

**October 14, 2012**  
**St. Luke Sunday – Caregiver Sunday**  
**Text: Isaiah 35:5-8**  
**Theme: “Today You Are Healed!”**

**We have set today, St. Luke Sunday, as a day we celebrate the caregivers among us. Some caregivers are obvious, medical personnel, parents with little children, people with elderly parents, people whose spouses are sick. Some caregivers are not nearly as obvious: that person who has coffee with her friend who is going through a rough time and just listens to her, that person on the other end of the phone who is always able to give hope and comfort, the one who took the time to smile and speak to a person who feels invisible and unloved.**

**The word “caregiver” and the word “evangelist” really have a great deal in common. An evangelist is someone who shares the good news that Jesus Christ loves you and died in your place to pay for and thus forgive all your sins so that you can spend eternity in heaven. A caregiver is simply someone who takes the Gospel off the theology shelf and puts it into motion. Take parents for example. The children are singing Jesus Loves Me this morning and that is a great song because it carries within it the most important theology of the Christian Church.**

**“Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so. Little ones to him belong. They are weak, but he is strong.” What more**

**do you need to know? But saying Jesus loves you doesn't really mean much to a two year old. His theology is not very developed yet. In fact, he probably couldn't tell you the difference between the Son of God and his favorite stuffed animal. However, this is what he does understand. When he is scared or hurt, he understands the arms of his mom or his dad, his grandpa or grandma, his aunt or his uncle. That is how he comes to understand that Jesus loves him. His family puts the Gospel in motion.**

**There was once a little girl who cried out in fear during the night because a storm had come up and the thunder and lightning were frightening her. Her mother rushed into her room to comfort her and reminded her that she need not be afraid of thunder and lightning because Jesus was always right here beside her. The little girl took her doll and her blanket, got out of bed and started toward the door. Her mother asked her where she was going and she looked at her mother and said,**

**"You stay here with Jesus. I'm going to sleep with Daddy."**

**St. Luke was a physician, a healer. He is known for his account of the life of Christ, from the perspective of the Gentiles, in the Gospel according to Luke, and his history of the early Church in the Acts of the Apostles. I suspect that once he knew Christ, physical**

**healing changed for him. Physical healing is wonderful but without spiritual healing, it simply doesn't matter. Who cares how pretty the paintjob is if the car doesn't run? On the other hand, we proclaim the Gospel to people physically. We are the hands, the feet, the arms of Jesus.**

**We are celebrating caregivers on St. Luke Sunday because St. Luke got it right. See to both salvation and physical care. They go together. James reminds us that faith and works go together. Our faith will demand works and those works will likewise deliver faith to another whose faith will in turn demand works. Ever notice how many drug and alcohol counselors are former addicts and alcoholics? Once you have been down that path and come out the other side, something inside you craves to help others find the peace you have found, Step 12 in the Big Book. The 12 steps of recovery work because they are how we work as spiritual human beings. Our faith that has been created and fed by the Gospel drives us to give care to others. We care for the young, the elderly, poor, the hungry, the disabled, but we do not really think that we can fix their plight and make everything all better. We know that old age always ends in death – every time. Childhood always includes broken hearts and the poor will be with us always. But we have been filled with the Gospel and we have confidence that the**

**day will come when the Lord returns for us. On that day, our complete healing will be obvious. Until then, all we can do is put Band-Aids on the situation. True healing will not be seen until the day of the Resurrection. That is why the Gospel was so important to St. Luke. He knew that his work must point to the Gospel if his healing was to truly matter.**

**Caregiving is a way in which we exercise our faith while spreading the Gospel. It is a way in which we put our theology into motion. People see Jesus in what we do. They feel Jesus' touch and hear his voice through us. We are all already healed. From the moment we had faith we were completely saved and completely healed. We only await the physical reality of that spiritual truth which will come on the last day. It is why we pray, "Come, Lord Jesus." It is why we have no fear of death or the second coming. We embrace it because we know that it is then that our healing of all ills, including sin, will be manifest.**

**Until that day, we continue to evangelize. We proclaim the good news of God's salvation because if someone has no faith in Christ, then no amount of healing really matters. We offer care to all people and do whatever we can to help them in their journey and we do it all in the name of Jesus who has already healed us and saved us.**