

From Pastor Dan

The inevitable march of time continues its increasingly frantic pace. Last month I wished you Merry Christmas, this month I wish you a Happy New Year, next month I will remind you of the beginning of Lent, then Easter, followed by Confirmation Camp and the National Youth Gathering, Rally Sunday, Confirmation Sunday, the pie auction, the first Sunday in Advent, Christmas and all of a sudden, another year has gone by. Which brings me to the point of this piece.

You see, every year at this time, we think about setting goals for the new year. Whether influenced by determination or guilt we pledge ourselves to a plan which will have us healthier and happier by year's end. So.... how's that working for you??? Now please do not get me wrong, long range goals and prudent planning can be an important part of a life well-lived. However, sometimes we may have a tendency to focus too much on tomorrow to the exclusion of concentrating upon that which is right in front of us.... today!

Jesus was keenly aware of this tendency of ours and addressed it very articulately in a couple of places:

- From Matthew 6:34, "So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today's trouble is enough for today."
- And from The Lord's Prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread."

Sound advice. The other day, I encountered some additional wise words while indulging my YouTube vice. Interestingly enough, they came from a fellow who has very little in common with Jesus aside from long hair (Which Jesus, as a Palestinian Jew, probably never wore). The author of those words is Tim Minchin who is a long-haired, mascara wearing, barefoot, piano playing, Australian comedian who also is an atheist; about as far from Jesus as you can get (or not....?) Anyway, his advice, while not as time-tested as Jesus' guidance, still clearly supports the significance of living in the moment. Included in his commencement address at the University of Western Australia (Tim Minchin not Jesus) were these suggestions,

“You don’t have to have a dream. Instead, I advocate the passionate dedication to short-term goals. Put your head down and work with pride on whatever is in front of you. If you focus too far in front of you, you won’t see the shiny thing out of the corner of your eye.”

It is a new year which provides the hope of opportunity as well as the nagging insistence that we finally ought to do something to take advantage of those opportunities. Thus, we establish long-range goals to accomplish that which needs to be done. This is a good thing and more power to you. However, in our typical preoccupation with a focus toward the horizon, Jesus reminds us not to miss that which is right in front of us, “Give us this day our daily bread.” Because if you focus too far in front of you, you just might miss “...the shiny thing out of the corner of your eye.”

Amen and Happy New Year

Pastor Dan

Council Members. Here is a list of Council Members. Please contact them with any concerns or issues you may have. Council meets once a month and welcomes input from the congregation.

President: Randy Knapp – 715-581-5558; rknapp@eojohnson.com

Vice President: Sue Cooley – 715-675-8566; cooley1512@outlook.com

Treasurer: Curt Cooley – 715-675-8566; usfcool@gmail.com

Secretary: Tammi Smith – 715-581-3892;tammism79@gmail.com;
tammism@aspirus.org

Trustees: Lee Sillars – 715-218-5041; lsillars@aol.com

Don Voelker – 715-675-7062; midmainefarms@hotmail.com

Evangelism: Duane Askew – 75-675-4111; daskew@airrun.net

Fellowship: John Marquardt – 715-675-3300; johnnym54401@gmail.com

Education: Connie Nowak – 715-675-1577; bcdenowak@gmail.com

Worship: Jan Mueller – 715-675-9558; dmjm5455.wau@gmail.com

Mission Statement: “We are called to serve God; serve each other; serve the community; serve the wider church.”

Serve God through worship, prayer, and the dedication of our lives to His kingdom.

Serve Each Other by mutual care and support to encourage everyone to fulfill their God-given potential. **Serve the Community** by making known the good news about Jesus

and the love of God by word and deed. **Serve the Wider Church** through prayer and practical support to help spread the good news about Jesus throughout the world.

Worship Schedule

9:00 a.m. Sunday Mornings

Please join us as we worship our Lord!

Homebound Parishioners. The following parishioners are no longer able to consistently attend worship services. I visit them to remind them that they are loved by God and loved by their community of faith, St. John. Sometimes it is helpful to hear those reminders from someone in addition to me.

Ann Kieckhafer
1347 Crystal Avenue
Room 236-1
Naperville, IL 60563

Ellen Kruit
1821 N. 4th Avenue
Room 215
Wausau, WI 54401

Harriet Wanner
1240 Merrill Ave.
Apt. 2
Wausau, WI 54401

Offering Envelopes. The offering envelopes for 2018 are now in everyone’s mailbox in the narthex. Please stop by and pick them up.

Annual Meeting. Our Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 11, 2018 following the 9:00 a.m. Worship service. All articles to be included in the Annual Report are due to the church office **no later than Monday, January 8, 2018.** (The Cemetery Association Meeting will follow the Annual Meeting.)

From the Correct Perspective

A child sat at his grandmother's feet as she embroidered. Looking up, he saw a mishmash of threads and ugly knots but no discernible picture or words. "Nana," he said with concern, "that's not very pretty."

"Come up here," Grandma invited, "and look at it from this side. You have to see it from my perspective."

"Oh!" the boy exclaimed then. "It's beautiful!"

Seeing the world from our human, earthly viewpoint, we can't grasp the masterpiece that God is completing. But when we finally see it from his perspective, we'll discover that the threads and knots all contribute to a beautiful work of art. That work won't be finished until Jesus returns, but in the meantime, may God grant us an occasional glimpse of the work in progress – from God's side!

Reminder! If you are in the hospital and would like Pastor Dan to visit, **PLEASE CALL** and let him know. Because of privacy issues, the hospital will not notify him or the church that you are there.

Food Pantry. The food items collected for the food pantry will be donated to Maine School. Your donations are appreciated. If you are able to help out with delivering these items to the school, please contact the church office.

Council Meeting Minutes. Copies of the minutes from the most recently held Council meeting are by the mailboxes. Please feel free to pick up a copy. If more are needed, please contact the church office.

Announcements. If you would like to have an announcement included in our weekly bulletin or newsletter, please submit the information in writing and put it in either Pastor Dan's mailbox or the administrative assistant's mailbox located in the narthex. If it is more convenient for you, you can submit your announcements via e-mail to stjohnwausau@msn.com. The deadline for submitting announcements for the Sunday bulletin is the Thursday before by 9:00 a.m. The deadline for the newsletter is indicated on the monthly calendar.

January Birthdays

1-4 Miranda Clausen
1-4 Heidi Teske
1-6 Florian Kolbe
1-8 Isaac Hoffman
1-8 Justin Zahn
1-9 James Klinger
1-9 Molly Lubecke
1-9 Matthew Nass
1-9 Jack Saari
1-10 Randy Knapp
1-14 Kelly Dehnel
1-14 Jerome Klug
1-15 Lane Bahr
1-15 Jamie Kickbusch
1-16 John Borth
1-16 Jackson Hein
1-18 Pastor Dan Sire
1-20 Maxwell Nass
1-21 Thomas Leduc
1-22 Patsy Askew
1-25 Jason Tesch
1-26 Karen Kolbe
1-26 Kelly Rosenau
1-26 Dorothy Westfall
1-27 Robin Hein
1-28 Michelle Bolz
1-29 Pat Rogalla
1-31 Amber Eno

January Anniversaries

1-6 Clark & Jennifer Bronsteatter
1-19 Curt & Sue Cooley
1-24 David & Alene Howe