

HIGHLIGHTS

From the Pastor

Twelve years ago I drove off Randolph AFB after a thirty-year career as an Air Force Chaplain. What a great ministry working daily with the finest people this country could produce. Now was the time to reenter the parish and this strange new world of civilian saints and sinners. I could immediately tell the difference between them dressed in Air Force Blue and all those different colors out here in the new world. Only one option, jump in, save being pushed!

I accepted the call to our sister congregation Saint John's Church just up the road from us. But would my pastoral gifts translate into effective ministry in a land ruled by general councils instead of councils ruled by Generals? Well, I guess a successful 9 years there proved my answer.

The values I use to live with every day as a member of the Air Force were *integrity first, service before self* and *excellence in all I do*. It is Air Force doctrine and surrounds you everyday in uniform. You get enmeshed in them and they become who you are. That is what institutional values made personal are supposed to do and I thank my military experience for instilling them into my every thought. What I have found is that those AF core values are "core" because they work anywhere. They have set my life on a foundation upon which I can build most anything, including a civilian pastorate. There is nothing particularly religious about them nor scriptural, although one could probably defend them from numerous biblical texts. They are universal.

Integrity speaks not of simple honesty but "completeness or wholeness." It is achieved through the development of three distinct disciplines. First, there is the initial hard work of discerning what is right from what is wrong. Second, there is an action taken that is the result of what has been discerned. Lastly, one speaks openly about what one has discerned to be the right thing to do. Therefore, integrity involves these three: a moral reflection, a promise-keeping action, and a public declaration.

Service before self is just another way of saying loyalty. Probably nothing runs more counter to our contemporary life-style than loyalty. We live in a world where alienation, not devotion sets the paradigm. But it is loyalty which binds people together. I define that loyalty as the human capacity to make and keep promises which reflects the image of a promise-keeping God. Our American rampaging "cowboy" individualism, growing anonymity, triumphant competition, and eroding transcendental values make the concept of self-sacrifice exceedingly difficult. And the gifts of self-sacrifice; faith, trust, and joy, all fall to the side of the road.

Excellence has come to me not as an adjective which describes the quality of something but a means by which something is produced. Excellence is a plan to get somewhere. It is the ability to enhance the synergistic effect of time and resource which are always limited. In ministry that translates into a focus on those the ministry serves and refraining from thinking that the church always knows what is best for others before listening to them. It is the one served which determines how "excellent" the service was! Secondly, excellence means managing the ministries of a faith community toward ministry improvement, not just the typical "ministry maintenance." That takes empowered staff and lay volunteers with a true emphasis on education and training followed-up with a great deal of appreciation.

These three personal values, coming to me through my years of military ministry have proved translatable to any environment. I treasure my past, live off the deep roots of a rich tradition and come back to the civilian world a much better pastor. And I am beginning to truly enjoy having to decide what color shirt to wear each morning.

Bits and Pieces

We express our sympathies to Charles and Betty Wilson and family at the death of her mother, Ellvera Boehm, December 22nd.



ASH WEDNESDAY AND HOLY WEEK

Ash Wednesday Service, March 6th, 11:00 a.m.

Maundy Thursday Service, with communion and Imposition of Ashes, April 18th, 11:00 a.m.

Good Friday Worship, April 19th, 11:00 a.m.

All services will follow with a light lunch in the fellowship hall.

thank you!

We would like to thank all our friends at HLPC for the kindness shown to us on the death of my mother, Ellvera Boehm. The thoughts, words, and prayers will always be remembered by the family. Betty Wilson

REMEMBER OUR SHUT-INS

Bertha Bailey	Jeannie Belz
Marguerite Hoermann	Ivy Kenneally
Shirley Ruedrich	Elizabeth Ruth
Malcolm Vogt	Ruby Yarbrough

STATISTICS

Amount Needed for Monthly Budget	\$ 11,040.49
Checking Account Balance 12/31/18	25,197.38
Total Income for December	8,329.93
Total Expenses for December	\$ 9,408.84



**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
FEBRUARY 19th, - NOON**

If you would like a contribution statement for 2018, and have not received it, please call the church office. 210-533-9484.

DECEMBER COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Meeting called to order by Chairman Wilson, minutes approved, and financial report filed for audit.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- 2019 Church Directory is in progress.

NEW BUSINESS

- Council Installation: set for January 6th
- Lenten Services: Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday worship, 11:00 a.m., followed by a light lunch
- Palms: Leroy will purchase
- Termite Inspection: It was moved, seconded and passed, that we proceed with the Termite Inspection at a cost of \$ 225.

Pastor Courter is offering his phone numbers to the congregation in case of a pastoral need. Please do feel free to contact him if needed.

Pastor Courter's home: 210-659-6491

Pastor Courter's cell: 210-313-8482

Email: chskipc@gmail.com

HIGHLAND PARK LUTHERAN CHURCH
P.O. BOX 10200
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78210

Sunday School 9:00 A.M.
Worship 10:00 A.M.

Office Phone 210-533-9484

Rev. Dr. James Taylor, Pastor
Rev. Skip Courter, Supply Pastor
Gail M. Kluth, Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper
James Bordner, Organist
Sally Rogers, Custodian

Congregational Council
Charles Wilson, President
Bob Turner, Vice-President
Gail Kluth, Secretary
Leroy Kluth, Evangelism/Daily Life Ministry
Dusty Anderson, Parish Ed/Youth Ministry
Dan Rich, Property Ministry
Nicole Barefoot, Worship Ministry
James Taylor, Pastor
Skip Courter, Supply Pastor



"HPLC Highlights" is published monthly by Highland Park Lutheran Church, 705 Hammond Avenue, San Antonio, Texas 78210, a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**We invite you to join us for worship on
Sunday mornings at 10:00 A.M.
Holy Communion is offered the first and third
Sunday of the month. Adult Sunday School is at 9:00 A.M.**