



RIVERSIDE CHURCH

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER, 2023

RIVERSIDE APOSTOLIC LUTHERAN CHURCH - NEWSLETTER

I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; And I lay down my life for the sheep.” John 10:14-15

September is a time of change. We change gears from summer to fall. It used to be that summer was a little slower schedule. Now it seems our summers get filled up with soccer and softball practices and games, vacations, weekend fun events like camping or short-day trips, golfing, hiking, bicycling, and so much more. Now the school buses will be running. The school bells will ring, starting the day for our students with a new grade. Different teachers, new challenges, and adventures. Our students begin another year of study, another year of pursuing their dreams, for others maybe another year of dreaded lessons.

Our farmers change gears as well. They are starting to prepare for a harvest. The machinery needs to be tuned up, to make sure every part is working, wore out parts changed out. Oil changes for the tractors and the semis are completed, getting them ready for the day that they start rolling in the fields. It is a time of waiting and watching. At the beginning of September, all the fields are still green, but as September progresses the high temperatures drop and the weather cools. The crops begin to turn yellow and then all the leaves drop off and there is just a stem with all the pods. Harvest is then around the corner.

The change of the seasons is more than a change from the summer weather to the fall weather and the change of summer schedules to fall schedules. There are changes in the seasons of life as well. We see the changes in babies becoming toddlers to preschoolers. We see the changes from kindergartners to sixth graders. We witness the change from junior high, senior high, college students. We enter the seasons of marriage and parenthood. There is the season of becoming empty nesters. There is the season of retirement. Each season of life has its own demands, its own schedules, its own challenges and joys and adventures. One can witness or enter into a different season more quickly than we anticipate and we find ourselves asking the question, how did time fly by so quickly.

We seem to change gears rather efficiently, as we go from one part of our journey to the next. Preschoolers are almost able to help Grandma and Grandpa program their phones for them. They grow up with this new technology and working with technology is second nature. As the students get older and begin to develop some of their athletic skills or artistic skills, there are schedules of practices and games and programs to attend.

Newly weds and young parents have their challenges and joys in the chapters of their life. Those who are just starting out in the workforce are thinking about their careers and working hard to get ahead. Retirement seems like a strange new world from the daily busy grind of striving to earn a living all those years. Through each changing season, we are constantly moving, constantly adapting to the different challenges, the different goals, different joys. People come and go in our lives. We try to hang on to good friends, but sometime, even with all the communication technology at our fingertips, it becomes difficult to stay in touch.

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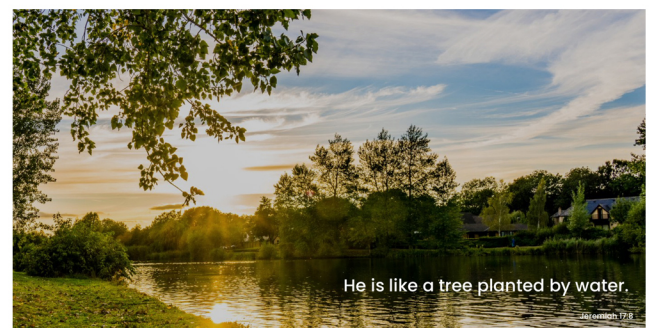
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As we rush through our days, in different parts of our seasons of life, we can get lost. We can become overwhelmed. It is in our work ethic to work harder and think harder to get more things done or at least get most of the things on our list done.

Through all our seasons, through all our rushing about in life, all our strivings to accomplish our goals, our investments in relationships, Jesus is our Good Shepherd. Jesus knows us. Jesus knows us as he knows the Father. Jesus knows what each day holds in store for us in every day of every season. Jesus doesn't just know us and know our struggles and our joys; Jesus is also our Good Shepherd. Jesus is present to walk alongside us. Jesus is present to hear our prayers and add his own petitions with ours to the Father. Jesus loves to bless us with good things, good people. Each day Jesus is present with his love to claim us. Each day, Jesus is present to seek us out when we have gone astray. Each day, Jesus is present to forgive and redeem, when we cry out for mercy and forgiveness. Each day, Jesus brings blessings of people and resources into our lives to meet our needs. Each day, Jesus loves to spend time with us. Jesus loves to watch us grow into our talents and gifts and enjoys how we come to make a difference in the world as we use them. Jesus draws closer when we are afraid. Jesus wards off enemies of sin, death, and Satan. Jesus leads us and guides us into people's lives, whom we bless and who also bless us.

We journey through the seasons of life, day by day, week by week, month by month, year after year. Each day, each season brings changes, some we love, some we fear, some we hate, some create wonder, others terrify us. Jesus is present as our Good Shepherd walking with us. Seasons come and seasons go, but the loving kindness of Jesus and his Father's love for us is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow.

God' Peace!
Pastor Ray.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Health and Wellness
Sunday School and Youth Groups
All the students returning to school

He is like a tree
planted by water.
Jeremiah 17:8

LOOKING AHEAD

SEPTEMBER

3rd - Sunday School Meeting After Church
6th - Youth Group Starts
10th - Sunday School Starts
10th - Meal Following Church Service
12th - Board Meeting
14th- Bible Study Resumes

OCTOBER

3rd - Board Meeting
8th - Meal Following Service
21st - Harvest Party