

PASTOR'S PENNINGS

How can I be happy if I don't take sides?

“Blessed are the peacemakers.” Matthew 5:9

Who really wants to be a peacemaker anyway? A peacemaker in a marriage is usually the one who has to swallow his or her pride. Who wants to say, “You're right, and I'm wrong,” to keep the peace in a marriage. A peacemaker amongst neighbors is the one who has to rake more, shovel more, and put up with more. Who really wants to do that to keep the peace between neighbors? To be a peacemaker can be a headache!

And yet, Jesus attaches the blessing of happiness to those who are peacemakers. Jesus can say that from His own experience. He was happy to bring peace to this world. After all, He is the Prince of Peace. This title rightfully describes Jesus because He made peace between God and all the people of the world.

Talk about a headache! It wasn't easy. He had to resist temptation, He had to resist the urge to strike back, He had to put others first, He had to go the extra mile, He had to suffer, and ultimately He had to die. But all of His sacrifices were necessary to establish peace between His Father and the world. Jesus was a success-ful peacemaker, and He was happy to do it. And you can be happy that He did it too!

To be a peacemaker is not easy. It wasn't for Jesus, and it won't be for you either. It isn't easy to be the peacemaker between quarreling siblings. It isn't easy to be the peacemaker between angry neighbors. It isn't easy to be the peacemaker in a contentious marriage. It isn't easy to be the peacemaker when grudges are involved. It isn't easy to be the peacemaker when that involves saying, “I'm sorry.” But Jesus never said it was going to be easy. He did say, though, that He will bless your peacemaking efforts. Just take one glance at all of the blessings attached to Jesus' peacemaking-- forgiveness, joy, and peace just to name a few.

How can I be happy if I don't take sides? That's the point. True happiness comes when you do take a side-- God's side. To be a peacemaker is to be a reflection of Jesus. To be a peacemaker is to take to the world the peace that Jesus has brought to you. And there is no greater joy than that!

PRAYER LIST

Psalm 86:3,6 - “Be merciful unto me, Oh Lord, for I call to you all day long. Hear my prayer, O Lord; listen to my cry for mercy.”

** Please keep the Quam family in your prayers as they recover from Charlie's departure from them into glory.

** Please keep our confirmation students in your prayers also: Stefan Paxton, Allison Evans, and Tom Shoenborn are in their third year. Destiny Barnett and Cole Oestreich are in their first year.

PLAN FOR YEAR-ROUND STEWARDSHIP GROWTH

October is stewardship month. Special Bible studies and stewardship services will be held on the first four Sundays of October. In addition, there will be three mid-week Thursday Bible studies every other week starting on Thursday, September 29th. The theme will be "Different Gifts, Same Grace." Sub themes will be, "serving, prophesying, encouraging, teaching, generosity, mercy and leadership."

Of course, stewardship is not just a once a year emphasis. It is God-pleasing if we get into the Word and do as the following study title indicates, namely, "Plan for Year-Round Stewardship Growth." Today, let us continue with:

The Heart of Giving That Honors God--Principles of Giving

1) Seeing it as a Privilege--developing the mindset of the Macedonians - "Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints" 2 Corinthians 8:4; also "But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this?...And now I have seen with joy how willingly your people who are here have given to you" (King David) 1 Chronicles 29:14,17.

Feeling free to give above the tithe (generous giving)

- a) Consider the abundance God has given you
- b) Consider the standard of living God intends for you to live
- c) Consider the potential impact all your gifts can make for others

Please read 2 Corinthians 8:1-7 and identify what was remarkable about the "Macedonian" response. Perhaps the most striking fact is that the Macedonians were not prosperous, but willingly gave this gift from their hearts with no urging from anyone.

2) Communicating the rewards of putting God first and responding generously - "A generous man will himself be blessed" Proverbs 22:9. Also, "Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously" 2 Corinthians 9:6. What blessings have you seen evident by living the privilege of giving?

The Leadership for a Stewardship Effort

How many congregations would you think have an active program to teach biblical financial stewardship? This issue was addressed a few years ago amongst some districts in WELS and was determined that only about 25% of the congregations polled were actually implementing such a program.

What stands in the way? The most frequent response to this question was "it's a turnoff to some people," indicating misplaced priorities.

3) Never underestimate the importance of leadership.

a) Leaders must become models of stewardship

b) Pastors need to become the primary leaders in their life, messages, and direction. "Set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity...Be diligent in these matters; giving yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers" 1 Timothy 4:12,15.

c) Partnership of permission and accountability be formed between leaders and pastor(s).

NEW MEMBERS

Dan and Becky Johnston, welcome to Holy Cross! Dan and Becky have a small girl named Addison. Addy was brought home on Christmas Eve and has brought a lot of joy to the family.

We are happy to have the Johnston's as members at Holy Cross and pray that they will be blessed richly in their new church family.

MARY-MARTHA NEWS

Mary-Martha has an on-going project of supporting the Central Africa Medical Mission (CAMM). This is the 50th anniversary of work being done there. CAMM cooperates with other groups and the government to ensure that resources are used efficiently in dealing with HIV and AIDS. The Lutheran Mobile Clinic also provides discussions of Law and Gospel, sin and grace, which are the most important part of the program. There is also a Rural Health Center in Mwembezhi, Zambia which provides medication, clinic supplies and treatment for 30,000 men, women, and children. Patients walk great distances, often past government clinics to come to the Mwembezhi Clinic. Our gifts also help fund the printing of Christ-centered voluntary counseling and test materials and provides training for additional staff as certified VCT counselors. These gifts also provide for repairing and maintaining the Mwembezhi Clinic and surrounding area. If anyone at Holy Cross would like to donate to this effort, please earmark it "Mary-Martha-CAMM." We appreciate any offerings. The ladies recently sent a check for \$100.00 to CAMM.

The regular Fall LWMS Rally will be held at Immanuel Lutheran Church in North Richland Hills, TX on October 8th beginning at 9:00AM.

The Holy Cross Lutheran ladies will hold their next meeting on October 8th, 2011. All ladies of the congregation are invited and encouraged to attend.

FALL FESTIVAL

The 2011 Fall Festival will be held in the afternoon of Saturday, October 29th. Exact times and activities are still in the planning stage. Many activities are being planned for young and old alike. Watch the church bulletin board and worship bulletin for the times and activities. If you would like to help with the festival, contact Paul Barnett.

VOTERS' BODY MEETING

The Quarterly Congregational Voters' Body business meetings will be conducted during the month of October. The Church Council meeting will be held October 11th at 7:00PM. On October 16th, following the worship service and pot luck dinner, the Congregational Voters' Meeting will be held. The Church Council, which consists of the congregation officers and chairman of each board, will meet to receive reports from the Boards and prepare an agenda of items for the Voters' Meeting. At the Voters' Meeting, the congregation's voting members will take official action to approve or disapprove agenda item recommendations. Among the agenda item recommendations will be the proposed budget for year 2012, presentation of a slate of candidates for election of congregation officers and board members, and all Boards will report on their activities during the past quarter. A slate of the candidates for the offices and boards will be posted on the church bulletin board prior to the meeting for all to review. After approval of the slate of candidates, the annual election of church officers and board members will be held during the meeting. All members of the congregation are invited to attend the Voters' Meeting.

2012 SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Board of Education called the following teachers and helpers. They were installed September 18th. The teachers who were installed are as follows:

Pre-Kinder - Patti Buczynskyj; grades 1 & 2 - Dina Shoumaker; Grades 3-6 - Barbara Strackbein; 7th grade confirmation Bible History - Kahle Mayfield; teen class - Bill Shoumaker, Scott Peters, and Phillip Class. A couple of other helpers are in the process of being called.

God has blessed Holy Cross with some awesome teaching talent. Those of you parents who have Sunday School aged children, please make use of the opportunity to have your children learn God's Word regularly in our Sunday School. Everyone, please pray for our teachers and children. Sunday School is there to strengthen the faith of our children and to prepare them for entry into confirmation.

CHURCH HISTORY CLASS

Christian Eisenbeis will be teaching a class on the history of the early Christian Church beginning Thursday, September 22nd, at Holy Cross. The class will begin at 7:00PM and end at 8:30PM. The class will meet six times on alternating Thursdays. This class offers a survey of the Apostolic Church from the ascension of Jesus until the legalization of the Christian faith in AD313; a history of the Eastern Orthodox Church to the year 1453; and a history of the Western or Catholic Church up to the year 800. This class is a must for anyone who has ever wondered what happened in the church between the time of the apostles and the Reformation. Please come and join us.

DO NOT FORGET

This afternoon, Sunday, September 25th at 5:00PM, a pot luck dinner is being held to honor all our new members. The dinner will be followed by everyone who would like to show their talent in playing a "Minute To Win." So, please come for good food and fellowship.

FREE CONCERT

Chris Driesbach was in New Orleans on August 29, 2005, dreaming of a way to use his musical gifts when hurricane Katrina hit. He was one of the first to see the church building completely flooded. He thought their church was finished. All his musical equipment was destroyed. But a little over one year later, with help from around the national church body and the 1300 volunteers that came, the church was rebuilt and his equipment was replaced. Now Chris travels the country thanking congregations and the volunteers for their support of New Orleans. He's been in almost 500 churches in 34 states. And possibly most amazing about his story is that just 17 years ago he was an atheist who didn't believe in God or Jesus at all. Now he's living his dream of being a Christian songwriter and performer, a worker for God. Come and listen to his story and his music on Sunday, October 9th at Gethsemane Lutheran Church of OKC. He will be performing a concert in the early afternoon. Check him out early for a preview at www.chrisdriesbach.com. For additional information, call Gethsemane Lutheran Church at 721-5313.

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

The Outreach Board would like to encourage every communicant member of Holy Cross to go through one of Pastor's Bible Information Classes (membership classes) and bring an unchurched friend. Pastor usually holds these classes several times every year. The classes will last around four months and will probably be held on Tuesday nights after Christmas. Please pray about it and start thinking about who you could invite and when. Talk with Pastor about the program. A sign-up sheet will be on the bulletin board soon.

Three Holy Cross members attended an Evangelism school and hope to attend a sequel in February. The following is a report on the class:

On Saturday, September 11th the Holy Cross Board of Outreach was given the opportunity to attend the School of Outreach in Lowell, AR. They found it very informative and a good time was had by everyone who attended.

The class opened with a Bible study on the mission of the church. Several Bible passages were given that clearly show what the mission of the church is, the importance and urgency of the mission, and the passion with which the mission should be carried out.

The remainder of the class pertained to evangelism organization and planning. Advice was given regarding how to organize and delegate tasks when doing out-reach. Recruiting evangelism workers was discussed including what the proper motivation should be when doing the Lord's work. The

evangelism was broken down into five categories. The first two, Prospect Discovery and Prospect Nurturing, were covered in this session.

Examined under the topic of Prospect Discovery was various ways to establish relationships with the un-churched. Emphasis was placed on coordinating events at the church with activities outside of the church that get invitations out to the community.

The first thing discussed under the topic of Prospect Nurturing was the Holy Spirit's power to change an unbelieving heart to one that trusts in Jesus as Savior. That makes the task both easier and clearer. Since individuals aren't responsible for converting people, the focus can be on the process of getting the Gospel to people so the Holy Spirit can accomplish His work. Then some good ideas were given that can be used to manage and nurture our prospect list at Holy Cross.

The Outreach Board would like to thank the congregation for giving them the opportunity to attend. They look forward to putting what they learned to use. The next session is scheduled for February 4, 2012. The topics discussed will be: Witnessing, Church Identity In The Community, and Worship Welcome. Anyone who would like to attend is more than welcome to come along with the Outreach Board members. If you would like a copy of the materials presented at the class, contact Kris Timm.

GRACE NEWS

An application has been made from Kingdom Workers for a WELS individual, or couple, to come to Norman for three months to help with the outreach effort. We will be informed in a couple of months if the application has been accepted. Many cards have been mailed out to the community explaining the change of address.

REFORMATION

This year's joint Reformation Rally will be celebrated at Holy Cross Lutheran Church on Sunday, October 30th at 4:30PM with a pot luck supper afterwards. The offering will be used to pay the expense of our speaker, Rev. John Koelpin from Calvary Lutheran in Dallas. Everyone is welcome to attend.

On November 10, 1483, Margaret Luther gave birth to a son. The next day she and her husband, Hans, brought their boy to be baptized. He was named Martin. Thirty-four years later, on October 31, 1517, this man nailed 95 theses on the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany. With these statements, Almighty God began a restoration of the central teaching of the Scripture, that a person is justified by grace through faith for Christ's sake, without the deeds of the law.

We celebrate the Reformation not to praise Luther. Rather, we are gathered to show respect to God and give Him the glory for once again causing the doctrine of free forgiveness in Christ to shine as a beacon of hope for us today. We intend to do this the way Luther did, by hearing God's Word to strengthen our faith and by using our voices to express our hope and give God praise.

Since the Early Christian Church was at one time truly centered on the Bible, have you ever wondered when the Roman Catholic Church started to teach contrary to the Bible and what some of those teachings are. Here is a list of some of their doctrines and the dates they became part of their teaching.

- >Prayers for the dead - 310AD
- >Worship of Mary - 394AD
- >Doctrine of purgatory - 431AD
- >Roman Bishop becomes Pope or Universal Bishop - 610AD
- >Worship of images, the cross, and human relics - 788AD
- >Use of Holy Water - 850AD,
- >Celibacy of the priesthood - 1079AD
- >The Rosary/prayer beads - 1090AD
- >Selling indulgences for forgiveness of sins - 1190AD
- >The doctrine of purgatory incorporated - 1439AD
- >Catholic tradition equal in authority with the Bible - 1545AD
- >Apocryphal books treated as Scripture - 1546AD
- >Virgin Mary's immaculate conception proclaimed - 854AD
- >Papal infallibility proclaimed - 1870AD
- >The assumption of Mary into heaven - 1950AD

When a church - no matter if it is Roman Catholic, Lutheran, or Reformed - builds upon any foundation apart from God's Word, she will soon sink into the abyss of the everlasting deep where darkness and the devil abound and reign. May God the Holy Spirit working through the means of grace mercifully grant us sinners the ability to ever test the spirits to see whether they are of God so that we may be found standing only on the clear doctrines of Holy Scripture in our faith and in our lives.

CHARLIE QUAM

Charles E. Quam, 77 of Norman passed away Sept. 16, 2011. He was born in Sturgeon Bay, WI to Lloyd and Frieda (Schmidtke) Quam on July 24, 1934. He proudly served in the U.S. Coast Guard for 20 years including time in Viet Nam. He retired from the Norman Postal Service in 1966 after 18 years of service. Charles is survived by his wife, Beverly of the home, daughter, Brenda Delaney and husband, Curtis of Norman, 2 sons, Gary and wife, Rebecca of Plano, TX and Andrew and wife, Jeanie of Norman, 6 grandchildren, Amanda (Patrick) Datugan, Blake Delaney, Alexis Quam, Gary Quam, Jr., Matthew

Quam and Jessica Quam, 2 sisters, Shirley (Mark) Vandermissen and Linda (Wayne) Block and 3 brothers, Donald (Carlye) Quam, Carlton (Marianne) Quam and Roger Quam. He was preceded in death by his parents and brother Sylvester. Memorial services were held 9:30AM, Thursday, September 22nd at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, with internment at Fort Sill National Cemetery in Elgin, OK.

Charlie was one of the very first members of Holy Cross and will be missed. We rejoice that through faith in Christ he is with the Lord Jesus. We thank the Lord for his faithful witness and work among us while he was with us.

SOUP CAN LABELS/CEREAL BOX TOPS

Please continue to bring your Campbell Soup labels and box top coupons and give them to Dina Shoumaker.

HC - OCTOBER GREETERS

Oct. 2 - George & Nancy McKinnis

Oct. 9 - Scott & Carole Peters

Oct. 16 - Jack & LaVon Post

Oct. 23 - Byron & Dina Shoumaker

Oct. 30 - Paul & Aimée Barnett

HC - OCTOBER CLEANING LIST

Oct. 1 - Kelly Lawson/Tom & Janet Finney

Oct. 8 - Mary-Martha Guild

Oct. 15 - Fred & Gina Potter/Sue Piña-Diaz & Wesley Piña

Oct. 22 - Duane & Sunny Stuever/Butch & Bonnie Barnett

Oct. 29 - Patrick Roberts/Ed & Kathy Schnell

HC - OCTOBER MOWING LIST

Oct. 1 - Dean Thomas/Troy Thomas

Oct. 8 - Tom Finney/Cliff Gallarneau

Oct. 15 - Rick Poulin/Paul Barnett

Oct. 22 - Robert Barnett/Butch Barnett

Oct. 29 - Bill Shoumaker/Byron Shoumaker

SOUTH AMERICAN MISSION BLOG

Trip to Apolo

Man proposes - God disposes

by Missionary Philip Strackbein

One of my duties in Bolivia is to visit the national church congregations that are located in outlying areas of Bolivia in order to strengthen our fellowship ties and also to see if there might be some potential theological education students who could study with us. The first trip was to Santa Cruz. This month another trip was planned to the outlying area of Apolo. There is a saying that man proposes but God disposes. That clearly turned out to be the case in this instance. My wife Kathy and I, Julio Ascarrunz, the pastor of Redeemer Congregation in La Paz, Julian Surco and his wife Ana, all headed out for the town of Apolo in the mission car at 7:30AM on Thursday, September 15th.

We were told that the total length of the trip would be around 12 hours. We had traveled for 7 hours when it became evident that the car was losing power. I stopped the car to check the oil and to see if there was any other evident problem. Once the car had stopped, I attempted to put the car in park, but found that the gearshift lever was jammed. Then I made an inadvertent mistake. I turned the motor off in order to check the oil. I found that both the motor oil and the transmission oil levels were okay, so the decision was made to try to keep going to the next town in order to try to find a mechanic who could look the car over. However, when I tried to start the car, I found that I could not do so since the car, having an automatic trans-mission, will only start with the gearshift lever in park. More efforts were made to get the gearshift lever to move, but to no avail. A mechanic in La Paz was called and he made some suggestions, but nothing worked.

Finally the decision was made to call the insurance company and ask that a tow truck be sent. The insurance company told us that the only two trucks available were in La Paz, 7 hours away. Since there didn't seem to be any other alternative, we asked that one be sent. Meanwhile we began to pray that a car with a mechanic would stop and help us out. None came. We were on a very isolated stretch of road. A vehicle would pass about once every half hour.

Since a special invitation had been made by the president of the Apolo congregation to attend their yearly voting assembly, it was felt that it was very important that at least some members of the group still try to get to Apolo by hitching a ride or by flagging down a bus that was headed in that direction. At 5:30PM a bus picked up Julio, Julian and Ana. Kathy and I stayed in the car to wait for the tow truck from La Paz. Around 7:00PM a heavy fog moved in and surrounded the car. It was clear that our trust in the Lord was being tested. What if another vehicle smashed into us? What if thieves held us up? We put the reflector triangle behind the car and also turned on the blinker lights whenever we saw the lights of a car approaching from either direction. Since the road we were on was high in the mountains, as night fell it began to get very cold, and of course we could not use the heater of the car to warm us

up. Since Apolo is located at a lower and warmer altitude, we had each only brought along a light jacket.

The tow truck finally showed up at 10:00PM. The driver was a mechanic and tried to get the gearshift lever to move, but was unable to do so. The only option was to take the car back to La Paz. They pulled the car up onto the flatbed of the tow truck. Since three men had come in the tow truck, there was no room for us to ride in the truck. So, we sat up in the car for the ride back to La Paz. The car was comfortable and has reclining seats, but the downside was the cold. The ride back to La Paz took another 7 hours and we finally got in at 5:30AM. We thank the Lord that He was with us throughout this ordeal and that He got us back home safely. Our trust is that His plans are always best.

50 YEARS

By Delores Staats

Lord, You've kept us together

These fifty long years

Through trials and hardships

Temptations and tears.

The way has been bumpy

As railroaders know;

The years on the road

Fighting ice and the snow.

At two in the morning

That ring was a sign

You'd have to go after

That break in the line.

Whether 90 degrees above

Or 40 degrees below

In rain or in shine

To your job you would go.

Four years in Chicago

I hate to recall!
You came home twice a month
Just to check on us all!
I know how you hated
Those train rides all night
Arriving on skid row
Sure gave me a fright!
But faithful and true
To our vows you would be;
Your coming back home
Was so special, you see!
You've built us three homes
With your carpenter's skill
And kept me in line
With your steady, strong will.
We raised our four daughters
Without too much hassle
And tried to make sure
That our home was your castle.
So now we're retired
And viewing the past
We thank You Lord, humbly;
We made it! at last!

BIBLE QUIZ

Read each of the following statements carefully. Each statement is either true or false. If the statement is true, draw a circle around the T. If the statement is partly or wholly false, draw a circle around the F.

- 1) T/F If Jesus redeemed from sin, I am saved by believing in Him and not by anything that I can do.
- 2) T/F Christ is the Savior of all except those who reject Him.
- 3) T/F He that is sure his sins are forgiven need not fear death, for sin, the cause of death, has been removed.
- 4) T/F Without the shedding of blood on the part of Christ there could have been no forgiveness for anyone.
- 5) T/F Our hope of salvation rests upon what God has done for us.
- 6) T/F Christ has saved us from our sins, so that we may serve Him here and hereafter.
- 7) T/F A person who through faith accepts Christ as his personal Savior has forgiveness of sins and therefore also eternal life.
- 8) T/F Some sins, apart from the sin against the Holy Spirit are so great that they cannot be forgiven.
- 9) T/F According to Scripture no man can be sure he will be saved.
- 10) T/F People who profess faith in God the Father, but not in the Son, will be saved.
- 11) T/F The free forgiveness of sin offered in the Gospel is an encouragement to sin.
- 12) T/F A Christian should be sure of the forgiveness of his sins because it rests entirely on the work of Christ.
- 13) T/F Faith is a good work on our part whereby we earn the forgiveness of sins.
- 14) T/F A Christian has the right to announce God's forgiveness to another only if he possesses a special gift of the Holy Spirit.
- 15) T/F Only ministers have the authority to pronounce the forgiveness of sins.
- 16) T/F Private confession to a minister is commanded by God.
- 17) T/F When a Christian forgives the sins of a fellow believer in the name of Christ, the pardon is valid before God.
- 18) T/F We should confess all our sins to God, even those of which we are not conscious.

19) T/F The Holy Spirit is not a real person, but only an influence going out from God.

20) T/F The Holy Spirit leads men to faith in Christ and keeps them in the true holiness.

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Answers: 1) T - If "by believing in Him" were viewed as the thing which saves rather than the work of Christ, the question could be marked false; 2) F; 3) T; 4) T; 5) T; 6) T - The Biblical term is "receives" which has a passive connotation, while the word "accepts" has an active connotation and could be seen as decision theology making the answer false; 7) T; 8) F; 9) F; 10) F; 11) F; 12) T; 13) F; 14) F; 15) F; 16) F; 17) T; 18) T; 19) F; 20) T

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