LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH GARNER< NC

Compassion for the unsheperded

In the name…

Let us pray…

The last three weeks we heard who Jesus was not: Elijah, John the Baptizer, and He was not welcomed in His hometown. Today we her Who Jesus was and is. He is the Shepherd Who has compassion for His sheep. Compassion means having sympathetic concern for the suffering and misfortune of others. In the gospel Jesus had compassion for the people there because they were like sheep without a shepherd.

We all know Isaac has been shepherded already throughout his young life, by parent, grandparents, and hopefully this congregation and the Church beyond the bounds of this building.

The lesson from Jeremiah says the shepherd will gather His and will bring them into the fold. And there will be shepherds raised over him who will shepherd him. This will begin with you Isaac’s parents who will promise to bring Isaac up among God’s faithful people, that would be us or any other community of faith, make sure he hears God’s word and when old enough receive the other sacrament of Holy Communion, to provide proper example to him to live out God’s word and faith, give him also an example of what it means to serve those who may be shepherdless, and to be example of what it means to strive for justice and peace throughout the community and the world.

But that does not end with parents, we as a congregation will promise to support Isaac during his life and pray for him. That means it is our responsibility to provide educational opportunities for him and all children of the congregation as well as for adults and in our worship and our live emulate the traits I just outlined. Be examples of regularly coming together to worship and praise our God and Lord Who water and the Holy Spirit has given us new birth in the same way Isaac has been given new birth through this sacrament. We too are to study God’s word so we can be equipped to strive for justice and peace both in this community and around the world.

We all are the shepherds for those previously shepherdless and that goes further than the recently baptized. The people who followed Jesus around the lake are described as being shepherdless, and the lesson from Ephesians describe more whom they might be. The uncircumcised, that is, those who were not participants in the religion of the day, namely the Hebrew faith, and so they were considered aliens, strangers, had no hope and were without God in the world. When we have a chance to reach out to any of these people with the help of the Holy Spirit then we are following Jesus’ example Who reached out to all. Throughout all the newsletters this summer I described the various groups who used out facilities and now even our fields. These facilities are God’s gift to us and we open them to all people, yes even those who might need a restroom during the July 3 celebration. Most importantly, we open our worship to all who want to join with us in praising God and receiving His gift of grace in the form of the Eucharist. St. Paul says in Ephesians that we are not doing this o our own but we do this through the blood of Christ shed on the cross built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ as our cornerstone.

So Isaac, we must remind you of this when you are older and can understand. If you ever feel shepherdless, out of place, not fitting in or as Paul says, a stranger and alien, remember your baptism when you were baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and made you a members of the household of God using Paul’s words. Today, you are an example for others who made need that reminder as well.

In our spiritual cinema today we finished “Paul, Apostle of Christ” and we hear how he was a citizen of Rome which gave him status, but even more so, he was a citizen of the Church and you have taken your place as a citizen of the Church or using Paul’s words a citizen with the saints.

In the name…