

# Lord of Life Lutheran Church

*"Where There's Life For You!"*

Volume 19 No. 5

e-mail us at: lolmv@verizon.net

November/December 2008

# 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!*



Inside this issue:

From the Pastor .....	P. 2
The Other One .....	P. 3
The Screwtape Letters .....	P. 3
Who Moved my IRA .....	P. 4
The Other Side of Prayer .....	P. 5
Lutheran Lay Renewal .....	P. 5
Thanksgiving Eve Worship .....	P. 5
Food Baskets/Toy Drive.....	P. 6
Christmas Eve/Day Worship Services .....	P. 6

FROM THE



PASTOR

## Giving Thanks...

Psalm 100:4 says, "Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name."

We have much to be thankful for here at Lord of Life! Over the course of the next couple of months I look forward to lifting

up to our God shouts of thanksgiving for the many blessings in our lives not only corporately but individually as well. I want to give thanks for all of you too. It is a blessing to be in community with you, to be your shepherd, and to have all of you as partners with me in ministry in this part of God's vineyard which is Moreno Valley. One of the ways we will give thanks has actually already begun. Thanks to Sally Haase we have 3 beautiful crosses in the back of the sanctuary that we can use to hang prayers of thanksgiving on as we lift up in this community of faith all of the ways we see God working in our lives. On Thanksgiving Eve we will gather for a time of worship and pie, as we give thanks for this community of believers that we are part of. November is Stewardship month at Lord of Life. As you look back on your last year of giving, look at the various ways in which God has blessed you. Out of that gratitude allow yourself to be challenged just a little bit more than you have been the previous year. Let me give you my own personal example for a moment. I currently tithe 10% of my income back to the church. It is truly amazing how God has richly blessed not only me, but my family as well as a result of doing this. Starting in November I will challenge myself and increase my tithe to 11%. I want to ask you to take a step out in faith with me. Prayerfully consider what this may look like for you. We all tithe at different levels. I only ask that you give a little more than you did last year. Starting November 9<sup>th</sup>, and continuing for the rest of the month; we will collect the pledges during worship. During the Children's sermon, I will be talking with our young ones about tithing. I will give them an opportunity to tithe with the rest of the congregation too. I continue to be thankful for the cottage meetings that have taken place and the ones still scheduled through January. What a blessing it has been to come into your homes, share some conversation about the future of Lord of Life, as well as the fine

food you have prepared; your pastor always gives thanks for that! Please sign up for one if you have not done so already. Your opinion is important for me to hear. I embrace your thoughts and your perspectives. I am pleased that the Children's choir continues to bless us with their musical offerings on the second Sunday of each month. Something I am very excited about and thankful for is a conference on Evangelism that Beverly Erck, Cindy Cassem and I will attend in the middle of November. What an opportunity we have to reach out to Moreno Valley, letting each and everyone of the folks around us know just how alive Christ is, as he is alive in all of you through the words and deeds you proclaim for all to hear and see. Give thanks for this miracle on Nason Street, and the people that our God has put in our midst that we are truly blessed to call our brothers and sisters in Christ, in the body of the one who created us as his own. On November 16<sup>th</sup>; Spencer and Schuyler Ciasullo will be received as new members as well as having their baptism remembered on this special day. As the month of November comes to a close we continue to give thanks as the season of Advent is then upon us. What a gift for all of creation as the baby Jesus was born on Christmas. Can you think of any greater reason to give thanks? Christ is the best gift any of us could ever receive. I understand this may be a tough thing to sell to a young child looking for gifts under the tree on Christmas morning, but you get my point. And like a child who waits with great anticipation for the gifts to come, I pray that we all will await the birth of our Lord with the same anticipation too! Luke 2: 14 says, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests." This is spoken in the story of Jesus' birth as we find in Luke. May this verse be written on our hearts as we thank the one who has given us so much in this life of ours. Martin Luther, for which our denomination is named, talks a lot about vocation. I give thanks for your calling, for your vocation not only to Lord of Life but to the entire kingdom of God. I look forward to many moments of exploring and walking with you all on your journeys.

Peace,  
Pastor Shane



*Wise Men and Women Still Seek Him*

Lifeline is a newsletter published bi-monthly  
By Lord of Life Lutheran Church  
13600 Nason Street, Moreno Valley, California  
Volume 19 No.5 November-December 2008

## THE OTHER ONE by Bev Erck

For nearly his entire career with the US government, my husband had a best friend. He was a Turkish man who returned the friendship in all ways. I once asked my husband what was so special about \_\_\_\_\_. The response came (in a voice that wondered "What kind of a ninny are you that you have to ask that question?") "Why, Bevy, if it came down to two against a thousand, I'd want him to be the other one." I watched the friendship develop for years. It turns out that the friend also felt that "two against a 1000" bond. Whenever the men met, it was always the same greeting; first a gentlemanly handshake followed by a lengthy bear hug with both men pounding on the other's back and making sounds of joyful mirth. The time since their last meeting could be 3 days, 3 months, 3 years or even longer. It was always the same. I often marveled at the mutual respect, loyalty, and integrity those two shared through good and bad! Even when we were at separate locations in the world, those guys held on fiercely to their friendship. A few years after his retirement, my husband died. I thought often about the gaping hole left, not only in my heart, but that of his friend.

I don't know where that "two against a thousand" came from but I venture to say it has affected many more than "a thousand". God must have known that those two men needed each other. He blessed each of them with a loyal friend in full view of their peers, their acquaintances, their jobs, and every person that ever saw them together. Admittedly, not all of us develop a friendship like this but most of us will at least witness such a friendship. I see the friendship of these two men reflected in the lives of their families. Not only my life but those of my daughters carry on that blessing. I still think about it every now and then. With time and the grace of God, I have discovered that all friendships are gifts from God. And, even when a very special gift is taken from us, the blessing itself does not end. I no longer believe in coincidence. God puts blessings where they will be a blessing to others. I've seen it with my own eyes and thank God every day for the grace to share them with all of His children.

The LLR Saturday afternoon's Women's Group spent some time discussing the need for nurturing friendships. You won't be surprised to hear that many of you that are reading this article have,

from time to time, become my 'other one'. I can't begin to explain how these friendships have touched my life. I am hopeful that I, too, can be the 'other one' for some of my Lord of Life sisters and brothers. Each of us receives more blessings than we could ever imagine. We receive the blessings that our Lord gives us and the grace to use them in our lives. Praise be to God!



### *The Screwtape Letters*

Or

How does Satan uproot the Christian?

Jack Pavelich has volunteered his home to host a weekly study of C.S. Lewis's book of the same title.

When: Mondays at 7 PM

Starts: November 10<sup>th</sup>

Where: Jack's home

(12881 Sunnymeadows Drive, MV)

*The Screwtape Letters*, written by C.S. Lewis during World War II, was originally serialized in a publication known as "The Guardian". It is, perhaps, one of the most popular Christian Books written in the 20th Century.

*The Screwtape Letters* was controversial when it was published and remains a controversial book to this day, and well it should be. It is written from the perspective of a devil. It actually purports to be a series of letters from one devil (Screwtape) to his protégé nephew (Wormwood), attempting to instruct him in the finer points of tempting a human to turn away from Christianity.

Jack has offered to chart a path through the 31 letters so that he, and you, by the grace of God, will be able to see and understand how Satan works in the lives of good people to distract them and separate them from what God would have us do.

Lewis was the author of many other books on Christianity. He even wrote the famous "Chronicles of Narnia" which are a Christian allegory. He was a college professor and hobnobbed with other famous authors. One of his closest friends was J.R.R. Tolkien, the author of "Lord of the Rings".

Please contact Jack if you are interested. You may pop in and out of the "class" as you please.

# Who moved my IRA?

By Jack Pavelich (10/2008)

Oh sure, I overheard you last week, “Just when I was getting ready to tithe, the economy goes berserk and now I can barely afford my latté in the morning!”

I hear all of you! And I also notice Thrivent seems to be sending out my stock reports more frequently than ever before. Actually, they aren’t more frequent; they just seem that way when the news is always bad, bad, bad!

A great friend was planning on retirement in the next year. His IRA losses will keep him working longer now. You been affected? Fortunately many of you live in those beautiful one story homes around town – so I needn’t worry about you getting too hurt jumping out of a one story window.

Did anyone notice the price of gas is falling to near \$3? I didn’t either until someone mentioned it to me. I guess our attention has been on other things.

But, something very important has gone unchanged: God still loves us more than we can understand; and He continues to provide for our every need – but that may not be in the form of a latté.

I’m too lazy to look it up, but our scripture asks us why we store up earthly things that die, peel, rot, disintegrate, erode, corrode and generally fall apart; when God offers us life Eternal if we will only believe in Him.

The work of ministry brings people to the realization that God will protect and guide us in everything we do – as long as we are doing God’s will. The economic times we face today will affect most people much more adversely than it will affect us. Why? Because we faithfully have our course set on Him and not on us – because we know our treasure is stored up in Heaven – because we know we are His, and He is ours.

The people of our community will face difficult times, and though they may not know it

yet, their true salvation, the true peace, their unfailing wealth lies in Jesus Christ. We will invite them in. They will come on their own.

And I promise, they will come!

We need to be ready. We know we can be very welcoming to 2, or 3, or 4, or 6 guests on a Sunday. How would we do with 10, or 15, or 20? Are we ready for them?

I don’t mean... are the carpets clean and the restrooms stocked. I don’t mean... is my hair just right; and, “do these pants make me look fat?”

I mean, are you ready to be excited about God’s work in your life?! In this time of economic trial, are you ready to be exuberant about the blessings God has showered upon you? Am I ready to put God first – and “me” somewhere on down the list?

The Scriptures tell us how to stay in shape spiritually so that our lives can be complete:

- Grow in our prayer life. Pray unceasingly, praising God for his wondrous works and for His guidance, assurance, healing, and presence in our lives; and the lives of those around us.
- Grow in our Scriptures. Study His word – it is the standard upon which we are to judge all things and all matters under heaven. The Bible is the Operating Manual and Troubleshooting Guide for man (that includes you gals too.)
- Grow in your giving. Jesus lifts up the importance of the tithe to the teachers and Pharisees (Matt 23:23), when He berated them for ignoring justice, mercy and faithfulness. In these tough times, we should not neglect the “former things.”

And my IRA? You know, it may not be there when I need it – but God will be.

Amen?

## The Other Side of Prayer

Ordinarily when a believer prays, the prayer is answered when the Lord provides the answer. Pretty simple! Right? But sometimes, using Grace, the Lord uses other believers to provide the answer. This time He has allowed Lord of Life members and friends to provide over 640 answers to prayer. Yes, you provided **140 warm quilts plus 500 health kits** to be shipped to victims of natural disasters around the world. Your generosity will comfort and warm those victims and reassure them that someone cares about them. There is no greater gift we can give than this. It is a real testimony to our Lutheran faith to continue to support this mission. Thank you! Other mothers around the world thank you too!

**Come Worship with us Wednesday,  
November 26<sup>th</sup>  
At 7:00pm**

### Thanksgiving Eve Worship



Pie and coffee will be served after  
worship service in our fellowship hall

## Have a Miracle to Share?

By Jack Pavelich

My daughter, Sheri, is really excited! She is writing a book about miracles: something she has yearned to do for many years. What started as a desire to share God's work in her life has resulted in her writing a book of miracles and the people they have blessed.

Do you have a miracle in your life that is leaping to be published for the world to see? What a blessing it is for those seeking hope and reassurance of their faith to be able to read about the miracles God has showered upon common people!

Want to share yours? E-mail Sheri (Petersen) [sheri0@charter.net](mailto:sheri0@charter.net) and let her know you would like to talk about it.

My name is Jack Pavelich and I approve this message.

## The Lay Renewal weekend did its thing!

**What was the objective for the weekend?** Renew, Rejoice, and Refresh in the sharing of God's Grace. This fits in well with our congregation's mission statement of "inviting all to grow in Christ" and it happened. For those that took the opportunity to attend some or all of the weekend activities, you can attest to the power of the Holy Spirit as it worked among us and allowed our objective to be accomplished.

**How did this happen?** When you take a visiting team of more than a dozen dedicated Christian lay people and blend them with a team of over a dozen dedicated Christian lay people running their respective committees from our congregation, you get a great weekend where we did renew, rejoice and refresh in the sharing of God's Grace.

**What did we learn?** I guess above all, the power of prayer works. Small groups are important and powerful, sharing is important and powerful, listening is important and powerful, and if you feed them they will come and pray, share, and listen. We also had time to reflect on who we were as a family of believers and where we felt God's will wanted us to go. It wasn't just dreaming, but real people talking about real things.

**Who did it?** The energizer bunnies of the church. They keep going and going and going. They store strength like a camel stores water. Since they don't seek the spotlight, they don't live off the applause. That's not to say they don't need it. They just aren't addicted to it. Let me throw out a few names, not inclusive of all the volunteers, Lois, Jack, Helen, Cindy, Jeannine, Mike, Deb, Julie, Shelley, Becci, Heidi, Dave, Maggie, and Bev; need I say more?



Dear Lord of Life Family,  
We so enjoyed celebrating our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration with all of you. Your cards and greetings made our day very special. Thank you for your thoughtfulness and caring.

Love and Blessings to All,  
Darlene and Fred Bueker



## Thanksgiving Food Baskets to be distributed November 23<sup>rd</sup>



We are once again getting ready to provide a Thanksgiving dinner to those struggling in our area. Our goal is to provide baskets of food that include a turkey, potatoes, canned vegetables, canned yams, stuffing, cranberry sauce, fruit cocktail, oranges, and dessert. We will also be providing dinner for the families at the transitional living shelters: Amelia's Light and the Genesis shelter. Any food or cash donations will be greatly appreciated. See the sign up in the Narthex. Please have all donations to the church before November 23<sup>rd</sup>. Thank you for being a blessing to others.



Our annual Christmas Toy Drive for the children of Edgemont School is underway. We will be providing gifts for the 525 children in school again this year.

We are looking for toys that keep the kids active or stimulate thinking and creativity. Some suggestions are: soccer balls, basketballs, footballs, skateboards, board games, trucks, or cars. Toys need to be at least \$10.00 in value. Cash donations are also accepted. We do ask that no used toys or stuffed animals be given. All gifts need to be turned in by December 12<sup>th</sup> to be counted and sorted. There will be a wrapping and pizza party on Saturday December 13<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 pm. We also need "Elves" to help deliver the gifts to the student on Friday December 19<sup>th</sup> at 8:15 am. Please get involved and make a difference to a needy child. 

Christmas  
Eve  
Worship



**Candlelight Service**  
5:00 & 9:00 PM



**Christmas Day**  
One service at 10:00 A.M



  
Our Thoughts &  
Prayers  
are with...

Cathy Davis, Ann Miller, Mona McCall, Diane Combes, Alan & Barb Shoemaker, family of Helen Shulin, family of Pastor Johnson, Allison Haught, Ona Ellington, Connie Lowe, Natasha Sinclair, Jerry Dagen, Linda Baginski, Bert & Shirley Bryant, The Coz family.