



Bethlehem Star

The Newsletter of Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Los Alamitos, California



Volume 49, Issue 5

May, 2009

*From the
Pastor*



He is Risen!
He is risen indeed!

Let me begin by thanking each of you for your participation in our Holy Week and Easter morning worship experiences. What a wonderful feeling to see Bachman Hall filled with our members on Maundy Thursday, the great choir anthem, and the experience of sharing the sacrament with each other as we sat at tables much like Jesus and His disciples at the Last Supper. Then on Friday night, again with so many of our members present, another great choir anthem, the completion of our drama series thanks to Brian Gary, and the Service of Darkness taking us back to that first Good Friday. And then to Easter morning, with the sanctuary filled with people, the magical unveiling of the cross thanks to Ron Clausen, a great call to worship by our bell choir, the outstanding choir anthems, Vanessa Stevenson's moving solo, the string quartet's special music, as always, Marynell's wonderful organ music, the smell of lilies thanks to everyone who donated them, the children's egg hunt thanks to the youth of our congregation, the decorating of the outside cross thanks to David Sandvig and those who brought flowers, and a great fellowship time thanks to Marianne Sakowski, Bob Campbell, and their helpers. I hope you found each of these services as meaningful as I did and that they met your spiritual needs.

Well, our spiritual journey now continues as we move through the rest of our Easter season. Each Sunday our lessons take us to the post resurrection appearances of Jesus to His disciples, as well as to others. One by one the good news of Easter morning became a reality to them. One by one they were so convicted by that news that they had to share it even at the risk of being crucified themselves. Once they knew the reality of the Easter message, He is Risen, they

couldn't keep it to themselves. They took the risk and invited others into the church of Jesus and into the hope of the Easter good news.

So, we must ask how were they able to take this risk? How were they able to go into the world and share what they had found in the Good Friday Cross and the Easter empty tomb? Well the answer would come on that first Pentecost day, which we will celebrate on the last Sunday of this month. (By the way, make sure to wear red that day) On that day they were given the assurance that when they would go and share they would not go alone. They were given the assurance that God's Spirit would go with them giving them the power to face whatever odds, to let others know God's saving love. With the power of God's Spirit they went into the world with the Good News of Jesus and thanks to them we now have the same good news. But, now comes the question, what will we do with the same good news? Will we keep it to ourselves or share it with others? Will we believe that the Spirit will go with us when we dare to invite others into the family of Jesus or will we give into the temptation of thinking that we Lutherans just can't do that? Will we be so convicted by the Easter good news that we don't want others to miss out on God's great love for them? Will we believe that the good news - *because He lives we will, too* - is vital for all our family and friends to know? Will others some day look back and give thanks that because we took the risk they are living as part of Jesus' family and with the Easter good news?

How will we answer these questions?

He is risen! He is risen indeed!
Pastor Will

Church Council Meeting
Wednesday, May 13, 2009
7:00 pm in the Fireside Room

Pastor David and Carla Schick
Bratislava, Slovakia
schickdavidcarla@yahoo.com



News from Slovakia

Prajeme vám pekné a požehnané veľkonočné sviatky.
(We wish you a nice and blessed Easter holiday.)

April, 2009

Easter greetings from Slovakia!

Dear Mission Supporters, Friends, and Loved Ones,

During the coming week Christians the world over will celebrate the high point of our church year. Once again during Holy Week we will remember the last days of Jesus' life on this earth. We will remember on Good Friday how he went to the cross to come close to us in our suffering and deliver us from our sin. We will celebrate on Easter Sunday how he rose from the dead to conquer death and bring hope to humanity in all times and places.

Here in Slovakia, like you, we are also preparing for this great celebration. Christians will gather in churches to hear again the joyous message of Good Friday and Easter, and to celebrate its meaning in their lives. In our International Congregation we will meet for worship on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday. Since so many of our members are living hundreds or even thousands of miles from loved ones, we plan also to enjoy an Easter lunch together at the church after our Sunday morning worship service.

In the Slovak language Easter itself is referred to as Velka Noc, which means "big night." Our fellow Christians in Slovak churches will meet not only for the traditional worship services during Holy Week, but also gather for services on Easter Monday, which is an important part of their Easter observance.

Whatever your traditions may be, we wish you God's richest blessings during this holy season, peace in your lives, and the joy of the resurrection in all that you do.

*Your Partners in Mission,
Carla and David*

Šibat' and Oblievať

In Slovak society a number of unusual folk traditions that originated in pre-Christian times continue to be observed on Easter Monday. Early in the morning bands of young men and boys set out to win chocolate and money by whipping - šibat' - and pouring water - oblievať - on young Slovak women. The men come to a young woman's home, compel her to come outside, douse her with buckets of water, and whip her with wicker sticks. In response, tradition requires that the young woman give the boys dyed hard-boiled eggs and candy, and tie a ribbon around their whips. The girl's father will reward the young men with money and a drink. The customs, once believed to purify the soul and body, are the remnants of a complex system of Slovak folk traditions based around the seasons of the year. The whipping and water were employed to ensure a young woman's fertility and beauty.

These traditions are still widely practiced in Slovak villages and small towns. Even in larger cities like Bratislava the traditions continue on a smaller scale. Cheap perfume or small amounts of water may be squirted on girls as a substitute for complete drenchings.

How do the women feel about all this? Each year David surveys his students about this in his classes at the Evangelical Lyceum. The boys seem to think it's a funny tradition and enjoy it for the most part. The response of the girls ranges from mild amusement to genuine annoyance.

Financial Crisis at Home and Abroad

Although we live so far away, we are acutely aware of the ongoing financial crisis back home in the US. The internet and television news programs remind us daily of the problems that America faces with the bankruptcy of long-established companies, layoffs, and home foreclosures. No family seems untouched by these difficulties (including ours).

Slovakia, along with the rest of the world, has not been exempt from the snowballing affect of the declining U.S. economy, and unemployment is steeply rising here as well. Bratislava, the city where we live, had benefited from a post-communist era building boom for several years. This has now been severely impacted by the financial crisis, with falling real estate prices and a decline in investments from home and abroad.

Around the world, churches and non-profits have been especially affected by this downturn. In light of the financial difficulties that everyone faces at this time, we want to express our most sincere gratitude for your support for the work of Global Mission in Slovakia. Your commitment to the mission work of the church is more critical than ever. We continue to value your prayers, financial support, and friendship as we and other mission personnel carry on this vital work. Please know that we are also praying for you, your congregations, and your families as we all struggle to deal with these challenging times.

Council President's Message

I must say thanks again this month to the People of Bethlehem. "Thank you" goes to all the men and women who helped make our Lenten Season and Holy Week, and Easter Sunday, one to remember for years to come.

Thanks to Pastor Mark Will for his very meaningful sermons and meditations which carried us through the lenten season. Thanks goes to Brian Gary for choosing the great dramas this year, and to all of the talented men and women who gave of their time to share the message to us through the dramas. Let's not forget Vanessa Stevenson, her special music and our outstanding choir, and all the special music we had at our Wednesday night services, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. Our choir sounded so good!

Bob Campbell and the Parish Life committee started our Wednesday evenings off with the soup and salad meals. Bob, his committee and other special helpers made sure everything was bought, set up and ensured that different groups made the soup, served and cleaned up. Thanks to Bob, his committee and everyone else who helped in any way with the dinners. I (and many others) really enjoyed a meal at an early time and not having to cook.

We had such a wonderful Easter Morning! Wasn't it great to see all of our members, their families and friends, and our special visitors sharing Easter morning with us? So many people gave of their time and talents to make our Easter service so special. Thanks to David Sandvig for new patio cross for the families and children to decorate with fresh flowers after the service. And to Brian Gary and the youth for hosting the Easter Egg Hunt, which was enjoyed by all the children. While the children looked for Easter eggs the Parish Life Committee served coffee, juice and goodies for the parents and guests to enjoy.

We are so blessed as a congregation for the gifts that we have enjoyed and will continue to enjoy, let us all remember to be thankful for each other. I surely am.

Don't forget to sign up and be a part of the May activities this month. The Men in Mission will host the Annual Mother's Day breakfast - it's a great way to start your day. The Women are hostessing the Ladies Event, with guest speaker Emily Barnes, on May 2nd. And, as always, please remember to sign up as ushers and readers for our Sunday services.

In God's Service,
Marianne

Vacation Bible School

Mark your calendar for the week of July 27-31. We need volunteers so don't go on vacation that week! Just kidding (sorta)! Our director is Shirley Campbell. She is already looking for volunteers to help teach, guide, and prepare.

Mother's Day Breakfast at Bethlehem

Everyone is invited to a Mother's Day Breakfast at Bethlehem on Sunday morning, May 10, 2009, from 8:00 A.M. to 9:30 A.M. in Bachman Hall, compliments of Men-in-Mission.

Men in Mission Meetings

Men-In-Mission will be meeting on Saturday, May 2nd, at 8:00 A.M. in the Fireside Room. We will complete our study of the book *The Case For Christ* by Lee Strobel. Our discussion will be on the chapter titled "Conclusion: The Verdict of History." All men are invited for study and fellowship. We will not be meeting on Saturday, May 16th. If you have any questions please contact Dale Retrum at (714) 527-4337.

Newsletter Deadline

Monday, May 18, 2009 (3rd Monday)
Please submit your articles by email, disc or fax

Wish List

There are several big ticket projects that the Property Committee will need to complete in the future. If you would like to contribute all or part of the cost of improvements for the church here are some of the items:

- Carpeting for Bachman Hall
- Updated Street Sign
- Carpeting for the Sanctuary
- Replacement Heating/Air Conditioning for the Sanctuary/Office building

These things have recently been purchased or upgraded:

- New microphones for the sound system
- New paper folding machine for the office
- Fireproof file cabinet for the Archives Room
- Upgraded safety lights along Wallingsford Road
- Safety surveillance video for the Nursery

Extreme Makeover: Congregation

BY THE REV. DR. GORDON PETERSON ♦ Assistant to the Bishop for Reconciliation, Discipleship & Mission

If you have a television in your home and spent any time channel surfing during the past five years, you may be familiar with Ty Pennington's visit to a family living in some city, suburb or village with his now famous: "Good Morning!" Whether you are a fan or just an occasional viewer, you know what comes next.

A team of hundreds, including contractors, designers, carpenters, plumbers, electricians, etc. come together to race the clock and take seven days to rebuild one very tired dwelling. They just don't rebuild any house. They rebuild the homes of some deserving family who doesn't have the means to change their living circumstances without the help of their neighbors or in this case, the Emmy Award-winning program, *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*.

If you've watched it you know that some fortunate family who is struggling to keep its life together has its life changed by being chosen in just the nick of time.

This morning I was thinking about you and your congregation and your sister congregations that form the Pacifica Synod across Southern California and Hawaii. I was thinking how God has blessed all of us in so many ways and how in so many ways the baptized and the congregations of the Pacifica Synod have been a blessing to this part of God's garden and throughout the world.

I also thought about those of you who are doing so well in reaching out to your ... communities through inspiring worship, dynamic educational programs, opportunities for service and the telling of the Good News in a wonderful variety of ways, languages and places.

It was wonderful to think of you and to know that in some small way I was a part of this web of life called synod—a way for us to walk together into God's future.

As my thoughts wandered from city to city and congregation to congregation, I could see in my mind's eye some broken places too. Congregations—communities of faith—that have fallen on hard times and are struggling to keep their life together. Many of these congregations are at a place in their lives where they are thinking about or even questioning their own viability. They are feeling the effects of a rupture in the way they have always seen their reality. They are at a place where there may be some receptivity to a transformation—an extreme makeover!

Otto Scharmer¹ says that the leader's real work is to help people discover the power of seeing and seeing together. What do you see? Do you see opportunity for new life in the community down the street, just across town or on the next island? Do you see the promise in letting go and letting come? I do, but it will take us walking together to experience such an extreme makeover!

¹ Theory U: *Leading from the Future as it Emerges* by Otto Scharmer—a very interesting book!

Women's Bible Study

**The Hidden Hand of God: Wisdom Stories
from Ruth, Daniel and Esther**



Session 9 - Esther: Reversal of Fortune

W.E.L.C.A. BOARD The next meeting of the WELCA Board will be held Monday, May 4, 2009 beginning at 6:30 p.m. For information contact Dianna.

Faith Circle The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 5th. Lois Bohlken is hosting and Marjorie Moeller is conducting the study. For Questions? Call Shirley Campbell or Marjorie Moeller

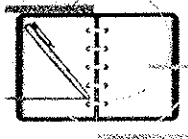
Phoebe Circle The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 12th at the home of Margie Reynolds. Margaret Hangartner will be conducting the study. Questions? Call Charlotte Driskill



**Sunday Morning
Coffee & Cookies**

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

Upcoming Events:



Women's Sunday Service: Save the date for Sunday, June 14th. If you would be interested in participating, please sign up in the Narthex or see Elise Johnson or Dianna Reynolds.

Ladies Day Event

SAVE THE DATE – Saturday, May 2, 2009. You will not want to miss our guest speaker Emilie Barnes, Internationally Acclaimed Author, Speaker and Organizer. Emilie is no doubt going to bless all those in attendance as she speaks on "The Spirit of Loveliness – Organizing you, your purse, your prayer life and surviving life's valleys." We hope to fill the sanctuary to the rafters with Emilie's appearance.

A continental breakfast will be served beginning at 9:00 a.m. The event should conclude between 11:00 and 11:30 a.m. Stay tuned for all the additional details, but please, tell your friends and neighbors and make this an event NOT to be missed.

Registration forms are available online at our Bethlehem website at www.blcla.org. Click on Upcoming Activities and find the event information and there is an active link to the registration form. Don't be left Out!

Information about Ms. Barnes is available at the following website location:

<http://emiliebarnes.com/home/Default.aspx>

Many of Ms. Barnes books are available at our Orange County Libraries:

*Cleaning Up the Clutter *The Spirit of Loveliness

*If Teacups Could Talk: sharing a cup of kindness with treasured friends

*Survival for Busy Women *Let's Have a Tea Party!

The April 18th **Cluster** event was a wonderful event, attended by Dianna Reynolds at St. Paul's Lutheran in Fullerton. Dr. Merle Bailey Doctor of Divinity was our speaker. He spoke on the Church Universal, specifically about Nigeria.

It was a great day!



Check out Pacifica Partners on line www.pacificawomen.org click on news & events

Please Remember in Prayer:

Hospitalized:

George Krazy (Geoff Krazy's father) - heart
 Charlie Lyons
 Johnny McGinley (Peggy Lange's nephew) - premature birth

Undergoing treatment:

Larry Adams (Wilkie Adams' nephew) - cancer
 Ann Anderson (Julie's sister-in-law) - stage 4 cancer
 Ed Booth (friend of the Brandon/Snyders) - cancer
 Joe & Barbara Bull (friends of Mary Seibert)
 Fritz Campbell
 Carl Chamberlain (friend of the Clausens) - pancreatitis
 Sara DeWeese
 Eva Dick (friend of Bruce Gustafson) - breast cancer
 Katrina Gary
 Kenny Grant (Krissy Retrum's uncle) - cancer
 Linda (Betty Jones' niece)
 Lenora Jones (friend of Lynne Estabrook)
 Bob Judy (friend of Charlie Lyons) - cancer
 Katherine Lindell
 Jack Lyons
 Jim Mauritzen (friend of the Hunts) - cancer
 Didith Oakes (Sigrun Borneo's sister-in-law)
 Chuck Obright (former member)
 Dean Page (friend of the Wolfe's) - lung cancer
 Eva Payne (Jim Brandon's cousin) - pulmonary disease
 Bob Piper (neighbor of Sigrun Borneo)
 Hannah Powell (10 yr. old friend of the Temples) - breast cancer
 Chris Powers - stomach cancer
 Carol Reid (friend of Jamie Slade) - brain cancer
 Jack Rohrer (friend of Bob & Nina Van Tress) - cancer
 Jacqueline Scott (friend of Bonnie & James Boire) - cancer
 Chloe Sohl - hearing loss
 Candie Toth

Recuperating:

Gladyce Ackerman
 Jim Ackerman
 Julie Anderson
 Gregg & Susan Arakawa (friends of Joen Coleman) - cancer
 Dan Ekdahl (Jane Clausen's brother-in-law) - surgery
 Stuart Gordon (brother-in-law of Sigrun Borneo)
 Jim Hargrove - knee surgery
 Tony & Lynn Miles (friends of Jim Brandon & Carol Snyder)
 Kristine Parkinson (the Lindell's daughter) - pancreatitis
 Jackie Philips (Ron Clausen's sister) - multiple sclerosis
 Dale Retrum - chronic lymphatic leukemia
 Mary Seibert

Convalescent or Care Facility:

Bryan Jones	Jeanette Olmstead	Ruth Precker
Jean Rich	Bill Snyder	Jeff Thompson

Military in Harm's Way:

Cpt. Justin Marshall (friend of the Dobberteens) - in Iraq
 Spc. Brian O'Hare (friend of the Toths) - 3rd tour in Iraq
 Chris Rogers
 Andrew Ramirez - in Afghanistan

May Anniversaries

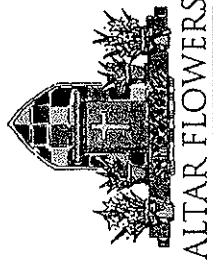
5/ 1/1956	Ray & Kay Shelton
5/ 7/1955	Bob & Nina Van Tress
5/ 7/1966	Dave & Linda Scott
5/ 8/1969	Evald & Linda Andersen
5/14/1966	Dale & Sandy Retrum
5/17/1980	Geoff & Heidi Krazy
5/28/1943	James & Geraldine Dawson
5/28/1977	David & Carla Schick
5/30/1981	Bertram & Veronique Sohl

May Birthdays

5/1	Brandon Holt
5/2	Emma Cooper Susan Schneider
5/3	John Buezis, Jr.
5/4	Jay Boire Leslie Moeller Alyssa Newkirk
5/5	George Maxwell
5/6	Brian Gary
5/9	Chloe Sohl
5/10	Christopher Newkirk Samantha Puhl Joanne Wolfe
5/11	Jim Ackerman Krista Vargas
5/14	Betty Kizziar
5/15	Bill DuBourdieu
5/17	Aline Snook
5/19	Bruce Gustafson Gary Nehrenberg
5/21	Frances Anderson John Will Hannah Wolfe
5/22	Anika Puhl Katie Slade Laura Tencati
5/24	Sophia Cooper
5/26	Bob Campbell Daryl Isaacs
5/27	Nicole Upright
5/28	Pat Notrica
5/31	Janet Halfen

Thanks to These People for Serving in May, 2009

DATE	ACOLYTE	CROSS BEARER	CANTOR	READER	USHERS	COUNTERS	OPEN/CLOSE
5/3	Emilie Sohl	Charlie Toth	James Toth	Dan Powers	Rick Gary Dan & Marianne Sakowski Al Thunselle	M. Schneider S. Schneider	B. Campbell F. Campbell
5/10	Charlie Toth	Paul Scott	Wilkie Adams	Bruce Gustafson	Rick Gary, Dianna Reynolds Christina Watson	J. Buezis J. Buezis, Jr.	D. Reynolds D. Retrum
5/17	Paul Scott	Charlie Toth	Bill Lindell	Liz Nehrenberg	Rick Gary	A. Campbell B. Campbell	B. Ritz D. Sakowski
5/24	Charlie Toth	Paul Scott	Elise Johnson	John Gearhart	Rick Gary	M. Moeller C. Warnock	A. Tegtmeier J. Toth
5/31	Paul Scott	Charlie Toth	Karin Nielsen Bonwit	Charlotte Driskill	Rick Gary	D. Retrum D. Retrum	C. Warnock C. Watson

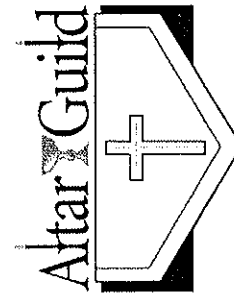


Altar Flowers

5/3 Anderson, Mazzari
5/10 Moeller, Roop
5/17 Gustafson, Krazy, Tegtmeier
5/24 Egbert, Wolfe
5/31 Ko, Stevenson

Altar Guild

5/3 Marianne Sakowski
5/10 Luelle Buezis
5/17 Doris Schaefer



Nursery care is provided during our Sunday services. An attendant will be in our nursery from 9:45 a.m. - 11:15 a.m. to care for infants and preschool children.



Bethlehem Star

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
3352 Katella Avenue
Los Alamitos, CA 90720

May, 2009

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Los Alamitos, CA
Permit No. 8

Return Service Requested

U.S. POSTER B 5/8/09

Pastor: Rev. Mark Will
Telephone: 562/430-3444 Fax: 562/594-0322
E-Mail: bethlehem.lutheran@verizon.net
Website: www.blcla.org

