

Cross Words

Monthly Newsletter of Cross Ev. Lutheran Church

April 2013 Volume 13, Issue 4



***I Need More…STRENGTH***

After several attempts of twisting and tapping, the lid just wouldn’t budge. “Honey, can you open this for me?” Her teenage son is eager to flex his muscles. He opens the jar and hands it back to his mother.

Life is sometimes like that jar, isn’t it? Sometimes we just don’t have the strength we need to tackle what’s in front of us. Not the strength it takes to move a piano or to change a flat tire, but the strength we need to raise our children or to stay married to someone who is so difficult to live with. We need the strength it takes to go to work and deal with people who are rude, inconsiderate and lazy, or to walk to the mailbox that contains bills we’ll have difficulty paying.

I need more strength!

“Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth…He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak…Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.” (Isaiah 40:28-31)

What should we do when we need more strength? Hand that jar over to the Lord. He has all the strength we need and so much more. After all, he is the One who created the earth and everything in it. More than that, this strong, wise, loving God came to earth in the person of Jesus Christ. The all-powerful God came in human weakness to rescue us from sin and death. He was condemned and crucified. Weakness, right? No! Strength! Jesus used his strength to remain on that cross until every last sin of ours had been paid for. His empty tomb proves it. “Jesus was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead” **(**Romans 1:4). Death has been defeated! The guilt of sin before God has been removed! By trusting in Jesus, life in heaven is waiting for us.

Need more strength? The One who created the earth has it. The One who died and rose for you has it. He is the One who gives us the strength to face each day with fresh confidence. Find that strength in his Word. And then be ready to soar. Be ready to soar on eagles’ wings with renewed strength! Be ready to soar on eagles’ wings through every challenge of life! Be ready to soar on eagles’ wings to the home that Jesus has prepared for you in heaven!

**THE VISIBLE CHURCH**

**Knowing Why We Are Here**

 Are you a member of the “hereafter” club? As age increases, we can find that we go into a room looking for something and forget what it was. “What am I *here after?*”becomes the question.

 Some churches seem to have joined the *hereafter* club. They seem to have forgotten what they are supposed to be after—what their mission really is. The head of the church outlined that mission very clearly: “Go and make disciples of all nations,” he commanded, “teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19,20). Using the gospel in Word and sacraments, we are to win the lost for Christ and nurture believers for lives of Christian service.

 Today there seems to be more confusion than ever about what the mission of the church really is. Nurturing the saved and reaching the lost with God’s gospel message takes a backseat to other concerns. Clearing up social  injustice, some think, is more important than proclaiming how God’s holy justice has been satisfied by his love in Christ Jesus. Dispensing food and water, some think, is more important than passing on slices from the loaf called Christ. Bringing the light of education to backward peoples, some think, is more important than bringing the light of salvation in Christ. These are all important concerns, but they are not the central mission of the church.

 In a day when scientists split atoms and launch satellites,  we need to remember that the soft voice of the gospel is still God’s power to split the old Adam and launch the new man. In an age when people bore deeply into the earth for precious oil and soar miles into space for science, we need to remember that every human needs to go to Calvary more than to the moon, that forgiveness of sins bought with Christ’s blood is more precious than oil’s black gold. To put it simply, we need to remember what is the central and most important mission Jesus gave to his church.

 So I look for a church that knows what it is *here after* and pursues it vigorously. I want a church that will nourish me with the life-giving Word and that will help me reach out with it to win the lost for their only Savior.

© 2012 Northwestern Publishing House. All rights reserved.

Scripture is taken from THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION.®

**NEWS FROM CHURCH**

**MEMBERSHIP CHANGES:**  ***Reaffirmation of Faith*** On Sunday, March 3 Stacey Kettenacker was received as a communicant member of our congregation through reaffirmation of faith. Stacey is the daughter of Sandy Lindbo and sister of Mike and Mark Kettenacker. May the Lord bless her membership.

***Adult Confirmation*** On Sunday, March 24, Tiffanee Ahlstrom became a communicant member of Cross through the rite of confirmation. May the Lord continue to bless Tiffanee as a member of Cross through the Means of Grace.

 Be sure to make your acquaintance with these new members of the Cross family.

***Released from Membership*** At the March 14 meeting of the church council release from membership was granted to the following: Wendy Bjorn, Virginia Bjorn, Dain Bjorn, Tiffany Bjorn, Craig Bjorn and Heath Schwanke.

**TREASURER** For the month of February, the treasurer reported income of $12,787.72, expenses of $13,465.92 and a General Fund balance of $47,015.68.

**TRUSTEES**

***Thanks*** The trustees wish to thank Gary Zimmermann, Lori Peterson and Roger Bechtold for paint the new windows that will be installed in the office/classroom section of the church.

***Church Cleaning*** The church council is sponsoring a “church cleaning day” on Saturday, April 27, starting at 9:00 am. This will be an opportunity to give the inside of the church a good cleaning, dusting, vacuuming, and wiping down. EVERYONE IS ENCOURAGED TO COME AND HELP CLEAN ***OUR*** CHURCH BUILDING

**APRIL CONGREGATION MEETING**

The April “Quarterly” Congregation meeting will be held on Sunday, April 21 at 10:30 am (following the morning worship service.) In addition to usual reports and other information, there will also be discussion of and a decision made concerning the disposition of a proposed land donation by Alfred & Ladess Bleck. All members are invited and encouraged to attend.

**CROSS LIGHTS**

![C:\Users\church office\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\L71EIPC1\MC900390900[1].wmf]()

 On Tuesday, April 2 Cross LIGHTS

will have it’s monthly meeting, from

7:30-8:30 pm. All the women of the

congregation are invited to join in the

fellowship and spiritual growth

.

**MEN’S BREAKFAST BIBLE STUDY**

The April meeting of the Men’s Breakfast Bible Study will take place on Saturday, April 20 at 9:00 am. The menu will include Biscuits & Sausage gravy. We will continue our study – ***How Can They Teach That?*** *(And Still Claim to Believe The Bible).* Lesson 5 deals with Abortion and Early Life Issues.

![C:\Users\church office\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\GIZRWH4T\MC900234399[1].wmf]()

 This is a good opportunity to review what the Bible teaches on these subjects, and how some twist or ignore what God’s Word says.

**Favorite Easter Hymn Service** In the April 14 worship service (along with the preceding Wednesday) we will have a “Favorite Easter Hymn” service. The hymns for this service were chosen as a result of the “Favorite Easter Hymn” survey conducted in February and March. Thank you to those who participated.

**HOLY COMMUNION SCHEDULE** During the month of April , the Sacrament of the Altar will be celebrated on Sunday, April 7, Wednesday, April 17 and Sunday, April 21.

![C:\Users\church office\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\7DB5T4OV\MC900435101[1].wmf]()

 **SENIOR FELLOWSHIP** The Senior Fellowship will meet on Thursday, April 18. There will be a chicken dinner at noon, followed by a presentation by world famous traveler Darlene Bechtold, who will share with us pictures and ***impressions of her recent trip to the Holy Land (Israel, not Green Bay!)***

******

*There is still some time to sign up for the trip to the Plymouth Playhouse on Sunday, April 14, 2:00 pm to see “Ring of Fire” - the Muisc of Johnny Cash. The Jukebox Musical based on the music of Johnny Cash. Through words and music, “Ring of Fire” honors and brings to life a remarkable musical legend – Johnny Cash. Full of love and emotion, humor and empathy, Ring of Fire: The Music of Johnny Cash pays tribute to the legendary Man in Black with dance, comedy, stories, tragedy and love.*

 *Tickets are $27. There will also be opportunity to have dinner after the play at the Green Mill Restaurant. Sign up at Church*

******

***NEWS FROM WEST***

***SPRING DRAMA***:  The West Lutheran Players are proud to present "Dickens of a Mystery" by Criag Sodaro on Friday & Saturday, April 19 & 20 at 7 PM and Sunday, April 21 at 2 PM.  Tickets are available at the door: $5 - adults; $3 - students and seniors; kids age 5 and under are free.  Go to [wlhs.net](http://wlhs.net) for more information.

**ACCENT AUDITIONS:**  Calling all current 8th grade students... if you are registered to attend West next year you are eligible to audition for the Western Accents.  Auditions will be held on Monday, May 6th from 4:30-5 pm.  Contact Mr. Baures for more information (763-509-9378 or gbaures@wlhs.net).

The Temptation of Prosperity

Prosperity knits a man to the world. He feels that he is “finding his place in it,” while really it is finding its place in him.

-*C.S. Lewis in* The Screwtape Letters

**LWMS HANNAH CIRCUIT SPRING RALLY**

**Lutheran Mobile Clinic - Malawi February 2013**

Greetings!

 Hope you are all doing well! I just returned from a short holiday with family and friends at South Luangwa National Park. We had a great time seeing so many animals in their natural habitat. Since there are no fences the animals sometimes wander into the surrounding areas. We got the pleasure of seeing two hippos walking right next to our cottage in the late evening (we were watching from inside the cottage so we were perfectly safe). Our hosts told us that the hippos come through their property most evenings. It was quite the treat to see them up so close!

  We have been enjoying the rainy season (although we always pray for the rains to hold off until we’ve returned from Suzi on Wednesdays!). The landscape is lush and green. The maize has gotten very tall. Malawians plant pumpkins throughout the maize fields and they are nearly ready to harvest. We also have some sweet corn in our garden that we’re looking forward to eating soon.

  It has been a busy month here. We saw more than 5,000 patients. As usual there were many patients with Malaria. The government facilities were struggling terribly because very few medications were available to them. We learned that much of the medication that was being given to patients was being purchased by the hospitals’ doctors with their own money. Some medications have been donated and the situation is somewhat better. They are still short of supplies including food for their nutrition programs. The Nathenje Health Center which is near our Mwalaulomwe clinic has been referring orphans and malnourished children to us rather than the other way around. Normally we refer severely malnourished children to them but now we need to take these individuals to the nutrition program at the District Health Center in Lilongwe. Most Nationals tell me that this is always a difficult time of year in Malawi. It is known as “hungry season” because the maize is growing in the fields rather than being available to make flour.

  The civil servants throughout Malawi went on strike this month and that included hospital workers.  The strike lasted only a couple of days and the government has agreed to increase the workers’ pay. People are struggling to make ends meet with the continuing devaluation of their currency and the continuously rising prices. The prices of regular household goods, housing and fuel are all going up.

  We were unable to make it to Suzi once this month because of bad roads. We were able to take an alternate route to get there on some days but were unable to get through even on the alternate route that day because the bridge was covered in water from recent flooding to the area. The road we’ve been using for years to get to Suzi and Thunga has gradually become worse and now even the better parts of that road have become quite bad when it rains. Some of our staff has said that we’ve had more rain this year than in years past so that’s also contributing to the trouble getting to clinic.

  We interviewed several candidates for our vacant Clinical Officer position. We are hoping to have someone hired in March. It’s been a bit frustrating using all temporary C.O.’s over the last couple of months but we do want to make sure that we are hiring the right person for the position.

  In addition to my family and friends visiting this month we had Megan and Mandy (from the Mission Abroad Program) staying with us. It’s been fun getting to know them and showing them what we do here. Both are nurses and our staff enjoyed explaining their work and having Megan and Mandy spend time with them at each nursing station. They also got to experience some of the local health centers, pharmacies where we buy medications, the district health office, etc. and other “behind the scenes” things we do to run the clinic. We’ve appreciated their open mindedness and willingness to help out wherever needed. Megan has returned to the U.S. but we look forward to seeing her again in April when she starts her position as Sister-in-Charge at Lutheran Mobile Clinic. Mandy will be with us until early March and then will return to her work as an Emergency Room nurse in the U.S.

  We still are not able to get water from our borehole at Thunga. We are having an assessment done and will see if some repairs need to be made. By this time in the rainy season we should be able to pump water even though we don’t get any in the dry season. Hopefully we will have better news from Thunga next month.

God’s blessings to you all,

Kari

***“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him! For if, when we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.” Romans 5:8-11***

|  |
| --- |
|  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |