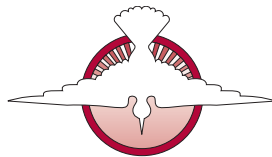


Stories TO Tell



All Saints Lutheran Church

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A Spirit-filled community where people make a difference

& Gifts TO Share

**Glorifying God
in all we do**

'Call me Allysa'

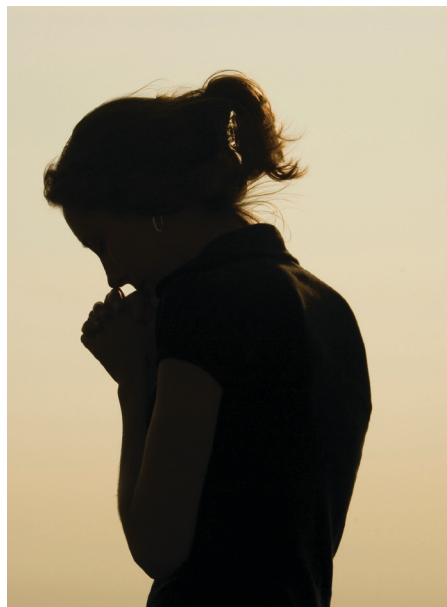
"Call me Allysa," she said.

Allysa is a beautiful 46-year-old with long brown hair. Only intermittent streaks of gray show any evidence of her true age. While her contemporaries have grown "prosperous" around their middles, Allysa is trim and fit. Her smile shows the optimism and hope that keeps her moving.

Others have been reticent to have their story be part of this year's "Stories to Tell and Gifts to Share" stewardship campaign, but Allysa came forward eagerly. Her story has not always been the most pleasant, and in some instances it has been quite lonely, but Allysa has no regrets.

"We only spent a few years together," Allysa recounted as she talked about her beloved. "When I met him, I so looked forward to a life together, working together," she says.

But he died when others didn't like the stories he told and the gifts he shared. Not the story you might want to hear in a stewardship campaign.



"After his death, I was left to continue his work alone, although I had his spirit to guide me."

Soon, however, Allysa's children joined in the ministry her beloved began and she continued. The common commitment of her children toward her work gave Allysa great joy and caused the ministry to explode over the next couple of decades. Like other mothers, she was dismayed when the disagreements among her
see **ALYSSA**, other side

Bible Verse

Matthew 28:7, 16-20

The Message

"Now, get on your way quickly and tell his disciples, 'He is risen from the dead. He is going on ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there.' That's the message."

Meanwhile, the eleven disciples were on their way to Galilee, headed for the mountain Jesus had set for their reunion. The moment they saw him they worshiped him. Some, though, held back, not sure about worship, about risking themselves totally.

Jesus, undeterred, went right ahead and gave his charge: "God authorized and commanded me to commission you: Go out and train everyone you meet, far and near, in this way of life, marking them by baptism in the threefold name: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Then instruct them in the practice of all I have commanded you. I'll be with you as you do this, day after day after day, right up to the end of the age."

God's people using God's resources for God's purposes

Allysa

children caused them to lose sight of what her beloved wanted to accomplish.

Even though those disagreements may have slowed Allysa's progress, she confidently says, "It's not the past that moves me, but the future; there is so much work to do." And Allysa suddenly becomes animated: "My vision for the future makes me so excited. I want to give glory to God, share the good news of Christ and encourage growth in the faith and discipleship, especially among my children and grandchildren."

Since her beloved's death, Allysa has had to rely on her children and the help of others to live and fund her work. Like others, Allysa has seen her children reduce their support for her during the past couple of years. Allysa chuckles when her children make less than encouraging comments about how she spends her money: "My children tend to be more practical when it comes to spending money, wanting to track the return on every dollar spent."

However, Allysa is unwavering in her choices: "I remember the choices that my beloved made, and he was very clear on how to use money. And Matthew 22 and 28 reinforce my beloved's and my own vision. In Matthew 22, we are told that the greatest commandments are, first, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind,' and second, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

"In Matthew 28, we are told to make disciples of all nations through baptizing and teaching. So in addition to what I do, my money needs to be spent loving

and worshipping God; loving and serving others; and evangelizing, baptizing and teaching all."

Without pausing, Allysa recited the numbers: "I spend \$557,745 in worshipping and loving God by providing pastors to lead worship, opening my home for my children and friends to worship, and providing music for worship. I spend \$116,250 in loving and serving my neighbor as myself by giving part of my income to the larger church, to Lutheran Social Services and other service groups, by opening my home up to community groups like Alcoholics Anonymous and Moms' Day Out. Finally, I spend \$348,505 in making disciples, teaching and baptizing by providing pastors to baptize and teach, by providing Sunday School, weekday Bible study and Vacation Bible School for young and old alike. I could recite more details, but it ultimately comes back to these three goals. No, not goals, but rather commandments of Christ."

At 46, Allysa remains ready, willing and committed to her beloved's work for many years ahead but recognizes that ultimately it will be up to her children to sustain it. And she refuses to resort to guilt to get her children to abide by her wishes. She remains hopeful that they will do the right thing for her and her beloved.

So, she told us to call her Allysa, but what did her beloved call her?

With glistening in her bright blue eyes, she smiled, "My beloved calls me - his bride - by my full name, All Saints Lutheran Church, and I call my beloved - my bridegroom - Jesus Christ."

Congregational Meeting

During its annual meeting Jan. 31, All Saints' congregation will vote on the 2010 budget.

Council has recommended a \$1,022,500 budget.

This budget reflects no salary increases, some cuts in program areas, a \$2,000 increase in utility costs, 11 percent benevolence and \$7,000 to train a replacement for the retiring director of administration and anticipated call expenses. Copies are available in the church office.

2010 numbers

- 326 pledges were received out of a possible 666 (49 percent)
- \$798,123 has been pledged
- 46 anticipated pledges (\$44,382) remain outstanding
- An additional \$129,565 estimated in non-pledged offerings and \$50,430 in other income is anticipated to support the Mission and Ministry of All Saints for 2009
- Total estimated 2010 income is \$1,022,458
- Actual 2009 income of \$999,511; Decrease of 8 percent from our 2008 income of \$1,086,920
- The uncertain economy is affecting contributions for 2010
- 2010 pledges (326) averaged \$2,448; 2009 pledges (349) averaged \$2,418