

Grace and Glory Supports the Fluvanna Habitat for Humanity Project

During a recent December worship service at Grace and Glory Lutheran Church, a check in the amount of \$859.00, made out to Fluvanna Habitat for Humanity, was received by Mike Himes, Fluvanna Habitat's new president. Presenting the check is Congregation President Frits Geurtsen, with Pastor Ken Albright looking on. The funds were largely raised by the congregation during Old Farm Day, partially matched by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, and includes Grace and Glory's \$200.00 commitment as a covenant church with Fluvanna Habitat.

“It is exciting that in our first year in a covenant relationship with Fluvanna Habitat, in the midst of an economic recession, that Grace and Glory, joining forces with Thrivent Financial, was able to maximize our giving, furthering Habitat's mission,” said Pastor Albright.

“Beyond our financial contribution, our second in 2009, I'm pleased to say that members of our congregation are also personally involved with Habitat,” added Frits Geurtsen. “A number of us, myself included, do actual construction, serve as members of the Board, and assist with fund-raising efforts such as the recent pancake breakfast and 5-K run. There are lots of ways to get involved and I strongly encourage other congregations and individuals to look into it.”



Fluvanna Habitat for Humanity saw its inception in 1994; a few years ago their Board of Directors set a lofty goal of “eliminating substandard housing in Fluvanna County”. The challenge in keeping to an affordable mortgage of around \$70,000 is the rapidly escalating land values in the county. “Realizing this, we purchased 12 acres of land and over a two year time frame created the county's first Minor Rural Cluster Subdivision, called High Mountain Acres,” stated Mike Himes, President of Fluvanna Habitat. “Our first subdivision consisted of 5 lots with 75% open space; we just closed on our first home there and have begun work on our second home, this one for a single parent with a young foster child. The Board also decided to build the homes to Earthcraft standards, involving a combination of energy efficient and environmentally responsible building techniques. In this way we help our partner families with lower utility bills and more comfortable, durable homes.

“We are making a difference in people's lives,” Mike adds. “If you want to become part of this exciting work, there is a niche for you. Please visit our website: www.fluvannahabitat.org, and fill out a Volunteer Information Sheet, or call (434) 589-3752.”

“We have a goal to establish many more covenant relationships between area churches and Fluvanna Habitat”, Pastor Albright says. With over 70 churches in Fluvanna County alone and only three who have signed covenants, the Habitat Church Relations Committee, which Albright chairs, has a lot of work to do. He further states, “Getting people into decent housing, with a mortgage they can afford, and giving them the opportunity to help in the building of their homes, has its roots in the Christian faith. I think it's a matter of getting the word out. We have to tell the story. As churches and the

Christians who attend them come to understand that Habitat offers not a “handout”, but a caring hand up, the support will naturally grow.”

Grace and Glory Lutheran Church worships Sundays at 10:15 a.m., with Christian Education for all age groups at 9:15 -10 a.m. Services are held at Fluvanna County Middle School while plans are finalized for their first worship center on Route 53. Pastor Ken Albright can be reached at (434) 531-3551; office number: (434) 589-2217. Visit website www.graceandglory.org.