

## Asking Purposeful Questions

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Here's a short list of what I'll call "logistical" questions that people who care about their congregations often ask:

- How are we going to pay our bills this year?
- How can we convince more of our members to participate in our congregation's overall ministry?
- How can we avoid conflict in our congregation so that we don't lose any more members?
- Where will find new members to replace those that have died, moved away or dropped out?

You probably won't be surprised that I prefer to contrast these kinds of questions with another category of questions that I've learned to call "purposeful." Here's an excellent example of what a purposeful question sounds like:

What is God up to in our church and in our neighborhood, and how can we help?

By now most of you know me well enough to guess that I'm a fan of purposeful questions. *Purposeful questions don't revolve around our purposes or our concerns, rather they focus on what God is doing right now in our context. They are questions about God's purposes, not ours.*

So, why should I or you or anyone else at church get to ask some purposeful questions when we have so many pressing "logistical" questions of our own? The short pastoral answer to this question is that all our purposes and concerns find their answer in the gracious and loving purposes of God.

Really?

I believe that God never hides from us what we need to do and take care of at any given time. Our problem is that we like to supplement God's "to do" list with a long list of our own. If you're like me, my "to do" list almost always contains some high-priority items on it, which for some reason, God never seems to give me enough time or energy to take care of... at least to my satisfaction. On the other hand, when I pay attention to the work God gives me each day, when I make that work my priority (no matter how mundane it may be), I'm never worse off for it. Once again God has enabled me to serve God's purposes and not just my own (or those items I might have thought were at the top of God's priority list).

I realize this might sound like a prescription for *perilous levels of church laziness*. Perhaps it only seems natural that 20% of the folks at church take care of 80% of the work. Maybe we assume something's wrong unless we have a handful of exhausted church volunteers who keep trying to keep the ship afloat.

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## Prayer List

**For those who mourn:** The family of Diane Marguerite Wilson, the family of Herman Sonier, the family of Jonathon Kenion, the family of Sarah Stafford, the family of Mollie Murphy, the family of Scott Steen, the family of Tom Creighton, the family of Laverne Johnson, the family of Lawrence Harper, the family of Kim Thornhill, the family of Allene Korineck, the family of Mary Armstrong.

**For healing:** Kathy Korn, Phil Duncan, Jeff Mellstrom, Sandy Williams, Jerrome Duncan, Ethel Grissom, Tom Wortham, Sylvia Ford, Bernice Smith, Sissy & Lloyd Thornhill, David Stankov, David Glover & family, Dick Barnes, Ron Weekly, Jr., Carlos Paiva, Sherman Banks, Sylvester Scott, Millie Nobles, George Williams, Phyllis Taylor, Dan Miller.

*It's our custom to have a prayer list in The Shepherd's Voice. This is a partial list of those for whom we pray. If you have someone you would like on the list, or would like to be taken off the list, please call or e-mail Judy Sonier at the church office.*

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### February Birthdays

2/4 Robert Spurlock  
 2/5 David Chisum  
       Sandy Williams  
 2/10 Laura Mulfinger  
       Cynthia Lundy  
 2/21 Sylvia Ford

### Baptismal Birthdays

2/14 Dominick Campbell

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The way I look at it is that while martyrdom remains an ever-present possibility, Jesus was the only one whose job it was to *die* for the church. Besides, my recollection is that he died so that the rest of us might be freed up to serve God's gracious purposes at church and beyond. By stepping on the brakes occasionally and asking what those purposes really are we might not only be doing ourselves a favor, we may actually begin doing what God was hoping we would.

One of your friends in Christ,  
 Pastor Mark Witte

## News and Notes

### Committee Meetings for February

Feb 01	11:45 am	Worship Arts Ministry
Feb 08	9:00 am	Property
Feb 08	11:45 am	Finance
Feb 15	11:45 am	Education Social Ministry
Feb 22	11:45 am	Evangelism

PLEASE NOTE: Starting in February and until further notice, Church Council meetings will take place on the third Monday of the month, starting at 6:00 pm.

### ACTS Food Pantry

The Altadena Sheriff's substation donated a huge amount of food left over from their annual Christmas food & toy drive. Accordingly, we won't be needing you to donate the usual menu items for a couple of months.

Instead, on World Hunger Sunday (the first Sunday of the month) in February & March, please consider donating items that can be used by the homeless — individually-sized items that ideally need no more than hot water to prepare or can be eaten as is, and do not need a can opener or other tool to open.

By the way, the CTS Youth have for several months been preparing extra "homeless bags" to be given out at the Food Pantry as part of their effort to reach out to the homeless. Thank you, Youth!

### The Church Calendar

Did you know the Church Calendar is available for view on our website, [www.ctsaltadena.org](http://www.ctsaltadena.org)? We try to keep it up to date as humanly possible. If you are planning an event you would do well to check it before nailing down a date and time for it. You might also check the "12-step Groups" page under "Community Programs" for the days and times of the regular 12-step group meetings.

### The Stretch Factor is Back!

Actually, the Stretch Factor never went away, but we have not done our job in reminding the congregation about it.

For those of you who are relatively new, the Stretch Factor was the brainchild of Hermann Engelhardt. It served an easy method for members of the congregation to make an extra donation at a time when the church finances were very stressed. Hermann suggested that people save their spare change and bring it in periodically to be counted by our intrepid Tellers. In practice, members of the congregation brought in a variety of coins, bills, and checks as the spirit moved them.

Although the stress on the church finances has recently and continues to come from property repair and deferred maintenance, every little bit helps. Whatever comes in through the Stretch Factor leaves more in our "bottom line" to deal with property issues.

At the Congregational Meeting, Al Schoepke suggested a goal of \$1,500 for this year's Stretch Factor, and has brought the Stretch Factor Thermometer back into the Narthex. We'll keep you posted on the progress of the Stretch Factor throughout the year.

### Black History Month

The Christian Education Committee will have a display of materials and a video concerning Black History in the Social Hall after the service on February 8. Be sure to drop by and check it out!

### Lent

Your Pastor and WAM Committee have been working together to develop a plan for worship and study opportunities for Lent. Those plans are not yet complete, but we can tell you it will be different than what we have done in the recent past. We'll keep you informed as the plans become finalized.

# Our Memory Garden



Thank you, David Chisum, for this wonderful expression of your faith, talent, and hard work!

Did you know that the blue and white crockery in this circular planter was once the bowl on our baptismal font, re-purposed after a catastrophic fall during a service?



# Serving in Worship

February 2015	Feb 1	Feb 8	Feb 15	Feb 22
<b>Liturgical Day</b>	4 Epiphany	5 Epiphany	Transfiguration of Our Lord	1 Lent
<b>Musician</b>	Brain Havey	Brian Havey	MacKenzie Wright	Brian Havey
<b>Deacon/</b>	Peter Holden	Garrett Biehle	Carolyn Spurlock	Dolores Scott
<b>Server/ Acolyte</b>	Lennon Holden Keinon Chin-Robinson	Dede Campbell	Nathalie Jaramillo Zoie Chisum	Bill Korn Robby Holden
<b>Lector</b>	Marcia Brown	Wayne Campbell	Valerie Jones	(No Readings)
<b>Offertory Prayer</b>	Deacon	Deacon	Deacon	Deacon
<b>Ushers</b>	Marcia Brown Valerie Jones	Wayne Campbell Jeff Mellstrom	Al Schoepke Robert Spurlock	Valerie Jones Zetta Robinson
<b>Communion Care</b>	Rita Mello	Cece Guiar	Robert Spurlock	Dolores Scott
<b>The Lessons</b>	Deut 18:15-20 Psalm 111 1 Corinthians 8:1-13 Mark 1:21-28	Isaiah 40:21-31 Psalm 147:1-11,20c 1 Corinthians 9:16-23 Mark 1:29-39	2 Kings 2:1-12 Psalm 50:1-6 2 Corinthians 4:3-6 Mark 9:2-9	No Readings (Lenten Study)
<b>Social Hour</b>	Garret Biehle	WELCA Birthdays	The Chisums	Rita Mello

# February 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7 10:00 am WELCA
8	9	10	11	12	13	14 9:30 am Food Pantry Team II
15	16 6:00 pm Church Council	17	18 Ash Wednesday	19 12:00 pm PACT Meeting	20	21
22	23 6:00 Bad Weather Shelter	24	25	26 6:00 AA/CA Secretaries	27	28

Sunday Service with Holy Communion, starts at 10:00 am every Sunday, followed by refreshments in the Social Hall. The schedule for committee meetings can be found on page 3.

You may notice that this page is blank. It is included because of printing requirements, specifically arranging the newsletter so that, when printed, it can be folded properly for mailing to our CTS family and friends who don't have access to the Internet. One good way to "fill" an "extra" page like this is with a poster from some future event that might be of interest to our readers, or by photos from some CTS event that has recently occurred (see, for example, page 4). If you have such posters or photographs, please feel free to send them to me at [willythekorn@gmail.com](mailto:willythekorn@gmail.com), or leave them in the Treasurer's mailbox in the church office.

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## Worship

Sundays: 10:00 a.m. The Eucharist  
Nursery Care Available

## Our Mission

We, the people of God at Christ the Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church are called to witness to Jesus Christ, crucified and resurrected, in our worship, our daily lives, and through our Christian service in the community. In faithfulness to this calling, we are committed to defend human dignity, to stand with poor and powerless people, to advocate justice, to work for peace, and to care for the earth. Inspired by the Holy Spirit and compelled by God's love for all people, we commit ourselves to invite and welcome ALL into our church regardless of race, nationality, culture, social status, or sexual orientation.

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Mark Witte, Pastor  
Judith Sonier, Office Manager

Jeff Mellstrom, Financial Secretary

Sandy Williams, President, Property ('16)  
Peter Holden, Vice President ('16)  
William Korn, Treasurer ('15)  
Garrett Biehle, Secretary, Stewardship ('17)  
David Chisum, Social Ministry ('17)

Katherine Ellis-Schoepke, Christian  
Education ('16)  
Valerie Jones, Worship Arts ('16)  
Zetta Robinson, Evangelism ('16)  
Lennon Holden, Youth

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