

Lord of Life Lutheran Church

Where There's Life For You!"

Volume 19 No. 6

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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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FROM THE



PASTOR

Happy New Year...

When I hear this phrase, I can not help but think of new opportunities that lie ahead for Lord of Life. We will be taking part in our first Annual Winter Retreat at Camp Yolijsa; January 9-11, 2009. The theme is: The Spiritual Body and all of

its parts. This is inspired by the passage on spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians. I look forward to some fruitful conversation with you all around this topic. We will start a new round of Cottage meetings together; after our final Wednesday meeting January 7th. And as we say thank you to those coming off of Church council; we will be welcoming in a new council for February. These folks have given much to Lord of Life in this leadership capacity. It has been a blessing serving with them all! A new outreach event will take place in February too. As a congregation, we will be participating in a program called Valentines for Vets. This will be a great opportunity to connect with those who have given back so much to us and to this country where we are blessed to live. As the weeks go on, be listening and watching for more information about this from Meggie Hilker.

Another first will take place later this year as well; our first Annual Family mission trip to Mexico. We will be visiting an orphanage in Tecate, Mexico; which has its own Olive grove on the property. The hope is that this might be enough of a money maker for these folks that the orphanage can ultimately be self-sustaining. The second part of our trip will be a tour of Tijuana. I would like to give you some opportunity to engage with brothers and sisters from another culture and to see first hand where some of the goods that we buy in America are made. *Remember the beautiful piece of pottery that I brought into worship?*

I have begun looking at putting together a Long range planning team that will be in conversation about the next steps as it relates to how we can continue to be good stewards of the property that our Lord has blessed us with. I pray that we may see the beginning to an after school tutoring program here at Lord of Life. We have now used the beautiful crosses in the back of the sanctuary for lifting up prayers of Thanksgiving to our Lord during the fall season and leading up to

Christmas. I now would like to focus on how God reveals himself to us in our daily lives. So, starting in mid-January I would like you to bring evidence of this in so we can continue to utilize the netting on the crosses. Bring in pictures of family, your favorite color cloth or material of some sort. At the end of this gathering time I pray that the many ways God is present will be evident as we enter this worship space that we are so blessed to have.

Time for beginning our Evangelism into our community is near. Coming soon will be times for sharing our faith stories with each other in a safe space and environment. I will explain this more as time goes on. Last, but certainly not least, I want to give thanks for the Lord of Lifers and Children's choir. If you have been wanting to sing there is no better time then now to join some fantastic servants of God; as they proclaim their love for our Lord through the gift of music. 2009 will see a new time for Sunday school. Our Education hour is now taking place after worship on Sunday mornings. This time is meant for those of all ages. Prayerfully consider what you would like to be involved in. God works in such fantastic ways. Perhaps you have wanted to teach or assist in this component of Lord of Life's ministry. We would love to serve with you in this capacity. I am looking forward to a fantastic year in this place, and all the opportunities that lie ahead for us all!

You may have noticed by now that I have used the word "we" quite a bit in this writing. It is not by accident. WE are all in ministry together in this part of the Lord's vineyard that we know as Moreno Valley. I am your pastor and shepherd; yes. But everything I have begun to talk about above has little chance of success if your God given gifts are not used along the way. The Spirit is alive and well at Lord of Life, because the Spirit lives in and through all of you! I thank you all for the many ways you serve our Lord. I can not do what I have spoken of alone, but together WE can by God's grace do some awesome things. We have much to be thankful for here at Lord of Life!

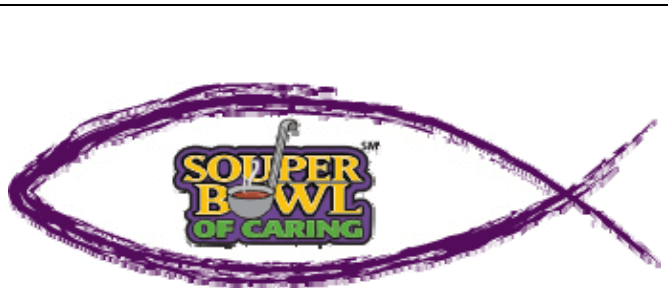
It is a blessing to be in community with you. What a blessing it has been to come into your homes, share some conversation about the future of Lord of Life. Your opinion is very important to me. I embrace your thoughts and your perspectives. I have an open door policy for a reason; so I can hear from all of you. If something is on your mind let's have some conversation over a cup of coffee or lunch. It is always a good time for food!

From the Pastor Cont'd...

Martin Luther, for which our denomination is named, talks a lot about vocation. I have lifted this up before. But there is room for all of us to continue to grow into our vocational identity together as a worshipping community. I give thanks for your calling, for your vocation not only to Lord of Life but to the entire kingdom of God.

Peace,

Pastor Shane



Over \$10 Million Raised in

This year marks a special event for the Souper Bowl of Caring. On February 1, 2009, it will have been 20 years since the youth of Spring Valley Presbyterian Church in Columbia, SC addressed the issue of hunger in their community with this Super Bowl Sunday Prayer:

"Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat."

Over the past 20 years, more than \$50 million has been raised for organizations that fight hunger. Be part of this movement that begins in our own backyard and reaches across the nations, sharing God's love with those who need our compassion and care. A special offering will be taken on Sunday, February 1st with 100% of the donation going directly to charity. Please help the hungry and hurting people in our community by being a part of this wonderful tradition!

GETTING UNSTUCK FROM STUCK or training for the Evangelism SWAT* Team

Having recently returned from the Billy Graham Evangelism Conference, I have become more and more aware of the potential that Lord of Life has to evangelize our community! There is nothing more strategic in the evangelism process than prayer! Many of you have told me that you cannot go knock on doors. But, you can pray! I have been told that some of you don't have time to 'work in the community'. But, you can pray! Finally, many of you have said that you aren't qualified to evangelize the scriptures. But, you can pray! Do you see a trend here? Prayer is the basic foundation of every evangelical mission. Everyone, including you, can be a praying partner in this mission. Indeed we start with prayer, gather our team/teams through prayer, train the team members through prayer and devotional outreach, practice our verbal approach via prayer and example, and finally reach out to individuals/families in our community with prayerful hearts to offer the Lord's message of salvation while other LOL evangelists remain at the church praying that our words and works might be fruitful to the Lord.

Our evangelism work is carried out by each of us individually but working within the boundaries of the TEAM collectively.

That's all there is to it!

Currently, the volunteers for this Evangelism committee include Jeannine Lester, Carole Korshavn, Cindy Cassem and Bev Erck. Talk with these people and Pastor Shane. Tell them you want to be a part of this group. You don't have to be good at anything but prayer! It is time for Lord of Life to take responsibility for introducing MORE seekers to the Lord. We pray that you will want to join us in this most vital Great Commission.

S.W.A.



*Spiritual Witnessing and Teaching

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Perspective ...

By Jack Pavelich (12/2008)

I spent the afternoon on my laptop, “googling” stuff that piqued my curiosity. I had found a subject rich in internet resources: World Hunger. Try it yourself. For a change from the normal articles and reports on World Hunger, try your search against “Images” or “Videos.” What I found kept me busy for hours – especially the Video resources.

I was given a new perspective: my life doesn't look anything like that of millions of people who exist in a world of extreme poverty!

While I was out and about, doing some food shopping for the bible study at my home one night, I ran across an older man who took the time to greet me, “God bless you brother.” Gee, I wish I had thought of that! He took the time to remember God in the midst of his busy day – I was too occupied to think of God first.

I was given a new perspective: People I don't even know witness to me all the time. Do others have the same impression of me?

I've heard a ton of excuses by people why they don't tithe; one of those being, they don't make enough to tithe. Then we were treated to a commitment by our young pastor, and his family of five, to increase their tithe from ten to 11%. Pastor's income is pretty much public information (since we vote on it each year.) I know Pastor's income is less than that of most households in our congregation.

Does that bring a new perspective for you?

Funny how an extra \$20 at the gas pump is something we pay and go on about our lives (with little tangible effect on the rest of our needs ;) but, the idea of an extra \$20 in the offering plate each week is considered outrageous!

Is that a new perspective? Isn't it the same \$20? ... of course, God isn't big on “collections” ... or is He?

The economy has affected my Daughter more than most of us. Her employer just cut everyone's rate of pay in order to compensate for increase costs. So, she finds herself doing a very

frugal Christmas for herself and her three boys. At first she felt really bad about not being able to give the boys a lot of presents. But as Christmas gets nearer, I find her and the boys with a great celebration attitude as they find other ways to enjoy family while spending minimal dollars for these holidays.

What a great perspective! We don't need to spend money to show our love for each other – rather love really demands we spend ourselves to each other.

If you take the opportunity to read C.S. Lewis' book *The Screwtape Letters*, you will be rewarded with a whole new perspective about life, relationships, Christian beliefs, and walking-the-walk. Each of us is under the impression we are walking a straight path to the Kingdom, while the truth is, that path is rife with curves and turns, speed bumps and detours, obstacles and dead-ends. We don't all make it.

The study we are now completing on the book has opened my eyes to my own spiritual journey; a new perspective on my own Walk to Emmaus (see Lk 24:13ff).

We are about to witness the inauguration of our first President of color. While I grew up in Northern Illinois all my child years, I had little exposure to what many experienced as racial discrimination. But hey, we were kids, and kids just play together – no matter! Then I spent 20+ years in the Air Force, probably an environment more widely integrated than any other at the time, so I saw few incidences of racial bias during that period. Just because I didn't see it, doesn't mean it wasn't there.

Since Mr. Obama won the election, I have seen a sparkle in the eyes, and a dance in the steps of the black brothers and sisters around me. A whole people seem to have been set free.

I'll be praying for a new perspective by our society in these next years – one that will see our President Obama not as a black man, but as a man.

Gal 3:28 There cannot be Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is no male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Amen?



New Women's Bible Study Starting Soon

When was the last time you were invited to something fun and didn't have to RSVP, bring a purse, stop by the store and bring something disguised as homemade, or change your clothes - a place where you could invite anyone and feel no obligation to return the invitation?

Well, get ready! Soon I will be hosting a local chapter of *Sweet Monday, Women's Socials on a Shoestring...Tied to a Generous God*. Sweet Monday began in 1995 in the home of Kim Newlen who was a stay at home mom feeling lonely and wanting the fellowship of Christian women and has not missed a monthly gathering since she began. She invited friends, neighbors and other women to her home. The "socials" begin with a dose of inspiration from God and are based on Biblical principles. There are Sweet Monday chapters throughout the United States and the world. The gatherings are non-threatening, lots of fun and open to all women.

Please watch and listen for more information regarding Sweet Monday, which most likely will not be held on a Monday, but will held on an evening when all women can come and be a part of this great evening of fun and refreshment in God's word.

See you there,
Cindy Cassem




Heavenly printing is once again working on the sponsor ad page in the "Lifeline." Any business owner interested in becoming a sponsor can contact Heavenly Printing at (951) 850-9909. Ads will run for one year. Space is limited and reservations are currently being taken. Help get your name out there!

WHAT ATTRACTS PEOPLE TO CHURCH?

Submitted by Mike and Deb Weitenhagen

Why do people select a particular church? A convenient location? Yes. A good speaker in the pulpit? Yes. Inspiring music? Yes. An attractive building? Yes. But a more essential element in attracting visitors, newcomers, and prospective members is friendliness – both in the pew and throughout the community. Where there is a warm, dynamic congregation with an enthusiasm that's contagious, visitors will usually be found, and will return. A church can buy many advantages with money, such as nice buildings, trained leadership, effective advertising and an abundance of supplies for spiritual and social use. But old-fashioned friendliness, of which the world is sorely in need, can't be purchased with money. It comes only from the hearts of dedicated people who love God and enjoy helping others feel at home in their church.



Annual Meeting

Sunday, January 25th

- Election of Church Council Members
- Annual Reports
- Church Budget



Cathy Davis, Alan Shoemaker, Jerry Dagen, Linda Baginski, Ona Ellington, Natasha Sinclair, Dave and Ann Miller, Diane Combes, The Harris Family, Lois White, Frank Rasmussen, Julie Johnson.



AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY RELAY FOR LIFE

Celebrate.

Remember.

Fight Back.

SAVE-THE-DATE

As you know the Moreno Valley Relay For Life is just around the corner. Lord of Life Lutheran Church's award winning team, Daisy's Chain, is once again ready to take on the challenge!

As you may remember we have been the top fundraising team in the city of Moreno Valley for 6 of the 7 years we have been involved, raising over \$77,000 in the fight against cancer! We were presented with a prestigious award from the American Cancer Society. This year we are expected to have a lot more competition so we are going to need your help. Together we can make it happen!

When: Relay begins Saturday, April 25, 2008, 9:00 am

Ends Sunday morning, April 26 with a Closing Ceremony

Where: Valley View High School, 13135 Nason (a few blocks from Lord of Life)

For information:

Contact: Pat Rupert, days 951/300-1223, eves 951/243-1045

E-mail: patricia.rupert@cancer.org or pat.bill.rupe@verizon.net.

or Becci Van Hoosier at 951/924-4887, church office manager

