

New Lifer News

*Merry Christmas
from the staff at New Life!*

**Christmas Eve
Candlelight Service
Dec. 24 @ 7 p.m.**



**NO New Lifer News
Next Week due
to the Holidays**

Caroling for Carol

by Teresa Bassett

I love our church, and the hearts of so many people who attend here!

One of New Life's long-time members, Carol Engel, has been stricken with cancer for several months and hasn't been able to attend church "at our building" in Morton. I was told that Carol listens to the weekend messages online, but she really misses the worship portion of the services. Some of New Life's men, from the newly formed men's ministry team, came up with the idea to take "New Life" to her home, for a night of Christmas caroling. Approximately 100 people from our body traveled to Mackinaw, on Sunday, December 20, to express love and support for Mike & Carol Engel. Many New Lifers wrote messages of love and encouragement to Carol, on luminary bags, which were used to line the Engels' driveway and street. We're very happy to hear Carol reported that our prayers are working, and she is feeling much better.

Another Mackinaw citizen, Jan Cagle, is also suffering with cancer. There was a request that Christmas carols be sung at her home, as well. Many New Lifers that visited the Engels also felt led to visit her and sing.

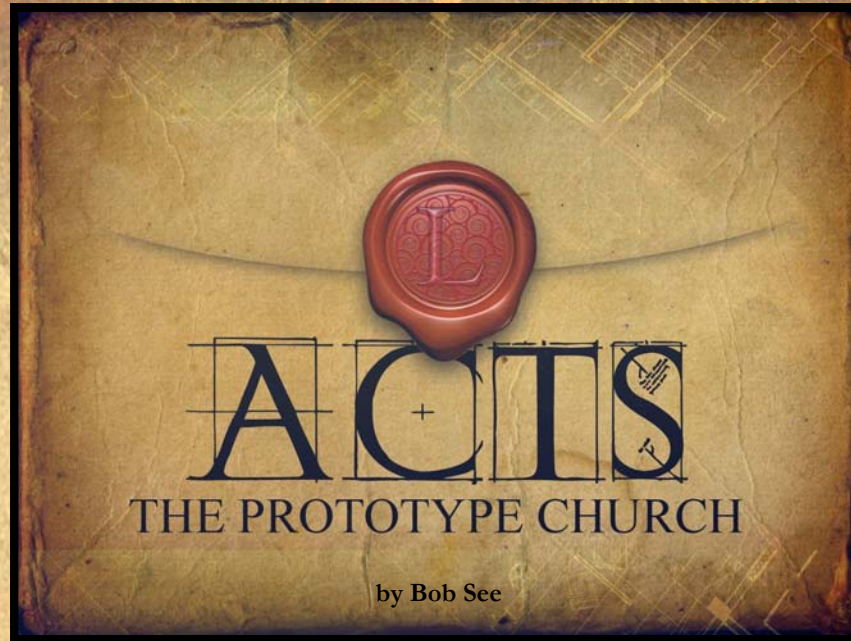
Thank you to Dick Edwards for his special heart, to those who planned this event, and those who took time during the Christmas season to make visits and bless these ladies during their time of need.



Carol smiling in the doorway as she listened



Mark Hootman leading Christmas carols



One of the puzzling things about Christianity is that there are so many denominations. Why are there so many different expressions of Christian faith? And how do I determine which is right, true or healthy?

In January we will begin to study the opening chapters of the book of Acts, where we will see the birth of the Church and look at that first church - the “prototype church.” We maintain that the first church, born in Jerusalem at Pentecost, models the priorities and goals and values that God intends every congregation to embrace. The “prototype church” becomes the standard by which to measure our own experience of Christianity.

And central to the birth of the church is the coming of the Holy Spirit. If you’ve been a Christian for a few years you are probably aware that the Person and the Work of the Holy Spirit raises questions and controversy for many believers. This is unfortunate as Jesus made so clear how dependant the Church is on the Holy Spirit, but because of conflict, bad teaching and bad examples. Many believers tend to avoid any emphasis on the power and presence of the Spirit in their lives. I hope our study in Acts will help us know and trust the Spirit in greater depth.

New Lifers, I encourage you to prepare for what God will do here over the next three months. From January through March we will be looking at subjects like; the power of the Holy Spirit, revival, repentance, walking in purity, and submission to God. We will be exploring prayer and fasting. We will learn about ministry and evangelism from the first church. New Life’s mission statement says we want to “ignite the church” – actually, in a real sense, we can’t ignite the church. Only God can accomplish that. But, we can prepare ourselves and seek Him to come visit us. We will be giving you more instruction and encouragement in these matters in the days ahead. But for now, I encourage two things:

1. Read the first two chapters of the book of Acts. What do you learn about the Holy Spirit? What do you learn about the Church – what values and activities did it pursue?
2. Pray for God’s work in your life for 2010. Ask God to touch your life this winter. Re-surrender your life to Jesus and ask Him to lead you into a deeper experience of Himself.

I find myself praying and in the Word for extended periods these days. I believe God is going to touch our church in new ways this winter and I encourage you to prepare spiritually for His work.