

March 2024

Life is busy. Lutheran Chapel of the Cross has been blessed by an incredible gift from Irene Miller. As the meetings take place, as each of you address your own emotional ideas regarding money, as decisions await fruition...pray. Pray that as a church, as God's baptized people, we remain faithful to God and His word. We know His grace, but that does not mean that we become as those who live unholy lives in our decisions. How do we as a church continue to support the great commission? How do we as a church utilize the gifts God has given us as good stewards to make disciples of all nations?

We have had an opportunity to fill out a survey to determine our place in the life cycle of a church. Why is that important? Our Father in heaven sent His only begotten Son to suffer, die, and rise from the dead in order that we would have life in Him. As we study the book of Colossians on Sunday mornings, we recall that the Apostle used the phrase "in Christ" 170 times in His 13 letters. We gather as those set apart, the agios, or those made holy by the blood of the lamb. We are those that are "in Christ". We are indeed saint and sinner alike. God has blessed this congregation with His gifts of word and sacrament ministry. During this season of Lent and throughout our lives, we come confessing our sins and then, receiving absolution, and confidently know by faith you are forgiven.

We are called to make disciples. We make disciples by going. Invite family, friends, people you run into at the store. But always remember that making disciples means that we baptize and teach. We baptize infants in the sure certainty that God is the one who brings someone to faith through the work of the Holy Spirit in the proclamation of His word. And then we teach. Or in the case of those who are older, we teach to baptize. Either way, it means taking the opportunity to speak the scriptures to others and affirm a true confession in the Lord. It means not bending, not caving in, and not giving way to the pressures of society or those that deny the word of our Lord.

It is not easy. In fact, the scriptures teach us repeatedly that we will have to bear our crosses as we confess Jesus Christ in a world that exchanged the glory of God for false gods. It is not easy to tell family or friends why we practice closed communion, asking them to speak to the pastor before communing. Yet, as we pass through Lent and make our way to Easter, we have a wonderful message to share of a Savior who suffered, died, and rose again for their salvation and for you. I encourage you to attend Bible study on Sunday mornings, even if you have all the answers. Maybe you disagree with some of the teachings of the Bible. I still encourage you to come and learn. I encourage you to gather with fellow members of the body of Christ and study the very word that brought you to faith. This is why we are here, to hear the word of our Lord. "Like new born infants, long for pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good." 1 Peter 2:2

Pastor Ficken

*Verbum Domini Manet in Aeternum*  
1 Peter 1:25