

FROM THE PASTOR



MUSTARD SEED
CALVARY
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

God's law is good. Maybe as an opening line that wins a captain obvious award. However, as Lutherans we can sometimes focus exclusively on the accusatory aspect of the law. It is true that the law always accuses. That is because we are sinners and so the law properly understood will always show us how we fall short of God's will.

Take for example the summation of the law: love. Love God and love your neighbor is the entire law in six words. It certainly sounds good and on the surface pretty simple. However, the more you think on it and understand its full meaning the harder it becomes to do. It is easier to follow specific rules (don't murder, don't bear false witness, don't take God's name in vain, etc.) than it is to spend all your life living out your love for God and your neighbor. Consequently, a Christian, filled with the Holy Spirit, will always be convicted by the Holy Spirit when love fails. At the same time the Holy Spirit reminds us that in Christ all those sins are forgiven and we are free of the law.

This deep and yet very personal understanding of how the law works on us should not be allowed to obscure the fact that the law is good. It is good because God ordains it, and it is good for us. God does not want us to obey the law because he is old fashioned and a curmudgeon. He does not even want us to obey the law so we can be saved. Christ does that for us. He wants us to obey the law, because it works good for us. Our flesh may disagree, the sinful world will always teach otherwise, and Satan will always be anxious to drag us away from this truth. But it remains the truth.

I was reminded of this basic fact recently listening to NPR. A scientist was suggesting that we should rethink how we understand cancer. He said that there is increasing evidence that many cancers are caused by infectious agents, bacteria and viruses. In some cases this is an accepted reality. So it is generally understood that cervical cancer is caused by the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) and that certain kinds of lymphoma are caused in part by the Barr-Epstein virus. He even indicated that some early stage stomach cancers seem to be treatable by antibiotics.

What does this have to do with the law? At the close of the segment he said that most of the suspected agents are passed sexually, or even by intimate kissing

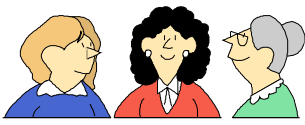
in the case of the Barr-Epstein virus. In other words quite possibly one of the leading causes of cancer is casual intimate contact (and all the attempts to make such contact 'safe' do not prevent – although may limit – the transmission of some of these viruses, especially HPV).

Since at least the 1960s our culture has made a significant and continuous move away from the traditional mores of intimate relationships. Instead of the basic idea of marriage being the proper place for such behavior, our culture has moved to an anything goes, whatever feels good motif. That has had obvious negative consequences in terms of society and individual health. However, this recent evidences points once again to the fact that God's law is good. We may not always understand the many ways it protects us, but we should never doubt that it does. It also shows that those who keep part of the law apart from faith still benefit even if that benefit is only worldly. In other words, a non-believer who lives chastely until marriage and in fidelity after will have a significantly decreased risk of health problems versus someone who lives promiscuously. On the other hand, a believer with a promiscuous past, or even struggles with promiscuity in the present, could end up with life threatening problems even though their sins are forgiven.

It is important for us to remember the goodness of both God's law and Gospel in dealing with the world and ourselves. We can never back down from what God's law commands, because to do so is to allow people to harm themselves. We can never accommodate to a culture which allows for casual intimacy. It is dangerous physically, as well as spiritually. However, when dealing with the consequences of such behavior we must liberally apply the Gospel. Regardless of the physical outcome of our past mistakes, whatever they may be, our sins are forgiven. We never blame people for their illnesses or look down on them because of past error. Perhaps most importantly, we trust that even if our past sinfulness visits us with very unpleasant consequences, that God will use even that for our good and His glory. God's law is good. God's Gospel is even better.

In Christ,

Pastor Joynt



LWML

We will not be meeting in the month of May. But we do have the spring celebration in EL Centro, CA on May 1 at 9 am. We will leave from the church so we can car pool. Anyone interested in going, please be there by 7:45 am. The ingathering is for the Center for Family Solutions and the items we are gathering are blankets, towels, toiletries, pajamas, gift cards for food stores or gas stations. There is a box in the fellowship hall. We thank you for your donations.

At the April 8th meeting we elected next years officers and they will be the same as this year. Connie Wubbena, president, Elaine Green, VP of service, Paula Backs, VP of inspiration, Marilyn Damet, treasurer, Linda Stange, secretary and Beverly Ferguson, VP of Education. We had a special guest program; Marilyn Treanor, the FL/GA LWML District President, spoke to us about the LWML Mission trip she made to Nairobi, Kenya two years ago.

Our secretary, Linda Stange, spent last summer reworking the local LWML Constitution/By-Laws from 1984. The revised version was presented at our March meeting and copies made available for members to study. These were presented at the April meeting and approved by the membership. A BIG THANK YOU to Linda for all the dedicated work. They will now be forwarded to the District.

The President Connie announced that she was made aware that the Delegate and Alternate Delegate credentials for the District Convention in June needed to be sent in by March 31st. Since we were not meeting until April 8th, she asked several ladies to fill these positions. Apryl Brand agreed to be the Delegate and Johnnie Altstatt to be the alternate. The Convention will be in Tempe in June.

We will begin the new year this October and we invite all the ladies to join us.

Beverly Ferguson, VP Education
Connie Wubbena, President

EDUCATION BOARD

As a congregation we support a number of missionaries and public welfare groups. To help us as a congregation make better decisions about how to use our resources, I thought it would make sense to include some information about some of the things that we support. I would like to start with one that I am most familiar with, Compassionate Social Care Ministries. Despite its somewhat generic name, this organization has a very narrow focus. It supports the work of Dennis and Lorna Meeker in Kenya. Dennis is a classmate of mine from Concordia Theological Seminary. Upon graduating, he took a call from the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Kenya. His wife is native to Kenya and received Deaconess training at CTS.

Dennis is the Pastor at Springs of Life Lutheran Church in Kibera, Kenya. Kibera is the largest slum in Africa, with a million people living primarily in 12' by 12' shacks often housing 8 or more people. Most homes have no electricity or running water. Bathroom facilities consist of latrines usually shared by about 50 huts. Disease runs rampant, especially AIDs.

With so much need, it is impossible to address all of it. However, through the church, a medical clinic, an orphanage, and helping children stay in school, Dennis and Lorna are serving God's people one child at a time. They have welcomed many orphans into their rescue center. As far as I can tell this is like them having 20 of their own children. And I thought watching my kids for a week would cure them of the parental delusion! At one point their medical clinic served almost 1,000 people over a two day period. Their single largest expense is education for the orphans they care for and others who need the help. So much is being done and so much remains to be done. It is our honor to support them. If you would like to know more about the work they do please check out their website: www.cscmkenya.org

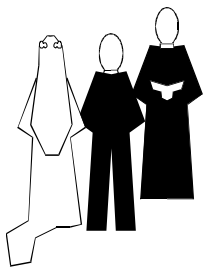
Happy Birthday! BAPTISM



Ted Schauer	05/03	Al Rahn	05/01
Joshua Christensen	05/09	Neva Sawatzky	05/01
Kristina Parker	05/10	Patrick Stuebs	05/01
Tony Spano	05/10	Carolyn Claude	05/02
Keith Macomber	05/12	Sherri Williams	05/14
Barbara Wheeler	05/12	Mark Ford	05/15
Lisa Elam	05/22	Dillon Kline	05/18
Jeanene Euhus	05/28	Bruce Fenske	05/19
Carter Rutledge	05/28	Arlen Stange	05/19
		Joshua Christensen	05/23
		Trina Elam	05/25
		Virginia Hildestad	05/25
		Mary Zeigler	05/25
		Tony Spano	05/31

ANNIVERSARIES

Pat & Whitney Stuebs	05/01
Leroy & Mary Pickett	05/08
Smokey & Margaret Morner	05/18



BURRITO BREAKFAST

Breakfast burritos will be sold on Sunday, May 2 to help raise money to send a couple of youths to the Higher Things Gathering. The cost is \$2.50 a burrito.

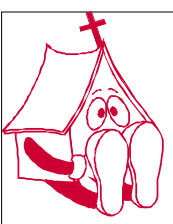
2009 BUDGET



Contributions & Expenses MARCH 2010

Contributions	\$11,850.80
Expenses	\$22,458.07
Building Fund Contri.	\$ 1,375.00
Building Principal Contri.	\$ 5,300.00
Building Fund Expense	\$ -25.00
YEAR TO DATE	
Contributions	\$34,003.82
Expenses	\$51,662.89
Building Fund Contrib.	\$ 2,395.00
Building Principal Contrib	\$16,500.00
Building Fund Expense	\$ 2,177.00
OVERALL FUND BALANCES	
Building Fund	\$ 2,861.26
Altar Carpet	\$ 3,789.30

Calvary Lutheran Church relies on God to provide to do His work through the hard work and monetary gifts of His people. Sometimes someone leaves to the Church a gift that is received after they have gone home to the Lord. This last month we received \$50,000 from the estate of Robert and Laura Cutchin. Praise be to God that he has blessed His people and used them to bless the Church.



BUILDING PROJECT PHASE I LOAN

LCEF Loan

Balance (04/22/2010)	\$111,880.17
Principle payment	
03/31/2010	\$ 5,100.00
04/15/2010	\$ 1,600.00

From the Board of Stewardship

In the month of May in many parts of our country the fields, gardens and orchards are green and growing, giving us the promise that seedtime and harvest will again prevail, and with God's blessing the earth will yield its increase and provide food for all God's creatures. According to God's design the sun will warm the fertile soil, the rains will cause the seeds to sprout and grow into healthy, productive plants, vines, trees and bushes. Last month's newsletter article had the title of "*April showers bring May flowers.*" We are now seeing evidence that this old saying is true.

In May we will also be celebrating two special church year events: Ascension Day on May 14 and Pentecost Day on May 23. These two very important events help to encourage and empower us as God's stewards. On Ascension Day our Lord returned to the right hand of the Father, not to escape from the world, but rather to serve as our Advocate to the Father. It is so encouraging for us to know that Jesus is at the right hand of the Father pleading for the forgiveness of our sins which results in fresh starts for us as God's stewards. At the price of His own life Jesus earned for us the forgiveness of sins, life and salvation. His resurrection was proof positive that the Father accepted His suffering and death on the cross as the perfect and complete sacrifice, and His ascension provided proof positive that just as He came from heaven to be our Savior so He returned to heaven to rule all things for the sake of His church—that is, the sake of us—His stewards.

Pentecost Day reminds us of when the Holy Spirit descended upon the first apostles and empowered them to be renewed servants of Jesus who became bold and effective witnesses of the good news of salvation in Christ Jesus. Pentecost Day also reminds us of the new birth of faith in us through the marvelous, yet mysterious, working of the Holy Spirit. For most of us that started with our baptisms. That new life continues as the Holy Spirit works through His Word and the sacrament of Holy Communion to strengthen and equip us to be effective stewards. As God's stewards we have

the promise that the Holy Spirit empowers us to do what we otherwise could not do.

The seventh Biblical Stewardship Principle states that "*God's stewards are served and serving.*" This means that "*God's stewards recognize that their stewardship involves a Gospel-powered style of life which is demonstrated in servanthood within all the arenas of life.*" By the grace of God we are reminded that we are to serve our Lord with personal acts of compassion and service as well as financial gifts. Some people seem inclined to think that stewardship is just about money. Yes, it is about money and how we manage it, but that is only the tip of the iceberg. Stewardship involves our wise management and use of all of life and life's resources for God's purposes.

What a blessing and encouragement it is to know and believe that Christ died for us, rose again from the dead, ascended into heaven as the divine conqueror of sin, death and the devil, and now sends His Holy Spirit to be the Lord and Giver of life. May the Holy Spirit enable us to use our time, talents, relationships, treasure and all the other special gifts and blessings in a way that honors our God and blesses our neighbors.



Mad Greek Restaurant

During 2010 The Mad Greek Restaurant is giving the members of Calvary Lutheran Church a chance to participate in a profit sharing program. Simply put, whenever you choose to eat at The Mad Greek Restaurant, 10% of the total bill will be donated back to your church. Please inform the Mad Greek cashier which church you attend and your receipt (or copy of your receipt) will be collected and saved in your church file. A check will be mailed quarterly to your church.

Scott Wilson
Mad Greek Restaurant Owner/Operator

Calvary received a check in the amount of \$23.53 from The Mad Greek in early April for our first quarter orders.