



SUFFOLK SON SHINE

ONLINE NEWSLETTER OF THE SUFFOLK ZONE LWML

February 2007

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Dear Friends!

Thank you for your continued support of our online newsletter. If you wish to see something in this newsletter, please let us know.

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COUNSELOR'S CORNER



“Talking about Sin”

Webster’s dictionary defines “sin” as “an action contrary to the law of God” and “an offense against any widely accepted standard”. Our modern world has become very uncomfortable defining “what is a sin” and talking about sin and its effects on our lives. Evidence of this is found regularly in the popular media. What is right and wrong is very clouded.

Although, Webster’s includes two possible definitions of sin, as Christians, our understanding and definition of sin is rooted in the first definition - “an action contrary to the law of God”. This is the only definition that is constant and secure. The problem with the discussion of sin in our modern world is that far too many in today’s world would prefer to define sin as “an offense against any widely accepted standard”. The more society is bombarded with moral compromise through the popular media, the lower the expectations become for that “widely accepted standard.” Think about how things have changed morally in the last 50 years. Living together before marriage was unheard of by my grandparents. Today, the majority of couples who come to be married are living together, and don’t give it a second thought. Honesty and integrity were the heart of business and success years ago. Today, profit sharing and controlling the market is where success lies. As a personal observation, what I see as pastor, is that when I was growing up, even though many were not “church-goers”, most were very aware of the commandments and knew when they were doing something wrong. Today, I see many who are just ignorant to the commandments. This only adds to the growing problem of allowing the world to redefine what is “widely accepted”.

All this talk of “sin” brings us to the season of Lent. Lent is the time in the church year, where God’s people take the opportunity to take a deeper look at sin, its definition, and its effects on our lives. The season of Lent precedes Easter to prepare us fully for the freedom and forgiveness that comes from the death of our Lord. The season of Lent in the history of the church is not a time of celebration or excessive joy, but more a somber period of reflection, repentance, and renewal. It’s a time to be honest with ourselves. To look in the mirror and see our shortcomings and the wrongs that we do that are responsible for putting Jesus on the cross. This reflection serves us by leading us fully to comprehend and celebrate that we have new life, forgiveness, and new chances to live by the resurrection of Easter morning!

~ Pastor Schenkel

FROM THE PRESIDENT



SHADOWS

February is the month of shadows. Whether or not we see a groundhogs shadow lets us know if we have six more weeks of winter. The sun starts to stay in the sky a little longer and casts longer shadows on the ground – remember those science projects?

February is also the month of love. Valentine’s Day is celebrated this month with cards, and candy. “Vermont Teddy Bear” commercials are broadcasted every half hour on the television. Valentine’s Day goes back many, many years. It has both Christian and Roman traditions. One legend explains that Emperor Claudius II decided that men who were single were better soldiers than those who had wives and children, so he outlawed marriage of young men who were potential soldiers. The legend continues that a priest named Valentine continued to marry young men and women, against the orders of Claudius, and was subsequently ordered to be put to death. Valentine, while in prison, fell in love with a young woman who came to visit him. He sent her a love letter signed “from your Valentine” – the first “Valentine”.

There is another story of shadows and love together. The true story, not a legend, of the love that held our Savior on a cross for us. He died for us on that cross because of His love for us. That cross casts a big shadow. We live, praise God, in the shadow of that cross today. There is a song that is called “In the shadow of the Cross”. The words speak of how we are to live our lives in that shadow, remembering what He did for us and how we are to treat one another – with Christian love.

This Valentine’s Day, give your loved ones a hug, a card, or some candy, and remind them, and yourself, of the shadow the cross of more than 2000 years ago makes, and that thankfully we live in that shadow today.

God’s blessings to you.

Ginny Wirsing

WALKING WITH JESUS



One of the clients I work for is a recycling yard, which is a nice title for a garbage dump. It is amazing just how much garbage people drive to this place on a daily basis. These huge trucks drive in, one after another, to dump its contents at this facility. Then the garbage is sorted, loaded, and shipped out to yet another yard. Load after load, day after day, week after week; garbage is dumped, sorted, loaded and shipped.

The funny thing is that the piles never seem to get smaller. You would think that after awhile people would run out of garbage or the loads shipped out would somehow be more than what comes in. It is sort of like laundry in my house, the more wash that is put into the washer the more laundry needs to be done.

Lately my life has been feeling just like the garbage yard. Load after load of “junk” has been delivered through health issues with my parents, struggling with our finances, raising four active teenagers, trying to keep home somewhat in order, etc. has felt like truck load after truck load of stuff dumped all over us.

Some days I feel like a tight ropewalker trying to keep my feet steady on a thin line stretched out over a sea of stress. If the rope remains taut and secure I can make it to the other side with out a problem. But the minute someone makes the rope sway, life comes “a-tumblin’-down” and just like Humpty Dumpty I fall down and break my crown.

It’s when life’s tight rope sways that I feel utterly hopeless and I hand over the reigns to God and tell Him to fix it all. I give up, throw in the towel, raise the white flag and I surrender it all to Him. The wonderful thing is that He doesn’t tell me, “I told you so,” or “I knew you couldn’t do it,” He just gently takes the reigns that I was tightly clutching in my hands, lifts me up and He begins to guide me through my piles of yuck.

God sorts through all of the garbage we have piled up in our lives and takes it away to reveal the beauty He knows is within our souls. Through the sins, deceptions, pain, and fear God sees Jesus who rests within our hearts. All God wants us to do is to relinquish control over our lives to Him and to allow Him to work through us to get His job done.

Allow God to work in you, through you, with you and you will see the piles of trash in your life disappear before your very eyes. There will still be hard times and times of pain, but God will navigate you through those times and then He will use those experiences you have to bless you and those around you.

YOU have been called to His purpose. YOUR experiences are happening to you and will be used for the good of those who love Him. YOU will be blessed throughout all the hardships of your life.

May all of our garbage heaps be moved, reduced, and compacted by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Linda Guterres

February 2006

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose. Romans 8:28



SPOTLIGHT ON: *TRINITY ISLIP*

It is that time of year again here at Trinity Lutheran Church in Islip. We celebrate LWML Sunday in January every year. This year it was LWML Sock Sunday.

There is a flurry of activity in our LWML society as we prepare for LWML Sock Sunday. Before each Service we will be collecting new socks to be donated to The Suffolk County Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

LWML Sunday starts with our members serving as Ushers and Lectors at all of the church services. We usually wear our LWML colors, pins and scarves.

I speak at each service thanking the congregation for their mite donations and mission support. I also tell the congregation about LWML, our Mission Statement and recent activities.

During the Services we will recite the LWML Pledge and we will sing *Serve The Lord with Gladness*. During the offering, Pastor Wackenhuth will say a blessing over the socks that were donated.

After each service, the LWML ushers will hand out new mite boxes and flyers explaining the mite distribution.

In the church lobby we had a table displaying samples of each of our mission projects we have done over the years. We proudly display a prison bible, layettes, school kits, bandages, sewing kits, Christmas boxes for Samaritan's Purse, confirmation banners and many more mission projects. We also have a display of pictures showing LWML members at the Cormaria Retreat, mission workshops, our annual LWML BBQ, and Christmas dinner. We even had pictures of some of our members who were in skits at the Tuscarora Retreat.

After the 8:15 service LWML hosts the Coffee Hour. While the congregation is enjoying the good food and decorations, we discuss LWML's fellowship and many activities. We usually get a couple of new women interested in joining our LWML society each year.

We are blessed with a very strong LWML society here at Trinity. Each member has a passion to serve our Lord. Everyone pitches in to help with LWML Sunday and all the other mission projects and activities. We hope you will celebrate LWML Sunday in your church. It has been a big success here at Trinity.

Liz Sullivan
President
Trinity LWML

“Serve the Lord with Gladness”
(Psalm 100:2)

ATLANTIC DISTRICT
LUTHERAN WOMEN'S MISSIONARY LEAGUE

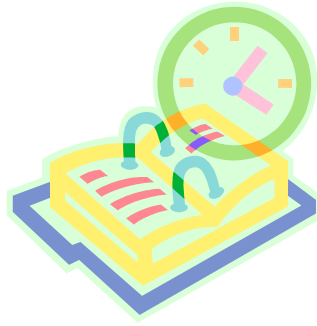
MITE UPDATE

- We need to collect \$28,640 before the end of the biennium....
- That is approximately \$1909 per month....
- Currently we average (May-Dec 2006) \$1150 per month....

We are not far off from the goal; you are all doing a great job, but we need to push on....

KEEP "MITES" IN THE FOREFRONT!!





SUFFOLK ZONE COMING EVENTS

3/9/07	7:30 pm	DAY OF PRAYER SERVICE	St. John's - Sayville
4/14/07	9:30 am	SPRING EVENT	Messiah Lutheran-Setauket
5/11-5/12	4pm-4pm	CORMARIA RETREAT	Retreat House-Sag Harbor
6/2/07	9:30 am	Zone Meeting	Grace Lutheran-Mastic
6/21-6/24/07		LWML CONVENTION	Sioux Falls, South Dakota
9/22/07	TBA	SUFFOLK SOCIAL	St. John's - Sayville
10/20/07	8:30 am	MINI-RETREAT	St. James Lutheran-St. James
11/3/07	9:30 am	Zone Meeting	TBA



STAMPS STAMPS STAMPS

We seem to be getting stamps from all over at least twice a week. Keep them coming so the committee can sort and cut them. Many have shared our project with their friends and neighbors and they are saving us stamps. This is such a wonderful way to help with our Interpreter's Fund for the Deaf. We thank you all for your efforts and enthusiasm. If you have any questions please call our Stamp Chairman Linda Bizarro at 631-563-0046

**Honey Pabst
AD LWML Vice President Human Care**

GOD'S VALENTINE

*For God so loVed the world,
That He gAve
His onLy
BegottEn
SoN*

*That whosoever
Believeth In Him
Should Not perish,
But have Everlasting life."*

John 3:16