



Monday Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:14-42; Isaiah 55:8-13; I Corinthians 2:6-15

There are myriad reasons why people attend church. Some attend because they were brought up in church, some because they find social connections, others come to please family, while others come to find a quiet time during the week to focus on spiritual values. We don't often stop to think that the church was established by Jesus with His words to Peter, "...on this rock I will build My church..." (Matt. 16:18). Frail Peter, who after being filled with the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, began to speak with authority and carry out the mission of Christ. Whatever our reason for attending church today, we are, at some level, participating in the Body of Christ. We are not simply entering a structure and following in the tradition of the first church by "...continuing in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42). The prophet Isaiah makes it clear that when we hear God's word "...it will not return...empty, but it shall accomplish [God's purpose] and succeed in the thing for which I sent it" (Is. 55:11). The Apostle Paul tells us that "...we have received...the Spirit who is from God that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God" (I Cor. 2:12).

*What are you doing in your day-to-day life to access the "Spirit who is from God?" What is your view of church attendance? List your reasons for attending weekly worship; as you list them, examine whether they are bringing you closer to Christ.*

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Tuesday Leviticus 9; Hebrews 4:14-5; 10

In ancient Israel, the priests were the descendants of Aaron. They had mastered the complex system of ceremonies, rituals, and sacrifices, and stood as intermediaries between God and their fellow Israelites. To atone for the sins of the nation, countless blood sacrifices were made every year. Indeed, the work of the priesthood was essential in maintaining Israel's relationship with God. However, in today's church, although our leaders are important, they do not represent us before God. As the author of Hebrews points out, Jesus Himself has ascended to heaven and now serves as our high priest, allowing us to "approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need" (Heb. 4:16). Because God loved us enough to sacrifice His own Son for our sins, the endless cycle of animal sacrifices is no longer necessary. This also enriches our life as a community of faith. No longer do we depend on our leaders to go before God and sacrifice on our behalf. Rather, each member of the church—both ministers and laity—can have their own personal relationship with God. And as that relationship calls us to reach out to others, through the church we may each find mutual encouragement and together create a place to put into practice the love that Christ demonstrated on the cross.

*How has the experience of community worship here at Schweitzer impacted your personal relationship with God? How can we help lead others into a direct encounter with Jesus Christ?*

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Wednesday James 1:27; 2:14-18; Philippians 4:4-13

The old, magnificent cathedrals of Europe and South and Central America are often visited by American tourists. One tourist, after commenting on the beauty of the churches, pointed out the extreme poverty that often surrounds these buildings. "The number of people who actually attend these churches is very low," she said, "and the efforts of these churches to help poverty-stricken children in these locations are almost non-existent." At some point in the past, parishioners saw the importance of giving their tangible best to see that these churches were constructed. We can only wonder: did they become slack in offering their intangible best to God? As Pastor Bob said in his weekend sermon, we are the temple of God, His ultimate building project. For those of us who wish to grow in Christ, it's crucial that we make the connection between our personal devotion to Christ and our corporate manifestation of this devotion. The construction materials outlined by Antioch Community Church aren't habits that are natural to us; they must be cultivated through the disciplines of prayer, Bible study, and obedience to Christ, who "strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13).

*As our building committee leads us (under the direction of our CEO Jesus Christ) in addressing both our immediate and long-term needs at Schweitzer, what role do you play in the process? As you pray honestly, ask God to remove any fear, greed, or pride in your heart and replace it with faith, generosity, and service (taken from a prayer by Richard Foster).*

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Thursday Psalms 42

From one believer to another, the recognition of a life owned by Christ is almost instantaneously detected, whether it's through spoken or written word, demeanor, or actions—either across centuries or between contemporaries. Two prayers, one written by St. Augustine very early in Christianity, and another written in the twentieth century by Richard Rolle, bear out this truth. As you read these prayers today, do they resonate with the Spirit of Christ in you?

*Late have I loved you, O beauty so ancient and so new. Late have I loved you! You were within me while I have gone outside to seek you. Unlovely myself, I rushed towards all those lovely things you had made. And always you were with me, and I was not with you. All these beauties kept me far from you—although they would not have existed at all unless they had their being in you. You called, you cried, you shattered my deafness. You sparkled, you blazed, you drove away my blindness. You shed your fragrance, and I drew in my breath, and I pant for you. I tasted and now I hunger and thirst. You touched me, and now I burn with longing for your peace. St. Augustine of Hippo*

*I ask you, Lord Jesus, to develop in me, your lover, an immeasurable urge towards you, an affection that is unbounded, a longing that is unrestrained, a fervor that throws discretion to the winds! The more worthwhile our love for you, all the more pressing does it become. Reason cannot hold it in check, fear does not make it tremble, wise judgment does not temper it. Richard Rolle*

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## SIGN UPS

**Yes, I would love to take a bass guitar group lesson on Tuesday, June 9 with Zach Reeves!**

\_\_\_\_ Beginner bass guitar group lesson  
11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. (bring \$ for lunch – Taco Bell)

\_\_\_\_ Intermediate bass guitar group lesson  
Noon - 2 p.m. (bring \$ for lunch – Taco Bell)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## PRAYER REQUESTS / MESSAGES TO STAFF

Prayer Requests:  
 Pastors only  Congregation prayer list

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