



“You are Salt, You are Light”

Pastor Andy CastroLang

February 23, 2020

141st Annual Meeting

Scripture (CEB):

Matthew 5:13-16

¹³ “You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its saltiness, how will it become salty again? It’s good for nothing except to be thrown away and trampled under people’s feet.

¹⁴ You are the light of the world. A city on top of a hill can’t be hidden.

¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a basket. Instead, they put it on top of a lampstand, and it shines on all who are in the house.

¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before people, so they can see the good things you do and praise your Father who is in heaven.

Sermon:

First off: there is no such thing as unsalty salt. Ask any chemist. Salt is salt. Jesus was trying to be a little absurd to make an important point.

You can’t be other than what you are.

You can’t be other than a light, if you are a light. Sooo...Shine. And if you are salt, well, be flavorful.

Be true to what you are.

And then, people will, if I might paraphrase Matthew a bit, thank God that you were born!

Others might just say, God, I sure am glad that person is in my life!

Jesus doesn't say, *once you start doing good things* then people will praise you in prayer to God in heaven.

He says, "the good things you do".

He presumes you do good, have done good, and will continue to do good. Like salt and light, doing good is true to what you are...

Westminster people: this is true of you.

1. When the S.O.N. committee (see their report on pg. 6) gathers coats and hats, water bottles and food...you shine.
2. When the Trustees (see their report on pg. 7) coordinate the opening of our building to yet another tiny nonprofit group with kids full of energy, when they coordinate the restoration of the bathrooms, and the fixing of leaky roofs...they are shining. They know Westminster is like a city on a hill and it cannot be hidden, so they make it shine!
3. When Education and Spiritual Growth goes to camp with the church family in September, when they plan curriculum, and bounce ideas off of one another and church members for exciting new learning opportunities...they are being salty indeed. Bible study and thoughtful conversation to sharpen minds, just like the snap of salt sharpens the flavor of any dish. (see their report on pg. 11)
4. When the Deacons of Westminster welcome with smiles, collect all the sign in sheets and those silly little pencils, when they lovingly prepare the Communion elements, month after month, and then, make sure the candles are lit, guests have a name tag, and everyone's prayer requests make it to the front of the church to be shared...well, they are just doing their salty best; adding to the beauty of well-prepared worship, with the welcome of generous Jesus people. (Their report is on pg. 11, too)
5. The report for the Music and Arts committee is on pg. 12, and from them you can expect everything from song, to Christmas trees; from cookies to cantatas. We have talented and fearless musicianship, and artistry and creativity lodged in the hearts and minds and hands of so many of our members and friends! Surely a well formed piece of art, and a glorious piece of music are light, light, light against any darkness that might haunt us?

I hope you can see where I am going with this? That you, too, can look at our Treasurers report (on pg. 8) and see more than numbers, but the passion of our members and friends, who give and give and give so that we can be light to our city!

And surely the power of WestCAT (report on pg. 12), to organize and agitate and cooperate to get the work of systemic change moving...surely, you can see that these members and friends of Westminster are salty? Like a slap across the cheek, like a cold fresh wind, their power of organizing for the common good, is the power of sharp taste, sharp action, Salt!

There is stewardship and there is sustainability; (see pg. 9) there is an immigration task force, and a young families' group, and a youth group. Small groups, book groups...people gathering around their passions, and the passion to be light and salt in our city!

But that is not all: there is lots to celebrate in this report, that celebrates the year behind us, our 140th year. Oh the celebrations! Oh the songs, the music, the feasting and the praying, the times we were in the news, the work, work, work...

Because we believe we are indeed called by Jesus to be like a light to brighten a home for all who enter, like salt to make the dull delightful!

As a warming center for young adults. As a house of celebration. As a welcome for 12 step groups and children and poets and artists. For union workers, for Lego League kids. For Mardi Bras yesterday, where among other things, over 80 new bras were donated!

See the "good things" you have done?

And yes, I truly believe, there are people in this city who praise your heavenly Father for the good that you do.

At this meeting of devoted, caring, wonderful people...I simply want to say, Thank You for the Good that you do, and have done, and will do in the future.

You are a light, a beacon of goodness, faithful to the call of Jesus. And yes, you are a salty bunch!

Praise God Indeed!