

St. Thomas Congregation

Evangelical Church (Lutheran Confession)

Newsletter 4 (2008)

July & August

We are building!!

- Court Yard Roof
- Gates / Solid Doors
- Wall of Remembrance

Christ is the
Cornerstone!!

**Elijah called out to the widow:
“And bring me, please, a piece of bread.”
(1 Kings 17:11)**

IMPORTANT DATES

- 20 July Double baptism at Saint Thomas (see page 8)
27 July Special meeting of the congregation to discuss proposals to synod (see page 9)
3 August Mission Festival
22-23 August Synodical Convention (see page 12)
7 September Thanksgiving / Harvest Festival

Read also:

A story on “forgiveness” - The Duck and the Devil (pages 6-7)
St Thomas Building projects (see page 7)
Finances, report from the Treasurer (see pages 10-12)

PURPOSE STATEMENT SAINT THOMAS CONGREGATION

To promote fellowship in a friendly environment, where

- God’s love in Christ is proclaimed (proclamation)
- love for one another is exercised (care)
- loving others is practised (outreach)

Loved by God. Loving others.

Reading the Bible is a wonderful experience full of surprises. I “stumbled” across the verse on the title page of the Newsletter (1 Kings 17:11) as I was preparing our final Bible Study of the term.

Elijah, the prophet of God, is hungry. Under King Ahab the people of Israel turned away from the God who led them out of Egypt and worshipped other gods. As a result the land was hit by a terrible drought. This drought affected not only the ungodly. Elijah suffered as well.

However, one day Elijah heard the voice of God telling him to go the little down of Zarephath, where a “widow” would supply him with food. This seems rather unusual. As in South Africa today, when the “shovel hits the gravel” the first people to suffer are the “poor”. In ancient Israel few were poorer than the widows. Widows (lacking a husband) had no legal protection, could not seek a public work, but were dependant on the generosity of others. At the time of king Ahab this generosity was scarce and hard to come by.

Why does God call on a widow, of all people, to supply Elijah with food? Shouldn't he have rather called on the rich and affluent, those who even in difficult times have in abundance, to provide his prophet with the much needed sustenance?

But God's ways are not our ways, nor are his thoughts our thoughts (cf Is.55:8). God's dealings are indeed extraordinary! He knocks on the door of the “poor” and commands the person with little or nothing to provide help to others.

“Pastor, we live in difficult times. I can hardly make a contribution anymore”. True, that is “our” perspective, but not the perspective of the one who is able to make the rich poor and the poor rich.



When Elija sees the poor widow gathering sticks at the city gates,

he does what God had commanded him: He asks the *widow* for food. She is taken aback. She is gathering sticks in order to prepare a “last” meal for herself and her son, before they both die. But Elija, knowing God, is both persistent and comforting: *“Don't be afraid... [but] go home and bring a small cake of bread for me... and then make something for yourself and your son”* (1 Kings 17,13).

Isn't that a bit unfair? Isn't God expecting a bit too much from this poor widow? Doesn't God's grace demand that widows should be excused from making contributions?

Against all expectation, the widow, however, does what God through his prophet had demanded from her.... and she and her son died the next day. NO! NO! NO! Those who trust God are never abandoned. Note what the apostle Paul writes: *“God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work”* (2 Cor.9:8). The jar of flour and the jug of oil emptied for the prophet, never ran out again until God in his mercy sent rain over Israel. God himself took care of the generous widow.

Nobody becomes poorer when he or she gives to God and through him to those who are in need. On the contrary, God approaches the “poor” to give, ***because those are the very people he wishes to uplift***, so that they - who have experienced hardship before - may abound in generosity to all those in need.

God asks the
POOR to help

A heart of generosity, giving with a cheerful heart, is one of the greatest gifts of God, more often than not given to the “poor”. But do you trust him?

May God fill our hearts with generosity, that members of St Thomas may become an even greater blessing to others - and indeed even more so in difficult times..

Yours in Christ
Dieter Reinstorf

“If you can't feed a hundred people, then just feed one.” Mother Teresa

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

The Perfect Mistake

My Mother's father worked as a carpenter. On this particular day, he was building some crates for the clothes his church was sending to orphanages in China. On his way home, he reached into his shirt pocket to find his glasses, but they were gone. When he mentally replayed his earlier actions, he realized what had happened; the glasses had slipped out of his pocket unnoticed and fallen into one of the crates, which he had nailed shut. His brand new glasses were heading for China! The Great Depression was at its height and Grandpa had six children. He had spent \$20 for those glasses that very morning. He was upset by the thought of having to buy another pair. 'It's not fair,' he told God as he drove home in frustration. 'I've been very faithful in giving of my time and money to your work, and now this.'



Months later, the director of the orphanage was on furlough in the United States. He wanted to visit all the churches that supported him in China, so he came to speak one Sunday at my grandfather's small church in Chicago. The missionary began by thanking the people for their faithfulness in supporting the orphanage. 'But most of all,' he said, 'I must thank you for the glasses you sent last year. You see, the Communists had just swept through the orphanage, destroying everything, including my glasses. I was desperate. Even if I had the money, there was simply no way of replacing those glasses. Along with not being able to see well, I experienced headaches every day, so my coworkers and I were much in prayer about this. Then your crates arrived. When my staff removed the covers, they found a pair of glasses lying on top. The missionary paused long enough to let his words sink in. Then, still gripped with the wonder of it all, he continued: 'Folks, when I tried on the glasses, it was as though they had been custom made just for me! I want to thank you for being a part of that.'

The people listened, happy for the miraculous glasses. But the missionary surely must have confused their church with another, they thought. There were no glasses on their list of items to be sent overseas.

But sitting quietly in the back, with tears streaming down his face, an ordinary carpenter realized the Master Carpenter had used him in an extraordinary way.

There are times we want to blame God instead of thanking him! I have to remember this in these times of trial with my own family.

Send in by Shane Swiegers

The Duck and the Devil

There was a little boy visiting his grandparents on their farm. He was given a slingshot to play with out in the woods. He practiced in the woods; but he could never hit the target. Getting a little discouraged, he headed back for dinner.

As he was walking back he saw Grandma's pet duck. Just out of impulse, he let the slingshot fly, hit the duck square in the head and killed it. He was shocked and grieved! In a panic, he hid the dead duck in the wood pile; only to see his sister watching! Sally had seen it all, but she said nothing. After lunch the next day Grandma said, "Sally, let's wash the dishes" But Sally said, "Grandma, Johnny told me he wanted to help in the kitchen." Then she whispered to him, "Remember the duck?" So Johnny did the dishes. Later that day, Grandpa asked if the children wanted to go fishing and Grandma said, "I'm sorry but I need Sally to help make supper."



Sally just smiled and said, "Well that's all right because Johnny told me he wanted to help" She whispered again, "Remember the duck?" So Sally went fishing and Johnny stayed to help. After several days of Johnny doing both his chores and Sally's; he finally couldn't stand it any longer.

He came to Grandma and confessed that he had killed the duck. Grandma knelt down, gave him a hug and said, "Sweetheart, I know. You see, I was standing at the window and I saw the whole thing, but because I love you, I forgave you. I was just wondering how long you would let Sally make a slave of you."

Whatever is in your past, whatever you have done... and the devil keeps throwing it up in your face (lying, cheating, debt, fear, bad habits,

hatred, anger, bitterness, etc.)...whatever it is...You need to know that God was standing at the window and He saw the whole thing. He has seen your whole life. He wants you to know that He loves you and that you are forgiven. He's just wondering how long you will let the devil make a slave of you. The great thing about God is that when you ask for forgiveness; He not only forgives you, but He forgets. It is by God's grace and mercy that we are saved.

CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

Building Projects - Report Back

Construction work is stressful. Ask David Skibbe! Apart from building ten units (duplexes) next to the church, David oversaw also the building of a brand new and extended roof in the inner courtyard of the church. A huge area is now under cover, providing shade in summer, but more importantly cover during the rainy season. Apart from building the roof, the single-brick wall of the courtyard has also been strengthened with another layer of bricks, ensuring that the wall will stand for many years to come. Appreciated by the ladies will be the solid double door that leads into the court yard from Bains Way. The "Cape Doctor" should in future have little effect on functions at the church. A single solid door has also been build on the East side of the court yard, providing both the children of the Aftercare and others an exit into the open area between the Baptist church and St Thomas.

The Wall of Remembrance

Deon Deetlefs has completed the final plans for the Wall of Remembrance (thanks for your valuable input and time). David Skibbe is in the process of getting these approved by the City (it may take some time!!). As soon as the plans have been approved, the building will commence.

Please don't forget your **pledge**. As we are having a cash flow problem. Paying in installments (each month a fixed amount until the end of August) would be of great help to our treasurer who needs to pay our accounts (see also "Finances" below)

20 July - A Special Day at St. Thomas



In the past few months we have blessed by the visit of the Johnston family at our church. Shawn, Christy, and their three children, Errin, Mari and Aimee live in Bothasig. After visiting our services regularly, with Shawn even joining us on one of our church working days, the Johnston family have decided on two things: (1) Join our congregation officially, and (2) that their twin daughters should be baptised (see photo of Mari and Aimee). This is indeed special.

The special day earmarked for this great occasion is Sunday, 20 July at 10am.

Plate of eats: A special occasions should be celebrated, ladies of our congregation are requested to bring a small plate of eats, which we can enjoy as we drink tea and coffee after the service.

Pastor and family on holiday

Family traditions demands that pastor Reinstorf and his family travel to Hoedspruit in the upcoming school holidays. As usual the Reinstorf clan (no less that 22 family members this year) will be gathering on the game farm. Before that pastor Reinstorf and family will be travelling to Pietermaritzburg to celebrate the golden wedding anniversary of Maggi's parents, and also attend the Brass Band Festival of the FELSISA to be

held in Uelzen (just outside of Dundee) on Sunday 6 July. They will be back in Cape Town on 11 July.

CONGREGATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Meeting of the Congregation 27 July

A special meeting of the congregation is called for Sunday, 27 July, immediately after the Church Service. To be discussed at this meeting are the proposals to the Synodical Convention of the FELSISA, to be held on 12 & 13 August 2008. St. Thomas made no proposals, but proposals by the Synodical Councils and various other congregations of the FELSISA need to be decided upon. For the FELSISA it is imperative that the views of the congregations are heard. The congregations (not the Synodical Council) determine the way forward. All decisions pertaining to the Synod as a whole, are taken at the biannual Synodical Convention.

Proposals will be up for viewing on the notice board of the church by not later than Sunday, 20 July. The St. Thomas Church Council will be meeting on Tuesday, 22 July.

St Thomas Bowling Day

Every quarter St Thomas has at least one "Social Activity". For the 3rd quarter the Church Council is planning a Bowling Day (with a braai), to be held on Sunday **21 September**, immediately after the Church Service. Please mark this date now already. More details will be made available in the next newsletter.

Bazaar

St. Thomas' annual Mini-Bazaar is scheduled for Saturday, **25 October**. The members of the Planning Committee are: Wesley Karshagen (chairperson), Marja Wybrow and Erica Laspé. As always, the bazaar will feature a number of stalls: White Elephant, Books, Granny's Kitchen, Tea

**White Elephant sale
Items needed!!**

Garden, Wors Rolls and Hamburgers, etc. If you would like to introduce a new stall, please phone one of the committee members. In the mean time, please start gathering items for the white elephant sale.

BIBLE STUDY



We had a great time studying the lives of some of the more well-known Spirit-filled people of the Old Testament, like Gideon, Ruth, David, Nathan and others. Because of the inclement winter weather, the last Bible Study was called off. We will therefore commence again after the holidays with the Prophet Elijah and God's gentle Whisper in 1 Kings 19.

Venue: 10 Van Gogh Street, Panorama

Time: 19.00 every Wednesday evening

First Bible study after the holidays: **23 July**. Themes and topics for future Bible studies will be decided on by the participants. Please bring your questions and make suggestions. In studying God's Word together, we do not only grow in knowledge, but in fellowship with God and one another.

FINANCES

This report covers the first five months of our financial year, that is the period beginning in January 2008 until the end of May 2008.

Income shortfall

During the first five months of the year the total income of the congregation amounted to R82 326, which is approximately 32% of the income budgeted for the whole financial year. This percentage is lower than the figure for the same period in the past, which varied between 40% to 45%. The lower figure can primarily be attributed to the various

planned building activities at the church. It shows however that our contributions will have to increase substantially during the remainder of the year, to finance the budgeted expenses.

Substantial increase in contributions needed

Our own contributions so far this year amounted to R52 163 or an average of R10 433 per month. Although this figure is higher than our contributions at the end of May last year, it still leaves us with a shortfall of R10 357 on our budgeted figure.

Wall of Remembrance

The other income items, with the exception of the pledges for the Wall of Remembrance, are all according to the budgeted figures. So far only five members have contributed towards the building of the Wall. Although members, who made pledges or promised donations towards the building of the wall, have until the end of August to pay, it would help our cash-flow if members paid earlier. Members that would like to make payments can do so by transferring funds directly to our Standard Bank account (details of the account are on the back page of this newsletter) or the money can be handed in, in a marked envelope as a collection during our normal church services, or the money can be handed in at any of the church elders.

Pledges needed to help cash flow

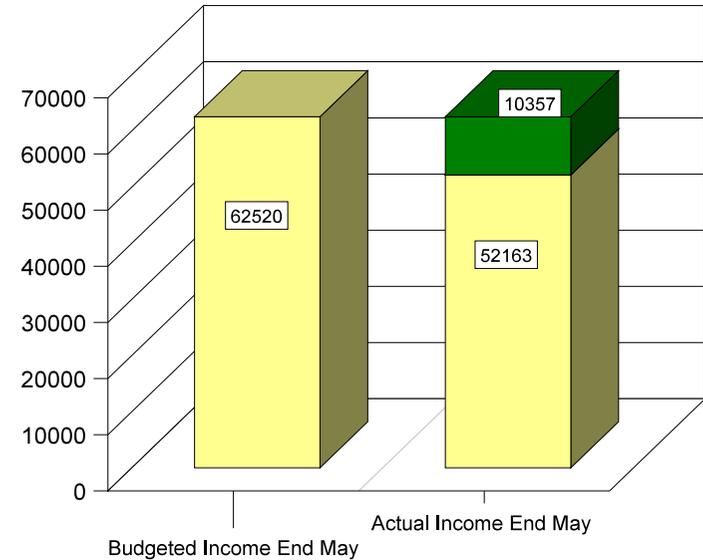
Expenses

As far as expenses are concerned, we repaid the loan of R15 000 to the Hillermann Trust. The repayment followed on the winding down of the trust. Since the congregation started, we benefited from these funds and we are extremely grateful that we could use these funds over such a long period. A water leakage was also repaired at the parsonage after the insurance paid their portion. The other expenses are the normal running costs and are all within the budgeted figures.

Summary: A small “thank you”

God blesses us in so many ways. Contributions to the church are just one way of showing our gratitude, a small “thank you.” Nobody is obligated to give. But we firmly trust God that he will provide everything we need and that cheerful giving reaps rewards.

The contributions can be summarized as follows:



Günther Meier

SYNODICAL NEWS

Brass Band Festival and Youth Day

The annual synodical Youth Day and Brass Band Festival will be held in Uelzen (see photo of church) this year, on 28 and 29 June. St. Thomas' Youth will represent the Western Cape. We wish them well and especially safe journey.



Synodical Convention

The biannual Synodical Convention of the FELSISA will be held 12-13 August 2008 at the FELS-Retreat just outside Paulpietersburg, Kwazulul-Natal. Official members of the Convention are one or two delegates of each congregation (congregations with more than 200 confirmed members may send 2 delegates) as well as all active pastors. St Thomas will meet on 27 July to discuss proposals tabled by the Synodical Council and other congregations of the FELSISA.



Do you see God?

One day a 6 year old girl was sitting in a classroom. The teacher was going to explain evolution to the children.

The Teacher asked a little boy: Tommy do you see the tree outside?

Tommy: Yes.

Teacher: Tommy, do you see the grass outside?

Tommy: Yes.

Teacher: Go outside and look up and see if you can see the sky.

Tommy: Okay. (He returned a few minutes later) Yes, I saw the sky.

Teacher: Did you see God up there?

Tommy: No.

Teacher: That's my point. We can't see God because he isn't there. Possibly he just doesn't exist.

A little girl spoke up and wanted to ask the boy some questions. The Teacher agreed and the little girl asked the boy: Tommy, do you see the tree outside? Tommy: Yes. Little Girl: Tommy do you see the grass outside?

Tommy: Yesssssss!

Little Girl: Did you see the sky?

Tommy: Yesssssss!

Little Girl: Tommy, do you see the Teacher?

Tommy: Yes

Little Girl: Do you see her brain?

Tommy: No

Little Girl: Then according to what we were taught today in school, she possibly may not even have one! (You Go Girl!)



"For we walk by faith, not by sight", 2 Corinthians 5:7

Actual Church Notices

1. The ladies of the church have cast off clothing of every kind. They can be seen in the church basement Saturday.
2. A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the church hall. Music will follow.
3. At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be "What is Hell?" Come early and listen to our choir practice.

Birthdays

Wishing you a happy and a blessed birthday!

18 July	David Skibbe
19 July	Ulrike Reinstorf
20 August	Heindry Peyper
24 August	Carol Sandmann
25 August	Maggi Reinstorf
27 August	Fred Halm / Frank Meyer
29 August	Minnie Halm
30 August	Annel Runds
6 September	Robert Stirling / Eckard Köhne
7 September	Jason Dini





DAILY BIBLE READING PLAN

July 2008

01 1 Corinthians 15,12-19
 02 Psalms 36
 03 1 Corinthians 15,20-28
 04 1 Corinthians 15,29-34
 05 1 Corinthians 15,35-49
 06 1 Corinthians 15,50-58
 07 1 Corinthians 16,1-12
 08 1 Corinthians 16,13-24
 09 Psalms 128
 10 Mark 3,7-12
 11 Mark 3,13-19
 12 Mark 3,20-30
 13 Mark 3,31-35
 14 Mark 4,1-9
 15 Mark 4,10-12
 16 Psalms 144
 17 Mark 4,13-20
 18 Mark 4,21-25
 19 Mark 4,26-29
 20 Mark 4,30-34
 21 Mark 4,35-41
 22 Mark 5,1-20
 23 Psalms 73
 24 Mark 5,21-34
 25 Mark 5,35-43
 26 Mark 6,1-6
 27 Mark 6,7-13
 28 Mark 6,14-29
 29 Mark 6,30-44
 30 Psalms 139,4-18.23f
 31 Mark 6,45-52

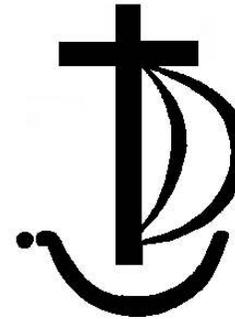
August 2008

01 Mark 6,53-56
 02 Mark 7,1-15

03 Mark 7,17-23
 04 Mark 7,24-30
 05 Mark 7,31-37
 06 Psalms 134
 07 Mark 8,1-10
 08 Mark 8,11-13
 09 Mark 8,14-21
 10 Mark 8,22-26
 11 Mark 8,27-33
 12 Mark 8,34-9,1
 13 Psalms 53
 14 Mark 9,2-10
 15 Mark 9,11-13
 16 Mark 9,14-29
 17 Mark 9,30-37
 18 Mark 9,38-41
 19 Mark 9,42-50
 20 Psalms 141
 21 Mark 10,1-12
 22 Mark 10,13-16
 23 Mark 10,17-27
 24 Mark 10,28-31
 25 Mark 10,32-45
 26 Mark 10,46-52
 27 Psalms 142
 28 Jeremiah 1,1-10
 29 Jeremiah 1,11-19
 30 Jeremiah 2,1-13
 31 Jeremiah 3,1-10

September

01 Jeremiah 3,19-4,4
 02 Jeremiah 5,9-21
 03 Psalms 94
 04 Jeremiah 7,1-15
 05 Jeremiah 7,21-28



EVANGELICAL CHURCH (LUTHERAN CONFESSION) SAINT THOMAS CONGREGATION

Church

27 Settlers Drive, Edgemoad

Parsonage:

10 Van Gogh Street
 Panorama 7500

✉ Street Address or
 P.O. Box 12255
 N1-City 7463

Divine Service

Every Sunday at 10.00am

- Sunday School
- Holy Communion

Sunday School

Maggi Reinstorf 021- 9303734

Women's Guild Convenor

Leanne Swiegers 021-9390486
 021-5953192 (w)

Treasurer

Günther Meier 021- 9760313

Pastor

Rev. Dr. Dieter Reinstorf

☎ 021-9303734
 083-4409498

Church Council

Günther Meier 021-9760313
 Heindry Peyper 021-4243949
 David Skibbe 021- 5581701
 Marja Wybrow 021-5571328

Banking Details

ABSA (Parow 502 110)
 Account Name: St Thomas
 Acc Number: 404 1515 600

Wall of Remembrance

Banking Details

Std Bank (Tyger Manor 050-410)
 Account Name: Evangelical Church
 Lutheran Confession.
 Acc Number: 076356302

Website: www.stthomas.za.net

SUNDAY SERVICES AND DUTY ROSTER

Service Times: Every Sunday at 10.00 (with Holy Communion) / (U) = Usher. Evening Service highlighted

DATE	SUNDAY	CHURCH ELDER	READER	SUNDAY SCHOOL	ALTAR DUTY	FLOWERS	TEA DUTY
6 July	8 th Sunday after Pentecost	H. Peyper	H. Peyper Acts 2:41-47	---	----	M. Skibbe	M. Skibbe
13 July	9 th Sunday after Pentecost	D. Skibbe S. Swiegers (U)	E. Köhne Eph.5:5-14	Maggi Reinstorf	Ulrike Reinstorf	C. Johnston	C. Johnston M. Reinstorf
20 July	10 th Sunday after Pentecost	H. Peyper A. Runds (U)	C. Melck Phil.3:7-14	Martina Reinstorf	M. Halm	M.Deetlefs	M. Deetlefs Antje Eggers
27 July	11 th Sunday after Pentecost	G. Meier D. Skibbe (U)	F. Meyer Rom.11:25-32	Antje Eggers	G. Schreiber	M. Aubrey	M. Aubrey Martina Reinstorf
3 August	Mission Festival	D. Skibbe H. Peyper (U)	S.Swiegers 1 Cor.9:16-23	Taryn Roserveare	L. Swiegers	Elke Crouch	Elke Crouch Lauren Swiegers
10 August	13 th Sunday after Pentecost	H. Peyper G. Meier (U)	R. Schulz Acts 9:1-9	Ulrike Reinstorf	A. Willis	J. Karshagen	J. Karshagen J. Peyper
17 August	14 th Sunday after Pentecost	G. Meier S. Swiegers (U)	D. Skibbe 1 John 4:7-12	Maggi Reinstorf	M. Skibbe	Faith Dini	Faith Dini Taryn Roseveare
24 August	15 th Sunday after Pentecost	D. Skibbe A. Runds (U)	H. Peyper Rom.8:12-17	Antje Eggers	M. Wybrow	L. Swiegers	L. Swiegers C. Johnston
31 August	16 th Sunday after Pentecost	H. Peyper G. Meier (U)	E. Köhne 1 Peter 5:5-11	Taryn Roseveare	M. Halm	J. Peyper	J. Peyper M. Aubrey
7 September	Thanksgiving Harvest / Festival	G. Meier D. Skibbe (U)	C. Melck 2 Cor.9:6-15	Ulrike Reinstorf	G. Schreiber	M. Deetlefs	M. Deetlefs J. Karshager

Flower Duty

The person on duty is requested to make a (very simple) flower arrangement to be placed either on or next to the altar (the flowers are to be taken home afterwards).

Altar Duty

The person on duty is requested to fill the communion vessels and wafer plate and place them on the altar (and wash the vessels after the service).

Tea Duty

The person on duty is requested prepare the cups and saucers before the service, serve coffee and tea after the service (provide milk), and wash the dishes



NB: If a person on duty is unable to fulfil his/her duty, please make alternate arrangement.