

Danevang Lutheran Church Newsletter January 2024

POINTS TO PONDER:

Concerning church history ... and future ...

Historical leadership models built upon an individual as the overseer of “all things church” no longer serve us well: Mostly because of a lack of trained leaders (See <https://www.lcmctexas.org/all-hands-on-deck-training-church-leaders/> by Texas LCMC District Director of Mission Growth, Pastor Bryce Formwalt).

While a lack of trained pastors and church staff is very real, I believe there is another aspect we need to consider: Our local church was founded over 100 years ago. While we have the passed down memories, our experiences in daily life are much different today. So, ponder this, about the church and society in general, not just Danevang Lutheran ---

Many of our ways of doing “church” or “community” were established during an era when the common mode of travel was by horse back, carriage, wagon, or foot. An era when a hand written letter, arriving days later to a location 20 miles away was “timely”. We, “the church”, learned how to serve in a community where the day-to-day interactions were with a relatively small group of people: family, extended family, & local associates. This dynamic allowed local church members to “know”. Know what? Well, know who to contact for _____ (fill in the blank with all those items that make for a community, like “arranging a meal after a funeral”, “hospital visitation”, “training others”, “counseling”, “building maintenance”, “planning an event”, etc .)

Now look at today: Our members are not all “just down the road, within a short ride by horse”. As a church community, we may only physically encounter one another on a periodic basis – often, only at a church service, where true interaction at a personal level is often of short duration. The reality is that even when we very much desire closer personal relationships within the church, there are obstacles our ancestors did not encounter. Examples: Traveling by automobile 20 miles each way is not a problem, until we get a little older and travel at night becomes a concern. Our vocations have us working at times, and distances from home, that are much different than in the past. Your day of rest may be another member’s work day. Depending on Tribal Knowledge concerning our collective skills and callings may actually, inadvertently, exclude those best prepared and called by God for a specific task.

In some respects, we repeat the errors of the secular community around us: doing the things of the past expecting results for today. Simply a different twist on that “definition of insanity”: doing the same thing over and over expecting a different result. Is any of the above a surprise to God? No, and He has a plan. Paul, guided by the Holy Spirit, has given us some insight:

Romans 12 (ESV):

1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers (*Or brothers and sisters*), **by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship** (*Or your rational service*). **2 Do not be conformed to this world** (*Greek age*), **but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect** (*Or what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God*).

Examining Paul’s wording in the Greek:

Paul’s use of “brothers” in Greek is sort of the Southern USA equivalent of “all y’all”.

“Living sacrifice”: an offering the Lord accepts because it is offered on His terms, inspired by the Holy Spirit living in us.

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“Spiritual worship, or rational service”: logic working through the divine reasoning known through faith; the believer grasps "divine reasonableness" by the Lord's gift of faith.

“Transformed”: changing form in keeping with inner reality – a believer’s inner reality influenced by the Holy Spirit.

“Renewal”: a renewal or change of heart and life

“Mind”: the God-given capacity of each person to think (reason); the mind; mental capacity to exercise reflective thinking ... for the believer, it is the organ of receiving God's thoughts, through faith.

Unwrapping aspects of the Greek words God inspired Paul to use, we might arrive at this perspective: As believers, we sit attentive to the Holy Spirit speaking in us. Attentive in a manner resulting in a continual transformation to be more Christ-like, *for today*. This means we are open to the Holy Spirit’s influence to ascertain the path God planned for us from the foundation of the earth. Keep in mind that God cares about the details, and calls accordingly: you may be called to a large task, or a small one. The key is not the perceived size, but that the task is important to God. God planned it. God provides for the “doing”. Be attentive to God: He may have a task, not previously revealed, for you to do now.

What might this “look like” for the church today? Well, maybe, each of us sit peacefully and ask God to show us what “we” need to “do” for His community ... and then make sure other members of the Body of Christ (the church) “know” just what those God provided skills are --- God provides, so if He has moved things along, and the old ways do not appear to work anymore ... Maybe, just maybe, God is waiting patiently for us to pay attention to His call, and just simply step up to the batter’s box, and even risk striking out.

Are you available to teach adults? Children?

Are you available to visit the home bound? Those in the hospital?

Do you enjoy facilitating fellowship? Events? Community meals?

Are you called to assist with Communion? Take communion to those who cannot attend service?

Are you up for some handyman services for the church grounds or buildings? Does that extend to others in our community?

How about helping with other’s children during events or services?

Do you have computer or information technology skills you can share?

How about organizing a prayer team or group?

Have some photography skills to leverage?

Willing to share our experiences via social media?

Feel called to lead worship services?

We discussed this in our last church council meeting, and over the coming weeks we will examine ways for members to let us know how God is calling them to serve. Oh, if your calling is in the realm of soliciting, collecting, digesting, organizing, and publicizing such information for a group of volunteers, PLEASE step forward.

Thanks,
Chuck

Announcements

Altar Guild & Greeters For Jan. – See Maria (2024 Sign-up Sheet in Narthex)

Learning with Fellowship

Ladies Bible Study: Ladies Wednesday morning bible study resumes on Wednesday, January 10, 2024 continues with a study of the second half of Hebrews. Time is 9am-11am in the Educational Building.

Sunday School: Each Sunday, starting Sunday, January 7, 9am to 9:45am in the Educational Building. Open to all adults and children before church service. Coffee will be served. We will discuss the scripture readings for the following Sunday.

Meetings

Council Meeting January 8th at 10 am. -- Annual Budget

Annual Congregational January 28th after Service – Present Annual Budget Followed by ...

Pot-Luck Meal

Pot-Luck Meal January 28th After the Annual Meeting

Services

Sunday 10 A.M. services -

January 21st - Doyle & Ann Schaer

January 7th, 14th, and 28th - David Kight

January 28th Service is a Baptismal Service

Website at <https://danevanglutheran.org/>



Mission Moment

by Pastor Bryce Formwalt
Director of Mission Growth



2024... Call to Prayer

For more than a decade, Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC) has invited members of congregations to engage in an intentional period of prayer at the beginning of each year. Known as “Three Days of Prayer”, former LCMC Service Coordinator Mark Vander Tuig established this annual practice to draw our collective attention back to the throne of grace. He boldly shared his conviction that “the church of Jesus Christ will never rise up until it first falls on its knees.”

Once again, the call goes out to you and to me. On January 2-4, 2024, we are invited as the body of Christ to follow our Lord Jesus’ example to pray, pray, and pray some more! And if you are reading this message after those specific dates, please set aside your own three days of prayer. There’s nothing special about the particular days themselves, other than it is an annual reminder to set aside an intentional time for focused prayer.

While we do not need set formulas or pre-written prayers to direct us as we pray, some may find it helpful to prepare prayer guides to focus their time. Consider organizing your thoughts with a list of prayer topics. I would encourage you to set aside specific times of day in which you pause, center yourself before God, and offer your prayers in Jesus’ name. For some, the historic practice of pausing for prayer every third hour is a helpful pattern. For others, a morning and evening routine of extended prayer time is more fitting. Still others will gather in groups with their church for a time of corporate prayer on each of the three days. Another idea is to organize a round-the-clock prayer vigil for 72 hours of continuous prayer.

The point is this: how we pray is not nearly as important as it is that we pray. The same can be said regarding what we pray for. First and foremost, give to God in prayer all that is on your heart and mind. Ask for God to guide you as you pray through the power of the Holy Spirit to bring to mind what to pray for. We trust as the Apostle Paul teaches in Romans 8 that the Holy Spirit will indeed intercede for us when our own words run out.

Our LCMC staff has developed a helpful prayer guide filled with ideas and resources. You can find it at www.lcmc.net/three-days-of-prayer. This year, we are invited to pray for our congregations and leaders, for those who do not yet know Jesus, and for the church around the world, especially our international mission partners. I would also ask that we remember to pray for the raising up and sending out of future ministry leaders. In Matthew 9, Jesus says, “The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send workers out into his harvest.” We have so much for which to pray. As we begin a new year, I pray that we may see God move in and through his church. Let it start with you and me on our knees.

Pastor Bryce Formwalt is the Director of Mission Growth for LCMC Texas District and Program Director of Harvest Workers, an online ministry training program (learn more at www.harvestworkers.net). Residing in Georgetown, Pastor Bryce is available to coach congregations on mission. Feel free to contact him with any questions or comments: 512-942-7776 ext. 2 or bryce@lcmctexas.org.

The 2024
LCMC Texas
Winter
Retreat in
Concan, TX

will be a
spiritual
formation
retreat in
cooperation
with LCMC
Staff. This is
a retreat for

pastors, seminarians, ministry staff, congregational leaders, and spouses all across LCMC. Our hope is that participants will be equipped, refreshed, and recharged for all that God has in store.

Register early, space is limited! There are two retreat opportunities: February 4-6 or February 7-9. Each retreat is limited to 45 attendees and can accommodate up to 11 married couples in private queen bedrooms.

District Phone System Upgrade

Please update your contact info. The Director of Mission Growth, Bryce Formwalt, and Program Support Specialist, Alyssa Moore, have new direct phone numbers. You may still call the main number (512-942-7776) and choose either extension. Newly, though, you may call or text either of them directly at:

Bryce Formwalt – 512-996-2468

Alyssa Moore – 512-996-2466

Vine & Branches
An LCMC LeaderCare Retreat

Winter Retreat
FEBRUARY 4-6 or 7-9, 2024
in CONCAN, TEXAS
lcmctexas.org/winter-retreat

Scan for more details

Sunday & Festival Readings for Jan. & Feb. 2024

Date	Church Calendar	1 st Reading	Psalm	2 nd Reading	Gospel
Mon, Jan 01, 2024	Holy Name of Jesus (Mary, Mother of God)	Numbers 6:22-27	Psalm 8	Galatians 4:4-7 or Philippians 2:5-11	Luke 2:15-21
Mon, Jan 01, 2024	New Years Day	Ecclesiastes 3:1-13	Psalm 8	Revelation 21:1-6a	Matthew 25:31-46
Sat, Jan 06, 2024	Epiphany	Isaiah 60:1-6	Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14	Ephesians 3:1-12	Matthew 2:1-12
Sun, Jan 07, 2024	Baptism of the Lord	Genesis 1:1-5	Psalm 29	Acts 19:1-7	Mark 1:4-11
Sun, Jan 14, 2024	Second Sunday after the Epiphany	1 Samuel 3:1-10 [11-20]	Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18	1 Corinthians 6:12-20	John 1:43-51
Sun, Jan 21, 2024	Third Sunday after the Epiphany	Jonah 3:1-5, 10	Psalm 62:5-12	1 Corinthians 7:29-31	Mark 1:14-20
Sun, Jan 28, 2024	Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany	Deuteronomy 18:15-20	Psalm 111	1 Corinthians 8:1-13	Mark 1:21-28
Fri, Feb 02, 2024	Presentation of the Lord	Malachi 3:1-4	Psalm 84 or Psalm 24:7-10	Hebrews 2:14-18	Luke 2:22-40
Sun, Feb 04, 2024	Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany	Isaiah 40:21-31	Psalm 147:1-11, 20c	1 Corinthians 9:16-23	Mark 1:29-39
Sun, Feb 11, 2024	Transfiguration	2 Kings 2:1-12	Psalm 50:1-6	2 Corinthians 4:3-6	Mark 9:2-9
Wed, Feb 14, 2024	Ash Wednesday	Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 or Isaiah 58:1-12	Psalm 51:1-17	2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10	Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21
Sun, Feb 18, 2024	First Sunday in Lent	Genesis 9:8-17	Psalm 25:1-10	1 Peter 3:18-22	Mark 1:9-15
Sun, Feb 25, 2024	Second Sunday in Lent	Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16	Psalm 22:23-31	Romans 4:13-25	Mark 8:31-38 or Mark 9:2-9

Year Series B: 2023 - 2024 from <https://wordtoworship.com/lectionary/rcl?year=2023>

Events in January 2024

☰ List
Month
Week
Day
January
▼
2024
▼
Go
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Today
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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Altar Guild & Greeters For Jan. - See Maria (2024 Signup Sheet in Narthex)	LCMC 12th Annual Three Days of Prayer - See Newsletter	LCMC 12th Annual Three Days of Prayer - See Newsletter	LCMC 12th Annual Three Days of Prayer - See Newsletter		
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
9:00 am: Sunday School (adults and children)	10:00 am: Council Meeting - Budget		9:00 am: Ladies Community Bible Study			
10:00 am: Sunday Church Service 10 A.M. (Pastor Kight)						
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
9:00 am: Sunday School (adults and children)			9:00 am: Ladies Community Bible Study			
10:00 am: Sunday Church Service 10 A.M. (Pastor Kight)						
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
9:00 am: Sunday School (adults and children)			9:00 am: Ladies Community Bible Study			
10:00 am: Sunday Church Service 10 A.M. Doyle & Ann Schaer						
28	29	30	31			
9:00 am: Sunday School (adults and children)			9:00 am: Ladies Community Bible Study			
10:00 am: Sunday Church Service (Baptism) 10 A.M. (Pastor Kight)						
11:00 am: Annual Meeting Followed by Pot Luck						

🗑️ Canceled event
👤 Church Service
📅 Classes
🏠 Community Hall Booked
👥 Fellowship
📄 General
🗓️ Meeting
🎵 Music Practice
👉 Serving This Month

All Categories