

Morrison Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church

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May 14, 2006
Manitowoc Lutheran High School Sunday

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 61:1-3

Epistle Reading: Colossians 2:1-7

Gospel Reading: John 15:1-8

Words of Introduction

By: Mr. Dennis Steinbrenner (Principal of MLHS)

Good morning to all of you. This is an exciting time at Manitowoc Lutheran High School because we are celebrating 50 years of God's grace. Fifty years of being rooted and growing in Christ—what a wonderful blessing. Our theme is "Rooted & Growing in Christ". The message of God's love and grace that those students heard in 1956 is the same message that today's students hear every day in every class and in every activity.

Rooted—many churches have lost their roots. Many have no set doctrines. Many believe that salvation is based upon something that they do. Many believe that they can pick and choose from the Bible those things that are true. Many, some that once were in fellowship with us, allow the pastor of each church to determine what is truth for that church. Many Christian high schools retain that label by teaching one hour of religion each day. Outside of that one period, they are nothing more than a private high school. By the grace of God, Manitowoc Lutheran has developed young people spiritually, mentally and physically for 50 years. Three thousand Christian youth have graduated from Manitowoc Lutheran during those 50 years. Three thousand of our children have heard the message that Christ died for their sins and know the peace that this knowledge brings. That is what we are celebrating this year.

Rooted—it is about Jesus. Jesus is the answer to the world's man-made menu of spiritual choices. He alone is the way and the truth and the life. (John 14:6)

Rooted—it is about peace. Sin, death and hell have all been defeated. The wall of hostility between God and us has been destroyed. We are his new creatures. We live in joy and peace.

Growing—it is about not only talking the talk, but also walking the walk—living our faith.

Growing—it is about proclaiming. We have the privilege, responsibility and opportunity to proclaim what we know about Jesus with those who don't know him. We proclaim Jesus as individuals in our daily lives as we come in contact with family and friends and neighbors and acquaintances. We proclaim Jesus through the organized outreach efforts of every congregation, and we proclaim Jesus as we partner with fellow believers in congregations throughout the WELS to tell more people about Jesus.

Growing in Christ is to proclaim peace through Jesus. That is His plan and that is why we are here. Wow! We have been chosen, all of us, to be one of his special people.

We have been called out of the darkness of our own sin into the wonderful light of the Gospel. We have a direct personal relationship with the creator of the universe. That is who we are because of Jesus.

So what do we do as a result of this? We are privileged to declare His praises—that is, to proclaim to others who Jesus is and to speak up about what He has done. We receive His love, and we reflect it. By virtue of our calling as a Christian we are preachers of the Gospel. We are witnesses of His saving work. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.

Manitowoc Lutheran High School—“Rooted & Growing in Christ Since 1956.” In today’s service our students, in Word and song, will demonstrate the faith that is in their hearts as they give glory to God. We pray that it will be uplifting to you and point you to the Savior’s incredible love for you. This morning you will have a chance to see first-hand the blessings of Christian education as we hear from our students. May their words glorify our Lord and Savior and reflect the faith that the Spirit has nurtured in their hearts. May God be praised by all that we do today. (For a CD of this service, please contact Morrison Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church.)

A Reflection of the Blessings of Christian Education

By: Mr. James Reis (MLHS Class of '68 & MLHS Board of Control – Chairman)

My name is Jim Reis and I have the distinct honor of talking to you this morning about my alma mater—Manitowoc Lutheran High School. I am at the present time Chairman of the Board of Control at the high school. This high school has always been very dear to me. This is a time of celebration—50 years of teaching youth and preparing them for the world on their own. Your high school, as an extension of your church, has the opportunity to ensure these young people that they don’t have to go into the world on their own. So I would like to take a few minutes this morning to talk to you about the many blessings of the high school through the eyes of a graduate.

As many of you know, some may not, that this is the 50th anniversary of our Manitowoc Lutheran High School. While I am not nearly old enough to have graduated way back then, I do remember as a young boy some of the first blessings of this high school. Blessings like meeting people who back then worked toward the goal of getting a Lutheran high school started. And shortly after, many people from my congregation and yours, people like our fathers who worked together from all the congregations to form the federation that we still have today. Then the continuous work of people as the Lord blessed our school and it grew out of its beginning state at one building and now to its present location on Lancer Circle. My ties to this high school go back to that first building where I watched my older sister, Judy, Class of '63, go through this high school.

I started in that first building. Back then I am sure I didn’t understand the responsibilities of a high school. A high school is not only to educate a child, but it should also be helping to prepare that student for the world as they go out and begin their individual journeys.

One of the personal blessings I received was the opportunity to attend this high school. I started in the first building. Then in January of 1967, we were able to enter the doors on Lancer Circle as students for the first time. While the Class of '67 was the first class to graduate from the new location, it was the great class of 1968 that was the first class to graduate having attended a full year at this location. Since that time many students have not only had the opportunity of graduating from this high school, but also many of them have been able to take advantage of our Christian grade schools. A community depends upon a high school to train and prepare these students to become good citizens. This is vital for the health of society. *Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it* (Proverbs 22:6).

This is a blessing each and every one of us has. While I am not an educator, I have the opportunity to work through this federation to make sure our school is operating with everything it needs. We also have the opportunity to send our children to a school with a Christ-centered education where they are ensured that they do not have to enter into the world on their own but can walk with Jesus every day. Train up a child—it was a command given to us by God. You don't have to be a teacher. Obviously, first the parent, and then through a grade school and then through the high school—all that is an extension of your church—we each of the opportunity to support our children in God's Word. And when he is old, he will not stray from it. Our prayer is that they do not follow the temptations of the world.

Our church, grade schools, our high schools are all blessings—tools that God has given us to accomplish our work. In 3 John 1:4 he says, *I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth*. This is a blessing that each and every one of us as a parent longs to see. As lay people, may we all join in and use the tools that God has given us to train up a child.

In this short time, I cannot begin to tell you of all the blessings and joys that I have received through this high school—first as a student attending and then as a parent sending my sons through this school. My prayers would be that each and every one of you grasp that opportunity so that you, too, may share in the joys and blessings of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I would like to thank you for the opportunity of letting myself and your high school worship with you this morning. May your day be truly blessed and may you have a blessed Mother's Day. Thank you.

MLHS: A Special Place for Me, A Special Place to Be

By: Max Scheuer (MLHS Class of '06)

Manitowoc Lutheran High School is a very special place to me and also a very special place to be. There are many things that make MLHS a very special place. First, I would like to talk about the Christian atmosphere in and around Manitowoc Lutheran. Before coming into high school, I was scared that I wouldn't fit in or that no one would like me. That idea totally changed within the first week of my freshman year. The

whole student body accepted my class, including me, into the Lancer family. Upper Classmen treated Under Classmen with respect. Special bonds developed between my peers and me because we have something no area school has to offer—God’s promises within a Christian atmosphere.

We all share the same heavenly Father who loves us with a love that will never let go. Every single day of school we get to strengthen this bond by having the opportunity to worship together. Where else could I get to strengthen the bond between me, my peers and Christ every day?

Secondly, I would like to talk about extra-curriculars at my school. Extra-curriculars at MLHS are not just things to do after school or a way to meet or make new friends. Teens who have been involved or are involved with extra-curriculars at my school will agree with me. We have developed many qualities like loyalty, teamwork, and respect by participating. In choir and band we have learned to praise our Savior through song. The focus of extra-curriculars at Manitowoc Lutheran is not on personal achievement but on doing everything to God’s glory.

Finally, I would like to talk about academics at Manitowoc Lutheran. Every class taught is centered around Christ. There are absolutely no false teachings, like evolution, taught by the teachers at MLHS to weaken my faith. Not only do the teachers teach the secular part of subjects, but they also teach us how Christ’s teachings fit in with the topic. They also teach us how to defend our faith against the outside influences found in a secular university or work place after high school. The teachers at Manitowoc Lutheran are not just people standing behind a podium teaching us different subjects. They are also our brothers and sisters in Christ. The student body of MLHS has reassurance that all of the teachers will teach everything according to God’s will and promises to strengthen our faith.

I am certain that in the future I will realize even more just how special my high school is to me when I am thinking about what school I should send my children to or when I am coping with a tragedy in my life or when I am in need of my faith and knowledge of Jesus to help me through a tough time. I will remember how Manitowoc Lutheran High School has strengthened my faith. A faith I would not have without the nurturing and Christ-centered education I have received from my school—MLHS.

Manitowoc Lutheran High School—a special place to me, a special place to be.