

This is an article that first ran in 2009 & in 2012 this last copy is from 2016 another that we could revisit.

Smoky Mountain Reflections #164

Do these phrases sound familiar to you? “90% of the work is done by 10% of the people.” Or, “Nobody wants to do anything around here; it seems impossible to get people to volunteer to do anything.” You may have been in places in your life where things seemed that way to you, and you may even think that this might apply to our church family here sometimes. However, I think it is more true that this is a result of so many people doing so many little *unseen* things that we do not even realize how much everybody *is* in fact doing, not to mention some famous guy about 500 years ago who said something about “putting the best construction on things” or “explaining them in the kindest way” when speaking of our neighbors. Re-read the opening statements (in quotes) and see if they seem like the ‘best construction’ to you.

As your pastor, I have a unique view of this congregation because it is my vocation to know and be pastor to all of you. I know the names of all our members (although it may have taken me a while to learn one or two) and have had one-on-one conversations with all of you. I also know most of what gets done around here and most of the people who do it. Consequently, I would like to take this opportunity to brag on the congregation of people for whom I am blessed to be shepherd. As I pondered this, it occurred to me that over half of our congregation is actively involved in some sort of activity that makes Saint Paul Lutheran Church the bright beacon of Gospel truth that it is in our community. I have on more than one occasion had perfect strangers complement me regarding the good that our church does for Christ in this community. I have in the past bragged about all the ministries and services we support, and also about the diverse geographical and cultural heritage that make up our church family. But what I have not bragged about in a long time is all the hard work that so many people do to make this church such a lively bunch of servants for Christ.

Now, our Lord speaks against bragging in a conceited way, but I think it is fitting to humbly recognize the many and varied efforts the members of our congregation make on behalf of Christ’s church. Most of the work people do here is to the glory of God and not for themselves, but how can a person say thank you for a job well done if they do not know who did it? Also, God tells us in His word to encourage one another. The list that follows is given so that you can thank each other for a job well done. This list is mostly alphabetical, and it is important to note that it is also brief and incomplete. Many are not on the list, but that does not mean they are not doing their part; quite to the contrary, some have served God’s church for decades and are in a different season of their life now. Others are new to the church and are still discovering what it is God would have them do. Still others are praying for and providing resources for God’s work. And my final caveat: your human pastor probably has forgotten the great job you did for God’s church because so many are doing so much, and some of you do so much that I only listed a few things for each of you. So here goes...

Donna Allen: recording engineer, Lavonne Berry: Women’s Care Center volunteer, LWML treasurer, Keith Brandt: Webmaster, Susie Brandt: choir, Robin & June Brown: greeters and choir, Nelson Calfee: Elder, Laura Calfee: Youth volunteer, Tucker Calfee: Acolyte, Gwen Cody: church secretary, Roger & Myrna Dance: Food Bank volunteers, Pastor Dettmer: Worship & Elder, Pat Dettmer: LWML President, Nancy Donaldson: Altar Guild, Norman Edelman: Trustee assistant, Ann Edelman: Acolyte, Gerald Frank: greeter & usher, Sue Frank: greeter & historian (scrapbooks), Joni & Billie Joe Geszvain: bulletin board & sign coordinators, Bob Hansen: choir, Keith Jenkins: Elder & adult Sunday School teacher, Dana Jenkins: Financial secretary, treasurer & Sunday School teacher, Clare Jenkins: Acolyte, Dean Johnson: usher, Jerry Johnson: Head Elder, Judy Johnson: Stewardship, Marc Johnson: Elder & usher, Chris Johnson: usher, Barbara Jones: Education & organist, Mary Ellen Kasten: Fellowship assistant, Rod Kuzynski: President, Jean Kuzynski: Choir, Elisabeth Leiser: Trinity Hope volunteer & choir, Bruce Lerche: Evangelism, Tom Malinowski: usher, Bill Matthies: choir, Dick Medley: Food Bank volunteer, Gary McCaffity: VP & choir director, Jan McCaffity: Newsletter & ICU Coordinator, Bob McMahan: grounds clean up, Carl Parsons: Elder, Mike Prall, Trustee assistant, Jay Purkhiser: usher, Beth Purkhiser: Fellowship assistant, Gerda Portier: Thrivent treasurer, Sunday School teacher, Chris Ramsey: Elder, Penny Ramsey: Sunday School teacher & paper calendar, David Roberts: head usher & Elder, Debra Roberts: Alter Guild, Dave Reptik: Trustee, Debbie Reptik: Youth, Trish Rupholdt: Alter Guild, Veronica Sawyer: Prayer Chain, Mandy Smith: choir and fellowship assistant, Betty Stover: Alter Guild & Prayer Chain Captain, Tony Stover: Trustee assistant, Riley Spencer: Acolyte, Bill Sproat: Elder, Angela

Sproat: Fellowship chair, Josh & Jenni Swiger: ICU delivery, Steve & Shelly Turner: lawn care & landscaping, Lois Vicknair: organist, Joanie Wagner: Altar Guild, Cheri Wales: choir, Eva Walker: Altar Guild. That is a lot of people doing a lot of good work for God. Now find someone you did not know was doing something for the church and thank them. Thanksgiving is just around the corner!

In Christ,
Pastor Portier