

*Below are some heartfelt reflections from Kurt Gorski, a member of our congregation's study committee. A formal presentation from the committee will come at the end of summer.*

Dear members of St. Lucas

I'm writing to you. Yes, you. You holding this. You as an individual and you as our congregation. The church commissioned a Study Committee over a year ago and now that it has been completed, it's my pleasure to share a reflection with you. This study was an endeavor unlike anything I've ever been involved in. Unlike, because it wasn't just another committee...not just another set of meetings...not just organizing another set of parameters. No, this was about inward reflection on our gifts and talents. And not just wishful thinking of what our gifts are, or trying to make up a list of things that look good on paper. But true reflection on Saint Lucas's unique place in God's world. We met many, many times and I might liken the process to running a cross-country marathon that I've enjoyed mile after mile.

If you want the short version, read the following letter that I wrote to God outside the Study Committee meetings, but reflects a great deal of what we were after.

Dear God,

The life I want most for myself is...The one You've given me. To be brave for You. To change for You. To go where You want me. In front of the people you want me. To be a bright reflection of Your love. To see my place as You've given me. To love others as You've loved me. To be generous, not stingy or scared to love. To feel wrapped in the warmth of Your hands through all happy and sad moments. To live...aware of You, to make Godly decisions to live the good and beautiful life You intend. To not be lured by earthly pleasures that lead me from You in a most unsettlingly quiet manner. And to share the Good News with others, so that they too, may rest in the peace and forgiveness that only You can provide.

If this letter interests you, please read on for an additional reflection:

Often times the best leadership is when the leaders amplify what's so good about those they are leading. Bringing out the best in each of us is a wonderful expression of who we are and what God made us to be. The Study Committee has reflected on what makes Saint Lucas Saint Lucas - our adherence to The Word, our overt friendliness to visitors, our school as an outreach tool, how we fit into our Bay View community. Remember that old saying that if you enjoy or are good at something, it may be a sign that it may be one of God's gifts to you? That's some of the core of what the study examined.

Using our gifts for the glory of the Lord is something we often talk about but are oftentimes caught somewhere between our good intentions and taking those steps to bring it about. The same God that created the heavens and the earth created everyone reading this. Together, we make up Saint Lucas. The Study Committee worked to uncover our gifts. The very gifts that bring warmth and love to our hearts and to those we are blessed to be around. We worked hard to expose our half-buried and partially-used gifts. Half-buried treasure doesn't do much good, does it? True, it may give us internal comfort that we own some treasure in the first place. Unused and half-in-the-ground treasure is like the man in the Bible who buried his one talent given to him by his master instead of attempting to put them to work in some capacity. In short, it's time to grab a stout walking stick and head on out the door.

One of the most important portions of the study was understanding how to organize and more easily use our gifts each day. So, how do we grab a stout walking stick and head on out the door?

Prayer is essential. Times of prayer and reflection give us time to seek the Lord's blessings. Yet, we often forget about prayer. Oftentimes we use prayer as a last resort instead of a first resort. Prayer and silent time spent with God can lead to moments of clarity in your life. It can lead you to decisions that are otherwise just too difficult to make on our own or through "worldly reasoned arguments". Times of prayer may be the most under-utilized gift in today's society. Please take time to pray and study God's word. Being God's disciple is not about performing all the "right things" perfectly day after day, or accomplishing a certain set of things. It is about receiving God's grace, hearing his word on a routine basis and living your life worthy of the life He's giving you.

The study provides a framework for us to more routinely engage in God's gifts and to share them with others and encourages us to challenge the worldly distractions in our lives. Our time on earth is not just one big ticking clock, trying to get in a whole bunch of accomplishments. Yes, there are certainly a number of things that we must do for our jobs and our homes and our families. It's awfully easy to forget about the most important thing ever. The Lord is our Shepherd. Engage with your Good Shepherd by reading or hearing His Word often. His light is the brightest light that can be cast onto your own path. And His light is your light.

Blessed to be a part of the Study Committee,

Kurt Gorski