

PASTORS PENNINGS

I'm afraid sometimes.

Can God help me be safe and sound?

One summer night during a severe thunderstorm a mother was tucking her small daughter into bed. She was about to turn the light off when the little girl asked in a trembling voice, "Mommy, will you stay with me all night?" Smiling, the mother gave her a warm, reassuring hug and said tenderly, "I can't, dear. I have to sleep in Daddy's room." A long silence followed. At last it was broken by a shaky voice saying, "The big sissy!"

All of us have fears. And they don't always end with a chuckle. Our fears may be rational or completely irrational, but when we experience them, they are definitely real. At times we are afraid and may wonder, "Can God help me?"

For example, when I am hurting financially, when my doctor brings me seemingly bad news, when my family falls apart it makes me feel afraid. But, that is not all. When I argue and fight, disappoint and betray my loved ones, and do other hurtful things, it is easy to ask the question, why should God love me? Does he really mean it when He says, "You are forgiven?" Doesn't he get tired of forgiving me over and over for the same sins? When doubts about God's promises creep in on my thinking it is easy to become afraid. Are you afraid or worried over the future of your life? Are you afraid of where your sins might land you in the next life? If so, listen carefully.

On another night, Jesus Christ's disciples were caught in a storm on the Sea of Galilee. Their fear was very real, too. Jesus came to them and said, "Take courage! It is I. Do not be afraid" (Mark 6:50). Jesus was there, and they didn't need to be afraid any longer. He displayed his almighty power by calming the wind and waves.

Jesus can help us with our fears as well. He controls all things and promises to use his power to help those who trust in him. When Jesus is in our lives, we can take courage and not be afraid.

While his promises are true for all kinds of fears, they are especially true for our spiritual concerns. Many are afraid of dying and having to stand before a perfect God and answer for their imperfect lives. Jesus encourages us even in these great fears. He said, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die" (John 11:25-26). Life on this earth will end for all people, but Jesus promises that those who believe in him will live with him in heaven eternally. Jesus died on the cross to take our sins away, so that God will not condemn believers in judgment but will give them eternal life in heaven. This is the comfort and courage that God gives to those who trust him.

The Bible is filled with examples of God's power and his many promises to help us with our fears. So, don't be afraid, God has not abandoned you. Your personal future is a very positive

one. What a reason, even during fearful times, to praise and adore our God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

We have just finished another stewardship program. The Bible Studies on Monday night and the stewardship sermon series hopefully have given us the Gospel motivation for proper stewardship and a better knowledge of what God pleasing stewardship is all about. After starting with the Bible and then evaluating the grass roots survey, our Boards have begun to draw up a budget for the 2009 year. That process will conclude with our October voter's meeting where the budget will be voted on.

Of course, the budget is important as a tool to guide us in the best use of God's resources. On the other hand we need to always be careful that the budget is never used to replace the work that belongs exclusively to the Gospel. For example, the budget would be used wrongly if it were used to motivate us to give. That is the gospel's function. The budget can set forth in an orderly way what the church hopes under God to accomplish through the offerings of its members. The goal, however, isn't to make the budget, but to glorify God with our offerings. In other words, we, as God's people need to be encouraged to give from what God has given to us, not to meet a budget or a particular need. Ideally, if we are motivated by the Gospel, the amount we joyously return to the Lord in deep gratitude for His saving mercy will be the same whether the church has a debt of one million dollars or whether it has one million in the bank collecting interest. Bank account amounts can change, budgets can change, how deeply we love God can change, but, one thing that never changes is God's overwhelming love for sinners like us. If we are giving in response to that love, we will give the maximum proportion that our joy in Christ permits. When the offering is no longer joyful giving from the heart it is no longer pleasing to God. It is not the money God wants, it is our willing, joyful hearts overwhelmed by his love which says, "God I love you more than my money." You are the Lord!

Each board of Holy Cross generated a list of items to be considered as the next project members of Holy Cross congregation can accomplish as stewards to enhance the Lord's work. All members of Holy Cross congregation were given the opportunity to take part in determining what the next project shall be by filling out survey forms on Sunday July 20th and 27th. The following is a list of the items and how they were rank in priority by members of Holy Cross congregation.

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| _1_ Entryway/Restroom Renovation | _9_ Picnic Pavilion |
| _2_ Play Ground Area | _9_ Rebrick Parsonage |
| _3_ New Sunday School area | _10_ Electronic Church Sign |
| _4_ New fellowship area | _11_ Activities Van |

_5__ Norman mission church

12 Staff Minister

_6__ New Pews

13 Audio/Visual System

_7__ Church Interior Renovation

14 Christian Day School

_8__ Gethsemane School Assistance

15 Radio Ministry

VOTERS BODY ACTION ON PRIORITY ITEMS

On Sunday August 24th following the worship service the Holy Cross congregation Voters Body met to act on recommendation presented by the Board of Stewardship pertaining to the stewardship priority items. The voter's body approved the formation of three committees to study the stewardship priority items and make recommendations to the voter's body on implementation of the items. The committees are as follows:

1. Church Relocation/Renovation Committee is to study and provide cost estimates on;
 - A. Selling the present property of Holy Cross congregation and relocating to a more southerly location,
 - B. Renovate the present church facility to expand the entryway/bathrooms/fellowship area/Sunday school area.
2. Norman Mission Committee is to study and provide cost estimates on starting a mission church in the Norman area.
3. Education Committee is to study and provide cost estimates on;
 - A. Providing financial assistance to Gethsemane Lutheran Christian Day school,
 - B. The feasibility of starting a pre-school at Holy Cross,
 - C. The feasibility of starting a day-care center at Holy Cross,
 - D. Obtaining an "activities van".

Each committee shall consist of a minimum of five members. So if you would like to serve on any of the committees please contact the Board of Stewardship chairman, Bill Shoumaker 392-5565. For more details on the committees and their duties see the church bulletin board or go to the Holy Cross web page -Activities-

SPECIAL OFFERING FUNDS

Holy Cross congregation presently has 12 different special offering funds which are available for members of the congregation to contribute to with the blessings given by the Lord. This is the fourth of a six part series which will explain the purpose of each fund, when it was established and the amount of monies in the fund.

Choir Fund

January 2008

\$145.78

Offerings flowing into this fund are to defray the costs of activities, supplies and needs relative to Holy Cross church choir. Please contact the Board of Elders and the Finance Committee for more information.

Organ Repair Fund
January 2008
\$10.00

Offerings flowing into this fund are to defray the costs of repair, maintenance, and other needs relative to the Holy Cross church organ. Please contact the Board of Property Management and the Finance Committee for more information.

EVANGELISM

Our Outreach Board has been working on a budget for next year. We are hoping to repeat the community canvass using canvassers from Martin Luther College. Typists are needed to put in Chamber of Commerce addresses into our new data base for mass mailing purposes. We hope to do four mass mailings to new people in the community. Right now prospects from the last canvass are being visited and have already received one mailing. We are hoping to do a friendship Sunday early next year. Everyone would invite one or more unchurched friends or acquaintances to come to church. They would be guests of honor at pot luck and invited to start a new Bible Information class.

There is a special event that we would like to invite all of you to attend. Our District Evangelism Coordinator, John Herring, has offered to do a seminar on Tuesday, September 16th from 6-8PM. The theme is, "**Connecting to the Community.**" The Outreach Board and Evangelism Committee will provide a light supper starting at 6PM. Mark it on your calendars and bring a friend. It should be a very exciting evening.

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER INSTALLATION

A new Sunday school year will begin on September 7th. Our teachers will also be installed on that Sunday. Dina Shoumaker, Darlene Chaddock, Diane Hanson, Patti Buczynskyj and Barbara Strackbein will head up the 2 year olds through eighth grades. At the time of this writing, August 15th there is one vacancy. Bill Shoumaker, Al Cardwell and Scott Peters will take turns teaching the post confirmation teen class.

MONDAY NIGHT BIBLE CLASS

Monday night Bible class will start up again on Sept. 8th at 6:30PM. The format is relaxed and there is a lot of discussion. At 7:30PM we take a ten minute break for snacks and fellowship. We close at 8:30PM. There will only be three classes in September because we will skip Monday the 15th in favor of Pastor John Herring's special evangelism seminar on, Tuesday the 16th entitled, "Connecting to the Community."

Each of the three Monday night Bible Studies will answer from Scripture questions or statements often made by skeptics who have serious doubts about various Bible teachings. The first class will answer the question, "What kind of God demands worship?" The second one answers the statement, "There are no moral absolutes." The third one responds to the statement, "I can't understand your three-in-one God."

Make a point to come. You will learn a lot and have a lot of fun.

PRAYER LIST

Our prayers and love go out to Marlin Henry whose brother Otis Henry passed away this month. Otis had emphysema and lung cancer. Apparently on his way home he struck a deer. Although no one was hurt the car sustained heavy damage. Our hearts go out to you Marlin and Karen.

Prayers have been requested by Mr. and Mrs. Fred Potter for a friend, Cathy Johnston Poule who has Osteomyelitis. Please pray that if it is God's will she will find a cure and that whether she is cured or not, that She would find peace with God through faith in Christ Jesus.

Laura Lundsford's father has diabetes and may need an amputation of a leg. He also has severe infections that have no cure with current drugs. Please pray that Laura will find strength in Jesus Word as her father fights for his life. Pray that her father will cling to his faith in Jesus without wavering until the day God calls him home.

Thank the Lord that Russell Luebking's heart surgery went well and that God, in his mercy has allowed him to go home. He is slowly recovering his strength. Both he and Jean are very positive and grateful for the Lord's deliverance. Neither is able to drive right now which makes life more complicated. Please pray that they will have patience with the inconveniences as well as the recovery rate. It is wonderful that their children are in town to help them.

Thank the Lord for allowing Richard Masucci to be able to leave the hospital, eat solid foods and to begin exercises following his heart surgery. Ask that the Lord be with both Richard and Ann during their recovery. Both Anna and Richard are very positive about the blessings God has given them, especially the blessing of grace and salvation in Christ.

We also want to thank the Lord that He provided our sister congregation with a new pastor from the seminary, Pastor Craig Born. Craig has a wife, Jennifer who is an architect. We also pray that their Lutheran School will grow and prosper and be a blessing not only to them but also to us here at Holy Cross.

Please remember Tom and Georgia Bigaouette in your prayers as they face health issues. May the Lord give them faith, understanding and peace as He leads them along the path of life.

Please pray especially for our new confirmation class. Those who have registered for the seventh grade class are; Jonah Schoenborn, and Shelby Stuever. Those who will be returning for the second year are; Robbie Hahn, Everett Peters, Peyton Dinse, and Troy Thomas. These children are the future of our church. Please say hello to them after or before church. Show that you are interested in them. Let them know you are praying for them to do well in their studies and in the process grow in their faith and love for the true God.

By the time you read this, your Pastor and Barbara will be celebrating her folk's 60th wedding anniversary in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. All the Strackbein boys will fly in to share the day. Barbara will be seeing a homeopathic doctor in Minneapolis before coming back on Wednesday. Last month her white blood cell count went up to the highest it has been in a year. This month it sank to the lowest it has ever been, please keep us in your prayers.

As most of you know Peter Strackbein has been an active member at Holy Cross for almost a year. He is returning to the north (Michigan). Please keep him in your prayers. We thank the Lord for his service to Holy Cross on the Outreach Board, and in choir.

Finally be sure to pray for your church leaders as well as those who are considering the wonderful opportunity to serve the Lord as leaders. Pray that the church activities which start up again in September will be a blessing to all of us.

PASTOR PATERSON'S MISSION SUNDAY

Every year we celebrate a mission festival Sunday. This year it will be September 28th. First Vice President of our district, Pastor Don Patterson will be preaching for the morning service and leading the Bible Study. There will be a pot luck in which he will also speak informally. It is important for us to know our District's leaders and give them a chance to serve us. Last year President Glaeske preached and spoke, I suspect you will also find Pastor Patterson a tremendous servant of God. Invite your friends to the special service. It will be a joyous occasion.

MARY MARTHA

The ladies of the Mary Martha guild will begin their fall meetings on September 8th at 1:00 PM. The first part of the meeting will be devoted to project work. This will be followed by a Bible study led by Pastor Strackbein. All ladies of Holy Cross congregation along with visitors are invited to attend.

CHOIR

September 10, 2008

That is the day we will once again begin our Wednesday night churr practice. If you have ever thought about being part of the Holy Cross Family Singers, then now is the time to do something about it. New music awaits us as we prepare to "make a joyful noise unto the Lord."

Introducing new hymns from the CW supplement will also be part of this year's agenda. The balcony is the place, and 7:00 PM is the time, so we look forward to seeing you there. For more information contact choir director Sunny Stuever 799-0549

CONFIRMATION

Confirmation class will begin on September 7th. We will begin at 12:15 on communion Sundays and 12:00PM on non communion Sundays. The Board of Education is going to be implementing a new policy. Although it is not in its final format, in general the students will be asked to take a year of Bible History in seventh grade before they can enter Pastor's confirmation class. If the

student knows his or her Bible stories based on an exam given by the pastor, they may, if they desire, start pastor's class during the seventh grade. If they do not know the Bible history stories they will need to take the Bible history course offered during Sunday school hours by Mrs. Strackbein or some other teacher. Even for those who know their Bible history stories and are eligible to join the confirmation class, it would be good if they took the Bible History course.

Parents if you have younger children. It is important for you to teach them Bible history at home and bring them to Sunday school. Children should know their Bible history and know by heart the Ten Commandments and their meanings as well as the three articles of the Apostle's creed and their meaning, before they join Pastor's confirmation class.

TEEN SUNDAY BIBLE CLASS

We have a post confirmation teen Bible class on Sunday mornings. Teens come and are a part of your continuing education in the Lord. Confirmation was not graduation from the Word. It was not the end of your religious instruction. It was a beginning and it needs to continue.

In addition to Sunday mornings plans are in the works to have a special Bible Study with pastor once or twice a month, followed by some fun activities. Look for announcements. If you are a teen, God wants to be a daily presence in your life. We at Holy Cross want to be a part of your lives also. Please join us!

POST CONFIRMATION TEEN BIBLE AND ACTIVITY DAY

Last year, the post confirmation teens met a few times at Pastor's house on Sunday afternoon. This year we would like to expand that idea. The leaders of our church really want to get the teens involved so they will be providing transportation to anyone who needs it. The first meeting will be on Saturday September 20th at 10:30AM at the church. Pastor will lead a Bible based discussion on the question, "Why Me?" If God loves us so much, how can he allow such pain? Why couldn't God just make a perfect world, where there would be no suffering? How can we move on? Following the study, we will eat and then have a fun activity. We should have you home by 3PM.

SPANISH BIBLE STUDY

A Bible information class in Spanish will begin on Tuesday, September 23rd at 7PM. Two people have requested it. If you know of any Hispanics that do better in Spanish than in English, invite them to come. If you want to practice your Spanish, please feel free to come also. There will be a brief devotion and some Spanish hymn singing before we get started. The course will use a Spanish video, a Spanish Bible and a Spanish work book.

QUOTE FROM LUTHER

The temptation to presumptuousness is very strong, particularly in those who strive with might and main to be righteous and godly and do not know of the altogether immaculate righteousness of God which is freely given us in Christ. As a result of this they are searching for something good in themselves until they become confident that they can pass muster

before God as people who are properly adorned with virtuous and meritorious deeds. - all of which is impossible. While you were with us, you held this opinion, or rather this error, just as I did. For my part, I am still wrestling with this error and am not quite rid of it yet. Therefore, my dear brother, learn Christ - Christ Crucified. Learn to sing praises to Him and to despair utterly of your own works. Say to Him: Thou, my Lord Jesus, art my Righteousness; I am Thy sin. Thou hast taken from me what is mine and hast given me what is Thine. Thou didst become what Thou wert not and madest me to be what I was not. Beware of your ceaseless striving after righteousness so great that you no longer appear as a sinner in your own eyes and do not want to be a sinner. For Christ dwells only in sinners. He came down from heaven, where He dwelt in the righteous, for the very purpose of dwelling in sinners also. Ponder this love of His, and you will realize His sweetest consolation. For if we must achieve rest of conscience by our own toil and worry, for what purpose did He die? Therefore, you are to find peace in Him by a hearty despair of yourself and your own works. And now that He has received you, made your sins His and His righteousness yours, learn also from Him firmly to believe this, as behooves you; for cursed is everyone who does not believe this."

PIONEER ACTIVITY

The Pioneers are planning a neat trip to the Orr Family Farm in late September for all children 12 and under. Watch for upcoming details on the bulletin board and in your mail boxes. For additional information check out their website at www.Orrfamilyfarm.com.

FELLOWSHIP ACTIVITY

Summer is almost over, and it's getting cooler so it's time for a softball game. So get your ball glove and come on out. The ball game will be played on Friday evening September 12th at 5:00 PM. Also bring something along that you would like to grill and some drinks. Those that can play, come on and do it, and those that cannot play come and tell everyone how it should be played. See everyone there.

NEWS LETTER

Some of the members of Holy Cross have expressed a desire to read the news letter from the web page rather than from a paper copy. If you are one of those that prefer the web page news letter, please politely decline receiving the news letter when it is given to you on Sunday morning. Likewise, if you do not want the news letter mailed to you if you miss it at church please let Bill Shoumaker know and your name will be removed from the mailing list.

HOLY CROSS MUSICIANS DECLARE MUSIC CONFERENCE UPLIFTING, INSPIRING, JOYFUL

Holy Cross Congregation provided scholarships to Amescha Byrd, Carroll Dinse, and Sunny Stuever so that they could attend the WELS National Conference on Worship, Music & the Arts, held in St. Peter, MN July 28-31. Anice Glass also attended at her own expense. Each of the persons who

attended wish to thank the congregation from the bottom of their hearts for allowing them to experience this tremendous event.

Sunny Stuever and Anice Glass sang in the 140 voice Festival Choir, which was accompanied by a 40 piece orchestra and a magnificent pipe organ. "The memory of singing in this choir will last me a lifetime," said Sunny. "The music was more complicated than anything I've ever been involved with before, but the successful mastery of that music to the glory of the Lord provided a feeling of joy like no other," she said. Conductors of the Festival Choir were Dr. James Nowack of the Wisconsin Lutheran Choir, Ms. Mary Prange director of the Lutheran Chorale of Milwaukee, and Prof. James Tiefel of the Seminary Choir of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

The centerpiece of the Conference was the new WELS hymnal supplement, which was published this summer, 2008. Seven different worship services featured the new CHRISTIAN WORSHIP: SUPPLEMENT along with other enriching resources and a variety of the best styles appropriate for Lutheran Worship. There were instructional sessions on the Supplement for both pastors and musicians. Carroll and Sunny attended the sessions for musicians.

Over 1300 people attended this conference, the largest attendance ever. There were people from all over the United States, Canada, and some special guests from Sweden. It was a tremendously uplifting experience to attend two Communion Services with such a large crowd of WELS Christians. Ten pastors, assisted by two others, distributed the Lord's Supper.

Each participant in the conference was allowed to take six instructional sessions in addition to attending concerts and worship services. Sunny and Carroll both attended a session on incorporating brass into the church service. Anyone in the congregation who has played a brass instrument or a reed instrument is urged to let us know. Even if you haven't played for years, you can still learn to play along with the organ. Sunny took instructional sessions on choir, while Carroll attended the sessions on playing the organ for the church service.

Amescha Byrd had a mountain-top experience as a member of the High School Honor Choir. To become a member, Amescha had to submit an application listing all of the musical events in which she had participated, such as All-State Choir, competitive solos and church solos. Out of 150 applicants, Amescha was one of the first 80 chosen. Amescha said that participating in this choir was an amazing adventure. The choir rehearsed for 6-8 hours a day in two hour increments. "I really enjoyed the director, Mike Gatie," said Amescha. He inspired me to be a better singer, musician, person, and most importantly, a Christian. I really enjoyed singing with my fellow believers and I cannot wait until Heaven, because just being with 1000 musicians was amazing. I cannot imagine what it would sound like singing and praising Jesus with billions of angels," said Amescha.

Anice Glass, Amescha's mother, said that attending the WELS Worship Conference was a life changing event that won't ever be forgotten. "I kept thinking during every service/concert that what I was experiencing was extremely emotional, spiritually overwhelmingly, beautiful," said Anice. Along with singing in the Festival Choir, Anice played the flute for a choir song during a service, attended two music sight reading sessions, two sessions on choir directing, and a class on

Voice Lessons for Choral directors, and a session on Online Choral Repertoire Resources.

“The emphasis in the organ classes was on new ways to introduce and play hymns so that the people could sing better,” said Carroll. Sunny said that she is looking forward to teaching the new music from the supplement to the choir and the congregation. Our goal is that the worship services at Holy Cross will be enhanced by what we have learned.

By Carroll Dinse