



14719 W 163rd Street Homer Glen, IL 60491

C e n t r a l	163 rd St.
	Ministry

Join Us on Sundays
9:00 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.
Wednesday nights at 6:00 p.m.
We have a place for you!



Thou Shalt Not Forget

A new way to connect

We all watch movies, read books, and/or listen to music. Do you try to find the spiritual in any of these media? Would you like to let others know of your findings? Here is your opportunity!

We are looking for members to write reviews of everyday books, music, and movies from a spiritual viewpoint. How about reviewing a song that you would like to hear during worship? Write about it! How about writing on a topic you would like to hear in a sermon? CoG is all about members connecting with one another!

Please email us at omalley11657@comcast.net with your ideas and reviews! We look forward to getting your spiritual take on your fave media!

February 13...One 10 a.m. service, Annual Meeting, and Chili Cook-Off!

Blood Drive

Tuesday, February 22, 2:00-6:00 p.m.

More information at Crossofglory.com

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Happy Valentine's Day



February 2011

Join us for Worship:

Sundays
9 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.
CoffeeHouse Worship:
Wednesdays
6:00 p.m.
All with Holy Communion.
All are welcome!

Staff:
PJ Malin, *Pastor*

Laura Uzzardo,
Parish Administrator

Mimi Pappas,
Nursery Attendant

Bob Bejlovec
Maintenance

Jamie Knutson
Director – The Welcome Place Preschool

Sharon Aden,
Director – The Welcome Place Christian Care & Counseling Center

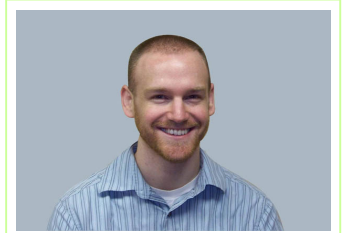
Please e-mail Laura Uzzardo if you prefer to receive your newsletter via e-mail: laura@crossofglory.com If you would like to be taken off our mailing list please give Laura a Call at **708-301-6998**.

Thank You.

Michael and Lisa O'Malley, *Editors*

Six Months of Growing in Every Direction

Pastor PJ Malin



Last year, God put a Vision in my heart. As I read through the Bible, I kept coming across the image of God's people being like a tree that is growing in every direction – down, up, together, and out. God gave me the Vision of our church as a church that is *growing in every direction* – growing down roots through Worship, growing up into the people God created us to be through Discipleship, growing together as a community of faith through Fellowship, and growing out through Outreach.

Six months ago, we formed Growth Teams in each of these areas, plus one in the area of Finance. These Growth Teams, or G-Teams, have been a G-force in our church and in our community. Here are some of their incredible accomplishments.

The Worship G-Team planned a Youth Volunteer Day. We asked teachers to nominate students they thought would be excellent worship helpers. Then, we invited nominees to be involved in every area of worship on January 16. Our youth did an outstanding job and many of their friends and family members came out to support them. We were able to get many new youths involved and we plan to keep them a part of our regular volunteer schedule. The Worship G-Team also created a survey to help us grow our worship experience. You can take the confidential survey by visiting: www.crossofglory.com/survey.

The Discipleship G-Team is preparing a training session for potential leaders who will lead a new kind of small group experience. They are also planning an online small group experience for young adults that will involve chatting online weekly and gathering together monthly for study and connection.

The Fellowship G-Team felt called to unite our church around the mission of feeding the hungry. This team developed the goal of feeding 5,000 people by collecting 5,000 cans of soup or chili by Super Bowl Sunday, February 6. They also organized a Christmas Party for our teams which began with the teens collecting cans from the community. On January 19, we surpassed our goal, and we cannot wait to see how many people we will end up feeding together. The Fellowship G-Team is planning a Soup and Chili cook-off on Sunday, February 13 to celebrate the miracle God has performed through our church and community.

The Outreach G-Team came up with two creative ways to reach out to our community. They designed new Cross of Glory shirts that so many of you purchased and are wearing around the community. I have my "Got Church?" hoodie on right now as I am typing this article. The Outreach G-Team also planned the Santa visit event which brought in 215 people from our community for a day of crafts, treats, pictures with Santa, and a lesson in the true meaning of Christmas.

The Finance G-Team was instrumental in two big financial campaigns. The first was the sale of Entertainment Books. The other was the MinisTREE campaign. In honor of our vision to grow in every direction, this team is building a tree that will be placed on the wall of our sanctuary. We were invited to purchase leaves and stones for this tree. Our

Six Months of Growing...

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church was hoping to raise \$4,000 so we could buy down our mortgage rate – a move that will save us \$25,000 in the next five years. You all stepped up and gave \$16,000! So we used the \$4,000 to buy down our mortgage rate and the remainder of the money left-over after the leaves and stones are purchased is being placed in a separate savings account from our General Fund specifically for the mortgage.

The Vision is becoming a reality thanks to your hard work, commitment, and generosity. I am really looking forward to another year of growing in every direction! As we anticipate electing a new Council in 2011, we are looking for individuals who can lead us in each of these growth areas. We are looking for people who can help us grow in the areas of Worship, Discipleship, Fellowship, Outreach, Finance, and Facilities. We added this last position because, as we grow in every direction, our facilities will need to keep up with us.

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Wrapping Up a Gaggle of G-Teams

Did you ever wonder, "Where do good ideas come from?" Or perhaps, "Who comes up with the wide variety of activities around CoG?" Think Pastor PJ comes up with everyone all by his lonesome? (hint: just humor him and say "great idea"...) Many of these ideas and suggestions are coming from your friends sitting next to you at CoG. In fact, 38 of them have been serving on a G-Team over the past few months.

There have been five G-Teams: Outreach, Fellowship, Worship, Discipleship, and Finance. Starting around August of last year and soon to be ending, these teams have been meeting at CoG with the Good Pastor, trying to come up with ideas, activities, and programs to keep the congregation busy.

This issue we're going to meet a few individuals who served on the teams; Karen Hartley, Sue Gervase, Cheryl Lawlor, John Uzzardo, and Nicole Morin. But first, a roll-call of the whole group is necessary.

In Outreach, the cast of characters includes: Jane Festin, Diane Grishaber, Karin Knutson, Cheryl Lawlor, Lisa O'Malley, Dawn Pechukas, Glen Schoenbeck, and Bruce Shake.

In Fellowship, the crew is: Haleigh Draper, Karen Hartley, Andrew Kjos, Kirsten Kjos, Michelle Kruse, Deb Murtaugh, Cheryl Nabors, Michael Parker, and last but not least, Dennis Tanrikulu.

Worship consists of the following: Tom Bonick, Chuck Fisher, Andrea Hines, Julie Malin, Dan Murtaugh, Dan Skowron, Lloyd Snyder, Sandy Sotzen, and John Uzzardo.

Next is Discipleship and that group is: Sally Beller, Caryl Hruska, Nicole Morin, Nicole Nelson, Nicole Talsma, Barb Taskay, and Tom Waller.

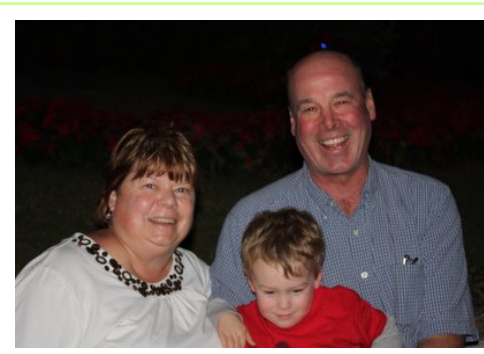
And finally, Finance, which boasts the talents of: Sue Gervase, Steve Hlavac, Debbie Sands, Christine Szrom, and Debra Waller.

Count them...38 strong. Truly a "gaggle" of talent, time, and effort.

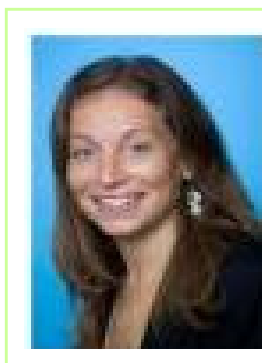
Attending meetings and spending time away from families, jobs, or whatever else folk do in their private



Nicole (Discipleship G-Team) chose an interesting pose for a church newsletter....



Karen (Fellowship G-Team) and husband Tom with their grandson, Pastor Jr./Ayden.



Sue Gervase Finance G-Team

lives takes a bit of effort. How does our group of five rate the effectiveness of the G-Team program?

"Meetings always started with prayer and a scripture reading that helped us to focus on different aspects of fellowship," explained Karen. "This helped us to focus on God, and helped us to think about being His hands and feet so that we would step out of the boat to take action." (Ed. Note: nice reference to a recent sermon with the boat!)

"It was great to have a group focused on one area," said Sue.

"It was also helpful that a council member sits in on meetings to inform us about G-Team overlaps and how we can work together."

John continued, "I think it was very effective. You get a lot of people with a lot of ideas and you pick out the best ones and refine them."

"Personally, I feel the G-Team format gives us the ability to run more successful events," volunteered Cheryl. "Not only do we have the luxury of having

eight volunteers for an event, but it was also much easier to enlist some help from the other teams."

"I really liked it," admitted Nicole. "There were a lot of people involved and pointed in many different directions based on their G-Team. We were able to do a lot of brainstorming and dreaming together and cover a lot of ground while we were doing it."

A unanimous thumbs up for the format and the meetings. But...what exactly did these teams actually...well...talk about?

"MinisTREE!" exclaimed Sue.

"We came up with a series of new small groups to help our community of faith grow in knowledge and faith together," Nicole

said.

"The Outreach team put together a wonderful event which included a visit from Santa," Cheryl said. "All of the children were able to take home a photo from their visit with Santa (see photo), make a few festive crafts and enjoy some goodies. The community didn't let us down, we were very pleased with the turn out."

Karen added, "The Soup/Chili Can mission to feed 5,000 was the most exciting and amazing miracle. I

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also enjoyed the Tell Christmas Party in which we had a scavenger hunt for cans of food along with fellowship with our youth. They are an awesome group to get to know. I look forward to the fellowship with the Soup/Chili Cook-off meal with our church family and I am also looking forward to going and helping to package food for Feed My Starving Children at a future date to be announced."

John echoed his opinion of our youth. "There were a lot of small things we did to possibly make the worship experience better. But the best thing we worked on was getting the youth more involved in worship"

But with all the different talents, perspectives, and...let's be honest...moods of a group of individuals, did our panel feel like they were a good fit for their respective teams?

"Since, being at CoG I have been given the opportunity to reach out while participating in events before the G-Teams were created," explained Cheryl. "The team as a whole did a wonderful job working together."

"Fellowship is at the heart of who I am," added Karen. "My heart's desire is to see the community here at Cross of Glory having fellowship. I believe that is what builds up a church community through many different avenues, like Bible studies, stepping out and trying new things and committees, meeting new people



John Uzzardo, Worship G-Team



Cheryl (lower right) and "the Outreach gang" with Santa and Pastor PJ

and getting to know your church family." John added, "Because of my love for the music ministry I think being on the worship G-Team was a no brainer."

For Nicole, it was a good fit because of ... "my involvement in related ministries (leader of women's ministry and women's retreat leader, preaching and assisting, prayer and care). I am called to serve in areas where I can go deeper with Christ and challenge others to do the same with me."

Time for the hoary old question that wraps up so many articles of this sort...would you all do it again if you could or would you recommend others to try the experience of serving on a team?

"Yes, absolutely," said Karen. "I truly believe God brings people together for His purpose. Look at what I would have missed if I did not commit time to the G-Team meetings, for the gathering of each others ideas, talents, and taking action to carry out the groups plan. If you are asked, pray about it, and when you make the commitment,

put the dates on your calendar. You won't want to miss what God is up to!"

"Sure [I would serve or recommend]," stated Sue. "It's just so hard to get a group who is already involved to find a time to meet that everyone can attend."

"Absolutely," Nicole added. "Everyone has something to offer! It's also a nice way to get involved here without a long term commitment to a project."

Cheryl responded similarly, "Absolutely. When you work on a team, it helps build better relationships within our community of faith. Working on a G-Team is an honor and privilege, it gives you an outlet to use all of the gifts that God has given you!"

John also said he would sign up for another go.

Next time you see any of these individuals, give them a hearty thanks for their time and hard work! And...perhaps consider serving next time around!

HAPPY BIRTHDAYS

Ann Marie Rafacz	2/01	Daniel Lamphere	2/18
Lana Archer	2/03	Brendan Lewis	2/18
Claire Kleczkowski	2/03	Kenzington Srebro	2/18
Lucas Maurella	2/07	Tyler Rolenc	2/19
Rowan Paluch	2/08	Kara Taskay	2/19
Glen Scheonbeck Jr	2/08	Gail Parker	2/20
Charlotte Sommerfeld	2/08	Khalin Niemeyer	2/21
Hunter Kolbus	2/09	Michael Sykora Jr.	2/22
JR Plotke	2/09	Tom Waller	2/22
David Plese	2/09	Dan Ganzer	2/24
Jerry Budd	2/12	Tanner Nelson	2/25
Rees Dubiel	2/14	Jake Pechukas	2/25
Andrew Tague	2/14	Tom Hartley	2/27
Chloe Skandera	2/16	Bill Nabors	2/27
Michelle Kruse	2/17	Elizabeth Laitman	2/28
Dan Skowron	2/17	Nancy Byrne	2/29
		Betsi Plese	2/29