



THE SERVANT

The monthly newsletter of Servants of Christ Lutheran Church, a congregation of The North American Lutheran Church serving the Cedar Rapids area

Meeting at Robins City Hall Community Room, 265 South Second St., Robins, Iowa 52328
Worship: 9:00 am; Fellowship & Coffee: 10:00;
Bible Class and Sunday School: 10:15
Ron Voss, Pastor

*****January 2020

Dear Servants,

My wife frequently visits the resale shops: Goodwill, Salvation Army, the DAC in Maquoketa, Bargain Bonanza in Clinton. She primarily shops for items to make home décor for church bazaars and library fundraisers. Occasionally she looks for clothing . . . why buy a new coat or shirt if it's going to be used for cleaning or lawn maintenance? She has discovered she achieves three goals when shopping resale: 1) She saves money (I mean who doesn't want to save money?); 2) It is always an adventure as she never knows what she might find. And even I must admit she has found some neat stuff; 3) She finds challenge and delight in arranging others' "leftovers" into something beautiful, fun, unique . . . and at a very good price.



No, this page is *not* about resale stores nor am I providing a list of stores in your area. But as I watched my wife cart in the latest batch of "finds," my mind drifted to the new year. Every person on the planet observes (though not necessarily celebrates) the new year. For some, the coming year will provide new opportunities, maybe a new home, a new job, a new addition to the family. For some, it is the determination to set goals and strive to reach them. As Christians entering a new year, I think there might be some parallels to our faith walk and my wife's resale store excursions.

SAVINGS - Shopping resale *does* save money, sometimes a great deal. Faith in Jesus Christ is also about savings: saving us from sin, saving us from death, saving us from the power of Satan. But whereas shopping relies on the shopper opening the wallet and paying for the item (even at a reduced rate), the "savings" with Jesus begin and end with Him. He initiates the "sale," He pays the full price, then He opens His pierced hands and gives us the forgiveness, the eternal life, the power over evil. That's something that is new not just every year, but every day.



(next page)

ADVENTURE - It saddens me when I speak with people, Christian people, who find faith, church attendance, service to the Lord “dull, boring, routine.” I felt the call to the ministry when I was a senior in high school. My plan was to attend college, go to seminary and then serve various churches. Traditional, “cut and dry.” Never did I envision mission starts, traveling across the county conducting stewardship workshops, teaching the Bethel Bible Series for 28 years, meeting wonderful Christian people, finding such joy and gratitude in watching individuals find Christ, watching life-long Christians grow in their faith. Dull??? Hardly. Adventures??? Let me count the ways! My wife never knows what she will find on shelves in Goodwill; I have learned, through God’s grace, I never know what He will reveal through His Word and through service in His name.

OLD INTO SOMETHING NEW - The expression is “turning trash into treasures.” My wife does that, and though I am no home décor expert, I admit to be astounded by some centerpiece that evolves from discarded items. Once again, we see a parallel with faith. Once again, we acknowledge Jesus is the potter, we the clay. He continually takes old, bruised, battered, sinful, hopeless people and molds them into “works of art.” Don’t believe me? How about Moses or Samson or Peter or the woman at the well? Look around you and marvel at people you know or know about and what the mighty hand of God has done.



“Behold, I make all things new (and daily renew)” Jesus’ words of promise to us in a new year. So, to each of you, a blessed new year in the Lord. Oh, and the next time you pass a Goodwill store, smile and wave!

In Christ’s renewing love and grace,
Ron

LIVING LIFE BACKWARD

A Biblical study of Ecclesiastes begins January 5

What if it is death that teaches us how to truly live??? Keeping the end in mind shapes how we live our lives in the here and now. Living life backward means taking the one thing in our future that is certain—death—and letting that inform our journey before we get there.

Looking to the book of Ecclesiastes for wisdom, *Living Life Backward* was written to shake up our “expectations and priorities for what it means to “live the good life.” Considering the reality of death helps us pay attention to our limitations as human beings and receive life as a wondrous gift from God, freeing us to live wisely, generously and faithfully for God’s glory and the good of His world.

Join us on January 5.

LEGACY GIFTS MATTER!

Prayerfully consider including the North American Lutheran Church and/or the Seminary in your will or estate planning. Pass on the love of Jesus to future generations.

Let Ron know of any prayer requests.



January Servants

Greeter/Usher: Cliff Waugh
Communion Assistant:

David Hosch

Snacks:

- ** January 5—Mary Collins
- ** January 12—LaDonna Retzlaff
- ** January 19—Lenore Heckart
- ** January 26—Linda Drake

Flowers: Mary Collins

2020 Mission Outreach Budget

North American Lutheran Church	\$ 6,000 (\$500 per month)
NALC Seminary	\$ 3,000
NALC Great Commission Society	\$ 1,500
Friends of Madagascar Mission	\$ 1,500
Trinity Lutheran Church, Warrenton, Virginia	\$ 1,000
Iowa Mission District	\$ 500
Water Mission	\$ 500
TOTAL	\$14,000

January Mission Giving

NALC General Fund—\$500
NALC Great Commission Society—\$750

*You crown the year with your goodness,
And your paths drip with abundance.*

Psalm 65:11

HAPPY NEW YEAR

