

Be A Witness

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

My sister Peg, who is a member of a Lutheran church in New York, is part of a study for her church. Each member was asked to contact someone outside of their congregation to answer a few questions. Completing the questionnaire took a lot of introspection. I challenge each of you to prayerfully review the four questions and contemplate your own response. You will be amazed at how much your eyes will be opened. God's blessings. Jean Kammerer

"WHAT IS THE CHURCH?"

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE PURPOSE AND MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH?

To teach, support and encourage others, in both in-reach and outreach as the Lord leads. Our congregation has a program called BYBK. "Be Your Brother's Keeper". Who is our brother? Members of our church body, family, friends, neighbors, our community, and all who do not know Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. We need to reach out to those He places on our heart. We need to be bold in witness, especially in the one-time opportunities He places before us.

We must always remember that it is the work of the Spirit to convict others' hearts. We are merely the vessels that God uses to reach out and share the Gospel. We often think that our witness will fall on deaf ears and be of no value. I like to use the illustration of an empty cup and an eyedropper. Each time you share the love of Christ in Word or action, imagine a drop of water falling into the cup. It may take a day, a week, a year, a decade or more; but at some point the last drop will fill the cup to overflowing. So it is with the living Word.

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE KEY ELEMENTS OF MINISTRY FOR THE CHURCH?

To be Christ's hands on earth; serving others in His name. Taking care of physical and emotional needs as well as the spiritual need. Paul tells us that faith without works is dead. I think many of us forget or neglect that. Compassion International has a wonderful reminder: "I can't hear you when I'm hungry." That also is true of those who are hurting, scared, lonely....

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS YOUR ROLE IN THE MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH?

To support the pastors and leadership of our congregation.

To share the spiritual gifts and talents that God has bestowed upon me.

To support missions within our congregation and church body, within our community and in the world with the time, talent and treasures that He has entrusted to me.

WHAT ABOUT YOUR CHURCH LIFE FILLS YOUR SOUL AND KEEPS YOU CONNECTED?

I have learned much from those I serve. God has fed and nurtured me through the wisdom of the women who take part in my senior care ministry. Adelaide often reminds us that "You are the only Bible some people will ever read." And there are many other pearls of wisdom I have learned from them. One that has captured my heart is this: When I first met Ramona she asked me "Why are you here?" I responded that I was a volunteer. She sighed and asked "Why are you here?" I told her that I led a Bible study there and then visited with other residents. Once again, she sighed and asked "Why are you here? Are you a pastor or an Apostle? I thought to myself, well I guess I can consider myself a disciple because I am a follower of Christ, but not being sure of what to say I raised a prayer for help. The words, which, though they came from my mouth, were not words I had processed. They flowed easily "Because I believe in Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior and I want to share His Love with everyone." She smiled and nodded. I continue to use those words and God has used them to open doors and hearts. Praise Father, Son and Holy Spirit.