

The In Touch

JUNE 2012

Volume 47, Issue 6

Our Mission: To Seek, Know, Love and Serve Christ in all Persons and in all Creation

Rambling from the REV. . .



Happy Mother's Day.

Certainly Mother's Day is a fine time to talk about love, as would be Father's Day. A mother's love for her child, at its best, is the closest we may come to mimicking Godly love. Parents can forgive anything; parents can give without thought of return; parents are capable of laying down their lives for their children.

But to really practice Christian or Godly love, we must love other Mother's children the same way we love our own. This is not so easy!

I've talked about giving to others and loving others the last two Sundays. And how many times over the years have I echoed Steve Schaitberger saying, "What part of all don't we understand?"

There are churches, even Christian churches, that claim that the commandments to love and care for one another only apply to our own religious community. By implication, they would expect a merchant to deal fairly with any members of his own faith, but he would be free to cheat those who were "other."

I think that the lessons from Acts we heard last week and this disprove any such notion. Last week we heard the story of Philip and the Eunuch. The Eunuch was studying scripture and was very interested in Judaism. However he could never become a Jew, not only because he was a Nubian (probably black skinned) and a gentile/pagan, but because as a Eunuch he was considered to be deformed, unclean, unable to ever enter the Temple.

Philip, directed by the Holy Spirit through an angel, was in the right place when the Eunuch's chariot came along. Philip joined him and told him the Good News as a way of explaining a passage from Isaiah. When the Eunuch saw water along the road and said, "Why can't I be baptized now?" Philip agreed. After all, if the spirit sent him hence, how could he refuse? And so the Eunuch was baptized into the new Way, the Way of following Jesus.

In today's reading from Acts, we only hear the very last bit in a rather long story. Do you remember the story of Cornelius? It begins at the very beginning of Chapter 10. Cornelius was a centurion of the Italian Cohort. He was a devout man and who feared God. This refers to non-Jews who hung around the fringes of the Jewish community and were often referred to as God-fearers.

Acts goes on to say that he gave alms, prayed to God and so did his household. One day he clearly saw an Angel who told him to send to Joppa for Simon, called Peter, and told him where to find this Peter. So he sent some men to fetch Peter.

Meanwhile, Peter is on the roof where he is staying when he fell into a trance. He saw a sheet being lowered from heaven holding a variety of animals, all of which were forbidden by the Jewish dietary laws. Now Peter was hungry and a voice told him to kill and eat. But he replied, "By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is profane or unclean." The voice replied, "What God has made clean, you must not call profane."

This exchange was repeated three times and then the sheet was drawn back up into heaven. While Peter was busy trying to figure out what this vision might mean, the men from Cornelius arrived at his door! And just in case he didn't get the connection, the Spirit says to him, "Look, three men are searching for you. Now get up, go down, and go with them without hesitation, for I have sent them."

So Peter does as he's told. He invites the men in, gives them food and lodging for the night, and sets off with them the next morning, taking some of his Jewish followers with him.

At the home of Cornelius all of his household and some of his friends are gathered to hear what Peter has to say. And Peter does preach to them. See Acts 10:34-43. Now we arrive at today's reading. While Peter was preaching to the gathered crowd, the Holy Spirit descended upon them, as she had on the disciples at Pentecost. The circumcised believers who accompanied Peter were astonished to see this, for they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Peter says, "Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" And he proceeded to baptize the whole crowd.

It's worth noting that the verses following this story tell us that the believers in Jerusalem were upset by this, and they criticized Peter for doing the baptism. So then he has to explain the whole story to them.

So let's think for a few moments about what all this means. Both Peter and Philip were born and raised as Jews. They had been taught exclusion from day one of their lives, because Jews lived surrounded by pagans or gentiles and they taught their children to think of them as "other" in order to keep the faith of Abraham pure.

Likewise they were taught from day 1 about the purity laws of Judaism. Those included among many other laws, laws about what animals could or couldn't be eaten, laws about which people were ritually pure and which were not. Everything in their background and training would incline them to exclude the Eunuch and Cornelius and his household. They couldn't even eat with such people! So how could they possibly baptize them?

Philip and Peter had to put aside their early training, their parent's instructions, their earlier Rabbi's teaching, their own prejudices, their own distaste for non-Jews. They had to put aside their old attitudes and their assumptions in order to include these foreigners into the new community.

So we have to ask ourselves, how well do we do this? Would we be comfortable welcoming a black person to our church or our neighborhood? How about an illegal immigrant? How about a Muslim?

Next Sunday we'll be welcoming guests from the Christian Bikers Association. What if they were Hell's Angels?

I hope we can all remember how Peter and Phillip stepped up, out of themselves, into their new lives, in order to love some other Mother's child.

And so must we. And so must we.

Lynn+

Three boys are in the school yard bragging
about their fathers.
The first boy says, 'My Dad scribbles a few words
on a piece of paper, he calls it a poem,
they give him \$50.'
The second boy says, 'That's nothing. My Dad
scribbles a few words on a piece of paper,
he calls it a song, they give him \$100.'
The third boy says, 'I got you both beat. My Dad
scribbles a few words on a piece of paper,
he calls it a sermon, and it takes eight people to
collect all the money!'



Learning more about the Book of Psalms.

Our **Life Cycles** lesson on May 1, 2012 was about the 150 psalms in the Book of Psalms. The lesson explored how the different types of Psalms give expression to the varieties of human experiences and relationships with one another and with God. We thought it would be good to share some of the experiences of our studies with the parishioners at HTEC. If you want to read it in its entirety, copies can be provided.

In Jewish and Christian usage the academics have divided the psalms into five books: **Book One** (1-41) the oldest ascribed to David; **Book Two** (42-72), 18 from David; **Book Three** (73-89), most anonymous; **Book Four** (90-106), most anonymous; and **Book Five** (107-150), 15 David's, one Solomon's, and most anonymous.

Most of the psalms come from the early years of the monarchy and were probably used in worship in the first temple. Psalm scholar Hermann Gunkel believes that psalms originated as sacred songs in the cultic life of the Israelite community. He also thought most were a product of the heritage of the worshiping community and not of individual authors. He identified six major types of poetry or categories in the Hebrew Bible.

These categories matter because they help us to understand that psalms were written for different reasons. If we are aware of the categories, we can interpret the psalms better in our devotional and pastoral activities. Details in the lesson explain how each of the psalms of each category differs from the psalms of other categories.

1. ***The Hymn of Praise*** is a song of praise. *See Psalms 29 and 46.*
2. ***Songs of Enthronement*** acclaim Yahweh as sovereign over the world and human history. These hymns tend to be oriented to the future, affirming that God's reign has not been achieved. *See Psalm 93.*
3. ***Laments: The Individual Lament*** accounts for about one-third of the Psalter where the Psalmist is in dire straits and calls out to God in time of need. *See Psalm 3. The Community or Communal Lament* has Yahweh's name at the outset and uses "we" instead of "I". The lament assumes that God hears their cries—"the certainty of hearing". *See Psalm 80.*
4. ***The Royal Psalms*** focus on the activities of the king. The king rules not so much on his own merits, but as an active part of God's plan. *See Psalm 20.*
5. ***Individual Thanksgiving*** psalms begin with a cry to God and end with an expression of gratitude. *See Psalm 66.*
6. Psalms of ***Communal Thanksgiving*** are rare and are acknowledgments of God's help when Israel was in danger of annihilations. *See Psalm 124.*

Before the session, each participant was encouraged to write a psalm (e.g. thanksgiving, praise, lament) in his or her own words based on the details discussed for each category of psalms. Here is an example.

A Song of Praise

1. Give praise to the Creator of the Cosmos,
All Cosmic creatures.
2. Give praise to the Creator of the Universe,
In all the splendor of its vastness.
3. The handiwork of the Creator
Is seen throughout the Cosmos.
4. Your handiwork is seen in the:
Galaxies, planets, suns, moons, and Constellations
5. Your handiwork is seen in the:
Earth's rocks, minerals, volcanoes, mountains, valleys, and tectonic Plates
6. Your handiwork is seen in the:
Oceans, lakes, rivers, streams and ponds
7. Your handiwork is seen in the:
Multitude of animals, plants, fungi, and microbial creatures
8. Your handiwork is seen in the:
Sky, winds, rain, snow and hail.
9. Creator, give the people a sense of wonderment with your Cosmic Presence.
Creator, give the people a sense of belonging to the whole of your Creation.
10. Creator be ever praised and present in the mind of your people.
O Creator, how majestic is your name in all of the Cosmos.

Author: Deacon Leland Grim





June Birthday's

6-1-12 Caryn Noland

6-9-12 Connor Weir
(son of Tara & Tyler,
grandson of Cindy Rud)

6-11-12 Erik Strand

6-21-12 Mark Grim
(son of Lee & Carol)

6-27-12 Jeannie Strand

6-27-12 Jon Reuter
(son of Olga)

6-28-12 Glenn Walls
(son of Bill & Karen, grandson to Donna Day)

6-30-12 Helen Fichuk



Wedding Anniversaries

6-18-12 Joan & Carl Stone

6-25-12 Brent & Lisa Schlieff

6-27-12 Dale & Sara Kennedy



Baptism Anniversaries

6-11-12 Diana Russiff (Day)

6-17-12 Laura Smith (Menefee)

Happy Father's Day Henry Maxwell

You taught me how
to ride my bike,
You showed me all
the things I like,

You gave me hope
when I had none,
You bought me my car,
my very first one,

You always let
me have my say,
So now I'm saying,
Happy Fathers Day.

My Little Hands
My little hands play patty-cake
they peek-a-boo and wave...
They catch me while I learn to walk
and splash me as I bathe.
My little hands reach up to you,
for hugs before I sleep....
and fold together when I pray
the Lord my soul to keep.
My little hands are tiny now
but yours will serve to guide me ...
And when I'm grown I'll still reach out
and know you're right beside me ...



Clothes Closet Update:

Community Clothes Closet

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In December, Jenell Feller from Occupational Development Center met with all CC Closet churches with the possibility of using our surplus clothing and goods to open a thrift store staffed by ODC personnel. In the process of this discussion, the church representatives agreed to try having the Closet open only once a month to allow for more shoppers for the ODC thrift store. Sadly, the thrift store project was rejected by the ODC board. We had already agreed to the once-monthly Closet openings and agreed to stay with that schedule until June.

However, our interest in collaborating with ODC had been piqued and St. Thomas became very interested in ODC clients. In January we began sponsoring, at \$65 per month, an ODC person to work in the Closet on Tuesdays to keep up with the drop offs that come in on off-days. This sponsorship is made possible through the donation of a St. Thomas parishioner and is enough to continue through January 2013. Our ODC worker has been doing a great job and is able to keep the Closet neat and orderly. Her work has been very helpful to the churches volunteering, as they are not arriving to such an overwhelming task each month.

In March, we were able to begin sponsoring one more ODC worker to be here on the days we are open for drop off and pick up. This sponsorship is at \$80 per month as the worker is here for 10 hours monthly. We are currently seeking additional sponsorship donations to keep this ODC person volunteering. Churches, organizations, and individuals have been informally approached for contributions. Thus far, we have nine months secured. July, October, and December remain open for sponsorship.

Becoming involved with ODC led to some needed updates in our insurance (Catholic Mutual), when churches or organizations are staffing the facility. It became necessary for the ODC and the volunteer churches to present a certificate of insurance to St. Thomas and for volunteers to sign a "hold harmless," agreement while they are at work in the Closet. (This is a common practice and is one that has been in place at St. Thomas for other organizations such as the Boy Scouts of America and community volley ball who use part of our facility for activities.)

The insurance discussion created an impasse for two of the Clothes Closet churches who decided to withdraw from the Closet. These are: Zion and First Lutheran Churches. We are saddened by their decisions, but grateful for the many years they served the Clothes Closet. The remaining churches, (with the exception of Holy Trinity who are not on the schedule until June) and the ODC filed insurance certificates with our office.

St. Thomas covered the month left vacant by Zion Lutheran (March). The Clothes Closet church representatives will meet in May to discuss recent activity at the Closet and to offer recommendations as we move forward. The remaining churches have expressed renewed dedication to the Closet project and its future success.

Community Clothes Closet

The Community Clothes Closet, located at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, is a collaboration of six churches. Each church is considered an equal a partner when operating the Closet. St. Thomas Aquinas Parish assumes responsibility for the physical plant.



By providing a certificate of insurance our partner churches agree that their liability insurance policy will be primary in the event of a claim or cause of action during their period of operation of the Closet and will be responsible for negligent acts of their volunteers and guests.

It is imperative that each Clothes Closet volunteer will have on file at the St. Thomas Parish Office a signed Adult Hold Harmless Agreement. Each church partner will ensure that the proper paperwork is on file for volunteers. Forms are available in the work area of the Closet, at each partner church, and at the St. Thomas Parish Office.

General Guidelines

- Pick up the key at St. Thomas Parish Office 15 minutes prior to opening.
- The sidewalks will be maintained by St. Thomas Parish and remain a parish responsibility. That being said, snow and ice frequently cause slip and fall accidents. Please help keep the sidewalk clean and ice-free while you are present. Snow removal equipment and salt is available in the entryway.
- The designated Clothes Closet area is defined as the south entry to Aquinas Hall, the two rooms behind the lockable double doors in Aquinas Hall, the entry and the lockable Household Goods room in the parish office building.
- Workers and guests are limited to the designated Clothes Closet areas with the exception of the Aquinas Hall bathrooms for workers.
- Guests are not to be admitted until the posted opening time.
- Prior to opening the door to the public, remove any obstacles such as bags and boxes, from the flow of traffic.
- During open hours keep the traffic areas dry and clean open and free of obstacles.
- Use good judgment when stacking items on shelves and racks. Overly filled shelves and racks tip easily causing a safety concern.
- Keep all items within the Closet area. Do not overflow into the gym.
- Put the keys to the Closet in a secure location during open hours.
- Put the wooden clothes Closet sign on the boulevard on the days the Closet is open for customers.
- The Aquinas Hall bathroom is off limits for guests.

Drop off Days- Wednesday 10am-2pm




- Sort and display items that have been dropped off. Dispose of unsuitable items. Label bags of garbage.
- Box and label off - season clothing. Place it under the stage in the gym. Try to keep bags and boxes to a manageable size.
- Before you leave make sure that all bags and boxes are behind the lockable doors in both the household goods and clothing section.
- Leave the space in good order for the next team. Pay special attention to traffic areas making sure they are left open.
- Make sure that all lights are turned off and all doors are locked
- Return keys to the parish office or place in the drop box located near the parish office door.



Pick up Days- Thursday 9am-3pm

- Welcome guests.
- Continue to sort and display items that have been dropped off.
- Keep shelves and racks full and orderly.
- Dispose of unsuitable items. Label bags of garbage.
- Continue to box and label off season clothing. Place it under the stage in the gym. Try to keep bags and boxes to a manageable size.
- Before you leave make sure that all bags and boxes are behind the lockable doors in both the household goods and clothing section.
- Leave the space in good order for the next team. Pay special attention to traffic areas making sure they are left open.
- Make sure that all lights are turned off and all doors are locked

June 2012

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
 HAPPY FATHER'S DAY					1	2 Altar Guild Donna Georgeann
3	4	5	6	7	8	9 Altar Guild
Holy Eucharist 10:00 a.m.						Flossie Jeanne
10	11	12	13	14	15	16 Altar Guild
Holy Eucharist 10:00 a.m.	6:30 p.m. Vestry Meeting Newsletter Deadline	9:30 a.m. Coffee @ Coffee Landing 6:00 p.m. – Total Ministry Meeting 7:00 p.m. – Life Cycle	Clothes Closet  Drop off 10:00 – 2:00	Clothes Closet  Customers 9:00 – 3:00		Flossie Jeanne
17 Father's Day	18	19	20	21	22	23 Altar Guild
Holy Eucharist 10:00 a.m.						Carolyn Helen
24	25	26	27	28	29	30 Altar Guild
Holy Eucharist 10:00 a.m.		6:00 – 8:00 Life Cycle Class				Carolyn Helen

Sunday Service Lay Responsibilities

JUNE 2012

Dates	Lay Officials	Acolytes	Lectors & Lessons	Greeters
3 Holy Eucharist 10:00 a.m. TRINTIY SUNDAY	Rev. Lynn Naeckel Deacon: Lee Grim	Erik Strand	Mavis Tanem Melanie Mattsen	Lennis Connors Mavis Tanem
10 Holy Eucharist 10:00 a.m. 2nd Sunday after Pentecost	Rev. Lynn Naeckel Deacon: Lee Grim	Robert Nye	Georgeann Wright Andy Wright	Gary Davison Carolyn Davison
17 Father's Day Holy Eucharist 10:00 a.m. 3rd Sunday after Pentecost	Rev. Lynn Naeckel Deacon: Lee Grim	Tessa Walls	Tessa Walls Kay Herman	Donna Day Karen Walls
24 Holy Eucharist 10:00 a.m. 4th Sunday after Pentecost	Rev. Lynn Naeckel Deacon: Lee Grim	Jeanne Corrin	Jeanne Corrin Robert Nye	Melanie Mattsen Tyler Downs