



ST. JOHN-ST. PETER NEWS

MAY 2008

Why we do what we do when we do it: The Role of Tradition in the Liturgy

I'm sure you all remember my story from last month, the one about the ham. The point of that story was to show that we should have a reason for doing something and that reason should still apply today. However, that story was not at all meant to lessen the value of tradition. Tradition is a wonderful blessing that God has given to us. Tradition is indeed valuable. So our question this month as we consider why we do what we do when we do it is: "What is the role of tradition in our liturgy?"

Lutheran worship is naturally drawn to tradition. The reason for that is because we place such a high value on the Word of God. The Word of God has traditionally taken the top priority in Lutheran worship and so naturally, the other traditions that are connected to this truth are also valued. This is one reason the liturgical tradition in our church has such great value. It forces us to put the Word in a primary position! And that's a wonderful thing!

However, some Lutherans, even myself sometimes, cringe when we hear the word "tradition." And the reason for that is because sometime "tradition" is used as an excuse not to try something a different way or perhaps change something that has lost its value. Just like anything, "tradition" can be abused. But that doesn't mean we should simply throw out every tradition because there's a chance it will be abused. There is great value in tradition. What is that value?

First, tradition is a way that the Word is given to us. Much like the favorite family stories are passed down from generation to generation, the story of Jesus and his love for the world is passed down from Christian to Christian. The tradition of sharing the Word in Sunday school, VBS, and Bible studies is a wonderful thing to hold on to. Why in the world would we every want to stop hearing the Word? The same can be said for the liturgy. As we learned last month, the liturgy proclaims the gospel to us every week. The songs and lessons connected with that tradition serve that role. Why would we want to give that up?

Second, tradition shows our respect for the past. There's something to be said about traditions that have stood the test of time. We all know that if we don't learn from the past, we are doomed to repeat their mistakes. The tradition of the liturgy allows us to learn from the past. The tradition of the liturgy is not a "dead rite" that we as the living simply repeat by rote. The tradition of the liturgy is the "living faith" of the dead who have learned how to proclaim the gospel in the face of error everywhere.

Third, tradition connects us to the greater "Church." The fact that these same songs and verses have been spoken and sung for up to 1800 years shows the beautiful thread that the gospel has woven throughout history. The same proclamation that was valuable for the early church has great value for today!

Finally, tradition provides perspective in our ever changing world. Just think of how fast society changes! Tradition provides us with the powerful acknowledgement that change is neither new nor is it always good or bad. Everything changes; except for God and his Word. Looking at past traditions, especially the means of proclaiming the unchanging God and his Word, can give us perspective on the changes of the present and look forward to the changes in the future.

So what is the role of tradition in our liturgy? Tradition plays a very important role. That isn't to say that there can't be changes in the tunes or updates in the language. But to radically change what has served the church so well for 1500 years? I'm not convinced there's real value in that!

By: Pastor Nathan Berg, Cataract Wisconsin

THANK YOU On behalf of the Teen Bible Study group, we want to thank everyone that helped and attended our brat fry. We hope you enjoyed the food and fellowship. Because of God's grace, through your generosity, we were able to raise \$325. It will be added to the general fund. Thanks again!

THANK YOU Thank you to everyone that helped clean the church and church yard. Your service to the Lord is appreciated.

ASCENSION Come worship our ascended King with us as we celebrate Christ's Ascension. There will be a special worship service on Thursday evening, May 1st at 7:00PM. The Sunday school children will be singing. Everyone is invited to an Ice Cream Social after our worship service.

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY! We wish all of our mothers a special Mother's Day. Come celebrate with us on Sunday May 11th as we thank the Lord for faithful Christian mothers.

CONGREGATIONAL DIRECTORY We are looking for volunteers to form a committee in preparing a new congregational directory. The last directory was completed in 2001. If you are interested in serving on the committee, there is a sign up sheet on the back table. If you have any questions, please talk with Pastor Endorf.

MLHS DELEGATE Larry Jaeger has accepted a second year term serving as a delegate for MLHS. We are looking for a second delegate. If you are interested, please talk with Pastor Endorf.

SCRIP Don't forget to order your certificates for Caan's Floral and Hartman's Greenhouse. It is time to start thinking about our flower beds and gardens again. Please plan ahead and your order will be ready for pick up on Mother's Day!

PIONEERS

Sunday, May 4th from 6:00 – 7:30pm – “Girls Only” will assemble and paint bird houses.

Sunday, May 18th 3:00-6:00pm is the 4th annual Scavenger Hunt for Peter’s Pantry. For this year’s Scavenger Hunt the Pioneers are looking to cover the entire village. So we will need as many kids possible to volunteer to help go from house to house picking up food. We will also need parents who are willing to volunteer to help supervise the groups of kids as they go from house to house. We will also be passing out bags on May 11th so that members and the people they give bags to can be prepared when we come by on the 18th. Watch for a sign up sheet in church looking for volunteers.

BENEFIT BRAT FRY There will be a benefit brat fry, raffle, and bake sale on May 18th from 10am - 6pm at Lakeshore Lanes in Sheboygan for Randy Thomas. Randy has been diagnosed with cancer of the pancreas. Randy was accepted into membership at the last voters meeting.

SERVING LUNCH AT MLHS Our church is serving lunch at Manitowoc Lutheran High School on May 20th. We need people to help serve the lunch and make bars. Watch for a sign up sheet in church.

SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE We will be switching to our summer worship schedule beginning Wednesday, May 21st. There will be two opportunities to worship each week during the summer. Wednesday at 7:00PM and Sunday at 9:00AM.

GOOD SHEPHERD-GROWING IN GRACE Good Shepherd Ev. Lutheran Church in Plymouth will be expanding their entryway, fellowship hall, administrative office space and education facilities. The plans may be viewed at www.goodshepherdplymouth.com.

God has blessed Good Shepherd with the assistance of the Builders for Christ program. *Builders for Christ* is a division of WELS Kingdom Workers offered in cooperation with the WELS Board for Home Missions. *Builders for Christ* helps WELS congregations organize and provides volunteer workers to build facilities at a reduced cost.

In response to this building assistance, Good Shepherd will need to provide meals five days a week for 20-30 volunteer workers. These noon meals will be provided Tuesday – Saturdays starting in mid-May through the month of July. The task of feeding workers for three months is a significant task for a small congregation like Good Shepherd. This is why they are seeking help from their brothers and sisters in the WELS. They are asking congregations to consider assisting with providing a meal once or periodically throughout this building season. Good Shepherd can provide meal planning assistance or you can simply make your favorite recipes. If you are unable to serve or transport your meal, volunteers are available to pick up and/or serve meals. If providing a meal is not feasible, monetary donations toward purchasing a meal would also be very helpful. If you are able to help with a meal, please contact Holly Rabe at 892-1161 or 980-5117.

If you would like to volunteer your talents as part of the construction crew, please contact Pastor Heup at 893-0207 for more information.

HOSPITALIZED If you or a family member is hospitalized or in need of pastoral care, please call Pastor Endorf (693-8612).

You may have missed seeing these members in our services. They are now living in a nursing home, but they welcome your visits and your prayers.

Virginia Chasensky
Shady Lane Nursing Home
1235 South 24th Street
Manitowoc, WI 54220
684-8254

Adela Grotegut
1239 South 24th St. #205A
Manitowoc, WI 54220
686-9886

Helen Hahn
Sheboygan Retirement Home
930 North 6th Street Rm410
Sheboygan, WI 53081
451-0844

Irma Kramer
River Bend Health & Rehab
960 South Rapids Road
Manitowoc, WI 54220
684-1144

Declining strength or poor health limits the mobility of the following. They are at home but often not able to get out. They, too, cherish their ties with you. Visit them, call them, send them a greeting. It gives them a happy moment.

Martin Belitz
4606 Mishicot Road
Two Rivers, WI 54241
794-1950

Dorothy Klessig
916 Huron Ave. Apt 301
Sheboygan, WI 53081
459-7975

Lorraine Fiedler
2422 North 27th Place
Sheboygan, WI 53083
457-7306

Dale Schuette
Staying with Wayne Schuette
5212 Cty Rd. X
Cleveland, WI 53015
693-8044

Margaret Freis
10621 Westview Rd
Newton, WI 53063
726-4718

Willis & Delores Voss
9319 CTH X
Newton, WI 53063
693-8419

Valeria Goerke
424 W. Suhrke Rd Apt 4
Plymouth, WI 53073
893-8084

Marilyn Zill
1220 South 39th Street
Manitowoc, WI 54220
901-4252