

Sharing the Good News

from the pen of the Mission Interpreter



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It All Adds Up

At Emanuel's Lutheran Church, Seguin, we come together every Sunday to worship God, to be refreshed and renewed in our faith, and to grow in our knowledge of what it means to be a member of the body of Christ. We sing hymns, confess our sins, listen to God's word, offer monetary gifts to support the work of the church, pray, and join in fellowship at the Lord's table. At the close of the service we are directed to "Go in peace; share the Good News." That is a big order, and it is up to us both individually and collectively to carry it out. A key word here is "collectively," for while each of us must be his/her own person, we are not isolated.

First, and foremost, we are never alone in doing God's work because He has promised that his Spirit will walk beside each of us to lead and guide us, so we can live both purposefully and fruitfully. Interacting within our families, with our friends, at school, at work, in all we do in daily living, our lives are a witness.

Second, we work together as a congregation contributing time, talent and money to get things done. Emanuel's has numerous organized outreach missions, but many hours are also spent in prayer, calls of concern, visits, providing transportation and meals, and, yes, even socializing with one another through church activities and others in our communities and at work, just by being friends.

Third, we are part of the Southwestern Texas Synod (one of 65 such bodies across the U.S.), composed of some 120 congregations, but also including six campus ministries and several partner ministries. The Synod Office is located right here in Seguin on the campus of Texas Lutheran University. Both through our benevolence dollars and our volunteer efforts we join with these other congregations in supporting such things as Lutheran Social Services, Cross-Trails Outdoor Ministries, and even in the creation of new mission congregations.

And fourth, we are part of the largest Lutheran church body in North America, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Through ELCA we're connected to four million other Lutherans in 10,000 congregations throughout the U.S. Headquartered in Chicago, our governing body stops at our national borders but certainly not our work. An organization of this magnitude has great outreach capability and can be an influence in a variety of ways to spread the message of Christ through programs that promote peace and justice. We as Lutherans have "feet on the ground" in remote places where so much help is needed.

There are Lutheran congregations on every continent except Antarctica, and all of us, together with our brothers and sisters in Christ in numerous other denominations, work together to show Christ's love to the world. By joining hands (God's work, our hands), by being the Church, we can decidedly make a difference. We are **sharing the Good News**.

