



## Your Pastor's Ponderings

As we enter this month of summer begun, of school's out, of vacation day, and of honoring Father, I went to share a little story I read that makes me think of two of the loves of my life: baseball and my baby girl. It's a story by Jimmy Piersall, a former major leaguer in the 50's and 60's. In this story, Piersall describes how to diaper a baby: Spread the diaper in the position of the diamond with you at bat. Then fold second base down to home and set the baby on the pitcher's mound. Put first base and third together, bring up home plate and pin the three together. Of course, in case of rain, you gotta call the game and start all over again.

What a rascally, wonderful and wise way to describe one of our duties as daddies. You just never know when it's going to rain and one time or another you'll definitely have to start all over again.

Speaking of fathers and starting over, as we continue our series on characters of the Bible, this month I want to talk about one guy who was both a rascal and wonderful – a rascally brother and the father of a great nation. I want to share with you some thoughts on Jacob – the son of Isaac, the brother of Esau, and the father of the twelve tribes of Israel -- Reuben, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Dinah, Joseph, and Benjamin. In Jacob, the full promise of God to Abraham to be the father of many nations finally bears itself out.

Before that promises comes to pass, at first, Jacob and Esau are born fighting. In fact, one meaning of Jacob is “cheat” because he was born clinging to Esau's heel as though trying to be born first. We see from the outset what kind of rascal Jacob will become. This nature is further revealed when he bribes Esau's birthright away from him for a bowl of soup and later when he steals Isaac's blessing from him as well. Later still, Jacob will wrestle with God and won't give up until God's blesses him as well. God changes his name to Isra-el, which means “wrestled with God”. Jacob is a person who will never give up and nor will the people who descend from him.

Yet, despite these instances of less than upright behavior throughout Genesis, Jacob is still destined for good things in God's eyes. One of the lessons of Jacob is that God can use anyone to further

God's hopes for the world. Some other descriptors for Jacob include trickster or supplanter. I see Jacob as a sort of biblical Han Solo type person. From Star Wars the movie, Han Solo is the cocky, lovable rogue, who starts by looking out only for himself but in the end does the right thing.

In Jacob, we discover that God doesn't just call saints to do the work of the Gospel in the world – God calls ordinary people, God calls flawed people, God calls people with good and bad qualities, God calls sinners, God calls people like you and I to do God's work in the world. And through the work of ordinary people we can change our community and our world, we can bring God's blessing and love wherever we go.

And that's the message I take from Jacob, in spite of his flaws, or because of his persistence, Jacob was chosen by God to continue the patriarchal line that became the nation of Israel, used to further God's place and blessing in the world. In the end, Jacob the rascal does right by God and God's people. And so can we.

Of course, that's what I think.

Happy Father's Day,  
Pastor Will



### **Coming In July – Parsonage Open House**

In celebration of our seventh year of ministry partnership, Pastors Will and Elisa and Lydia would like to invite the members of both the parishes to an open house picnic at the parsonage on Sunday, July 12. The open house will be from 1:30pm to 5pm. Stop by any time you like during those hours.

We will provide burgers, sausage, chips, salad, and drinks. We will also be having a cake to celebrate Lydia's first birthday. Just bring yourselves. (Please no gifts.) Come celebrate with us, have some good fun, and enjoy the hospitality of our togetherness.



### **Praying the Directory**

Starting in June, each week in addition to his daily prayers, Pastor will also pray for specific families in our directory. He invites you to join him. By intentionally praying for our members (even when not on our prayer list or having a specific need or illness) we invite Christ to keep all of us in his care. And we remind people that they are part of larger faith community, namely our parish but also the larger family of God.



Coming in August –

### **THE ADVENTURES OF PAUL!**

#### **OUR JOINT PARISH VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2009**

Come with us on a journey through the lands of the Bible.

Come travel on the Road to Damascus; come see ancient Athens, come spend a night in prison in Philippi, come visit extraordinary Ephesus; and come be shipwrecked on the mysterious island of Malta. Come travel the roads of the Bible as we go on an adventure with Paul as he makes his way to various churches.

We will be taking a similar journey in our VBS adventure.

Each night of VBS will be held at a different location (one night at Messiah, one night at Samuel's, one night at Mt. Calvary, one night at Mt. Zion, and another night at Messiah). Each of these places will be transformed into one of Paul's stops throughout the Holy Land. In each of these places, we will spend time in a different Bible story, doing a Bible craft, and singing Bible songs.

The Adventures of Paul will begin at Messiah on August 3<sup>rd</sup> through August 7<sup>th</sup>. We will conclude our Adventures with a journey to the Bakersville Grove on August 9<sup>th</sup> for a Joint Parish Worship Service. Worship starts at 10:30am followed by a pot luck picnic.

The fun begins each evening at 5:30pm with a Repast for the Road (in other words, we will have a meal each evening). Then at 6pm, the activities kick off with large gathering followed by our workshops – Mission Music, Aquilla's Arts & Crafts, Gamaliel's Games, and Tent Tales.

Transportation will be available for those who request it OR you may drop you child off at each location. Directions will be available. To sign up, please call the church office at 926-2215 or fill out a registration form by July 19<sup>th</sup>. Let's Hit the Road.



**Thrivent Financial for Lutherans** – is helping to sponsor an “All Pro Dad” event on **Saturday, June 6** at the UPMC Sports Performance Complex in Pittsburgh with Steelers coach, Mike Tomlin. Please not that the Thrivent representatives from northern Somerset County are providing coach bus transportation for \$10.00 per family. Registration for the event and bus must be made with their office at (814) 254-4153.



### CRAFT VENDERS NEEDED!!!!

**What: Craft Show**

**Where: Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries**

**Edgewood Grove Estates**

**231 Tabernacle Drive**

**Somerset, PA. 15501**

**When: Saturday, July 11, 2009**

**Time: 8:00am- 2:00pm**

**Rain Date: Saturday, July 18, 2009**

Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries Community Support Services and Senior Daily Living are sponsoring a craft show. If you would like a space, please send in the following form with your donation of \$10.00 per space to ALSM, **by June 15, 2009**. We hope this will bring a big success for all and make it an annual event. If you know of anyone else interested, please let them know they're invited too. Any questions please contact: 443-0854

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**Name:**

**Address:**

**Phone #:**

**Type of Craft:**

**Number of Spaces:**

**Donation:**



### VBS Planning Meeting

VBS Meeting

Pastor Will would like to meet with VBS helpers from Samuel's and Messiah on **Monday, June 8<sup>th</sup> at 7pm @Messiah**. He would like to discuss the information we talked about at our joint meeting in May and pass out some suggestions for each night. Please let him know if you are unable to attend.

### Synod Assembly

Our annual Synod Assembly is being held Thursday, June 4 through Saturday, June 6 at the Blair County Convention Center in Altoona. Pastor Will will be in attendance there. Any one is invited to come to be a guest and watch the proceedings. The Assembly begins Thursday evening with an opening worship service at First Lutheran. Somerset County resident Nila Cogan is being ordained as part of that service. The weekend continues with the business portion of our assembly on Friday and Saturday. Part of those proceedings will include the election/re-election of a bishop.

Please keep Pastor Will, the representatives from Messiah, and all of the people of the Allegheny Synod in your prayers during this time of assembly.

### YOUTH GATHERING NEWS:

#### A) **Youth at Synod Assembly** –

The Bishop would like to have **all youth** from the Synod (**that includes our New Orleans Youth**) who are going to New Orleans be present at the Blair County Convention Center in Altoona on **Saturday, June 6<sup>th</sup> at 8:30am** for a special commissioning service and blessing for travel.



### **ALSM UPDATES**

First, thank you to our congregations and members of your congregations for their continued prayerful and financial support which enables ALSM to provide charitable care to those persons without resources;

Nomination applications for Rev. Dr. Like Rhoads Award, Youth Services, and Helping Hands awards are available on the ALSM website. Please take time now to nominate someone for 2009; the deadline is June 30. The awards will be presented at the annual dinner scheduled for Thursday, October 29, 2009 at the Altoona Discovery Center. The Rev. Dr. Daun McKee, CEO of Diakon Lutheran Social

Ministries, and former CEO of ALSM will be our guest speaker. More to come;

The ALSM Annual George V. Meadows First Commonwealth Bank Golf Outing will be held Monday, August 10 at the Iron Masters Country Club. Please hold the date and plan to join us. More to come;

ALSM is in the construction stage phase of affordable elderly housing in the Berlin Pike, Somerset Township are in conjunction with the Department of Housing and Urban Development. We anticipate accepting applications in early fall 2009. More to come;

ALSM has been approved to build affordable elderly housing on the campus of The Oaks at Pleasant Gap in conjunction with the Department of Housing and Urban Development. We anticipate construction to begin in the early fall 2009. More to come;

Community Support Home Care Services has opening at its Senior Daily Living Centers for caregivers who need respite care, to place their loved ones during the day. Centers are located in Altoona, State College, Somerset and Meyersdale. In many locations podiatry and beauticians services have been added. Please contact Sally Lenz for more information at 814-696-4506.



### **On the Horizon: Worship Happenings in June**

#### **June 7 – Holy Trinity Sunday**

It is a mystery of our faith that our God is one God in three persons: the Holy Trinity. On this Sunday, we celebrate and ponder that mystery that God is beyond, before and after the universe; that God is creator, redeemer, and sanctifier; that God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

#### **June 14 – Sunday of the Mustard Seed – Recognition of Graduates**

Jesus finds the power of God better imaged in a tiny, no-account seed. In the mustard seed, a tiny kernel grows into a shrub that shelters many birds, into a tree of life. Just as we don't know exactly how the seed grows, we don't know how forgiveness happens, how people get sober, or how families reconcile. Just that it does because God is in charge and through God, everything becomes new.

In celebration of new things, this day we also celebrate our new graduates, those from high school, technical school, and college or university as they enter into a new walk of life. We have witnessed

them blossom from a tiny child into a person ready to enter the wider world. We ask God's blessing upon them and rejoice with their families on this wonderful occasion.

#### **June 21 – Lord of Sea & Sky Sunday**

Today, Jesus calms the storm. Even the wind and waves listen to him. We are called to listen to him as well so that when the storms of life attack us, we can discover the power of Jesus' word to see us through.

#### **June 28 – Sunday of Restored Life**

A woman finds healing, a girl is restored to life – through his presence and touch, Jesus restores all kinds of life. He does this to make the community whole again. We are emboldened to come into the presence of Jesus each week and to live as a community that defines no one as an outsider.



### **Some Summer Fun**

Music can be fun. Music has the power to evoke wonderful memories. It can make us cry and make us smile. Some of the most memorable moments of music are from our childhood. Who doesn't remember singing favorites like This Little Light of Mine or Jesus Loves Me.

This summer during worship will we have fun some and bring back some great memories by singing some of those childhood favorites. We will do this during our opening hymn. For instance, on Holy Trinity Sunday (June 7<sup>th</sup>), we will open by singing He's Got the Whole World in his Hands. Come to worship, praise God, have some fun, and see which of your favorites that we will be singing. Let us make a joyful noise together.

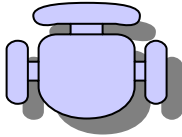
#### **Sum...Sum...Summer Time**

Here's a sneak peek at some things coming up this summer:

- 1) Synod Assembly – June 4-6
- 2) Parish Picnic – July 19<sup>th</sup> @Sam Picnic Pavilion
- 3) National Youth Gathering Trip – July 21-27
- 4) Vacation Bible School – August 3-7 (@various locations)
- 5) Joint Parish Worship – August 9<sup>th</sup>\*\*

### **\*\*Joint Parish Worship in August**

On August 9<sup>th</sup>, as a conclusion to Vacation Bible School, we will again be having a Joint Parish Worship Service. This time we will gather at the Bakersville Grove in Bakersville for worship and potluck picnic. Worship begins at 10:30am with the picnic immediately afterward. Watch for further details.



### **We've Reached the Top**

The chair lift @Messiah has been paid for, arrived and been installed. Now, any one who has concerns over using steps may use the chair lift to access our fellowship hall. In this way, all may be one.

**We will dedicate the chair lift during worship on Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup>.** The chair lift will be dedicated to the glory of God and the memory of our loved ones.



### **Recognition of Graduates**

The Parish would like to recognize all of our high school graduates during worship on **June 14<sup>th</sup>** with a blessing and a small gift. Please make plans to attend.

Any families who have other graduates (from colleges, universities, technical school, business schools, or otherwise), we would like to include their names in our prayers and blessings and recognize them in our bulletin as well. Please let us know if you have a graduate by calling the Parish office (926-2215). Please leave your graduate's name and the name of their institute from which they graduated.



### **Come and have a Berry Fun Time**

This **Wednesday, June 17<sup>th</sup>**, the Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church hosts their annual Strawberry Festival. There will be food, fun, music and strawberries!! **The fun begins at 4pm and goes until 7pm(ish).** All are welcome to come join us.

We have BBQ Chicken dinner and Strawberry desserts for you to enjoy. Please note: desserts and drinks are extra. All are welcome to come join us. Take out and drive thru are available.



### **There's Wisdom in the Word – Summer Break**

Due to Pastor Will's schedule our monthly parish Bible study will be on break in June and July. We will resume our study in August by continuing our sessions on Rediscovering the Book of Faith.