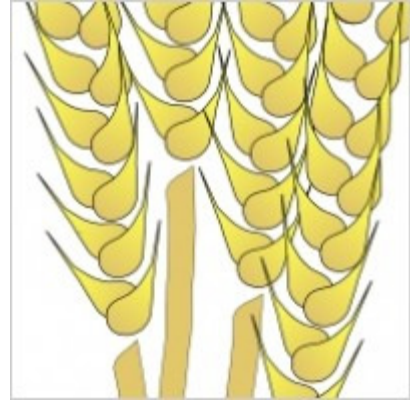


## **St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Church**

**Sermon by Pastor Anthony E. Schultz**  
**Sowing Seeds, Reformation,**  
**November 4, 2012**  
**John 4:34 to 38**



<sup>34</sup>“My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. <sup>35</sup> Don’t you have a saying, ‘It’s still four months until harvest’? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. <sup>36</sup> Even now the one who reaps draws a wage and harvests a crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. <sup>37</sup> Thus the saying ‘One sows and another reaps’ is true. <sup>38</sup> I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor.”

Children of our Heavenly Father – precious in His sight for Jesus’ sake:

The Grandma was visiting from India – visiting her family in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania – some 15 miles NW of Philadelphia. Grandma was babysitting her little granddaughter – Saanvi – just 10 months old. It seems a neighbor from the basement of the apartment building broke into the 6<sup>th</sup> floor apartment and snatched little Saanvi. In his apartment they found a ransom note – demanding some \$50,000! Is that a lot of money? \$50,000 – ball park a year’s pay? Is that a fair a reasonable price for a human life? I don’t think so! The price for an immortal soul is nothing less than the innocent life and the tortured death of the very Son of God! Jesus died to redeem – to buy back your soul and mine. Jesus died and rose again – so that whatever might happen to us in this world – we might spend eternity safe by him! Today –Reformation Sunday and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Sowing Seeds Sundays we will one more time consider part of the parable of the sower and the seeds. Today God’s Word reminds us:

### **Jesus Brings In The Sheaves!**

- 1. Blessings Come From Jesus**
- 2. The Glory Belongs To Jesus!**

For three Sundays now we have looked at the Parable of the Sower and the Seed! We talked about the Sower – the one who scatters the Seed of the Gospel all around the world. The seed is scattered in Watertown – in Jefferson and Dodge Counties. There are some 193 different nations in the United Nations General Assembly. To join the UN you need to get at least 9 out of 11 votes in the Security Council – with none of the 5 permanent members of the Security Council voting against you! It’s a big world out there. We are doing mission work in Africa – in Zambia and Malawi – in Mozambique – in Nigeria – and next door in Cameroon. There are people in Benin and Togo – who have at best a pretty good Sunday School teacher – who would like to baptize people – but they don’t really know or understand what baptism is – so they wait. They wait for someone to come and teach them! We are serving some 66,500 people in Africa. On the one hand that sounds like a lot! On the other hand – there must literally be millions of people in Africa – and so? We are serving people in Russia – in a limited way in Albania and Bulgaria – some 700 people – again – out of a potential of millions? What do you think – as we go to TGI Fridays for Jack Daniels’ shrimp are we in fact doing everything we possibly can – to spread God’s Word around the world? Are we faithful lifetime students of God’s Word? Pastor Mueller used to say again and again – to dormant people who said they didn’t come to Church – but they prayed all the time – and they read their Bible all the time – you cannot read your Bible all the time – and not be encouraged again and again and again and again – to come to church – to worship – to build up the fellowship of believers!

<sup>34</sup> **“My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.” My food...** we have a saying like that. This is my bread and butter. This is how we roll. This is what we do – to do the will of our Heavenly Father. Jesus came to finish his work. That would happen on a Friday afternoon – just outside the walls of Jerusalem – when Jesus was crucified! When Jesus had paid for the sins of the whole wide world Jesus said, **“It is finished!”** Finished! This is the essence of the Reformation! There remains nothing for us to do – to be forgiven. Jesus washed away all our sins. We don’t have to go out and do something kind or thoughtful or helpful to make up for our sins. We don’t need to do more good things than bad things – so as to balance out life’s scales. We don’t have to wonder or doubt if Jesus loves me. Jesus always did and he always will. It’s

like your spouse or your children or your grandchildren – you love them no matter what. Unconditional giving forgiving love never fails! Even if they would do terrible harm to you – it doesn't change the fact that you love them. Jesus loves us with the purest most powerful most complete and wondrous love of all. Even if we go through periods where we have drifted and strayed – Jesus always love us. Jesus wants us to spend eternity with him in Heaven. That's why Jesus said from the cross with a loud voice, **"It is finished!"** Nothing remains for us to do. Jesus did it all!

<sup>35</sup> **Don't you have a saying, 'It's still four months until harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.** 51 days until Christmas! There is plenty of time yet – to get ready for Christmas. Plenty of time to find and cut and decorate a Christmas tree. Plenty of time to buy presents and wrap them – time to bake cookies and write the family Christmas letter – stick the stamps and send it out. Plenty of time! It's tempting to think there is plenty of time – to tell my family member – to tell my relatives – to tell the people I work with about Jesus. Now is the time! Now is the time – before it's too late! The storm this week named Sandy – comes ashore on the east coast. There stands the lonely reporter – wearing all the weather proof gear – standing on the beach that's being swept out into the sea by huge waves – or washed way up past the shore. Then they swing the camera around – and there are all kinds of people – waving – drinking \$4+ coffees – leaning – seeing how far they can lean into the wind – taking pictures! Oh, they think – there will be plenty of time to run to higher ground. The worst part of the storm isn't here yet! We dasn't believe the lie – that we are all going to live to be at least 83 years old – will be admitted to the hospital – and have 3 to 5 days in the hospital – to have the pastor come and visit with us – give us Lord's Supper – tell all the people we love that we love them and hug them and say good-bye. People pass away all the time. Levi was big and tall and strong and powerful. He worked hard on his farm – milking cows and chopping wood and throwing bales of hay and cleaning the barn. He sits down for supper – and goes to heaven from his chair at the head of the table. Benny – the farmer – on his way from the farm house – to the chicken coup – fell in the big circle gravel drive-way and got up in Heaven. Melinda the janitor – a little grandma who lived just through the block on Sunday morning – woke up – said "Good morning!" Then while her

husband went outside to get a fresh tomato – rolled over and woke up in Heaven! It is not just imaginary when people say someone just died. And the other person says, “I just saw them yesterday! They looked just fine!” Or, “They were just to the doctor! They didn’t think anything was wrong!” Sometimes it’s even athletes – people in incredible physical condition – that have a hidden heart condition – or they are in a terrible accident – and all of a sudden – without warning – they are gone! It would be wonderful – if it’s still 4 months until harvest. But rather – again and again – now is the time!

**<sup>36</sup> Even now the one who reaps draws a wage and harvests a crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. <sup>37</sup> Thus the saying ‘One sows and another reaps’ is true.** When my mom and dad went to Church at Hope in West Chicago, IL for a while they had Pastor Pankow. Pastor Pankow was related to Pastor Uetzmann. Pastor Uetzmann was his Grandpa. So – back in the day – Pastor Pankow used to visit his Grandpa and play in what was my house – now Pastor Gartner’s house! How neat is that! I only met Pastor Uetzmann once or twice – when Dr. Lehmann would bring the Northwestern College Touring Chorus to sing at St. Luke’s. Back in 1970 I never thought one day I would preach here. Jesus has this all figured out. I will be very happy to see Pastor Uetzmann in Heaven – to tell him that he laid a sure and certain foundation – by the power of the Holy Spirit – through the means of Grace – so that when Pastor Gartner and I had funerals here – we could tell the survivors at the grave side at the Lutheran Cemetery and Immanuel Cemetery and Oak Hill Cemetery and St. Paul’s, Ixonia Cemetery you will see them again. Even at the Cemetery just miles south of here – where they have the grave stone – that connects 5 graves – where all the people went to Heaven in one horrific crash – God’s Word says, **“Be still and know that I am God!”** God’s people here knew that – and believe that – through his preaching and teaching! One Pastor sows and other Pastors reap – and all the glory belongs to Jesus!

**<sup>37</sup> Thus the saying ‘One sows and another reaps’ is true. <sup>38</sup> I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor.”** St. Luke congregation is as old as the state of Wisconsin. When you see sesquicentennial license

plates – 1848 to 1998 – you can be reminded our congregation began in 1848. If you read the history of our church – you will see that at first we didn't understand the Bible teaching of the divine call – the Holy Spirit sending just the right shepherd with the right combination of gifts in the right amounts at the right time – always and only for the glory of God. That's how it's supposed to work. Back in 1848 St. Luke *hired* pastors. They kind of had try outs. If you were out east and read the newspaper – you might find a notice that St. Luke, Watertown, WI was looking for a new pastor. You could come and preach a *try out* sermon and then negotiate pay and benefits. In the first 39 years St. Luke burned through some 12 ministers – **the longest one Pastor Knaak for 11 years. Pastor Joerris and Pastor Boesch and Pastor Kaemmerer 2 years, Pastor Hoyer, Pastor Koehler, and Pastor Zobel just 1 year.** Not all of St. Luke's first 12 pastors were conservative Lutheran Pastors either. But still the essential Christ crucified was here. God's lambs and sheep were baptized, confirmed, married and buried. Jesus was glorified. And upon this foundation – on 4<sup>th</sup> Street and Madison Street – Jesus' sheep gathered until there just wasn't enough room for worship, for Sunday School. About this time we needed plumbing and heating repairs – there wasn't a fire escape from the balcony and you could only get into the basement from outside! So Jesus moved his sheep to Clark Street and 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. How wonderful was that? The new Church building here – was dedicated on May 22, 1960. I finished 2<sup>nd</sup> grade that year! Who knew that one day we would be blessed to make sermons in a pulpit that was dedicated when I was blowing out 8 candles on my German chocolate birthday cake with cocoanut and walnut frosting? Jesus knew! Who knew that Pastor Gartner would be installed on May 10<sup>th</sup>, 1998 – with his friend Pastor Leon Ehlert preaching on the text of Moses and the burning bush? Jesus knew. Who planned that Pastor Schneider should be Pastor in Savannah, Illinois – and then when he retired from there – Pastor Bigelow – Melinda's brother-in-law would be Pastor there – and we would be blessed with Pastor Schneider here? Jesus had that figured out. Different Pastors come and different Pastors go. We celebrated last Sunday night at Luther Prep our member Prof. Robert Krueger's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in the preaching and teaching ministry. It takes special gifts in a special combination to teach German to young people – even as they are encouraged to consider working in Jesus' harvest fields!

I have only seen one picture of little Saanvi – just 10 months old – in a very pretty dress. Her grandma – who was babysitting when Saanvi was snatched suffered both defensive and offensive wounds. Almost any time someone is attacked – they have defensive wounds. Almost instinctively – when someone tries to hurt you – you put up your hands – to dry and protect yourself. Hence – defensive wounds – on your arms – on your hands. Saanvi’s grandma had *offensive wounds*. That means she fought so hard to try and protect her precious grand-daughter she literally hurt her hands and her feet and her arms – fighting as hard as she was able – to try and keep her grand-daughter safe! She died trying to save her! What a pale picture of Jesus’ sacrifice to save us. Jesus died on the cross – to save us from our guilt and sin. Jesus died on the cross – so that we might have eternal life! Jesus loves us more than words can explain! Jesus’ forgiving love will never fail. Day after day – again and again – Jesus gathers in the harvest of souls – bringing people home to Heaven. We pray with the Apostle John, **“Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus –** to take us to our forever rest. Amen!

To God alone all glory!

Rev. Anthony E. Schultz

