

“I wonder ... I wander ... I believe”
ALL SAINTS LUTHERAN CHURCH “OASIS OF JOY” USA
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Early October, 2009

It's one of “those days.”

I feel dis-jointed ... my head and mind are going in what seems like 100's of different directions ...
I'm in a hurry ... but not sure what I'm “in a hurry” for ...
I'm “on edge” ... but why???

The world we live in gives us cause to worry, I guess. Sure --- I worry about my job, paying the bills.

Maybe I'm too young ... maybe I'm too old ...

Do I have too much??? ... not enough??? ...

I'd like to be one of those who can just “live the moment” ... but ---- I have people depending on me ... so, I wonder if I'm doing enough. Doubt creeps in ... I think too much ... heck, I never used to “doubt” myself before.

Funny ... maybe ironic ... but I think about “religion” a lot. Higher power ... God's will ... spiritual things.

I was at a “meeting” last night ... and a guy got up and talked about RECOVERY.

He was so honest ... so fresh ... so open. I admired his humble courage. I could use some of that.

So, I'm driving home ... and I pass this church. The sign has words on it ... like *LOVE ... or COURAGE ... somebody's first name* ... it's always intrigued me. There are a couple cars in the lot ... so I pull in. The front door is open ... I meekly enter ---- to the smell of strong coffee. I flash-back to my days in the army ... this stuff smells just like “military coffee.”

I ask the gentle lady in the office if it's ok to come in and sit for a while. She makes me feel welcome.

There is “something about this place” ...

A cup of coffee from a stranger ... well, not a stranger anymore.

The daylight ... peaking through the sky-lite ... in a simple-but-beautiful sanctuary ...

And the “love buckets” ... all over the place ...

A plastic container ... with little – kid toys in it ... next to the altar ... what's that about????

A wooden sign on the pastor's door: ***“We're all in this together”*** ...

I sit in the humble silence of the church.

I think about “recovery” ... actually ... I think about “re-discovery.”

Re-discovering the simplicity-and-majesty of my faith ... maybe putting my priorities back in order.

Looking at myself ... my family ... my friends ... my life ----- with a skip in my steps, with more joy in my heart, and thanksgiving for the moment I'm in.

Life is a journey ... and has its share of bumps. There are also some “alleluia-moments” that I'm often “too busy” or “too pre-occupied” to notice. So weird ----- I stop at a church I don't know ... the door is open, the coffee hot, and I feel like a stranger no more. Is it coincidence? ... a little nudge from God? ...

I walk out the door ... then turn back:

“What times are *your masses* on Sunday?”

“8:30 and 11.”

It's been a long time ... maybe it's time to come back.

joy to all “*from a stranger no more*”

A FEW THINGS COMING UP ... ANY QUESTIONS? ... call us.

ALL SAINTS SUNDAY IS A VERY SPECIAL DAY ... November 1

We celebrate the anniversary of our church ---- 49 years since All Saints began. We have two festive services, as usual. We read the names of loved ones who have “gone before” ... you can sign-up for votive candles on Sunday or drop by during the week. Our pot-luck is at 4:00 ... we eat about 5:00 ... have some entertainment afterwards ----- adults, kids, friends are welcome. Everyone brings a main-and-side dish, and we celebrate the goodness of what we have together.

OUR NEXT BINGO IS FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23 ... first call, 7:00

This month the men's club is donating half of the profits to the choir scholarship program. You can begin making your reservations for bingo on Sunday.

OUR FALL FESTIVAL IS SUNDAY OCTOBER 25.

It lasts through-out the morning ----- games, pumpkin decorating, face-painting, a hot breakfast between services. Adults, Sunday School, the youth group --- we all make it happen together.

TWO OTHER PROGRAM COMMITTEE NOTES:

**Spiritual Yoga ... now there are 2 classes: Mondays at 6:00, Wednesdays at 7:00 ... in the gym.*

**OUR ANNUAL WINE-TASTING PARTY: Friday, December 4.*

OUR EDUCATION PROGRAM IS IN FULL SWING.

If you have not registered ... you can do so any Sunday. Sunday School is for kids age 3 through 6th grade.

Confirmation is for 7th-8th graders. Our first class is MONDAY, OCTOBER 19 ... 7:15-8:30.

Some of you have asked about “first Communion.” I have a class for 3rd graders (and older) and parents just before Easter (one session on a Sunday) ... and you receive your 1st Communion during Holy Week.

PRAYER KEEPS US CONNECTED

Our summer worker – Jason Chessare --- his grandma died this week ... Ellie Gabrys.

Dan Fritz's dad is in hospice care. We had a memorial service for Hal Boadway this week ---- long-time friend and colleague of Roger Carlsen & Doug Gehrke. Janet Turner Carcelli (daughter of Rosalie Turner) ... she and her husband David were married here this summer. David was killed in a car accident this week ... his funeral was Monday. To Janet and family --- our deepest prayers. Vera Heiser is recovering well at home. Don Schroth has been at St. Joseph Hospital. Sandra Harneck is re-habing well at Lemont Nursing Center. Kathy Klang's brother Jim is seriously ill at his home in Wisconsin. Jean McCabe is recovering well from her angioplasty. Linda Ruisz's brother Tom is at Ridgeland Re-hab ... and her son Michael is doing well after surgery on his arm.

In closing ... it is no secret that so many people “out there” and “in here” are going through tough times.

There are a couple things we can do.

***Please support our “humble temple” to the best of your ability. The reason our door is open is because people care enough to support us ---- financially & spiritually. Most important is your presence here ... you need it, we need it. But we can't take what we have here for granted ... we can't leave it up “to someone else.” Thanks for doing what you can, when you can. We have a good place here ... let's all work together to keep it vibrant and healthy.*

***If you know of someone (you or someone else) who is hiring ... give us a call. We have several folks in our church who are looking for work ... and sometimes a “connection” is all they need. THANKS!!*

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