



The Christ Messenger

Christ Lutheran Church
Vienna, West Virginia

October 2021

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Our Mission:

As Children of God,
nourished by the Word,
Sacrament and Fellowship
of loving, forgiving, and
hopeful believers—
WE are guided by the Holy
Spirit to WITNESS to Christ's
saving presence in the
World!

Pastor Tom's Musings

It's hard to believe that fall is here once again. And I have fond memories of this time of year. It's when one of my favorite fruits are picked, apples. Apples are one of my favorite fruits. When we lived in Adams County, in Pennsylvania, I got very involved in the Apple Harvest Festival. So just for kicks, and being in the fall mood, I wondered what biblical significance the words Apple Harvest might have. So, I broke open my trusty concordance and found references to both the words Apple and Harvest. Now I am not sure I can fill my Apple Harvest appetite from the Bible as much as having a piece of scrapple or Apple dumpling with ice cream, but I would like to share with you what I learned.

I found the word Apple appearing at least five times in the Bible, primarily in the Old Testament. Now initially I thought I'd find the first instance of the word Apple in the Garden of Eden, but it's not there, it just says fruit. But the other instances that the Apple is mentioned, it refers to something which is very special. So special that God uses the word of describe His relationship with His people. In the book of Deuteronomy, Moses recites the words to "The Song of Moses" and in it he talks about the relationship God has with his people. Moses said, "He (God), sustained him (Israel) in a desert land, in a howling wilderness waste; he shielded him, cared for him, guarded him, as the apple of his eye." (Deut. 32:10) That's the relationship, the apple of his eye. That's the way God sees us, as the apple of His eye.

Later, in Psalm 17, King David uses the same apple of the eye example to describe something very precious that needs protecting. David says, "Guard me as the apple of the eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings." (Psalm 17:8) Here the apple of the eye is the same as our pupil that needs to be protected by our eyelids, but also in whom the light will shine through. Finally, David's son Solomon provides yet another description of relationship, this time between a man and a woman, and this time the words Apple tree are used. Solomon writes, "Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest, so is my beloved among the young men. In his shade I take great delight." (Song of Solomon 2:3) So in summary then, the word Apple in the Bible is all about a very special relationship.

The next word is Harvest. The first time we see Harvest mentioned is in God's promise to Noah after the flood. God promised, "As long as the earth endures seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will not cease." (Gen. 8:22) God's promise here sustains us all. Jeremiah echoes how the people respond to that promise made to Noah, they say, "Let us fear the Lord our God, who gives rain in its season, that autumn rain and the spring rain, and keeps for us the weeks appointed for Harvest. (Jeremiah 5:24) God has set everything in motion and for that we give Him honor and praise. In the New Testament, the word Harvest is more about rescuing the lost, feeding the hungry, and bringing everyone back under the guidance of One Shepherd. Jesus said in Matthew 9, that the Harvest is great but the laborers are few, and therefore ask the Lord of the Harvest to send out laborers. In other words, we have a responsibility here.

So what's all this Harvest stuff about? Well, we've learned that the word Apple describes a very special and enduring relationship. It is a relationship in which we are guarded, cared for and held under the protections of God's wings. God has set up our well being in the Harvest. Everything that we will ever need God will supply. Our relationship with God and the joy of our full dependence on him is what we are to share with those who are lost, those who don't feel God's love in their lives and have the weight of the world bearing down on their shoulders.

Can you just imagine a World Harvest Festival that we could have? Can you imagine having scrapple, Apple dumplings, ice cream, pulled pork sandwiches as well as a personal relationship with God that is as precious as the apple of your eye? Wouldn't it be great to live in God's promises and know you will always be taken care of and be able to harvest that same kind of joy among your friends? I believe that would be a Festival to remember. I pray that we all would have a biblical kind of Harvest Festival this year.

Always in Jesus
Pastor Tom

ELDERBERRIES

Elderberries met at Cheddar's in Vienna, on Thursday, September 16, 2021. It was a nice, sunny day and we had enough privacy that we could actually hear each other. We found out we have some "speeders" in the group. Hmmm. And we told our snowbirds good-bye for a few months. Safe travels, Ron and Judi.

The bad thing was that we had to sit at two tables. The good thing was that we had to sit at two tables. We like large numbers. We were happy to have two new faces, Pastor Tom and Liz Darr, with us.

Those attending were Jenny and Mike Knotts, Judi and Ron Clampitt, Kay Rowan, Fran and Tom Williams, Carolyn Stanley, Larry Armstrong, Pastor Tom and Liz, and Delores and Jerry Steege.

In October, we will meet at Napoli's in Belpre. (Our meeting date is on the third Thursday.) There is a sign-up sheet at church or call me at (304) 428-2056. Hope you are able to join us.

Delores Steege



Birthdays

October 3 – Rocky Freeman
October 6 – Ron Garrison
October 11 – Jenny Knotts
October 15 – Tom Williams
October 21 – Judy Clampitt
October 27 – Loreta Delaney
October 27 – Mike Knotts

Anniversaries

October 16 – George & Barb Volker

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

After the garage sale, I wanted to especially thank Rocky Freeman as she was the mover and shaker that got us going. The total made after expenses was \$1949.50.

At our LCW meeting, as we remembered each person individually and how they really went above and beyond to help; we decided we would be afraid we would miss someone if we started naming people and all they did. It was not just the 5 active women—it was church-wide. So, the women asked to be sure to put a special thank you in The Christ Messenger.

We want to thank everyone for your help: working, pricing, donations, buying, baking, cooking, setting up, taking down, cleaning up and taking left overs to various organizations. (We even had strangers help at the close. Thanks to Kim's bribing several strong boys and a girl with food!!)

A special note of appreciation to everyone for pricing their donations. It was better this time than ever –helps us so much, plus we never want to hurt anyone's feelings by underpricing.

Sincerely, Rocky, Judi, Kay, Lisa and Delores

Good Samaritan Center

Item of the Month



Chili Beans

Important Dates to Remember

October 3rd – Blessing of the Animals at First Lutheran at 4pm
October 10th – Installation of Pastor Darr at Christ Lutheran at 4pm
October 21st – Elderberries at Napoli's in Belpre at noon
October 30th – Vienna Trick or Treating 6pm-7:30pm

Starting October 12th and running for six weeks:
Women's Bible Study: Women of the Bible
Meets at 1pm in the Fellowship Hall. If this time doesn't work for you but you would like to participate, please contact Liz Darr.

Sunday School begins October 3rd at 9:30
October will start our updated schedule of services at 8:30 and 10:45

Quiet Moments

“Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless” Mother Teresa

Dear Friends,

My grandmother, Catherine McLaughlin, probably never heard the above quote, but she lived it every day of her life. She knew that gentle but strong words can heal any situation. She used to tell me that “gentle words can turn away wrath.” (Proverbs 15).

Yet today we see so much anger in so many situations. From politics to simple daily living, we find so many examples of exasperation, anger, or just plain rudeness. We think of the “good old days” and bemoan our present generation and/or circumstances. What happened to listening to each other and offering a kind word where needed?

We, at Christ, have a wonderfully supportive church family. We need to take that kindness out to everyone we meet whether in person, computer, or phone. We can make a difference in our environments by using those kind words that Mother Teresa spoke. We are those little threads that can knit peace into our families, communities, and country.

Together, one person at a time, we can spread what gifts that God has blessed us.

Enjoy the adventure of seeing how many smiles you can initiate by just being the genuine you!

Blessings,
Liz

We keep the following people in our prayers:

Russell Behnke; Jerry John DiNicola; Sally Ebeling; Family of Ron Goben; Pam Goots; Heather; Mary Hennen; Laura Lemley; family of Jim McGuier; Rob Miser; Gary Miller; Gean Secreto; April Sowards, Family of Mildred Stanley; Jerry Steege; Caren Thomas; Donna Vincent; Patsy Wagaman; Terry & Vicki Wilson; Tiffany Wilson; Lois (Steege) Wood; police and first responders; our troops; Christians and other minorities in the Middle East; people in the Ukraine and eastern Europe; pray for peace; and for our military, especially for Airman Elijah Modesitt (U.S. Airforce); Jon Shorr serving in Afghanistan; Conner Allen serving in China; families of all those who serve in the military; for all who have been diagnosed with COVID 19 and/or hospitalized for the virus, for all who have died from the virus, for all of our medical personnel and first responders who are treating patients, for all families and loved ones separated by quarantines, for people who do not have access to medical care to be treated, for folks who are unemployed and the underemployed.

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Church Web Page:

<https://christlutheranviennawv.org/>

Church Facebook Page:

[Facebook.com/christlutheranchurchviennawv](https://www.facebook.com/christlutheranchurchviennawv)



A harvest of sufficiency, contentment, and generosity

When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the foreigner. I am the LORD your God. –Leviticus 19:9-10

“What I earn is mine, ALL mine, to do with what I want.” That’s the message our culture tells us again and again. Yet the Leviticus 19:9-10 clearly tells us that the “mine, all mine” attitude existed some 2,500 years ago as well. It’s hard-wired into us.

Our sinful human nature leads us to claim all we can for ourselves, which is why for thousands of years and up to the present God has called faithful people to live a better way. In this passage, “the Lord your God” instructs farmers and vintners to harvest only once, and not to the very edges of their land, and to leave the remnants of the harvest to the poor and the foreigner – people on the margins scavenging for their daily bread.

The teaching encourages landowners to find sufficiency in their first harvest, to be content that their needs are met, and then be generous with what is left over. Today, Leviticus 19:9-10 challenges us whose “harvests” of income are more than sufficient to satisfy our immediate needs. Do we have to take it all? What can we give for the needy?

In this traditional season of harvest, what blessings can you count from the last year? (Take a few minutes to prayerfully consider this, and make a list). Does your harvest more than adequately meet your needs?

Now prayerfully consider how much you can generously “leave” for the needy? Consider this in making a year-end contribution to your congregation, or in determining a pledge for 2022.

--Rob Blezard

Copyright © 2021, Rev. Robert Blezard. Pastor Blezard serves as pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, MD, and works as content editor for www.stewardshipoflife.org. He blogs at www.thestewardshipguy.com.