

Blessing for Daily Life

Divorce

The following "blessing for daily life" is shared by June Tweten, Messiah Lutheran Church in Fargo.

Troubled marriages can be a source of stress for many families. When a sibling or a child makes a decision to end a marriage, the whole family is affected. This is one way one family acknowledged the painful loss of divorce.

Our son's and daughter-in-law's quick divorce took place on a Wednesday. Our church's weekly prayer group met that day and I shared this troubling situation. "We need to do something. What can I do to support our whole family and especially our daughter-in-law, who officially is now out of our close-knit clan?"

Messiah's Minister of Health who is also our prayer group leader said, "I have a book that may help you. It's called *For Everything a Season: 75 Blessings for Daily Life*, available from the synod's resource center. It includes a blessing for the ending or changing of a relationship." After reading the blessing, we knew this was something we wanted to do as a family as a way to acknowledge our heartache and loss and to support one another.

We called the whole family together and invited our pastor and spouse to be with us for a shared meal. We explained to everyone that we were gathering to acknowledge the divorce and to ask God to bless us all in our anxiety and uncertainty. Our pastor readily accepted the invitation and told us he would bring communion.

Sunday evening came and soon 27 of our total 37 family members (ten members live out-of-state) plus our pastor and his wife gather together with our son and daughter-in-law and their four children. We crowded together in one room and the pastor explained the situation, then opened with prayer. He then invited any and all family members to affirm to our daughter-in-law that she was firmly planted in our family and would continue to be so. A brother reminded us of how these rifts sadden our Lord who wants only the best for us. There were also recollections of happy days that brought quiet chuckles and smiles. The pastor then honored our son and daughter-in-law and each of their four children individually with a prayer for God's blessing.

After sharing Holy Communion, a benediction was pronounced and we closed with a hymn, "As You Go On Your Way, May Christ Go With You." Finally, we shared a meal together, doing what every family likes to do. We ate together knowing that God is with us in every situation, even in great loss and pain.