



# ONE VOICE



Churches: ♦Bethany ♦Immanuel ♦Lunder ♦Silver Lake ♦Winnebago

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## *From the Pastor's Desk*

*"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven; a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted." Ecclesiastes 3:1-2*



When the calendar is flipped from September to October, we have definitely changed from one season into another. The seventy and eighty degree days have changed to fifty and sixty degree days. The warm nights are now cool nights in the forties or lower. The wind that blew green leaves through the branches of the trees all summer are now tantalizing our eyes with bright colors of red, yellow and orange. The rustling has become little louder as the leaves start to become dry and soon the beautiful colors will be rolling along our lawns into piles to be raked. The bean fields that have been a bright green, with the leaves also catching the wind, creating waves across the field have



turned yellow or already dropped the leaves altogether and have become rows of dark brown sticks with pods of beans. The corn that was green has finished growing and is dented and the wind now dries the corn. Combines have been in the field harvesting the beans and soon starting with the corn. Summer baseball has given way to football. Kids have already forgotten the free days of summer and have been in school with teachers and friends learning new things and growing. Yes, the season has changed from summer into full blown fall.

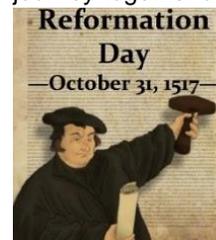
Most of us like fall. We like the colors of the trees. We like watching football, cheering on the Iowa State Cyclones and the Iowa Hawkeyes. We enjoy the clean crispness in the air in the morning and in the evening. Farmers planted the seeds, applied fertilizer and sprayed for weeds. They have prayed for rain. They have prayed for sunshine. Now it is time to head out for the harvest. They don't know how each field will do until they harvest it. Hopefully, it will be a good harvest.



As we witness the change of the seasons, we can't help but notice the change of seasons in our lives. We witness children grow through first days of school in elementary school, then middle school, high school and suddenly first days of college. We look back on the first day pictures and wonder how did that happen so fast? The seasons come and go. We also witness this truth in our own lives. We remember when we were young, graduating from high school, going to college, first jobs, getting married, marveling at the miracle of our children. As the seasons passed anniversaries celebrated from five, ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty years and more. We are wowed at the blessings and adventures of the years. Yet, at the same time some of us have lost grandparents, parents, spouses, friends, and even some children. The adventure of the seasons and the celebration of blessings, the times of joy, the times of sadness, a time to be born and a time to die.

Even though we have been witnesses to the different seasons and we have seen things change and we have changed, at least one thing has been constant. Our Lord is

always walking with us. The Lord claimed us in the beginning of our seasons, a time to be born, as the baptismal waters washed over our brows and we were marked with the cross of Christ and sealed by the Holy Spirit. The Lord was walking with us as we walked through our first seasons growing up with our families. The Lord is present through each season we have experienced, time for planting and time for harvesting. Our Lord Jesus has promised to be with us always. The Holy Spirit dwells within our very being bearing witness to God's faithfulness and steadfast love. When we headed into a new season, we didn't know what the season would hold, but our Lord knew the path. Our Lord is present with blessings. Our Lord is present when the brokenness of the world creates brokenness in our lives and wounds our heart. The Lord draws closer to wrap his arms of love around us. The Lord brings people and resources into our lives to bring healing to move from one season to the next season. We can only look back at the past seasons we have experienced and participate in the present season. But our Lord has the vision of every season, the seasons that have been, the seasons that are and the seasons yet to come. This is true for our own journey and the journey together as brothers and sisters in Christ.



At the end of October we will be celebrating our Reformation Heritage. Truly, the Lord walked with all our brothers and sisters in Christ through the season. The Holy Spirit blew threw the streets of Jerusalem empowering the disciples to proclaim the gospel and the church was born. There was a season of growth and persecution. There was a season when the church became the center of culture. There was a season when the church needed reformers and the Lord sent Reformers like Martin Luther, Philip Melanchthon, John Calvin, Ulrich Zwingli and many more. There was a season when every church filled their pews plus Sunday schools full and every church had a pastor. Now it is a different season. We have brothers and sisters that gather together in person and those who are on-line and worship as families, work for social justice, but all are still the church. It is a different season. Like the seasons before, we don't know how the season will unfold with blessings, joys, challenges, brokenness and sorrow. But what we do know is the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit still hold us in their hands. The Lord is steadfast in love blessing us in abundance. The Lord is present walking with us through the joys and sorrows. As we venture forth from one season to the next, we know only our Lord who has walked with us in the past seasons will walk with us into this new season. The Lord is steadfast. The Lord is faithful. The Lord is present.

*Pastor Randy*



# WANDERINGS AND WONDERINGS



Max Weber, a famous German sociologist, once said that “Luther and Calvin did away with the monasteries and, in turn, made the whole world into a monastery.” What he meant by that was that serving God is not something you do away from your worldly vocation, but in the midst of it. The reformers made it clear that the love of God was to be expressed in the daily labors that go with our vocations. The bible tells us that whatever we do, whether in word or in deed, we must do heartily as unto the lord, and not as unto men (Colossians 3:17, 23)



One Friday a young professor of English literature at a state university walked into the academic dean’s office and announced that he would not be back on Monday to teach. He was quitting. The dean explained that there was no way he could just walk out on this contract. If he quit he had no future in teaching. He would be blackballed for any job for which he applied at any other school. To all of this, the young professor simply shrugged his shoulders and said, “That’s okay.”

His mother called me and told me what he had done. She asked me to go and talk to him. After all, if he did not teach, what else could he do with a PhD in English literature? Conceding to the plea of his mother, I went to see him. He was living in an attic apartment in Trenton, New Jersey. It was one of those with-it lofts, decorated with interesting posters and bookcases full of avant-garde books.

He told me to sit down in a beanbag chair. The thing was like a giant amoeba and I felt almost devoured by it. He looked at me and he said, “I quit. That’s all there is to it. I couldn’t stand it anymore. Every time I walked into that classroom, I died a little bit.”

I understood what he was talking about because I, myself, was a college teacher at the time. I knew what it was like to walk into a classroom and pour your heart out for truth – truth wrenched from suffering and pain, gleaned from the sorrow of human existence! And after you cry and bleed for truth, some student in the last row raise a hand and asks,



“Do we have to know this for the final...?” And a college professor dies a little bit.

After a while I was aware that there was no way to dissuade him from his decision, “Well, what are you doing now to make a living?” I asked.

“I’m a mailman,” was his answer.

“A PhD mailman. Now that’s something!” I responded.

He laughed and said, “there really aren’t too many of us out there.”

Being raised on the Protestant ethic, I then said what you would expect me to say, “Well, if you’re going to be a mailman, be the best mailman you can possibly be!”



“I’m a lousy mailman,” he answered with a laugh. “everybody else in my post office gets the mail delivered by two-thirty in the afternoon, or three at the latest. I never get it delivered until about five!”

“What takes you so long?” I inquired.

“I visit,” he said. “You can’t imagine how many people on my route never get visited until I became the mailman. There are interesting people on my route who are interested in literature. There are hurting people who need the comfort that comes from the great poets. There are people who read and want to share what they’ve learned. I can’t go to sleep at night!” And when I asked him why, he said, “it’s hard to go to sleep after you’ve drunk twenty cups of coffee.”

I wasn’t surprised when I found out the following year that the people of his mail route had gotten together and thrown a surprise birthday party for him at the local American Legion hall. He was special to them, and they were special to him. His mail route had become a mission field.

(From “The Mailman” Let Me Tell You a Story by Tony Campolo)

Work should be a way to living our commitments and our love for people. So far as it is possible, we should settle for nothing less. Work should be a means for spiritual fulfillment.

Wanderings and Wonderings,  
Pastor Bill Peters



