A Quick Thought, A Quick Announcement

Co-missioners,

Our editor is enmeshed in some family responsibilities this week—all good, to use a phrase that merits some musing in future weeks. He left us two items to pass along to you. Both are brief. To these we'll add a link to an article worth reading. It strikes us as raw material for a heap of conversation about the mission of the Gospel in our digital age.

Peace and Joy,
The Crossings Community

A Quick Thought, A Quick Announcement

by Jerome Burce



1. **The Quick Announcement. (Mark Your Calendars!)**

We thank God by acting in hope.



Vaccinations are here as one of God's great First Article gifts to a world recently awash in the Covid-19 virus. By all accounts they work well. With this in mind we've dared to lay plans for the next in-person Crossings event, a two day seminar at our usual haunt, the Shrine of our Lady of the Snows in Belleville, Illinois, across the river from St. Louis.

Here are the main things to know right now (yes, it goes without

saying that we’re excited):

Dates: January 23-25, 2022

Topic: The Promising Community: "Can I get a Witness?”

Key Speakers:

- The Rev. Dr. Mary Hinkle Shore, rector and dean of the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia, South Carolina
- The Rev. Dr. Kit Kleinhans, dean of Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio
- The Rev. Robin Lütjohann, pastor of Faith Lutheran Church, Cambridge, Massachusetts

Also: Good conversation, good food and drink, good people to meet and know. Above all a chance to revel once again in the Gospel, and in the company of others who recognize it for the treasure it is.

Watch for more in coming weeks. We’d love to see you there!

2. **A Quick Thought. (Which Truth are We Telling?)**

Here’s a snippet from a sermon preached last Sunday by one of our own. It’s a mini-Aha about Paul’s great phrase, “speaking the truth in love” (Eph. 4:15)—



“For the longest time I thought that telling the truth in love meant talking to someone about his or her faults, though doing so without coming across as too much of a judgmental jerk.

“There’s some of that here, I suppose; though what strikes me today—what I want to leave with all of you to think about this week—is that God’s truth comes in two forms. There’s the truth about me: what I ought to be and fail to be, of what I should get done, and don’t get done. There’s the truth of my sin, of your sin too—our stubborn unrelenting sin that none of us will ever shake no matter how many people get in our faces about it.

“Then there’s the other truth, the wonderful, incredible, impossible truth about the God who does what we can’t do. He does it in Christ Jesus, Christ who sets our sin aside, Christ who put his Spirit in us, Christ who calls us his brothers, his sisters, Christ who presents us to the Father as God’s dear children, and not in theory only, but in fact. I think Paul is pushing us to make this the first and final truth that we tell each other—not once, but over and over, far more than we tend to.

“In this or any other church it’s time to be done seeing each other strictly through the old eyes we were born with. What I need from you and you from me are sets of baptized eyes that see as God sees us all in Christ Jesus. What we also need are mouths—not just the pastor’s mouth—that will tell each other

what Christ give us to see, breathtaking marvel that it is."

[To which we add: ergo Crossings.]

3. **An Article Worth Reading**

To fill out your Crossings reading time this week we point you to an extended article that appeared recently in The New York Times. It demands our attention, we think. It describes a mindset of the world we inhabit, one in which (for example) "an ethic of reciprocity" is imagined as the best that human beings can hope to achieve in their relationships with each other. In its own backhanded way it "necessitates" Christ.

The title: "Can Silicon Valley Find God?" (Which god are you looking for, one wants to ask.)