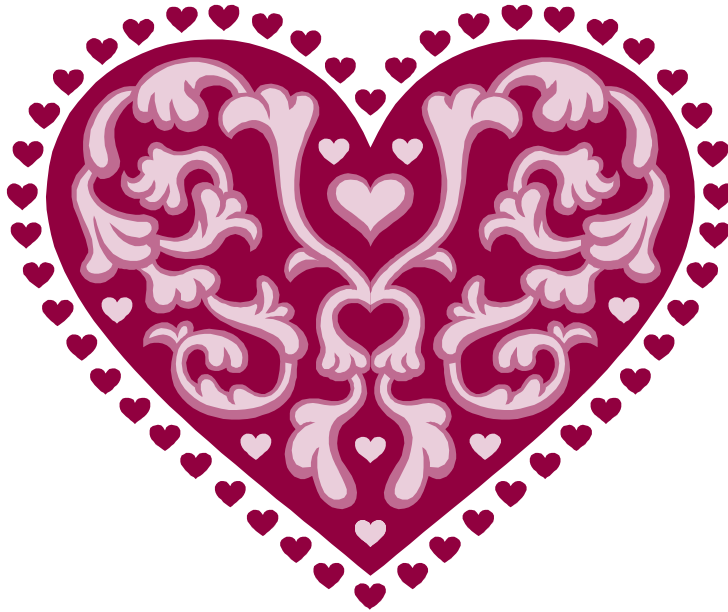


# TOMORROW RIVER LUTHERAN PARISH NEWSLETTER



## FEBRUARY 2009

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We are two congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
serving the Villages of Amherst, Amherst Junction and Nelsonville,  
and the Townships of Amherst, Lanark, New Hope, Stockton and beyond.

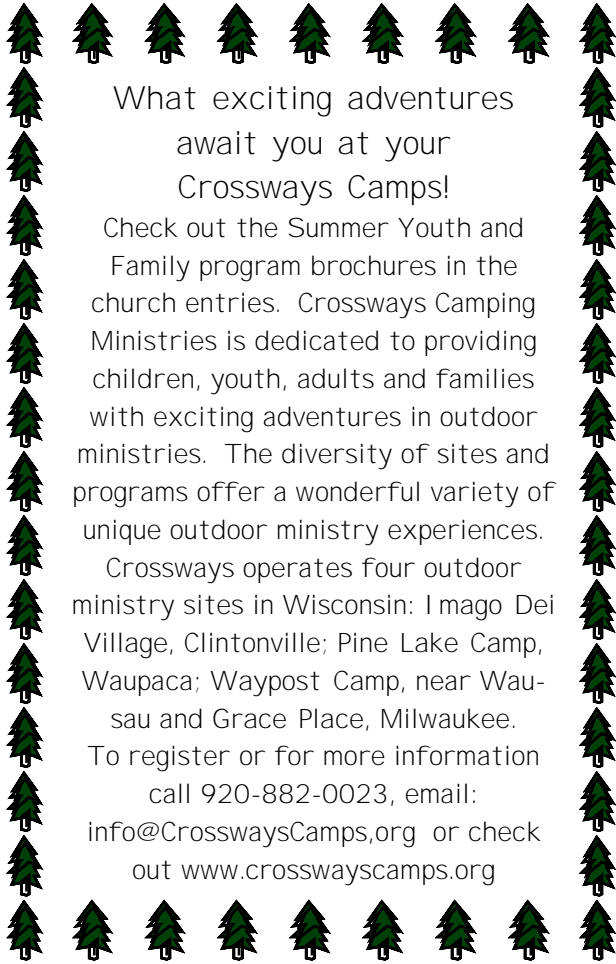
Peace Lutheran Church  
293 South Main  
P.O. Box 309  
Amherst, Wisconsin

Nelsonville Ev. Lutheran Church  
3061 Oak Street  
P.O. Box 116  
Nelsonville, Wisconsin

*“There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,  
the holy place where the Most High dwells. God is within her.” Psalm 46:4-5*

## Bible Study & Fellowship Opportunities

- Y CARE Gifts for February will be available in the church entries for delivery to recipients on Sun., Feb. 1.
- Y Nelsonville Lutheran World Relief Quilters will meet on Mon., Feb. 2 & 16 at 7:00 p.m. and Tues., Feb. 10 & 24 at 9:00 a.m. at Nelsonville church-lower level.
- Y Women's Connection is open for women on Tuesdays, 5:00-7:00 p.m. at Nelsonville. Stephen Minister training is tentatively scheduled for: Tues., Feb. 3, 10, 17 & 24, 6:00-8:30 p.m. and Sat., Feb. 7 & 28 (morning); all training sessions held at Peace.
- Y Nelsonville Evening Bible Study will be held on Tues., Feb. 3, 7:00 p.m. at Phyllis Shatters'.
- Y Do Group will meet on Wed., Feb. 4, 11 & 18 at 12:30 p.m. at Peace; the group will meet on Wed., Feb. 25 at 9:30 a.m. for quilt tying and potluck at noon.
- Y Confirmation Class will take place on Wed., Feb. 4, 11 & 18 beginning at 6:00 p.m. at Peace; students should attend Ash Wednesday worship on Wed., Feb. 25.
- Y Bible Study—Book of John will meet on Wed., Feb. 4, 11 & 18 at 7:00 p.m. at Peace.
- Y Luther League will meet on Wed., Feb. 4 & 18 at 8:15 p.m. at Peace. Men's Group will be held on Wed., Feb. 4, 11 & 18 at 8:30 p.m. at Peace.
- Y New Members Gathering will take place on Sat., Feb. 7, 8:30-10:30 a.m. at Nelsonville. *See newsletter announcement for additional information.*
- Y Nelsonville Social Sunday will be held on Sun., Feb. 8 before and after the 10:30 a.m. worship at Nelsonville; hostesses are Sally Cook and Pat Onan.
- Y Nordic Mountain Youth Ski Trip is Sun., Feb. 8, 3:00-8:00 p.m. at Nordic Mountain, Mt. Morris.
- Y Stephen Ministry Peer Supervision will take place on Mon., Feb. 9 & 23 beginning at 6:30 p.m. at Peace.
- Y Youth Prayer team will meet on Tues., Feb. 10, 7:30 p.m. at Morning Star Coffee.
- Y The Tomorrow River Conference Annual Meeting will be held at Peace on Tues., Feb. 10 beginning at 6:00 p.m.
- Y Mary Circle will meet on Thurs., Feb. 12, 12:30 p.m. at Peace.
- Y First Communion Sunday is Feb. 15; those students participating in First Communion training will have their first communion.
- Y "February Fun" will be held on Sun., Feb. 15, 6:00-8:00 p.m. at Nelsonville. *See newsletter announcement for additional information.*
- Y Scripture Sisters Bible Study will meet on Mon., Feb. 16, 6:30 p.m. at Peace.
- Y Peace Fellowship will have a committee meeting on Tues., Feb. 17, 5:30 p.m. at Nelsonville.
- Y Joint Church Council meeting will be held on Tues., Feb. 17, beginning at 6:30 p.m. at Nelsonville.
- Y Committee meetings will take place on Tues., Feb. 17, 8:00 p.m. at Nelsonville [or as scheduled].
- Y Prayer Shawl Ministry will gather on Wed., Feb. 18, 6:00 p.m. at Nelsonville in the Women's Connection (Healing Room).
- Y Ash Wednesday is Feb. 25; services will be held at Peace at 10:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.



What exciting adventures  
await you at your  
Crossways Camps!

Check out the Summer Youth and Family program brochures in the church entries. Crossways Camping Ministries is dedicated to providing children, youth, adults and families with exciting adventures in outdoor ministries. The diversity of sites and programs offer a wonderful variety of unique outdoor ministry experiences.

Crossways operates four outdoor ministry sites in Wisconsin: Imago Dei Village, Clintonville; Pine Lake Camp, Waupaca; Waypost Camp, near Wausau and Grace Place, Milwaukee.

To register or for more information call 920-882-0023, email: [info@CrosswaysCamps.org](mailto:info@CrosswaysCamps.org) or check out [www.crosswayscamps.org](http://www.crosswayscamps.org)

T.R.A.C.K.

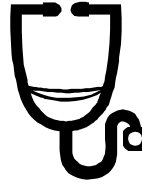
(Tomorrow River Area Community Kitchen)  
Providing emergency assistance of food for families with need in the Tomorrow River school district area.



*T.R.A.C.K. welcomes non-perishable food and monetary donations (used for perishable item)*

HOURS:  
Mon., 8:00-10:00 a.m.  
Thurs., 5:00-7:00 p.m.

Housed at Peace Lutheran,  
293 S. Main St., Amherst



HOSPITALIZED?

If you are hospitalized or know of anyone that is, please call the pastors as soon as possible. Upon admission, please ask that your church affiliation be documented.



FEBRUARY IS  
"LOVE  
MONTH"!

February is the month that Peace members & friends are given the opportunity to share their love with the children of the congregation.

"Valentine" envelopes will be available for your monetary gifts to help defray the cost of Summer Bible Camp; envelopes are distributed by Hope Circle.

THANK YOU! in advance for your support of our children. Remember... campfires, singing, roasted marshmallows, swimming, praying, skits, praising, laughing, making new friends...

# THOSE ASSISTING WITH WORSHIP

## Acolytes:

- Feb. 1 Ryan Walkoe (AM)  
Sam Cook (NV)  
Feb. 8 Ryan Walkoe (AM)  
Sam Cook (NV)  
Feb. 15 Chelsy Bobbe (AM)  
Chase Gordon (NV)  
Feb. 22 Chelsy Bobbe (AM)  
Chase Gordon (NV)  
Feb. 25 Ashley Chantelois (AM-7 p.m.)

## Greeters:

- Feb. 1 Mark & Sandra Lynne  
Schmutzler (AM)  
Peggy Henke (NV)  
Feb. 8 Melissa Hilker (AM)  
Mark & Gayle Huglen (NV)  
Feb. 15 Connie Pitt & Dolly Carr (AM)  
Nola Knight (NV)  
Feb. 22 David & Barbara Ische (AM)  
Judy & George Konkol (NV)

## Ushers:

- Feb. 1 Laura Kolbus & Julie Bunting  
Feb. 8 Barb & Christopher Ramlow  
Feb. 15 *Need volunteers*  
Feb. 22 Laura Kolbus  
Feb. 25 *Need volunteer* (AM-10:30 a.m.)  
Steve Maves &  
Chris Loken (AM-7 p.m.)

Terry & Gail Benzine family (NV)

## Offering Counters:

Laura Kolbus & Carol Lea (AM)

## Lectors:

- Feb. 1 Beth Borgen (AM)  
George Konkol (NV)  
Feb. 8 Marla Borgen (AM)  
Paul Onan (NV)  
Feb. 15 Burt Benjamin (AM)  
Anita Peterson (NV)  
Feb. 22 Mark Schmutzler (AM)  
Phyllis Shatters (NV)  
Feb. 25 *Need volunteer* (AM-10:30 a.m.)  
Ila Sanders (AM-7 p.m.)

## Communion Assistants:

- Feb. 1 Barbara Ische (AM)  
Paul Onan (NV)  
Feb. 15 Carol Benjamin (AM)  
Gayle Huglen (NV)  
Feb. 25 *Need volunteer* (AM-10:30 a.m.)  
Theresa Maves (AM-7 p.m.)

## Nursery:

No nursery attendant at Peace or Nelsonville; nursery is open for family use but not attended.

## Altar Guild:

Delores Solverud, Jan Bormann,  
Delores Johnson (AM)  
Anne & Jenny Hvizdak (NV)



### C.A.R.E. Ministry

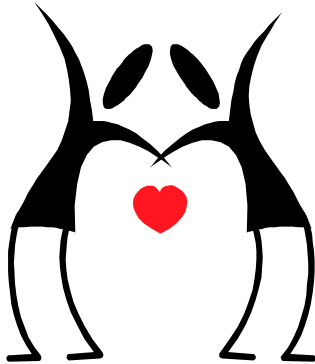
This is a thank you to all the people connected with C.A.R.E. ministry.

I have appreciated being remembered with all the cards and homemade gifts. The Christmas basket was very thoughtful and useful. Thank you to the people who take time to deliver and visit us. I have made good use of the shawl, which was such a good idea.

God's blessings to all the people doing the work of the Lord.

Lois Hedbany

.....  
: Thank you to all those  
: involved in the  
: parish's C.A.R.E. ministry.  
: I am grateful for the  
: monthly visits and gifts.  
: Thank you for the festive  
: Christmas basket, it was  
: wonderful!  
: Lorraine Packer  
: .....



### Thank you for praying

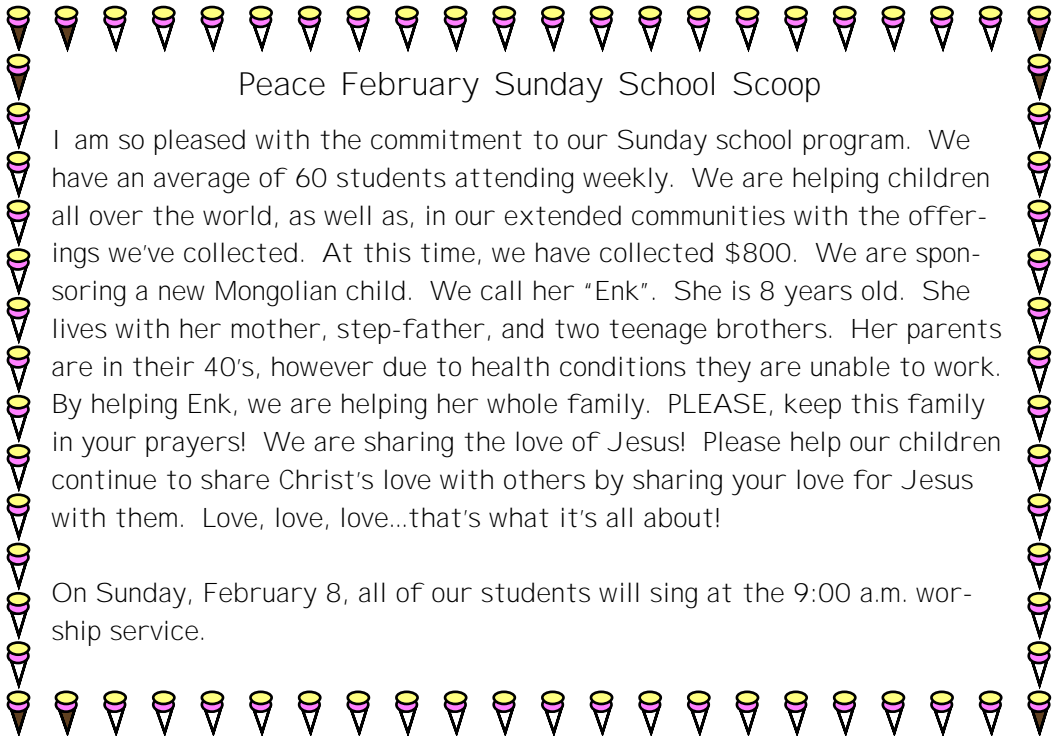
**for:** Family & friends of Kristen Schroeder, Ruth Calvey, Tom Olszewski, Elaine Doerfler and Robert Tiegs;

**for:** Irv Williams, Joel Niesen, Russ Hoefft, Carl Bohman, John Hauke, Jr., Phyllis Shatters, Marge Parker, Schroeder family, Rev. John Poffinbarger, Rev. Jon Sachs, Bette Bobbe, Heidi Pottruff, Three sisters coping with addiction and cancer in families, Karen Veltus, Pastor Jim Scott, John Hulstraud, Shirley Quail, Lori, Betty Harris, Carol, 64 yr. Old man with health issues related to his bone marrow, Dorothy Kachur, Howard Borgen, Woman grieving loss of marriage, Bobette, Donna Huglen, Person undergoing cancer treatment, Earl Frederickson, Pastor Jeff Giles & family, Robert Husberg, Father Tom O'Neil, Mitch, John Houdek, Jr., Candy Baer, Richard Pask, Georgia, Bill Romundson, Lois Hedbany, Evelyne May, Jim Garavet, Young person with eating disorder, Esther Bicknase, Ruby Shanklin, Bob Rausch, Edna Moy, Tommy Pritzlaff, Phil Doll, Margaret Stroik, Jim Engebretson, Kathy Skalski, Hermsen family, Noah, Bonnie Shanklin, those with limited mobility;

**for:** Armed Service Personnel;

**for:** Those in need of a Stephen Minister, care receivers, Stephen Ministers, training participants & leaders;

**for:** Any members, friends or family who have recently been hospitalized, undergone surgery, are recovering from illness, in need of rest, or



### Peace February Sunday School Scoop

I am so pleased with the commitment to our Sunday school program. We have an average of 60 students attending weekly. We are helping children all over the world, as well as, in our extended communities with the offerings we've collected. At this time, we have collected \$800. We are sponsoring a new Mongolian child. We call her "Enk". She is 8 years old. She lives with her mother, step-father, and two teenage brothers. Her parents are in their 40's, however due to health conditions they are unable to work. By helping Enk, we are helping her whole family. PLEASE, keep this family in your prayers! We are sharing the love of Jesus! Please help our children continue to share Christ's love with others by sharing your love for Jesus with them. Love, love, love...that's what it's all about!

On Sunday, February 8, all of our students will sing at the 9:00 a.m. worship service.

### Attention High School Seniors



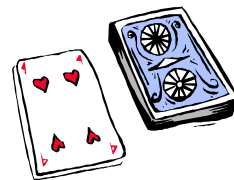
There are three scholarships available through the Tomorrow River Lutheran Parish. There are different requirements for each. Application forms are

available from the parish office or in the narthex of Peace and Nelsonville churches.

Completed scholarship application forms with all required information should be returned to the parish office **no later than April 1, 2009 to be eligible for scholarship funds.** Questions? Please contact the parish office, 824-5615 or

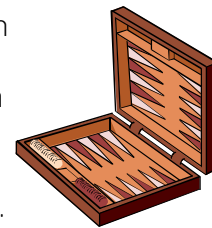
### FEBRUARY FUN...

Come out of the cold to enjoy game night on Sun., Feb. 15, 6:00-8:00 p.m. at Nelsonville church.



Peace fellowship will provide drinks and popcorn. Bring your favorite trail mix ingredient (bag of M&M's, Reese's pieces, raisins, pretzels...) to add to the trail mix dump.

Games can range from cards to Clue, bring your favorite one with you. Any questions, contact Bonnie Warzynski, 366-2098.





*\*\*Nelsonville and Peace congregation annual meetings were held the end of January. Church council positions and committee council representatives have not been completely determined. A complete listing of parish leadership will be available in the March newsletter.*

## PARISH LEADERSHIP

### PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

President: Lori Carlson  
 Vice President: Jennifer Johnson  
 Secretary:  
 Treasurer: Barb Ramlow

#### Committee Chairpersons & Council Representatives:

Lay Ministry/Worship:  
 Evangelism:  
 Fellowship:  
 Education: Ila Sanders (Chairperson)

Youth:  
 Stewardship:  
 Property & Bldg. Use:  
 Long Range Planning:

Sunday School  
 Superintendent: Leah Maves  
 WELCA President: Delores Solverud  
 Cemetery: John Olson

### NELSONVILLE EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH

President:  
 Vice President:  
 Secretary:  
 Treasurer: Judy Konkol

#### Committee Chairpersons & Council Representatives:

Lay Ministry/Worship:  
 Evangelism:  
 Fellowship:  
 Education:  
 Youth:  
 Stewardship:  
 Property:  
 Long Range Planning:

Sunday School  
 Coordinator: Janet Hafemann  
 WELCA President: Anita Peterson  
 Cemetery: Richard Packer

### TOMORROW RIVER PARISH STAFF

Office Phone: 715-824-5615

E-mail address: trchurch@wi-net.com Website: www.trchurch.org  
 Office Hours: Mon.-Thurs., 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Pastor Gretchen Anderson  
 Pastor Dwight Anderson Home Phone: 824-2710  
 Young Blessings Preschool Director: Laura Kolbus  
 Organist: Ruth Gordon  
 Custodians: Chuck & Gretchen Diver (AM), Linda Packer (NV)  
 Treasurers: Barb Ramlow (AM), Judy Konkol (NV)  
 Office Manager: Nanci Simon

#### JOIN US FOR

**WORSHIP:** 9:00 a.m., Peace Lutheran Church 10:30 a.m., Nelsonville Ev. Lutheran Church

10:15 a.m., Sunday School

9:15 a.m., Sunday School



Ahh, the love month. February is the time when all the stores burst with pink and guys roll their eyes at another opportunity to mess up with well-intentioned gifts. Valentines Day has become a commercial holiday filled with waxy chocolates and plastic flowers...or has it? It is easy to be cynical toward the day but what a great concept to celebrate God's ideal of "love." Many people do celebrate it in a very personal way with their partner, or just with others in their life whom they truly love. I will argue the "spark" is still there.

You may be surprised to find out that Saint Valentine is not just one man. There are many legends about many different people. The *real* Saint Valentine is still much of a mystery, not something we can pinpoint...much like the love *he* represents. However my favorite story is told about a Roman priest who became martyred by Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius Claudius during Claudius' reign from 268-270 AD. The priest, so called "Valentinus", was arrested and imprisoned when it was found that he married young Christian couples and helped Christians in general; it was a crime at that time. In fact, as the legend goes, Claudius even took a liking to Valentine until Valentine tried to convert the Emperor. This made the emperor angry and Valentine was sentenced to death. Legend says he sent a letter from jail the night before his death. He sent it to the jail-master's daughter signing it "From Your Valentine."

Valentine died because he would not renounce his faith and therefore the Roman Catholic Church later made him a Saint. Saint spelled with a capital "S" is one who is designated as someone who had *special favor* with God, a designation by the Roman Catholic Church. Lutherans do not disregard the works of **S**aints (capital "S") but rather emphasize the saintly nature of all God's children. We are all a work in progress moving toward greater service to God; we all have *special favor*. Martin Luther said we are both **s**aint (little "s") and sinner. And that is something we cannot escape while here on earth. God is working on us, trying to make us better everyday. We all have the potential to do great things through faith.

Our lives are overwhelming, that is true. Perhaps we DO have too much going on. Perhaps there is a simpler way. There is, by *making* time for God everyday. Christ did die for you, became a martyr, so that he could be raised again into your life and heart. He is waiting for you and wrote you his own love letter. I urge you to open your Bible and read God's love letter to you. Don't take time, MAKE time. He is waiting.

Jesus Christ is the love story I proclaim this February!

Speaking of love, I love being your Seminarian.

## Monday Morning Jesus (Brian Konkol)

I *do not* look forward to Monday mornings.

I do not look forward to Monday mornings. However, while this distaste of mine may be similar to many (...I know quite a few people who do not like Mondays!), here in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa my reasons are quite different from most.

Monday is “trash day” in our area, which means, as local residents place their trash bags near the streets to be collected by municipality workers, the roads become cluttered with various men, women, and children searching through the multitude of bags before the trucks arrive. Each Monday morning I see anywhere between ten and thirty people searching for food, clothes, and anything else that could possibly be used or sold. The sights and smells are totally disgusting. I never look forward to it.

A natural initial reaction to the sights and smells of garbage searching is one of repulsion. It is easy to wonder, “How could anyone dig through garbage? What about the smell? What about the filth? How could anyone do such a thing?” However, after a small bit of consideration (...and a large dose of humility), one receives a different outlook, and the situation becomes even more offensive. Once one is able to get past the initial reaction, the question is no longer *how* someone could do such a thing, but rather, *why* they are in a position where they need to do such a thing. One asks the deeper questions: Why do so many people live in such a way? When the world is filled with so much wealth and technology, why do so many have so little? What does it say about our society when there is such a large gap between the wealthy who drive down the streets in luxury vehicles and the poor who hover off to the side looking through filthy waste? How can one person’s trash be another person’s treasure? What does all this say about us? What does all this mean for me?

I cannot imagine any person *wants* to search through garbage bags, just as I suppose no person *wants* to live in extreme poverty. However, the harsh reality of our world today is that billions of people throughout the world are forced to live in such dehumanizing situations because they have no other choice. Why is this? I suppose there are many who could argue as to why poverty exists, but what cannot be disputed is that it does indeed exist, and that it is a growing challenge throughout the world that inevitably affects all people in every corner of the world. According to the World Bank, there are currently more than one billion people living on less than \$1 per day, while another three billion (...approximately half of the world’s population) are living on less than \$2 per day. In 2005, the poorest 40% of the world’s population accounted for 5% of global income, while the wealthiest 20% accounted for 75% of world income, and the wealthiest 10% accounted for 54%. Perhaps most startling of all, the United Nations reported that every three seconds a child dies as a result of extreme poverty (...try snapping your fingers every three seconds, do this for a minute, and you will realize just how serious this is).

The challenge of poverty is a serious issue for all global citizens, and of course, it must be a top priority for those who claim to follow the way of Jesus Christ. I could be mistaken, but I believe Jesus was someone who was constantly committed to accompanying those most forgotten in soci-

ety. I believe it was his top priority. Lepers, cripples, blind beggars, prostitutes, and other public outcasts were repeatedly the beneficiaries of Jesus' care and concern. With this in mind, I would like to believe that if Jesus were physically walking among us today, he would most certainly be found alongside those digging through the garbage on Monday mornings. He would not scold them for doing such "filthy" things, but he would actually accompany them, listen, learn, and remind them that they are blessed, cherished, loved, valued, and regardless of their impoverished situation, they are beautiful children of God who deserve honor and respect. I believe Jesus would consider their life stories, get to know them, and perhaps find food and share a meal together. And of course, I believe that just as Jesus provided hope, love, and justice to so many during his life and ministry, he would call upon us to look outside ourselves and do the same in our day and age.

A number of global leaders have said that we now have the knowledge, information, technology, and resources to end extreme poverty; the only thing we lack is the moral and political will. Basically, we have the tools, but we do not have the motivation to use them. Why? I suppose one of the main reasons we lack the will is that the vast majority of those of us in the more affluent half of the world simply do not know anyone in the poorest half. How many of us are actually *friends* with someone who lives in extreme poverty? How often do we actually share a conversation with someone who is poor? How many names of poor people do we even know? Poverty is all around us, yet because the United States and other developed nations are so good at hiding it in back alleyways and out of plain view (South Africa has not yet mastered this art), we try not to think about it, and we most certainly try to avoid those who are victims of it. As much as the statistics are powerful, the reality is that it is easy to pass over numbers on a page, and it is much more difficult to forget your friends. This, I believe, is the key to it all.

There are many things that need to happen for extreme poverty to be reduced on a global scale, many of which are quite complicated to understand. However, even as we search to make sense of the complexities, I believe one simple thing we all can do to assist in the process is to *change our relationship with the poor*, both locally and globally. Sharing a simple conversation and building a relationship can teach us more about poverty than any report or textbook ever can. The commitment to spend time with local poor, or the ability to travel to a distant land, will teach us much more than anything we could ever view on CNN or National Geographic. We might be able to forget a magazine article or TV show, and we might even be able to forget heart-wrenching photos which are worth a thousand words, but when we look into the eyes of a child, or when we share a meal in a small tin shack with a family of twelve, it sits in our minds forever. We cannot forget.

The month of December is often recorded as the most common time period for charitable giving. The Season of Christmas and New Year often gives us "the will" to give. But sadly, by the end of January most people have forgotten about the poor and have gone back to the routines of their everyday lives. Perhaps what we need to remember is that people are poor not only during December, but they are poor each and every day of the year, and if we work together, great things can take place in all corners of the globe. The temptation of the ongoing global economic crisis is for us to look only at ourselves, and say "I can't worry about others. I need to worry about myself". Yet, the fact of the matter is that we must continue to look outward, for as we are intimately connected as Children of God, we

must continue to follow Jesus' call to love and care for those who are poor, marginalized, and are too often forgotten and left to suffer.

I suppose I will never enjoy Monday mornings here in Pietermaritzburg. It is challenging to experience such things. However, what I have come to realize over the past year in South Africa is that Monday mornings are my most important hours of the week. While Sunday mornings are usually reserved for formal worship, it is on Monday mornings that I experience Jesus the most. It is Jesus who walks alongside those who look through the garbage. It is Jesus who dwells in the slums. It is Jesus who sleeps in cardboard boxes and tin shacks. It is Jesus who comforts those infected and affected by HIV and AIDS. It is Jesus who is found in the cries of violence. It is Jesus who is found in the debris of wasted opportunity and lost lives. It is Jesus who is with us when we are with them.

I may never enjoy Monday mornings here, but I thank God for them, for if I were not confronted with the realities of extreme poverty, I wonder if I too would fall victim to the temptation of avoiding it at all costs. I thank God that Kristen and I have been welcomed into Lutheran communities of faith who worship in the poverty-stricken townships, for if we were not, I wonder if we too would forget that the Church is supposed to be "good news for the poor." I thank God that we are able to sit with people face to face, to listen, to learn, and be shown that we Americans do not always have the answers, because all too often we have been a big part of the problem. I thank God for the forgiveness we receive from our local hosts when we think we understand but simply do not. I thank God that our hosts are willing to walk alongside us, for as Jesus is found among them, it is through them that I am able to experience Jesus walking alongside me.

In order to respect the dignity of every person, to promote the common good of society, and to follow the way of Jesus Christ, I pray that we all may renew our commitment to overcome extreme poverty. This is an issue that affects us all, and it can no longer be ignored. First, we commit ourselves to changing the way we relate with the poor through starting and building personal relationships, so that "the poor" are no longer statistics in a book or pictures on a screen, but flesh and blood people whose names we know and whom we have grown to value and love. Throughout the process we can also take concrete steps to seek relief and justice for those who suffer as victims of poverty, both near and far. The ELCA's poverty resources can be an excellent start, (see below), for they provide much needed assistance to those who do not have the capabilities to produce it on their own. As time, energy, and resources are poured into poverty reduction projects, and as we learn to listen to and love the poor, not only will we have the "knowledge, information, technology, and resources" to end extreme poverty, but we also have "the moral and political will". For the sake of the billions who suffer, may that day come sooner rather than later, because Monday morning is only a few days away.

Lutheran Disaster Response: <http://www.elca.org/Our-Faith-In-Action/Responding-to-the-World/Disaster-Response.aspx>

Stand With Africa: <http://www.elca.org/Our-Faith-In-Action/Responding-to-the-World/ELCA-World-Hunger/Our-Work/Stand-With-Africa.aspx>

ELCA World Hunger: [http://www.elca.org/Our-Faith-In-Action/Responding-to-the-World/ELCA-](http://www.elca.org/Our-Faith-In-Action/Responding-to-the-World/ELCA-World-Hunger/)