

Open Arms

From Pastor Paul's Desk

April 2005

Volume XIV, Issue

Dear Friends,

Easter is here and we celebrate the new life that is ours in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

What a wonderful worship event we had on Easter Sunday. The music, flowers, happy children, the inspiration of a son and mother baptism, were all a great joy to behold. Our numbers, as we have come to expect them each year, were high. "Wouldn't it be nice if all these people showed up every week" was a frequently heard comment. The day was fantastic but, of even greater value, is the promise that we have new life in our resurrected Lord. Out of death new life can arise.

The extraordinarily painful drama of Terry Schiavo.

I believe that it is the place of the church to comment on the issues that affect people's everyday lives. What can I, as your pastor, say about

this painful story? In some ways it is very tempting to say nothing at all because I know that there is a wide range of feelings on this issue. I know that some of you spend a great deal of time listening to the TV and those who are influential in that medium, whether from a Christian perspective or a secular direction. It is tempting to leave this for the loudest talkers. But I need to make a few comments.

The first obvious comment has to be to acknowledge the terrible pain that the family must be experiencing. One can only imagine how difficult it must be to go into that room and visit with Terri, to see her, to talk to her, to hope for clear signs of life. Some of those by the bedside have found those signs of life and others have not. Even the doctors are divided on the severity of the brain injury. Of course, some of the doctors of-

fering their opinions on her condition have done so without actually visiting her bedside or examining the medical testing results. And to make matters worse, this whole drama has been continuing for 15 years and much of the more incendiary portions of it have repeatedly led to the courthouse.

From what I can tell, there have been a great many distortions and falsehoods spoken by persons on both sides of this issue. That makes it hard to shape an informed opinion. You have to spend much time sorting through a variety of competing claims and compare and contrast them to whatever resources you yourself possess, such as prior experience.

Having arrived at an opinion, we then need to be careful about making a judgment on the families involved in the Schiavo story. Clearly this is a clarion call for

us to prepare advanced directives about our wishes in regard to extraordinary life sustaining measures. Science has now made it possible for us to be sustained far beyond the time when we would have survived if nothing had been done. Be sure and let your loved ones know what you want, in writing. Better that this situation never arise.

Brain activity is really odd. When I have seen people in a coma it has not always been clear what was happening. Usually the nurses are the best source of information for what to expect. You cannot rely on what people look like. I think the truth about Tern's condition could never be discerned by watching how she looked or moved. But then I don't really know. What I do know is that I would not wish to be left in a vegetative state for 15 years, even

Cont. on page 2

Cont. from page 1

if you don't want to let me go. Also, I believe in the promise God is the Lord of life, and that ultimately His will shall prevail. I believe in the promise of new life and resurrection that is ours in Jesus Christ. Tern's physical struggle ended today, March 31. Please continue your prayers for Tern's family and for our nation, that we might treat each other with dignity and civility, even when we disagree. As for Tern, she is in God's awesome hands. To God be all the glory.

We are anxious to get on with the work of Living God Church

Yes! The Call committee has been selected and installed. The members are: Harold Atkins, chairperson; Tim Bream, Sue Fessenbecker, Chris Gursky, Elaine Hughes-Dobles; and Emily Schuerin. They have begun their work already, having chosen their chairperson and contacted the synod. They have begun reading the self-study materials that we gathered through your questionnaires. They are on their way. In May they should be busy meeting with candidates. God bless their work.

Your Interim Pastor,
Paul Townsend

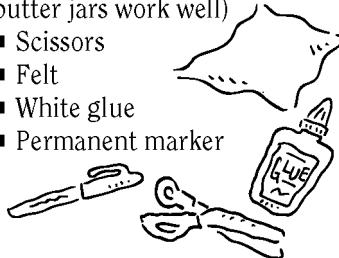
Save for a Rainy Day



Any day is a good day to start saving money for a rainy day. Make your own "Rainy Day Fund" bank.

Here's what you'll need:

- A clean plastic jar (peanut butter jars work well)
- Scissors
- Felt
- White glue
- Permanent marker



Here's how to make it:

1. Clean and remove the label from the plastic jar.
2. Cut out an umbrella shape from felt and glue it to the side of the jar.
3. Use the marker to write "Rainy Day Fund" on the jar.
4. Cut a slot in the lid (you may need an adult to help).
5. When you get your allowance or earn money doing something for someone, put the money in the lid's slot.
6. Save the money for something special or important. Spend money wisely and remember to give an offering to your church or Sunday school.



Be an April fool

English essayist and poet Charles Lamb (1775-1834) once joked, "Here cometh April again, and as far as I can see the world hath more fools than ever."

April Fools' Day is best known as a day for practical jokes, but it can be used in more beneficial ways. It can be a day of faith and fun - a day to thank God for the joyous times of life, for the days of laughter, for funny stories, for the antics of children and for other things that bring smiles to our faces.

There is opportunity for laughter every day. Laugh! Laugh heartily and often. You will find healing in mirth and levity. And remember, "He who sits in the heavens laughs ..." (Psalms 2:4, NRSV).

God Isn't Deaf

Little Sonia was praying loudly to God and asking for a new doll for her birthday. Her mother interrupted her and said, "There's no need to shout. God isn't deaf."

Sonia responded, "No, but Grandpa is and he's in the family room watching TV."

Last Minute Planning

It was the start of a holiday weekend, and the service station was crowded. Finally, an attendant hustled up to the local minister who had been waiting in line for some time. "I'm sorry about the delay, pastor," the attendant apologized, "but it seems like everybody waits until the last minute to get ready for a trip which they knew they were going on all along."

The pastor smiled and said, "I know what you mean. I have the same problem in my business."

Inside this issue:

Women's Tea	3
Steeple to People	3
Youth Group: Laser Tag	4
Yard Sale	4
Announcements	4
Calendar	5

Stewardship

(From *Stewardship*, March 2005)

“His First Dollar”

There is a delightful story about a little church that was having a reunion celebration to which former members who had moved away were invited. One former member who attended was a man who became a self-made millionaire. He, along with others, were giving testimonials on their growth in faith. The rich man talked about when he was a little boy in that church. When he had earned his first dollar, he decided to keep it forever. But, then, a visiting missionary came to the church

and preached about the urgent need for money in the mission fields. Deeply moved, a great struggle came over the little boy when the offering plate was passed. He continued the story:

“However, the Lord won, and I put my treasured dollar in the offering basket. And I am convinced that the reason God blessed me so richly is that when I was a boy, I gave God everything I possessed!” The congregation was all caught up in his testimonial when a little old lady in the front piped up and said, “Mister, I dare you to do it again!”

Call Committee Chosen

The Call Committee has been selected and is now meeting with Synod Representative, Pastor Larry Hand. Pastor Hand will be instructing the Call Committee on the appropriate protocols involved in their important assignment.

The Church Council has decided that interviewing three candidates at a time would be more efficient than interviewing one at a time.

If you have not seen a copy of the Call Process Procedure, there are some available in the church foyer.

The Women's Tea is Scheduled

All of the ladies of Living God Lutheran Church are cordially invited to an Old-Fashioned Victorian/English Tea Party. Lin Williams and Catherine Cattell will co-ordinate the Tea Party.

The Tea Party is scheduled for Sunday afternoon, May 22nd, at 4:00 PM. Tea and coffee will be

served along with tea sandwiches, scones, and tea cakes. Formal attire is optional.

This annual event is all about

The annual Women's Tea will be held on Sunday, May 22, 2005 at 4:00 PM at the Church.

getting together for an afternoon to enjoy one another's company. Women are encouraged to bring along a friend for the occasion.

This year, anyone attending can make a charitable donation to the Bridge of Hope of Chester County.

Steeple to People

CONTRIBUTED BY CAROL SCHMIDT

“Being poor doesn't mean being jobless,” said a recent Challenger, Gray, and Christmas report that found “more and more working families are living at or below the poverty line.” — *Money Magazine*, December 24, 2004.

The single mother has to decide—fuel or food. The man on social security needs medicine

that far exceeds his budget. A woman leaving an abusive husband in North Carolina is trying to return to her parents' home in Ohio when her car breaks down near the Morgantown exit of the turnpike. A family of five has planned and budgeted as close as possible—but it's an extremely cold month and the fuel oil runs out. A retired couple have an opportunity to move to

a lower rent apartment, but don't have the deposit for the new apartment.

In December of 2004, Steeple to People gave ten families food, assisted four families with rent, assisted five families with heating fuel, gave one woman money for child care, helped one family with prescriptions and one more with their phone bill. Quite a ministry, wouldn't you say?

Youth Group Plays Laser Tag CONTRIBUTED BY SERGEY AND JAMES

The Youth Group went to play Laser Tag on Sunday afternoon, March 20th. The object of the game is to shoot at people without getting shot.

For Laser Tag, they gave you a vest. It had lights on it, and you want to shoot at the lights. Your vest had these targets in it, and you get a laser gun to shoot the targets. When you shoot someone's target, it turns off for 5

seconds, and they cannot shoot. If you get shot, you can't shoot anyone else for 5 seconds. When you are shot, the vest will vibrate. Every time you shoot a light, you get points.

It is hard to hide because the targets blink, and if you are wearing white, you will glow. The room is dark with black lights, and the floor is filled with obstacles on two floors. After the

time is up, you get a score on a piece of paper, and you can look on a screen to see what place you come in.

It was really fun to play with the whole Youth Group.



Yard Sale: Fundraiser and Community Outreach

On Saturday, April 23rd, we will host a Community Yard Sale as both a fundraiser and a community outreach effort.

We will rent outdoor space for \$10.00 and a table for an extra \$2.00 to anyone interested in selling their yard sale items. In addition, we will sell food and

refreshments from our kitchen. Both of these will bring in some funds in lieu of a Spring Fling this year.



The church will also have a table where yard sale items can be donated to sell with all proceeds going to church fundraising project.

Set up begins at 6:30 AM. The Yard Sale runs from 8:00 AM until 2:00 PM.

Announcements

Are you single and would like to socialize with other singles? We will be getting together for a matinee movie and dinner afterwards on Sunday, April 24th. Call Carol Schmidt @ 610-873-7966 if you are interested in attending. (Leave your

email address if you have one.) You will be contacted closer to the date with the time and place.

We have a Softball Team. We are in the process of trying to schedule opponents.

There should be a schedule out some time next month.

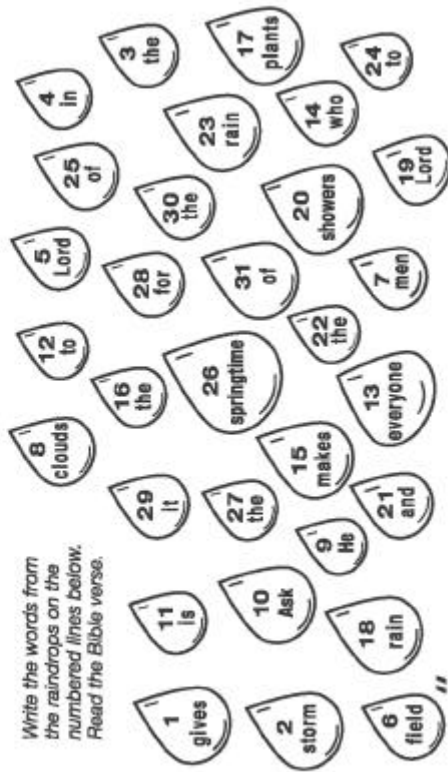
The Stewardship Committee, the Church Council, and Pastor Paul would like to thank all who have contributed their time and talents. Your continued hard work, insight, and



Thank God for Rain

Each spring the Lord sends April showers to water the earth. Without rain to nourish our trees, plants, flowers, fruits and vegetables, there would be a poor growing season and very little to harvest. Thank God for rainy weather!

Write the words from the raindrops on the numbered lines below. Read the Bible verse.



29	10	16	5	28	18
11	4	22		26	
3	19	14	15		
27	2	8			
1	20	31	23		
7	21	17	25		
30	6	24	13		

Zechariah 10:1 (NIV)

Answer: "Ask the Lord for rain in the springtime; it is the Lord who makes the storm clouds. He gives showers of rain to men, and plants of the field to everyone." Zechariah 10:1

April Calendar

Thursday, April 7th @ 7:30 PM	Church Council Meeting
Wednesday, April 13th @ 7:30 PM	Honey Brook Women's Club Meeting
Tuesday, April 19th @ 7:30 PM	Building and Grounds Committee Meeting
Saturday, April 23rd from 8:00 AM — 2:00 PM	Community Yard Sale
Saturday, April 30th from 8:30 AM — 3:30 PM	Youth Group: Helping Hands Day

Church and State

"We have staked the whole future of the American Civilization not on the power of Government, far from it. We have staked the future of all our political institutions upon the capacity of each and every one of us to govern ourselves according to the Ten Commandments of God."

— James Madison

(Chief Architect of the Constitution)

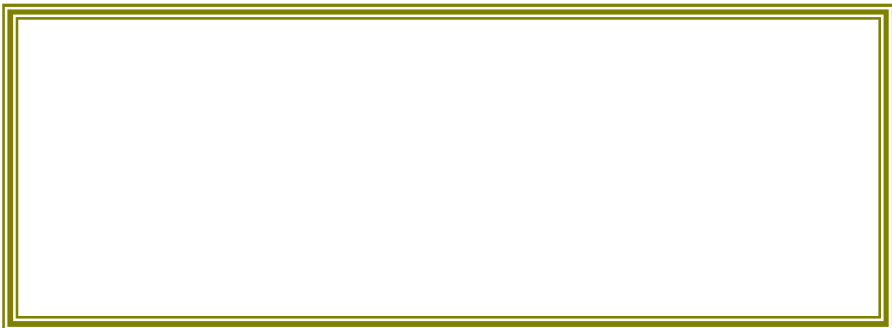
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Extending Open Arms

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