

*And every day in the temple and at home they did not cease to teach and proclaim Jesus as the Messiah.  
(Acts 5:43)*

Neighbors in Christ,

Grace and peace to you, my beloved friends and family. This month of October I wanted to go back to our Affirmation of Faith, and remind one another of the importance that we have as the Body of Christ to proclaim the good news of God in Jesus Christ through our words and deeds.

Consider thinking about proclaiming the good news. It is easy to imagine a pastor such as myself on Sunday morning bringing the Word of God to our respective congregations and assemblies. But through our baptismal covenant, we all are also called to proclaim the good news of God in Christ ourselves. Not just the pastor, but every one of us – that is promised in our baptismal covenant with God as we affirm the faith of a person being confirmed, whether young or older. And not just once, or once in a while. We are called to proclaim the good news day after day, never ceasing, just as the disciples did in the passage above.

What does it mean to proclaim the good news of God in Christ? As the Church, acting together and as individuals, we have a story to tell. We have the story of God's movement in our lives through the saving actions of Jesus Christ. The life, death and resurrection of Jesus is not simply a story in the Bible. Rather it is the story of our lives and the story of what brings us life. We simply share with others how God is working in our lives. We share the story that shapes our story. It involves holding the hand of someone who is sick, reminding another person that we see God working in and through them, through prayer, or simply reading scripture or devotions on a daily basis.

When we are living out the story of Christ in us, proclaim the story of God's saving grace in our lives. Reflect on inviting others to the church where Christ is proclaimed. The following examples may help us to do so: Confess our faith through song and word in worship; offer encouragement to a friend and others who are ill or are in need by visiting them; let Jesus be our example through our daily lives by giving thanks to God in caring for the common good; sharing your faith in your homes and with others that are friends and family; and live prepared to give a reason for the hope within us found in Christ's promises to us. These forms of shared faith are easy to do and generally keep us from getting out of our comfort zones too.

Remember, we are daily called to Affirm our Faith and live among God's people, hear the word of God and share in the Lord's Supper, proclaim the good news, serve one another as we are served, strive for justice and peace, and ultimately follow in Christ's footsteps as he walked freely to his cross for us. These are just some ideas to think and meditate on what we are ultimately called to do.

I look forward to seeing you in worship and wish you a beautiful and pleasant month!

Rev. Erik Karlson  
Pastor, Neighbors in Christ Parish

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