



Bethlehem Star

The Newsletter of Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Los Alamitos, California

Volume 47, Issue 5

May, 2007

*From the
Pastor*



Let me begin by offering some special words of thanks.

First, thanks to Brian Gary for his work with our Lenten dramas and to all those taking part in these. What a meaningful and thought provoking series of dramas these were.

Second, thanks to Marynell and our choir for their wonderful music during Holy Week/Easter, Melissa Sandvig and her group for the liturgical dance, and to those providing special music for our Lenten services. It truly enriched our worship experiences.

Third, thanks to those planning and taking part in our Easter vigil.

Fourth, thanks to those who helped me get ready for, and those who took part in, our Maundy Thursday and Good Friday worship services. Both services went well and held so much meaning for us as we contemplated what our Lord did for us.

Fifth, thanks to Brian Gary and our youth groups for providing our children with the egg hunt. Sixth, thanks to those who helped in my Easter sermon. Each of you did a great job.

Finally, thanks to those who donated lilies and those who brought flowers for the cross. What a great and meaningful time Holy week and Easter was for our worship family because of what each of you did..

Well, even though the Day of Easter is once again in the past, it doesn't mean that our Easter celebration is over. Over the next few weeks we will continue in the season of Easter. Each week we will be reminded of those special days after Jesus' resurrection. We will be reminded of how lives were changed when the disciples and other followers were confronted by the risen Lord. And then towards the end of this season on Ascension

Day, we will be reminded of the Lord's final words to the Easter people as he exhorts them to go and tell, go and baptize, go and make disciples.

As we continue our journey as Easter people, what a great time for us to remind ourselves why the words heard at the tomb, "He is not here. He is Risen!" are so important. This is a great time to ask ourselves how those words have and are changing our lives. This is a great time to ask ourselves what we are doing with the Good News we have received. This is a time that challenges us as individuals and as the people of Bethlehem, today's Easter people, to ask how we can continue to find new ways to fulfill that same Great Commission from our Lord. We have the same great news that compelled the followers of Jesus to go into the world, share the good news, and make disciples for Him. We have the Good News of the Crucified and Risen Lord! We have the Good News of eternal life. Our world needs to hear it! Peoples lives still need to be changed! Will we dare to find ways to share the Good News of our Lord? Will we dare to be the Easter people our Lord needs us to be?

In Christ,
Pastor Will

May Council Meeting

Wednesday, May 16, 2007
7:30 pm
Fireside Room

Newsletter Deadline

Monday, May 21, 2007
Please submit articles by email or disc

News from Our Missionaries to Slovakia

Pastor David & Carla Schick
Palisady 48
81106 Bratislava
Slovak Republic

(March, 2007)

Dear Friends in Christ,

We send you warm greetings from Bratislava, Slovakia. Spring has come to Slovakia and Easter is just around the corner. Great things have continued to happen here, so we wanted to write to you all again and give you an update.

We hope that you are all doing well and experiencing the joy and hope of this season. Our congregation, Bratislava International Church, has done very well in recent months, and our attendance is approximately double what it was a year ago. We have been blessed with some great musicians at the church this year, and we have been able to do some very creative things with music. Next week we will turn our hearts toward re-experiencing the high point of the Christian year, as we hold special services for the English speaking community here in this city on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday.

One of our more exciting events we have had as a congregation recently was a service of confirmation that we held for seven youth in January. Because we have an international congregation and our people travel so much, it was difficult putting together all of the confirmation sessions and the preparation for the service. It is also interesting trying to create enthusiasm for something like this, because only one of the families had a Lutheran background and was even familiar with the concept of confirmation. But all of the families became very enthusiastic about the program, and the service was really inspiring. As is typical for our church, it was quite an international group of young people, with kids from Korea, the US, and England. Three of the young people were also baptized.

We are launching into the next phase in the development of our refugee ministry at the church. We are organizing a series of activities and workshops to be held at the Gabchikovo Refugee Camp (outside of Bratislava) over the coming

weeks and months. Members and friends of the congregation will offer one or more days to go into the camp and lead sessions in an area in which they have some talent. Areas include sports, music and art, language lessons, Bible Study, and recreation. So far we have people signed up to lead workshops in art, crafts, and music lessons.

It will all kick off this Saturday with a concert to be held at the camp. David and several other musicians are putting a band together which will perform both Christian and secular popular songs. We are hoping in this way to be able to bring a little more warmth, friendship, and encouragement into the lives of the camp residents.

This school year we have been supervising a great group of missionary teachers from the US and Canada. We have nine here in Bratislava alone, teaching at the school where David teaches. So far the experience has been so positive that several of them are planning to return again for a second year. We have really enjoyed overseeing this group of people and working together with them during the past seven months. We have seen the development of a very positive spirit this year in the Evangelical Lyceum, the school where David teaches. God has opened many doors to deepen the spiritual life of the school. Chapel services have really become wonderful this year.

As we have reported before, about a year ago David and an American colleague developed a new songbook for the students filled with new songs in Slovak and in English. Then they started working on developing music teams. It has all really taken off this year. The creativity of the music that the students are performing while leading worship at the weekly chapel services is incredible. For the last couple of months David and the other religion department teachers have been able to step back from the music preparation for these services. It is completely led by the students and they are doing a great job. We just take care of the preaching and the liturgy. Instead of seeing chapel as a duty, according to the feedback we're getting, most of the students really get a lot out of both the preaching and the worship now. The director of our school has been very enthusiastic and complementary about these developments.

Back at the beginning of the school year we told you that the Lyceum was having its 400th

anniversary this year. (How many high schools can say that?!) The celebration for this anniversary took place a few weeks ago. An evening concert was held featuring music and other acts from students and different people connected with the school. The American teachers were the opening and closing act for the concert, with David performing a guitar solo during one of the songs. It was very well received. (A number of young people from the school have been following him around, looking for guitar lessons ever since.)

Carla continues her work of organizing and cataloging the many thousands of books in the seminary library. She has been working very hard on a special project for some months now, and is finally just about to wrap it up. She has been the main person responsible for helping one of her Slovak colleagues in the seminary library to be able to go to the United States next year to earn a Masters in Library Science degree. Her work has involved large amounts of translation assistance, and communicating through letters, emails, and phone calls to help apply for a scholarship from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and to secure his admission into the library school.

The scholarship is secure, but the admission process has been difficult because of the differences between the Slovak and American systems. Just recently we got the good news that he has now been accepted to the MLS program at Dominican University in Chicago. This has been an exciting project, because one of our primary goals here is to build the capacity of local leaders in the Slovak Church, so that they can take over the work when we go home. Since no comparable degree program exists in Slovakia, this is the best way to make this happen.

During the season of Lent our ministry has been featured on the ELCA Global Mission website for a program called the "*Global Mission Lenten Worship Series - Living in God's Amazing Grace*." The resources we provided include pictures, facts about Slovakia, a sermon prepared by David, and even a recipe for making a Slovak soup.

You can access all this by going to the following link:

<http://www.elca.org/globalmission/lent/lent07/week2/week2.html>

We've been gratified to hear from people around the U.S. who have enjoyed the sermon and

the other materials. The last thing we would like to tell you about is a wonderful trip we recently took to Africa. We spent the first two weeks of March in Kenya visiting our son, Paul, and his wife, Stephanie, who are ELCA missionaries in the Young Adult program in that country. They work with over 150 orphans in a wonderful place called the Tumaini Children's Home. Both of them are teachers and also hold many other activities for the children.

If you would like to see pictures of them and read about their ministry go to: <http://www.myspace.com/kenyaschick>

We're grateful for your love, your support, and your prayers. May God richly bless you in this season of Easter with the joyous presence of the risen Christ and his message of new life.

Your Partners in Christ's Service,
David and Carla Schick

On the next couple of pages you will find:

- A list of prayer requests for the ministry here.
- Some of pictures showing recent events in our ministry in Bratislava, and also our trip to Africa.

(These pictures did not transfer to this copy, but are available to view in the narthex at Bethlehem Lutheran Church)

PRAYER REQUESTS

- Pray for David's school, the Evangelical Lyceum.
- Pray that God will continue to open doors into the students' lives and faith.
- Pray also that we will be able to find a librarian for the English library at the school. Carla has been having to cover work at that library as well as her regular work at the seminary library.
- Pray for us as we continue to deal with the long separation and distance from loved ones. We would appreciate prayer for our families. Carla's mother is recovering from a recent heart attack.
- Pray for God's blessings on our children: Christian, who lives in California, and Paul and Stephanie, as they live and work in Kenya.

- Pray for the unity and strength of the Slovak Lutheran Church, our partners in ministry here. They're still suffering in many ways from the legacy of the Communist years. Suspicions, mistrust, and lethargy are difficult problems to overcome after the many years of persecution they endured.
- Pray for the refugee members of our congregation and the effectiveness of our ministry at the refugee camp. These wonderful people have a very difficult life down at the Gabchikovo refugee camp, and truly appreciate the opportunity to be an active part of our church family.
- Pray that those who have waited so long may be granted asylum, and that God will grant them patience and strength while they wait.

Facts to Know About the E.L.C.A. - 2007

- This year is the 20th anniversary of the E.L.C.A.
- That the E.L.C.A. has 4,850,776 baptized members and 10,549 congregations.
- This past year congregations of the E.L.C.A. gave 9.2 million dollars to help support 284 missionaries in 50 countries.
- That the E.L.C.A. currently has 185 campus ministry programs and this is the 100th anniversary of Lutheran campus.
- That Lutheran Men in Mission has developed the first young Men's Ministry Council in the U.S. These young leaders will work with the Lutheran Men in Mission staff and board in developing ministries with and for young men.
- That the E.L.C.A. Disaster Fund has given, thanks to donations from members, \$26 million dollar to help Gulf Coast families and communities to rebuild.

Mother's Day Breakfast at Bethlehem



Everyone is invited to a Mother's Day Breakfast at Bethlehem on Sunday morning, May 13, 2007, from 8:00 A.M. to 9:30 A.M. in Bachman Hall compliments of Men-in-Mission.

Men in Mission Support for the Navajo Mission

Each year the Bethlehem Men-In-Mission try to provide some means of support for the Lutheran Navajo Mission in Arizona. Each summer the Mission school sends home with the students a health kit that includes bath size towels. These are also used for the students' showers at the school and for the guest apartment. We will be collecting new bath size towels in the Narthex or we can accept donations so we can purchase towels on your behalf at Costco or Sam's Club. Last year our congregation responded with over 70 new towels. We should have all towels collected by mid-May, 2007, so we can arrange to have them delivered to the reservation. If interested please contact a member of Men-in-Mission for more information.

We Care / Postal Food Drive



Saturday, May 12, the U.S. Postal workers will be picking up food at your homes for their annual Food Drive. WE CARE will benefit from this food drive. In the past this has meant several TONS of food for WE CARE for distribution to the needy.

This also offers a wonderful opportunity for you to donate your time and energy to assist in this Food Drive. If you have an hour or so you can donate on May 12 please call Marty Thompson at WE CARE (598-9790). Volunteers are needed to assist the Mail Carriers during their routes or sorting the food when it is delivered to WE CARE.

This is a great chance for you and your family to help in your community.

See you there!

Alice Roop
Social Ministry

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Thank you to our High School Youth Group for another outstanding Easter Egg Hunt. Once again, the paper bags were filled with so many eggs that the children could not carry them home without dropping a few.

Also, thank you for the "Incredible, Inedible Holy Week Eggs." We hope the daily mini-devotionals were meaningful for everyone.

Stop by the bulletin board by the Youth Room and see the latest pictures from the Easter Egg Hunt!

 Extend a hand and give a big welcome to our new Choir Director, Vanessa Stevenson. She was installed at the Sunday service on April 29th. 

Vacation Bible School

HELP WANTED!

Plans are underway for quite an adventure this summer. Now all we need is children to participate. Registration is underway now. So, talk to your children, grandchildren, neighbors and friends. Dakota Joe and Digger need their help uncovering the evidence.

July 30 to August 3

9 a.m. to noon

\$10 per child, \$25 maximum per family

Scholarships are available

Turn in the registration form included in this newsletter to reserve a seat today! Extra forms are available on our web site or in the church office.

Our Stained Glass Windows

Get a new perspective of our beautiful stained glass windows. Visit our picture gallery on our web site and view some recent photos of our windows. The jewel-like colors are fantastic!

Java Corner

Visit our coffee and tea display. It's all good! Some of it is even organic! Tell us your favorites and we'll order more of the flavors you like! Currently, our inventory includes: Coffees: Cafe Nica, Ethiopian, Guatemalan French Roast, Breakfast Blend, Colombian Decaf, Hazelnut Creme Decaf and for our percolators, Fellowship Blend and Fellowship Blend Decaf

Teas: Irish Breakfast Blend, Rooibos and Green

Sheep



Now we are collecting for a flock of sheep. For each \$120 we collect, we will purchase one Heifer Project sheep. Pick up your ark today and after you have filled it, leave it on the counter in the church office.

Share the Day With Our New Confirmands

On June 3rd at our worship service, we will celebrate the Rite of Confirmation. This year Kristen Davis, Glenn Miller, and Charles Toth will make their faith confession and become the newest confirmed members of our congregation. Kristen, Glenn and Charles have completed their confirmation studies and been approved by the pastor and church council to take part in this special Rite. We hope you will join us on this special day!

ELW Hymnals

The new hymnals have been dedicated and placed in the pews. We bought a total of 180 hymnals and dedications can still be made if you haven't dedicated one yet. Forms are available in the church office.

Food for the Poor

 FOOD FOR THE POOR, INC.



On Sunday, May 20th we will welcome Father Thiering from Food For the Poor, Inc., Coconut Creek, FL. He will lead the Adult Study hour and also will make his presentation during our worship service. This organization has visited us before and our cumulative donations were quite generous. Food For the Poor is proud of their efficient program of giving, 96% of donations in 2006 went directly to help the poor. Posters have been placed around the church and information brochures are available in the narthex.

Their Mission Statement: *Food For The Poor (FFP) ministers to spiritually renew impoverished people throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. Established in 1982 as a 501(c)(3) corporation, our goals are to improve the health, economic, social and spiritual conditions of the men, women and children we serve.*

Food For The Poor raises funds and provides direct relief assistance to the poor, usually by purchasing specifically requested materials and distributing them through the churches and charity organizations already operating in areas of need. In this way, the organization serves the poor with dignity and ensures the most appropriate use of donors' funds.

Our ministry reflects God's unconditional love, which surrenders all, inspires trust and faith, and embraces all people regardless of race, status or creed. We believe that Christ is alive, and that we can best serve Him by being of assistance to those in greatest need (Matthew 25:31-46). Finally, we stress the need for regular prayer to guide and maintain the purity of our mission. Our mission is to link the church of the First World with the church of the Third World in a manner that helps both the materially poor and the poor in spirit. The materially poor are served by local churches, clergy and lay leaders who have been empowered and supplied with goods by Food For The Poor. The poor in spirit are renewed by their relationship with and service to the poor through our direct ministry of teaching, encouragement and prayer.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY TO YOU?

Are you stressed out?

Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy?

Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live.

I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David.

See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you.

Seek the LORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake their way, and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD.

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

For you shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

May 2007

Women's Bible Study

Session 9

Suffering as vocation-God's Jesus' and Ours.



Faith Circle Next meeting will be on Tues. May 1st in the Fireside Room. Hostess Virginia Robinson Bible Study Leader-Joyce Ritz Questions? Call Jean Franz .

Phoebe Circle Next meeting will be on Tues. May 8th at the home of Katherine Lindell Charlotte Driskill will lead the Bible Study. Questions? Call Charlotte Driskill.

W.E.L.C.A.BOARD Next meeting will be on Monday May 7th at 6:30 p.m. in Bachman Hall.



Sunday Morning

Coffee & Cookies

Thank you to Phoebe for providing coffee and cookies in April. Faith will be responsible in May.

Upcoming Events:



Sat. May 19th Ladies Day Event 11 am-2 Luncheon and renowned Guest Speaker Amberly Neese. Hostess: Faith Circle

Sat. July 28th Cluster President's Meeting, Redeemer Lutheran, Seal Beach.

Wed. Sept. 19th 6:30pm Supper & Fall General Meeting/Election of 2009 Officers -Hostess: Phoebe Circle



In God's Garden you are the Brightest Bloom



Join Faith Circle for our May Lady's Day Event which will include a delicious lunch and a dynamic program given by Amberly Neese. She is an inspirational speaker, who combines humor and faith. Reservations will be taken on the patio after Sunday Services Ladies \$10.00 Ladies 12 & under \$5.00 Questions: Contact Jean Franz, Faith Circle Leader

Thank you to the ladies that attended the Cluster Event on Sat. April 28th at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Fullerton where we heard Pastor Judy Miller speak on

Bad Girls of the Bible

It was a great morning full of fun and fellowship

Remember that Pacifica Partners

is now available on line

www.pacificawomen.org click on news & events

More hints for Health and Hope:

Sing along with the radio * Share your feelings
* Pray often * Laugh just for fun * Thank and praise God all day long



Remember in prayer these friends and members of Bethlehem:

Hospitalized:

Jackie Philips (Ron Clausen's sister)

Recuperating:

Jaysen Armas
Sigrun Borneo
Joel Cooper
Joshua Gimbel (Betty Jacobs' great-grandson)
Melanie Henniges (Everett Zupke's niece)
Betty Jacobs
Genevieve Jenkins
Madeleine Laurence
Katherine Lindell
Charlie Lyons
Susan Mlynaryk
Kristine Parkinson (Lindell's daughter)
Aline Snook
Everett Zupke

Undergoing treatment:

Julie Anderson (Richard Toth's sister)
Gwen Bailon (friend of Cathy Warnock)
Joan Bissing (friend of Charlotte Driskill)
Adeline Beemer (Lynn Roesner's mother)
Joe & Barbara Bull (friends of Mary Seibert)
Rev. Bruce Craft
Julie Davis
Sara DeWeese
Joan Flower (Charlotte Driskill's friend)
Caroline Fuelling (friend of Marjorie Moeller)
Katrina Gary
Stuart Gordon (brother-in-law of Sigrun Borneo)
Ethel Latch (Carol Snyder's aunt)
Jack Lyons
James Lyons
Jim Mauritzen (friend of the Hunts)
Bekki McClain (Richard Toth's niece)
Rev. Don McMillan
Harold Miller
Shirley Moleneux (Betty Jacobs' niece)
Joyce Rekstad
Jennifer Rienholz (granddaughter of the Sheltons)
Lynn Roesner
Gary Schulze (friend of Betty Frovarp)

Convalescent or Care Facility:

Ruth Hudson Ernie Kling
Arlene Larson Jeanette Olmstead
Ruth Precker Darlene Staglin
Jeff Thompson

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May Anniversaries

5/ 1/1956 Ray & Kay Shelton
5/ 1/1999 Everett & Irene Zupke
5/ 7/1955 Bob & Nina Van Tress
5/ 7/1966 Dave & Linda Scott
5/ 8/1969 Evald & Linda Andersen
5/14/1966 Dale & Sandy Retrum
5/14/1988 Granger & Sherry Riach
5/17/1980 Geoff & Heidi Kracy
5/25/1980 Constantine & Sharon Zarkos
5/28/1943 James & Geraldine Dawson

May Birthdays

5/1 Brandon Holt
5/2 Emma Cooper
Susan Schneider
5/3 John Buezis, Jr.
5/4 Leslie Moeller
5/5 George Maxwell
5/6 Brian Gary
5/7 Caitlyn Davis
Jill Medrano
5/10 Samantha Puhl
Joanne Wolfe
5/11 Jim Ackerman
5/14 Betty Kizziar
5/15 Bill DuBourdieu
5/17 Callie Freeman
Aline Snook
5/19 Amy Freeman
Bruce Gustafson
Julian Medrano
Gary Nehrenberg
5/20 David Coe
5/21 Frances Anderson
Hannah Wolfe
Everett Zupke
5/22 Anika Puhl
Katie Slade
Laura Tencati
5/24 Steve Belgum
Sophia Cooper
5/26 Bob Campbell
Daryl Isaacs
5/27 Nicole Upright
5/28 Pat Notrica
5/30 Jennifer Zarkos
5/31 Janet Halfen
Kristine Medrano