

Walking in Faith

Faith Lutheran Church
Harcourt, Iowa

MARCH 2008



Notes from the Edge of the Desk

Sometimes we teach best what we most need to learn.

In the Lutheran Women Today study, we spoke of Peter's question to Jesus: "Lord, how many times must I forgive my brother? Seven times?" And Jesus responds, "Not seven times, but seventy times seven." Frankly, that never seemed like much more to me than Jesus saying, "Buck up! If you belong to me, you'll do this, just because I tell you to, over & over & over again." (Much like shaving. I hate to shave. I hate to go at my face & throat early in the morning with an ever-increasing number of blades – my current shaver has five! In other cultures, it's not even called shaving – it's called self-mutilation & attempted suicide.)

Then, the next day in a Lenten devotional, I read about 'the thorn in Paul's flesh' – a mysterious chronic situation of his own. Paul fervently prayed multiple times that this situation would be removed from his life as well – but it never was. As far as we know, his painful circumstance was finally solved coincidentally enough the moment he gave up inhaling.

I have been frustrated with an on-going situation in my life – one which never runs smooth. And it doesn't look to improve anytime soon: indeed, it doesn't look to improve, ever. (It is one of those circumstances that makes the question "Death – where is thy sting?" understandable, even when it's taken out of context...)

I don't sleep when I'm vexed; insomnia gives you lots of time to think things out. And it finally occurred to me – Jesus didn't curse Peter to a lifetime of grudging acts of forgiveness: rather, he gave Peter a nearly limitless number of opportunities to get good at it – to get to the point where he might even learn to milk a little joy out of it. Why else would anyone – even Jesus – recommend that you let anyone stick it to you 490 times? Does that sound like the abundant life Jesus came and died to give you?

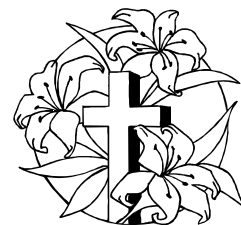
(For those of you who are lost by now, the answer is, "No, it doesn't." And thanks for sticking with this article this long...)

Really, what are the chances that one or more of these aggravators that bat "490" in our lives would be there coincidentally? Don't we have to believe that they are put into our lives to test & teach us – to rub us the wrong way until that which is the worst in them wears off the worst that is in us? They are spiritual sandpaper! They serve to change us for the better, so that we stand a lesser chance of rubbing someone else raw with OUR endeavors.

It puts one in mind of the story of the little girl that was such an unbelievable optimist that one Christmas, instead of a gift, her parents decided to test her optimism by filling the parlor around the tree with horse droppings. When the girl came down the stairs, she was thrilled, exclaiming, "If there's this much manure, there has to be a pony somewhere!"

Maybe you have ample evidence of a pony in your life: maybe you could identify the thorn in your flesh by name & social security number. And maybe you can't do a thing about it being there.

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March 9- Daylight Savings time begins

Worship 9:00
Coffee 10:00

Sunday School
10:00

SERVING COFFEE IN MARCH

March 2-
March 9- Jane & Pearl
March 16- Rod & Cheryl
March 23- Church Council
March 30-



Church Council

Faith Lutheran Church Council met on February 7, 2008 at 7:30PM. Members present were Doug Bahr, Donna Brundage, Grant Gibbons, Mark Greenfield, Dorothy Nahnsen. Don Peterson, Eddie Peterson, Jeff Peterson, John Samuelson, Jan Peterson, treasurer and Pastor Rod Meyer. Pastor Rod led devotions based on Matthew 6:21, True Treasures.

The secretary's report was approved as read. The treasurer's report showed a balance of \$2,580.82. This includes an interest check from one of the CD's. For January we had an inflow of \$4,088.62 and an outflow of minus \$9398 for a new total of -\$5,309.88. In savings there is \$6,825.95. In the memorial account there is \$3,562.61. \$1000 from Jim and Berneil Drake will be taken from the Memorial fund for the restoration project. In the Mission Investment fund as of 12/31/07 there is \$5,626.60. A motion was made, seconded and carried to accept the treasurer's report.

A discussion was held regarding ways to help decrease the heating consumption of the church. John reported that two handicap bars have been purchased for the bathrooms. A motion was made, seconded and carried that a handicap stool be installed in the upstairs bathroom. Mark and Joe Buda will complete the project.

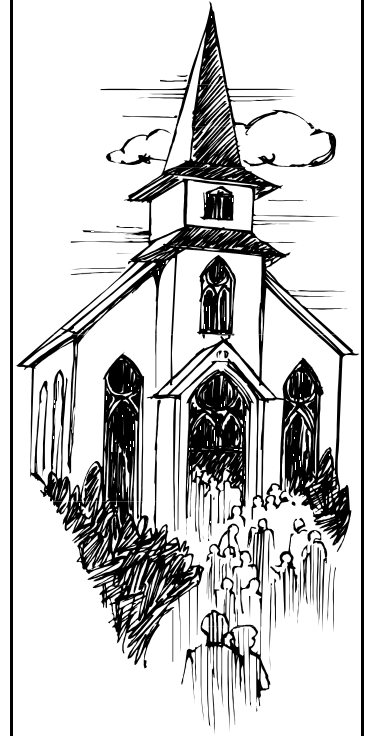
A request for the use of the tables and chairs from the church was presented and approved. Lenten services will start February 13th at 6:00-6:45P for soup and services from 6:45-7:00P. Maundy Thursday services will be at Trinity in Boxholm at 7:00P. and Good Friday services will be at Faith at 7:30P. The Youth group will hold Sunrise services at 6:30A at Trinity in the church.

John welcomed Donna Brundage as the new member to the Council. Jan reported that we have received a bill from Workman's Compensation for \$322 for the year. The Countryside Ministry Council meeting was discussed.

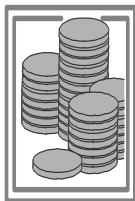
The Council meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20P.

Respectfully submitted,
Dorothy Nahnsen



*Happy
Easter to all*



Treasurer's Report

Beginning Balance 1/1/08	\$ 7,104.40
January Deposits	4,088.63
January Expenses	<u>9,398.51</u>
Balance 1/31/08	\$ 1,794.52

Serving Faith

Ushers-

**Nathan Peterson &
John Samuelson**

Communion Assistants-

Marc Greenfield & Eddie Peterson

Greeters-

Beth Peterson & Jan Peterson

HAVE FAITH

Hidden Pictures

The cover of the 2008 Directory has a picture of Jesus on the front. It has several hidden images in that picture. See if you can find a nativity scene in the beard, Jesus on the cross on the left side of his ear, an angel's trumpet makes the right eyebrow and Jesus praying in the garden of Gethsemane is the center at his hairline.



Easter Egg Hunt

On Easter morning an egg hunt will be held for all children during the Sunday school class time. No class will be held that day. All children are welcome to join the fun of the hunt in celebration of Easter.

Altar Frame

An arched oak frame has been added to the canvas behind the altar. The canvas had begun to curl at the corners and was pulling away from the wall. The 1917 canvas is glued to the wall making it impossible to remove and repair without damaging it. A professional restoration would cost over \$10,000. Mike Gustafson designed and installed the frame in February. It is the hope of the council that the frame will enhance the sanctuary as well as help to secure the canvas.

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You can still praise God for the lesson He is providing for you – and thank Him that He provides you opportunity after opportunity to get it right. You can pray that God will use these circumstances to make a better person of you; that the wisdom that you receive from this lesson might keep you from being a ‘thorn in the flesh’ to someone else.

That circumstance might be a conduit, bringing you the very grace of God.

It is the same lesson Paul writes about in II Corinthians 7 - “A thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me, to keep me from being too elated. Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me, but He said to me, **“My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.”** So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong.”

The story of resurrection can be told any number of ways... rod

Easter Lilies

The enclosed form can be placed in the offering plate or let Marsha know by Friday, March 21, if you are bringing a lily for Easter morning worship to have it memorialized in the bulletin.



Schedule for Lent

Soup Suppers will continue on Wednesday evenings. Soup will be served at 6 pm. The Lenten service will follow from 6:45 - 7:30 pm.

Soup Servers:

March 5— Shirley, Rosie & Donna

March 12— Youth Group

Everyone is invited for supper, fellowship and services.

March 20- Maundy Thursday Service at Trinity 7 pm

March 21- Good Friday service at Faith 7:30 pm

March 23-Sunrise Service 6:30 Trinity
Easter Worship 9 am Faith



- March 2 Worship/Communion 9 Coffee & Sunday School 10
Harcourt Firemen's Soup Lunch 11-1
- March 5 Soup Supper 6 pm Lenten Service 6:45 pm
- March 6 Church Council 7:30 pm
- March 8 Daylight Savings Time—Change Your Clocks!
- March 9 Worship 9 Coffee & Sunday School 10:00
- March 12 Soup Supper 6 pm Lenten Worship 6:45 pm
- March 13 Paton Lion's Pancake Dinner
- March 16 Worship 9:00 Coffee & Sunday School 10:00
- March 17 Deadline to see your 1st robin!!!
- March 20 Maundy Thursday Service 7 pm at Trinity
- March 21 Good Friday Service 7:30 pm at Faith
- March 23 Sunrise Service 6:30 am at Trinity
Easter Worship 9 Coffee & Easter Egg hunt 10
- March 27 Faith WELCA Guest Night 7 pm
- March 30 Worship 9 Coffee Sunday School 10

WELCA NEWS— March 2008



I must begin by thanking everyone again for baking bars for the Sue Wagner Benefit. Also, our Soup Lunch and Bake Sale was another successful event for the ladies of Faith. We look forward to helping to purchase some new padded chairs for the church with our \$975 proceeds of that day.

Our soup suppers and Lenten service began in February and continue on Wednesday evenings. Thursday, March 27th, was scheduled for our WELCA general meeting, but plans have changed. Instead, we will host a Guest Night at Faith. Ladies from the area churches have been invited to come and enjoy a presentation by Pastor Brad Miller of Des Moines about his recent trip to Mali. Mali is an impoverished, predominately Muslim country in Western Africa which is facing tremendous challenges. We hope to have a good representation of ladies and men from Faith here that night.

As Jesus appeared to the disciples after his resurrection his first words were, "Peace be with you." He gave them the gift of forgiveness for their sins. Our weeks of preparation for Easter and beyond reminds us that we also have been offered that same forgiveness. Each Sunday the sharing of the peace has become an important part of our service and may we use that act to also be forgivers. As believers and members of this church family, I hope the peace and forgiveness of this season of Easter will sustain us on our journey of faith.

Marsha