

**A bit of hope and joy ... as our LENTEN JOURNEY begins  
ALL SAINTS LUTHERAN CHURCH "Oasis of Joy" USA  
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**Mid-February ... March ... 2009**

**Hello, Friends ...**

*10 weeks*

I stood by her bedside ... with her grandfather ... 3<sup>rd</sup> floor ... a hospital, with the name HOPE on it ...  
She is so beautiful ... so fragile ... yet so strong.

Born October 1 ... home for **10 weeks** ... for most of her life ---- a hospital bed has been her residence.  
I feel so helpless ... watching her. What is a little almost-5-month old thinking??? Is this the way life always  
will be? The circle of life ----- little Drew ... her parents, Gail & Andy ... grandma and grandpa ...  
a candle on the altar ... a community in prayer.

Nobody knows the future ... I don't want to. Not my prerogative, not yours.  
But I do know this ----- *I am embraced by the power of love.*  
*And, it's that power ... that spirit ... that unconditional grace ... that gives us the inner  
strength & courage to face another day.*

As I watched little Drew struggle to settle down ... as I looked at the gentle strokes of a loving grandpa ...  
as I talked to Drew's mom later in the day ----- assuring her that Drew's candle will always be lit, and  
prayers from LaGrange Road will never stop ... I discovered once again what is at the very foundation of my  
often-tattered faith.

**IT IS THE GENTLE POWER OF CONNECTEDNESS.**

*Drew is our child.*

*Drew is our destiny.*

*Drew is our hope ... and our prayer ... and our link to a power greater than all of us.*

Even tho' we can't fully feel the pain and exhaustion of Drew's parents and family ... we share their journey.  
Their tears are ours ... their hopes are ours ... their footsteps are never in the sand alone.

We live in a world in which we often try to look at things as black or white, right or wrong, God's will or not  
God's will. We want definite answers in a jig-saw puzzle world.

We jockey for position ... we seek power and position ... we want to "know" the answers.  
God's kingdom has a different set of standards ----- rooted in love ... rooted in nurturing  
relationships ... rooted in grace & goodness & giving of oneself unto others.

Some say this "spiritual stuff" doesn't work ... my response ----- it's the only thing ... in life ...  
that really does work. Its' about our soul ... our spirit ... our shared destiny.

Drew ----- in your fragile innocence ... without having to say a word ... in a room on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor ...  
you call each one of us to live our lives with new-found grace and purpose. You call us to dig deep ...  
to discover new ways to look beyond ourselves ... and to embrace every moment given to us.

All we have is our love.

Drew ... we wish we could make it all better.

For now ... we'll keep your candle burning.

It's Lent, my friends. It's a journey ... a spiritual one.  
Let's share it together ----- luv and joy ... "rev"

**THE SEASON OF LENT BEGINS THIS WEEK.**

*\*Ash Wednesday worship ... Feb. 25 ----- noon and 7:30. Our services include the Lord's Supper and the gift of ashes. (No Thursday worship on the 26<sup>th</sup>)*

*We return to Thursday worship throughout Lent ... with suppers at 6:30, followed by worship at 7:30. Please ... please ... "pretty please" ----- sign-up for the suppers, so we know how many to expect. It's the only way of knowing if there is enough interest in continuing Lenten-suppers.*

**SPAGHETTI IS IN THE "AIRE"**

*Last chance to buy tickets is on Sunday ... for the dinner on Saturday, February 28. It's a great adult evening, and the auction after dinner is lots of fun. If you have auction items ... try to have them at the church by Thursday evening, Feb. 26. If you have something ... but can't have it here by Thursday ... call the office and let us know when you can bring it ----- thanks to all!!*

**FESTIVAL OF MUSIC ----- Sunday, March 22, 4:00**

*An opportunity for kids and adults to share the gift of music ... also, some numbers by our choir and Mike Hefter, our fine organist. Please sign-up so we can plan our time together. An offering will be taken ... to benefit our choir scholarship program. A reception --- hosted by our youth group --- will follow.*

**ONE MORE BINGO BEFORE EASTER ... Friday, March 13.**

*Doors open at 6:30 ... 1<sup>st</sup> call at 7:00. All proceeds go towards our men's club's outreach program. All adults are welcome ... please bring neighbors and friends.*

**3 on 3 BASKETBALL TOURNEY ... boys and girls ... 6<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades.**

*Sunday afternoons ... March 29 (a kind-of preliminary practice round) ... followed by the "real deal" on Sunday, April 5 (Palm Sunday "shoot-out"). You can sign-up as an individual ... or a team ... your friends are welcome -----BUT YOU GOTTA SIGN-UP!@! ... what are you waiting for????*

*And, in the spirit of All Saints ----- win or lose ... everyone plays the same number of games!!*

**FIRST COMMUNION INSTRUCTION ... 3<sup>RD</sup> GRADERS AND OLDER.**

*This one-time class is for kids who have not yet received the Lord's Supper. At least one parent needs to be present. SUNDAY, APRIL 5 ... noon. You will receive your 1<sup>st</sup> Communion on Holy Thursday, April 9.*

**THE GENTLE POWER OF PRAYER**

*\*Kim Schnell continues to be at Loyola Hospital ... hopefully home next week.*

*\*Both Don and Kathy Schroth have been hospitalized ... home by the time you get this newsletter.*

*\*Kieran Conway continues his chemotherapy ... and so does Ann Fritz.*

*\*Drew Mickelson ---Hope Children's Hospital. \*Gary Edwardson – Linda Buikema's brother, and son of Merv and Barb – recovering from surgery for a brain tumor ... home and soon to begin therapy.*

*\*Sue Torsberg ... is having surgery on February 24*

*\*Wendy Boer --- Pam Catalano's and Paul Javorski's cousin --- recovering from surgery this week.*

*\*Vern Bock, Sr. --- in hospice care ... his long journey with Alzheimer's may soon be over.*

*\*Kailei Ribich is home from the hospital. \*Long time member, Gail Kickert, died after a long illness.*

**\*\*May this sacred time of the year ... bring us closer together.**

**"We are in this together" .... more than ever\*\***

*CHECK OUT OUR WEB-SITE ... [www.allsaintsjoy.com](http://www.allsaintsjoy.com)  
Len Wcislo and Sue Smith --- nice work!! Thanks so much.*