



Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church
Pastor Terry's Thoughts of the Week

Love's Vision

I love the title of today's theme! There are many visions we all have – many of which are very selfish – but we also are people of God with the ability, with God's help, to have a vision of love for all the world.

Each Sunday we greet each other with the “peace of God”. It is not only a greeting, but a prayer and a hope for each other. And that hope is not confined to this building or even this continent. We include in our prayers a vision of peace for the whole world. That's a vision of love which spreads out from this place to every place.

Am I a dreamer, only a day dreamer? No. I have hope in God that as his people we will somehow learn to spread that love of God throughout the world. And then I look around me.

One neighbor has a camera mounted on his house to keep a watch on his vehicles and the youngsters who play in the street there. The sad thing is, it is necessary, to some extent as simple vandalism seems to be “nothing” according to local youth culture.

Our police forces are getting larger as the population increases. My theory, totally unfounded, is that about 5% of any population causes all the trouble so as the population increases, so does the number of people causing trouble.

There is war in the world. Most of us cannot remember a time when there was not a war someplace. That's sad, but it is the way of the world. It's up to us to put the way of God, the way of peace, into the world. Theoretically this is all wonderful. In actuality it will take generations. So we must begin here.

Look around this wonderful family of God. We have a lot of talent here, a lot of children, a lot of good, God-fearing and God-loving folk. We also – each one of us – has something or someone in the congregation we wish we could change. Someone we could help become a little more Christ like, someone who's outlook on life we would like to change.

There are also people in this family we would like to imitate in one way or another. That's not to say we'd like to be JUST like them in all ways, but there are certain things they do we think are outstanding.

But sometimes as we look around us we realize that some of the people we would like to emulate are also people we have some trouble with in one way or another. In other words, we have a congregation filled with people who call themselves Lutheran – people who are, at the same time both saint and sinner.

And it's among this group we want to begin our quest for the peace of the whole world, a vision of love.

Yes, it is among us that this peace begins. We begin by holding our tongues when gossip arises. We continue by supporting the things we see that are going on that are fulfilling and working toward that vision of love. We add on to all this by supporting the work of the congregation and reaching out to the world with our vision of love and our caring concern.

Are we perfect? No. We're PRACTICING Christians and God brings the perfection.

TMK

-- Week of September 7, 2008