

# Lord of Life Lutheran Church

*"Where There's Life For You!"*

Volume 18 No. 5

e-mail us at: lolmv@verizon.net

November - December 2006

# LIFELINE

Lifeline is a Newsletter published by Lord of Life Lutheran Church in Moreno Valley, California.

## **Our Mission Statement**

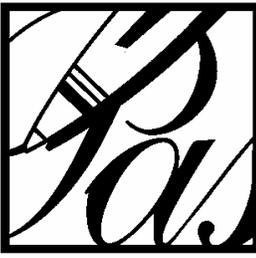
*We are a congregation of believers in Jesus Christ, called by the Spirit into a community of faith and love, nurtured by Word and Sacrament, and empowered by the gospel to be God's instruments of love and grace.*



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FROM THE



**INTERIM PASTOR**

*"We will not neglect the house of our God."*

--Nehemiah 10:39

Have you ever noticed that God always has a next step of dedication and growth for us? We as Christians are to constantly learn more, love more, be more like God, and grow beyond where we are today.

The Christian life is really a series of new beginnings. That's what makes being a Christian so interesting and exhilarating. We should be excited about our next opportunity to serve, lead, grow, and follow God through another open door.

**But be careful! There's a danger here.**

It's easy to rest on our success and become stagnant after reaching a new level of growth. We need to be aware of what I call the perils of the plateau. That's the danger of settling for where we are and becoming stagnant, rather than moving onward and upward for the cause of Christ.

Nehemiah saw this danger, which is why he led the people of Israel in rebuilding their lives after rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem. Nehemiah and the people took time to dedicate themselves to the things of the Lord *after* the success of rebuilding the walls.

We must not, as Nehemiah put it, "neglect the house of our God." Instead, let's continue to look for the next opportunity and not get comfortable, lazy, or satisfied with our current level of spiritual growth. Nothing is worse for a Christian than being dormant and still in our spiritual life.

Have you hit a spiritual plateau, or are you still excited and eager for your next opportunity to grow spiritually? Tell the Lord you want Him to show you the next spiritual mountain to climb. Enjoy the Christian life, and live it to the fullest, without settling or stopping!

**THE CHRISTIAN AND CHURCH LIFE IS A SERIES OF NEW BEGINNINGS.**

Come Worship With Us  
Wednesday, November 22  
at 7:00 PM  
**Thanksgiving Eve  
Worship**



Pie and coffee will be served after worship service in our fellowship hall!

**Edgemont Uniform Drive**

*By Carole Korshavn*

Our annual school uniform drive for the students of Edgemont Elementary, the most economically challenged area of Moreno Valley, was an outstanding success! Thanks to your generosity and matching funds provided by Thrivent, we were able to purchase 243 two-piece uniforms and some extra shirts. We also collected 162 pair of socks and underwear. Socks and underwear will continue to be collected throughout the school year due to the tremendous need for these items.

Ninety-five percent of Edgemont students receive a free or reduced lunch – an indicator of poverty – and 69% of them are classified as English Language Learners.

May God richly bless you for your continued faithfulness in meeting needs of these children.

# A Confidential Spiritual-Life Checkup

As your interim pastor, I am responsible for your spiritual health in much the same way as your doctor is responsible for your physical health. Both of us must be allowed the privilege of helping you. Often, it is only when a disease overcomes us that our doctor or pastor is made painfully aware of it. When was the last time you sat down and examined the health of your spiritual life? God is requesting an appointment with you. Please do the following "lab work" not as a test, but as a tool for diagnosis, so that you might know your "blood count" and decide together on a proper diet and exercise program that will bring about your best spiritual health. Since pastors (or doctors) can help only if we allow them, this is entirely voluntary, but I am suggesting that you:

*(I am also available to discuss your findings)*

1. Set aside an hour of uninterrupted time in which to thoughtfully answer these questions.
2. Keep your answers only to yourself, and God alone.

## I. Blood Type:

1. Are you now a Christian? Comment on your answer.
2. Have you been baptized? When? Where?

## II. Red Blood Cells (oxygen carriers that prevent anemia)

### A. *Devotional life*

1. How meaningful is Sunday morning worship to you?
2. How meaningful is private worship to you?
3. Do you feel you are becoming more acquainted with God? In what ways?
4. Is meditation a part of your spiritual walk? Describe:

### B. *Intellectual life*

1. Are your doubts and questions being answered? If yes, how?
2. Do you feel you know the Bible? What help do you need?
3. Do you understand basic concepts of theology – justification, regeneration, sanctification, gifts of the Spirit, etc.? What help do you need?

## III. White Blood Cells (Disease fighters for inner spiritual cleansing and renewing)

1. Do you feel you are a more accepting, forgiving, loving person than you have been?
2. Do you feel you are stronger against temptations (to be impatient, angry, greedy, lustful, etc.)?
3. Do you feel your self-esteem is healthy?
4. Do you see yourself becoming more pure in motive, thoughts, and lifestyle?
5. Do you find yourself usually encouraging others or competing with others?
6. Do you occasionally tear another person down in jest or in anger? What triggers this?
7. How is the Holy Spirit helping you become whole?

## IV. Platelets (blood clotters that stanch the wounds of living in a hurting world)

1. Have you found someone to help bear the burdens of life?
2. Do you find you can share your inner joys, hopes, and dreams?
3. When someone in jest or in anger tears you down, how do you handle it?
4. When you fail, what happens within you?
5. When you succeed, what happens within you?

## V. Blood Pressure (hypertension and exercise)

1. Are you able to turn your finances over to God and tithe, trusting him to supply?
2. Are you able to turn your vocation over to God to use you how and where he wants?
3. Are you learning to let go of the desire for things?
4. Are you able to exercise your gifts within the body of Christ? What do you see as your gifts?
5. Are you able to explain to others in the community why you are a Christian? Any problems here?
6. How much are you concerned for those who are less fortunate, wanting to share with them the gospel and the helping hand?
7. How concerned are you with injustices and other social evils?

## VI. Tired Blood (from imbalanced spiritual diet)

1. Is your life balanced? How do you deal with pressure? Do you have regular time for family, recreation, personal growth, etc.?
2. Do you feel you have a balance of worship, study, and service to stay in shape?

## Just like eating an Elephant...

By Jack Pavelich

No, this is not a politically slanted article, though the title may indicate otherwise. I want to share with you my thoughts on overcoming the adversity of debt by people who are destined (expected) to be tithers. Somehow the debt seems to always win, while God makes do with the change left over in our designer jeans.

It's no secret in the church that God fully expects His people to tithe (that is, give a full tenth) of all that we earn to Him (that is, to the daily work of the church.) After all, everything that exists is His – and we are merely caretakers of all His stuff. Since we are given it all, that we might prosper and benefit from all the Earth and all the creatures upon it, God expects that we take a small portion (the tenth) and commit it back to God.

I remember how our Christmas days used to leave Mary Jean and I with credit card debt that took until the next Thanksgiving to pay off – just so that Jack could go shopping out of his mind once again (I think it's a guy thing – but maybe not, huh ladies?) We really struggled with our giving to the church in those years – and the credit card debt was an insurmountable hurdle that Satan put in our path. Not only did it affect our church offering, but it affected every financial decision we would make throughout the year. We were slave to my spending.

The prophet Malachi warned the people that they were stealing that which was rightfully God's. The people in their confusion couldn't understand – they hadn't taken anything from God! But God was speaking of the tithes that weren't coming his way – that which belonged to Him for all time was being frittered away for the personal gain of the people. (Malachi 1-3) It is not a surprise then, that after this message, God would be silent for over 400 years – after being such an integral part of the lives of the chosen ones. (Read the book for yourselves. It is a short one – a 15 minute read.)

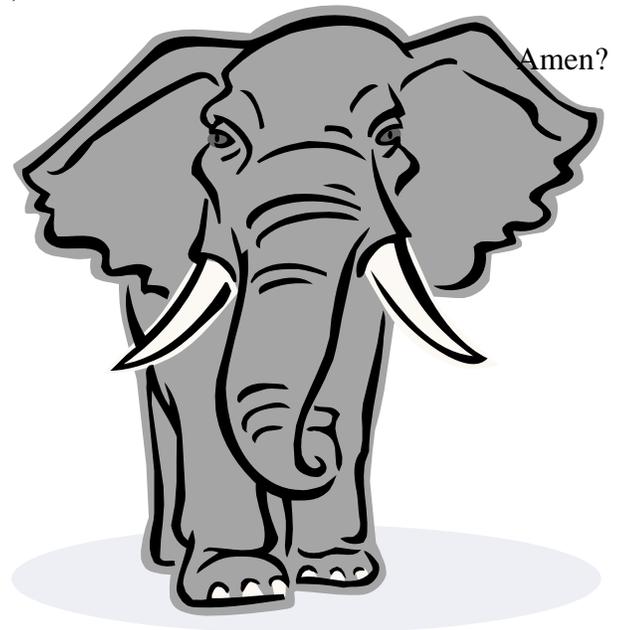
It took years for me to learn that the way to the tithe was the same way we eat an elephant. – One bite (or step) at a time. At least it was for me – I had much to learn about managing finances. The first

thing I had to learn was: if a man earns \$100, and spends \$101, over time he will be heavily in debt.

In our journey to the tithe, Mary Jean and I took on a mission to increase the “proportion” of our earnings which were earmarked for God, each and every year. Some years we added a full 1% of our income. In today's dollars, on your \$40,000 income, that amounts to an increase of only \$400 spread throughout the year– less than \$8 each week (the cost of a lunch). Increasing your church giving by that amount now, moves you one step closer to finishing off the entire elephant. Mmmmmm! Sounds simple...

The tithe set me free. Sounds silly doesn't it? But it's true. I had to become master of my finances in order to tithe. Before the tithe, my finances – or more precisely my debt – was master over me, affecting every household decision. What a relief to finally meet God's expectation of tithing, and be blessed by the blessing of the tithe – and along the way, I can recall not a single sacrifice as a cost to getting there.

One small bite at a time, and the elephant can be yours, too.



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13600 Nason Street, Moreno Valley, California

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## Back from the Brink: A Leadership Special Report

Did you know that 85 percent of churches in the United States have plateaued or declining attendance? That's approximately 340,000 churches. That means 340,000 churches need a turnaround. How can they do it? And what skills are required? LEADERSHIP journal, conducted a fascinating study in 2005 that looked at 31 churches that had reversed these declines. Average attendance doubled from 91 to 183 in these remarkable comebacks. Many churches saw measurable improvements in attendance, finances, purpose, and spirit to participate in less than a year. The majority of pastors said results were better than expected. What were the key factors in recovery? Pastors, lay leaders, and a sampling of members were surveyed – 761 respondents in all. We asked how it happened. And most important, if their churches could be renewed, can mine?

### Turnaround leaders focused on causes, not symptoms

*When asked, "What signaled the need for change?" Pastors and parishioners saw things differently.*

	Pastors	Parishioners
Loss of vision	65%	39%
Low morale, apathy, or spiritual depression	62%	26%
No meaningful impact on community	59%	35%
Plateaued or declining attendance	56%	39%
Low attendance	56%	34%
Aging congregation	33%	50%

### Five Factors in Successful Turnarounds:

- ➔ Spiritual initiatives (prayer, etc.)
- ➔ Congregational education via sermons, classes, etc.
- ➔ Change worship style
- ➔ Change the vision statement
- ➔ Change the church leadership structure

**85%** of pastors looked to outside resources to help initiate or stimulate the turnaround.

**95%** of turnaround churches had widespread congregational support soon after initiating plan.

**42%** of pastors reported that the church board was the number one source of resistance to the turnaround plan.

**Some turnarounds are dramatic:** the fighting that divided a congregation and spoiled their reputation ends, and the church is suddenly alive and growing.

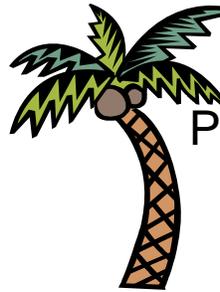
**Some turnarounds are subtle:** after decades of stagnant attendance and lackluster ministry, a pastor leads the people to find renewed purpose, and the winds of the Spirit move again.

**All turnarounds are significant:** the gospel is advanced by healthy churches. Yet even the more evangelistic denominations, focused on church planting, are battling inertia.

*By John C. Larue,*

*Copyright October 1, 2005 Your Church*

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Pacifica Synod Assembly  
May 2 – 5, 2007  
Waikiki Beach Marriott

Each year the congregations of the Pacifica Synod are asked to send their Pastor and two voting delegates (1 female and 1 male) as representatives to the Synod Assembly. Lord of Life continues to support this synod and last year sent Pastor Dave and Pat & Cathy Fulgenzi as our representatives. The 2007 Synod Assembly promises to be exciting and unique as it will be held in Hawaii. Needless to say, the cost to send our delegates will be significantly higher than Assemblies in the past. It is still, however, our obligation as a congregation in this Synod to cover the cost of having our pastor and two lay delegates attend on our behalf. On Sunday October 29, Pastor Davis sold DVD's from his Martin Luther/Martin Luther King presentation in Arizona with "all" the proceeds going to defer the cost of sending our 2007 delegates. In addition, a female member of LOL has offered to pay her own airfare and hotel cost to go as our delegate. In a further attempt to defer the cost, we are asking if there is a male member interested in attending that would cover his cost? We need additional funds to cover this event and ask that if you think of other creative ways to fund this project, please contact our church office. For more information on the 2007 Synod Assembly, please log on to [www.pacificasynod.org](http://www.pacificasynod.org)



Join Bob Barker and  
"Come on Down"

## The Price is Right

*The Price Is Right*, television's longest-running game show, began its 35th season on September 18. The show, hosted by Bob Barker, premiered on CBS September 4<sup>th</sup> in 1972.

"Bob Barker is a television icon and, throughout his illustrious career, he has brought great joy to his fans of all ages, from all walks of life," said Barbara Bloom, Senior Vice President, Daytime Programs, CBS. "We are thrilled to be airing this landmark 35th season of *The Price is Right* during Bob's 50<sup>th</sup> year in show business." "I thank the television viewers of the country for allowing me to be a guest in their homes for half a century," said Barker. "They have been gracious hosts."

Did you know that Pastor KD was a contestant of the show several years ago? He won a sail boat (sold it) and two motor cycles (sold them too!). He used the proceeds from the sale to help pay for his B. A. Since then he has successfully organized (2) group trips to the taping of the show. On each occasion, someone in his group was selected to be a contestant. Most recently in 2005, a member of the group won a new car!

A group of 20-25 people from Lord of Life will be attending the 9:00 AM taping **Tuesday, January 2, 2007** at Television City in Hollywood. You may even be selected as a contestant! You must be at least 18 years of age to attend a taping and you must bring a valid photo ID and Social Security Card. Cost to be determined, will include transportation. We recommend you bring a sack lunch.

You will go through processing while sitting on the covered benches. Your I.D.'s will be checked, you will receive a handwritten nametag and the Pages will go over the general rules for contestant eligibility. Prior to entering the studio, there is a brief interview by the production staff and that's how the contestants are selected. You must be

present at CBS for the entire processing. There is a Gift Shop, snack bar, vending machines, water fountains and restrooms for your convenience.

## Jamaica Mission Trip 2007

Join Pastor KD with Lord of Life and Ascention Lutheran church of Paradise Valley, Arizona, on the Jamaican Mission Trip 2007. Pastor KD will lead a challenging and exciting mission project to the rural parish of Mandeville in his home of Jamaica, West Indies.

The departure date is **July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2007**, returning home on **Saturday, August 4<sup>th</sup>**.

Participants will travel to Montego Bay, Jamaica, and then to Mandeville, where they will spend a week working on a building and expansion project at the Robin's Nest Orphanage in Montego Bay. This orphanage is run by a Lutheran group in Montego Bay, Jamaica. In addition to our work at the home, we host vacation Bible school, and medical personnel attending offer their services at the local hospital. The work days were just that, work - both exciting and exhausting!

Participants should be ready to challenge themselves, making a difference in the lives of those we encounter in Jamaica and in their own lives. Building skills are not required. All they need is a willingness to try and work hard.

Please visit [www.woundedhealerministry.com](http://www.woundedhealerministry.com) for an application. Prompt completion and return of this application is required in order to secure your space on our trip. No space will be secured until a non-refundable deposit has been received for applicants accepted as part of the team. Space will be limited to twenty five individuals. Total cost is \$1,800 which includes airfare, transportation, hotel, and meals).



## Lord of Life Hosting Fair Trade Fair



More than one billion people live on less than \$1 a day; another 2.7 billion struggle on less than \$2 a day. And income inequality is increasing around the world. Globally, nearly 200 million people are unemployed, while millions more are underemployed and don't have enough work or income to support their families.

We are hosting an **LWR FAIR TRADE FAIR** featuring high-quality handcrafted items made by disadvantaged artisans in developing regions of the world. The first two Sundays in November (5 & 12) you may purchase fair trade coffee, crafts, jewelry, and Christmas decorations. Do your Christmas shopping early by purchasing gifts for your friends and family.

Handcraft production is small-scale and diverse. Crafts can be made in homes by women while cooking or caring for children, as they are herding animals or between chores. Other crafts are made in small workshops that offer child care, companionship, and use of equipment such as sewing machines. The carving of wood, stone or clay pieces is often done by men working outdoors. Many indigenous artisan skills are passed down through generations, helping to strengthen family connections and preserve cultures and customs.

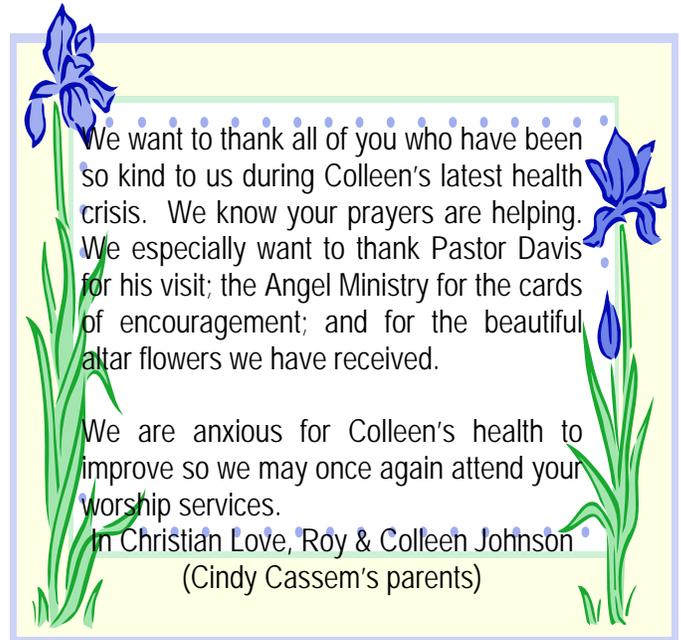
When you purchase items from **LWR FAIR TRADE FAIR** you enable artisans to earn a fair income through their craft skills and use locally available natural resources. They are able to earn income from their work and to build better lives for themselves and their families. In addition to wages, artisan groups provide benefits to their members including skills and literacy training, access to basic health care, low-interest loans or credit. They also invest in community development projects such as building safe water wells, funding elementary schools, and sponsoring public forums on topics ranging from women's rights to nutrition.



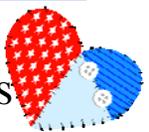
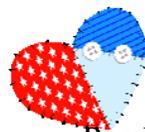
## Arlene Enters Four Paintings: All Winners!



Congratulations to our very talented Arlene Eder who entered four paintings in the Southern California Fair at the Perris Fairgrounds. In the Senior Fine Arts Division, Arlene was awarded 2<sup>nd</sup> place for one of her paintings, and received first place for the other three paintings, and ultimately won "Best of Show" for her painting of mail boxes. We are very proud of you, Arlene!



## In Search of Warm Fuzzies



*By Bev Erck*

Rarely have we seen such a wonderful expression of your caring for others than we observed on the Quilt and Health Kit projects this year. Indeed there was such an outpouring of good will that we packed up 133 quilts and over 426 health kits to send to Lutheran World Relief. I am proud to be one of the many LOL members who participated in these two missions! What a great feeling it is to consider that it is so very easy to comfort someone in a distant place with a warm quilt or a needed health kit after their natural disaster. God knows your heart and we thank Him for inspiring each of us to take part in this worthy mission.

# Annual Toy Drive For Edgemont Elementary School



- There are 717 students (boys and girls between Kindergarten and 5<sup>th</sup> grade) who attend Edgemont Elementary School - and we would like to provide each of them with a gift for Christmas again this year. We are looking for toys that keep the kids active or stimulate thinking and creativity. Some suggestions are: basketballs, soccer balls, footballs, skateboards, board games, trucks and cars. Toys need to be at least \$10 in value each. Start early and look for sales so you can spend your money wisely. *We do ask that no used toys or stuffed animals be given - this may be the only gift they receive.*

All gifts need to be turned in by **December 10**, to be counted and sorted.

A wrapping and pizza party will be held **Saturday, December 16** from **3-7 PM** at Lord of Life Lutheran Church  
13600 Nason Street  
(One block South of Cottonwood)



We also need "Elves" to help deliver the gifts to Edgemont Elementary School  
21790 Eucalyptus Avenue  
**Friday, December 22 at 8 AM**

We appreciate all the help we can get. Please let us know if you would like to be involved in any way. You may contact Julie in the church office (924-4887) between 8:00a.m. and 4:30p.m.





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