

Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church (USA)



Changing Lives and
Growing In God's Love

www.Holy411.org

Rev. Dr. Daris S. Bultena, Pastor
Minister of Word and Sacrament

June 11, 2009

Count Your Blessings

Dear Readers,

The other day my friend Millie and I led chapel for our 3 and 4 year old children here in the day programs and ministries that we operate as Good Shepherd Church. Millie and I like to hear the children sing. We realized some weeks ago that so many of the songs we know from years and years ago have fallen out of the memory of our youth.

We love new music with all the jazzy tunes and snappy lyrics. We also love the old songs with their wonderful messages. It is possible to hold both the old traditional and the newer contemporary together with admiration for both. Too often in the church (and in our homes and in society too) we tend to operate as if we have to choose either the old tradition or the new contemporary.



In doing music with children, we firmly believe there is a role for both! So the other

day we taught the children an old, old hymn. "Count Your Blessings." Do you remember that old hymn? By the end of our chapel program the 3s and 4s were singing it out in full voice: *"Count your blessings name them one by one; count your blessings see what God has done; count your blessings name them one by one; count your many blessings see what God has done."*

To make matters more interesting, we invited children to stand up and share with the whole group what they saw as their blessings. We defined blessings as the "good things we can name in our lives—those good things that are gifts from God!"



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The answers were child-like. The majority of answers had to do with toys. These children are very thankful for their toys. They were also very blessed by their pets—dogs and cats were high on the list of blessings. It was a delight to listen to those children name for themselves what is meaningful in their lives and what they understand as gift from God.

I'm wondering about us adults though...do we see how blessed we are? Are we aware of the ways we have been blessed beyond our toys? I was thinking about that in my own life. I'm thankful for the stuff too, but I'm also trying to see (and remember daily!) that my relationships, my ability to love, and my opportunities to serve are all blessings that are given to me by God.

I think that is the difference between just having stuff and being blessed—when we acknowledge that it is God's doing, and also that it is God's desire to bless us with love, and grace, and mercy. (Those are way better than toys!)

Count your blessings!

Blessings,
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