



# Compassion

Sharing hope...

2017 - Fourth Quarter

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Special Gifts & Memorials



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NEWS

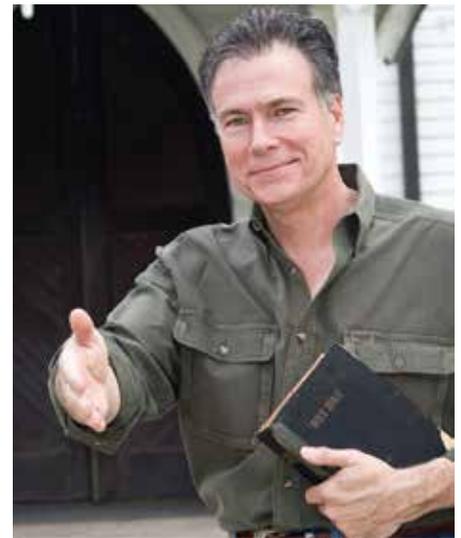
## Welcoming Samson

He deeply needed anger management counseling. He was guilty of domestic violence and murder. While committing acts of vengeance, it seemed he was comfortable with the motto, "Do unto others worse than they did to you." His parents were distressed by his lifestyle. He was an object of both fear and hatred by those who became the target of his wrath.

Although he grew up in a believing home, his actions at times seemed at odds with his faith life. None of us would justify his sinful actions, and yet we know that the Lord used him, warts and all. He delivered Israel from one of her most fierce and hurtful enemies, and he is counted among the believers "whose weakness was turned to strength." (see Hebrews 11:32-34)

Like the original Samson, there are other *Samsons* among us today. Some have needed anger management counseling, are guilty of domestic violence, murder, or other crimes. In spite of all that, some have been chosen by the Lord. In pure grace, God sent His Spirit and worked faith in their evil, stony hearts. When one of those new children of God arrives at your church, will you welcome them?

To help yourself with that question, take a look in the mirror. Do you see a thief, an addict, a gossip, someone who struggles with sexual sin, or the love of money, or in need of control of emotions? Because if you don't see any of those, you are looking at either a deluded person or a liar. "There is no one who does good.... All have sinned" (Romans 3:12,23).



Yet God forgave us! Yet God welcomed us unconditionally! Now He sends us to welcome others with the same mercy and grace which He extended to us. Just like those future *Samsons* you will meet, we are all a work in progress. So, God placed us in church families where we continue to be mentored, both by the Word and by strong Christians we can trust. Each of us is sick and in need of the Divine Physician. But remember - we aren't just patients! We are also one of God's first responders, which he sends to rescue the perishing!

God bless our partnership together with one another and our Lord and Savior, Jesus.

Read about Samson in Judges 13-16.



by Executive Director  
Philip Henselin

## Spiritual Hustlers

*“I need to  
show up.  
And I did.  
And God  
showed  
up, too.”*



In Matthew 25, Jesus tells a story that used to bother me: It's the story of the five foolish bridesmaids who didn't bring an adequate supply of oil for their lamps and ended up getting shut out of the wedding celebration while they were out hunting for an oil seller. I used to think that the "foolishness" of these women was being absent-minded and disorganized, and I wondered why that got them such a harsh consequence. Then I heard a sermon a while back that set me straight: the pastor explained that the "foolishness" of the five bridesmaids was that they were *hustlers*. That helped me understand, because I've had a few years of experience dealing with hustlers and fending off their manipulations. Those bridesmaids knew very well how much lamp oil they were going to need, but they figured: Why should I go to the trouble and expense when I can just tell a sad story to some sucker and have them take care of my responsibilities for me? And when they couldn't find anybody they could hustle, they ended up on the outside looking in.

Jesus told the story to warn against *spiritual* hustling: trying to slide through life using somebody else's connection with God. A man in my prison Bible study group told us about how he'd been one of those spiritual hustlers. During his first years of prison he avoided all opportunities for Bible study and worship. Often other inmates would say to him, "We're going to the chapel; come with us." And he'd always answer, "Not today, but you all pray for me, okay?" And he figured he had covered his bases: no need for him to seek God and connect with him, because the guys at the chapel were doing it for him.

But here he was now, in a Bible study with us. He told us, "It started hitting me: Nobody can do this for me, nobody else's faith is going to get me connected to God; I need to show up. And I did. And God showed up, too."

Somebody once said, "God has no *grandchildren*." I love being part of his process of turning strangers - and hustlers - into children.



by Chaplain Philip Merten

# A Time for Everything

"There is a time for everything and a season for every activity under heaven: a time to be born and a time to die; a time to plant and a time to uproot; ...a time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance; ...a time to embrace and a time to refrain; a time to search and a time to give up; a time to keep and a time to throw away: ...a time to be silent and a time to speak" (Ecclesiastes 3:1ff).

Call them Randy and Joanne. Both are active WELS members. Their faith is strong and working in their daily lives. However, a great sickness in Randy has raised some faith and ethical questions. After being in the hospital numerous times, Randy is wondering how much care is enough. Is it "a time to search or a time to give up."

Randy's concern for his family is somewhat financial. Should he use all his resources to fight for another month of life? He and his wife have had "time to weep and time to laugh." He thanks the Lord for giving him doctors and nurses and medicines which have extended his life. But what time is it now? Is it "a time to search or a time to give up"? Randy uses some of his time "to be silent" before the Lord and some of his time "to speak" to the Lord for the care of his family.

Is it "time to keep or a time to throw away"? Randy is tired of all the health care he has received. He embraces his season of earthly life and death. He embraces his time for God's help through prayer in making difficult decisions. He prays, makes his decisions, and then tries to refrain from questioning God's will.

Randy and Joanne have also had much "time to cry" and "time to laugh." They have had "time to mourn" his condition and yet "dance" in precious memories. They have had "time to embrace" in their marriage and "time to refrain" when sickness demanded it. They have had "time to plant" their life in a home. They have had "a time to uproot" their life when Randy has had to stay in the hospital for a long period of time. What kind of time is left? What time is it for them now?

King Solomon had similar thoughts about his earthly time and called it "meaningless" compared to eternal time. Jesus points to eternal time with God and says: "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life and no one can snatch them out of my hand" (John 10:27-28).

For believers, an earthly time is a temporary gift for life and death. It is a time of grace to possess God's gift of eternal life in Jesus' saving arms. God gives everyone an incredible will to live and helps believers see the time to give up. In earthly time we cry, mourn, search, and die. In eternal time we enjoy God's presence and life forever. Now is the time to enjoy the Lord's saving gifts. Now is the time to pray for the Lord's guiding hand. Then after prayer, it is time to make the best decisions we can. That time will be just the right time. Thank you, Jesus!



*by Chaplain Kenneth Wenzel*





Sharing hope...  
with those who need it most!

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*“To share God’s law  
and the saving  
Gospel of Jesus  
Christ with all  
individuals who  
are or have been  
institutionalized,  
and their families.”*

### Special Gifts & Memorials 8/2/2017 - 11/29/2017

#### IN CELEBRATION OF

**The Reformation**  
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Wilger  
**Larry and Mary Maas’  
50th Anniversary**  
Mr. & Mrs. Larry Maas  
**500th year of the Reformation**  
Ms. Lou Beard

#### IN HONOR OF

**Ethel Jogwer**  
Mrs. Michel Stoller  
**Being blessed with  
50 years of marriage.**  
Mr. & Mrs. Juel Knutson  
**Pastor Myron Sordahl’s  
50 Years of Service**  
Mr. & Mrs. Edward Rzepka  
**Scott Sterr**  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Schulz  
**Retirement of Silas Burn**  
Mr. Matt Banbury  
**Rev. Steven Petersen’s  
Retirement**  
Mr. Matt Banbury  
**Tim & Amber Iles Wedding**  
Rev. & Mrs. Charles Iles

#### IN MEMORY OF

**Audrey Johnsen**  
Mr. Richard F. Johnsen  
**Augus & Frieda Meyer**  
Mr. & Mrs. Fred Brehmer  
**Benjamin & Lydia Harbach**  
Mr. & Mrs. Benjamin Harbach  
**William and Helen Ivy**  
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**Janice Stuebs**  
Rev. Martin Stuebs

**Judy Dowty**  
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**Verlyn W. Jahnke**  
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**Walter Sievert**  
Mr. & Mrs. Timothy Sievert

#### IN THANKSGIVING FOR

**Watching over our son-in-law  
who was hit by a car.**  
Rev. & Mrs. Arthur Koepsell  
**Institutional Ministries and  
the good they do.**  
Mrs. Beverly Wichman  
**Successful Eye Surgeries**  
Mr. David Beyer Sr.  
**Duane Pfaff**  
Mr. & Mrs. Duane Pfaff  
**Ida Pfaff’s Recovery**  
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Gebert  
**Grandchildren and Great  
Grandchildren**  
Mr. & Mrs. Jerome Mathwig  
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Marriage**  
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**A well run office by Joe,  
Stephanie, Michelle, & Laura,  
and last but not least, Cindy.**  
Rev. & Mrs. Philip Henselin  
**Richard & Shirley Pfeifer 64  
years of marriage**  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Pfeifer  
**My 3 Great-Grandkids’ Health**  
Ms. Ruth Rehbaum  
**God’s Grace**  
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Mr. & Mrs. William Atwood