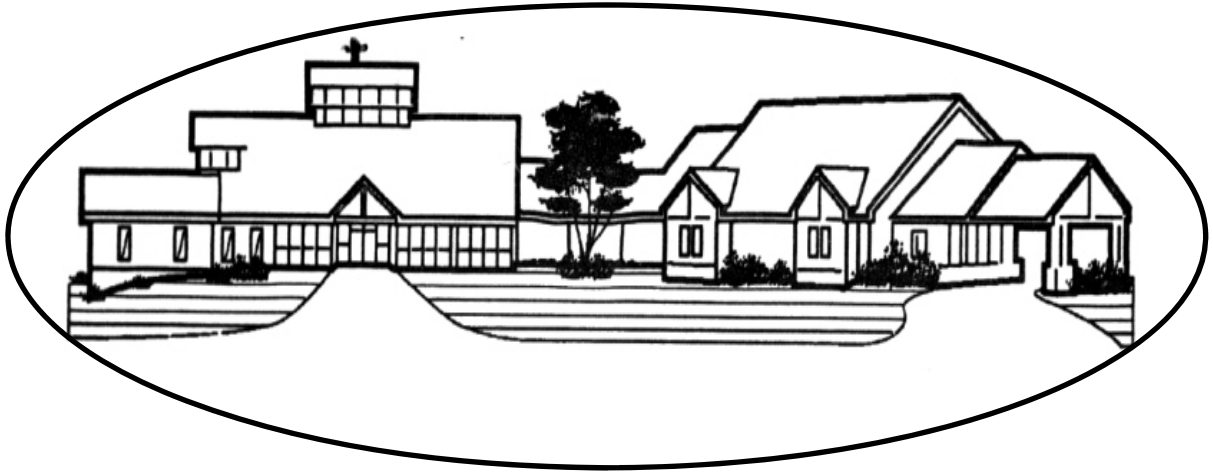

Agapegram

February 2012



ETERNAL SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

220 Carson Road

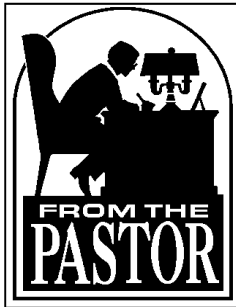
Seneca, South Carolina 29678

www.eternalshepherd.org

office@eternalshepherd.org

Office: 864-882-3209 or 864-882-5512

Little Lambs Preschool: 864-882-3202



A Prayerful Lent

Later this month on February 22nd, we will mark the beginning of Lent with the celebration of Ash Wednesday. As this season of repentance and “spring cleaning” draws near for us at Eternal Shepherd, I want to challenge us all to make the most of the season.

It is easy to give token acknowledgement to Lent, attending midweek services when it fits our schedule and listening to Sunday sermons that have a more penitential emphasis, but no more. A few years ago we challenged ourselves by making intentional use of the spiritual discipline of fasting during the Lenten season. This year, I suggest we do something similar, but with a different discipline: prayer.

We have a wonderful tradition of concluding Lent with the 36 hour Prayer Vigil between the Good Friday and Easter worship services. This year, we want to focus on the discipline of prayer throughout *all* of Lent. To prepare for this focus on prayer we will be hosting a **Spiritual Formation Workshop: The Discipline of Prayer** on Saturday Feb. 11th from 9a – noon. Vicar and I will work together to present practical insights on prayer and different ways to pray, including approaches to prayer used in the ancient church. This prayer workshop will prepare us for the beginning of Lent a week and a half later, so that we can improve our prayer life throughout the season of Lent. This will not only help us with our praying during Lent (and beyond), but it will also allow us to bracket the season with two great prayer events: the workshop at the beginning and the Prayer Vigil at the end.

I encourage everyone at ESLC to attend this Spiritual Formation workshop on prayer so that we can walk this Lenten journey together. Not only focusing on sorrow for our sin and repentance, but also developing our conversations with the Lord as we do so. Along with our focus on prayer in Lent, we will also be studying the book of Amos. Our mid-week services will draw from *Amos* and the large group Bible study on Sunday morning will also be looking at God’s message through this prophet.

My prayer is that this Lenten season would be a blessing for your faith and a meaningful preparation for the joy of Easter, when we celebrate again Christ’s defeat over sin’s power assuring us of His grace that covers every sin and failure and that promises life everlasting.

“Lord, teach us to pray...” Luke 11:1

Pastor David

Board of Christian Education

The Board has been busy planning for a fun and educational year. Our members are Lane Wilson, Kate Wells, Micky Louderback, Diane Elliott, Kyra Carbone and Nicole Beattie and we will soon welcome Diane Marino and Ann Cochell.

If you'd like to participate in Bible Study, consider these options:

Mon. morning Men's Bible Study @ 9:00 /Tom Eckersley

Tues. morning Women's @ 10:00/Marie Schmidt

Thurs. morning Men's Group @ 9:00/Barry Voeltz

Thurs. morning Women's Study @ 9:00/Janet Walker & Charlotte Beyer

Sun. Morning Large Group Study @ 9:45/Pastor

Sunday Morning Small Group Study @ 9:45/Norm Arnold

'God Loves Moms' is a new study starting soon. They'll meet once a month at a restaurant/ Judy Hammer.

We have an active Bible Study schedule. I pray that you will find an opportunity to suit your needs. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." Col. 3:16

We hope you had a chance to visit the Library for our Open House and Author Book signing. Please make use of the resources available and make sure you check out our family friendly DVD selections. Kyra Carbone is our Library Coordinator if you have any questions.

The Nursery (at the 11:00 service) is currently staffed with volunteers. Would you consider watching over our little ones once every two months? That's all it takes, if we can arrange a few more volunteers it could be less often. Talk to Diane Elliott if you can lend a hand.

If you'll remember back to the days with your little ones I'm sure you can visualize how it felt to teach your child to sit quietly during the service. We are trying to give parents with young children the chance to train up their children. We have bags with quiet activities and we reserve the last 2 pews for families with small children. Can you help by leaving these pews for the families to come and go, spread out and maybe even come in a little late (knowing that there will be a space for their family).

~Nicole Beattie

President's Message

Following God's Plan – 2012 Council Retreat

Your church council gathered for its annual planning and review retreat at the church on Saturday, January 21st. As I looked around the table, I was extremely impressed by the enthusiasm and dedication shown by each council member for carrying out God's plan and direction for Eternal Shepherd. We wanted to share with you the highlights and key points that were addressed during our time together. This is another step in our goal of keeping all members of Eternal Shepherd better informed of the workings of the church.

- The following members were added to God's workers on these boards: Christian Education – Diane Marino, Altar Care – Nancy Hucker, and Little Lambs – Peggy Voeltz. Thank you for your willingness to serve.
- We reviewed our year-end finances, analyzed our expenditures, and reviewed our financial outlook for 2012. The financial report is now available for your review. This report will be reviewed in depth at our February 26th congregational meeting.
- We voted to establish a church Mission Committee to establish a plan and a direction for our future mission work. Our plan will include both adult and youth mission direction. Lars Helland has agreed to answer God's call to chair this important project.
- We have purchased a new safe in order to properly protect church records from the many possible disasters that could occur. We are awaiting its arrival.
- We want our picture board, as wonderful as it is, to include some upgrades in its heading and lettering other than paper which becomes brittle and soiled. The "Instruments of God's Love", our members, are important and should be presented as such. Tom Eckersley has agreed to use his time and talents to help with this upgrade.
- The church calendar is being updated periodically. You can review it at any time on our church website.
- Please be aware that we do have a suggestion box located in the narthex. Feel free to write any suggestions or questions and place them in this box for our review. Don't forget, you can also take your questions and suggestions to your elder.

Continued on next page...

- Our very meaningful and exciting Assimilation Program is taking shape and will be fully operational in the near future. We are looking for one or more volunteers that would be willing to help. See Janet Walker or Pastor Hammer for details.
- Soon you will see a new sign as you enter our church from Carson Road. This sign will say “Servants Entrance”. This sign will compliment the sign as we leave that says “You are now entering the mission field”.
- We reviewed our future staffing direction related to our vicarage program. Pastor Hammer stated that while there will be fewer vicars available for placement this year, there is a good chance that Eternal Shepherd will again be chosen for one.
- Each board chairman submitted goals for 2012 for their areas of responsibility. We know that with God’s help they will work hard to achieve these goals.
- A final recommendation from the council regarding worship times will be presented to the congregation at our next congregational meeting.
- **Please mark your calendars and plan to attend the next Congregational Meeting on February 26th after the late service.** More information will follow.

We, as your church council, ask for your prayers, your help, and your support for 2012. We know that through prayer and listening for His direction, our God will lead us forward and aid us in accomplishing the plans that He has for us.

*In God’s Service,
~Barry Voeltz*

TO BE GIVEN AWAY TO GOOD HOME...

I will be thinning and dividing the ornamental Grasses around the rear and west side of the parking areas. If you would like some for landscaping purposes please see or call me. There are several varieties to choose from.

~Harry Hornburg (864) 944-7273.



Elder's Corner

Paul's Journey --- Part 2 of a Series

Why me? Why now? How many ask these questions when God asks us to do something or tries to lead us. Everyone knows the story of Jonah and the whale: when God asked Jonah to go to Nineveh, Jonah might as well have said, "Sorry, God, not me, not now!" Of course, God eventually got Jonah's attention. Perhaps Saul, when called by Jesus on the road to Damascus, wondered about the same things. Why me? Why now?

Why *did* God call Saul---telling Ananias that "this man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel" (Acts 9:15)? The Bible does not tell us; this remains a mystery to us. We know Saul, who would become Paul, was a bad fellow; he was there when Stephen was stoned, giving his approval of Stephen's death (Acts 8:1); he was "still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples" while Philip was baptizing the eunuch from Ethiopia along the road to Gaza (Acts 8:26-40; 9:1). Despite all of this, God called Saul. By calling a persecutor of Christ's followers, God made one less persecutor. God also provided another illustration for us showing that we can be redeemed, and our sins can be forgiven. God knew that Paul would be able to use the experience before his conversion to draw others to God; Paul wrote to the Philippians, "If anyone else thinks he has reason to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless" (Phil. 3:4-6). Paul is saying here that by the standards of the world, he was a player, a big man. But then, in the next verse, he writes: "But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ." The example of Saul also shows us that, in His grace and goodness, He can turn the worst of us away from the evil one and toward Him. There is hope for all of us. God is good.

So why did God call Saul into service instead of someone else? Again, the Bible does not tell us; He may have had even better reasons than the few that come to mind here.

God called Saul after Jesus' crucifixion, maybe 2-3 years after Jesus died for our sins on the cross. The easy answer to "why now?" is because it would have made no sense to do so earlier. The gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John tell us *what* Jesus did; it became Paul's job to tell us *why*. So then the question becomes, why did God send Jesus during the reign of Caesar Augustus, to die for us during the reign of Caesar Tiberius, about 2,000 years ago? Again, the Bible does not tell us exactly, but Mark seems to give us a clue when he records that Jesus told the Eleven, just before He ascended into heaven,

Continued on next page...

“Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned” (Mark 16:15-16). At that time, the Roman Empire encompassed all of what we can reasonably call the civilized world. Without the Empire, travel would have been difficult, dangerous, and maybe impossible. Without the Empire, perhaps the “good news” that Jesus spoke of, and that Paul carried, would not have spread; it might very well have been snuffed out by the evil one and his minions: indifference, procrastination, doubt, unbelief, and all the other human traits that try to turn us away from God and toward evil. While the Bible is not specific about “why now” or “why then,” the time was ripe and God’s plan was brilliant. Praise Him.

When God is trying to lead us, instead of asking “why me” or “why now,” perhaps it would be better to ask, “how can I serve You, my Father?” Maybe this is what Saul asked. *Our Father in heaven, strengthen our faith, help us love You.*

*Paul Wilson
Chair, ESLC Board of Elders*

BOARD OF PROPERTY

Near the end of February we will be seeing some major changes in the church Sanctuary. We will be installing two new pews on the right side where the pulpit now sits. The pulpit is being rebuilt and reduced in size to be installed inside the Chancel area to the right of the Altar. Seats will be added inside the Chancel area for the Pastor and the Vicar. These changes should add enough additional seating capacity to our Sanctuary to meet our projected needs for the next five to seven years.

We will be notified by Sauder Church Furniture Company at least a week in advance of shipment to set an exact delivery date. We will need at least four to five volunteers to help with the installation. Please let me know if you would like to help.

On another subject, we are asking all church organizations to review any materials they may have stored at church. Please make sure things are packed together so we can maximize the limited storage space we have in closets. To that end we are reviewing the number of tables and folding chairs to make sure we have enough for any function, then look into reducing our current inventory to match this. Our initial count seems to show that we have about 75 more chairs than we will ever need.

*Ted Wanthal
Property Chairman*

A WORD FROM YOUR STEWARDSHIP BOARD

Dear Friends,

Now that the work of the Assimilation Committee is complete, we are ready to put into motion the “Guidelines for Involving Members in the Life of our Congregation.” Before we can do this, we must first extend a warm welcome to others, especially those that are visiting with us for the first time.

Our Greeter Program works well, and those that stand at our doors are doing a superb job with their smiles, hand shakes and words of “We are so glad you are here.” But this job extends beyond to **all** our members.

According to Rich Liedtke in **How to Be a Master Greeter**, “God is sending new people into His churches every Sunday. In your church the number in a year will be near 150% of your average weekly attendance.”

Since we have 200 attending regularly each Sunday, we probably will have nearly 300 visitors in a year. Do we receive these visitors in a positive way?

How these visitors are greeted will have an enormous impact on their becoming a part of our church. If we warm the visitor with kindness and love, his heart is open and ready to receive the gospel.

Each of us is the embodiment of the person of Christ in our church. One of the greatest compliments our church can receive from a visitor is, “There is a special spirit in your church.” Does the visitor see Christ thru us.

Each of us also represents the Pastor and all his vision and passion for spreading the gospel both in our church and in our community. Because Pastor Hammer and Vicar Pahl cannot be everywhere, we are their front line emissaries.

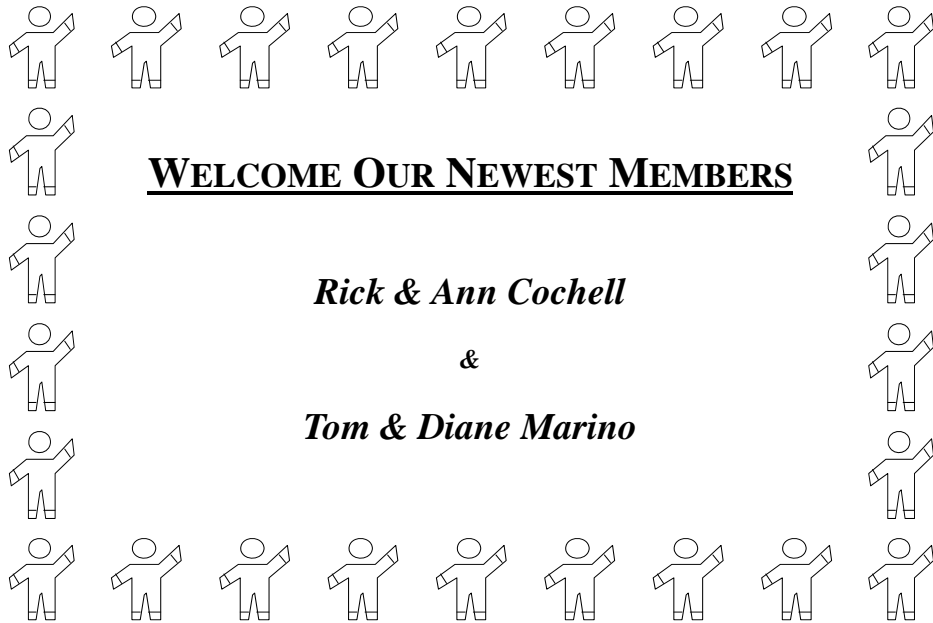
Each of us is a key player in the reputation and growth of our church. The visitor “sees” who we are and “what” we are about thru each of us.

My dear mother made a point of “welcoming, greeting, and talking with” a new face each Sunday. Her Sunday wasn’t complete unless she did this. Years later, at her funeral, many attending expressed to our family that she was the first face that they met when visiting the church. What a goal for each of us to work toward.

Next time you see a visitor, welcome them warmly, introduce yourself and invite them to Bible Study and / or Fellowship Hall for a cup of coffee. Go with them and introduce them to others.

Spread the love of God and our church.

*Your Stewardship Board,
Janet Walker*

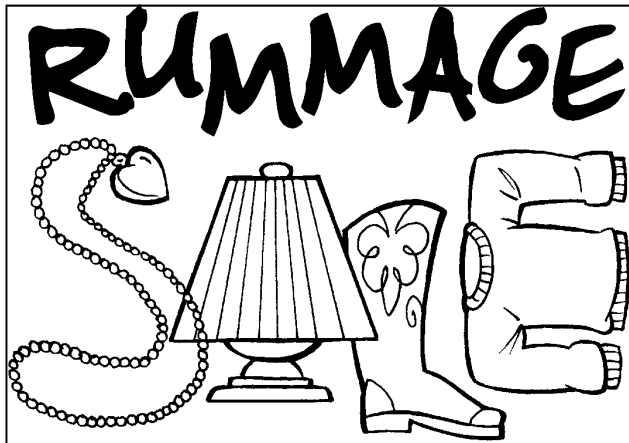


WELCOME OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

Rick & Ann Cochell

&

Tom & Diane Marino



**February 18th
8:30-11:30 AM**

This is a major fundraiser for ESLC where proceeds will support projects, equipment and other needs of our congregation as well as 30% of the proceeds going to Our Daily Rest Shelter.

As you clean out your offices, closets and cabinets, remember to save those useful, gently used items for the Rummage Sale. Please include manuals with the item if applicable. Remember clothing and reusable working items that others will find valuable are tax deductible. **You can begin bringing items today and put them in Room #213 after Sunday School.** Thrivent has discontinued the Care in Congregations program, so we will not receive supplemental funds. ~Questions should be directed to Chris Worthy or Linda Nichelson. ~Thank you

Volunteers Needed for Rummage Sale - Please see or call Chris Worthy at (864) 888-8668 or Linda Nichelson (864) 888-8542. ~Thank you

Women of the Church

Come join us Round the Table as we start our new Bible Study. Mark your calendar for:

Thursday, February 23rd

9:00 AM - 10:30

for

A New Song: All of Your Wonderful Deeds



Sing a new song! Our God does marvelous things...for you! This study will encourage and uplift you as you reflect on the hope that we have in our Savior. It provides 6 weeks of stories - faith narratives - based on biblical psalms. Following each day's reading are questions that will facilitate your own reflection on the Bible.

Each faith narrative was written by a real woman facing real-life issues. Each author found help, encouragement, and direction for her life from God's Word. Just like you.

Please join us in Fellowship Hall for prayer, fellowship, and wonderful sharing. The sign up sheet is on the bulletin board. Come and join us!

Please note the new study guide is available to pick up (from either Janet or myself) - and the cost is \$11.00.

~Charlotte Beyer and Janet Walker, Facilitators



Easter

THE EASTER STORY AND EGG HUNT - April 7th 9:00 to 11:00 AM. We are in need of volunteers: stuffing the eggs will be on that Tuesday morning, April 3rd at 11:00, and on Saturday we will need teens to help hide eggs (8:15), also need craft helpers to aid the children in making their crafts. Bakers to donate sugar cookies for the little ones to decorate. We will be doing resurrection eggs with the children so please save your egg cartons any kind will do. There will be baskets in the Narthex to collect egg cartons and

Easter Egg fillers starting in March. Some suggestions for the egg fillers: small non-chocolate wrapped candy, small toys, erasers, stickers, boxes of goldfish. **Please contact Diane Elliott to volunteer, 882-6288 or elliott50@bellsouth.net.**

Sharing the Faith

The Detention Center Experience

By Chris Gibson



I decided to participate in the Detention Center Outreach on Saturday, December 10, 2011. I felt that it was an opportunity to love God and my neighbors in a tangible way (Matthew 22:37-39). I was reminded of Jesus' words, "I was in prison and you came to visit me... Truly I tell you, whatever you do for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you do for me" (Matthew 25:34-40). Those are all very intellectual, and even, spiritual thoughts.

So, I should have been excited about the opportunity, but how did I really feel about it? Nervous! Anxiety! Apprehensive! New place, new people, new experience, and certainly out of the box for me. Let me briefly describe it.

When you're entering, you see the tall fence with rolls of barbed wire at the top, which surrounds the outside area. A guard lets you into the facility, and after you enter, they lock the door behind you. How often do we take our freedom for granted? Once inside, we went around to the inmates and invited them to come to the devotional time. The rooms were big with bunked, barrack type beds.

When we all gathered in the dining area, I sat with two young men, both just 21 years old, who had made some mistakes. We got to know each other for a few minutes. One was finishing up his stay that weekend, and the other was hoping to be out before Christmas. We went through the blue life manuals and talked about sin and Christ's forgiveness. Then, Pastor David shared a devotion from the Scriptures with us, and we took prayer requests from them.

In spite of my uneasiness, it was a very rewarding experience. While I will probably never know what impact that time had on them, it was an opportunity to share with these young men the grace that God has shown to me so many times (Ephesians 2:8-9). Also, I found my faith strengthened through it. Often, it is not until we step out in faith, depending on God, that we truly experience our faith. Would I go back? Lord willing, I hope to go back when Eternal Shepherd goes again, and I hope that you will consider joining us!



SPECIAL GIFTS/MEMORIALS

In December the following gifts were given:

In loving memory of Wilma Anthony
the Organ Fund received a gift of \$7000.00

In loving memory of David Anthony & Wilma Anthony
the Memorial Fund received a gift of \$3000.00

In loving memory of Janet Arnold
the Little Lambs Preschool Fund received a gift of \$2000.00

In loving memory of Merle Thom the Organ Fund received a gift of \$500.00

In loving memory of Leona Lanning the Organ Fund received a gift of \$300.00

To the Glory of God and His Manifestation
the Organ Fund received a gift of \$200.00

In honor of the Baptism of Emilee Jessa Egolf
the Elder Fund received a gift of \$100.00

Other Gifts:

The Alaska Mission Trip Fund received gifts of \$3812.00

The Organ Fund received a gift from Scrip for \$2500.00

The Organ Fund received gifts of \$1045.00

The Bibles for Police Officers Fund received a gift of \$500.00

The Food Bank received gifts of \$370.00

The Elder Fund Received a gift of \$200.00

The Debt Reduction Fund received a gift of \$50.00

The Sunday School Fund received a gift of \$50.00

The Youth Mission Fund received a gift of \$25.00

The Little Lambs Preschool Fund received a gift of \$20.00

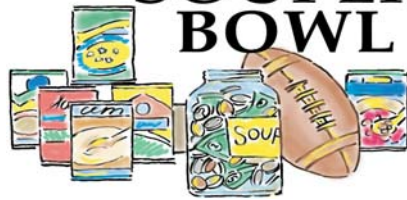
The Lutheran Witness Fund received gifts of \$20.00

The Youth Fund received a gift of \$20.00



SOUPER BOWL Sunday

February, 5th



Please join us in collecting cans of soup or giving a monetary donation in order that soup may be purchased for the Golden Corners Food Pantry.

Look for the large basket in the Narthex!

WE WOULD LOVE YOUR HELP!

Please note that the new Hospitality/Fellowship sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board. Our Committee would appreciate it if each congregational member would please consider taking a turn to assist with Fellowship after the 11:30 service by signing on the line representing a date convenient to you. You will notice that the name of a Committee member is already posted and this member will be available to assist you in any way you may need. We all so enjoy our time together with coffee and a "goodie", a time to fellowship with each other.



Looking for a thoughtful card or gift then look no further than ESLC's Card Ministry and Scrip gift card program.

Little Lambs Tales

We were so happy to see the children after a Christmas break. It seems like they have all grown taller in just a few weeks!

January's cold weather fit right in with our seasonal studies. The children got to paint with ice cubes and a potato masher (that had a beautiful design similar to a snowflake). We conducted experiments to see what happens to ice when we leave it at room temperature, and we learned how polar animals stay warm. We even made our own "polar bear" snack.

Registration for the 2012-13 school year will begin February 1st. If you know of anyone who might be interested in Little Lambs, please encourage them to contact me. I would be glad to send them information and take them on a tour of the preschool.

This year, the children will be making valentines for residents of the Lila Doyle nursing home. Some of our parents have offered to send gift items along with the cards. If you would like to donate small items for the nursing home residents, please drop in the box in the preschool entryway.

Nicole Beattie has once again graciously agreed to coordinate the silent auction portion of our ***Annual Spaghetti Supper/Silent Auction Fundraiser on March 10th***. Won't you consider donating a theme basket, gift certificate, or other special item for the auction? If you are willing to help, I know Roberta Port would appreciate some assistance with food preparation as well. ***We would like to extend an open invitation for you all to attend the spaghetti supper this year.*** More information will follow. Tickets will be on sale for several weeks prior to the event. Come join us for an evening of good food, good company, and intense auction bidding!

Thank you to everyone who has continued to faithfully collect Campbell's soup labels and used ink cartridges for us. We are saving our soup label points toward some big ticket items and the credit we get at Staples for the ink cartridges helps immensely toward the purchase of office supplies. Of course, we continue to depend on the connection of your Ingles and Bi-Lo cards to the preschool. We are able to get most of our art supplies through these programs.

We are in need of a covered sand box for our little playground. If you run across one, we'd love to have it!

~Thanks for all you do, Leslie

FORGIVENESS Game

Try this twist on musical chairs.

What you need:

- 28 large index cards
- Black marker
- Two teams of people
- Radio or CD player

What you do:

1. On index cards, write out *forgiveness*, one letter per card. Make two sets (two F's, two O's, etc.).
2. Mix up the cards and form them face up in a circle on the floor. (You'll have six blanks mixed in.)
3. Have teams mix themselves up and stand in a circle around the cards. Ask an extra person to turn the music on and off.
4. As the music plays, teams walk around the circle. When the music stops, players each pick up the card nearest them.
5. Team members take their cards to a designated area and try to spell forgiveness. Any double letters or blanks go back to the "music person," who reorganizes remaining cards, spacing them evenly into a fresh circle.
6. Play continues until one team spells *forgiveness*.



FOLLOW GOD'S EXAMPLE

In a letter to the church in Colossae, the apostle Paul wrote about the importance of forgiveness.

•••• DIRECTIONS ••••

To complete Colossians 3:13 (NIV), use the smaller words to fill in the larger words.



gain as or ear van an for give
gave her on it one other he an a

B _____ w _____ h each

ot _____ d _____ give

_____ e an _____ if _____ y

of you h _____ grie _____ ce

a _____ st some _____ .

For _____ as t _____ L _____ d

for _____ you."

COLOSSIANS 3:13, NIV

Answers: "Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you." Colossians 3:13, NIV

SERVICE TIMES

8:30 a.m. Worship Service
(Communion 2nd & 4th Sundays)

9:45 a.m. Sunday School
& Adult Bible Study

11:00 a.m. Worship Service
(Communion 1st & 3rd Sundays)



THOSE WHO SERVE

Pastor, Rev. David Hammer
Vicar, Justin Pahl

Preschool Director, Leslie Schalkoff
Secretary, Celeste Entrekin

Choir Director, Rick Schmidt
Choir Accompanist, Michelle Rowland
Organist, Lori Gourdin

MISSIONARIES

Jim Pohlig, Wycliffe Bible Translators
Jake & Michelle Gillard, Uganda
Matt Heise, Georgia & Eurasia

Eternal Shepherd Lutheran Church
220 Carson Rd.
Seneca, SC 29678