

The Ambassador

August 2013

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

From your priest

Not long ago, I came across the following on Sandy Kenz's Facebook page. I liked it so much, I have shared it multiple times, and now I share it here. Many of these things you hear me say in my own sermons over and over again. Sandlin, however, says it much better and more concisely. Enjoy...

10 Things You Can't Do While Following Jesus

by Mark Sandlin

Lots of people claim to be "following Jesus" and then they do stuff like this. Sure, people who follow Jesus do these things all the time but you can't say you are doing them *because* you are trying to follow Jesus' example.

(Clearly, this is not a complete list but it's a good place to start).

10) *Exclude people because they practice another religion.*

Jesus was constantly including people and he did it with a radical disregard for their religion. We do not have a single recorded incident of Jesus asking for a person's religious affiliation before being willing to speak with them or break bread with them. We do have several records of Jesus seeking out those who happen to practice faith differently from him. There was even this one time when he used a hated Samaritan as an example of how we are supposed to take care of each other.

9) *Exclude people for what they look like, how they were born or things beyond their control.*

I may have mentioned this already but Jesus was constantly including people. Jesus had this rebel streak in him that actually sought out folks who didn't "fit in." People who were different, people who were marginalized, people who were made to feel unwanted in one way or another held a special place in the heart, life and actions of Jesus. I suspect he did it because he understood they weren't actually different at

all. Touch the lepers (the "untouchables"). Do it.

8) *Withhold healthcare from people.*

Did you ever play the game "Follow the Leader"? If you don't do what the leader does, you are out. Following means you should imitate as closely as possible. When people who were sick needed care, Jesus gave it to them. If we are following Jesus, we will imitate him as closely as possible. No, we can't repeat the miracles he did but I've seen modern medicine do things that are about as close to a miracle as I expect to get.

7) *Exclude people.*

Last time. Promise. Jesus was constantly including people. It's a little concept called love. He was pretty big on it.

6) *Let people go hungry.*

When Jesus said, "feed my sheep," it was about more than just a spiritual feeding. As a matter of fact, if Gandhi was right (and I suspect he was), you can't have one without the other: "There are people in the world so hungry, that God cannot appear to them except in the form of bread." There is not a food shortage in the world -- there is enough for everyone. There is not a problem with having a distribution system capable of handling it; I can eat lobster from Maine while looking over the Pacific ocean. The problem is that we aren't very good at sharing.

5) *Make money more important than God (and the children of God).*

The love of money really is the root of all sorts of evil. We make choices about what we will do with our money every day. Our choices speak louder than our words. Willingly or not, our choices frequently hurt the least of these and others rather than help them. Sometimes, we even hurt ourselves. Our money is so important to us, we are willing to shop at stores because their prices are cheaper even though we know the products they sell recklessly endanger the lives of those who make them. We buy food which is mass produced with disregard for their health impli-

cations because the farmer down the road is more expensive. We'd rather keep more of our money than pay the taxes it takes to provide for those in need. We have a money problem.

4) *Judge others.*

"That 'speck of sawdust in your brother's eye' and 'let he who is without sin cast the first stone' stuff? Meant it," Jesus.

3) *Be physically aggressive or violent.*

Okay, okay. "Jesus in in the temple grounds with the money changers." I'll give you that one but, other than that, Jesus both gave the example of and taught his followers to avoid violent behavior. "Put your sword away, (insert your name here)." So, what about the money changers? See #2.

2) *Use the church to hurt people.*

For the most part, Jesus practiced Dudeism. That man could abide. However, there were a few times when he seemed to get more than a bit worked up (most notably with the money changers in the temple grounds). What could take this chill, peace-loving, Jewish hippie from 0 to 60 in the flip of a switch? Using an institution whose primary goal is meant to be love to hurt people. (It's important to note that while you might describe Jesus as aggressive in the temple grounds with the money changers even then he was not physically violent toward people).

1) *Hate.*

The one possible exception might be "hate" itself but even then hate breeds hate -- so best to avoid it.

Around St. Stephen's

Baptisms

Stephanie Parrott was baptized at St. Stephen's on July 27. Her sponsor was Leah Elliott.

Deaths

The memorial Eucharist for **Lauren Kurki**, sister of John Kurki (Cheryl Kurki) was held at St. Stephen's on June 27. Lauren died May 21 in New Jersey. Fr. Jamie was celebrant.

Jan Breyer died June 22. Fr. Jamie officiated at her memorial service at Hanson Runsvold Funeral Home on June 26. Her ashes were buried in Sunset Memorial Gardens, Fargo.

Adele Meister, mother of **Mark Meister (Ann Burnett)**, died suddenly on July 8. Her funeral was on Saturday, July 13, 2013 at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church in Great Falls, Mont, with burial at Mount Olivet Cemetery.

Dedication Sunday

Dedication Sunday is set for September 8. We will begin Children's Chapel that Sunday, as well as have a Blessing of the Backpacks. More information will be in next month's *Ambassador*.

Flood Clean up and Prevention

Leo Wilking

As a result of heavy rainfall on the night of June 25, there was considerable flooding in the church undercroft, kitchen area and Father Jamie's office. A clean-up firm was contacted immediately and the basement level of the church was quickly restored to a satisfactory condition. The elevator sustained minor damage and was also repaired. Wednesday and Sunday services (June 26 and June 30) proceeded as scheduled. The total bill for clean-up and elevator repair will be approximately \$3,500.

Because the positioning and condition of the gutters and downspouts was definitely a contributing factor to the flood, immediate action was taken to remedy that situation. In addition, to prevent a recurrence of similar disasters, the Vestry has authorized an evaluation by competent professionals to determine whether there is need for a sump pump and drain tile, plus a reshaping of the terrain on the east side of the church and possible construction of a small retaining wall. After the needed changes and their cost have been determined, a fundraising effort will be initiated to help pay the bill.

Bulletin Deadline

Information for the Sunday bulletin (announcements; ministry assignments) are due each Thursday at noon. Send items to James Mackay (evensong2@gmail.com, 701 540-1870). Thanks.



The medical mission team to Guatemala, 2013. A total of 763 patients were seen for medical reasons, while the dental team extracted 183 teeth and provided 1000 fluoride treatments. Almost half of the patients were children. 34 people were referred for specialist care.

Towels Needed at Shelter

Are you cleaning out your linen closet? If so, and you have more towels (and wash cloths and hand towels) than you need, or maybe you just want to change the colors in your bathroom or just want new towels, the folks at the Gladys Ray Shelter would be most grateful if you would gift them with your older ones.

Most of you know about the shelter, but just in case some of you who are newer to our congregation don't know, here's a little reminder. In 2006, following ten years of research and study of the homeless situation in the F-M area, a shelter was established to meet the needs of persons who were homeless and were not being served by other shelters and were not connected to agencies that provide treatment. Due to the magnitude of their problems, these individuals tend to cycle through systems without achieving any long-term stability. Because of the chronic nature of their substance abuse and/or mental illness, they are not amenable to treatment, not able to stay in other shelters, not able to maintain an apartment and frequently not able to eat at the established meal sites.

They live on the streets or circulate between "friends" who have housing and move between detox, jail and homelessness. They "fall through the cracks". The question is, how do we serve people with substance abuse and mental health issues who are not currently participating in traditional treatment services and have exhausted existing community resources? At the Gladys Ray Shelter no one is turned away. They have a place to shower and sleep for a short period of time, after which many are able to seek and receive some of the help they need.

The shelter is named for Gladys Ray, a Native American woman and a strong and vocal advocate for people who are homeless. Her passion for the shelter project was boundless. She did not live long enough to see it being used, but she rejoiced when the project was approved. She died on the day the first staff for the shelter was hired.

Two years ago we put a box in the gathering place in our church and asked for donations of towels, which Jan Eliasson, the shelter director, said was an on-going need. We delivered three large garbage bags full of towels, wash cloths and hand towels.

Now I'm requesting a new supply. The box will remain in the gathering place for the next few weeks. The donations DO NOT have to be new. As long as they are useable anything is welcome. The only requirement is that they are clean. I thank you in advance for helping with this project. I hope all of you are having a lovely summer. God's peace!

Alice Hauan

Our website and blog

Please visit the St. Stephen's website <http://ststephensfargo.org> and the blog <http://ststephensfargo.blogspot.com> for news, photos and other items of interest.

Also look for us on **Facebook**, on which we have both a group page and a separate page, and check out St. Stephen's on **Twitter**: ststephensfargo.

Family Fun Event includes Fundraising for Guatemala Mission

Saturday and Sunday, August 10 and 11, you have an opportunity to attend a free activity suitable for all ages.

The Fiber Arts Festival is in its third year at Rheault Farm, a park at 2902 S. 25th St in Fargo. There is free parking, no admission charge, and plenty of free activities. Many of those attending are parent/child combinations, sometimes even three generations.

Do bring your wallet, though. *Joe in a Bag* is selling food and drink, plus 14 vendors will have yarn, needles, books, supplies and equipment for any sort of fiber work you like to do. On Sunday there's a Fiber Frenzy rummage sale booth. You can get a good deal on stuff that others are clearing out!

Sheep will be sheered, alpacas and angora goats will be on the grounds, and you can make your own paper from flax pulp.

For the first time, St. Stephen's will have a booth at the festival. Under the leadership of John Baird (with a *little* help from his wife, Kim) plain white silk

scarves, hankies and other goodies will be transformed by dye into works of art. It's a lot of fun, and so easy that small children have made beautiful things. We guarantee, you won't fail. You could make a serious dent in your Christmas gift list.

All proceeds from the booth will go toward the Guatemala medical mission expenses.

Volunteers are needed. Contact Kim Baird, kbaird@cablone.net. You need not be "artistic," someone has to take the money and fetch the buckets of water!



Dr. Reid Redden of NDSU shearing for an appreciative crowd.



Debbi Gerecke demonstrates basketry

Schedule of Ministries at St. Stephen's for August-September*

PLEASE NOTE: The September schedule is tentative and does not include Children's Chapel - a more complete schedule will accompany the September issue of *The Ambassador*.

Schedule	August 4	August 11	August 18	August 25	
Acolyte	Froiland	Holbrook	Marubbio	Meister	
Altar Guild	Nylander	Spurbeck	Spurbeck	Hauan	
Worship Ldr/ EM	Meister	Marubbio	Holbrook	Weightman	
Lector	Hauan	Meister	Morrissey	Wilking	
Usher	Hauan	Nylander	Stewart	Reusch	
	Marubbio	Patnode	Wilking	Patnode	
Euch. Visitor	Holbrook	Marubbio	Weightman	Baird	
Coffee	Templeton	Baird	DuFault	Gelinski, B&T	
Cleaning	Holbrook	Holbrook	Marubbio	Marubbio	
Tentative Schedule	September 1	September 8	September 15	September 22	September 29
Acolyte	Weightman	Froiland	Holbrook	Marubbio	Meister
Altar Guild	Hauan	Holbrook	Holbrook	Lindley	Lindley
Worship Ldr/EM	Wilking	Baird	Hauan	Marubbio	Holbrook
Lector	Nylander	Stewart	Templeton	Weightman	Wilking
Usher	Baird	McMullen	Nylander	Reusch	Wilking
	Hauan	McMullen	Patnode	Stewart	Baird
Euch. Visitor	Holbrook	Marubbio	Weightman	Baird	Holbrook
Coffee	Hauan	Wilson	Marubbio	McMullen	Holbrook
Cleaning	Ranney	Ranney	Wilson	Wilson	Stewart
Children's Chapel	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD

*Communion is available for those who are unable to attend Sunday worship. Please call the church to request communion after the Sunday service.

**If you are unavailable to serve on a date when you are assigned, please find a substitute and let James (evensong2@gmail.com) know who the substitute will be as early as possible so he can include the correct names in the bulletins. THANKS.