

Shepherd's Voice



August 2015

“The Hope of the Resurrection”

By Pastor Joanna Mitchell

This past February, my family and I were able to see the musical “The Color Purple” at the Park Square Theater in St. Paul. I have been listening to this musical for over three years. I love the music and the message within it (some of you already know this because I do talk about it quite frequently. I know. I know. I’m sorry). But its story is Gospel. It is the good news of God revealed in someone’s life. One of the things I love about the music and play is that it wrestles with some big theological ideas. What is the purpose of this life? Is it okay to suffer now because one day we will be with God in heaven? Who is a saint? Who is a sinner? And is it ever too late for redemption?

When I was a child, I was pretty convinced that religion had everything to do with what happened after I died. My belief that Jesus was Lord and had died for my sins meant that I would live forever in heaven. But beyond that I couldn’t tell you much about how my faith should influence my daily life. I think very differently today. I spend a lot of time thinking about how faith matters in my life today and what role faith should play in the ways in which we act in the world. This is part of what is uncovered in “The Color Purple.” Celie (the main character) is in an abusive, horrible relationship and she is resigned to the fact that her life on earth will just be this way. She says: “This life will soon be over, but heaven lasts always.” In time her understanding of God leads her to believe that God has forgotten about her. She is filled with anger toward God. It takes her good friend to help her see that God isn’t for some day (heaven), but today and that when we look around the world we can see God’s presence in our lives. We can also hear the answer to our prayers to God by taking a stand and saying no to the injustices in our lives. Celie is finally able to do this on Easter Sunday of all days. She stands before her abusive husband and declares that she is going to leave him and that every mean and hateful thing he has said to her doesn’t matter because she is here and she matters. When we saw this scene performed live, the entire audience erupted in applause. I love live theater. Together we celebrated the magnitude of this moment. Celie is a new creation.

A few weeks ago I preached asking the question, “What do we stand for as a Christian community?” and I pondered if we too could respond as Paul does in the end of the book of Acts that we stand for the Hope of the Resurrection. In some ways this idea of the hope of the resurrection seems opaque. What does that even mean. Is this the hope that one day we will be in heaven as I believed as a child, or as Celie thought as well? Or does it mean something more? Paul testified to this truth time and time again when he was put

Pastor’s Message continued on page 2.

**Shepherd of the Hills
Lutheran Church
500 Blake Road South
Edina, MN 55343
(952) 935-3457**

Staff:

Pastors	Scott Searl & Joanna Mitchell
Assistant/Visitation Pastor	Fred Jensen
Director of Music/Organist	David Surdez
Shepherd's Song Director	Emily Koski
Children's Choir Director	Kent Goodroad
Administrative Assistant	Shawn Wacholz
Custodian	Kevin Wicks
Parish Nurse	Kaye Wothe
Center for Service Director	Katy Yannitelli

Church Council Members / Officers:

President	Kathy Wiemer
Acting Vice President	Mark Schultz
Treasurer	Quinn Driscoll
Financial Secretary	Dan Orlopp
Secretary	Augusta Thrift
Service	Scott Koelsch
Worship & Music	Allie Jensen
Building & Facilities	Dave Wiemer
Learning	Shay Koski
Growing Relationships	Christa Meland
Caring	Jodi Sheldon Rogness
LMCC	Hilary Nelson
Evaluation	Jason Miller

Telephone & Voice Mail Extensions:

Worship Times	1
Directions	2
Shawn Wacholz	11
Pastor Scott Searl	12
Pastor Joanna Mitchell	13
Emily Koski	15
Emergency Message Mailbox	24
Kaye Wothe	25
Kevin Wicks	26

Shepherd Online!

Pastor Scott Searl	scott@sothchurch.com
Pastor Joanna Mitchell	joanna.mitchell@sothchurch.com
Shawn Wacholz	office@sothchurch.com
Kaye Wothe	kaye.wothe@sothchurch.com
Church web site	www.sothchurch.com
Center for Service	www.hopkinsvolunteers.org

Pastor's Message continued from page 1.

on trial for his faith. Paul completely believed in the resurrection of the dead, but I believe he also believed that the hope of the resurrection had something to say about this life as well. It has something to say about the ways we act in the world on regular basis and how to work alongside of people who are different from us. The bible study we have been using states that Paul responds to the Jewish and Roman authorities by using the "politics of the resurrection." We are so used to politics being something that divides us. We are republican or democrat. We believe in big or little government and our list could go on and on. But the politics of the resurrection or hope in the resurrection is very different than the politics we see on display in our world regularly. Instead it shows us a different way to be, a different way to challenge the powers that be in our world not by using oppression and force, but by living in hope, by cooperating, by trusting that God is present when all voices are heard.

The hope of the resurrection celebrates that all people from all nations are around the throne of God and have a place there and sometimes these voices disagree with one another, but one voice, one person is not better or worse than the next. And when we believe in that hope we work to restore life, to build up, and to empower people to be the person God has created them to be. Believing in the hope of the resurrection isn't simple. It means we have to be willing to listen to people we disagree with and to believe that there perspectives have value. At times it means that we have to stand up against oppressive powers because they have silenced us or others too long.

My favorite song, in "The Color Purple" comes at the end of the musical when Celie looks back over her life and gives thanks. She gives thanks for her sister, children, house and more. She states: "I'm thankful for every day that I'm given, both the easy and hard ones I'm living, but most of all I am thankful for loving who I really am. I'm beautiful. Yes, I'm beautiful and I'm here." For me this is it. The hope of the resurrection. Celie stands and sings as God's new creation, empowered, emboldened and filled with love for the world and for herself. It is this love that gives her the capacity to forgive her husband and to listen to everyone God has created with love, respect and empower them to live as well.

Pastor Joanna



PRESIDENT'S POST

By Kathy Wiemer, Church Council President

Lazy Summer Day(s)

Do you ever just stop what you are doing or have planned to do to just sit, relax and do nothing? Or just sit and daydream? When I was growing up, I remember lying in the grass in the middle of a hot, summer day and watching the clouds drift by in the sky and letting my imagination take me far, far away. It seemed like time moved at a slower pace and while I probably spent a short amount of time drifting with the clouds, it felt like I'd taken a long excursion. When I came back to reality, I still had my chores to do but found that I did them with a lighthearted hop in my step and a refreshed outlook. I hope that you are able to find some time to relax, recharge and enjoy some relaxing summer days or at least a few dreamy hours! I have Friday afternoons 'free' in the summer (by having longer work hours Monday through Thursday) and appreciate the opportunity to have some downtime to do nothing or whatever I want to do. Ah, the warm, lazy days of summer!

Future Capital Projects: August 9th before Worship

The Church Council is discussing and considering some possible opportunities for a future capital appeal process. Your input and consideration is very important as we continue to care for our building and create a welcoming environment. We hosted sessions on June 7th and July 12th and will offer one more opportunity this summer for conversation: August 9th. Join P Scott and me at 8:30AM before worship in the adult forum room as we continue to envision God's call toward our future. Thanks to all who have attended!!

SOTH Block Party on September 13th!!

Mark your calendars for our annual Block party where you can come and enjoy great food, fun, entertainment and games for the kids!! Mark Schultz is leading the planning and several new activities are being explored. Please think about inviting friends and neighbors to join you for the extravaganza under the big white tent!! It's a wonderful way we can celebrate God's blessings with our surrounding community.

Check Out Shepherd's New Website

One of our four strategic pillars is to use technology to allow our content to reach more people. We are very excited that our new and updated website is up and running, thanks to the hard work of the Growing Relationships ministry team led by Christa Meland. Special thanks to Ryan Adolphson (son of Shepherd Song guitar/bass player Mark Adolphson) for the creation of our new site. We hope you have already explored it but if you haven't, please check it out (www.sothchurch.com). Please let us know what you think!!

Continued above

President's Post continued

Main Level Kitchen Remodel

The Admin and Facilities ministry team is updating the kitchen on the main level. It will include new flooring, cabinets, countertops and appliances. The plan is to keep disruption in that area of the church to a minimum during the remodeling and to have it completed before September programming begins.

Thanks for your continued support and prayers for your family of faith and your church council leadership. As always, if you have any questions or concerns about our life together please don't hesitate to contact me or any Council member.



WE'RE HIRING

Shepherd of the Hills is hiring a part-time Children's Ministry Coordinator. We are looking for someone who loves God, enjoys children, is able to teach, lead music and is a team player. If you know someone who would be an asset to our SOTH Team please direct them to our website: www.sothchurch.com/about/openpositions for a full-job description and information on how to apply. Thanks!

Learning and Fellowship



Meet for Breakfast

GOOD COMPANY BREAKFAST

Friday, August 21 at 9:00 am

A Group for all ages!

Denny's Restaurant at 4209 West American Blvd will be the site of the August 21 at 9:00 am Good Company breakfast. The group meets monthly on the third Friday of the month at various restaurants surrounding the church and all church members and their guests are invited to join us for food, fun and fellowship. If you are able to attend please contact Barbara Felker at 952-929-2813 or dollroom@sprynet.com or come to the Good Company table that morning.



FAMILY FUN NIGHT Final Family Fun Night changed to Night of Service! Wednesday, August 12 at 5:30 pm

Shepherd of the Hills has 15 spots at Feed My Starving Children on Wed., August 12th from 6-7:30pm in Chanhassen. People of all ages are encouraged to attend and help us

feed the hungry around the world. We will need to be in Chanhassen at 6pm for those interested in carpooling we will meet and be ready to depart from Shepherd at 5:30pm.

Please send Pastor Joanna (joanna.mitchell@sothchuch.com) an email or sign up at the welcome Center for this event. I hope you can join us.



WOMEN'S RETREAT AUGUST 7th-8th 2015

Instead of going away for our retreat on August 7th and 8th we are going to stay at SOTH for a time of learning, fellowship and fun. A sign up is on the welcome center counter. We will gather for dinner on August 7th in the lounge at 6:00pm and begin our programming for the evening at 7pm. We will conclude our evening by 8:30pm and reconvene the next morning at 9:30am.

Our topic for our retreat is "Being Named." We will be looking at unnamed women in the bible and giving them names while also examining the meaning of our own names and what it means to be named and claimed by God. I hope you can come. Please sign-up today!



SUMMER BIBLE STUDY SCHEDULE

Come for Bible study, food, and fellowship! The Wednesday morning group meets at 9:30 am for coffee, treats and fellowship before they begin a Bible study. The Bible study begins at 10:00 am and is based on the following Sunday's sermon text. All are welcome. Our last Summer date is August 19. Weekly Bible Study will resume Wednesday, September 9.



FOOD PANTRY HOPKINS VOLUNTEERS

By Katy Yannitelli, Director

Greetings! Are you starting to feel the dog days of summer? Keep your cool — head inside to volunteer at one of our partner organizations!

Reach for Resources in Minnetonka has several new opportunities. Reach for Resources is a non-profit organization whose mission is to help people of all abilities in the Minneapolis metro area to live a full life. They do this by providing individualized services that maximize independence, promote community involvement, and improve physical and mental well-being.

New positions:

Human Resources Assistant
Photographer
Fund Development Committee Member
Fund Development Researcher
Social Media Guru
Volunteer Resources Internship
Story Writer
Reception Volunteer

In addition, ICA Food Shelf in Minnetonka also has new opportunities. ICA, Intercongregation Communities Association, has been in existence for 40 years. It grew out of the work of two couples and their awareness of the mounting need in our area. They began distributing food and clothing from a house in downtown Hopkins. Today, ICA is supported by 36 partner congregations, over 100 business partners, and by many civic organizations, schools, and fraternal organizations.

New positions:

Food Rescue Volunteer
Home Delivery Volunteer
Mobile Food Shelf Volunteer

Please visit our website, www.hopkinsvolunteers.org, for more information about these positions as well as many other opportunities.

As always, thank you for your support and for getting the word out about us! Please feel free to contact me with suggestions for organizations we can help, or for any other questions or comments you may have.



LOAVES & FISHES

Monday, August 10

Mark your calendar for our next serving date of Monday, August 10. We now prepare and serve an evening meal at St. Gabriel's Church (1310 Mainstreet, Hopkins). The change in

location and serving on Mondays makes it easier for members of SOTH to help feed our community. Timing is as follows: 4:00 to prepare, 5:00 to serve and 6:00 for clean up. We are finished by 6:45. If you would like more information or are able to volunteer, please contact the church office.



**God's work.
Our hands.**

GOD'S WORK. OUR HANDS.

Sunday, September 20

Worship at 9:30am

Service at 10:30am

Save the Date and Join the Planning Team!

This will be our 2nd year participating in a nation-wide ELCA event.

Schedule:

9:30am	Worship
10:30am	Serve
Noon	Community Meal

We hope you will join us for a morning of worship and service. We will have service projects lined up for people to participate in on Sunday morning. Projects may include: visiting people in a nursing home, preparing our community meal, making cards for people at Chapelview, lawn and yard care, making scarves and blankets for ResourceWest's winter warm wear drive and more. If you have ideas of ways we can serve our community please contact someone on the service team. Last year we had over 65 people join together for God's Work Our Hands Sunday. This is a great opportunity to put our faith in action and share God's love.

Thanks!

The Service Team
Scott Koelsch
Pastor Joanna Mitchell
Hildy Shank
Karen Vevle
Lisa Walker

Worship

WORSHIP ASSISTANT SCHEDULE

DATE	TIME	LECTOR	COMMUNION PRESENTERS	COMMUNION ASSISTANTS	ALTAR GUILD	USHERS
August 2	9:30	Tom Peterson	E Levernier & B Nelson	E Levernier & B Nelson	L Walker & M Bullemer	Crouch Team
August 9	9:30	Colleen Rose	S & L Edmundson	S & L Edmundson	L Lilly & K Schultz	Stone Team
August 16	9:30	Diane Sands	P & B Johnson	P & B Johnson	L Kopperud & B Edmundson	Stone Team
August 23	9:30	Reid Anderson	A Gullickson & S Wacholz	W Wacholz & H Nelson	A Lauer & G Morseth	Stone Team
August 30	9:30	Gretchen Marble	E & B Edmundson	S Peterson & E Edmundson	K Iverson & L Rosendahl	Lilly Team
Sept. 6	9:30	Ellen Levernier	R & G Morseth	R & G Morseth	N Broholm & J Luers	Lilly Team
Sept. 13	9:30	Scott Edmundson	K & J Wicks	K & J Wicks	K Vevele & J Wicks	Rinker Team
Sept. 20	9:30	Jack Hanson	F & J Ness	R & C Rinker	K Boucher & K Wiemer	Luers & Rinker
Sept. 27	9:00 10:30	Warren Wollenberg P or S Bohnsack	D & M Brubacher K Vevele & G Nash	L Kopperud & W Wollenberg R & N Shaeffer	M Bullemer & K Schultz	Luers Team Rinker Team

GREETER SCHEDULE

August 2	9:30	Ed & Betty Edmundson
August 9	9:30	Mark & Karen Schultz
August 16	9:30	Eric & Julie Showers
August 23	9:30	Sophie Deguisne & Kathy Stitt
August 30	9:30	Michelle & Dylan Braun

HOSPITALITY HOSTS

Lana Edmundson & Sandy Christensen
 Laura Hanson
 Geraine Morseth
 Jean Wicks
 Sharon Peterson

August 2015

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 9:30 Worship 10:30 Coffee & Fellowship	3 1:00 Staff Meeting 7:00 Troop Meetings	4	5 6:00 Staff Meeting	6	7 Office Closed 6:30 Women's Retreat	8 9:30 Women's Retreat
9 8:30 Forum: Council Update 9:30 Worship 10:30 Coffee & Fellowship	10 Newsletter Deadline Loaves & Fishes 1:00 Staff Meeting 6:45 Shepherd's Song Rehearsal 7:00 Troop Meetings	11 5:30 Executive Team	12 6:30 Family Fun Event Night of Service	13	14 Office Closed	15
16 9:30 Worship 10:30 Coffee & Fellowship	17 1:00 Staff Meeting 7:00 Troop Meetings	18 6:00 Council Supper 6:30 Council Meeting	19 9:30 Fellowship 10:00 Bible Study	20	21 9:00 Good Company Breakfast Office Closed	22
23 9:30 Worship 10:30 Coffee & Fellowship	24 1:00 Staff Meeting 6:45 Shepherd's Song Rehearsal 7:00 Troop Meetings	25	26	27	28 Office Closed	29
30 9:30 Worship 10:30 Coffee & Fellowship	31 1:00 Staff Meeting 7:00 Troop Meetings					

Summer Worship Schedule

April 26 - September 20, 2015

9:30 a.m. Worship





FALL RETREAT

Confirmation Students Mark Your Calendars!

September 25th at 6:30pm
to September 26th at 4pm.

Our confirmation class is invited to a camp out/retreat at Pastor's Scott's house. We will spend the day getting to know each other, playing games and learning about our faith. Please mark your calendars. We want everyone to be able to attend.

IMPORTANT FALL DATES & PROGRAM NOTES

Wednesday Evening Programming for all begins September 2nd.

New this year, our Wednesday programs will include a community meal on the first Wednesday of the month from 5:30-6:30 pm.

Every Wednesday there will be Faith Formation Classes from 6:30-7:30 pm, in the form of cross-generational Bible study, small group faith formation, TED Talks and current events and faith forums. Watch for more information on our new format in the coming weeks.



Photo: Back row: Sam Koelsch, Anne Goodroad, Callan Showers, Elissa Marble and Andrew Christianson.

Front row: Pastor Joanna Mitchell, Adam Teske

MISSION TRIP RECAP: REFRAME

This was the last high school mission trip for all of the youth who traveled to Hammond, Indiana this year. They have all graduated from high school and will be heading off to new adventures this fall. It was terrific to have one last trip together. Our theme for the week was "Reframe." We spent our days working on homes: repainting, building porches and ramps and reroofing, and our evenings working together on our relationship with God. Every year at Workcamp, I am awed by the depth of our youth's understanding of who God is and the ways they have seen God working in and through their lives. They are indeed a gifted group of young people.

One afternoon Adam and I asked the kids this questions: "Why do you go to church?" This is what they told us.

I enjoy the connections in the church.

I really enjoy the community. If I didn't like the community and the values they hold, I probably wouldn't go because there are other ways to praise God.

The church is a different environment than anywhere else you might go.

At church you get to hang out with people you wouldn't normally hang out with. It doesn't matter who is on your right or on your left.

I see kindness in other people there.

It is time apart from everything and everyone else when I am there.

Our youth understand the power of the community. They have recognized it in one another and in you and they value it greatly. Because of this I give thanks. Our youth serve God with kindness and compassion, they reach out to others and through their work, both on mission trips and beyond in the world, I know they will continue to spread God's love.

Thank you!

Pastor Joanna



BEING SAVED

By Pastor Scott Searl

There are some words and phrases that the church uses that for some people feel really “churchy” or “religious” in a bad way. “Being saved” is one of these phrases that has been given a good deal of airtime in our culture. For some churches, “being saved” has to do with a personal act of acceptance of Jesus Christ as savior and Lord. This sense of “being saved” is not Lutheran. In fact, any reliance on our own

ability to choose God is viewed as very suspicious by most Lutherans. Instead we trust and believe that God is always coming to us. In fact, Luther recognized that God is simply out of our reach as small, limited, finite creatures. There is no way, journey, path or decision that can get you to God, from a Lutheran point of view.

The good news, however, that Luther saw in the Biblical story, is that despite human frailty, foibles, flaws and limitations, God is always seeking us out, coming after us, chasing us down, intercepting us, and finding us. Often in places we’d least expect. God is always in direct communication with us. This is great news, if like me, you realize that almost every attempt at being good, or being godly, or being faithful, fails miserably. Usually, the moment I’m feeling faithful and good, I feel the angels of my lesser nature creep up and inspire me to do something stupid, or hurtful or angry. Or, even in my best moments of decision or action there is almost always some unintended outcome that may or may not be positive.

For us as Lutherans, “being saved” is not a choice we make, but a choice God makes in choosing us. We in fact admit that too often our best laid plans oft times go awry. We say, “we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves.” We are stuck in our own humanity. We are stuck in our own brains, and can’t see the whole picture of life and world, we are stuck in our limited bodies, stuck in our limitations of life, stuck in our path toward death.

This being the case, the “being saved” part for Lutherans goes something more like we are saved from having to wear a mask. Saved from having to be or act like someone the world around me would like me to be. Saved from the burden of having to have it all together. Saved from having to pretend we are perfect or good, or godly, or faithful, or wonderful or anything else for that matter. We are saved from having to be perfect. Saved from having to use all that energy to act or speak in the “right” way. We are free to admit that we say and do dumb things, and then move on from them without dwelling on them or beating ourselves up about them.

We are saved to speak freely and act with boldness, with the hope that God will redeem both all my words and actions. And we are free to view others in the same way. We are free to put the best possible construction on our neighbor’s actions and speech because God is doing the same for

Continued from below.

our neighbor and us too! And we are saved to speak freely with love and kindness because love and kindness has been given to us, without merit, without our needing to choose it. In fact if someone asked Luther today, “Are you saved?” he would simply respond, “Why, Yes! I have been baptized.” In other words, God came to him, loved him, spoke to him, and choose him! Just as God comes to you, loves you, speaks to you, and chooses you, even if you don’t choose God! This is the gift of “being saved” as a Lutheran! You are baptized! Thanks be to God!

Continued above.

Staff Reflection

SHEPHERD OF THE HILLS BLOCK PARTY Coming September 13th!

We're excited to announce that our 7th annual block party is scheduled for Sunday September 13th following the 9:30 am Worship. The festivities will begin at 10:30 am and run until 12:30 pm.

Entertainment!

- Music

Activities for kids of all ages!

- "New" Video Arcade, Bounce house, the popular foam machine (bring a towel), and more!

Food!

- SOTH will provide hot dogs, and smoked brisket along with water, lemonade and coffee for everyone!
- We asked that everyone attending bring a dish to pass. (Example: pasta salad, salads, relish, chips, dessert, etc.)

Save the date of September 13th. Bring a dish to pass, and invite a friend or neighbor to attend and enjoy the fellowship.

We will see you on the 13th!!!!



LESSONS FROM A 2-YEAR OLD

By Emily Koski
Shepherd's Song Director

My oldest son turns two this month. Wow! I was warned that time seems to go by faster when you have kids, and it's

definitely true. While my husband and I have spent every day of the last couple years teaching him how to eat, talk, walk, play and NOT hit, he's taught me more than I could've imagined. Here are some lessons I've learned from my two-year old:

Dance. Any kind of music – even a TV commercial jingle – triggers a dance party he just can't control! And why should he? Dance, rejoice, let the spirit take control and experience joy in a way that lets the world know you're happy!

Learn with wonder. My son is constantly observing, experiencing and learning, and it's all done with genuine curiosity and a sense of awe. As an adult, learning can be a critical exercise, constantly questioning if the processes and principles are "good" or "bad," "true" or "false," or "could be better or more efficient." While there's a time and place for that, it's much more peaceful to simply take it all in with an open mind and see how the new information might transform you. It's much more fun, pleasant and fulfilling to view the world with wonder.

Don't dwell. Whether it's a lost toy, a bump on the head or being told "no," he doesn't dwell on unpleasantness for long. He gives just as much time and attention as is necessary to get over it and then gets back to living his life.

Listen and acknowledge. Crazy cacophony happens when my son gets in a cycle of repeating himself over and over, louder and louder... and louder! I quickly realized this will spin out of control until I take the time to listen and acknowledge what he's saying. Even if my response is a no ("I hear that you want juice, but we aren't drinking juice right now."), he generally accepts it and moves on. More than the juice or cookie or whatever, he just wants to be heard.

Laugh. He loves to laugh! Tickles, silly songs, animals, water fountains, playgrounds and basically anything new he encounters all make him squeal with delight. Appreciate the simple things and let the joy they bring you make you laugh out loud!

Love freely and often. My son will give hugs, kisses and "love you's" to just about any person or stuffed animal he meets. When we're leaving family or friends after a visit, he will blow kisses and say he loves you about 25 times, and it never gets old. Take the time and show the love every chance you get. With all the hurt, fear and pain in the world, it will never be too much.

I'd love to say that I live each one of these lessons with as much gusto as my son does. I don't. But I do let his joy, laughter and wonder wash over me every chance I get, and I pray that both of us keep his wisdom in our hearts as the years continue to fly by.



LOOKING FOR ALTARS?

By Kaye Wothe, Parish Nurse

Without saying a word, Pastor Joanna left a book on my desk last week. I knew the author was one of her favorites. I was struggling with what to read since completing my master's degree. So I jumped in

without further thought. The book, "An Altar in the World" by Barbara Brown Taylor, opens by talking about seeing altars in our world. It reminds me of looking for God in my day, or "God-sightings." So what is an altar? It is a place a reverence, a sacred place in our house of worship. We often will make a bowing gesture to it as if God is there on it. It is the place we put the elements of communion, the body and blood. Yet, we know that God is not just there at the altar. He is in creation. He is where ever we are. So maybe we just need to notice the altars in our days. The church building and altar has meaning and deserves reverence because it is where we come together to worship and find God together. God calls us to do this together. Matthew 18:20 says, "For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."

Conversely, the church building is not meant to be a shelter from the world. The whole world is God's house. So when we are out in the world serving, traveling, working or just being with others we need to look for the altars God has placed in our path. For Moses it was a burning bush. Remember how God had him remove his shoes because it was sacred ground? Moses did not have to stop. He could have gone around the bush and moved on. Where can you take time to find sacred places this summer? I think of hikes in quiet places. I think of places where people stand together in cities, like the street food stand or the subway. I think of beaches where waves bring in water and shells that might have touched another shore far away in the near past. It might even be on the golf course. These are all places where people gather, and we see God's amazing creation. All we need to add is God's name.

I am not suggesting you get up and shout it, but you can if you want too. I suggest you look for ways to act out God's name. Just like God called Moses to act. Moses told God he was not a talented speaker, but God said he would give him the words and Moses really then needed to spring into action. As our mom's said, actions speak louder than words. So I challenge you to look for altars in the days ahead, to praise God for them and feel His presence there. Then to act, to help reveal God's presence...maybe you help someone else, or you leave the place better than you found it, or you simply take time to pray for others from that spot. I'd love to hear about the altars you find! I will be looking for them too.

Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church
500 Blake Road South
Edina, MN 55343

Return Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Hopkins, MN
Permit No. 132

Dated Material



Join us for our Sermon Series on the book of Hebrews

Sunday Worship at 9:30 am

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>August 2</i> | <i>Who is Jesus?</i> |
| <i>August 9</i> | <i>What Did Jesus Do?</i> |
| <i>August 16</i> | <i>What is Faith?</i> |
| <i>August 23</i> | <i>How Shall We Live?</i> |
| <i>August 30</i> | <i>What if Faith Fails?</i> |

If you would like a Study guide,
they are available for \$10 at the Welcome Desk.