



January 2007

Goodnewsletter

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

I see hope for St. John's in the upcoming year. I plan to continue strengthening our worship by developing worship services that are meaningful and life-giving to you. If our worship is meaningful and relevant to you it will be so to many of our guests as well. Meaningful, relevant worship attracts participants and encourages us to invite others to worship.

Discipleship will be a focus in 2007 (and beyond). In the edition of "Taking Faith Home" for the Christmas Eve Candlelight Service I have started a series on page 2 entitled "A Study of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's The Cost Of Discipleship". As before, each week's article builds on the previous weeks, so you may want to ask me for a copy of "Taking Faith Home" on the very few Sundays that you happen not to attend. I will occasionally speak about discipleship throughout the years as well.

I also believe that we need to work on our exterior property.

We need to make it more attractive and welcoming to the public. People are attracted to beautiful places, which put them at ease. Visitors will feel welcome at St. John's even before they meet any of us. Although we don't have money for these improvements, I believe that many of you will support our thoughtful, financially responsible efforts at beautifying our exterior grounds.

Pastor George

Cell: 619-971-0399

Wishing you all
a
New Year,
filled with
God's blessings.

Sunday Worship:
Traditional 9:00 am
(1st & 3rd Sunday)
Contemporary 9:00 am
(2nd & 4th Sunday)
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 :
Confirmation class 6:00 pm

Bible study 6:45 pm

Thursday:
Choir 7:30 pm

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

Annual Congregational Meeting January 21

10:30 am
Fellowship Hall

Topics:

- Voting on the changes to the Constitution & By Laws
- Election of Council Members
- Year overview
- 2007 Budget

Come and participate.
Help your church grow.

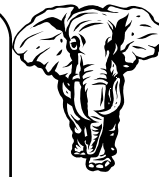


Happy Birthday

9	Carole Nelson
11	Miria Stephens
12	Maxine Mattson
19	Louise Anway
20	John Stephens
27	Samantha Pazo

Please contact the Church Council by January 9, if you are interested in being a Council Member. You can leave a note in Stephen Dietrich's mailbox.

Please turn in your COMMITTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT to the office by 1/14.



Epiphany Potluck & White Elephant Gift Exchange

Sunday, January 7
11 am
Fellowship Hall

For the potluck, please bring a dish to share. DON'T buy anything for the White Elephant gift exchange. It's something you have and don't want or need. Exchanging gifts is fun, come & enjoy.

January

- 6 — Epiphany
- 7 — Epiphany potluck & White Elephant Gift Exchange
- 9 — Council Meeting
- 20 — SJ Women's Planning luncheon
- 21 — Annual Congregational Meeting



February

- 2 — Ground Hog Day
- 13 — Council meeting
- 14 — Valentine's Day
- 18 — Transfiguration Sunday
- 19 — President's Day
- 20 — Shrove Tuesday
- 21 — Ash Wednesday

Council President's Message – January, 2007

Happy New Year! I hope you have all had a wonderful and blessed Christmas.

Well, another year has come to an end and we look forward to all that this new year will bring. It seems that at this time of the year, we tend to review what happened over the last 12 months.

This year, we have sent several church members and people close to members home to be with our Father. While we have the normal feelings of mourning the loss of these loved ones, we also celebrate their lives. We pray that their families receive comfort from knowing that they are with the Lord.

With God's help, we have made significant progress in decreasing the amount of the loan, as I have mentioned before. Our financial situation has gotten much better over the last two years and while we still have challenges ahead, we will prevail through God's blessings.

We have made some improvements around the Church property and look forward to more to come. I want to acknowledge the hard work of the Property committee and those who have helped throughout the year to make this happen.

We have had fellowship with East Hills now for almost two years. We just recently agreed to extend this fellowship through 2008. We look forward to continuing to get to know these brothers and sisters in Christ better and working together to further His kingdom.

Looking forward, we will be discussing some projects that will be coming up this year. Some of our facilities need repairs and there are things that we would like to do to make the property more attractive. We will provide more information on these in the near future.

I hope you all have a great month!

Steve



To receive your Newsletters via the E-mail, contact:

sjdietrich@cox.net.

This will give Stephen your E-mail address

We're collecting:

- *Box Tops 4 Education for the Navajo Lutheran Mission*
- *Personal hygiene items for Rachel's house*
- *Diapers and Warm Clothing for Salvation Army Back Country*
- *Used ink cartridges*
- *Greeting cards for our Shut-ins*
- *Canned goods for our emergency pantry*

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 mailboxes.

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.)

Personal Morality

'I am responsible for this,' or 'This is my duty': this is a moving and wonderful thought. A mysterious, resounding voice seems to say, 'To thee, individually, O man, is given this task. Whether defeat or victory, both belong to thee. Thou art what no one else in the world is, for nowhere has nature created two similar objects. Thou hast a duty which no one else in the world can do, and if thou dost no do it that loss will stand debited to thee in the world's balance-sheet.'

'What is that duty I owe to myself?'

Someone may quote the verse :

Call not man God for man is not

God

Yet man is not distinct from God's
glory

and answer, 'My duty is to rest secure in the belief than I am a ray of God's light.' Another may answer that the duty is to have sympathy and fraternal regard for others. A third may answer that it is to revere parents, care for one's wife and children, and acquit oneself well with brother, sister or friend. Alongside of all these virtues, it is also a part of my duty to respect myself even as I respect others. As long as I do not understand myself, how shall I understand others? And how shall I respect one whom I do not know? Many hold the view that the obligation of proper conduct arises [only] in relation to others and that, in the absence of contact with others, one may do just as one

pleases. He who holds this view does not know what he says. In this world none can, with impunity, act as he pleases.

Let us now see what our duty is to ourselves. Let us take, first, our private habits which are unknown to all but ourselves. We are responsible for them since they affect our character; but this is not all. We are responsible for them also because they affect others. Every person ought to control his own impulses, and keep his soul as well as body clean. 'Tell me,' says a great man, 'what a man's private habits are and I shall tell you what he is or will be.' We should therefore control all our appetites, so that we do not drink or eat to excess. Else we shall lose our strength and our good name. Worldly success never comes to him who does not abstain from sensual pleasures and does not thus save his body, mind, intellect and soul.

Arguing along these lines and keeping one's instincts pure, one should further consider how to put them to use. One ought to have a fixed aim in life. If we do not discover our life's purposes, and keep steadily to the course, we shall be swept along like a rudderless ship on the high seas; we shall falter on the [moral] path. Man's highest duty in life is to serve mankind and take his share in bettering its condition. This is true worship-true prayer. He is a godly man who does God's work. Hypocrites and cheats going about invoking God's name are legion. Because a parrot utter the name of God, no one would call it godly. Contribution to an ideal order of human life is something everyone can aim at. With this aim in view the mother may legitimately rear her child, the lawyer may pursue his profession, the merchant may carry on his business or trade and the working man may labor. A person with that fixed aim would never deviate from the path of morality, for if he did, he could not fulfill his aim of uplifting mankind.

Let us consider the matter in some detail. We ought constantly to examine whether our way of life tends to improve human life or to worsen it. Thus the merchant should ask himself whether, in transacting a business, he is cheating himself or another. The lawyer and the physician, acting according to this standard, will give more thought to their client or patient than to their fees.

Continued on page 5

- Continued from page 4 -

The mother in rearing her child would proceed very cautiously lest she should spoil the child out of misguided by these considerations and do his duty. The result of all this would be that, if the worker fulfils his function in conformity with the moral ideal, he would be deemed better and higher than the wealthy merchant, physician or lawyer who lives without any

discipline. The worker would be the true coin and those selfish men, even though more intelligent or wealthy, would be counterfeit. This further shows that any man, whatever his place in life, has the power to fulfill this aim. A man's value depends upon his way of life, not his status. One's way of life is not to be judged by one's visible outward actions, but by one's inner leanings. For instance, if of two men, one gives a dollar to a poor person to rid himself of his presence and the other half a dollar but with love and out of compassion for the man, obviously, the one who gave half a dollar is truly moral, while the other who gave a dollar, the sinner.

To sum up, he alone is religious, he alone is happy and he alone is wealthy, who is sincere in himself, bears no malice, exploit no one and always acts with a pure mind. Such men alone can serve mankind. How can a damp matchstick kindle a log of wood? How can a man who does not practice morality teach it to another? How can a sinking man save another from drowning? The man who lives a moral life never raises the question as to how to serve the world, for he is never in doubt. Matthew Arnold says of a friend :

I saw him sensitive in frame,
I knew his spirits low,
And wished him health, success,
and fame

I do not wish it now.
For these are all their own reward,
And leave no good behind :
They try us-oftenest make us hard,
Less modest, pure, and kind.

Time was when Arnold wishes his friend health, success and fame. But he did not so wish now, because his friend's happiness or misery did not depend on their presence or absence; he therefore only wished that his morality might ever endure. Emerson says, "Adversity is the prosperity of the great." Both the money and the fame belonging to the base are a misery to them and to the world.

10 ALTERNATE NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

Instead of making resolutions you may not keep, try this:

Put MORE into your life.

- More Time.
- More Fun.
- More Adventure.
- More Good Deeds.
- More Nature.
- More Creativity.
- More Fit.
- More Organized.
- More Memorable Traditions.
- More Money.

Make a plan and succeed.

What's in the middle of LIFE?

IF

November's Worship Assistant's Schedule




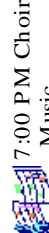



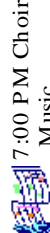

	9:00 am	
CANTOR	Kristine Hurtado-Bergstrom	7 & 21
READERS		SNACKS
1/7	Connie Reck	Maxine Mattson
1/14	Connie Reck	Marilyn Litsheim
1/21	Stephen Dietrich	Rene Brown
1/28	Stephen Dietrich	Pat Cowan
ASSISTANTS		
1/7	Paul Stephens	
1/14	Paul Stephens	
1/21	Stephen Dietrich	
1/28	Stephen Dietrich	
USHERS		
1/7	Rene Brown	Please be prepared to light
1/14	Rene Brown	and extinguish the can-
1/21	Mike LaValle	
1/28	Mike LaValle	
ALTAR GUILD	Jeanne Kenney	
	Thank you for all your help	



St. John's Women's News:

All women are invited to come and enjoy a salad luncheon on Saturday, January 20, at 11:30 am. We will be discussing our 2007 calendar and electing officers. If you have an idea for an event or wish to be an officer, please come and enjoy some great food and fellowship. An overview of the WELCA Hawaiian Assembly, will be given

January 2007 Monthly Planner

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																																		
<p>1</p>  <p>New Year's Day</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Church Office closed</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>  <p>7:00 PM Choir/ Music</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Epiphany</p>																																																																																																			
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<p>21</p> <p>9:00 AM Service 9:15 AM Children's Sunday class 10:30 AM Annual Congregational mtg.</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p> <p>8:45 AM Women's Bus. mtg 9:30 AM Women's Bible study 7:00 PM Women's Bible Study</p>	<p>24</p> <p>6:00 PM Confirmation class 6:45 PM Bible study</p>	<p>25</p>  <p>7:00 PM Choir/ Music</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p> <p>6:30 AM SHARE pick up</p>																																																																																																		
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Volume 5 Issue 1

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

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Pastor's E-mail: pastorgeorge100@hotmail.com
Website: <http://www.stjohnslutheranelcajon.org>

Staff:

George Ekeren-Moening	Pastor
Laura Stephens	Secretary
Breena Loraine	Choir Director
Jeane Lawrie	Accompanist
Drew Peterson	Accompanist

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