

*Our mission statement:
Celebrating God's love
by worshipping God,
caring for each other,
and serving in community.*

Crossties

*"Sharing the
Ointment
for Jesus'
Feet-Giving God
Our Very Best"
Cf. John 12:3*

August 2010

Holy Cross Lutheran Church

Vol. 16 No. 07



BERGY'S BABBLE: ALLIGATOR OR T. REX

Of all the luck. The Vega with three operational cylinders wouldn't start and I was running late. I was going to have to have to ride the Harley to do the funeral.

Thus began an amazing association with a group of folks who were very interesting and exciting to be around half the time and mostly terrifying the other half. It turned out that the granddaughter of the deceased man was married to Cap'n, the president, parliamentarian, and final authority of the Reapers, a serious motorcycle club. My lucky day, he deemed me to be a righteous dude.

In the middle of a conversation extolling the virtues of two-cylinder internal combustion, out of the blue, Cap'n said, "You know there may come a day when one of us gets shot, or highsides their scoot on a bad curve or wants to get married or baptize a curtain crawler. We need a chaplain who understands bikers. Someone who will talk to us where we live instead of preaching pious platitudes. Someone who won't clutch from fear."

I was incredulous as Cap'n's words hung between us. Technically, this was an informal call to a specialized ministry. A ministry to a 'congregation' of the proud-to-be-damned one-percenters. This was way before big bikes were a weekend affectation.

I said, "I can see that you are serious, Cap'n, and I need to go out and sit on Deacon Blue for a bit and think your offer over, okay?"

“I’m glad that you are serious, too. Take your time.”

I went outside the funeral home and cranked up the Deacon and commenced to cogitate. From early childhood on, there is one sound that is ground so deeply into my soul that I can feel it rumbling viscerally anytime I think of it. That is the sound of a tractor. The sound that accompanied my solitary thinking for hours at a time in the fields, plowing, harrowing, sowing and mowing. That sound has accompanied some of the most fervent prayers of my life. And a Harley with the right pipes comes real close to that sound. Sitting on the Deacon I prayerfully considered this call and what I saw as its need for guidelines and boundaries.

Then I went back into the Cap’n and said, “I can do this for you but I need some assurances here.” “Let’s hear’em.”

“Ok. I won’t be anybody’s pastor for long if I have to participate in obviously illegal activities. That means that I probably can’t be a prospect in the club. I don’t mind helping like a prospect, but I can never be considered one or a member. So I can’t wear colors. The bad news is that without an initiation process, the brothers probably won’t like that and may not trust me. The good news is that I am trustworthy and can probably be of more help as a witness in a jam, if I am not formally associated with the Reapers. Another thing, for weddings, I will need to know the bride and groom, so I would want to meet with them and plan the occasion with some pre-marital sessions. And one other thing. Cap’n, I know you’re the final authority in this group. I won’t do anything to undermine that, but I may sometimes need your protection.”

I was asking for a lot of rope there, but Cap’n thought about it and said, “That makes sense. Okay. We’re on.”

A few months later, Cap’n found me and said “A brother wants to get married, Chaplain. Here’s his name and number. I told him about gettin’ together with you and his old lady.” I was nervous about making that demand but they came into the church office the next week and we fidgeted until we were comfortable with each other.

It turned out to be a grand church wedding at Holy Trinity. Thundering Harleys descended on the church parking lot. Hairy, squinting, two-hundred-fifty pound tattooed mesomorphs sauntered around chains clanking and leather squeaking. Most of them left their weapons with prospects at the back door. I made the announcement that we were about to begin and drink up...no beer in the nave. Cap'n backed me on that and the beer stayed in the parish hall just like a normal Lutheran polka party.

Aside from a little good-natured heckling of the bride and the groom, the wedding went fine and the brothers cleaned the church impeccably.

After the church reception, I was informed that my presence was required at the real reception at the South Main Icehouse. They had bought all the stock for the night and left a refundable damage deposit of \$5000.00, just in case. The whole establishment wasn't worth that much. But the frightened icehouse owner was set, in case of a total loss. Needlessly, for the entire deposit was returned.

About a year later, in February of 1980, Stinky and Pinky decided to get married at the clubhouse in southeast Houston. Stinky (he was aptly named) came over to our house to make some plans. He was somewhat scary looking. I introduced him to the family and we sat down at the kitchen table to discuss things. You wouldn't believe how fast the room emptied out. Candy and Mom and Dad Terral decided to retire early, and on the way to her room, Mom, ever sweet and polite, said, "It was nice to meet you, Mr. Stinky." He answered her back, "Nice to meet you, too, Ma'am."

We did our last night of counseling at the clubhouse which had a sixteen foot scythe with red paint dripping off the end of the blade buried in the front yard. We rehearsed where we were going to stand and how we would get there and how to park the bikes in procession.

It was a dewpoint's the same as the temperature, 150% humidity, pea soup fog February Houston night. On the way home I saw the last ninety degree curve on the gravel road too late and had to lay the Deacon down to avoid a yawning ditch and barbed wire fence. I was bummed.

I broke the left handlebar and clutch and dented the tank on the Blue Deacon. I jammed a stake from the ditch in the frame, and wrapped the clutch cable around it to make a suicide clutch and limped home with dangling pieces.

The next day, wedding day, a Siberian express howled into town, and I just had time to go to Union Cycle Salvage and get some pull back handlebars and install them with frozen fingers. Not a chance I could do anything about my geriatric battery. If it came to that I would just have to run down the road pushing the bike with the clutch in while it was in second gear and then when I ran out of breath, jump into the saddle and pop the clutch and hope it was fast enough to roll it over and start.

The wedding went off beautifully and was a grand celebration. After the ceremony, the horizon covered the sun with a steely icy blast and we all went into the crowded clubhouse pulsing with high decibel rock. I was talking with the brothers and generally socializing. I did the traditional wedding toast, standing on hands and quaffing a brew upside-down. Even tried to teach some of the brothers how, but most collapsed in a puddle of beer.

I was pleasantly surprised that they also began to open up and speak of their spiritual journeys with me. "I am a Baptist, but I guess we're all going to the same place, huh?"

"Yeah, I just hope it's not tonight, and not a morgue or an incarceration facility."

"My Daddy's a preacher. I had to read the Bible three times."

"A preacher embarrassed me in front of my friends talking down to me."

"I had perfect attendance in Sunday School for three years."

"You think if Jesus came back today, he'd ride a Harley?"

It was an amazing variety of conversations and concerns, punctuated by two things: Number 1: Every forty-five minutes I went out and started up Deacon Blue and let it run until the heads were hot, so the oil wouldn't congeal in the cold and finish off the battery. If I could get it to roll over just twice, it'd start.

Number 2: Joker didn't like me. I was trying to keep a low profile but the stupid human trick was over the top showing off as far as he was concerned. And then there was the fact that I didn't have colors on.....so every once in a while, he'd throw his Bowie knife across the room right at me and stick it quivering in the floor between my boots. I didn't even see it coming the first time until I felt the solid thunk between my feet. He reputedly hunted with that blade and could bring down a deer at 20 yards.

After the first time, I always kept one eye on him, but when he threw that tumbling steel, I never moved, 'cause I didn't want to walk into his target, assuming it wasn't my body. Finally in an act of desperate bravado, I nonchalantly asked him, "How do you do that, Joker, stickin' it every time." I was hoping to sound like a dumb rube, but I don't think it came out that way, and the ensuing guffaws and ribbing really ticked him off, but I didn't act scared.

One of the brothers cut a patch off his jacket and gave it to me. He said, "You'll be the fourth man to wear this *Hell on Wheels*, patch, and this is the first time it was cut off of anyone alive. My best friend cut it off of his bud that died in a tank in Nam. Then he died on the highway when a guy in a cage (car) didn't see him and turned into him. Here, man, you can't have colors but you can have a patch. Wear it with pride and keep the rubber side down." I was stunned at this gesture of trust and goodwill.

So I went out to warm the heads on my bike and think about it, and savor this rare moment. About that time, Joker burst through the front door waving a Mini 14 (kind of a stunted G.I. M-16). He yelled, "Preacher, you ain't leavin' this party!!" I stuttered, "No, no, I'm not, just, just warming the heads to keep the oil movin'," while I watched the barrel swing my way. Time really was standing still, but I wasn't gonna. Gambling on the proposition that Joker'd never shoot a Harley, I did a Fosbury Flop over the Deacon backwards, and commenced to making myself flatter than a rattlesnake's inseam, while a line of rounds stitched the ground five feet in front of the Deacon throwing up gouts of dirt.

I was praying hard and trying to rub the muzzle flash out of my eyes, when the other brothers piled out at the commotion and calmed everything down. Cap'n locked up the rifle. Joker looked at me with a twinkle in his eye and said, "Ha, I finally got you to move, preacher!"

A couple of years back I ran across Cap'n. The Reapers had voluntarily disbanded and everyone was doing well. Their new professions were stevedore, fisherman, bowling alley owner, farmer, student, tattoo artist, airplane mechanic and other straight type stuff. Joker? Wilderness guide and chauffeur/body guard for VIPs. I saw his name at the end of movie credits one night and knew he was doing good in Hollywood.

Bonhoeffer asserts that God gives to pastors, as precious gifts, the people that they serve, and that as pastors, we should be grateful for God's wonderful gifts. He's right. That trust from God is awesome and should ever be a reminder of the preciousness of the people of God, each and every individual. Still, on occasion, one may hear a pastor complaining about the alligators in his pews. That's bad form. I never had one. An alligator.

But once, God gave me a T. Rex.



See you in worship BERGY

DID YOU KNOW ...

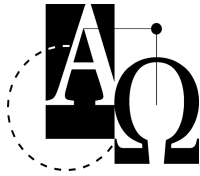
THE VOTES ARE IN

The ballots have been counted and the vote was

92 for 9:00 a.m. service time

43 to change to 9:30 a.m.

Council had decided that the vote would need to be a 2/3 vote in order to make the change so **the service time will remain at 9:00 a.m.** I want to thank you for responding to the question and I am sorry that some of you will be disappointed.



ALPHA & OMEGA

Neighborhood Circle will meet at 5:00 pm on **August 1st**, 2010, at the home of Ruby and Wayne Schaper, 2215 Greyburn 713-465-5206.

Lucy Candler

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED WHAT HAPPENS TO THE CHARITIBLE CONTRIBUTIONS GIVEN “IN MEMORY OF” YOUR LOVED ONES?

I cannot answer that for many years past, but I can tell you about some of the most recent uses of memorial funds and how much they are contributing to practical ministry needs here at Holy Cross.

Of course, as I believe it was written about in one of the past issues of Crossties, our worship services are enhanced by new paraments for each season of the liturgical year thanks to the combined resources of the Steve Schwartz – Sid Wagner Memorial Fund. Thank you, Georgene and Sharon.

Another important way in which our worship has been improved is through the use of Frank Meyer’s Memorial Fund money to purchase new microphones for the sound system in the sanctuary. Thank you, Irene.

The most recent use of memorial fund money is the acquisition of a fifty inch, flat screen, wall mounted television and DVD player for use in the annex. The Adult Forum and Pastor Jhon’s confirmation class currently use this room for studies. The purchase and installation of this equipment was made possible by the proceeds of the Guy Guilfoyle Memorial Fund. Thank you, Gloria.

The memory of your loved ones live on in a very real way through these contributions to Holy Cross.

AIM Karen



CONGRATS TO OUR GRADS

Diplomas were recently received by several of our members.

- Dayana González
- Gabriela González
- Melina Martínez
- Walter Martínez
- Edwin Pineda

We wish them well as they take their next step into the world.

from **THE HOLY CROSS ENDOWMENT TEAM**

Several months ago we announced the establishment of a method of contributing to the Endowment Fund at the \$1,000 level. In appreciation, a small plaque to honor or memorialize a family member will be placed on one of the pews in the sanctuary. Thank you to the Linn Family for contributing to the Holy Cross Endowment. A plaque will be placed on the pew where the Linn family often sat during services.

Several other members have expressed an interest in honoring/memorializing a loved member. As the plaques are prepared, we want to recognize their decision as well.

Some have asked for a plaque designated to the "Glory of God" be available for those who wish to contribute to the endowment. All contributions are appreciated. As soon as we reach the \$1,000 contribution level, a plaque will be placed on a pew designated "To the glory of God."

Please designate your contribution: **Holy Cross Endowment Fund.**

Susan Giesecke



RUMMAGE SALE

The annual Rummage Sale will be held on Friday, **October 1st** (9:00 am to 1:00 pm) and Saturday, **October 2nd** (9:00 am to 2:00 pm). Once again, Amy Schomburg will chair this event. She will need a lot of help from the church members.

So start cleaning out closets, cabinets, drawers, and garages and get ready to donate your “treasures” to the church for the Rummage Sale. Also, there will be a need for plants, briskets or money for briskets, and items for the bake sale – cakes, pies, cookies, bread and other items.

Joyce Peden
Rummage Sale Publicity Chairperson



MAM
Memorial Assistance Ministries
1625 Blalock Rd.
Houston, Texas 77080

FREE IMMUNIZATIONS FOR KIDS AT MAM

Parents must be present
Bring shot record for each child
Register at the front desk
or call (713) 468-4516 Ext. 105

DATE	TIME
Wednesday, August 11	9:00 am — 1:00 pm
Monday, August 16	9:00 am — 11:45 am
Thursday, August 26	4:00 pm — 7:00 pm

YOUR COUNCIL

President Bettye Raschke called the meeting to order on July 11, 2010 and opened with devotions. Present were: Pastor Berggren, AIM Karen Davidson, Pastor Jhon Jairo Arroyave, Bettye Raschke, Wayne Schaper, Mike Appling, Alma Laubenberg, James de Leon, Jim Peterson, Sharon Wagner.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as corrected. The Treasurer's Report was accepted.

A motion was made and seconded that \$5000.⁰⁰ of the Mission Endowment Fund be devoted to the Spanish Ministry to be used as needed. The motion passed.

Pew Plaques will be installed soon. These plaques are dedicated by members giving \$1000.00 to the Mission Endowment Fund.

Wayne presented Pastor Berggren a check for \$11,575.⁰⁰ to be given to Ed Cooper. This represents the money raised at the Benefit on June 5, 2010.

PASTOR JIM reported that the first Family Night was successful and the second Family Night was Wed. July 14th. The "Now the Feast" Worship Service is going smoothly. He thanked the Worship Committee for their work, especially in selecting Hymns.

AIM KAREN reported that the Apartment Ministry at Spring Shadows Place is going strong as is the Hearthstone Ministry. Her home visitation requests are increasing. She thanked Gloria Guilfoyle for the large screen TV she gave with Memorial Monies for Guy. It is being used during the Sunday Forum. She will conduct the Services for the next two weeks.

PASTOR JHON reported that he will be on vacation July 20—August 07, 2010. Our cleaning service will pick up some of his duties. He also announced that the Nursery Attendant will be stepping down as soon as a replacement can be found.

.../// ...

... /// ... Your Council ...

Crossties on line seems to be going smoothly. Previous Crossties will remain on line for three months.

As a result of the Service Time Change Ballots, the SUNDAY SERVICE TIMES will remain the same.

The meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

Sharon Wagner — Secretary



Thank You!

**DID YOU KNOW THAT YOUR FELLOW
HOLY CROSS MEMBERS
ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE COMMUNITY?**

THANK YOU to the following East Spring Branch Food Pantry Volunteers from Holy Cross: Verlene Furley, Karen Rose, Sheldon Urwitz, Carol Prokofieff, Mona & Gene Fogt, Betty Raschke, Pat Pfluger, Noel & Susan Giesecke, Jackie Houg, Eligio Villarreal; and Sussy Basurto.

THE EAST SPRING BRANCH FOOD PANTRY has ways for you to help, too! Volunteers are needed to sort and distribute food to needy neighbors. The work is easy (and fun) and the time commitment is only 3 hours a month. The Pantry is located directly behind our Church. It is open on Tuesday & Thursday 11am — 2pm & Saturday from 10am — 12 noon. We are also in need of people to help with loading and unloading at the Houston Food Bank on Thursday mornings. You don't need to have a large vehicle, just be available for lifting. The time commitment for that is also 3 hours or less. Please thoughtfully consider giving a few hours per month for this worthy endeavor! No experience necessary. Please call Mary White at (281) 799-6752 or Robin Harger at (713) 468-1725 if you are able to help out!

THE STEPHEN MINISTRY CONNECTION

CHRIST CARING THROUGH PEOPLE

I've shared the following with several friends in the recent past. But it strikes me that it's totally appropriate in its application not only to the rocks in the road over which we tend to stumble, but to the love which is the very core and basis of Stephen Ministry. In I Cor.13:13 we read, "And now abide faith, hope, and love, these three; but the greatest of these is love."

In the presence of fear, paralysis happens.
In the presence of guilt, negativity happens.
In the presence of compulsiveness, stress happens.
In the presence of insecurity, imitation happens.
In the presence of selfishness, conflicts happen.
In the presence of worry, procrastination happens.
In the presence of anger, attacks happen.
In the presence of arrogance, intimidation happens.
In the presence of criticism, insecurity happens.

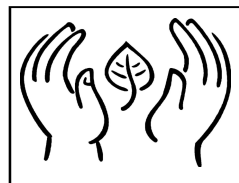
In the presence of God, love happens.
In the presence of love, forgiveness happens.
In the presence of forgiveness, acceptance happens.
In the presence of acceptance, faith happens.
In the presence of faith, hope is restored.
In the presence of hope, love is renewed.

In the presence of love, miracles happen.

Let us walk your rocky road with you and find the forgiveness, acceptance, faith, hope, and love of God.

In His name,

Marge Carroll
Stephen Ministry Coordinator





*Birthdays
of the
Month*

August 2010

Happy Birthday!

Holy Cross members celebrating birthdays this month:

03	Valeska Orellana	17	Candice Roy
04	Barbara Sledge		Katherine Schaper
	Reina Gómez	19	Walter Ruthstrom
06	Doris Pharries		Anita Cooper
	Eli Acosto		Angélica Rivera
	Horacio Gómez	21	Brenda Villegas
08	Jim Peterson	22	Donna Fisher
	Stan Crick		María Villaseñor
	Chris Lambeth	23	Madeline Price
09	Kerri Gree	24	Dorsey Mae Alexander
	Aaron Johnson		Ernesto Moreno
	Edward Johnson	25	Marilyn Flick
	Adriana Samano	27	Gloria Guilfoyle
10	Ricardo Hernández		Carol Thielemann
11	Louise McDonnold		Jymmy Navarro
14	Ronald Burns	28	Dorothy Storenski
15	Fredda Yurk	29	Henry Schaefer
16	Roberto Pérez	30	John Allcorn Jr.
		31	Guadalupe Villarreal



If your name is not listed or if this is incorrect information,
please let me know so that the list can be corrected.

Bettye

Baptisms

BAPTISM

On July 11th it was our privilege to receive into membership, by baptism, Sebastian Zachariah Williams, son of Jonathan and Dana Williams. We welcome this new little one into our midst.

PRAYER OF THANKS

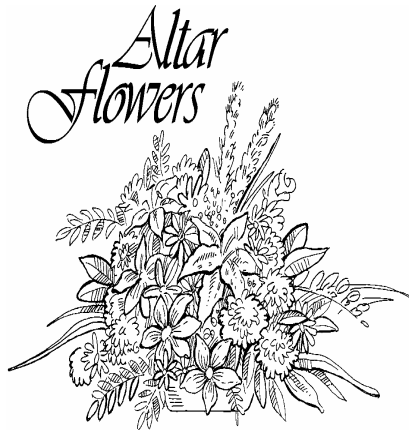
Rose Ellen Hogan has arrived, born on June 30, 2010. She is Alma Laubenberg's great-granddaughter and Ellen's granddaughter.

Please make an address change to your directory:

JOHANNA SCHULZE
Deer Creek of Wimberley
555 RR 3237
Wimberley, Texas 78676





She will celebrate her 95th birthday on September 1st, 2010.



July

Altar Flowers

- 04 John Stokes, Jeanette & Frank Stokes
- 11 Alma Laubenberg
- 18 Sharon Wagner
- 27 Calvin & Tillie Remmert

SUNSHINE SAINTS		REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS							
Remember in prayer the homebound, disabled, long-term ill, and prolonged recovering.		Men and women who serve our country in the military and law enforcement.							
Ella Brezina Ora Dell Dittmar Betty Dodson Doris Anne Drosche Sig Ellerman Harold Finstad	Nancy Mendel Doris Pannell Doris Polker Dorothy Storenski Sue Vogt Roselain Larson								
<p style="text-align: center;">Prayer Chain <u>Telephone and E-mail</u></p> <p>Prayer chain requests and anyone who would like to be added to the telephone or e-mail Prayer Chain can notify: Alma Laubenberg 713-996-7479 or <i>email</i>: albob1948@yahoo.com</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>In Our Thoughts & Prayers</i> </p>		<p style="text-align: center;">Marty Houg Bill Alexander Ed Cooper Betty Griffin Carol Kirsch Natalie Hansen María Samano Al Raschke Karl Giesecke Betty Mooney Betty Firth Claire Leno Harold Finstad Jay Oliver</p>							
<p style="text-align: center;">CHURCH OFFICE HOURS</p> <p><u>Monday - Thursday</u> 8:30 am - 4:30 pm <u>Friday</u> 8:30 am - 2:30 pm</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">Treasurer's Report</p> <p>If you have any questions call Wayne Schaper, Sr. at (713) 465-5206.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>JUNE 2010</u></p> <table style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td>Receipts</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 32,857.⁷³</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Expenses</td> <td style="text-align: right;"><u>32,727.⁵⁸</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Balance</td> <td style="text-align: right;"><u>\$ 130.¹⁵</u></td> </tr> </table> <p>Operational receipts year to date received \$ 209,814.⁹⁷ Expenditures year to date <u>217,106.²⁹</u> Balance < <u>\$ 7,291.³²</u>></p>		Receipts	\$ 32,857. ⁷³	Expenses	<u>32,727.⁵⁸</u>	Balance	<u>\$ 130.¹⁵</u>
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Balance	<u>\$ 130.¹⁵</u>								
<p style="text-align: center;">Holy Cross Lutheran Church's E-MAIL address is: hclc@holycross.us</p>		<p>AVERAGE ATTENDANCE</p> <p>SERVICES - JUNE 2010</p> <p>English: 157 — Spanish: 108</p>							
<p>You may sign up for Altar Flowers in the Narthex. Suggested donation is \$40.00 and \$12.00 for a rose.</p>									

Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Spring Branch

A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

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Houston, Texas 77055
Tel. (713) 686-8253

E-mail: hclc@holycross.us
Web Site: www.holycross.us
Fax (713) 686-9095

“Holy Cross Lutheran Church is a community of Christians gathered by God’s grace and reaching out through God’s love.”

TELEPHONE EXTENSIONS		YOUR CHURCH STAFF	
100	Church Office	†	Rev. Jim Berggren — Senior Pastor
101	Sussy Basurto Office Manager & Events Coordinator		email : jberggren@holycross.us
103	Rev. Jim Berggren	†	Jhon Jairo Arroyave — Hispanic Pastor
	Senior Pastor		email : jojave38@hotmail.com
104	Rev. Jhon J. Arroyave	†	Karen Davidson — Associate In Ministry
	Hispanic Pastor		email : aimkd@sbcglobal.net
105	Karen Davidson, AIM	†	Sussy Basurto — Office Manager
107	Financial Office		email : hclc@holycross.us
108	Stephen Ministry Office	†	Christian Clark — Choir Director
109	Family Life Center		email : cctenor@pdq.net
110	Nursery		
111	Volunteer Office		
<p>SATURDAY INFORMAL SERVICE 6:00 p.m. — Narthex</p> <p>SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES English Service : 9:00 a.m. Sunday School : 10:30—11:15 a.m. Spanish Service: 10:30 a.m. Estudio Bíblico y Escuela Dominical 11:30 a.m.—12:15 p.m.</p>		<p>WORSHIP MUSICIANS</p> <p>Jana Hodgson Organist Jo Ann Meeker Pianist Ann Crick Pianist</p> <p>EARLY LEARNING CENTER (713) 461-5535</p> <p>OFFICERS OF THE CONGREGATION Bettye Raschke President</p>	