



The Messenger

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From Pastor's Pen

I have had to take antibiotics the last three winters in a row because of bronchitis. This year I determined that I would remain healthy. I dosed myself up with Echinacea, vitamins A, B, C, E and zinc...but with the first change of weather in came the cold. I drank herbal teas and took cold and flu tablets and set out to; and build up my antibodies; and get resistant. And I beat the thing! I took a week off with the hoped for side-benefit of really getting rested and over the cough. I succeeded!

Then my nephew came to visit us after holidaying with his family - skiing in New Zealand. It has been great to have him with us because family is a special treasure, as you know. He brought us gifts from his trip: chocolates, tales of Queenstown and ... a raging head cold, with all the frills. Now I'm not saying he gave it to me; BUT my cold must have been on holiday in New Zealand too and decided it was time to tag along home on the same flight as my relations. ☺

My desire to heal myself and avoid the doctor is a picture of much of humanity's response to God. We so often seek to circumvent God and avoid Him, kidding ourselves we can do it on our own. 'We're really better off not bothering.' No need to go to the trouble of taking time from our hectic, fast-paced life to visit someone who will simply tell us, "It's a virus." and he can only deal with the symptoms. We throw God in with the doctor who can't cure the common cold; and suggest that God cannot solve our problems.

The trouble is we often avoid seeing the doctor, believing that if we don't confront disease it may just go away by itself. With a cold ... maybe; with serious illness unlikely; with the sickness of sin – no way; but God's way.

So often, we find that when serious illness strikes, instead of appreciating the doctor's efforts, we resent the fact that he can't just fix us quickly. The same is often true of our attitude to God. "He didn't do a quick fix for me, so what use is He?"

Sometimes, God has a different fix in mind, not the fix we might devise for ourselves - not quick, but effective, one which will take care of the real problems of life rather than the symptoms of something much more serious.

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. ¹² Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. ¹³ You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. ¹⁴ I will be found by you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back from captivity. Jeremiah 29: 11 – 14

Great Physician, Jesus Christ, give us trust in You. Cleanse our sin, heal our hurts and make us whole. Amen.

*Yours in Christ,
Pastor Greg.*

Pastor Greg Vangness

PARISH MATTERS

GIVING THANKS TOGETHER: Our thanks to the community, organisers and Sarah Dixon in particular, for a lovely day of fellowship.

There was a very comfortable atmosphere at the service this year with a large number gathered at Bethlehem Hall, Woongoolba, The need for quite a few to stand up at the event didn't seem to dampen the day even though the weather had done so the night before.

The singing was enthusiastic and guests from several local churches were in attendance. The service was held at 9:30 a.m. and many clergy and others attending their regular services were unable to attend; but gave greetings.

Sarah gave a testimony of her experience of the loss of her uncle: Payne Stewart... a well-known professional golfer on the US PGA Tour; and the way this deepened her trust in God through her grieving process; and the "why's" she faced.

Sarah provided us with the reminders that when we need to deal with the tough issues of life:

- 1 **You are allowed to ask God why.**
- 2 **God is not obligated to explain to us.**
- 3 **When God seems silent, his people become the expression of his love and care.**
- 4 **God is not the source of our heartaches.**
- 5 **Sometimes, God delivers us through the fire, but not from it.**
- 6 **Faith guides and walks us through our whys.**

Sarah's use of an experience which could have been crippling to reaffirm the love and care of God for her is a timely encouragement to us all.

The fellowship we enjoyed was continued over a fantastic morning tea; so thanks to the many hands that made light work. We pray and trust that God will continue to bless our community and ask that we may look to Him in all things.

Our thanks to the organisers of our Annual Men's Dinner and the volunteers who kept the kitchen running smoothly. As usual the meal was of excellent quality and a great time was had by all from general reports. There were just over 80 in attendance on the night.

Our guest speaker on the night was Pastor August Fricke from Gympie Lutheran Parish. August shared some of his experiences as a local pastor who went on holiday to Cambodia and saw the harsh living conditions of the local people. He was moved to help improve living conditions and now travels back regularly with an ad hoc team of people to provide practical help and ministry to the people he has come to love. Love is a motivator in so many things. We often need to see a need and are then eager to help. Pastor Fricke works closely with Australian Lutheran World Service and endorses this organization of the Lutheran Church Of Australia, though he organises his mission trips independently.

Through the ticket sales for the meals and the limited items brought for auction, \$2900.00 donated to Asia Focus; a further \$1400.00 was raised for Australian Lutheran World Service and costs and a donation were made to the St. Peter's Ladies Guild for their efforts for our meal.

We are thankful to all who contributed to the night's events and those who contributed items for auction and organised the proceedings. We especially thank God for His call to serve Him in this way and the blessing He has given us through the event, as well as the chance to help others as we gather for a night of feasting and fun. If you missed out on this year's Dinner, there's always next year. Ask us to let you know when we get under way next time.

**PARISH WINE AND CHEESE NIGHT:
SATURDAY 2nd September. 7:30 P.M.
Venue is the St Peter's Hall,
185 Alberton Road, Alberton
\$10 PER ADULT**

Please come and have an entertaining evening sampling a selection of wine and cheese under the expertise of Pastors Michael and Greg. There are always a few surprises in store; and it's a great mixing opportunity for the community.

**Advance booking is a must!
Contact Pastor Greg on 3287 2084 in order to
arrange your booking now.**

LUTHERAN HOLIDAY PROGRAM 2006

Before you realise it Lutheran Holiday Program will be here! Preparations are well under way for this year's exciting program; and this year we're going on Safari! A safari is an expedition or journey to hunt for things of value. Our journey takes us to the Kingdom of the Son this year, in search of the meaning of The Lord's Prayer. Set in a wonderful jungle of new discoveries Ben Bakari will be our guide, as we walk along with Terry and Jerry Jaywalker to meet up with Dr. Doolots (who may have more to teach than Ben). Let's find out together!

This year holiday program promises fun for all as we watch the cast of our plays learn valuable lessons about themselves and explore the special gift of prayer God gives us, so we can talk to Him with trust and joy.

Kids love to explore the world around them! That's why every activity in the Kingdom of the Son will help them to learn to see things they might miss otherwise; and watch for pitfalls as well. Each day the kids will discover exotic animals, create safari crafts, play exciting games and enjoy 'jungle food' as they seek to know God through prayer. We will learn how God listens, provides, forgives, protects and "rules".

The program this year is on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday the 26th, 28th and 29th of September.

At this stage, we are looking for adult helpers, who have a Blue Card or would like to apply for one. If you can spare just one day or even 3 hours of your time we would really appreciate it.

Our mission project this year is to collect funds for the Australian Lutheran World Service appeal for the people of Sudan. Sarah Kubenk, a well-known face to the children, is the ALWS representative who will be giving us some insight into the needs of this troubled part of our world; helping us discover how much we can help our brothers & sister overseas with so little.

Please, encourage us by remembering to pray for the teachers, helpers and the children and families who form Lutheran Holiday Program, so that we may all see that Psalm 17:6 is true:

"I call on You, O God, for you will answer me, give ear to me and hear my prayer.

FROM PRINCIPAL OF LORDS: GARTH HUNT

In November last year, the LORDS School Council engaged a number of consultants to prepare a revised submission for the Gold Coast City Council. Our consultants assure us that the current master plan and associated documentation conforms to the requirements of the current GCCC Town Plan, the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, the Environmental Protection Authority. On March 2nd 2006 the Office of Urban Management released Amendment 1 of the SEQ Regional Plan. This unannounced change removed the exemption clauses for "community purposes" that were an essential part of our legal strategy.

This final part of our application will be completed in the next week and the revised application submitted in the middle of August.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT CONTINUES TO GROW

In recent weeks we have met with David Jull, our Federal member, and Margaret Keech, our State member. We thank them for their continued strong support for the school. Similarly, we thank you for your continued support.

During September we will enter the public notification phase of our development application. Usually this process only consists of objections so this will be the time when we would ask each of you to submit letters of support: to demonstrate the high level of community support that the school has. The forthcoming "LORDS Voice" will be available to inform you of ways that you may do this.

If you would like the address of any of the above please contact Sue at the office.

While we still have some obstacles to overcome, the process that we are moving through with the OUM has reinforced to me the appropriateness of the site for a school and the community desire that exists for you to exercise your choice of schooling. Our site remains the only one that meets Education Queensland's locational criteria for a school; and is available in this area irrespective of the location of the urban footprint.

LORDS OFFICE NOW OPEN

We now have an office in the Ormeau Train Station Shopping Centre. Sue Westlake is available for queries at the Office on Tuesday and Wednesday from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm and Fridays from 2:00 pm to 4:30 pm. I will be working from the Office on most Thursdays.

I look forward to writing to you in September with what I pray will be positive news at last. While we wait for the approval process to be completed we continue the planning process so that the school can commence as soon as practical after our development approval.

Garth Hunt
Principal LORDS

TRIAL WORSHIP FORMAT REPORT

Alberton Parish, as you may know, has been trialling a new routine in worship formatting over this last quarter. At our recent half yearly meeting it was noted that a small number of families are using the new system to suit their preferences in worship. People have commented that it is nice to see faces from the wider parish and the fellowship that this allows.

In order to see if this is temporary, or of lasting benefit to the parish it was determined by a strong majority vote, to extend the duration of the trial period until our annual general meeting next year.

For those who enjoy one style of worship, it means that you will travel to the congregation hosting that style of worship on a given Sunday. This also has the benefit of mixing with a wider range of the 'family', which is Alberton Parish. For those who desire to worship with family and in their own congregation, it will simply be the case that you will experience two contemporary followed by traditional services back to back or vice versa.

We term the services "Family" as opposed to "modern" worship; and allow for the variation in the practice of worship according to the natural style of the individual make-up of congregations. (Cf. the example cited in the article in the last Messenger)

The desire is to see people at church more regularly because worship is more relevant. If there are topics you would like the Family Services to deal with, there is option to do so. Simply pass the topic or theme on to pastor or one of the pastoral assistants and we will work it into the program. We are also always interested in knowing of people who would like to take part in services. Perhaps your family would like to take part in a service with a theme which is meaningful for you – a once off involvement. You might enjoy being asked; but don't wait. Please volunteer if this has been on your mind.

We so often see regular faces for skits, and the like; but we don't want to burn these folks out or leave you feeling uninvolved. Please pray that God will uphold our places of worship in the parish with His protecting love, that we may know we are a people of God who are blessed each day.

Pastor Greg

Picnic in the Park is a new parish activity which will begin this month and follow on on the first Sunday of each month. People spend their Sunday in a variety of ways. For most it is a family day; but there are those who are at a loose end or would like the opportunity to see fellow members of the parish on a social basis and just don't seem to find the time or go about it. 'Picnic in the Park' is geared for the whole parish and friends of the parish. This is a casual, 'come as you are able' event. The idea is to simply pack a picnic lunch and bring it along to worship on the day. If you've come to an early service you can stay around for coffee and a chat; and then meet with others after the late service and head off to the designated picnic area for the day. You will be informed of the venue for the picnic by information provided in the bulletin on the day so that you can simply turn up at the picnic area if that suits you best.

This is a fantastic opportunity to socialise with others and create a greater sense of community amongst ourselves. Quality relationships take time and circumstances to develop and this gives you the chance. There's no obligation to stay any particular length of time. Anyone who wants can come along. There will not be a program; just the chance to share a meal and one another's company. No cost. Just come.

SERMON SERIES: PERSONALITY TYPES

The promised series is coming this month commencing on Sunday, 20th of August. For those who haven't heard about the series it is based on the negative emotions we experience as "people of the fall." The sinful nature can show itself differently in people with different personality types; but in each case to let the negative aspects of any personality type have control, makes for poor wellbeing and leads to a sense of loss within the individual.

Find out the answers of a loving God to the pitfalls of guilty, depressive, angry and fearful personality types. Hear God's plan to make each of these types more joyful with the Spirit's aid.

The upcoming sermon series will explain these five groups & show consequences of living under the control of our emotions; and the answering strength that God seeks to bring to those caught in particular patterns of behaviour, which are hurtful to all.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT BETHLEHEM, WOONGOOLBA

Our community "Giving Thanks Together" Service held in July, was a time of blessing for all who gathered together to give thanks to God.

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Many of our youth enjoyed Christian Life Week Camps during the June school holidays. Lots of friendships were made and the joy of knowing God's love shows on their faces as they tell what a wonderful experience they had at camp.

(Parents, please keep this in mind for your young ones aged 14 and older. There is a strong base of parish youth who make fabulous use of these camps to grow in faith through the process of having fun with peers and a young and vibrant leadership. Many of the leaders are campers who have been for many years and having reached the age of 18 must come back as leaders if the wish to continue to come. The end result is that these youth are being equipped to share the blessings of the faith they have received from people who have mentored them.)

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Ladies come and enjoy "Showers of Blessings" at our morning tea.

Date: Tuesday 15th August

Place: Woongoolba Lutheran Church hall

Time: 9.30 a.m.

Cost: \$7

Everyone is most welcome to come and enjoy a delightful time of comedy, drama, dramatic dance, exquisite song and brilliant poetry presented by the Harvest School of Ministry....

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The Bethlehem Pre-school & Kindy are having the "Festival of Fun" day on Saturday 26th August. This special fundraising day encourages the community to come and enjoy a good time with families at the centre.

For those who have not been to one of these events before, they are fantastic. There are a variety of foods available; a selection of rides and activities for the children; a cuppa for tired parents.

It's a great opportunity to talk with the preschool staff on a casual basis, look over the preschools facilities and meet the parents and hear what they have to say about this quality preschool. Attendance figures are very healthy. For further information contact the centre on 55462246.

Planning for the proposed ramp on the Church building is going ahead. Members are encouraged to assist by donating towards the cost of building this much needed ramp. Please contact Lee Zipf for further information.

NEWS FROM ST. PETER'S, ALBERTON

Explorer's Club on Friday afternoons has a 'new' group of mum's handling craft and cooking activities once again. Yvonne Buhner continues to direct the afternoons and much to our joy, we have new children joining in. We praise God for the chance to relate the truth and love of our Lord, Jesus Christ to the children and parents in this relaxed setting.

Mum's, of the parish, if you are looking for a relaxed and friendly environment for your kids on a Friday afternoon this is the place. Come along and meet our other mums and stay for a cuppa and a chat.

KID'S CHURCH is held in conjunction with church at the 9.30a.m. services. Children can join their parents in church & continue in the hall from the second song. Here they have a Bible story, singing, craft and games as well as a snack. All children are welcome!

Just a note to the ladies who helped at the Men's dinner recently! ☺ There is a strong rumour going around that the men who have received your loving help will be holding a meal for you in the near future.

Mind you, the men have a suspicion that the rumour was started by one of the ladies themselves. ☺ Nevertheless, some of the men have been looking into pies from Yatala, some mushy peas and a bit of something to wash it down with; and all of this served with love.

Parish Pastor

Rev. Greg Vangsness

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