

Another Word November 1, 2022

To our family and friends of First Christian Church

The chill is now almost every day. Air conditioners are being shut down and furnaces turned on. Welcome November! (I think)

Please remember to turn back your clocks this Saturday or you may have to wait in the parking lot.

This Sunday we will be honoring and remembering all of our Saints who have gone on before us during this past year.

I want to thank everyone who contributed to Samaritan's Purse. We collected \$1,500 (which the church will match). This offering will go to the relief efforts in Florida.

As a reminder, please have your Thanksgiving meal bags returned by this Sunday, Nov. 6<sup>th</sup>. We again have gone over our goal in giving. 20 turkeys and 24 meals have been collected. If you can't be here Sunday, let us know, and we will come and pick up your purchase. Thank you.

This coming Monday, November 7<sup>th</sup>, Kelly Knowlton and The Jazz All Stars will be performing at 7pm in our Sanctuary. You are all invited to come out for a great evening of music.

A work day is scheduled for Saturday November 12<sup>th</sup>, from 9 to noon to clean up around the building and prepare for, Brrrrrrrrrr!, winter.

Our scriptures for November 6<sup>th</sup> are Psalm 145: 1-5, 17-21, and Luke 12: 49-53. Our message title is, "What will you do with Jesus?" Shelley Carpenter is our serving Elder.

For November 13 our scriptures are Isaiah 65: 17-25, and Matthew 25: 1-13. "Ready or not..." Linda Gardner is our serving Elder.

Let us be in prayer.

O Holy Father, we thank You for the love You shower upon us. And we see, hear, and respond because of that love. With the ups and downs of life, we are at times confused and afraid. But when we open our hearts to You, life seems so much better, and what You have in mind for us becomes crystal clear. We ask for Your saving grace and healing for our loved ones within our church and families. We pray continually for Your guidance and strength, and may we conform to Your wisdom that guides us in Your perfect way. In Jesus' precious name we pray, Amen.

One of my favorite musicals of all time is "The Music Man." You know the one where Professor Harold Hill, a con artist goes to River City to sell band instruments and uniforms in order to bilk the residents out of their money. The instruments are sold to the families and now they wait for the uniforms. The local music teacher notices that there are no rehearsals and asks how the youth band members will learn to play. Without skipping a beat, the Professor says, "There is a new way of learning. It's called the Think System." He then teaches the members of the band the first few bars of the Minuet in G. You know the song that goes, "Da...de da de da de da de da...da de da... da de da." She is

suspicious, but all the band members begin practicing the song, singing it over and over. However, not one instrument is played.

Well, the big day arrives as do the uniforms. The Professor by now has been discovered as a fraud but the music teacher stands up for him and says, Professor, lead your band. SPOILER ALERT! If you've never seen the ending, stop reading here....

The Professor, in hand cuffs, pleads to the newly formed band to, "Think men! Think of the notes, and play!" Then, in squawking but recognizable notes, the little band played Minuet in G on their instruments to the joy and cheers of their families. And, in true musical fashion, they all lived happily ever after.

I think we all like this story. But it seems a little farfetched to think that you could think of something, practice it over and over in your mind and then perform it in real life. Not unlike the playing of the musical instruments in our story. However, you would be wrong.

Neuroscientists have discovered that the brain reacts to focused thought pretty much the way our repeated physical actions work. In other words, by repeatedly envisioning yourself playing specific notes, say with a trumpet, it can help you attain some of the same results as physically practicing with one. I'm now compelled to say, "Believe It Or Not," Professor Hill was right. You see, repetition is the key. Being focused and doing something over and over, whether by thought or by action will bring you closer to your goal.

And what is the goal of a Christian? Our goal should be to become conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. Paul writes in Romans 12: 2, “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is.” And in Romans 8: 9, Paul writes that God wants us “..to be conformed to the likeness of His Son.” So, how do we renew our minds and conform to the likeness of Jesus? It starts with the Holy Spirit that is at work within each of us. Then, the more we focus on Christ, the more we will be drawn in line and be conformed to Him.

So, like Professor Hill’s “Think System,” we need to pray continually, to read God’s word and meditate on its meanings daily, and always worship and direct all our attention toward Him, who is the Lord of all. The more we focus on Christ, the more we will be conformed in His image. And the music that we will ultimately play to the world will be a symphony of beauty, grace, and love!

In His Peace,

*Rich*