

MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR

Jesus Said

Jesus said: *“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations....” (Mt. 28:19)*

That command drives much of what I think and do as a minister of the gospel. I believe one of the highest callings of the church is to make disciples. It is what I aspire to see happen in and through St. Timothy Lutheran Church.

My working definition of a disciple of Christ is:

**A lifetime follower of Jesus,
living by his power and will in one’s life;
responsibly involved in his body, the church,
doing God’s work in the world.**

I call it a “working definition” because it embraces all the key dimensions of a disciple’s life. It encompasses the idea of a learner and follower empowered by the Holy Spirit while including the work of an apostle. It reflects living and working in the body of Christ and serving God’s purpose in the world of drawing all things unto himself.

The definition, in fact, includes the four essential “turnings” (developed more fully elsewhere in this newsletter) of the disciple. These are: turning to Christ, turning to Christ’s ethic, turning to the congregation, turning to the world in love and mission.

I dream of a St. Timothy congregation made up of disciples of Christ who take seriously the call to make disciples. I dream this while recognizing that all things in this life are approximate and that growth in discipleship and the work of a disciple is an ongoing process. It occurs only over time and, in fact, spans a lifetime.

Nevertheless, we need to pick up where previous generations of St. Timothy left off and grow in our capacity now!

For that reason, I am calling St. Timothy to **“21 Days of Renewal.”** I am calling all St. Timothy’s family and extended family and friends to set aside all other priorities and make it your goal to be an active participant in this dynamic, moving initiative. See elsewhere in the Timothian for more detailed explanations.

I would like to suggest three reasons why you might consider participating:

Reason #1. Yourself. As a person baptized into Christ, you may want to grow into the fullness of Christ. You may want to make your Christianity meaningful and relevant. You may want to become a more mature disciple of Christ.

Reason #2. Your family. Whether it is a spouse, a significant other or a child, you may want to deepen that relationship by sharing deep stuff...like eternal stuff. You may want to discover the rewards of being able to talk intelligently and from an informed, mature perspective about matters of faith.

Reason #3. Your congregation. If not for yourself, then at least for the sake of St. Timothy, participate. Much is riding on the revitalization, renewal of this ministry...both for now and for generations to come.

I would like to offer up six reasons for not coming that I have heard that **do not** hold water:

1. "I have to get dinner for myself or my family." Answer: A lite supper is provided. Put off having steak to another time.
2. "I can't get there by 5:30." Answer: Roll in when you can. Just get there...preferably by the time the teaching begins.
3. "I have child care needs and can't afford a babysitter." Answer: Child care is available at the church. Professional, adult child care workers are being provided free of charge to the parents.
4. "I don't drive at night or my wife has the only car." Answer: People on the team are prepared to transport you.
5. "I will feel dumb. Others know more than I do." Answer: You can gather up a group of individuals you would be comfortable with and have them in your circle for the duration. The situation will improve over time...guaranteed!
6. "It is not my style." Answer: Would you tell an employer that "it's not my style" going for continuing education that is required for the job?

Being a disciple of Christ is an awesome privilege and responsibility. We can help one another grow into mature disciples. God has a lot at stake in this ministry. He should be able to count on us to deliver.

In closing, I invite your prayers for our **"21 Days of Renewal."** Be assured that you are in my prayers as you contemplate the level of your participation in the initiative.

In Christ,

Pastor Dean Hunneshagen