

Hand*clasp*

September 2017 Monthly Newsletter of First Lutheran Church

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LivingLutheran

Lectionary blog: Jesus doesn't offer a free ride

By Delmer Chilton August 28, 2017

Lectionary blog for Sept. 3
Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Jeremiah 15:15-21; Psalm 26:1-8;
Romans 12:9-21; Matthew 16:21-28



Delmer Chilton is originally from North Carolina and received his education at the University of North Carolina, Duke Divinity School and the Graduate Theological Foundation. He received his Lutheran training at the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia, S.C. Ordained in 1977, Delmer has served parishes in North Carolina, Georgia and Tennessee.

I was listening to the comedian George Carlin one night on HBO. He was talking about how the expression “**self-help**” is an oxymoron. “**Look it up,**” he said, “**if you did it yourself, you didn't need any help! Pay attention to the logic of the language people!**” Along the same lines, I was thinking about the concept of **self-service!** Isn't that a bit of an oxymoron as well? I mean, **if you** do it for yourself, is it really “**self-service?**” It would appear to me that the concept of **service** should involve me doing something for somebody else, not “**me**” doing something for “**me.**”

Self-help and self-service are very much the modern, American way.

“What's in it for me?”

“How do I benefit?”

“Where's my payoff?”

All too often, these are the questions that run through our minds as we consider a request for a commitment of our time, talent or treasure. **We think to ourselves, “If I do this, is it going to be worth my time, my effort, my involvement. Or would I be better off doing something else?”**

Our Gospel lesson today presents an interesting counter-balance to this way of thinking. Here, Jesus very clearly defines here what his commitment to the kingdom of God is all about, what he expects to happen to him because he has been faithful to his calling from God:

Thomas, Roberta	9/1
Kunz, Paul	9/2
Luthans, Angie	9/4
Starks, Ronald	9/5
Gann, Linda	9/6
Chladek, Dan	9/9
Christian, Kaitlyn	9/9
Dunning, Alan	9/9
Bufkin, Caleb	9/10
Eyberg, Mel	9/10
Hunter, Shanya	9/13
Johns, Mary Anna	9/13
Schmidt, Stephen	9/13



Lynch, Robert	9/14
Nelson, Jane	9/15
Viselli, Trisha	9/15
Schneider, Nila	9/18
Kirschner, Verna	9/19
Goforth, Laurel	9/21
Pearl, Carolyn	9/21
Perry, Linda	9/21
O'Mara, Janell	9/22
Edwards, Chester	9/25
Gilmore, Carrie	9/25
Mistek, Joe	9/26
Chladek, Nathan	9/27

Sonny & Jane Thompson	9/2/1989	28 years
James & Carol Bunge	9/3/1977	40 years
Terry & Sarah Cotton	9/4/1976	41 years
Roger & Randi Lenander	9/9/1978	39 years
Mindy & Brandin Erickson	9/13/2008	9 years



**CHURCH
DIRECTORIES
AND PORTRAITS**

You are invited to capture memories for a lifetime. Be a part of our new family directory program. Our goal is to include everyone! We are partnering with Lifetouch for professional photography that will connect our families and tell our story. Each family will receive a complimentary 8x10 portrait and directory for participating. You can schedule your photography session online at www.flcsj.org, call the office, or sign up on the sheets on the table in the back of the sanctuary. Lifetouch will photograph here at the church. In your ten minute session you will be professionally photographed; immediately view your portraits; and be able to purchase portrait gifts.



Thank you to Steve Archer and Barton Dennis for maintaining the church property. By trimming the hedges, edging, and all of the other things they do, the church property has maintained its beauty!

**Treasurer's Report
July 2017**

Cyndee Simpson, Treasurer

July Income	\$19, 863.40
July Expenses	\$17, 524.80
Year to Date Income	\$125, 589.33
Year to Date Expenses	\$119, 133.22

Roundtable

Dwelling in the Word

Phoebe Circle - Tuesday, Sept. 12th, 7:00 pm,
Janice Harmsen - Hostess
Kris Langdon - Dessert
Laurel Goforth - Lesson

Thursday Morning Bible Study - Thursdays at 10 am
at church

Fellowship

Early Morning Breakfast - Tuesday, Sept. 19th,
6:30 am, at Le Peep

Wednesday With Friends - Wednesday, Sept. 20th,
12:00 pm, at TBA

Service

Rally Sunday - Sunday, Sept. 10th

Chancel Choir - Wednesdays, at 7:00 pm

Quilting Ladies - Tuesday, Sept. 12th and 19th,
12:30 pm, Fellowship Hall

Leadership

Congregational Council - Thursday, Sept. 14th, 6:30 pm

Altar Guild - Thursday, Sept. 7th, 10:00 am,
Carol Bunge - Hostess

Directory Pictures

Wednesday, Sept. 20th from 1:30 pm to 8:00 pm

Thursday, Sept. 21st from 1:30 pm to 8:00 pm

Friday, Sept. 22nd from 1:30 pm to 8:00 pm

Saturday, Sept. 23rd from 9:30 am to 4:00 pm

If you are able to help work the welcome table for the pictures, please call the office or let Misty know.



Hurricane Harvey Relief

The situation:

Please stand by our neighbors as we begin the long road to recovering from Hurricane Harvey, one of the most catastrophic storms to hit the country in more than a decade.

Our response:

Lutheran Disaster Response's affiliate is actively present, collaborating with community leaders and officials to initiate the proper responses, particularly the long-term recovery efforts. Together, we have a strong history of working with disasters in the Gulf Coast area. Recovery efforts are expected to take years, and Lutheran Disaster Response will be there to accompany those affected through every phase of this disaster.

We invite you to stand by our neighbors on the Gulf Coast during this time. Your gifts ensure that our church will be able to provide help and hope for those left homeless or otherwise affected by this disaster for years to come.

****Gifts to Lutheran Disaster Response, designated for "Hurricane Response – United States" will be used entirely (100 percent) for this disaster until the response is complete.**

Together, we can help provide immediate and long-lasting support. Give today to support the needs in this response and others like it.

What you can do:

Pray:

Please pray for the people who have been affected and are in the **path of Hurricane Harvey. May God's healing presence give them peace and hope in their time of need.**

Give:

Gifts to "US Hurricane Relief" will be used to assist those affected by the hurricane until the response is complete.

Connect:

To learn more about the situation and the ELCA's response:

-Sign up to receive Lutheran Disaster Response alerts.

-Check the Lutheran Disaster Response blog.

-Like Lutheran Disaster Response on Facebook and follow @ELCALDR on Twitter.

“From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and the chief priests and scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised” (Matthew 16:21).

I doubt that Peter even heard the part about rising again. All Peter heard was the pain, suffering and rejection. And he couldn't take it. "Wait a minute," he thought, "this isn't what I signed up for. I want to be a part of the bold, strong, conquering, triumphant kingdom of God. I want to have a better life, and more joy, and a happier marriage. What's all this gloom and doom about?"

Jesus rebuked Peter. Called him Satan. Told him to stop thinking about himself and his personal financial future and to start thinking about God. Put another way, Jesus wanted Peter to quit worrying about self-help, and self-improvement and self-service. He wanted his disciples, his devotees, his followers to center their lives on God and the service of others: "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow me."

Often, we tend to be like Peter; we want to follow Jesus without it being too much trouble.

We want being a Christian to improve our self-esteem and make us better and more effective family members. We want our faith and commitment to Christ and the church to bring us more success in life and work. The problem is we want all that without the self-denial, and self-sacrifice and the spiritual submission of self to God that goes with it.

Often, we tend to be like Peter; we want to follow Jesus without it being too much trouble.

Without the cross, there is no Christianity. Without both the cross of Christ and the cross of a Christian, we are reduced to a pleasant religious and philosophical society that meets every Sunday to sing hymns, listen to a nice talk, take part in a symbolic meal, and go home feeling better about ourselves.

With the cross

But with the cross, we are a saved and redeemed people, called to follow Jesus in giving our all for the betterment of the world.

With the cross, we are God's holy people, stepping out in faith to follow God into the trenches of the world's struggle with sin, death and the devil.

With the cross, we are a royal priesthood, going forth into the unknown future with a mission and a ministry to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, bind up the broken-hearted, soothe the suffering, and heal the halt and the lame.

With the cross, we have a divine mandate to stand against the powers that be on behalf of the poor and needy, to speak out against injustice and oppression wherever we see it and know it to exist.

With the cross, we dare to lose our life in the cause of Christ.

And with the cross we, like Jesus, find our real lives, the lives for which God created us, the lives we have been invited to embrace since we were baptized—lives of loving God and serving our neighbor.

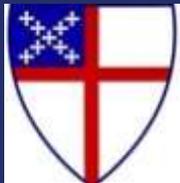
Amen and amen.

Full Communion Partners - to learn more, got to

<https://www.elca.org/Faith/Ecumenical-and-Inter-Religious-Relations/Full-Communion>



Presbyterian Church (USA)
Full Communion partner since 1997.



The Episcopal Church
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Reformed Church in America
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United Church of Christ
Full Communion partner since 1997.



United Methodist Church
Full Communion partner since 2009.