

## Pastor's Page for May 2016

Dear Saints,

I'm included on the mailing list of "SONshine Society" newsletter, which encourages elderly visitation within nursing care facilities, as well as support of families and staff. Compassion is always needed and welcomed. We can all make a difference, and certainly individuals have varying degrees of tolerance and giftedness. Some find such settings depressing, and perhaps are put off by smells or what they see. I think it's a balancing act of priorities ... in how I can either add a bit of joy to the day by visiting, or add to the burden through my neglect. Okay, this is an oversimplification. I'm not there all the time. We each need to figure out the right balance between "all or nothing." This might depend on the role of your relationship, on your time availability, on your comfort level and skill set. Even "once in a while" is better than "not at all." Perhaps you will find comfort in visiting by bringing a companion or pet as moral support. You have an advantage of knowing the infirm patient in healthier condition, so can tell stories and reminisce in ways a staff person or volunteer stranger could not. You might discover you feel as blessed as whomever you come to visit. Simple acts of greeting to those you pass in the hall can brighten their days.

Perhaps you'll find this poem from their website insightful:

### ***"Look At Me!!"***

*What do you see, world, what do you see??*

*What are you thinking when you're looking at me, A crabby old woman, not very wise?*

*Uncertain of habit, with far-away eyes, who dribbles her food and makes no reply, when you say in a loud voice, "I do wish you'd try!"*

*Who seems not to notice the things that you do, and forever losing a sock or a shoe, who, resisting or not, let's you do as you will- with bathing and feeding, the long day to fill.*

*Is that what you're thinking? Is that what you see? Then open your eyes world you're not looking at me!*

*I'll tell you what I am as I sit here so still, I'm a small child often, with father and mother, sisters and brothers who love one another.*

*A young girl of sixteen with wings on her feet, dreaming that soon a lover she'll meet.*

*A bride soon, at twenty, my heart gives a leap, remembering the vows that I promise to keep.*

*At twenty-five now, I have young of my own, who need me to build a secure, happy home.*

*A woman of thirty now my young ones grow fast, bound to each other with ties that should last.*

*At forty, my young sons are grown and are gone, but my man's beside me to see I keep strong.*

*At fifty, Once more babies play 'round my knee, again we know children, my loved one and me.*

*Dark days are upon me, my husband is DEAD!! I look at the future, I shudder with dread.*

*For my young are all rearing young ones of their own and I think of the years and the love that I've known.*

*I'm an old woman now and nature is cruel, 'tis her jest to make old age look like a fool.*

*The body is crumbled, grace and vigor depart.  
There is now a stone where I once had a heart.*

*But inside this old carcass, a young girl still  
dwells, and now and again my battered heart  
swells, I remember the joys, I remember the  
pain, and I'm loving and living life over agin.*

*I think of the years all too few, gone too fast,  
and accept the stark fact that nothing can last.*

*So open your eyes, world, open and see –  
LOOK CLOSER – SEE ME!!!!*

*By a "Crabby Old Woman"*

Somehow, it brings me joy if I've any sense of being able to bring some light or joy to somebody's day. I like when there is some practical benefit I can bring, but most people simply appreciate the remembrance and visit. I usually offer prayer and Communion when appropriate. Once in a while I'll bring a guitar and share some music, if the person seems the sort who would enjoy it.

I appreciate how member Sharon Lord has been encouraging singers to visit local nursing homes, inspired in part by Christmas caroling. Music does have a way of restoring people's spirits, often bringing happy memories and adding some new ones.

Let me acknowledge that May 1<sup>st</sup> will be First Communion Sunday, so we'll have this sacrament at both Services. Thursday, May 5<sup>th</sup> is the National Day of Prayer ... pray always, but consciously commune in prayers with others to honor God and Country. The ELCA congregations of Lake County will have an Ascension Day Service and combined choir at 7 p.m. at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Waukegan ... and All Saints is invited. Mother's Day is May 8<sup>th</sup>, and we honor such women past and present.

Pentecost Sunday is May 15<sup>th</sup>, the birthday celebration of the Christian Church through the Holy Spirit: wear red in observance. We have a Baptism scheduled at the 10 a.m. Service. Trinity Sunday is May 22<sup>nd</sup>. I do have a wedding scheduled in late May. We'll begin our summer schedule on Memorial Day weekend on May 29<sup>th</sup>, which is at 9 a.m., combining the two formats of traditional and contemporary praise.

Thank you to all able to attend our congregational meeting on April 10<sup>th</sup>. Lauri Schreiber has launched a campaign to encourage financial and prayer support toward hiring a new music coordinator & organist. Help us network in finding qualified candidates.

Trinity Lutheran Church in Ingleside celebrated its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary in April, and really enjoyed the loan of our Bell Choir set. Their volunteers hope to play for our congregation in May, and will be arranging a date. Michaeline Witt, Lauri Schreiber and I sang in a 60-some voice choir concert on the 16<sup>th</sup> at Trinity, and I performed a vintage hat & music program after their potluck on the 17<sup>th</sup>. Trinity's organist, Ed Kramer, continues to record hymns each week for us on Tuesday's for the upcoming 8:15 a.m. Service.

I presided at a Baptism, a funeral, and a wedding vow celebration in April. It doubles the joy when members volunteer to go on a visit with me to shut-ins, and when others ask me to accompany them. We had over 20 people participate in Phil Donner's Bible Studies on Wednesdays, including me, and we deeply appreciate his leadership and inspiration. Thank you to all who came to our Grub Day on April 30<sup>th</sup>. Our leadership is also refurbishing our float, and making plans to be in the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade. Help us reach out to our community. Together, we make a positive difference!

In Christ's name and service, Pastor Nathan