

A publication of



DIVINITY
LUTHERAN CHURCH

PARMA HEIGHTS, OHIO

Divinity Digest



A PEOPLE AND PLACE OF HOPE,
HEALING AND WELCOME

May, 2010

Divinity Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On Sunday, May 2, during our 11:00 a.m. worship service, 13 of our 8th grade students will affirm their baptisms in the Rite of Confirmation. **Mark Ackerman, Jr., Brian Berry, Drew Boxler, Megan Desmond, Paige Grey, Sean Klemme, Samantha Knoblock, Jeremy Landrau, Nicole LaPerna, Tiffany Lisy, Joey Massaroni, Alexandra Moe and Christian Panico** have written their personal faith statements based on what they've learned and experienced thus far in their faith journeys.

In the following excerpt from Nicole LaPerna's faith statement, she tells the powerful story of her Mom's illness and God's faithfulness.

"One thing that has brought me closer to God and the people who love me is the summer of 2007. My mom woke up and didn't feel too good. She really wasn't acting herself. She was drifting in and out of consciousness. One second she would be talking the next she would be out. My grandma was worried, and my mom couldn't stay awake enough to get to the car, so my grandma called the ambulance. The ambulance crew (who was mostly a volunteer crew that came in their own cars) helped get my mom into the ambulance. I was scared and didn't know what was going to happen, and I just sat in the corner and cried. One of the older gentlemen saw me and came over and comforted me. He said, 'Aw don't cry now sweetie, your momma is gonna be just fine.' I sure hoped he was right. Our good friend and neighbor from Arizona came up to see what was going on. My grandma explained, and I ended up going back to her cottage while my grandma went to the hospital with my mom. She kept me distracted from everything, and we played games and everything. When my grandma came back, she said that they were going to have to transport my mom to The Cleveland Clinic. She said that it should only be for a week or so, not even. The next day we came back to Ohio, and my mom was getting worse. We ended up staying for more than a month. The doctors had no clue what was wrong with my mom. They tried everything, but they just couldn't cure her. All they knew was that it was some kind of infection. My mom was so sick that she had to go into the Intensive Care Unit, and she was hooked up to a breathing machine. They didn't think she had much of a chance of living. I prayed to God every night. I wasn't ready to lose my mom, I was too young, and I needed her. I wouldn't let God take her away from me yet. She got worse and worse, and then she started getting a little better. I prayed more and more. Finally my mom was out of ICU. She was in a regular room, but she still wasn't cured. They still don't know what was wrong. I could tell my grandma was really stressed out from everything. One night, I woke up to my grandma coming in my room to check on me. I noticed that all the lights were on, and my grandma had a worried expression on her face. I immediately thought the worst, but no it wasn't. My grandma was having a stress overload and the ambulance took her to the hospital. Now I was really panicking. That night in the emergency room, I just opened my mind and talked to God. I knew he was with me, and whatever happened, everything would be ok. My grandma came out of the hospital that day, and we were back up to see my mom. She was sleeping, and the doctors came in and wanted to talk to us. They found out what was wrong, and they figured out what to do to make her better. As the week wore on, she got better and stronger too. She finally came home and I was so happy I just prayed and thanked God that she was still with me. I thanked him for all of the support from everyone. God was there for me and my grandma too."

We join with Nicole in thanksgiving for our 13 confirmands and their families.

In Christ, Pastor Doug



By Rick Haase

Alexandra Vago says she is "a natural born violist."

"It came down to who had the longest arms," she said, telling the story of why she chose to play the viola at the end of fifth

grade at Parma's Green Valley Elementary School.

It's a good thing she had the longest arms. The viola has taken her on quite an interesting musical ride.

Vago also plays the violin, but she said she favors the viola because she loves its sounds.

"It's like eating a good piece of dark chocolate," Vago explained. "There's a bittersweet quality to how it sounds."

She was a member of the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Orchestra in its inaugural year with legendary conductor **Jahja Ling**.

Vago is now a sought-after professional musician. She has played with the Trans-Siberian Orchestra when that group has visited northeast Ohio and Erie, Penn. She was called upon to play when singer Smokey Robinson visited Cleveland for a concert, too.

"He was so down to earth," she recalled. They performed at the former Nautica Stage and hung out after the concert.

And, her first professional job as a member of the American Federation of Musicians Local 4 was to play for The Three Tenors — Placido Domingo, Jose Carreras and Luciano Pavarotti — at Cleveland Browns Stadium in 2000.

"Words can't even describe what that was like. I remember they talked about soccer a lot," she said.

Born and raised in Parma, Vago attended Hillside Middle School and Normandy High School for two years before her acceptance into the prestigious Interlochen Arts Academy in Interlochen, Mich.

From Interlochen, she headed to Temple University in Philadelphia, where she earned master's degrees in viola performance and musicology.

She will complete a doctorate in ethnomusicology — the study of music in and as culture — in December 2010 at Kent State University. The topic of her dissertation? "A Semiological Analysis of Contemporary Christian Music as Heard on 95.5 FM (WPHR) 'The Fish,' Cleveland, Ohio." She said her doctoral thesis will primarily examine the lyrics to many pieces of contemporary Christian music. She is writing the thesis now.

Vago, who has taught at Mount Union College in Alliance and Hiram College, is an adjunct faculty member at Tri-C's Western Campus in Parma.

There, she teaches courses like songwriting, ear training and theory, a survey of African-American music, and one of her favorites, a survey of rock 'n' roll.

Part of her reasoning for the topic of her dissertation, she explained this way: "It's cultural appropriation of the radio station."

The frequency 95.5 FM was for years WCLV, Cleveland's classical music station, which Vago grew up listening to. That changed on July 3, 2001, when WPHR and The Fish went on the air.

"It has eclipsed the popularity of Classical music in northeast Ohio," Vago said.

She was curious about the topic and had to argue to convince members of her dissertation committee to allow her to study it.

As a part of her research, Vago was looking for another creative outlet. On Ash Wednesday, Feb. 17, she visited Divinity Lutheran Church in Parma Heights, after doing Internet research.

"I came to see what was going on. It was a combination of research and personal."

She liked the weekly sermons of Senior Pastor **Doug Gunkelman** and felt a connection. Vago also found that the church had a contemporary praise band, Chosen, and she now plays regularly for worship services with the group.

"I find it to be incredibly rewarding for both myself and the congregation. I look at it as an opportunity to give back. I also look at this as a form of tithing. I also felt I could add something to the ensemble."

The group includes Vago, guitarists **Dennis Cushing**, **Rick Chmura** and **Chad Tracy**, drummer **Billy Petersen**, keyboardist

Steven Czapor, and vocalists **Danette Gunkelman, Ken Spanagel, Jordyn Sesock** and **Natalie Eberhardt**.

Her ultimate goal is a full-time teaching position once her Ph.D. is completed.

"I love the intergenerational aspect of teaching at a community college," Vago said. "You do not see that at private schools." Vago, who is of Hungarian descent, met her husband, **Mell Csicsila**, while both were members of the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Orchestra, which rehearsed at Severance Hall. They were both in high school at the time — she at Normandy and he at Highland High School in Medina County.

"His mom worked at the North Royalton Public Library, where we used to go all the time. His mom ended up talking to my mom," Vago remembered. That conversation led to their first date.

She still has the corsage Csicsila gave her, in a box at home on Parma's Theota Avenue.

Csicsila, also a musician, is a percussionist.

"He's Hungarian and Polish," Vago said.

He proposed to Vago on stage before a concert at Severance Hall on April 25, 2003. Both were members of the Cleveland Pops Orchestra, conducted by **Carl Topilow**.

"Carl announced our engagement during the performance," she said.

The pair married on January 4, 2004 in Las Vegas at the Little Chapel of the West. That chapel is where Ann-Margret and Elvis Presley tied the knot in the movie "Viva Las Vegas."

The couple's wedding day was the same day that singer Britney Spears married Jason Alexander. Spears made national headlines when the marriage lasted less than three days.

Happily, the union between Vago and Csicsila has proven much more enduring.

The couple honeymooned in Sedona and Flagstaff, Ariz. and visited the Grand Canyon.

They have no children yet, but hope to have a family one day.

Csicsila holds both his bachelor's and master's degrees in music from Cleveland State University.

"He's the percussionist you'll hear at Playhouse Square," Vago said. "We're freelance musicians."

Like his wife, Csicsila also teaches as an adjunct faculty member at Tri-C West and has also taught at Kent State University's Stark Campus.

Vago also has her own company, Blue Point Music, which provides music for all occasions, private and group instruction, music services and consulting, workshops and master classes and contest adjudication.

"I'm a cultural phenomenon researcher," she said. "I like to keep up on my pop culture."

For fun, she works out at Curves at least three times a week and loves going to the movies. Two recent favorites were **Tim Burton's "Alice in Wonderland"** with **Johnny Depp**, and **James Cameron's "Avatar."**

"In the different realms that I work, there's so many different facets to me, that I don't think people know the whole picture. I am doing what I want to do. At the end of the day, if you can be satisfied, that's what really matters."

(Alexandra is presently in our Divinity new member class.)

"Go and Do



Likewise . . . "

After talking about the parable of the Good Samaritan and what Jesus meant by "Go and do likewise", our Confirmation youth have spent the last several Sunday's doing service activities. They have led the nursing home services, collected and packed lunches for Redeemer, made homebound cards, helped put food away in the pantry, created favors for the luncheon for the homebound, stuffed eggs for the Easter egg hunt, and packed nine food baskets for our Divinity families in need. We would like to thank them for their ministry.

When it comes to our Parma City School District, try taking a leap of faith

At 9 a.m. each morning, I allow myself a few minutes to break away from the breakfast dishes, the bits of kiwi that dot the kitchen floor, and the two beautiful toddlers that are waiting for my attention to let the bells from **Divinity Lutheran Church** echo through my body and soul. My teens are deep into their school day by now giving it their best shot, but I pause, captivated by the bells' sweet song. I imagine the community that laid each brick with their hearts and their finances so that it may resonate in my heart still today.

Were the people of this community, like so many I've known to have originated from Parma and Parma Heights, sons and daughters of immigrants or refugees? Were they already citizens who moved here from another town to build on a dream that they had for a family they loved? What is the message that those bells were petitioned to deliver for so many years now?

I like to believe that it was the message of an ever enduring faith. Not only of religion, but that the best was yet to come from the people of a community arriving at one common place from so many different beginnings.

I don't know all of your stories (although I would love to), but I do know of the nostalgia that some of your sons and daughters have of Parma/Parma Heights' history, of the communities of their beginnings. They love these towns; they love where they came from and we were encouraged by them to raise our family here last year.

I know that times are harder than they've ever been for many of us. But lack of faith in the Parma school district will cost us dearly, even you. A failing school levy is not punishing a corrupt school board member; his punishment is out of our hands now. Rather a grand history is being shamed as well as the potential for a grander future.

Our children and teens already feel the lack of faith the nay votes have shown them. They know that they are losing dearly here. They are missing out on the opportunities that former students flourished from. Without a school to envelope their academic pursuits,

they will go without. I fear for what we will get in return.

The cat is out of the bag. All the surrounding areas know of our apprehension, our fear, the absence of our faith. Who will be willing to fill our vacant houses? Certainly not those with dreams of a quality education for their children. Probably not those that will be there to participate in a community faith movement of their day and age. Your house value and neighborhood safety plummet. I am reminded of a poem that was written in the paper Oct. 29 that brought tears to my eyes. A poem of a gentleman in a nursing home that wished his nurses would see more than a stone for his heart, one that encouraged his nurses to look deeper, to see who he really was, in his teens, his 20s and beyond. A leap of faith.

Unfortunately, the poem was discovered only after he had passed. Too late to know the true patient, but not too late for the next one.

Too late for the failed levies, but not too late to pass the final attempt. It's time for a leap of faith of our own. One that looks beyond the haphazardness of youth and imagines the heights that can be reached with many community hearts to cradle the young that have the audacity to attempt what we only dream of.

I bet we'll get just what that type of community support has written in Parma/Parma Heights history. Amazing sons. Amazing daughters. Enduring Faith. And bells will ring forever in their hearts as well.

**Stephanie Hess
Parma Heights**

(The above article is a reprint from the Sun Post, Thursday, November 26, 2009.)

OFFICIAL NOTICE

The Spring Meeting of the congregation will be held on Sunday, May 16, 2010 at 12p in the Sanctuary. Items of business will include the election of officers and board co-directors. All voting members of the congregation are urged to be present.



With fundraising winding down for the year the Sr. High Youth now turn their attention to other activities such as . . .

Youth in the Digest!

April 17 – Youth and their families attended the 9th Annual Habitat for Humanity

Walk to raise money for the materials and supplies which will be used to build a house for this year’s selected Habitat house recipient, the Malcolm Family. Many thanks to all who participated.

April 18 – “SNL” Youth Group Nights continued on this evening. Many great friendships are being made and nurtured during these Christ-centered events. The next “SNL” night will be Sunday, May 2.

Mark Your Calendars:

- May 5** Spring Rummage Sale, setup begins at 12 p.m.
- May 6-7** Spring Rummage Sale 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- May 8** Sr. High Youth help with church clean-up day, 9:00 a.m.
- May 15** Sr. High Youth serving Ronald McDonald House, 3:00 p.m.
- May 16** Sr. High helping out with Kids 4 Christ Carnival, 11:00 a.m.
- May 23** Youth Sunday – Services 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.
Youth Car Wash – 10:00 a.m.

Other News

It’s back . . . the Spring Rummage Sale will be held on May 6 and 7 in the Fellowship Hall from 9 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Volunteers are needed for this event in the following areas: setup on Wednesday, running the sale on Thursday and Friday, AND clean-up! All proceeds go to the youth in the following areas: National Gathering, Summer Camp, Youth Activities, and Select trip (i.e. Sky Ranch)

accounts. Contact Laura Ramsey if you are able to donate some time to this fundraiser for our youth.

Sr. High Youth volunteers needed! Our Youth Sunday is fast approaching and we still could use some volunteers to read, greet, usher, and more. Please, consider helping out with this amazing event. Contact Laura today!

Calling All Youth Grades 7 – 12 – We need youth volunteers to help out with VBS 2010 which will be held from June 21 – 25, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. We are looking for those youth who love to work with kids and can assist our VBS teachers in the following areas: music, arts and crafts, outdoor games, snack time, and more. Do you prefer to act? We also need youth volunteers to help with daily skits during the week. Contact Laura Ramsey if you are interested.

Attention Divinity Family – The Youth Board is looking for volunteers to fill the following positions for the 2010 – 2012 term: Youth Board Co-Director and Fundraising Co-Directors (need at least 2 individuals). We would like to extend an invitation to those individuals to be a part of the Youth Board Retreat this coming July. For more information and/or if you may be interested please contact Laura Ramsey ASAP.



1468 West 25th, Cleveland, Ohio 44113 216-696-2715

Lutheran Metropolitan Ministry’s 2100 Lakeside Men’s Emergency Homeless Shelter is in need of the following items: Men’s underwear (all sizes), Men’s socks, toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant, soap, shampoo (travel size is preferred), shoe powder, lotion, towels and washcloths. For more information, please contact Sheryl Thomas at 216-566-0240 ext. 134 or stthomas@lutheranmetro.org.





Here I Step to Health and Wellness

Spring is here and summer is fast-approaching! We have been waiting for this! Now is the time to begin walking to health and wellness.

You are invited to participate in a walking program sponsored by Divinity's Parish Health Ministry. The campaign encourages you to follow the roadmap for health & wellness by increasing physical activity, decreasing caloric intake, and living prayerfully.

To participate, you need to agree to walk two and one-half (2.5) miles a day for eight weeks. That would be a total of 140 miles - Wow! The distance from Cleveland to Columbus!

You can do this! Taking the *Here I Step* challenge is a great way to continue your journey to health & wellness while nurturing your relationship with God! You can walk to health & wellness on your own, with a friend, or organize a group (It's always fun to walk with others). You can walk anywhere: the mall, the gym, your neighborhood, the park, etc. You can even walk around the hallways at Divinity - 10.5 times around equals one mile!

To participate, sign up in the Narthex and receive a "tool kit" with instructions and suggestions for your journey. The program begins on Sunday, May 2 and continues until June 20. Pedometers are available at a nominal price for those who wish to use them to keep track of their steps (2000 steps equal one mile).

It is our sincere prayer that you will experience social, physical, and spiritual health and wellness as we step into summer!

Parish Health Ministry

New Book Debuts at Divinity

Life-long congregant and newly published author **John Ordosch** will debut his multi-media event "Hate Can Wait" at the May 23 services at 9 and 11 a.m. Over the past year, John has worked with Pastor Doug on the project which makes its world debut at Divinity. He explains, "At the core of Hate Can Wait is a children's illustrated story book that

introduces, defines, explains and then provides examples of how kids can address feelings of Hate in their everyday lives. The precocious Hate character really jumps off the pages and I'm excited to present this book with its gentle moral and religious message!"

A colorful slide show accompanies the story that John will present as a children's sermon. Pastor Doug adds, "John approached me about working together to co-write an adult sermon that follows the children's presentation. I'll debut the adult sermon portion on May 23 as well." He adds, "We kicked off Hate Can Wait on Mother's Day, 2009 with a sermon but this is the fully realized, completed project."

Following the services, John will sign copies of the book that will be available for sale (\$19.95 each plus tax, cash or check only.)



7th and 8th Grade Confirmation Notes

"Forget what happened before and press on to our goal to share in the resurrection."

... Chris Panico

"The sermon made me think about how much God loves each and everyone of us. He doesn't see people the way we do. God doesn't play favorites. He loves us not because We are good, but because God is good. The past is 'skubala'. Our past does not determine how much God loves us."

... Nicole LaPerna

"Our goal is to share Christ and to live for today and into the future."

... Dyllan Sesock

"I liked the flashbacks of Pastor Doug's Easter Bunny days, when the tooth fairy, Santa Claus, and the Easter Bunny were still real. I thought about how I'm on the back nine of my childhood. I will miss making up silly games in the backyard and waking up on Christmas day knowing Santa had given you presents. It's sad to know it's almost over.

The Hallelujah Chorus gives me chills. It is suppose to remind you to be happy. Jesus died for our sins. Now we have everlasting life. I think Easter is the happiest day of the year."

... Mark Ackerman, Jr.

School Supplies for Children of Iraq

A local soldier serving in Iraq is hoping residents from his hometown will reach out to help Iraqi children.

Sgt. Jeffrey Smithisler is a chaplain assistant with the HHC 16th Engineering Brigade, serving in Baghdad. The engineers have built several schools throughout the Iraqi capital.

"That is great! However, the vast majority of kids here do not have any school supplies at all," Smithisler wrote in an e-mail to the *News Sun*.

He would like to give a backpack full of supplies to as many children as possible. He is asking "everyone back home" to donate pens, pencils, glue, dull scissors, colored pencils, pencil sharpeners, notebooks, folders and other supplies, except crayons. "We can't give them crayons because they wouldn't last very long in the 140-degree weather," he said.

Also needed will be money to help with shipping costs, he said. The items can be mailed in priority shipping boxes from the Post Office, which qualify for a flat rate of about \$11.

He will ask the Middleburg Heights Community Center, Big Creek School and Midpark High School to be collection centers for the supplies. Shipments will go to his military mailing address.

"This will be a great way for our community to show support. Even though they won't be going to the troops, it gives us joy and meaning to our mission when we can do great things like this here," he said.

The above article appeared in the News Sun on Thursday, April 1, 2010; written by Susan Ketchum

Sgt Jeffrey Smithisler is a son of our congregation and son of Dennis Smithisler. He is collecting school supplies for children in



Women of the Church

helped build several school throughout Baghdad. Jeffrey states in the above article that the vast majority of kids do not have school supplies. He is asking

Baghdad. The HHC 16th Engineering Brigade has helped build several school

everyone back home to donate pens, pencils, glue, dull scissors, colored pencils, pencil sharpeners, notebooks, folders and other supplies. No crayons because of the 140 degree weather. Place items in box marked school supplies in the parlor. For further information call **Mary Ann** at 440-845-6428. Please try to help out with Jeffrey's mission.

Mark your calendars for June 8 – The Women of the Church will be holding a Hawaiian Luau in the Courtyard. Meat will be provided. Bring a dish to share (vegetable, potato salad, dessert). All women are invited to participate. Watch the bulletin for further details.

On Sunday, November 7 – we will have a tea in fellowship hall. Watch the *Digest* and bulletin for further details.



Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR/Automatic External Defibrillator) AED Training - Adults, children, or infants may suffer life-threatening emergencies anywhere or anytime. Most of these emergencies occur in or near the home or they might occur here at our church. Victims of these emergencies are more likely to survive if you know what to do in an emergency. Prepare yourself to react quickly and appropriately in an emergency by learning basic skills. Learn how to quickly assess a victim, call for help, provide CPR, use an AED and relieve choking. You will also learn the signs and symptoms of heart attack and stroke in adults. CPR/AED training will be offered at Divinity on Saturday, May 1, 2010. The class will start at 8:30 a.m. and end at 2 p.m. The cost for the course is \$14. To enroll, please contact **Judy Jacobson**, 440-878-9916, or **Marti Stephan**, 440-886-4899, or call the church office, 440-845-2060.



ARE YOU SAFE AT HOME?

Your home is your palace. However, it is full of dangerous items and many areas that can

cause numerous accidents. So let us take a quick review for your safety. Know where the "danger" items are - medicines, toxic bleaches, oven and drain cleaners, paint solvents, polishes, and waxes. Keep these items in their original containers. In this way you have a source of the involved chemicals and how to treat an emergency. Look for items packaged in child-resistant containers. Don't leave them under a sink or in plain view in the garage - lock them away in a secure place, out of a child's sight and reach.

Electrical Hazards

Are lamp, extension, and telephone cords placed out of the flow of traffic? Cords stretched across walkways may cause someone to trip. Arrange furniture so that outlets are available for lamps and appliances without the use of extension cords. If necessary to use an extension cord, (and only on a temporary basis), use a #16 gauge with polarized plugs. When disconnecting cords, pull the plug rather than the cord itself. Cover unused electrical outlets with electrical tape or use plastic caps. Unusually warm or hot outlets or switches may indicate there is an unsafe wiring condition. Replace all damaged or frayed cords.

Floors

Remove all rugs and runners that tend to slide. Purchase rugs with slip resistant backing, or apply carpet tape or rubber matting to the underside. Periodically check the backing as they become less effective as they are washed. Make certain carpeting is firmly attached to the steps all along the stairs. Loose carpeting can lead to insecure footing resulting in slips or falls. Have secure and sturdy handrails. Do not let clutter accumulate on stairs leading to a slip or a fall. Mop up all spills on flooring to prevent falls.

Kitchen Safety

Keep flammable objects such as paper towels, potholders and wooden trivets away from burners. Don't store cookware or anything flammable inside the oven. Make sure burners aren't encrusted with food which can catch fire.

Wear short or tight fitting sleeves, long sleeves are more apt to catch pot handles, overturning pots and pans causing scalds. There should be good even lighting over stove, sink, and counter areas, especially where food is being cut or sliced. Make sure kitchen ventilation systems and range exhausts are functioning properly and are in use while you are cooking. Keep a properly charged fire extinguisher in the kitchen.

Bathroom

Bathtubs and showers should be equipped with non-skid mats or abrasive strips to prevent falls. There should be at least one, preferably two grab bars in shower or tub. Have a qualified person set your water tank temperature. Water temperature above 120 degrees can cause scalds. Always check water temperature by hand before entering the bath or shower. Taking baths, rather than showers reduces the risk of scalds from suddenly changing water temperatures. Hair dryers, shavers, curling irons, etc., should be unplugged when not in use. Never reach into water to retrieve an appliance before checking that it is unplugged.

Smoke Detectors

Smoke detectors warn you, giving you a chance to escape from a fire, The best place for a smoke detector is outside of bedrooms and at each level of the home. Test them monthly and replace batteries once a year or when they make a "chirping" sound. In case of fire, have two points of exit from your home, and practice using their routes. Decide on one place, outside the home, where the family should meet. Do not re-enter the home. Go to a neighbors home and call 911.

Basement– Radon (Rn)

The most common source of indoor radon is uranium in the soil or rock on which homes are built. Sometimes radon enters the home through well water. Uranium breaks down and releases a gas which is colorless, odorless, and radioactive. Exposure to high levels of radon causes lung cancer. You can test your home by purchasing a kit at the hardware or retail store. The kit should meet EPA requirements or is state certified.

Helpful Suggestions

Have the chimney checked out and cleaned by a registered and licensed

professional. A clogged chimney can cause poisonous fumes and smoke to come back into the house.

Use night lights in bathrooms, bedrooms, and all walkways.

Have a least one telephone located where it would be accessible in the event of an accident which leaves you unable to stand.

Have emergency and poison control phone numbers posted at each phone. Teach youngsters how to make these calls.

Have a happy and safe environment.

J. D. Piper

Parish Health Ministry

Resources: Home Safety – North Ohio

Heart Center

Ohio Medical Group, American Red Cross

Household Safety Sourcebook,

Dawn D. Matthews

doesn't increase for families with more than two children even though their poverty rates are higher. Filing for EITC is also complicated, so most eligible families need to use commercial tax preparation services. EITC filers often pay hundreds of dollars every year – money needed to support their families – for tax preparation.

Another credit, the Child Tax Credit, is worth up to \$1,000 for each child under age 17 claimed on a worker's tax return. It provides close to \$50 billion in subsidies to families with children every year. Until recently, this credit was not available to families with incomes below \$11,300. Thus, nearly 10 million children living in poverty didn't benefit from the credit. Bread for the World is asking Congress to keep these improvements in place beyond their 2010 expiration.

Bread for the World is also seeking additional funding for Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) sites, which provide financial education and free tax preparation assistance to low-income people.

Divinity will be participating in this historic effort. Dick Wittig will be in the narthex on Sunday, May 11 to help you write a letter to our elected senators and representatives in Congress to support feeding our hungry. This Offering of Letters is a powerful expression of our Christian citizenship and a message of hope for hungry people.



Churches Join Bread for the World to Make Sure our Nation's Children Don't Go Hungry

breadfortheworld
HAVE FAITH. END HUNGER.

In 2010, Bread for the World members will urge Congress to adopt changes to U.S. tax policy that will benefit low-income families.

But what do tax credits have to do with hunger?

This year, taxes will be near the top of the agenda in Congress because a series of tax cuts enacted in recent years will expire. In the midst of the debate over taxes, the needs of low-income people could easily be lost. Bread for the World will urge Congress to protect and strengthen two key tax credits.

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) was established in 1975 to help low-income families hold on to more of their earnings. The EITC is a refundable tax credit geared primarily toward families who have one or two children. According to a 2006 Brookings Institution study, the EITC lifts more children above the poverty line than any other government program.

As effective as this simple program is, it could be made even more helpful to low-income. For example, the size of the tax credit



**Are You Able?
Join us May 8 at 9am**

Join us for a work day on Saturday, May 8 beginning at 9 a.m. until ??? We will be working outside and inside. Lunch will be provided. Mark your calendars now!



Vacation Bible School

BAOBAB BLAST

June 21st - 25th

9:00 am - Noon

Children Age 4 through Grade 4

Baobab Blast is an invitation to the African Savannah, home to the Baobab Tree also known as the "Tree of Life".

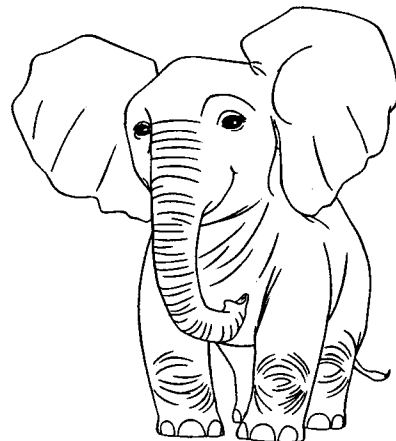
It will serve as the Safari Meeting Place for VBS this year.

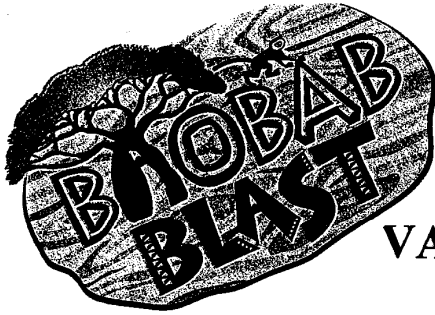
Please plan on joining us for a week of God's Word, Songs, Crafts, Games, Snacks and Fun.

Registration form(s) are available in this Digest, on the Sunday School Bulletin Board, near the Publicity Posters or in the Church Office.

Please register early!

**Please tell your friends.
Hope to see you there!**





VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL REGISTRATION FORM

Student's Name: _____

Birth Date: _____ Last Grade Completed: _____

Known Allergies, Medical Concerns or Special Needs:

Parent's Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Emergency Information:

Telephone # _____

Health Care Telephone # _____

Church Home: _____

Brothers and Sisters (Names and ages):

Person picking up the child if different from parent _____

**Please complete and return to the church office.
Thank you!**



Divinity Lutheran Church Women

1st Quarter Report – January – March, 2010

Balance – December 31, 2009 \$5,944.96

Receipts:

Circle Offering	\$56.00
Funeral Donations	725.66
Interest	12.23
Health Kits	20.50
Nut Rolls	
(401 sold, \$5 donation)	3,213.00
Lenten Dinner	378.23
Easter Centerpieces (41)	<u>615.00</u>
Total	\$5,020.62

Disbursements:

DLC Pastor's Discretionary Fund	764.05
Christian Service	541.69
Nut Roll Expense	673.74
Lenten Dinner Exp.	114.18
Novaks Florist	
(41 X 15 + 50.00)	<u>665.00</u>
Total	\$2,758.66

Balance March 31, 2010 \$8,206.92

Checking account - \$7,906.92
Christian Service - 300.00
Total \$8,206.92

Filed for audit

Marilyn J. Sesock, Treasurer

Management of resources is the best thing for environment

Let's face it folks, climate change has been taking place ever since the earth was created four and a half billion years ago.

What the present day discussion on this subject should do for us is hopefully move us back on the path to good stewardship of our natural resources.

We are all aware that our record in this area as nations and individuals has not been all that good. We definitely need to strive for better management in our relationship with our environment for the common good of us all.

I would add this. I prefer a little warming to the alternative. Twelve thousand years ago there was a mile-high ice sheet where Cleveland now stands. Never mind the recent *Forbes* report about Cleveland being the most miserable place in the nation to live. You should have been here then.

Richard M. Wittig, Berea

(According to Dick's latest letter, he's been around much longer than any of us know. - Pastor Doug)



To many of us, Mother's Day is a day we cherish. We remember our mothers, and grandmothers. It is very

important that we do have our memories. How our mothers nurtured us from a baby until we became adults, and even then they would give us some words of wisdom. She taught us to reach out to others and made sure we went to Sunday School and church. Being the oldest in the family, and my father was working 10 – 12 hours a day at his meat market in Berea, my mother depended on me, for some of the chores like going to the 5 and dime store, the shoemaker, and also the hardware store to do her shopping.

Mom and I worked together many times. She did not stand for profanity or laying around. We had to be busy doing our chores. As I grew older, I joined sport clubs and we belonged to the church's Walther League organization.

I would like to share the times when my mother had a hard day or had been feeling down. I would put my arms around her, and give her a big hug, and tell her I loved her, and I would always get a big smile from her.

See mothers have their responsibilities but they are also human, and have feelings. So we have to give them the love, respect, and obedience when they are helping us as we are growing up even if we don't agree with them.

We have to look out for them when they are growing older. Remember when Jesus was hanging on the cross, he told John to take care of their mother, Mary.

This is what Mother's Day means to me. I believe that it is also special for all of you folks. God bless you always.

Bob Maas

Relay for Life
Friday, July 23, 1:00 p.m. – Saturday,
July 24, 7:00 a.m.
Tri-C Western Campus
Want to be part of the Divinity team?
Contact Youth Director Laura or
Pastor Doug.



"Dear Pastor Doug and
Divinity Family:

Thank you for the
kindness and compassion
you've given me this
Easter season. The
wonderful Easter basket
was greatly appreciated.

Thank you again, and may God bless you all."

... **Alyce Mudra**

A very sincere "thank you" to the many
volunteers who contributed so much to make
Divinity's Caring Luncheon a success. The
efforts of the folks who prepared the food,
served the food, shopped, cleaned up, did all
the dishes, decorated Fellowship Hall, and our
youth who so lovingly made table favors for our
Family to take home with them. And, a big
"thank you" to our young people who sent
cards to the homes of our homebound family
for Easter. Everything we do is so very much
appreciated by them. We really are blessed to
be a blessing.

... **Loretta Cross**

"Dear friends at Divinity,

My sister and I would like to thank the
many people who have given their time and
help to us.

First we would like to thank Dianne
Mims and Loretta Cross who visit our home to
give us communion, lots of love a very
welcome visit.

Second to thank the Sunday School
teachers and children for making the hand
made cards for Christmas, Easter and many
other holidays. We enjoy these cards so very
much. We just love them.

And to the many people who contributed
the food for the Easter basket full of food. We
thank them so much, it sure is helping us
towards our monthly food allowance.

Again, thank every one for us. May God
bless and keep all of you in his care. With all
our love,

... **Lydia Wink and Martha Yanuzzi**

"Members of the Divinity Family,

Words cannot express how deeply I
appreciated the outpouring of love and support
upon the recent loss of my Father, Stan Haase.

Thank you all for demonstrating such
concern and caring. It means the world to me,
and I know that it would have touched my Dad
immeasurably.

Pastor Doug was with me every step of
the way -- at a time when I needed him the
most. Thank you for seeing me through that
very dark valley. Your presence, strength, and
words of comfort and reassurance will never be
forgotten.

Loretta Cross -- dearest friend. Thank
you for your touching eulogy. You captured
the essence of my Dad with every word and
reminiscence. He would have absolutely loved
it.

Divinity Lutheran Church Women,
especially MaryAnn Filipow, thank you for such
a marvelous meal and to everyone who
contributed food, I thank each of you.

Danette Gunkelman and Steve Czapor -
- thank you for sharing your musical gifts to
make the service such a beautiful and fitting
tribute. Marlene and Fred Dray, thank you for
sharing your personal copies of music. Larry
Wise, thank you for capturing it all for me on
DVD, and for running the slide presentation,
which I'm still getting compliments on.

Larry Jones -- thank you for your hard
work and perfectionism on my behalf. You
knew how important this service was to me. I
appreciate your extra effort.

To all those who attended, thank you for
being there for me, and for my Father.

In His Service and with Grateful
Appreciation,

... **Rick Haase**

G.S. RESIDENT SERVICES

HANDYMAN SPECIALIST



7791 ARBOR WAY
PARMA, OH 44134

GREG SIMON
440-465-7944



MAY, 2010

Sunday, May 2, 2010 – Fifth Sunday of Easter

Head Usher
Assisting Minister
Lector
Acolyte/Crucifer
Lay Assistants

Wine Steward
Welcome Center
Nursery Attendant
Grace Prayer Team: Loretta Cross, Marilyn Sesock
Communion Bread: Florence Rollason

9:00 a.m.
Dave Boxler
Darryl Tinay
Judy Jacobson
Steve Newbould
Doug Smith
Judy Junker
Leslie Crowe
Suzanne LaPerna
Laura White

11:00 a.m.
Doug Smith
Jill Heise

Dyllon Sesock
Lynn Ziebro
Sandra Cramer
Karen Hopp
Sandra Cramer
Barb Bemer

Sunday, May 9, 2010 – Sixth Sunday of Easter

Head Usher
Assisting Minister
Lector
Acolyte/Crucifer
Children's Sermon
Welcome Center
Nursery Attendant

Grace Prayer Team: Marty Hof, Mary Paul

Dennis Miller
Marilyn Sesock
Jeanne Mapes
Brandon Kalbrunner
Adam Havel
Elaine Quint
Kim Perez

Dan Bemer
John Forbes

Paige Grey
Adam Havel
Dorothy Olson
Diana Vegh

Sunday, May 16, 2010 – Seventh Sunday of Easter

Head Usher
Assisting Minister
Lector
Acolyte/Crucifer
Lay Assistants

Wine Steward
Welcome Center
Nursery Attendant
Grace Prayer Team: Judy Junker, Fay Maldari
Communion Bread: Judy Junker

Don Hartwick
Jim Deily
Tony Chilia
TBA
Bill Rettig
Dennis Grand
Carol Miller
Carole Naumann
The Kolk Family

Ed Pabst
Kip Kanya

TBA
Dorothy Olson
Lee Olson
Ed Kahl
Judy Votava
Sharon Massaroni

Sunday, May 23, 2010 – Day of Pentecost

Youth Sunday – Our youth will be providing leadership during both services of worship.

Sunday, May 30, 2010 – The Holy Trinity

Head Usher
Assisting Minister
Lector
Acolyte/Crucifer
Lay Assistants

Wine Steward
Welcome Center
Nursery Attendant
Grace Prayer Team: Jerry Crowe, Leslie Crowe
Communion Bread: Laura Smith

Dennis Miller
Darryl Tinay
Lana Gray
TBA
Marilyn Sesock
Michael Lipinski
Beverly Selong
Bertha Simon
Ethel Horvath

Dan Bemer
Joyce Tallman

TBA
Joan Pratt
Loretta Cross
Mary Goellner
Doris Tuhacek
Marie Marvin



A Christian Devotion *from* Lutheran World Relief

By the Rev. Dr. Jon Diefenthaler

Why a Lutheran Malaria Initiative?

"Sir," they said, "we would like to see Jesus."
John 12:21

Who are the fastest growing group of Lutherans in America? It's not the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) or The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (LCMS) or even the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). It is a group of people who identify themselves as Lutheran, but we rarely see them in any of our pews.

Like the Greeks in John 12, these Lutherans "would like to see Jesus." But they have not found him in so many of the churchgoers whom they know. Moreover, as far as they are concerned, there simply isn't enough reason to start looking in churches that aren't actively doing God's work outside of the Sunday service.

Jesus came into view for me recently in the African nation of Tanzania. Here Lutheran World Relief is partnering with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT) to combat malaria, one of the world's most deadly diseases. LWR's program aims to reach 1.6 million people in 12 of 20 ELCT dioceses by sharing pertinent information about his disease, helping families obtain and use bed nets for their children, and enabling pregnant women to receive timely and appropriate treatment. The emphasis on training parish pastors, who in turn train others in their sub-parishes, Sunday schools, youth groups and choirs, has resulted in the mobilization of an army of "malaria missionaries" in each of their communities.

"Why are you interested in malaria?" we asked. In their responses, Lutheran leaders in Tanzania clearly understand that the mission of God – that his Son, Jesus Christ, has commissioned us to carry on – involves the entirety of everybody's life, the body as much as the soul. "Holistic redemption" is what one of them called it.

The Lutheran Malaria Initiative (LMI) is a much larger, worldwide effort to fight malaria, in which LWR is playing a key role. LMI will not only create a unique opportunity for all U.S. Lutherans to join the battle, I believe it will hold up the Jesus that so many are yearning to see.

Prayer: O God, there are people around me who want to see Jesus. To this end, help me to find a way to give support and encouragement to LMI. Amen.

Jon Diefenthaler is President of the Southeastern District, LCMS, and a member of LWR's Board of Directors.

Note: Offerings received at the Northeastern Ohio Synod Assembly, May 14-15, 2010 will be used to support the Lutheran Malaria Initiative.

Malaria Worldwide

- Forty-one percent of the world's population live in areas where malaria is transmitted (e.g., parts of Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Central and South America, Hispaniola, and Oceania).
- Each year 350–500 million cases of malaria occur worldwide, and over one million people die, most of them young children in sub-Saharan Africa.
- In areas of Africa with high malaria transmission, an estimated 990,000 people died of malaria in 1995 – over 2700 deaths per day, or 2 deaths per minute.
- In 2002, malaria was the fourth cause of death in children in developing countries, after perinatal conditions (conditions occurring around the time of birth), lower respiratory infections (pneumonias), and diarrheal diseases. Malaria caused 10.7% of all children's deaths in developing countries.