

A BIT OF GOODNESS ... in the "humble temple"  
ALL SAINTS LUTHERAN CHURCH "Oasis of Joy" USA  
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Mid-January ... 2020

My heart is a bit heavy as I write this letter to you.

Our church lost another one of the "good folks" this morning (January 13). Jerry Arnold died.

Jerry and his wife Conni ---- such a main-stay in the 2<sup>nd</sup> row on Sunday morning.

Proud Marine. Korean War veteran.

So solid. So real. So loyal. He and Conni and family ---- such a good life together.

Jerry had some health issues ... and not long ago his son died unexpectedly. So, he's gone through a rough stretch. Conni, their rich friendships, loving family, and a good dose of All Saints ---- well, it's all given Jerry the strength to live each day with hope and joy!!

I realize anew .... as another day draws to a close ... what it is that makes the world go 'round.

Life is about passion and commitment.

It's about finding purpose for our own lives ... and enabling others to find purpose in theirs.

It's about discovering the joy of giving.

It's being able to accept who we are ... finding the quiet courage to make the changes we need to make ... while, at the same time, knowing that we can't do it all.

Every Sunday ... when Jerry walked in with his Korean War Veterans hat ... I would thank him for his service ... and, inside my soul, tried to resolve that I would never take our freedom for granted.

I know I take my freedom for granted more than I should.

But I do know ... as I think of the "blue collar ethic and mentality" of guys like Jerry ...

I am more determined than ever to work to keep All Saints a BEACON OF HOPE for all of you who grace us with your presence and commitment. It's like someone said to me earlier this week ... as we planned for their loved-one's funeral ----- "I don't know how we could ever get through this ... without our faith and our church." Well ---- I hope you never have to find out!!

We say "good-bye" to someone like Jerry this week. I see all those "little souls" sittin' on the gym floor singing songs on Sunday morning. We need ALL OF YOU. You need to be here on Sunday morning, when you can. You need to support our "humble enterprise" ... so the rock-solid commitment of people like Jerry doesn't become a thing of the past. After all these years ... sure, I worry a bit when I see lots of empty seats. But my heart has never been so full ----- when I see how the "love we share" ... can change lives: one person, one moment at a time.

With joy and hope ...

Don

OUR ANNUAL SPAGHETTI DINNER IS COMING UP: Saturday, February 29, 6:00.

It's our only major fund-raiser for the year. Tickets are still only \$22. We hope to "pack the house" (i.e., "pack the gym") with lots of goodness and love and joy. It's a fun adult evening. The auction is a lot of fun. If you have something new to donate ... please bring it as soon as possible ... so we can plan ahead. Gift cards and bottles of wine go fast. Services rendered ... tickets to events ... gift baskets ... it all helps. We have solicitation letters here at the church ... that help explain to donors what our event is about. You don't have to bring an auction item. Most important --- come and enjoy!!

#### SPEAKING OF "PACK THE HOUSE"

We are gathering at Olhms School in Oak Lawn this Saturday (Jan. 18) to support South Suburban Special Olympics. It's an afternoon of basketball ... with special needs young people playing their hearts out. Dan and Anne Fritz chair this event ... and Ben Fritz and Ethan Gowaski from our church participate. Our church is one of the sponsors. The address is 5345 W. 99<sup>th</sup> St. --- opening ceremonies at 12:30. If you come ... look for a small crowd of red shirts ... we may even have one left for you!!

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL WINTERFEST IS SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 9 in the gym .... beginning at 9:45.

Please come and enjoy.

These kids will bring you lots of joy and smiles!!

CAN YOU BELIEVE LENT IS NOT FAR AWAY???

Ash Wednesday is February 26 ----- with services at noon and 7:30.

THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT.

\*Financial commitment forms are here at the church.

\*Offering envelopes are in Charter Hall. If there are none for you ... there is a form you can fill out.

OUR ANNUAL MEETING is Sunday, February 2 ---- beginning after the 2<sup>nd</sup> service ... about 12:15.

(The Super Bowl is not 'til much later in the day.)

It does not last long. We have reports from various areas of ministry ... approve the 2020 budget ... and elect church council members. If you can ... please try to come. It's important. This is our church ... and we want you to know how "the business of the church" is going ... thanks.

#### THE PRAYER CONNECTION

(I know we don't have everyone in our prayer list ... if you want someone included for Sunday worship ... please call us at the church ... prayer and caring are very important to us.)

\*Jerry Arnold died Monday morning. Visitation at Colonial Chapel is Sunday. His service is here at the church on Monday --- times not set yet. \*Charlie Ryl-Kuchar is having his 2<sup>nd</sup> open heart surgery this week. \*Dorothy Ellis is recovering from a fall. \*Mary Schoenhofer's sister – Laurie O'Gorman – has been diagnosed with a rare adrenal gland cancer. \*Sue McVicker is at Lutheran General ... continuing her recovery from a stem cell transplant. \*So good seeing Cindi Johnson in church Sunday. She has had a long journey with cancer. \*Eileen Ammann died this week. Her funeral is here on Saturday morning. \*Elinor Lalick is now at Lexington Healthcare in Orland. We miss you here at church, my friend!! \*Sue Smith is facing rotator cuff surgery soon. \*Judy Splayt got a "thumbs – up" on her cat scan last week!! \*Karen Yahl's dad Ken is now at Lemont Re-hab. \*We just had the funeral service for Peggy Voight's dad --- Paul O'Neill. \*Jack Kennebeck continues his long recovery ... he's at home ... and our confirmation class is going to have our next class at his house!!

BLESSINGS TO ALL!!

