

From the Pastor



"You are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the chief cornerstone. In Him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in Him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit."

Ephesians 2:19-22

The Cornerstone Laying for our new sanctuary will be Sunday, October 21. The service at 9:15am will be themed for this occasion. However, in order to allow members of other area congregations and the community to also attend, the Cornerstone Laying ceremony itself will be in the afternoon at 3:30pm. Following this brief ceremony, we will have a Hog Roast from 4:00pm-6:00pm for those in attendance and the entire community, with a freewill offering to benefit the Building Fund. Don't miss this very special day!

In ancient times a cornerstone was not merely decorative or ceremonial, but the single most important part of a building. For, it was from this one, carefully prepared and perfectly square block that the rest of the building would be sited. If the cornerstone was off by even a fraction, this mistake would be multiplied over and over again as the

building rose, and eventually would cause a distortion so severe that the building could be compromised and even collapse.

Jesus himself and the Apostles repeatedly use in the New Testament the illustration of a cornerstone to describe Jesus as the foundation upon which our faith is built. The ancient people to whom they were originally writing would have immediately understood the significance of this symbolism. Jesus Himself is the perfect, square block, upon which we may build our faith without fear of going astray, "a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in Him will never be put to shame" (1 Peter 2:6).

However, to appreciate the full meaning of this symbolism we must recognize that the opposite is also true. If we build our faith on a faulty foundation, the errors will only be compounded and grow worse and worse over the generations, and we will go farther and farther astray. Like the foolish man who



built his house on sand instead of Christ and His Word, eventually such a faulty faith will collapse with a great crash (Matthew 7:24-27).

That is what is happening now in many denominations. At one time they had strong Biblical principles, built on the firm foundation of Christ and His Word. But, beginning 50-100 years ago, many denominations began introducing

what seemed at the time to be minor errors. For example, some wanted to interpret parts of the Bible—such as the creation account, the story of Adam and Eve, Jonah being swallowed by a great fish—as fable or myth. Other parts of the Bible, such as its moral teachings or the requirement that pastors be male, were declared obsolete and culturally conditioned, and therefore no longer relevant or applicable to our modern world.

Proponents of this view claimed these were peripheral issues, with no direct relation to or consequences for the Gospel. But, what has been the result as those seemingly minor errors have been multiplied and compounded over a generation or more?

- Last summer the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America decided that unrepentant, open homosexuals can serve as pastors. The Episcopal Church even elected such an openly gay man, Rev. Gene Robinson, as Bishop of New Hampshire, and included Rev. Tracey Lind, a lesbian, on the list for Bishop of Chicago, with voting to take place on November 10. As CNN notes, "If she wins, she would be the second bishop living with a same-sex partner in the Episcopal Church."
- The United Church of Christ became the first mainline Christian denomination to support same-sex marriage officially when its general synod passed a resolution affirming "equal marriage rights for couples regardless of gender."
- United Methodist Bishop Joe Sprague of Chicago in a lecture at Iliff Seminary in Denver ridiculed traditional Christian beliefs about Jesus' deity, virgin birth, and physical resurrection as "idolatry." He described the virgin birth as a "theological myth," and pointedly

rejected the central teaching of Scripture, that Christ died on the cross for the sins of humanity: "Obviously, such an understanding . . . leaves no room for me to affirm the substitutionary atonement theory that portrays Jesus' blood on the cross as satisfying an angry deity through one majestic sacrificial human death. . . The concept of a blood sacrifice is superstition at best . . ."

- The ELCA's Fortress Press published a book by Gerd Luedemann, professor of theology at the University of Gottingen, asserting that Christ did not rise from the dead and His body rotted in the grave. He says the four accounts of, and many other references to, Christ's resurrection in the New Testament are based only on a mythical legend, not a real event.
- Retired Episcopal Bishop John Shelby Spong has written numerous books rejecting in detail all the teachings of Christianity. He has called for the repudiation of Christianity in favor of creating a new religion for the 21st century. Yet he remains an Episcopal Bishop in good standing.
- Rev. Mansfield Kaseman has been allowed to remain a pastor in the Presbyterian Church (USA) although he refuses to state even the simple confession, "Jesus is God." He adamantly asserts he cannot say

Crossnotes

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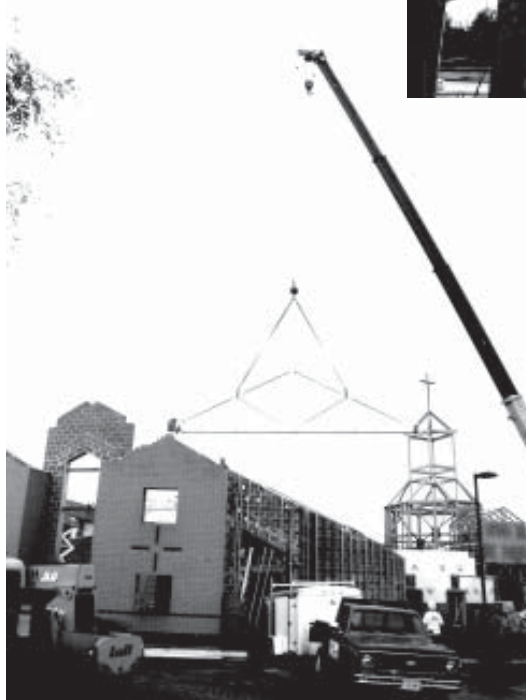
October, 2007

Volume 5

Number 10



*Building
for the
Future*



On September 18 the massive wooden trusses were raised which support the sanctuary ceiling of tongue-and-groove wood planks, which has now also been installed. Such open trusses are unusual for a modern church building and will give our sanctuary a great sense of space and should help provide excellent acoustics. These trusses and matching cross beams are of a dark stain, with the ceiling being natural pine. The Hearth Room ceiling is of similar construction.

this, because he doesn't believe that Jesus is God.

- Rev. Bill Phipps, leader of the United Church of Canada, Canada's largest Protestant denomination, stated, "I do not believe Jesus was God," and that "I do not believe He rose from the dead."
- Episcopal Bishop Frank Griswold, formerly Presiding Bishop, admitted: "Broadly speaking, [our] Church is in conflict with Scripture. The only way to justify it is to say, well, Jesus talks about the Spirit guiding the church and guiding believers and bringing to their awareness things they cannot deal with yet. So one would have to say that the mind of Christ operative in the church over time . . . has led the church to in effect contradict the words of the Gospel."
- The main theology textbook used in ELCA seminaries says: "Today it is impossible to assume the literal historicity of all things recorded. What the biblical authors report is not accepted as a literal transcript of the factual course of events."

Sadly, these examples are just the proverbial tip of the iceberg. Just as even a minor error in an ancient cornerstone could result in the compromise and collapse of the entire building, the supposedly minor errors introduced into these denominations decades ago have resulted in their collapse—literally. It is not just a coincidence that all the denominations mentioned above have experienced staggering, accelerating losses in membership and attendance.

Historian Thomas C. Reeves studied this phenomenon in his book *The Empty Church*, which he aptly subtitled: *The Suicide of Liberal Christianity*. That is exactly what these and many other denominations have done: committed institutional suicide by trying to build on something other than the solid rock of Christ and His Word. As Paul says in 1 Corinthians 3:11, "For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ."

Today, a building's cornerstone is only decorative and ceremonial. However, because this imagery is used so often in the New Testament, in a Christian church building the cornerstone has great symbolic significance. It reminds us how foolish it is to build our faith on sand, that it does no good to build a beautiful new sanctuary if we are not *spiritually* and *doctrinally* building our faith and our church on the solid rock of Christ and His Word, which is what our cornerstone represents.

As the Augsburg Confession of the Lutheran Church declares:

"We teach these doctrines, fully aware that we would endanger our soul's salvation if we deviated in the least from the Word of God, and thus took his name in vain. Nor do we wish to pass on, or hand down, to our children a teaching that would adulterate the divine Word and Christian truth."

Pastor Kevin Vogts



October 7

*"The Mustard Seed
and the Mulberry Tree"*

Luke 17:5-6

October 14

*"Always Pray and
Do Not Lose Heart"*

Luke 18:1-8

October 21
*"Make Christ Alone
Your Cornerstone"*
Psalm 118:22

October 28
*"What It Means
to Be a Lutheran"*
Ephesians 2:8-9



Cornerstone Laying and Hog Roast October 21

The Cornerstone Laying for our new sanctuary will be Sunday, October 21. The service at 9:15am will be themed for this occasion. However, in order to allow members of other area congregations and the community to also attend, the Cornerstone Laying ceremony itself will be in the afternoon at 3:30pm.

Following this brief ceremony, we will have a Hog Roast for those in attendance and the entire community. Proceeds from the Hog Roast will benefit the Building Fund, with matching funds from Thrivent. Our thanks to Jon and Gail Dorr for donating the hog, and to Rev. Donald Meyer of Trinity Lutheran Church, Marcus, Iowa for roasting it for us. The meal will also include coleslaw, beans and dessert.

Please sign up on the bulletin board to help with the Hog Roast. Help is needed with setup before, in the kitchen during, and cleanup after the event, along with donations of desserts. For more information contact one of the Hog Roast committee: Ginny Peterson, Betty Gunderson, Sherry Isley, Jeri Melstad, Mary Mettenbrink, or Terry Vogts.



**Rev. Wallace Schulz
Speaks at Circuit
Reformation Service
October 28**

The Yankton Circuit, of which our congregation is a part, is holding a joint Circuit Reformation Service at 3:00pm on Sunday, October 28 at St. John's Lutheran Church, Tyndal, South Dakota.

The guest speaker will be Rev. Wallace Schulz, for many years associate speaker of The Lutheran Hour radio ministry and now an worldwide evangelist with the Lutheran Heritage Foundation. An offering will be taken for the work of LHF, which distributes Bible, catechisms, hymnals and other literature in dozens of different languages to Lutheran church bodies around the world.

Following the service refreshments will be served. This is a great opportunity to celebrate our heritage with our fellow Lutherans in the Yankton Circuit and hear a world-renown preacher!



**Birthdays &
Anniversaries
This Month!**

- Ryan Dial, October 2
- Dennis Melstad, October 5
- Denise Fletcher, October 8
- Heidi Finkral, October 8
- Carter Baier, October 12
- Justin Benson, October 15



**Holy Cross
Lutheran
Church
Dakota Dunes**

***Cornerstone Laying
and Hog Roast***

Sunday, October 21

3:30pm — Cornerstone Laying Ceremony

4:00pm-6:00pm — Hog Roast

**BBQ Sandwiches,
Coleslaw, Beans,
Desserts**

**Freewill Offering to
Benefit Building Fund
Matching Funds from Thrivent**



All Invited

***Please Come Help Celebrate
this Milestone in Our Ministry!***

Emma Bargstadt, October 26

Doug & Janet Martin
October 6, 1990

Denise & Patrick Honner
October 16, 2004

We list members' birthdays and anniversaries in the newsletter each month and the bulletin each week. If your information is missing or inaccurate, please accept our apologies and notify the church office at 232-9117 or email holycross@longlines.com.



Elders for October
Rob Finkral and Carroll Gustman

Next Elders Meeting
November 1, 7:00pm



Altar Flowers

The flower calendar is on the bulletin board at the back of the church. Occasions to remember include anniversaries, birthdays, in memory of loved ones, etc. Flowers may be obtained anywhere and you may provide your own vase or use one of the assortment in the church kitchen.

September 9

Joey & Marcy Schroeder
11th Wedding Anniversary

September 16

Madeline Smith & Family
In Memory of Carl C. Smith

September 23

Doug & Janet Martin
Kendall & Kylie's Birthdays

September 30

Joey & Marcy Schroeder
Bryce's & Marcy's Birthdays

October 7

Jon & Gail Dorr

October 14

Harold & Mary Mettenbrink
In Memory of Richard Mehlhaff
and Areita Mettenbrink

November 4

Jane Michels
In Memory of Jim Michels

November 11

Doug & Sue Jansen
Veteran's Day

November 18

Mabel Schibonski
Birthday

November 25

Deb Stein
Birthday



Crucifers

October 7

Myron Bose

October 14

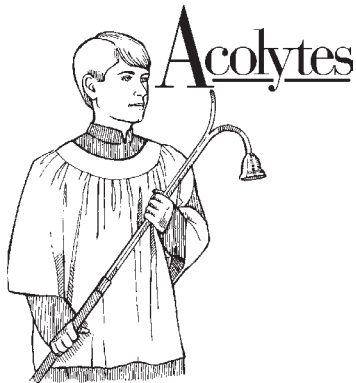
Evan Steemken

October 21

A.J. Michels

October 28

Trevor Vilhauer



Acolytes

October 7

Kylie Martin

October 14

Tyler Fletcher

October 21

Zachary Selby

October 28

Keegan Johnson



BUDGET UPDATE

As of September 30, 2007

Offerings Budgeted	
Per Week for 2007	\$2,495
Average Offerings Received	
Per Week Year-to-Date	\$2,381
Average Shortfall Per Week of Budgeted Offerings	
Year-to-Date	\$114
Total Offerings Budgeted	
Year-to-Date	\$92,865
Total Offerings Received	
Year-to-Date	\$90,130
Total Budget Shortfall	
Year-to-Date	\$2,735



Join the Choir

You are invited to help sing praises to the Lord in the Holy Cross Choir! Choir practice is on Sunday mornings at 8:15am.

We have an active schedule this month, with plans to sing on October 7, October 21 for the Cornerstone Laying, and October 28 for Reformation Sunday.

For more information about the choir contact Janet (258-1124) or Pastor Vogts.



In the back of the church is a sign up sheet to bring snacks for after worship. You are welcome to bring whatever snacks you wish.

Those bringing snacks are also asked to please prepare the coffee. Instructions are posted near the coffee maker. Coffee, cups, napkins, plates, etc. are all provided and in the kitchen. Thank you to those providing snacks!

October 7
Dorr

October 14
Mettenbrink

October 21
Winborn

October 28
Volunteers Needed



Each month we remember in prayer in our worship specific missionaries sponsored around the world by our congregation, through our Synod and related organizations.

All the missionaries we are remembering this month are among over 40 newly appointed LCMS missionaries pictured at right who are just beginning their service in the mission field



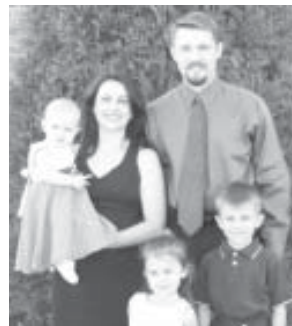
October 7
Nick and Amy Larsen
Japan



October 14
Ashley Effken
Czech Republic



October 21
Delano and Linda Meyer
Sierra Leone



October 28
Rev. Brent and Jennie Smith
Germany



By Nick and Amy Larsen
LCMS Missionaries in Japan

Easter was an amazing time this year. Center Church, Lutheran Language Institute (LLI), and St. Paul's English congregation joined together for an Easter Kids' Day on Easter Sunday between the English service and the Japanese service. Forty-five kids attended! We know only God could have brought that many kids. For many of the children, it was their first time to go to church. A few of the members of Center Church told the Easter story and planned an oral quiz for the students after the story. Many of the answers to the quiz were, 'Jesus.' It was moving to hear children speak the name of Jesus for the first time!

We had another Kids' Day on a Saturday in June. This time, 11 children came. The number was quite a few less than Easter, but those who came were children whose parents really want them to learn about the Bible. These 11 kids have been to almost all the Kids' Days. One of the mothers asked me if we would be starting anything for teens. She wants her older daughter to start learning about Christian values. Even though some of the moms bring their children just to hear English, everything is completely bilingual and the children learn Bible verses and learn about God. We are planning another Kids' Day in October. Please pray that God will bring children into the church to learn more about Him.

Nick's Bible study is continuing to go really well! They just finished reading the Gospel of John and are beginning 1 Corinthians. Each week they are able to have great conversations about faith. One man who comes to the Bible study is not a Christian, but he continues to ask great questions. Nick looks forward to

this Bible study each week. It is fun to just walk around Hanno with Nick. He has really been out in the community making friends with our neighbors, the store workers, and local students. He is always saying hi to people and making connections. Our relationship with a family that lives on the first floor of our apartment building has been blossoming. Nick was able to talk to the husband and tell him why we came to Japan. He was so surprised to learn that we were missionaries. He thought missionaries just handed out tracts on the street corner! We look forward to spending more time with that family!



Our women's group, Holy Cross Women in Mission, received this note of thanks from Jackson Recovery Centers:

Thank you so much for your generous donation of seven quilts for the patients at our Women and Children's Center. You are appreciated!

All women are invited to participate in our women's group Holy Cross Women in Mission. Meetings are the second Wednesday of the month at 7:00pm. The next meeting is October 10. For more information contact Janet Martin (2329657).

LCMS Deaconess Murdered, Suspect Arrested

A man who was helped by a kind and well-loved deaconess with a heart for helping the less fortunate has been arrested for her murder.

Benjamin Fish, 47, is being held by police in Wichita, Kan., as a suspect in the beating death of LCMS Deaconess Evelyn Middelstadt, 79. Fish, who had driven Middelstadt's car to Oklahoma and was returned to Wichita by a relative, was charged Aug. 3 with first-degree felony murder, aggravated robbery, and felony theft.

The body of Middelstadt, a retired social worker, was found August 1 at the office of Minority Contractors and Consultants, Inc., where she



worked as assistant manager. She was "trusting of people," according to company president and close friend Moses Thompson, and had a hard time saying "no" to those who asked for help.

In the months before her death, Middelstadt had reportedly given money and rides to Fish, a part-time employee of the firm. The deaconess was known for her service to others. She co-founded the Kansas Self-Help Network, along with her mother, at her kitchen table in 1984. The network connects those who need help with more than 3,000 support groups, and is the second-largest organization of its kind in the country, according to news reports.

Rev. Allen Hoger, pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church in Wichita, said Middelstadt will be "especially remembered for finding homes for—and for helping homes with—children with special needs."

The deaconess also was "an advocate for mutual understanding between the races, and for minority rights," he said, and "a great asset to Moses Thompson, who sought as a minority business owner to help the residents of central Wichita by securing contracts for demolition and asbestos removal."

Thompson, who had known Middelstadt for more than 30 years and considered her his closest friend, said the deaconess had helped several of his family members and likely would have forgiven her killer.

"She was that kind of person," he said, adding, "She taught me how to understand and accept people."

The deaconess also served the Immanuel congregation through teaching, helping parish families in various ways, administering its "Love Fund" to help members and non-members in financial need, coordinating its English-as-a-second-language program, and overseeing its monthly food-distribution program.

Even though she was slightly built and soft-spoken, Middelstadt "possessed a fiery tenacity when it came to helping others secure what they needed," Pastor Hoger told Reporter. "She was also very level-headed and kind-spoken, and was cherished for how she always treated people fairly and did not speak ill of anyone."

A story on the Web site of *The Wichita Eagle* characterized Middelstadt as "fearless."

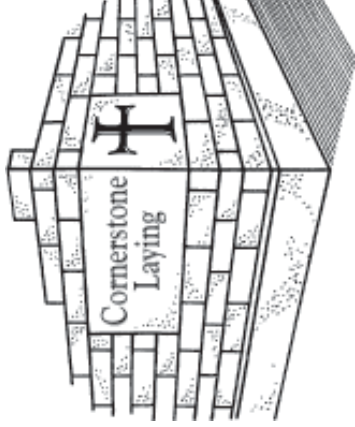
"She thought nothing of walking through known gang neighborhoods and handing out fliers for Immanuel Lutheran Church," said the *Eagle*, paraphrasing Phyllis Jenish, parish secretary at Immanuel.

Hoger told the *Eagle* that Middelstadt wasn't naïve about danger because she knew what could happen—she had been in frightening situations before. But she willingly went where she needed to go to help others, he said.

"God is going to speak to this community through her death, even as He did through her life," Hoger told the newspaper.

More than a dozen members of the Lutheran Deaconess Association joined 200-plus mourners at Middelstadt's August 7 funeral at Immanuel, which featured the Deaconess Litany and "was packed with poignant and joyous hymns," Hoger said.

The deaconess is survived by a brother and sister-in-law, Ron and Barb Middelstadt of Elk River, Minn. Memorial contributions may be made to the Lutheran Deaconess Association, 1304 LaPorte Ave., Valparaiso, IN 46383, and the Self-Help Network Center, c/o Wichita State University, Department of Psychology, P.O. Box 201, Wichita, KS 67260.



Holy Cross
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Dakota Dunes

Cornerstone Laying and Hog Roast

Sunday, October 21

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4:00pm-6:00pm — Hog Roast

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Return Service Requested