

From our Pastor...



Don't just come to church... be the church!

**SHEPHERD OF THE
VALLEY LUTHERAN
CHURCH**

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Dear Friends in Christ,

God is doing great things at Shepherd of the Valley and I am glad to be part of this church at this exciting times. By God's grace we are growing in community spirit and service to others. God does not stop surprising us, and even though the cold months of winter are making themselves known through the rigid weather, God's guiding Word offers encouragement, insight and challenges to stretch our imagination and faith. We don't know where God is leading us but we may be sure it will be an honorable and life fulfilling journey. Staying open in trust to what God is trying to do with us is a basic step in discipleship. Fear of losing ourselves in the process and self-protection, predictability of what's coming next and insecurity might all be factors creating uneasiness and anxiety. Yet, we are all familiar with the words of Jesus encouraging us to trust: "Those who lose their life for my sake and the sake of the gospel will find it." (Mk 8:35) and "Remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Mt 28:20)

Funny how we need to go beyond our comfort zone and what is familiar to us to experience life anew both individually and as a community. If we personally and corporately do things the way we have always done them we are going to get the same results. Now, while this might be comforting to some, will it seek out new explorers of the faith and allow them the space necessary to be included in community living and in ministry? We may never grow spiritually if we are held captive by our own fears either. Creativity and generosity are needed to develop new possibilities and to support old and successful ministries. If you feel God nudging you, will you respond?

God wants to build us in faith: make all arrangements and take advantage of all occasions to strengthen one another and give God the glory.

In His service,
Pr. Giuseppe