

The tension at the table was going to need a serrated knife to cut through it. Mom and Dad were tired after a long day. The kids were sniping at one another. And then a reach for the ketchup resulted in a glass of milk turning into a puddle on the bright red tablecloth. Eyes grew big and all heads turned toward Mom, when a sweet little voice piped up, quoting one of the family's favorite TV commercials: "You know what this room needs? A smile!" It was so unexpected that it caught everyone off guard and started a chain reaction of giggling that released the stress that was so palpable just moments before.

Does this scene seem familiar? Too often our family situations are full of stress, and it is hard to remember to bring a smile into the room, to laugh at a situation instead of launching into a tirade or, worse, crumbling into tears.

The Bible doesn't often refer to laughter, at least not in a positive light. More often laughter is a derisive response, as in God laughing at the wicked world powers that were rebelling against him or ancient Sarah laughing in disbelief when God promised her a child. The proverbial wife laughs—at fear: "She can laugh at the days to come" (Proverbs 31:25). When Jesus spoke of laughter, he spoke both in terms of a blessing—"Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh"—and a warning: "Woe to you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep" (Luke 6:21,25).

What can we take from such a serious biblical perspective on laughter? When there is tension in a family, when there is stress and sadness, we need to remember what causes such things. Sin is very present; our sinful

of Jerusalem on that blackest of Fridays. The only laughter would have been the maniacal glee of a mistaken Satan thinking he had just overcome the world's Savior. But his laughter was quickly quashed as the triumphant, risen Jesus trampled on his premature gloating and crushed his visions of victory.

Even beyond laughter, our victorious Savior gives us something less fleeting: true joy.

"May the righteous be glad and rejoice before God; may they be happy and joyful" (Psalm 68:3).

Does this mean that we can't enjoy a good belly laugh, a great guffaw, or a howl of hilarity? Not at all. But it is important that we guide our children to learn what is and isn't appropriate to laugh about. We don't want to laugh unkindly at someone else's expense—for example, a person with a different appearance or a unique manner of doing things. And we certainly never want to laugh at those things that God takes very seriously, summarized succinctly in his Ten Commandments.

We do know a beautiful freedom because of Jesus' victory, allowing us to rejoice that we need not fear Satan and death because their sting has been removed. That sure knowledge cuts through the tensions of our lives, giving us room to smile, rejoice, and make glad noises of all types before the Lord: giggles, guffaws, chortles, chuckles, or even a song at the top of our voices!

Pamela Holz and her husband, Pastor Ken Holz, live in beautiful Clarksville, Tennessee.



IS LAUGHTER THE BEST MEDICINE?

Pamela Holz

natures are constantly fighting to take over and rule our hearts. The world would have us view our lives as a silly sitcom where children are disdainful toward the adults, who are dumb and self-absorbed. Satan desires us to simply laugh off sin, brushing it under the table.

While this paints a rather bleak picture in an article about laughter, it doesn't have to. What we need is a clearer perspective, remembering where we need to keep our focus. There was no joyful laughter on that hill outside

THE WORLD WOULD HAVE US VIEW OUR LIVES AS A SILLY SITCOM.

I Thanked God

Jennifer David-Sayles

Routines. We all have them. On a normal day, I wake up, have my cup of coffee, and read my Bible. I then go about my daily chores. However, I really wanted today to be different. Today I wanted to thank God . . . FOR EVERYTHING.

I began cleaning the entryway. For some reason, this is the catchall room for everything that comes through our door. It was at this time I thanked God that I had a home. I thanked him for the things others left behind that needed to be returned to their proper places because that meant my children and husband had been here. I thanked God for the mud that my children had dragged in because that meant my children had shoes on their feet.

Next was the living room. I folded up the blanket that my daughter had slept with the night before and thanked God that she was warm and that he was giving me the privilege of raising her. I grabbed my vacuum cleaner and unknotted the cord. I thanked God that I had carpet to vacuum; so when the girls had friends over, they could sit comfortably and watch the latest movie on television. I thanked God for the television. But I did ask him to make the programming a little more family friendly.

On to the kitchen. The MESSY kitchen. You see, I had made no-bake cookies the night before and had left the pan in the sink to soak. I thanked God for the ingredients I was able to use in those cookies, and then I sent

a little prayer that those ingredients not end up on my hips! I thanked him for the stove and the refrigerator and the cupboards full of food.

It was time to set the table for breakfast. I thanked God that we gathered

As you walk about today, thank God for all that you see, hear, taste, smell, and touch.

here as a family every morning and then again in the evening. I thanked him for the conversations that we all had at these times.

I then moved on to the bathroom. How I HATE to clean the bathroom. However, as I scrubbed the toilet bowl, I thanked God profusely for allowing me to have indoor plumbing so that

I didn't have to walk outside in the middle of the night! It made that chore A LOT easier! I thanked him for my being able to scrub a shower that my girls use way too much. I wound up all the cords to the hair dryers and to the curling irons and thanked God that my children love themselves enough to look presentable wherever they go. I grabbed the dirty clothes out of the hamper, collected the mounds of clothes on my children's floors, and placed everything in the laundry room. As I loaded my washer, I thanked God that I didn't have to go to a river, run sandy water through them, and then hang them from a tree. I thanked him for great smelling laundry soap and fabric softener that makes our clothes soft.

As I finished everything else, I thanked God for my four beautiful daughters, my amazing husband, my awesome son-in-law, and my two adorable—downright spoiled—grandsons. And then I thanked God for my church, extended family, friends, and everything else that makes my life complete. I have to say, by focusing on my blessings, the chores were a whole lot easier to complete.

As you walk about today, thank God for all that you see, hear, taste, smell, and touch. It will give you a much brighter perspective on your life.

Jennifer David-Sayles, a freelance writer, resides in Gilford, MI, and is a member of St. Luke in Vassar.



**Assisting Parents
in Bringing up their Children
in the Training
and Instruction of the Lord.**



THE PARTNERSHIP POST

February 3-7, 2020

CPTA Meeting

To all SVLS parents – we are meeting this Wednesday February 5th @ 5:30. In addition to our business meeting, there will be a potluck and a Vex Robotics presentation.

Wisconsin Parental Choice Program

The window to apply for the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program is now open. Any eligible families are highly encouraged to apply. The application window is open from February 3 - April 16. It is NOT a first come, first served window. Any eligible application received within the application window is equally valid. Please look for the email Mr. Steinmetz sent out which has much more detailed information.

On some Fridays within the application window (and Saturdays by appointment only), either Mr. Steinmetz or Kevin Rusch will be openly available in the K-8 office to provide open assistance and guidance with WPCP and/or the application process itself. There will be a computer set up in the office on these Fridays if you'd like to bring in your needed documents and fill out your application right at school. These dates are as follows:

- + February 21 (1:00-5:00 p.m.)
- + February 28 (1:00-5:00 p.m.)
- + March 6 (3:00-5:00 p.m.)
- + March 13 (1:00-5:00 p.m.)
- + March 27 (1:00-5:00 p.m.)
- + April 3 (1:00-5:00 p.m.)

2nd Semester Mission Offerings

For our 2nd semester chapel offerings, we are partnering with FVL Schools to work with our WELS Board of World Missions to support the Gospel work being carried out through the Ukrainian Lutheran Church, a Confessional Lutheran church body with which we share fellowship. So far this semester, SVLS has collected \$190.28 for Ukrainian Lutheran Church.

To Keep in Your Prayers:

Mrs. Szep - She had emergency gastrointestinal surgery last Friday due to a perforated colon and will be out of the classroom for a couple weeks as she recovers.

Pastor and Mrs. Hunter and their family - They welcomed the newest member of their family on January 30, Frederick Warren.

HELPERS NEEDED for the B-Team Basketball Tournament

The annual B-Team Basketball Tournament is this Friday and Saturday, February 7-8. SVLS is hosting the tournament, and we need YOUR HELP to make it a success. There are a variety of volunteer slots where help is needed. We're especially calling upon the athletics families to help, but help from any of our SVLS families is welcome. Mr. Edmundson has sent out the tournament schedule to B-team families so you don't have to worry about potentially signing up during a time when your child will be playing. Proceeds from this tournament benefit the SVLS athletics programs in which our children participate. Concessions workers must be in 8th grade or above. Go to <https://signup.com/go/AGJQOuG> to sign up to help. Thank you!

Spirit Week!

This week is Spirit Week at SVLS! Our Spirit Week days are as follows:

- Monday - Pajama Day - Wear pajamas to school (please leave pillows and blankets at home)
- Tuesday - Character Day - Dress like a book, movie, or TV show character
- Wednesday - Crazy Mismatch Day - Wear outrageous clothes/outfits that don't match
- Thursday - Fake an Injury Day - Convince us that you're injured while not actually being injured
- Friday - School Spirit Day - Wear school colors and school swag to cheer on the Rams!

During Spirit Week, school dress code, while relaxed to an extent, is still in effect. Costumes and outfits for Spirit Week should still be modest and appropriate. Clothing choices for Spirit Week should still reflect our Christian culture and principles.

Divine Call

At the January 14 meeting of the School Board, a call was extended to Mrs. Backus to become our full time 3rd-4th grade teacher. Please continue to keep her in prayers as she deliberates her call.

Private School Tax Deduction

Wisconsin state law allows Wisconsin parents to deduct private school tuition on their taxes. Under this law, parents statewide can deduct up to \$4,000 per student in grades K-8, and up to \$10,000 per high school student. In order to complete [Schedule PS](#), you will need the following information:

Name of School: Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran School, Inc.

Address of School: N8728 South Coop Road, Menasha, WI 54952

FEIN of School: 46-1896578

Please consult with your tax preparer for more information. To request your 2019 statement of tuition dollars paid, please contact the school office.

Scrip Kwik Trip Bonus!!

Kwik Trip is offering a bonus rebate in the month of February!! Any cards purchased Feb. 1st - 28th will be at 9% instead of their regular 4%.

Stock up for everyone in your family! Ask grandparents and aunts and uncles! This is a great opportunity to maximize your savings!

Art Contest Winners

Thank you to all the students that submitted art for the contest. Every entry was beautiful and thoughtful.

Grades K-2 Winners:

- 3rd Place: Ari Fazendin and Evelyn Vanden Heuvel
- 2nd Place (tie): Emily Carrel and Lilly Borree, Anabel Meitner and Mollie Kehl
- 1st Place: Emily Boree and Madalyn Marks

Grades 3-5 Winners:

- 3rd Place: Peyton Rehberg
- 2nd Place: Emily Miller
- 1st Place: Kat Swick

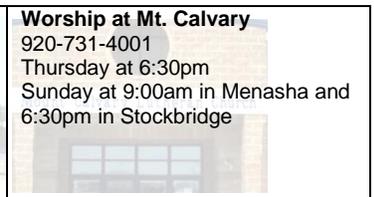
Grades 6-8 Winners:

- 3rd Place: Brady Mayer
- 2nd Place: Naomi Doriot
- 1st Place: Riley Schmitz

Help Prevent the Spread of Illness

With it being cold and flu season, and because people tend to stay inside during this time of year, the spreading of germs becomes more common. Please help us prevent the spreading of germs and illness by keeping your child home if (s)he is ill. As a general rule, keep your child home if (s)he has a fever, nausea, bad pain, persistent coughing, or vomiting/ diarrhea. **For the health of your child and others at school, please follow the 24+ hour rule!** Only send your child back to school when (s)he is fever free (without meds) for a minimum of 24 hours, has been on antibiotics for a minimum of 24 hours, hasn't thrown up etc. for a minimum of 24 hours, etc. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Hot Lunch Menu	
Mon	Tacos and corn
Tues	French toast and sausage links
Wed	Grilled ham /cheese sandwich / cheesy potato soup
Thurs	Pizza and garlic bread
Fri	Meatloaf + Mashed Potatoes

<p>Worship at Bethel 920-725-1822-English 920-840-5490-Espanol Sunday Worship-English 8:00 & 10:30 am Los Domingos Misa-Espanol 12:00pm</p> 	<p>Worship at St. Luke 920-788-4408 Wednesday at 6:30pm Sunday at 9:00am</p> 	<p>Worship at Mt. Calvary 920-731-4001 Thursday at 6:30pm Sunday at 9:00am in Menasha and 6:30pm in Stockbridge</p> 
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FVL hosts its fifth annual FVL VEX Experience on Sat., 2/8! This has grown to be the largest VEX tourney in Wisconsin. Interested in volunteering? Volunteers receive an event shirt and refreshments. Sign up at www.fvlhs.org/vex. Contact [Nathan Nolte](mailto:nnolte@fvlhs.org) (nnolte@fvlhs.org) with questions.