LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH GARNER, NC 3/11/18

Speakijng the Gospel By What We Do

In the name…

Let us pray…

stopinquire,

Yesterday as I was driving to church, I saw this sign on Walgreen’s Pharmacy, Shingrix Avaialble. So I stopped in to inquire, and it was just as I thought. They had the new Shingles Vaccine, and many of you know I had shingles a few years ago. And I can attest. You don’t want to get it. So I immediately got it. If I had seen the sign and just took my doctor’s WORD that the one out is not that good or wait for him to OK me getting it. I would be defenceless against shingle. So I saw the WORD and Acted on it. Today’s gospel lesson is the Gospel in a nutshell, the Good News that God so loved the world that He gave His Son Who died for us that we might have life. That’s great news, we are “In There”. But it goes on to say that those who have seen the light need to show deeds that have been done in God. Our response to the Good News is actions. Actions that show Christ’s love in us.

The news recently has been praising the students of Parkland and rightly so who are calling on action with regards to gun violence. I was struck by an article in the newspaper buy a graduate student and instructor in creative nonfiction at UNCW. It was entitled, “as Academics Struggle, UNC Chancellors Prosper”. To summarize what she was saying, 2017 was a year when chancellors throughout the UNC system were getting raises added onto already large salaries while she will wak across the stage at her graduation, even after working throughout her education career, with a debt of $15,000. Lauren Krouse was using the power of the pen with the risk of being singled out by those same chancellors . and of course during March madness she did not even mentions the outrageous salaries of basketball coaches and how it was not fair that UNC’s coach only made al little over $2,000,000.

Lauren does not mention the Gospel of course, but she was speaking out against injustices as Christ, our Savior calls us to do.

John Perkins was a yoiung black man who left his home state of Mississippi to escape segregation and racism, but moved back to the small town of Mendenhall with his wife era Mae in the sixties to preach the gospel which he felt was his calling after seminary training. He started by forming a bible study club for hihgh school students, but discovered they needed special help for their general studies period. So he started a tutoring program which led to housing programs, medical clinics, and even political involvement. He was still preaching the gospel but it went along with challenging unjust social and government structures. Jesus was his model. Jesus did not just throw the Good News at people from afar. He lived among them and modelled how the kingdom brings radical transformation of the status qou. In order to be a faithful proclaimer of the Gospel, we must be challenged to act justly within the context in which we live.

This coming Saturday, the Pine Straw Sale begins. The men and women who might help don’t do it for us, it is done for Camp Agape, but not even for the general fund of maintaining the camp. Those who went to O Holy Night heard Randy, the Director, say that Camp Agape is committed to eventually getting 100 children who would not otherwise have the opportunity to experience camp which will proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, not just by Bible Study or Hearing the Gospel in other ways, but by experiencing how the young people who make up the staff truly show Christ’s love by caring for them and loving them.

Yesterday I attended a brunch in Durham that I was invited to called “Color for Change”. I never did find out how I was invited, by text nonetheless. Maybe they thought the name Dubnansky originated from Wutunda, the fictional Utopia in Black Panther. It simply stated those invited “believed in the power of the black community”, sure I do, but I believe in the power of the Christian community more which includes Blacks, Hispanics, and all of Christendom worldwide. That is why another article in the paper yesterday was troubling. It was entitled “Babies with Down Syndrome Have Right to Life”. This was a Washington Post writer, Marc Thiessen. He starts out quoting an adult woman with Down Syndrome who has lived a full life telling of the newer faster ways to screen for Down Syndrome so that more children with the disability can be killed in the womb. Then he gives statistics, Iceland has virtually eliminated Down Syndroe, not because of any medical breakthrough, but because the abortion rate for Down Syndrome babies is close to 100% highest in the world. Denmark 97%, very Lutheran countries, and US even 67%. The Gospel commands us to speak out against this. Ewe have heard the phrase, “All Lives Matter”. Black lives matter yes, Brown lives matter, yes, Down syndrome lives matter all lives are a gift from God. Other stats he gives, 97% are happy with who they are, 96% percent are happy with how they look, I have never heard of anyone with Down Syndrome so depressed they took their own life or abused their bodies with drugs or self-injury acts. They live happy healthy lives and we can learn from them. The Gospel demands we speak out against that It demands us to speak out against any injustices And to DO Whatever it takes to live the Gospel by our deeds.

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