

Welcome to this month's Newsletter. Today's focus is on **ACTIVE FAITH**. Do you remember the parable in Luke's gospel that we often call the Good Samaritan. It's a story of a person in need and other people simply walking by, until the person who is least expected to help, stops to help. He goes above and beyond what was really even required and helped the person significantly. Active Faith is the way we look to engage in our world every day because of our faith. Is there a need; is there a need I can meet? Now Active Faith for me reminds me of what it means to be an active person. Many of you know that I used to be avid cyclist. I used to ride a lot of miles every week. In the last few years that has not happened after a knee surgery. Now occasionally I will get on the bike with my six year old daughter and we will take a little ride and in doing that I'm reminded how much my muscles have atrophied in the last several years since I haven't been riding. Active Faith requires some exercise. To actively exercise our faith we need to keep doing it.

Now there are a lot of ways that people demonstrate Active Faith. Some of those are really obvious: we have people who work at Lowell every month in our mobile food bank; we have people that work at Helping Hands. Those are a couple of obvious ways that people demonstrate their faith by action and activity. We also have a lot of people here at the church who do that. We have Office Volunteers who spend part of their week helping out at the church; people who restock the pencils and note cards in the Sanctuary; our television ministry is filled with people who demonstrate by actively being involved in a ministry of the church. Our ushers who are here every week, handing our bulletins, taking collections and overseeing the service demonstrate Active Faith. Sunday School teachers, thrift shop volunteers, people on committees - the list goes on and on. Different people demonstrate their faith in different ways. Some people are prayers and their activity is praying for the church, for others, for me, for all kinds of folks. Other people are doers and they demonstrate their Active Faith by really getting involved hands-on with somebody else. Some people demonstrate their Active Faith by thinking; they read and they study and they teach. Some people are heart people and their Active Faith is that feeling of being connected with God and wanting others to feel that way as well.

In these differences we realize that Active Faith isn't just one way; instead Active Faith is demonstrated in all kinds of ways. Think about how the gospels tell the story of Jesus a little bit differently; Mathew from a Jewish perspective, Luke from almost a gentile perspective, Mark is so ready to tell the story, and John is almost spiritual. Those four different ways of telling the story of Jesus remind us that our Active Faith is going to be different from maybe the person's in the pew next to us or maybe different from someone else in our family and wherever all of those are combined they're very complementary.

Active Faith is really about seeing the world and finding our place to fit into God's kingdom. In our Vision Pathways statement we say that Active Faith is, each week, finding a way to serve our neighbor as a disciple of Jesus. I think that's a great challenge and it reminds me that serving my neighbor can look very different from week to week, from neighbor to neighbor. So, as you ponder what it means to have Active Faith in your life, I would invite you to think widely about that definition. Active Faith isn't just working in a soup kitchen, it's not simply demonstrable. Sometimes Active Faith is done quietly, sometimes it's done obviously, sometimes it's done publically, and sometimes it's done privately.

Where is your call to demonstrate Active Faith in your life in a way that meets a need in the world? I hope that you'll think about that and I hope that you'll remember that Active Faith is indeed Central to Life.