

*The Eagle - St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
Jersey Shore, Pennsylvania*

Pastors Message August/September 2010

Recently I read an article from the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Gettysburg that went like this: *“Why am I still here? Why am I still alive? What purpose is there in my life?”* Over the course of his ministry, JB has seen a great many people wrestling with questions like these. JB compares such struggles to the long night Jacob spent wrestling on a river bank with an opponent who is finally revealed to be the presence of God (Genesis 32:22-31). About the role of the pastoral caregivers who are called to be with people suffering through long, dark nights, JB shares this reflection: *“I think that the only way that we can help the other person is to be willing to go through it with them. It requires a spiritual presence grounded in God that is comfortable with the uncertainty, and trusts that God is present in this holy struggle.”* JB’s reflection got me thinking about the first time I went into a room where a woman had just passed away. I was in my session of Clinical Pastoral Education. I remember the looks on the faces of her loved ones. There I stood – a seminarian unsure of what in the world I was to do in this situation. After a few moments, my mouth began to move and the words, *“Our Father, who art in heaven,”* began to flow. When the prayer ended with *“Amen,”* the family looked at me with sadness and confusion. I then said a prayer asking for the comfort of the family and left. Two weeks later I received a call from the woman’s son asking me to be a part of her memorial service. His exact words to me were *“when we couldn’t pray, you could!”*

Several weeks ago I had a very humbling experience. I was at a nursing home visiting a resident when the wife of another resident, a member of another Lutheran congregation, I’ll call PD, saw me, and asked if I would visit her husband and pray with him. I obliged and did so. At various times members of St. John ask me to visit their relatives or friends who are hospitalized; however, I don’t like visiting members of other Lutheran congregations as they have their own Pastor to visit them. A couple weeks later I was back at the same nursing home, running behind with visits and having to get back to Jersey Shore for an appointment when I saw PD in the hallway. The first thought that came to my mind was that I was late, I had to visit so and so, I don’t have time to visit PD in the hallway. But he saw me and I stopped. He whispers in a soft unintelligible voice and I prayed with him. *“Our Father, who art in heaven...”* A few days later I get a thank you card in the mail from Mrs. PD thanking me for visiting her husband. She wrote: *“Thanking you for taking the time to visit PD. I knew it meant a lot to him that someone cares and takes the time. It’s more than our Pastor has done.”* I felt so ashamed of myself that I wanted to ignore him that day so I could meet the demands of my schedule. Maybe God was speaking to me that day to ease my schedule to be present with those in need and carry out God’s mission rather than my mission!

Pastor Aucker

ELCA Ministries Benefit from Thrivent Financial Member Vote

CHICAGO (ELCA) -- Three ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) will receive financial benefits thanks to members of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, a not-for-profit financial services membership organization based in Minneapolis. Thrivent members recently voted how they wanted to distribute \$1 million among 10 national charities through a new program called "Thrivent Choice," according to a June 1 Thrivent news release. Funds were distributed to the organizations based on the percentage of votes they received, the release said. A total of 150,199 members voted in the inaugural "Thrivent Choice Voting Event," between April 19 and May 21, the release said. Three ministries of the ELCA will receive a combined total of \$323,763: + \$147,242 to Lutheran Disaster Response, a collaborative ministry of the ELCA and The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) + \$145,345 to the ELCA World Hunger Program + \$31,176 to the Lutheran Malaria Initiative, a collaborative effort of the ELCA, the LCMS and Lutheran World Relief, in partnership with the United Nations Foundation, to mobilize Lutherans to fight malaria. "We are deeply appreciative of Thrivent members who voted for all of these worthy causes," said the Rev. Kevin A. Massey, director, Lutheran Disaster Response and ELCA Domestic Disaster Response. "Lutheran Disaster Response will put this gift to very good use responding to the needs of individuals, families and communities affected by disaster." The Rev. Daniel Rift, director, ELCA World Hunger Appeal, said the hunger program is grateful for the "help and hope" brought about as a result of the Thrivent initiative. "We estimate that by their selection over 48,000 members provided almost \$7 each for ELCA World Hunger or the complementing work of Lutheran Disaster Response and the Lutheran Malaria Initiative. Even more meaningful than these gifts are the votes of confidence and prayerful support of these members. That commitment and prayer for the work of the church is beyond measure," he said. "We're very appreciative to Thrivent and Thrivent Choice for these funds," said the Rev. Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl, coordinator, Lutheran Malaria Initiative, ELCA Office of the Presiding Bishop. "We look forward to greater recognition of the Lutheran Malaria Initiative as we roll out this initiative in the coming months." The 10 organizations and the total funds they received are: + LCMS World Relief and Human Care, \$192,122 + Lutheran Disaster Response, \$147,242 + ELCA World Hunger, \$145,345 + Habitat for Humanity International, \$114,212 + LCMS World Mission, \$112,315 + Feed My Starving Children, \$99,465 + American Heart Association, \$67,854 + Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) Committee on Relief - \$57,281 + WELS Humanitarian Aid Committee, \$32,987 + Lutheran Malaria Initiative, \$31,176. Thrivent Financial said it will launch a second aspect of Thrivent Choice later this summer called "Choice Dollars." "Eligible benefit members will be able to help direct funds to thousands of Lutheran nonprofit organizations, including Lutheran congregations," the release said. Thrivent members of St. John Lutheran are reminded to remember St. John as one of your choices to allocate your Thrivent dollars.

Lutheran Youth Lead Efforts to Fight Malaria, Build Awareness

CHICAGO (ELCA) -- Melanie Ferraro, a senior high school student, is working to get 1,600 of her peers to care about malaria -- a preventable, treatable disease that kills more than 1 million people a year. Ferraro, a member of Lutheran Church of Hope, Broomfield, Colo., said people her age can make a "difference for positive change." Lutheran Church of Hope is a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). In August 2009, the ELCA churchwide assembly authorized the continued development of the Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI) -- an initiative to educate U.S. Lutherans about malaria, advocate for global health initiatives and raise funds to help combat the disease. Ferraro began her effort shortly after the assembly's action. Members of the Lutheran Youth Organization (LYO) of the ELCA Rocky Mountain Synod "decided they would try to raise money to support LMI," Ferraro told the ELCA News Service. She said the LYO's goal is to raise \$75,000 by the synod's assembly next month. To date high-school-age Lutherans in the synod have received \$67,000 in commitments toward their goal. The synod assembly is May 27-29. The financial commitments started in November 2009 at the synod's senior high youth gathering in Estes Park, Colo., said Ferraro. "Each kid there was challenged to pledge \$100 and encourage congregations in the synod to pledge \$1,000," she said. "Although we can't see the effects our money may have in (fighting) the disease, it's been cool to see that kids in our synod are feeling empowered through the challenge," said Ferraro. "It's the youth taking leadership. They're saying, 'We can do this.' The energy among the kids has snowballed since the youth gathering. We made T-shirts for sale, with the proceeds going to LMI, and on the back of the shirt it says, 'I am the change.' This is very empowering. We're standing up for something, and it feels like we're leading the church." LMI is a partnership of the ELCA, The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and Lutheran World Relief. It is made possible in part through a partnership with the United Nations Foundation. Malaria is a mosquito-borne infectious disease, and it is a serious public health threat in Africa. One way to help prevent malaria is to sleep under a net, according to the Rev. Andrea DeGroot-Nesdahl, coordinator for LMI and the ELCA Strategy on HIV and AIDS, ELCA Office of the Presiding Bishop. Lutherans can purchase insecticide-treated bed nets and arrange for the nets to be delivered to someone in Africa through "Lutheran Nothing But Nets" at <http://lutheranmalaria.org/nets> on the Web. LMI is partnering with "Nothing But Nets" -- a grassroots campaign "to prevent malaria by raising awareness and funds to purchase and distribute bed nets and save lives," according to its Web site. In addition, to help bring awareness about malaria prevention, Nothing But Nets is hosting "Sleep Out to End Malaria" -- a national effort where participants sleep overnight April 24 under protective bed nets. The effort precedes "World Malaria Day" April 25. "Malaria is a daily crisis in the lives of our companion church members in Africa. Our engagement in the Lutheran Malaria Initiative is our way to fight and contain the disease," said DeGroot-Nesdahl.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: Thursday, August 19, 8:00 a.m. Volunteers are needed for painting at the Thrivent Lutheran Build for Habitat for Humanity house on Third Street near Brodart in Newberry. 51% of the home must be built by Lutherans from our congregations here in the West Branch Conference. So we need YOU! Contact Pastor, 748-4581, if you can help.

REMINDER: September 5, the 8:15 a.m. service will be moved up to 8:00 a.m. A simple coffee/snack/fellowship time will be held in the kitchen from 9:00 -9:15 a.m. Volunteers will be needed to offer hospitality during the fellowship time.

October 3, 6-8 p.m. **Catechism** will begin for all youth 6th grade or older who have not completed Catechetical Instruction. Classes will be held on the first and third Sunday of the month. An informational meeting for parents will be held during the Sunday school hour in the Chapel on September 12. If your child has not completed catechism class, please see Molly or the Pastor.

Bible Study – Monday morning Bible Studies will resume September 13 at 10:00 a.m. Our first session will be hosted by Gloria Ely on Washington Ave. Bring a covered dish and plates/silverware. We will be studying the book of Acts this Fall.

1st Place Honor – Our Scout Group was named 1st place in the July 8 Toron Parade. Congratulations.

St. John T-shirts – Our softball team recently received some beautiful T-shirts of St. John for \$11.00 each. Others have asked about getting a T-shirt, too, so Lynette Yost is taking orders. Please see Lynette for a T-shirt.

Seeking a Choir Director

St. John Lutheran is seeking a choir director(s) to lead its Sanctuary and Bell Choirs. Applicants should submit a resume to Dorothy McCracken, Music and Worship Chairperson.

West Branch Conference News

Pastor Jeffrey and Dawn Zetto, Bethany, Montoursville, has taken a call to Texas, to be near their daughter.

Vicar Becky Horn finished her year of internship at St. James on July 18 and returned to Gettysburg Seminary.

Vicar Gary Shumway will begin his year of internship at St. James on August 1st. He and his wife, Anita, have two children and a granddaughter.

We had over 130 in attendance for the first Joint Worship Service of our 5 Jersey Shore Area Churches on July 11, when we gathered at Garman Lutheran. The church was filled, with some standing. Many raved about how wonderful the music sounded with that many voices.

Leave a Legacy for Ministry and Mission: Would you like to make a gift to your congregation and/or favorite church charities but are not sure what your future financial needs will be? You can make charitable giving part of your will or you could simply change the beneficiary statement of an insurance policy, qualified retirement plan, commercial annuity, or bank or brokerage account. There are many ways you can make an estate gift to support your favorite church charity without sacrificing your personal financial security. For more information on how to include your favorite Church charities in your estate planning call Pr. Greg Kramer at the Lutheran Planned Giving Office at 570-374-2044 or call the ELCA Foundation, 800-638-3522, ext 2970 or visit our website at www.elca.org/fo.

Update on my Continuing Education. So what am I learning? While, I continue working on my Doctor of Ministry in Congregational Leadership and Mission, I started my third year in April and have been reading and writing papers weekly. This semester's theme is God and Church in public civil society. Or, in simpler terms, what impact do our churches have on the community around us? Such as, instilling moral values, building character, service, spiritual growth, reconciliation, social justice, healing? I have a week of classes July 26-29 and then a project to complete during August and September.

Attention all Committees/Ministries. Budget time is near. Every ministry is reminded to establish their goals/visions for their ministry and determine a budget amount for 2011 that would accomplish those goals. This is to be done at each ministry's August meeting and submitted to Jim Ely.

Lifeline screening results:

The results from the June 15, lifeline screening is as follows 74 people came to St. John Lutheran Church to be screened. 49 showed results within the normal range, 22 were moderate and 3 had findings of possible significance.

Weis Certificates

As a special fundraiser for church projects we are selling Weis Markets gift certificates each Sunday after worship or during office hours during the weekdays. You can buy \$10, 20, 50, 100 certificates. You pay \$10, take them to the store and use them like cash to buy \$10 worth of groceries. The church earns 5% from Weis Markets. While that may not seem like much, if 100 families in the congregation spend \$100 per week on groceries that 5% would add up to \$26,000 per year with very little effort other than buying and reselling them. It is a great way to support the ministries of St. John. They are also available during the week from Molly in the office.

Christian Ed meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 16th at 7:00 p.m.

We are in need of two teachers one for the 4 and 5th grade students and one for Pre teen class for the 2010-2011 school year. If you are interested in teaching please attend the scheduled meeting or call Gloria Ely at 398-2811.

Rally Day

September 12th is Rally Day. Sunday School kicks off the 2010-2011 school year with Rally Day. Special activities and games are being planned. Come out and regularly attend Sunday school to learn about God's love for us.

*Your Car.....Your Marriage
Both Run Smoother with a tune up!*

ATTENTION MARRIED COUPLES: Could your relationship use a tune up? The final Pennsylvania Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekend for 2010 is set for October 22-24 at the Radisson Hotel Sharon in Sharon, Pa, an hour north of Pittsburgh. Weekends are for ALL marriages, and offer a time to escape daily pressures and responsibilities to search out and discover a warmer, closer, more joyful relationship with each other. Weekends run from Friday night at 8 p.m. to Sunday at 5 p.m. All costs for 2 nights lodging, meals and supplies are covered by a \$45.00 per couple registration fee plus a confidential contribution of whatever amount you choose to make toward the end of the weekend. The Radisson in Sharon is a very popular location as the hotel boasts a lovely tropical atrium, and each room has a king bed and in-room hot tub; so don't delay, sign up today to avoid ending up on a waiting list.

To register, simply go to the website: www.GodLovesMarriage.org and sign up; or for questions or if you would like a brochure with registration form mailed to you, contact Pennsylvania Directors of Lutheran Marriage Encounter, Fred and Julie Schamber at 724-325-3166 or email: fjschamer@comcast.net

Remember our **Home bound members**

Elaine Braucht (Mar 11)
Heartland Retirement Home
PO Box 210 46 Elementary Lane
Woolrich PA 17779
Phone: 769-7317

Mary Jane Keller (Jan 25)
Epworth Manor
Room 418
951 Washington Ave
Tyrone, PA 16686

Manor Care

John Long
Manor Care North, Wmpst

Kathryn Welshans (Oct 22)
Sycamore Manor
1445 Sycamore Rd
Maple Corp Room 445
Montoursville, PA 17745

Phyllis Dinger (Sept 16)
Fulmer's Personal Care Home
201 Woodward Ave
Lock Haven, PA 17745
phone: 748-1829

Pat Newman
Heartland Retirement Home Room 1
PO Box 210 46 Elementary Lane
Woolrich PA 17779
phone: 769-6207

Maxine Seiffert
The Hillside Assisted Living Room 227
2725 Four Mile Drive
Montoursville PA 17754
phone: 322-4436

Remember those serving in the military
with your cards and prayers:

PFC Bilby, Daniel P
B Co 302D BSB
Unit #15052
APO AP 96224

LC Fredrikson, Cass
SNCOAPSC
Box 20166
Camp LeJeune NC 28542-0166

AR Jason L. Kreitz
3200 Hunters Road
SIR Apt. B
Fort Worth TX 76116

Benjamin Milarch
ITAM-AF, Bldg SA-8
APO AE 09322

Remember in prayer our college students:

Blair Aldridge, Penn State University, Johnstown
Chelsea Baier, Lock Haven University
Phillip Bergeman, Lock Haven University
Brandon DeLaney, Pennsylvania College of Technology
Steven Fox, Pennsylvania College of Technology
Jackie Gibson, Elmira College
Andy Hockenberry, Lock Haven University
Kari Anne Miller, Susquehanna University
Erica Motter, Lock Haven University
Matthew Myers, Pennsylvania College of Technology
Maddison Myers, Bloomsburg University
Nicole Yost, Mansfield University

Please contact the office with names and information on anyone we might have missed.

We are so proud of you!

Thank you to the members of Bethany Believers and St. John Lutheran Relay for Life teams. Both of these team were in the Top 5 Teams for raising the most money at the Jersey Shore Relay for Life Weekend that was held on May 7 and 8th.

Youth and Family Ministry

On June 13th following 10:30 a.m. service, pizza and rain the youth and their families (a group of 20) headed to the PA Grand Canyon and Zoo. When we arrived and so did our rain after and ice cream it was all dried up and we had a nice walk and visited the zoo. We then headed up to the Grand Canyon and after a short time in their exhibit room and a short walk down to look out at the canyon it started to rain again. We had a great time.

June 20 was Father's Day. The youth distributed chocolate bars to all to the Men of St. John in honor of Father's Day. The children's choir concluded their season by singing for us on Father's Day.

On July 6, 40 members of St. John signed up to ride the Hiawatha Paddleboat unfortunately when I went to purchase the tickets they were already sold out – We postponed our tour and don't forget make your own sundaes for Tuesday, August 17th.

On July 7, the youth and their parents and Pastor (12 in all) served dinner at Sojourner's Café in Williamsport. With special help from Gloria Ely we served a delicious dinner of Hamburg BBQ, potato salad, chips and cookies to around 50 hungry people. Thank you to all who helped serve our Community.

On July 31 – Youth Serve Breakfast at St. John. Please report at 8:00 a.m. We should be cleaned up and finished by 10:00 a.m. Help those less fortunate in our community by serving a hot meal.

August 4 – The Williamsport Crosscutters Present All Faith Night 2010. The game begins at 7:05 p.m. If you are interested in joining us to the game please contact Molly prior to July 18th.

August 8 – Blessing of the Keys Service. This is for all youth who have recently obtained their driver's license or anticipate applying for a permit in the coming year, join us for a special blessing upon you and your parents as you make this important step in your life.

August 10-12 – Trip to Ocean City, Maryland. If you are interested in going, please contact Molly or Pastor as soon as possible. Cost is \$30 under 18 years of age, \$40 over 18 years of age. We will be staying at St. Peters Lutheran Church located one block from the beach. Meals are on your own. There are still openings available. Please Contact Pastor Aucker at 748-4581.

NEW DATE - The Hiawatha Family Cruise will be on Tuesday, August 17th at 6:00 p.m. Tickets are \$2.50 each. Checks may be made payable to St. John Lutheran Church. This 1 ½ hour cruise features make your own sundaes. Please contact Molly if you are interested in attending.

Go Jersey Shore Bulldogs! This fall join us after each HOME Football game for the 5th Quarter. Home games for 2010 are September 3 and 17, October 8, 15 and 29. Bring your friends (EVERYONE IS WELCOME) and enjoy some music, snacks, and fun! We need adults to help!

Youth Group will be held at St. John on the second Sunday of each month beginning on September 12 at 6:30 p.m. We are looking for advisors to help with all ages of the youth groups. If you are interested please contact Molly. Everyone is welcome to join and you may bring a friend too!

Remember the deadline for the October/November 2010 newsletter is September 15. Please submit your articles to Molly early.

Nurse's Notes for August 2010

August 1

Parents & Teens: It is time for band and sport practice to begin! To avoid dehydration, drink 8-10 oz. of water every 10-15 minutes. If exercising for longer than 90 minutes, drink 8-10 oz. of a sports drink (with no more than 8 percent carbohydrate) every 15-20 minutes (<http://sportsmedicine.about.com>)

August 8

Tips for back-pack shopping at <http://www.aap.org/advocacy/releases/augschool.cfm>:

- Choose a backpack with wide, padded shoulder straps and a padded back.
- Pack light. Organize the backpack to use all of its compartments. Pack heavier items closest to the center of the back. The backpack should never weigh more than 10 to 20 percent of the your child's body weight.
- Always use both shoulder straps. Slinging a backpack over one shoulder can strain muscles.
- Consider a rolling backpack. This type of backpack may be a good choice for students who must tote a heavy load. Remember that rolling backpacks still must be carried up stairs, and they may be difficult to roll in snow.

August 15

Bullying is wrong, and can be equally traumatic for kids who are innocent bystanders! Here are a few tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics for you to share with your child if he/she witnesses bullying.

- Tell your child not to cheer on or even quietly watch bullying.
- Encourage your child to tell a trusted adult about the bullying.
- Help your child support other children who may be bullied. Encourage your child to include these children in activities.
- Encourage your child to join with others in telling bullies to stop.

August 22

Cultivate a Kinder Heart. A study from the University of Wisconsin-Madison shows that heart patients who undergo forgiveness counseling – they learn to work through and overcome hostile feelings, and thus grudges, they hold toward others – have significantly fewer heart symptoms, such as angina, than those who don't get the counseling. (Mahoney, S., June 2010 Prevention, pg. 34)

August 29

Still using hydrogen peroxide to clean scrapes and cuts? Don't! Dr. Alfred Sacchetti, spokesperson for the American College of Emergency Physicians, states that though peroxide can kill bacteria, it can also damage healthy tissue as well. To clean a small wound, rinse the area gently with soap and water, dab on a little antibiotic ointment and cover with a bandage. Doctors and nurses sometimes do use peroxide to remove dried blood from sutures [stitches] after the wound has already healed. (Gelman, L., July 2010 Prevention, pg. 18)