

# FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN



December 2009



## Our Church Life Together

### The Church Worships

Join us this Christmas season for some special worship services together. On December 13, the children will be sharing the Christmas story with us. On December 20, the Choir will bring us the annual Christmas Cantata. On Christmas Eve, December 24 at 5:30 pm, we will have our candlelight service of Lessons and Carols. *(see back page for details)*

### The Church Celebrates

Our church is holding its annual Christmas Dinner at the Escalon Community Center for the second straight year. Last year's event was a tremendous event for our church, with well over 200 people in attendance and we hope to have another wonderful evening together. We gather together at four o'clock in the afternoon on Sunday, December 13. During the evening we celebrate together with a wonderful meal, reflect on the ministry of our church and sing Christmas songs together. The event is open to any who would like to attend – and we encourage you to invite friends and visitors as well. Please let the office know the number of people that will be with you on this wonderful evening – we will be expecting you as we cannot imagine this evening without you there!

### The Church Expands

Escalon Presbyterian Church voted in favor of the recommendation given by Session to purchase the property to the South of the church on First Street. For those of you who have been a part of this church for some time, you may remember that this property and the house used to be the

church manse (housing for the pastor). The property purchase was successful and we are now in the process of evaluating the property for future use for the mission and ministry of Escalon Presbyterian Church. The Presbytery of Stockton enthusiastically voted to approve the purchase of the property and agreed to a short-term, 6-month loan of \$30,000. As you consider end-of-the-year giving, please pray about giving to the "property acquisition" fund, enabling us to pay back the Presbytery in short-order.

### The Church Supports Zimbabwe

The Session of EPC has given approval to a short-term reconnaissance trip to Zimbabwe to visit our friends, the Giddens, who are working there and participating in the mission project of First Fruits. First Fruits is a joint effort between them and our church which provides food-packs to hungry people in a village in Zimbabwe. Pastor Troy Onsager, Jeff Jarchow (who has been facilitating the First Fruits ministry from its inception) and Greg Foulke (who has mission trip planning experience through his work with Habitat for Humanity) will be traveling to Zimbabwe in February to visit the Giddens, observe the work of the ministry first-hand, and to consider options for a subsequent mission trip the following year from our church. We are requesting some donations towards the cost of plane tickets, which will run a little more than \$1,500 a-piece. If you'd like to give to this scouting trip, just write a check to EPC with "Zimbabwe Trip" in the memo line.

Thank you EPC for all your prayers and support – we look forward to celebrating with you.

