

Weekly Devotion, Monday September 21, 2020
Pastor Matt Woods, Grace Lutheran Church

“When the Body Gets to Work”

Let me start off this morning with a sense of gratitude for this last Saturday’s Drive In Service. The Lord gave us an absolutely beautiful day. And it was great to see so many faces that I haven’t got to see in many months.

When one plans for an outdoor event one always has to wonder about the weather. But this weekend was perfect. The who drive in thing was new also. I used to participate in Drive-in services at my last congregation but in our case there were a lot of unknowns. We had to acquire an FM transmitter that would broadcast throughout the parking lot. We asked ourselves, “How will the music work?” “How will communion work? We had to develop a whole new mindset in the way we did church. And we had to depend on a lot of people to make it a reality.

The day began with a couple of us putting up the platform for Pastor and I to stand on. It has to be high enough for everyone to see. Right on the heels of finishing that Ryan came in and started hooking up speakers and microphones and later ran the system that allowed us to broadcast the service over our FM transmitter. Then Jess brought in her keyboard and played for the music and Tom, Georgianne, Hanna, Carol, and Helen led the music. And Tim Bohannon helped hold the pages down for Jess as she played because a breeze mess with her music sheets. Out in the parking lot Sabrina handed out bulletins along with her son, Nicolas. Shawn, Kent, John, and Tim helped park the cars. Communion was set up by Lorna which took special care because we had to divide it on two carts that could be wheeled around. And let’s not forget Karen who put the bulletins together and Wendy who had to go through each bulletin to correct the FM frequency from 89.9 to 87.7 FM. Meanwhile on the inside Ed and Dan and Joan were installing another new faucet and water heater in the office. Yes, I know they didn’t directly influence the Drive-in service but they were there making things better for the church building. Thank you to these and the many others who do so much for Grace’s ministry. Many people of different gifts helped to create one reality—a Drive-in Church service. And that’s the point for today. Many parts of the body of Christ worked together to make Saturday into a blessing.

So let’s consider again the words of Paul in 1 Corinthians 12 as he talks about the body of Christ.

“⁴ There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. ⁵ There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶ There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.

⁷ Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. ⁸ To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.

¹² Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. ¹⁴ Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

Paul was writing to a very divided church in Corinth. They just couldn't shake off the influence of their old life which kept haunting them. The Church had many problems with division, taking fellow members to court, immorality of some, and a contest of sorts in their minds about who the greatest in the kingdom is. Some bragged that they had certain gifts and because they had certain gifts they were somehow better than others who didn't have that same gift. So Paul puts emphasis on the One Spirit that makes those gifts a reality.

Paul doesn't deny that there were gifts of the Spirit but he does make special note on how to apply those gifts in chapter 13. "If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ² If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³ If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing." What good are gifts if we don't use them to bless more than ourselves? What good would a drive-in service be if we only had musicians, or only preachers without the technology to broadcast them. Where would the communion be if all we had was parking guides. How would we hand out the bulletins if all we had were people inside working on a sink. Folks none of these people were here for personal gain but because by the One Spirit we were all led to offer what we could to make the Service a blessing while at the same time we were willing to lean on the others to do what they do best. Like a puzzle all the gifts came together create a larger picture that brought attention to Jesus rather than ourselves. And whenever we do that good things happen. And they did.

Oh we had our glitches. Even with all of those gifts we had some issues. The station we picked originally and advertised to our neighbors was the wrong one. Rosie and the High School had gone around and distributed cards of welcome to our neighbors. The next day when we realized the error she made the effort to go out again with the corrected information. And at the service itself we discovered our new frequency 87.7 could not be received in some of the newer cars which didn't let their drivers tune into such a low frequency. Their radios could only go down to 87.9 (Two tenths). So, with the patience of all who worshipped in their cars we adjusted again to 87.9. But this little problem in the end didn't derail all that was accomplished. Fact is, even the body of Christ can't do everything perfectly. But perfection is not our calling—faithfulness is. Even when we face forces we cannot control God will accomplish His work and His grace will bless His people. And it sure did on Saturday. Thank you to the Holy Spirit who brought us all together.

And now the Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord makes His face to shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look on you with His favor and give you His peace in Jesus. Amen.

Pastor Matt Woods
John 3:30