



## Your Pastor's Ponderings

Happy autumn to all. As the seasons begin to change once again, the leaves start to drop, a chill enters the night air, and the dreariness of winter looms on the horizon, it seems appropriate that in our look at great characters in the Bible we also move from a time of prosperity into a time of deprivation. We move from the good times of Joseph to the hard times of Exodus.

“For a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph”. Not knowing Joseph or his family or the ways of Israelites, the new pharaoh grew afraid of their numbers. For many Israelites had come to Egypt to ride out the famine and settled there. Now there numbers were increasing. But rather than empower them, the new pharaoh enslaved them. This now is the time of Moses.

Moses is one of the greatest figures in the Bible and one of its most important prophets, if not the most important (next to Jesus). Moses was not only a great leader but also a lawgiver and author. But did you know some other names we could also ascribe to Moses include “murderer”, “runaway” and “stutterer”. For example, as a young man, he witnessed an Egyptian taskmaster beating up one of his enslaved kinsfolk. He became so incensed by this action that in response he slew the taskmaster. Then because Pharaoh wanted him killed for this offense, Moses ran away to the desert of Midian, to hide. Finally, when God called him out of this “exile” to lead the people out of Egypt, Moses himself used the excuse “I am slow of speech and slow of tongue.”

Now, many of us probably imagine Moses looking a lot like the imposing figure of Charlton Heston from “The Ten Commandments” movie. But it is history that has added those imposing characteristics. Moses was an ordinary person whom God chose and made great. Sure, Moses grew up in the privileged surroundings of Egyptian royalty but the rest of his life he spent in the desert living a blue collar type of life, first as a shepherd and then as a “union” leader of the Israelite nation. In addition, Moses had a speech impediment. Plus, Moses made excuses when God asked him to do

something. Moses was a flawed person (like all of us) whom God empowered and inspired to become an instrument to deliver and lead his people to the promised land.

To be sure, Moses had his good qualities as well (lots more of them). When push came to shove, Moses did as God asked. He went to Egypt along with his brother Aaron. He showed obedience to God. He showed courage in returning to his past, a place that he had run away from. (How many of us have things in our past that we might hesitate before reliving?) He showed bravery in confronting Pharaoh and demanding the release of the Israelites on God’s behalf. He showed persistence in continually confronting Pharaoh until they were released. He showed trust in God in guiding the Israelites through the Red Sea. He showed perseverance in continuing to teach and guide the Israelites despite all their whining in the desert. He showed mercy in convincing God not to give up on his “stiff-necked” people who began to worship a golden idol as soon as God’s back was turned. He showed dedication in finally delivering them to the doorstep of the Promised Land.

As the text describes him – “there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face”. One of the wonderful things about Moses is that he never loses his humanness. He gets angry, he gets frustrated, he gets down on himself, and he occasionally doubts his abilities. For all his greatness, Moses never stops being human like us. And I think that is one of the most compelling messages of the Moses story – God can do incredible things with ordinary people. He uses us, scars, warts, and all, to do his work, to spread his word, to bring love to the world.

In some sense, that is also a daunting responsibility because that means we should have no excuse for not following God and doing what God wants us to do with our lives. But it is also a wonderful opportunity because that means God can use “little old us” to change someone’s life for the better, through our service, through our persistence, through our love, through our humanness.

Moses story is a story about a God who acts on behalf of his enslaved people by showing them a way through their struggles. Through Moses, God provides a way to understand human struggles for liberty and dignity throughout history and throughout our lives. And that’s our story too. And that’s a wonderful thing. At least, that’s what I think.

Pastor Will



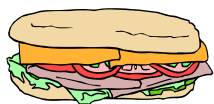
Business Meeting

**Reminder: Joint Council –**

The Joint Council meets on Tuesday, October 6<sup>th</sup> at 7pm @Samuel's.

**Mission Team Updates:**

This year our team is heading to Orange, Texas to help folks who are still recovering from Hurricane Ike- One Year Later. Date of trip is Feb 28 thru March 6, 2010.



**HOAGIE SALE:**

The Laurel Mt. Mission Team will hold a Hoagie/Pizza Sale on October 9<sup>th</sup>. Price is \$6.00- **Orders will be due by October 4<sup>th</sup>**- Contact a team member to place your order! Or sign up on the order sheets in the narthex of each congregation.



**TEXAS BAR-B-Q DINNER & GOODIE BASKET**

**SILENT AUCTION**

Mark your calendars. On November 7<sup>th</sup>, the Laurel Mountain Mission team will be hosting a Texas style BBQ, featuring a pulled Pork Sandwich, Ranch Style Baked Beans, Cole Slaw & Texas Sheet Cake to delight your taste buds. Final details will be available later...but please put it on your calendar. We will also be hosting a Silent Auction of Goodie Baskets. If you'd like to donate a basket to help with the event- contact a team member.



**SEQUANOTA'S FALL CRAFT EVENT:** Nov. 13 and 14.

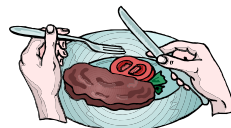
There will be one craft project Friday evening and two on Saturday. There will be kids crafts if kids sign up. Come Friday night or Saturday, commute both days or spend the night for an additional fee. Craft leaders will be Amanda Illar Schmidt, Susan Barclay, Brent Betz and others yet to be named. Call or email us at (814)-629-6627 or [contact@sequanota.com](mailto:contact@sequanota.com) for more information.



**CAMP SEQUANOTA'S TEAM BUILDING AND ZIP LINE PROGRAMS:**

Starting in September we are offering team building programs on Saturdays for sports teams and groups from churches, communities, and businesses. The Zip-Line and climbing wall will also be open for individuals or groups on Saturdays.

*Reservations are needed.* Watch for more on these programs and the fees in the near future. Call or email us at (814)-629-6627 or [contact@sequanota.com](mailto:contact@sequanota.com) for more information.



**COMMUNITY NIGHT AT HOSS'S :** Support

Camp Sequanota by attending the Sequanota Community Night at Hoss's Restaurant in Somerset on Thursday October 15<sup>th</sup>. Sequanota will receive 10% of all proceeds from meals purchased by persons presenting our Community Night card. Check with your congregation or call the Camp for a ticket. Tickets can be used all day.



**Brother or Sister, Can You Spare a Dime? – To Change the World**

Our Sr. High Youth group plus youth groups across the ELCA are taking part in an effort to raise \$1 million for ELCA World Hunger as part of the Change the World: **2009 Lutheran Youth Challenge.**

Bottles are now placed in each narthex and will be there through December for you to share your spare change.

**SEQUANOTA'S FALL WORK DAY:** Oct 3<sup>rd</sup> starting at 8:30 AM. Come at anytime and join in the work projects. Projects include setting up quilt racks for auction, cleaning dining hall, cutting, splitting and stacking firewood, closing up cabins, clearing road ditches, raking leaves, moving equipment to storage, washing windows and cleaning areas at Enrichment Center, clearing trails and more. Free overnight lodging in cabins on Friday as well as a continental breakfast and lunch on Saturday for all workers. Call or email us at (814)-629-6627 or [contact@sequanota.com](mailto:contact@sequanota.com) for more information.

**SEQUANOTA'S FALL ADULT STUDY** Oct 8<sup>th</sup> from 9 AM to 4 PM with Pr. David Wright leading. The topic is: **The Doctor Is In: An Appointment with the Gospel according to Luke.** St. Luke, the Evangelist, has often been called "The Beloved Physician." Throughout the next year, we will be reading and hearing much of Luke's gospel account in our Sunday Worship. Registration fee is \$10.00. Register early, we may need to limit enrollment. Call or email us at (814)-629-6627 or [contact@sequanota.com](mailto:contact@sequanota.com) for more information.



**SEQUANOTA'S ANNUAL QUILT AUCTION AND CHICKEN**

**BBQ:** Oct 10<sup>th</sup> – Auction begins at 2:30 PM with BBQ following. Snacking and dessert foods will be available before, during and after the auction. There will be some silent auctions of filled baskets, donated items and craft items. The main auction will be mostly quilts with some other

handcrafted items. BBQ will be available for pick up and eating in immediately following the auction at about 4 PM. Quilters, please deliver your quilts as soon as possible so we can post pictures of them on our Website. Call or email us at (814)-629-6627 or [contact@sequanota.com](mailto:contact@sequanota.com) for more information.



**FALL FOLIAGE HIKE WITH PASTOR GEORGE: m**

October 25<sup>th</sup> at 3 PM we will hike the trails and pass by some of our new vistas with views toward the Somerset and Johnstown areas. The hike will last about 1 ½ hours and traverse some steep terrain. Please call to let us know you

are coming in case we need to call the hike off due to weather.



**Fireproof" Your Marriage –**

Local dynamic speaker Mike Dunlap (from the North Star area) has offered to come to our area in late October and early November to host a six week Bible study and time of conversation for couples who would like to strengthen their marriage. The study will be held at Mt. Calvary Lutheran but any who are interested are welcome.

Your marriage does not need to be in trouble – think of it as a “tune up”! This is open to parish members and community members alike – dates will be set if we find that there is interest. If you would like to attend this workshop, please put your name on the sign-up sheet



**We are starting to assemble things for Heath Kits.**

**All items must be in original wrapper. Items we are collecting:**

- Regular Bath Towels (prefer dark)/ Regular Washcloths
- Soap (bath size bars) any brand
- Toothbrushes / Combs (wide tooth preferred)
- Metal Nail Clippers w/file / Band-Aids (1/2" x 3/4")

We will be collecting these items for the next 6 weeks. School kits will be prepared later. Thanks to anyone who can help to supply any of these items.



**We are starting to assemble things for School Kits.**

**All items must be in original wrapper. Items we are collecting:**

- 8 ½" by 11" Pads and Note Books / Blunt Scissors (steel)
- 30 Centimeter Ruler or a ruler with centimeters on one side and inches on the other / Pencil Sharpeners / Pencils with Erasers
- 2 ½ inch Erasers / Packets of Construction paper
- 8, 16, or 24 Crayons

**Yes it is that time of the year for School Kits and Health Kits. There will be a box in the Narthex like last year.**



### **Confirmation- Schedule**

Calendar in October:

**October 4<sup>th</sup>** – 5pm: Class @M (Session 3)

**October 11<sup>th</sup>** – Fellowship Event @Mountain Playhouse (Late Nite Catechism)\* Meet at 2pm in the parking lot of Mt. Calvary Play begins at 3pm.

**October 18<sup>th</sup>** – 5pm: Class @M (Session 4)

**October 25<sup>th</sup>** – TAKE A SABBATH – NO Class

### **The Jr. High Retreat is Coming Soon!**

The Allegheny Synod will be holding its annual Junior High Youth Event from Friday, November 13<sup>th</sup> thru Sunday, November 15<sup>th</sup>. The theme of this year's event is "Giving Credit to the Cross" – a Synod Stimulus Event. Confirmation Youth are strongly encouraged to attend but any youth in grades 7, 8, and 9 is eligible.

The cost of this year's event is **\$80 per youth**, for room, board, t-shirt, and programming. The total cost is \$140 but the parish youth fund is picking up \$60 of that cost. If you are unable to cover the cost, please be aware that scholarship money is available. Don't let the cost prevent anyone from going. Please contact Pastor Will if this is a concern.

Please be advised that a letter went out recently to our Jr. High Youth with information and registration forms about Jr. High Retreat. If you are a Jr. High Youth (7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> grades) and did not receive a letter, but are interested in going, please contact Pastor Will (926-2215) **ASAP**

**. The deadline to register is October 4<sup>th</sup>.** Please turn in all forms and fees to Pastor Will by then. **Make checks payable to the Allegheny Synod.**



### **Fall Bazaar @ Friedens church**

The Somerset County Auxiliary of ALSM will hold their 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual County Fall Bazaar on Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> from 10am to 4pm at Friedens Lutheran Church. They will have on display crafts, yard sale items, and plants. There will be baked goods and hot food available (soup, sloppy joes, and hot dogs). Donations of yard sale items, crafts, and baked goods are welcome. Please drop them off at Friedens Lutheran Church on October 2<sup>nd</sup> at 9am.

Proceeds benefits the ministries and programs of ALSM in Somerset County.



### **A Little Piece of the Saints – Bring Us the Fabric of your Loved One**

I know it's a little early to be thinking about All Saints Sunday, but it is coming up next month. As we remember those who were significant to our faith life, we would like to invite anyone who has recently lost a loved one to bring in a piece of fabric (5' x 5') to be placed in our All Saints Banner @Messiah.

We are asking for this fabric so early so that we might have time to add it to the banner before All Saints Day. And so that on All Saints is might be on display with All Our Saints on Earth and Those Above.



### **The Faces of Our Saints – Invitation to Worshippers**

Next month, on November 1<sup>st</sup>, we will celebrate All Saints Sunday, a remembrance of all God's saints, past and present. In the spirit of that remembrance, we invite anyone who would like to bring a photograph (framed or loose) of a loved one or photo of someone special who revealed Christ to them.

These pictures will be tastefully displayed in the narthex and around our worship space so that we might remember the Faces of our Saints. This display will last through Christ the King Sunday (November 22). Please be sure to leave some way for us to identify your photo so that it may be returned to you at the end conclusion of our remembrance.

### **There's Wisdom in the Word**

Our Parish Bible study continues this week. We are beginning a new topic in the Book of Faith called People of Faith. Our study is entitled "A Great Grand-ma to a King, a King-maker, a King and a Royal Pain" which looks at the persons of Ruth, Samuel, David, and Elijah and their stories. This month we look at Samuel – the prophet whom God used to anoint the first king of Israel.

Join us on **Tuesday, October 27<sup>th</sup>** at 7pm in the lounge of Messiah.



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

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#### **October 4<sup>th</sup> – Blanket Sunday/Sunday of the Little Children**

What does it mean to receive the kingdom of God as a child does? In today's Gospel, Jesus announces and enacts in history the new reality of God's surprising activity. Women and children (all people) are accepted and valued, not dismissed as inferior.

Also on this day, congregations throughout the Allegheny Synod will experience how we accept and value people near and far as we participate in Blanket Sunday. Through a special offering of envelopes and blankets, we help provide warmth, shelter and security to someone in the world coping with catastrophe.

#### **October 11<sup>th</sup> – Companion Synod Sunday/Sunday of the Rich Man**

In today's Gospel, a rich man, who is sincere and good hearted, comes to ask Jesus what he should do to inherit eternal life. Mark's gospel is alone in saying that Jesus looked on him and loved him. Out of love, not as judgment, Jesus offers him an open door to life: sell all you own and give it to the poor. Our culture bombards us with the message that we will find life by consuming. Our Gospel counters this

message with the invitation to find life by divesting for the sake of the other.

Also this day, we remember the other and share Christ's love by remembering our neighbors in Christ, particularly the Kenya Evangelical Lutheran Church, partners in God's worldwide Gospel. Through our worship and prayers, we will pray for their continued good work in spreading Christ's message of new life.

#### **October 18<sup>th</sup> – Harvest Home Sunday/Sunday of the Servant Savior**

Today in the Psalms, we hear the passages known as the "servant songs." In this song and in light of Christian faith, the servant's healing ministry and redemptive suffering are understood to be fulfilled in the life and death of Christ.

In this spirit of serving, we also celebrate Harvest Home – the sharing of our bounty with those who need the help of ministries like ALSM and the Lutheran Home in Johnstown. As a special treat and an example of Christ's service in action, we hope to have representative from ALSM share with us some updates about Harvest Home during worship this day.

#### **October 26<sup>th</sup> – Reformation Sunday**

On this day we celebrate the heart of our faith: the gospel of Christ—the good news—that makes us free! As we remember the Reformation and Martin Luther's actions that helped spur reform in the church, we pray that the Holy Spirit would continue to unite the church today in its proclamation and witness to the world. In the waters of baptism we are made one body; we pray for the day that all Christians will also be one at the Lord's table.



Where Did You See God this week!

Please share your stories with Pastor Will about where you saw God this week by email, bulletin insert, writing a letter, leaving a message on the voice mail, or in person. **Please continue share with me where you see God in your lives.**

Example: I saw God in

I saw God \_\_\_\_\_



### **OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD**

Once again, our parish will be preparing and sending shoe boxes filled with gifts for Operation Christmas Child. This year, we will be using a similar approach to previous years by asking for a certain item each week. The following is the schedule for donations.

**SEPTEMBER 27** -- Solar Powered Calculators, Flashlights, Batteries, and Watches

**OCTOBER 5-** Coloring books, Crayons & Notepads

**OCTOBER 11-** Toothbrushes, combs & hair clips