

MISSION/VISION SUNDAY

Report from the Mission/Vision Task Force and Results of "Listening Sunday"

Text: Jeremiah 29:11-12

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.

INTRODUCTION—Observation on Things to Keep

We've heard it said that God loves us and has a wonderful plan for our lives. It's easy to agree when we like the plan.

But sometimes, God's plan turns out to be different than what we were thinking. You may be happily married with two children. You have no intentions of having any more. But one day, you come home from work and your wife says, "Guess what? I just came back from the doctor. We're going to have two more kids! Isn't this a blessing? Praise the Lord!" And you reply, "Honey, I need to sit down." Sometimes God's plan is different than what we were thinking.

Or maybe you have a job you really like—a job that you're good at. But one day, the boss says, "John, we need to make some changes. We're going to have to let you go." And you go home and say, "Lord, what is happening? I thought I was where you wanted me to be! I thought I was doing what you wanted me to do! What is going on?" Sometimes God's plan is different than what we were thinking.

If you were up in the Goodyear blimp, and you were watching a parade, you could look down and see the entire parade. You could see the beginning of the parade, the end of the parade, and everything in between.

That's how God sees your life and our family of believers here at Trinity. He sees the beginning of our life, the end of our life, and everything in between. And God knows the plans he has for us. They are plans to prosper us and not to harm us, plans to give us hope and a future.

As we have made our plans for our congregation and laid out our mission and vision, we have called on God and prayed to him, we have sought and searched for his wisdom and blessing. We've made our plans together and we want to share them now, but we also want to remember that sometimes God's plan is different than what we are thinking. We know that the Lord has already seen the next ten years. So we ask him to give us the strength to do what we need to do for him, to bring only glory to his name and to reach out with his saving Word. Amen.

Actions:

- Keep ALL our existing ministries
- Small adjustments to existing ministries
- Do everything well for our God

HYMN: CW#537 *Onward, Christian Soldiers*

Text: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

THEME ONE: Member Involvement

Look around you; each one of you makes up a part of the body of Christ. As St. Paul, by inspiration, sought to find a simile to adequately describe the Church of Jesus Christ, the one he came back to time and time again—in fact, over 30 times—was the comparison between the Church and a body.

Each of us is unique and different. There is an awesome variety among us and that's a tremendous blessing. But we are also called to be unified, united in our purpose. That can pose a problem, but through the power of the Holy Spirit, it is essential for us to overcome it.

Here we can learn from our physical body. I can be scratching my head with my hand, walking across the floor with my feet, seeing with my eyes, hearing with my ears, and smelling with my nose all at the same time. The secret to keeping the Body of Jesus Christ that we know as Trinity Lutheran Church on the right path is that we must be seeking the same goal. That goal is to reach out to people with the saving Gospel, introduce them to their Savior Jesus, and then help them grow in their faith and service to God. Amen.

Actions:

- Take a new skills survey
- Charge the President, Vice-President, and Board Chairmen to reinstate and repopulate support committees
- Publish and post lists of all committees with members' names and contact information

HYMN: CW#57 *Go, Tell It on the Mountain*

Text: Psalm 19:1-4, 14

The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world...May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.

James 1:19 My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.

THEME TWO: Communication

Communication! Sometimes we are like the couple who were with some friends and the subject of marriage counseling came up. Mary said, "Oh, Tom and I will never need counseling. We have a great relationship. He was a communications major in college and I majored in drama. He communicates really well and I just act like I'm listening."

Communication can be a very frustrating thing. In Psalm 19 we hear how **"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world."** In spite of nature's proclamation about our Creator God, in spite of nature's communication, many people don't listen and believe the lie of evolution instead. What's the problem? People aren't listening!

All of us who communicate here at Trinity, who proclaim the Word, who tell of needs and wants and events, need to do an even better job at telling everyone in the congregation what is going on. At the same time, no one in the congregation can ACT like they are listening. Everyone of us must work at listening to what is being communicated. As St. James reminds us: **Everyone should be quick to listen [and] slow to speak.** Amen.

Actions:

- Make maximum use of take-home bulletin inserts, calling chains, email lists, bulletin boards, online directories, website and links, yard signs, video screen, ministry minutes.
- Form a standing Communication Committee

HYMN: CW#566 *We All Are One in Mission*

Text: Matthew 28:16-20

Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

THEME THREE: Oneness in Mission

You undoubtedly recognized those words as the Great Commission of Jesus to his disciples, to us, his Church. Now realize that Jesus was not giving those standing around him a nice colloquial phrase to utter every once in a while to a group of people gathered in a church. No, with these words Jesus was impacting his followers so that we, as the Church, might make an impact.

In these words, Jesus gives Trinity Lutheran Church our goal. A well-defined goal is needed to be successful. It has been said, “If you aim at nothing, you are sure to hit it.” The goal of a basketball team is to make more baskets than its opponent. The team may dribble, pass, and run with excellence, but if they do not put the ball into the basket they will not win. The goal of Trinity Lutheran Church is to “**make disciples.**” We do that by letting people know they are saved by Jesus, getting them baptized into Jesus, and teaching them about Jesus so that they will follow Jesus.

Our strategy to reach this goal is “SI.” No, that is not *Sports Illustrated* but “Simple and Intentional.” We need to reach out—go where the people are. We need to plug in—bring people into the church where they can hear the Law and the Gospel. We need to build up—teach and train our members to use your God-given gifts and talents.

If we are going to reach our goal of making disciples with our simple and intentional strategy, we must be committed—ALL of us must be committed. It has been said, “None of us is as strong as all of us.” That means we need to be a T.E.A.M. = Together Everyone Accomplishes Ministry. We do that by being involved together in the ministry of Trinity Lutheran Church. Together—joined together, knitted together, supporting together, working together.

As we move into this new decade of ministry, will you make it a point to find your place on T.E.A.M. Trinity Lutheran Church? Together we can impact our community and the world with the Good News: Jesus Christ is our only Savior from sin. His perfect life for us, his death in our place, and his resurrection from the dead, give us forgiveness of all sins and eternal life in heaven. Let’s work together for him! Amen.

Actions:

- Monthly social and family activities
- Neighborhood parties
- Community service projects
- Blending LES and public school children

Pastor Richard D. Starr