

HEARTBEATS Staying Connected 9/18/2023

Dear Friends in CHRIST,

ONE AT ONE – *Every day this week beginning on Tuesday, September 19 you are encouraged to pray for one minute at one o'clock. This week, ask GOD to open your eyes more to the good in people. Pray that the HOLY SPIRIT help you to see everyone as someone for whom JESUS died.*

I love Sundays. I love going to church, worshiping GOD, and learning more about GOD'S love and will for us. (And I'm not just saying that because I'm a pastor. I really do.) I love gathering with other believers who have a shared love for the LORD and concern for each other. And I love seeing the things that happen that lead to people growing in their faith and commitment to GOD. There are so many things that occur that not everyone sees and I'm fortunate that, as pastor, I get to see some that others might miss. This Sunday was no exception and I thought I would share a few of these observations with you. I'm not going to mention names because incidences like these happen every week, but by naming them, perhaps you'll be more aware and get to catch them with greater frequency yourself.

We had a new acolyte Sunday, who begins a wonderful journey of serving in the church.

We sang two songs with which I was not familiar. I struggled with them and especially one, but the words of both were meaningful and it was a great opportunity to learn two new ways to praise the LORD. Next time we sing them it will be easier.

A person received Holy Communion for the first time.

I talked with a visiting couple who had been married at St. Andrew Lutheran more than 40 years ago.

I had a brief conversation with a former member who is finding the way back to this congregation and with the help of another member.

I got to say, "Hi," to an individual who is relatively new and is discovering a place of comfort and belonging here.

Someone who is not yet a member, but based on involvement and for all practical purposes is, shared with me has a yet unwrapped Bible that had been recently and surprisingly uncovered at home.

We helped two sets of parents fulfill one of the commitments they made at the baptism of their child, to place in the child's hands the Bible. And two children happily received their very own copy of GOD'S Word.

There is always so much that happens at church on a Sunday. I am so joyful to catch glimpses of GOD at work here and to see what GOD is doing in the lives of people. I hope you see these things, too, and that on future Sundays you become aware of more of what happens when we gather together in JESUS name.

In CHRIST'S love,
Pastor Jeffrey