

Missions

May 5, 2019

Our Savior's Way

Pastor Mann

I asked three people, *"What is the mission of the church?"* The first person told me, *"The mission of the church is to preach! When I come to church I want to hear a good sermon."* The second person said, *"The mission of the church is to care for people. The church needs to help the needy, visit the sick, and care for the elderly."* The third person said, *"The mission of the church is transformational. It's the job of the church to transform people's lives so that they can transform the world."* What would you say the mission of the church is?

Does anybody remember the Our Savior's Way mission statement? It says, ***"The mission of the church is to make disciples for Jesus Christ by forming relationships, experiencing Jesus together, and sharing God's love."*** So, the main business of the church—the mission of the church is to ***"make disciples for Jesus Christ."*** I think it's easy to forget that. We get so wrapped up in our own needs and the needs of the people around us, we forget the main business of the church.

Several years ago the city of Pittsburgh built a big, beautiful new post office. It cost several million dollars. On the day it opened, the governor was there to make a speech, bands played, the people cheered. It was quite a celebration. However, when the first person walked through the door of the new post office building to mail a letter, to the embarrassment of the engineers, it was discovered that in the rush to meet the deadline and open on time, they had omitted the usual letter drop. Here was this brand-new, expensive post office and there was no place to mail a letter. It was a small oversight, but it negated the very reason for its existence.

That brings me to the point of the message this morning: WHEN ANY CHURCH LOSES THE SPIRIT OF MISSIONS—MAKING DISCIPLES FOR JESUS CHRIST—IT SURRENDERS THE VERY REASON FOR ITS EXISTENCE. Our God is a missionary God. The Bible is a missionary book. The Gospel is a missionary message. And so, the church needs to be a missionary kind of

place. When we forget that, we've lost sight of what God created us to be.

Today, I'd like to introduce you to three of the many places our church—Our Savior's Way—is in mission: (1) Derek and Mimi Ells in Guatemala. (2) The Comfort Dog Ministry. (3) The Mission Trip to Haiti that's happening this summer. And I'm going to ask the representatives of these groups three things: (1) Give us a brief description of your mission; (2) Tell us how you are making disciples for Jesus; and (3) How has this mission changed you?

A. DEREK AND MIMI ELLS IN GUATEMALA

B. THE COMFORT DOG MINISTRY

C. MISSION TRIP TO HAITI

Last Summer I had an opportunity to go on the mission trip to Haiti and help them put in a new irrigation system for the garden in the orphanage. The system was designed by Carl Griffis who, at that time, was busy running his pool business. The thing is, everybody who went on that mission trip stepped out of busy lives. I think about how Jesus called his first disciples. Matthew was busy being a tax collector. Peter, James, and John were busy with their fishing business. Saul, whom we heard about today, was busy hunting down Christians. The point is that God chose each one, and He pulled them out of their comfort zone, and He put them about the business of making new disciples for Jesus Christ. They met Jesus. They experienced His presence. They witnessed His resurrection. And suddenly, their whole perspective changed. The central, driving purpose of their lives became—to share the Good News and the Gospel of Hope—that Jesus has died, and Jesus has risen, and Jesus will come again to bring eternal life to everyone who trusts in Him. This is the mission purpose of the Church. This is God's business and if we, the church, are not all about God's business, then we ought to be out of business.

There is a bridge across Panther Creek in Western Kentucky. It was built many years ago by the United States Government. It was built to be a symbol of recovery and hope after a massive flood. That bridge still looks good—as good today as the day it was built. The reason is, there is no road leading up to that bridge and there is no road leading away from the

bridge. In, fact, this bridge has never carried any traffic. It has never served the purpose for which it was built. It is a bridge to nowhere. My friends, this church was built for a purpose—to make disciples for Jesus Christ. This church is a place to form relationships, a place to experience Jesus together, and command central for sharing His love. This church is meant to be a bridge to a better life here in Northern Virginia—a bridge to eternal life in Jesus.

Missions:

1. How would you describe the mission of the church?
2. Do you know the Mission Statement of Our Savior's Way Lutheran Church?

MISSION STATEMENT: At Our Savior's Way we make

_____ for Jesus Christ by: Forming
_____, Experiencing _____
together, and _____ God's love.

"Go there for and make disciples of all nations." --Matthew 28:19

3. What do they do on the mission trips to Haiti?
4. What important work are Derek and Mimi Ells doing in Guatemala?
5. How is Amos the Comfort Dog fulfilling the mission of the church?
6. One message of the video is that we each can be involved in mission. What is one way that you can be involved in mission?
7. Who can you share Jesus with this week? How?