

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church Des Moines, WA April 19, 2015

Mission Sunday: Grow, Gather, Go

1. **Grow in the Word**
2. **Gather around the Word**
3. **Go with the Word**

Hymns: *I Sing As I Arise Today* – 560 – 283 –
494 – 566 - Closing: 293

All Scripture quotations from NIV 1984

I. Grow in the Word

Colossians 2:6-7 *So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him,⁷ rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.*

If you look at our mission statement, a dominant theme should stand out – It’s all about the Word. And how could it be any other way for a Lutheran church and for people who want to be Lutherans? It is the Word that creates and strengthens faith; it is the Word that gives comfort and assurance; it is the Word that motivates and changes hearts.

In order for our church to accomplish anything else, we need to be growing in the Word. Paul says that it is through the Word that we strengthen our roots. It is through the Word that we are first built up as individual Christians that we might also be built up as a group of Christians. It is through the Word that we will overflow with a thankfulness that will motivate us in our Christian lives.

That growth through the Word happens:

- In church, through the proclamation of the Word, and through the use of the Sacraments, which are powered by the Word
- In Bible studies – from toddlers to seniors, on Sunday mornings and every day in between, from large groups to families gathered around their dinner table, we want to be a church filled with people who are dedicated to studying their Bibles
- Through our grade school – where the Word is daily taught, where Bible stories are told, where catechism instruction is given.

As members of Holy Trinity, we are committed to growing in the Word.

II. Gather around the Word

It’s one of the biggest false assumptions that we often make – looking around and assuming that we have nothing in common with the people who sit around us on Sunday morning. The reality is that we have the one thing that truly matters in common with everyone who sits around us. We are united by Christ!

And that unity allows us to live as the apostle Paul describes in Philippians 2: *If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion,² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.⁴ Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.*

As people, we want to gather together with those who share a common bond. As members of Holy Trinity, we have been given a common bond: It is a love of the Word of God and of the Savior which we are given in that Word. Treasure that unity in Christ, and use it to find the many other bonds that you have with people in this congregation.

Strike up a conversation about Jesus with someone that you know loves Jesus and you might find someone who went to the same school as you; you might find someone who does the same work as you; you might find someone who shares the same interests and hobbies as you. As you gather with fellow members around the Word, you might find a friend as well.

III. Go with the Word

When we are growing in the Word, when we are gathering around the Word, Paul says that something will naturally happen. We will confess and share the Word.⁸ *But what does it say? “The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,” that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming:⁹ That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.¹¹ As the Scripture says, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame.”¹² For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call*

on him, ¹³ for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

¹⁴ How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? ¹⁵ And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

Look at the opportunities that we have as a congregation to go with the Word:

- Into a community that is amongst the most unchurched in the United States
- Supporting a Korean pastor and be involved in a mission that works in the largest per capita Korean population in the United States.
- Supporting a Sudanese mission as it begins from the ground up in our Synod.
- Being involved in a school where children of many different races and nations and backgrounds gather together
- To family and friends that desperately need you to speak to them.

There are so many ways in which our feet can be made beautiful. We have the Word that people need. We have the Word that changes hearts. We have the Word that changes lives and eternities. And it is our mission to go with that Word.