



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

**Bold Church: Mission**

What is “mission” to you? As a young child I heard a missionary preach in my home church. He had been a classmate of my pastor. He told us wonderful stories about Africa – animals and snakes and other things that get children excited. But he looked yellow to me. And that was fascinating. (I found out later it was from medication he took for malaria!)

I suspect that it was because of him that I became a missionary later in life. I went to South America, not Africa, but there was still the impression of Mission.

The really interesting part of all this is that when we future missionaries gathered together in the seminary where they would teach us everything we needed to know (right!) they asked us, one after the other, to tell how we became interested in missions. We were all roughly the same age and about four or five of the families said they had heard Pastor Elmer Danielson speak when they (we) were in Sunday School. It is difficult to measure the impact he had on the children of the old Augustana Lutheran Church in the 1940's.

Now that is one form of mission, but it is not a ministry that everyone can do. So what is our mission today?

As you hear about those who are doing a variety of things in the church, you are hearing about mission! It's not just making quilts, shawls, ME dolls and the like, although those are fascinating and important ministries. It is also calling to find out if someone is OK after not seeing them for a Sunday or two. It's looking for a way to minister to someone you meet in the market or in a restaurant. It is being kind when someone is less than kind to you, realizing that they may have had a very difficult time just moments before. It's saying “Thank you” even when it may be a little over the top.

Mission in our lives is never ending. We come to this place to worship and to be renewed. Some say that our worship time is when we get refueled for the week. I think that's good. As Americans we move around a lot during any given day. Some day, just for fun, keep track of how many people you have interchanges with as you move around. Are there complete strangers you say "hello" or "good morning" to as you walk into a store? Are there folk you see often and just kind of walk by - try stopping and giving a greeting.

Don't be embarrassed about asking for names. Personally, I'm pretty good with faces, but tell me a name right now and I'll forget it before lunch. I can look at someone and remember a good bit of their story as they have told it, but I can't come up with a name! My "name rememberer" is just out of whack most of the time.

But admitting weakness and being truly friendly is a wonderful part of mission. We can't do it all, but we can do a bit in the part of the world in which we move.

As you come to worship to be refueled by the word and the feast, remember there are those who are in need of the love of God - and you are the one to whom that mission has been entrusted. We all have the gift of God's love showered on us. Our mission is to spread that gift around - for you can never give it all away!

*TMK*



-- *Week of April 25, 2010*