

New Hope Lutheran Church

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August 7, 2022

The 9th Sunday after Pentecost

Coming Events

- Aug 10 10 – 1 Kahvi Time **Regent St**
6:30 Council mtg **Regent St**
- Aug 14 10:00 Bilingual Worship † **Voima Hall**
2:00 English Worship † **Regent St**
- Aug 15 – 22 Hilikka's holidays. During Hilikka's holidays phone messages and emails will be checked periodically.
- Aug 17 10 – 1 Kahvi Time **Regent St**
- Aug 21 No Finnish Worship **Voima Hall**
2:00 English Worship with Trinity **Regent St**
- Aug 24 10 – 1 Kahvi Time **Regent St**
- Aug 28 10.00 Finnish Worship † **Voima Hall**
2:00 English Worship **Regent St**
- Aug 30 – 31 Hilikka's holidays. During Hilikka's holidays phone messages and emails will be checked periodically.

In our prayers Ruth, Marilyn.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you sent your Holy Spirit to be the life and light of your church. Open our hearts to the riches of your grace, that we may be ready to receive you wherever you appear, we pray through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with your and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Psalm 33:12 – 22

- ¹² Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people he chose for his inheritance.
- ¹³ From heaven the Lord looks down and sees all mankind;
- ¹⁴ from his dwelling place he watches all who live on earth—
- ¹⁵ he who forms the hearts of all, who considers everything they do.
- ¹⁶ No king is saved by the size of his army; no warrior escapes by his great strength.
- ¹⁷ A horse is a vain hope for deliverance; despite all its great strength it cannot save.
- ¹⁸ But the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love,
- ¹⁹ to deliver them from death and keep them alive in famine.
- ²⁰ We wait in hope for the Lord; he is our help and our shield.
- ²¹ In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name.
- ²² May your unfailing love be with us, Lord, even as we put our hope in you.

First Reading “**Genesis 15:1 – 6**”

- ¹ After this, the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: “Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward.” ² But Abram said, “Sovereign LORD, what can you give me since I remain childless and the one who will inherit my estate is Eliezer of Damascus?” ³ And Abram said, “You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir.” ⁴ Then the word of the LORD came to him: “This man

will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir.” ⁵ He took him outside and said, “Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” ⁶ Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

Second Reading “**Hebrews 11:1 – 3, 8 – 16**”

¹ Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. ² This is what the ancients were commended for. ³ By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

⁸ By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. ⁹ By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. ¹⁰ For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God. ¹¹ And by faith even Sarah, who was past childbearing age, was enabled to bear children because she considered him faithful who had made the promise. ¹² And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore. ¹³ All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth. ¹⁴ People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. ¹⁵ If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel “**Luke 22:32 – 40**”

Glory to you, O Lord.

“Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will never fail, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. “Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, like servants waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. Truly I tell you, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready, even if he comes in the middle of the night or toward daybreak. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.”

*The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.***

Sermon

*By Pastor Charles Nolting
“A Servant Attitude”*

Something you may have noticed in our lessons is the presence of what might be termed a “*servant attitude*”. It’s an important concept because it can help us to better define our purpose here on earth, and what that means for each of us individually. It gives us a sense of direction, and in serving we impact a lot of people around us in ways that are lasting and concrete.

Step 1. don’t worry

That servant attitude is best shown in our gospel lesson. (Luke 12:32-40) Here we find there are 3 steps to take in fully realizing the servant attitude. In the first

step, what may strike you is how helpless we are to make ourselves. Jesus says; “*Don’t worry about your life! Don’t make the necessities of life your top priority!*”

I realize that’s quite unlike the attitude the world encourages us to have – an attitude of “being the master of one’s own destiny”. But the thing is, when we think we are the ones in charge, it may give us a sense of power, but it also means that we are the ones who have to worry about things. So, the first step in gaining a servant attitude is to allow God to provide, to acknowledge that all things do ultimately come from God, and to give thanks for them – however great or small they might be.

Step 2. find your treasure

Another pointer with regards to gaining the servant attitude in our gospel lesson is found in verse 34: “*where your treasure is, your heart will be also.*” In this step, we need to be brutally honest with ourselves and ask “what is my treasure?” What is it that I value above all else? When my mind drifts, what does it drift to? What possessions am I passionate about?

A lot of times when you ask people what they are passionate about, they may tell you there is no one thing that they feel is their passion. They have many interests, but nothing strikes them as being significant. That may apply to a lot of us. For some reason, we don’t usually think much about what it is that drives us and gives us the most pleasure out of life. And yet, each of us has some over arching passion that is fed through all those little interests we do have.

I’m told that one place to start looking for your passion is to check out your treasure – literally. Look at your personal finances. After you’ve paid for the necessities, what is it that we spend the greatest amount of money on? Of course, when you do that, you also have to ask yourself; “is this for me only? Is it for my family and I only? Or is it perhaps to be used for all kinds of people so that the good news of the gospel might somehow be

shared? Where is your treasure.... And who are you using it for?

The reason this is important to the servant attitude is that our over arching passion is to be about the master – God. All of those interests we have – both large and small - need to have some kind of “God direction” about them. Are they helping others? Are they bringing joy to others? Are they in any way spreading the love of God to others? “*Where your treasure is, your heart will be also.*”

Step 3. Wait and watch

The third thing we discover in our gospel about gaining and maintaining a servant attitude is that we are to wait; “*like servants waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet*”. Waiting is difficult though. Sometimes we look for answers and direction, but the time is just not right for the Lord. And that’s why it is about the toughest thing we have to do. We are to wait expectantly, even in the darkest hours of our lives when we feel like we are being trampled on continually. We have to wait when life just seems to be the same thing over and over.

The tough part about waiting is that it can be BORING, - there seems to be nothing else to occupy us - and when we feel bored, we are tempted to “fall asleep”, meaning to lose interest and attention in what we are supposed to be doing. “Falling asleep” then refers to anything that distracts us from what we are to be doing, to the point that we aren’t doing anything worthwhile for God anymore.

Distractions come in many forms. We are encouraged to have and be so many things that we don’t have time for it all, yet we try anyway. We might allow ourselves to get so entangled in the things we feel must be done in life, and in that process, fail to look after ourselves and our spirit. That too might be considered falling asleep as in Jesus parable. The servant attitude though requires us to be awake and wait.

The funny thing is that we probably fight this servant attitude tooth and nail. How often do we consider ourselves the masters of our own destiny, feeling that only we control how things go? We pull the strings, don't we? Well we'd like to think that wouldn't we? Unfortunately, that attitude really gets people into trouble because sooner or later we come face to face with the fact that there are greater forces at work than we ourselves.

In being a servant and having a servant attitude we discover many answers to the questions of "why am I here, and what is my purpose here?" We are to serve God, and in doing that we leave our mark on this earth. It's not always as exciting or grand as we are led to believe our lives should be – but it is lasting. The 3 steps of the gospel lesson help us to understand what it means to be a servant and how we can best get there. Don't worry. Find your treasure so it can be used for God's purposes, and Stay awake – these are all part of being the servants and having the servant attitude that God seeks from us. May our lives be ones of servant hood to God.

Amen.

Prayers

Trusting in God's extraordinary love, let us come near to the Holy One in prayer.

Let your lovingkindness be upon your church. Fill all who proclaim the gospel with your Spirit. Equip your flock to speak your word of promise and hope in the midst of fear and uncertainty. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Let your lovingkindness be upon your creation. Dwell among us and sustain our earthly home. In places of famine, provide nourishment. In places of plenty, fashion us to be good stewards of your bounty. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Let your lovingkindness be upon your world. Be our helper and our shield in places torn by strife and violence. Raise up courageous leaders to govern with compassion and justice. Let workers for peace abound in places of war and strife. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Let your lovingkindness be upon your children. Look upon all who wait for your steadfast love. Console those who grieve and embrace those who cry out to you. Help us to trust your promise and not be afraid. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Let your lovingkindness be with those who are ill, that your healing power may strengthen them and give them relief from pain and discomfort. Be with all who suffer from illness, that they may know your presence with them. We especially remember those whom we name to your in our hearts. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Let your lovingkindness be upon this community. Fashion our hearts to strive for the way of peace. Strengthen the outreach ministries of this congregation. And all who care for those in need. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

With thanksgiving we remember all who have died in faith and now rest in you. As they placed their hope in you, so strengthen us to trust in your promise of new life. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Receive the prayers of your children, merciful, God, and hold us forever in your steadfast love; through Jesus Christ, our holy Wisdom.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. **Amen.**