

“Gearing Up for Autumn”
For the Pastor’s Corner of the *Shoreview Press*

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August 30, 1997 (486 words)

Autumn time, and the livin’ is crispy!
Cooler nights, and shorter days!
Vacation’s over and routine is returning.
We welcome school, and work, and football plays.

As much as we all love the slower pace of summer, there’s something exciting about gearing up to an autumn of exciting possibilities!

Our bodies need and deserve to enjoy time off to relax, but we also need and really thrive on learning and growing. Stretching our minds and strengthening our bodies. Challenging ourselves to become all we were designed to be.

This fall, do something good for your bodies—both of them. Not only do you possess a physical body, but also you are meant to find the fulfilling place God has designed for you in the body of Christ.

The church is described in scripture as the body of Christ.

You can easily enough see how [it] works by looking no further than your own body. Your body has many parts—limbs, organs, and cells—but no matter how many parts you can name, you’re still one body. It’s exactly the same with [Christ’s body]. ...

The way God designed our bodies is a model for understanding our lives together as a church. 1 Corinthians 12:12, 20, *The Message*

Just as the respiratory system brings to our bodies life-giving oxygen and expels waste carbon dioxide, so worship fills us with God’s life-giving presence and helps us to eliminate stress, negativity, and harmful attitudes.

Just as the cardiovascular system supplies fresh blood to the entire the body while removing waste products, so too biblical preaching and teaching nourishes and cleanses us spiritually.

Just the endocrine system helps maintain an optimal internal physical environment, so also a personal devotional life maintains an optimal spiritual environment.

Just as the reproductive system grants us the joy of bearing children, so also the greatest joy of spiritual life is seeing your faith bring new life to others.

Just as the muscular system generates energy and makes possible movement, so also discipleship provides strength and progress to spiritual life.

Just as there is much connective tissue in the physical body, so too we are meant to be connected relationally with believers who will be available to support and nurture our spiritual life.

Just as the immune system provides to our physical bodies vital protection against infection, disease, and malfunctions of the internal systems, so also godly decision-making defends our spiritual lives from ruinous mistakes with lifelong and eternal consequences.

This autumn, when the children go back to school, when athletes return to the gym, when employees are back on the job, and we all get serious about living, do yourself a favor—get back to church. Get connected with people who care about you, get in touch with a God who is real. Find your place in the body of Christ.

Enjoy an abundant harvest of things that really matter this fall.

Pastor Debbie