

BETHEL NEWSLETTER

June 2009

Reaching Out – Praying, Caring, Sharing

Holdrege, Nebraska

Live in Love

We are in the time of year when couples who are deeply in love are getting married. Romantic love is a wonderful experience for two people to share. I talk about this phase of their relationship in my premarital sessions with them. This kind of love is nice, but not sufficient for what is needed for the rest of their lives. Romantic love can easily fade away when met with some tough challenges later on. The reason, as I see it, is there is too much based on feelings. Feelings tend to change easily depending on what is going on at the moment.

Recently in our liturgical texts from John 15 Jesus talks about love in a different way. He commands us to love as he loves us. We know his love is not based on feelings. It is a love that goes much deeper, that transcends all of our differences. It is a love that values others as those that God has created and loves.

Philip Yancy in his book What's So Amazing About Grace? writes about a definition that Mother Teresa gave at a National Prayer Breakfast. She said that America has become a selfish nation, in danger of losing the proper meaning of love: "giving until it hurts." (p. 244) We often think of love as getting or having something. It is a feeling I have or want to get. It is a person or object I have or want to get. Mother Teresa was right when she defined love as giving. That is the way Jesus not only described love but lived it. He gave and gave until he died. We are to love as he has loved us.

As I pointed out in a sermon based on this text, love is the essence of the Christian faith. As the familiar song goes, "They will know we are Christians by our love." Notice this doesn't say they will know we are Christians by our church membership or even church attendance. As some have noted who are on the outside looking in that they have been turned off by Christians who aren't loving. That is not the spirit of love that Christ calls us to share.

The Christ-like love calls us to give or serve others as Mother Teresa noted. Can you image a

world where giving was more important than getting? I tasted that in Tanzania when I visited there. Brothers and sisters in Christ were so willing to share with us strangers all they had on hand when it came to serving their guests. It is something we can do here too.

Please know first and foremost that you are loved no matter what. Then let us love as Christ loved us and give a powerful witness to our world that there is a more blessed way to live. The world needs to not only hear but see that message lived out. That is what it means to be Christian.

Live in Love,
Pastor David Sites

Golly, it is the month of June already! I still have a Christmas present for my wife, that I cannot remember that special place where I put it so I wouldn't forget to find it for Christmas!! I think I have the same problem with the fact that I get to thinking God hasn't spoken to me, but I haven't been listening. I was thinking it is kind of like if I went and picked up a telephone book, open it up, and proclaimed, "I have found a list of everyone who's on welfare!" or what if I said, "Here is a list of college graduates!" or, "This book will tell us who has a red car." Right away, 99.9% of people would say, that's not the purpose of that book. You are holding a telephone book. Its purpose is simply to reveal the name and telephone number of residents of my town during a certain time frame. Only by understanding the purpose can I accurately use the telephone book. Only by understanding its purpose can I accurately use the Bible.

The purpose of the Bible is simply to proclaim God's plan to save his children. It asserts that man is lost and needs to be saved. And it communicates the message that Jesus is the God in the flesh that was sent to save us his children.

Though the Bible was written over sixteen centuries by at least forty authors, we are told by historians, it has one central theme. It is all about salvation through faith in Christ and His grace. Many things begun by Moses in the lonely desert of Arabia and finished by John on the lonely isle of

Patmos, it is held together by a strong thread: God's passion to save his children. The Bible is the truth! We need to take the "TIME" to understanding the Bible. The Bible is like a person at sea in a boat, they need to set the compass in the right direction. If the person calibrates it correctly, he will arrive at his destination safely. But failing to set it correctly, who knows where this person will end up? I know I need to check my compass and to be sure it is always calibrated right to follow my God.

God Bless,
Darrel Wissmann, PMA

It is the end of the school year. Students come home from college, or go off to work summer jobs. Others graduate from college, high school, kindergarten or preschool. Each student has gained knowledge, and increased their level of understanding, but what about wisdom?

"Whence comes wisdom?" I remember singing a beautiful and challenging choir anthem that began with that question. The anthem was based on Job 28—one of the most elegant poems in the Old Testament. This passage of scripture questions where wisdom can be found, and in the final verse of the chapter proclaims that "Truly, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.

The word Wisdom appears 345 times in the Bible—including the apocrypha, and has several different nuances of meaning, however, in all cases, wisdom is of God. Human wisdom is from God, given to us as a gift. It was a gift that King Solomon specifically requested—a request which God honored. We remember the wisdom of King Solomon in the case of the two women both claiming to be the mother of the same child. However, King Solomon later used the gifts God had given him for selfish purposes.

Wisdom does not necessarily remain constant. The story of Solomon makes it very clear that it is possible obtain it, possess it, and use it; however it is also possible to ignore the gift of wisdom and make choices that undermine this gift. Let us make choices that are wise and benefit those around us and the world in which we live.

For The Lord provides me wisdom. Out of his mouth comes knowledge and understanding. He lays up sound wisdom for me because I am upright. He is a shield because I walk in integrity; that he may guard the paths of justice, and preserve the way of his saints. Thus, I will understand righteousness and justice, equity and every good path. For wisdom will enter into my heart. Knowledge will be pleasant to my soul. Discretion will watch over me. Understanding will keep me, to deliver you from the way of evil, from the men who speak perverse things. Proverbs 2:6-12

Intern Margaret Jacobus



GOLD STAR AWARD

Christian education is an important part of our ministry here at Bethel. Many folks are involved with this ministry which for the most part will be breaking for the summer.

Deb Roberts has served as Sunday School Superintendent along with a great staff of Sunday School teachers.

Jody Thulin has been the WINGS Director and she too has a wonderful group of folks working with her in this outreach ministry to children.

Jani Thorell, Brenda Gray, Brian Gnuse, Diane Dahl and Janet Exstrom have served as guides for the confirmation program this past year.

Judy Wissmann and Kendra Fritsche are again heading up a great Vacation Bible School staff.

All of these folks named and unnamed deserve a big **THANK YOU** for all their time and efforts they put in to the faith formation of those they serve. You are very much appreciated!!

AS A PLACE OF GRACE WE **PRAY** for each other as members and friends of this congregation:

Building Your Bethel
Evangelical Lutheran
Church Foundation

June 7, 2009

Damien & Stephanie Todd
James & Brenda Johnson
Justin & Jackie Johnson
Shane & Heidi Johnson

June 14, 2009

Marian Johnson
Marvin & Dorothy Paulsen
Del & Ruth Pearson

June 21, 2009

Don & Lillian Pelowski
Carole Peterson
Faye Peterson

June 28, 2009

Larry & Jonette Jensen
David Johnson
Donald & Grace Peterson

June Ushers

8:30 a.m.

LeMoyne Exstrom
Cedric Fuerst
Del Pearson

11:00 a.m.

Jim Engler
Kent Person
Ted Titus

6:30 p.m. Monday Night Ushers

June 1 Dr. Stuart Embury
June 8 Bryan Keffeler
June 15 Gregg Ericksen
June 22 Kirk Ronhovde
June 29 Craig Sandell

USHERS NEEDED!!

Ushers are needed for the 8:30 a.m. worship service. If you would like to serve as an usher, please contact Kent Hansen, Kent Exstrom or the church office.

Pastor Sites is schedules to do radio devotions on KUVR 1380 AM, June 1-5 at 8:40 a.m.

Have you received an inheritance? If so, consider gifting part of the inheritance to the **Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church Foundation**, in memory of the loved one who remembered you. You can make this gift now or in your estate plan.

**TANZANIA AIDS ORPHAN
PROJECT UPDATE**

Last month the newsletter included a thank you from one of the recipients of the scholarship so designated. You will hear from another of the students at worship services at the end of May. Also two new scholarships were made available as a result of the income from the Lenten coin folders. The students are Restituta Kasoga and Consolata Temba.

**BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP**

In the May newsletter you may recall an article about the scholarships established at two of our seminaries for students preparing for ordained ministry. These were provided by the Bethel Foundation with matching funds from the congregation 1997-2001. Last month the recipients from Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago were listed. This article identifies the recipient from Wartburg Theological Seminary. He is Andrew Zoerb. Andy is currently a second year student and is very appreciative of the financial assistance he is receiving from the scholarship. His letter and family picture are posted on the bulletin board across from the office.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

June 1 – 5

9:00 am – 11:30 am

It's not too late to sign your child up for VBS!
Registration forms available in the church office or
www.bethel-lutheran-church.com

June is National Safety Month

Injuries in the home are very common. Children under age 5 and adults over age 70 are the highest risk groups for home injury. The Home Safety Council (HSC) is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to preventing home related injuries that result in nearly 20,000 deaths and 21 million medical visits on average each year. It is the leading source for home safety tips, checklists and information about home fire safety, falls prevention, poison prevention, water safety, child safety, etc.

This is the time of year when many of us are doing "Spring Cleaning". When cleaning out closets or reorganizing, always keep stairs, landings and all floors clear. Follow safety recommendations when using harsh products for cleaning. Do not mix products together. Check cabinets where medications are kept and be sure to keep medications out of reach of children. Reducing clutter will help prevent falls. If you need to climb, use a stepladder. Never stand higher than the second rung from the top. Also be sure that your ladder is in good condition with no weakened steps.

You may want to do a Home Safety "Walk Through" to identify and remedy potential falling hazards. Some things to check for are:

- Handrails on both sides of stairs and steps
- Lights at the top and bottom of stairs
- Tape small rugs to the floor or do not use them at all
- Keep the stairs clear
- Have nightlights in bedroom, hall, and bathroom
- Have a mat or non-slip strips in tub and shower
- Have a bath mat with a non skid bottom on the bathroom floor
- Have grab bars in the tub and shower
- Wipe up spills when they happen

This is a reminder to practice safety so that you can have a great summer!!

Alice Ann Swanson
Lay Ministry Committee



Plan to keep Sunday School as part of your summer schedule. Sunday School will continue every Sunday through June. The last summer Sunday School date will be June 28th.

Classes will resume August 23rd

Lori Swanson,
Christian Education Coordinator

Worship & Music



A request has been made by the Youth and Family Task Force to unite our Sunday Worship Services for the summer months into one worship service for the months of July and August. The Praise Team will be keeping their schedule for worship on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month.

The Worship and Music Committee voted to have one worship service for the months of July and August. Services will be at 10:00 a.m. with coffee and adult Sunday School starting at 9:00 a.m.

We are very mindful of the worship experience for the Bethel congregation. We will look at attendance of gathering and giving after the summer months have passed.

Let's all embrace this new summer schedule for worship at Bethel.

Mark Your Calendars! July & August
Coffee AM & Adult Bible Study 9:00 a.m.
Worship Service 10:00 a.m.
Monday Worship Service 6:30 p.m.

In September we will resume our regular worship schedule.

Respectfully in the Lord's Name
Mary Root, Worship & Music

The S.A.F.E. 2009 Wish List

- Garbage Bags
- Cleaning Supplies
- Deodorant
- Shampoo/Conditioner
- Tooth Brushes/Toothpaste
- Gas Vouchers
- Phone Cares
- Postage Stamps
- R.Y.D.E Cards
- Working new/used paper shredders
- Basic Tools: hammers, screw drivers, pliers, handheld power tools, levels, etc.
- Basic Household Hardware/Supplies: nails, screws, stud finders, first aid kits, fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, door locks and deadbolts.
- Pyrex baking/cake pans with lids for transporting food.
- Tampons/pads
- Bed sheets
- Laundry detergent
- Dryer Sheets/Fabric Softener
- Paper Towels
- Toilet Paper
- Diapers/pullups
- Baby Wipes, Wash & Shampoo

**Community Care
Project for June**

Layettes

Two shirts, two gowns or sleepers, two receiving blankets, four cloth diapers, one sweater, two washcloths, one bath-size bar of soap and two diaper pins.

Please bring your items to the church and place them in the community care box located at the northeast entrance, lower level.

Thank you for your contributions.

Stewardship? What is that? When asked, most people tend to give an answer that has something only to do with money. The Stewardship Committee discussed ways of identifying the great amount of stewardship at Bethel that focuses on the giving of our “Time and Talents”. We want to take

the time to recognize all the wonderful stewards at Bethel, and hopefully introduce and invite others to offer stewardship in one of these areas.

This month we would like to spotlight all the areas of stewardship that are responsible for the Worship Support services at Bethel. Thank you to all who “give” in these areas.

And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others. 2 Corinthians 9:8.

**WORSHIP SERVICE SUPPORT
STEWARDSHIP:**

Altar Guild	Changing Baptismal Banner
Altar Flower Delivery	Changing of Banners
Altar Flower Purchase	Changing of Paraments
Sunday AM Coffee	Sunday AM Prayer Group
Hymn Boards	Communion to Shut-ins
Ushers	Creating Banners
Funeral Ushers	Care of Linens
Sound/Audio/Video	Delivery of Bulletins
Greeters	Bulletin Assembly
Welcome Persons	Wedding Coordinator
Bethel Callers	Bread & Wine Preparation
Baptismal Napkins	Wedding Coordinators
Baptismal Chests	Newsletter Assembly

Hooray for Fathers

A Houston newspaper asked readers to send in thoughts about their fathers. Letters flooded in, and what people wrote about their fathers is most inspiring.

A few comments:

- Dad was always there for me. He sacrificed to make sure that we had what we needed.
- When disappointment came my way, Dad said, “Son, real life ain’t about



getting what you want but more about doing something with what you get.”

- My dad was disabled, but he worked hard to make sure we children had a good education and lived moral lives. He would say, “I want you to succeed more than I did.”
- My dad wanted us to be Christians and took us regularly to church.

What would you write about your father?



Have you visited Bethel's web site? If not, please check it out. It is being updated and kept current by our web master, Sylvia Person. If there is something you would like on the web site, please contact Sylvia at 995-6488.

www.bethel-lutheran-church.com

The Staff of Bethel Lutheran Church works as a Team, with defined roles and responsibilities to support and advance Bethel's Vision and Mission. We work as a cohesive, supportive Team, with an effective communication process that enhances our ability to provide cost effective service, administration and support to (for) the Congregation and its mission.