



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

Bold Church: Testimony

If you were not confused by the picture on the cover and the word “testimony” with it, you have a good idea of the arenas that are covered as I think of “testimony”.

Yes, testimony is speech, particularly in a court room or when we listen to the story of a person’s life. What it is a testimony OF is sometimes hard to comprehend. A witness at a trial may seem to be giving testimony that will support a defendant’s position, but soon attorneys will begin to ask prying questions and we find that support is lost and the defendant is finding his cause weakened.

Our verbal testimony may be very positive as we tell about our Christian lives, but then our actions may say to those around us that words are not works and works speak much more loudly than the words we said.

Stories are told again and again of people who are limited in one way or another, physically, and yet they have accomplished more in their lives than some folk who are blessed from day one. Their testimony of life is how they have used the abilities they have and not about how limited they were.

The testimony of our faith is often observed in our actions. We may have difficulty verbalizing our faith, but what we do in life shows what’s important. If we say we love everyone as God loves us and then we are heard pulling down a person or criticizing the way they live, then our first words are “overrun” by the second set. We need to be consistent.

Our testimony as a family of faith (this congregation) is strong and positive. Just before Lake County’s school vacation in April, we received a call from a local school which was trying to supply some food for some of the poorer students

to take home with them over the holidays. Unfortunately, the call came after the office was closed on Friday, so pastor just announced the need at pastor's breakfast. My thought was that a number of places had been called, so what we could provide would just be part of the gift.



When the food was brought to the school, the assistant principal said "we called you because you (the congregation) have been so helpful to us in the past". We were the ones called because our blessing to the community was known and appreciated. As a point of interest, those "Tuesday morning munchers" came up with over \$100.00 in cash and coupons. What a witness to their concern for others!

As a family of faith, we are active in our community. We are volunteers in many places and our gifts are contributed to many organizations and helping groups. We are known as a giving community. That is our testimony to the community. How come we do all this? God has showered us with the gift of love and also with the gift of testimony in our lives. As Lutherans we tend to be shy about telling the world about our faith in words, but our actions shout the love of God for this world all over the community.

Blest to be a blessing? You betcha - and the blessings overflow, even changing OUR lives.

TMK

-- *Week of May 9, 2010*