

## Go ... Be the Church ... Do the Gospel

We were blessed last week with the inspiring words of encouragement from Rev. James Guelzow. I want to in a way build on that message that from Psalm 100 **“For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.”**

Generations! Wow! Not years or months or weeks or days, but God says he is faithful to all generations! God is faithful forever to everyone! That is such a blessing. A blessing that for 50 years Trinity has had the privilege to proclaim to people of all ages and all generations.

Our worship buildings have many symbols that make bold statements about our Christian faith.

**There is the cross above our altar;**

**The Christian Christ center symbols on our paraments;**

**The Baptismal font reminding us that we have been brought into God’s Family.**

**Symbols of the Christian life on our pictures and our banners.**

**Of course there is our Altar and the communion vessels that set upon it regularly reminding us of the ongoing faithfulness of God to forgive and renew us regularly.**

But the most powerful symbol is one you may least expect; **it is the aisle of the church building!**

**The Church’s worship and witness take place in the aisles of the church - the runway between God’s Altar and God’s World.**

The aisle of Trinity Lutheran Church and your home church is where you and many others began journey in the Christian life through Baptism.

The aisle is where you walked with fellow Confirmands for the Confirmation blessings and to affirm your Baptism.

The aisle is where you walked with your parents and where you walk today with other to receive Holy Communion.

. The aisle is where you walked to be joined in Holy Marriage and promised to walk together in Christ all your earthly days.

The aisle is where loved ones were led by the Pastor to receive their final rites in the Church before being laid to rest.

How many saints of God have traveled this aisle, Sunday after Sunday, as they have entered to worship and then left to be witnesses?

You heard last week from Rev. Guelzow, 50 years ago there were about 150 people who had been urged by God to **“Go, Be the Church, Do the Gospel.”** Go tell the Gospel; Go establish an Christ centered witness right here in Lake Placid. Go be the Church, the people that God !

The founders of our congregation had a vision of Church - the fellowship where faith in Christ is nourished by Word and Sacrament. They had the Bible; They were trained in the Catechism; and they too sang their hymns which had a strong emphasis on the Church as the Body of Christ, just like generations before them and those of us who have followed.

Those who laid the foundation of Trinity from 50 years ago knew the importance of the Church gathering for worship and being a consistent witness to those around them in this community.

They had remembered walking the aisles many times in their former churches; the aisle always took them to the Lord’s Table for nourishment and helped them find their pews to listen to the Word read and preached.

Article VII in the Augsburg Confession states about the Church: **“The Church of Christ is the community of believers where the Word is preached and the Sacraments administered according to the purity of the Gospel.”**

Church does not take place inside four walls. It takes place in the aisles of life, wherever our life journey’s lead us. We have been left a legacy of the importance of corporate worship according to a strong sacramental tradition, without forgetting the necessity of living out our faith with other traditions of the church as our neighbors and co-workers.

Go ... Go tell the Gospel ... BE the Church this is our responsibility now. This concrete block building is only the church when the people of God that are the Church are here worshiping and learning. During the week, the church isn’t here; **the aisles of the building have become the sidewalks where you and I go about**

**our vocations. The aisles of the church building lead to the streets where the church as the scattered people of God DO the Gospel.**

The Gospel needs hands and feet, says the Apostle Paul. The good news of Jesus needs to be put into action. Faith without action is as good as no faith at all, warns James in his letter. If Trinity is to endure for another 50 years we must be DO'ers of the Word, DO'ers of the Gospel!

How often have we fallen into human folly when we thought it was the will of God - and how often have we been forgiven for blunders and mistakes! And yet the legacy of the Gospel has been passed to us, and we also become those to whom the Gospel has been entrusted for a future generation.

The Pastors of the Congregation and its hundreds of dedicated layfolk through the past 50 years been a witness to the love of God by doing the works of the Gospel in our little places at home and at work at school, in the classrooms here during Sunday School, Trinity Tots, Bible Studies, LWML meetings, fellowship gathering, hospital rooms and nursing homes. We have agonized, but how we have been rewarded as the congregation grew not only in numbers but also in strength of faith.

How do we DO the Gospel? You do it when:

- \* You sit by each other overnight sometimes when someone is critically sick in the hospital.
- \* We support a missionary in a country half-way around the world with our prayers and pocketbooks.
- \* Some in our congregation give volunteer time so that the faith will go on.
- \* We respond to special appeals to help some families in need.
- \* We respond to church-wide appeals for funds for college and seminary training.
- \* We volunteer time in the church office to give our office manager a hand.
- \* We bring gifts for a never-ending need for Manna Ministry or the Middle School Back Pack Program.

How else do we be the Church and do the Gospel? Oh yes, we come to worship to praise God for His goodness, for His steadfast love and for His enduring faithfulness to each of us. In closing in the next 50 years whether you're here or whether I am here does not matter because you know who will be here, those who follow in our footsteps and God's faithfulness for all generations to follow. My brothers and sisters in Christ, Go Be The Church --- Go be the Gospel!!