



There were some mind-boggling developments last month regarding homosexuality. Widely publicized in the news media was a court ruling which allowed so-called homosexual "marriage" to begin in California. But, the really mind-boggling developments were in the realm of religion.

As this editorial cartoon so graphically portrays, many denominations are throwing out the Bible and its morals in favor of liberal theology and the decadent morals of our modern lifestyle. The results of this trend were shockingly evident last month.

The national convention of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. voted to become the latest denomination to endorse openly homosexual clergy; the first openly homosexual bishop in the Episcopal Church "married" his male partner in a civil union; two male clergyman in the Church of England "married" each other in a full church ceremony; and the Lutheran Church in Germany began the process

of electing the first openly homosexual Lutheran bishop. All these deplorable events took place just last month!

Because liberal denominations and clergy claim Biblical support for such blasphemy, we will look this month at what the Bible really does say about homosexuality.

We humans are all equally sinful.

Paul says in Romans 3:10-12, "There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one."

Our human laws differentiate between different levels and types of

So no one has the right to any kind of holier-than-thou attitude! As Paul says: "There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. . . What shall we conclude then? Are we any better? No, not at all!" (Romans 3:22-23, 9).

Jesus' blood atones for all sins of all people.

The Lord says in Isaiah 1:18, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool." No matter what your sins may be, that is how the Lord sees you through faith in Christ: white as snow. As 1 John 1:7 says, "The blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from every sin."

Homosexual thoughts and actions are not unforgivable sins. In 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, Paul includes homosexuality among a list of sins: "Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God." Then Paul continues with the Good News: "And that is what some of you were. But you were

washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God." So, Paul specifically says that some of the Christians at Corinth had been "homosexual offenders" and that this sin also is forgiven through faith in Christ.

To "repent" means struggling to change your life, to literally "turn away" from sinful thoughts, words and deeds.



crime: misdemeanors and felonies; violent and non-violent; first offense and repeat offenders. But God doesn't see things that way; in God's judgment, sin is sin, no matter who commits it or what that sin may be. James 2:10 puts it this way: "For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it."

As 1 Peter 2:11 says, "Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul."

The story is told of a young man with a bad reputation who came to faith in Christ as his Savior and applied for membership in a local church. "Were you a sinner before you received the Lord Jesus into your life?" the pastor asked. "Yes, sir," he replied. "Well, are you still a sinner?" "To tell you the truth," he said, "I feel like I'm a greater sinner than ever." "Then what change have you experienced in your life?" the pastor asked. "I don't quite know how to explain it," he said, "except that I used to be a sinner running after sin, but now I'm a sinner running from sin."

That's what the Lord expects of us all. No matter what particular temptations you personally may face in your life, the Lord expects you not to run after sin but to run from sin. As Paul says in 1 Corinthians 6:18-20, "Flee from sexual immorality. . . Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body."

Human sexuality is a good gift of God, but sexual activity of any kind is permitted only between a man and a woman who are husband and wife.

Crossnotes

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After the creation of male and female, after the creation of human sexuality, the creation story concludes in Genesis 1:31: "And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good." The Lord says in Acts 10:15, "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean." So human sexuality, when exercised according to God's plan, is not something impure or wicked or sinful, but a good gift of God.

With one limitation: sexual activity of any kind is permitted only between a man and a woman who are husband and wife. Jesus asked, "Haven't you read that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh?'" (Matthew 19:4-5). So this special union is reserved for "male and female" who are husband and wife.

Homosexuality is no worse than any other sin—but it is still a sin.

Despite what some are preaching, there are indeed many passages in the Bible which make clear that homosexual thoughts and actions are sinful: The story of Sodom and Gomorrah in Genesis 19:1-29; blunt prohibitions in Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13; in 1 Timothy 1:9-10, Paul describes homosexuality as "those that defile themselves with mankind" and he says that it is "contrary to sound doctrine;" Jude 7 describes it as "going after strange flesh;" in Romans 1:18-27, Paul cites homosexuality as an example of humankind rejecting God's will: "Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion."

So, homosexuality is no worse than any other sin—but it is still a sin, and no one has the authority to change that.

The Lord Himself prescribes heterosexual marriage as the remedy for sexual temptations and sins, including homosexuality.

"But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband. The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. . . If they cannot control themselves, they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passion" (1 Corinthians 7:2-5, 9).

Miscellaneous Issues

What is the percentage of the population? You may have heard the figure 10%. You probably don't know that figure comes from a study conducted in the 1940's among the prison population of New York State—not exactly a representative sample.

In 1993, a properly conducted scientific study indicated that the actual figure is about 1%. That does not mean that the 99% has a license to be hateful or even violent toward the 1%! Paul says in Ephesians 4:15 that we should be "speaking the truth in love." Not hate and violence, but love!

Whether it's 1% or 10%, from a spiritual standpoint the percentage of the population really doesn't matter. Whether or not something is a sin is not decided by what percentage does it, but by the Word of God.

Another question is whether people with homosexual tendencies are born that way or if it is caused by environment. The medical evidence on this is inconclusive.

Again, from a spiritual standpoint it really doesn't matter whether people are born with homosexual tendencies. We know that some people are born with a susceptibility to alcohol, but that doesn't mean they are exempt from God's command against alcohol abuse. In the same way, even if—because of humankind's fall into sin and the resulting impairment of our physical nature—some people are born with homosexual tendencies, that does not mean they are exempt from God's command against it.

Another question is whether or not AIDS is a direct punishment from God for homosexuality. Psalm 103:10 tells us flatly that God does not work that way: "He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities." God does not mete out tit-for-tat punishments!

If you drive down an icy road at 100 miles an hour and have an accident, God did not cause the accident, and it is not a punishment from him, but simply the natural earthly consequence of your own actions. In the same way, we cannot conclude that AIDS contracted through homosexual activity is a direct punishment from God, but it is simply the natural earthly consequence of that action. In any case, we are called upon as Christians to show compassion and kindness to anyone suffering in that way, no matter what the circumstances.

Finally, wasn't the Bible—especially St. Paul—just conforming to the culture of that time in prohibiting homosexuality? If anyone tries to tell you that, they either don't know what they're talking about or they're deliberately misleading you! Homosexuality was not at all prohibited in the culture of that time, but the exact opposite: in the Greek-Roman world homosexuality was totally accepted and approved of.

Actually, Paul wouldn't have had to say anything against homosexuality if the culture of that day already prohibited it. For example, he doesn't say anything against cannibalism because the culture of that day already prohibited it. So, the very reason Paul had to speak out against homosexuality was because the culture of that day totally accepted and approved of it.

We close with the words of St. Paul from 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8, words that are directed to all of us: "It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God. . . . The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you and warned you. For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God."

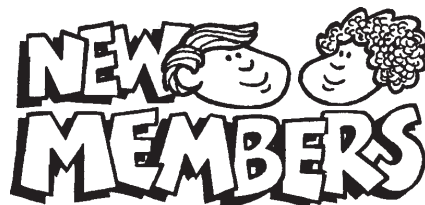
Pastor Kevin Vogts



BUDGET UPDATE

As of June 29, 2008

Total Offerings Budgeted	
Year-to-Date	\$74,930
Total Offerings Received	
Year-to-Date	\$72,903
Total Budget Deficit	
Year-to-Date	(\$2,027)



We welcome into membership **Merlin and Glenda Schincke**. Merlin is finance manager at Knoepfler Chevrolet and Glenda works for Hirschbach. They lived previously in Bancroft, Nebraska and are at home in Dakota Dunes at 465 Bluestem Trail; 605-422-1630.



Habitat for Humanity Project— Holy Cross Volunteers Needed

On Saturday, July 26th from 8:30am-4:30pm, 12-15 members of Holy Cross age 16 years and older are needed to serve as carpenters (won't Jesus be proud!) on Thrivent Financial for Lutheran's and Habitat for Humanity's latest house building project in the Riverside area in Sioux City. Jackie Baker is our congregation's coordinator for this project.

We will also provide snacks for the morning and afternoon as well the lunch. Beverages will be provided by Thrivent. We plan to feed 20 and will also provide the paper products.

Megan is the prospective homeowner for the home we will be working on, and according to the site manager she is the hardest worker she has ever had. She is currently living in Sioux City in an upstairs apartment with her two children. She was selected after an extensive application and interview process. She is strong in her Lutheran faith and will well exceed her obligatory 250 hours working on the house.

The site is located on the corner of Bryan and Goldie Streets. Workers ages 16 and older are needed (those 16-18 must parental permission and will be unable to use electrical tools).

The sign-up sheet, which contains additional information, is located in the

Gathering Room, or you can call Jackie with questions at 239-2674. This is a great opportunity for Christian fellowship, to lend a hand in Siouxland, and to serve our Lord.

Two thirds of the funding for each home will be paid by Thrivent. Since 1991, Thrivent and its members have worked with Habitat for Humanity to build more than 500 homes, raise more than \$25 million and contribute more than 1.4 million volunteer hours in homebuilding time. Holy Cross can be a part of that incredible record!

Habitat owners are expected to make a 1% down payment upon closing of their house and will pay an average mortgage payment of \$350 per month. The owner must also pay their property insurance and taxes. The application process makes certain that the applicant will be able to follow through on these responsibilities. Habitat for Humanity's motto is: "It's not a hand out, it's a hand up."



Potluck Dinner and Quarterly Business Meeting July 27

All adult members of Holy Cross are automatically voting members of the congregation. The next quarterly business meeting of our Voter's Assembly is Sunday, July 27.

There will be a potluck dinner at 11:30am with the meeting starting at 12:15pm. Everyone is urged to come enjoy the potluck and stay to help administer the business side of Holy Cross.

The last quarterly business meeting for 2008 will be on Sunday, October 26. For more information contact congregational chairman Doug Martin (232-9657).



Summer Sermon Series on Philippians

In June we began a "Summer Sermon Series" on the book of Philippians. Here are the remaining weekly topics, with selections from Philippians for you to read in preparation for the sermon:

July 6

*"Look Not Only to
Your Own Interests"*
Philippians 2:3-11

July 13

"Press on Toward the Goal"
Philippians 3:1-14

July 20

"Friendly Fire?"
Philippians 3:15-19

July 27

*"Four Questions About
the Resurrection"*
Philippians 3:20-4:1

August 3

Rev. Donald Winterrowd
Guest Preacher

August 10

Rev. Steven Benson
Guest Preacher

August 17

*"The Cause and Characteristics
of Christian Joy"*
Philippians 4:4-7

August 24

"Think on Such Things"
Philippians 4:8-9

August 31

"The Secret of Contentment"
Philippians 4:10-13



With the help of volunteer Church Receptionists, the Church Office is now open Tuesday thru Friday from 9:00am-11:00am. This gives you a regular time to stop by the church for dropping off announcements, delivering flowers, etc. Pastor Vogts will often be in his study at Holy Cross during this time also, but he sometimes has other commitments.



Prayer Garden and Fountain Installed

A special feature of our landscaping now being installed is a Prayer Garden accessible from the Gathering Room.

The Prayer Garden includes a large patio, which is tinted and molded to look like stone. Bordering the patio is a

striking fountain, designed to look like a natural waterfall. A footbridge extends from the patio to a deck, to which a gazebo can later be added.

Our thanks for the generous designated gift which provided this special feature of our new church.



Stained Glass Update

The stained glass window for above our altar is currently being crafted by Bovard Studios, Fairfield, Iowa. They now estimate that it will be installed in mid-August, which is later than originally planned.

The delay was caused mainly by a large order for a cathedral in California being received the day before our order. Projects are completed on a "first in, first out" basis.

Also, they report that due to the detail and complexity of our window it is taking the artists longer than anticipated. It is actually four windows in one, featuring detailed scenes of the nativity, ministry, crucifixion, and resurrection of our Lord.

Finally, for consistency they prefer to have certain artists carry through the entire project, and these delays caused a conflict with the scheduled vacations of the lead artists working on our window.

Bovard Studios also reported that they have a large sketch of our window's design in their reception area and visitors often comment how striking it is. They said they consider it a signature piece for their firm and one of the finest, most unique windows they have ever produced.

Jump in with Jesus

VBS Success!

Over 70 children were blessed at our Vacation Bible School the week of June 2-6. Our theme was "Jump in with Jesus," featuring the Bible stories of Noah and the Ark, the Parable of the Sower, Jesus Calming the Storm, the Raising of Lazarus, and Christ's Death and Resurrection.

Each child was given as a gift from our congregation two Arch books of the last two stories. The children donated \$480 in their daily offerings, which will be used to buy similar children's Bible story books for distribution to needy children in the Siouxland area through local charities.

Thanks so much to all those who helped, especially: Janelle Berghult, Myron Bose, Quinton Bose, Zahn Bose, Wendy Brown, Andrew Dreibelbus, Joey Ellikson, Heidi Finkral, Amy Giorgio, Sherry Isley, Jeri Melstad, Melanie Melstad, Mary Mittenbrink, Brian Moore, Joey Schroeder, Tiara Selby, Emily Steemken, Deb Stein, Jacob Vogts, Sarah Vogts, Megan Winborn, along with Board of Education members Daniell Bargstadt, Angela Dial, Larissa Kommes, Terry Vogts and Pat Winborn, Pastor Vogts, and all who brought snacks.

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

Elders for July

Jon Dorr, Joey Schroeder
& Ron Yockey

July Elders Meeting

July 1, 7:00pm

Usher for July Andy Winborn

Junior Ushers for July

July 6—Quinton Bose
July 13—Tyler Fletcher
July 20—Keegan Johnson
July 27—Kendall Martin

Crucifers for July

July 6—Sarah Vogts
July 13—Myron Bose
July 20—Dylan Sawyer
July 27—Kylie Martin

Acolytes for July

July 6—Kasey Michels
July 13—Jace Waybright
July 20—Emily Steemken
July 27—Tiara Selbey



ALTAR FLOWERS

The flower calendar is located on the table in the Gathering Room. 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.

June 8

Doug & Sue Jansen
Birthdays

Jennifer Wolfe and Ryan Wadsworth
40th Wedding Anniversary of the Late
Jim Michels and Jane Michels

June 15

Rev. Kevin & Terese Vogts
Jacob's Birthday

June 22

Doug & Janet Martin
Kaleb and Kaden's Birthdays

June 29

John & Sherry Isley
Wedding Anniversary

July 6
Harold & Mary Mettenbrink
Wedding Anniversary

July 13
Dolores Hageman
Birthday

July 20
Ginny Peterson
Husband Bob's Birthday

August 17
Marcy, Bryce & Brady Schroeder
Joey's Birthday

August 24
Rev. Kevin & Terese Vogts
Anna's Birthday

August 31
Rev. Kevin & Terese Vogts
Sarah's Birthday



Our congregation has designated a tithe of 10% of our general offerings to support the work of our District and Synod. Each month we remember in prayer in our worship services specific missionaries around the world who are supported in this way by our congregation.

July 6
Anna Meyer
Taiwan

July 13
Rev. Frederick Reinhardt
Senegal

July 20
Efrain Diaz
Japan

July 27
Shauen & Krista Trump
Uganda



Karen Brock, July 5
Nichole Dial, July 5
Jacob Michels, July 6
Dolores Hageman, July 13
Shannon Feese, July 16
Gloria Barnum, July 20
James Miller, July 28

Harold & Mary Mettenbrink,
July 6, 1985

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.



Summer Bible Study on Understanding Islam

Our Summer Bible Study in Adult Bible Class is "Understanding Islam." An important part of the class each week will be videos featuring Drs. Emir and Ergun Caner, who were raised Muslim by a mosque leader but became Christian and are now both seminary professors.

We will look at the history of Islam and the key differences between Islam and Christianity. Join in Sunday mornings at 10:30am.



Preschool Registration Night July 29

Holy Cross Preschool and After School Care will hold an Open House and Registration Night on Tuesday, July 29 from 6:00pm-7:30pm. This is an opportunity for parents and children to see the facilities and meet the staff. Our program includes:

Mom's Day Out

Cindy Feeser, Teacher
2-3 year-olds
\$105 per month
Tuesday & Thursday
8:30am-11:00am

Preschool

Cindy Feeser, Teacher
3-4 year-olds
\$130 per month
Monday, Wednesday, & Friday
8:30am-11:15am

Pre-Kindergarten

Julie Larson, Teacher
4-5 year-olds
\$130 per month
Monday, Wednesday, & Friday
8:30am-11:15am

After School Care for Kindergarten-6th grade is until 6:00pm and follows the Dakota Valley school calendar (\$10 per day; \$12 per early out day). The children are dropped off by the Dakota Valley and Sacred Heart busses.

Spaces fill up fast so if you are interested or have a grandchild, friend, neighbor, etc. who may be interested you are encouraged to please register *now* to reserve a place for fall.







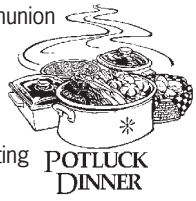




HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH

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 Cell: 712-898-4818 Email: pastorvogts@longlines.com
www.holycrossdakotadunes.org

2008

July 

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><i>Ruler of the nations, we humbly pray that You look with favor upon our country. Give wisdom to our leaders, bless us with peace and prosperity, and especially grant that Your Gospel may be proclaimed in our land for the salvation of many souls; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.</i></p>		<p>1 7:00pm Board of Elders</p>	<p>2 9:00am-3:00pm Summer Day Camp</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4  INDEPENDENCE DAY Church Office Closed</p>	<p>5 Karen Brock Nichole Dial</p>
<p>6 8th Sunday after Pentecost 9:15am Worship with Holy Communion 10:30am Bible Class Jacob Michels Harold & Mary Mettenbrink</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9 9:00am-3:00pm Summer Day Camp 10:30am Women's Tea </p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p>
<p>13 9th Sunday after Pentecost 9:15am Worship with Holy Communion 10:30am Bible Class Dolores Hageman</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15  Newsletter Deadline</p>	<p>16 9:00am-3:00pm Summer Day Camp 6:30pm Board of Education Shannon Feese</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p>	<p>19</p>
<p>20 10th Sunday after Pentecost 9:15am Worship with Holy Communion 10:30am Bible Class Gloria Barnum</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22  St. Mary Magdalene</p>	<p>23 9:00am-3:00pm Summer Day Camp</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25  St. James the Apostle</p>	<p>26 8:30am-4:30pm Habitat for Humanity Project </p>
<p>27 11th Sunday after Pentecost 9:15am Worship with Holy Communion 10:30am Bible Class 11:30am Potluck Dinner 12:15pm Quarterly Business Meeting  POTLUCK DINNER James Miller</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29 6:00pm-7:30pm Preschool Open House & Registration Night </p>	<p>30 9:00am-3:00pm Summer Day Camp</p>	<p>31</p>	<p> Church Office Hours Tuesday-Friday 9:00am-11:00am</p>	

Deadline for Calendar Submissions or Changes is the 15th of the Prior Month
Email to holycross@longlines.com or Leave Voicemail Message at Church Office
This Calendar May Not Reflect Late Submissions or Changes



Quarterly Business Meeting and Potluck Dinner

Sunday, July 27
Potluck—11:30am
Meeting—12:15pm

All Invited — Everyone Welcome!



Holy Cross Preschool Open House and Registration Night

Tuesday, July 29
6:00pm-7:30pm

See the Facility – Meet the Staff
Register *Now* for Fall
For Information Call 235-1688



Return Service Requested

Rev. Kevin Vogts, Pastor
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