

ADVENT NEWS

ADVENT EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD



From the Pastor

The next few newsletter articles will tackle the subject of “worship.” For now, let’s start with what was heard at a popular local Christian church not very far away . . .

“when you go to a Justin Timberlake concert...you are worshipping: showing love, admiration, affection...Lucas Oil stadium...same thing...the question isn’t whether but what you will worship?”

“your church experience will only be as good as what you bring to it”

“you were made to worship...you were made to love and show admiration and affection”

“God is worthy of the WOW that is already in your heart”

“aim the WOW in your heart toward the one that is only worthy of it”

“you are already worshipping so direct it to Him”

“aim your worship...to God”

“life is hard and challenging....worship your way through it”

The underlying premise of this “sermon” is that true worship is standing, dancing, clapping, praising, exactly how you see done at a concert or football game. The pastor even went so far as to say that God commands such worship and that humans beings are created to do just that.

Let’s start with John 6:28-29, *Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?” Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.”*

The highest form of worship is FAITH. Not what you do or how you do it, but belief in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, crucified and risen for your sins and the sins of the whole world.

The local pastor went on to claim that “you were made to worship” and that you are doing just that at a Colts game or Justin Timberlake concert. Since this is worship, you merely need to “aim your worship at God.” This is also false on many levels:

1. Man is spiritually dead in his trespasses and sin. He is not made to worship, he is so infected by sin that even Jesus says in John 8:44 *You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires.* There are many passages that speak to our inability to worship God or that we can control or aim anything. Here is another from 1 Corinthians 2:14 *The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.*

October, 2019

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2. Many Christians assume that the word “worship” is the same as the word “praise.” This is why many churches, even Lutheran, have a “Praise Service” or a “Praise Team”. The first word for worship that occurs in Genesis actually means “bow down.” This is quite different from the definition of worship I shared above. Bowing down is quiet and reverent and submissive. I suggest we start a “Bowing Service” and a “Bowing Team”! 😊 Just joking.
3. God commands that we only worship Him, so if what we do at a Colts game or Timberlake concert is the same thing, then following the logic from this popular local Christian church, it would be sinful according to Scripture! Consider these passages where God commands worship of Him only: Luke 4:8 *And Jesus answered him, “It is written, “You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.”* Deuteronomy 6:13 *It is the Lord your God you shall fear. Him you shall serve and by his name you shall swear.*

So we see that the definition of “worship” from this big box church is incorrect, from Scripture. Furthermore, how do you deal with sin in your life? This church falsely tells you to “worship your way through it”. This puts ALL the work on you!

Our Divine Services as Lutheran-Christians focus on two things: humbling ourselves before the almighty God with reverence and awe, but an awe that bows down before Him, which is so different from the way the world worships. We don’t worship God like we do the Colts or Timberlake, because we have nothing to offer Him. We are sinners. Thus, the Divine Service is not about us coming to God, but rather God coming to us. Forgiving us. Which reminds me, Jesus commands (mandates) the Apostles’ and the church that follows them John 20:19-23, *On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, “Peace be with you.” When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.” And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.”*

I watched the entire service of this local church. Never once did I hear the pastors speak these life-giving words of Jesus: I FORGIVE YOU. Why don’t they do that? Jesus commands it.

Luke 24:46-47 *Jesus said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.*

Forgiveness of sins was mentioned once or twice, but it was not the main thing in the “sermon”. They never mentioned the Gospel in terms of what Jesus did by living a perfect life, dying a death as the once for all sacrifice upon the cross, and rising to new life in His resurrection. This church is trying to get you and others to believe a false gospel, that you can and should worship God in a certain way. This is all Law. I am saddened to hear such drivel and fear for those who may be led astray.



And if we are going to talk about what God commands, what about Jesus also commanding the Lord’s Supper? We do it every Sunday. And not just because He commands (mandates) it, but because we also need it and desire what He forgives: forgiveness of sins, life and salvation. I did not see nor hear this emphasis at this local church. Luke 22:19-20 *And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remem-*

brance of me.” And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.

Lastly, disciples are NOT made by teaching them to worship or aiming their worship at the right person or place. Hear again the words of Jesus, Matthew 28:18-20, *And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”*



Disciples are made first by baptizing, not worshipping. Which is one of the reasons we baptize our infants. They, as sinners, receive God’s grace and mercy. They do nothing, He does everything. Then we teach. We catechize. I did not hear this emphasis from Scripture, at this local and popular “Christian” church. They are preaching a false gospel and twisting God’s word to appeal to you and others, leading them away from the gifts of Christ.

The crux of this first newsletter article on worship is this: we have nothing to offer Him, but He gives everything to us through Jesus Christ, through His Word, through His Sacraments. It is not sinful to celebrate at a Colts game or Timberlake concert. True worship is faith and quiet submission, which should bring to mind the story of Mary and Martha. Martha is busy working and doing things for Jesus. Mary is sitting quietly, at Jesus’ feet, listening, learning and receiving. Jesus commends Mary’s faith and actions, not Martha’s. Let us first receive His gifts of Word and Sacrament and then get busy with all that needs to be done this side of heaven. How we worship, what we say and do, does matter. More to come in the next newsletter article.

Forgiveness of sins, life and salvation are freely yours through Jesus Christ your Savior!

Peace be with you,

Pr. Mackay

LIFE CHAIN EVENT - Sunday, October 6th—**TODAY**—Pray to end abortion!

Advent will participate in the Central Indiana Life Chain event next Sunday October 6th.

Dozens of area churches will be lining up along Meridian Street in Indianapolis between 38th and Michigan Streets for one hour holding signs, and silently praying for the unborn and those who have been affected by abortion. **The hour is 2:30 pm – 3:30 pm.** Once we know the total number of participants from Advent, we will be assigned a location. We simply show up and pick up signs from a nearby booth and take our assigned position for one hour. The location will be emailed to you next week as soon as we have it. T-shirt sales will take place the day of the event at that location. SIGN UP information in the narthex or email Pastor Grady directly at jjgrady@adventlutheran.org.



Conversation at the Coffee Shop

It's what we've always done/ why not something new?

Finally something to think about/ how about something to feel good about?

Bend your head/ clap your hands

National anthem was better / no, half-time show was better

Since starting at Advent a decade or so ago, I have been looking for an image or some metaphor that would bring into focus what Advent has been doing with liturgy and music to make it so special.

Last summer, between an insomnia induced late-night Netflix offering and subsequent reading, I learned about a pair of new descriptors that I had never heard of before. And the origin of those descriptors indicated that the contrasting points of view in the coffee shop conversation above might have been going on since ancient times.



What I learned about was the difference in job description between two mythical Greek deities: Apollo and Dionysus. Greek mythology said that Apollo was to be in charge of anything to do with medicine, healing, music, songs, dance and poetry. The Greeks also scooped alongside anything related to the protection, health and education of children. It was his job to see that children grew up right. Since he was doing that, they added the job of taking care of herdsmen and shepherds. Apollo's job was to inspire laws. At the end of his workday, Apollo was supposed to leave behind a sense of order, intellectual reason and human self-discipline. He was a smart sort of guy, even if a cold, stick-in-the-mud.

On the other-hand was the mythical Dionysus (we might know him better by his Roman name Bacchus). Dionysus was in charge of everything to do with winemaking, fertility, ritual madness, theater, and religious ecstasy. When it came time for Dionysus to drive home from work, he was to leave behind chaos—but that did not mean something necessarily bad. It could mean letting go of worry, letting loose. Feeling joy. Compared to Apollo, Dionysius was the party man. He was the individual with whom parents and teachers would rather children not become friends—even if the parents and teachers were.



Of course, these were not actual gods. All praise to the one, true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The point worth pondering is how the Greeks gathered certain ideas together around one name or the other.

Around Apollo they connected the notions of good order, what is necessary for the kids to grow up well, what are the important things to sit and think about, what is necessary to those living in groups. Among the Apollonian ideas, the past and the future are essential to consider, even if it comes at the expense of the present.

Conversation at the Coffee Shop *(continued)*

Around Dionysus were gathered notions of what causes individualization, what catalyzes a person to exhibit unexpressed, unrecognized joy, what lets him stop worrying, what feels good. Around those qualities of Dionysus, the moment at hand is the most important one.

I think it is safe to say that practices at Advent are more Apollonian in style than Dionysian. And more Dionysian styles of liturgy and music are popping up all around.

What to do about it? I guess that's an Apollonian question on my part I must admit. Perhaps the answer is that God remains in control. And may our praise and offerings be found worthy to God. May we at Advent raise our next generation to grow fervently in the true faith. May our Pastors continue to lead us in good order while healing us with the Word. And may we too feel the liberating joy of sonship which Christ has won for us.

Phil Spray
Music Director

Golf Outing Success!

Thanks for all who came out to support our youth and raise some funds for our future Heritage Tour to Germany. If you missed it, the Advent Golf Outing made for a fun afternoon. The weather looked like it was going to be an issue with rain falling as we left the church after Sunday services. But someone pointed out "the pastors showed up at the golf course and the rain stopped!" I will not take credit for any part of that! ***Thanks to Amie Cramer, Anna Frey and consultant Lestine Grady for rapidly putting this outing together!***

Twenty-six golfers enjoyed Brookshire's somewhat narrow and challenging course with its wandering creek and tall grass that frustratingly consumed a good number of balls. Many of the participants are pictured below.



There was a drawing for a few small prizes, the bulk of which went to ***Brenda & Ron Wilson... their team was also the winning team!***

Look for a few changes coming next year. We would like to have the outing earlier in the summer, possibly in June, once our college students return from school. Planning will also start earlier, just after the first of the year, in an effort to garner more corporate sponsors, more prizes and a greater number of participants!

Advent School & Youth Music

Our Preschool and Kindergarten are off to a great start. Morning classes are all full with the exception of a very few Mom's Morning Out (2 year olds) openings. There are a few spots left in the afternoon Pre-K and the afternoon Kindergarten too. We are currently fully staffed as well, but could always use more names on our sub list. If you are interested in being on the sub list or have a child you would like to enroll, please contact me at 317-873-6318 or dtrewartha@adventlutheran.org.



We are still doing the scrip (gift card) program throughout the year to benefit the school. Remember, cards are purchased at face value and can be used for personal buying or as gifts. The retailers give the school percentage profits from each card sold. The order schedule (deadlines) for the remainder of the year is October 25, November 22 and December 13. Order forms may be found on the Narthex table or outside the school office. I place orders at 9 AM on the order dates. Also, if you shop at Kroger and have a KrogerPlus card, you can sign up online for the Kroger Community Rewards for 3% of eligible purchases to be donated to the school by Kroger. The school's non-profit organization number is YN661. THANKS!!

The Sunday School youth began their regular schedule on Sept 15th which includes 15 minutes of music time (Preschool-2nd grade at 9:30 in the Library, 3rd-6th grade at 9:30 in the downstairs commons area, and 7th-12th grade at 10:15 in the Library.) The students will be learning music for the services on November 24th and also for the Sunday School program on December 15th. Please encourage your children to attend the full 15 minute music times so we have time to prepare for the upcoming musical offerings. THANKS!

Deb Trewartha
Director of Advent School and Assistant Director of Music

Saints on Stage to present *THE MOUSE THAT ROARED*



What happens when the smallest country in the world invades the United States ... and wins?

The Mouse That ROARED, adapted by Christopher Sergel and based on the novel by Leonard Webberley, will be performed at the Lutheran High School in Indianapolis on Friday and Saturday, **October 4 and 5 at 7 p.m.** and on **Sunday, October 6th at 3 p.m.** Tickets may be purchased online at www.lhsi.org. Adults - \$10 in advance, \$12 at door. Students and Seniors 65+ - \$5 in advance, \$8 at door. Seating is general admission. Lutheran High School is located at 5555 S. Arlington Avenue, Indianapolis, IN.

The Marriage Witness

There are so many people just living together these days or suffering from broken marriages. I grew up in a broken home and can attest that is not what God would have intended. Once I grew up, I prayed the same fate would not befall me. If you have been blessed with a happy marriage you can share how God has worked this out in your relationship. You can inspire others that are struggling to find that same joy through Christian relationships. I ran across a nice expression of this in a book called *Daily Wisdom for Couples* by Tony Sorter & Pamela McQuade:



“The “father of lies,” Satan, has fooled many people into believing marriage is a partnership of misery. Out of fear they shun it, living together instead or completely avoiding relationships... Happily married Christians kill Satan’s lie by making their marriages witnesses to young people caught in doubt. By sharing time with others, telling them of God’s plan of marriage, letting them see marital joy, and providing an example of positive behavior, Christians shine light into lives darkened by Satan’s lies.”

Shine on my dear friends in Christ,

Chuck Long, Advent Chairman

LWML Indianapolis Fall Rally—COMPASSION BEYOND WORDS

The Lutheran Women’s Missionary League Indiana District—Indianapolis East & West Zones will hold a fall rally on **Saturday, November 2 starting at 9 a.m.** (registration and breakfast) at the Concordia Lutheran Church in Greenwood, IN.



COMPASSION BEYOND WORDS is the theme, which will be addressed by Leslie Haines, Executive Director of the Lutheran Military Veterans & Families Ministries, Inc. (LMVFM) The speaker will be accompanied by two Care Dogs, representatives of their "Paws and Effects" program which assists veterans in need of a therapy/service dog to receive one.

The LMVFM is a Christian non-profit (501c3) faith based ministry “dedicated to serving military veterans, military contractors and their families in need of care and assistance, regardless of their faith or religious affiliation. We offer resources, assistance and training to congregations and other care providers to assist veterans, military contractors and their family members.” The organization is based out of Ft. Wayne, IN. For more information, visit their website at lmvfm.org or email them at lmvfm.org@gmail.com

Helping veterans let go of their past, engage in the present, and have hope for the future.

And His Name Shall be Called....

Jesus had many names. All the words below were used to refer to Jesus in the Bible. Fit the names into the puzzle. (HINT: Start with the longest names!)

GOD
SUN
WAY
ONE
ROOT
WORD
LAMB
GATE
LORD
KING
VINE
LIFE

SEED
STAR
RABBI
BREAD
LIGHT
TRUTH
ALPHA
OMEGA
STONE
FATHER
PRINCE
BRANCH

CHRIST
SAVIOR
MESSIAH
TEACHER
REDEEMER
IMMANUEL
SHEPHERD
COUNSELOR
BRIDEGROOM
RESURRECTION

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