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1 Thessalonians 5:14



God's Commitment Is Often Hidden in the Ordinary of Life

(Much of the following first appeared some time ago, in an article written by James Nestingen, for the Lutheran Standard; but is worth repeating now.)

When the good Lord creates new life, he often keeps it a secret. In fact God sometimes hides his work so deeply in everyday life, that it is often easy to miss it. Such secretiveness can be disturbing, because we'd rather want God to send us flares every time he acts in our life or neighborhood. But life seems so routine, and WE seem so ordinary (as compared with saints and angels), that we dismiss the possibility of God's activity during most of our daily lives.

But the Scripture tells another story, a story of god's work being hidden in the ordinary, including ordinary you and me. There is Paul's observation to the Colossians, that the lives of the faithful are "hid with Christ in God" (3:3). And there is Jesus' of the sheep and the goats (Matt 25), where the sheep are as surprised as anyone that they are being counted among the Righteous. The miracle is that the one who raised Jesus from the dead is committed to working in the common and ordinary, in the everyday mix of things.

For example, God works in families. What could be more common and ordinary? With all the demands children make on their parents, it is hard to see how any couple can make it on their own. That's why God throws in grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, and friends for good measure. Life starts at home. A child's life and future are shaped in the family. The whole world community has its future in what happens when the roots are being formed in family. God's commitment to family is his commitment to life itself.

Or, in addition to family, consider your job. Is daily work or job any more than a necessary evil? Even if your job is deeply satisfying, it's still a job... something you haven't much choice but to do. What on earth could God have to do with work? But our jobs (small or great, common or prestigious) are the point where we serve our neighbors. Whether mopping floors or designing computers, it's in our jobs that we are of some earthly good to our neighbors and community. Our jobs are the means which God gives us to be of regular service to one another. God has a vested interest in our jobs, and he's not about to stay home when we go to work.

Or, in addition to family and work, consider government. As much as politicking and administrative abuses get talked about, government has accomplished much good: order in society, our educational system, government-funded research on diseases, etc. God has an interest in government, and he works through it. And in spite of all the selfishness and wastefulness that he encounters here, amazingly sometimes His Will is still done... when peace and justice do prevail.

Hidden in ordinary life, God has made a commitment to you through family, work and government. And hidden in the ordinary life of a carpenter's son, God has made a personal commitment to you specifically. It was made in your baptism, across a pulpit, at the Lord's Table, where the promise of Christ was declared to you. It is the promise that you are Christ's, and that your whole future is shaped by him and for him. Knowing that promise, you can live with your family, work in your craft, participate in government, assured that God is working in, with, and through the common and ordinary.

Believe it or not, God is even working through this newsletter. God is working through you, and your talents, in the many things we are about, here "on the mountaintop". At times we forget that! At times we forget that in the ordinary (tasks) God is at work! May we all be reminded of that simple truth; and may we all be reminded, that *it is ministry* that we are about!

WORSHIP

“And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me,
Satan: for it is written, Thou shall worship the Lord thy God, and
him only shall thou serve.” Luke 4:8

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| Sunday, September 3 | 13th Sunday after Pentecost
Worship at 9 AM
First Lesson: Jeremiah 15:15-21
Psalm 26
Second Lesson: Romans 12:9-21
Gospel: Luke 14:25-33 |
| Sunday, September 10 | 14TH Sunday after Pentecost
Worship at 9 AM
First Lesson: Ezekiel 33:7-11
Psalm 119:33-40
Second Lesson: Romans 13:8-14
Gospel: Matthew 18: 15-20 |
| Sunday, September 17 | 15th Sunday after Pentecost
Worship at 9 AM
First Lesson: Genesis 50:15-21
Psalm 103:1-13
Second Lesson: Romans 14:1-12
Gospel: Matthew 18:21-35 |
| Sunday, September 24 | 16th Sunday after Pentecost
Worship at 9 AM
First Lesson: Jonah 3:10-4:11
Psalm 145:1-8
Second Lesson: Philippians 1:21-30
Gospel: Matthew 20:1-16 |

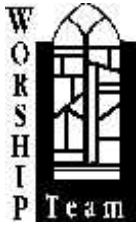


CALLING ALL SINGERS

With September comes the start-up of various programs/ministries. Choir is one of them! If you have the desire to sing, then plan on joining us. You don't need any formal training, or special musical knowledge. We'll provide that free of charge, in a fun and enjoyable way. And as an added bonus, you'll be praising God, and helping others grow in their faith. Practice will be held on Thursday evenings starting September 7th at 7:45. To indicate your interest, or to get more information, please speak to our Director of Music, Roger Neubert. Remember that the Psalmist said; "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord."

RINGING IN A NEW YEAR

This year in addition to our regular choir, we will again be having a Chime Choir. We have experienced already how chimes can add to our worship service; and look forward to their return on "a regular basis"! However due to the addition of a new octave of chimes, *this* Choir is particularly in need of new members!! Practice will be held on Thursday evenings starting September 7th from 7 PM to 7:45 PM. To become a part of this musical ministry, please speak to our Director of Music, Roger Neubert. Similar to choir, you don't need any special musical training – just the desire to play!



BE A PART OF OUR WORSHIP TEAM

We are always looking for volunteers to be a part of our worship team on Sundays. Please consider using your gifts in this way. Sign-up to be an Usher, Lay Reader, or Acolyte. These tasks *are* important as we gather for worship each week – and they can be done by anyone, including YOU! Please volunteer today. Thank you.

SOMETHING NEW IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN

Starting on September 17th, *and on the third Sunday of each month thereafter*, we will be having an Adult Discussion.

This discussion will be over coffee, immediately after worship (10AM to 11AM) and will look at **Understanding Our Faith**. Through discussion and question and answer, we will look at key points of our theology from a layperson's perspective! There will be no big fancy words – just a “simple” understanding of what it means to be believer. At the beginning Pastor Jerel will be leading this discussion, BUT as time moves on, it is his hope that a member (a layperson) will take over the leadership role. It has been some time since we last had an adult Christian education opportunity; so plan now on being a part of this *new excuse* to stay after worship for coffee!!

MISSION

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

Matthew 28:19



OUR SUNDAY SCHOOL CONTINUES

This fall, we will continue our Sunday Church School for small children, but with a new twist! Beginning on Sunday, September 10th, and on the second **and third Sunday** of each month thereafter, we will be having a lesson for children (age 2 and up) during the worship hour. That is right, we will be offering it twice a month this year!! This lesson will take place in our Nursery. All those with small children are welcome to participate!! Our first group of lessons, will center on “Creation”. If you are able to help out with these classes, please let Pastor Jerel know. Even if you can’t volunteer, please pray for this ministry. Thank you.

A BIG THANK YOU

A big thank you needs to go to all those who contributed to our “Christmas in July” Gift. Because of your generosity, we raised nearly \$500.00 to be used for the purchase, through Heifer International, of colonies of honeybees for Guatemala. Wow!! Again thanks to *all of you* for your participation and support with this outreach!

SEEING WHAT IS HAPPENING ON OUR BEHALF

For some time now we have included a copy of our Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod's monthly newsletter to Mountaintop News. Hopefully by reading it each month more members have come to know of the ministries of our Synod. This, plus our Pennsylvania Southeast Conference's weekly *Communitas* are important ways to see how mission is being carried out on our behalf across our communities *and* the world. All too often we become so centered on what is happening in our "own little church" that we forget that we are a part of a much larger Church that includes both the Lutheran and U.C.C. (Reformed) denominations. Together we are the Church.....Together we are doing mission!!



YOU'RE INVITED

In our ongoing partnership with Huff's Church we are continuing to have a joint Men's Group. This group will be kicking off a new year of activities, with a breakfast at the Pied Piper, in Bally, on Saturday, September 30th at 9AM. Any male, member or nonmember, is welcome to come!! We'll be breaking bread together, and looking at what activities we might want to tackle in the year ahead. Pastor Jerel continues to be excited about this new ministry, and the cooperation it shows between our two congregations. Once again, we have cause to give thanks, and celebrate!

USING OUR GIFTS

“Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, [let us prophesy] according to the proportion of faith.” Romans 12:6



LET'S GET ROLLING

That's right it's time to get rolling....cookie dough! As an addition to our Fall Bazaar this year it has once again been decided to have a Holiday Cookie Sale. We are again seeking volunteers who would be willing to come out a day and/or night to St. Peter's Place to help roll out, cut, and bag cookies. Baking will begin on Wednesday, September 27th. In addition we are looking for donations for flour and sugar. Signup sheets are posted in the Galleria; or talk to Ron Marks to volunteer. Come out and lend a hand!! And remember, the more dough we roll, the more "dough" we will have to help offset our ministry expenses.

WE NEED YOUR IDEAS

At our recent Church Board retreat it was decided that one of the areas that we will emphasize for the coming year will be "getting the word out" about our ministries. With that said, we are asking members for their ideas for a tag line, or "advertising slogan". It should be something simple that will make those who see/read it, *want to* go to our website and get information about St. Peter's. Get creative!! Submit as many ideas as you want!! Drop them in the Offering Plate or give them to Pastor Jerel.

LIVING IN COMMUNITY

“Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all [men].”
1 Thessalonians 5:14



IT IS BACK!!

After another “winning season” last year, Game Time is back! On **Sunday, September 24th, from 1 PM- 5 PM** you are invited to join others in St. Peter’s Place, for a time of games. Check your closets, and dust off those old board games, or decks of cards! Last year we got “rowdy” with dominoes, pinochle, and Crush to name a few of the games in which “champions” were crowned. All games and any age players are welcome!! Invite a friend and be sure to join us!!

SHARED MINISTRY TO BE SHARED

On Sunday, September 17th from 2PM to 5PM those involved in Shared Ministry are invited to St John’s, Gernants (Leesport) to share their stories about this unique ministry. Those new to this ministry have many questions.... regarding worship, finances, membership requirements, and Christian Education to name just a few topics. Having been one of the longest such ministries, we have much to share! If you are interested in joining Pastor Jerel and Board Members for this event, please RSVP as soon as possible.



GET YOUR INFORMATION IN EARLY

Friday, September 1st	Community Meal
Thursday, September 7 th	Choirs Begin @ 7 PM
Tuesday, September 12 th	Church Board @ 7 PM
Thursday, September 14 th	Choir Rehearsals
Sunday, September 17 th	Shared Ministry Workshop
Tuesday, September 19^h	Newsletter Mailing 10AM
Thursday, September 21 st	Choir Rehearsals
Saturday, September 23 rd	Yard Sale/Pig Roast 8 AM-2 PM
Sunday, September 24 th	Game Time
Thursday, September 28 th	Cookie Baking Begins
	Choir Rehearsals



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Mark your calendars now for an upcoming special worship event that will happen on the first Sunday in October. We are inviting both members and neighbors to bring their pets to St. Peter's for a Blessing of the Animals. This service, which will occur right at the end of our regular worship service, reminds us that God created all things; and that he gave humans "dominion" over the animals. This service also reminds us of our responsibility to be good stewards of all of God's gifts. The Blessing of Animals is usually held close to the date we remember or commemorate St. Francis of Assisi – a lover of animals! Plan now, on joining us, with your pet(s), for this unique worship opportunity.

SOME ODDS AND ENDS



WALKERS CAN BE BORROWED

The church has a few walkers and wheelchairs for home use. If you have need for this equipment, on a temporary basis, please call the church office.



IF YOU ARE MOVING....

Please remember to contact the church office in advance of your move to inform us of your change of address. This will help us save us an additional postage cost. We are charged a fee for each piece of mail that is returned.



INTERESTED IN OUR CHURCH BOARD?

Please know that all Church Board Minutes are available for your review and comment. Copies are located outside the Pastor's Office on the Bulletin Board.



You *are* remembered on your important day!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

The Following people celebrate their birthdays in September.

Betty Herbster	Clarence Burkhard
Larry Rohrbach	Virginia Yeager
John Moyer	Lisa Morton
Sandra Long	Joshua Gade
Danielle (nee) Moyer	Helen Buchen
Barbara Rohrbach	Chris Gonzalez
Darla Butz	Brian Bartholomew Jr.
Faye Keim	Randy Kline
Marshall Mangold	Troy Kline
Peggy Zweifel	Betty Reed



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

The following people celebrate their Anniversaries in September.

Alaina and Brian Trexler	Randy and Julie Kuhns
Walter and Jean Bortz	

BEHAVIORIAL COVENANT

As baptized children of God, and members of St. Peter's Union Church, we agree to live out our life together modeling the following characteristics:

FAITHFULNESS - Attend worship regularly. Receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion regularly. Give financial support to the congregation as God may prosper. Pray often for our pastor and other leaders and for our mutual ministry together.

RESPECT – Treat other members and all volunteers with respect, dignity, and words of support, always keeping in mind the example of Jesus.

EMPATHY & OUTREACH – Have a mindset, which is mindful of others in need and the Biblical mandate to help them.

INTEGRITY – Be honest, truthful, and of moral character in dealing with others, and in representing our ministry to others. Be encouraging and uplifting.

OPEN-MINDEDNESS – Remember that God *is* still speaking. Be open to seeing differences in viewpoints, and making decisions taking all views in account – always considering what is *best for our congregation* and its ministry.

GOODWILL – Always act as a goodwill ambassador for our congregation, and the wider church. Use your own gifts and talents to encourage others to *joyfully* use their gifts for ministry. While being faithful, remember to have fun!

Church Health Team 2011