



The Messenger

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

September 2013

Living Waters Lutheran Church and Preschool

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

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

LW Mission Review Coming in October

Quick—what's the mission of Living Waters? The vision? Our core values? Those three commitments that Pastor mentions every Sunday as we begin worship? And what do they really mean anyway? During the month of October, we will have mission minutes each Sunday to review these statements and provide an opportunity for congregational feedback on them. These brief and thought provoking messages will fold into our annual Stewardship Drive for 2014. This is your church. Be sure to take part.

Introducing Pastor Charles and Connie Plaster

We welcome the Plasters, our Guest Pastor for the middle of September. They are in the process of moving from Superior, Wisconsin to Richfield, Minnesota, a suburb of Minneapolis, as Pastor Charlie officially retires on October 1, 2013.

He is a graduate of St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN and Luther Seminary, St. Paul, and has served a congregation in Parish-Rock Falls, Wisconsin, plus churches in Valley City and Parish-Hampden, both in North Dakota. He currently serves as Interim Pastor for Concordia Lutheran, Superior, Wisconsin. He has participated in numerous training and continuing education programs throughout his ministry. He says he takes his work seriously...but not himself.

Pastor Plaster has been involved in community and ministry programs for feeding the hungry, food pantries, curriculum review for a school district, a nursing home board, after school care, a community concert association, and a Kiwanis Club. His hobbies are reading and exercising.

Connie has enjoyed a career as a radiologic technologist. Her hobbies are sewing, quilting, photography and listening to good music.

The Plasters have two children and two grandchildren.

We extend a warm welcome to them as they join us for a few weeks and we look forward to their time with us.



A Message From the Pastor

Commitments

Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act. (Psalm 37:5)

*A Great Commitment to The Great Commandment and
The Great Commission will grow a Great Church. (Rick Warren)*

I never tire of reminding myself—and anyone else who will listen—that there is a huge difference between the Christian Faith and the Christian Life. So much that we say and do as Christians and as the Church is easily misunderstood, unless we are clear about the distinction between Faith and Life. This is especially true when it comes to the matter of “Commitment.”

The faith that saves us is our faith in God and God’s commitment to us in Jesus Christ. As Christians—and as the Church—our commitment is always a response to God.

We love because God first loved us.

We strive to live the good life—the *worthy life*—because the Holy Spirit first *called, gathered, enlightened, and sanctified* us, creating and sustaining our faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior and our Lord.

It is crucial to keep this in mind when you hear the repeated reminder that we, at Living Waters, place special emphasis on three commitments—our commitment to Christ, our commitment to the Body of Christ, and our commitment to the work of Christ in North Port and beyond.

Our commitments do not save us, from the perspective of eternity. This salvation comes from God alone. The cross of Christ—the anchor of our faith—secures this salvation for us.

However, our commitments do make a huge difference for life in the here and now. They emerge from our identity as the redeemed children of God—and as people of faith.

Who we are determines how we live. As those bound for heaven, we strive for a certain way of living here on earth. We strive to live as the redeemed children of God.

As people of faith, we strive to “commit our way to the Lord.”

And we do so, trusting God to take care of us, “to act”—all the while that we strive to love God with our whole being and to love others as we love ourselves.

Please keep this in mind the next time you struggle with the challenge—and the risk—of living out your commitment as a Christian.

*In Christ,
Pastor Dell*

New Member Orientation Class September 25, 2013

Join others who are interested in becoming a member of Living Waters at this special session. Learn about our church, the Lutheran faith, discover your spiritual gifts, and how you can become involved in our ministries. Call the church office to register.



It's More Than Dinner...

By Jody Shelton



It's been a few months since the Outreach Ministry has checked in and sent you some updates. The Kitchen Gang is excited to announce that Adeline and Peter Banks have stepped up to hand out bread and pastries on Thursdays. Dennis and Debbie Stankiewicz have been picking up the goods from Publix on Wednesday evening and delivering them to the church on Thursdays. What a blessing they are and we thank them so much! We are happy to report that we continue to receive enough bread and pastries to keep sharing with Willow Creek Apartments. They are grateful for this ministry.

The dinners are averaging around 60-75 people each time. Larry made 113 grilled cheese sandwiches for one of the August dinners; they were really good! Kris and her sister, Karen, are getting the chicken dinners down to a science. They made a mean pasta salad last month that was gone in 35 minutes! We are always getting new faces in and they are all grateful for the warm meal, clothes, toiletries, bread and pastries. The "word" through the community grapevine is "they love our food and friendship the best here at Living Waters." So you should all be proud of yourselves for supporting those of us who are working this ministry. We all thank you from the bottom of our hearts for the food and monetary donations that continue to come in.

Larry and I just did a Sam's run and filled the freezer with meat again. We give God the praise for it all. Please come join us anytime; it is a very awesome night of fellowship. You never know what's gonna happen next or who we may sing Happy Birthday to.

The bike ministry has given out 43 bikes total.

The good news is that Ron, who was running the bike ministry, has now been able to get himself a vehicle and rent a house, so he has stepped back from the ministry. Larry has now been bringing the bikes to our house and giving them a new paint and oil job! We thank Ron for giving back when he himself was receiving!

We have lost three of our friends, but we know they were called home to be with the Lord and we are so grateful to have met and been a part of their lives. One man's daughter, from out of state, was given a prayer shawl from our church and was so touched to know that her father had friends here at Living Waters while he was alive. I have delivered dinners to one family in which the Mom is going through a battle with cancer and they are not able to get here on Thursdays. I walked in last Thursday with a big old chocolate cake and she hugged me and said: "Ms. Jody, how did you know? I have been looking for something chocolate all day?"

We are always looking for continued support of food, clothes, bikes, bike parts, toiletries [we could use some mosquito repellent for some of our outdoor friends] and helpers at the dinners. So don't forget to sign up and come join us for some good times. We thank you in advance.

Blessings, Jody & The Kitchen Gang

How You Can Help:

Donate food.....Donate money
And especially...donate your time to help
set up, serve and clean up. Sign up sheet
is on the table in the Narthex.

Meet Your Council Members

By Scott Hanson

Editor's Note: This month, the featured Council Member is Scott Hanson, Council President.

It is both a privilege and pleasure to serve as the congregational president of Living Waters. This responsibility comes at an exciting yet challenging time for our church. As I have indicated on several occasions, we are battling many issues....from financial growth.... to increasing our congregation size..... to impacting our community with our mission commitments. All of these items may sometimes appear to be negative on the surface, but with the energy and enthusiasm of our Church Council, we have all agreed to take a positive and forward thinking approach to meet the tasks at hand. We have seen tremendous backing and support from the entire congregation as we move forward.

As president, you are forced to wear several hats from creating and balancing budgets, handling insurance issues, leading Council and Executive Council meetings as well as serving on the Long Range Planning Committee and Stewardship Teams. Yes, there is definite hair thinning occurring from switching hats!!

One of the interesting situations is holding our various meetings. As we are all aware, "snowbirds" make up a significant portion of our congregation. The same goes for your Council. So, throughout our summer Council meetings, we have been using a video-conferencing technique which allows us to be "live" from any location! Each meeting is held in two different time zones and at four different locations! I'll start the meeting from our resort office in Hayward, WI, Gayle will join from "her porch" in the Carolinas, David is in his den in New Hampshire, and the rest are at the church in Florida. It is truly amazing how convenient this has been for us.

On a personal note, I thought I would give you a little background of our family. You already know that Ellen is on the Council and serves as our Marketing Director. She was born and raised in the small town of Allison, in north central Iowa. I was born in Chicago and moved around to several states while growing up. Ellen and I were married in Minneapolis and shortly thereafter moved to Hayward, WI, where we own and operate Highland Pines Resort.

A few years ago we became "snowbirds" and purchased a home in Port Charlotte. We spend five months "up north" and seven "down south"!

We have two daughters, Katie and Kristi. Katie is women's basketball coach at Lenoir Rhyne, a Lutheran university in Hickory, North Carolina. Kristi is in commercial real estate in Charlotte, North Carolina. Kristi and her husband Jason have blessed our family with our first grandson last year...Emmett. On the fun side, we are avid golfers, fishermen and of course Green Bay Packer fans.

The upcoming fall and winter will be an exciting time for Living Waters. The Council and their teams have planned for several new events and happenings. With a strategic emphasis on new member growth, we anticipate seeing many new faces. We can hardly wait for what our new members will bring with their *time and talents*.

Please take a moment to consider how you might become even more involved in our church family. I know that you will enjoy the "good feeling" you will receive when using the gifts that you have been given.



Women of the ELCA Fall Gathering

You are invited to our **Fall Gathering** at Lake Yale, Leesburg, Florida on **November 8-10** (Friday evening through Sunday afternoon). This women's retreat includes workshops, fellowship, worship services, Bible study, fun, rest, great food and hotel-style accommodations.

We will carpool from Living Waters on Friday morning (Nov. 8) at 9am. The rooms are double occupancy so bring a friend or relative. The registration forms for overnight accommodations, workshop list, workshop registration and all the particulars can be found online at www.flwelca.com, click on Fall Gathering and print your forms.

You may also contact Sheri Moehling 429-1552 or Kris Dines at the church office for the forms and further information about the retreat. Deadline for sending in registration forms is October 15, 2013.



Theme for the Retreat: God's Peace
Please come and join us
Women's Board; Mid-Gulf
Conference Board



The Seven Holy Habits

1. Pray daily
2. Worship weekly
3. Read the Bible daily
4. Serve in ministry
5. Relate in a small group
6. Give a tithe
7. Share your faith

Supplement Your Income As You Support Living Waters: The Charitable Gift Annuity

A Charitable Gift Annuity is an easy way to supplement your income, at the same time as supporting the ministry of Living Waters through The Living Waters Fund.

A Charitable Gift Annuity provides income to you for the rest of your life. All this requires is a gift of \$10,000—or more—and very little paperwork. Living Waters works with two community foundations that handle the administration of your Charitable Gift Annuity—The Lutheran Community Foundation and Gulf Coast Community Foundation of Venice.

Your Charitable Gift Annuity contract includes the promise to pay you (or up to two people) an income at a fixed annual rate. This interest

rate varies, based on your age(s) at the time the contract is made. Your income is guaranteed for life. At your death, The Living Waters Fund receives the remainder of the annuity's value.

Here are some examples of the current interest rates (annuity payout rates) for a Charitable Gift Annuity:

- Margaret, age 65, 4.7%
- Tom, age 80, 6.7%
- Lois, age 75, 5.8%
- Jean, age 87, 8.2%

Contact Pastor Dell and Diane Shiell for the one-page application for your Charitable Gift Annuity today.

In Christ,
Pastor Dell and Diane Shiell

A Special "Thank You"

By Adeline Banks

Joanne Bligh has been a dedicated volunteer to Living Waters for many years, serving the church and congregation in many different capacities. One of her areas of service has been to organize and manage our Altar flowers. Now, due to health reasons, she has had to relinquish that duty. We wish God's blessings on her and her husband, John, and send the appreciation of all her friends at Living Waters for all her years of service.

I have agreed to take over this responsibility. The procedure for ordering flowers remains the same.

To purchase flowers for the Altar:

1. Sign the flower calendar chart in the Narthex for the date you wish the flowers placed.
2. Below the chart is an envelope to place the amount of \$20 for each arrangement. This can be cash or check made out to Living Waters. Up to three arrangements may be ordered for a Sunday.

3. A form provided there must be completed and placed inside the envelope. Information needed is: name of donor; in memory/honor of; color desired and date desired.

4. The envelope can be placed in the holder under the chart, taken to the church office or given to Adeline Banks. Flowers are purchased at North Port Natural Florist.

5. On the date that your flowers are placed, they may be picked up after the last service in the sacristy.



Flowers not taken are delivered to a shut-in or nursing home. Altar flowers always enhance our Worship Service and glorify God. They also give the congregation a opportunity to remember someone or something special in their lives.

Questions, see Adeline Banks or call 941-275-0438.

A Back To School Prayer

Dear God,

As another year of school begins, we ask your blessing on all who will do the very important work of being students. Bless them with:

Eagerness to learn, that their world may grow large;

Respect for teachers and students, that they may form healthy relationships;

Love for nature, that they may become caretakers of your creation;

Happiness when learning is easy and stick-to-it-iveness when it is hard;

Faith in Jesus as their best teacher and closest friend.

Protect all of them, watch over them and keep them safe. As they learn, help them also to discover the different gifts that You have given each one of them to be used in Your work in the world. As they hear the many voices that will fill their days, help them to listen most carefully for Your voice, the one that tells them
You will love them always, no matter what.

In Jesus' Name, Amen

Excerpted from Sundays and Seasons

Mid-Gulf Conference Funding New Position in Haiti's Lutheran Church

The congregations of the Mid-Gulf Conference have committed to fund the ministry of a new staff position in the Lutheran Church of Haiti for three years. The position is that of mission team coordinator and director of communications, and the lay leader holding it is Jorel Carter.

With grant funding from Lutheran Disaster Response in the aftermath of the 2010 earthquake having come to an end, *L'Eglise Lutherienne d'Haiti* (ELH) is seeking new ways to work with its Lutheran partners in securing support for its pastors and ministry teams.

At a Mid-Gulf Conference meeting on June 1, Pr. Steve Winemiller (Faith/Sarasota), who has led or facilitated numerous mission trips to Haiti before and since the hurricane, noted that the disaster funding had ended. He proposed that the conference step up to help with one particular area of outreach.

"Pr. Steve's congregation and, especially, Emmanuel Lutheran in Venice have long supported Pr. Joseph Livenson Lauvanus," Pr. Rosemary Wheeler Backer, co-dean of the Mid-Gulf Conference, said. Pr. Livenson, who was elected the first president of the *ELH*, has spoken at synod assemblies and national gatherings and at many Florida-Bahamas congregations.

"Several members of the Florida-Bahamas Synod's Haiti Task Force are from Mid-Gulf," Pr. Rosemary (Gloria Dei/Holmes Beach) added. "Several conference pastors visited the island in the year following the earthquake." She was one of them.

On that trip, the pastors met Jorel in his

home in Port-au-Prince. "It was a home filled with hospitality, music and thanksgiving, even though it had

no secure front door," Pr. Mark Bernthal (St. Armands Key/Sarasota) recalled. "He is a man with a servant's heart!"

After discussion as to how the conference might support the new position for Jorel Carter, a proposal was taken back to the Mid-Gulf congregations. In a few weeks, commitment had been secured to fund the new *ELH* staff position for three years at \$6,000 per year, with payment to be made on a quarterly basis starting Aug. 1.

"With Haiti being the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere before the earthquake, the needs are enormous," Pr. Mark said. "The Lutheran Church of Haiti is poised to share the good news of God in Jesus Christ while standing in solidarity with the people of Haiti."

The *ELH* under Pr. Livenson's leadership "has laid a solid foundation for continuing, strengthening and growing the church's ministries," Pr. Mark continued. "Adding Jorel to the staff for coordinating visiting servant teams and administering the guest housing will fill an important need."

Serving as an ambassador from the *ELH*, Jorel Carter will be available to visit congregations in Florida and beyond to share the story of the church's ongoing mission and ministry in rebuilding Haiti. He expects to be in Florida in November.

"Mid-Gulf congregations have a history of supporting the Lutheran Church of Haiti," Pr. Mark said. "This project is a wonderful next step."



Sunday Servants ~ September 2013

Please check the schedule to verify the days you will be a Sunday Servant.

Where you see a blank space, please consider signing up to help out.

The sign-up book is on the table in the Narthex.

Function	Sept. 1	Sept. 8	Sept. 15	Sept. 22	Sept. 29
Usher (4)	Needed for each Sunday				
Altar Guild (1)	C. Cortese	C. Cortese	C. Cortese	C. Cortese	C. Cortese
Counter (2)	A. Banks	K. Grant	L. Ertle	B. Cartwright	M. Savard
	J. Parcels	M. Savard	M. Savard	J. Pauley	
Lay Reader (1)	R. Fundyga	V. Biassi	J. Johnson		P. Keller
Comm. Assist. (1)	Needed for each Sunday				
Greeter (2)	J. and T. Hernandez	M. and D. Poe	J. and T. Hernandez	J. and T. Hernandez	J. Hernandez
Host (1)					
Fellowship	B. Drechsel		B. Drechsel		
set up					
clean up					
Nursery (1)	B. Doss	B. Drechsel	D. Ryder	D. Mendez	T. Hernandez
PowerPoint (1)	M. Savard	C. Helland	D. Mendez	K. Grant	L. Shelton

On a personal note...

Happy Birthday

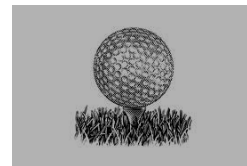
If your name has been omitted from this list of members or the date is in error, please contact the church office to make the correction. Consider making a connection with a member by sending a birthday card.

Sept. 1 Ed DeMeritt
Sept. 2 Ron Leeper
Sept. 3 Daryl Mendez
Sept. 4 Rick Backiel
Sept. 5 Sean Bozich
Sept. 11 Ellen Hanson, Lois Ertle
Sept. 12 Bill Carlock
Sept. 13 Joanne Carlock
Sept. 18 Pat Keller
Sept. 19 Betty Drechsel
Sept. 28 Mary Catherine Leeper
Doug Grant
Sept. 29 Gary Swanson

"May the good Lord bless you."

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.



Annual Preschool Golf Tournament

**Saturday, November 2, 2013
Heron Creek**

Mark your calendar now to reserve this date so you can participate in our annual Preschool Golf Tournament fund raiser. All levels of golfers are welcome to participate in this fun event. Round up a foursome or sign up to join a group. Details later.



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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