



From the Pastor



"20 - 17 VISION!"

Most of the time we talk about "20-20" vision being the optimal quality sought and hoped for either with or without corrective lenses. So, what is "2017 Vision"? That is the vision that is being developed for the mission and ministry of Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church. Why 2017, and not 2020? The year 2017 is three and a half years out which is roughly what most futurists suggest as being relevant given the rapid changes taking place today. The year 2020 will be the next step as we focus on the future desired picture of ministry of our congregation. The year 2017 also happens to be a rather important one to us Lutherans for it marks the 500th anniversary of Luther's posting of the 95 Theses on the church door in Wittenberg, Germany. Many historians see that act as the beginning of the Protestant Reformation. Plans are already underway for that momentous occasion, even possibly inviting the Pope to preach at the Lutheran Church in Wittenberg! Now that would be some vision!

Getting back to "20 - 17 VISION," why is it so important to develop a vision? Isn't it just a 'wish list' of what Shepherd of the Valley would like to look like and see happening three years or so from now? To a degree, that's true! But it's not just a willy-nilly wish list of what we want, or what ministries we'd like to pursue in the next few years. It is a vision of what we believe the Lord is gifting and calling us to do within the context (time & place) in which we are called to serve. This involves much much more than simply saying that we want to see our Sunday morning worship attendance increase to . . . (some higher number). In fact, a truly God honoring vision focuses much farther beyond "my church," "my school," "my programs," "my campus" etc. A church of vision must shift its vision from internal to external, from program development to people development, from church-based to Kingdom based.

An easy way to get a handle on "vision" is to consider your own life. Where do you see yourself in five or ten years? Teenagers may see themselves as having graduated from high school and college and beginning a new career. Mid-lifers may be looking ahead to traveling, new grandchildren, and the fruitful years in their chosen profession. Seniors are, perhaps, looking at downsizing and simplifying their lives, more traveling and celebrating with their grandchildren who are getting married and graduating. While "vision" may be the new buzz-word, it really is a very old concept, but an important one.

So, where do we see Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church going in the next three years or so? Where is God equipping and leading us to go? What are the needs and opportunities for ministry in our Moreno Valley community that will open doors to share the love of Christ in word and deed? How can we best prepare ourselves and utilize our God-given resources to realize our vision? As we develop a clear vision for the next three years or so, it will generate the motivation, direction, and purpose needed to achieve it!

The Apostle Paul wrote by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, "*We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.*" (Ephesians 2:10). God knows our intended vision and ministry for the future. We need to pray and seek out His will and vision. I'm sure that Martin Luther never imagined what the future held for him, even in 1517 when he challenged the practice of indulgences in the church. But as he prayed and submitted himself to the Lord's leading in the context in which he served, he became a mighty instrument in the Kingdom of God. May God enlighten our vision to see His vision, and mold our service to be His instruments and disciples in His Kingdom!

Pastor Dennis Krueger

JUNE/JULY SERMON SERIES:

Paul's Letter to the Galatians - "THE RIGHTEOUS LIVE BY FAITH" On the Sundays in June we have been reading and working through the Book of Galatians in our Sunday morning services. Many members have commented that it has been a real blessing. Galatians, much like Colossians that we studied last year, reveals the essential truth of the New Testament that man is justified through faith in Jesus Christ. Martin Luther relied heavily on this letter in his writings and arguments against the prevailing 'works-righteousness' theology of his day. We wrap up our study on July 14th (7/7 - Ch. 5; 7/14 - Ch. 6). Hopefully you will join us as we explore this book of the Bible together!



FELLOWSHIP MINISTRIES!!

On Sunday morning, August 4th, our old friend Dave Anderson and his new singing/musician partner, Roger Walck, will be leading our Sunday morning worship services with their special music and sharing a message with us about the vital and growing ministry of "Shepherd's Canyon Retreat!" Roger and Dave have been friends for 44 years and performed together occasionally in the past. With Dave's wife, Barbara, unable to continue her role in the singing ministry, Roger is a welcome addition. Roger is actually a neighbor, from Corona, and had taught at Christian High School in Orange for 20 years, before retiring. Join us on this mid-summer Sunday for a little change of pace as we worship and praise our Lord together!

“I stand at the door and knock....”

A few weeks ago on one of our beautiful Saturday mornings here in Moreno Valley, there was a soft knocking on my front door. I opened the door to find a middle aged woman and her young pre-teen son standing on my front porch. “Hi, we’d like to talk to you about the Bible!” was her cheery greeting to me. “Great!” I replied. I had already identified her as a member of the Jehovah’s Witnesses, and was quite willing to engage her in conversation. We spoke for about five minutes, and then she asked if she could come back the next week to talk some more. I agreed, and set a time for us to meet again.

I realize at this point many of you are questioning my sanity, but I think that as Christians, we often miss golden opportunities to share our convictions with others. I have heard many reasons why people choose not to share their faith. They aren’t comfortable sharing in public, they are worried about violating work place rules, it’s embarrassing, it never seems a good time, I wouldn’t know what to say, what if they ask me something I don’t know the answer to, and many others. But consider this for a moment. All people need to hear the Gospel, and here are people showing up at your front door wanting to talk about religion of all things! You can witness without leaving the comfort of your own home. And if things don’t go well for you, you can easily escape back into your house!

There are basically two categories of people who show up on your doorstep. Many are from other Christian denominations simply inviting you to try out their church. I have chatted with many of these people, and as soon as they find out I already attend a Christian church, they graciously thank me for my time and leave, usually saying something along the lines of “we are not trying to take you away from your home church.” The reason for this is simple. While we might differ on secondary theological issues with other Christian denominations, we recognize that in the essentials of Christian doctrine, we agree with one another.

Members of the second category, however, will not leave when you tell them you are a Christian. The two most common groups in this category are the Mormons and the Jehovah’s Witnesses. They will continue to witness to you, because they believe that you cannot be saved without being a member of their organization. This is not my opinion; they will freely offer this up to you if you ask them “Can I be saved if I am not a Mormon/Jehovah’s Witness”? While these groups may make the claim they are Christian, their own teachings deny that central claim of classical Christianity, that Christ’s sacrifice on the cross is sufficient for salvation. In their view, it is Christ + works, as opposed to Christ + nothing that is needed for salvation.

Next month I will offer some general advice and strategies to have productive conversations with people that come to your door. In the months after that, I will focus on the two groups I have mentioned, the Mormons and the Jehovah’s witnesses. We will learn about their theology from their own teachings and literature, and how best to approach conversations with each group. Until then, if someone knocks on your door, don’t be afraid to have a conversation! As the Christian philosopher Greg Kousser says, “You don’t have to hit home runs every time out, just get up to bat!”

Your Servant,
Drew Covert



QUILTING FOR LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

Hello everyone from the quilting group!

We are now more than half way through our year and are busy working on our quilts for LWR and the baby quilts for Parkview Hospital.

We would like to sincerely thank Carol Hoeflin, Linda Williamson’s sister, Janean Hamann and Dee and Eric Tourtillott for the large amount of materials they have donated to our group to keep the work going for the baby quilts and other quilts. We were on our last bit of material for the baby quilts and we have no funding for this group so all items are from donation only. Thank you so much for keeping our project alive. You all are an answer to our prayers.

This year I think you will be surprised by the beauty of our quilts and all the hard work that has been put into each and every quilt. They will be a true blessing to those who receive them.

It is now time to keep your eyes open to watch for sales of items that will go into the health and school kits. The sales start at the end of July so please remember all of the Lord’s people that are in need of our help and drop off items to the office or leave in the church lobby marked “For LWR.” A specially marked box will be placed in the church lobby later to remind you to pick up items for the kits.

We thank each and everyone of you who support us and our work and thank God that your hearts have been open to His service. May God bless each of you and please keep our group in your prayers also. If you would like to see us at work come by the 4th Saturday of each month (except November and December) in the fellowship hall or call Linda Olson 276-0373 and I will be happy to answer your questions.





Preschool Summer Fun!

We are in full swing with our summer program. The children are learning about animals from around the world! So far, they have explored the lives of animals from Australia, Africa, China, and North America. For the rest of July they will be discovering animals from the South American Rainforest, Middle Eastern Desert, and Antarctica. Along with all this, Suzy Langhorne has brought in her caterpillars and is sharing her knowledge with our children, what a blessing for us all!

During the summer we are also sprucing up the classrooms. Lot's of cleaning, repainting, and repairs are happening. A big "thank you" to Phil Sandstrom and all the others who have stepped up to help out with this enormous task.

We still have openings in our 4-year-old and Kindergarten classes. Spread the news to your family and friends. We would love to have every spot filled!

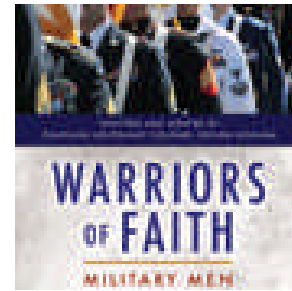
Upcoming Events:
July 4th – school closed

Please pray that God will bless us with a successful year and provide all that we need.

In His Service,
Linda Williamson, Director



Think about submitting your name for consideration as a member on either the Mission & Ministry Board of Directors, the Lay Ministry Board or the School Board. Each board meets only once a month. And you will have the blessing of serving God and the congregation. If interested, give the church office a call or write your name on the sheet in the church lobby. The nominees will be posted prior to the Annual Voters Assembly on August 11th following the 10:45 Service.



The Knights of the Holy Spirit will next meet on July 13 at 9:00 am. The present study is called "Warriors of Faith. Service members of the United States Armed Forces are met with challenges on and off the battlefield. Warriors of Faith -- Military Men, a Men's Net Work Bible study written especially for these servicemen and women, past and present, explores the issues of anger, grief, guilt, forgiveness and love, as they impact the lives of those who have served, or are now serving, their country. This is a five part study, covering topics that include: Anger, Guilt and Forgiveness, Grief, and Love. This month we conclude this course and cover "Love" is effective in addressing all our veterans and their families including those dealing with Post-traumatic Stress Disorder. We'll see God's embracing love and the love we can share with those who have given so much. We invite you to attend and bring a friend. We have been having some great discussions!

Power Point Schedule for July & August

8:00 am	10:45 am
7/7 Joshua Stange	Amanda Johansen
7/14 Bud Kenefick	Jim Wilson
7/21 Luke Hamann	Drew Covert
7/28 Gerry Klepps	Bob Maurer
8/4 Joshua Stange	Bob Maurer
8/11 Luke Hamann	Amanda Johansen
8/19 Gerry Klepps	Abby Covert
8/25 Bud Kenefick	Marvin Niles

If you need to change your schedule, or have any questions on how to run the system, contact Drew Covert at 951-525-8111 or lcmsdrew@roadrunner.com. Thank you all for your service to our Church and our Lord!



Upcoming Cursillo Weekends

Men's Weekend - July 18-21
Women's Weekend - July 25-28

If you'd like more information about Cursillo, speak with any of Shepherd's cursillistas:

Pastor Dennis, Pastor Allen,
Larry & Marlene Alexander,
Marge Clark, Erin Ennis,
Bob & Carole Johansen,
Jerry & Sue Anna Schatz.
Or go to www.lcsocal.org



HOLIDAY BOUTIQUE NEWS

Hi Everyone!



We are having our first crafting workshop on Saturday, July 13th from 9 a.m. until 12 p.m. We welcome anyone who would like to come and join us. The crafts we will make are for the Holiday Boutique which will be held on Saturday, November 2 from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. You are more than welcome to bring a craft you are making to work on. Come enjoy the fun and fellowship. Stay as long as you would like and remember – you don't have to be a crafter to join us. It is always a learning experience for us all. We will also have a few surprise guests.

We will have our canning workshop later in the summer so now is the time to stock up and start freezing our fruits. If anyone has extras that they would like to share please let us know. We are looking for peaches, strawberries, pomegranates etc. We always sell out of our jams and jellies because they are soooo yummy. Thank you for your contributions. If you have any questions please call Marina Bromar. Looking forward to seeing you!

In the Love of Christ,
The Boutique Committee



“A MATTER OF LIFE AND DEATH!”

When I underwent a training program to be a paramedic, many years ago, one of the clinical requirements was to spend a prescribed number of hours observing autopsies. While it took some getting used to (especially the smell), it was a really great learning experience. In fact, one of the primary reasons for conducting autopsies is not merely to determine the cause of death, but to uncover how to avoid death and promote/support life! So, when I read an article by a well known and respected church consultant in which he reported the findings of an autopsy he conducted on a church he'd worked with ten years earlier, it caught my attention. He writes, “I took no pleasure in discovering that not only was my diagnosis correct, I had mostly gotten right all the signs of the impending death of the church. I reviewed the past ten years and was able to piece together a fairly accurate autopsy. Here are things I learned.”

The church had no community-focused ministries and was not interested in its neighborhood. There was no attempt to reach out to the community. The congregation was inwardly focused on their needs, wants and desires. The community began a transition toward a lower socioeconomic class thirty years ago, but the church members had no desire to reach the new residents. The congregation thus became an island of middle-class members in a sea of lower-class residents.

Members became more focused on memorials. Do not hear my statement as a criticism of memorials. Indeed, I recently funded a memorial in memory of my late grandson. The memorials at the church were chairs, tables, rooms, and other places where a neat plaque could be placed. The point is that the memorials became an obsession at the church. More and more emphasis was placed on the past.

The percentage of the budget for members' needs kept increasing. At the church's death, the percentage was over 98 percent! There was almost no support for missions, evangelism, or helping those outside the church.

The members had more and more arguments about what they wanted. As the church continued to decline toward death, the inward focus of the members turned caustic. Arguments were more frequent; business meetings became more acrimonious. Members were divided on turf and agenda issues!

With few exceptions, pastoral tenure grew shorter and shorter. The church had seven pastors in its final ten years. The last three pastors were bi-vocational. All of the seven pastors left discouraged.

The church rarely prayed together. In its last eight years, the only time of corporate prayer was a three-minute period in the Sunday worship service. Prayers were always limited to members, their friends and families, and their physical needs. Although they preached from the Bible and studied God's Word, they didn't absorb it and live it!

The church had no clarity as to why it existed. There was no vision, no mission, and no purpose. Most reminisced about the past years and wanted to get back to the way things had always been done! The members idolized another era. They saw their future to be returning to the past.

The facilities continued to deteriorate. It wasn't really a financial issue. Instead, the members failed to see the continuous deterioration of the church building. Simply stated, they no longer had “outsider eyes.” They became accustomed to the way things were and not what they should/could be.

Though this story is bleak and discouraging, we must learn from such examples. It is estimated that as many as 100,000 churches in America of all kinds of denominations could be characterized with many of the same symptoms as stated above, and dying. Sadly, Shepherd of the Valley exhibits some of these characteristics. But it is certainly not too late! Pray for God's Spirit, wisdom and guidance that we ‘learn and live!’

Pastor Dennis Krueger



The TLC for Cancer Patients Ministry doesn't meet the months of July and August but will resume their regular schedule in September on the 4th Tuesday at 7 pm.

THANK YOU - The Bennett/Carlson and Helmer families would like to thank everybody for the cards and prayers that we have received following the death of Dennis Bennett. We would also like to thank Pastor Dennis and Pastor Ron for their consoling words. We would also like to thank Chris Deinert and the Choir for participating at the funeral. We know that Dennis was smiling from above when he heard their joyous voices. Also, we would like to thank everybody who has donated to the Choir Robe Memorial Fund in his name. Dennis really loved singing in the choir and we are hoping that Dennis' vision of new choir robes for our Chancel Choir can be realized soon.



Joseph Project - Community (Citywide) Food Bank



Shepherd is working with other churches in Moreno Valley with this community food bank that provides food for the needy every Thursday from a distribution center at the Koinonia Evangelistic Center, 21866 Brill Rd., Moreno Valley (951-867-3050). Volunteers are needed to help out with distribution, sorting, clean up, etc. at the center. Contributions to the Joseph Project will be gratefully accepted through Shepherd. Please pray for



Being an LCEF investor means providing the dollars needed to fund loans for churches, schools and ministries within the LCMS. Your investment also provides money for housing loans for our pastors and teachers. Why not talk to your congregation representative, Larry Alexander, today for more information about the ministry of the Lutheran Church Extension Fund. You can also get more information by calling 1-800-843-5233.

JOIN IN THE CHALLENGE



This is a plea that you help build the Prayer Army we need so badly. Join us in choosing a time (maybe even 10 or 15 minutes) of any day of the week that is best for you individually and lift your silent (or loud) voices to the Lord. Ask for His touch on Shepherd, our Pastor, the members of our congregation, our school, and our community. His promise is clear - if His people gather together in prayer, He will hear our prayers. Let's do it!

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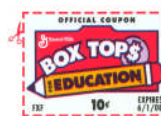
Powdered drink mix cans, Magazines, Plastic baby food containers, Prescription bottles (small), Candy boxes, Advertising magnets, Small bottles, containers, boxes, Empty thread spools (wood or plastic), Tins (from band aids, Altoids, tea, etc.), Starbucks-type bottles with lids and carton

Bring to the church or office. These items are made into craft items and given to the cancer patients at the County Regional Hospital. Thank you each and everyone for your help.



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We have scrip available for Staters Bros. Stop by the SCRIP table after services or at the school during the week.

The sponsors appearing on the back cover of the newsletter help defray the cost of printing the Shepherd's Staff, please give them your consideration when possible.

July 2013

Sunday Worship: 8 AM and 10:45 AM - Communion: 1st, 3rd, and 5th Sundays

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 5:30 PM School Board (O)	3 7:00 PM Praise Team (S)	4 8:00 AM Braille Mail (H) Independence Day - School & Office Closed	5	6
			Youth at Camp Pondo			
7 9:30 AM Adult Bible Class (H)	8 9:00 AM Women's Koffee Klatch @ Brandon's	9 7:00 PM Lay Ministers (H)	10 3:00 PM Boutique Meeting (O) 7:00 PM Praise Team (S)	11 8:00 AM Braille Mail (H) 9:30 AM Tai Chi (H) 12:30 PM Staff (O) 7:00 PM Band (H)	12	13 9:00 AM Boutique Crafting Workshop (H) 9:00 AM Knights of the Holy Spirit Bible Study (O)
14 9:30 AM Adult Bible Class (H)	15	16	17 7:00 PM Praise Team (S)	18 8:00 AM Braille Mail (H) 9:30 AM Tai Chi (H) 12:30 PM Staff (O) 6:00 PM M & M Directors (O)	19	20 LCMS Synodical
		Vacation Bible School (S-Y-H-O)			Men's Cursillo Weekend	
21 9:30 AM Adult Bible Class (H)	22	23	24 7:00 PM Praise Team (S)	25 8:00 AM Braille Mail (H) 9:30 AM Tai Chi (H) 7:00 PM Band (H)	26	27 7:30 AM Men's Breakfast at Brandon's 9:00 AM Quilting for LWR (H)
	LCMS Synodical Convention			Women's Cursillo Weekend		
Men's Cursillo						
28 9:30 AM Adult Bible Class (H) BP Screening after Services Women's Cursillo	29 6:00 PM Diamond Girls (H)	30	31 7:00 PM Praise Team (S)			

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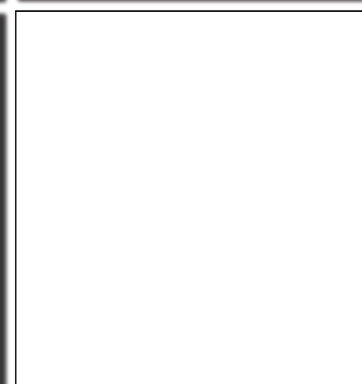


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The Shepherd's Staff

WORSHIP SERVICE TIMES: Sunday: 8:00 & 10:45 AM
5th Sunday of the month - One service only at 9:30 AM

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**DENNIS KRUEGER, SENIOR PASTOR
RON KRAFT, EMERITUS PASTOR
LINDA WILLIAMSON, SCHOOL DIRECTOR**

July 2013



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Date: July 15 - 19th
Place: Shepherd of the Valley
Time: 3:00 - 6:00 pm

"ADVENTURES ON PROMISE ISLAND" . . . WHERE KIDS DISCOVER GOD'S LIFESAVING LOVE!

Our director, Carol Maurer, had to step down due to a death in their family. Our Christian condolences to the Maurer family on the sudden passing of Bob's sister in Florida. SO... we need a lot of help, fast! While we considered cancelling it this year, we decided to drive ahead and make it happen! But that will require a lot of help. As of the writing of this article we have a few volunteers, but we have no teachers or teacher-helpers! We have some support help volunteers to handle crafts, snacks, and recreation... But we really need teachers - and, of course, a Director! Please pray and consider how you can help out! Much more will be covered in our Sunday morning announcements between now and July 15th!

Contact the church office at 924-4688 to register children or to volunteer.