

President's Message
Council Notes

PAGE 3

Project Hospitality
Stephen Ministry

PAGE 4

Thrivent for Lutherans
Men's Bible Study
Birthdays

PAGE 5-6

FLIM Golf Tournament

PAGE 7

Lord of Grace Newsletter

Staff

Lars Hammar: Interim Pastor
Dani Anich: Administrative
Assistant
Dawn Calkins: Adult Choir
April McDaniel: Preschool Director
Erin Draper: Nursery Coordinator
Todd Martin: Organist/Piano
Lisa Parks: Bookkeeper

Church Council

Carolyn Bernheim: President
Bill Witt: Vice-President
DeMar Sather: Interim Treasurer
Laurie O'Brien: Education
Lisa Rynda: Youth
Len Mowinski: Fellowship
Chris Kollen: Evangelism
Jim Dahnke: Property
Cindy Stein: Worship

Committee Chairs

Charlie Motzko: Technology
Lori Brown: Financial Secretary
Len Mowinski: Newsletter
Dino Revie: Website
Cheryl Fitch: Prayer Chain
Mike O'Brien: Preschool
Committee
Mandy Nelson: MOPS Coordinator

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

I have to admit that I am addicted to one of my technological devices: the Digital Video Recorder (DVR) that's attached to my satellite TV connection. It's a wonderful device. It allows me to program ahead which shows I want to watch, and record those for later. Then, when I do decide to watch the latest CSI: Miami (a guilty pleasure – I can't get enough of the white pants, green lights and overacted, contrived puns in sunglasses) I just select that show, and press play. When I get to commercials, I just fast-forward. I don't have to watch anything I don't want to. Total personal choice.

There's a danger in this, though, and that's that I will only watch a small set of shows, and never notice if anything new comes along. I don't have to push myself to appreciate anything new. I don't have to give anything a chance. I can just program in the ones I like and watch them forever (or until they're cancelled).

It's a phenomenon that's becoming prevalent in America, in all aspects of our life, not just TV. It's the paradox of personal choice. I can choose anything, so I'm not forced to choose what I don't like. When the internet started gaining popularity, and the insane amounts of knowledge came to our fingertips, the assumption was that we would become more well-informed than ever, being able to learn multiple viewpoints and ideas at a keystroke.

Instead, the opposite has been happening. We're choosing to learn only things that support the beliefs and biases we already have. If it doesn't agree with me, or challenges me, or points out a problem with my ideas, I just turn it off and switch to hear what agrees with me.

This is what's been called by Bill Bishop as "The Big Sort". In his book by that name, he shows how this desire to hear our views mirrored back to us has led to self-segregation by media, neighborhood, and even church. We find a church where the preacher reinforces our beliefs, and makes us feel comfortable in them. If he/she challenges me or disagrees with me, I just walk out and change the channel. Problem solved.

This had led, not surprisingly, to an ever-greater polarization in our churches between divergent views. Witness the controversies that have been racking the ELCA in the last few years, particularly over sexuality. I don't know how many times I told people that the new ELCA statement on sexuality is not binding, that there is no requirement to agree with it, that no church is forced to change their position on homosexuality, or hire any pastor they don't want, it didn't seem to matter. If I don't like it, I'm out of here. I'm changing the channel.

The problem comes with trying to build a real community when you have to walk on egg-shells over every controversial issue for fear of offending people. For one, I don't see Jesus as being very non-offensive. In fact, he was so controversial and offensive they killed him. I also don't think this makes us very strong people – only listening to what we already believe in. If I believe that my beliefs are so true, I should have nothing to fear in hearing the other side(s). In fact, that should help me refine my views. Without challenge our minds, I'm convinced, become like muscles that don't work out – flabby. We need a certain amount of challenge to stay strong

I guess I'm a bit of a dreamer on this point. I have a vision for Christian community that is deeper and more committed than a bunch of consumers who receive a product as long as it's agreeable, but not one Sunday more. Christian community, to me, should be more like a family (in the good sense) where we have a bond to Christ that is strong enough to allow us to let him speak to us when we don't want to hear what he has to say. Christian community should be built on relationships to one another that are strong enough and have the substance to allow the liberal and conservative to sit in the same pew, and where we can have debates and disagreements without being personally offended or threatened. Christian community should transcend that.

Jesus' disciples came from some very divergent backgrounds, and are recorded in scripture having some major arguments. I can imagine Matthew the tax collector and Judas the political zealot had a couple debates. But, this rag-tag group was chosen by Christ himself to build the church.

It's not an easy vision in a world where we can pick our own news channels. But, I believe it's worth fighting for. And, I believe that when it's lived out it's very powerful, and something people will want to be a part of. A community based on love of Jesus and love of neighbor – even through disagreements. What a rarity, and what a powerful witness.

God Bless,

Pastor Lars



COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENT

Please join us for a congregational meeting on January 9th at 1200 (right after the second service). We will be voting on two things: whether to extend a permanent call to Pastor Lars and reconfirming the compensation package that was approved at our recent budget meeting.

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Carolyn Bernheim

It is a common practice at the beginning of a new year to look back on the year past and reflect on what has gone on. As I look back on the last year at Lord of Grace all I can say is WOW! Here are some of the events/activities that come to mind. We started out the year under the pastoral guidance of Pastor Suzanne. She led worship for us in January and readied us to receive our interim Pastor. Pastor Lars joined us on January 31st. We had a packed house for a combined worship service. It was so wonderful to see the church filled with so many voices praising our God. This was followed by a delicious pot luck fellowship. What a great way to welcome Pastor Lars to Lord of Grace. During the spring we had times of reflection and fellowship at our evening Lenten services and then celebrated together on Easter morning as we welcomed the risen Lord. I love the sunrise service and seeing all the children excited and on the hunt for Easter eggs. In June we hosted Vacation Bible School. This is not only an opportunity for our children to grow in their faith but also serves as an outreach to the community. This was so successful that attendance had to be capped. The church opened its doors to the community with the 4th of July picnic. This was an opportunity to reach to the community and enjoy the local fireworks – looks like this might become an annual event. In the fall we celebrated Oktoberfest and Thanksgiving

together. In December we joined in Advent services to prepare ourselves for the birth of Christ and many members of the congregation came together to help host Bethlehem's Market Place for the children.

During the year, attendance at worship has grown. I am excited that there are now several families with children at the first service. The service feels so alive with the sound of children at worship. Sunday school is doing well with a dedicated core of teachers who keep the children excited to learn about the love of their Lord.

Confirmation is going strong as is the young adult fellowship group. Preschool is doing well and enrollment is steadily growing. The men's group is as strong as ever. This year the women of Lord of Grace met and decided to form a unit of WELCA (Women of the ELCA) at Lord of Grace. This will provide a forum for the women of the church to get together for bible study, fellowship, service projects and much more. Pastor Lars organized a visioning team to start the process of looking at where we are and what we can be so we can better serve our current and future members and the community. Oh, yes and we are finally getting the storage cabinets in the fellowship hall – a project many years in the making.

I could go on, but I think by now you must have the idea that the spirit is alive and at work at Lord of Grace. The church has grown and developed during this last year under Pastor Lars' leadership. I can only imagine what growth will take place in 2011. When we as the body of Christ come together and pool our resources and prayers, the sky is the limit.

**QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STEPHEN
MINISTRY PROGRAM**
Bill Witt

Why the Name Stephen?

The name Stephen comes from St. Stephen, who was the first lay person commissioned by the apostles to provide and develop a caring ministry to those in need as recorded in Acts 6.

" We can do everything through him who gives us strength" Philippians 4:13

What is the Pastor's Role?

The pastor is and will always be the primary caregiver of the church, but there is no way that the pastor can meet all the needs for care in a congregation. God calls on all of us, not just the pastor, to minister and care for one another.

"Each of us should look not only to your own interests and needs, but also to the needs and interests of others." Philippians 2:4

Who are Lord of Grace's Stephen Ministers?

There are several members of our church who have gone through training to serve our church members. These members are: Ron Paul, Donna Witt, Janette Carollo, Tim Murphy, Bill Witt, Laura Hinderaker, and Cheryl Fitch. All of us are ready to give confidential, caring help to those who are lonely and hurting.

"Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor serving the Lord." Romans 12:11



PROJECT HOSPITALITY
DeMar Sather

The Tucson Interfaith Coalition for the Homeless, in partnership with the Salvation Army and approximately 30 local churches coordinates Project Hospitality.

Project Hospitality provides food, shelter, and safety to the homeless during the time period of November 28th thru February 28th. Winter is a very difficult time for the homeless as Tucson can experience overnight temperatures in the 20's and 30's.

Thursday January 6th is the next evening Lord of Grace will be hosting the men. They are served an evening meal, breakfast and given a sack lunch as they leave in the morning.

The men are picked up at the Salvation Army Hospitality House and returned the next morning leaving the church at 7:00 am. The shelter program will be held in fellowship hall. Lord of Grace will provide the cooks and two male overnight coordinators. The Salvation Army provides cots and blankets for the men to use.

Here is your opportunity to serve. If you are interested in serving on a Meal Team or being an Overnight Coordinator please contact DeMar Sather. Phone 579-5344, e-mail dandpsather@comcast.net. Thank you in advance for your participation in Project Hospitality.

**NEW CABINETS IN
FELLOWSHIP HALL**

The dream of adding cabinet space in Fellowship hall started with Rose Motzko (former fellowship chair) and Jim Dahnke, Property chair. Today, it's a reality but not without your assistance.

I want to acknowledge the congregation for your generosity in supporting this project.

Over the past three years, almost \$3000.00 was collected from events like the Fall Oktoberfest and Chili cook-off. Matching funds were also secured from Thrivent Financial.

A meeting will be held sometime in January with all groups interested in using this new space. Stay tuned for a date and time. You can contact Jim Dahnke or Len Mowinski about the meeting.



THRIVENT BUILDS EXPERIENCE!
Jo Riester

ACT I

Glorious sunrise morning of December 4th

ACT II

Home dedication for our Thrivent Builds family, with cast of 75+ including Thrivent members, area Lutheran congregation members, members of the Islamic Center, friends of Abdi and Salema in colorful garb, and women in orange from the Arizona Correctional Center.

ACT III

A new home and new life for Abdi and Salema and their five children.

ACT IV

Sunday, December 5 Thank you and presentation of certificate to over 61 Ascension Sunday School students for their Sunday School offerings supporting the home.

CREDITS

Many thanks to all who toiled under the Arizona sun, designated their Arizona Tax Credit for Working Poor to Thrivent Builds, or even contributed above and beyond those credit amounts.

Hours donated -- over 3200 hours by 643 donors

Local Contributions -- \$ 13,609.00

Gifts in Kind -- flooring, windows, trees \$4279.95

Habitat Tucson contribution -- \$41,888.00

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans -- \$ 108,990.00

COMING SOON!

Thrivent Builds Home #5 Wall raising Saturday, March 19, 2011. Contributions to Habitat for Humanity Tucson should be designated for Thrivent Builds to match Thrivent's 2011 grant of \$84,975, and support our local commitment of \$15, 450.

Questions? Jo Riester 742-2882



MEN'S BIBLE STUDY
NEW TIME AND LOCATION
Mike Stein

You are invited to join us for bible study and breakfast. On Saturday January 8th, we'll meet at the IHOP restaurant (Cortaro Road) at 7:00 am. We meet every Saturday except the fourth one of the month which is reserved for service projects.

BIRTHDAYS

Norm Ritzen
 Scott Sather
 Vicki Shearer
 Bernard Rickus
 Ivan Jensen
 Carson Scott
 Chris Jones
 Shirley Riley
 Kimberly Maisto
 Jamie Chapman
 Mikayla Gutierrez
 Chirs Pendleton
 Francisco Gomez
 Kristie Hammar
 Gail Johnson
 Dawn McKenna
 Bryce Thomas
 Ryan Johnson
 Bradley flora
 Lars Hammar
 Patricia Sather
 William Witt
 Jackie Smith
 Gina Marie Maisto
 John Riley
 Jim Dahnke
 Sydye Loudermilk
 Katelyn McDaniel
 Karen Radant



Anniversaries

Warren and Pat Erler
 Stephen and Helen Smith
 Merlyn and Jeanette Johnson



PRIME TIME GROUP

Darlene Paul

The Prime Time group met to discuss this year's activities. The events center on music and theater. We tried to spread out the dates so as not to conflict with church events or the holidays. All events will be on a Saturday or Sunday.

- January 2011 -- A New Musical Wicked at Centennial Hall. Call Darlene for details.
- March 27th -- Simply Swingin, Sinatra and Friends, a TSO event

Please join the Prime Time Group if you will. Signup sheets and additional information are in Fellowship Hall. Contact person is Darlen Paul. 572-6322.

MOTHERS OF PRESCHOOLERS - MOPS

DO YOU NEED...

A place to come just as you are and unwind, while your children are cared for?

Someone to talk to, confide in, who understands your daily struggles?

Encouragement, inspiration, and guidance during this crazy yet critical stage of mothering?

Information that is practical and relevant to the life of a mother?

Beginning September 2nd
 Meet the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month
 9:15 am to 11:15 am
 Meet in Lord of Grace Church-Fellowship Hall
 For more information: 520-744-7400

Tee Up for FLIM!

A Golf Benefit for Future Pastors

**Monday, March 21, 2011
12:30 PM Shotgun Start
Mountain View Golf Club
SaddleBrooke, Arizona**

You are invited to participate in The Eighth Annual "*Fund for Leaders in Mission (FLIM) Golf Classic.*" When you register as a single or gather a foursome, you will contribute in a significant way to the growth of the ***Fund for Leaders in Mission*** endowment that provides educational scholarship assistance to persons preparing to serve as pastors of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

Join more than 100 other golfers in this "scramble" event that generates lots of fun and camaraderie! Following golf everyone gathers for a delicious sit-down dinner at 5:30 PM. The evening program (including distribution of Prizes) ends promptly at 7:00 PM.

Look for registration forms in your church narthex or contact:

Pr. Ken Ahlstrand, Coordinator

pasken@comcast.net

520/481-4536



Lord of Grace
Lutheran Church
7250 North Cortaro Road
Tucson, AZ 85743
"Making Christ Known"

NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT 18
CORTARO, AZ