



Proclamation

St. Paul's
Lutheran
Church

May 2014

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Are You A Mission-Minded Person?

May 2014

By Tim McNutt

Last month I wrote about the changing landscape facing American churches. There used to be a time when people gravitated towards churches. We were more of a conservative, *Christianized* nation and there were not as many competing voices. Additionally, the 1970's were a time of renewal/revival for churches, so in some places people appeared to just flow into our local churches.

Now our nation is more like Athens in Acts 17. We are a religious nation, but one of many competing religions, traditions, faiths and voices. Satellite TV and the Internet stream philosophies, lifestyles and teachings from all around the world into the privacy of people's homes. Even the 'New Atheists' and Darwinian evolutionists are as aggressive as churches once were with their advertising campaigns.

The result is that people are not turning toward the Church for answers for their felt-needs as they once did. When someone passes through a transition or faces tragedy they are more apt to Google their questions or listen to a talk show than to turn toward the Church.

One of the reasons many churches are shrinking or closing all together is because of a lack of interaction with the real world. In other words, the church members are on the inside waiting for people to come inside their building. One of the biggest reasons churches are evaporating is because this fails to take into account the reality of the spiritual world of apparent non-interested people. Paul's logic of Romans 3 speaks of this reality – ***No one understands, no one seeks for God. All have turned aside.*** (Romans 3:11-12a, ESV)

Many factors come into play why churches disintegrate. Another of the biggest is we fail to take into account the natural law Jesus Himself instituted: ***As the Father has sent Me; even so I am send you.*** (John 20:21, ESV)

Do you realize Jesus has sent you to your station in life?

A healthy parish is a balance of caring discipleship and outreach. One is not more important than the other, both have equal value. A quick reading of the **Acts of the Apostles** highlights the church caring for one another as well as going out to spread the Good News of Jesus.

Meaning? For one, the Father cares as much about those on the outside as He does the inside. All of us were once separated and alienated from Christ. Someone cared enough to come to us and help us with our needs in Jesus' name. But what if they had never come outside to us? Would we have ever been spiritually smart enough to come in out of the rain? Probably not. Another gleaning is that missional living requires praying and thinking ahead of time. Missional living necessitates as you begin

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your day to remember all those who you will come in contact with. Consider these words from Paul again, ***Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.*** (Colossians 4:5-6 ESV)

Each and every person you come into contact with needs the Good News of the resurrected Christ. They may be spiritually blinded to that fact but it doesn't change the truth of the matter. Praying and thinking ahead of time helps you to focus on a Colossians 4:5-6 lifestyle. It's literally the essence of 'treating others the way you want to be treated.'

Creativity is essential if we are to fulfill Colossians 4. How do we walk in wisdom? How do we make the best use of our time? How should our speech always be gracious? Many competing voices in our world today are full of creativity and enthusiasm for their non-Christian message. In doing all that we can to live and share the Good News of the Gospel means our message ought to be equally interesting. Paul specifically noted our conversations should be 'seasoned with salt.' Think about how salt makes your food even more appealing at the table. It's an element that draws people to your cooking. Creativity helps draw people to Christ in your works and words.

In summary, are you a mission-minded person? We all have vocations and callings from Christ. He has good works prepared in advance for all of us. Are you serving your good works as evidence of the work of God in you?

Every good work that you do in life might be the cause of someone asking questions about your faith in Christ. ***That you may know how you ought to answer each person*** presupposes that a person will be asking a question that requires an answer. Are you prepared to give an answer?

Again, once upon a time, people came to us for help with the Christian faith. Times have changed. The commission to enlarge the family hasn't. Meaning we can't sit inside waiting. The need is great. ***'Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and crippled and blind and lame.'*** ***And the servant said, 'Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.'*** ***And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled.'*** (Luke 14:21-23, ESV)

Sunday School News

The Sunday school year is winding down and will come to a close on Sunday, June 1st. This will be the last day of Sunday school classes until we resume in the fall. The children will also be participating in the 10:30 worship service that will continue our celebration of yet another year of studying God's Word. Our celebration of the Sunday school year will conclude with our annual closing picnic immediately following the 10:30 worship service. Please mark this day on your calendars and plan to join us even if you do not have any children in Sunday school. We will be providing fried chicken for the picnic and are asking all families to bring a side dish and a dessert to share. Every year the picnic has been great culminating social gathering to reflect and celebrate another wonderful year of Sunday school. We hope everyone can join us.

Attention Sunday school Teachers – We will be having a Sunday School Meeting Thursday, May 8th at 6:30 PM to discuss plans and curriculum for next year.



To the Congregation of St. Paul's from John Bowling, Counsel Vice President

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

First I want to thank everyone for their kindness and support when my mom passed away, as well when I was having some health issues. It's during such times as these that we realize what a blessing our church family is!

I also want to thank everyone for coming out to help at our recent church clean up day. It was a beautiful day and a lot was accomplished. As it is at our own homes there is always more to do so another work day will be coming up in the future. More information will be coming once dates, etc. are planned.

We will be having our bi-annual *Voter's meeting on Sunday, May 18th immediately after the 10:30 AM* worship service. A light lunch will be served. We will be discussing the new Building plans to keep everyone updated on the information gathered so far. We are in the process of obtaining estimates so that we will have a ballpark figure of the total cost of the proposed new building. Please come out to the building meetings if you can as we need your ideas and thoughts. Everyone is welcome to join.

As I look around the church it is great to see so many areas flourishing. Donations for our local mission projects are steadily coming in. There is also a lot of enthusiasm in the Youth group as they prepare to launch their "rockets to heaven" in the near future and prepare for several upcoming activities. Seeing so many children in our Sunday School and during our worship services is truly a blessing and a sign of a healthy growing congregation. A lot of work has been going into planning a safe and welcoming Nursery for all interested church members and visitors during the 10:30 worship service. Please contact Amy McNutt if you would like to volunteer to help staff it or have any questions about the Nursery set up before using it. Attendance in our Adult Bible class is growing on Sunday mornings and I urge all of you to join in... there is always room for more!

I look forward to another great day of fellowship as we work together at the upcoming yard sale this weekend. Diane Nichols is coordinating this project and needs lots of helping hands! Hope to see everyone there! God's Blessings! John Bowling, Vice President

Thrivent News!

Thrivent members, select our congregation the first time you direct Choice Dollars between April 1st and May 31st, 2014, and St. Paul's will receive an extra \$20 grant from Thrivent Financial through the "Direct Now ... and add \$20 campaign." Thrivent will give an extra \$20 to our congregation for each member who chooses to direct their Choice Dollars to our congregation. This can be done on line www.thrivent.com or by calling 800-847-4836 and saying "Thrivent Choice".

Thrivent Financial was named as one of the World's 2014 Most Ethical Companies for the third consecutive year! This prestigious list is made up of organizations that demonstrate ethical leadership and corporate behavior.

Are You Missing Out?

By Paul Mehrkam

I having been taking grad courses to get a Masters in leadership in management. I am doing well with my courses, but I am no longer able to help in mentoring and traveling with the Robobees robotics team. Every now and then I miss it and feel left out. In addition, the team is in the world championship and are doing well being ranked 7th out of 80 teams.

The thing that we often forget is that we have to continuously make changes in our lives to better serve God. Sometimes we might feel left out. But the things in this world that temp us will stay in this world. It is through grace, faith, and scripture that works God works in our heart and the Son of God, Jesus, is the never ending source of our salvation.

"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10).

Dear God please continue to call on us to be Your labors in Christ to humbly preach the Gospel, baptize the unchurched, and to serve those in need. Amen.



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**Behold, now is the favorable time;
behold, now is the day of salvation.**

2 Corinthians 6:2

Vacation Bible School July 7th— July 11th

Vacation Bible School is just a little over 2 months away, beginning on July 7th thru July 11th. A fantastic staff is taking shape and materials are being gathered to make this year's program the best ever! This year, at our "Weird Animals" themed program, kids will discover that Jesus' love is one-of-a-kind. Weird Animals is a habitat filled with incredible Bible-learning, team building games, cool Bible songs that will stick with you for years to come, Sciency-Fun gizmos and tasty treats. Registration forms are included with this newsletter. Classes will be filled on a first come basis so please return your forms as soon as possible to assure your child a place in our program. Forms can be mailed back to our church office or brought to church and given either to the church secretary or placed in Brenda Bowling's mailbox across from the kitchen in the hallway.

Our Vacation Bible school program is a free mission outreach into the community. As such, we ask the support of everyone at St. Paul's to help make this program successful by helping in any way possible. Many have already volunteered their time to help out as teachers, crew leaders and other support staff during the week. If you cannot physically be there during this fun week, please consider helping by purchasing some of the items we will need during the week by taking one of the "Iggy" buddy donation forms from the church bulletin board, purchasing the requested item and placing it in the VBS box in the hallway before July 1st. New forms will be continually posted as needs arise. We will be holding our first staff meeting for all those who signed up to help on Wednesday, May 14th at 6:30 PM in the Educational Building. See you there!

Melissa Chew and Brenda Bowling, Co-Directors