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Hosanna Hotline

Monthly Newsletter of Hosanna Lutheran Church - January 2012

Serving God, Changing Lives.

January Highlights

Sun., January 1
Epiphany

Mon., January 2
**Office Closed for New
Year's Holiday**

Tue., January 3
**7:00 PM Care Team
Meeting**

Wed., January 4
**7:00 PM Confirmation
Class**

Fri., January 6
**Equal Exchange
Coffee Sunday**

Sat., January 7
6:00 PM District Rally

Sun., January 8
Visit by the Magi
**11:30 AM Gold Award
Ceremony for Claire
Tyrrell**
**11:30 AM Church
Council Meeting**

Wed., January 11
**5:30 PM Hosanna
WELCA Board Meeting**

"A Way of Life Together"

For the past several months we have been working together and praying together, discerning God's purpose for Hosanna Lutheran Church. Everyone has been involved and we arrived at a way of articulating the mission of this congregation, "Serving God. Changing Lives." Once we established this grounding for our future together in ministry, we quickly began building on it by establishing six guiding principles which are grounded in Scripture.

- Praise Jesus as Lord and Savior
- Prayer Changes Everything
- Listen to and Act on God's Word
- Everyone is a Minister, Serving with Joy
- Invite and Welcome All People
- Generously Share God's Blessings

With that bit of history before us, we will be taking the opportunity to experience these guiding principles during our Sunday worship from January 8th to February 12th. The "sermon time" will be dedicated to working with these six principles and allowing them to work in and through us. It will be a time for experiencing each principle, one that we hope will strengthen the foundation for our mission into the future. After worship on February 12th, it is our hope and prayer that everyone will have the Purpose Statement and The Guiding Principles "deep in our bones" and will be equipped to move forward together.

We invite and welcome you to this experience! Please join us as we seek to grow in "A Way of Life Together!"

Your Mission Focus Ministry Team



Mon., January 12
7:00 PM Leadership
Meeting with Hosanna
and Nueva Vision

Sat., January 14
7:00 PM Women's
Interfaith Book
Discussion

Sun., January 15
Mission of the Month
Noisy Offering

Mon., January 19
10:00 AM Bishop's
Worship Excellence
Team Meeting-Synod
Office

Sat., January 21
Cub Scout Pinewood
Derby

Sun., January 22
10:00 AM Worship and
Mentoring Sunday (No
Kid's Church)
11:30 AM
Congregation Annual
Meeting

Sun., January 29
Blood Drive

Quick Links

[Hosanna Website](#)

[Weekly Cyberline](#)

[I'm New to Hosanna:](#)
[Find Hosanna](#)



Insiders and Outsiders

By Bishop Mike Rinehart

Here's my hunch. Everything for me rises or falls on this bet. I'm putting all my eggs in this basket:

The turnaround of the mainline churches will happen when we in those churches care as much about those outside the church, as we do those inside. To embrace relevance, we will have to let go of survival.

That's it. That's all I've got. If I'm wrong, fire me now. I'll die on this hill.

What does this mean?

My theory is that the mainline churches have ceased to be relevant to the culture, because insiders trump outsiders every time.

Decisions are made for the benefit of those inside rather than those outside the church. In every single decision, even the little ones, insiders trump outsiders. Take hymns, for example. Musical decisions are not made considering what will attract spiritually hungry outsiders, but what will please the card-carrying, bill-paying membership. Most church outsiders don't care if you ever sing "How Great Thou Art." They won't be slightly offended by a guitar in church. Time and time again church leaders receive heat from church insiders upset about this or that, because the insiders are trying to recreate their childhood church experience or simply have a rigid idea of what church is supposed to be. Church leaders cave in to these insiders because they try to control the purse strings.

More facts on the ground: insiders are inherently change-averse. People don't like change, especially those who have status in the church. Pete Steinke taught us that every church is an emotional system. Some people are benefitting from the system as it currently is. Some benefit emotionally. They are revered as church saints. Or they are validators to whom everyone turns for approval of decisions. They are having an emotional need met by receiving recognition. Or perhaps they are simply tirelessly defending The Tradition, regardless of how new or unhelpful that tradition may be. People in power, who have privileges in the current system, will resist change and make life really hard for any leader who seeks to be a change agent. Pastors are paid from members' giving, so there is a potential conflict of interest. If they do the right thing, some leaders will end up losing their job (or up on a cross, to reference an often-told story).

Why is this happening?

Church structures were set up to preserve what exists, not

change it. These stable structures work well when society is changing slowly, imperceptibly. If something is working, protect it at all costs. But what if it is not working? What if the rate of societal change skyrockets, and old patterns and structures no longer work? Peter Drucker once said, "When the rate of change outside the organization exceeds the rate of change inside the organization, the organization is doomed."

What do we do about it?

Change. Adapt. The church has adapted, survived and even thrived in times of tectonic change in the past. It can again.

Stable structures are a high value in a stable culture, but when in a climate of rapid change, adaptability is the higher value. In a time of stability, experience is crucial. In times of change, experience can be a liability, especially if the experienced make the fatal mistake of assuming what garnered success in the past, will guarantee success in the future. What got you where you are now will not get you where you need to go in the future. Sorry. Leaders who don't get this are in for some rough sledding.

Let's face it, change is hard. Change, however is non-negotiable. The only constant in life is change. There is no growth without change. As someone once said, "*The only one who likes change is a wet baby.*" Any kind of change creates conflict. Leaders can only tolerate so much discontent. And even a little discontent sounds LOUD when you're in the hot seat. So when things heat up, leaders circle the wagons, which is precisely the wrong thing to do. Instead, leaders need to sin boldly. Lead boldly. Look at any successful enterprise and you can be certain that someone, at some point, took a huge risk along the way. Nothing great is accomplished without risk.

"The trouble with Steve Jobs: Likes to make his own rules, whether the topic is computers, stock options or even pancreatic cancer. The same traits that made him a great CEO drive him to put his company, and his investors, at risk."
-Fortune Magazine

But risk is risky, and change is simply too difficult and painful. Most organizations won't change until they're desperate, like the alcoholic that won't go to rehab until s/he hits rock bottom.

So what will give us the courage to take those risks? This takes us back to the beginning. Churches will not adapt to the new realities until they care as much about reaching those outside, as appeasing those inside. The world is hell-bent on destruction in countless ways. It is desperately in need of a church that offers a Way of peace, truth, compassion and hope, as opposed to the world's way

of power, materialism, exploitation and violence. It needs leaders willing to risk comfort, status and economic security for the life of the world and the outreach potential of the church. It needs a church that looks less like the Pharisees' religion and more like Jesus' ministry. It needs a church that is willing to sacrifice everything for those outside: buildings, budgets, sacred cows, traditions, structures. It needs a church that so loves the world, that she'd be willing to die for it.

So here's the plan. New policy. Every decision, every single decision made by staff, council and every committee is made on behalf of those not yet here. Every sermon choice, every hymn, song and musical choice, every building and grounds choice, every spending choice is made with outsiders in mind.

When we become a church for the world, the outsider, when the pain of staying the same (and dying of irrelevance) for those already here exceeds the pain of changing (and sacrificing old ways) for those not yet here, we will be the church for which God incarnate came to this earth and gave his life.



"Martin Luther - Driven to Defiance"

Nailing his treatise to the doors of Wittenberg Cathedral, an obscure German monk changed the world forever. But Martin Luther would do more than revolutionize the church; he offered the Christian world a new vision of man's relationship with God and, in turn, redefined man's relationship with authority in general. Filmed across Europe from rustic rural Germany to the opulent Vatican City, MARTIN LUTHER is the dramatic story of the collapse of the medieval world and the birth of the modern age.

Watch on PBS Channel 8 on Monday, January 2 at 9:00 p.m.



NOTIFICATION OF PROPOSED BYLAWS CHANGE

Our current bylaw regarding our mission statement, as amended at the November 20, 2011 congregational meeting reads:

C4.05.01 As a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Hosanna's mission is "Serving God. Changing lives." We are God's servants, working together to keep the presence and grace of God at the center of our lives; to grow in our faith and share it with others both within

and outside of our congregation; to care for each other and for our community, and to wisely manage the gifts that God has given us.

At the January 22, 2012 annual congregational meeting, we propose to further amend this bylaw to incorporate the guiding principles introduced at the November 20 meeting. The new proposed wording is:

C4.05.01 As a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Hosanna's mission is "Serving God. Changing lives." We are God's servants, working together guided by these principles:

- a. Praise Jesus as Lord and Savior.
- b. Prayer changes everything.
- c. Listen to and act on God's Word.
- d. Everyone is a minister, serving with joy.
- e. Invite and welcome all people.
- f. Generously share God's blessings.

Nancy Agafitei, President

Events of Note in 2012...

Sunday, January 8 - Claire Tyrrell's Girl Scout Gold Award Ceremony immediately follow worship, with reception following. Everyone is invited to stay!

Sunday, January 8 - February 12 - Special sermon series: Guiding Principles As A Way of Life

Sunday, January 15 - Mission of the Month Noisy Offering

Sunday, January 23-25 - 2012 Tri-Synodical Theological Leadership Conference in Waco, TX. Theme: What Shall I Say? Bringing the Gospel to Life in our Preaching and Speaking. [Information and registration.](#)

Friday, January 27 - Saturday, January 28, 2012 - Human Dignity Retreat. Confirmation students and their parents are invited to a synod-wide gathering to discuss topics many

parents are uncomfortable talking about with their kids. This meaningful retreat will partner with parents in addressing the issues associated with their youth's coming of age. Teens are hungry for honest answers to difficult questions, and parents need support from the church in order to protect and equip their kids in a difficult world. See Amber Walker to register.



January 27-29 Mother & Daughter Retreat at Lutherhill offers the place and the experiences that allow you to kindle and ignite a strong mother-daughter bond. Cost: \$70 per person 13 and older / \$40 per person under 13 years. [Register here.](#)

Sunday, January 29 - Blood Drive. See Bernie Brown for details. [Sign up online.](#)

February 3-5 Lutherhill Book Club - We figured since Oprah has retired, we would take her torch and run with it. All kidding aside, we invite you out for a fun discussion on an influential book of our time. The book title will be announced in the fall of 2011. Cost: \$90 per person. [Register here.](#)

Saturday, February 4, 6:00 PM - Hosanna Book Discussion in the Confirmation classroom. Upcoming title: " My Own Country: a doctor's story of a town and its people in the age of AIDS," by Abraham Verghese.

Summary: In fall 1985 Verghese--who was born in Ethiopia of Indian parents--returned with his wife and newborn son to

Johnson City, Tennessee , where he had done his internship and residence. As he watched AIDS infect the small town, he and the community learned many things from one another, including the power of compassion.

Sunday, February 5 - Super Bowl Hot Wings Fundraiser for the Hosanna Choir.



February 17-19 Senior High Retreat - Join other High School youth for an action-packed weekend at Lutherhill. Be challenged by God's message of how we are to carry His light out into the world. Explore your faith life alongside your peers. Cost: \$130 per person. [Register here.](#)



March 2-4 Women's Pampering Weekend - Ladies pamper your spirit with a relaxing weekend at Lutherhill. Sara Larson Woodruff will help you find your balance amidst the demands of day-to-day life. What is better than spending a weekend illuminating your spirit? Cost: \$150 per person. [Register here.](#)



March 23-25 Upper Elementary Spring Retreat (grades 3-6) - A great time in life to discover how God's light can be applied to everyday living. You want to know more, more about God, more about your life with God, and more about the light God put in you. Lutherhill is ready to explore God's light with you and how you can be a laser show for Christ. Cost: \$70 per person. [Register here.](#)



April 27-29 Family Spring Retreat - Spring is the perfect time to grow things, so grow your family's faith together, celebrating God's gifts. Bring the whole family to Lutherhill for a reminder of how to carry God's light out into the world. Cost: \$70 per person 13 and older / \$40 per person under 13 years. [Register here.](#)



May 11-12 - Synod Assembly 2012 at Lakewood United Methodist Church, Houston. This year's focus is WORSHIP! Everyone is welcome!



Photo Gallery

Two pics from the Advent Retreat at Lutherhill:



Hosanna Lutheran Church | 16526 Ella Blvd. | Houston, TX 77090
Sunday Adult Education - 9 AM
Sunday Worship with Kids Church and Communion - 10 AM
Wednesday Morning Bible Study - 10 AM

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