

Looking Up

“... look up, and lift up your heads;” Luke 21:24 KJV

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2012

A PUBLICATION OF THE VANCOUVER APOSTOLIC LUTHERAN CHURCH

PASTORS ARTICLE - THAT WE ARE

Romans 5:8

“...but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

Romans 14:7

“For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself.”

It has long been known that WE are not honestly a “WE” society, but an “I” society; indulging in celebration of the individual. The Church, by definition, *is* a “WE” society and does not fare well in an “I” society. In order to survive in the “I” society the Church must perpetually war against not only the insinuations of the evil One, and the bawdy, backwards world in which she is embroiled, but against, indeed, her very real temptation to disintegrate into crass individualism. The weapon of her warfare is always the same: The Word of God. The Bible speaks with remarkable frequency of the need to experience ourselves as very deeply connected with one another in and under Christ. We need only be reminded of Paul’s terminology concerning the many members of a body feeling most keenly the sting that visits only one (1 Cor. 12:26). We remember, likewise, that as we bow to partake of the Lord’s sacrament, doing so without regard to our neighbor and fellow-man is to defile ourselves and profane the very nature of that sacrament (1 Cor. 11:27ff). As the threat to one is the same, so is the promise; as the pain, so the reward, as the sting, so the revelry. This reality is *guaranteed* by the One who calls her into being as the Church. She does not “realize”, however, her own reality; She does not bring it into being as a result of obedience to command. It is only made possible by The re-creating Spirit of God who finds us in the throes of the flesh, as insistent individuals, and makes us into a pliant body in the Spirit; clinging both to Him and to one another.

The decisive Word of God, which the Church both bears and receives, is not only reminder, but also challenge, gauntlet, sword, hammer (Jeremiah 23:29), river, and deluge. As such, it never leaves things intact and unchanged. It changes and brings change. It levels and raises. It cheers and terrifies. Even the two verses quoted above retain the power to effect seismic shifts in the Church’s members and indeed the world out of which She, herself, is drawn. “None of us lives for himself” is far more than saying “None of us *should* live for himself?”. “Christ died for *us*” is far more provocative than saying, as we might, in private whispered devotional: “Christ died for *me*”.

So... It is not that we *ought* to be a “WE” society, we *are*, in spite of ourselves, a “WE” society by the grace of God. It is not that we *should* be the light of the world, we *are* (Mt. 5:14) in spite of ourselves. It is not that we *ought to remember* that we are a body. We *are* The Body in spite of our appetite for unyielding individuality. In the flesh we are indeed merciless demanders. But in the Spirit: thankful recipients. We are heartened by this as Bonhoeffer so eloquently expressed: “We enter the Church not as demanding critics, but as grateful recipients.”

This reminder itself, is not law. The God who loves His people into existence did not leave them to fend for themselves unaided. Nor did He come to demand anything of us. He came to bring into existence things that are not, that He might bring to nothing things that are. (1 Cor. 1:28) Those things that He has brought are the very “we” that we are... a collective, grateful body, connected more deeply than we might often venture to guess!

~Pastor Nathan



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January 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 11:00am Service	2	3 7:00pm Board Meeting	4	5	6 7:00pm Bible Study Location TBA	7
8 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Service Holy Communion	9	10	11 10:00am Ladies Bible Study 6:30pm Family Night	12	13 7:00pm Bible Study Location TBA	14
15 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Service	16	17	18 10:00am Ladies Bible Study	19	20 7:00pm Bible Study Location TBA	21 10:00am Annual Meeting
22 9:45am Sunday School 9:45am presentation *see notes below 11:00am Service message by Jim Fresnell Concordia College Choir Singing Meal Following	23	24	25 10:00am Ladies Bible Study 6:30pm Family Night	26	27 7:00pm Bible Study Location TBA	28
29 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Service Holy Communion	30	31	Cooking and Clean-up Groups for January 22, 2012 Meal Meal Preparation- Group #4 Cal and Wanda Dessert and Cleanup- Group #5 Kyle and Eileen			

Notes for January

January 22nd

The Concordia College choir will be singing during the 11:00am Worship service
 There will be a presentation at 9:45am conveying the mission of the choir.
 Jim Fresnell (Director of Church Relations, Concordia College, Portland, OR) will be giving the message that morning.
 Meal Following Service

Contact Information

Church Office: 693-2620

Pastor Nathan: 433-0753 - cell: 624-7830 - email: nathanjuntunen@gmail.com

WEBSITE: www.valchurch.org

NOW on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/VancouverChurch>

February 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 7:00pm Board Meeting	2	3 7:00pm Bible Study Location TBA	4
5 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Service	6	7	8 10:00am Ladies Bible Study 6:30pm Family Night	9	10 7:00pm Bible Study Location TBA	11
12 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Service Holy Communion Meal	13	14 VALENTINES DAY	15 10:00am Ladies Bible Study	16	17 7:00pm Bible Study Location TBA	18
19 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Service	20	21	22 10:00am Ladies Bible Study 6:30pm Family Night	23	24 7:00pm Bible Study Location TBA	25
26 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Service Holy Communion	27	28	29	Cooking and Clean-up Groups for February Meal Meal Preparation - Group #3 Josh and Emily Dessert and Cleanup - Group #2 Shane and Diana		

Please Remember in Prayer:

Bergman family from Clatskanie - loss of Deanna Bergman December 8th

Dan Fortish

Loreen Lindsley (Macular Degeneration)

Denton Holmgren & Camden Aho - Leukemia

Michelle Holman - ALS

Newsletter Announcements:

Janelle is looking for volunteers to organize a Family Night

Contact her at 798-4468

Our goal is to have this newsletter sent primarily via email.

If you would like to be **removed from the mailing list**,

contact Janelle Logan: brettnjanelle@juno.com

or

If you would like to **receive the newsletter via email**

please send your email address to DaNita Maunu:

a d m a u n u 2 @ m s n . c o m

As always, the newsletter is posted on our website:

valchurch.org



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