



New Creation Lutheran Church

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February
2006

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An Invitation to Friendship

The language of Epiphany is in the imperative & invitational tone: “Come and see” and “Follow me”. Jesus longs for us to trust him enough to see what following him is all about, and he wants us to do this right now. There is also language of friendship and intimacy. Jesus invites those first curious disciples to come home with him and see where he lives. They remained with him for the rest of their lives.

Henri Nouwen observes of this invitation: “ We come to see that Jesus not only invites his followers to live with him in the same house, but to discover that he himself IS the house.” We are invited into an intimate friendship with Jesus as our life becomes formed by him. It is also an invitation to be in the world, to see the world with the eyes of friendship and formed by the words of invitation.

Our souls are formed in the “house of Jesus” where compassion and contemplation meet. Here we discover that true spirituality is intimately involved in the anguish of the world. We learn as followers that compassion is an act of flowing over toward one another. The love and friendship we offer others is a flowing over of the love and friendship we experience when we remain with and live in Jesus.

Epiphany is the flowing over of God’s light into our darkness – the arrival of Jesus flows into our lives. It is a season of the overflowing of God’s grace onto the world. May Jesus’ loving friendship flow over you and fill you to overflowing.

Pastor Anne

THANK YOU

Christmas thanks to all for your generous present with the shopping cards for \$400. Jim and I were deeply touched by this outpouring of thoughtfulness. As soon as I am settled, I will be hitting the shops!

INTO THE ‘HOOD Update:

Our move is complete and all our boxes are encamped all over the house. Our previous house is officially on the market, and looking for a loving family to buy it. If you have anyone interested let me know. And pray for a quick sale!

Our new address is 6841 Heaton Moor Drive, San Jose 95119, and phone: 408-224-3992. However, please use my cell for most calls: 408-406-8749.

Jim and I again thank everyone who was sooooo helpful in helping us move: Linda & Jennifer Doering for all the great packing, Ken Doering for the truck, trailer, and strong back. (Our MG has never traveled in such style!) Then there are Harry Welton who took a load of stuff to Goodwill and helped take down a 30’ radio tower, Jim Aplan and Bob Busby who also got on the radio tower project as well as clearing out the upper level of the garage, hauled trash to the dump, and hauled Jim’s stuff to our new house – and all who joined in teasing Jim about his garage, knowing full well that theirs is just as bad!

We hope to invite you all over for a party as soon as we clear out the boxes.

In deep appreciation:

Pastor Anne

Palestinian Pottery

On Feb. 26th, the Lord's Table will be set with communion ware made in Bethlehem, Jesus' birthplace by Palestinian artisans at the International Center of Bethlehem, a ministry of Christmas Lutheran Church. It is a gift to our synod from the people of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) and made possible through ELCA Global Mission. Its journey in our church began at the 2005 Church wide Assembly in Orlando, Florida, and continues throughout the 65 synods of the ELCA, traveling from congregation to congregation and then to the 2006 Synod Assemblies. It is a tangible reminder of our connection to the Holy Land and our shared mission.

Christmas is one of six congregations of The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL). The ELCJHL is one of the ELCA's global companion churches and a fellow member of the Lutheran World Federation. The ELCJHL carries out its ministry in the midst of Israeli occupation, serving communities surrounded by very real concrete walls and barbed wire fences that increasingly divide and dispossess the people. As well as congregations in Bethlehem and Jerusalem, there are ELCJHL congregations in Beit Jala, Beit Sahour, Ramallah, and Amman (Jordan). This church, while tiny (2,000 resident members), is at the forefront of reconciliation efforts and care for the whole community. The ELCA, the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), and other global ecumenical groups work alongside the ELCJHL and the people of Israel and Palestine in providing and supporting humanitarian, educational, and social ministries.

As Christians we are one body, living in God's amazing grace and working for peace in God's world. Our Palestinian brothers and sisters in the Body of Christ ask us to remember them and their Muslim and Jewish neighbors in our prayers. Read the information included in the worship folder to learn more. Go to www.elca.org/PeaceNotWalls for resources and to find out what you and your congregation can do to support peace efforts in the Holy Land.

Books & Brew

February 10, 7:30 PM

Rick & Glenda Voss's
6329 Solano Dr. San Jose
408-225-7127

The book that will be discussed is:

“The Heart of Christianity - Rediscovering a Life of Faith” by Marcus Borg

To obtain a copy of the book please contact Pastor Anne.



NCLC will observe Shrove Tuesday on Sunday, 2/26 after worship.

Shrove Tuesday is the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday which is the first day of Lent. It's a day of penitence, to clean the soul, and a day of celebration as the last chance to feast before Lent begins.

Shrove Tuesday is probably the Christian festival that the family enjoys most, after Christmas, of course. But there's more to Shrove Tuesday than pigging out on pancakes or taking part in a public pancake race. The pancakes themselves are part of an ancient custom with deeply religious roots.

Penitence

Shrove Tuesday gets its name from the ritual of *shriving* that Christians used to undergo in the past. In shriving, a person confesses their sins and receives absolution for them. When a person receives absolution for their sins, they are forgiven for them and released from the guilt and pain that they have caused them. This tradition is very old. Over 1000 years ago a monk wrote in the Anglo-Saxon Ecclesiastical Institutes: *In the week immediately before Lent everyone shall go to his confessor and confess his deeds and the confessor shall so shrive him.*

Shrove Tuesday celebrations

Shrove Tuesday is a day of celebration as well as penitence, because it's the last day before Lent.

Lent is a time of abstinence, of giving things up. So Shrove Tuesday is the last chance to indulge yourself, and to use up the foods that aren't allowed in Lent.

Giving up foods: but not wasting them

In the old days there were many foods that observant Christians would not eat during Lent: foods such as meat and fish, fats, eggs, and milky foods. So that no food was wasted, families would have a feast on the shriving Tuesday, and eat up all the foods that wouldn't last the forty days of Lent without going off. The need to eat up the fats gave rise to the French name Mardi Gras; meaning *fat tuesday*. Pancakes became associated with Shrove Tuesday as they were a dish that could use up all the eggs, fats and milk in the house with just the addition of flour.

Thank you everyone! Your generous gift at Christmas was just what the doctor needed. It is not in my nature to ask for help, but I am learning. Thank you.

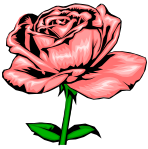
Jim

Birthdays			Anniversaries		
10-Feb	Natalie	Busby		None this month	
14-Feb	Bob	Busby			
16-Feb	Christopher	Sahoo			
17-Feb	Jennifer	Doering			
18-Feb	Marilyn	Feldhaus			
19-Feb	Shannon	Hanson			
19-Jan	Delia	Ohlon			

Statistics: Giving & Attendance

Date	Offering	Other	Total Giving	Attendance
12/4/2005	6450	2675.81	9125.81	40
12/11/2005	3150	1450	4600	39
12/18/2005	605	12840	13445	40
12/24/2005	2740	143	2883	78
12/25/2005	140	248	388	31
			30441.81	

New Creation Lutheran Church						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4-Jan
					7:30pm crafting @New Creation 7:30pm APC	1:30-5:30pm UCG
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
9:15am Choir Rehearsal 10:00am Prayer service 10:15am Worship 4:30pm APC			11am Bible Study @ Rawls Pl.		7:30pm crafting @New Creation 7:30pm APC	8-11am Workday 1:30-9:00pm UCG
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
9:15am Bell Choir Prep. 10:00am Prayer service 10:15am Worship 4:30pm APC	7:30pm Choir Rehearsal		11am Bible Study @ Rawls Pl. 4pm -Bell Choir		7:30pm crafting @New Creation 7:30pm APC	1:30-8:30pm UCG
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
9:15am Choir Rehearsal 10:00am Prayer service 12 noon Leadership Team 4:30pm APC	7:30pm Choir Rehearsal		11am Bible Study @ Rawls Pl.		7:30pm crafting @New Creation 7:30pm APC	1:30-5:30pm UCG
26 Fat Sunday	27	28				
9:15am Choir Rehearsal 10:00am Prayer service 10:15am Worship w/pottery & Choir Anthem 4:30pm APC						



In just one week the new and old Leadership Teams will meet to make transitions including the election of officers. Some members of the team will remain the same. There are challenges that await the Team and the congregation this year. There are also opportunities that will become available to us. I'm so excited about what we can all do together in 2006. Some things that have worked well in the past may remain the same, but many things are going to be different. In this new year, we will look for ways that we can assist the church in building up our church "community". We will continue to put together special events. We will continue to put efforts into our outreach programs. We will continue to meet on a regular basis to study God's word, lift our voices in prayer, sing praises to God, remember the sacrifice of Jesus, and offer to the Lord for His work. There are some things that will NOT change and should not change.

There are hopes for the new year as well. I hope our programs will be a great success and that we will have many visitors on these special days! I hope that we will be able to engage the community in more Bible studies this year. I hope that we can offer more opportunities for our youth to study and learn God's word. These are things that we CAN do if we are willing to get busy and do the necessary work. But then there are also individual personal goals that we each ought to set for ourselves in regard to the Lord's work this year. Have we considered our personal Bible study and prayer habits? Have we considered personally inviting a friend or a family member to our services? Have we considered taking some of the literature that we have here at the building and placing it in our work place or doctor's office, or some public common area in our community? There is so much that could be done if we would think about it and then do it.

2006 is beaming bright with newness and optimism! Let us strive to make some things happen this year that we know need to happen. If God is for us, then who can be against us? We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us! Let's make this a great year to remember! I want to encourage you to talk to your Leadership Team members about your ministry needs. They are each responsible for a portion of spreading the Good News and need your input and assistance. Talk to them and offer a helping hand when you can. Also I want to encourage you to get personally involved with the ministries here at New Creation. We truly have something for everyone with a variety of outreach and educational programs. If you would try one new thing this year, I think you'll be pleased with the results. We proclaim Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. And Jesus invites us into a personal relationship with Him. Answer the call!

We also have a variety of different types of events and activities that give New Creation members an opportunity to "socialize" with each other. Some of them are: coffee time, soup suppers during Lent, Bible study dinners, Mother's Day brunch, Father's Day brunch, pot lucks..... Hmm, do you see a trend here? Other "socializing" activities that organize themselves are: the bulletin folding & crafting groups. Do you have other ideas? If you didn't already suggest something at the Congregational meeting, let the Leadership Team know what does interest you. I'm sure they'll consider it. The important thing is to get involved in something at New Creation where you can meet others, form lasting friendships, and just have fun. These activities offer great opportunities to invite a friend or even an entire family.

New Creation will continue a full schedule of activities this year. It is time to plan for the most important things we do as a church – praying and worship. Every Sunday, whatever the season, we gather for worship. We offer our prayers, our praise and thanksgiving. We receive forgiveness, and hear God's promises in word and song. The holy supper, the water of baptism and the fellowship of believers nourish our faith. Our worship varies but is always structured in a *liturgy*, an ancient word that in some translations can mean the 'work of the people'. Good worship is always somehow the product of the whole community. Around the basic structure of I.N.S.S. (invite, nurture, serve, and send) we can arrange many different elements and hopefully meet the spiritual needs of many different people. But we need your help. You may like to see certain things happen or not happen. You may have a good memory of a service, series of services or events that were particularly meaningful and effective. Sharing your ideas and experiences will help enrich our worship and will make our liturgies the *work* of even more people. Please prayerfully consider donating some of your time to serve. We know that most of you have many demands on your time but we hope you can clear some space for this important ministry. With your help, this year our worship will continue to give glory to God and bring blessings to God's people gathered at New Creation. The Bible classes Pastor began have been quite interesting and fruitful. It is hoped that more of you will join these small groups. There is so much to learn about the bible and its teachings. The group setting brings out things that one person alone cannot always discern.

In case you were not able to attend last month's Congregational Meeting, I would like to remind you of all we were able to accomplish during the last year, the special visitors that enriched our services, meaningful events commemorating church seasons, opportunities to discern the word of God, and to serve our neighbors.

Throughout the year-	Prayer Walks	
January -	Jack Pearson/Congregational Meeting	
February-	Leadership Team Retreat led by Larry Moeller (Concentrated work on I.N.S.S)	
March-	Maundy Thursday foot washing by confirmation kids and Easter Sunrise Service	
April-	Guest Preacher Rev. Dr. Phyllis Anderson & BBQ by confirmation kids	
May-	Confirmation kids bowl-a-thon, Mother's Day Brunch, Book Study Began, and Rawls Place Cinco de Mayo Celebration	
June-	Yard Sale, 1 st Communion group recognition day, Father's Day Brunch, and Congregational Budget Meeting	
July-	Received \$12,000.00 grant for media system	
August-	Outside Worship Services began, Confirmation Camp at Mt. Cross, and Rawl's Place BBQ	
September-	Labor Union Speaker for Labor Day, Family Fun Day, and Pet Blessing	
October-	Musicpalooza and start of 49 Day Bible Immersion Bible Study (4 small groups)	
November-	Bay Area Men's Choir, Christmas with a Conscience, Media System Up Running, and Children's Choir sang for SJPD tree lighting ceremony	&
December-	Wright Center Christmas Party & Caroling, Prayer Walk, Rawl's Place Christmas Party and Christmas Pageant	

Don't forget to speak the word of God because someone out there needs you. God's will is done through people. Evangelism is the simplest and most basic of all ministries in the church. There are two types of evangelism: exclusive evangelism, which focuses on the power of words to bring others to faith in Jesus Christ, and inclusive evangelism, which uses the power of acts of generosity to attract not-yet Christians to God. Any Christian can bring the kindness of Christ to others. Small things done with love ... changes the world. God's kindness is doable. God's kindness happens when his people live in the power of his acceptance.

Blessings,

Linda Doering, President



ELCA Presiding Bishop's Statement on Remarks by the President of Iran

December 19, 2005

In recent days, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the president of Iran, has been widely quoted as saying the Holocaust is a "myth," and that the State of Israel should be relocated to Europe, Canada, or Alaska. Earlier, he was quoted as saying Israel should be "wiped off the map."

I join with other religious leaders in condemning these remarks. The historical record of the Holocaust is clear and has stood up under legal and scholarly scrutiny. We have listened carefully to the eyewitnesses, many of whom have lived among us for the last half century. We know and grieve the awful truth of the Shoah. No reasonable person can stand by while any nation's leader makes such outrageous and unacceptable claims. The remarks represent a sadly different path for Iran, which in 2001 initiated the International Year of Dialogue among Civilizations at the United Nations.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Lutheran World Federation have worked tirelessly to promote a just and lasting peace in the Middle East for all people. Our efforts have involved conversations with Israeli and Palestinian leaders as well as with Jewish, Muslim, and Christian leaders. We shall not cease our work to seek balanced and reasonable solutions that ensure peace, safety, and security for all people in that troubled land.

In the United States, I have joined with Christian, Jewish, and Muslim leaders in a 12-point plan for Middle East Peace. The plan emphasizes a two-state solution, and it calls on the government of the United States to do more to promote a lasting peace in the Middle East. The ELCA Churchwide Assembly in 2005 implemented a Middle East strategy that calls for peace with justice between Israelis and Palestinians.

Moreover, we as Lutherans are committed to a relationship with the Jewish community that is open and honest. At the 1984 Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation, held in Budapest, the presence of Dr. Gerhard Riegner, then retired General Secretary of the World Jewish Congress, signaled a new start in the dialogue between Jews and Lutherans at the global level, addressing the lamentable reality of Martin Luther's anti-Judaic writings and the tragedy of the Shoah. At that time, we jointly affirmed the integrity and dignity of both faith communities and pledged to work together against all forms of racial prejudice.

In its 1994 document, "Declaration of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the Jewish Community," the ELCA acknowledged the pain caused by Luther's anti-Judaic diatribes and his violent recommendations against the Jews. The ELCA expressed its "deep and abiding sorrow" over the tragic effects of these writings on subsequent generations.

In the declaration the ELCA said that "we express our urgent desire to live out our faith in Jesus Christ with love and respect for the Jewish people. We recognize in anti-Semitism a contradiction and an affront to the Gospel, a violation of our hope and calling, and we pledge this church to oppose the deadly working of such bigotry, both within our own circles and in the society around us. Finally we pray for the continued blessing of the Blessed One upon the increasing cooperation and understanding between Lutheran Christians and the Jewish community."

Nothing can be gained by condemning or showing disrespect for any person, much less an entire people. As Lutherans, we will continue to work with the Jewish people, we will work with the Palestinian people, and we will work with all other people of good will in the Middle East. Together we will continue our quest for mutual respect, hope, and peace for all people in this world.

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson
Presiding Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
President, The Lutheran World Federation