

Eyes and wrists, blindness and pain

2nd Corinthians 12:7-10

I hurt my right wrist recently. I don't know what I did to it, but it keeps 'giving out' on me, and it just plain hurts. As I write this I'm waiting to go see my family doctor in a few hours to have him look at it, and then refer me on up the ladder to another doctor who will hopefully be a specialist in strange wrist related pains. All I know this afternoon is I am in pain, and I can't really use my right hand that well – a big hindrance when you're right handed!

I was thinking about the Apostle Paul. In his second letter to the Corinthians, he tells them about a 'thorn in the flesh' he was experiencing. There are some theories regarding what the 'thorn' was, but the one I like is that Paul was having trouble with his eyes, possible dealing with cataracts, glaucoma, or maybe even going blind. He ends his letter to the Galatians with, "See what large letters I use as I write you with my own hand!"

I don't know, of course, if that's what Paul's issue really was. We only know that he suffered a lot in his body through beatings, stonings and rejections. We also know that even in his hardships he kept his unshakable faith that said, "I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength!"

Some days I don't feel like I can do *anything*, let alone *all* things! And I know I'm not the only one who feels this way. But the thing the Holy Spirit reminds us is that regardless of the circumstances we find ourselves in, it's all just temporary – there's a bigger picture to be looking at here... and that's hard to do when we're blind.

Even though Paul suffered and had his thorn in his flesh, his Spiritual eyes were still opened to the wonders of heaven and could see beyond the temporal-ness of things in this world to the eternal applications of faith. He may have had problems seeing the words on paper and so had to write with big letters, but his real eyes – his Spiritual eyes – had been open, and nothing could close that.

Physical blindness is hard enough, Spiritual blindness is death. Physical pain is an inconvenience, Spiritual pain is something that cannot be healed or without Jesus. Physical pain can be controlled with medicine, Spiritual pain can only be healed with the healing Word of God.

If the problem with my wrist is carpal tunnel, I'll be a little taken aback, because I may have been able to prevent it through simple things like sitting differently in front of the computer, not having my laptop on top of a cooling fan when I use it, or any other plethora of other options.

It's not that much different for Spiritual blindness. Spending time in God's word, in prayer, with Christians who are positive people and know and live out God's word will help prevent Spiritual blindness and pain.

I'm off to see my doctor now. Hope my wrist will get fixed soon.

I'm off to read and study God's Word more. Hope my eyes will never be blind to the truth.

Pastor Michael



From the Consecrated Stewards Team

“Freed to Live”

On July Fourth we pause as a nation to reflect on the meaning of “Independence Day.” The Declaration of Independence was written to begin the process of gaining freedom from being a colony of England and chart our own course as a nation. But freedom is not something that you simply declare and it happens. Our freedom is something that was purchased at a high price. From the time of the Revolutionary War after July 4, 1776 to our war today in the Middle East many brave men and women have laid their lives on the line to fight for and defend our freedom as citizens of the United States of America. Thousands upon thousands of those brave soldiers shed their blood and gave up their tomorrows so that we can be freed to live our todays and tomorrows in the greatest country in the world and enjoy freedoms that millions of people in the world can only dream about.

As that old saying goes, *‘freedom is not free.’* It is fitting and proper for us to remember and honor those who have given their all not just on July Fourth but throughout the year. They made the ultimate sacrifice so that we can be free! We also do well to remember and honor our brave men and women who continue to put their lives on the line so that we may be free to live.

It is also fitting and proper for us to remember and appreciate our spiritual freedom from sin, death and eternal condemnation. That freedom is not something that the strongest army in the world could obtain. That freedom is not something that we can earn or even deserve. It is the free gift of God who loved the world so much that He gave up His one and only Son who shed His holy precious blood so that we might have a peace that passes all human understanding and freedom that will last for eternity.

Our fitting and proper response for all that God has done for us in Christ is to live our lives in ways that honor Him and bless others. We call that proper response to God’s love *Christian stewardship*. As redeemed stewards we, in cooperation with and encouragement from fellow redeemed stewards, freely and joyfully manage all of life and life’s resources for God’s purposes. God delights in loving and giving and sends us His Holy Spirit to empower us to also grow in our loving of God and others and our giving of time, talent, treasure and any of the other blessings God has entrusted to us.

*“Lord of glory, You have bought us with Your life blood as the price,
Never grudging for the lost ones that tremendous sacrifice.
Give us faith to trust You boldly, hope to stay our souls on You;
But, oh best of all Your graces, with Your love our love renew.” (LSB 851)*

LCC HAPPENINGS

June has come and gone – so quickly. I hate to ever wish an end to a part of summer, but this year I do say good riddance to June. May July bless us with some summer weather – FINALLY! Activities around church started to wind down for the summer. Things that did happen in the month of June include...

- **The Graden family** coordinating Mainspring on June 13th. They bought a barbeque meal to bring to Mainspring, with the help of many families who donated money to defray the cost.
- **The Lutheran Church of the Way 6th Annual Golf outing**, which was held Sunday, June 7th, (one of the few nice days in June). This year we had four teams representing LCC at this outing. The team of John Kaczorowski, Chuck Lemke, Dana McGivney and George Olson Jr. won it all! Also, Dana won closest to the pin on one of the holes. Way to go guys – now we

have a title to defend next year! This golf tournament is an event to raise money to sponsor people willing to take time out of their busy lives to go on mission trips-to Kenya, for example.

- **The Annual Congregational Picnic**, held on June 14th at the Williamson's house! This year it was a very small, intimate gathering. It poured all morning, but cleared a bit by noon. Many did not brave the weather. Our thanks to the Williamsons for again opening their home and yard, and to Sandy Landstrom for her help with the food.
- **Hanover Day on June 20th!** This is a special day to promote and recognize all the businesses and organizations in Hanover. Many thanks to Holly Brazel for all her work to get this organized and to those who volunteered their time to "man" our booth.

JULY AND BEYOND

Scrip Program for July – the order date will be Sunday, July 5th, with the card pick-up date being July 12th. If you miss the order date, or decide mid-month that you need more gift cards, all is not lost! We now stock gift cards for the most popular venues; grocery stores and local restaurants to name a few, which can be purchased throughout the month based on availability.

Mainspring, on July 12th, is being coordinated by **Kyle McGivney, with the help of Walter Seamon**. The sign-up and recipe for the month (the Tater Tot casserole I believe) is posted on the bulletin board. We can still use more cooks!

Thursday evening summer services are here! Thursday evening services at 7:00 PM will be held now until the Thursday before Labor Day, August 27th. Please note the time change this year – 7:00 PM rather than 7:30 PM!

VBS 2009 – July 20-24 – SAVE THE DATES! This year our theme will be Discovery Canyon Adventure. We have full registration already! Cathy Hayes can still use more help, so if you are available, please speak with Cathy.

The flower chart needs some attention over the summer months. The cost for altar flowers is \$30.00, and you can take the flowers after the service. Sign-up is on the bulletin board.

Dana McGivney has offered to supplement the Capital Fund Drive campaign by offering his services to post and sell things on Craigslist that are currently cluttering our attics, etc. More detailed information on this fundraising opportunity is included in the newsletter, but this is a wonderful way for us all to help the church without all the work associated with a yard sale or auction! Thanks Dana for taking this on!!

Members of our Youth Group are planning to attend Soul Fest again this year. Kim and Dan Prestridge are planning, as of now, to join the group in New Hampshire. Should be a wonderful time for those who signed up!

Volunteer Opportunities

The strength of our church has always been largely due to the commitment of our members. It is important that we all continue to help and volunteer, which is even more important as we help support a new pastor. There are many ways each of us can choose to help. Below are just a few...

Interior and Exterior Help Jackie Johnson, the Deacon of the Interior, would love the help of someone with a 30 foot step ladder and a love of heights to help change some of the burned out light bulbs in the church.

Hanover Habitat for Humanity – Plans for the house being built in Hanover by Habitat for Humanity are well underway. Each Hanover church is being asked to support this endeavor, both by supplying volunteers and food as the building starts, projected to begin in May.

- Stacey Stahl and Kyle McGivney have volunteered to coordinate food. We will be supplying food for the volunteers every sixth week. A sign-up is on the bulletin board for people to volunteer for food detail. Please sign-up and include phone number and email address so that they have the means to contact you when it is our turn.
- LCC Habitat Volunteer Coordinator needed: Please contact Nick Iovino (volunteer@sshabitat.org or 781-843-9080 x18) if you would be willing to coordinate volunteer workers on behalf of our church. Also, please let our office know (781-826-5121) if you volunteer for this position so that we don't keep asking...

Mainspring – We supply meals to Mainspring on the 2nd Saturday of each month. A menu is usually posted around the first of the month and we can always use a few more cooks and bakers. The last few months we have been feeding close to 100! There is a **sign-up for 2009 on the bulletin board** for volunteers to coordinate each month in 2009! We still need volunteers for several months. This involves picking the menu, taking the meals to Mainspring and serving the meals.

Remember the Hanover Food Pantry, it can always use more donations! Also, the Food Pantry would like to help the environment and save space in their facility by giving out reusable grocery bags to patrons. This will eliminate the need for a mountain of plastic/paper bags on the premise. So, in addition to food items, the Hanover Food Pantry would love donations of reusable bags which can be purchased at any grocery store for \$1.00 per bag. Other specifics needed by the pantry are bar soap (no Ivory), and paper products.

Vacation Bible School is scheduled for the week of July 20th, from 9:00 AM – 12:00 AM, **BUT** we could still use some more volunteers; teachers, kitchen help and older students to help in the classroom and on the playground! Please see Cathy Hayes if you can help!

Coffee Hours – This year we need people to supplement the confirmation families in hosting the weekly coffee hour after church. A sign-up is on the bulletin board for volunteers to help out! So far everyone has been great in keeping the coffee and food coming after church. However, it looks like we will be a bit hungry and thirsty this summer... Thank you for all your help!!

Personal Mention

- **Happy Birthday wishes in July** are extended to **Phillip Anderson, Kay Bakeberg, Chris Donahoe, Amy Erickson, Kyle Erickson, Denise Hendrickson, Jean Himberg, Derek Koertje, Karl Mueller, Jennah Muller, and Alston Siller.**
- **Happy Anniversary to Kristin and John Evans, Stephanie and Jay Freeman, Charles and Jeanne Lane and Lisa and Bill Orrall.**
- **Our prayers and condolences go out to the family of Barbara Hanson, who passed away in June.**

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PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER...

- Rob Hendrickson**, for continued health and healing
- Carla Errichiello-Hill**, for continued health and healing
- Audrey Yeingst**, undergoing treatment for cancer of the liver and bile duct
- Edith McNeil**, recovering from knee surgery
- Jean Adams**, recovering from eye surgery
- Jodi Gries**, Jerry and Barbara Gorichs' daughter, recovering from cancer surgery
- Agnes Abrahamson**, preparing for surgery in early July
- Barbara Chaston**, Shelly Chaston's mother, recovering from a heart procedure
- Harrison Collett**, 6 yr. old brother of one of our Nursery School students, diagnosed with bone cancer
- Harriet Williamson**, for health and healing
- Elsie Vuilleumier**, dealing with loss of sight after surgery for macular degeneration
- Lloyd Prestridge**, Dan Prestridge's father, living with cancer
- Bella and Brayden Orrall**, for continued health and growth.
- Anna Fitzgerald**, Agnes Abrahamson's granddaughter, dealing with epilepsy and autism
- Ethan Darcy**, for continued healing related to his congenital heart defect
- Joyce Linde**, for health and healing
- Marie Bain**, for good health
- Beth deConinck-Smith**, a friend of the Hendricksons, undergoing debilitating treatment for cancer
- Jon More**, friend of the Sweetsers diagnosed with lung cancer
- Jerry Haley**, friend of the Sweetsers, diagnosed with a brain tumor

Ministry to the Persecuted Church:

On June 12, 13 Christians were arrested by plain clothes police, after visiting Christian villages in Laos. The visiting believers met the police when they were in the village for their routine daily work. The police questioned them about what they were doing in the village. The police have not disclosed why they arrested the believers and at last report the Christians are still being held at a provincial police station. Please pray for the release of these believers. Ask God to protect and encourage the believers in the villages. Pray God to bless Christians in Laos.

Earlier in the newsletter we mentioned that Dana McGivney has offered to help the Capital Fund Drive by coordinating for members, items to be sold on Craigslist. Below are the details...

Capital Fund Drive

We will be posting donated items online to sell to help with the CFD. Members can decide to donate 100% of the proceeds or a portion. Similar to our auction except these items might be too big to bring to the church. This also has the potential of bringing in double or triples what the auction does.

The items posted will have great exposure and potentially see hundreds of would-be-buyers. Most of us are sitting on something we would like to get rid of. (See list below).

Dana McGivney will do all the work, taking photos, posting online and follow up with buyers. No personal information is given; only the item you are selling. You will only have to get involved when the purchase is made, cash only. I am certainly available to help facilitate the sale if anyone needs me to be there during time of purchase.

ITEMS TO BE SOLD:

Furniture: Sofa, Loveseat, Chairs, Recliners, Beds (not bedding) Dressers, Chests, Tables and chairs, Coffee and End tables, TV stands, Desks, China Cabinets Curios.....

Outdoor Items: Patio furniture, Swings, Tools, Lawnmowers

Electronics: Cameras, DVD players, any functioning electronic.....

Kids Toys: Gently used indoor toys, Games, Bikes, Outdoor toys.....

Think reasonably with expectations about 70 to 80% off retail prices and we are sure to get rid of the piece.

Contact info djmack.ent@hotmail.com or Dana McGivney 781-733-4918

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On a lighter note:



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ADOPT AN EXPENSE PROGRAM

(January – December 2009)

We are starting fresh to get the “Adopt-an-Expense” program to coincide with the church’s fiscal year. So... below is the list of “Adopt-An-Expense” program items for 2009, so far. As mentioned at the January congregational meeting, the **goal is to get \$1,600 of adopted expenses by the end of the year. We are half way to our goal by the end of May!** Does this mean we can beat the goal???

Many thanks to Cory and Don Burroughs, Gudrun Davis, Jackie Johnson, Patty Owen and the 4th-6th grade Sunday School, and Audrey and Ray Yeingst for their contributions. Please remember that you can adopt a portion of any expense. Every little bit helps!!!

<u>Item</u>	<u>Approx. cost</u>	<u>Remain. Amt</u>	<u>Adopted</u> (this year)
2009 Expenses			
Sunday School Supplies			
Fall material	380.00	240.00	140.00
Winter material	380.00	380.00	
Spring material	380.00	380.00	

VBS Supplies	1000.00	1000.00	
Offering envelopes	500.00	500.00	
Disposable Communion Cups	110.00	0.00	110.00
Portals of Prayer	160.00	160.00	
Confirmation Scarves	40.00	40.00	
Certificates (Baptism, 1 st communion...)	60.00	60.00	
Altar Candles	500.00	500.00	
Eternal Candles	125.00	125.00	
Calendars	30.00	30.00	
Communion cruet	94.00	0.00	94.00
Holy Week bulletin covers	90.00	90.00	
Pastors' wives conference	90.00	0.00	90.00
Puppet Ministry			
Deluxe Puppet Pack	116.00	0.00	116.00
6 Inbetweens	144.00	39.00	105.00
6 Full/Half Body Puppets	240.00	40.00	200.00
Stage Materials/Props	300.00	300.00	
TOTAL ADOPTED:			\$855.00