



"Where the Word of life gathers, nurtures, and sends us forth to serve."

October Newsletter from the Pastor:

Dual Citizenship

When I attended Concordia Academy in St. Paul for my high school education, I had several schoolmates who were from Canada. Since their parents were American citizens, they had "dual citizenship." They were both American and Canadian citizens. As they got older, however, they would have to choose between the two countries for their permanent citizenship.

You and I have a dual citizenship too. We are citizens of the United States of America, and citizens of heaven. Paul wrote to the Philippians, "Our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ." (3:20) Even a cursory reading of Paul's letters makes very clear, however, that our heavenly citizenship does not call us to escape our responsibilities here on earth. While heaven is our ultimate destination, we are called to live here on earth in a way that reflects our heavenly citizenship.

The apostle Peter emphasizes the same thing in his first letter. He highlights our heavenly citizenship by calling us "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession." Because of that identity, he addresses his readers as "sojourners and exiles." (1 Peter 2:9,11-12). In the rest of the letter, just as Paul does in his, he urges them to let their heavenly citizenship influence their earthly conduct.

I call your attention to this reality, because our country is politically divided. The mid-term elections are just around the corner. In the grab for power, influence, and control, candidates can resort to name-calling, spending more time and energy trying to paint their opponents in a negative light rather than clearly articulating their positions and how they intend to carry out their responsibilities. Heavenly citizenship says that we should speak the truth in love; that we should, as Luther says in his explanation to the 8th Commandment, "put the best construction" on what the other person is saying or as a newer translation has it, "explain everything in the kindest way." The failure of some candidates to be sensitive to the Lord's advice does not excuse us from getting involved, participating in the political process, letting what God has done for us in Jesus Christ inform and guide our attitudes, words, and deeds. It's not an easy assignment, but I believe it is not one for us to run from. Indeed, some of the issues and elections may not be clear-cut, but asking for the Spirit's wisdom, let us participate in the way we think is best.

With the country as polarized as it has become, I believe we Christians have a duty and responsibility to become informed about the issues, to learn to know the candidates, what they stand for and how they intend to carry out their responsibilities, and then that we will actually vote. We live in a democracy, not a dictatorship. The power has been entrusted to us people, and I am praying that in our land, where we live and work and play, we have a tremendous opportunity and duty to let the wisdom that comes from God's revelation instruct and inform us so that we may contribute to the well-being of our country.

With this little article, I am not suggesting how you should vote, but simply urging you to participate in a responsible way, a way that reflects your Christian citizenship.

Pastor Michael

Guest Pastors will be serving us October 14 and 21, while Pastor and Joan Michael are on vacation. Rev. Dr. Richard Carlton will serve the first Sunday and Rev. Dr. David Kruger the second.

Our Together in Mission Partnership with the Rev. J. P. and Mrs. Aimee Cima, missionaries of our church to Cambodia has been approved. We have agreed to pray for them and contribute \$500 annually to their support; they in turn will keep us informed of their work.

From the Project Connect Literature Rack – "First-Class Faith Sharing: Methods & Motivations". Do you have trouble sharing your faith? You shouldn't! We have a message that liberates the individual – no matter where he or she finds themselves in life. So don't be hesitant, pass it along!