

MUSINGS FROM THE PEW

Spiritual gifts (Reading opportunity: Romans 12:4-8) by Susan Hardy

“In Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others” Rom. 12:5

Our loving God has made us all and has given each of us different spiritual gifts. No one is better than another because of their gift(s), but we all have an important function(s) to carry out. We are all necessary in God’s plans.

From Romans 12 (NIV) the gifts are prophesying, serving, teaching, encouraging, contributing (generous giving), leadership, and mercy. This list of gifts can be broken down into more specific categories which, though not “biblical”, can give us a better understanding of what our gifts might be at this current time. We must not limit ourselves, as God can lead us to other gifts!

Our yoked congregations exhibit the wonderful use of the various gifts. The musicians and singers who lead us in praise of Our Lord, the teachers who lead us through sharing of The Word through working with the children, or those willing to fill in for Pastor by giving sermons are some examples of the gifts of teaching. Lay readers, greeters, and communion assistants are sharing their gift of serving, as is the quiet service of taking care of the church properties or setting up and cleaning up after events. Giving generously can be monetary, but can also be manifested through our time and talents. Think of what this congregation has given to Listen, to Pastor’s trip to the Dominican Republic, to The Zienzele Foundation, or think of the talent the musicians share at Genesis. Consider our talented bakers who use their gift to make delicious pies for the Chicken Pie Dinner or after the band concert. The gift of leadership is exhibited by our church counsels or the quiet leadership of those who get projects done through gentle asking or guidance. Mercy is shown by those who visit shut-ins or those who are hospitalized or by listening to those who are going through tough times.

God can use your gifts in any situation. I have a homebound friend who reaches out to people with notes and phone calls of encouragement. She also spends time in prayer for those in need. Should I feel guilty for not reaching out like my friend? No, those are not my gifts. Should I let myself get “guilted” into using a gift I don’t see in myself? I don’t believe I should, but **God** will let me know if **He** thinks I should!

What gifts do you see in yourself? Not sure? Think about your passions, pray about how God can use you, where do you feel He is nudging you? He may lead you to places you never saw yourself, such as writing a “Musing from the Pew”.