



NBUMC NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2009



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The View From Here

by Pastor Pam

One of the great challenges all of us routinely wrestle with is finding time to pray. The crush of daily responsibilities and family obligations quickly saps our energy and reduces our free time to a trickle of scattered moments. Add to that the uncertainty we often have about even knowing *how* to pray and pretty soon, we're not praying at all except when we feel that our world is breaking apart.

During the past three months, ever since returning from the last gathering of the Academy for Spiritual Formation in Wisconsin, I've been dipping my toes into the waters of an ancient form of prayer called the Jesus Prayer. It is certainly not the *only* way to pray. It is not the only way that I pray, but for many, especially those in the Eastern Orthodox church, the Jesus Prayer has become a very precious and life giving means of following the Apostle Paul's injunction in I Thessalonians 5:17 to pray without ceasing.

Far more could be said than I can possibly say here about the power this prayer has had on people's lives. The beauty of the Jesus Prayer can be found in its brevity, its comprehensiveness and its flexibility. The prayer is simply this: "*Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me.*" Just 10 words in all. Some choose to adapt it slightly to their own needs, shortening the address to "Lord Jesus" or just "Jesus." Some, including myself, add the words, "a sinner" after the word "me." I personally have expanded it even more so that my prayer becomes, "*Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, have mercy on me, a sinner.*"

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Aside from its brevity, the beauty of the Jesus Prayer lies in its flexibility. It is available to us at all times and in all places. We can pray it silently or aloud. We can pray it as we wash the dishes or prepare a meal. We can pray it while standing in line at the grocery store, while sitting at a stoplight or in a traffic jam, while waiting to see the doctor or while lying in a hospital bed. We can pray it before a difficult conversation, when unable to sleep or while suffering great anxiety. When life makes impossible more complicated forms of prayer, or when we find we have no words to pray, we always have the words of the Jesus Prayer at our disposal. Some discover the prayer to be so vital to their life with God that they set aside time to pray this prayer repeatedly. When asked what the Jesus Prayer meant to her, one woman said, "Everything." When she was dying two years later of cancer in her 40s, she was asked what was sustaining her faith and courage. She said, "the Jesus Prayer. It gives me everything I need."

For all its brevity and simplicity, there is a world of meaning in that prayer. Someone once said that it "holds in itself the whole gospel truth." Let me explain. First, the prayer points to Jesus' identity as both God and man. He is addressed by his human name, Jesus. Yet his divinity is also there for he is called both *Lord* and *Son of God*. There are also two other aspects to this prayer. In the first part of the prayer, we look to God in adoration for who he is and in the second part of the prayer, we acknowledge who we are.

We confess our own sin and unworthiness and we ask for mercy. In praying for mercy, we acknowledge our own helplessness, but we also pray in hope for we are addressing our prayer to Jesus, whose name itself means salvation. As the angel of the Lord told Joseph, “you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” (Matt. 1:21)

If I have had any hesitation about the Jesus Prayer, it has been over Jesus’ own admonition not to heap up vain repetitions in prayer. One Orthodox pastor, however, assures us that when we pray it with inward sincerity and concentration, it is not vain. The New Testament teaches us in many places that there is *power* in the name of Jesus. Demons are cast out through his name. Peter said there is no other name by which we can be saved. And Paul said that at the name of Jesus, *every knee shall bow*. While there is power in the name of Jesus, those who use the Jesus Prayer warn that simply reciting it mechanically and unthinkingly accomplishes nothing. It is not a lucky charm or magic incantation. It is a prayer that we must pray with our full attention, with love and devotion. One of its benefits is that through it, we learn to resist and overcome those painful and harmful thoughts that trouble our minds throughout the day and distract us from God. It is a concise way to seek God’s help wherever we are and in whatever situation we find ourselves in.

I am too inexperienced to speak as an expert on the Jesus Prayer. I have, however, been soaking myself in the testimonies of those who have made it a central part of their lives for many years and who speak of its transformative power. You don’t need to be an expert to begin. Simply begin wherever you are. However inexperienced you may feel at prayer, the Jesus Prayer offers a good place to begin. “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy on me, a sinner.”

Footprints

by Carolyn Joyce Carty

One night a man had a dream.

*He dreamed he was walking along the beach
with the Lord.*

Across the sky flashed scenes from his life.

*For each scene, he noticed two sets of
footprints in the sand;*

*one belonging to him, and the other to the
Lord.*

*When the last scene of his life flashed before
him, he looked back at the footprints in the
sand.*

*He noticed that many times along the path of
his life*

there was only one set of footprints.

*He also noticed that it happened at the very
lowest and saddest times in his life.*

*This really bothered him and he questioned the
Lord about it.*

*"Lord, you said that once I decided to follow
you, you'd walk with me all the way.*

*But I have noticed that during the most
troublesome times in my life,*

there is only one set of footprints.

*I don't understand why when I needed you most
you would leave me."*

*The Lord replied, "My precious, precious child,
I love you and I would never leave you.*

*During your times of trial and suffering, when
you see only one set of footprints, it was then
that I carried you.*

Greeters

<i>August 2</i>	<i>Don & Lavada Knight</i>
<i>August 9</i>	<i>Laurel Peterson & Chelsea Lehr</i>
<i>August 16</i>	<i>Carol Bequette & Ruth Chaput</i>
<i>August 23</i>	<i>Paul & Doris Pratt</i>
<i>August 30</i>	<i>Larry & Pam Buck</i>

Liturgists

<i>August 2</i>	<i>Michael Witte</i>
<i>August 9 & 16</i>	<i>Carol Bequette</i>
<i>August 23 & 30</i>	<i>Allen Williams</i>
<i>September 6 & 13</i>	<i>Joe Jackson</i>

Lawn Mowing

<i>August 2</i>	<i>Jerry Bequette</i>
<i>August 9</i>	<i>Kyle Marshall</i>
<i>August 16</i>	<i>Michael Witte</i>
<i>August 23</i>	<i>Larry Buck</i>
<i>August 30</i>	<i>George Mason</i>
<i>September 6</i>	<i>John Norbeck</i>



FIFTH SUNDAY POTLUCK

On Sun., Aug. 30, our normal 9 a.m. worship service will be moved to 10 a.m. and will be followed by a potluck here at the church. Plan to bring a dish to share and enjoy an extended time of fellowship with your church family.

WORDS OF THANKS

A letter of thanks was received this past month from H.I.S. K.I.D.S. Inc., a Highland ministry devoted to families affected by childhood cancer. The letter reads as follows:

VBS,

Thank you so much for your recent donation of \$138.27 to support our HIS KIDS Summer Camp Program. The money is greatly appreciated and will be used to sponsor a child to Camp HIS KIDS 'Down on the Farm' 2009.

Without your support, our ability to serve these special children and families would not be possible. We are thrilled for the opportunity to have shared H.I.S. K.I.D.S., Inc. with you, and are blessed to have received your support. Once again, you have truly made a difference in the lives of children with cancer and their families...thank you.

Sincerely,
Traci Riechmann
Midwest Regional Manager

Thank you's were also received this past month from the local cub scouts for allowing them to use our basement for their meetings last year and from Pastor Steve and Dianne Springer, missionaries serving with the Red Bird Missionary Conference. The Springers wished to thank us for our ongoing support of their ministry.

IN THE COMMUNITY

St George Parish will be holding its annual picnic on Sat., Aug. 8 from 3 p.m. till midnight. Quilt and cash bingo will begin at 6:30 p.m. Polka music will be played from 3:15-4 p.m. and from 5:00 to 5:45 p.m. Dinner will be served from 3 to 7 p.m. Cost for adults is \$8.50 and for children between ages 5 and 11, the cost is \$4.00. Kids under 5 will be free. Carryouts are available.

August Reading



Back To School Prayers

Prayers for the beginning of a new school year

God, I'm going to be real honest. I don't want to go back to school. But I really do want to start the year right. So help me to change my not-so-great attitude.

Father, I want you to be right beside me at school this year, almost like you're my best friend. If you were really walking beside me, maybe I'd be more concerned about pleasing you than pleasing others. If you were there beside me, maybe I'd realize I could talk to you anytime I wanted, and lean on you when I'm feeling sad or dumb. Help me know you really will be right beside me each day of this school year.

Dear Lord, It would be so easy to look around school and see all the losers. Not a cool way of thinking, is it? Help me with this, OK? Instead of looking at others as losers, help me to see them as people you love, people made in your image, people you died for.

Father in Heaven, When I'm around my friends at church, it's so easy to act like a Christian. Then I get back with my school friends and I'm like this completely different person. I want to keep my faith real this year. So please do whatever it takes to help me be the same person at school as I am at church. In spite of my flaws and the mistakes I make, help me to be totally committed to you.

*Taken for your reading pleasure from
www.christianitytoday.com*

New Baden UMC



October 2nd and 3rd



"We've got a newcomer in Sector C. Blue blazer, plaid shirt. Falcon, that's your greeting area. Where are you?"

Calendar & Events

August 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Due to vacations and schedule conflicts, there will be no finance meeting or administrative board meeting in August. Any committee meetings not listed below will be announced as needed.

August 2	8:00 am Praise Team 7:00 pm Youth Group
August 4	7:00 pm Trustees
August 9	8:00 am Praise Team 7:00 pm Youth Group
August 11-16	Pastor Pam @ Academy for Spiritual Formation in Wisconsin
August 16	8:00 am Praise Team 7:00 pm Youth Group Rev. Allen Miller, Christ UMC, preaching
August 17	6:00 pm UMM (at the church)
August 18	7:00 pm UMW
August 23	8:00 am Praise Team 7:00 pm Youth Group
August 30	8:00 am Praise Team 10:00 am Worship followed by Potluck 7:00 pm Youth Group

New Baden United Methodist Church

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Pastor: Pam Hoffman

Music Director: Joan Witte
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August Birthdays

1 st	<i>Michael Witte</i>
3 rd	<i>Pauline Laux</i>
4 th	<i>Jerry Bequette</i>
5 th	<i>Joe Brancheck</i>
5 th	<i>Shea Seipp</i>
9 th	<i>Patricia Malina</i>
10 th	<i>Pam Buck</i>
10 th	<i>Becky Mealy</i>
11 th	<i>Joseph Brancheck</i>
13 th	<i>James Hill Jr.</i>
15 th	<i>Luke Smith</i>
17 th	<i>Naomi Sinkler</i>
18 th	<i>Gabrielle Rulo</i>
19 th	<i>Steve Lehr</i>
22 nd	<i>Krystal Jackson</i>
26 th	<i>William Malina</i>
26 th	<i>Allen Williams</i>
30 th	<i>Shirley Strake</i>
31 st	<i>Renee Sinkler</i>

August Anniversaries

3 rd	<i>Richard & Renee Sinkler III</i>
13 th	<i>Jerry & Carol Bequette</i>
19 th	<i>Mark & Keri Thaler</i>