

# Sermon- Our Saviors Lutheran Church- 9/8/2019- God's Work/Our Hands Weekend

Text - Matthew 25:31-46

## “Do it For the Least”

Grace and Peace to you and from our Lord Jesus Christ. Welcome to the big weekend in the life of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Thousands of churches in the ELCA will focus on God's Work/Our Hands. Some churches will assist the community between worship services, others after worship and here at Our Savior's we used our hands to help others on Saturday. You have just heard from some of the teams that made an impact on our community.

So, the question is, why does the ELCA do this Gods Work/Our Hands Sunday? Why do we do it? That's easy - we have a Biblical mandate to help the least of these sisters and brothers. That has to do with the text I read a few moments ago. The sheep and goats metaphor. We may know very little about sheep and goats. But, the people who Jesus was talking to knew a great deal.

Here is what they knew:

Sheep follow the voice of the shepherd. They trust him to lead them to food, water, and safety. If they wander, as many do, the shepherd will go out and rescue them and bring them back to the safety of the flock.

Goats on the other hand are headstrong. They don't follow anyone. Think of it this way: If we are allowing ourselves to be led, being sensitive to the pull of God's spirit and following the path of the Good Shepherd, we are sheep. If we are headstrong, going our own way, and pulling back against God's spirit, we are goats.

So, which one are you? Probably a combination - maybe we are shoats. Then, most interesting, is that neither the sheep or the goats, the righteous and the unrighteousness, have any idea where or when they have seen the King! They both say, “When did we see you?”

And the King, (Jesus) tells the sheep and the goats, (us) ‘I'm exactly where I've always been. Ever since the beginning of time I've been aligned with the people

considered the “least of these”. If you are looking for me’, says Jesus, ‘look where you have always seen me to be - among the poor, the sick, the hungry, the disenfranchised, and the neglected. Any time you take care of your neighbor in need, you are face to face with me.’

That’s why we do God’s Work/Our Hands day. But, here at Our Saviors, we are enlarging the day. The theme of this day has been enlarged to include the phrase- We Are Church. Not this is a church but We Are Church - working to fulfill His mission together, not as Lone Rangers. So, we decided to celebrate our togetherness with a tailgate party, eating together and improving upon the concept of We Are Church. We put up booths to help you see where you can fit in.

And in your bulletin you will see a Time and Talent sheet. It’s full of opportunities where you can be a vital part of this ministry. In less than a month, Pastor Jon will arrive as your New Pastor. Wouldn’t it be grand if he was given a sheet with a load of names of members of OSLC who said I will serve?

So let’s do it. Berdie will play some soft music. You will pray and put down how you will serve. (Congregation fills in the sheets in 3-4 minutes) And then place the sheets in the offering baskets.

Yes, We Are Church  
Amen Let it be so.