

The Call

A Publication Of
Spirit of Peace Lutheran Church

September 2009

Spirit of Peace Lutheran Church (ELCA)

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October Newsletter
September 20, 2009*



Lead a life
worthy of the calling ...
making every effort
to maintain the unity
of the Spirit in
the bond of peace.
Ephesians 4:1-3

From Our Congregation's Mission Statement

We, the congregation of Spirit of Peace Lutheran Church, members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, are a diverse and multi-gifted group dedicated to being joyful servants of God, caring for one another in a fellowship-minded environment.

We are friendly, open-hearted and welcoming to all. . .
As part of the Church, we will proclaim the Gospel message of Jesus Christ through preaching and teaching. Our faith will be visibly active with the intention of bringing into the fellowship of God's Kingdom those in our community who do not have a church home and/or who do not know Jesus as Lord and Savior.

From The Pastor

Timothy Edmondson

Dear Friends— (excerpt from Sermon delivered Sunday, August 23)

This past week our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America made some very controversial decisions at it's national churchwide assembly –huge decisions that affect the direction of the ELCA.

As a congregation, we studied the Social Statement on Sexuality scheduled to come before the assembly –which as we learned is not policy but rather a teaching statement out of which policy is derived. We knew that it affirmed marriage as between a man and woman, and that in matters of homosexuality, it said there was no consensus in the church and was therefore descriptive and not prescriptive –meaning it articulated the various and contrary opinions of those in the ELCA. That social statement required a two-thirds vote which it received.

The more controversial consideration was, of course, that of ordaining (which is when someone becomes a pastor) gays and lesbians who are in a publicly accountable, life-long, monogamous, committed, same gender relationship. And that resolution was narrowly approved by a simple majority. And don't believe everything you see or read in the media. On Friday evening –CBS 11:00 news reported that the ELCA was ordaining homosexuals –which made it sound like anyone who was a non-cellabate gay or lesbian person could serve in the church. Not so. The LA Times got it right on the front page of yesterday's paper when it clarified that this would apply only to those in committed, life-long relationships. Now remember, the nature of this decision does not bind the hands of any congregation –and some congregations will choose to call a gay or lesbian person in a life-long, committed relationship and some congregations will choose not to do so. The decisions of the assembly intend to respect the bound conscience of individual congregations.

Needless to say, the reaction has been . . .well, passionate. There are those who are rejoicing – they are those who may have sensed a wall between themselves and their church based on their sexual orientation and they are finally receiving an affirmation they have long desired. They however, loving their church, celebrate with what I can only imagine as a diminished joy because they are aware of how painful this decision is for those who do not share their point of view.

Those folks, who do not share their point of view, are wondering whether the ELCA can continue to be their church in light of such decisions. They are now at odds with a church they have loved. Of these, some will leave the ELCA, perhaps entire congregations. Other individuals and some congregations will choose to stay to be as I heard one pastor say, “leavening in a time when the church needs us.”

Of course, the call to both sides (and I know that to say there are only two sides is very simplistic) . . .but the call is one for unity. And why? Because church leaders are afraid the church will fall apart? No, because it is the call of Christ that His people might be one even as He and the Father are one. Well, what is it that makes us one? Is it our like minds, our similar opinions, our same conclusions to difficult issues? Oh. . .those things might make unity easier, but they are not that which hold us together.

In this room are various opinions and, no doubt, strong reactions to the decisions of what is still our church. The ELCA, you and I, have an opportunity now to show the world something that it has not seen before –that people of such contrary ideas and opinions and lifestyles can live together, can embrace one another, can accept one another, can love one another. The world has never seen that before; all it knows is that differences separate people and destroy unity. Jesus said, “May they,” (and he's talking here about his followers; i.e. the church) “May they be brought to complete unity so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.” So that the world may know. . .

What story will we write now as the ELCA? What song will we sing now? Will the world be prevented from seeing Jesus because of division and resentment and anger? Or will the world be impressed with what is the hub of the wheel for us as God's people?. The blessed assurance that what is most important, what matters more than anything else to us is what Christ has done for us at the cross. That we are redeemed, purchased of God, heirs of salvation and therefore brothers and sisters one of another.

Was what our church decided to do this last week right or wrong, healthy or unhealthy, a gift or a tragedy? I guess each of us has her/his own opinion on that. Regardless, the decisions that

(continued on page 4)

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“May they
be brought
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John 17:23



Wine Auction

Saturday, September 12th
5:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Graciously hosted at the home of
Ella and Lyn Manor
452 Salem, Big Bear City

Please bring 2 bottles of the same wine.
One will be opened for tasting; the other auctioned for
pleasure. Or you may prefer to pay \$10 per person
at the door.

Cash and checks only please.
Non-alcoholic beverages also available.

The festivities include exquisite hors d'oeuvres, fabulous
desserts and a silent auction and 50/50 drawing
For more information, call Linda at (909) 585-6026.

A Benefit Fundraiser
for the Outreach Ministries of
Spirit of Peace Lutheran Church
Big Bear City



Lots of Ways to Help with the Wine Auction—

*Sign up to attend and invite some friends to join you! If you can't attend, make a contribution.

*Sponsor a basket and come up with your own theme. Purchase items to have placed in the basket. A sports theme? Movie theme? Time for tea theme?

*Solicit vendors in the valley to donate an item or a service. We'll provide all you need to do this.

*Help with the food and make your favorite appetizer.

See Linda Griffith to find your specific way of making this fundraiser a huge success!


**FUND
RAISER**

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

**IN CASE OF
EMERGENCY**



(Pastor's article continued from page 2)

were made by the ELCA were made under the umbrella of God's grace and within the hand of God who has promised to never leave nor forsake His church. We are the church, not because of our social statements, nor because of our ordination polices –we are the church because of the cross of Jesus Christ that is the centerpiece of our faith. That's what makes us the church and that is what has the power to hold the church together even at times like this.

A story is told about a young lad who strayed from his home in a small town in Maine. It was a cold day and snow was falling. When the parents discovered that the child was missing, they first began to search for him in the homes of neighbors and friends. When he could not be found within the limits of the town, they began to search for him in the outlying fields and woods. After a while the entire population became alarmed and all were eager to help. They ran around frantically in all directions, calling the boy's name but their search was in vain. When a wise man saw what was happening, he summoned the people and said, "This will never do. Let's organize this search properly and we are bound to succeed. Let us all join hands and march through the fields and woods and we will find the child." When they did as they were told, when everyone in the community joined hands, they came upon a pile of snow. They brushed aside the snow and found the frozen dead body of the lost child. The heartbroken parents cried out in grief, "Oh, if only we had joined hands earlier."

Outside these doors is a world that has one basic need. Some of them don't even realize it. But this world needs to see Jesus. And they need to see Jesus through us. Will the decisions of the past week rip us apart as the ELCA? What kind of impact do you think a fragmented church will have upon the world?

How much longer will the world have to wait while the church (and not just the ELCA) figures out whether or not we like each other, whether or not we want to work with each other, whether or not we want to join hands with each other, whether or not we want to love each other? And how many more will have to die because of our lack of consensus?

This will be a tough time for the church and for individuals who make up that church. But let us not forget, let us not get totally side-tracked from the assurance we have as God's people –that Christ is the center of what we believe and his cross stands in the middle of who we are as people of faith. It reaches vertically telling us that God and humanity have been reconciled, and it has a horizontal dimension showing that because of the cross we are reconciled with one another. Let's show the world what we're made of. A new chapter of the story is being written; a new verse of the same song is being sung. Can we sing it together? By God's grace we can. . .that the world might know. . .that the world might know Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

Deep Peace,
Pastor Tim

Women's Bible Study and Prayer Group

Our women's Bible Study and Prayer Group is going strong. 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. Bring a friend. We are using the book "Acts: Seeing God's Power in Action" by Phyllis J. LePeau, as a study guide. Due to individuals' 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.



Church Council Highlights (August Meeting) —

- 2008 Financial Audit has been completed with thanks to Tom Williams, Warren Wasson, and Lorene Carlson.
- July's monthly expenses exceeded income by \$122. Mid-year pledge adjustments resulted in \$40 more of giving intentions.
- Report on Tribute to America program: attendance was outstanding. Decision to "pass the basket" at next year's program as opposed to just setting it out.
- Decision to begin application process for "pre-approval" loan through Mission Investment Fund for future building/purchase of property. Decision to re-activate building fund. Dan Ploch offered some possible buildings for sale/lease in the valley.

ELCA Assembly Adopts Full Communion with the United Methodist Church (ELCA News Release)

MINNEAPOLIS (ELCA) -- By a vote of 958-51, the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) adopted a full communion agreement Aug. 20 with the United Methodist Church (UMC). This is the ELCA's sixth full communion relationship and the first for the UMC.

The assembly also adopted an implementing resolution by a vote of 922-15.

In 2008, the UMC General Conference adopted the same agreement.

The churchwide assembly, the chief legislative authority of the ELCA, is meeting here Aug. 17-23 at the Minneapolis Convention Center. About 2,000 people are participating, including 1,045 ELCA voting members. The theme for the biennial assembly is "God's work. Our hands."

Before the ELCA's vote, the Rev. Gregory D. Palmer of the UMC said it would be "a great day" for both churches. "I am grateful that we have come to this point." At a news conference following the two actions, Palmer -- who is president of the UMC Council of Bishops -- said that "God has brought both our churches to a broad place where Jesus Christ calls us ... to all be one [and] to go out for the sake of the world."

"We welcome you as you welcomed us last summer," the Rev. Mark S. Hanson, ELCA presiding bishop, told Palmer after the first vote, "and we rejoice at what the Spirit has in store for us."

"This is indeed a day of great rejoicing," said the Rev. Donald J. McCoid, the ELCA's executive for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Relations.

Just after the first full communion proposal was read to the assembly, the Rev. Barbara M. Wills of the ELCA Northeastern Iowa Synod moved to refer the measure to the presiding bishop for further study throughout the church body, and for it to be re-presented to the 2011 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. She said she was concerned that there had not been sufficient time for such study.

"We've had a long time of discussion [in both churches]," McCoid responded. "I think it's important for our church to respect the process."

That motion to refer the decision was voted down by more than 90 percent of the assembly.

Ten ELCA bishops were among those who lined up at microphones to speak in favor of the full-communion agreement. Speakers told of cooperative and joint ministries already being conducted by Lutherans and United Methodists and noted the need for more such ministries and cooperation, especially in rural and remote areas.

Steven Chapman, a layman from the ELCA Northwest Washington Synod, asked, "What took so long?" in reference to the agreement. "I know what Lutherans are going to bring to the potluck," he quipped, "but what are the Methodists going to bring?"

"I think we have the same recipe books," answered Bishop Sally Dyck of the UMC's North Central Judicatory Episcopal area of Minnesota, which drew laughter and applause from the assembly.

Full communion is not a merger. But it means that the two churches express a common confession of Christian faith; mutual recognition of Baptism and sharing Holy Communion; join worship and freedom to exchange members; agree to mutual recognition of ordained ministers for service in either church; express a common commitment to evangelism, witness and service; engage in common decision-making on critical matters; and a mutual lifting of criticisms that may exist between the churches.

The two churches began formal theological dialogues together in 1977, which led to declarations of "Interim Eucharistic Sharing" in 2005.

The ELCA has 4.6 million baptized members, and the UMC has 8 million.

Our Combined Ministry With Our Local Methodists. . .

We have been blessed with a wonderful ministry partnership with our Methodist brothers and sisters for quite some time now (Shoebox Ministry, combined worship, etc.). Currently our big project together is "Simple Suppers" —a program that offers a hot nutritious meal on the 2nd and 4th Thursday evenings of every month. The Methodists handle the 4th Thursday; we take care of the 2nd. Anywhere from 20 to 60 people show up to eat and it is anticipated that this ministry will grow as word spreads in the valley. Sandy Groon chairs this project for us and is always looking for more helpers to set-up, cook, serve, and clean-up. Give her a call and let her know you would like to serve the Lord and His people in this way. (909) 584-8023.





September

Healing

- Alyssa (Leutloff's niece) —hearing loss
- Sharen Bartley —knee surgery
- Rod —Lupus
- Fran Palmer (friend of Clarks) —cancer
- Barbara Kirkland (Grace Beyer's Niece) —recovery from brain surgery
- Bastian Berkhoff (uncle of Penny Coelho) —cancer
- Melissa Flahive (friend of Linda Wilson) —undergoing tests
- 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
- 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
- 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
- Anni Ruther (Doris Angerhofer's mother) —chronic pain
- Norb Hesch —Parkinson's disease
- Sue Griffith ("Tatsy") (Bill's mother) —Alzheimers; in assisted living

Strength, Comfort, Guidance, Peace, Direction—

- Rob, Jacquie, Emily Hall (KJ's brother and family)
- Danessa Barto
- Kellie Lemon & Family (daughter of Bill & Linda Griffith)
- Ruth & Pat —friends of the Clarks
- Caregivers

Thanksgiving & Praise—

- Trudy (Nancy Hilliard's friend) —healing after heart problems
- Guido (Anna Weiner's brother) —healing after surgery for severe nerve pain
- Pastor Kent Tuohino —to be installed as Pastor of Eden Lutheran, Riverside

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 (returning to US after 2 tours in Iraq), 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)



Prayer and Praise Page

*"If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer."
Matthew 21:22*

	9/2	Alan Clark	9/14	Don & Lorene Carlson
	9/9	Martha McKinley	9/21	Ivan & Martha McKinley
	9/9	Eric Turney		
	9/10	Mary Craig		
9/14	Cyndi Bauer			
9/21	John Hamilton			
9/22	Cody Oddson			
9/23	Patricia Ryan			
9/28	Bob Wenzel			
9/30	Doris Angerhofer			



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41619 Big Bear Blvd. Suite 1A
Big Bear Lake
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
(Come as You Are)
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
September 1

**"We are Friendly,
Open-Hearted, and
Welcoming to All."
(from our Mission
Statement)**