

# Grapevine – July 2009

## Trinity Lutheran Church

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*During our pastoral vacancy, the Rev David Thorp – 892-9158 is on call for pastoral concerns.*

*The Rev. Bruce Meyer conducts services at 9:00, our summer hours.*

*Sunday School resumes in September.*

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**\*\*\*\*\* PASTOR BRUCE MEYER’S SERMON FROM SUNDAY, JUNE 14 \*\*\*\*\***

Some time ago I came across a little article entitled “Attitude”, written by Charles Swindoll. He says this: “The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude to me is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skills. It will make or break a company...a church...a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past. We cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude...I am convinced that life is 10% what happened to me, and 90% how I react to it. And so it is with you. We are in charge of our attitude.

I use that article as the springboard to say, that if our attitude is so important to the way we live and experience life – then Scripture directs us to the one, single, dominant attitude that is to rise up in us above all others.

And what do you think it is? What’s the attitude? It’s this. It’s thankfulness, gratefulness, gratitude. Or as someone has called it – the “attitude of gratitude”. Wherever you look in the Bible it’s all over the place. Page after page encouraging us to live lives of thanksgiving.

We may not immediately think of gratitude as one of the basic needs of our lives – until we realize that none of us can do without it – either giving or receiving it. Is it not true that the lowest and most difficult days in our lives and relationships are those days when we are unable to express thanksgiving to God or gratefulness to one another? As someone said: “We know we’re in the pits on those days when we can’t praise or give thanks for anything.” (You ever have days like that?)

This is why we need to hear again and again, and especially as Christians, what St. Paul says in a stirring passage in First Corinthians. He says:

“No matter what happens, always find reason to be thankful in all circumstances, for this is the will of God for you who belong to Jesus Christ.” (What a statement! Put that on your refrigerator door to look at all the time).

Notice first, Paul doesn't say to give thanks only when something good happens. He says – no matter what happens.

Some people have the wonderful ability to see and express a positive side to everything. I remember the comment a woman made to her husband. He had just come home from his office. And when he looked at his wife he said – “O my, you've got that disaster look on your face. Something went wrong today, didn't it?” And she said “Yes”. He said, “I've had nothing but bad news all day long. Can't you tell me any good news?” To which she replied, “Yes I can. We have six beautiful children, don't we?” And he agreed, “Yes, we have six beautiful children.” And then she said – “Well, five of them didn't break a leg today!” What a sensitive handling of that situation. First, she acknowledges the blessing of their children – and then – the “no matter what happens”.

Secondly, St. Paul doesn't say to give thanks only when you have a reason. He says, always find a reason!

There is so much of the goodness of God and the goodness of one another that we take for granted and never say anything about. So much that goes unnoticed and unexpressed. And even if we do notice it, how often we never affirm it or put it into words and express it. May we never be like that crusty old Yankee husband whose wife was very upset with his lack of unexpressed love. One day she said, “You never tell me that you love me!” To which he turned to her and said – “I told you once that I loved you – on the day we were married. And if I ever change my mind I'll let you know.”

O no! Say it. Speak it. Get it out. Put it into words. What all too often gets quickly put into words, is what is wrong and not right in our lives. All our reasons for dissatisfaction. It can be well and good to complain and “get off our chest” the grievances we have and what's troubling us. Even God invites us to do that with him. But never at the expense of realizing what God has already given and graciously bestowed upon us – and to remind each other of that.

It is rightly said – “All genuine blessings are expressed blessings”. We are not just to think them. We are to name them. In our families, to our spouses, with our children, about our country, and not the least to each other as Christians. And above all, name them to God, who is the source and giver of anything and everything that is good and right. Don't hide the blessings. And don't hide the God who gives them. And never let the grievances outweigh the gratitude.

Lastly, Paul doesn't say to give thanks if you want to. He says – This is the will of God for you in Jesus Christ. For those of us who sometimes get confused and muddle around about what the will of God is for us – here is one place where there can be no misunderstanding about what the will of God is. Always find reason to be thankful, says Paul. This IS the will of God for you. That's clear!

I read an article titled – “The Healthiest Hour of the Week”, written by a Christian physician. The title fascinated me. What's that hour? In short, it said that the healthiest hour of the week is when the people of God gather on Sundays to worship and praise the Giver of life. And keep coming back Sunday after Sunday. People whose lives in between Sundays aren't all “peaches and cream” and who oftentimes deal with hard and difficult situations. But who keep coming back to sing and pray and praise God, and find reason to be thankful in all circumstances.

In worship we glorify God's love and grace to us in Jesus Christ. It's the healthiest hour of the week and the healthiest attitude of our lives. You and I are in a truly healthy life-giving place right now. It doesn't get any better than this.

...No wonder we call what we do in a few minutes the Eucharist. It means THANKSGIVING.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow. People, let us find reason to be thankful at all times, in any place and in every circumstance. It's God's will for us in Christ. And what a difference it makes! Amen.



**\*\*\*\*\*THE CALL COMMITTEE\*\*\*\*\***

has received the name of a candidate to be considered as our next pastor, and will be setting up an interview. **PLEASE KEEP THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN YOUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS AS THEY BEGIN THIS IMPORTANT PROCESS.**

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**<<<<<<Project Katrina Team Announcement>>>>>>**

Another trip is planned for New Orleans on October 17, 2009 and we are offering a new fundraising idea that may be of interest to all homeowners. Our team of experienced builders and workers are willing to work on a project at your home like a small renovation or just about any project you have. We envision many church members have projects that are in various stages of planning and we can help. For example, if you are planning to hire a handyman or contractor for a project around your home, our team would be willing to complete the project at a good discount because we will volunteer our time and you can save considerable labor costs.

Here are a few small project ideas our team would like to suggest: new and replacement decks, camp docks, painting, wall papering, rebuilding or reframing just about any project you have.

Information about rebuilding New Orleans: we anticipate about twenty Portland area Lutherans to join together for a sixth trip to Louisiana. This rewarding work to help a family rebuild after the severe devastation of Hurricane Katrina is what God has called us to do.

**<<<<<<PROJECT KATRINA NEW ORLEANS MISSION VI>>>>>>**

The next meeting for Project Katrina New Orleans Mission VI will be on July 8<sup>th</sup> @ 7:00pm at Trinity.

**<<<<<<BOOKS ON SALE FOR LDR/NEW ORLEANS>>>>>>**

Books on cooking, sewing, crafts and health are available for a "free will offering." All funds will go to benefit the LDR/New Orleans project. Make any checks payable to Trinity Lutheran Church and please note under memo "LDR/New Orleans."

**----- BOOKS FOR ETHIOPIA -----**

Amanuel, Brenda, Dawit and Jane are collecting books to be shipped to a library in Addis Ababa and a school in Nehemte. Children's, youth, and adult books are needed. To cover the cost of shipping, Abera has put together DVD's of Trinity events to offer for a donation to cover the cost of shipping the books. The DVD's can be viewed during Fellowship time after the church service. This is a Care in Community Project and Trinity will be receiving matching funds from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans.

**..... CONGRATULATIONS TO .....**

Keith and John on their Confirmation on May 31, 2009.

..... **THANK YOU** .....

**to** Ellen for your work in updating the Directory. The 2009 Directory is available and can be picked up at church.

**for** the two new baby changing stations.

**To** all who worked so hard on Westbrook Together Days to raise funds for the Food Pantry and Salvation Army's River of Life.

~~~~~ **MUSIC OUTREACH** ~~~~~

No singing July and August

On July 15, at 11:00am, Senior Saints are invited to a picnic at Lenny's camp on Sebago Lake. A grill will be available along with cold drinks. Please bring potluck.

On August 19, at 11:30am, Senior Saints will lunch at a restaurant TBA, followed by a one hour trip on the Songo River for a cost of \$7.00.

----- **GLENN MILLER ORCHESTRA** -----

Alice has found us a place to hear some great music. On July 7, at 7:00pm, the Seaside Pavilion at Old Orchard Beach is featuring the Glenn Miller Orchestra. Details can be found on the bulletin board. Advance ticket sales are \$15, - \$18 at the door. You can order tickets on line at [www.seasidepavilion.org](http://www.seasidepavilion.org). Or, - you can pay Alice ASAP in advance of her order placement.

.....**WESTBROOK FOOD PANTRY ITEMS FOR JULY**.....

Peanut Butter

**\$\$\$\$\$ SPECIAL OFFERINGS AND WHERE THEY WENT \$\$\$\$\$**

The monies taken in at the Bean Supper, after expenses, was \$912. \$304 was received from Thrivent Financials. When it was assigned, Project Katrina got \$664, and Long Creek Youth Ministry got \$552.

**+++++ CAMPERSHIPS AND SCHOLARSHIPS +++++**

**Camperships** for Camp Winni went to Keith, Sidney, Jesse & Samantha; for Camp Calumet went to Nicole, Jillian, Matthew, and Sierra. **Joyce Barnes and Margaret Knowles Scholarship** went to Hilary.

**James, age 4, was listening to a Bible story. His dad read: "The man named Lot was warned to take his wife and flee out of the city but his wife looked back and was turned to salt." Concerned, James Asked: "What happened to the flea?"**