

Lord of Life Lutheran Church

"Where There's Life For You!"

Volume 18 No. 10

e-mail us at: lolmv@verizon.net

September-October 2007

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

By Pastor Chuck Malloch

"Praise God from Whom ALL
Blessings flow..."

Thank you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit: for Lord of Life Lutheran Church in Moreno Valley and for the solid ministry so evident here; for the Christian Love in caring for one another in this family of God; for the Spirit of holiness and the openness to God's word; for the enthusiasm in worship and music and reverence of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

Just when I think I've seen and done it all---God opens another door with one more surprise and I'm sharing the Good News from another pulpit.

Yes, I'm thankful for each precious member of this congregation where God has called me to serve as an Interim Pastor. The kindness, openness, and hospitality have become a beautiful experience in my life. Homes and hearts have been opened to me. Especially, I thank the Egelands, Palestis, and Yoders for the special weekend lodgings. For Office Manager, Becci Van Hoosier and everyone who has been so encouraging and helpful in my ministry here.

Because of a previous commitment, I will be away Sunday, September 2nd for our family reunion. Then "**Rally Day**" at L.O.L. is scheduled for September 16th. This event begins our fall Sunday Church School, Installation of Teachers and Staff, and we welcome children in new classes. I like to also call it "Catch up Sunday." Not the kind you put on burgers, but "Catch Up" on church attendance, offerings and gifts, spiritual hungers, news of church family members, and celebration as we begin anew. Let's reset the goal posts and "kick off" another fall season anticipating even more of God's rich blessings.

In His love and in His grip,

Pastor Chuck

Family Night: Series of three gatherings at Lord of Life Lutheran Church

Join us on September 14th, 21st, and 28th at 6:00 p.m. for supper and friendly visiting followed by a program. There will be a \$2.00 charge for dinner and it will be collected that evening. Please sign up in the Narthex.

Week 1: "After the Fall"; a climber's true story of facing death and relying on God.

Week 2: Brother Sun, Sister Moon focuses on the early years of Francis of Assisi.

Week 3: Pioneers of the Spirit; creative saints and how they expressed God in their creativity. How do you express God?

This is your personal invitation for some church family togetherness at Lord of Life.

SEE YOU THERE!



Your generous contributions to the LWR Quilt Drive and Health Kit Drive have been remarkable! There are a few holes to fill and we are asking for your support to round out the numbers that LOL can give this year. The Health Kit requirements include: 50 hand towels, 50 wash cloths, 50 toothbrushes, 25 nail clippers, 100 bars of soap, some combs and more band aids. The cost of the items in each kit is a minimum of \$3.25. The quilts are coming along, too. With only 6 weeks to go, the swing machines are humming. We still need gently used clean sheets. Batting prices have gone up and makes only 12 quilts. If you would prefer to give money to purchase these items, please mark "Health Kits" or "Quilts" on your check. I thank you for your continued support. I know the in-gathering will be rewarding for all of us! God bless you! Bev Erck

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When God Comes First...

by Jack Pavelich (8/2007)

It's not natural! But I feel guilty if I don't! Sometimes I wish that little voice would just leave me alone. You've been there...

The beggar outside the storefront is certainly going to use anything I give him for booze or drugs or cigarettes. If I don't make eye contact I can pretend not to see him. Besides, if he's so poor, how can he afford cigarettes?! ... or is this just my way of justifying keeping it all for myself – as though I don't have enough already.

Why must I give things away in order to be made whole? They want my money and they want my time. I don't need their help – why do they always need mine? I work hard and deserve a rest each day so I'll have the energy to do it all over again tomorrow. Maybe if they worked as hard as I did, they would be able to take care of themselves! ... or is this my way of justifying keeping it all for myself – as though I don't have more than enough already.

I check the caller ID. Oh no, not again. Some people are so needy. Why can't they just grow up and accept the world the way it is? What help do they think I'm going to do? If it were a 5 minute phone call, okay – but an hour? Besides, why do they always call right in the middle of my favorite programs? Thank God for Caller ID! My time belongs to me! ... or is this my way of justifying keeping it all for myself – as though I don't have more than enough already.

It's hard to follow Jesus in my life when I allow ME to be the priority instead of Him. Yet He asks that we love Him with all our soul and all our heart and all our strength. It's natural for me to love ME. ... and since He is the one who made me, He has no one to blame but Himself! ... or is this my way of justifying keeping it all for myself – as though I don't have more than enough already.

As Christians, we're expected to swim upstream. God knows the difficulty we face – He knows because He lived with us for a time as one of us. He knows we will fail from time to time, or more often, and that is why He gave us the cross.

We are meant to give and to serve. That is why we tithe, that is why we feed, that is why we clothe, and that is why we provide. And in doing so, we are made rich in Christ. Only in Christ can less be more. Only in Christ can smaller be greater.

Do you agree? If so, let's do something with it!

Amen?



New Pastor Selected...

by Jack Pavelich

The Pastor said there was good news and bad news. The good news was: "We have enough money to pay off our debt!" The bad news? "The money is still in our pockets!"

And here we have good news about our new Pastor who will serve Lord of Life: "The new Pastor has been chosen!"

... but we're still waiting for God to reveal that Pastor to us.

We are seeking God's choice for us and have asked for your continued prayers as we discern His Will for Lord of Life and the Moreno Valley Community. Please be patient. Our Lord has blessed us with wonderful Interim Pastors to care for us. Pastor Kenneth and Pastor Chuck give us great encouragement that we will soon find the one who is meant to be our spiritual leader.

Meanwhile – let's do some ministry! Let's do it! Let's make something happen! We have been well prepared for this work.





The ABC's (Anticipation, Blessings, and Concerns)

Submitted by Bob Vernlund

These are exciting times for our church family. It is the anticipation of what is happening to our family of believers as we welcome our new pastor and refocus on what Christ is calling us to do. This anticipation has been bolstered by a great year under the interim leadership of Pastor Kenneth followed by the blessing of one very special Pastor Chuck. Yes, we are blessed by all the good that is going on in our congregation. We are surely trying to live our new mission statement of **“inviting all to grow in Christ”**.

We have had a **transition team** that did a great job in building our church profile and a **call committee** that has been working feverishly since last January to find the right shepherd for our flock. These two teams were very important to our future but they are by design, only temporary. The rest of the blessings are all the people who dedicate themselves to **assisting with worship** throughout the year and **supporting the Lord's work** in every way they can.

The one area of **concern** is our lack of support of our building fund. We have over a \$10,000 **deficit** so far this year. The payments have been made each month but we had to draw money from other accounts to make up that deficit. Money designated to the building fund can only be used to pay our mortgage, which is now below \$500,000. We can draw money from the general fund to help meet our payments **BUT**, this is not good business and we do not like to do this. We have around 60 giving units in our congregation and simple math would say that if each gave \$20 a week to the building fund we would not have a deficit. Not everyone is able or willing to do this so others have to give more. There are many who give of their “time and talent” to offset their lack of “treasure” and this is needed as well. We have decided to take a second offering on the last Sunday of each month just for our building fund. It should help all of us be more aware.

We look forward to this fall and holiday season. We can be sure the anticipation is doing what Christ would have us do as we are led by the Holy Spirit.

A Note of Thanks

from Robert Willis

I'm writing to say thank you to so many of you in our congregation who have kept me in your prayers, most recently with my surgery and I believe more importantly over the past few years with my Family and Youth ministry training. I have completed the program at Cal Lutheran and am now an ELCA Youth and Family minister. Your support both financially and spiritually has given me the motivation and determination to finish this 4 year goal. Once again my eyes fill with tears of joy as to the ways God uses our congregation to bless us and others.

On a lighter note, my sister Rhonda heard I became a minister and asked me to marry her and her fiancé in the upcoming year. I didn't know what to say, but broke into tears of joy just at the thought of helping them begin their marriage journey together. What a wonderful God we serve, Amen!!!



A DIRECT LINE

From Beverly Erck

During my recent bout with cancer, I was reminded by one of the LOL parishioners that I, along with everyone else, have a direct line to the Lord. Indeed, it is true! How can I thank you for your encouragement, prayers, and support? I think you've taught me a valuable lesson...that you can't fix it yourself and you **MUST** give it to the Lord. Each of our prayers went right to the “source” and I was given a peace of mind that I have rarely experienced. I knew in my heart that it would be all right! We make up a mighty army when we pray together and take away Satan's power whenever we do! Let's continue being prayer warriors and put this “direct line” to work daily in our lives.

I wanted to share with you a scripture that has been meaningful to me during various times in my life when “push” comes to “shove.” Jeremiah 29:11 “I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not harm you, to give you a hope and a future.” I'm sure that the Lord means this for each of us and for LOL, too. And so, again, a dark time has passed and I am spiritually lifted to praise the Lord. My heart is full (and my bladder is gladder than it's been for a long time.) Thank you, brothers and sisters in Christ.

Not just for youth

by Robert Willis

How does youth ministry fit into the ministry of our whole congregation? Our church is one of the few places today where generations have an opportunity to interact, where values can be taught and modeled, and where an individual is valued as a gift to the community. This is not random or accidental that this is so, since community and relationship is at the very heart of our values. These realities of community and relationship should be at the core of our congregation's ministry as it relates to the youth and families of our community.

Youth ministry is no longer simply a "youth group". The emphasis of an integrated youth ministry is one that honors each young person's baptismal calling and our own Lutheran understanding of the body of Christ. I believe the church can no longer afford to put young people out of sight and out of mind to be handled by a "youth worker" and a few fundraisers. The church of tomorrow is being built on the foundation we are laying today, and we are laying that foundation on the hearts of our young people. We know what happens to houses built on sand, don't we?

Ask yourself these questions:

1. To what degree is our youth ministry integral to our congregation's ministry?
2. How many young people do I greet by name on Sunday morning?
3. How many other adults do the same?
4. Are young people asked to serve based on their individual gifts?
5. How do we honor parents and parenting in our congregation?
6. Does our church budget reflect an interest and priority in youth?
7. Are relationships being built intentionally between youth and healthy, caring adults?
8. How many adults are praying for young people by name?
9. What kinds of rituals recognize the milestones in the lives of youth and families?
10. Do adults in our congregation intentionally model high moral and ethical standards?
11. Are programs planned and evaluated on the basis of their encouragement to build relationships?
12. Are programs planned and scheduled for the convenience of families?

These questions are a good place to start and you may think of others on your own as you begin to figure out the real role of youth ministry in our congregation.

There are basically 4 ways to make youth ministry integral to the life of our congregation:

1. Building relationships with healthy, caring adults:

Mission projects or trips, Servant events, prayer partners, learn their names, greet them, smile, and talk to them. Ask them about their faith journeys, and share yours with them. Be honest, open and caring to our young people.

2. Provide structured and formal learning opportunities:

Provide some intergenerational opportunities for learning, invite youth to be involved in planning, plan for classes to meet specific needs of parents, invite youth and adults to co-lead programs and classes.

3. Provide peer support:

Budget for youth and family ministry as a priority; provide quality space for young people, encourage the youth to participate in the congregation as a group as well as individually, hire quality staff and volunteers, encourage and teach evangelism among young people.

4. Support the families of young people:

Provide parenting classes and support groups, develop relationships among families, plan family-friendly worship services, ask families what they need or want from the church, inform youth and families of where they can seek help or counseling.

Remember what Jesus said, "It's all about relationships...love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength and love your neighbor as yourself. That's what I believe and that's what we should teach by our words and our actions. It takes the investment of the whole faith community to help our young people to know that we treasure the great gift God has given us in them. I'm "All in." How bout you?

Annual Toy Drive for Edgemont Elementary School

There are 850 students (boys and girls between Kindergarten and 5th grade) who attend Edgemont Elementary School - and we would like to provide each of them with a gift for Christmas again this year.



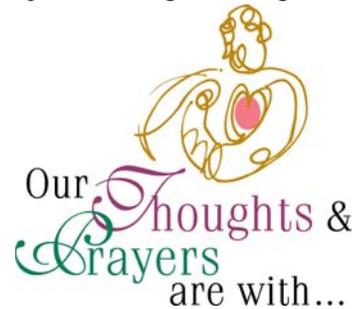
We are looking for toys that keep the kids active or stimulate thinking and creativity. Some suggestions are: basketballs, soccer balls, footballs, skateboards, board games, trucks, and cars. Toys need to be at least \$10.00 in value each. There are some great toy sales going on, so you can get some great deals! ****We ask that no used toys, no stuffed animals, no war toys, nor toys needing batteries be given.****



All gifts need to be turned in by December 9th to be counted and sorted. That gives us about 13 weeks! If you prefer to make a monetary donation, please mark "Edgemont Toys" on your check. We appreciate all of the generous help we've gotten from LOL members and the community, and we are truly blessed to be able to deliver Christmas gifts to those who otherwise may not receive one.

Uniform Drive for Edgemont Elementary continues

We are continuing the uniform drive for Edgemont Elementary (K-5). This is the most economically challenged area in Moreno Valley, where 100% of the students qualify for free breakfast and lunch. Although school uniforms are no longer mandatory, a uniform is provided for children who come to school dressed inappropriately. The cost is approximately \$15.00 for a two piece uniform. We have raised \$1,415.00 so far. God bless you for your generosity. Also, white socks and underwear (size 6 or larger) are continually needed and we will be collecting those items throughout the year. Special thanks to Mona Daugherty for doing some great shopping.



James Avila, Russ Hagle, Amanda Estes, Karen Berkland, Jacob Hill, John Baginski, Linda Baginski, Martha Ellingson, the family of Gene Etheridge, Eileen Clark, Denise Mclure, Carole Horton, Helene Salazar, Janie Weitenhagen, Wendy Shipley, Aaron Egeland, and all others needing medical and spiritual healing.



Please send Aaron Egeland a card letting him know that he is in your prayers, especially during basic training! His current address is:

SR Egeland, Aaron M.
Div 353, Ship 05
Recruit Training Command
3610 Illinois Street
Great Lakes, IL 60088-3118