



GOOD NEWS May 2023

On Sunday, April 30, 2023, a gathering of St. Andrew people accepted, by consensus, the following statement stating WHY St. Andrew exists as a congregation:

To come together as a worshipping community, nourished by God's love so that we may+ reflect God's love to others.

Pastor's Message

Dear Friends of St. Andrew Church,

Now well into the Great 50 Days of the Easter Festival with the shouts of *"He is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!"* still ringing in our ears and through our lives, a singular thought continues to call us forward into the days ahead. **We are an Easter people!** We are called to practice Resurrection, to be the very evidence of the risen One for all who hunger and thirst in this broken, fractious world to know of his life giving healing mercies.

How else will others know of the new creation that has been born and continues to emerge in all of its astonishing goodness and wonder if we as the Church, the people called to be the very living body of Christ in the world, don't bear witness to it through our life together and in our lives of serving and loving at every intersection of our lives? We are called not only to be proclaimers of the Resurrection. **But we are called and empowered by the Resurrected One to be practitioners of the Resurrection!**

In his commentary on the Book of Acts, the book written by St. Luke to describe the very earliest days of the Church when the followers of Jesus spread out with conviction to tell and live the good news of the crucified-risen Christ, Will Willimon writes this:

"When you think about it, the quality of the church's life together is evidence for the truthfulness of the resurrection. The most eloquent testimony to the reality of the resurrection is not an empty tomb or a well orchestrated worship service on Easter, but rather a community of people whose life together is so radically different, so completely changed, from the way the world works or builds community, that there can be no explanation other than that something decisive that happened in history long ago, has happened also to them. The tough task of interpreting the reality of a truth like the resurrection is not so much scientific or historical – 'how could a thing like that really happen?' but the communal, 'how do you (we) look like a people of the resurrection?'"

In a certain way there is no greater question we need to be asking ourselves through these days of transition, these days of discerning how God is calling us in ministry into the days ahead, than how do we look like a people of the resurrection? How do we work through differences to reflect the healing love of the risen One? How do we slip or leap off the fences of our low energy and uncertainties in order to bear bold witness to the One who calls us to serve without hesitation, to help and lead with love?

In a favorite poem of mine, Wendell Berry proposes some ideas (with a couple of mine thrown in): "Love the Lord. Love the world...Love somebody that doesn't deserve it...Laugh [for] laughter is immeasurable...Plant sequoias [which is to say, plant tiny seeds with hope for a yet unseen future]...Sing full throatedly...Be joyful, even though you have considered all the facts...**Practice resurrection!**" Together let us live lives soaked

through and through with baptismal grace, re-oriented, disciplined yet daring to risk, turned around and made new by the presence, the companionship, the courage of the risen Jesus!

With gratitude for your partnership in practicing resurrection along the way,
Les Swenson, Pastor through this transition time

FROM THE PRESIDENT

It is time to order offering envelopes for 2024. If you requested envelopes for 2023 you will automatically be put on the list to receive 2024 envelopes. If you did not request 2023 envelopes but would like 2024 envelopes please let me know by May 25. The order will be placed before June 1, so that we receive the “early bird” discount”. Every penny counts!

Important dates...

May 7 – Small group discussions after worship. The purpose of these discussions will be to hear your thoughts on the future of St. Andrew. Your thoughts and feelings can’t be heard if you are not there to share them

May 13 – Spring clean-up day. 9 AM – 2 PM. There is much to be done. Any and all help will be appreciated, if you can stay all day, or just an hour. Many hands make the chores seem easier!

May 21 – Pastor Stephen Wilco, Associate to Bishop Hazelwood, will be with us to answer your questions concerning St. Andrew’s options for the future. Now that our WHY statement has been determined, it is important that everyone participates in the discussion concerning our future.

May 28 – Pentecost Sunday / Confirmation Two young men, Connor and AJ, will be publicly affirming their baptism with the rite of confirmation. It a good day for all of us to remember our baptism and the deep meaning it holds.

A number of people have asked when Pastor Geoff will be back with us. The answer is very soon. Pastor Swenson will be away May 14 and June 4 and 11 and Pastor Geoff has agreed to join us on those days.

While there is always enough happening in the world to pray about I ask you to be sure to include St. Andrew and your church family in your personal prayers.

See you in church,

Bob

WORSHIP

*Return to the Lord your God, who is gracious and merciful,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.*

Get into the rhythm of life and renewal, worship with us on the regular! As God’s people, we gather together in the presence of God and find rest, solace, a bit of grace for ourselves and others. It’s called worship. We worship in person **Sundays at 9:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary.** Sunday’s service is streamed on Facebook and YouTube:

<https://www.facebook.com/Standrewct/>; https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLSSna5Ti_WSwRJ_ySbMA3Q.

Following the live stream, the video of worship will be posted so that you can worship as you are available any time after that.

All these sessions will be via Zoom, and will conclude with a brief order of evening prayer.

PARISH NEWS



Pentecost Sunday, May 28, A Day of Celebration, Affirmation and Empowerment!

Come celebrate the festival of Pentecost, Sunday, May 28, as we rejoice in the empowering, life giving graces of the promised Holy Spirit moving through and enlivening the ministry of the Church!

Pentecost brings to conclusion the Great Fifty Days of Easter. It lifts and carries us into the long season of being and becoming the living body of Christ, practicing resurrection and bearing witness to God's undying love for the world. Pentecost is a lively, even noisy festival of the Church (see below about the noise part and how you can be a part of the noise making!). It is a day for rejoicing, of knowing that God's Spirit is alive and at work among us. It is a day for affirming our baptismal faith, our trust in God's presence and leading.

On this day, two young people of St. Andrew Church will affirm their baptismal faith in the Rite of Confirmation, Connor Pratt and Aiden (AJ) Trudel. Over the past year they have been preparing for their Confirmation with Arlene Creswell and Bob Herold as their guides.

Here are Bob and Arlene's reflections on their journey with AJ and Connor ... "While confirmation class with only two students and no Pastor at first seemed like a task that would be overwhelming – what do we talk about, will they participate in class? After just the first class we realized that working with Connor and AJ would not be a task, but a blessing. With only two "students" we were able to really identify with them individually. We explored many Bible stories and the foundations of the Lutheran Church and even some church management issues, but more importantly we tried to instill in them the values of Christian living. We are confident that the seeds have been planted, we pray that they grow. We look forward to their "adult" participation in the life of St. Andrew Church."

Embrace these two young men in your prayers as they prepare for this special passage in their emerging and maturing lives of faith. And give thanks for Arlene and Bob for their faithful ministry of mentoring and guiding.



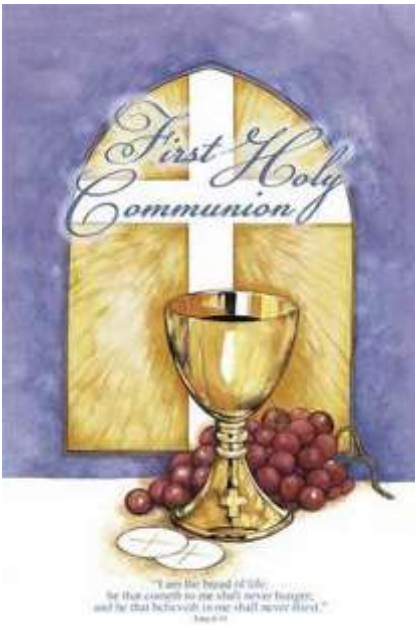
More about Pentecost ... Help Make Noise! The Sounds of Pentecost!

On Sunday, May 28, as we celebrate the festival of Pentecost, you are invited to help make a semblance of the noise of the first Pentecost day when the Holy Spirit breathed into the followers of Jesus and moved the Church into action.

In the Book of Acts we read: *“All of them (the followers of Jesus who had gathered in a small upstairs room in Jerusalem) were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability.”*

Do you speak a language other than English, even in a very elemental way? You are invited to help in the reading of part the Pentecost story in that language. Don't worry if your Spanish or Italian or Greek or Swedish or French or German or Japanese or Latin or Zulu or Trukese is not perfect. You'll be speaking simultaneously with everyone else to make a wonderful cacophony of sounds, just like Pentecost!

If you would like to share in this noisy excitement of Pentecost please speak to Pastor Swenson, Jill Little chair of our Worship and Music team, or call Nicole Gergler, our Church Administrator, and they will supply you with the information (and the text in your language) you need. Thanks!



May 21 ... A Celebration of New Beginnings! Baptism and First Communion!

On the Seventh Sunday of the Great Festival of Easter we will have many reasons to rejoice in the new life offered us in the risen Jesus.

We will celebrate the Baptism of Louis Luther, son of Vicki Trudel and Brett Dube, as he is bathed in the living, unending graces of God's love and joined to the community of Christ as our new brother in the faith.

We will also celebrate with Michael Lynch and Nikolas Paul Shackford as they receive Holy Communion for the first time and rejoice in Jesus' invitation to dine at the table of life giving love.

Keep the families of Louis, Michael and Nikolas in your prayers as they prepare for these holy days in their lives.



An Announcement about Announcements for those with Announcements to Make...

We love when people want to make announcements about what's going on at St. Andrew Church! They are reminders of life stirring among us, of good work in ministry.

If you are eager to make an announcement/invitation to ministry, please follow a couple guidelines:

- By the Tuesday before you want to make your spoken Sunday announcement please submit a written announcement about your invitation that can be included in the weekly Announcement Page that is sent to the whole congregation. That way your invitation to ministry will receive a broader audience and you can provide some more details that are not possible in a brief oral presentation. Send to: churchoffice@standrewct.org, or call Nicole in the church office: 860.583.5809.
- Which gets us to point two ... please keep your spoken announcements on Sunday morning crisp, to the point and as brief but newsy as possible. Refer people to the Announcement in the already published weekly Announcement Page for more details. We will be placing some of published sheets out for distribution next to the Sunday bulletins for people to pick up if they need them.
- Invite people to talk with you after worship to find out more about your invitation. Make yourself available at coffee hour. Personal contact and invitation is always the best way to get people engaged!

Thanks!

A Changing Worship Bulletin Format Coming Soon...



In order to make our worship bulletins more user friendly especially for guests who are new to St. Andrew Church, we will be experimenting with a new bulletin format beginning in May.

Among the changes ... a larger size; larger, more readable font size; all sung, musical parts of the liturgy will be printed as well as hymns we sing from the new supplemental hymnal "All Creation Sings." The words of the

Intercessory Prayers also will be included so that you can use them for your own prayers at home. But you will be invited to turn to the cranberry red ELW hymnbooks to follow the hymns we sing from it.

Bear with the changes and keep in mind the goal ... to make our bulletins more user friendly for worshippers, especially for guests.



Our Gratitude to Gwynne Hopko For Her Continued Ministry

Remember when we celebrated Gwynne Hopko's retirement as our Minister of Music back in December? Have you noticed Gwynne is still very much among us, her music making still wonderful, gifted and spirited? With St. Andrew Church still in transition, with our future direction still under careful thought and conversation, and with the full support of the Congregation Council, Gwynne has committed to continue serving as Minister of Music for the foreseeable future. Her retirement, and the search for a new Minister of Music, is now on pause. Yes, she will enjoy some planned, well deserved weeks of vacation along the way. But for now we are grateful for her willingness to continue her ministry of helping us lift our voices in praise of the risen One.

FAITH FORMATION

Children's Bible Story Time Continues

Attention parents, guardians, and grandparents of youth age 18 months through grade 6! Our caring and dedicated team of volunteers are delighted to continue holding Children's Bible Story Time (CBST) during the 9:30am service in this new church year. Join us each Sunday in Advent and beyond as children and a rotation of two adult volunteers read from a children's bible, sing songs, and participate in activities that help children comprehend the Sunday's gospel and connect it to their lives today. Children are invited to leave with our CBST leaders before the first lesson and return during the hymn of the day. On the fourth Sunday of the month, Pastor Les gives a Children's Sermon in lieu of CBST.

Children's Bible Story Time at St. Andrew is geared to children in preschool through 6th grade. Our curriculum is built to accommodate a span of ages and development! If your child is 18 months to 2 years old (or simply shy!), they can still attend with a parent. Got a teenager in the household? We'd love to welcome them as a helper!

Please contact Britt Lynch (860-302-6538 / ray.britt.2015@gmail.com) or see her in church if you have any questions.

NEWS FROM YOUR TRANSITION CONSULTANT

Deacon Natalie Bloomquist

Upcoming Dates for St. Andrew's Transition/Discernment Work

St. Andrew has important decisions to make about the congregation's future. The discernment work and the conversations cannot be done by a few people. This work will only be successful and productive if we have the thoughts, reflection, and engagement of all our members.

Please mark your calendars and commit to participating in the following discussions:

May 7 after worship – we continue our discussion on possible options for St. Andrew's future; we will have focused discussion with small groups sharing their thoughts with the large group.

May 21 after worship – we will meet to determine if there is consensus among the membership of St. Andrew as to which option St. Andrew will explore for its future. Associate to the Bishop Pastor Steven Wilco will be with us to share information and answer questions on behalf of the New England Synod.

If you have any questions prior to our next gathering, please feel free to contact:

Transition Consultant: *Deacon Natalie Bloomquist* at natalie.bloomquist61@gmail.com

Transition Team: *Karen Biernat, Emily Gdovin, Roy Ouellette, Kristen Pratt, Owen VanBrocklin*

OUTREACH & MISSIONS

GROCERY CART CHALLENGE: "Tuna, turkey, chicken and ham, vienna sausages and even SPAM"!

Confirmation students AJ and Connor are collecting canned meats for this month's challenge. The food items will be donated to Gloria Dei's food drive and will be delivered by the students and their families at the end of the month.

Please grab an extra can or two when you're shopping to help AJ and Connor end their confirmation year serving others!

St Pauly Shed: **TIME TO SWAP OUT YOUR SWEATERS AND BOOTS FOR SHORTS AND SANDALS**

Tired of packing away those same old fall clothes? donate them to the St Pauly shed at St Andrew. Clean out your closets of clothes, shoes and linens and help the church and people around the world. Time for some new fall/winter clothes this year anyway, right? Are your snow boots old enough to vote? Is your fall wardrobe bordering on being "vintage"? Out with old, in with the new! ...every item will help someone. Please donate!

Stuffies: Our Soothing Stuffies team is back to making blankets for Stuffies for the Bristol PD. We need anyone who is willing, to sew/edge some blankets to wrap the stuffies in. The material is supplied along with a simple pattern. All that is needed is to stitch the outside edge of the material. This can be done by crochet, knitting or any way you want to finish it. If you would be interested in becoming part of this ministry please contact Robin at 860-582-7807 or email mrland@comcast.net

Cozy Cover Ministry: A huge thank you to all who have left donations for the Cozy Cover Ministry and the Greeting Card Ministry. All will be used. Anyone interested in becoming part of these activities, please call Trudi @ 860-583-0554.

Also, will the crafter who created and donated the outstanding quilt with the pocket and cross , please call Trudi. May our Lord continue to bless these generous friends.

You may not be able to donate anything. Your prayers for the success of these Ministries are the **very** best donations and bring glory to the God we serve."

PARISH LIFE



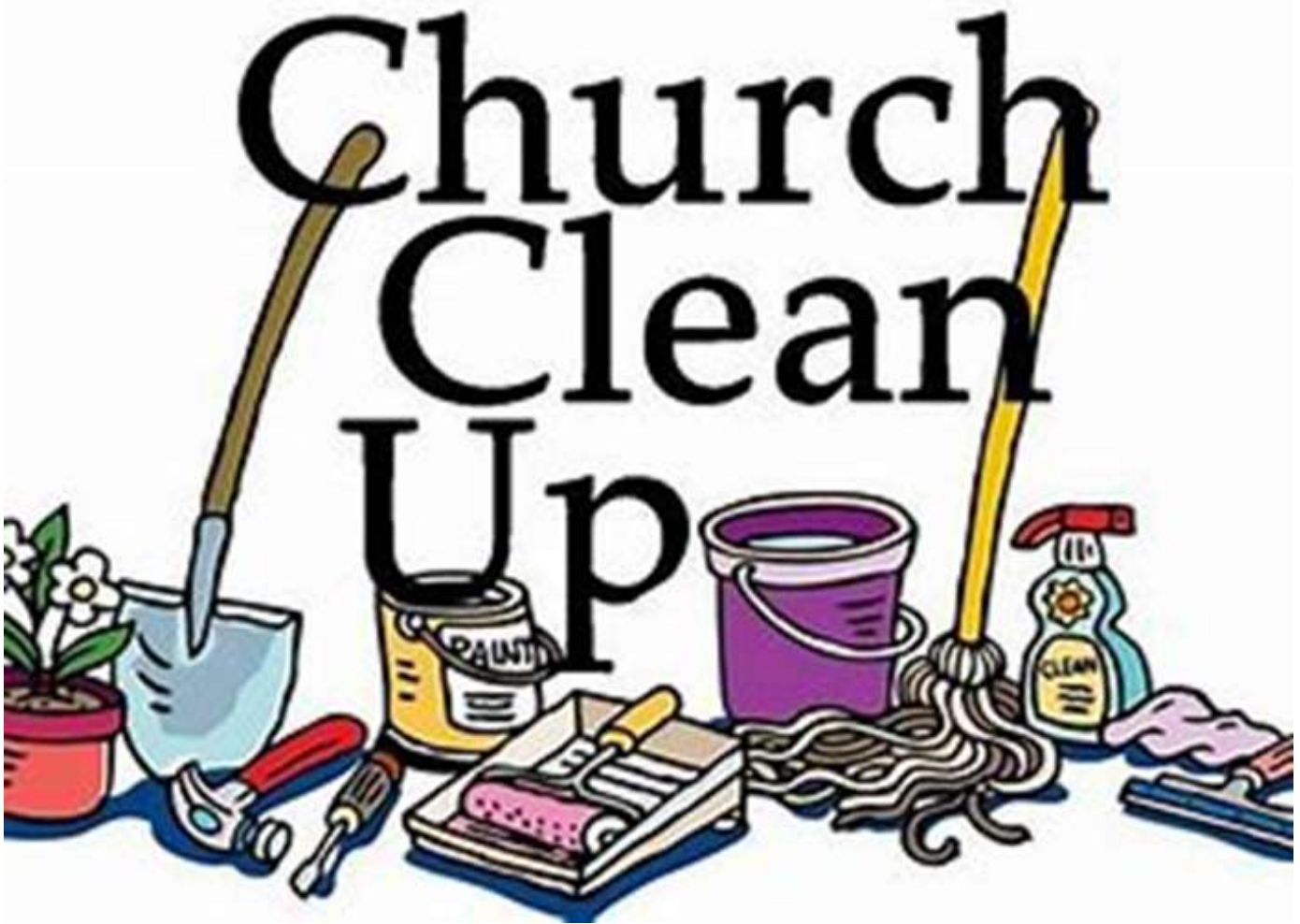
CHOIR FESTIVAL CONCERT *at St. Rose of Lima Church, Meriden*

SINGERS FROM OUR ST ANDREW VOICE CHOIR can be found in this photo with fifty other singers from six area church choirs. The conductor for this concert was Mr. Andrew Brochu, the choral director at Avon High School who brought with him forty singers from the select chorus. The choirs were invited to perform individually, in the joint church choir and en masse with the Avon High School choir. Each choir spent months learning the music before coming together for an afternoon of rehearsing culminating in the Sunday afternoon concert in March.

This event was organized by the Greater Waterbury Chapter of the AGO (American Guild of Organists) who designated the theme of the program "We are INSTRUMENTS OF PEACE". Catholic Relief Services donated the offering collected to citizens of Ukraine, where help is needed.

The choir and I enjoyed the shared musical experience of singing with one hundred enthusiastic church choir singers and we look forward to the next choir festival two years from now.

Gwynne Hopko, Minister of Music



COME ONE, COME ALL

**SPRING CLEANUP – SATURDAY MAY 13, 2023
9 a.m. – 2 p.m.**

On May 13, 2023, St. Andrew will be having a Spring Clean Up, inside and out!
The sign-up sheet is located in the Fellowship Hall.

Any and all help will be greatly appreciated!

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

WHO IS my neighbor?



"Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor?..." "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise" (Luke 10:36-37).

VACATION BIBLE
SCHOOL 2023

July 17-21, 2023
5:30pm to 8:00pm
Includes dinner for your child
FREE

For kids entering Pre-K* to kids entering 6th grade

***must be potty-trained**

Registration begins May 1, 2023
For more information see the St. Andrew Website at www.standrewct.org

STEWARDSHP

OUR DAILY BREAD



Easter giving - as we move through Holy Week toward the light of the Resurrection, take a moment to reflect on how we as a church are looking forward, toward new growth, new ideas, new life. Please consider a special Easter offering in thanksgiving for what we have and in anticipation in what is to come. Generosity is a spiritual discipline, thank you for your generosity!

Electronic Offering: are you ready to start using automatic electronic giving? We can walk you through it, it is incredibly easy and you get an email every week (or month, your choice) confirming your offering. Go to standrewct.org and click the Donate button. You can make a one-time donation, set up weekly or monthly offerings, all in just minutes! See Bob H. or Arlene C. for info/assistance.

Service Stewardship: if you've ever thought about serving but were afraid to ask....now's the time to take that step! We have opportunities to serve in the areas of worship, outreach, parish life, from one-time to short-term duties. Many hands make light work. Training is always provided :0) See Bob H., Arlene C. or any Council member for more details.

MAY BIRTHDAYS

2 Jon FitzGerald	19 Tina Beaudoin
3 Wesley Hoyt	19 Lisa Fournier
3 Tyler McMahon	20 Owen VanBrocklin
4 Andrew Trudel	21 Omar Ramirez
8 Michael Lynch	22 Lindsey Matulis
8 Charles Schissler	23 Quinn Vontell
12 Abigail Griffin	24 Zachary Fournier
13 Erin Avolt	25 Kaitlyn Koeppen
13 Levi Avolt	25 Donald Milbrandt
14 Dawn Stitham	26 Melissa Hoyt
15 Kristin Beaudoin	27 Karen Biernat
15 Olivia Beaudoin	28 Robin Caron
15 Erica Matulis	28 David Hoyt
15 Kenneth Soden	31 Mark Beauregard
17 Kenneth Griffin	31 Brian Murphy
	31 Ronald St. Pierre



Spring DIABETES SUPPORT-EDUCATION SERIES- 2023

WHETHER YOU ARE NEW TO DIABETES OR NOT, IF YOU WOULD LIKE UPDATED INFORMATION, TIPS, TRICKS, SUPPORT, THESE **FREE** SESSIONS MAY BE FOR **YOU !!!**

NO REGISTRATION REQUIRED – Just show up
6 SESSIONS 1.5 HOURS: April 10,17, 24,May 8,15,22

Where: Bristol Public Library 5 High Street, Bristol CT

When: Afternoon session starts 1:00 pm, repeated session begins 7 pm- same topic at both sessions

By: Betsy Gaudian MSN, RN-BC, RDN, CDCES

Questions:

April 10- Diabetes, what, why, the basics

April 17- Nutrition- and the DIET !

April 24- Monitoring + CGMs

May 8- Medications- and all that jazz (BP & Chol)

May 15- How to cope, emotions, problem solving

May 22- Exercise, open forum, resources, show + tell

CARING FOR EACH OTHER AND FOR THOSE IN OUR COMMUNITY

Remember in your prayers...those known to us in need of healing: We offer prayers of thanksgiving and supplication for:

- those known to us in need of healing: Bill Murtha, Arthur Potz, Jim Prior, Callum Rescsanski, Paul Rescsanski, Charles Schissler, Steven Siecienski, Johanna Tessman, Carole Wedler, Trudi Wedler, Marge Pearson, Anna Zurell, Nancy Denehy, Andrew Alling, and all those in nursing homes and the homebound: Marie Ouellette and Jean Wentland.

Purpose Statement

We are committed to seeking out people for membership in Christ's family, studying God's Word together that we may grow in his grace, strengthening our lives with regular worship and fellowship and sharing our time, talents, and treasure that Jesus will be known to all people through our words and deeds.