



Message from Pastor Scottie *August 2013: Being a Part of the Living Church*

General Creighton Abrams, a four-star Army general, once said, "Soldiers are not in the Army. Soldiers are the Army." I was struck by this comment as a true comment on Christians as well. Read this from a Christian Biblical perspective. 'Christians are not in the Church. Christians are the Church.'

Every one of us is in the game. There are no bench warmers. Each of us have been blessed by God with gifts (fruits) of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23 to begin the list that Paul elaborates on throughout his letters). No one is left out and every gift is needed for the mission as Paul reminds us when he uses the analogy of the human body and its parts indicating that every part has its role (I Corinthians 12:12-31). The body cannot be all an ear or leg or head. It takes all parts of the body to make up the whole person for mission. Every person, regardless of age, background, or experience plays their part.

What is your part? Where do you serve in God's mission at the Lutheran Church of Our Savior? Sometimes we call this stewardship of gifts. There are many places for your abilities. Let me focus on one such need. Our children are without enough teachers. The good news is we have more children and we are growing in this age group. The challenging news is we need more folks willing to share with them.

One reason why some folks do not like sharing by teaching is because they don't see immediate results. Teaching is constant planting of seed or nurturing of minds and hearts, but the payoff is often a distant future reward. Case in point is a Sunday School teacher of mine when I was in the third grade. Her name was Marilyn Dickerson. She was high school educated, raised up in the Christian faith, married to a postman, and mother to four children of her own. Her gift was being able to retell a Bible story in such a way that you felt you were there. When she talked about Absalom running for his life I was panting right along with the story character. She made stories real and alive. She was no theologian or great intellectual. She simply put her own enthusiasm behind familiar Bible stories while showing her love for all of us. Poor Marilyn. We were a rowdy bunch of kids. She would see us again in another class before we graduated to the seminary interns during confirmation where we really caused pain and challenge. But twenty-five years later the results were amazing among this group of children. One child became an accomplished church music director and organist now serving in a large Lutheran congregation in North County St. Louis. A second child is serving as president of his Lutheran congregation and has served in several capacities as a lay leader. Two of us became pastors now serving in the ELCA. The others continue actively in church life. If you were to ask us why we ended up the way we did, somewhere on our list of reasons each of us would mention Marilyn's classes. No, we don't mention our college educations or seminary or several other advantages we had. We mention Marilyn.

Where are the Marylins of the LCOS? There are several places where we need people to stand up and share their abilities to carry out our (God's) mission in the world. Just ask anyone on the Church Council or see posted requests or ask me. Remember, the mission is not over until we see Jesus in person. We are not in the Church. We are the Church and these are opportunities for us to respond with our love to God for all that he gave, gives, and promises to provide because he loves us so much. As we look forward to Stewardship Month in September, let us consider the impact opportunities we have to show our love back to God through his gifts to us.

Blessings Always,
Pastor Scottie

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