



The Messenger

*News about our church,
our ministries and our people*

May-June 2013

Living Waters Lutheran Church and Preschool

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The next issue of The Messenger will appear in July. Deadline for articles is June 21. See last page for details.

**Thanks,
Judy Johnson,
Editor and Publisher**

You're Invited to A Little Pomp and Circumstance May 31, 2013

Mark your calendar now to support the little ones graduating from our Preschool on Friday, May 31 at 5:30. The ceremony takes place in the our sanctuary and is always a fun and heartwarming event.

Let's make our support of the Preschool evident to all the parents and children. We love to hear them sing for our services; let's help them celebrate this day in their young lives. You are invited to attend.

Pictorial Directory Is Online

By Ellen Hanson

Our online pictorial directory is now up and functioning. Those of you who gave us permission to include you in this directory should have received a notice by email of your user name and password for entering the site. Just go to:

www.livingwaterslutheran.com and click on the member area. This will take you to the page where you will be able to sign in with the information you were sent.

Once you have entered the site you may change your user name and password and make any other changes. If you have any problems just let me know and I will try to help you. If you don't have an email address, you can still gain access to the site if you contact me for your user name and

password to be able to enter from any internet device.

For those of you who would like to sign up, you still can by filling out the form to request membership which is also on the log in page. Once that is sent in you will receive a user name and password and can follow the procedure as above.

Please be assured that all requests for access must be cleared by me before they can be issued a user name or password. I will be happy to put your directory picture on the site if you want me to, or you can upload a different one if you prefer. Hopefully you will find this online directory easy to use and helpful if you don't have your physical directory nearby.

You can contact me at:

highlandpines@centurytel.net or 715-296-2362.

A Message From the Pastor



Stewardship is faith in action...It is what I do after I have said, "I believe."

(T.A. Kantonen)

We are growing in our faith and in our stewardship.

As we know from reading 2 Corinthians, the reason Christians are generous givers is because "...their first action [is] to dedicate themselves to the Lord and to us for whatever direction God might give them" (2 Cor. 8:5). It is so exciting for me as a pastor to watch people grow spiritually.

Our Congregation President, Scott Hanson, sent a letter to everyone to inform you that the Slavic Baptist Church will no longer be using our church facility. This has a significant impact on our church finances.

In his letter, Scott summarized some actions that are being taken by the Council to address this situation. The Council has earmarked funds to make up for the projected income shortfall in 2013.

Looking ahead, the Council plans to base future budgets on the actual offering income received the previous year. If needed, the pastor's salary will be reduced to 50%. The Council is launching a major marketing initiative to help people know about Living Waters and to help people find us.

Since Scott's letter was mailed, the Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) has taken additional steps to make sure Living Waters is moving forward in the right direction. The LRPC is asking the Finance Team to develop proposed budgets for the next three years.

The LRPC has also developed an outline of "steps" to help the newly organized Council

ministry teams align so everyone is working on a common set of goals.

This plan will incorporate goals for each ministry team, based on the needs and opportunities identified by the proposed budgets for the next three years. The LRPC is also planning a month-long program in the fall of 2013 to bring the congregation on board with our exciting new clarity about our mission and ministry.

Also, since Scott's letter was mailed, four members of our Long Range Planning Committee attended a gathering of local ELCA congregations to discuss possible ways to work together to make us strong and better equipped for outreach.

I was greatly encouraged by attending this meeting because it really made it clear to me what excellent leadership we have at Living Waters at this time. The next meeting of this group is scheduled to be on August 6 at Living Waters. Whatever direction others may take, more than ever, I am convinced that the leaders of Living Waters have a healthy and realistic outlook and they are taking positive steps to make sure that our congregation has an outstanding future.

Recently, I read that "Hope without a plan is denial." How true! We have hope because God has blessed us with leaders who have put together the beginning of a good solid plan.

In June, a mailing will be sent to everyone with a statement of your financial contributions for 2013. We hope this will be helpful to you as information. Also, we ask you to please dig deep and keep up your financial support for Living Waters through the next six months of "summer" in North Port. (cont. Page 3)

From the Pastor, cont.

In addition to your contribution to support The General Fund (that is, the budget), please consider making an extra gift to the new Marketing Initiative. The Council has pledged to match dollar-for-dollar (from the endowment fund) the first \$2,500 that is given for the purpose of marketing.

Finally, a word to those of you who are “on the move” as the seasons change. As you head back up north for the summer—or as you make other travel plans for the summer—be assured you are in our prayers.

Thank you for being part of all that we do. Remember, the work of our Lord at Living Waters goes on through the summer. Whatever you can do to help us with our financial expenses will be greatly appreciated.

Blessings and have a safe and refreshing summer with family and friends wherever you are.

In Christ,
Pastor Dell

Blessed to be a Blessing

Our Motto: *Sharing Christ in Word and Deed*

Our Vision: *Sharing God's Love in Word and Deed by Praising God and Serving The Community*

Our Core Values: *Love God and Neighbor; God's Will, Not Our Own; Good Stewardship; Openness to Change and New Ideas; Flexibility*

Our Three Commitments: *Commitment to Christ, Commitment to the Body of Christ and Commitment to the Work of Christ in North Port and Beyond*

Our Ministry Process: *Grow in Membership, Involvement and Stewardship*

Doing Good
Doesn't
"Just Happen"

Prayer Shawl Ministry

By Char DeWitt

The Prayer Shawl Ministry will keep its regular schedule throughout the summer months. We meet on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month from 4:00 to 5:30.

Jane Fundyga, along with the prayer shawl members, has been busy with a special project for Mother's Day. We're working on Father's Day gifts as well.

We continue to knit and crochet prayer shawls for those who are ill, are struggling with grief, those newly baptized, and those who deserve a special blessing. If you know of someone who would benefit by receiving a prayer shawl, please call the office and we will do our best to honor every request.

Red Cross Training for Host Shelters

Red Cross Training Class is available for volunteers at Risk Shelters. If you are interested, please sign-up in the church narthex or contact the church office.

Living Waters is a Host Shelter with the American Red Cross. Host Shelters are facilities that can be used when people have to be temporarily sheltered after a disaster, such as a fire, flood, or hurricane.

News From Your Long Range Planning Committee

By David Lanning

The Long Range Planning Committee (LRPC) is preparing a plan for a congregational review of the Mission Statement. This review will be in the Fall during October. The purpose of the review is to engage all the members of the Congregation in becoming invigorated with the concept of the Living Waters Lutheran Church Mission and to fully embrace the Mission Statement and to learn how to live it.

In addition, the LRPC is developing a process which includes "Steps" that individuals take toward the living the Mission. These steps are defined as involvement that each member normally has in our church ministries.

The process that is being developed will include keeping records of an individual's steps and include specific Council Director and Team assignments to follow these records,

giving encouragement and assistance to the individual as appropriate. The focus is to grow the Church and to add some excitement as we note our progress.

In addition, to help with the establishment of goals together with our Mission, the LRPC is recommending to the Council that Estimated Budgets be prepared right now. These budgets are to include a three year plan in which the Pastor's salary is at least 66% of his full time position. This information will be compared with our known present income. Goals of membership growth and giving can then be established.

Throughout this process you can expect to be kept informed. And you also should expect to play a role in helping Living Waters emerge as an even stronger church.

A New Protocol

By Gayle Backiel

If your small group or team has an idea for a fund-raising or fellowship event or maybe an event to bring people to our church, we now have an Event Request protocol in place. First there is a form on line at our website, livingwaterslutheran.com. Click on Info Center. Then on the drop down window, click on fund raising, fellowship and evangelical event form. Click on PDF Fund Raising form and print it. Second, please fill out the form and submit it to the church council at least 6 weeks before you would like to have your event. This gives you time to get approval from the council, get it scheduled on the calendar, see if other groups or individuals would like to help or get involved and help ensure a successful event.



Many thanks to the congregation for your generous response to the April 14 appeal for **A Special Time**, our adult Alzheimer's respite program. Your generosity totaled **\$1,261!** Your support of this important ministry is deeply appreciated.

Facing Our Current Reality

By Judy Johnson

No matter how many silly jokes we can come up with about how Lutherans don't like change, the fact is, change is upon us as a church. Churches can either hide from change and let it sweep them into whatever place it chooses for them or they can face change and proactively and prayerfully choose their direction and destiny. We are choosing the latter.

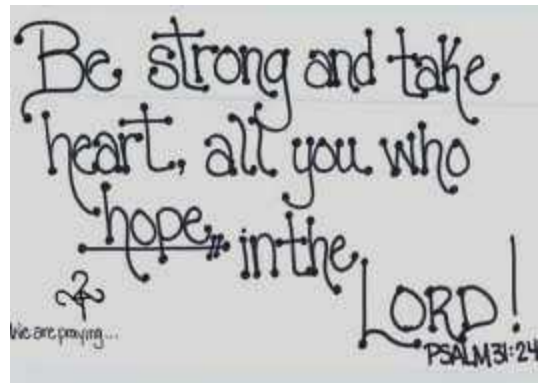
As Pastor mentioned in his "From the Pastor" column, four members of our Long Range Planning Committee attended a "gathering of local ELCA congregations to discuss possible ways to work together to make us strong and better equipped for outreach." Scott Hanson, Judy Johnson, David Lanning and Pastor Shiell shared thoughts and ideas with others in focused, round-table discussions. Five of the seven ELCA churches within an approximate 15-mile radius of the 34287 zip code, including Living Waters, are considered to be struggling congregations.

The discussion topics centered on three general issues: exploring the possibility of ministry collaboration; voicing fears about collaboration;



ELW 640:

"Our Father, by whose name all parenthood is known, in love divine you claim each family as your own. Bless mothers, fathers, guarding well, with constant love as sentinel, the homes in which your people dwell."



and assessing each church's desire to pursue ways to collaborate. A meeting facilitator not associated with any of the churches or the synod led the discussion. Some agreed that we should explore the possibilities while others didn't share a great amount of interest. Those who are interested will convene again at Living Waters in August.

There is no way to predict at this time what avenues of collaboration will emerge from these discussions. But this we do know: the leadership of Living Waters is committed to finding ways to get us through these troubled times and we are assuming that each person who is a part of Living Waters shares that commitment.

Did I hear an Amen?

Ephesians 6: 1-3:

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother—which is the first commandment with a promise—that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on earth."



LW Council Highlights

By Scott Hanson

This month your council members were presented with the task of dealing with the news of the loss of rental income from the Slavic Baptist Church. For seven years they have rented our church for their worship services. The loss of income resulted in numerous hours of discussion, researching alternatives and praying for direction.

As outlined in my Congregational Letter of April 15, we are to applaud the Council for deciding to take a positive and aggressive approach in working through the problem. The

Council has decided to implement a Marketing Plan designed to target membership growth and overall church awareness. Additionally, several strategic financial changes have been implemented. Please refer to the details as described in my letter.

I am extremely confident that we will address these issues and enjoy increased growth in all aspects of our church. It is now more important than ever to ask for your support during this time. Obviously your financial commitment is critical, but your *time and talent commitments* are equally important. We have so many activities for you to become involved and lend your inter-

est and expertise. This is going to be a wonderful time to be active in the life of Living Waters.

Coupled with our efforts of growth, the Long Range Planning Committee is working on methods to involve the entire congregation in understanding our *Mission and Vision*. Over the coming months, you will be interested to learn of the "Steps" to help grow our church.

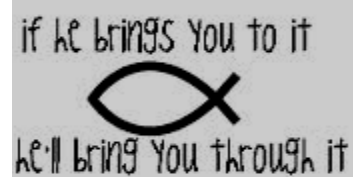
As we move forward remember, ***"The task ahead of us is never as great as the Power behind us."***

FINANCIAL FOCUS.....

from the Stewardship and Financial Teams

Giving during this time of the year is usually on the "up-side." However, over the next few months, giving is historically lower than in the winter (*We love our snowbirds!*). We are hopeful that the congregation will continue in its strong financial generosity over the summer and throughout the year.

Please let us know if you have any questions about Special Offerings or any of the many Designated Giving opportunities at Living Waters.



Adult Bible Study Resumes in May

Our popular Adult Bible study resumes on Sunday, May 5 at 9:00am. During our summer schedule we move this great experience from Monday evenings to Sunday mornings.

Preschool News and VBS Schedule

By Susan D'amico

We are starting May with 16 VPK students and 11 3/4 year olds. We are preparing the children for our Graduation ceremony scheduled for May 31 at 5:30pm.

Our Summer program begins June 3. We are anticipating about 12 children attending during the summer.

VBS will be the week of June 17-21. This will be for 2-6 year olds.

Sunday Servants—May 2013

Please check the schedule to verify the days you will be a Sunday Servant. If there is a blank space, please consider signing up to help out. The sign-up book is on the table in the Narthex. **There is a new position – Welcome Host – to give a special name tag to first-time visitors and to hand out a LW Welcome Packet.** June Sunday Servants are not yet scheduled.

Function	May 5	May 12	May 19	May 26
Ushers (4)	W. Wilcox			
	V. Wilcox			
Altar Guild (1)	M. Keleher	M. Keleher	M. Keleher	M. Keleher
Counters (2)	A. Banks	K. Grant	L. Ertle	B. Cartwright
	J. Parcels	M. Savard	M. Savard	J. Pauley
Lay Reader (1)	B. Bruno	P. Keller	V. Biassi	
Comm. Asst. (1)	C. Cortese	P. Dinges		
Greeter (2)	T. Hernandez	T. Hernandez	T. Hernandez	T. Hernandez
Welcome Host (1)				
Fellowship				
Set up (1-2)				
Clean up (2/more)				
Nursery (1)	B. Dreschel	M. Savard	B. Doss	D. Lanning
PowerPoint	C. Helland	N. Van Harn	K. Bridegam	D. Lanning

On a personal note...

Happy Birthday To These Members

If your name has been omitted from this list or the date is in error, please contact the church office to make the correction.

*Happy
Birthday!*

May 4 Ed Hauk, Anthony Moreno

May 12 Karen Feldmann, Bob Colvin,
David Parcels

May 13 Dolores Ryder

May 17 Cortney Helland, Ginger Ulrich

May 18 Katelyn Moreno

May 19 Samantha Didonato

May 26 Mary Misora

May 28 Rose Lapprich

May 29 Bunny Olsen

June 2 Dale Helland

June 3 Kathy Grant

June 4 Judy Johnson

June 6 Bud Bauer

June 11 Bill Wakefield

June 17 Jose Hernandez

June 21 Kari Reece

June 24 Sandy Cox

June 26 Barb Bruno, Heidi Fortin

June 28 Marilyn Keleher, Dru Munson

Watch out...

The R.O.M.E.O.S

are coming...



**Student Music Recital at
Living Waters**

On Saturday, May 11, 1:30—4:00, our sanctuary will be the site of a music recital featuring the students of local music instructor, Debbie Dale.

The Messenger is published monthly by Living Waters Lutheran Church with printed copies distributed the first Sunday of each month. Copies are also available at: www.livingwaterslutheran.com and via email distribution.

To have information included in the newsletter, please write your content and send it to Judy Johnson: j3john@comcast.net. Articles must be submitted by the 21st of each month for publication the following month and may be edited. Pictures are not printed.

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Office Hours: 9:00am-Noon, Mon. - Thurs.

If you have questions about our church, its ministries or about becoming a member, please contact Pastor Dell Shiell via email at: pastor@livingwaterslutheran.com