

Serving “Together”

July 1, 2018

Our Savior’s Way
Worshiping Sundays 8:00, 9:30, & 11:00 AM
Pastor Labuhn

Gathered together around God’s Word, we’re continuing to take a look at our “Together” theme this summer. And this morning, we’re taking a look at serving together. Serving together, just as the early disciples did long ago when they devoted themselves to serving those who were in need. Taking a look at the book of Acts, chapter 2, v. 42-45, it says “⁴² And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ⁴³ And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ And all who believed were together and had all things in common. ⁴⁵ And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need.” Serving was a significant part of what they did as they met the needs of those who were in need.

There’s a story of a man in civilian clothes who, during the American Revolution – prior to July 4th 1776, rode past a small group of soldiers who seemed like they needed some help. They were trying to repair a small defensive barrier. As they did, their leader was shouting at them, giving them instructions but wasn’t helping at all.

When the rider asked the leader why he did not help them, the leader said with great dignity, “Sir, I am a corporal!” Then the stranger apologized, got off his horse and started helping the exhausted soldiers. When the job was done, he said to the corporal, “Mr. Corporal, next time you have a job like this and not enough

men to do it, go to your commander-in-chief, and I will come and help you again.” – It was none other than George Washington.

As we celebrate the 4th of July, we celebrate the time when our nation became independent from England. But that didn't necessarily mean that we became a self-sufficient nation. Because our nation's leaders also recognized, that as we became more independent from England, we would also become more dependent upon God. Because He is the one who truly provides for all our needs. And, as human beings, all of us are in need of help from time to time.

In our Gospel reading for today, we see two different people who needed help. The first is a leader of the synagogue by the name of Jairus, who comes to Jesus and falls at his feet. He implores Jesus earnestly to heal his daughter. The second, is a woman who had gone everywhere else over the course of 12 years trying to stop her bleeding. She had suffered a great deal under the care of doctors, spending all that she had but instead of getting better, she got worse. So in her desperation, she reaches out and touches Jesus, trusting that somehow she might be healed. And when she did, she was healed and freed from her suffering. And while Jesus asks who touched His clothes, and the woman falls down before Him in fear and trembling, Jesus says to her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well, go in peace and be healed of your disease.”

God knows that we need this kind of unconditional love in our lives. Because contrary to what many might think, not all our needs can be overcome by our own grit and determination. We still need God's great love to meet all our needs. That comes to us through Jesus, who willingly humbled Himself to take on the form of a servant. He died on the cross and on the third day, He rose again to new life. So that having overcome death as one of us, all those who believe in Him might overcome our great need of eternal life. Which we receive in Him, by faith in Him alone.

As we gather together today to worship Him by the power of the Holy Spirit, having been baptized into His death and resurrection in the waters of baptism, we also acknowledge that we still need

Him in our lives today. And so through ongoing confession and repentance, falling down before Him in fear and trembling, He gives to us that peace that we need in our lives. It makes us whole once again so that we might go out from this place and share His love with others in need of His great love. This is what motivates our hearts to willingly use our unique God given talents to be His hands and feet in our world today. And it's also what helps to make us, Our Savior's Way Lutheran Church. Because serving together is not just foundational to whose we are, but it's foundational to who we are as a congregation.

Some of us gathered here this morning have just gotten back from a mission trip to Haiti. While they were there, they hosted a Vacation Bible School program for the children and installed a new irrigation system on the orphanage grounds. This irrigation system waters plants at the orphanage which give to them sustenance as well as a little extra that they can sell in the market to provide for others' needs as well. Yet, there are many other ways in which we serve even in our own Northern Virginia community as well.

This morning, we have a video for you of Jessica Wessell, a congregational member of Our Savior's Way, sharing with us what serving together means to her....let's take a look.

There are so many unique ways in which you can serve together with other members here at Our Savior's Way. If you aren't involved already, please consider serving together with others. You can help out with our upcoming Vacation Bible School. You can help deliver bread to those in need, or host a dinner at a homeless center, welcome visitors to church, or pray for those with prayer concerns. You can serve on the Altar guild or serve on one of our committees. There are plenty of opportunities to serve together, all you need to do is contact our Volunteer coordinator, Nikki Deacon, or let one of the pastors know. Our contact information is in your bulletin.

Let's pray –