



October 2006

Goodnewsletter

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, "You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me." When he heard this, [the man] was shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions. Then Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!" (Mark 10:21-23)

One commentary speaking about this notion of radical sacrifice:

All Christians should think seriously about their stewardship of money and material possessions. Resisting the pressures of a consumer culture, which generates perpetual needs for more and newer possessions, is difficult for many Christians today. Our excess consumption may deprive others of resources they need just to survive. It is a hidden form of structural greed that wastes the world's resources and creates suffering for others we may never meet.

The American dream has always been to have a great job, buy a beautiful house, drive a nice car, provide excellent education for our children, worship God the way we want, enjoy our leisure time, live a comfortable life, etc. For centuries people have come to the "New World" to find a better and happier life. As you know, it still happens today.

Yet, our wealth has serious consequences for our health, particularly our moral and spiritual wellbeing. Our materialism undermines our spiritual health, in that, we continuously seek more and more – newer,

bigger, and better "stuff". We neglect our relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Our "things" occupy our thoughts and energies more than our relationship with the Lord. By reflecting on it many of us would realize that our "things" have actually become our gods. Our "things" have been turned into idols.

Or, maybe we don't take Jesus' teachings very seriously, because, they make us feel uncomfortable, anxious...perhaps guilty. Why? Maybe we neglect our neighbors, especially the poor and needy. We don't have time for them. We don't want to share with them. We don't want to be bothered by them. Perhaps we are guilty of uncaring, selfishness, and indifference.

Gandhi said that "we should live simply so that others may simply live." This is truly loving our neighbors as ourselves. Jesus knows that as we learn to live simply, we learn to give, to share, and to care. We learn that our "stuff" and our "things" don't really make us as happy as we thought, nor do they lead us to our ultimate goal: eternal life. As we give we learn to offer with joy and thanksgiving what God first gave us – our selves, our time, our possessions, signs of God's gracious love to us. It is by giving that we receive "treasure in heaven."

Follow Christ always and know that God's love for you is your only true possession!

Pastor George

Cell: 619-971-0399

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 :
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



Greeting cards are needed for our shut-ins. If you have any blank cards, please leave them in the office.



Happy Birthday

5 Beth Stephens
5 Wendy Stephens
9 Barbara Helm
18 Emily Gay

The Bishop's Gathering on September 23, had many involved participants, enjoying the set-up and food. Thank you to all who helped this event go so smoothly.



Packaged baby diapers are needed at Salvation Army Back Country. Please bring your donation to the church office.



Shannon Ekeren-Moening Health Fund Benefit Golf Tournament

Sunday October 29
1 pm shot gun start

Carlton Hills Country Club
9200 Inwood Drive - Santee

Tournament fee: \$100 (green fees with cart and dinner) Guest dinner \$25
Contact the church office for registration forms

October's Events

10/10— Council meeting
10/29 — Reformation Sunday
10/29 — Chili Cook Off and Silent Auction
10/29 — Health Benefit Golf Tournament
10/31 — Halloween



11/2-5 — Pacifica Synod WELCA Assembly in Hawaii

11/5 — All Saint's Sunday

11/14 — Council meeting

11/18 — SHARE pickup

11/19 — Mother Goose Parade

11/23 — Thanksgiving

11/26 — Christ the King Sunday

Greetings from the Council Chair:

How quickly the summer has gone by! Fall has come and the days are getting shorter. It won't be long until Christmas is upon us. We have some great things to look forward to in the coming months.

The plans for the "rock garden" in the front lawn area are progressing. We have received some good ideas about what people envision and Pat Cowan has been having short meetings to explain these and to solicit any additional ideas. Please contact Pat to provide your input at the next meeting.

As of the September Council meeting, we have paid off about 25% of the line of credit. This has been a great opportunity to pay this debt at a faster than required rate. We look forward to completing our obligation to the bank and having this debt erased. God has truly blessed us with your giving and the sharing of our facilities with East Hills.

We have finally received the fans that we ordered for the sanctuary and the fellowship hall. We are working to have them installed (albeit just in time for winter). I had hoped that we would have them in during the summer, but the best laid plans... Well, we should have them in for next summer at least.

May God's peace be with you during this coming month and throughout the rest of your lives.

Steve



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

sjdietrich@cox.net.

This will give Stephen your E-mail address

1 Pastor George has been with us for 1 year, Happy Anniversary. We hope that God blesses us with many years to come.

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.)

Morality As A Religion

The subject of this chapter may strike one as strange. The common idea is that morality and religion are distinct things; still this chapter seeks to consider morality as a religion. Some readers may think the writer guilty of confusion. That reproach may come from two sides from those who regard religion as more than morality, and from others who think that, where there is morality, there is no need for religion. Yet the author's intention is to show their close relationship. The societies spreading ethical religion or religious ethics believe in religion through morality.

The common idea, it may be admitted, is that there may be morality without religion and religion without morality. One comes across many men of immoral conduct who claim to be religious in spite of the sinful acts they commit. On the other hand, there are moral men like the late Mr. Bradlaugh, who are proud to call themselves atheists and would run away from the name of religion. Those who hold either of these views are mistaken. Those who hold the first view are not only mistaken, but also dangerous as they practice immorality under the guise of religion. In this chapter, therefore, we shall show that, considered intellectually and scientifically, religion and morality are united and should be so united.

Morality was in the beginning simply the customary conduct of a community, settled ways of acting that men living together naturally fell into. By a natural process the good customs tended to survive and the bad ones to die out, since, if the bad ones did not die out, they would weaken the community and lead to its extinction. Even today we see this process at work. It is

neither morality nor religion if people observe good customs more or less unthinkingly. However, most of what passes for morality in the world today consists, as pointed out above, of good customs.

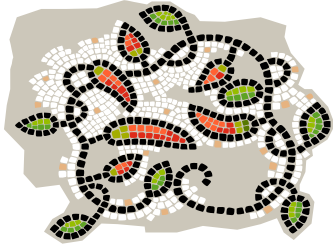
Moreover, men often have a merely superficial idea of religion. Sometimes men believe in religion only as a means to ward off dangers that threaten them. It would be a mistake to dignify actions as religious where they are performed out of a love that springs from fear.

But at long last a time does come when men begin to tread the path of morality consciously, deliberately with a determined will, regardless of gain or loss, of life or death, without turning to look back, ready to sacrifice, permeated with true morality.

How can such morality subsist except with the support of religion? One tells oneself, "If by doing a little harm to another, I can secure my personal interest, why should I not do that little harm?" The profit derived from doing harm is no profit, but a positive loss [to the doer]. How shall this unpalatable deed go down one's throat? Ostensibly in Germany's interest, Bismarck perpetrated dreadful deeds. Where then was his education? Where did those maxims of morality disappear which, at other times, he used to mouth before schoolchildren? Obviously, a reply to all these questions can be given. The reason why he could not keep up his morality in the face of these difficulties was that his morality was not grounded in religion. So long as the seed of morality is not watered by religion, it cannot sprout. Without water it withers and ultimately perishes. Thus it will be seen that true or ideal morality ought to include true religion. To put the same thought differently, morality cannot be observed without religion. That is to say, morality should be observed as a religion.

Furthermore, it is seen that the rules of morality, laid down in the world's great religions, are largely the same. The founders of the religions have also explained that morality is the basis of religion. If a foundation is removed, the superstructure falls to the ground; similarly if morality is destroyed, religion which is built on it comes crashing down.

The author adds that there is nothing wrong in calling morality a religion. Dr. Coit in his prayer says, "I shall have no other God except righteousness." On reflection, we shall realize that God will not help us and answer our impassioned prayer for help, if we utter His name, while having a dagger concealed under our arm. Let us take two men, one who believes in the existence of God, yet breaks all His commandments; and another who, though not acknowledging God by name, worships Him through his deeds and obeys His laws, recognizing in the divine laws, their Maker. Which of the two men shall we call a man of religion and morality? Without a moment's thought, one would emphatically reply that the second man alone is to be considered religious and moral.



ATTENTION, ATTENTION

The Chili Cook-off and the Women's Silent Auction will be held on October 29th. Come and eat a bowl of chili and shop the Silent Auction items. This fun filled event will start at 11:30 am and the auction will close at 1 pm. There will be a turkey and rice soup available for all those non chili eaters, besides salad, rolls, cornbread and desserts. Have your chili, to the Fellowship Hall, at 11 am for judging. Now for desserts, please bring one that will sooth that chili beast. Eat, eat, eat and shop, shop, shop. What could be more fun?

Congregational News

Our next Congregational meeting will be on Sunday, November 19, after service. At this meeting you will be notified of the changes to the Constitution and the By-Laws. The Annual Congregational meeting will be on January 21, 2007.



On the origins of the jack o'lantern

O'lantern sound Irish, and it is. The flickering, carved pumpkin faces that animate the American Halloween derive from an old Irish custom of creating rustic lanterns from vegetables. The Irish child's typical Halloween flashlight was a hallowed-out turnip out potato with a candle inside, and when the Irish landed in American in the nineteenth century, they were quick to spot the possibilities in the pumpkin.

October's Worship Assistant's Schedule

| | 9:00 am | |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| CANTOR | Brian Cowan | 1 & 15 |
| READERS | | SNACKS |
| 10/1 | Charlie Meyer | Mona Anderson |
| 10/8 | Stephen Dietrich | Kristine Hurtado-Bergstrom |
| 10/15 | Pat Cowan | Glenda Holsbo |
| 10/22 | Pat Cowan | Kim Stephens-Doll |
| 10/29 | Charlie Meyer | Maxine Mattson |
| ASSISTANTS | | |
| 10/1 | Charlie Meyer | |
| 10/8 | Stephen Dietrich | |
| 10/15 | Pat Cowan | |
| 10/22 | Pat Cowan | |
| 10/29 | Charlie Meyer | |
| USHERS | | |
| 10/1 | Rene Brown | Please be prepared to light |
| 10/8 | Rene Brown | and extinguish the candles. |
| 10/15 | Carole Nelson | |
| 10/22 | Carole Nelson | |
| 10/29 | Carole Nelson | |
| ALTAR GUILD | Judy Dietrich | |
| | Thank you for all your help | |















St. John's Women News:

Our year has been a full one and there is so much more to come. The Pacifica Synod WELCA Assembly, in Hawaii, is November 2-5. Jeane Kenney, Miria Stephens, Corie Stephens, and Laura Stephens are attending this wonderful event.

The Silent Auction is this month and our Sister's in Christ Christmas luncheon will be on December 2.

May the Lord bless all women to empower themselves for the good of all people.

October 2006 Monthly Planner

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|-----------|---|--|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <p>1 9:00 AM Traditional 10:30 AM Adult Forum</p> | <p>2</p> | <p>3  9:30 AM Women's Bible study</p> | <p>4 6:00 PM Confirmation class  6:45 PM Bible Study</p> | <p>5  7:30 PM Choir/Music</p> | <p>6</p> | <p>7</p> |
| <p>8 9:00 AM Contemporary 10:30 AM Adult Forum 1:00 PM SHARE sign up</p> | <p>9</p> | <p>10  9:30 AM Women's Bible study 7:00 PM Council meeting</p> | <p>11 6:00 PM Confirmation class  6:45 PM Bible Study</p> | <p>12  7:30 PM Choir/Music Columbus Day</p> | <p>13</p> | <p>14</p> |
| <p>15 9:00 AM Traditional 10:30 AM Adult Forum</p> | <p>16</p> | <p>17  9:30 AM Women's Bible study</p> | <p>18 6:00 PM Confirmation class  6:45 PM Bible Study</p> | <p>19  7:30 PM Choir/Music</p> | <p>20 Liturgy Conference</p> | <p>21 6:30 AM SHARE pick up</p> |
| <p>22 9:00 AM Contemporary 10:30 AM Adult Forum</p> | <p>23</p> | <p>24 8:45 AM Women's Bus. mtg  9:30 AM Women's Bible study 7:00 PM Women's Bi...</p> | <p>25 6:00 PM Confirmation class  6:45 PM Bible Study</p> | <p>26  7:30 PM Choir/Music</p> | <p>27</p> | <p>28</p> |
| <p>29 9:00 AM Contemporary 10:30 AM Adult Forum 11:30 AM Chili Cookoff & the Women's Silent Auction Newsletters delivered</p> | <p>30</p> | <p>31  9:30 AM Women's Bible study Halloween </p> | <p>Pastor at Leader's Conference</p> | <p>Pastor at Leader's Conference</p> | <p>Pastor at Leader's Conference</p> | <p>Pastor at Leader's Conference</p> |

| September | | | | | | |
|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | T | F | S |
| | | | | 1 | 2 | |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |

| November | | | | | | |
|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S | M | T | W | T | F | S |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | |



Volume 4 Issue 10

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 |

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 |