

The Call

A Publication Of
Spirit of Peace Lutheran Church

July 2009

Spirit of Peace Lutheran Church

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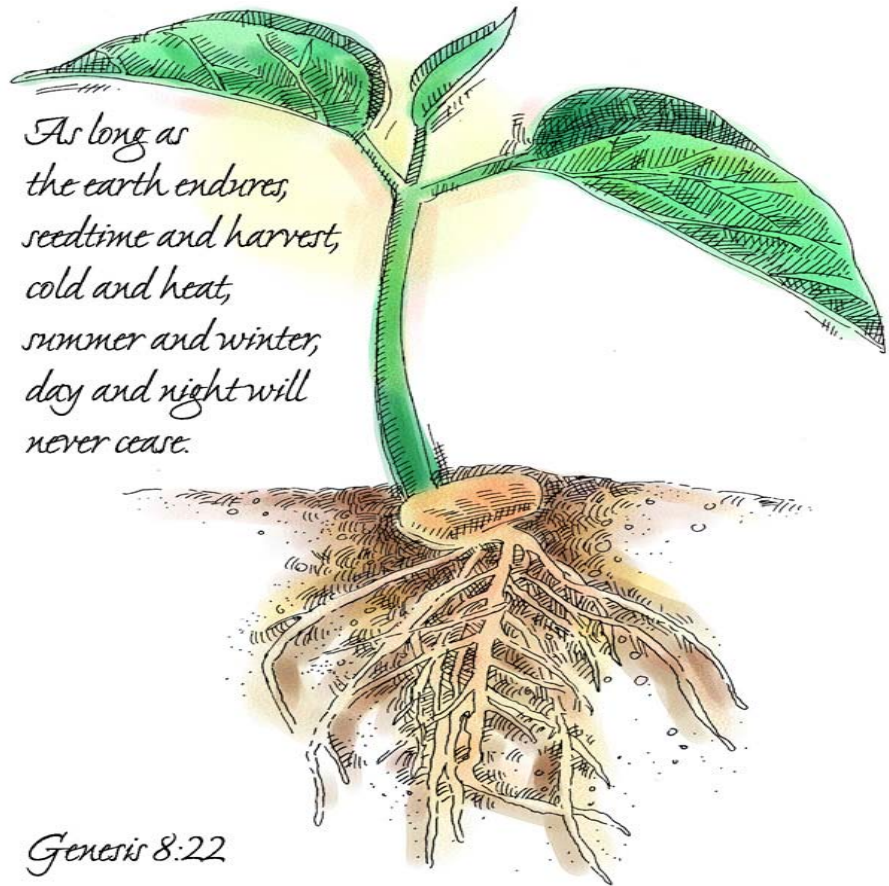
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*Deadline for
July Newsletter
July 26, 2009*



*As long as
the earth endures,
seedtime and harvest,
cold and heat,
summer and winter,
day and night will
never cease.*

Genesis 8:22

Grow With Us!

*Is Membership or
Associate Membership for you?
(see page 3)*

*A New Class is forming with an
orientation session on Tuesday,
July 7th, 7:30 pm at church.
Reception on Sunday, July 26th.*

From The Pastor

Timothy Edmondson

Dear Friends—

There was once an old monastery that had fallen upon hard times. Centuries earlier, it had been a thriving center where many dedicated monks lived and worked and had great influence on the realm. But now only five monks lived there, and they were all over seventy years old. This was clearly a dying order.

A few miles from the monastery lived an old hermit who many thought was a prophet. One day as the monks agonized over the impending demise of their order, they decided to visit the hermit to see if he might have some advice for them. Perhaps he would be able to see the future and show them what they could do to save the monastery.

The hermit welcomed the five monks to his hut, but when they explained the purpose of their visit, the hermit could only commiserate with them. “Yes, I understand how it is,” said the hermit. “The spirit has gone out of the people. Hardly anyone cares much for the old things anymore.”

“Is there anything you can tell us,” the abbot inquired of the hermit, “that would help us save the monastery?”

“No, I’m sorry,” said the hermit. “I don’t know how your monastery can be saved. The only thing that I can tell you is that one of you is an apostle of God.”

The monks were both disappointed and confused by the hermit’s cryptic statement. They returned to the monastery, wondering what the hermit could have meant by the statement, “One of you is an apostle of God.” For months after their visit, the monks pondered the significance of the hermit’s words.

“One of us is an apostle of God,” they mused. “Did he actually mean one of us monks here at the monastery? That’s impossible. We are all too old. We are too insignificant. On the other hand, what if it’s true? And if it is true, then which one of us is it?”

One monk’s contemplation was similar to the four others’: “Do you suppose he meant the abbot? Yes, if he meant anyone, he probably meant the abbot. He has been our leader for more than a generation. On the other hand, he might have meant Brother Thomas. Certainly Brother Thomas is a holy man—a man of wisdom and light. He couldn’t have meant Brother Elred. Elred gets crotchety at times and is difficult to reason with. On the other hand, he is almost always right. Maybe the hermit did mean Brother Elred. But surely he could not have meant Brother Phillip. Phillip is so passive, so shy—a real nobody. Still, he’s always there when you need him. He’s loyal and trustworthy. Yes, he could have meant Phillip. Of course, the hermit didn’t mean me. He couldn’t possibly have meant me. I’m just an ordinary person. Yet, suppose he did? Suppose I am an apostle of God? Oh God, not me. I couldn’t be that much for you. Or could I?”

As they continued to mull the hermit’s words, the old

monks began to treat each other with extraordinary respect on the off chance that one of them might actually be an apostle of God. And on the off-off chance that he himself might be the apostle spoken of by the hermit, each monk began to treat himself with extraordinary respect.

Because the monastery was situated in a beautiful forest, many people came there to picnic on its tiny lawn and to walk on its paths, and even now and then to go into the tiny chapel to meditate. As they did so, without even being conscious of it, they sensed the aura of extraordinary respect that now began to surround the five old monks and seemed to radiate out of them, permeating the atmosphere of the place. There was something strangely attractive, even compelling, about it. Hardly knowing why, people began to come back to the monastery more frequently to picnic, to play, to pray. They began to bring their friends to show them this special place. And their friends brought their friends.

*As more and more visitors came, some of the younger men started to talk with the old monks. After a while one asked if he could join them. Then another. And another. Within a few years the monastery had once again become a thriving order and, thanks to the hermit’s gift, a vibrant center of light and spirituality throughout the realm. (Adapted from M. Scott Peck, *The Different Drum* [Simon & Schuster, 1988].)*

John 17 records Jesus’ prayer to His Father for the Church—for you and me. He asked that all of us would be one so that the world might believe. When we care for each other and treat each other with love and respect, then those in the world find the Church to be attractive, even compelling.

We have some very big decisions facing us as a congregation—decisions that will set a long-term course for our ministry. What’s most important for us right now is not which direction we take or even what course we set, but that wherever we go, we go together—and that wherever we end up, we end up together. In the spirit of Jesus’ prayer, let us lose no one along the way and sacrifice no person for the sake of the journey. May we be one.

Thank you for being who you are. We are no dying order of monks—that’s for sure; our ministry is alive with God’s Spirit. But all it takes is for us to forget; for us to lose sight of our purpose—to confuse people with program; to lose sight of the individual in the crowd; to substitute “building” for ministry.

Let us not forget: one of us is an apostle of God. Is it the person sitting next to you on Sunday morning? Is it you? Is it me?

Yes.

Deep Peace,
Pastor Tim

“My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you.”

John
17:20-22

Interested in Membership or Associate Membership?

Question #1: Aren't we all equal in Christ's Church?

Answer: By virtue of our baptism into Christ's death and resurrection, we are united with Him and become part of His Body which is the Church. Regardless of whether one belongs to a particular congregation, the family of God includes all who believe in Him and call Him Lord and Savior. You can be Lutheran, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, or non-denominational and still belong to the same family of Christians. We are always first and foremost, disciples of Christ!

Question #2: Why is membership in a particular congregation important?

Answer: Along with being the Body of Christ on earth, the Church is also an organization that involves membership. The goal of membership is not to separate those who belong from those who don't but rather as a way to make an investment in a particular place of ministry within the larger Church. A congregational member receives all the privileges of participation including holding office and voting on congregational issues. Membership is a sign of investment and commitment to ministry in a particular place with a particular people who share a particular mission.

Question #3: How is associate membership different from a regular membership?

Answer: Associate members are persons holding membership in other Lutheran congregations who wish to retain such membership but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation while being active as well in another congregation. They have all the privileges and duties of membership except voting rights and eligibility for elected offices on the Congregation Council.

Question #4: If I don't want to become a member or associate member, am I still welcomed?

Answer: Absolutely! Your participation in worship and other programs of this congregation is welcomed with the exception of voting rights and eligibility for elected offices (such as Church Council). Nonetheless, you are still welcomed to voice your opinion and influence congregational decisions through participation in discussions. As a gifted and valued child of God, you are a blessing to us and a brother/sister in Christ (see Question #1). If there are issues preventing you from becoming a member or associate member, it is a good thing to discuss these with the pastor in an effort to resolve them.

Question #5: How does the congregation benefit through my membership/associate membership?

Answer: Besides being blessed by your commitment to ministry, you are included in the total number of members and associate members — a number which is important to maintain financial mission support from the ELCA. This Mission support by way of a grant comes with the expectation that we will be developing as a congregation. One of the ways development is measured is through the number of folks listed on our church roster.

So...you want to become a member or an associate member? Contact the church office or speak directly to Pastor Tim.

Congregational Meeting Sunday, July 26th (after worship)

Agenda to include any old business, new business including voting on the motion below, and an update on our current financial situation.

Motion: Be it resolved that Spirit of Peace Lutheran Church authorize the expenditure of funds to determine the practicality and legal ramifications of entering into a joint building program with St. Columba's Episcopal Church.





God Be With You, 'Til We Meet Again!

Dale and I wanted to sincerely thank you all for the lovely farewell reception for us just one week after the memorable 5th anniversary celebration that we also got to share in. In between that time, Dale and I also attended the Pacifica Synod assembly in Riverside so we truly had a strong foundation of loving and caring Lutherans sending us forth to spread the good news in and around our surroundings in Sedona, AZ. We moved in officially on Memorial Day and our new address is: 225 Bell Rock Blvd. Sedona, AZ 86351. We hold our church family near to our hearts and welcome your visits when you are passing through or need a respite amid the red rocks at only 4,500 feet! Cell numbers again are: Dale (619) 851-9616 and Janet (619) 851-0301. Land line number is (928) 554-4039. We are proud to be charter members of Spirit of Peace and have been enriched by your faithfulness to His Word in music, study, song and service.

With Much Love,
Janet & Dale Webber

22nd Annual Synod Assembly of the Pacifica Synod Report to the Congregation:

USE OUR HANDS was this year's theme showing us how to be useful in reaching out. We, Spirit of Peace, are certainly doing a lot of using our hands in our community up on the hill, but we can all be reminded of just how many more people need a caring person in their lives and a chance to know Jesus. One really progressive effort that comes to mind for me is how First Church in San Diego holds services three times a month and the 4th Sunday is spent in service to the community USING THEIR HANDS to help the elderly, visiting those who are ill and those who need communion in their homes, working the neighborhood community garden, and feeding the homeless/hungry. There is not a lot of fanfare, just church family members in service to others in downtown San Diego. Pastor Margaret Duttera (one of our members who attended the assembly) filled us in on how her former church near the ocean brought church to the beach each Sunday, along with chairs and music and songs and communion. That had to take a lot of effort from everyone yet reached out to a lot of people.

Several key issues were discussed in voting sessions. I appreciated forums offered the day before items came to vote where we could ask questions. This was very helpful for clarification and open discussion on key issues. PLUS we had 12 minutes of discussion on the memorials to be presented to churchwide in August just before we prayerfully handled each vote. MEMORIALS affect the entire ELCA whereas RESOLUTIONS affect just our Pacifica Synod. Our synod voted YES to two important issues on Human Sexuality, and the Memorial to ADOPT the proposed ELCA Social Statement on Human Sexuality and the Memorial to ADOPT the Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies were passed as well. I gave Charlie, our congregation's president, the 2 page report on the actual tallies if anyone is interested.

The election results for each conference were held and our Pastor Tim was voted to serve on Synod Council for our Big Bear Conference which includes 13 churches. Each conference met separately to offer ideas on how to be helpful in serving each other using our hands as well as deciding on issues that the conference wanted to work on. I asked that our conference bring to the attention of the synod at large the fact that mission churches need to be supported longer to succeed. One year you can be the POSTER CHILD for the synod and/or even nationwide and the next year you can have your support reduced by 7%. I related it to abandoning one of your young children, long before it was ready to stand alone. Our sister church in Yucaipa shared their joys and concerns with us. I applauded those who came up to share their views and support of our own church's efforts. So our work this coming year lies before us to use our hands in efforts not only to reach others who are unchurched but to our sister churches as well. If asked, we would be willing to serve and have a voice at the synod assembly next year. In His Service, Janet and Dale Webber, Delegates.

SPECIAL
REPORT



Mystery Minister. . .

Here's something new and fun and it comes to us from our very own little Church Mouse (bet you didn't know we even had one!). Each month, the newsletter will feature a biographical sketch of one of members/associate members. Your job is to try to guess who it is. . .

One day in church, I was just sitting there ruminating, and I hear this guy say he rode a camel. Naturally, I was interested in hearing more. So I sidled over (we mice sidle a lot) and offered to buy him a meal. He turned me down. "How about a cup of coffee?" No again! He seemed like a scintillating kind of guy. Don't get me wrong—I know lots of scintillating mice. Wait! Wait! It's all in your perspective. Ah well, if you were 3 inches tall, you'd see my point. I didn't give up; every week I approached him for an interview opportunity and every week he was busy. Ok, not everyone wants to be seen in public with a mouse. I offered an alternative—he could put it in writing. It's not as much fun as face to face, but. . . here it is, and it was worth waiting for. . .

He and his family had a scary brush with the depression so they moved from Colorado to California twice. They finally settled around San Gabriel. Having an entrepreneurial spirit, he tried the market, local, as a clerk. When the time came, undaunted and filled with patriotic spirit, he became involved with the Korean War. It was during this period he met and wooed a lovely Japanese lady. They were married and had 4 children who had 7 children, eventually.

Well, I figure the juicy parts are coming and I'll hear about the camels. Nope, he comes back to the US of A. For the next 25 years, he's a student and a teacher with some clerking thrown in. But you've got to admire his pertinacity—he gets a Masters in Anthropology with a specialty in California Archaeology and one in education. So now when he retires, guess what? The really great stuff. . . camels!

He becomes involved with Cambridge University in Wales, California State University, and Hebrew University in Israel. He even participates in digs at Tel Lachish and Tel Dor. During this time, he's also visiting Japan, Korea, China, England, Scotland, Turkey, Egypt, Kenya, Tanzania, and Mexico.

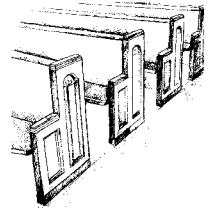
Somewhere along the way, he retires (again), but I'm not sure when. Now he's a land lubber and a fully involved Lutheran. Oh, wait, he bought a boat. When he's on board he teaches boating classes with/for the Coast Guard Auxiliary—I think.

What a guy! Not too shabby! Kind of an American Odyssey.

**"Who do you think this Person is?" asks the Church Mouse.
(see p. 7 for the correct answer)**

Highlights of June Council Meeting

- Dan Ploch was welcomed as Deacon filling the remainder of a 2 year term.
- Lorene Carlson will join auditing team. Audit meeting to be set.
- Simple Suppers: Our first meal assisting the Methodists went well. Sandy Groon to chair this project. Costs for food to be deducted from monthly support to Lutheran Social Services.
- Grant monies from ELCA and Synod are behind requiring use of supplemental reserves. Adjusted budget with grant reductions to be presented at congregational meeting in July. Stewardship letter to address how economic difficulties have affected our households.
- Yard Sale raised \$1000 with Thrivent funds. 140 volunteer hours logged.
- Wine Auctions: September at Manor's residence. Someone needed to coordinate gift baskets.
- Congregational meeting date/agenda approved with a motion regarding building with the Episcopalians.



View from the Pews





Stewardship Committee by Bill Griffith

Whether you call it a spending plan or a budget, it is all about numbers. Early in 2009, we received some surprises. Our grants from the ELCA and the Pacifica Synod were reduced by 25% or \$5,000. Our plan to partner with more mature congregations and receive additional financial assistance is not meeting our hopes. The current recession has put a financial strain not only on our congregation but on churches of all sizes and denominations.

At this time it is urgent that we re-evaluate where we are and where we are going with our current financial plan. Simply put we are not making the numbers in our 2009 plan.

While this news can be interpreted as discouraging, **THEY ARE ONLY NUMBERS.** We are a healthy mission congregation and our symbol remains, arrow up ↑. In mid July we will review our 2009 spending plan. A key theme for our 2009 Stewardship Campaign is “Discipleship Rather Than Just Membership.” It is up to us as Disciples of Christ to take appropriate action. This month, you will receive a statement indicating how much you have given this year in comparison to your pledged amount. You will also have an opportunity to adjust your pledge to a lower amount, if needs be, or to raise it to reflect additional blessings in your life.

Our goal is to continue our growth and mission in the Big Bear Valley. **PRAYERS, PRAYERS, PRAYERS.**

Women's Bible Study and Prayer Group

Our women's Bible Study and Prayer Group is going strong. Our meetings are held on Mondays from 1:00 to 3:00 pm. We are studying the book of “Acts.” All women are welcome to come and join in this spiritual fellowship time. Please feel free to join us whenever you are available. Bring a friend. We are using the book “Acts: Seeing God's Power in Action” by Phyllis J. Le-Peau, as a study guide. It is a LifeGuide Bible Study. Copies are available at the Ark Book Store on Big Bear Blvd., near Pine Knott. Due to individual's personal schedules we meet in various homes. Be sure to call Linda Griffith to check on the location and what chapters we are studying. Home: (909) 585-6026. Cell: (562) 884-4477. Linda is also in the office on Monday mornings —(909) 878-2650.



SOP Yard Sale

On Sunday, June 14th, we announced that we were going to have our church yard sale in six days! A lot of fast, hard work had to be done in a very short time. Members, and friends pulled together by gathering quality items to sell, making and setting out signs, gathering tables, setting up, working the sale, and taking down and removing the leftovers.

Although it was not a heavy yard sale weekend, we still made over \$600. Also, \$400 in supplemental funds were requested from Thrivent Financial and we will know soon how much was granted. (Talk to Alan Leutloff about how to become a Thrivent member).

We had 19 church members and friends who worked over 140 volunteer hours to make the yard sale happen! We want to thank everyone who helped out. A special thanks to Pat Elbert who chaired this event and also to Mike and Julie Chatham who hosted the event in their front yard. We have a great bunch of folks here at SOP. **GREAT JOB on another successful fundraiser!**



Who Knows?

In case of emergency where are your written wishes kept? At a relatives? At a good friends? How about a place like the church office in addition to other locations.

Items that might be included:

- Who to contact with phone numbers;
- What to do in regard to medical treatment (including “Right to Die” document)
- Funeral or Memorial Service Requests
- Organ Donation information

These records, kept in a locked file, can assist greatly in a time of difficulty. Something to consider.

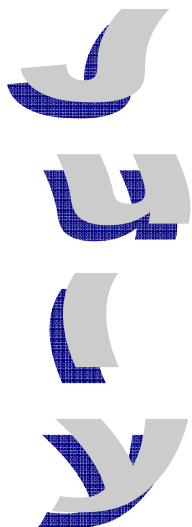
Submitted by: Tom Williams



The Mystery Minister for the month of July is Warren Wasson.

Warren is a founding and charter member of this congregation and is our Church Council Vice President. Warren is a faithful servant of Christ and a mover and shaker in terms of our ministry. His latest project for Spirit of Peace is in securing financial grants from the ELCA.

Warren's wit and charm is infectious and contagious. We are blessed to count him as a dear, dear brother in Christ and partner in ministry!



Healing

- David Max —back problems
- Bastian Berkhoff (uncle of Penny Coehlo) —cancer
- Fran Palmer (friend of Clarks) —cancer
- Melissa Flahive (friend of Linda Wilson)
- Virginia Mitchell —severe osteoporosis
- Marilyn Vecchio —Leukeimia
- Renee Marquez (friend of Cyndi Bauer) —Leukemia
- Helen Coelho (Rick's Mom) —Leukemia
- Ike VanKampen (Martha McKinley's uncle) —cancer
- Char Williams
- Betty Owens (friend of Warren's) —Alzheimer's/cancer
- Guido (Anna Weiner's brother) —severe nerve pain
- Christine Race (Janet Webber's daughter) —MS health concerns
- Danny (son of Doris Angerhofer's friend) —Parkinson's
- Marian Bacon (friend of Linda Wilson's) —brain cancer
- Lynn Thompson (friend of Kathy Kerr's) —brain tumors
- Andy Mearse (friend of Bartos) —chronic pain
- Candy Seimers (family member of Sandy Groom) —cancer
- Lori Baltus (Linda Wilson's friend) —blood cancer
- Janice Schlieder —lupus and knee problems
- Alma Bauer (Paul's mom)
- Glenn Beyer
- Betty Adams —cancer & Alzheimers
- Sierra Meadows —Crohn's disease
- Michelle (Neal Hertzmann's niece) —breast cancer
- Joe LaMura (friend of Judy Hollander) —cancer
- Herb Bauer (Paul's father) —Parkinson's disease
- Anni Ruther (Doris Angerhofer's mother) —chronic pain
- Norb Hesch —Parkinson's disease
- Sue Griffith (Bill's mother) —Alzheimers; in assisted living

Strength, Comfort, Guidance, Peace, Direction—

- Danessa Barto
- Kellie Lemon & Family (daughter of Bill & Linda Griffith)
- Ruth & Pat —friends of the Clarks
- Caregivers

Safety & Protection

Those in the military: Nick Caretto (Army); Peter Caretto (Marines); Sam McCullar (Navy); Tim Lauer (Navy Submarine); Scott (Rick Coehlo's friend), LCpl Tyler Craig (Wendy Craig's son in Angola, Africa), Cory Amelsberg, Sean Parrish; Sgt. William VanSickle, Marc DiConti and Son; Jeff Taylor (Keyson's Son serving in Iraq), 2nd Lt. Michael Nguyen (Air Force); Prvt 1st Class Devin Barto (Colorado Springs); Prvt 2nd Class Davin Barto (Colorado Springs), Brian McCoy (basic training/Texas); Tom Hastin (Jr Navy Seal); Travis Hastin (Army Ranger)



In Celebration—
 Congratulations to Proud Mother, Ceara Gehrke and Proud Grandparents, Charlie and Robin Gehrke at the birth of Gunnar Travis, born June 27th, 7 lbs, 14 oz; 18 1/2 inches.

- | | | |
|------|-----------------|----------------|
| | 7/3 | Kay Cedergreen |
| | 7/4 | Jeanne Schremp |
| | 7/5 | Betty Smedberg |
| | 7/11 | Bill Griffith |
| 7/12 | Bryan Edmondson | |
| 7/21 | Linda Griffith | |
| 7/23 | Eileen Hammond | |
| 7/27 | Paul Bauer | |
| 7/27 | Rick Holden | |
| 7/27 | Tyler Smith | |

Congratulations to Merrilee and Michael Ragsdale who were married on Saturday, June 27th!



- | | |
|------|-----------------------|
| 7/1 | John & Barbara Allen |
| 7/7 | Doc & Nancy Hilliard |
| 7/12 | Tom & Pat Elbert |
| 7/18 | Dale & Janet Webber |
| 7/30 | Alan & Donna Leutloff |

Spirit of Peace Lutheran Church

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9 am—12 Noon Mon.—Wed.

9 am—12 pm Fri.

Worship Location:

349 E. North Shore Dr.

Big Bear City, CA 92314

(The Seventh Day Adventist Church)

Worship:
Informal Blended Liturgy

Sundays at 9:30 a.m.

A Little About Us:

We are a Christ-centered, Bible-based community of faith that welcomes all people and serves God by serving the needs of those in the Bear Valley.

We are part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

"The Call" is published monthly by

Spirit of Peace Lutheran Church

P.O. Box 2997

Big Bear City, California 92314

**RETURN SERVICE
REQUESTED**

Mailed on
July 7th

**We may not
have any walls to
call our own;
but we do have
a Solid Foundation!**