

## *From the Pastor*



Recent articles in the news reveal that Holy Cross is actually at the forefront of the latest church growth trends—although we didn't know it!

During the 1980's and 90's the trend was toward mega-churches with thousands of members and enormous facilities. This trend was actually based not so much on anything religious but rather on prevailing societal trends, paralleling in the realm of religion the "big box" and "super center" phenomenon which during those decades transformed the retail industry and the landscape of suburban America.

However, an article in the March 6, 2006 issue of *Time* magazine explored the latest trend, away from mega-churches toward smaller neighborhood churches, or even more intimate congregations that meet in members' homes. It turns out that while people like shopping in a "big box super center," they don't necessarily feel comfortable worshipping in one. Those interviewed had formerly been members of mega-churches but felt lost in their impersonal atmosphere, unconnected and strangely alone among the crowds of thousands.

Evidence has been mounting for some time that the mega-church phenomenon has peaked. Many of the largest mega-churches, including those in our Synod, are stagnant or declining in membership and attendance. For example, statistics for a Lutheran

mega-church in our area—not LCMS—reveal that for the past several years they have received not a single adult convert, with all new members coming by transfer from other Lutheran congregations.

I once heard the late Dr. Robert Preus, an LCMS theologian and seminary president, put it this way: "Jesus said that we should be fishers of men. What's better for fishing: a huge ocean liner, or a fishing boat?" In fact, statistical analysis does indeed show that most new members come not through the efforts of mega-churches but through small and medium size congregations such as ours. In contrast, studies show that 80% of those joining mega-churches were actually existing church members drawn away from other congregations.

While we certainly hope and expect Holy Cross to continue our recent healthy growth, rather than envisioning a mega-church we are focused on being a neighborhood, community church for Dakota Dunes, North Sioux City, McCook Lake and the surrounding area—a more intimate, mid-size congregation, which it turns out is the latest church growth trend! A limiting factor for Holy Cross will always be parking, since our property will not allow for more than about 100 spaces. Because of this limitation, one architect we recently interviewed—but did not select—suggested that if we had "vision" we would move to another location. I replied that our vision is to "bloom where we are planted," to serve as a neighborhood, community church for this area, for which we are ideally situated. Unwittingly anticipating the article in *Time*, I explained that not everyone feels comfortable being a member of a mega-church. And, if God should bless us with extraordinary growth, rather than creating an "ocean liner" the better option, which actually leads to greater growth and outreach, is instead to launch another "fishing boat" by planting another congregation.

Another trend from the 1980's and 90's was giving up traditional worship, music and hymns in favor of contemporary worship. However, the other latest church growth trend where we are in the forefront is revealed in a recent article in the *Dallas Morning News*: a return by contemporary churches to more traditional worship.

### *A Return to the Classics: Contemporary Churches Rediscover the Power of Familiar Hymns*

Excerpted from *Dallas Morning News*,  
February 18, 2006

"A funny thing happened last summer at Lake Pointe Church in Rockwall. A shipment of hymn books arrived, and not by mistake. Lake Pointe is a mega-church with contemporary style worship. Years back, it dissolved its choir and got rid of its hymnals in favor of Christian 'praise' music, played by a rock band, with lyrics flashed on big screens.

"But in August, sensing demand, the church debuted its 'Classic Service,' an early Sunday morning alternative service with choir, piano, organ and lots of congregational singing—out of those shiny new hymnals. The first Sunday, Pastor Steve Stroope and his staff prepared a room for 200. Nearly twice that many came, forcing a move the next week to the church gym. A second batch of hymnals was ordered. The service now regularly draws 300 to 350, with chairs covering the basketball court. 'We've scratched an itch,' Mr. Stroope said.

"More and more churches that cast their lot with contemporary worship are beginning to innovate through tradition, giving folks some old-time religion—especially hymns. First Baptist Church of Fort Worth started an early Sunday morning traditional service in 2004. Northeast Houston Baptist offers an



February 26 was a very special Sunday as we welcomed 16 more new members to our congregation with a special recognition during the service and a potluck dinner following. If you have an interest in learning more about and possibly joining Holy Cross, you are invited contact Pastor Vogts (232-9117 or 232-4013).

early morning service that's heavy on hymns and even includes some liturgy. Saddleback Church in Lake Forest, California, is famously and influentially contemporary in worship style. But last September it added a Sunday service called 'Traditions,' complete with hymnals, to its several worship style options. 'It is extremely popular with those who attend,' said Gerald Sharon, part of Saddleback's pastoral staff.

"Students of the contemporary style say that much of its music lacks the melodic sophistication of enduring hymns, or the poetry and doctrinal depth of lyrics penned by such writers as Charles Wesley ('Love Divine, All Loves Excelling') or Isaac Watts ('When I Survey the Wondrous Cross')."

## Crossnotes

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*605-232-9117  
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"When done incorrectly, contemporary services are all foam and no root beer," said Nathan Lino, Northeast Houston Baptist's pastor. 'They are entertaining, fun and high energy, but you leave with no sense of having had a meaningful time of worship. . . I do think churches are beginning to realize that there is a growing desire for a shift back toward a more traditional style.'

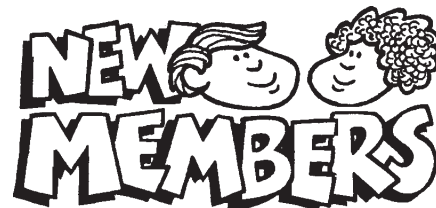
"As Mr. Stroope watched the church grow, he worried that a percentage of its loyal members were gritting their teeth through the electrified praise music. 'We just really felt that there was a group of people in our church who very graciously, because they love everything else about our church, tolerated our style of music,' Mr. Stroope said.

"To run the classic service, Mr. Stroope recruited Don Blackley, a veteran Dallas-area Baptist minister of music. This was a little ironic, because when Lake Pointe sold off its choral library in pre-Classic Service days, Mr. Blackley bought some of its anthems and orchestrations for First Baptist in Garland, where he was interim music director. 'Now I'm building back a choral library I helped diminish,' he said.

"Jerry Walker is among the regulars at the Classic Service. 'The music that's in the contemporary service,' he said, 'well, it's just harder for me to sing along with.'"

So, although we didn't know it, these articles reveal that Holy Cross is actually at the forefront of the latest church growth trends!

Pastor Kevin Vogts



On February 26 we rejoiced to receive our latest group of 16 new members. If you have an interest in joining Holy Cross please contact Pastor Vogts (232-9117 or 232-4013).

Welcome to the Holy Cross family of faith!



*Ryan and Angela Dial  
Nichole and Caden*

Ryan and Angela Dial and their children Nichole and Caden join by transfer from Trinity Lutheran Church, Winfield, Kansas. Ryan works at BPI Technology and Angela is a Registered Nurse and homemaker. They are at home in Elk Point at 1404 St. Andrews Lane, Elk Point, SD, 57025; (605) 761-1404.



*Rob and Heidi Finkral  
Dylan Sawyer, Levi and Vaughn*

Rob and Heidi Finkral and their sons Dylan Sawyer, Levi and Vaughn, join by transfer from Our Savior Lutheran Church, Norfolk, Nebraska. Rob is employed by Tyson and Heidi is a hair stylist. They are at home at 325 North Shay, Dakota Dunes, SD, 57049, (605) 232-4191.



*Kevin and Helen Hamilton  
Michele*

Kevin and Helen Hamilton and their daughter Michele join by release from First Lutheran Church, South Sioux City, Nebraska. They recently moved from the Sioux Falls area for Kevin's work with Gateway. Helen's mother Donna Vondracek also recently moved to the area and joined Holy Cross. They Hamiltons are at home in North Sioux City at 3 Bancroft Court; North Sioux City, SD, 57049; (605) 780-0102.



*Gina Hanke*

Gina Hanke joins by Affirmation of Faith. She has worked for several years for fellow member Ginny Peterson. She has three grown sons. She is at home in Dakota Dunes at 935 Spyglass Circle, Dakota Dunes, SD, 57049; (402) 651-8222.



*John and Sherry Isley*

John and Sherry Isley join by release from Christ Lutheran Church, Salem, South Dakota. John is the new manager of 1st Financial Bank and Sherry is retired from the medical insurance field. They have three grown sons, who live in Kansas and North Dakota, and one grandchild. They have recently moved into their new home at 548 Oxbow, Dakota Dunes; (605) 422-1262.



*Todd Peters*

Todd Peters joins by Affirmation of Faith. Todd grew up in Sioux City and was formerly a member at St. Paul's and Calvary Lutheran Churches. He works in Information Technology at Gateway. He and his wife Jill have one son, Caden, and are at home in Dakota Dunes at 395 Partridge Circle; (605) 232-1909.



***Building Presentation  
Planned for April 23***

The Building Committee has been meeting weekly with architect Brad Mollet to study our needs and consider a possible building expansion.

The process has included consideration of our congregation's growth trends and facility requirements, assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of our current site and building, an "adjacency study" of how various components of a building should ideally be arranged, an engineering survey of our property (you may have seen the surveyors at work), preliminary

# Symbols of Our Savior



March 29  
"INRI"



April 13 (Maundy Thursday)  
"Pelican in Her Piety"

**2006 Lent Services  
on Symbols of Christ**  
Wednesday Evenings and  
Maundy Thursday and Good Friday  
7:00pm



April 5  
"Butterfly, Peacock,  
Phoenix, and Pomegranate"



April 14 (Good Friday)  
"Crown of Thorns"

design planning, and cost considerations.

At the Quarterly Business Meeting on Sunday, April 23 at 1:00pm the Building Committee plans to present a report and recommendation to the congregation. Whatever is decided could be very important for the future of our congregation. All members are urged to attend this important meeting.



## Who Really Wrote the Bible?

Our current Adult Bible Class is using a documentary *Who Wrote the Bible?* from The History Channel to look at the question *Who Really Wrote the Bible?*

While it has some great footage and good features, The History Channel documentary ultimately gave an un-Scriptural perspective that is very commonly assumed in the media, college classes, etc. and even by many liberal churches.

Join in Sundays at 10:30am for the study *Who Really Wrote the Bible?*



## Preschool Registration Night April 4th

Registration Night for the Holy Cross Preschool for the 2006-2007 school year will be Tuesday, April 4th from 6:00pm-7:30pm. Come learn more about our high quality preschool

program, and hold a place for your child for next Fall by paying the registration fee.

Early registrations will be accepted through April 4th for members of Holy Cross and current students and their siblings. Contact Preschool Director Lynnea Mueller at 235-1688, mailbox #2 or by email at [holycrosspreschool@longlines.com](mailto:holycrosspreschool@longlines.com). After April 4th enrollment will be open to the public.

Class sizes are limited, so you are encouraged to reserve a place for your child as soon as possible, and if you have friends, neighbors, relatives, etc. that may be interested, please let them know to reserve a place, so that they will not be disappointed.

Classes include Mom's Day Out for two year-olds, and Preschool sessions for three, four and five year-olds. Holy Cross Preschool is blessed with a dedicated, professional staff, and an excellent facility. Most of all, education takes place in a loving, Christian atmosphere.

Holy Cross also offers After School Care. Children thru 6th grade enjoy a variety of supervised activities from 3:00pm-6:00pm. Bus service is provided directly to Holy Cross from both Dakota Valley and Sacred Heart.

This service of our congregation has blessed hundreds of children over the years from our congregation and community, helping them to grow and develop not only mentally, socially, etc. but also to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18).



## ***New Sanctuary Lamp***

The Board of Elders approved accepting the donation of and installing our new sanctuary lamp. It was donated to our congregation by St. John's Lutheran Church, Wagner, South Dakota, which itself recently received a donation of a new one.

The sanctuary lamp is a traditional church fixture which symbolizes Christ's presence among us, as he said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (John 8:12).

Just as the Lord appeared to Moses in the burning bush, which “burned with fire but was not consumed” (Exodus 3:2), and the lamps in the Temple were to be kept burning continuously (Exodus 27:20-21), the eternal flame of the sanctuary lamp is not extinguished, to

# *Community Easter Sunrise Service*



**Easter Sunday, April 16**

Sunrise Service—7:00am

Light Continental Breakfast—8:00am

Second Easter Service with Holy Communion—9:30am

All Events Held at Holy Cross Lutheran Church  
Freewill Offering Taken to Defray Breakfast Expenses

***All Invited—Everyone Welcome!***

symbolize the eternity and continuous presence of the Lord. The special candles burn for approximately one week.



Holy Cross is again sponsoring a Community Easter Egg Hunt, on Saturday, April 15 (day before Easter) at 10:30am on the church grounds. This event is for the entire community, and all children up to age 10 are welcome.

Last year over 100 children attended and at least that many adults

attended. This event is becoming a real community tradition. There will be plenty of eggs, prizes, snacks and an Easter video. There are no charges or fees for this free community event.

Donations to help defray expenses would be appreciated. Place in offering plate marked “Easter Egg Hunt.”



In the back of the church is a sign up sheet to bring snacks for after worship. You are welcome to bring whatever snacks you wish.

Those bringing snacks are also asked to please prepare the coffee.

Simple instructions are posted near the coffee maker. Coffee, cups, napkins, plates, etc. are all provided and in the kitchen. Thank you to those providing snacks!

March 5  
Jeanette Yockey

March 12  
Nancy Wiese

March 19  
Angela Dial

March 26  
Terry Vogts

April 2  
Sue Jansen

April 9  
Jeanette Yockey

April 16  
Easter Breakfast  
Holy Cross Women in Mission

April 23  
Helen Hamilton

April 30  
Terry Vogts

May 7  
Heidi Finkral

May 14, 21, & 28 — *Need Volunteer*



## **Donate Lilies for Easter**

Sign up on the bulletin board to donate lilies to beautify our church at Easter, which falls this year on April 16. Note whom or what they are in memory or honor of. As we focus on the promise of the resurrection, Easter is a wonderful occasion to remember loved ones.

# **Community Easter Egg Hunt**



Saturday, April 15 • 10:30am

On Church Grounds at  
Dakota Dunes Boulevard and Bison Trail

Up to Age 10 • Plenty of Eggs!

Prizes • Snacks • Easter Video

*All Children Invited—Non-Members Welcome!*

No Charges or Fees

Lilies will be obtained this year from Mosher's Garden Center. Cost is \$10 per plant and the deadline for signing up to order is Palm Sunday, April 9. Put payment in offering marked "Easter Lilies."

You are also *welcome* to bring plants you purchase elsewhere or receive as gifts. Please still sign up, noting you will bring your own plants.

All adult members of the congregation are automatically eligible to be voting members. You are urged to come and help administer the business affairs of our congregation.



April 2  
Ron Yockey

April 5 (Lent Service)  
Ron Yockey

April 9  
Joey Schroeder

April 13 (Maundy Thursday)  
Joey Schroeder

April 14 (Good Friday)  
Greg Huibregtse

April 16  
Greg Huibregtse

April 23  
Mike Bargstadt



## **Quarterly Business Meeting April 23**

The regular quarterly business meeting of the congregation will be held on Sunday, April 23 at 1:00pm. The Building Committee plans to present a report and recommendation to the congregation. Whatever is decided could be very important for the future of our congregation.

April 30  
Don Wiese



LCMS Chaplain Eric Erkinen leads a Bible study for U.S. soldiers in Baghdad.

## ***LCMS Chaplains in War Zones***

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has dozens of chaplains on active duty in the United States Armed Forces and dozens more reserve chaplains in the various branches of the National Guard and Reserves. LCMS chaplains currently serving in war zones include:



LCMS Chaplain Eric Ebb visits an orphanage in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan

Chaplain Eric Ebb (Army)

Bahrain

Chaplain Mark Tews (Navy)



LCMS Chaplain Robert Burmeister feeding a child in Iraq.

Iraq

Chaplain David Anderson (USAR)  
Chaplain Robert Burmeister (Army)  
Chaplain Eric Erkinen (Army)  
Chaplain Richard Graves (Army)  
Chaplain Craig Muehler (Navy)  
Chaplain Timothy Sowers (Army)  
Chaplain Richard Townes (Navy)



LCMS Chaplain Kevin Hoogland with his unit in Kuwait.

Kuwait

Chaplain Kevin Hoogland (ARNG)



LCMS Chaplain Christopher Molnar (center) helps cut the troops' Christmas cake at Quantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Quantanamo Bay, Cuba

Chaplain Christopher Molnar (ARNG)



**Altar Flowers**

Thank you for these flower donations to beautify our worship. The sign-up sheet to provide flowers for worship in 2006 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.

March 5

Mabel Schibonski  
In Memory of Husband Elmer

March 19

Joey & Marcy Schroeder  
Brady's Birthday

April 16

Rev. Kevin & Terese Vogts  
Pastor's Birthday

May 7

Rob & Heidi Finkral  
Wedding Anniversary

May 21

Ron & Jeannette Yockey  
Wedding Anniversary  
Travis' Birthday



## ***New Purple Paraments***

Our thanks to Mabel Schibonski for donating, in memory of her late husband Elmer, our new purple altar paraments. They will be dedicated on Palm Sunday, April 9.

The lectern hanging (shown above) has a cross imposed over the monogram of Jesus' name, "IHS." The altar has a triumphant crown to symbolize that after he was crucified, dead and buried on the third day he rose again from the dead and ascended into heaven and is seated on the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

Purple is used during Lent especially as a reminder of the purple robe Christ

was dressed in white while being mocked before his crucifixion (Mark 15:17). As the ancient color of royalty, the purple paraments are a testimony that he really is what the sign posted above him on the cross proclaimed: "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews" (John 19:19). The pulpit hanging has a crown of thorns (Mark 15:17), the meaning of which we will meditate on for our Good Friday service on April 14, and three nails to symbolize his being nailed to the cross (Luke 24:39-40, John 20:25, Acts 2:23).

Purple is also traditionally used during Advent, to symbolize Jesus is our coming King. A new color more recently adopted by many churches for Advent is light blue, to symbolize the joy of Christ's advent in the flesh. This set is still available for donation. If you may be interested in donating a light blue set please speak with Pastor Vogts for more information about costs, symbols, etc.

Our thanks also to Don and Nancy Wiese for donating a new white set, in memory of Don's late son Nathan, which was used for the first time and dedicated on Christmas Eve; Doug and Janet Martin for donating a new red set, which will be used for the first time on Pentecost; and Concordia Lutheran Church, Sioux City, for donating a black set which will be used by us for the first time on Good Friday. Our green set is in excellent condition and does not need replacing at this time.



We are now listing in the newsletter each month and have prayers in worship each week for those having birthdays and wedding anniversaries. This information was recently requested from all members.

If your information is missing or inaccurate, please notify church secretary Nancy Wiese, 232-9117 mailbox #4 or email [nancywiese@longlines.com](mailto:nancywiese@longlines.com).

Jeri Melstad, April 6

Pastor Kevin Vogts, April 17

John Isley, April 22

Gary Gunderson, April 26

Braylen Bietz, April 28



**LCMS member and NASA astronaut Jeff Williams (right) plans to worship with his home congregation in Houston via a space uplink while on a six-month assignment on the International Space Station with Russian cosmonaut Pavel Vinogradov.**

## ***LCMS Astronaut Plans to Worship from Space***

Astronaut Jeff Williams' Christian faith is important to him and he wouldn't dream of leaving home—or earth, for that matter—without it. Williams, a member of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Houston, says he plans to stay in touch with his congregation even though he'll be off the planet—orbiting 250 miles above the earth during a six-month stint aboard the International Space Station.

In fact, Williams has arranged with NASA technicians to "join" fellow congregation members in a July 2 worship service. Aboard the space station, Williams will receive only audio from the service, but if all goes well the congregation will be able to see and hear Williams via a live video feed. In a telephone interview from the Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Center in Star City, Russia, Williams told the *LCMS Reporter* that he's not sure yet what he'll say to

Gloria Dei members in July, but he will probably "reflect on the grandeur" of the view, "being able to see the work of our Creator" and "the magnificence of his grace that we find in his Son, Jesus Christ."

Williams, 48, began his service at the Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center in Houston in 1987, the year he and his wife, Anna-Marie, became Christians. They joined Gloria Dei the following year. About a fifth of the congregation's 3,200 members have connections to NASA, including several astronauts.

As the international two-man space-station crew on Expedition 13, Williams and Russian cosmonaut Pavel Vinogradov will man the orbiting laboratory for six months, doing research and maintaining equipment. Williams, a U.S. Army colonel, will serve as the expedition's flight engineer and NASA science officer. He described the space station, in orbit since 1998, as "fairly roomy," with about as much livable space as a three-bedroom house. He expects to have relatively normal work days, with more free time on weekends, just like home. And, just like home, he said he expects that "prayer will be part of my daily regimen up there," with more time for devotions on weekends. He is taking along plenty of reading material—including Christian and devotional works—mostly in space-saving electronic form that he can read via computer. But he is taking a printed Bible.

Williams said he doesn't really feel any closer to God while exploring the "heavens," but says space exploration "intensifies and magnifies the reality of the faith I already have." It also "intensifies the awe and wonder" of what God has done for mankind, he said. "It's a very humbling experience to view the earth"—and everything it represents—"and to begin to imagine the creative power of our God." Williams and Vinogradov will take part in three "spacewalks" outside the spacecraft, a thrill Williams has had once before, while on the 10-day "Atlantis" STS 101 shuttle mission in 2000. "It's awesome," he said, "the highlight of the whole experience."





## Internet Resources

There is much on the Internet of questionable or negative value. However, there are also many blessings to be found. Our own Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has been a leader in many areas of the Internet.

[www.kfuo.org](http://www.kfuo.org)

KFUO is the oldest religious radio station in the world, operated continuously by the LCMS since 1923. (Incidentally, Pastor Vogts is on the LCMS Board for Communications which oversees operations of KFUE.) You can listen to KFUE live online and there is a very large library of archived programs. You'll find music, talk, Bible studies, and inspirational programs.

[www.issuesetc.org](http://www.issuesetc.org)

Issues, Etc. is a talk program produced at KFUE and syndicated nationwide. It covers a wide range of topics with world-renowned guests from all over the world. Even though this excellent program is not currently broadcast in our area, you can easily access it over the Internet. You can listen live weekdays from 3:00pm-6:00pm and Sunday evenings from 10:00pm-Midnight. It is also broadcast on Sundays on XM Satellite Radio on channel 170 from 10:00pm-11:00pm. Even better, Issues, Etc. has an archived library of thousands of programs going back through 2003, all easily available on the [www.issuesetc.org](http://www.issuesetc.org) web site. You can search these archived programs for topics of interest to you. If you use podcasting you can sign up to have programs downloaded directly to your computer. You will be blessed by listening to Issues, Etc. Once you listen, you'll be hooked!

[www.ctsfw.edu/chapel/  
audio.php](http://www.ctsfw.edu/chapel/audio.php)

Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, Indiana has recently begun broadcasting its chapel services over the Internet. Each morning's service, when classes are in session, is posted by noon that day and one week of services are archived. You will thrill to the singing of hundreds of seminary students. The music and messages are excellent and very uplifting.



## Hurricane Relief: Making a Difference One Home at a Time

While retired pastor Rev. Sidney Ponseti recovered from a cerebral hemorrhage and his wife battled cancer, Hurricane Katrina filled the couple's home with as much as 10 inches of floodwater. But instead of dwelling on their hardships, the Metairie, Louisiana, couple prefer to focus on their blessings. And those include some extremely dedicated volunteers from Nebraska.

"For years, we were the ones doing the giving, so it's humbling to be on the receiving end," said Sylvia Ponseti, whose husband retired after 40 years of pastoral ministry. "I don't know what we would do without these wonderful, kind Christians who are such a blessing."

In October, Beverly and Jerry Helzer, members of Peace Lutheran Church, Grand Island, Nebraska, began packing up and cleaning out the Ponsetis' mold-covered home. In December, the Helzers were still in Metairie, drywalling the Ponseti home during the day and sleeping in their RV at night. "My husband is retired and enjoys carpentry work,"

Beverly said. "When he learned how much Mrs. Ponseti would like to be back in her own home, he was determined to make that happen as soon as possible."



**Director of Christian Education Seth Kaiser (left), and Beverly and Jerry Helzer drywalling the once flooded, mold-covered home of retired pastor Rev. Sidney Ponseti in Metairie, Louisiana.**

LCMS volunteers from throughout the country have lent a hand with cleanup efforts. When Rev. Scott Murray, senior pastor at Memorial Lutheran Church, Houston, Texas learned that Katrina damaged at least half the homes in Gretna, Louisiana, he issued a call for volunteers. Members of his congregation spent two weekends repairing roofs, starting with the homes of Salem Lutheran School faculty.

"Their school grew to beyond capacity enrollment after the hurricane," Pastor Murray said. "We wanted to help the teachers and staff give their full commitment to the students' psychological and spiritual needs. We didn't want them to worry if their houses would leak the next time it rained."

Enrollment at the Houston school also grew. About 30 children from evacuee families resumed classes at Memorial Lutheran, with tuition assistance provided by the congregation and LCMS World Relief and Human Care.

Emptying devastated homes of years of personal belongings is challenging, both physically and emotionally. During a week of relief work in New Orleans, volunteers from St. Luke Lutheran Church, Cabot, Pennsylvania removed refrigerators filled with rotten food and washing machines brimming with stagnant water.

But the toughest task, says Mark Willert, St. Luke's Director of Christian

Education, was “going in and taking out generations of belongings and memories and throwing them curbside.”

The group discovered that instead of physical labor, their most important job was listening. They told of cleaning out the home of a hurricane survivor undergoing chemotherapy. Amid the ruins, the St. Luke’s volun-teers found a treasured photograph of the woman’s deceased sister. Tears and hugs followed.

“Folks are so appreciative that we are here, and that a church would care enough to send us even for a week,” Willert wrote in an e-mail from New Orleans. “They tell us our presence here is what helps keep them resilient and helps them to know that even folks far away care and want to help.”

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.



## HOLY CROSS Women in Mission

Our newly formed women’s group has selected a name: *Holy Cross Women in Mission*. It has also been decided to become part of the Lutheran Women’s Missionary League, a nationwide organization of local women’s groups from congregations throughout the LCMS.

You are invited to the next monthly meeting on April 11 at 7:00pm. Nancy Wiese has the topic on making quilts for the needy , and Jeri Melstad will be leading us in a devotion and providing snacks. All women are welcome to this evening of fun and fellowship!



Each month we remember in prayer in our worship specific missionaries 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.



April 2  
*Rev. Herb Hoefler*  
*Sri Lanka*

“I have just returned from another tour of new work, this time in the tea plantations of Sri Lanka. I try to focus my efforts on recognizing and encouraging those who are doing the pioneering work. The fledgling congregations I visited today have been raised up by God through the work of the Lanka Lutheran Church (LLC) seminary students. They go to the remotest corners, for their policy (like in India) is to go where there are no other Christian churches.

“Once again, I spent the day bouncing and swerving in a van. Then we had to climb up stone ‘steps’ and over rocks and tumbling creeks to these areas of new outreach. They are unreached because they are almost unreachable! We had a brief worship service in each place, and my role was to deliver a message appropriate to the situation we encountered.

“Each seminarian has an area of 20-25 plantations, with a population of 15,000 to 20,000 people. They are under the supervision of one of the LLC pastors. The usual story is that they face a good three months of opposition. Leaders object that they are just here to convert people, but they simply reply, ‘We are here to share the good news about Jesus, and people can decide for themselves.’

“I asked the seminarians how they present the good news. One spoke of telling how Jesus came to be among the poor (for these people are desperately poor and oppressed). He came to give them new life, forgiveness, and eternal life.

“Tomorrow the LLC is holding a baptism service at the headquarters congregation in Nuwara Eliya. I think there will be 125 baptized, all from these ministries. They do it away as a group so that local anti-Christian radical leaders won’t interfere and so the new believers sense the fellowship of the wider church, even though they are scattered in different plantations.

“All of these converts came from just six months of the seminarians’ work, and they say many more are getting ready. Join us in thanks to God for the blessing of His Spirit on the work of His Word.”

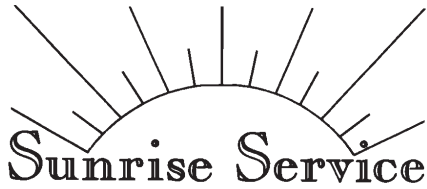


April 9  
*Rev. Paul Mueller*  
*Nigeria*

April 16  
Cassie Thomas  
Macau

April 23  
Miriam Carter  
India

April 30  
Anton Lutz  
Papua New Guinea



## **Community Sunrise Service at Holy Cross**

You are invited to a Community Sunrise Service on Easter Sunday, April 16 at 7:00am, held in the sanctuary at Holy Cross. This simple service will feature the Easter story and favorite Easter hymns. A light Easter Breakfast provided by the Holy Cross Women in Mission will follow. A second Easter Service, with Holy Communion, will be held at 9:30am.

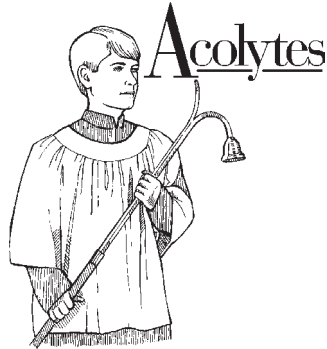
Easter Sunrise Service is one of the most moving and meaningful worship opportunities of the year. Bring your family and holiday guests to celebrate the real significance of Easter. This is a wonderful opportunity to invite family, friends, neighbors, etc.—everyone enjoys Easter Sunrise services!

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## **Holy Cross Summer Day Camp 2006**

Holy Cross Preschool and Afterschool Care is again planning a Summer Day Camp for 2006 for children three thru six years old. Classes will be held on Wednesdays, May 24 thru August 9, from 9:00am to 3:00pm. (There will be no class June 5 due to Vacation Bible School.)

For more information about the program, fees, and to register call 235-1688.



April 2  
Keegan Johnson

April 5 (Lent Service)  
Jacob Vogts

April 9  
Sarah Vogts

April 13 (Maundy Thursday)  
Trevor Vilhauer

April 16 (7:00am Sunrise Service)  
Dylan Sawyer

April 16 (9:30am Service)  
Evan Steemken

April 23  
Keegan Johnson

April 30  
Justin Peterson



April 2  
Quinton Bose

April 5 (Lent Service)  
Dylan Sawyer

April 9  
Evan Steemken

April 13 (Maundy Thursday)  
Kylie Martin

April 14 (Good Friday)  
Jacob Vogts

April 16 (7:00am Sunrise Service)  
Kendall Martin

April 16 (9:30am Service)  
Sarah Vogts

April 23  
Zachary Selby

April 30  
Zahn Bose



## **Vacation Bible School June 5th-9th**

Mark your calendars now for our annual Vacation Bible School, which will be held the week of June 5th-9th. We are again planning to have morning classes for preschool age and other younger children, and separate afternoon sessions for older children. Our attendance has been growing every year and last year we had nearly 90 students, most of them visitors from the community.

This years theme is "Treasure Cove: Discovering the Riches of Christ." Once again we plan to give all the younger classes the five Arch books which coordinate with the lessons. This is a wonderful opportunity to share Christ with the children of our community. Help will be needed from the congregation for all aspects of this outreach event.

# Community Easter Egg Hunt



Saturday, April 15 • 10:30am

On Church Grounds at  
Dakota Dunes Boulevard and Bison Trail

Up to Age 10 • Plenty of Eggs!

Prizes • Snacks • Easter Video

*All Children Invited—Non-Members Welcome!*

No Charges or Fees



# Community Sunrise Service

**Easter Sunday, April 16**

Sunrise Service—7:00am

Light Easter Breakfast—8:00am

Second Easter Service—9:30am

All Events Held at Holy Cross Lutheran Church

***All Invited—Everyone Welcome!***

**For More Information Call 232-9117**



Return Service Requested

Dakota Dunes, SD 57049

149 Bison Trail

Rev. Kevin Vogts, Pastor

**Crossnotes**  
Holy Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church