

Lord of Life Lutheran Church

"Where There's Life For You!"

Volume 23 No.9

e-mail us at: lolmv@verizon.net

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LIFELINE

Lifeline is a Newsletter published by Lord of Life Lutheran Church in Moreno Valley, California.

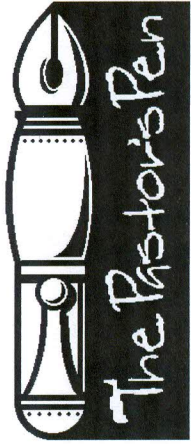
Our Mission Statement

Inviting all to grow in Christ!



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How fast time flies! The year is half over and it makes me reflect on what we have been doing, what we planned for, what we hope for, and where to go from here.

Over the last 16 months, together we have gotten to know one another. We have identified some things that need our attention. We have discovered some things that we have going for us.

What we hoped for is unclear to me at this time. There is the overall, hazy 'we need to grow, we need more young people' vision. Any church or for that matter, any organization can make the same claims.

How are we different? What about Lord of Life makes us different? What do we aspire to? What are we willing to make an extra effort, more commitment for?

All successful, thriving churches are busy making a difference in the lives of people outside their doors. The number of members and the amount of money available are irrelevant. This is the ministry part of loving one another that God has directed us to. That's why it works so well. God has a vested interest in blessing us when we take on God's work, especially for those we do not know, are not one of 'us,' and from whom we can expect nothing in return. This is also the part of ministry that is the most fun. One area that I am exploring, along with Cindy Cassem's help, is Cuddle Programs at local hospitals. Children and babies healed faster when they are actively cuddled, rocked, and held. There are volunteer programs and we are looking into the requirements. Sounds like a great ministry for grandma's and grandpa's!

As a result of the visit from Rev. Denis Laherty, we have launched a lay visitation group headed up by Marv Egeland. The something Marv has done before and he enjoys it. There are some of you who also did this in the past. Let Marv know if you'd like to join him in this effort. This does not mean I will not do visits. It means, as a church, we can do more and more often visits. Marv will also bring Holy Communion to those who cannot come to church.

Another area that Rev. Laherty pointed out is the extreme value in having a greeter ministry. We decided to have volunteers sign up for a month at a time, finding their own replacement if for some reason they are unable to be there. Authurine Broussard signed up for July. Who will be next? Connected to this is the need to wear our name badges. Let us be prepared to welcome visitors, for God is preparing them for us. Be prepared to be reminded often to wear your name badge. For forgetful people, I was reminded of the Kiwanis who fine forgetful folks!

There will be some new signage to indicate where to enter the building for worship and where to find the offices. I will personally underwrite the cost of this.

The Pastor's Pen

(continued from page 2)

At the end of this month, we will again celebrate Christmas in July. Plan your cookies and your pledges for July 23. Remember, we agreed to a budget with a \$24,000 deficit. This is one strategy to make that up. And to make up the shortage of giving year to date. To help in the effort, I have declined to change mileage to the church for this year. That was a \$1200 item in the budget.

For the fall, we will have a Blessing of Backpacks Sunday, A Blessing of the Pets Sunday, All Saints Sunday and other special occasions. See the calendar elsewhere and then mark yours.

One of the things I am working on is acquiring a youth director. One way is to find a good person who will work for nothing. Another is to join with area churches and share a professional. We all agree that our future is in our youth. That means we have to get serious about supporting the effort to lead them effectively and joyously. Please put this item on your everyday prayer list.

What we cannot do is to fail to move forward because of the lack of money. Money is just a means of conveyance to have someone else do what we could very well do ourselves. If we were a new mission, just starting out, that is what we would be doing. We have the advantage of not starting, but continuing. We have some experience. We can do this. Pray for the desire to do what right now you thing is not possible. Allow God room to provide the miracle.

Finally, let me share my vision for us. I look forward to the day we have dedicated folks jump at the chance to participate in specialized ministry and to recognize

ministry needs in our community and then bring these needs to our attention for consideration of our involvement. I look forward to that time we are willing to let the Lord provide and not fret over what we do not have. We have a lot.

Redevelopment is using what we already have to become what God has planned for us.

Shalom.

Pastor Carol



My Lord of Life family,

Words cannot express my thanks for the wonderful feeling of love you have shown me on my birthday. Your thoughtfulness will remain in my heart for the rest of my life.

Thank you, Pastor Carol and congregation, for my special prayer.

I would also like to thank the ladies that supplied the beautiful birthday cake and the flowers. Such a special morning to share with many wonderful people,

Attaining the age of 90 was far from any expectations for my life span. Praise the Lord.

Love in Christ,
Katherine



CHURCH COUNCIL

Yes, Virginia, there is a Christmas in July

This year on Sunday the 23rd of July you will hear the Christmas hymns and songs fill the air of the sanctuary at Lord of Life one more time. It means a couple of things that should not take away from the real Christmas celebration in just about five months.

The first thing is a reminder that we love our church family and why we like to gather in praise to our Savior, hear the spoken Word, and experience the presence of His love, forgiveness, and blessings.

The second thing is a call to pledge our support to the ministries that make having this facility we call Lord of Life, the miracle on Nason St:

- ✚ a church to serve this community,
- ✚ a place of worship that means something to our friends and family.
- ✚ a sanctuary from life's challenges
- ✚ a refuge, oasis, or retreat
- ✚ and best of all, "our" church

This day will not be a "fund raiser", but will be a pledge drive to ensure that our ministries, our goals, and our mission will continue to serve our God. We are asking everyone to consider an additional gift to the church that will allow us to cover the shortfalls we budgeted for this year and the years to come. We have no specific goal except to hear and do God's will.

There are some of us that are on "fixed income" and retired that can still support the missions of this church. If you were fortunate enough to put aside funds in a traditional 401(k) or IRA to support your retirement, the government has devised a way to get some of this back in a "required minimum distribution" (RMD) every year after you are 70 and ½ years old. You will pay taxes on this RMD and it can even put you in a higher tax bracket. One of the options you have is to give this RMD or a portion of it to your church and that will be tax free. You can either give to the IRS or your church, the decision is yours.

This year we would like to collect enough to pay off our mortgage, fund all our expanding ministries, and make this miracle "shine". I know it is a big dream, but we are praying for your support and your pledges to go for the goal.

Your church council has also requested our mortgage holders, the Mission Investment Fund, to reduce our monthly payments so we can continue the ministries this church serves. We have not received their response, but we are looking for every way possible to increase the cash-flow and grow our ministries and service in this community. May God help us all.

Bob Vernlund

Worshiping in a small church

I have summarized a couple articles that pertain to a small church. The first appeared in an issue of *Christianity Today*. Used by permission of Christianity Today, Carol Stream, IL 60188

We like to think we are a family church where everyone knows everybody and we care about each other more than the big churches do. Operating a small church like a family doesn't mean we shouldn't do it well. There are some characteristics that healthy families and churches do to be successful. They lead by example more than by lecture. One of the strengths of the smaller, family-style church is the ability for the pastor and congregation to actually know each other. A healthy small church takes advantage of that. Healthy families welcome new members and don't put up walls to keep newcomers out. They don't keep others out, they throw open their doors to welcome everyone in. A healthy family draws boundaries which allow us to love and welcome the dysfunctional members without letting them ruin things. In a healthy family-style church, dysfunctional members are loved and appreciated, but control freaks don't get their way, gossip is not tolerated and bullies don't win.

In 1 Timothy 1:9, "...the law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels..." The same is true for churches and families. If a church is healthy, it will lead with love and grace, not law and punishment. Healthy families come together when they face challenges. No matter how much they may disagree with each other, when a healthy family faces a common enemy, they unite to defeat it and protect its members. But an unhealthy family will turn on each other.

Maybe the best way to tell if a church is healthy or unhealthy is to see how they behave when faced with a trial. Healthy churches band together and get stronger. Unhealthy ones turn on each other and fall apart.

So how do we test this theory in good times? Find a common enemy and go on the offense. Tackle the homeless problem in your town. Welcome people into your church family who don't look, act or sound

like you. Give the growing youth group the main sanctuary, while the small adult Bible study goes to the back room. Stretch yourself into new areas of ministry and see what happens. That all sounds good, but what about us, you and me. Do we really believe that God is with us? Do we have doubts about who is speaking to us.

The second article was by Max Lucado published a few years ago about God never giving up. I think this applies to our church family and is worth a review.

The thick and dreadful darkness of doubt. The same darkness you feel when you sit on a polished pew in a funeral chapel and listen to the obituary of the one you love more than life. The same darkness that you feel when you hear the words, "The tumor is malignant. We have to operate." The same darkness that falls upon you when you realize you just lost your temper again. The same darkness into which Jesus screamed, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Appropriate words. For when we doubt, God seems very far away. Throughout time, through God's people often forgot their God, God didn't forget them. He kept his word. God didn't give up. He never gives up. When Joseph was dropped into a pit by his own brothers, God didn't give up. When Moses said, "Here I am, send Aaron," God didn't give up.

When the delivered Israelites wanted Egyptian slavery back instead of the milk and honey land they were promised, God didn't give up.

When Aaron was making a false god at the very moment Moses was with the true God, God didn't give up. And when human hands fastened the divine hands to a cross with spikes, it wasn't the soldiers who held the hands of Jesus steady. It was God who held them steady. For those wounded hands were the same invisible hands that had carried the firepot and torch two thousand years earlier. They were the same hands that had brought light into Abram's thick and dreadful darkness. They had come to do it again. So the next time doubt walks in, escort him out. Out to the hill. Out to Calvary. Out to the cross where, with holy blood, the hand that carried the flame wrote the promise, "God would give up his only son before he'd give up on you."

(Continued from page 5)

We need to pray to God for the challenges put before us that may seem small to him but insurmountable to us. Cast out our doubts that we can continue to hear his word, grow in his image, and be inviting to all.



July

Tom Hilker
Jim Cassem
Katherine Ward

August

Carole Korshavn
John Meeks
Kristin Freeman
Kyle Freeman
Matthew Shoemaker
Dolly Kline
Schuyler Ciasullo

If your baptism information is not included, or included in error, please contact the church office so that we may update our system. We would like to celebrate everyone's baptism anniversary, so please be sure to contact the church office with your information.



Please Pray for:

Harold Lester, Oly Vernlund, Connie Lowe, Ira and Gene Yoder, Alice Olson, Katherine Ward, Bill Shulin, Pat Rupert, Jeff Merritt, Dorothy, Susie Davis, Ona Ellington, Carole Horton, the family of Jill Rasmussen, Julia Fanning, Carla Engle, Laura Entrekim, the family of Mark Booth, Gail Paddock, Megan Kelley, James Ward, Bob Kretschmer, Bruce Gaynor, Elisa Gonzalez, John Abramson, John Simpson, Margaret, Steve Johnson, Brian Kelley, Mike Johnson, Rita Nielsen, Mark Korshavn, Larry Wilderman, Kathy Bickel, Jeff Sims, Alan Yoder, Audra Ciasullo, Jack Hoffman, Janell Stanford; and all others needing God's healing touch.

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CONGRATULATIONS!

Trevor Van Hoosier: graduated 3rd in his class at Rancho Verde High School and will be attending Baylor University in August.

Spencer Ciasullo: senior at Valley View High School

Kyle Freeman: senior at Valley View High School

Schuyler Ciasullo: sophomore at Valley View High School

Alyssa Van Hoosier: freshman at Rancho Verde High School

Shynell Stanton: 8th grade transitioning from Calvary Chapel to a public school

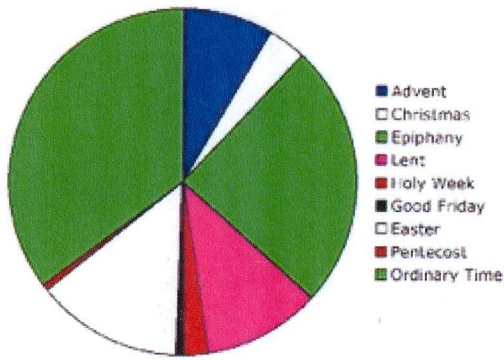
Fernando Garcia: 4th grade

Zoe Ross: 2nd grade



Sunday, August 6th we will be blessing the backpacks prior to the start of the school year.

Students, please bring your school supplies and invite your friends to bring theirs as well. Let's get the new school year started in the best possible way. Teachers and other school employees are welcome to bring their "tools of the trade" for a blessing also.



A brief summary of color usage, according to the church year:

Advent: Blue is associated with Advent, suggesting hope. This association originated in Scandinavia, probably because purple dye was too expensive for churches to use. Some assemblies use purple in Advent, a color associated with royalty as the church awaits the newborn king. (note, this is a different meaning than when it is used in Lent; see below).

Christmas: White, calling to mind the purity of the newborn Christ, and to our light and joy in him. Some also use Gold.

Epiphany of Our Lord: White (see Christmas).

Baptism of Our Lord: White (see Christmas).

Time after Epiphany: Green is used for its symbolism of our growth in Christ. Green, in a sense, is a "neutral color," used when more festive or more somber color is not appointed.

Transfiguration of Our Lord: White (see Christmas).

Ash Wednesday: Purple is the preferred color as this is the first day of Lent. Historically, black has also been used on this day, since it is the color of the ashes to which we will all return.

Lent: Purple is typically associated with Lent, suggesting repentance and solemnity.

Sunday of the Passion: Scarlet is the preferred color of this first day of Holy Week, as it suggests the deep color of blood. (Scarlet is to be distinguished from the brighter color of red,

which is appointed for the Day of Pentecost, martyrs' days, and certain church celebrations). If a parish does not have scarlet vestments, purple may be used.

Days of Holy Week: Scarlet or purple may be used for Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of Holy Week.

Maundy Thursday: For this fourth day of Holy Week, celebrated as the institution of the Lord's Supper, scarlet or white is used.

Good Friday: No vestments or paraments are used on this day, after the stripping of the altar on Maundy Thursday night.

Vigil of Easter: White or Gold suggests of joy in the Resurrection is used on this night. Easter Day: Gold or white is suggested for this day. The gold color symbolizes that this day is the "queen of feasts," unique in the entire church year.

Sundays of Easter: White suggests the joy of the resurrection.

Day of Pentecost: Red as the color of fire is used on this day when we remember the tongues of fire descended on the crowd in Jerusalem. In contrast to the color of scarlet, Pentecost's red is a bright color.

The Holy Trinity: White is suggested, the expression of joy in the mystery of the Triune God.

Time after Pentecost: Green is used, to indicate our growth in faith as we follow the teachings and ministry of Christ. Some assemblies use differing shades of green throughout the Sundays after Pentecost, a lighter green in summer and a darker green in fall.

Christ the King: The final day of the church year uses white, a festive color suggesting light, joy, and the celebration of our Lord.

Lesser festivals and commemorations are white, unless a martyr is celebrated, in which case bright red is suggested.