



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

### **Lord of the Sabbath**

Sabbath: reminds me of the old hymn, "Take time to be holy". Many of you may not know that hymn, but when I was a kid we sang it fairly often. What it meant to me was "take time to do 'church' stuff". I did a lot of "church stuff" – and I still do. One of the reasons is that I feel comfortable in church. Church buildings have an ability, in my mind, to keep the world at bay. It tends to be somewhat quiet and I usually like the people I find there. Usually.

But the Sabbath really isn't entirely about doing church stuff. Sabbath is a time of rest, rejuvenation and renewal. Retreats are special times of sabbath when we feel we can grow in an atmosphere that is different from the usual. Some monasteries and nunneries offer places for directed devotional retreats and just quiet times for those of us who feel the need to get away from it all. That's what Sabbath is all about.

Church workers are probably the worst ones for not hearing this commandment – and it is a command, not a suggestion! Church is the place that is definitely open and active on Sundays – not a bad thing! So what happens? Some take Mondays off to recuperate. Some make sure they have a certain amount of "self" time each day. Some make sure that they have free time. But, quite frankly, most don't take good care of themselves in terms of sabbath time.

For the rest of us, taking a sabbath may also be a problem. There are "big games" on Sundays. They sometimes start before we can get home from church. What do we do about that – at least golf doesn't start until about 3:00 pm.

And there are shopping deals – Sunday only. Also special coupons, Sunday specials, for meals and just about anything else you may want. We may work

all week and then find our weekends are just as hectic if not more so than the week we just put in. Folks, we are running ourselves ragged.

When we retire, we don't have all the activity we had when the kids were around – so now we travel and run around so that we don't miss seeing the grands as they sprout and grow. So we still get tired as we're re-tired.

A sabbath. A time to spend day-dreaming. A time to let your mind do it's own thing. A time to let your spirit flow so that God's Spirit can join in. Ever thought of it that way?

I've said before, and I'll say it again, that often our thoughts turn to prayers before we know it. There are mornings I wake up and know that Ed has done a good job because last Sunday's choir music is still going around in my head. Those are good words and music reminding me of a time of worship and fellowship with good friends and with God.

Take some time to think about how you do your sabbath. How do you get your rest. Some of you "gym" it out – yes, that does actually relax you in the long run. Some of you find a 20 minute nap a day rejuvenates you. Some of you get lost in a good book.

If you don't "do" a sabbath, take another look at your life and find make time, because God gave us this vital commandment for our good health, our worship time and a time for wonder.

*TMK*

*-- Week of September 27, 2009*