



Luther Memorial  
Church ELCA

# Messenger

**OCTOBER 2010**

## Pastor's Logos [word]

Column by Paul Coen, Senior Pastor

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The Last Sunday in October is Reformation Sunday. We Nebraska Lutherans love celebrating this event because we can wear red in Church! Also because many folks know that Martin Luther was one of the great reformers of the Protestant Reformation. Luther's passion was God's Word and that we as Christians look to the Word of God as the chief authority in matters of salvation and moral behavior.

Since August of 2009, many within the ELCA and outside the ELCA have accused the church of forgetting its Lutheran heritage and not taking seriously what God's Word says about homosexuals. We have been accused of listening to the voices in society telling us what to believe, concerning everything from abortion, civil rights, divorce, the role of women and homosexuals in the church.

I am a pastor in the ELCA, I have been called by Luther Memorial Lutheran Church to be its pastor, a congregation of the ELCA. It is my role and responsibility to speak to those who attack this church, its people, the doctrines and teachings of the Lutheran Church. So now you will hear me speak to those who say we have turned away from the Lutheran faith tradition and those who would say we are not truly Christian.

First and foremost, God's Word is true in all three of its forms, the written, spoken and the living Word. Yet God's Word is not to be taken literally in all cases and for all situations. When we read scripture we should remember when the author wrote the text, to who was the author writing and what was the historical situation of the time. An important German Lutheran phrase



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The Messenger is a monthly publication. To provide feedback, please contact us.

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## STEWARDSHIP IS SPELLED *LOVE!!!!*

That's right stewardship is Love in action. It cost over \$124,000 to raise a child to age 18. We spend this kind of money because there is a profit in it. Yah, right!! We spend that kind of money because we want the best for our kids and we care for our kids. We don't have children to make money off them. We give up our resources for the sake of our children, out of love for them. And they might even say thanks!

If we love God and care for God's people, we will give of our resources and we even get a return on our dollar. Yes, you heard me, we get something back and it is tangible, not only a good feeling. What do we get back? Here is a list on the return of our offering: a place to worship, a place to have fellowship, a place for you, your children and your grandchildren to gather and learn about God's Word, a place where professional leaders in worship, teaching, preaching, pastoral care, community development, crisis management, resources networking and other professional skills are available to you 24/7.

Let's be honest about all this. It's not like we are paying for a club membership, a pew rental or fire insurance (think hellfire and brimstone for clarification). We are sharing of what was first given to us by God; our lives, our family, our friends, our homes - all that has been made available to us from God. We did not earn it or deserve it, but God gave it all to us, none the less. If God is so generous, cannot we be generous in our gratitude?

Make your offerings a gift, given out of love, not guilt, given in gratitude not with an attitude, shared because you care and not because you were dared. Let your love for God guide you in your giving and know that you will always get back more than you give.

**WELCA NEWS** Blanket Work Day will be October 18th at 8:30 am. A pot-luck dinner will be enjoyed at noon! Why don't you join us to tie blankets and eat lunch?!!!!!!

**Election of Officers** will be held at the next meeting, November 13th, at 1:00 pm.



## Pastor's Logos cont'd

is translated as "situation in life". This means the situation in life of the author, the story and the reader. This will make a huge difference on how a text is understood. We are also called, as Lutherans, to see all things through the person of Christ. Whether it be Old or New Testament, all things are to be seen in the context of Jesus' Life, Death and Resurrection.

Lutherans are not literalists and if you think we should be, then be very careful which text from God's Word you use. Falling asleep in Church means you could get stoned to death, or polygamy is not a crime in the Old Testament, and slavery is not condemned in the New Testament. If we say that Jesus' words are the most important in Scripture, then in regards to this issue of homosexuality, why doesn't he mention it in any of the four Gospels? Do you think he didn't know about homosexuals? There are those who wish to just pick and choose what part of God's Word they take literally. This is called proof texting and when they do so they tend to not use the entire reading. For instance, the condemnation of homosexuals in Romans 1:26-28 also says that gossips are just as bad as murders and homosexuals, but that is not usually mentioned. Additionally, if you read on in chapter 2 of Romans, you will find that those who judge others are considered worse than the aforementioned sinners. Yes, judging like God gets you God's judgment.

I could go on and I would be more than willing to discuss with anyone how Lutherans have been called to listen and live God's Word. The ELCA has not allowed social pressures to move us but rather those who wish to use God's Word literally are the ones who have fallen into Americana Revivalist Fundamentalism. Those who judge us as being too gracious, too forgiving, too compassionate, too welcoming, and too loving, I wish to thank them. What a compliment to be so judged. I believe that God's Spirit has moved through the ELCA and through those who voted to bring down the wall that keeps out our brothers and sisters from serving God in this church.

The vast majority of those Churches that are leaving the ELCA and saying we are not Lutheran or Christian are primarily led by pastors. The pastors who have left the church and taken their congregations with them have betrayed a trust. When they broke that trust they hurt the Body of Christ. They turned neighbor against neighbor, family members at odds with one another and the ultimate insult is that they fool others into believing that they have the only true understanding of God's Word.

I admit to you that I am hurt and angered by what I see and hear from these congregations that want to do it their own way and believe that other churches should not have the right to see it differently. If you have questions or concerns, please let's talk and for those who wonder what will happen if you disagree with me, here it is: *I promise I will not condemn or verbally abuse you. I will still consider you a brother or sister in Christ, treating you with respect and charity as we are called to do so by Christ.*

May we all have the vision of Christ in our hearts and minds as we struggle through the challenges in our life of faith.

### **1000 Haitian Health Kits**

That was the goal - 1000 - and we almost made it on Rally Sunday!!! The goal was reached and exceeded by our younger Sunday School children in September. Way to go kids and way to go Luther Memorial!!!! You made a difference in people's lives that will be appreciated and remembered. PRAISE TO GOD!!!!

### **THE DRAMAS ARE BACK AGAIN!!!!**

That's right, we will kick off our Faith Drama Series with a mini-play from the life of Martin Luther on Sunday, October 24th, at both services. We have a number of our young people taking the roles of Martin & Katie Luther, as well as their 4 children. The rehearsal for our first drama will be on Sunday October 17th following the 2nd service. Future drama dates are Wednesday, December 15th, Sunday, February 27th, Sunday April 17th (A live cablecast of the Passion Story) and Sunday, May 22nd. Come, see, hear and believe through our Faith Drama Series!



*Worship*

*Assistants*

# LUTHER MEMORIAL CHURCH

1<sup>st</sup> October 2010

2<sup>nd</sup>

Service – 8:00 am

Service – 10:15 am

<u>READERS</u>	October 3	Fred Bredehoeft	Bev Sporhase
	October 10	Carlene Keim	Sallie Agena
	October 17	Carlene Keim	Sallie Agena
	October 24	Fred Bredehoeft	Bev Sporhase
	October 31	Karen McCoy	Lisa Lintner
 <u>ACOLYTES</u>	 October 3	 Emily W	 Tanner H
	October 10	Mackenzie D Patty W	Courtland W Hunter P
	October 17	Shae F Madalynne S	Justin H Carlie K
	October 24	Sydney L Samantha H	Aubrieanna K Patty W
	October 31	Allison N Trey M Quinn S	Allison M Britton L Aaron H
<u>USHERS</u>	OCTOBER	Bob & Patty Engelbrecht Gary & Ellen Kuenning	Loren & Andrea Stubbendick Brad Buller Frank Schulze
<u>VISITATION</u>	OCTOBER	Jane Coen	
<u>VIDEO &amp; AUDIO</u>	October 3	Jerry & Rhae Werner *Hunter P	Steve & Tyler Wellman *Quinn S
<u>COORDINATOR</u>	October 10	Eric Lamblin & Alan Maier *Kylee W	Ron & Diane Hawkins' *Sydney P
<u>*POWER POINT</u>	October 17	Ron & Mary Ann Wenninghoff	Dan Watermeier & Eric Lamblin
<u>OPERATOR</u>	October 24	Arlin Rohlf Andy Brace & Jim Pfeiffer *Carlie K	*Allison M Ole Schavland & Alan Maier *Courtland W
	October 31	Jerry & Rhae Werner *Morgan L	Alan Maier & Eric Lamblin *Allison N

PLEASE GET YOUR OWN SUBSTITUTE, IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO SERVE!!

# Youth & Family NEWS



## First Communion

### Instruction

All 3rd grade students (and older students who have not yet received communion training)\*

are invited to a training session and lunch on October 24th at 11:30am in the Fellowship Hall. Please RSVP to the church office by Thursday, Oct. 16th. Child care is available if you tell us of the need.

\* - younger children may receive training if parents think they are ready - please talk to one of the pastors.



## Community Family Fun Fall Event: Pot Luck & Trunk or Treat

Sunday, October 31, 2010

Time: 12:00-2:00 pm

Luther Memorial & St. John's UCC are joining together to sponsor a pot luck and Trunk or Treat. Every family is asked to bring a dish to share for the meal at 12:00pm. Adults are encouraged to also decorate the trunk of your vehicle (or bed of your truck), bring candy or other goodies to hand out and if you wish, to also dress up in a costume. After our meal, the children can dress up in their Halloween costumes and then go trick or treating in the parking lot with their own bucket. We may even have some other fun games to play.

Come join the great fellowship and enjoy a little extra costume time for the kids.



## Confirmation Service Event: Leaf Clean Up Sunday, Oct. 17th, 1 - 6pm

Confirmation students will be raking leaves for church members who need a little extra help doing so. Bring rakes, gloves, bags and we'll need a couple trucks to haul it all to the dump. We'll eat dinner afterwards and maybe watch a movie too.

## Calling ALL church members! WE NEED YOU!!

If you would like help cleaning up the leaves in your yard, please call the church office to place a reservation to have the work done. We may not get to everyone - so we will do them in the order that you call.



Leaf Filled  
YARDS NEEDED

## Middle School Gathering December 28 - 29, 2010 at First St. Paul's, Hastings

The theme is **MAD E** and we'll explore Rom. 12:9 - 15 (go look it up). Talk to Pr. Mike if you're interested. Early Bird registration: \$40 by 10/29. Reg. Bird registration: \$50 by 11/30.

# Luther League

## Haunted House

Saturday, October 23rd

Meet in the youth room so we can head to our evening's activities. Watch for more details to come (like cost, where we're going and what all we will be doing.

RSVP to Pr. Mike by 10/21.



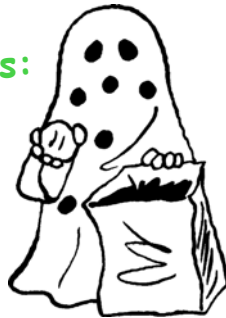
facebook

Join our facebook group "Luther Memorial Luther League" It'll be a good way for you to hear about upcoming events.



## Calling all Crocheters:

If you crochet and need a project, please call Pastor Mike.



## FALL SERVICE PROJECT: HELP AT TRUNK OR TREAT

Sunday, October 31st, 12:00 - 2:00 pm

Come lead games and help the younger kids generally have a good time and be safe. There's free food and who knows what kind of mischief you can create. It's Halloween after all! Talk to Pastor Mike if you're interested, especially if you have a game or activity you want to lead.

Lutheran Youth of Nebraska  
(LYON) Assembly  
November 19 - 21, 2010  
at Kearney's Holiday Inn  
& Convention Center



Early bird registration: \$150 by 10/8  
Regular registration: \$180 by 10/22

Talk to Pr. Mike if you're interested.



Are you ready?

THE AMAZING  
(G)RACE

October 9, 2010

Come explore Nebraska Lutheran Campus Ministries - no matter where you plan on attending. Enjoy a little friendly competition as you explore what campus ministry has to offer. Talk to Pr. Mike ASAP if you're interested.



We recently asked the congregation members to contact the church office on how they would like to get Church communications - the newsletter, weekly happenings and devotions. By mail or email? If you have not contacted us, please phone the church (269-2360) or send us your email as to which way best works for you.

### NEW PASTOR IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD!

Pastor Mark Ekstrom will be ordained on Saturday, October 9th at Morning Star Lutheran Church in Omaha, and installed at Beautiful Savior, Palmyra, and St. John's Lutheran of Otoe on Sunday, October 17th. Pastor Mark served as Vicar Mark for two years at both churches and will become their fulltime servant of God as our neighbor. We congratulate our two sister churches on having called Pastor Mark and look forward to a wonderful partnership in ministry.

### 2011 OFFERING ENVELOPES

We are getting ready to order offering envelopes for next year. If you **do not** want offering envelopes or choose not to use them, please notify the church office ASAP. **Reminder:** Printed envelopes are NOT necessary for credit to be given to the giver. Any personalized check or note attached to cash is all that is needed. Offering statements are mailed after September 30th and December 31st each year.

### THE BACKPACK CLUB!!!

What a success!! The kids and their families appreciate them, the volunteers enjoy putting them together and folks are giving to make even more backpacks available to feed hungry kids and their families on the weekends. If you would like to help, the cost of one backpack for a family of four for 34 weeks is \$200. You can do half a backpack or a quarter, if you want. If you would like to help fill the backpacks, come at 6 pm Thursday nights to the church. It takes only 15-20 minutes to help fill 20 packs. Fundraisers and other gifting opportunities are planned to help support and expand this wonderful program. Our goal is 75 families and I know this community can make it happen!!!

Luther Memorial is sponsoring a **4-person Golf Tournament on October 2nd at the Syracuse Country Club**. There will be a 9 am shotgun start and the entry fee is \$40, which includes a cart, lunch, door prizes and fun!!! All proceeds will go to the Backpack Club. For more information, please contact Bill Schulte (269-2980) or the church office. Come join in the fun and help the Backpack Club!!!!



### OCTOBER IS PASTOR APPRECIATION MONTH



The first thoughts that come to me when I think of appreciation are to be grateful, to regard highly and to hold in esteem. As you think over those words of appreciation, there is probably an event or happening that comes to your mind. You may have thoughts and memories of times that either Pastor Paul or Pastor Mike is present in your lives as a hand of support or spiritual guidance of hope. They are here for us in good times, when we experience sorrow, and to laugh with us in our joys. Pastor Paul and Pastor Mike are here to help us understand and give us hope as we live our lives. They are among us each Sunday to give us guidance for the coming week with the Holy Spirit present in prayer and words that explain the God that we adore.

As you meet or congregate with Pastor Paul or Pastor Mike, please remember October is the one month of the year that we should take the time to say "**Thank you**" for all that you two do!!

Lay Ministry Committee

# SEPTEMBER 2010 CHURCH COUNCIL NEWS

Highlights of September 20, 2010

- Haiti mission trip was presented by Pastor Bostrom of Sheridan Lutheran in Lincoln. The trip will be this winter. If interested in learning additional details contact Bev Sporhase.
- Additional money has been raised for 10 more backpacks for the Backpack program.
- An additional bid for sidewalk repairs was submitted by DH Construction from Lincoln. It was suggested to get input from BVH as to how much should be replaced. Cheryl Halvorsen will contact BVH.
- Andy Brace was nominated to be on the Audit Committee.
- The following people were nominated to be on the Nomination Committee: Bill Wirth, Bev Sporhase, Jim Pfeiffer, Rhae Werner and Pastor Paul Coen.
- The third quarter Benevolence payment will be made for 2010 in the amount of \$7044.95.
- Youth Council Representatives will be Micah Buller and Tim Jensen.

Next Council meeting will be October 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Wirth, Vice President



## MOVIE, TV & BOOK REVIEWS

By Paul Coen, Senior Pastor

**"LETTERS TO GOD"**  
Rated PG

on DVD  
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This movie is about a boy who has brain cancer and decides he wants to talk to God via the mail. The postman sees his letters and brings them to the postmaster who decides to answer them the best he can, inviting many others to assist him in responding to the boy's letters. The postman is kind of like an angel and well, you can guess who the postmaster is! This is a little known, but great movie. I highly recommend this one!!!

**"Prince of Persia"**  
Rated PG-13

on DVD  
\*\*

Not to be confused with *Prince of Egypt*, this film comes out of a tale from *The Arabian Nights*. The story is about 3 brothers who are all Princes and because of an evil vizier, they are turned against each other. It is only through the passion of the youngest brother, the sacrifice of a beautiful princess and a magic dagger, that alter time, that harmony and the kingdom can be restored. Not a great movie but an entertaining one.

**"The Bible"** now in paperback and hard cover in bookstores everywhere.  
Rated G, PG, PG-13 and R \*\*\*\*

I am not joking here, it is a good book; not an easy read and it is best done in the company of others. I would highly recommend you start at the beginning, but if not choose some of the shorter books in the Old Testament, such as Ruth and Jonah or Philemon or Philippians in the New Testament. Some of the sections move slow and are hard to understand and some parts are not for children. Please don't read it like a history book, but see it more as a written family album. As you read this Book, let's talk about it!!!!