

ADVENT NEWS

ADVENT EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD



Overheard at a local hardware store, in a galaxy far, far away . . .
(actually it was in Zionsville, IN)

Guy 1: “Hey, you look familiar! Have I seen your face somewhere before?”

Guy 2: “Ummm. Probably not. I just moved to the area.”

Guy 1: “No man, I really think I have seen your picture somewhere... maybe the newspaper?”

Guy 2: “I doubt it. The picture that was in the paper of me is actually a few years old and my wife says I have aged considerably since then, besides growing my beard during the winter.”

Guy 1: “I knew it! Why was your picture in the paper?”

Sidenote: At this point I could have had a lot of fun with this guy, but a Pastor is supposed to be honest, right?

Me: “I am the new pastor at Advent Lutheran Church here in Zionsville.”

Guy 1: “Cool! I knew I recognized your face. What kind of Lutherans are you?”

Sidenote: In hindsight, I probably should have just said something like: the kind that use the liturgy, believe in original sin, that the Bible is actually the Word of God, that Baptism saves you, that the Body & Blood of Jesus is really present in the bread and the wine, that we are justified by grace through faith . . . but we were in the hardware store, so I just said:

Me: “We are Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod.”

Guy 1: “Yeah! I’ve heard about you guys . . . the MISERY SIE-NOD!”

Let’s stop there, ok?

It is true that somewhere along the path of life this gentleman that I met in the hardware store had heard or been exposed to the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. Misery! It has been a long-standing joke, not just among Lutherans, but also among Kansans, Iowans, Illinoisans (is that a word?), etc. It is actually fairly accurate!

In April of 1518, Martin Luther is called before the Augustinian Order in Heidelberg to defend and further explain his views on indulgences, which he had just attacked six months earlier in the 95 Theses. Ironically, the word “indulgence” does not occur once in the records of this debate (called a “disputation” and something we need more of in the church). Many theologians believe it was even more important than the 95 Theses. The Heidelberg Disputation contains 28 Theses followed by 28 Proofs (explanation of the Theses).

Here are the first three Theses:

1) The law of God, the most salutary doctrine of life, cannot advance man on his way to righteousness,

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“somewhere along the path of life this gentleman that I met in the hardware store had heard or been exposed to the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod.”

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Pastor's Pen (continued from pg. 1)

- 2) Much less can human works, which are done over and over again with the aid of natural precepts, so to speak, lead to that end.
- 3) Although the works of man always seem attractive and good, they are nevertheless likely to be mortal sins.

May I summarize?

- 1) The Ten Commandments won't help you obtain righteousness.
- 2) You can't keep the Ten Commandments.
- 3) Whatever you do won't really get you anywhere and is probably sin.

Misery. Sin. Death. Helplessness.

Yes! As Missouri-Synod Lutherans, we talk about sin, death and helplessness. It is our nature and the state of this life as we await Christ's return. We acknowledge, even embrace it. Living is difficult. Raising children is challenging. Suffering hurts. And dying might be the hardest thing we ever do.

So what is one to do? Embrace the misery. Recognize the problem. And then? I will let Luther answer this one:

- 17) Nor does speaking in this manner give cause for despair, but for arousing the desire to humble oneself and seek the grace of Christ.
- 18) It is certain that man must utterly despair of his own ability before he is prepared to receive the grace of Christ.
- 19) That person does not deserve to be called a theologian who looks upon the invisible things of God as though they were clearly perceptible in those things which have actually happened (Rom. 1:20; cf. 1 Cor 1:21-25),
- 20) He deserves to be called a theologian, however, who comprehends the visible and manifest things of God seen through suffering and the cross.
- 21) A theology of glory calls evil good and good evil. A theology of the cross calls the thing what it actually is.

Misery, yes. But through the suffering and the cross of your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, there is grace and mercy. Covered with His righteousness in your Baptism. His life-giving Body and Blood coursing through your veins and weary bones. His Word of Absolution, which is absolute comfort, spoken to you.

So let us be theologians of the cross, shall we? Certainly as we speak with our neighbor in the hardware store, but especially as we receive His gifts in the Divine Service.

Jesu Juva (Jesus, help me),

Pastor Mackay

- 11 You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore. *Psalms 16:11*
- 4 Sing praises to the Lord, O you his saints, and give thanks to his holy name.
- 5 For his anger is but for a moment, and his favor is for a lifetime. Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning. *Psalms 30:4-5*

Read a free translation of the Heidelberg Disputation here: <http://bookofconcord.org/heidelberg.php>

From the Chairman

As we begin phase II of our journey at Advent, we will be considering how we might best serve God in the years to come.

As we think of all the possibilities, the proverb from Matthew 25 comes to mind:

¹⁴ "For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. ¹⁵ And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey... ¹⁹ After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰ So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' ²¹ His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord...' ²⁴ Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. ²⁵ And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours...' ²⁷ So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. ²⁸ Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents.



We mustn't be afraid to use our talents to serve God. After careful prayer and deliberation, we should boldly move forward; but at the same time avoiding sinful pride. It's important to recognize that at times God may close a door. We can take solace in the fact he often opens another one in its place. If we are careful to have a humble attitude, God will faithfully guide us. There may be a few curves thrown in along the way, but that just keeps it interesting!

May we all "Enter into the joy of our lord,"

Chuck Long, Advent Chairman



Giving Statements

Please check your hymnal box for your 2018 year end giving statements. If you have any questions, please e-mail the office so questions may be forwarded to the financial secretary.

Higher Things Conference 2019

The mission of Higher Things is to assist parents, pastors, and congregations in cultivating a distinctively Lutheran identity among their youth and young adults. The most direct way this is done is through the annual youth Conferences. Since the year 2000, Higher Things has held a total of 38 Lutheran youth Conferences! In 2019, they will add four more to that list.

In a world where youth are tempted to compromise, Higher Things is excited to plan its 2019 Conferences centered on the theme of the Church and Unity .

Advent is planning to attend the St. Paul, MN conference this year to be held June 26-29th.

Why Higher Things?

We live in a culture of blurry religious distinctions and do-it-yourself spirituality. Youth, especially, need solid ground that will nurture lasting Christian faith. Rather than treating youth as an adolescent subculture and confusing them with religious experiences that cannot be replicated at home, Higher Things believes in challenging youth to learn the pure doctrine of the Christian faith. By teaching them the same message that they hear at home, youth grow in the fullness of the Christian faith as they come to appreciate historic liturgical practice and its unique focus on God's gifts of forgiveness, life and salvation for us delivered in Word and Sacrament.

For more information, please see Pastor Grady and brochures and registration on the Higher things website at www.higherthings.org



Church Service Cancellations



Brrrrrr! Now that Indiana is experiencing snow and icy conditions, there is a possibility that inclement weather could affect Sunday church services. When weather conditions are hazardous, a decision will be made by 7:00 AM on Sunday regarding cancellation of church services.

If conditions are deemed to be extreme, church services will be cancelled. Advent Lutheran Church will contact local television stations to inform them of a service cancellation. Please watch your local morning news programs, TV station weather apps and websites. (If church services are cancelled, Sunday School and Bible Study will also be cancelled.)

If the Boone County and/or Hamilton County Sheriff's office issues a snow emergency, church services are automatically cancelled. During a snow emergency, all roadways are closed to non-emergency personnel and driving is prohibited unless a personal emergency exists.

Please note: No event, including church services, requires your attendance if you believe weather conditions are dangerous. Please use your best judgment to determine whether it is safe or wise to travel when road conditions are hazardous. We ask parents to be especially judicious in allowing their teens to drive to an Advent event during inclement weather.

Thank you for using caution during these wintry months! Keep warm and safe!

School News

Registration for the 2019-20 school semester is in full swing for Advent member and school families to enroll for next fall before we open to the general public on February 4th. Many classes will fill before the 4th, so please take advantage of the opportunity to register now to secure the class/days/times you prefer. Brochures and registration forms are on the Narthex table and just outside the school office in early January.

Please contact me if you have questions or would like to visit a class. Email me at dtrewartha@adventlutheran.org or call the church office at 317-873-6318.

Deb Trewartha,
Advent School Director



Youth Music

Thank you to all the students who participated in Christmas program. Thank you as well, to all who helped behind the scenes!

The 3rd-12th graders are now learning new music to sing in the March 24th church services. Parents, please watch for more information to follow as the date approaches.

Annual Valentine Dinner

Our Annual Valentine Dinner to benefit the school is coming up very soon!



Invitation/Reservation forms were placed in hymnal boxes last week, for you to complete and return. Extra forms are by the red Valentine Dinner boxes in the Narthex and outside Fellowship Hall. We are excited to welcome back Biru Bar, the very talented Lithuanian band that entertained us a couple of years ago. And, of course, the delicious appetizer bar, Italian cuisine and dessert cart will be included as well as dinner and activities for the kiddos. This year the dinner will take place **the Saturday AFTER Valentine's Day, February 16th @ 6PM.**

See you there!

Deb Trewartha,
Advent School Director

Lutheran Schools Week

The school will kick off National Lutheran Schools Week by singing at the opening of the 10:45 AM service on Sunday, January 27th. We are excited to welcome our school families once again to worship with us and have their children be participants in our service! This year's theme is "Our God is Real and Present Here". The students' medley includes the hymn Lord, Jesus Christ, Be Present Now and two children's songs, God is Near and Jesus Said "I'm With You".

This week of Lutheran Schools Week will be the last week for Advent member and school families to enroll for next fall before we open to the general public on February 4th. Many classes will fill before the 4th, so please take advantage of the opportunity to register now to secure the class/days/times you prefer.

Sharing Jesus' Love through Action

The Lutheran Women's Missionary League offers on their website a year's worth of simple mission service activities for your family, which has as their focus the following:



Nurturing Faith in Christ. By God's grace we offer each woman opportunities to be in the Word and to use her unique gifts in God's service.

Making Our Faith Meaningful. We equip each woman to make a significant difference in the lives of all people.

Sharing Encouragement. We value each other in Christ and we accept and encourage each woman to grow in her relationship with others.

For January, here are their suggestions:

Nurturing Faith in Christ—Start off the year in a positive way so you can be a blessing to others. Wake up 15 minutes earlier and spend it alone reading inspirational material and praying. Set a goal to increase by 5 minutes every 3 months.

Making Our Faith Meaningful—Collect canned soup and boxed crackers in a large soup kettle. Then give the "Souper Bowl of Caring" to a local food pantry or soup kitchen. EXTRA CREDIT: Volunteer at the food pantry or soup kitchen!

Sharing Encouragement—Start a "secret pal" prayer partner program for the ladies in your congregation. Ask ladies to commit to praying daily for their partner and suggest small acts of kindness to do throughout the year.

Each month's suggested activities will be included in the Advent News for your family to consider. Learn more about Gospel Outreach at LWML under the Mission tab at lwml.org/home.

LCMS Mercy Medical Teams

Health care professionals needed for short-term service. Since 2006, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's Mercy Medical Teams have provided desperately needed health care to thousands of patients in underserved regions around the globe. This short-term volunteer program offers medical professionals opportunities to volunteer abroad in a variety of clinical and health-related settings.

Doctors, nurses, pharmacists, other types of medical professionals, pastors and **hard-working laity** are coordinated and trained into specific Mercy Medical Teams, which work in conjunction with LCMS partner churches and international clinics to address needs of both body and soul.

For more information visit lcms.org/mercy-medical-teams