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Hosanna Hotline

Monthly Newsletter of Hosanna Lutheran Church - September 2011

September Highlights

Sunday, September 4
9:00 AM Blood Drive
Equal Exchange coffee,
chocolate and snacks
for sale.

September 3-5 Labor
Day Weekend; Office
Closed on Monday.

Wednesday, September
7
5:30 PM WELCA Board
Meeting
7:00 PM Hosanna Choir
begins weekly
rehearsals
7:00 PM Confirmation
Class first session

Saturday, September 10
Lutherhill Ministries
S'mores & Champagne
Gala at the Woodlands
Waterway Marriott

Sunday, September 11
Grandparent's Day
8:45 and 9:00 AM
Discovery Disciples, led
by Shelly Gunhouse,
begin weekly rehearsals
9:00 AM WECLA Annual
Christmas in September
Bake Sale

Sunday, September 18: The Next Step in Discerning God's Purpose for Hosanna

In August, six of us from Hosanna attended the Synod leadership conference. It is a great place to see how other Lutheran churches are living out God's purpose for them in their own special circumstances. We heard about an inner city church with a large lawn to mow. They decided to turn it into a community garden, where new produce is grown for many in the neighborhood. Another church with a significant amount of property turned one of its facilities over to a cooperative effort by several churches to operate a food bank.

At Hosanna, we too, are in the process of discerning what God's purpose is for us in our particular location. At 18 small group meetings, we prayed together, studied scripture together and had conversations about what is important at Hosanna. From the book of Acts, we identified key lessons that any church should remember. The full list was printed in last month's Hotline. It includes things like

- The Spirit of God is still at work.
- Respect and welcome all people as children of God.
- God wants us to be workers with him.
- We should see in new ways.

The 56 possible purpose statements suggested by our small groups have been narrowed down to three by the Mission Focus Team and the Church Council, using the ten criteria that we had established at the outset and reviewed in our small groups. The purpose statements that best met these criteria are:

1. Walk with Jesus. Live God's Word.
2. Loving God and loving our neighbors.
3. Serving God, changing lives - 365.

The congregation will select one of these at our next

Sunday, September 18
Mission of the Month
Noisy Offering
WELCA installation of
officers

**11:30 AM Important
congregation meeting**

Tuesday, September 27
Hosanna Seniors (50+)
Tour of Houston's
historic Heights district.

Quick Links

Hosanna Website

Weekly Cyberline

I'm New to Hosanna:
Find Hosanna



meeting on September 18. **It is an important meeting for all members to attend.** The next step will be to decide on our core values as expressed in four or five guiding principles. Much of the information gathered in our small groups will aid this process.

We will publish our purpose and principles, but more importantly, we will begin to act on them. We will make decisions based on them. We will review our communications like the Hotline, the Cyberline, Facebook, and the Backyard and align them with our principles. We will revisit our team structure and revise it if necessary to meet our new directions. We will be looking for new ways to meet community needs.

At the recent synod event, Bishop Rinehart recommended going out into the community and listening to key leaders, asking them to list what they think are the most important unmet needs in the community. We would then:

- Make a list of ten community needs based on these conversations.
- Engage the congregation in deciding which of these needs we might meet, and how to go about it.

We are anxious to do this soon.

While we have been engaged in the renewal process, we have already been faced with a community need. Eickenroht Elementary, a school 1.5 miles south of Hosanna on Ella Blvd., has requested our help for their primarily low income students. Several of us have had met with the teacher who sent the original e-mail to us. Our youth have already collected some supplies for the school. We hope to meet with the principal soon to talk more about ways to help.

If the Spirit is calling you to be active in developing our guiding principles, assessing community needs, or serving God in other ways at Hosanna, answer that call and contact any of us to get connected with these ministries.

-- Pat Gibbons, Mission Focus Team;
Nancy Agafitei, President; Pastor John

Events of Note in September

Muslims for Life Blood Drive Campaign

Come out on Sunday, September 4, 9 AM-1:30 PM to donate blood. Hosanna is pleased to partner with the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in their Muslims for Life Blood Brive Campaign in honor of 9/11. With a goal of 10,000 units of blood nation-wide, Muslims for Life is working with several interfaith groups in Houston and across the country to raise

awareness about the importance of religious tolerance and peaceful relationships in our community. Each blood donation saves 3 lives. All collections benefit the Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center.

For questions contact Bernie Brown at 281-225-8676 or bernie@entouchonline.net

To schedule an appointment go the giveblood.org and look for Hosanna under church drives.

Labor Day Weekend Bowling for Youth and Children

Bowl with your friends after church, Sunday, September 4. Meet at the Diamond Lanes, 267 North Forest Blvd at 12 PM for fun and fellowship. Cost is \$10 per person which includes 2 hours of bowling and shoe rental.

Lutherhill Ministries S'mores & Champagne Gala 2011

Saturday, September 10 at the Woodlands Waterway Marriott, 1601 Lake Robbins Drive, The Woodlands.

- 6 PM - Cocktails and Silent Auction
- 7 PM - Dinner and Musical Entertainment
- 8 PM - Live Auction followed by Dance

Summer is in full swing here at Lutherhill. This week we have 149 campers at camp learning that Love Wins! Lutherhill's ministry is made possible by your continued support. We raise 40% of our annual budget through donations. You can help. Individual's are \$125 or Sponsor a Table of 10 for \$1,500 for additional benefits such as reserved seating and recognition. Call 888-266-4613 for reservations.

Can't make it on September 10th? Consider donating an auction item, purchasing raffle tickets or sponsoring a summer staff member to attend! For more information contact Kristin Albers Lamm, kristin@lutherhill.org

WELCA Annual Christmas in September Bake Sale

Sunday, September 11, starting at 9:00 AM, and after the 10:00 AM service. All proceeds go to helping families in need. You can help by baking pies, cakes, cookies, etc., or purchasing goodies.

Hosanna Seniors Tour the Heights

Tuesday, September 27 - Join other fifty-plusers for a tour of the Heights, guided by the chairman of the Heights Association, who will take us through the neighborhoods and show us the homes and a few surprises. Depart from Hosanna at 8:30 AM and return about 3:00 PM. See Judy Rhodes for information. Add your name to the list on the sign-up table in the Narthex.



Choirs and Confirmation

"All God's Critters got a place in the Choirs!!"

Children who love to sing and play instruments are welcome to join the Discovery Disciples every Sunday morning beginning September 11. Students in grades 7-9 will meet in the choir room from 8:45 - 9:00 AM and students in Kindergarten - 6th grade will meet from 9:00-9:45 AM. Come and make a joyful noise with us!! Shelly Gunhouse

Also... Adult Choir begins weekly rehearsals Wednesday, September 7 at 7:00 PM.

Confirmation opening session is Wednesday, September 7 at 7:00 PM.



Looking Ahead to October

The annual **Fall Classic Golf Tournament** will be Saturday October 22 at Bear Creek Masters Golf Course, 16001 Clay Road, Houston; phone 281-859-8188. Shotgun start at 8:00 AM.

The tournament is open to all high school youth who golf and men and women adult golfers from Hosanna or Kinsmen and their friends. We will play a scramble format where each player hits a golf ball and the team selects the best shot. Each team member shoots their next shot from the same spot. Cost per player is \$56 which includes your greens fee, cart, free range balls and a hamburger buffet lunch immediately following the tournament.

Form your own foursomes. Individual trophies will be awarded for 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th place team members. There will also be two longest drive contest holes for men and two longest drive contest holes for women. On each of the four par three holes there will be a closest to the pin contest. Winners will be awarded prizes after lunch.

See the sign-up poster starting Sunday, September 4 and form your team as soon as possible. Pay golf fee to Bob McConnell in cash or a check made out to "Men of Hosanna." Deadline is Sunday October 16. NO EXCEPTIONS.

If you have any questions, contact Bob McConnell: home 281-440-5432, cell: 832-541-5432.



Lutheran Men in Mission Gathering Called! Equipped! Sent!

July 22-24, 2012 at the Denver Marriott Tech Center.

Our vision for the 2011 Lutheran Men's Gathering is that every man attending would be a new man in Jesus Christ, living a life that makes a difference. And, our vision is that every man will leave the Gathering with the tools and inspiration to do just that. For more information and to register go to lutheranmeninmission.org



Faith Together: Take 15 Minutes Each Day

Think about practice -- learning by repetition. Sports, spelling, new languages, even our faith, get stronger with practice. "Practice makes perfect." Investing in a 15-minute faith practice each day strengthens your faith and shapes your life as a Christian family. Try this today:

The Faithful Fifteen - Have each family member tell about his/her favorite part of the day. Then tell about the worst part of the day. Then remember the places where each saw God in those highs and lows, naming those things and persons they are concerned about.



ELCA Malaria Campaign

Make Malaria History

A child dies from malaria every 45 seconds. Today we are in a special moment where we could turn this around. Working through Lutheran churches in Africa, the ELCA Malaria Campaign is uniquely positioned to provide mosquito nets, insecticides, medication, health care, education and more to help eliminate deaths from this disease-for good. [Donate now.](#)



We Can't Do it On Our Own

My favorite hymn:
 My favorite Bible verse:
 My favorite Christmas carol:
 My favorite potluck dish:
 TV show I'd never watch:
 What's playing on my iPod right now:
 My perfect day:
 People would be surprised to know that:
 The best thing I learned in Sunday school or Bible Study:
 I feel most Lutheran when:
 I'm doing God's work with my hands when:

People are Social. The Church Should Be Too.

One of the workshops at the recent Fall Leadership Conference was "Demystifying Social Media" hosted by Rev. David Hansen of St. John's Lutheran Church Prairie Hill, who presented his thoughts on using Facebook, Twitter, Google+ and Blogging to reach a good portion of our community. We need to examine how to best utilize these tools. The rapid spread of social media is almost mind boggling. These touch our youth and many other members.

Pastor Hansen opened his presentation with, "Our Christian faith is all about communication. 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.'" (John 1:1). We Lutherans would not be here if Martin Luther had not made use of a revolutionary new

technology -- the printing press with moveable type, invented by Johannes Gutenberg around 1439. Soon after Luther posted his 95 Theses on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg (October 1517), one entrepreneurial publisher printed them for rapid sale. In an amazingly short time period -- two weeks -- the Theses spread throughout Germany, and within two months throughout Europe. One early Protestant writer said, "It was as if heavenly angels had played messengers."

Today, as we approach the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, another mass-media innovation has become available to the church -- Social Media. Look around the next time you go to a mall, coffee shop, airport or when just walking down the street. It seems everyone is looking at Facebook or Twitter or YouTube on an iPhone, Android, iPad, Blackberry, or other mobile device. Recently, the Pew Internet Project found that 83% of American adults own a cell phone, and 42% of those people own a Blackberry, iPhone or similar smartphone. The study also found that 87% of smartphone users access the internet or email on their device, including two-thirds who do it daily. Look what Martin Luther and St. Paul accomplished without access to an iPad, iPhone, Blackberry, Android. What can those of us who do have access to iPads, iPhones, Blackberrys, Androids accomplish? Imagine the possibilities.

While a church can continue to communicate to it's people through traditional forms like bulletins, mailings, phone calls, emails, face-to-face conversations, television, radio etc., Social Media has some unique benefits all it's own in effectively communicating:

- It's easy and effortless. It doesn't take much money or manpower to implement or use it.
- It's ubiquitous. Because it's so available and pervasive it isn't hard for people to miss the message.
- It's variety. Social Media takes many different forms, words, audio and image.
- It's viral. The beauty of social media is that your message can expand well beyond it's intended audience -- therefore exposing and introducing new people to our community and our cause -- that of sharing the message about God's love.

Here are some best practices for using social media:

- **Be yourself.** Don't fake it! Be authentic, not trivial. When tweeting or posting to your Facebook wall, ask yourself, "Does this help someone else become better, smarter, wiser?" Substance trumps the mundane every time.
- **Don't over share.** Don't put information out there that you don't want someone else to know. We don't need to share that we had berries on our cereal this morning.

- **Don't complain or air gripes.** Setting a positive tone in your posts is better received and shared more often than negative content. If the idea you're sharing is negative in nature, find a way to present it in a positive light.
- **Listen and engage.** Facebook and Twitter are about people connecting with people. Most of the communication that goes on is about the little, personal things in people's lives. People are looking for that kind of interaction. By allowing the personal side of Hosanna to come out, it makes Hosanna more attractive to people, especially unchurched people who think the church is all about rules and religious practices.
- **Share and love.** When you post or "tweet," do so purposefully. When you listen, listen to serve. Social Media should not be used like a direct mail outlet to "bullhorn" your message down people's throats. You just won't get anywhere. If you give people ideas, let it be informative and something they want to share with others. If you listen to comments or replies, do so with the care of customer service.
- **Explore.** You can't just step into Social Media.
- **Involve others.** Calls to action or posted questions are great tools of interaction.
- **Update, update, update.** New posts should happen more than once a week. Most people on Facebook check Facebook a lot. Having new content on your church's Facebook Page gives people a reason to check the page whenever they are on Facebook and that keeps them connected. Updating the page doesn't mean that you have to constantly be adding events or photos. It can simply be putting a message on the wall, perhaps a Bible verse or short "message of the day". Also, unlike your church website, adding new content to the Facebook page can be done by every Hosanna member and visitor. So, fellow Hosannan's, write messages on the wall, post pictures and videos, and participate in discussions. Post a favorite Bible passage or inspirational thought.

With this in mind, click the Facebook symbol in the left column and give it a try!!! Imagine the possibilities.

One more thing... Note the social media share bar at the top of this Hotline (also on the Cyberline). You can use it to forward Hosanna's email newsletters to your friends -- tweet them to your Twitter followers, or "Like" them to share with your Facebook friends. This helps get the word out about Hosanna.



Church Signs

HONK IF YOU LOVE JESUS
TEXT WHILE DRIVING IF
YOU WANT TO MEET HIM

THOU SHALL NOT STEAL
THE COPPER FROM THE AC UNIT

THERE ARE SOME
QUESTIONS THAT
CAN'T BE
ANSWERED BY
GOOGLE

READ THE BIBLE
IT'S USER FRIENDLY
PLUS WE OFFER TECH
SUPPORT HERE ON
SUNDAYS

Photo Gallery



Completed bus shelter at the Metro Route 86 bus stop on Ella Blvd. A job well done. Thanks Daniel Wolf.



Above and below: the remodeled nursery. Thanks Claire Tyrrell.



Also... a big thank you to those who helped Daniel and Claire with these projects, both with funding and physical labor. Good job everyone!!!!

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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