

August 2012 Newsletter



"Communicating the Love of Jesus" Worship Hours:

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Christian Growth Hour: 9:00 a.m. Worship Service: 10:00 a.m.

Living Word Lutheran Church

Located on the West of Spicer on County Rd 10 in old Prairie Meadows building PO Box 242, New London, MN 56273

Phone: 320-796-0742

Website: www.livingwordlutheran.net

What we aim to do:

Make disciples for Jesus - as we go, wherever we go.

What we aim to be:

A joyful, caring, Christ-centered family of God.

Question for Pastor...

Have you seen any good movies lately?

This is a question that father and son toss around from time to time in our household. I did get a chance to watch a few movies on vacation. The ones that have been out for awhile we watched on DVD. One was new to the theaters, and we got to watch it while decked out in those



"cool" 3D glasses. (I kept mine, just in case I ever want to dress up as Roy Orbison for Halloween.)

There were three movies worth commenting on, but before I do that I should add this disclaimer: When it comes to movies, I probably critique them differently than most people. I tend to evaluate movies based on the message they send to the viewers. Movie makers always seem to have an agenda - a point of view they hold that they want the viewer to adopt. Many viewpoints (agendas) coming out of Hollywood run contrary to a Christian worldview, so I always have my "radar" on in order to detect what message is being sent. As a result, I sometimes miss the entertainment value of the movie.

Violet and I tend to enjoy animated kids' movies (which really seem to be aimed at adults). My all-time favorite is *Monsters, Inc.* We've seen both *Ice Age* movies, so last week we went to see Ice Age 3 - in 3D. We both came away feeling pretty good about some of the underlying messages sent in it. There was a good message about staying true to your values and your friends - even if those values and friends aren't the most popular. We also found a very positive "family" message. It was particularly refreshing to see the father portrayed as strong and loving and willing to

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sacrifice anything for His children (Sound like any God you have come to know from the Bible??). It seems to me that the few times movie families actually have a dad, he's either no longer a part of the family, very self-centered or just a complete 'doofus'. I was also impressed not to find the seemingly ever-present "gay agenda" in the movie. You can check with other folks for the entertainment value of the movie, but I'd definitely recommend it for the "message" value.

A second movie we had seen once before when it hit the theaters a couple years ago, *The King's Speech*. It's a movie about Queen Elizabeth's father and how he worked to overcome his speech impediment. I was reminded of Moses being chosen to lead God's people in spite of his own speech impediment. It has a good message about persevering, but I also noticed an underlying message that church leaders are selfish, powermongers and the church itself is nothing more than silly rituals.

But one movie really "hit me like a ton of bricks." It was called Machine Gun Preacher. (An title that should at least get the interest of all the pastors in the world.) When Anthony asked me about it my response was one word: "Powerful." He asked me what I meant by that. I told him that it was one of a very few movies that actually leave you really wanting to do something as a result of what you have seen.



I came away ashamed of ever complaining ... about anything. The movie made me feel ashamed of all the times I spend money on frivolous things. It made me realize that 'by and large' the Christian church is a "country club" that simply seeks to serve the wants of its members instead of being an army dedicated to saving people from Satan and evil. (And, I'm not talking "army" in the military sense that might be suggested by the "machine gun" in the title. I'm talking "army" in the sense of our hymn "Lift High the Cross... the love of Christ proclaim.")

But most of all it made me want to do something about all the kids in the world

who don't have parents - or who have parents that screw up their kid's lives.

Machine Gun Preacher is a movie based on the real life of one man and his family and their efforts to make a difference in the lives of real kids in the Sudan and Uganda - kids whose parents are killed and who themselves are then used as pawns in a civil war.

It is a movie about the power of God to change lives. It is a movie about the call of God to make a difference in the lives of people around you. It is a movie that, like *The Passion of the Christ* is not easy to watch - especially for parents. But I think it's a movie we - also like *The Passion of the Christ*-must watch. In fact, I will be showing it at some of our meetings, and Bible Studies in the near future.

My hope is that watching the movie together will motivate us to come up with ways to join with others in our Synod and District in helping The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Kenya develop six rescue centers that will serve orphaned children. (The congregations of our District voted at our District Convention this spring to raise funds for one and a half of the four orphanages.)

"Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world."

> Thanks for asking , Pastor David

Send your questions to pastor@livingwordlutheran.net

Living Word Lutheran Church on the Web

Our Website:

Information about our church, calendar of events, schedules, past newsletters, and more at http://www.livingwordlutheran.net

Our Blog:

The latest in information, news, views, and interesting items from Living Word Lutheran at

http://livingwordlutheranlcms.blogspot.com/

*Link is also found on home page of our website

Facebook:

Posting the daily bible readings, church activities, and taking prayer requests! Go to www.facebook.com to sign up for your free account. Already on Facebook? Go to

http://www.facebook.com/people/Living-Word-Lutheran-

Church/100002935463148

*Link is also found on home page of our website

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THE CALENDAR IS BARE (almost)...

As you look at the August calendar on pages 12 & 13, you will notice that activities and meetings are at a minimum.... so that we can put as much effort as possible into working together to complete our new building. Read on for opportunities to help...

Building Update...



Again, A LOT has happened since the last Newsletter. If you've driven on County Road Nine between New London and Spicer, you've seen how much has happened over the past couple months. If you haven't had that opportunity, I'd encourage you to continue to check our website

More photos and

updates at

www.livingwordlutheran.net

www.livingwordlutheran.net for the latest updates and pictures.

Recently...

- The roof has been completed
- · Interior walls have been built
- · Well has been dug and water lines run
- Ceiling has been "sheet rocked"
- Window are installed.
- We have started discussing plans for a Dedication Sunday

Most of the contractor work has been completed. During the month of August we need LOTS OF VOLUNTEER HOURS to complete the building as scheduled. Upcoming work opportunities....

Hanging Drywall
Painting
Decorating
Landscaping
Insulating
Putting on siding
Providing Childcare for

Providing Childcare for workers

Providing Meals for workers

Being a "go-fer" (running errands or to pick up stuff)

Organizing our Dedication Sunday

Organizing our Community Open House Day

If you haven't had a chance to sign up to help, you can do so in the back of the church or by talking to Kevin Welsh or send an email to pastor@livingwordlutheran.net. **Thanks to all who** have helped at the building already.

Thot for a day: You

Sharing the Love of God In Practical Ways...

Use Our Make-A-Meal Program

Several years ago we began the Make-A-Meal program as a way to share Jesus' love/mercy with people going through a tough time. Please use the Prayer and Care cards in the attendance pad at worship or call Pastor David or Meal Coordinator Linda Dilley if you know of someone who would appreciate a meal. Thanks!

Building Help Needed

We have lots of opportunities to work together as the building goes up. If you didn't get a chance to indicate the tasks you could help with, please check the sign-up sheet in the fellowship area. — We have AMPLE OPPORTUNITIES during the month of August (and will need all the help we can get) as we work to get the building "move-in ready" by our late August/early September target.

- Thanks to EVERYONE who has helped already and everyone who plans to help in the future, but hasn't had the opportunity yet.
- Thanks to Marcia Welsh and Nancy Jo Wendt for volunteering to match up work with workers.
- Thanks to Kevin Welsh for coordinating all the work efforts.

Accompanist Needed

Our 1st and 3rd Week accompanist Susan Johnson, has moved to Hudson, WI, so we are in need of people who can help in worship by providing accompaniment on piano, organ or keyboard. Please talk to Pastor David if you can help - or know of someone who can. Thanks!

Elders Available For Prayer After Worship

God tells us in the book of James (5:14-15), "Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray.... Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord." Our Living Word Elders (Troy Hansen, Kevin Welsh, Jason Miller and Brady Sharp) will be available each week after worship at the front of the sanctuary to pray with you.

Prayer List from Worship Available to Take Home

We have begun printing off the prayer requests from worship, so you can take them home and keep them in your prayers during the week.

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Upcoming Events...



Vacation Bible School

One Day: Saturday, August 25, 9:30 -2:30

Theme: God's Amazing Creation

Lots of "Hands On" activities that will help the kids experience how truly amazing God's creation (including themselves) is.

Living Word "Church Softball" Playoffs

(Thursdays at Swannson Fields in Willmar)



August 2 - 6:15 Green Field vs. WCRC (then at 7:15 if we win 6:15 game; If not... we're done)

Thanks to our fans, our players and Bryson for organizing us.

E-Mail Humor...

A sign of the times...

During "children's time" in the worship service, the kids came forward and the pastor, wanting to teach about prayer, asked, "How can we talk with God?"

The pastor produced paper and envelope and said, "Maybe we can write God a letter. Does anyone know God's address?"

The group said no.

Then the pastor pulled out his cell phone and said, "Maybe we can telephone God. Does anyone know God's phone number?"

The response was again negative.

Then the pastor displayed his laptop computer and said, "Maybe we can send God an e-mail!"

A little five-year-old boy enthusiastically said, "Yeah, try wwwdot-God-dot-com!"

(In case you are wondering, there is a God.com website. It is maintained by a Christian organization called The Evangelical Media Group - not, unfortunately, by God.)

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Habitat for Humanity...

Habitat for Humanity is looking for applicants for its Home Repair Pilot project!

Dear Living Word Lutheran Church,

Do you know of someone in need of an exterior home repair? Is your siding in desperate need of a make over? Is there need for a handicapped ramp? We are still looking for applicants for our Home Repair Pilot project. If you know of someone struggling or in need, please direct them to apply.



Habitat for Humanity of West Central Minnesota is piloting a home repair project.

This summer we will do just one home repair project but hope that by joining forces with community partners, we will be able to continue this program in the future.

We are seeking a homeowner in need of home preservations such as pairting, landscaping and minor extensor repairs. This project will help a low-income homeowners, impacted by age, disability or family oricanistances, who struggle to maintain the extenior of their home. We will use volunteers, donated materials and no-interest loans to make repairs affordable.

What are the guidelines?

- Homeowner must complete an application and all the requested documents.
- Homeowner must be living in the home as their primary residence.
- Homeowner must have homeowner insurance and be current with mortgage pageneras & property taxes.
- Requested or needed home repairs are within Habitat for Humanity of West Central Minnesota limits.
- All able-bodied residents volunteer alongside other volunteers during their project.
- Homeowners must not sell the home for three years after completion of the project except for special or unforeseen circumstances (e.g. illness).
- · Homeowners must be home during all times that these are volunteers on site.
- Homeowner must have owned and lived in their home for at least the last 6 months. For this prior project, the home must be located in William or Spices.
- Homeowner must be honest on the application, disclose all information during
- the application process and sign a partnership agreement.

 Homeowner must be willing to sign a repayment a greement for the cost of work.
- done on their home.
 Homeowner's income must be at or below income guidelines listed below:
- Homeowner's income must be at or below income guidelines listed below

County	HUD%	1 Person	2 Регяопя	3 Pensons	4 Persons	5 Persons
Kendiyohi	60%	\$27,300	\$31,200	\$35,100	\$39,000	\$42,100

Referrals Are Needed!

Application deadline is July 20th

For an application for the pilot home repair project you may.

Download the A Brush With Kindness(ABWK) application from our website www.habitatwcm.org or contact us at 619 Beraon Avenue SW

Willmar, MN 56201 Contact Nancy at (820) 281-2704 to learn more.

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The flier provides details on the guidelines for qualifying for our home repair pilot project. It also provides details on acquiring an application.

Please feel free to contact Nancy at the Habitat offices (320-231-2704) if you have any questions in regards to the project.

Looking for another opportunity to help Habitat for Humanity?

- Cordless Drills
- Tool Chests
- Prv bars
- 4' and 6' ladders
- Paint brushes and rollers
- #18 trim nail gun
- printer paper (all kinds)
- photo paper
- paper cutter
- 2 outdoor benches
- Notebooks
- 3 ring binders
- Vacuum Cleaner
- Picture Frames
- Truck for ReStore

Habitat is Seeking Board Members

The Habitat for Humanity of West Central Minnesota Board of Directors provides organizational leadership and vision, maintains high ethical standards in accordance with our values, engages in effective planning to respond to the needs to people living in substandard housing, and acts as wise stewards of our resources.

We are seeking qualified candidates to serve on our volunteer Board of Directors; in particular:

- Energetic and entrepreneurial business people, who are not already overextended with other commitments, eager to put their enthusiasm for changing the world to work for us.
- Community leaders and philanthropists willing to engage their peers in support of our mission.
- Board members must be able to attend monthly meetings and contribute to the outcomes of one of our committees.

If you are interested in becoming a Habitat Board Member or have questions, please contact Joline at the Habitat offices (320-231-2704).

August - Daily Devotionals

We begin the month finishing reading about how God builds His church (people who follow Jesus) in the book of Acts. The remainder of the month we prepare for "God's Amazing Creation" Vacation Bible School by reading passages about the Creator and His Creation.

	Wk of July 29	Daily Readings	God Builds His Church - ACTS 19-28
July 30	Acts 19-20		
July 31	Acts 21-22		
Aug 1	Acts 23-24		
Aug 2	Acts 25-26		
Aug 3	Acts 27		
Aug 4	Acts 28		
	Wk of Aug 5	Daily Readings	The CREATOR and HIS CREATION
Aug 6	Isaiah 40:25-31		
Aug 7	Job 38-39		
Aug 8	Job 40-41		
Aug 9	Psalm 104		
Aug 10	Psalm 8		
Aug 11			
	Wk of Aug 12	Daily Readings	CHRIST AS CREATOR
Aug 13	John 1:1-3		
Aug 14	1 Corinthians 8:6	3	

Aug 15	Hebrews 1:1-2
Aug 16	Colossians 1:15-20
Aug 17	Ephesians 3:7-9
Aug 18	Acts 17:24-3
	Wk of Aug 19 Daily Readings THE CREATION OF THE WORLD
Aug 20	Genesis 1:1-8
Aug 21	Genesis 1:9-19
Aug 22	Genesis 1:20-25
Aug 23	Genesis 1:26-2:3
Aug 24	Genesis2:4-17
Aug 25	Genesis 2:19-25
	Week of Aug 26 Daily Readings THE CREATOR and HIS CREATION
Aug 27	Nehemiah 9:6
Aug 28	Psalm 19:1-4
Aug 29	Romans 8:18-25
Aug 30	Isaiah 42:5-9
Aug 31	Hebrews 11:1-3
Sep 1	Romans 1:18-27

August 2012 - Living Word Church Calendar of Events

Sunday	Mond	lay	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
July 29 9:00 Growing in Christ Hour - Adult Forum: 10:00 Worship 11:15 Fellowship	July 30	PRAY (inspire to you, you; S	July 31 SE REMEMBER TO AT 11:09 EVERY ed by Luke 11:9: "So . , Ask and it will be giv eek and you will find; the door will be opened	DAY I say en to Knock	5:30 Men's Devotion Yellow Field 6:15 - Church League Softball Yellow	3	4
9:00 Growing in Christ Hour - Adult Forum: 10:00 Worship w/Lord's Supper 11:15 Fellowship			7	6:30 LWML Pie Making @ church	9	10	11
9:00 Growing in Christ Hour - Adult Forum: 10:00 Worship 11:15 Fellowship	13		7:15 Elders' Team	15	7:00 Mission &Ministry Team	Tce Cream	Noon - 6:00 Pie & Ice Cream Social @ NL Music Festival
9:00 Growing in Christ Hour - Adult Forum 10:00 Worship -w/ Lord's Supper 11:15 Fellowship	20		21	22	23	24	9:30-2:30 Vacation Bible School "God's Amazing Creation"
9:00 Growing in Christ Hour - Adult Forum 10:00 Worship 11:15 Fellowship	27		28	9:30 Mom's Study Noon Women's Study	30		Sep 1

Upcoming Schedules...

Scripture Readers

Aug 5	Dualle natisett
Aug 12	Tammy Wachter
Aug 19	Scott Wachter
Aug 26	Bryson Wachter
Comb D	Wands Bakkin
Sept 2	Wendy Robbin

Sept 2 Wendy Robbi Sept 9 Mona Hjelle Sept 16 Phil Iverson Sept 23 Kevin Welsh Sept 30 Linda Dilley

Fellowship Servers

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Aug 12	Wendy Robbin / Alicia Sawatzky
Aug 19	Nancy Jo Wendy / Tammy Fuglie
Aug 26	Tammy Wachter / Sarah Miller
Sept 2	Mona Hjelle / Elaine Abraham
Sept 9	Violet Dauk / Laurel Iverson
Sept 16	Linda Dilley / Bonnie Hansen
Sept 23	Marcia Welsh / Pam Johnson
Sept 30	Wendy Robbin / Alicia Sawatzky

Leader needed

Marcia Welsh / Pam Johnson

Children's Church Schedule

Aug 5	Mona Hjelle
Aug 12	Eve Bajari
Aug 19	Michelle Johnson
Aug 26	Donna Peterson
Sept 2	Mona Hjelle
Sept 9	Eve Bajari
Sept 16	Michelle Johnson
Sept 23	Donna Peterson

Make A Meal Volunteers

Sept 30

August	Gracie Geer	Laurel Iverson
September	Pastor David	Linda Dilley
October	Violet Dauk	Julie Bajari
November	Scott & Tammy Wachter	Nancy Jo Wendt
December	Wendy Robbin	Bryson Wachter
January	Pam Johnson	Donna Peterson
February	Jamie Iverson	Mona Hjelle

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Department usually When tempted to fight fire with fire, remember that the Fire da ÿ ٥ ģ

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Aug 5	Troy Hansen & Scott Wachter
Aug 19	Kevin Welsh & Brady Sharp
Sept 2	Troy Hansen & Scott Wachter
Sept 16	Kevin Welsh & Brady Sharp

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Aug & Sept Children's Church Kids

Usher / Greeter Schedule

USITED /	di eeter Schedule	
Aug 5	Mark Fuglie & Tim Geer	Bryson Wachter
Aug 12	Linda Dilley & Mona Hjelle	Laurel Iverson
Aug 19	Kevin & Noah Welsh	Bonnie Hansen
Aug 26	Vern Samuelson & Wally Abraham	Greeter Needed
Sept 2	Jamie & Phil Iverson	Bryson Wachter
Sept 9	Duane Hansen & Chuck Weflen	Laurel Iverson
Sept 16	Jason Miller & Bryson Wachter	Bonnie Hansen
Sept 23	Lonny Robbin & Jason Olson	Greeter needed
Sept 30	Troy Hansen & Brady Sharp	Greeter needed

LWML News...

The Lutheran Women's Missionary League meets this month on Wednesday, August 8 to put together pies for the Pie and Ice Cream Social to be held at the New London Music Festival on August 18 from noon to 6 p.m.

Please talk to Pam Johnson if you can help with either or both. Thanks!

Mom's Study and Noon Wed. Women's Study:

Resume Wednesday, August 29

August Discipleship Verse...



"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.

Matthew 7:24

E-Mail Wisdom... (received via e-mail)

THE ADVANTAGES OF HAVING DOGS (VS. KIDS)

- \sim It doesn't take 45 minutes to get a dog ready to go outside in the winter.
- ~ Dogs cannot lie.
- ~ Dogs never resist nap time.
- ~ You don't need to get extra phone lines for a dog.
- ~ Dogs don't pester you about getting a kid.
- ~ Dogs don't care if the peas have been touched by the mashed potatoes.



- ~ Dogs are housebroken by the time they are 12 weeks old.
- ~ Your dog is not embarrassed if you sing in public.
- Average cost of sending a dog to school: \$142
 Average cost of sending a kid to school: \$103,000

A REBUTTAL ON BEHALF OF KIDS (OVER DOGS) By Greg Hench

- ~ They don't bark.
- \sim They are capable of answering the phone. (Well, until they get their own cell phone.)
- \sim I have never stepped in any of their messes in the back yard.
- $\sim\,$ I have never run over any of their messes with the mower in the back yard.
- \sim They are permitted in most public buildings with no special license.
- ~ They live much longer.
- \sim They eventually learn to buckle themselves and keep their head in the window.
- $^{\sim}$ Mine have never chewed up the couch, the curtains, the pillows or the carpet.
- Once mine were potty trained, I never had to proudly carry around the poopy bag like it was some great trophy of ownership. (The real question is who owns who if you're the one carrying the little poopy bag??)

Copyright 2012 Greg Hench.

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Where would you keep it?

everything.

Remember, you can't have

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True story from Greg Hench, Youth Pastor//Hurting Dad:

One day I was talking to my son Mat about safely crossing the street while trying to incorporate the idea of sacrifice and love at the same time.

I decided to make this little teachable moment an opportunity to have him choose between safety and sacrifice. I asked Mat, who was probably about 6 at the time; "If I were to be walking across the street and didn't see a car coming and I was about to get hit, would you run out in the street and push me out of the way of the car so I didn't get hurt even if it meant you would probably get hurt really badly?"

With minimal hesitation Mat replied, "Well, that wouldn't be very smart."

Thot for a day:



Dear Friends,

Over the last few weeks of service with The Link, I am reminded of our call to serve others as reflected in Matthew 25:37-40:

"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you? And the King will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'"

Not a day passes when members of God's family seek assistance from The Link. With the generosity of our community, The Link is able to assist many people with basic needs such as past due rent/mortgage, car repair, referrals and advocacy. Sometimes, having a listening ear or sharing in a meal with someone can have a great impact.

Through our ecumenical efforts with The Link, Tuesday's Table is serving up to 200 people each week. That's 800-1000 meals each month—or over 10,000 per year! A big THANK YOU goes out to the dedicated volunteers at Our Lady of the Lakes Catholic Church, New London Evangelical Covenant Church, Faith Lutheran Church, Peace Lutheran Church and Hope Presbyterian Church that plan, cook and serve the meals, week after week, month after month.

The New London Household Exchange continues to grow! From January through April, the community donated \$2,638 in goods to the household exchange to benefit people in transition and people needing basic household items.

Thank you for building a community where we are able to serve others generously and hospitably, giving our gifts of time and resources to God's family.

Blessings, Rhonda Otteson Page 18

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Needs:

The New London Household Exchange is looking for furniture and basic household items! Donations are accepted Tuesday from 2 pm-6 pm and Thursdays from 10 am-2 pm at the New London site. We are always looking for friendly faces to help out at the New London Household Exchange. Contact Rhonda if you are interested: 320.796.2522 or flc link@tds.net.

The Community Care Pantry is in need of personal care and basic household cleaning products. Contact Cathy Plucker at Hope Presbyterian to donate at 320.796.2650.

Tuesday's Table in August: Come join us for food and fellowship!

August 7th: Our Lady of the Lakes Catholic Church August 14th: New London Evangelical Covenant Church

August 21st: Faith Lutheran Church
August 28th: Peace Lutheran Church

Do you have a coffee hour, a social concerns committee or an opportunity for a "temple talk" at your congregation? I would welcome the opportunity to come and share about The Link!

Thank you for your support! Donations can be sent to:

> The Link, c/o Faith Lutheran Church, 310 Medayto Drive, Spicer, MN 56288

Upcoming Events!

PhotoVoice Project:

The Views & Voices of Women Where: Make.Do.Workshop (formerly the Pottery Workshop) 17 Central Avenue West, New London When: Friday, August 17th from 6-8 pm

The exhibit will feature the photos taken by four women: their struggles, their resiliency and, most of all, their hope. This project was made possible by the support of a special grant from the Willmar Area Community Foundation.

Support The Link during the New London Music Festival!

Stop by the Lions food booth! All proceeds will benefit The Link.

Here's a link to this fun, family friendly event:

http://newlondonmusicfestival.com/

Inspirational Message...

The Bridge Keeper

There was once a bridge which spanned a large river. During most of the day the bridge sat with its length running up and down the river paralleled with the banks, allowing ships to pass thru freely on both sides of the bridge. But at certain times each day, a train would come along and the bridge would be turned sideways across the river, allowing a train to cross it.

A switchman sat in a small shack on one side of the river where he operated the controls to turn the bridge and lock it into place as the train crossed. One evening as the switchman was waiting for the last train of the day to come, he looked off into the distance thru the dimming twilight and caught sight of the train lights. He stepped to the control and waited until the train was within a prescribed distance when he was to turn the bridge. He turned the bridge into position, but, to his horror, he found the locking control did not work. If the bridge was not securely in position it would wobble back and forth at the ends when the train came onto it, causing the train to jump the track and go crashing into the river. This would be a passenger train with many people aboard. He left the bridge turned across the river, and hurried across the bridge to the other side of the river where there was a lever switch he could hold to operate the lock manually. He would have to hold the lever back firmly as the train crossed. He could hear the rumble of the train now, and he took hold of the lever and leaned backward to apply his weight to it, locking the bridge. He kept applying the pressure to keep the mechanism locked. Many lives depended on this man's strength.

Then, coming across the bridge from the direction of his control shack, he heard a sound that made his blood run cold. "Daddy, where are you?" His four-year-old son was crossing the bridge to look for him. His first impulse was to cry out to the child, "Run! Run!" But the train was too close; the tiny legs would never make it across the bridge in time. The man almost left his lever to run and snatch up his son and carry him to safety. But he realized that he could not get back to the lever. Either the people on the train or his little son must die. He took a moment to make his decision.

The train sped safely and swiftly on its way, and no one aboard was even aware of the tiny broken body thrown mercilessly into the river by the onrushing train. Nor were they aware of

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the pitiful figure of the sobbing man, still clinging tightly to the locking lever long after the train had passed. They did not see him walking home more slowly than he had ever walked: to tell his wife how their son had brutally died.

Now if you comprehend the emotions which went this man's heart, you can begin to understand the feelings of our Father in Heaven when He sacrificed His Son to bridge the gap between us and eternal life. Can there be any wonder that He caused the earth to tremble and the skies to darken when His Son died? How does He feel when we speed along thru life without giving a thought to what was done for us thru Jesus Christ?

Story Behind The Song...

"How Firm A Foundation"

This hymn is one of my favorites. It combines an easy-to-sing tune with some great words that focus on promises God makes to us in His Word, the Bible. It is based on the ending of Jesus' "Sermon on the Mount" in Matthew chapter seven.

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. 26 But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

You may recall a favorite kids' song based on these same verses, "The Wise Man Built His House Upon The Rock"

I'm apparently not alone in my appreciation of this hymn. I've read that it has been a popular favorite amongst Christians ever since it first appeared, in 1787. It was said to be a favorite both of Confederate General Robert E. Lee and President Theodore Roosevelt and was sung at both of their funerals. Also, there is a story that says the hymn was the favorite hymn of President Andrew Jackson's wife, and that he asked for it to be sung to him as he was nearing death.

It was published then Dr. John Rippon, a Baptist minister in London. When it appeared in Rippon's 'A Selection of Hymns,'

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it was signed simply "K". Some have speculated that the author was Robert Keene (or Keen) was a close friend of Rippon who served as song director at the Carter Lane Baptist Church. All efforts to positively identify this mysterious "K", have been fruitless; and the mystery remains to this day.

The traditional tune (Portuguese Hymn or Adeste Fidelis) used in England with "How Firm A Foundation" is the tune most often associated with our Christmas hymn "O Come, All Ye Faithful" for which it was composed by the author John Frances Wade. The composer of the tune (Foundation or Protection) most commonly used here in the United States is also unknown.

While the authorship of both the words and tune remain a mystery, there's no mystery about the message of the hymn. Whoever the author, he had a thorough knowledge of practical Christianity and of what is needed to encourage troubled believers in their times of affliction.

The song shows us what a source of strength we can find in God's word. It is actually a sermon in song which proclaims many of the promises found in the scriptures. The author emphasizes the only foundation for a faith which will prevail - the Word of God itself.

This grand old hymn was originally in six stanzas; the one usually omitted is verse 2. Our hymnal - # 728 - also omits verse 4 (and adds one of its own). The final verse of the original text below is my particular favorite.

Maybe you are going through trials right now (who isn't?). Read this hymn and let God strengthen you with the promises from His Word:

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord, Is laid for your faith in His excellent Word! What more can He say than to you He hath said, To you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?

"In ev'ry condition— in sickness, in health, In poverty's vale, or abounding in wealth; At home or abroad, on the land, on the sea, As days may demand, shall thy strength ever be.

"Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dismayed, For I am thy God, I will still give thee aid; I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand, Page 22

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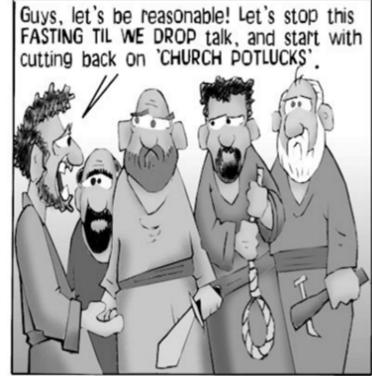
Upheld by My gracious, omnipotent hand.

"When through the deep waters I call thee to go, The rivers of sorrow shall not overflow, For I will be with thee, thy trials to bless, And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.

"When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie, My grace all-sufficient shall be thy supply; The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.

"The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose, I will not, I will not desert to his foes; That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



Considering this group of Zealots were NOT Lutherans, giving up potlucks was a very reasonable suggestion.

Acts 23

That for a day: