



St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Messenger

625 W. Gibson Road, Woodland, CA * Phone 662-1935 * August 2017

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Dear St. Paul's,

Do you like change? Some people love a change now and then, others do not. I bring this up because we have been worshiping in the Fellowship Hall because we are waiting for our new HVAC system. We have made adjustments. We have brought in some chairs with armrests, we are taking Holy Communion standing up and I appreciate how willing people have been to adapt. Still, I miss the sanctuary, but I do enjoy the great sound of voices raised to the Lord in the smaller space of the Fellowship Hall. I do enjoy how the service ends and people stand around and talk in place, and coffee is only 10ft away.

Change is difficult; some things we have had to figure out as we go along. We still sing and read the Word. We still Commune and hear the sermon. What has also been enjoyable is that people have been sitting in new places by different people. Last week I sat next to someone who had a wonderful singing voice. I never knew they had such a lovely voice until I had the chance to sit by them. Each week people ask me about the people they sat next to. How long have they been here and what was their name again. People are getting to know each other. People are meeting and talking. In the middle of change and different situations we are more of a Church.

What do I mean by that? The Church is the people. The Church is knowing and sharing with those around us the faith that has been given to us by the Grace of God. One hymn I enjoy has this verse:

I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless;
Ills have no weight and tears no bitterness.
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still if Thou abide with me.

Ills have no weight and tears no bitterness is the line that make me think. The struggles of *ills* and difficulties to the point of tears are part of our life. But they are just part of it. It is not what life is made up of. Difficulties in church, difficulties with families, life, jobs, or whatever. They are all part, but they are not the focus or center of our existence, Christ is!

Christ is the center of our Hope. Christ is the center of our peace. Our Faith is a constant source of comfort and joy.

Romans 15:13 *May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

Blessings to you through your many changes and challenges.

In Christ Jesus,
Pastor David Hardin