

St. Paul's News

475 State Street Albany, New York 12203

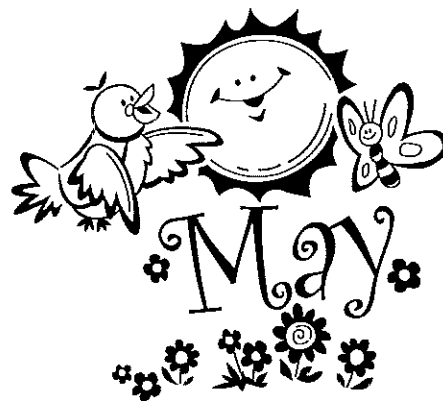
One of the "perks" of the contemporary clergy situation is that you generally have a few folks in the congregation who provide a "free" clipping service – folks who read something, clip it and hand it to me with a word of encouragement to read it before sending it to the landfill. There are one or two "phantom clippers" who discretely place their work in the center of the seat of my desk chair. I suspect that's because they are afraid if it landed on my desk it would be lost forever.

For a while, my father was a compulsive clipper. At the time, he was newly retired and reading the NY Times daily, while I was juggling three kids, a church and school in the Bronx and a doctoral program. His clips I resented on several counts (besides the fact that they came from my father) – both the volume and the quizzes that came with the weekly packet arriving stuffed in another large manila envelope.

These days I appreciate my "clippers". I take it as a sign of hope; some folks still believe whatever the old guy has keeping his ears apart is more than oatmeal mush.

As you might guess, the other day a clipping floated like a message in a bottle to my desk chair. Written by one of a local paper's columnist/commentators, it reported on a book about some very thorough research. The conclusion: exercising your faith through prayer and meditation along with physical exercise could increase your life

span. Notably, the book's author was NOT some clergy-type nor anyone remotely connected with some School of Theology. It was written by a couple of serious neurologist doctor-types. Real science and religion *can* come out in the same place! The suspected jabs at "organized religion" with its attendant "scandals, problems and politics" concluded with a decent one liner: The church is like Noah's Ark: If it



weren't for the storm without, you couldn't stand the smell within!"

Interestingly, our commentator mused that peddling religion as self-improvement was just more consumerism – albeit dressed in the manner of these economic times – drop the big-ticket cars and techie gadgets. Increase your God intake instead. Paradoxically, any spiritual quest as self-improvement is self-defeating! Finally the commentator allowed that maybe God was OK with being the "bait to catch himself". Hmmmm. Doing the right thing for the wrong reason?

Well, the next day I ran across a column in the NY Times – touting

the benefit of a powerful weapon that could help fight illness and depression, speed recovery, slow aging and prolong life: faith? - - NOT! This new miracle element of life is friendship! Of course, all this was backed by multiple sources of varied and extensive research from numerous friendly higher education-types.

You've gotta wonder if your friends have faith, is there a multiplier effect? What if you exercise your faith with your friends - - or would that all be just selfish and void?

Keep the clips coming. With all the info-stuff the vast horde of opinion-type folks constantly feel the need to push at us with the speed of light from the multiplying media – newspapers, magazines, talk radio, talking heads, blogs, internet, IM, tweets, U-Tube, etc. – it gets to be a bit much. Once upon a time, someone would come up to you – "I just finished this – its great" they'd gush - and press into your hands the hard edges of the cover of a book!

Paul

"Mayday, Mayday, Mayday!"

The above words really have nothing to do with the month of May except for using "May" as a part of the words. They come from a French phrase which means **"come and help us!"** and have become an international code asking for help for airplanes and ships in trouble and danger. **"Come and help us"** may be what many of us are thinking and saying in light of today's gloomy economic conditions. Sadly, too many people are losing their jobs and homes and others are pulling back on their spending and giving because of what is happening financially.

"Why would God allow this?"

is a question on the hearts and minds of many people, including faithful Christians. First of all, God did not cause this present condition. It is rather the result of some unwise behavior by many people in the business, financial and political realms. Perhaps we need to frame the question more like this: **"What might God be trying to tell and teach us during such economic times as these?"**

One thing that He may be trying to teach us is to distinguish more carefully and thoughtfully on the difference between our wants and needs. More often than not we have what we need but don't have everything that we want. The desire to have everything is what gets us into financial difficulty.

Another thing that God may be teaching us is to concentrate more on what is really most important. The truth is that God has already come to answer our **"Mayday, Mayday, Mayday!"** call by sending His only-begotten Son to be our Savior. Romans 8:32 offers us the assurance of God's care and concern for us:

"He who did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all—how will He not also, along with Him, graciously give us all things?" (NIV) Jesus in His Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 6:25-34) encourages us not to be overly concerned with material things because our Heavenly Father knows what we need when it comes to food, clothes, shelter and such things. Will God fulfill all our wants? Probably not, but He will take care of our needs. Because of this assurance Jesus instructs us to **"seek first God's kingdom and His righteousness and all these things will be given to us as well."** (Matthew 6:33 NIV).

So, in troubling times like today's economy, we can live with the blessed assurance that God loves us and will take care of us so that we can live as His faithful stewards and continue to support generously the work of His church. Nothing done or given for the support of God's work is ever done or given in vain! Or, to put it another way, **"God's work done in God's way will never lack for God's supply!"**



Ascension Day

Our
Ascension
Day
Service
will
once

again be held up at Eagle Hill Cemetery on Western Ave. We will begin with a picnic supper at 6 pm along with members of the Cluster Churches and worship will follow that.



K.I.T.S

June 28th trip to MacHayden Theater to see HELLO DOLLY

Seniors on the Go! and then to the

Winding Brook Country Club for Lunch. Price is \$40 per person. Call Marion Truland at 235-2277 for reservations.

Senior Communion Luncheon

Wednesday, May 27th, at First Lutheran...

10:30 gathering with goodies

11:00 worship with communion

12:00 luncheon

Please call the church office for reservations (463-0571)

CLUSTER PROJECT MAY-JUNE

The Lutheran Cluster Project for May and June will be for Becky's House, 296 Hackett Blvd, Albany. This temporary residence, within walking distance of the hospital, is a caring environment for loved ones of St. Peter's Hospital patients who live at least an hour away from Albany. One staff person and six volunteers provide for 14-15 guests. They would appreciate the following:

- Snack size applesauce, cereals, fruit, pudding
 - Chips, crackers
 - Herbal teas
 - Paper products (towels, napkins, toilet paper, tissue, paper plates)
 - Plastic utensils
 - Gently used games
 - Disinfectants, detergent (only Tide with Bleach)
 - Video tapes or DVD's
- Monetary donations to be used toward the purchase of linens.

BRILLE MINISTRY

Our devoted Braille Ministry Team meets every Tuesday evening at 6 PM. They could always use more Hands – especially when one member might not be able to make it. Please see Arlene Hurley if you would like to help out!



- 1. Tyghe Daniel McCoy
- 7. JULIE ALEXANDER
- 9. CALLIE BAUM
- 14. MARTA STEPHANOS
- 20. Braxton Harris
- 21. MRS. FRANCES
VAN ACKER
- 24. ROBERT RELYEA, JR.
- 29. NICOLE ALDI
JANET WALTERS
- 31. ANNE RAGONI
- 31. Eisha Dow

Dear Anne Ragoni,

Thank you for the thoughtful, beautiful Easter Card (complete with "cotton tails") What a work of art!! This is a card I call "a keeper" because it will never be disposed of!

I always enjoy the names of those who sign the card. It brings back memories of each person and I love and miss each one of you! St. Paul's will always be my "home" and each one of you "my family"!

The plate of cookies are a great Easter gift also!

A blessed Easter to each of you!
Peg Mull



Thank You

WORSHIP HELPERS

ELDER
Martha Hempel

DATE	FLOWERS	SERVICE STEWARD	Communion Assistant	Coffee Hour
5/3	Mary Boshea in memory of her son, Steven Fiske	Sheryl Baum	Diane Kingsotn	CHOIR
5/10	Annie David in loving memory of her mother	Sheryl Baum	Diane Kingston	MEN'S CLUB FOR MOTHER'S DAY
5/17	The Harris family—Happy Birthday Braxton	David Devaprasad	Anne Ragoni	The Seims
5/24	The Harris Family in celebration of their anniversary	David Devaprasad	Anne Ragoni	The Ragonis
5/31	The Alexanders in celebration of Alex and Bailey's Anniversary	Andrew Van Acker	Christian David	Arlene Hurley

GOD'S BOXES

I have in my hands two boxes,
Which God gave me to hold.
He said, "Put all you sorrows in the black box,
And all your joys in the gold."

I heeded His words, and in the two boxes,
Both my joys and sorrows I stored,
But though the gold became heavier each day,
The black was as light as before.

With curiosity, I opened the black,
I wanted to find out why,
And I saw in the base of the box, a hole
Which my sorrows had fallen out by.

I showed the hole to God, and mused,
"I wonder where my sorrows could be?"
He smiled a gentle smile and said,
"My child, they're all here with me."

I asked God why he gave me the boxes,
Why the gold and the black with the hole?
"My child, the gold is for you to count your blessings,
the black is for you to let go."



THE MAY NEWSLETTER HAS
BEEN SPONSORED BY
ANDREW VAN ACKER.

Here is a Table Prayer shared with
us during the children's sermon one
Sunday by Alec Devaprasad:

Father God, we thank you for food
And clothes and shelter too,
For loving families and for friends
Our flow of blessing never ends.
Amen



Walk Through the Bible
Have Fun While Learning the Bible!
Learn the Old Testament in One
Day!

Well - maybe not everything. But in a few creative, interactive and fun-filled hours you can learn the basic outline of the Old Testament, the important stories and people, and the basic history of God's work with Israel. ***This is not your usual boring, note-taking seminar!***

What: Walk Thru The Bible - Old Testament Seminar

When: Saturday, June 6, 2009, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Where: Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
510 Albany Shaker Road, Loudonville, NY 12211

Cost: Only \$20, including lunch and childcare

For more information or to Register:

By Email: <http://www.goodshepherdchurchloudonville.org>

By Phone: 518-458-1562

Sponsored by:

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

The Albany Lutheran Cluster

The Hudson Mohawk Deacon Training Program

Thrivent - Capital District Chapter

May 2009

St. Paul's Monthly Planner

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																				
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