



August 2006

Goodnewsletter

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

By George

God gave words of ancient, enduring wisdom: **Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates (Deuteronomy 6:4-9).** To this, God added various injunctions to care for the poor, welcome strangers, and live justly with one another. He also instituted a series of feasts and festivals through which the people of Israel would remember and celebrate his care for them in the past and in the present.

What was the sum of this ancient, divine wisdom? The faith was to be received in home and community by means of careful listening to the word of God, a word that was to be taken to heart and meditated upon day by day, and through participation in family and communal faith celebrations. The faith was to be talked, woven into the rhythms and events of daily family life. The faith was to be enacted through family and communal rituals and traditions, which reminded the Israelites of their status as God's chosen people. And lastly, the faith was to be expressed through concrete acts of giving and service to others.

These four elements of ancient

wisdom for passing on faith are brought together by the Minnesota-based *Youth and Family Institute* as the Four Keys to Nurturing Faith in Home and Congregation: 1) caring conversations; 2) devotions; 3) service; and 4) rituals and traditions. Together, the Four Keys communicate a vision and shape for living out the Christian baptismal journey, so that faith is integrated into daily life and shared dynamically with one another.

On Sunday, September 10th, I will begin a five-week preaching series which articulates the Four Keys.

Sept. 10 – Living the Life of Faith
Sept. 17 – Caring Conversations (Faith Talk)

Sept. 24 – Devotions
Oct. 1 – Service

Oct. 8 – Rituals and Traditions
We will use the book Frogs Without Legs Can't Hear: Nurturing Disciples In Home and Congregations by David W. Anderson and Paul Hill.

You may purchase a copy of Frogs Without Legs Can't Hear for \$16 in-order-to dig deeper by reading along with me each week. This book teaches the Five Themes and Four Keys for nurturing faith in the home and community. See either Laura or myself by August 27th to secure your copy.

Pastor George

Cell # 619- 971-0399

Sunday Worship:

Traditional (1st & 3rd Sunday)	9:00 am
Contemporary (2nd & 4th Sunday)	9:00 am
Children's Sunday school	9:15 am
Adult Forum	10:30 am

Tuesday:

Women's Bible Study	9:30 am
2nd Tuesday: Council meeting	7:00 pm
4th Tuesday: Women's Business mtg	8:45 am
Women's Eve. Bible Study	7:00 pm

Wednesday:

Bible study	6:45 pm
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Thursday:

Choir	7:30 pm
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Council Members:

Stephen Dietrich	Chair
Glenda Holsbo	Vice Chair
Pat Cowan	Treasurer
Vicky Gay	Secretary
Mona Anderson	
Rod Cravens	
Bill Martin	
Paul Sofranko	
Laura Stephens	
Miria Stephens	

Financial Secretary:

Mona Anderson

St. John's Mission Statement:

St. John's is a congregation of believers in Jesus Christ, called by the Holy Spirit into a community of faith and love to be God's instruments of love and grace.

St. John's Home Page



Very simple and painless ways to help Interfaith Shelters raise

funds, is by:

1. Albertson's Community Partners Card, call—619-702-5399 or E-mail rjohnston@interfaithshelter.org or go to www.albertsons.com and click on community partners card. ISN number is 490001245843.
2. Ralph's/Food 4 Less Community Contribution Program, call—1-800-443-4438 or go to Community.Programs@ralphs.com. ISN number is 4449.
3. Go to iGive.com for online purchases and enter ISN number 25710 and Interfaith Shelter Network of San Diego County.
4. Donate your car. Call 619-308-8503 and a St. Vincent's auto auction service person will do the rest.



Happy Birthday

- 1 Mary Swanbeck
- 6 Toivo Aukee
- 18 Gilberto Pazo
- 20 Alice VanPatten



Happy Wedding Anniversary

- 12 John & Miria Stephens
- 16 Larry & Mona Anderson
- Larry & Barbara Gay



Can you say Happy Birthday 99 different ways? Alice Van Patten has reached that milestone and we wish her many, many Happy Birthdays.



Our food pantry needs a REFILL. Please leave your canned food donation in the kitchen. Thank you.



Hi everyone! I just wanted to take a moment and say thank you to everyone who helped me get to Europe. I can not express the gratitude of our congregation and I will never be able to say thank you enough. I had an amazing time in my travels through Europe, and I have to say that Paris was most definitely my favorite. My choir had an amazing tour throughout Norway and guess what! This year we are coming to San Diego! All in all this was an amazing experience that I would not trade for the world! Thank you, Thank you, Thank you!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Wendy Stephens

We're collecting:

- Box Tops 4 Education
- Personal hygiene items for Rachel's house
- Used ink cartridges

Greetings from the Council Chair:

This has been a very busy month for Judy and me. She had several teacher conferences that she needed to attend and I have accompanied her to several of them. We just got back from a week in Orlando, Florida and she had another here locally starting a day later. Hence, we haven't been around much during July. As a result, this blurb will be very short this month.

One thing that I wanted to mention is that if anyone wants to have the monthly newsletter sent to them in electronic format rather than getting it in printed out each month, we have the capability to send a PDF copy to your email. This will save on our printing costs, save Laura time both with printing and distribution, and save you the effort of recycling the newsletter after you are done reading it. If you want to receive it electronically, drop me a note at my email (sjdietrich@cox.net) and I will put you on the distribution list. You will need to have a version of Acrobat Reader on your computer in order to open the newsletter. If you do not have this program, you can obtain it at:

<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>

If you have any questions about this process, send me an email or see me at church. I hope you all have a great month.

Steve

To stay COOL:



1. Don't go in the sun, well duh.
2. Use any pool you can find, but play it safe and ask permission first.
3. Air conditioning works, but the bill may get you in the end.
4. Take many, many cool showers.
5. Stay in the shade, that's obvious.
6. Relax, it could be worse.

Council Committee chairs:

Christian Education/ Youth—Mona Anderson
Evangelism— Glenda Holsbo
Negotiating—Pat Cowan
Property— Rod Cravens, Bill Martin
Social Ministry— Vicky Gay
Stewardship— Glenda Holsbo
Worship and Music— Miria Stephens

If you need to contact a council member, please leave them a note in their mailbox. Which are located by the congregation's mail-boxes.

Ethical Religion

BY
M. K. GANDHI

Printed & Published by Navjivan Press, Ahmedabad -
380 014, India

(This is an interesting little book that still has great implications for today. It is timeless and urgently needed in today's world. There are other, more current, books on this topic. Perhaps we'll explore those as well. Yet, this is a wonderful starting point. We'll publish parts of this book each month. The book is divided as follows: Introduction, Beginning, Ideal Morality, What is Moral Action?, Is There a Higher Law?, Morality As a Religion, Religious Morality or Moral Religion, Social Ideal, Personal Morality, and Seven Deadly Sins of Intolerance. Enjoy, Pastor George.)

What Is Moral Action?

When can it be said that a particular action is moral? In asking this question, the intention is not to contrast moral with immoral actions, but to consider many of our everyday actions against which nothing can be said from the conventional standpoint and which some regard as moral. Most of our actions are probably non-moral; they do not necessarily involve morality. For the most part we act according to the prevailing conventions. Such conventional behavior is often necessary. If no such rules are observed, anarchy would be the result, and society-social intercourse would come to an end. Still the mere observance of custom and usage cannot properly be called morality.

A moral act must be our own act; it must spring from our own will. If we act mechanically, there is no moral content in our act. Such action would be moral, if we think it proper to act like a machine and do so. For in doing so, we use our discrimination. We should bear in mind the distinction between acting mechanically and acting intentionally. It may be a moral of a king to pardon a culprit. But the messenger bearing the order of pardon plays only a mechanical part in the king's moral act. But if the messenger were to bear the king's order, considering it to be his duty, his action would be a moral one. How can a man understand morality who does not use his own intelligence and power of thought, but let himself be swept along like a log of wood by a

current? Sometimes a man defies convention and acts on his own with a view to [doing] absolute good. Such a great hero was Wendell Phillips. Addressing an assembly of people, he once said, "Till you learn to form your own opinions and express them, I do not care much what you think of me." Thus when we all care only for what our conscience says, then alone can we be regarded to have stepped on to the moral road. We shall not reach this stage, as long as we do not believe-and experience the belief-that God within us, the God of all, is the ever present witness to all our acts.

It is not enough that an act done by us is in itself good; it should have been done with the moral or otherwise depends upon the intention of the doer. Two men may have done exactly the same thing; but the act of one may be moral, and that of the other contrary. Take, for instance, a man who out of great pity feeds the poor and another who does the same, but with the motive of winning prestige or with some such selfish end. Though the action is the same, the act of the one is moral and that of the other non-moral. The reader here ought to remember the distinction between the two words, non-moral and immoral. It may be that we do not always see good results flowing from a moral act.

While thinking of morality, all that we need to see is that the act is good and is done with a good intention. The result of an action is not within our control. God alone is the giver of fruit. Historians have called Emperor Alexander "great". Wherever he went [in the course of his conquests,] he took the Greek language and Greek culture, arts and manners, and today we enjoy the benefits of Greek civilization. But the intention of Alexander behind all this was only conquest and renown. Who can therefore say that his actions were moral? It was all right that he was termed "great", but moral he cannot be called.

These reflections prove that it is not enough for a moral act to have been done with a good intention. The result of an action is not within our compulsion. There is no morality whatever in my act, if I rise early out of the fear that, if I am late for my office, I may lose my situation. Similarly there is no morality in my living a simple and unpretentious life if I have not the means to live otherwise. But plain, simple living would be moral if, though wealthy, I think of all the want and misery in the world about me and feel that I ought to live a plain, simple life and not one of ease and luxury. Likewise it is only selfish, and not moral, of an employer to sympathize with his employees or to pay them higher wages lest they leave him. It would be moral if the employer wished well of them and treated

them kindly realizing how we owed his prosperity to them. This means that for an act to be moral it has to be free from fear and compulsion. When the peasants rose in revolt and with bloodshot eyes went to King Richard II of England demanding their rights, he granted them the rights under his own seal and signature. But when the danger was over, he forced them to surrender the letters. It would be a mistake for anyone to say that King Richard's first act was moral and the second immoral. For his first act was done only out of fear and had not an iota of morality about it.

Just as a moral action should be free from fear or compulsion so should there be no self-interest behind it. This is not to say that actions prompted by self-interest are all worthless, but only that to call them moral would detract from the [dignity of the] moral idea. That honesty cannot long endure which is practiced in the belief that it is the best policy. As Shakespeare says, love born out of the profit motive is no love.

- 1 "Love is not love,
When it is mingled with
respects that stand
aloof from the entire point."
- 2 "Then why, O blessed Jesus
Christ,
Shall I not love thee well?
Not for the sake of winning
heaven,
Or of escaping hell;
Not with the hope of gaining
aught,
Not seeking a reward-
But as thyself hast loved me,
O everlasting Lord!"

Just as an action prompted by the motive of material gain here on earth is non-moral, that action is moral which is done only for the sake of doing good. A great Christian, St. Francis Xavier, passionately prayed that his mind might always remain pure. For him devotion to God was not for enjoying a higher seat after death. He prayed because it was man's duty to pray. The great saint Theresa wished to have a torch in her right hand and a vessel of water in her left, so that with the one she might burn the glories of heaven and with the other extinguish the fires of hell, and men might learn to serve God from love alone-without fear from hell and without temptation of heavenly bliss. To preserve morality thus demands a brave man prepared to face even death. It is cowardice to be true to friends

and to break faith with enemies. Those who do good out of fear and haltingly have no moral virtue. Henry Clay, known for his kindness, sacrificed his convictions to his ambition. Daniel Webster, for all his great intellect and his sense of the heroic and the sublime, once sold his intellectual integrity for a price. By a single mean act he wiped out all his good deeds. This shows how difficult it is to judge the morality of a man's action because we cannot penetrate the depths of his mind. We have also the answer to the question raised at the outset in this chapter: what is a moral action? Incidentally, we also saw which kind of men could live up that morality.

Pacifica Synod Assembly News:

The Draft Resolutions pertained to Lutheran Campus Ministry and Grabbing Hunger by the Roots. Both resolutions were approved.

1. Campus Ministry involves identifying, encouraging, and equipping future leaders of the church. The Synod has requested each congregation to add an additional gift of a \$1 for the 2007 year. Campus Ministry will be 100 years old next year.
2. Grabbing Hunger is challenging the church to find ways to resolve this issue. Lutheran World Relief has partnered with Equal Trade Exchange to invite us to purchase Free Trade Coffee. To order Free Trade coffee, call 1-718-830-0303. Write letters to our local government officials on behalf of the hungry. Contact: Bread of the World, 1-80-82-bread or 50 F Street NW, Suite 500, Washington DC 20001. The Synod wants each congregation to seriously consider using the Lent in 2007, to remember the hungry.

Many, many changes are being done to the constitution and by laws having to do with the election of the bishop. You can view the changes, by contacting the office.

Next Pacifica Synod Assembly will be in Hawaii. Can we all say Hula? I got dibs on this trip.

August's Worship Assistant's Schedule

	9:00 am	
CANTOR	Kristine Hurtado-Bergstrom	6 & 20
READERS		SNACKS
8/6	Luella Cravens	
8/13	Matthew Dippolito	NO SNACK PERSON
8/20	Pat Cowan	IS SCHEDULED
8/27	Denise Dippolito	THROUGH SUMMER
ASSISTANTS		
8/6	Luella Cravens	
8/13	Luella Cravens	
8/20	Pat Cowan	
8/27	Pat Cowan	
USHERS		
8/6	Carole Nelson	Please be prepared to light
8/13	Carole Nelson	and extinguish the can-
8/20	John Stephens	
8/27	John Stephens	
ALTAR GUILD	Jeanne Kenney	

Thank you for all your help



Calling all choir members and their families.

Come to the Bon Voyage for Katherine Stephens-Doll, and end of choir season Choir Party on Saturday, August 5 at 3 pm.

Susan Shaddox has graciously opened her home to the choir. Susan says “to give her a call for more food details and to bring your swim-suits.”

August 2006

Monthly Planner

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																	
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Volume 4 Issue 7

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN CHURCH
1430 Melody Lane El Cajon, CA 92019

Address service requested

Phone: (619) 444-1272
Fax: (619) 444-1353
Email: secretary@sj.sdcoxmail.com
Website: <http://www.stjohnslutheranelcajon.org>

Staff:

George Ekeren-Moening	Pastor
Laura Stephens	Secretary
Katherine Stephens-Doll	Choir Director
Jeane Lawrie	Accompanist
Drew Peterson	Accompanist
Beth Stephens	
& Corie Stephens	Youth

Office hours:

Tuesday—Thursday 8 am—4 pm

Weekly Group Building Usage

<u>Monday-Friday</u> 7:30 am	A.A.Coffee Clutchers	<u>Thursday</u> 6 pm	DBSA (Depression Bipolar Support Alliance)
<u>Monday-Friday</u> 12 pm	A.A. EC Noon Group		8 pm NA Speakers
<u>Tuesday</u> 7 pm	Women's AlAnon	Every other	6 pm G. S./Brownies
3rd 7 pm	4H Beef	<u>Friday</u> 9 am	License 2 Freedom
<u>Wednesday</u>		7:30 pm	AlAnon Open
1st & 3rd 6 pm	G. S./Brownies	<u>Saturday</u>	
2nd 6:30 pm	G.S. Leaders	4th	6:30 am SHARE pick up
4th 7 pm	4H/ Golden Clover	<u>Sunday</u>	
		2nd	1 pm SHARE sign up