

## Getting free of clinging vines

Hebrews 12:1

If you've driven by the parsonage lately, you may have noticed the amount of under-brush that has been cleared. Clearing the underbrush was one thing, but the biggest job was actually dealing with the Bittersweet vines growing all over the yard.

Bittersweet is one of those vines that run underground and kills anything it can get its 'hands' on and grow on. Some of the trees at the parsonage have been spared from a slow death at the choking hands of the Bittersweet through us cutting vines at their base last year, and then removing as much of it as we could and as high up as we could this year. But if you look up, many of the trees are still covered in the remnants of that which clung to it so tightly. The trees have been given a new lease on life, but the memories of what tried to kill them remain.

Maybe one day those dead vines still interspersed in the upper parts of the trees will come down.

Maybe one day the trees will finally be free of them. Maybe, but I doubt it. Once allowed to grow that strong and powerful, the effects of the clinging vines will remain for the rest of the life of the trees.

As we pulled the vines down, we burned them with the underbrush, also cut last year. As the vines burned we noticed that even though many of them had been 'dead' for at least a year, as they were destroyed in the flames, moisture was still inside of them, and came bubbling out of the cut ends.

As we watched them burn, we also realized we were watching a parable in motion. The vines had taken over, and it took the hand of one more powerful than they to kill and remove them from continuing to do damage. However, even in their final moments they continued to spew out their bile, and if they had not been destroyed, would have sired more vines and more destruction through their seeds – their beautifully red and shiny berries that drop to the ground and produce more vines.

When the fires ended last month and the last bit of underbrush and vine were burned for this year, there was nothing left but ash that eventually blew away in the breeze. It is the same with our sins in God's eyes – once forgiven they are gone. In this world there may be consequences, but in God's eyes, they are gone and nothing remains of them.

It took the hands of One bigger than us to deal with the sin that would bring us death. It will be a consuming fire that will bring a final end to the evil one who sought to destroy us. It will be a new and glorious existence we will have in place Jesus has prepared for us on that last day.

Thank God for Amazing Grace.

Pastor

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From the Consecrated Stewards Team

“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!”*

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## ***LCC HAPPENINGS***

*Has it seemed like a while since you've received a newsletter in the mail? That's because it has been a few months! We now publish the newsletter each month online! We have managed to have the newsletter available online no later than the first of the month! Please visit our website, [www.lcchanover.com](http://www.lcchanover.com) to see the monthly newsletter, plus much much more! We will continue to send out newsletters every few months. The major events of this past month included:*

- **Jill Chiarelli** coordinating Mainspring on April 11<sup>th</sup>, again feeding close to 100 people this month. WOW! Many thanks to all the cooks who stepped up and made this a very successful day.
- **The New Bethlehem Coffee House**, held on April 19<sup>th</sup>. As always, many thanks to Jill Chiarelli and all who helped out.
- **The men met on April 18<sup>th</sup>**, for their monthly Bible Study and breakfast.
- **The Women's book study group**, which meets Monday evenings from 7:15 PM to 8:15 PM, continued studying the book *“Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World”* by Joanna Weaver.
- **The Women of the Cross had a potluck breakfast and Bible Study on Saturday, April 4<sup>th</sup>.**
- **The church has started a new Capital Fund Drive** as part of our debt reduction initiative. An informational letter with a pledge card was sent out during February. Pledge cards are to be returned in March, even if you are unable to participate at this time. If you did not receive this letter please see Ernie Hill.
- **Holy Week and Easter services...** The final mid-week Lenten service and soup supper was held on April 1<sup>st</sup>. A Palm Sunday service was held on April 5<sup>th</sup>. Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services were held at 7:00 PM on April 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, respectively. Additionally, a Good Friday service geared towards children was held at 4:00 PM on Good Friday. Like its Ash Wednesday counterpart, this service was well attended, with about 50 people, both members and guests, in attendance. We had over 200 in attendance between our 6:00 AM Easter sunrise service and the 9:00 AM traditional Easter service!

- **Two of our children received First Communion on Maundy Thursday.** Congratulations to **Danielle Levin and Noah Yeingst** who completed a first communion study with Pastor Michael during Lent and received first communion during the service Maundy Thursday.
- **Many thanks to our Easter breakfast cooks.** Once again we held an Easter breakfast between the 6:00 AM and the 9:00 AM services. **Keith Dwyer, Kevin Hayes and Tony Materna** did an outstanding job manning the kitchen once again, and a huge thanks goes to **Cathy Hayes** for coordinating the breakfast in the absence of a Deacon of Parish Life.

## ***MAY AND BEYOND***

**Scrip Program for May** – the order date will be Sunday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, with the card pick-up date being May 10<sup>th</sup> (just in time for Mother’s Day - think of that nice meal out!!) 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 May 9<sup>th</sup>**, is being coordinated by **Janet Fisher and Kyle McGivney**. The menu for peppers and sausage is posted on the bulletin board. We can use many cooks with the numbers at Mainspring so high these days. . Many thanks to everyone who volunteers to help with this ministry. However, most of the remaining months of the year are yet unclaimed. Please consider helping out.

**The next Congregational Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup>** at 10:30 AM following our worship service.

**Also on May 31<sup>st</sup>**, we would like everyone to plan on sticking around after the Congregational Meeting to help with **a clean-up of the exterior**. Bring some yard clothes, a rake, and whatever else you think will help get the church grounds cleaned up!

**Puppets of the Cross** will start meeting on Thursday, April 30<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM to get ready to participate in the service on May 17<sup>th</sup>. If you want to participate, but can’t make this rehearsal, please contact Stacey Stahl. Puppeteers will also meet on May 7<sup>th</sup> and May 14<sup>th</sup>, both evenings at 6:00 PM.

**Men – the next Bible study and breakfast** will be held on May 23<sup>rd</sup> rather than on May 16<sup>th</sup>. A small group of men will be attending the Iron Sharpens Iron conference on May 16<sup>th</sup> in Worcester!

**The next New Bethlehem Coffee House is scheduled for May 17<sup>th</sup>**, from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM. This will be the final coffee house of school year and will feature music by Sagewood Creek. This is also the end of the year cookout. Come help out – join the fun. We need as many hands as possible to help with the cookout!

**May 17<sup>th</sup> will also be the last day of Sunday School** and Adult Bible study for the summer. To help make this a special day, we are having a birthday celebration in honor of everyone’s birthday as part of the coffee hour. The plan is to have 12 birthday cakes, one for each month of the year, decorated according to the month or season. There is a sign-up on the bulletin board for volunteers to provide the birthday cakes. We have 5 months covered so far!

**There will be no Sunday School or Adult Bible study on Mother’s Day, May 10<sup>th</sup>!**

**Women of the Cross Bible Study** is ongoing Monday evenings from 7:15 PM – 8:15 PM. The group is studying *"Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World"* by Joanna Weaver. The final discussion date

for this book will be Monday, May 18<sup>th</sup>. There will be a “field trip” scheduled to wrap up the year – stay tuned for the date.

**Women and girls of the Cross**, another breakfast is scheduled for Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup> at 9 AM. Lea Bouchard has offered to make breakfast for us! Thank you Lea! Following breakfast, the women will have a quick rehearsal for the Mother’s Day service. Please remember to sign up on the bulletin board so that Lea knows how many to expect for breakfast.

**Thursday evening summer services are almost here!** Can you believe it?? For those who would like an option to Sunday morning services during the summer, we will be holding Thursday evening services at 7:00 PM from Memorial Day until Labor Day. The first service will be Thursday, May 28<sup>th</sup> and the last will be August 27<sup>th</sup>. Please note the time change this year – 7:00 PM rather than 7:30 PM!

**The Lutheran Church of the Way 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf outing** is scheduled for Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup>. 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. More detailed information as well as a sign-up form is include later in the newsletter!

**The Annual Congregational Picnic** is scheduled for Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup>, at the Williamson’s house! Harriet and Bill want to host this traditional event once again! And how many of us realize they have been doing this for 30 years!

**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.

**Movie Night** - One more movie night is scheduled to end the year, on Friday, May 29<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM. Pastor Michael may be entertaining suggestions. Plan to bring your popcorn and enjoy an evening of fun!

**First Lutheran Church of Boston Hymn Festival:** May 3<sup>rd</sup> at 3 PM. This event features favorite hymns of the major Church Feasts. The selections are partly based on the results of congregational voting. Dr. Christopher Boyd Brown will lead devotions on hymn texts, and the FLC choir will be leading the congregational singing with trumpet and organ accompaniment. If you wish to join the choir, there is a rehearsal at 2 p.m. in the choir loft. Please let your friends know about this event!

## ***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...

**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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.

**Church Council positions** – Part of the next congregational meeting will focus on the approval of church council positions for next year. At present, the council needs to fill two positions for next year, an Elder and the Deacon of Parish Life. Elders are concerned with the spiritual well-being of the congregation and the Pastor. They assist the Pastor and provide guidance when needed. The Deacon of Parish Life is responsible for organizing and overseeing the fellowship activities of the congregation. This would include things like the annual picnic and the Easter breakfast. Anyone interested in either of these positions, please see either Pastor or Al Hieber.

**Interior and Exterior Help** Jackie Johnson, the Deacon of the Interior, would love the help of someone with a 30 foot ladder and a love of heights to help change some of the burned out light bulbs in the church. **The spring clean-up for the church grounds is scheduled for May 31<sup>st</sup>**, at 11:30 AM following the congregational meeting. Bring your work clothes, rakes, and whatever else may be needed to get the property cleaned up!

**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 currently scheduled for the week of July 20<sup>th</sup>, from 9:00 AM – 12:00 AM, **BUT** we are in desperate need of volunteers; teachers, kitchen help and older students to help in the classroom and on the playground! We need to know we have staff in place before committing to the week. Please see Cathy Hayes if you can help!

**New Bethlehem Coffee House** – Jill Chiarelli can always use more help with the coffee house on the third Sunday of each month, from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM! May 17<sup>th</sup>, is the year-end cookout. Much help is needed for this event, so please mark your calendars. New Bethlehem Coffee House will resume in October.

**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. Thank you!!

**Worship Assistants.** It is time to put together the list of worship assistants for the summer. In the past, this has been done based on prior history of attendance at Sunday or Thursday services, and from past volunteers. We need double the number of people during the summer to cover 2 services. So, this year, there will be a sign-up sheet posted for people to volunteer. Past experience not needed!

**Altar Guild** – someone to set up for communion, pick up flowers, and clean up after the service.. Thursday evenings is clean-up only.

**Readers** - Read the readings for the service, Old Testament and/or Epistle readings.

Readings are provided prior to the service.

**Communion Assistants** – to help with communion. This should be done by people who have served on church council in the past, or who are currently members.

**Counters** - Sunday only. Ernie Hill arranges the counters. I'm sure he won't turn away anyone who would like to get involved!

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***Personal Mention***

- **Happy Birthday wishes in May** are extended to **Julia Abbott, Maiju Balas, Ron Balas, William Bouchard, Gracie Clyde, Ethan Darcy, Jillian Donahue, Paul Donahue, Dottie Hayes, Jimi Hayes, Gunnar Munnick, Ava O'Connor, Max Pastore, Julie Phillips, Evan Sidoti, Trevor Smith, Priscilla Tilley.**
- **Happy Anniversary to Robert and Jean Himberg, John and dawn Muller and Phil and Maurine Lindquist!!!**
- **Our prayers and condolences go out to the family of Ginny Just on the death of her mother, Ruth, on April 22<sup>nd</sup>.**

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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 (special prayers for her scan scheduled 5/1)
- Ray Yeingst**, for health, after being hospitalized in late April with pneumonia and blood clots
- Jodi Gries**, Jerry and Barbara Gorichs' daughter, recovering from cancer surgery
- Harrison Collett**, 6 yr. old brother of one of our Nursery School students, diagnosed with bone cancer
- Jay Freeman**, recovering from knee surgery
- 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
- Jennifer T**, in thankfulness and gratitude for continued recovery
- 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 Feb. 22, the Taliban attacked six churches, burned several Christian homes and four Bibles and injured children in Karachi , Pakistan , according to The Voice of the Martyrs contacts. The churches that were attacked are, Christ United Church , Philadelphia Pentecostal Church , ARP Church , Salvation Army Church and two public churches.

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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 April!** Does this mean we can beat the goal??? Many thanks to Cory and Don Burroughs, Jackie Johnson, Patty Owen and the 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> 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)
<b>2009 Expenses</b>			
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 <sup>st</sup> communion...)	60.00	60.00	
Altar Candles	500.00	500.00	
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**

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