



Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church
Pastor Terry's Thoughts of the Week

Bold Church: Beginning

The real beginning of mission was when the disciples were gathered together and those who had witnessed Jesus' ministry worshipped together. Through the years something emerged that, today, we envision as "Holy Humor" Sunday – the Sunday after Easter.

It comes from the Middle Ages when people used that Sunday to rejoice over the fact that the devil had been defeated. It was a time to laugh at the devil, to proclaim him a fool and to joyously celebrate. We've lost some of the medieval humor, but we need to remember that at this point, the devil has had his due. He's done and done in.

If you have been blessed, as I have been, to be in a congregation that has a clown ministry, you know what I mean. Our first clown introduced herself by doing cartwheels down the center aisle! To say she brought smiles to the usually somber Lutherans, is to put it mildly. She had a real ministry. As time went on, she taught others how to bring laughter – and good points – to people by pointing a finger at herself. But we all knew we were one with her.

People who can laugh are usually healthy people. I don't necessarily mean "healthy" in body, but rather healthy in mind and in outlook. Those who can laugh at themselves find that the world is sometimes a very silly place, a place that seems, sometimes, to give more credence to non-essentials than to faith.

Neelie (the clown's name) helped us to laugh as she portrayed Zacchaeus up in the tree, short little guy who was a tax collector and cheat. But we understood that we had a good bit of Zacchaeus in us as well. We were concerned about having "enough" of everything so we could be comfortable in life – now and in the future. We realized that we could easily become so

individualized that we would forget about others – and care less.

Neelie also taught us about living life a little more lightly and paying more attention to God’s promises and the important things of living.

Now, we don’t have a proper clown in this congregation – although there seem to be a few of us who might just make the grade in the future. But it would be good if we could get that “clownish” outlook on life. The clown is the one who is different, who looks foolish to the rest of the world. But it is the clown who gets down to the nitty gritty and strips the world of its false cover.



Are you willing to stand out in society like the clown? Jesus did. Yes, he stripped his view of the world down to the very essence of life. He helped people see what was really important in life. He gave humorous examples (a camel through a needle’s ee? Come on!) but he never let go of the important things.

People didn’t like Jesus and sometimes we don’t like the truths that clowns bring us. But both Jesus and the clowns will always be there teaching us that the important stuff of life is worth looking a little crazy for and that, on the whole, the world is better because God is in charge.

TMK

-- *Week of April 11, 2010*