



Nativity News

February
2014

Pastor's Ponderings

By Pr. Scott Landrum

A characteristic of the Gospel is that it attacks our best not just our worst. I mean, everybody knows that it is not ok with God or society to steal, kill, abuse ourselves or others, or participate in a whole host of other vices. We really don't need anybody to tell us that, the consequences are evident. What we don't understand, actually don't believe, is that the Gospel is intent on destroying anything that we might trust to improve our stead with God that is not faith in Christ alone. Even then, faith in Christ is notoriously slippery in that we twist faith into something we do rather than its proper understanding as a gift from God apart from anything we do. Thus, to nail it all down, the faith that saves is given by the Holy Spirit when and where he pleases, using the means of word and sacrament.

Said negatively, apart from word and sacrament there is no faith in Christ, and right there is the problem. The giving of faith is very, very, narrow and attacks our "good" feelings, works, experiences and anything else we prize as faith producing knowledge of God. I'm sure all of us have a favorite experience of something other than word and sacrament that we believe communicated God's love and forgiveness to us. The reason is that on some level we are all mystics. We really believe that we can find God in something, anything other than him finding us through word and sacrament. All manner of false religion has resulted from people fashioning a faith on their experiences. All manner of sin has been justified and affirmed by people trusting their feelings. There's a way that

seems right but in the end leads only to death. That is the perilous journey for the mystic. We would do well to listen to the Apostle Paul who said "I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified." Luther echoes Paul in the Smalcald Articles:

Therefore, we must constantly maintain this point: God does not want to deal with us in any other way than through the spoken word and the sacraments. Whatever is praised as from the Spirit—without the Word and the Sacraments—is the devil himself.

So run like the plague from anything that you think or feel communicates God's love and forgiveness apart from Jesus, and even more specifically, Jesus given in word and sacrament.

Peace,

Scott



CHRISTMAS AT WHITFIELD AND GRACE HOUSE

Using funds raised at our rummage sale and craft fair, the Social Ministry Committee purchased and delivered gifts for some of the patients at the Mississippi State Hospital and Jaquith Nursing Home residents. Each of the 1200 residents they serve receives a Christmas bag filled with goodies and a personal gift through the generosity of community partners and supporters.

RANKIN COUNTY
human resource agency

Canned Goods Always Needed

The need for food at Rankin County Human Resource Agency never ends. Remember to bring your donations of non-perishable goods to the church by the last Sunday of each month (except those months with five Sundays when we collect for the Center for Violence Prevention). Instead of keeping a pantry here at the church, we have found it works better to take our collections to this agency and refer any requests that we get to them.



Christmas greetings were also delivered to Grace House. Nativity members packed a special box of homemade cookies and a box of chocolate candy for each of the men's and women's residences. The boxes were delivered as an expression of encouragement and support from the members of Nativity to residents of Grace House in time for the holiday.



EVANGELISM REPORT

The announcement of a drive to raise the balance of funds required to purchase a new front sign was made on January 12, 2014. Response to date has been very good. After just two weeks of the anticipated ten week drive, the fund has already been increased by almost \$900. If the generous members of Nativity Lutheran continue at the current rate, this could be the shortest ten week drive in history!

The company bid-selected to create our new sign (if we are indeed successful in raising the money) is Headrick's, located in Laurel, MS. They were identified during fairly extensive research with other local churches and were highly recommended for their workmanship and responsiveness, as well as being the lowest bidder for our project.

Also, please give us your thoughts as to where the old sign should be re-located within Nativity's interior campus. The Evangelism committee's intention is to keep the old sign in a prominent place for historical and sentimental reasons. You may also want to give some input to the Evangelism committee as to preferred color of the background. Some had expressed dissatisfaction with the maroon shown in the early draft of the proposed sign. We can make it any color you like.

In other Evangelism related activities, you should be aware that the group of volunteer Ambassadors and Pew Buddy's has now completed one full year of loyal and vital service. These eleven dedicated folks alternate each Sunday, in helping to make any new visitors feel welcome and at home in Nativity Lutheran Church. For the year just ended, they welcomed about two dozen first time visitors.

If you would like to be a member of this merry band, please contact anyone on the Evangelism Committee.

Evangelism Committee



February & March Birthdays Anniversaries

Clyde Hatten	2/06
Garry Starr	2/06
Don Poole	2/12
Vivian Stevens	2/13
Jim Moulds	2/15
Wanda Palombo	2/17
Fred Braatz	2/19
Grant Stevens	2/20
Betty Moore	2/27
Susan Landrum	2/28
Joe Hunt	3/01
Pat Schnell	3/03
Renate Hunt	3/10
Debbie Pruett	3/13
Ryan Edwards	3/15
Pastor Scott	3/24
Derek Stevens	3/27
Cathy Mills	3/29

Stephen & Cindy Braatz	2/14
Keith & Pat Anderson	3/10
Tommy & Lynn Templeton	3/25

Happy Birthday & Anniversary to All !!!!!

If you wish to participate, please look for the sign-up sheet on the table in the narthex and provide your birthday and/or anniversary **month & day only** by your name so we can **wish you a Happy Day!**

NLC February 2014 Volunteer List – 10:30 Service

February 2

Greeters – Jim & Pat Moulds
 Ambassador - Mitch Leavell
 Pew Buddy - Joe Hunt
 Ushers – Tony Caldwell & Kathy Peters
 Lector – Sandy Bettiga
 Comm. Asst. – Sandy Bettiga
 Nursery – Lynn & Matthew Templeton
 Counters – Alton & Kathy Lewis
 Acolyte – Katie Mae Rials
 Altar Care – Dorothy Leavell

February 16

Greeters – Linda Tucker
 Ambassador - Meade Entrekin
 Pew Buddy - Susan Landrum
 Ushers – Mitch Leavell / Hack Walston
 Lector – Bud Weisser
 Comm. Asst. – Alex Weisser
 Nursery – Sue Caldwell/Haley Templeton
 Counters – Hack Walston & Kathy Peters
 Acolyte – Alex Tucker
 Altar Care – Dorothy Leavell

February 9

Greeters – Renate Hunt
 Ambassador – Dorothy Leavell
 Pew Buddy – Linda Tucker
 Ushers – Keith Anderson & Tommy Templeton
 Lector – Rick Shultz
 Comm. Asst. – Rick Shultz
 Nursery – Ann Starr
 Counters – Bud Weisser/Keith Anderson
 Acolyte – Eli Bettiga
 Altar Care – Dorothy Leavell

February 23

Greeters – Bettiga Family
 Ambassador – Lynn Templeton
 Pew Buddy – Ruth Burgess
 Ushers – John Schnell/Renate Hunt
 Lector – Hack Walston
 Comm. Asst. – Hack Walston
 Nursery – Marcia Weaver & Alex Weisser
 Counters – Mitch Leavell/Boyde Bergum
 Acolyte – Savannah Stevens
 Altar Care – Dorothy Leavell

If you cannot serve on the dates shown, please try to swap with someone and let the office know of the change. Thanks.

February 2	8 AM & 10:30 services with Sunday school at 9:15
February 5	12 Noon – Al-non 12 Noon and 7:00 PM Bible Study
February 6	7:00 PM Social Ministry Meeting
February 9	8 AM & 10:30 services with Sunday school at 9:15 Sweetheart Brunch
February 12	12 Noon – Al-non 12 Noon and 7:00 PM Bible Study
February 16	8 AM & 10:30 services with Sunday school at 9:15
February 19	12 Noon – Al-non 12 Noon and 7:00 PM Bible Study
February 22	8:30 AM – Coffee with Brewed Awakening @ Cups
February 23	8 AM & 10:30 services with Sunday school at 9:15 Food Collection for Rankin County Food Pantry
February 25	Church Council – 7 PM
February 26	12 Noon – Al-non 12 Noon and 7:00 PM Bible Study

FEBRUARY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Nativity Prayer List



Please pray for:

David Mancuso, Carol Tucker, Ann Schultz, Trieu Lam, Lilly Bartl, Kenny Cleveland, Bob Miller, Brian Johnson, David Johns, the family of Harold “Butch” Begemann, Pat Schnell and Bud Weisser.