

The Messiah **Messenger**

Messiah Lutheran Church, Holt, MI
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From Pastor Steve...Dear Fellow-Redeemed,

I realized after last month's discussion at our Voter's meeting regarding "my" vision for Messiah that there is a need to address this in more concrete terms, so I would like to take a few moments to discuss "vision."

There are two basic approaches to vision; they are "The Sinai Approach" and the "Team Approach."¹ The Sinai approach is where I, as a Pastor, act like Moses, coming down from on high, stating that I have the vision from God for the future of Messiah! It's nice to believe that would take place, but even if it did, the vision would be mine and the only ownership of the vision would be from me. The second is a process that must take place where collectively leaders from Messiah would come together with me to begin to answer the following question: "What does God want Messiah to be in the next 5 years". You see it's not what "we" want in "our" vision, it's what do we believe, based upon Scripture, prayer, and the Lord's guidance that God wants for this church.

(¹Bill Hybels, Senior Pastor, Willow Creek Community Church, "Vision to die for")

We know the overall marching order for the church on earth comes from Matthew 28 (the Great Commission). That overall order, as I will restate it, is that we exist only for one purpose: *to fully connect people to Jesus now and forever*, or as we summarize "Seeking the Lost, Growing the Found." But the question of vision is "HOW" do we see ourselves, under God's direction, fulfilling those marching orders?

The hard part of answering the "what does God want" question is that it takes time, and it is a process that must be invested in. With that in mind, in the next few months I will be asking specific leaders in the congregation to come together as that team and join me in the process of answering that vision question. I would like all of you to ask yourselves the same question. To pray over it, ponder it, to look out over the community and see what need Jesus puts on your heart. I would like you to communicate those moments to this leadership so that we can see where our Lord might be leading His people.

As that question is answered and begins to take shape, the team will communicate back to all of you to see if this vision motivates and inspires you to take "ownership" of the vision. This is key to our future here at Messiah because if we as a faith community do not value the vision, we will not be fully engaged in the process of seeing it fulfilled in our midst. We won't be willing to make sacrifices in order to see it completed and we won't be willing to ensure that we can hand it off to the generations to come.

I hope you will take this task for Messiah before our Lord in your prayers. That you will pray with me that those that are asked to become part of the team will be willing to invest their time in this endeavor. That you will ask yourself over and over again "What does God want Messiah to be in the next 5 years" and see what answer comes from the Lord.

May we together as the people of God be led in a direction that will allow us to without fear or apology "Seek the Lost, and Grow the Found" for Jesus.

From the Elders...

It's time for the summer Messenger article so that must mean it is time for me to polish up the sales pitch for Monday night services giving us the ability to attend church even though we were out of town or booked in some other way on the weekend. While I do want to pitch Monday night attendance during the summer, unfortunately other matters currently weigh much heavier on my mind.

The Voters Meeting at the end of April seems to have been the catalyst for subsequent action and activities that at the kindest level can be called very disappointing. Questions and concerns with the ministry at Messiah were directed primarily to Pastor, and to a lesser extent the Elders and Congregation Chairman. Individuals present at the meeting will have their own conclusion as to whether the questions and questioning were appropriate, whether the answers or lack of answers were appropriate, and what should have been allowed and what should have been cut off with respect to the interaction.

I doubt anybody at the meeting walked away that afternoon feeling like the mission of the church was best being served. Yet these meetings – held only twice a year – do provide the forum for the Pastor to present a report to those interested enough in the direction of the church to attend, for the boards and treasurer to give an update on their area of responsibility, and for anybody present to bring forward questions, observations, give thanks for successful efforts, or voice concerns.

At this meeting it was announced that several individuals had completed the new member class and were accepted into membership, the financial situation of the congregation was in a much better place than where we were at the November meeting, several members had stepped forward and volunteered significant time and effort to correct problems with

deficiencies in the current bookkeeping process, the ECM board reported the daycare is essentially at full capacity and significant time and effort was being placed into the proper management and care of this ministry, and the Trustees have amongst (many) other things repaired the outside lighting on the cross at the front of the church. I doubt if many of us carried those items out to the parking lot with us. However, we do remember the aspects that made us feel very uneasy or worse.

While the tone of the meeting may have been disappointing, I believe it would have at the least resulted with follow up action and communications that would allow us to move forward together. Opinions and thoughts may still vary, but at least things would have been out on the table where they could be worked through.

However, subsequent to the meeting – and in spite of the message at the meeting that we are taught in the Bible to talk face to face – an anonymous letter was sent to Pastor, the chairman, and the elders. Then a second anonymous letter was sent to the individuals that came forward with questions and concerns. The letter I received as an elder was troubling for its inaccuracies and for shedding light on the fact that so many people could attend the same meeting, hear the same words, and have such a different understanding as to what was said. The letter sent to two of our families was much more upsetting. Because they chose to speak up they were chastised and questioned as to whether Messiah was the best place for them.

On one hand I can look at this situation and realize that it is the work of only two people who in some way justified sending these letters. Yet the ripple from their actions and the fall out that has ensued is very crippling to our efforts of growing God's kingdom at

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Messiah. So now what? Do we hope that given time maybe this will just go away and everything will take care of itself? Do we talk amongst ourselves and pick and choose sides? I don't think ignoring a situation will 'fix' anything nor will misdirected conversations.

So as is often the case, I believe it is open communications that are necessary. We can make the statement 'why bother...nothing ever gets done'. But often that is just an excuse used to justify not getting involved. There is no guarantee others will completely agree – or agree at all - with your position. Things may not go the way we prefer. Yet awareness and better decisions happen when based on first hand information and not second hand feedback or assumptions. There will still be varying opinions and disagreements with church matters, but with early and open communication – to the appropriate individual, board, or committee - they shouldn't have to fester and become confrontational.

Well, this is certainly my longest article for the Messenger. My prayer tonight is that I never write another one like it...

In His service,
Mike Wagner
Board of Elders

Car seat needed

If you have a currently unused car seat for an 18-month-old, I would like to borrow it for the first two weeks in July. Under the rules of full disclosure, I confess that I am clueless as to how to properly install it and would need some guidance. Please contact me if you are able to help.

-- Janet Robson

Membership Activity

Transfers

May 11, 2010

To Our Savior Lutheran Church from Messiah Lutheran

Harlan and Kelli Schaedig and children

From Our Savior Lutheran Church to Messiah Lutheran

Melissa Miller

From Christ Lutheran Church to Messiah Lutheran

Larry and Sandy Russell

Reaffirmation of Faith

May 11, 2010

Bernie and Rosie Garlitz

Adult Confirmation

May 11, 2010

David Wingert

Food for thought

Paul says, "We aim at what is honorable not only in the Lord's sight, but also in the sight of man." 2 Corinthians 8:21

Jesus used the Greek word "kala" in Mark 14:6 to describe the woman's anointing His head with precious oil. According to T.M. Moore honorable is not really the best translation for the word. He feels the English Standard Version (ESV) is closer to the true meaning translating it as "a beautiful thing." So Paul says he takes aim at what is beautiful, including the relationships he pursued with his co-workers.

What a great watchword for relationships as for everything else. What does it mean to aim for beauty in our relationships? 1. Giving of ourselves freely and selflessly to encourage and edify another person. 2.) When the work we do together brings out the best of each of us and provides a meaningful service to others. So, don't take people and relationships for granted. Aim for beauty in our relationships, all our relationships. Blessings on your summer!

Women's Ministry Committee in the works!

Please mark your calendars for two important dates. **Monday, June 7 at 6:00 p.m.** we are having a **Women's Ministry Meeting**, to do what else but plan women's ministry events! We want to brainstorm for activities for the whole year so the more brains we have the better. Also, we have a solid date for our next **Women's Retreat**. Put a big circle around **February 4-5, 2011**. We will have more information as the months progress.

Messiah's 2010 Graduates

Our high school graduates will be recognized during our 10:45 a.m. worship on June 13th. Pastor will speak briefly with each graduate on their plans after high school and that will be followed by Pastor praying with them at the altar.

We are extremely proud of all these fine young men and women from Messiah! As they pursue their future endeavors may they always keep their eyes focused on the cross. In doing so they will be a light to whomever they meet!

Mason High School

Holt High School

Holt Central High School

Michigan Technological University

B.S. in Mechanical Engineering
Stacey Stanley

University of South Carolina

Master's Degree in Percussion Performance
Steven Wulff

Northwestern Law School

Juris Doctor
Adam Smith

Congratulations!

Jackie and the Centurions show their commitment

I am continuing in my Year 2 coursework. Residence in June was inspiring and very productive! The focus was evangelism. T.M. Moore and Chuck Colson were our instructors for the whole weekend. There is a lot to share with the Board of Outreach and Messiah members in general. I just need a little time to organize all the materials.

We held our annual spring Michigan gathering for Michigan Centurions. Messiah was the host this year. I was so proud Messiah. But I was especially impressed with the ladies from the First Place 4 Health class who only graciously gave up their classroom for us, but also prepared a wonderful lunch. We accomplished a lot of fellowship as well as preparation for the remainder of the year. Nice first impression, Messiah for those Centurions who came from all over the state!

The national centurion program has asked Michigan (only) to pilot a regional program starting in September. We have been working hard at structuring it, costing it, and coordinating it with the national office. We are so excited to be able to offer this to Michigan! Because we have met certain requirements of the national program, anyone who goes through the Michigan program will be commissioned by the national program making the participants eligible for all the support, residences, conferences, material and resources that those of us who have completed the national course have. Exciting!!!!. The application process will open soon. It will be a nine month program (as a school year) as opposed to a 12 month program. The plan is to have a school in Grand Rapids, one in Lansing, and one in Detroit all going at the same time. Twice a year there will

be statewide gatherings (one in Grand Rapids and one in Brighton) for an all day Saturday meeting. There will be monthly meetings in the region that will last a full Saturday. In between, there are monthly conference calls, readings, devotionals, movies and a project assignment.

Another exciting addition is at one of our statewide meetings we will include a brand new DVD study by Chuck Colson and a bevy of other experts in the field studying the Truth. We are being given the first productions to start our program with! Yippee! I would love to encourage as many as possible to sign up for the course. You will not regret it! The cost is still being worked out but it is going to be around \$400.00 (possibly less, not more) for the whole program (plus books and your travel to the statewide meetings twice a year.) The cost will cover the speakers both at the state meetings as well as those on conference calls, some national costs, and some local costs. Please see me about it if you have any interest. I would love to share and encourage! As I get the details, I will pass it on. (P.S. - rumor has it that Chuck will be the first conference call of the program!!)

This summer, Cyndy and I will continue to prepare more lessons for the return of the Talmadim in the fall. This has been exciting for us to be able to offer it and we are pleased with the response and growth we see from the participants! I will also be putting together and assisting in organizing and hopefully implementing ideas that the Manhattan Declaration Bible study has suggested to help Messiah be a more vital and involved church with its members as well as within its community. Kudos to both classes!!! You have really rolled up your sleeves and gotten into both of the studies!



Let's exercise together!

Jackie Lack is offering a DVD exercise program from 8:15- 9:00 on Saturday morning at the church and also starting a Sunday stroll every Sunday afternoon, when it is not raining (or snowing), beginning at 2:00. Park in the

Lumbertown parking lot at Holt Road and the railroad tracks. We will walk the Holt walk which is about 3 miles round trip. Anyone, young, old, male, female, walker, stroller, jogger is welcome; whatever! We will meet at 2:00 and enjoy the fellowship and exercise. The walks will begin after the Memorial Day weekend.

Keep in mind the upcoming "Give a Kid a Coat" drive

The "Give a Kid a Coat" project is October 22 and 23 of this fall. It is a little early to do much planning, but as I change my closets over from winter to summer clothes I am starting to put aside clothing that I am going to donate. Maybe you have a coat, jacket, or other clothing that you no longer need or want. Baby and small children's clothes are also in great demand. If you don't want to store the clothes at your house, I will be happy to take them to the warehouse where we store things. Messiah has always been such a good supporter of our community projects - it is so much appreciated.

Rhoda Hunter
Holt Food Bank Volunteer

Thrivent Builds with Habitat for Humanity

The beginning of June brings with it the beginning of the Thrivent Builds with Habitat for Humanity project. There are ways for everyone to participate. Here are the top ten reasons why you should participate in the Thrivent Builds project:

10. Get a free T-shirt.
9. Put your time, talents and treasures to good use.
8. Who doesn't like demolishing things?
7. Find out what a double header is (it is not just two ballgames on the same day).
6. Get a free lunch.
5. Practice your painting skills.
4. Find the green thumb you never thought you had.
3. Spend time getting to know your fellow church members.
2. Learn valuable home improvement skills that you can utilize on your own home.
1. Be part of providing affordable housing for a family in need.

The home being renovated is located at 226 Horton Street in Lansing, two blocks north of Michigan near Emil's restaurant. Drive by and take a look at the challenge that lies ahead. The Ground Blessing celebration is scheduled for June 3 at 5:30 pm, and everyone is welcome to attend.

Messiah is scheduled to work on:

Thursday, June 10, 6-9:00 p.m.

Saturday, July 31, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Thursday, August 19, 6-9:00 p.m.

Saturday, October 16, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Please contact Kyle Kopper, 269-592-0274, to find out the different ways you can participate in this very important project.

To the Messiah membership:

So often in life we have expectations of people and become disappointed when those expectations are not met to the level we desire. Sometimes we don't let people know our expectations, and they don't know ours either. I say this because I think maybe that is part of the problem mentioned at the April Voter's meeting in regard to either me or my family, or both attending different functions here at Messiah. Maybe you have expectations of me as your Pastor, and I have expectations of you that neither of us have fully communicated. I wanted to try at least to open those lines of communications in the next few paragraphs.

For over 20 years our family (really my parents) have owned several weeks in Time Share property. While some of the properties they use as weeks can be exchanged for other places and times of vacation, the property they purchased years ago in Florida was not purchased for that purpose. With the family in mind, they locked in specific weeks every year at a facility in Orlando. This is where everyone in my family agreed that they would always want to go, and that we would go at that specific time of the year every year. Other extended family members have also purchased at that location for the same time in order that we might be able to see each other once a year.

Some years those weeks fall during Ash Wednesday/Lent. As Easter moves to various times of the year, so then does Lent. Many years our vacation weeks do not fall during Ash Wednesday/Lent. When they do, I am not able to be with you as you have witnessed. When they don't, I will be here. I made mention of this in broad terms before accepting a call to Messiah, and it has been discussed at several Elder's meetings. In hindsight, maybe I should have communicated it to you also in order to reduce concern, which is why I am communicating it now.

I also believe it is important for each of you to value your family time together, and I know from personal experience and from association in business that careers can often overshadow family life to the point of the family being neglected. As God's people, second behind our personal faith in Jesus, is the responsibility we all have to our families. I believe that it is important for me to set an example to the congregation of that value. I hope also that we as a church never find ourselves asking you to compromise your family time for busy work around the church, which would be contrary to what we value and teach. If you can make it to an event, great, but not at the expense of your family.

I hope this communication at least helps with addressing some of the expectation issues that were brought up.

Thank you,
Pastor Steve



The LCMS Family Ministry Action Team is committed to addressing the vital issue of sharing the faith with the next generation, in spite of the challenges surrounding us at this point in the history of the church and the world. As the people of God, we are called to take such action!

We all need to move forward in bringing the message of hope and faith in Christ, to children and families of our congregations and communities.

Later on in this issue you will find the first of a three-part series entitled, "Where Are the Children." This article explains how we all need to move forward in bringing the message of hope and faith in Christ, to children and families of our congregations and communities.

Volunteer of the Month: Teresa Washburn

Teresa has had a life-long desire to work with a church youth group, but she felt she had to become more spiritually mature before she took on that challenge. When she and her family joined Messiah a few years ago, she felt the time was right, and she volunteered to be the leader of the junior youth group. She has a strong desire to share with these young people the proof that God exists and what He does in their lives. She wants them to understand that the Bible is “not just stories.”

Teresa has led the youth group in a Little Caesar’s fundraiser, in bake sales, and making cards and cookie baskets for residents in retirement homes. Under her leadership, the junior youth have volunteered at the soup kitchen, the fish fries, and at Luther Haven work weekend. The youth have also attended a gathering at Concordia, Ann Arbor. This summer they will visit the Creation Museum, Michigan Adventure, Luther Haven, and hopefully undertake a camping/canoeing trip. Teresa wants the kids to know that being a Christian is NOT boring!

Teresa and her husband, Mike, have three children, who attend school in Mason. Teresa is strongly considering home schooling the younger two children this fall. She loves animals and gardening and “fiddles” with woodworking. She is self-employed and owns a dental lab, which she runs from home, allowing her to be available for her children. Teresa has a degree in marketing and management from Northwood University. She and Michael love to camp, kayak, and go on walks with their children.

Teresa has in the past volunteered with Delhi Township Parks and Recreation. She has led a group to discuss how to bring God and

values back to America. She has volunteered with Shared Pregnancy and Greater Lansing Right to Life and is a 2010 candidate for precinct delegate in Ingham County. Teresa also plans to volunteer for Music in the Meadow in August.

Messiah and its young people are blessed to have Teresa’s faith and energy. Please let her know how grateful we are for her hard work.

Thank You!

To the Board of Planned Giving:

Thank you so much for the grant you provided from Messiah Lutheran Church’s Endowment Fund. The grant has provided the financial means for Messiah Child Development Center (MCDC) to build a fence for the toddler playground area. The fence is located on the north side of the building and connects to the existing fence/playground.

State Childcare Licensing changed their playground rules and recommended toddlers, 2 ½ years and younger, have an age-appropriate playground separated from the older children. The fence will insure the safety of our children. The project has begun and the posts are set! The staff and I appreciate the many ways Messiah Lutheran Church supports the childcare ministry.

God bless,
Kelly Marble
MCDC Director

Deacon Deliberations...

Grace, mercy, and peace be with you.

God provides. This major truism has been made clear to me many times and in many ways during my Deacon training and as I begin my service to you. A sermon topic, a devotional to start a meeting, an activity for the children, whatever the need, God was there to put me in contact with the answer. Many times I have been asked, "Why become a Deacon?" The best of answer, of course, is provided in God's word; (2 Peter 1:3-7) *"His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us to His own glory and excellence, by which He has granted to us His precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love."*

I am striving to further my growth along this continuum and in doing so would like to share a devotional from Oswald Chambers dealing with the goal of love.

Love is an indefinite thing to most of us; we don't know what we mean when we talk about love. Love is the loftiest preference of one person for another, and spiritually Jesus demands that this sovereign preference be for Himself (see Luke 14:26). Initially, when *"the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit"* (Romans 5:5), it is easy to put Jesus first. But then we must practice the things mentioned in 2 Peter 1 to see them worked out in our lives.

The first thing God does is forcibly remove any insincerity, pride, and vanity from my life. And the Holy Spirit reveals to me that God loved me not because I was lovable, but because it was His nature to do so. Now He commands me to show the same love to others by saying, *"...love one another as I have loved you"* (John 15:12). He is saying, "I will bring a number of people around you whom you cannot respect, but you must exhibit My love to them, just as I have exhibited it to you." This kind of love is not patronizing love for the unlovable---it is His love, and it will not be evidenced in us overnight. Some of us may have tried to force it, but we were soon tired and frustrated.

"The Lord... is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish..." (2 Peter 3:9). I should look within and remember how wonderfully He has dealt with me. The knowledge that God has loved me beyond all limits will compel me to go into the world to love others in the same way. I may get irritated because I have to live with an unusually difficult person. But just think how disagreeable I have been with God! Am I prepared to be identified so closely with the Lord Jesus that His life and His sweetness will be continually poured out through me? Neither natural love nor God's divine love will remain and grow in me unless it is nurtured. Love is spontaneous, but it has to be maintained through discipline.

In Christ,
Deacon Bill



**Don't forget our Monday evening
Prayer & Praise worship option
at 7:00 p.m.**

We are so proud of our *First Place 4 Health group!*

We are half way through this 12-week session, working on "growing the fruit of the Spirit." It is an exciting journey and we are now trying to add some exercise components to become more fit and healthy to do God's work.

Ladies, if you are interested in joining, but Saturday morning doesn't fit into your schedule, there are two other groups in the South Lansing area that are available to you. The other two groups meet on Tuesdays, 10:30 am, and 6:30 pm at South Lansing Christian Church. Their next session starts on July 13. Let me know if you are interested.

For the rest of 2010, the schedule for our Saturday class is as follows;

Summer Session (only 6 weeks long) starts July 17-Aug. 21

Fall Session (12 weeks) starts Sept. 4-Nov. 20

Holiday session (3 weeks long) starts Dec.4-Dec.18

Galatians 5:22-23: *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law."*

May God bless your summer,
Rhoda Hunter



Happy Fourth of July!



Messiah's worship service on Sunday, May 23rd opened with a video of our MCDC children. The children, 36 in all, sang for their parents, grandparents, family members and Messiah's congregation. The children learned the songs and prayers during our chapel time led by Ms Rhoda (Hunter) and Mr. Bill (Lack).

Thank you to Ms. Rhoda for leading our choir of angels! She works diligently to ensure a wonderful program. Thank you also to Pastor Steve for producing the video for the children and parents enjoyment. It was darling to hear the children call out their classmates' names as their pictures came on the screen!

It was a blessing to be at the service when Bill Lack was installed as a Deacon for Messiah. Congratulations on your hard work and dedication, Bill!

Sarah Grafe says thanks!

I would like to express my sincere appreciation for funding my registration for the 2010 Katie Conference. Being able to spend time with other pastor's wives is an opportunity I look forward to every April!

In Christ's love,
Sarah

Where Are the Children?

Dr. Steve Christopher
Associate Director, Children's and Family Ministry
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

There is nothing more frightening to parents than not knowing where their child is. If even for a nano-second in a store or shopping mall, or within the safety of one's own neighborhood—if a parent looks for his or her child, and that child is not visible or able to be heard from, there is instant panic! Relief comes when the child is safe and secure in the presence of their parent or guardian. Anguish beyond belief, beyond consolation, accompanies those parents who never find their child again, or discover that their child's life was tragically taken from them. No parent in any generation or culture wants to lose a child in any way.

We have strong laws that protect children in our 21st century society. Special training for children and parents is offered so they can avoid risky situations. We have a national system of alerting our communities to child abductions. We have trained law enforcement agents who respond quickly and with expertise, all in the hope of returning the child home safely. Our society has done a lot over the last several decades to ensure the well-being of children, so they can get home safely.

But have we done this in the church? Have we done it in terms of spiritual matters? Have we done what it takes to make sure our children make it home safely to their heavenly Father? The numbers in our church body, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, do not make a strong case that we are doing well in this area. Sunday school attendance in the LCMS declined from 533,573 in 1997 to 415,066 in 2007, and the number of baptisms has dropped from 46,984 in 1997 to 27,913 in 2007. Even the stalwart of children's ministry within the LCMS, the Lutheran school, saw a decline in enrollment from 181,854 in 1989-90 down to 140,678 in 2007-08.

According to these numbers, we are not reaching children as we have in the past! This, despite the overall growth in the U.S. population (more than 70 million since 1985) and a large generation of children, totaling 73 million—which is second in size only to the "baby-boomers," estimated at 78 million. Of these 73 million children under age 18, nearly 43 million of them lived with their biological mother and father who are married to each other. An additional 19.3 million lived with one parent. Overall, 94 percent of children lived with a least one biological parent, this according to a 2009 release from Robert Bernstein of the Public Information Office of the U.S. Census Bureau (<http://www.census.gov/>).

So, where are the children? It appears that we are not adding them to our LCMS family of faith or helping them get home safely to our heavenly Father. Just as parents grieve over a lost child, it must grieve our Father in heaven to see His children lost and wandering. He gave His only-begotten Son to die on the cross, so that all the children, young and old, can make their way home to heaven.

Now is the time for action! Now is the time for the LCMS to start working in more intentional ways, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to teach the saving faith to our children! It's time to make sure the next generation is a generation of believers, a generation who knows their Father in heaven.

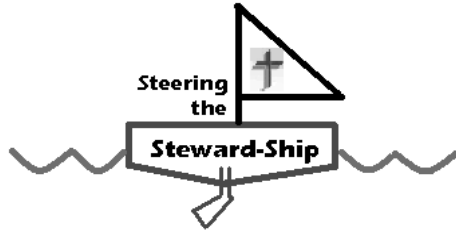
How do we do this? Parents must be equipped to model and teach the faith in the home. As the family of faith, congregations must intentionally support and train parents to pass along the faith to the next generation. As children of our heavenly Father, we must boldly proclaim the message of the saving love of Christ, demonstrating His love and acceptance in intentional ways to the millions of children around us who do not know Him. We need to make sure that no child is lost or forgotten, and that all are accounted for in the census of heaven. We must, for the time is short: "Behold, I am coming soon!" (Rev. 22:7, 12).

(This is the first in a three-part series on a plan of action for more intentional approaches to Family Ministry within The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.)



LCMS FAMILY MINISTRY ACTION TEAM:

Jim Bradshaw, Rev. Galan Walther, Rhonda Mohr, Rev. Glenn Lucas, Dr. Patti Hoffman.
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■ Visit us on the Web at www.lcms.org/family



Friends will come and go. Sometimes friends will come into our lives for just a short time, but we are touched forever nonetheless. Some friendships can last a lifetime, while others seem to simply fade with time or apathy. However, once you feel the touch of our Savior Jesus, you are touched forever.

But Jesus never promised it would be all sunshine and flowers. Even his closest earthly friends were caught arguing among themselves on the way to Capernaum one day, about who among them was the greatest. Perhaps Jesus, knowing where their journey was about to lead, was annoyed at their lack of focus.

Think about the fact that every soul who comes through our front doors is touched in some way by the actions of every person in our congregation. Your financial gifts fund the ministries and outreach opportunities of our church. Your time and muscle (physical and mental) strengthen our fabric and actually “gets things done.” Plus, an added benefit is that as more strands are added to a fabric, the less likely it can be easily torn apart. In our case, working alongside others in service helps to build friendships that can withstand the difficult times that will come.

Whether your membership is actually reflected in this congregation or another congregation, across the street or across the globe, we are all part of the same Christian family and we must seek to serve the same Lord. Christ himself gives us the ultimate example: “Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends” (John 15:13). And then he actually did just that. His love was

more than words, it was words in action.

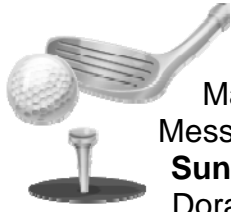
Always have a heart for service. As a part of the body of Christ, we all have a duty to carry out His work. Whether out in front or in the background, with hands or hammer or brain, when done for the right reasons God promises to bless you. Count on it. Now, friends, let's get to work.

**We have been truly blessed with Harlan Schaedig's stewardship articles for the past 3 years. Sadly, this is his last one. We sincerely thank him for his wonderful insights on using our God-given spiritual gifts for expanding His kingdom. Harlan, you, too, have touched us forever!*



Join us for Vacation Bible School!
July 12-15, 2010

VBS is quickly approaching! Mark your calendars for July 12-15. The program runs from 6-8:00 p.m. with dinner at 5:30. We still need more volunteers to make this program a success. The areas of need are: Bible Story for elementary age children, crew leaders, and Chadder's theater. We also need help with decorations. If you are available, please sign up in the narthex. **Our volunteer meeting will be held on June 16th at 6:00.**



Golf anyone?

Mark your calendars for Messiah's summer golf outing **Sunday, July 11**, 2:00 p.m. at El Dorado. The cost of \$40 per person includes 18 holes of golf, a cart and dinner. This will be a fund raiser for the senior youth. A signup sheet will be available soon. Contact Steve Jenkins with questions.

Thank you for your kindness

I would like to thank the congregation of Messiah for their prayers and cards following my recent surgery and health issues. I would also like to express my gratitude to Pastor Grafe for coming to my home to pray with me and serve me Holy Communion. I'm doing better every day!

Carolyn Flamme



Please join us Friday, July 23rd when the Lugnuts take on the Cane County Cougars. Game time is 7:05 p.m. **Last day to order tickets is Sunday, June 6th**. We get to enjoy the LAFCU fireworks following the game AND each group has their own raffle for a special Lugnut gift. Tickets are \$10 each. You may pay by check made payable to Messiah Lutheran Church or with cash. (If you pay with cash please note who is purchasing the tickets.) A sign up sheet and info are in the narthex.

Outreach Community Prayer Event

As it says in the Casting Crowns' song – "If we are the body, why aren't His feet going?"

The Outreach Board invites you to help us in a **fun**, easy event – take your first step on the road to discipleship – no skills required. On two evenings this summer we will meet at church at 6:30 p.m. for a few minutes of very brief training, and then we are heading out into the neighborhoods around church to ask our neighbors if we can pray for their needs.

Prayer requests will be gathered by teams of two (one team member will log the requests and might not even have to talk – how easy is that?). All teams will meet back at the church after one hour of walking to deliver up the prayer requests and snack on some cookies. All prayer requests gathered from our neighbors will be offered up publicly in prayer during worship the following Monday evening. Come join us for one or both parts of each event – mark your calendars now:

- **Outreach Walk Sunday, June 27th at 6:30 p.m. for the June 28th worship.**
In the event of rain the alternate walk date is July 18th for worship on the 19th.
- **Outreach Walk Sunday, August 15th at 6:30 p.m. for the Aug. 16th worship.**
In the event of rain the alternate walk date is August 18th for worship on the 20th.

As it says in the Casting Crowns' song, "If we are the body, why aren't His hands reaching?"

Thoughts from the Chairman...

Adaptable. Are you adaptable? Yes you are, would be my guess. With our current economic condition, many of us have had to adapt. You may have had to adapt your life style as a result of the changes in the value of your home or investments. You may have made changes in your retirement plans. You may have had to adapt as a result of losing your job or being under-employed. As things improve, God willing, we will adapt to those changing conditions and events. Do we always like to make these adaptations? Not really. But it is a necessary thing for us to do. We adapt to make the best of each situation.

As we head into the summer season, we find the weather changing which again causes us to adapt. We put away our winter clothes and get out the shorts and tee shirts to adapt to the changing temperature. We find the grass growing or the garden needing to be planted so we adapt our schedule to take care of these outdoor activities. So once again we adapt to the situation because it is the best thing to do for us to enjoy the things around us.

For over 55 years (yes I am that old), I have been attending a Lutheran church. I have been a member of at least 5 different churches and have spent considerable time in several other churches. In those 5 member churches I have had the privilege of learning from and listening to at least 11 different pastors. Each one was different in their style, experience and spiritual gifts. But all have had one thing in common: Their love for our Lord and Savior. I have learned that I need to adapt to their style to get the most out of the service and to have my faith grow.

I have also observed that each of these pastors have adapted over time to their congregation's ministry needs. They have changed their delivery style and their

involvement in the congregation depending on the needs of the congregation at the time. But again several things didn't change: Their love for our Lord Jesus and their joy of bringing others to know Jesus, our Savior.

So I pose this question to you. Are you adaptable at church? As with other things, things at church continue to change and we need to adapt to those changes. New boards and committees are formed or new people join the boards with new ideas so we need to adapt to a new way of doing things. Our children grow older so we need to adapt our programs to meet their changing needs. New music is introduced and new orders of service are used in order to keep things fresh. It takes a while but we adapt to the change. We keep some familiar things so that we are comfortable with the service. It is always a balancing act between keeping the traditional parts and introducing new things. But one thing always remains the same. The love our God and Savior has for us.

Everything else can change and we need to adapt to it. I would ask that you adapt to the changes to keep your faith strong. After all, the strengthening of our faith is key no matter what shape or form it takes.

In service to our Lord,
Ned Gottleber



Father's Day – June 20, 2010

News from the Senior Youth

Dear Congregation,

In May, the year came to a close for both Sunday school, as well as Monday nights. As this year of senior youth comes to a close, there are many memories that we will take with us. The lessons that we did on Sundays and Mondays were an eye opening experience for both the youth and us. Almost every Monday night, we played pool and *Pictionary*- there were several great drawings!

In the summer, we are planning on getting together with the youth group about once a month. We are planning on having a game night one night, a movie night another time, and possibly even a bonfire another month.

Also in the summer, eight of the youth members along with two parents will be going to the National Youth Gathering (NYG) in New Orleans. Everyone is very excited for this trip and it is going to be a lot of fun!

Thank you for all your support of the senior youth. This year went by very fast as our first year as youth leaders, and we can't wait until next year to do it all again.

In His Service,
Jacob and Amanda Dixon



2010 Summer Picnic and Outdoor Worship

We have the Peregrine Shelter reserved at Hawk Island Park Sunday, July 25th. Worship begins at 11:00 a.m. and our picnic immediately follows.

We ask that you bring a dish to pass. The Board of Fellowship will provide the meat, beverage (punch, iced tea and water) and tableware.

Items you may wish to bring: a lawn chair, your bathing suit, towel, and beach play paraphernalia.

The park is located on Cavanaugh Road between Aurelius and Pennsylvania. There is a \$2 fee for Ingham County residents/\$4 for non-residents to enter this county park.

Volleyball!

Come one, come all. Come join us in volleyball!

The women's First Place 4 Health (FP4H) group will be playing some friendly "low impact" volleyball on Wednesday evenings this summer, beginning June 2nd. Join us on the lawn, weather permitting, and the gym if it is not. Set up starts at 6:00 p.m. for those who can help; all should be prepared to play by 6:30. Questions contact Rhoda Hunter or Vicki Pinkney. We hope to see you for some lovely summer evenings of fun and fitness.