



SPIRIT OF CHRIST
COMMUNITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

May 2012

**SPIRIT OF CHRIST COMMUNITY
LUTHERAN CHURCH
5801 Minnetonka Blvd.
St. Louis Park, MN 55416**

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Pastor's Pen

April showers bring May flowers. I'm also hoping it will bring new grass from the grass seed that I have planted. I redid part of my lawn last year and some of the grass seed did well. Other areas not so well. Therefore I reseeded recently hoping for help.

Help did arrive with rain and sunshine but with that rain came severe weather. Sometimes the weather predictions are right on and sometimes they just fizzle. We are more attentive to the weather now since the magnitude of certain severe weather is more severe. Predictions are that it will continue to be more severe this year.

April also brought Easter. Will it also bring new growth? We are also watching the economy and world news. Most of the situations we are watching have become more severe. We are observers for the most part, seemingly helpless to do much of anything to rectify what is going on in the world.

But like the rain that regenerates, God's love in Christ should do the same for us.

Just like those disciples fearful and anxious locked away in a room, we need a risen savior in our lives. We need a Savior who can save us from life's complexities and uncertainties.

As I look out into my yard today, I see the difference that the rain has made. I see thick dense areas where before bareness lay. I see lush green grass waiting to be mowed any day that I get a chance. I am looking for new signs of growth in the reseeded areas. I am optimistic about the future of my lawn.

As I look out at life today, I am optimistic about what is waiting for us. Just as my lawn is thickening, Christ is in the midst of our lives, he is in the thick of things. He is going on before us waiting to meet us in the unexpected daily life places. He comes into the barrenness of life and brings growth.

Join us Sundays as we are reseeded with the word. Also feel free to join the ministry as we reseed the lives of others around us with God's word of love and grace.

Pastor Wes

Address Service Requested

Garage Sales

Do you enjoy garage sales? On Saturday, June 2, you will have two great opportunities to find wonderful bargains while supporting two causes. The youth group will be holding a garage sale from 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. at the home of Bret and Cheryl H. The Peterson Family India Mission Trip Garage Sale will be 8 a.m. - 3 p.m., (Sorenson Neighborhood Garage Sale Day).

The SPIRIT OF CHRIST NEWSLETTER is published monthly for members and friends of Spirit of Christ Community Lutheran Church. If you would like to be on the Spirit of Christ mailing list or if you have a change of address, please notify the church office. Deadline for newsletter articles is the 15th of each month.

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Stewardship... A way of Life



Income tax time has come and gone. Every year Pam urges me to do my taxes early, she is optimistic. I do them in April knowing I will owe more than General Electric. At first glance, it is amazing how much I owe. I am astonished at what is expected of me.

I have been audited three times over my lifetime. It all has to do with my giving to charitable organizations. Even though the IRS has expectations on what I owe they don't expect people to give what I give, hence my dilemma.

When it comes to the deductions part, I take out all my receipts and slowly list all the organizations that I have given money to. All the organizations are legitimate, highly respected and certified organizations. They have all given me a receipt or receipts for my donations.

I don't worry about giving because I figure that I will just write it off anyway on my taxes. I guess no matter what happens we write it off anyway. I have never found myself wanting and when I do, somehow and in some way mysteriously I am provided for.

But now as I sit down to do my taxes, I find that while I write down everything that I have receipts for, I can't deduct it all. The IRS has a limit on my giving. They have a limit on my generosity. There is a certain percentage of my income that I can't exceed. I am dumbfounded.

I suppose that the answer to my dilemma is to determine the IRS ratio and then make sure that I don't go over that limited amount. But is it really what I want to do? Do I want to limit services to people who won't pay income taxes because their income will be below the poverty level? Do I want to limit services to people who need help desperately in life to stay alive?

Some days I wonder if there aren't people who do say, "Well I'm at the 10% tithe, that's it!" or "Well we just hit the IRS limit, that's it!" On this day I am glad to be looking forward to all kinds of ministry because I think we all know better. We are stewards of God's gifts and it is a way of life.

Events

Metro Paint-A-Thon – Help for Seniors

Since 1984, Metro Paint-A-Thon has helped low-income seniors and people with disabilities. The program of the Greater Mpls. Council of Churches is seeking applications from owners of 1 and 1½ story homes **through May 4**. If you could benefit from this service, contact Molly Chandler, program coordinator, at 612-276-1579 or mchandler@gmcc.org to request an application. You can also check on eligibility and download an application at paintathon.gmcc.org.

Confirmation

Parent and child confirmation. The pastor isn't forever but parents are. By attending together you become the "resource" for your child. We will meet in the Green Room from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. We meet May 2 and 9.

Active Adults

Active Adults meets at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 17. This is our last meeting before summer. Meet at Spirit of Christ for dessert and conversation at 1:00 p.m. Musical entertainment will be provided by Dan and Carlie. All adults are welcome. There is no cost for this event.

Celebration Sunday

Sunday, May 20, marks the end of the Sunday School year and our last Donuts and Devotions until Rally Sunday. Join us following worship for our celebration. There will be a barbecue; potluck; and fun and games for all. All are welcome to celebrate the day.

Mark your Calendar

Daycamp will be held August 20 – 23 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Daycamp is open to children ages 5 – completed 6th grade. The cost is \$55 for members and \$70 for non-members.

Parish Nurse continued

- it protects the heart, improving the function of blood vessels and increasing blood flow
- it gives the body a great workout by exercising the diaphragm, abdominal, respiratory, facial, leg and back muscles, even burning as many calories as a few minutes on the rowing machine or exercise cycle!
- it improves brain function (better blood flow, more oxygen) which enhances learning, reduces stress and improves retention of information. With so much power to heal and renew, the ability to laugh easily and frequently is a tremendous resource for facing problems, enhancing relationships and easing anxiety.

Renee Compo

Taking care of yourself

Recently I have had conversations with people who feel responsible for others with chemical problems. Addiction is called “a family disease” for good reason. It’s normal for family members and loved ones of alcoholics and addicts to experience loneliness, guilt, resentment, stress, lack of sleep, or various health problems. This disease affects each family member differently. Some lose their spiritual connection as a result of despair or anger. Others may see their social life deteriorate.

Often family members feel personally responsible for holding everything together, fearing that if they don’t, the family will fall apart. This sense of personal responsibility is a huge burden—and it can lead to feelings of pain and anger. Healing will come for you when you turn your energies toward thinking about what you need for yourself.

If you need help ask.

Pastor Wes

Congregational News



Prayers for ...

Gail H. for continued healing

Thank you to...

Youth group for the wonderful Easter breakfast
Everyone who donated ingredients for Easter Breakfast



Congratulations to...

Nikki C. who received the Caring Youth Award from the city of St. Louis Park.

Help Needed

Team lead for newsletter mailing is needed for April assembly of the May newsletter. Please sign-up in the Narthex or talk to Teresa if you can help.

Women’s Circle Bible Study

We meet on Tuesday, May 8 at noon.
We will meet at Bev D.’s house,
St. Louis Park. Contact Bev if you
need directions.

Donut Sunday

The next Donut Sunday is May 6. We will have one more Donut Sunday before fall. It will be held on June 10.

Social Action

Our Saviour's Shelter Supper– May 11th

Dinner at Our Saviour's Shelter is on Friday, May 11. We will serve chicken, stuffing, gravy, vegetables, salad, dessert and milk. If you are interested in donating a menu item, talk to Carolee about quantities and logistics. Groceries cost approximately \$120.00, so monetary contributions or donations of coffee, boxes of tea and other menu items are always appreciated. Please contact Mark or Carolee C. or see us at church to sign up for serving or to donate to the grocery fund.

TreeHouse Meals

Spring 2012 meals: TreeHouse still needs more volunteers through June 14th. If you don't have time to cook or serve, we are also looking for meal sponsors and trying to match up people who might be able to fund a meal or a portion of the cost with those who have the time to do the cooking and serving. Stay tuned for more information on their summer programs.

Please contact Audrey Gustafson, agustafson@treehouseyouth.org (or call 612-801-4741) with your name, contact number, email, to find out about available dates. Or for more information about collaborating with others to get a meal together, contact Kristina Fruge at kristina.fruge@gmail.com.

Seeking Volunteers for May 14!

Minneapolis and Hennepin County will be holding the 13th Project Homeless Connect event at the Minneapolis Convention Center on Monday, May 14. For more info or if you are interested in volunteering go to, www.homelessconnectminneapolis.org

Social Action

Feed My Starving Children – May 12, 2012, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Look for a sign up sheet in the narthex for this next serving opportunity. Contact Joanne S. if you need more information. AND SAVE THE DATE for July! July 7, 2012 from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. is our next opportunity to serve at FMSC!

Get Involved!

The Social Action Team welcomes everyone in the congregation to join us for planning and organizing mission and social action events. This could be an ongoing activity or a one-shot time commitment. Talk to anyone on the Social Action Team (Mark or Carolee C., Wendi H., Matt K., Pat L., Deb S., Joanne S. or Jeanne W.) if you are interested in being more involved in these activities.

Important Information! Please Read!

It has come to my attention that there are times when people show up at church or events. They will talk about how Pastor Wes “helps” them. They will say that Pastor Wes is too busy, so could you help them with money, food, rides etc. They may also ask for your telephone number to contact you. They say that Pastor Wes will reimburse them or contact them. Under no circumstances are you to assist individuals in these ways. Explain that they will have to talk to Pastor Wes. You will only make yourself vulnerable to these people. Thanks.

Parish Nurse

Then I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun, than to eat and to drink, and to be merry....” Ecclesiastes 8:15 “You’ve heard the one about the priest, the rabbi and the Methodist minister...”

We all love to hear a good joke, or love to hear folks laughing at a joke we’ve told... And why not? Laughter is natural – what sounds better than the giggle of a toddler being tickled? – and, best of all, laughter is healthy! Larry Wilde, founder and director of the Carmel Institute of Humor, notes “the act of laughing allows the body and mind to relax, to become more receptive to positive energy, to be refreshed! It is complementary therapy – it eases anxiety, helps patients cope so that they benefit more fully with clinical procedures!”

The word “laughter” (in its various forms) is mentioned thirty-eight times in the Bible, sometimes as laughter of unbelief (think of Sarah, when she was told she would conceive in her old age); sometimes, the laughter of a fool (Ecclesiastes 7:6); or, the laughter of God himself (Psalms 2:4); or, the laughter associated with the joy of salvation (“Blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh” Luke 6:21) Surely, we were meant by our Creator to find joy in our lives. More than just a respite from sadness and pain, laughter gives us the courage and strength to find new sources of meaning and hope. And, laughter really is infectious – more contagious than any cough, snuffle or sneeze. When laughter is shared, it binds people together and increases happiness and intimacy.

Healthy physical changes are also triggered by laughter:

- it lowers blood pressure, because the deep breathing sends oxygen-rich blood and nutrients throughout the body
- it strengthens the immune system by increasing our natural “killer” cells (these destroy tumor cells and invaders of our bodies such as viruses), gamma interferon (a disease-fighting protein), T-cells (the “sentries” of our immune system), and B-cells (these produce disease fighting antibodies)
- it triggers the release of endorphins, the body’s natural “feel-good” chemicals that promote overall sense of wellbeing and can even temporarily relieve pain

Social Action

Blood Drive – May 9 from 3:00 – 6:30 p.m.

Why should I donate blood?



Memorial
BLOOD CENTERS

Blood is essential for life: it carries oxygen and nutrients throughout the body, fights infections, and helps heal wounds. And everyone has this self-generating resource that can be generously given to others—when and where it is needed most.

- Accidents happen 24/7 that put our friends, family, and neighbors in danger
- Blood transfusions save the lives of cardiac patients during surgery
- Premature infants come into the world often needing blood to survive

If not personally in need, at some point we will all know a friend, neighbor, family member, or co-worker who needs a blood transfusion. In fact, 1 out of 3 people will need blood in their lifetime. From natural disasters to unforeseen catastrophes, emergency hospital procedures to life-long battles with chronic diseases such as sickle cell, the demand for blood is constant. The supply is not. And since there is no substitute, only volunteer blood donors can roll up their sleeves and save lives.

Memorial Blood Center will be here in the SOC parking lot on May 9th.

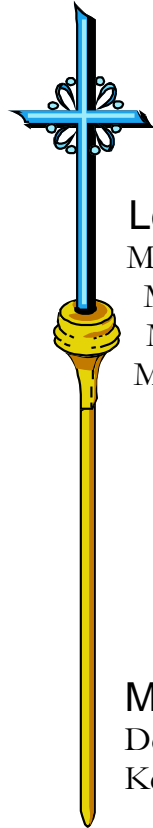
Contact Jeanne W. or see her at church to reserve your donation appointment.

Give blood-the ultimate renewable resource!

Serving in May

Power Point Operators

May 6 Dina S.
May 13 Joanne S.
May 20 LeRoy M.
May 27 Bret H.



Lectors

May 6 Linda T.
May 13 Linda T.
May 20 Dick B.
May 27 Bruce S.

Ushers

May 6 Team 10
May 13 Team 11
May 20 Team 1
May 27 Team 2

Money Counters

Deb S.
Kevin R.

Social Action Calendar May to July 2012

May 2012

1+ TreeHouse Meals
2 Families Moving Forward fundraising luncheon, 12 -1 p.m.
9 Blood Drive, 3:00 to 6:30 p.m.
11 Shelter Supper 6:15 to 8:30 p.m.
12 Feed My Starving Children 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.
14 Meals on Wheels
14 Project Homeless Connect
21 Dinner at Your Door

June 2012

5, 7 TreeHouse Meals
9 Shelter Breakfast 5:30 to 7:30 a.m.
11 Meals on Wheels
12, 14 TreeHouse Meals
18 Dinner at Your Door

July 2012

3+ TreeHouse Summer Program
7 Feed My Starving Children 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.
9 Meals on Wheels
13 Shelter Supper 6:15 to 8:30 p.m.
16 Dinner at Your Door