



# Newsletter

## AUGUST

2009

### REMEMBER ...

- Our services are broadcast on Hudson cable Channel 15 on Wednesday night at 9:00PM and again on Thursday morning at 9:00AM.
- Check out our church web site at: <[www.emmanuelhudson.org](http://www.emmanuelhudson.org)>
- Watch "Time of Grace" on TV Sunday mornings at 6:30 a.m. on FOX 9.
- "Message from the Master" airs on 1220 AM radio Sunday mornings at 7:30 a.m.

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## Pastor's Pen...

Greetings everyone... a blessed summer to all of you who may read these words.

It's been a busy summer for sure, but, as is my custom, and it sounds like others do the same, I have spent some of the "down" time reading. For me, the preparation for sermons keeps me reading and studying almost all the time. In addition to what I read for what I write, I read for pure enjoyment, that is, to learn something new or interesting. What I've included in our newsletter is an example of a sermon that I recently read. It sound so familiar.

*(Pentecost 5, 9 July 2006, Walter W. Harms, Göttinger Predigten im Internet: Every Sunday Sermons based on the RCL by a team of Lutheran theologians/ pastors.)*

### WHO IS JESUS ANYWAY?

Although officially retired, I am serving a small "new" congregation, if you can call 105 official members small. Some weeks ago when the Scripture involved that startling statement of Jesus: "Ask anything in my name and I will give it to you," I asked the assembly what they thought Jesus would want them to ask of him. They came up with 4 items I found quite exciting. 1. Increase in membership. 2. A larger facility. 3. To start a Christian school (primary grades thru ?). 4. Harmony among the members.

I thought those 4 requests to Jesus were God-pleasing (of course, I have the right and duty to declare what is God pleasing, right?) and could expect to be answered. But I wondered if I (or the other members) had faith enough in Jesus to give this

"called out" group of people what they/we wanted. They would be miracles if these 4 requests were answered.

Not enough faith in his home town of Nazareth, or the lack of faith (what kind of faith we're not told), seem to be the reason that he could not do but a few miracles in that town,

Do I believe Jesus can do miracles? Yes, of course, is my immediate glib answer. I never doubted Jesus did miracles, and even still does them, but do I have enough confidence in the words of someone whose message and methodology seem pretty strange in this age of e-mail, internet, cell phones, blue tooth (is the plural, blue teeth?), blackberries, and all kinds of other "fruit" of this age, to believe he would do the requests we presented to him? At this moment, we are waiting with eager expectation to see what he will do with "us" at this place and time in history.

Would Jesus be amazed at "our" lack of faith in who he is? Who is he to us anyway? We in the church can recite what we believe, right? "I believe in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord who was conceived by..." and on to the end of that part of the Apostles Creed.

"Lord," "Jesus Christ," "God almighty" are largely used in expletives. Our "lord," the one who tells us what life is all about probably is the television set. We derive more and more of our morals, ethics, images, and dreams from the stories we let amuse us and much more day after day, night after night. The news channels report on fires, famines and floods; wars and crimes (is there a difference?) all over the world, natural and structural disasters,

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# 2009 YOUTH RALLY—AMES, IOWA

The WELS International Youth Rally was held July 8-11, 2009, at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. Kayla Ring, Amber Simolke, Mark Carlson, and Rachel Krueger attended the Rally. There ended up being 1000+ teens and 300+ leaders in attendance from WELS World Missionaries of Brazil, Malawi, Taiwan, and Zambia; as well as Grenada, Ontario, and of course all over the United States.

Everyone in our group also was in the choir, so we were constantly on the go making sure we were eating on time so we had enough time to get to choir practice. If you like following an itinerary, this was the place for you.

Wednesday, July 8: We arrived ahead of schedule to check-in. Afterwards, we found our dorms and tried to get the layout of all of the buildings. We had a quick supper at Taco Bell. Then it was off to choir rehearsal in the Stephens Auditorium, which became our second home for the Rally as we spent most of our time there. After the opening program, it was the Rally kickoff celebration at Memorial Union. There was bowling, billiards, arcade games, a DJ and plenty of room to dance. After all the excitement, at 11 p.m. it was time for our individual group devotion and then lights out at midnight.

Thursday, July 9: After early breakfast, we headed to Stephens Auditorium for devotion, presentations, and choir rehearsal. After lunch, we loaded school buses for Adventureland which was a good 45-minute trip one-way. We spent the entire afternoon and early evening there. This is a much smaller version of Valley Fair or Six Flags but very family oriented. Everyone wore their "Follow the path; lead the way" T-shirts. When we arrived back, it was nearly 10 p.m. and we did our individual group devotion. There was entertainment that night as well but we were so tired we just headed for bed.

Friday, July 10: After breakfast, choir rehearsal, devotion, presentations, and lunch, it was time to get back on the school bus to head out to our service project. Again, there was a dress code in place – wear the long-sleeved Rally shirt, jeans, and tennis shoes – as we were going to be working in a park pulling weeds, pruning trees, and putting mulch around. Did I mention that it was 90+ degrees out that day?! About 400 of us ended up at Ewing Park in Des Moines, a lilac park. They even had a TV news crew there, and we actually made the clip that aired! After about 4 hours of grueling work in full sun exposure, it was time to get back on the buses and head back for the Rally fest. Of course, the first thing we did when we got off the bus was freshen up. Then we ate and did our individual group devotion. Afterwards we

headed back to Stephens Auditorium for the WELS Got Talent and then Chapter 6 presentations. Then we headed back out to enjoy the Rally festivities. There were awesome fireworks, ice cream, inflatables, and a DJ.

Saturday, July 11: Breakfast, choir rehearsal, and closing worship. This is where all that choir practice paid off. We sang 3 of the 4 songs for the closing service. I'm surprised we were able to learn all of this music in the short of amount of time we had to practice it, but it certainly sounded like we knew what we were doing. Of course, having a band and other instrumentalists always adds to the worship experience. Then we had the closing program, and we headed back home.

The Rally theme song, "Follow the Path and Lead the Way," was sung at each devotion by the entire assembly. I was able to get the accompaniment for this song, and you will be able to hear it when we sing it in church for our Rally Sunday, on September 13.

So was the Rally worth going to? Ask those of us who went, and you will receive a resounding, "Yes"! Kayla and Amber are already looking forward to the next International Rally held in 2 years at a location yet to be determined. Please take the time to talk to each of us about our experiences at the Rally. We couldn't have gone without all of the congregational support, and for that we truly thank you. It was certainly a spiritually moving event. I'm so proud I was able to represent Emmanuel Lutheran Church as the leader for our youth group.

*Follow the path and lead the way!*

## Joyful Noise Preschool - Ann Winkler

Joyful Noise Preschool will soon be starting its ninth year of operation. A parent orientation meeting has been scheduled for Thursday evening, August 27th, at 6:00 pm for 3-year-olds and 7:00 pm for 4-5 year olds. The first day of preschool will be Tuesday, September 1 for the 3 year olds and Wednesday, September 2 for the 4-5 year olds.

We are looking forward to an exciting year of new adventures, friendships and knowledge. Please keep us in your prayers.

## *Pastor's Pen Continued...*

massive depression of persons in flooded cities, corrupt CEO's and elected government officials, excessive profits of oil companies and more children in poverty than ever before, outrageous greed followed by hideous envy, fears, terrors—and who is Lord? It doesn't take a holocaust to doubt his presence.

Where is he? Where are we going to see him in action, proving (the miracle) that indeed he really does have "all authority in heaven and on earth"?

Who is he to us anyway? To his hometown people, he was, well, Mary's son, although they usually called people by their father's name, as in sons of Zebedee. But then they all knew his start in life as different?! He wasn't much more than just a builder of things; need to know your craft all right for that, but that doesn't give you much insight into life, does it? Where did this wisenheimer get the wisdom to perform miracles? His brothers and sisters certainly didn't display any of whatever it was Jesus had. He is just showing off, trying to one up all of the citizens of this town.

Who is he to us? Well, I suppose we have to have some order in life and this "do unto others, as we want them to do to us" thing is pretty good. It's nice to think that after all the stuff we have to go through in this life we'll get to a better place. That does depend on "the good we have done in this world" doesn't it?

To think Jesus has all the answers to all the questions—isn't that a little arrogant on our part? Shouldn't we tone that down a bit? After all, you can't tell whether it was God or the medicine that worked, can you? If I haven't prayed for food in years, doesn't mean the super market will be empty, does it? Sure we all need miracles now and then, but that's not the stuff that our lives encounter every day. We need to learn to calm our nerves in this frenetic traffic that makes our roads look like clogged drains (nothing going no where); take a deep breath before we let everything hang out; take the meds for depression; and, well, look on the bright side of life, smell the roses, take time for yourself, get an interesting hobby or get into sports.

Who is this Jesus to us?

The hilarious part of today's reading from Mark's version of the life of Christ is what he does next. He sends his twelve disciples out two by two and gives them authority over evil spirits.

These twelve, well, they didn't have much more of a wonderful history than Jesus. Some were fishermen and probably smelled like fish that had been in the sun too long. The tax collector, Matthew, certainly must have been something to see what he was doing, after being not much more than a low life most of his life to this time. Little education (all wisenheimers?), except for their time with Jesus. Not very "faith" filled persons. Jesus himself had said that they had little if any faith, whatever kind of faith that was to be. If that is the kind of people Jesus sends out, I guess we don't have to be thinking our qualifications aren't good enough.

What is their mission? Cut down the authority of the devil. Show who's in charge? God or the devil? Evil and sin or forgiveness and restoration to God's family?

They were sent—no money, no extra clothes, no lunch money, no bag of things a person can't live without. They were to be dependent on the people they went to see. They weren't to have it all together. They needed people to provide everything but their shoes.

Jesus is pretty open with them. Some will reject their message (whatever it was) in favor of some previous message and faith. Shaking off the dust was a symbol of rejection. Not to waste time with such; but to bring healing, reconciliation to those who need it.

I said this was hilarious. If Jesus walked in that door and sent you out to Buda, Kyle, Creedmoor, and other places, would you go? Go without preparation? Go, believing you have power over evil spirits? Go with no money, no credit cards? I don't know which part we would find more hilarious!

He was amazed at their lack of faith, or is it our lack of faith? Would he be amazed at our quantity, (or is it?) quality of faith? Or our lack of the same?

So they went and preached, not as preachers, but as proclaimers of the Good News about Jesus. This caused people to repent, change their attitude and direction in life, start new, give up the old; have hope when like seemed hopeless. After people heard the message from these disciples, they gave us hatred and anger. They were reconciled with people. They were anointed with oil and got healed. No longer squealing in pain and despair, but well oiled with the oil of gladness coming from the Good Shepherd. It worked, their message!

But, of course, these little faith-ed people could do what Jesus promised because they believed in him. They trusted him. If he said it, it was going to happen, and it did!

Who is Jesus anyway? What instructions could his first century message have for 21st century people? What is the content of our "preaching"? I mean your preaching, not this stuff I do on Sundays? What does it say about your faith in Jesus? Some in his home town thought he went too far for a local lad; some of us are reluctant to believe Jesus can do all he promised.

Even that cross thing of Jesus, that's often too difficult to explain. My "sin" is involved in that? My "sin" is no more? All because of this Jesus?

Think for a moment what healing could take place if we believed that we are part of the world God loved. Lay out in your mind what we could give up, in both frenetic behavior and fear we might miss something if we trusted that we will live under the protection of the divine forever and that this present living is but a time of listening and proclaiming?

Who is this Jesus anyway? "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" Amen.

See you all in church, God Bless...



Pastor Kogler

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*"Believe in the Lord Jesus and  
you will be saved ..."*

*... home of Joyful Noise  
Preschool*



Frederick A. Kogler, pastor  
Ann E. Winkler, preschool teacher  
Don Benisch, congregational president

**Why we're here ...**

***Emmanuel Lutheran exists to prepare people for eternal life. The Bible presents two possible destinations when we die: one is hell; the other is heaven. While people follow all sorts of ideas and philosophies to gain heaven (self-denial, being a good person, etc.), the Bible gives us the only pathway to heaven: "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31). Emmanuel Lutheran proclaims the truths of Holy Scripture, pointing always to Jesus Christ as our only Savior from sin -- our only path to heaven.***