

Devotions - May 27 - June 2, 2007
by, Confirmation Students
Calvary Lutheran Church, Rapid River
(Pastor Steve Gauger)

Sunday, May 27

Katie, 8th grade

“There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord.” 1 Cor. 12:5

My parents are convinced that families need to worship together, every week. We’ve done that since I was baptized. Now that I am in confirmation, I get to sit with my friends at worship. That’s a good thing, even if we have to sit right up in front. But my family also believes in serving together. Every spring we rake the church yard and clean up the gardens. During the summer we volunteer for several weeks of lawn mowing. It helps when you have five kids in the family!

I am the last one in my family to be confirmed at Calvary. I wonder what will change now that we are all teenagers; what will change when we start to leave home? I want to find new ways to serve in God’s kingdom. I hope I will never forget the lessons my parents have taught me.

Where is God calling you to help out today?

Dear Lord Jesus, I want to thank you for the gift of your love. Help me to show that thankfulness in everything I do. Let my life be dedicated to serving you and your church each day. Amen.

Monday, May 28

By, Vincent, 8th grade

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.” Colossians 3:16

I am thankful that my parents are very serious about learning, and especially about learning the Bible and the stories of the Church. We read the Bible together all the time. We watch DVD's about things like the Jerusalem Temple or the Exodus. And we play trivia games! The Bible is full of trivia, but if you learn the trivial things, you will also learn the important things. Kids love games, and this is a good way to make Bible learning fun.

My parents help out with Confirmation and Vacation Bible School, and my mom is a Sunday school teacher. They let us know this is important stuff. We've learned a lot from them, and it's all been good, because it also means Sunday worship and the sermon make a lot more sense to our family. The more you know about God, the more you will understand.

I hope I will always be learning more about God's Word. And I hope that my church will understand that everyone needs to learn, teenagers and adults too. This isn't just about Sunday School children, you know.

Dear God, I thank you for the gift of your Word, and the teachings of Jesus. Help me to grow in faith and knowledge each day of my life. Amen.

Tuesday, May 29

By, Emilee, 8th grade

“The Lord make your love overflow and increase for each other,
and for everyone else.” 1 Thessalonians 3: 12

I have to say that I have two families: my parents and brother and sister, and my church family. I started coming to church because my friend Katie invited me, and I met a lot of wonderful people. So I started to come to Confirmation, and that was good, too. Some of the families at church have even adopted me as one of their own, so now I have lots of grandmas and grandpas. I think this is what makes the church so special; no matter who you are or where you come from, people love you as a child of God.

I love to come to worship, and I love to help out: I like acolyting, and especially helping at communion, and I like to usher and help in the nursery. These are all good ways to share my gifts for making people happy. If I can make someone smile, it's a good day. I think this is how Jesus wants us to live together: to share our love for him and one another, and to find ways to help one another.

How do you share your love at your church?

Loving Jesus, thank you for making me your child. Thank you for showing me how to love others, and to live my life the way you did. Bless all the members of my family, no matter who they are. Amen.

Wednesday, May 30

By, Ryan, 8th grade

“Bear one another’s burdens.” Galatians 6:2

If you have some heavy lifting to do, just call my family. We have four strong men, and lots of trucks. Every October, my brothers and I help my parents haul 750 quilts to the Lutheran World Relief collection center. One year we had to take them all the way to Menominee! But my dad is a truck driver, and we all know how to work. If there is hard work to do, you can count on us. When I am asked to help out, it makes me feel like I can do something really important in the work of the church.

God gives families all different kinds of gifts. One family at our church used to own a moving company. When we had to move the grand piano from the church to the parish hall, they knew just how to do it, and they had all the right equipment. You never know what God will need to have done in the work of his church. So you better keep in shape. Don’t let your muscles get flabby! Be ready to say yes when God knocks on your door.

How many strong men does your church need?

Almighty God, there are so many things that you have to do in our world. You know I am ready to help out when I am asked. I hope everyone knows the joy of sharing in the work of your kingdom. Amen.

Thursday, May 31

By, Noah, 8th grade

“Feed the flock of God that is among you.” 1 Peter 5:2

I have learned about the importance of regular worship from my parents. We all worship together on Sunday, including my grandparents. We need two pews for the whole family. When we decided to become members of the church, we also decided we would be serious about worship. I think that’s where everything begins: worship is the heart of the church. It’s where we grow close to Jesus, and learn how to share his love.

But my family loves to feed people, too. So on the first Sunday of every month, we serve coffee hour. All of us work on it. And it’s not just coffee and a cookie. We make sandwiches and bake with my grandma for most of the previous Saturday. People love to come to our coffee hour, and we love to serve them. Food and love are closely related, I think. I feel sorry for the people who run right out of church and don’t stay for the food. They are missing out on something neat.

I think I understand now why the church likes to have people eat together. It’s a way to serve others, but it’s also a way to remember God’s love for everyone and how he wants everyone to have plenty to eat.

Dear God, you give us the gift of good food and good friends. Help us to share those gifts with the world around us, and to celebrate your presence in the people of our church. Amen.

Friday, June 1

By, Marcus, 8th grade

“Don’t stop praying.” 1 Thessalonians 5:17

I would have to say that I have learned about the importance of prayer from my parents and their experiences. Health problems are a big issue for us, and so when people pray for my parents, and we pray in church for all the sick, it is a real help, for my mom and dad, and for all the kids. I know it makes my mom feel better just to come to worship, and knowing people are praying for her.

So I think we need to pray for other people, and also let them know we are praying for them. We want God to give them strength and healing. I know if I am ever sick, I will ask my friends to pray for me. We all need to ask God to share his power with the people we love. I heard once that nothing good ever happens without prayer. We all need it.

Do you know people who need your prayers? Do you need someone to pray for you? Come to church and let your friends help you with the power of prayer.

Dear Jesus, teach us to pray the way you did, each and every day. Help us connect to the power of God through the gift of prayer. Amen.

Saturday, June 2

By, Cassie, 8th grade

“I am not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ.” Romans 1:16

I have a lot of friends. I guess that's putting it mildly. Every weekend I have some friends stay over at our house. I am glad my mom let's me do this so much! But when they stay on Saturday night, they also have to come with us to worship on Sunday morning. Some of them don't have their own churches, and they are very curious about ours. They like to sit up in front in the acolytes' pew with me when I am the acolyte. Some of them like to come because we have the Lord's Supper almost every Sunday, and at their church they don't. Some like the music. Some just like to look at the stained glass windows. Some are curious about the Bible.

They might all come looking for something different. But here is the important thing: they all find Jesus. Every week, it's Jesus. So if you asked me, “Why do you make your friends come to church with you?”, I would tell you, “Because we all need to know Jesus, no matter what we come looking for.”

It's good to know that my friends are always welcome at my church. How does your church show visitors how good it is to be together to worship Jesus?

Dear God, you bless all of us with the gift of friends. Help each one of us to be happy to share the good news of your Son Jesus with all of them. Amen.