



Your Pastor's Ponderings

Recently I saw an episode of Fox's latest hit television show, Glee. The theme of that night's program had to do with dreams. (Imagine that ☺). It had to do with the dreams of a wheelchair bound student, the dreams of a mother to know her daughter better, and the dreams of two singers (Will Shuester and Bryan Ryan) to be part of a Broadway show. One of the most moving parts of the program happened when Will Shuester decides to give up his part in a community production of Les Miserable to Bryan Ryan so Bryan (a member of the school board) won't cut the Glee Club program from the budget.

The Glee Club finds out he gave up the part of his dreams to save the Club. And Finn says, I'm sorry you had to do that Mister Shue. And he replies, I'm not. The way I see it is that I'm trading my one dream for the chance that all thirteen of you might find yours."

Sometimes making dreams come true requires a little sacrifice on each of our parts. I'm not sure where I'm going with this other than to say that in the coming months as we dream our dreams together, as we think about what dreams God has in store for us, as we put forth our ideas on what future God holds for all of us as his people in our community, it may be necessary to sacrifice one small dream for the good of a greater dream. (and isn't that of a sort what Jesus did for us on the cross. Jesus died on the cross, was raised from the dead, and then ascended to the God the Father for our sake so that not only might we have the promise of new life and salvation but also so that we as the church might become his hands and feet in the world – so that God's love might not only be known through the love of Christ but more importantly so that God's love might also be known through the actions of love of God's people, the church – us.

Speaking of not only dreaming a little dream but also of living one of God's right now, I want to share a new thing God's doing now in the life of our parish and our community. Lately, I've been talking with certain groups of pastors throughout the synod about ways of deepening our relationship with Christ and sharing that relationship

with others – perhaps some who have never met Jesus. I've been doing these study groups partially because I've been particularly haunted by a question I heard someone recently ask – *if your congregation disappeared, would your community miss you.* I've been dreaming about different ways we might answer that question so that the answer is yes, that we would be missed.

One of the ideas we've talked about has to do with doing things relationally (doing things that bring people together) and with hospitality (being welcoming to those around us in a face to face way). As one means of creating relationships with those around us in the community and being a hospitable presence in our community, one little dream that I've decided to make a reality is to host a Summer Saturday Outdoor Worship and Campfire at the pavilion in Huston's Hollow. I hope fellow disciples will join me in this effort. Hopefully we can reach some of the camper folks, introduce them to our church community, and invite them to join us on Sunday mornings. If nothing else, at least we take a few opportunities to share God's love and to be neighborly in a way that expresses the difference the good news of Jesus makes in our lives with those around us.

Perhaps here is where the sacrificing a little of our dreams (as mentioned above) comes in – perhaps we sacrifice our little dream of a Saturday evening with a drink on the swing after mowing or we sacrifice our little dream of Saturday night out with the friends by instead spending a Saturday evening with Jesus in worship at a campfire making some friends for Jesus and strengthening our place in community. Yes, I understand that's not easy to do.

But as one professor I read says, Gospel hospitality (and dreaming) is really hard, and we don't expect that. We think it's going to be warm and fuzzy and everyone will be really happy...but it's not for the fainthearted. Scripture tells us that. (Just look at Christ on the cross). But that's OK because we can trust God to lead us. We don't have to have it all figured out. We just have to be willing to take some risks and maybe give up a small dream or two for the chance a bigger and better one for all. So later this summer come on out to our Saturday Worship at Huston's Hollow and dream around the campfire with me and meet so new neighbors for Jesus.

Dream On,

Pastor Will



Becoming the Parent You Want to Be: A Family Time of Bible Study for You and with your Kids

Becoming a Better Parent

Our Parenting Bible Study continues this month on Saturday, June 26th at Messiah from 1pm to 3pm. Last month, we looked at how being a better parent starts with being a better couple and focusing on passion, intimacy, and commitment. This month, we will look at two of the ten biblical qualities that the Drs. Parrot suggest are key in becoming a better parent --

The study is open to parents or even grandparents who have young children to take care of. Their children are invited to come as well. We will open each session with a brief worship time for the whole family. Then the children will be able to spend time in the nursery or outdoors playing games with adult supervision while Pastors Will and Elisa and parents participate in the Parenting Bible study. At the conclusion of study time, we will get together for another family activity before departing. Snacks, coffee, and juice will be available throughout.



There's Wisdom in the Word – Parish Bible Study

All are invited to come, pray, and study scripture as we continue to explore God's Word. This month we continue our exploration of **Keep Climbing: Why God Doesn't Give Us Everything We Want.**

Session 2 focuses on the topic of Flattening the Mountain. In this session, we discover how hard times are a vehicle that God uses to stretch and grow our faith in him.

Our Bible study meets on the last Tuesday of the month. This month, we meet on Tuesday, June 29th at 7pm @Messiah.



Recognition of Graduates

The Parish would like to recognize all of our high school graduates **during worship on June 13th** with a blessing and a small gift. Please make plans to attend.

In addition, we would also like to recognize any other 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 the institute from which they graduated.



A Peek at Summer

Here's are some things to put on your summer calendar –

- 1) Synod Assembly – June 10-12
- 2) Pastor Will @Camp Sequanota as chaplain – June 27- July 3
- 3) Parish Picnic – July 18th
- 4) Vacation Bible School – July 26 – 30
- 5) Joint Parish Worship/VBS Wrap Up – August 1st (Bakersville Grove)

Music in the Mountains @Camp Sequanota – August 21st

Coming at the End of July

The Journeys of Joseph: From Canaan to Cairo

Our Joint Parish Vacation Bible School 2010

Come with us on a journey through the lands of Israel and Egypt as we travel the same road that Joseph walked – with his family in Canaan, to prison, then to the Pharaoh's Palace. Come travel more roads of the Bible as we journey with Joseph on his walk of faith from slave to Pharaoh's advisor.

As with last year, 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 Mt. Calvary, one at Mt. Zion, one at Samuels, one at Messiah, and another night at Mt. Calvary). Each of these places will be transformed into one of Joseph's stops throughout the Bible lands. In each of these places, we will spend time in a different part of Joseph's story, doing a Bible craft and singing Bible songs.

The Journeys of Joseph will begin at Mt. Calvary on July 26th through July 30th. We will conclude our Journey with a trip to the Bakersville Grove on August 1st for a Joint Parish Worship Service. Worship starts at 10:30am followed by a pot luck picnic for all.

The fun begins each evening at 5:30pm with Food for the Journey (in other words – dinner). Then at 6pm, the activities kick off with a large gathering time followed by our workshops – Music, Crafts, Games, and Stories.

Transportation can be made available for those who request OR you may drop your child off at each location. Directions will be available. To sign up, please call the church office at 926-215 or fill out the enclosed registration form by July 15th.



Synod Assembly

Our annual Synod Assembly is being held Thursday, June 10 through Saturday, June 12 at the Blair County Convention Center in Altoona. 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. The weekend continues with the business and ministry portion of our assembly on Friday and Saturday.

Please keep Pastor Will, Kimberlee, Marie, and all the people of the Allegheny Synod in your prayers during the time of assembly.



Look What God's Doing Now – Summer Saturday Evening Worship and Campfire @Huston's Hollow

Later this summer, in an effort to reach out to strangers in our midst, to enjoy God's creation, and to worship together differently, we will be hosting an occasional Summer Saturday Worship and Campfire @Huston's Hollow.

The worship style will be informal and casual including a bible study talk type sermon followed by a lite meal – hamburgers and hot dogs on the grill. These worship opportunities will take place on Saturday, July 31st at 5pm, Saturday, August 21st at 5pm, and Saturday, September 18th at 5pm.

If you are interested in helping out with this worship, please let Pastor Will know.



On the Horizon: Worship Happenings in June: June 6th – Sunday of Abundant Blessings/Rogation Sunday

The Time after Pentecost is a teaching time, a growing time, in the life of the church. This week in worship we celebrate God's ability and intention to provide us with a new lease on life and with abundant blessings. To that end we gather with the whole people of God to be instructed by the word and nourished in the blessed sacrament.

In addition, we celebrate God's abundant blessings of spring time and renewal through the remembrance of Rogation Day. We do this through prayers for the planting season and a blessing of the seeds, soil, and lands. *(If anyone has any seeds that they would like to be blessed,, you are welcome to bring them to worship that day.)*

June 13th – Speaking the Truth Sunday/Recognition of Graduates

In our lessons today, we hear how King David seduced his neighbor Bathsheba and was responsible for the death of her husband,

Uriah. God sends the prophet Nathan to confront the king. Nathan tells the king a parable and opens David's eyes to see his own guilt. In Nathan's word to David, we hear our own calling to be faithful to God's words and speak the truth in the love in all things.

In a celebration of God's love and truth for all things, we also celebrate our new graduates today, those who are moving on from high school, technical school and college to bigger and greater things in their lives. We have watched them grow in our midst from young ones into confident young adults now ready to find their own greater truth in the wider world. May God Bless them in all things especially on this wonderful occasion.

June 20th – Sunday of Reaching Out/Father's Day

Today we hear in our lessons how baptism is powerful bond that unites us not only with God but with all believers. And we also hear how in casting out the Gerasene man's demon, Jesus' mission extends to all believer and how we are called to reach out to others so that they may be united in God's love and mercy.

June 27th – Fruits of the Spirit Sunday –

Today in worship we hear how we have no good apart from God. Thus our Lord's call to follow him is an invitation to freedom. This is freedom to revel in the Spirit's fruits: love, joy, peace, patience, and the like. This is the path of life.

Today in honor of the Fruits of the Spirit that God gifts each of us with, we are invited to share our good fruits with others, specifically disciples in our congregations are invited **to bring cans of canned fruit to worship with them today to be presented later to the Somerset Food Pantry.**

Camp Sequanota Updates

9. Our 5K Cross County Run / Walk – we had about 30 runners on a rain threatening morning. In response to last year's evaluations we changed to a slightly less challenging course with more clearly marked the turns. The race went very well.
10. The Spring Open House / Introduction to Camp was well attended by current and potential campers. We also had few persons who came just to see what has been happening around Camp. During the event we signed up a number of new campers.
11. The Spring Work Day had 40+ participants. Despite threaten weather we accomplished a great deal getting camp ready for

Summer Camp. The group cleaned cabins, picked up stick, trimmed shrubs, cleaned out spouting, fasten bunk beds to the floor, cut down dead trees, cleaned ditches, cleaned up our Camp Store, and help clean and arrange the Dining Hall for the Mother's Day Dinner. We thank all those who came out to help.

12. Our second annual Mother's Day Dinner attracted 217 guests. Many praised the Mother's Day meal prepared by Dawna and her staff, as well as, the atmosphere and service provided. It might have been cool and damp out side but it was friendly and warm inside. This year our attendance grew by 100, what will 2011 bring?
13. This year is again proving to be challenging financially. As our summer and year round programs grow, the Board is moving toward increasing the Program Director's time possibly to full time this coming fall. In order to meet this need we need to increase the gifts from individuals and congregations and those received through our fund raising efforts. Please prayerfully consider how you might help us continue to grow this vital outdoor ministry in the Allegheny Synod.
14. Our international staff member will not be able to join us this summer. As happens too often in Africa, he was denied a visa by the U.S. Embassy. We will try again next year to get an international counselor.
15. Summer enrollment is about equal to last year at this time. Keep the registration forms coming.
16. By the end of next week our summer staff should be filled. Staff training begins June 2nd. Our 2010 Staff will lead worship and be installed on Saturday morning, June 12th, at the Synod Assembly in Altoona.
17. Please pass the word that even though we do not have specific specialty camps like fishing, horseback riding, and adventure listed in our brochure, these special program activities are available many weeks of camp.
18. Urgent need – money to help pay for 2 riding mowers (\$1,000 each) and a computer for our summer media staff member's use (\$350). We were down to one riding mower (about 7 years old) that was repaired at least twice this spring. For the last three summers the staff member working on our DVD's and the end of the week slide shows has not been able to work efficiently sharing a computer with our office staff.

19. Burning of the Mortgage Celebration: After 31 years of mortgage debt we will celebrate its payoff on Saturday June 26th. There will be time to swim, hike, sit and talk (or sleep), eat, worship and enjoy a campfire. It all begins at about 2 PM. The worship celebration will begin shortly after 6 PM with campfire ending 9 PM. There is no fee for this event. The offering received during the service help offset some of the day's expenses.
20. Dining Hall restroom addition project: We are about to submit our revised plans to secure a building permit. If we move forward as planned construction should begin this fall. We are considering a self build project to complete the addition. If you have skills to share please let the camp office know and we will contact you as we approach actual construction. We need carpenters, cement works, electricians, plumbers, painters, cleanup help, landscaper workers, road pavers and more.
21. Our Music in the Mountains Music Festival on August 21st is taking shape. This year there will be Pre-Event Bash Friday evening for those who come to camp, use the cabins, or sleep in the Enrichment Center. Fees for overnight lodging are tents (must bring your own) – no cost; cabins \$8 per person, and Enrichment Center \$20 per person (bring own linens). The first concert begins at 10 AM with final concert by Lost and Found at 6 or 7 PM. During the early afternoon there will be workshop sessions presented by concert leaders and others. The swimming pool, the Zip-line and climbing tower will be open part of day. There will be planned and self guided hike, crafts, and other fun things to fill the day. Food will be available for purchase all day or bring picnics. The Camp Store and concert presenters' sales tables will be open throughout the day. Cost is \$15 in advance and \$20 at the gate.

When Your Church is Not the Biggest in Town

Steve Burchett

These are days of “largeness” and, admittedly, I have bought into the hype. Let me explain: Normally when my wife and I go out on a date, we eat at a restaurant, but there are certain eateries that I refuse to frequent. Why? Because their servings simply aren't large enough! If I'm going to spend that kind of money, then I want to get something substantial in return. I recognize that you might prefer taste over size, but I prefer goodness and largeness. Actually, if I had to have one or the other, I'll take mass. That way, at least I won't be hungry half-way through the post-dinner movie.

What about the local church? Is largeness always better? Nearly every town has a church that is bigger than all of the others. Is God blessing the big church, while the other churches around the community are missing out on God's favor?

A few years ago, I had the privilege of visiting a church in Washington, D.C. Their morning service was packed with about 800 people in a church building not really designed for that many people. I happened to walk in a few minutes after the service began, and an usher struggled to find a seat for me. This is a pastor's dream.

When we see and hear about churches like that one in the nation's capitol (even churches with thousands), we might be quick to say, “I wish my church were that large.” I've heard that said often in my travels and in conversations with other pastors and church members. This is commendable if the goal is to see scores of people won to Christ. However, I've conversed with too many people who conclude that “bigger is always better”—not in regards to seeing people saved, but because they think a large church will offer more activities, increase notoriety, and somehow prove that God is pleased with them.

The New Testament never says we must have big local churches. Granted, huge churches have existed since New Testament times (cf. Acts 2:41). However, our churches may truly please God and yet never be extremely large. How? By being “extreme” in other ways.

Consider these four:

(1) Our churches should be extremely faithful to Scripture. Like the early church, we must strive to be committed to the “apostles' teaching” (Acts 2:42). What makes a church worthy of imitation is not its largeness, but its commitment to live out the Bible. Frankly, there are big churches that have grown numerically because they have not been committed to Scripture or the gospel of Jesus Christ (cf. 2 Timothy 4:3-4). We would be foolish to desire what they have (cf. Galatians 1:6-9).

(2) Our churches should be extremely loving. The idea of the church loving one another is pervasive in the New Testament. To give just one example, John writes, “Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another” (1 John 4:11). You may never be the largest church in town, but you should strive to be the most loving. Jesus said, “By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35). We mistakenly think that the big church is always the one having the most impact in a community, when in fact it might be the smallest—the church marked by sacrificial, Christ-like love.

(3) Our churches should be extremely evangelistic. Jesus said, “Make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19). That is a word for every church, huge and tiny.

Yet there is a mistaken idea today which says that only big churches with slick programs can really do effective evangelism. What would the early church disciples have thought about that? I don't think they considered such an idea. For instance, at the very beginning they simply would not have had time to think about it. Instead, persecution struck, scattering the people (Acts 8:1). These small dispersed groups of believers went about everywhere proclaiming the gospel resulting in many being saved (Acts 11:19-21). Big events at a spacious church building are not required. What is necessary? Followers of Jesus who take Jesus' commission seriously and tell others the good news, trusting that "the gospel...is the power of God for salvation" (Romans 1:16).

(4) Our churches should be extremely dependent upon the Lord. Jesus said, "[He] who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). Therefore, some churches, even those with full calendars, do "nothing" in God's eyes because they are ministering in their own strength, without a humble, prayerful dependence upon the Lord. The only way to really do "something" that counts for eternity is to look away from our scrawny resources to the vast resources of the Lord. The beauty of such reliance upon the Lord is this: We get all that we need, and God gets all of the glory. When people visit your church, do they see a group of people dependent upon the omnipotent Lord? Are you a praying church? "Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen." (Hebrews 13:20-21)

well as Fresh Strawberry Desserts will be available from 4pm til 7pm. Eat in, take out, or Drive Thru. Join us with fun for all.



Business Meeting

Joint Council Reminder

Joint Council – the joint council of the NCLP meets on Tuesday, June 1st @Samuels at 7pm.



Strawberry Festival @Mt. Calvary

Come join our sister parish as they hold their Annual Strawberry Festival on Wednesday, June 16th at Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church – 3093 Glades Pike, Lavansville. BBQ Chicken Dinners as