

## *The Reverend's Ruminations*

Fall is beginning to fall all around us! The leaves already show hints of their brilliant colors, the children are back in school, and the farmers are beginning to work at harvest amid the wild weather swings that make Minnesota so fun.

As you read this, our Christian Education year is also in full swing after a slight delay to prepare for, and participate in, the activities that made our sesquicentennial celebration such a rousing success. The second-year confirmation class has resumed on Wednesday afternoons, and our Sunday school classrooms are abuzz with students enjoying the continuation of their Christian journey alongside new and old classmates and teachers. We can always find ways for more adults to help, so if you're available on Sunday mornings at 9:15 we'll gladly plug you into the activities! Any nieces, nephews, grandchildren, or neighbors that are looking for a church home are certainly welcome too, and a word of encouragement from you might be just what they need!

Don't forget that we have an adult Sunday school class at 9:15 as well! Join us for coffee and Bible study in the chapel. This fall we'll be looking at the book of Genesis, and learning of God's ways in the world. We'll examine the beginnings of the human race, as well as the origins of our faith in God. The women's Bible study group also continues to meet on the fourth Thursday morning of each month at 9:30. If you haven't had a chance to enjoy their discussion of *Parables from the Back Side*, you really should join them for an engaging alternate look at some of Jesus' most familiar parables.

As I looked up a section of Paul's Second Letter to Timothy recently, I felt myself drawn first to his opening greeting. It was almost as if he were writing on my behalf to this very congregation! The names, as they say, have been changed to protect the innocent (or removed, along with verse 4 in this case) from **2 Timothy 1:3-7**:

*"I am grateful to God—whom I worship with a clear conscience, as my ancestors did—when I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother...and your mother...and now, I am sure, lives in you. For this reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you...for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline."* (NRSV)

The part about a familial tradition of faith passed down through generations initially grabbed my attention, as I thought of the 150 years of worship and service celebrated on September 22 and 23, but Paul's example of continual prayer and his challenge to rekindle "the gift of God that is within you" got me thinking that sometimes all of us need encouragement to rekindle and reengage the faith practices with which we've long been familiar. I hope that you, too, remember fellow members of your congregation in prayer.

Christianity, as I hope you've realized, is not just a Sunday morning activity! It is a part of your life that should know no bounds. Prayer is a powerful thing, and many in our congregation can attest to its amazing results in their lives or the life of a friend or relative. Would you consider becoming a member of our prayer chain? We have a dedicated bunch who lift up immediate concerns when notified, but could always use more. If you are interested in joining them, give Carolyn Thompson, Marilyn Forstrom, or me a call.

Yours in Christ's service,

*Rev. Cory Germain*