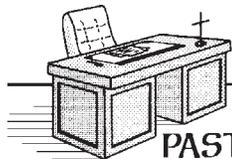




2005

Holy Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church

Crossnotes



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

The Gospel Reading several weeks ago was the story of Jesus calming a violent storm on the Sea of Galilee (Matthew 14:22-33). The Sea of Galilee is normally a peaceful, placid lake. But, occasionally extremely violent storms erupt, suddenly and without warning. Modern meteorologists explain it's because the Sea of Galilee itself is below sea level but is surrounded by very high, steep hills. This causes abrupt shifts in temperature which produce a whirlwind effect and sudden, unusually violent storms.

It's often the same scenario in our lives. We're sailing smoothly along on the calm sea of life, and suddenly, out of nowhere, there comes into our life a terrible storm: Injury, sickness, death; financial problems, trouble with work or business, job loss; struggles within our marriage or family; accidents, injuries, natural disasters. Recently, our fellow citizens along the Gulf Coast have endured many or all of these sufferings as a result of Hurricane Katrina.

Several years ago when a similarly severe storm battered the coast of Bangladesh, the Associated Press quoted one man whose hut was flattened: "It's God's punishment, but for what?" That often is our natural first reaction to trouble and suffering in our lives, to assume that God is punishing us.

The bad news is we do indeed deserve punishment from God because of our sin, as we say in our Liturgy: "I confess unto you all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended you and justly deserved your temporal and eternal punishment" But, the Good News is your sins are all forgiven for the sake of

Jesus Christ: "But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray you of your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor sinful being." The Good News is, God's Son, Jesus Christ, took your sins upon himself and suffered all the punishment for you, in your place.

That is why Paul can say in Romans 8:31, "*If God is for us, who can be against us?*" God is not punishing you, God is not against you; he forgives you, he loves you; he is for you, he is on your side, because Jesus Christ cancelled out all your sins and earned you God's favor.

While it is true that sin is ultimately the root cause of all natural disasters and calamities, because sin spoiled the perfection of creation, it is not true that God sends disasters and calamities upon Christians as a punishment for sin.

For those who trust in Jesus Christ, trouble and suffering in your life, even a disaster like a hurricane, is not ever a punishment from God, but actually God somehow working all things together for your good, as Paul says in Romans 8:28-39: "*And we know that God works all things together for the good of those who love him. . . Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? . . . No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be*

able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." God is not angry with you; he is on your side, and somehow working all things together for your good.

So, why is there suffering in our world? Because of the Fall into sin, our world is not what it should be, not at all what God intended it to be. Sin spoiled the perfection of God's creation, and the sufferings we face in this world are the residual effect, the lingering result, of the Fall into sin. As long as we are in this world we still endure the sufferings brought on by the imperfection of our fallen world: sickness, accidents, disasters, violence, crime, discord, strife, all culminating in physical death. Just as it is now normal for our imperfect bodies to sometimes be sick, to grow old, and to eventually die, so it is normal for our imperfect environment to have disasters and calamities.

However, while it is true that sin is ultimately the root cause of all natural disasters and calamities, because sin spoiled the perfection of creation, it is not true that God sends disasters and calamities upon Christians as a punishment for sin. Bad things which happen to Christians here on earth are never a punishment from God. Psalm 103:10 puts it plainly: "He does not punish us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities." Jesus Christ already paid the punishment your sins deserve, as Isaiah 53:6 proclaims: "The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all."

God is not angry at our world. God is not angry with you. God forgives the sins of the whole world for Jesus' sake. St. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 5:19: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not counting men's sins against them." You can be certain that your sufferings are never targeted punishments from God for particular sins. Rather, your sufferings are the general result of the sorry state of our fallen world.

Faith in Christ means the end of *eternal* suffering, but not necessarily the end of *earthly* suffering. Revelation 21:4 says that in heaven, "there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." But, on the way to heaven we may still pass through much suffering, as Paul says in Acts 14:22, "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."

Psalm 18:6 declares, "In my distress I called to the LORD; I cried to my God for help. In his temple he heard my voice and listened to my cry for help." Turn to the Lord in prayer, his Word and Sacraments and worship for help and comfort in time of trouble. As Psalm 46 says, "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam The LORD Almighty is with us."

Pastor Kevin Vogts

Hurricane Katrina Wreaks Chaos, Triggers Caring

By Kim Krull

LCMS World Relief and Human Care

Monique Miller, the wife of Rev. Philip Miller of Chalmette, Louisiana, was due to deliver the couple's third child on Monday, August 29, the day Hurricane Katrina delivered to the Gulf

Crossnotes

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Coast near New Orleans what many are calling one of the most devastating storms in U.S. history.

Like thousands of their fellow Louisianans, the Millers evacuated just before Katrina hit and are wondering what will remain of their home once they are allowed to return.



"It has been stressful, but we know God is watching over us," said Rev. Miller, pastor of Christ Lutheran Church in Chalmette, a community of about 50,000 just southeast of New Orleans.

The Millers followed evacuation orders and fled to the Houston, Texas, area with their two young children and two elderly parishioners who would have been stranded in Chalmette. Monique Miller experienced contractions during the 13-hour trip.

All are staying with the pastor and a member of Living Word Lutheran Church in The Woodlands and hearing reports that lead them to believe their homes and their church in Chalmette are probably flooded.

"We live on the same street as the courthouse, and we understand it has water up to the second floor," Rev. Miller said. "I'm concerned the levee has given way, which means many in our congregation may have damage."

"It's one thing to say we may have lost everything and then to realize that we probably have," he said.

That's just one example of the horrific blow dealt by Katrina to families in the Gulf Coast, including to many LCMS members and their churches. The Category 4 storm caused the

evacuation of thousands of people and is responsible for at least 100 deaths and \$25 billion in damages, according to early estimates.

"Even those of us who are in this business day in and day out are shocked by the magnitude of Katrina," said Rev. Matthew Harrison, executive director of LCMS World Relief and Human Care. "The reports that are trickling out of the devastation are more shocking, one after the other."

Harrison and Rev. Carlos Hernandez, director of Districts and Congregations with LCMS World Relief and Human Care, left for the Gulf Coast on September 2 to begin damage assessments and coordinate response efforts.

Requests for emergency assistance and stories of Katrina's destruction are pouring into the St. Louis offices of World Relief and Human Care, the arm of the LCMS devoted to disaster response, development, and care for those in need.

At least half of the 140 congregations in the LCMS Southern District have been impacted by the hurricane and the Southern District office in New Orleans is a total loss, according to Harrison, who spoke with Southern District President Rev. Kurtis Schultz on Tuesday.

"It's good to know that in times like this, people exercise their faith and Christians look after you. It's good to know people care."

Here's a sampling of a few of the stories reported to LCMS World Relief and Human Care:

- In response to the large number of people unable to evacuate New Orleans, Rev. David Goodine and his family scrapped their plan to leave the city and kept open the doors of St. Paul Lutheran Church near the French Quarter. Sixty people, mainly from the parish, are

staying at the church, which is without electricity and running water and is operating as a mini relief station.

- Forty-five young residents plus staff members of Bethlehem Children's Center in New Orleans were evacuated to Trinity, Baton Rouge, where they are staying in the school gym.
- Atonement Lutheran Church and School in Metairie, Louisiana filled with as much as four feet of water. "One of our members stayed in the upper floor of the gym during the storm. Many homes are flooded, some to the top of the first floor, others to the rooftops. People are being rescued from their attics and rooftops," Atonement's pastor, Rev. Don Little, said via e-mail.

LCMS World Relief and Human Care is working on plans to establish a network for volunteers to assist with hurricane recovery, working with Rev. Stephen Linck, pastor of Grace Lutheran Church, Pensacola, Florida. Linck has coordinated volunteers since last year's Hurricane Ivan. Volunteer bases are expected to be set up in Pensacola and Houma, Louisiana, when it is safe to enter hard-hit areas. Call World Relief and Human Care at (800) 248-1930, Ext. 1380 or 1381, for more information.

Even in the midst of this tragedy, not all the news is bad. Hurricane victims say they are thankful for the loving response of fellow LCMS members who already are providing shelter and resources to assist with what no doubt will be a long recovery.

"Our congregation helped with tsunami relief, and it's nice to know that things like that are reciprocal," said Miller, the Louisiana pastor whose family is staying at the home of Rev. Alfonso Espinosa of Living Word Lutheran Church in The Woodlands, Texas.

"It's good to know that in times like this, people exercise their faith and Christians look after you," Miller said. "It's good to know people care."

Gifts for hurricane relief may be made out to LCMS World Relief and sent to LCMS World Relief and Human Care,

P.O. Box 66861, St. Louis, MO 63166-9810; designate checks to "2005 Hurricanes." Or call the Credit Card Gift Line at (888) 930-4438, or visit <http://worldrelief.lcms.org> and click the "Give Now" button.



Messages for September

September 4

*"Singing the Faith:
O Sacred Head, Now Wounded"*

Isaiah 53:4-5

September 11

*"Forgive Your Brother
from Your Heart"*

Matthew 18:21-35

September 18

"Workers in the Vineyard"

Matthew 20:1-16

September 25

"A Tale of Two Sons"

Matthew 21:28-32

Worship Order Rotation

We are now rotating our worship services on a monthly and season rather than weekly basis.

In September *Divine Service II, First Setting* (Page 158; in October *Divine Service IV*; and in November *Divine Service II, Second Setting* (Page 178). There will also be occasional alternate orders of service.

When the new church year begins in Advent we will rotate services on a seasonal basis for Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent and Easter, and then on a monthly basis during the longer season of Pentecost.

Please let Pastor Vogts know your opinions and preferences about our worship.



*Mark and Mindy Krause
Kristina and Quintin*

By Transfer from
Faith Lutheran Church (LCMS),
Sioux City, Iowa



POTLUCK DINNER

We will welcome our most recent new members with a New Member Sunday on September 25. There will be a welcoming ceremony during the service with potluck dinner following. Please come and welcome the newest members of our Holy Cross family of faith!



Sunday School and Bible Class for all ages will resume on Sundays at 10:30am with Sunday School Rally Day next Sunday, September 11. During the service Catechisms and/or Bibles will be presented to all children in the 3rd-8th grades.

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6)



Our third annual Family Fun Carnival on August 28 was another *extraordinary* success! It estimated that once again several hundred members of the community enjoyed this fantastic event.

From 4:00pm-6:00pm activities on the lawn of the church included two children's inflatable "bouncers" and carnival games. Most people also came inside the church for crafts and food, including a fun cake walk, and balloon sculptures.

Thank you to everyone who worked so very hard making this event such a big success, including planning, preparation, setup, working at the carnival, and cleanup and tearing down. Special thanks to Board of Evangelism Chair Danielle Bargstadt. *Great job!*



The west lawn of the church was transformed into the carnival grounds.



Third Annual Family Fun Carnival
August 28, 2005



Many of the most familiar and beloved parts of the Bible are from the book Psalms, which was the hymn book of the Old Testament. It is the longest book of the Bible, with a fascinating history, and conveys many important doctrines. Join in Adult Bible Class on Sundays at 10:30am beginning September 11 as we look at the Psalms.





Confirmation Begins September 7

The survey by the Long Range Planning Committee revealed a desire for a more comprehensive confirmation program, which we are beginning to implement this year.

Confirmation classes will begin on Wednesday, September 7 and continue each Wednesday from 6:30pm-7:30pm (6:15pm during Advent and Lent). This year we are adding a Pre-Confirmation class for 5th-6th Grades that will focus on key Bible stories and memorization of the Catechism to prepare for Confirmation class in 7th-8th Grades.

We are combining with Concordia Lutheran Church, Sioux City, with classes held at Holy Cross. Pastor Kenneth Schmidt and Pastor Vogts will rotate teaching the two classes.



Please give all announcements for the bulletin, newsletter, etc. and similar information and materials to church secretary Nancy Wiese. You may put them in her mail slot in the church office or send them by email to holycross@longlines.com. The deadline for the bulletin is 8:00am Friday and the newsletter deadline is the third Friday of each month.

Our thanks to Nancy for volunteering to service as our church secretary. She is in the office on Tuesday and Friday mornings. Pastor Vogts also has office hours each Friday morning. Nancy can be reached at the church (mailbox #4) or at home (712-873-5163).



Thank you for these flower donations to beautify our worship. A sign-up sheet to provide flowers for worship is on the bulletin board at the back of the church. Occasions to remember include anniversaries, birthdays, in memory of loved ones, etc. Flowers may be obtained anywhere and you may provide your own vase or use one of the assortment in the church kitchen.

August 7

Marcy, Bryce & Brady Schroeder
Joey's Birthday

August 14

Rev. Kevin & Terese Vogts
Terry's Birthday

August 21

Rev. Kevin & Terese Vogts
Anna's Birthday

August 28

Betty & Gary Gunderson
49th Wedding Anniversary

September 4

Rev. Kevin & Terese Vogts
Sarah's Birthday

September 11

Joey & Marcy Schroeder
9th Wedding Anniversary

September 18

Joey & Marcy Schroeder
Bryce & Marcy's Birthdays

September 25

Doug & Janet Martin
Kylie & Kendall's Birthdays

October 2

Ginny Peterson
In Honor of Ginny & Bob's
53rd Wedding Anniversary

October 9

Doug & Janet Martin
15th Wedding Anniversary

October 23

Tenth Anniversary Committee

Help Needed with Offering Count

We need 2-4 persons to help count the offerings on a rotating basis. Please contact financial secretary Sue Jansen (232-0280) to volunteer or for more information.



Each month we remember in prayer in our worship specific Missionaries of the Month, sponsored around the world by our congregation, through our Synod and related organizations. You are encouraged to remember them also in your personal and family prayers.



October 2
Heidi Selmeyer
Japan

"Another great gathering happened recently here at Suginami Lutheran Church. All of the 20-somethings in the Lutheran churches in Tokyo were invited for a 'Welcome Party'. We had a worship service, get-to-know-you games, and snacks. More than 40 people came!

"The event was planned to be two hours long but after three hours, most people were still hanging around the church. We ended up splitting into two groups of about 15 people each so that we could go and find a place for supper. Restaurants are often busy on Sunday nights, so we couldn't walk in and ask for

seating for 30-plus. Again and again people kept saying, 'I've never seen so many Christians my age before!' It was a huge success! You could feel the energy and excitement as we all made new friends and caught up with old ones.

"If you remember that there are not a lot of Christians in Japan, you can understand how important this was. Almost everyone in the room goes through his or her week without really spending time with another Christian. On the train, at college, working, anywhere really, you may be the only Christian there! God really gave us a great chance to support and encourage one another. Hopefully, we will be able to do more things like this in the future."



September 11
Rev. Claude and Rhoda Houge
Kenya

"Claude recently went to Ethiopia for 10 days. He was introduced to many of the church leaders and Mission Training Center (MTC) students.

"He visited the town of Kuyire where the Lutherans were beginning outreach to the Muslim community. Because of the strong Muslim influence, no one would rent a room to the Lutheran evangelists where they could have Bible study and worship. After five months of searching unsuccessfully and having doors closed in their faces, the Lutheran evangelists finally came to one compound where they found an older woman 'praising God.' The woman's name was Basha. When the evangelists told her who they were and why they had come, she said to them, 'God has put me here for you.' And, she then gave them a room in her own home in which to gather people for Bible study and prayer.

"A short time later she took the evangelists to a piece of property in the town with a large, locally built round house on it and said, 'God told me to give my property to you.' She had this large piece of property, along with the building on it, legally transferred to the Lutheran church. 'Everything is for God,' Basha said.

"How do you explain such things? Segai, one of the leaders, probably put it best when he explained to Claude, 'Jesus Himself is working. We just go and He is with us.' Pastor Messele added, 'Prayer is our first strategy!'"



September 18
Elizabeth Mowery
Guatemala

"Almost every day, I get one or two opportunities to explain what I'm doing here in Puerto Barrios. Most people in Puerto Barrios are used to seeing 'gringos' passing through for a night or two on their way somewhere else, but to see one riding a bike, buying groceries, and doing laundry is another story. Although sometimes I'm tired of answering the same questions, I thank God for these easy opportunities to share the reason I'm here.

"As I was talking with some people at the Internet café one day, one man said to me, 'Oh, that's really good what you're doing, the world would be a better place if there were more good people like you.' That was a great chance to discuss that I'm not here because of any good intentions I have, but only because of the Holy Spirit working on my mind and heart! I told them I wasn't here because I have a pure heart to sacrifice myself serving others, but because God loves me and the rest of the world. He uses us as His instruments

going out to encourage Christians in other lands and talk with those who aren't yet believers. This point of view seemed to be a new concept for the men I was talking to, who thought good works were the means and the end of our relationship with God. So, I thank God for this and all the conversations I've had.

"I had another talk with a Honduran father of three, as we were sitting together on a bus earlier this week. He asked me some basic questions about why I was in Guatemala, and I got to share with him about my faith and how important it has been in my life to have Christian parents as examples to me and who brought me to church to hear the message of salvation through Jesus. For whatever reason, he was asking me for advice about raising his sons. I don't think I look like someone who is full of child-rearing wisdom, but it was a ministry opportunity nonetheless! Praise God simply for bringing me somewhere where I stick out enough that people ask why I'm here; an instant witnessing opportunity!"



September 25
Todd and Kim Roeske
Philippines

"You are not to go into the mountains carrying a sword. You are not to go into the mountains carrying a gun. You are to go into the mountains carrying God's Word to our Tagakaulo brothers and sisters! These were the words of encouragement from Agapitu Guili, the retired provincial officer for tribal affairs, to the 12 Tagakaulo Lutheran Church of Christ in the Philippine pastors at the first-ever Tagakaulo pastoral-training graduation. For the majority of these men it was the first time they had ever graduated from any sort of educational program.

“We wanted their graduation to be a special event. We wanted it to be an event that confirmed for the pastors, in the presence of their community, their position as well-equipped spiritual leaders. They were celebrating the culmination of six to eight years of studying God’s Word, while simultaneously serving their congregations. During that time, these men have grown into mature leaders who are firmly based in God’s Word.”



Elders

September 4
Dennis Melstad

September 11
Joey Schroeder

September 18
Mike Bargstadt

September 25
Ron Yockey

Alternate
Doug Jansen



Acolytes

September 4
Kendall Martin

September 11
Jacob Vogts

September 18
Sarah Vogts

September 25
Kylie Martin

Almighty and everlasting God, graciously hear our prayers on behalf of those who were injured by the ravages of wind and water. Protect them, and by Your mighty deliverance spare their lives. To the families of all those who lost their lives, give comfort and peace. For the countless number who are still waiting to hear word from their loved ones, grant patience, peace, and hope. Sustain all those who have lost their homes and their jobs. Grant ready access to food, clothing, and shelter, and keep them from despair as they look to the days and weeks ahead.

Watch over and protect all who are working to care for those in need: the police and other law enforcement officials; Coast Guard, National Guard, and other rescue workers; doctors, nurses, and counselors; and all other aid workers. Defend them from all danger, and give them courage and endurance to attend to their tasks to the best of their abilities and to the welfare of those under their care.

Grant wisdom to our leaders—to the President, to the governors and mayors of our southern states, and to all others charged with the responsibility of caring for the general welfare of those in need, and give to us all hearts of compassion shown in acts of kindness and love.

Because we are set in the midst of so many and great dangers, grant us such strength and protection as may support us in all dangers and carry us through all trials, and, as you have promised, finally take us to Paradise, where there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Adapted from Materials Provided by the LCMS Commission on Worship



Mark Your
Calendar!

Tenth Anniversary Celebration October 23

In 2005 Holy Cross is celebrating the Tenth Anniversary of our congregation’s initial organization as a mission in 1996. We will observe this milestone with a special service of celebration on Sunday, October 23 at 2:00pm.

The guest preacher will be Rev. Dr. Raymond Hartwig, former President of the South Dakota District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and now LCMS national Secretary, based in St. Louis. Dr. Hartwig was very instrumental in the launching of Holy Cross.



Long Range Planning Update

The Long Range Planning Committee began with a congregational survey to identify needs and priorities. Several items highlighted have already been addressed, such as a more comprehensive Confirmation program, a church secretary, and hiring a preschool director.

The committee has benefited greatly from visiting several newer church buildings in our area, and several more visits are planned.



Holy Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church

Crossnotes

Rev. Kevin Vogts, Pastor

149 Bison Trail

Dakota Dunes, SD 57049

Return Service Requested

DISASTER

LCMS WORLD RELIEF
Human Care

SHARING Update SHARING Update SHARING Update

LCMS World Relief and Human Care Responds to Hurricane Katrina

LCMS World Relief and Human Care is mobilizing to respond to destruction and loss in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, which struck the Gulf Coast of the United States as a category 4 storm on August 29.

From Louisiana to Florida, none of the Gulf states has escaped Katrina's impact. Hardest-hit are Mississippi and Louisiana. In all, damage from the storm is estimated to reach \$25 billion; 120 people are said to have been killed, but as search and rescue efforts continue, officials fear the toll could rise. At least 1.2 million people are without power in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama.

Conditions in hard-hit New Orleans grew worse still when levees designed to keep out Lake Pontchartrain collapsed, allowing additional flood waters into the city.

Speaking via telephone from his Birmingham, Ala. place of shelter, LCMS Southern District president Rev. Kurtis Schultz described an anxious situation from the perspective of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. According to Schultz, at least 70 of the 140 congregations in the district have been affected. The district office, which was located near Lake Pontchartrain, is feared to have been damaged. "We would not be able in any event to get into the building for at least a month," Schultz said. Schultz related also that his own home, in the Slidell area, is likely to have been damaged or destroyed.

Although LCMS World Relief and Human Care is waiting for needs assessments to be able to respond appropriately on a broad scale, the agency's staff is at work determining strategy and lining up partners.

"Priority one is doing everything possible to address the needs of leaders, pastors and congregations in our districts who will be helping to coordinate this massive response," said Rev. Matthew Harrison, executive director of LCMS World Relief and Human Care. "As their needs are met, they become better able to turn toward their neighbors in love in word and deed."

Evacuations of the New Orleans area are continuing, as are police and National Guard emergency efforts. Access throughout the affected areas is very limited and not conducive at this time to hands-on volunteer activity. Individuals can respond most effectively by providing financial resources through organizations such as LCMS World Relief and Human Care.

Gifts to this Missouri Synod organization will be used to enable the LCMS districts and congregations in the area to reach out locally and also to equip the inter-Lutheran program Lutheran Disaster Response to assist communities across the region.

Please designate checks "Hurricane Relief 2005"

Send donations to:

LCMS World Relief/Human Care
P.O. Box 66861

St. Louis, MO 63166-9810

Credit card gift line:

1-888-930-4438