

Mt. Calvary News

Inviting ♦ Uplifting ♦ Informing ♦ Equipping ♦ Inspiring



February 2008

Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church (LCMS) 1609 Second Street West Polson, Montana 59860

From the Pastor's Desk ...

What Wondrous Love Is This?

Thinking about love

Because Valentine's Day happens to be in February, this is a month in which there is typically much talk of love in the news, in the entertainment media, and especially in advertisements.

However, there is also another, more important reason this February to contemplate the meaning of love. This month, the season of Lent begins — a season in which we focus our hearts and minds on the price Jesus paid for salvation — a price that is as unbounded as God's love for us.

So, what is God's love for us like? For an answer to that question, let's consider how God's love is described in the Bible.

“The Four Loves”

When the writers of the New Testament were describing God's love for us, there actually were a few different Greek words for love that they could have chosen to use:

- They could have used the word “eros.” That is the kind of love you experience when you are drawn to someone by some “magnetic” quality of theirs, such as their beauty or personality. It's a “Valentine's Day” kind of love. However, that certainly wouldn't be the right word to describe God's love for us. After all, God loves us even when we are at our most unlovable.
- Instead, they could have used a different Greek word for love: “storge” (pronounced STORE-gay). That is the word used to describe the natural affection family members have for one another. But, again, this word doesn't really do justice to God's love for us. After all, God loved us sinners even when we were his enemies and had not yet become members of his family. There's nothing natural about that kind of love.
- A third word for love that could have been used is “filia,” which refers to the love that friends or brothers have for each other (like in Philadelphia, “the city of brotherly love”). But, again, it really isn't up to the task of describing God's love for us. While Jesus is our friend, and while we can even describe him as our brother, his love for us far exceeds mere brotherly love.

Since none of those three words for love were quite right, the writers of the New Testament used a different word: “agape” (pronounced ah-GAHP-ay). What is agape like? Agape is a love that's focused on helping others. It's a love that wants the best for others — whether or not they've done anything to deserve it! And when you love somebody with an “agape” kind of love, you don't just feel it in your heart — you do something about it! You show your love in the things you do and say. Agape is an active love that's focused on helping others.

That is what God's love for us is like. That is the kind of love we see most clearly in the cross of Christ. May we give thanks for that love not only during the season of Lent, but every day of our lives!

— Pastor Aaron Stinnett

The January LWML Meeting

The meeting was opened with prayer by Nancy and the League Pledge. She led the topic, "Through Christ: Abundant Life for Women."

Virginia gave the Treasurer's report: We received \$82.99 for Fifth Sunday mites and \$56.07 for mites at the December meeting. Thank you to all members of the congregation who support the Mission Projects of LWML through your mite donations. You may read more about one of this year's projects in the LWML Mission Grants article.

Final copies of the updated prayer chain will be handed out the last Sunday in January; the new list will go into effect on February 1.

Committee assignments were updated. Loretta Chambers volunteered to be the contact person for local mission needs. If you are aware of local needs that LWML could help with (for example, quilts for people whose home has burned), please notify Loretta. Joanne will help Anna and Bev with calling for food for funeral dinners. Hazle volunteered to be in charge of set up and clean up for special occasions, and Nancy Stinnett will order the cakes. All other committee assignments remain the same:

Quilts and sewing kits: Betty, Joanne, Bev, Barb

Layettes: JoMay

Health Kits: Ardith and Stinnetts

School Kits: Sylvia and Sunday School students

Planning funeral menus: Anna and Bev

Altar Guild: Arlene, Jane, Barb, Bev, Marilyn

Mite Box Sunday: JoMay

Cradle Roll: Virginia

Book Display: Arlene

Prayer Chain: Betty and Anna

Barb reported that her daughter Ruth's church has extra Bibles they will donate for Ryan Shima to distribute. The money we set aside for buying Bibles will be used for postage to send them to him when he requests them. We also discussed the possibility of placing Bibles in the local jail. Loretta will check to see if that is possible.

We will bring treats to the February meeting for our college students: Adam, Leslie, and Calvin.

We will host a Spring Tea in April. We thank Mary Lou for once again heading up this project. An exact date will be set soon, and Mary Lou will be talking with individuals about how they can help with this project.

Carolyn Webb has offered to teach basket weaving to interested church members. Samples of baskets will be displayed at church so participants can choose the style they would like to make. The price of the 3 to 4 hour class will depend upon the basket chosen. Each class will be limited to ten students; Carolyn will teach more than one class if more people are interested.

Anna was hostess.

LWML Mission Grants: ***Eight New Lutheran Blind Mission Outreach Centers***

More than 55 million people in the world today are blind. Of the 12 million blind and visually impaired children and adults in the US,

- 95% are unchurched
- 50% are unemployed
- 60% are single and isolated
- 82% do not read Braille

Since 1999, Lutheran Blind Mission has established 40 Outreach Centers. Each center is a mission station based at a congregation which reaches out to blind people demonstrating God's love. The centers use the social and physical needs of the blind community as an opportunity to share the Gospel. The blind outreach director, who knows where to find other blind people, facilitates regular gatherings including:

- Monthly fellowship meals
- Bible studies
- Braille classes
- Computer training
- Guide dog support
- Grief counseling
- Dress for success classes
- Job application reference and referral

Blind people trust other blind people because they know and understand firsthand the problems confronting them. Through the Centers, potential

leaders are connected with the Lutheran Blind Mission for training. On average, thirty new people are touched and receive the Gospel at each center in a year's time. The Lutheran Blind Mission Ministry plans to have 75 Outreach Centers open by the end of 2008.

The mission grant of \$40,000 will be used to open eight new Outreach Centers and provide training for the Outreach Directors.

Lutheran World Relief: To Others, Through Others.

Members of Mt. Calvary have had an opportunity to donate items for each kind of kit Lutheran World Relief distributes around the world. Between now and the annual World Relief Drive in April we will feature each of the kits once more.

Your opportunity to help in February

We invite you once again to donate items for the layettes. Items most needed now are:

- Shirts or Onesies® 18 to 24 Month size
- Gowns or sleepers (with or without feet) Sizes up to 24 months
- Wash cloths
- Receiving blankets
- Diaper pins (not just large safety pins, but actual diaper pins)

A box for your donations is in the Fellowship area.

Key dates for your calendar...

February 1..... New Prayer Chain in effect

February 18.....Basket Weaving

April 12..... World Relief Drive

April..... Spring Tea (watch for exact date)

**April 25-27..... Montana District LWML
Convention in Billings**

Quick, "Click" Fund-Raiser

The Mt. Calvary Preschool has been working with "Good Search", a Yahoo-powered Internet search engine. This web site donates 50% of its revenue (about a penny per search) to designated charities.

There is no limit to how much a charity can earn. This is an easy way for *you* to help Mt. Calvary Preschool raise funds. (See below about using this web site.)

The preschool recently received a check from the "clicks" it received from people using GoodSearch with our preschool as their charity of choice. Every penny helps, and the \$10.31 we received will be used to buy supplies for the coming 2008/2009 school year.

We have seen this work in 2007 and challenge you to help us earn more in 2008. Please spread the word and use GoodSearch to help support our nonprofit school. Your participation is much appreciated.



It is simple to use. The banner just above is what you see when you enter and first reach the site's address, www.goodsearch.com. Just below your initial choices to search the web for information, images or videos, enter "Mt. Calvary Lutheran Preschool (Polson, MT)" in the "Who do you Goodsearch for?" blank field. You can also make this choice from a drop down list. Then, as you normally do, begin your search by typing keywords into the blank search bar.

You can even make Good Search your homepage, so the site is easily accessible each time you want to search the web. If you need help finding or getting started using GoodSearch, please ask Annette Schiele for a quick lesson.

"The Agape Fund" — Sharing Christ's Love with One Another

From time to time, we would like to remind you about a special fund that was established at Mt. Calvary in 2006. Known as "The Agape Fund," its purpose is to provide assistance for members of Mt. Calvary who find themselves in times of special need.

"Agape" is a word from Biblical Greek that refers to a selfless, giving, active love — the kind of love that Christ demonstrated for us, and that he calls on us to show one another. You are invited to contribute to this fund at any time.

This fund is overseen by the Board of Elders. If you have any questions, feel free to talk with any of the Elders (Chuck Moody, Walt Patterson, and Reynold Unger) or with Pastor.

As a reminder to all, records of monetary gifts and tithes are managed as confidential records.

Birthdays:

Tristan Alexander 2/5
 Markus Bobb 2/02
 Loretta Druyvestein 2/03
 Anna Mindt 2/06
 Becky Upton 2/07
 Jenna Ness-Neumann 2/07
 Gwenevere Reese 2/15
 Betty Shoumaker 2/21



Anniversaries:

Gary & Patti Patterson 2/1
 David & Candis Unger 2/12

Prayer Chain Reminder

As mentioned in the LWML Meeting minutes, the revised list of prayer chain participants and their assignments are effective February 1. This is simply a reminder to please make sure that your assignment has not changed. You should find the new booklets and prayer chains in your mailbox.

Praise, Glory and Thanks Be To God!



- Feb. 3 – Available
(Transfiguration Sunday)
- Feb. 10 – Available
(First Sunday in Lent)
- Feb. 17 – Available
(Second Sunday in Lent)
- Feb. 24 – Available
(Third Sunday in Lent)

Mt. Calvary Preschool Board Meets Exciting Decisions Follow Devotions

“And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:11 – 13 ESV). He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers ... and some to be Lutheran school board members! No, St. Paul wasn’t aware of the wonderful education ministries we know as Lutheran schools.

And he probably never met a school board member! But, if Paul were writing today, board members,

people gifted with skills to govern and provide ministry oversight, might be included on the list.”¹

Thus began the devotional read by Candis Unger at the Mt. Calvary Preschool Board meeting on Tuesday, January 22, 2008. The Board met to review the application of Becky Upton for the vacant teacher position. After careful review the Board decided to hire Becky into the position, and welcomed her as the Preschool teacher for the 2008/2009 school year.

The Board also welcomed Virginia Nygaard to the Board, serving as preschool treasurer. Candis Unger will serve as secretary, Mary Davis as Chairman, and Annette Schiele as the advertising coordinator.

The Preschool Board is very excited for the ministry opportunities in the upcoming school year and has already started preparations in anticipation of it. Now that Mrs. Upton has been hired, there is a lot of work to be done to prepare for the students. The Holiday Market Fundraiser in November (with matching funds from Thrivent) raised \$1256.52 for room renovations. This money will be used to improve the preschool room with new flooring and other fixture updates. Another \$550 was recently received from the Florence Small Grant, and is designated for a new Concordia curriculum for the preschool.

“Paul reminds us in Ephesians 4 that God provides leaders for a purpose – to prepare His people for works of service. To what end? So that the body of Christ may be built up, may achieve unity, may increase in knowledge of the Son of God, and may become mature in faith. For what ultimate outcome? So that His people can attain a whole measure of the fullness of Christ.”¹

God has provided Mt. Calvary Preschool with a new teacher, a new curriculum and funds to enhance our facility so that we may continue to spread the Good News of Christ to local children and their families. May God bless us as we carry out this important church ministry.

¹ *Quotes from a devotion by Richard Herman from National Lutheran Schools Week 2007, read at the Preschool Board meeting.*

A Sincere Note Of Thanks

Arlene Cooper boxed and posted items donated to the Montana Developmental Center at Boulder, in time for Christmas. Thank you all for your donations.

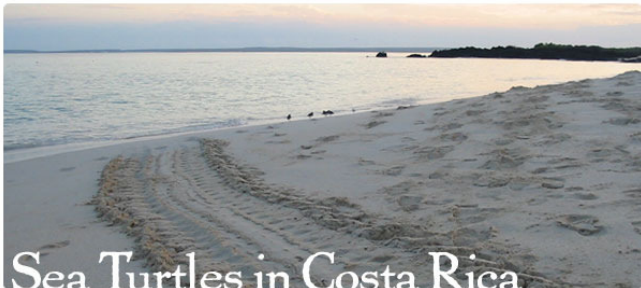
Incidentally, Arlene's new email address is:
just_a_cooper@yahoo.com.

Library Notes

Consider sharing your talents by helping in the Church Library on Sunday mornings! Volunteers are needed to read stories, check out books, shelve books, keep items in order, design bookmarks, write news articles, repair and mend materials and other library tasks.



If you are interested in spending 30 minutes once a month after the church service please contact Mary Lou Mires (883-3987 or mlmires74@yahoo.com).



This image shows the path made by a Sea Turtle through the beach sand.

Amanda Berens, Sunday School teacher here at Mt. Calvary and Polson High School student, will soon be off to Costa Rica. No, she isn't taking a winter break in the sunshine; Amanda, along with other students and their PHS Biology teacher, Jon Petersen, will join in an on-going effort to help the local Leatherback sea turtle population in conjunction with Ecology Project International (EPI). In addition to working with the Turtles, she says, "We are going to plant trees in the rainforest ..."

To finance their one-week trip (March 29 – April 6), Amanda says the students "have been saving for a long while". They also held bake sales at last summer's Ronan Fair, and are asking for donations.

In addition to learning about conservation, the students plan to work on their Spanish skills, hope to do some dancing, are planning forest hikes, will tour a banana plantation and learn about the dangers to the local wildlife.

The following information, from the Project's web site, tells more about the experience that Amanda and her fellow students will have in Costa Rica, and the good that the Project is doing (for us

all, indirectly) through these volunteers and the Project's Partners.

Course Overview

Costa Rica contains an amazing 5% of the world's biodiversity. Its Caribbean coast – where Ecology Project International's program site is located – is the fourth most important nesting beach in the world for Leatherback sea turtles, a critically endangered species. Through our Sea Turtle Ecology Program, youth from Costa Rica and around the world work in partnership with the Pacuare Nature Reserve to conserve and protect these sea turtles from extinction. Ecology Project International students are a critical part of the conservation effort for Leatherbacks at Pacuare Reserve. Their hands-on learning about research, service and cultural exchange benefits everyone involved.

Partners

U.S. students join their Costa Rican peers, the Pacuare Reserve, foundations, and government agencies in an international effort to ensure the survival of this species. Partners and supporters for this Project include:

- Costa Rica's Ministry of Education
- CR-USA Foundation
- EARTH University
- Intel and Fundación Omar Dengo
- Marine Conservation Society
- MINAE, Costa Rica's Ministry of the Environment and Energy
- Pacuare Nature Reserve



"We get the opportunity to measure the turtles and collect their eggs", says Amanda.

Conservation Impact

Data collected by Ecology Project International students are utilized by scientists to improve

conservation efforts for Leatherback sea turtles. Every night of the Leatherback nesting season, Ecology Project International students walk the beach in search of sea turtles and their nests, to study population trends and protect the nests from tides, poachers, and other threats.

Academics and Education

During their time in the field, Ecology Project International students serve as volunteers for Latin American conservation institutions. Under the leadership of our outstanding instructors, every student conceives, develops, analyses, and presents a field-based research project and attends biology, tropical ecology, art, and journaling classes.

Cultural Exchange

More than half of our participants at this project site are Costa Rican. After each group completes the Leatherback research, students meet their international peers and share their experiences and academic projects at a local school.

Costa Rica: Location

Costa Rica is in Central America, bordered to the north by Nicaragua, and to the south by Panama. Despite its tiny size (about the size of West Virginia), Costa Rica is geographically and ecologically diverse.

Student Participation and Contributions

Since EPI's first two-week field program in 2000, a total of 1,700 students, teachers, and staff of our Sea Turtle Ecology Program in Costa Rica have:

- Collected data on 892 endangered Leatherback sea turtles, counted more than 65,000 eggs, and helped to protect over 630 Leatherback nests
- Volunteered 28,000 hours on conservation projects
- Walked 21,000 miles on sea turtle "patrol"
- Collected 1,700 pounds of trash from nesting beaches
- Planted 2,100 trees

EPI's web site, with a lot of information and photos on the Project also contains news and newsletters. The web address is:

http://www.ecologyproject.org/english/costa_rica.html

Thoughts for Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day, a time when thoughts turn to love. But what is love? Is it a box of chocolates, or a pretty valentine? Is it a peck on the cheek, a big bear hug?

Well, sometimes love is known in those ways. But love, real love, is how we relate to God and to one another if life is what it ought to be - beautiful!

Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church (LMCS)

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Librarian:	Mary Lou Mires
Congregational Care Team:	Bob & Mary Lou Mires Bob & Hazle Heth
Choir Director:	Esther Stinnett
Organists:	Joyce Shima Sylvia Moody

Words Of Welcome

We are very glad for the presence of all visitors. Please know that we are pleased to have you worshipping with us. We encourage you to introduce yourself to others, and participate in our fellowship.

March Mt. Calvary News Deadline
Monday, February 25th

Email Submissions To: hob@bresnan.net