



January

ST. PAUL-ZION DUAL PARISH **JANUARY 2024**

A Few Thoughts from Pastor

It is good to give thanks to the LORD, to sing praises to Your name, O Most High; to declare Your steadfast love in the morning, and Your faithfulness by night, to the music of the lute and the harp, to the melody of the lyre.

Psalm 92:1-3

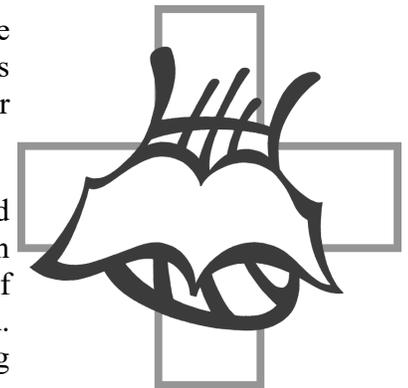


This time of year, I typically think a lot about music for (& in) church. During Advent and Christmas this year, the roughly 35-day period from Dec. 3 through Jan. 5, we sang (or will sing) all or parts of 52 different hymns during services at St. Paul and Zion. Eight of these hymns we sang more than once.

In total, we turned to these hymns, to theological poetry set to music, some 60 times to worship, to praise, to pray, to learn, to teach, to reflect, and to reinforce the truths of God's holy Word. And not all the hymns were Advent or Christmas hymns. And I'm not even counting the various canticles and psalms that we prayed, chanted, or sang.

So ... thanks to our organist and to all of you who join in giving voice to these treasures of the Church. Truly, many of these hymns are incredible little sermons set to music, and they often remain in our minds and hearts long after the song or the service has ended.

The great hymns of the Church are truly a treasure, and a gift from God, and we are blessed to have been given such a collection of both ancient and modern works. Deep, solid, time-tested, and orthodox presentations of the teachings of Holy Scripture, they are truly treasures of the Church that we have inherited. And while we may not always realize it (or appreciate it/them), perhaps this blog post from several years ago by Pastor Klemet Preus might be helpful. Consider his clever take on hymnody in the Church and what a "problem" it is for the devil:



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Tuesday, Thursday

If I were the devil, I would try to get people to stop singing hymns. What a great idea, if I were the devil. It seems like such a benign idea. That's what makes it so diabolically clever. It's not really awful like fornication or murder. And if I were successful, I would make the lives of Christians less beautiful, which if you're the devil is an added bonus. Beauty comes from God and has a type of self-corrective force within itself. Take away beautiful hymns and you take away a bit of beauty and you win twice. You make people less joyful and they aren't exactly sure why. But especially I would try to get people to stop singing hymns because such a strategy would disarm them of the weapons they use to fight against me (the devil).

If I were the devil, I would convince people that the traditional Lutheran hymns actually get in the way of an evangelistic worship service. These hymns can't touch the lives of people and give them a palpable sense of God's presence. That's what I'd get them to believe. Think about it. Get the people to stop singing hymns. Make them believe that hymns are too difficult, boring and old fashioned. Make them think that hymns are not in the heart language of the culture. Make them think that the old Lutheran hymns are just too, well, too German. Aren't the Germans the ones who started the world wars and aren't most movie villains afflicted with broad German accents? Didn't the wicked warden in "Shaw Shank Redemption" whistle the tune to "A mighty Fortress" when he went about his work. And he was really bad. No German hymns for us.

Then Christians will trade in their hymns for shallow ditties or, better, a praise band which stylizes its music so much that people really can't participate at all. They'll think they're actually doing God a service.

Christopher Boyd Brown says, "The Lutheran hymnals unhesitatingly affirmed the prerogative of the laity to apply the comfort of God's Word to themselves and their families, and not a few writers, both clergy and laymen averred that such lay use of the hymns might well be of at least as much spiritual help as the pastor's sermon." Brown also says, "By means of hymns, the laity...were able, even in the absence of Lutheran clergy, to appropriate the Lutheran understanding of the Bible for themselves, to comfort themselves and others in time of need, to instruct their children, and to sustain their Evangelical faith and identify in the face of opposition and persecution."

Don't you see? By taking away hymns and getting the people to stop singing them I could hurt the people in three ways: First I could make them defenseless against the Baptist, Methodist, American Evangelical forces which permeate the culture. Heavens, the culture's mine. Why shouldn't the churches be too? If somehow I could get a congregation to call a pastor who was weak on Lutheran doctrine, the people would not have the hymns to correct him when he strays. And I know I could trust such a pastor not to reintroduce the hymns.

Second, if I could get people to stop singing hymns then I would be trashing the Lutheran emphasis on the Royal Priesthood since Lutheran laymen have always taught each other and themselves with Lutheran hymns. Hymns would no longer teach and laymen would no longer be teachers. Parents would no longer catechize their kids by teaching them hymns.

Third, I have been working for over 2000 years to afflict the church with boring pastors and boring sermons. When God reformed the church through the Lutherans, not only did preaching improve, but the Lutherans also almost single-handedly restored to the church a rich hymnody. That way if the pastors still preached bad sermons at least the people got a mini-sermon in the hymns. And they could whistle the sermon all week long. But if I can get the people to stop singing hymns then I can concentrate more fully on making the sermons dull. And I make it more difficult for the sermons which are comprehensible to be reinforced by hymns.

But how do I get those Lutherans to get rid of such a wonderful God given and God pleasing blessing? I've got it. I'll use the pastors. I'll send them to Fuller Seminary and other Church growth centers. I'll get them to read and heed George Barna, David Luecke and Kent Hunter. Oh, Sweet, Satanic, Irony. The first Lutheran pastors gave God's people hymns so that they would not have to depend solely on the pastors. I'll use the pastors to take away the same hymns so the people must rely solely on the pastors.

Then I'll have 'em. And then watch me work, if I were the devil.

Lord, protect us from the wiles and works of the devil ... and thank You for the gift of music and for the great hymns of the Church.

In Christ,
Pastor Holle

Stewardship



The Chief Stewards of Humanity: Mom and Dad

St. Paul tells the Ephesians that the first commandment with a specific promise attached to it is, "Honor your father and mother so that it may go well with you, and you may live long in the land" (Eph. 6:2). This promise is one indication of the importance of this commandment. The other thing that highlights the special nature of this commandment is its placement within the Ten Commandments.

The Ten Commandments are clearly organized in two big categories. The first three commandments deal with our relationship with God. This category is called the First Table of the Law. The last seven commandments, the Second Table of the Law, tell us how we should relate to other people. These two tables correspond to what Jesus calls the two greatest commandments: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind," and "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matt. 22:37-39).

The order of the Second Table of the Law is also important. Murder is a greater sin than adultery, which is a greater sin than stealing, or lying, or coveting. But why is the Fourth Commandment first in the Second Table, ahead of "you shall not murder"? Is disobeying your parents really worse than murder? Or maybe we should give up on thinking these commandments are ordered?

The overall effect of this order is to get us to see our parents as a connection point between our neighbors and our God. Throughout our upbringing our father and mother stand between us and God and deliver His gifts to us: God clothes us, feeds us, protects us, and teaches His Word to us through our parents.

So, parents have a very high calling from God. They are called to be stewards of the greatest gift - the gift of life.

Parenting thus gives us a keen insight into all our stewardship. Parents know that they have been given a great treasure in their children, a treasure that does not belong to them, yet for which they feel a great deal of responsibility. Truth be told, every gift we have been given is like this, because everything we have - whether our own personal skills and powers or our wealth and time - is all from God. He entrusts it all to us so that we can use it all and take care of it all for His great purposes.



STEWARDSHIP

Managing God's Gifts To Us

ST. PAUL DORCAS

The St. Paul Dorcas met for lunch at Kirkwoods in Highland on December 3rd. We had 10 members present and 1 guest, Becky Holle. After lunch we went to Wes & Linda Duesing's home for refreshments.

Kathy Heiniger and Cindy Manche gave a devotional called "Love Explained," from LWML. We all sang, "Joy to the World."

We discussed the Dec. 12 Circuit Visitor's meeting to be held at St. Paul. Cindy Manche will provide breakfast drinks and Becky Holle offered to make cinnamon rolls. Lunch will be taken care by Sadie and Becky Meyer.

Sadie and Becky Meyer are preparing a meal before the Advent service on Dec. 6, 2023. We had volunteers to provide desserts.

Cindy Manche read a thank you from Kathy Heiniger. We had a discussion of increasing memorial gifts. We decided to table a vote for later.

We collected our Christmas stocking money which goes to charities.

We all thanked Linda for inviting us to her home.

Submitted by,
Cindy Manche

ZION LWML

The regular meeting of the Zion Lutheran Church LWML was called order by Lela Middendorf on December 12, 2023 with 4 members present.

Lela opened the meeting with a devotional titled "How Mary Prepared for the First Christmas."

The minutes of the previous meeting were read by Anne and approved, and Diane gave the treasurer's report.

We plan to serve a soup luncheon as a fundraiser prior to our annual General Assembly Meeting the end of January, 2024. Discussion followed on funeral lunches, menus and how we serve them. Ten Christmas goodie bags were completed for our shut-ins.

There was more discussion on having Executive Committee meeting instead of LWML meetings every month. No decision was reached.

Lela closed with a reading from Luke 2.

Anne Arnesen
Secretary

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS:

Military: Spencer Ernst, Bert Ernst, Alexander Williams

College: Joey Meyer, Sage Meyer, Paul Pearson, Megan Brockhoff, Paige Stover, Gunner Smith.

Care Facilities & Shut-Ins: Betty Allen, Carol Bauer, Gene Rice, Darlene Covert, Connie Kneisel, Jaynell Robidoux, Don Robidoux, Charles Fritz, Lois Voss, Tom Hansen, Bonnie Reynolds, Esther Krug.

Also in our prayers: Bill Rahe, Dale Strobel, Charlotte Kruse, Wes Duesing, Richard Clay, Aimee Hampl, Carl Mueller, Sherry Hartley, Randi Fischer Murphy, Tammy Shefferd Miller, Edna Coonce, Janice Grubb, Kurt Killman.

We Remember the blessed saints who now rest in the Lord and we pray for their families that they remember all who die in the Lord live with the Lord. (Romans 6:5)



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

*Jan 1-Carol Bauer, Jan 3-Diane Brockhoff, Jan 8-Rebecca Nimz, Jan 12-Regina Rygaard,
Jan 15-Bob Freese, Jan 16-Lois Voss, Jan 18-Liesl Gigstad, Jan 21-Megan Brockhoff,
Jan 25-Brady Killman, Jan 26-Leslie Brockhoff, Jan 29-Kristina Costlow,
Jan 29-Alexander Hinton, Jan 29-Andy Trent*

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

Jan 4-Kurt & Sherry Killman, Jan 11-Donna & Mike Gormley,

SERVERS FOR JANUARY

(Please trade if you have a date conflict)

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN

January 7th: Dwight & Charlotte Kruse

January 14th: Dennis & Cindy Manche

January 21st: Jeff & Leslie Brockhoff

January 28th: Steve & Nancy Manche

Altar Guild for January: Charlotte Kruse, Cindy Manche, Jeff Brockhoff

ZION LUTHERAN

January 7th: **Elder**-Kurt Killman, **Acolyte**-Brady Killman, **Ushers**-Bob Freese & Larry Walter,
Greeters-Kurt Killman & Brady Killman, **Sound System**-David Middendorf

January 14th: **Elder**-Leon Wissmann, **Acolyte**-Corey Dunaway, **Usher**-David Middendorf,
Greeters-Hampl family, **Sound System**-Leon Wissmann

January 21st: **Elder**-Scott Gigstad, **Acolyte**-Saige Stover, **Usher**-Leon Wissmann,
Greeters- Tim & Jackie Bianchi, **Sound System**-Bob & Virginia Freese

January 28th: **Elder**-Kurt Killman, **Acolyte**-Remington Killman, **Ushers**-Bob Freese & Larry Walter,
Greeters- Larry & Carol Walter, **Sound System**-David Middendorf

Altar Guild for January: Cathy Brockhoff, Diane Brockhoff, Lela Middendorf



Ladies Bible Study

***Tuesday nights at 6:30pm
at Zion Lutheran.
Please join us!***

LWML Retreat

Cindy Manche,
Kathy Heiniger,
Lela Middendorf and
Sarah Kloefer
attended the Kansas
District LWML Retreat
in Wichita on November
10 and 11. The speaker
was writer Sharla Fritz
who led sessions relating
to "Continuous Joy".



SUNDAY SCHOOL

We invite all kids to come and join us for Sunday School!
Sunday School meets each Sunday morning at **9:15am at Zion.**
Sunday School at **St. Paul** starts after the service at **9:30am.**
The Zion Adult Bible Class meet on Sunday mornings at 9:15am
and St. Paul Bible Class meet after their service.
Please come join us!!



PLEASE HELP TO KEEP US UP TO DATE:

*If you have a new phone number, address, or email address,
please make sure you send it to the office.*

*You can e-mail the office at
office@NEKpartnership.org or call 785-740-0268.
The office would also like the names and addresses
of any members who are at college. Thank You!*

Evan and Sadie at the St. Paul booth at Fairview Lights Up



AMERICAN HERITAGE GIRLS

American Heritage girls would like to send a hearty thank you to our charter organization! The girls enjoyed the hot chocolate provided by Zion's Outreach committee at their Christmas Party on December 7, and is looking forward to a bright future! Between the support for Samaritans Purse shoeboxes, Giving Bean, and other endeavors, the Troop could not enjoy the success and growth it has seen without the generosity of our Charter.

God bless you and sends you a Happy New Year!



JANUARY, 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 New Year's Day	2 6:30 Ladies Bible Study	3	4	5	6
7 Baptism of Our Lord 9:15 Bible Study @Zion	8 7:00 St. Paul Elder mtg	9 6:30 Ladies Bible Study 7:30 Zion LWML	10 7:00 Bible Study @Zion	11 7:00 Zion Elder's mtg.	12	13
14 2 nd Sunday after the Epiphany 9:15 Bible Study @Zion	15 Martin Luther King Jr. 7:00 Zion Church Council mtg.	16 6:30 Ladies Bible Study	17 7:00 Bible Study @St. Paul	18	19	20
21 Transfiguration of Our Lord 9:15 Bible Study @Zion	22 Articles Due for Newsletter	23 6:30 Ladies Bible Study	24 7:00 Bible Study @Zion	25	26	27
28 Septuagesima 9:15 Bible Study @Zion Fellowship @St.Paul (after service) Zion Annual Meeting (after service)	29	30 6:30 Ladies Bible Study	31 7:00 Bible Study @St. Paul	<i>Happy New Year!</i>		