

July  
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PRINCE OF PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

July 2010 Congregational Update



## Pastor Micheel— "Striving for Balance"

*It is good to hold on to the one thing while not letting go of the other.  
The one who fears God goes out with them both.*

Ecclesiastes 7:18



Hear what the proverb is saying? Often we have choices: "Should I do this or that?" Well, if both things are good, then the wise thing to do is to do them both. But how? God gives us no specific rules like, "Do one thing 53% of the time, and do the other thing 47% of the time." Instead, he treats us like grown-ups and says, "Be wise. Do one good thing while not neglecting other good things."

We wrestle with these choices every day. For instance: God provides me with \$100. What should I do with it? Buy a gift for someone in my family? Enjoy a dinner out? Give an offering to church to support telling about Jesus? Pay taxes on it? Give to a local charity? God says that all these things are good. He gives us freedom to decide how to use the money he's given. The answer is probably, "I'll try to do more than one of these things, since they're all good. Or, if I use the entire \$100 for one thing this time, then I'll use the next money I get for another thing." As Ecclesiastes says, "**It is good to hold on to the one thing while not letting go of the other.**"

We often face similar dilemmas in our congregation, too. We have many good things set before us and only a certain amount of time, energy and money to spend. How do we choose? **It's wise to strive for balance—doing one good thing while not neglecting another.** Here are some examples.

### ***Balance between my preferences and everyone's benefit***

"If I had my druthers..." We all have personal preferences. As an example, I notice this when choosing music for church. Some like old-time gospel; others like classic Lutheran hymns. Still others prefer contemporary. Some like music to help them meditate deeply on God's Word; others like music to help them voice exuberant praise. So how do I pick music? I can't realistically honor the preferences of 300+ church members. So I try to think of what will be healthy and helpful to our whole congregation and to guests. I suppose that means that no single person gets exactly what he or she wants. But is that a bad thing?

Paul wrote, "Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to *mutual edification* [or "the building up of each other"]" (Romans 14:19). How we organize, what events we plan, how we spend our money—in all these areas, we do want to listen to the thoughts and concerns of individual Christians. But we also must consider what will be beneficial for everyone, for the whole body. This is hard to balance! Yet we need to plan and do what's good not just for each of us individually, but for all of us together. Paul put it well: "Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others" (Philippians 2:4).

### ***Balance between nurture and outreach***

Should we nurture the faith of believers who are already part of our church? Or should we make contact with those who aren't yet believers, to reach them with the gospel?

You know the answer: God wants us to do both. Did you ever notice that Jesus' Great Commission includes both evangelism and nurture? "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit [evangelizing non-Christians], and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you [nurturing Christians]" (Matthew 28:19,20). Jesus wants us to tell the good news to those who haven't heard it yet, and he wants us to instruct and build up those who have.

Which one should we emphasize more? That's a tough question to answer. If we concern ourselves only with nurturing believers, we will be neglecting God's will to use us to proclaim his gift of grace to the world. On the other hand, if we don't nurture believers, we'll get so spiritually unhealthy that we won't be able to share the good news.

I believe this balance between nurture and outreach is one of our greatest challenges in doing one thing while not letting go of the other. We live in such a ripe mission field, with people all around us missing out on the grace of God. We have made a commitment to evangelism by operating a preschool and school that reach many new families and introduce them to Christ. We have committed, with the help of fellow believers in our synod, to having a second pastor so we can reach more people with the gospel. At the same time,

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## Pastor Micheel (continued)

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new Christians that we reach need to grow in their faith. Nurturing them is critical. And veteran Christians get attacked by the devil as much or more than anyone; they need constant support and strengthening. Maybe the best thing we can do is to keep both evangelism and nurture on our minds all the time. “The one who fears God goes out with them both,” as the proverb says. Instead of putting blinders on and losing sight of one or the other, let’s strive to do both well: evangelize the lost and nurture the found.

### ***Balance between being served and serving***

How should I spend my time and energy? Should I come to church to let Jesus serve me? Or should I spend more time serving Jesus?

Jesus serves us in church services and Bible study time. Jesus gives us his forgiveness, his righteousness, his strength, and more. He does for us what no one else can do.

At the same time, God frequently tells us to use the new lives we’ve been given to serve each other. (See Galatians 5:13, among others.) We serve in our families, our church, our workplaces and schools. We’re not to be lazy, but to serve each other in love.

So which is more important—being served or serving? Mary and her sister Martha can help us answer that. (Read Luke 10:38-42.) Martha was so busy serving Jesus that she neglected being served by him. Jesus told her, “Mary has chosen what is better.” So we need to keep this clear: Our religion is not mainly about us doing stuff for Jesus; it’s about Jesus doing stuff for us.

Yet we must not neglect serving. We must strive for a balance between the two. Which brings me to a related point...

### ***Balance between being busy and resting***



God wants us to use our gifts wisely. That includes our time. Paul tells us, “Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity [or “time”]” (Ephesians 5:15,16). We are to use the opportunities God gives us in this life, and not to be lazy. Jesus also makes this point in his parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30). Whatever God gives us, including our time, he expects us to use wisely.

At the same time, God is the one who invented rest. In the beginning, he set aside one day a week for people not to work. Again, his main point was to remind us that life is not about what we do but about what he does for us. In addition, he knew that non-stop busyness is not healthy for people, physically, emotionally or otherwise.

So how busy is too busy? Here’s one rule of thumb: If you’re too busy serving to be served by Jesus, then you’re too busy. If you’re doing so much that you can’t come to church and Bible study, then look for ways to free up time for Jesus to serve you. We can’t live without Jesus serving us with his gospel.

This is a tough balance to find in our congregation. We have many opportunities. We have many people jazzed up with many good ideas for how we can serve. Yet I also observe frustration because some people aren’t as busy as other people think they should be. Others feel pressured to participate in activities and to be busier than they feel it’s wise to be. Still others are driven to serve by a Christian sense of duty, but sometimes run short of joy when they serve.

How do we find balance? It’s hard, since God does not write our church calendar for us, nor does he fill out our personal day planners. He calls on us to work together, love each other, use time wisely and rest. I think we should allow for freedom here. Let some serve more if they want to. Let some serve in ways apart from church if they wish. Give people latitude to do constructive things they like to do. Give people permission to say “no thanks” when given service opportunities. Let’s help each other avoid extremes of hyperactivity on one hand and laziness on the other. And let’s not judge each other’s choices, which are made in Christian freedom.

In almost every area, we want to do one good thing while not leaving other good things undone. It’s not a matter of “either-or”; it’s “both-and”. God give us this wisdom, so that we strive for balance!

*Pastor Micheel*

## Board for Spiritual Welfare

### Why does it matter if I go to church?

Baseball fans go to baseball games. Football fans go to football games. People belong to health clubs. People join churches. Why?

Fans attend games because they love the game. Being among a loud and boisterous home crowd conveys the excitement and fervor of the moment better than watching the game on television at home alone. Even gathered among a few friends at home is better than just watching the Super Bowl alone.

The whole purpose of Weight Watchers is to meet every week to offer one another encouragement in the fight against the bulge. Rejoicing with those who have made progress and comforting those who have had set backs, is a prime reason for membership.

An individual can read the Bible alone, speak to the Lord in prayer alone, and sing praises to God alone. But the excitement of praising God with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs is so much better even with a few friends. Being with fellow believers to celebrate the victory our God has won for us over sin, death, and the devil is such an encouragement to us as we live our lives here on earth.



We as believers join a church because we as Christians are not meant for isolation. The devil comes looking to tempt us when we are alone. He knows it is easier to get us to despair, to worry, and to be discouraged when we are alone. The encouragement of fellow believers is a prime reason for having a church to call home.

One may feel at times that they don't need the encouragement of others. The role God is playing in their life is good and they are happy. But another one of our roles as a believer is to serve one another in love. Our presence as part of a church is an encouragement to fellow believers. We can share how God is working in our lives, how we are comforted knowing he is in control of the world, how we have peace because we are forgiven for all we have done, and how we are sure of eternal life in heaven.

A piece of coal taken out of the fireplace and left to burn alone will soon grow cold. But those pieces of coal left together will burn bright and hot because of the coals around them. ***"Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."***

If you know someone who has stopped attending Prince of Peace regularly, please share this with them and encourage

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them to return to their church family. Chances are someone else misses them too, and is worried their coal is going out.

*Brad Gollon, Elder*

Re-printed from [www.wels.com](http://www.wels.com)—Questions and Answers, Listed Under Christian Living

## Congregational President

Fellow Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

[Jesus} told them, *"The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."* (Luke 10:2)

Of course the Lord does not need our help, but he wants our help. I get excited every time I do an activity around Prince of Peace; whether it is a committee meeting or most recently, The Discovery Camp. It was great not only to spend time with Jesus' little lambs, but also members that were so willing to share their time and abilities to make it a fun and educational experience.

If I get excited, I assume the rest of you get excited as well. After the most recent voters' meeting in which we approved another record budget, there are a few open positions in Leadership and Strategic Planning. With the change in our organizational structure, these positions do not require near as much time commitment as they have in the past. I urge you to consider one of the following positions:

**Secretary** – logs minutes at Leadership meetings (six times per year), Voters' Meeting (two times per year), and any other special meetings. Great way to get involved without having the responsibility of leading a board or committee.

**Financial Secretary** – records and reports the sources of income and offering on a weekly basis. Part of the Leadership Team that meets six times per year.

**School Board member** – one of seven members that meets monthly to discuss all issues relating to our Christian Day School/Preschool. The school is a big part of our ministry.

**Stewardship Chair** – responsible to assist Prince of Peace, friends and members with using their time, talent and treasures in God-pleasing way.

**Director of Volunteer Ministries** – newly formed position charged with connecting members with opportunities to serve.

I will be calling members until these positions are filled. These opportunities are great ways for you to serve in God's kingdom. If you have any questions regarding any of these spots, do not hesitate to contact me.

I am excited for another fiscal year at Prince of Peace and I can't wait to see what God has in store for us.

Yours in Christ,

*Eric Myers – Chairman*

## Principal's Update

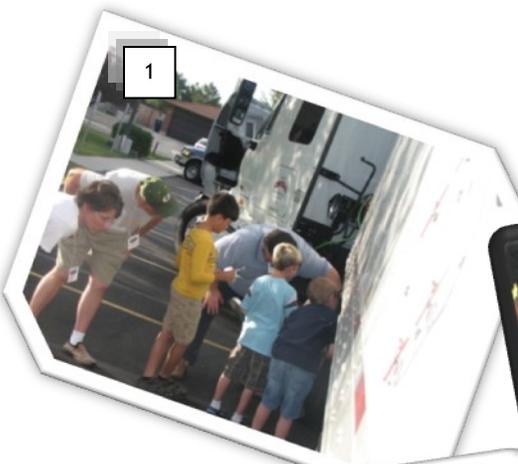
**Taylorville Dayzz**—What a blast—literally! The focal point of the PoP booth was the making of and giving away of foam rockets that were able to fly over 50 feet. The booth opened Friday, June 25, at 4PM. We were open for about 5 hours and gave away about 300 rockets. We continued the next day with fresh volunteers at 11AM and closed up shop around 10:30PM with very tired volunteers! In all, we managed to pass out about 500 rockets and 700 water bottles with the PoP logo emblazoned on the side. It was encouraging to see our rockets flying around the park and our name getting out with the water bottles. We had a sign-up for door prizes for children and adults. There was a spot on the forms to mark if more information about some of our programs at PoP was desired. There were 26 children's forms that were marked that the parents wanted more information about our school and 13 adult forms wishing to learn more about what we teach. A HUGE thank you goes out to everyone who made sacrifices to help out at the booth and to those who prayed for the success of the event. *The picture*



*shows a crowd of children waiting eagerly to make one of the rockets.*

**VBS / Discovery Camp**—A total of 67 children came to our program this last Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday to enjoy a traditional VBS (ages 3-5) and to hear about electricity, hair styling, semis, science, scrapbooking, picture taking, basketball, tools, birdhouse making, cooking, garden stones, and camping (ages 6-12). But that was not all. The purpose, after all, was to share the Gospel with those who may never have heard it and with those who have and wanted to hear more.

Our volunteers did an awesome job at teaching their classes and showing the children their love for the Lord. Thank you to those who truly recognized the importance of such an event and gave of your time, talents and treasures. We were certainly blessed to have a number of visitors bring their children. To God be the praise!



*Pictures:*

- # 1-Darrell Koplín teaching the kids and adults about semis*
- # 2-Jeff Pieros showing the group how to start a camp fire*
- # 3-The end of the last day was time for ice cream ☺*

**Online Sermons**—I have heard from a couple people that they regularly make use of the podcasts of our sermons. If you are still unaware, there are video and audio podcasts of the sermons. Head to our website and get the url and paste it into i-Tunes.

**Bulletin Art**—Please send an email to [jeff.sell@popslc.org](mailto:jeff.sell@popslc.org) if you would like to do a cover during the summer months.