

GETHSEMANE LUTHERAN CHURCH MESSENGER

A FAMILY IN CHRIST CARING FOR ALL PEOPLE

July 2011

VOLUME #118 ISSUE #7



Vacation Bible School 2011

Monday—Friday, July 25-29

9:00 am—12 noon

Children Age 3 thru 5th Grade

Register Today! Registration forms are available on the Gethsemane website at www.gethsemanestl.org or at church.

It's not too late to volunteer to help! Please contact Kim Elliott (644-3335) or Leslie Wobbe (481-0708) as soon as possible.

See elsewhere in this Messenger for a list of needed supplies & props!

Our VBS Café is named "Shake It Up" because Jesus calls us to "shake up" our lives and become His followers. The Bible gives us the recipe: be ready for God's call, give happily to God and to others, believe fully in Jesus as God's Son, remember Jesus' life and teachings, and celebrate God forever. Shake It Up Café will introduce our children to stories of biblical festivals that reveal these ingredients and link the Old Testament, New Testament, and our lives today.

BLOOD DRIVE: Give the Gift of Life Sunday, July 24, 2011 8am-1pm

The American Red Cross Bloodmobile will be parked on Pernod outside Gethsemane's main entrance. Donors need to be in general good health, free of cold or flu symptoms and must have an ID with them when presenting to donate.

Contact Mary Jane Thomsen for donor appointments at 218-213-4313 or email her at maryjanethomsen@hotmail.com for further information.

Life at Gethsemane

Sundays in July

“God’s Not-So Modern Family” is our theme. We hear stories of the mothers and fathers of faith from the Book of Genesis, and realize that God works through our family stories, with all of their joy and grief, brokenness and health, to continue to form us into God’s people, blessing the world God loves so very much!

Sunday, July 3 : Isaac and Rebekah

Join us for “10 at 10:10”! A periodic special music feature that this month will feature a hymn sing of patriotic songs in honor of Independence Day weekend.

Sunday, July 10: Jacob and Esau

Sunday, July 17: Jacob’s Ladder—Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it!

A Celebration service will feature an ensemble of musicians to lead us in singing hymns like “Blessed Assurance,” “Leaning on the Everlasting Arms,” and “We Are Climbing Jacob’s Ladder.”

Joint Neighborhood Ministry Emphasis

Sunday, July 24: Jacob Wrestles for a Blessing

*VBS Staff is commissioned!
Summer Blood Drive.*

Sunday, July 31: Joseph Is Sold by his Brothers

Sunday, August 7: Joseph Forgives

Pastor Kendra is commissioned as a voting member to the ELCA Churchwide Assembly. Between services, a short DVD on the role of a voting member will be shown.

Summer Fellowship: Come between services for coffee and doughnuts; stay after the 2nd service for cookies and lemonade.

IT’S ICE CREAM SOCIAL TIME!

Enjoy Fun, Treats and Good Times!

FRIDAY, July 29, 2011

(The VBS Closing Program is at 7:00 p.m.)

Gethsemane will be wrapping up Vacation Bible School with the annual ICE CREAM SOCIAL. This year’s Social is still tentative — so watch for more information on Sunday mornings. We will be in need of **volunteers** to help scoop and serve Ted Drewes frozen custard, serve desserts and soft drinks, set up and clean up. We will also need donations of fresh baked goodies. If you can squeeze in an hour of volunteering, there’s a dessert in it for you!

If held, this year’s Social will be raising money for Lutheran Disaster Response to assist with tornado relief in Joplin, Missouri.

(Please Note: there will **not** be a BBQ at the Ice Cream Social this year!)

If you are interested in helping, please meet during Fellowship Hour Sunday, July 3rd, or let the church office know.

Faith By Foot Continues on Monday evenings throughout July!

Come for a short devotion and a time of walking and talking from 7-8pm on Monday evenings! We will NOT meet on Monday, July 4th. Our numbers grow each week! It’s a great opportunity to wear your Gethsemane T-shirt.

Church Council Highlights June, 2011

1. Began with devotions and Dwelling in the Word.
2. Received a Treasurer's Report which showed that giving is \$3880 behind budgeted needs through the end of May. Asked for a special Finance update at the end of June to carefully monitor finances at the middle of the year.
3. Received, with regret, Lois Wind's resignation as chair of the Fellowship Committee.
4. Heard Pastor Kendra's plans to attend the Churchwide Assembly and take vacation in August. She will be out of the office from August 8-24.
5. Continued work on Missional Directions, focusing on "Building bridges and bearing public witness to address poverty and homelessness in our community and world."
6. Discussed finding a coordinator for the Ice Cream Social.
7. Debriefed the congregational meeting on June 12th that approved a Reconciling in Christ Welcoming Statement; celebrated and gave thanks to God for the decision and all who spoke their hearts and minds. Heard from the RIC Steering Team about follow-through plans.
8. Received, with regret, Charlie Wallis' resignation from the Church Council. Appreciation was voiced for Charlie's leadership and commitment.
9. Approved membership items: to release Teri Wallis' membership, per her request; to release Jesse Fenton and Cory Blackwell, due to whereabouts unknown.
10. Received a report on the Synod Assembly from Richard Schuessler.
11. Appointed Debbie Schaller as President until next year's elections are held; discussed possible interim appointees for the open council position.

Central States Synod Assembly Report —June 3-5, 2011 Kansas City

Joan Williams, Pastor Kendra, and myself attended this year's Assembly. The Central States Synod, while not having any major resolutions up for vote this year, still faces challenges and opportunities much like Gethsemane. The Synod, while it is financially stable and meeting budget, has had to make cutbacks and giving has been down the last few years. Gethsemane has faced similar financial situations. There have been divisions among the Synod over social or policy issues, much like we have had discussion within the Gethsemane community. Engaging youth and young people continues to be a struggle across the church. The synod adopted a resolution calling the church to speak and act to prevent bullying, harassment, and related violence. We heard about response to the tornado in Joplin, and received a special offering for Peace Lutheran that totaled \$17,554 with a Thrivent gift. Gethsemane was recognized as one of the top 20 congregations in mission support giving to the Central States Synod.

However, despite the issues we encounter or differences we have, the focus of the Synod and Gethsemane continues to be "Changed by Love, Sent in Love, to Serve." I feel that it is important to keep the idea of "God's Work, Our Hands" as we make worship and being a Christian a 24/7 idea. Bible Study Leader Rolf A. Jacobson (Luther Seminary) emphasized this idea that worship on Sunday is almost like practice for the rest of the week. To change from thinking of the Church as a building or worship being Sunday at 8:30am is a shift in the way most people (including myself) grew up thinking. I think for Gethsemane to grow as a faith community and live out "God's Work, Our Hands," there needs to be a shift in how we view ourselves as Christians and as a Church. A shift in how we view ourselves and how we live our lives will not happen over night, nor will it be easy. But continuing to focus on the grace of God and Jesus' love for us, we can continue God's mission and sustain our faith.

Richard Schuessler

Vacation Bible School 2011

There will be an Adult Volunteer Meeting, Sunday, July 10th at 1:00 PM. If you are interested in helping in any way at VBS — in the kitchen, with crafts, as a small group leader, a storyteller, etc., please come! After an overview of this year's program, we will break up into groups according to different areas: music, recreation, storytelling, crafts, food, group leaders.

There will be a mandatory Teen Helper Meeting, Sunday, July 24th at 1:00 pm. All teen helpers are asked to come to this safety training and meeting.

All VBS Staff will be commissioned and blessed during worship on Sunday, July 24th.

VBS Supplies & People List:

Personnel:

Recreation Leader, Adult Group Leaders (5), Audio-Visual person (to take pictures, design & run closing slide show)

General:

Signs (Restaurant Themed indicating Storytelling, Recreation, Music, Crafts, Snack)
Whistles on lanyards (15)

Crafts:

Sidewalk Chalk, Plastic containers (cream cheese, cool whip, etc), Large coffee filters, Cotton swabs (1 box), Construction Paper

Snacks:

Goldfish Crackers, Kool-Aid/Lemonade Mix, Checkered tablecloths
Paper products (small plates, napkins, 8oz. cups)

Storytelling:

Old blankets and bedspreads (to be used outside on the ground)
Canopy Tents (2-3), a Chimenea, plastic tablecloths, artificial flowers and green branches; plastic fruits and vegetables

If you can provide any of these items, please talk to Kim Elliott or Leslie Wobbe, or bring them to the church. You are also invited to consider being a VBS sponsor — see the enclosed form. Thank you for your support!

June 2, 2011

We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed but not driven to despair; persecuted but not forsaken; struck down but not destroyed (2 Corinthians 4:8-9).

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Our hearts have been breaking for weeks as we have watched incessant storms devastate many parts of the United States. From the plains of North Dakota to the bayous of Louisiana, floodwaters and torrential rain have washed out communities and cropland. Destructive tornado strikes leveled homes for miles in cities and towns including Joplin, Mo., and Cullman, Ala. Two ELCA church buildings -- one in each state -- were destroyed.

The winds destroyed the building of Peace Lutheran Church in Joplin, but not the faith of its members. Last Sunday they gathered in the parking lot in the midst of debris and shattered hopes to worship in the strong name of the risen Christ.

In the aftermath of storms that seem relentless, we may feel overwhelmed and anxious, but not powerless. For God's promise is clear: nothing in all creation will separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. Trusting in God's promise and the power of the Holy Spirit, we respond by joining together in God's work of restoring community. The liberating power of the gospel frees us to repair roofs in Cullman and fill sandbags in Fargo, on behalf of people we don't know and may never meet.

These are our commitments as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

- **We will pray.** Pray with me that those affected may have the strength and courage they need to face these difficult days.
 - **We will stand together,** roll up our sleeves and work with partners to rebuild lives and restore hope. In Alabama, we are already at work with the Mennonites and the Christian Reformed Church in a rapid rebuilding project. Elsewhere, partnerships are unfolding with the United Methodist Church and others to coordinate volunteers to repair and rebuild homes and lives in the months and years to come. Working together we can achieve more on a scale and scope than we could ever achieve alone.
 - **We will give generously.** We are already organizing volunteer opportunities in response to the unmet needs of these communities. To support our efforts, please give now to ELCA Disaster Response. Your gift designated to Severe Spring Storms will be used in full -- 100 percent -- for the people and communities deeply affected by these storms.
 - **We will stay until the work is done.** One of our strengths as Lutherans is our practice of sustained response after a natural disaster, built on local networks of congregations and social ministries. Central States Synod Bishop Gerald Mansholt compared our work to long-distance running. ELCA Disaster Response was one of the first to arrive in Missouri and Alabama, and they will be the last to leave. Even as we begin this journey, our work continues on the Gulf Coast and in Haiti.
 - **We will witness to our living faith** in Christ Jesus as we join together to do God's work with our hands.
- In all these things, I give thanks for each of you. May we be about God's healing and restoration in a time of despair. May we bring God's message of hope in the wake of spring storms.

In God's grace,
The Rev. Mark S. Hanson
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Reconciling In Christ

Reconciling in Christ is a program for Lutheran communities of faith to answer the inclusive call of the gospel by welcoming believers of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

On June 12, 2011, at a duly called special meeting of the congregation, Gethsemane Lutheran Church approved the following Reconciling in Christ Welcoming Statement by an overwhelming majority. Thanks to all who participated in the process, who voiced a variety of opinions respectfully and passionately, who prayed and listened to God and to one another. This vote is just one step – an important step – in a continuing journey. May God continue to guide us to be a people of radical hospitality and reconciling love.

Gethsemane Affirmation of Welcome

Christ's welcome knows no boundaries! Therefore, our welcome knows no boundaries and we invite all people to full participation in the life of the congregation.

We at Gethsemane Lutheran Church in Saint Louis embrace...

People of any race or ethnicity...

People who are male, female, transgender, or any other gender identity...

People of any age...

People wherever they are, or wherever they have been, on their faith journeys...

People who are single, married, widowed, divorced, separated or partnered...

People who are straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, or any other sexual orientation...

People with a variety of political perspectives...

People who have, or had, addictions, phobias, abortions, or a criminal record...

People who are homeowners, renters, living with parents, or homeless...

People who are fully-abled, disabled, or of differing abilities...

People of differing educational backgrounds...

People of any socio-economic condition...

People not mentioned above, all of whom are created and loved by God!

As we celebrate and seek to preserve the beautiful, amazing diversity of God's creation, we pledge to ourselves and to all others that we will strive to live as a reconciling people in our life together and in our outreach to the world. We are committed to being a radically loving and welcoming community of faith.

Living out the Welcome Update

--A signed copy of the statement on letterhead has been mailed to Lutherans Concerned/North America headquarters in MN, which is the requirement to be an RIC rostered congregation (Gethsemane will receive a certificate and will be listed on their web site).

--The statement will appear in Gethsemane's weekly Sunday bulletins throughout the summer months.

--The statement now appears on Gethsemane's web site.

--RIC committee is looking at other church buildings to explore ways to display the RIC designation on our building and sign and ordering RIC brochures to put in our brochure rack.

--RIC committee representative met with Worship Committee 6/22 to request assistance in planning/implementing a Sunday of Thanksgiving to celebrate our RIC designation during worship services/fellowship hour. Dawn Schuessler agreed to work with Linda Ford on special subcommittee for this purpose. Looking ahead to a Sunday in August (details in August Messenger!).

- The RIC committee wants to explore opportunities in the coming year to provide programming for all ages regarding **bullying: how to identify, how to prevent, how to respond, etc. (note: this is not limited to the subject of LGBT bullying, but bullying of all types)** and to explore offering resources/assistance to Mallinckrodt school in this regard and in other ways to the larger community.
- RIC committee to help staff Lutherans Concerned/North America booth at Pridefest in Tower Grove Park June 25-26. We will provide Gethsemane pens & 1/2 sheet flyers for the booth.
- Will invite St. Louis chapter of Lutherans Concerned/North America to hold one of its regular meetings at Gethsemane, perhaps this fall.
- RIC Committee wants to offer support to Gethsemane's outreach and welcome ministries. Any/all suggestions of ways to live out our welcoming statement are encouraged.

Social Action

Sunday, July 17 — Joint Neighborhood Ministry Sunday SAVE THE DATE TO HELP IN GOD'S WORK!

On July 17, we have a heaven-sent opportunity to be a help and comfort to our neighbors. They need assistance, and we can help. One of our congregation's closest partners in providing help to those in need is Joint Neighborhood Ministry in Benton Park. "JNM" has been an anchor in south St. Louis for the thousands of our brothers and sisters who come to it each year for food, clothing, rent and utility assistance, employment assistance and health advocacy from its parish nurse.

As we enter this third year of high unemployment, Joint Neighborhood Ministry is stretched to the breaking point. Every month, more people come to ask for help. Some of these were just making ends meet, when something happens -- a car breaks down, a family member loses their minimum wage job, an asthmatic child needs a trip to the emergency room -- and suddenly there is no money to pay for the electric bill or to buy groceries that month. These stories are intermingled with those of the elderly who are living on fixed, inadequate incomes, so they refuse to turn on the air conditioner, afraid that they will not be able to pay their electric bill or they forego needed medicine in order to pay the rent, because being homeless is their biggest fear.

More and more each month, these people come to JNM for help. But donations have been declining, too. Many of the people who have been so generous in the past may be concerned about their jobs, trying to save for college for their children, or for their retirement. Everyone is facing higher prices, so it is easy to lose sight that this economy is doubly hard for a group like JNM. They are being asked to help more people, with far less money. Now, the insurance premium for the van is almost unaffordable, the funding for the nurse will run out at the end of July and the food shelves are so low that JNM has had to use cash to purchase food.

On July 17, there will be JNM special collection envelopes, and a presentation about JNM's work, at Gethsemane before and between services. Please help live Matthew 25. Separately, we are completely overwhelmed by the need that we can never fill. So let's draw strength from each other, because together we can do God's work, which is a very great thing indeed.

Gethsemane Endowment Fund

The Endowment Fund was established so that members and friends of Gethsemane may consider Gethsemane Lutheran Church in their wills and estate planning, or as a method of making a permanent contribution to the Church in their lifetime. Making the Endowment Fund a beneficiary of a gift is a way to extend and maintain the mission and outreach of Gethsemane Lutheran Church.

Over the past four years, the Gethsemane Endowment Fund has provided over \$35,000 to support our General Budget, \$19,000 in matching funds to support mission and outreach projects such as Project Peanut Butter, Rafiki Foundation, and Panama, and \$7,200 to the ELCA Central States Synod. It has also helped to make our remodeling project a reality with over \$93,000 of funding.

Please consider the Gethsemane Endowment Fund as a beneficiary in your estate planning or as the recipient of a one-time gift. Doing so will help ensure that the Fund continues to be a vital part of the mission and outreach of Gethsemane Lutheran Church.

If you have questions or you would like to discuss including Gethsemane Lutheran Church in your estate planning please contact the Pastor or one of the Trustees.

Todd Boehlje
Sarah Bohnert
Jan Bornemann
Ruth Johnson
Conrad Otto

Lutheran School of Theology

Summer Term Workshop

Lutheran School of Theology offers biblical and theological courses for everyone, from interested lay persons wanting to learn more, to professional church workers and students. You are cordially invited to enroll in the following upcoming Summer term course on July 7 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.: “**Making Pastoral Care More Effective**” (Dr. Kenneth C. Haugk). Brochures with registration forms are on the LST poster in the narthex. You may also call 314-725-9710 or email <registrar@lststl.org> or register online at www.lststl.org

IN OUR COMMUNITY...

Volunteers Needed: St. Louis Public Schools Annual Back to School Fair
Saturday, August 6, 2011, 9am-1pm at Chaifetz Arena, St. Louis University
Contact Maureen Nolan, Director for Volunteer Services at 345-4577 or Maureen.Nolan@slps.org.

Gretchen Jenson and Ami Boehlje (along with many other parents) have been working with the St. Louis Public Schools to establish a continuum school for the 2 early childhood centers in the district. The new program will open this fall at Humboldt in Souldard. We need your help! The school is getting more and more ready each day but it still needs some work. Please join us for some serious painting on Saturday, July 9th any time from 10am-4pm. Friends, family and any interested parties are welcome to join us! Please contact Ami (314-752-4145) or Gretchen (314-353-3286) to RSVP so we know how many painting supplies to order.

All Pro Dad: Father & Kids Experience

Join Rams alumnus Aeneas Williams for an unforgettable morning filled with relationship-building information and activities!

Saturday, July 16, 2011, 9 am – noon

Russell Training Center, One Rams Way, St. Louis, MO

Cost: \$15 per family covers the father and up to four children (recommended for children 5 years old and older). How to register: Register at www.AllProDad.com/Thrivent beginning June 14. If you don't have Internet access, or for more information about the event, call 800-956-8300, ext. 309.

Presented by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans.

IN OUR WORLD...

The **Lutheran Men's Gathering: Called! Equipped! Sent!** at the Denver Marriott Tech Center July 22-24, 2011 is fast approaching- but it's not too late to register. You and two or more of your friends can still register for as little as \$110 each! The \$99/night Denver Marriott Tech Center offer, which includes a hot buffet breakfast, will expire July 1. Register for the Gathering- and the hotel today by going to www.lutheranmeninmission.org

Our speakers/musicians include: **Rollie Martinson**, co-author of *The Spirit and Culture of Youth Ministry* and *Coming of Age*, **Jay Gamelin**, campus pastor at the Ohio State University, **Pat Morley**, CEO of Man in the Mirror, **Larry Clark**, pastor of St. Mark Lutheran Church in Chicago, **Paul Hill**, Executive Director of Vibrant Faith Ministries and **Peter Mayer**, lead guitarist for Jimmy Buffett. **Tony Melendez** and **Karl Mecklenburg** will also be with us. Born without arms, Tony has inspired people the world over with his guitar playing and voice. Karl Mecklenburg is the former all pro captain of the Denver Broncos where he was a part of two Super Bowl winning teams.

VICISSITUDES

(The changes or events that occur in our lives)

Dear Gethsemane Family,

Thank you very much for the generous gift of cash that will send Chris and I to France in the near future. The Euros and travel France guide book will come in handy as we plan our trip!

Thank you also to everyone for organizing and planning the beautiful reception in May. The cards and messages were so thoughtful. You made my "retirement" as organist a special occasion for myself and my family.

I trust and know that God is working in special ways through all of you this summer.

Many blessings and thanks,

Ella

RACHEL CIRCLE LUNCHEON

Monday July 25, 2011

at Pietro's Restaurant

Please call our hostess

Marie Mueller at 314-842-5712 to

make your reservation.

We extend the hope and comfort of the resurrection to the family and friends of John Mohl, who died unexpectedly on Sunday, June 19th. John was the son of Gladys and Marvin Mohl, and spent part of his growing up years at Gethsemane. He was the Executive Director of Camp Wartburg in Waterloo, IL. He is survived by his wife Andrea, 2 sons and a daughter, and his brothers Lary and Bruce. Condolences may be sent to 301 Sierra Ct., Glen Carbon, IL 62034.

June Celebrations



Gethsemane's "Happy Hoofers" Walk for the Cure

These are just a few of the Gethsemane members who participated in this year's Susan B. Komen Race/Walk for the Cure — either as a part of Gethsemane's team, or other teams. Thanks to Jen Paulson for organizing (and taking the picture!)

If I Had A Hammer...

Participating Gethsemane Youth Group members are packed and ready to leave for Jackson, MI on their home improvement mission trip.



This year's Confirmands celebrate!

Congratulations to the 2011 Confirmands. A special thank you to those who served as their mentors: Norm Hopfer, Mike Elliott, Megan Yemm, and Margaret Lenhart. May God continue to bless their growth in grace!

Gethsemane Lutheran Church
3600 Hampton Ave., St. Louis, MO 63109
Phone: 314-352-8050; Fax: 314-352-8051
Email Address: Gethsemane@swbell.net
Webpage: www.gethsemanestl.org
Church Office Hours: 8:30am-1:30pm

Pastor Kendra Nolde
314-524-6817 prkendra-glc@swbell.net

MESSANGER NEWS

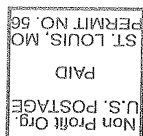
You can send your news and notes for the Messenger to glc-messenger@swbell.net. There is also a Messenger drawer by the church office. For best results, news should be in by the 20th of each month, but we'll do our best to get your news in whenever you submit it.

eMESSENGER

Please consider helping us save a tree and save on the cost of paper and postage. This happens if you choose to receive your Messenger only by e-mail. Just send us a message at glc-messenger@swbell.net.

WEEKLY E-NEWS

If you are not receiving our weekly e-news and would like to receive it, let us know by sending an email to gethsemane@swbell.net (and make sure that you put our address in your address book so that your spam filters let it pass through!).



“Return Service Requested”

Gethsemane Lutheran Church
3600 Hampton Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63109