

Mark Your Calendar

9/3

LABOR DAY NO SCHOOL

9/8-10

Every Member Weekend

9/14

Matins and Muffins

9/15

Dig It Volleyball Tournament

9/16

Jesus Cares weekend

9/23

New Bible Study: How to Read Your Bible 4 weeks series

The Best – and most Elusive – Solution to a Church Crisis

BY PASTOR MARK KOM

I have often told people who are in crisis that I wish I had a magic wand. I would use that magic wand to make their problem go away. I would wave my wand and the cancer would be gone. I would wave it high in the air and make the marriage problem-free where divorce would never, ever enter the picture. That wand would put money in a church's checking account, create a line of volunteers the night before the next big event. Yep. Me and my magic wand would be in high demand, solving one crisis after the next.

But maybe no such wand is actually needed to solve a crisis. Perhaps there is a different solution. I think it's the easiest solution in the world. It's a solution that's fairly easy as you actually do it. But it's also a solution that is so terribly elusive for so many churches (for a variety of reasons). Have you guessed it? Here it is:

Worship.

I am certain that worship is the key to everything. From a budget crisis to a volunteer shortage and everything in between - worship is the key to it all!

Of course, somebody could say, "that's not too difficult to figure out. It's obvious that if you have more people in the seats, then naturally more money would be coming in to the offering baskets; more people would

be around to fill volunteer spots; and there would simply be more people around to support each other." Certainly that's true. If we had the 1000+ people on our membership list in church every week we, most likely, would not be talking about deficits, shortfalls, a need for volunteers or giving more support to each other. But it goes much deeper than that.

Consider what Worship Is

Worship can be defined as "ascribing worth to someone or something." That makes sense, right? When I come to church I'm telling God that he's worth it as I give him honor and praise. King David surely thought so, too. He said in the Psalms: I was glad when they said unto me, "let us go to the house of the Lord." Going to the temple was so worth it for David because it was God's house where he could joyfully and willingly express what was in his heart of faith. Praising and honoring God was worth it.

But if you really think about it, the glorifying and praising God in His house was only David's response to the Lord, the biproduct of what made David so happy and joyful. It was in God's house where David was able to hear about God's love and grace and goodness to him and His people over and over and over again. He could hear about a Messiah who would take away his sins. It was this grace of our God that made everything about worshipping Him worth it.

Consider what Worship in God's House Fosters

That kind of worship – ascribing worth to God – also showed itself in how David and the Israelites gave offerings to build and outfit a temple. After all, giving an offering to the Lord is a spiritual act of worship.

Their worship fostered a spirit of working together and supporting each other. Hearing about God's grace when they came together for worship prompted both the King, as well as the people, to do great things. 1 Chronicles 29: 9 tells how much rejoicing there was among the people at the willingness of people to give and how they had given whole-heartedly. And it says that King David was rejoicing right along with them as he had personally given a generous portion of his own "savings account" toward the project. Nobody had to be bullied or shamed into giving an offering, volunteering their time or working together for the Lord's ministry. For those Israelites, from the King on down, they knew it was for the Lord. And God was worth it! He had done so much for them. This was something that they wanted to do for Him.

Worship in God's house has that effect on people, right? It certainly has had that effect on all of us who come to worship our Lord regularly at Crown of Life. Our worship centers around Jesus Christ and His grace to us. He saved us. He loves us. He forgives us. He is preparing a place in heaven for us. These are the things we shed light on every week when we come together for worship. It's no wonder that God's people are generous with their time, talents and even their treasures. We believe that God's worth it! He gave His all for me - even His very life on a cross for my forgiveness. It gives me joy to thankfully give an offering back to him – a generous offering (of time, talents or treasures) from the heart.

Worshipping together regularly fosters a culture of generosity for all the right reasons. The more people who gather around God's grace, the more this generous spirit abounds. God's people respond to His grace. We believe all the more that God is worth it.

It's interesting that public worship wasn't the only time that David ever ascribed God worth. David also worshipped the Lord in his home. Prayer is worship. David often had a heart to heart talk with the one, true God. It was so worth it. David also studied God's Word outside of the temple walls, too. Public worship fostered worship at home. Worship at home fostered going to the temple to worship with others. And together it fostered a culture of generosity for the Lord, His temple and His ministry.

Times of crisis will always come. It might be tempting to try to find a magic wand to make some funds, volunteers or support magically appear to make the challenges go away. But maybe no such wand is actually needed. Perhaps the best thing to do is to focus on getting as many of our members to worship as possible. That will refocus all of us on God's grace. It will help foster a culture of generosity as we respond to that grace. That will be the best time to collectively face these challenges head on.

We will tackle all the challenges that face our congregation because God's grace to us will have convinced us of one very important thing:

God's worth it.

A Divided Nation and A Divided Will

August 31, 2018 | PASTOR ZACHARY PUDLO



"As every divided kingdom falls, so every mind divided between many studies confounds and saps itself." — Leonardo da Vinci

The Nature of the Will

I ran across this quote and couldn't help but wonder how Leonardo da Vinci could get away saying this. After all, wasn't he known to be a true renaissance man? Didn't he dabble in not just art, but also math, architecture, science, music, and the list goes on and on? Maybe he was speaking from experience. A divided mind saps itself. I suppose most of us can relate. We do live in a busy world where personal life, family life, work life, and everything in between seems to tug us in different directions.

But as I read through this quote I couldn't help but think about how often times our own interests tug and pull against one another. We have divided wills raging within us. For example: Last night I wanted to sit down and write this blog. But I also hadn't had a night off for the week and dishes had piled up in my sink. I wanted to write, but I also wanted a night off from normal duties to clean up and relax a little. Or another example: I can resist ordering dessert from any menu. I have no trouble with that. But if you place dessert in front of me I WILL eat it. Most of you can probably relate. We all have a will within us that is divided. We have conflicting desires raging within our own bodies. Why is that?

Theories for the Division

There are about as many explanations for why we have these conflicting desires within us as there are people in the world. Almost all of them have to do with the way the human being is made up. For example: Plato would attribute the conflicting wills to the conflicting desires of body and mind. Our body has one desire, and our mind has another. Freud would attribute the divided self to the division of the Id (Instincts), Ego (Reality), and Superego (Morality). For Freud, the reason we would have conflicting desires is because our instincts conflicted with reality and morality. More recent theories would attribute conflicting desires to the different sections of our brain as it develops from youth to adolescence to adulthood. Though there are countless more, these are just a few examples of ways human beings have tried to explain the motivational factors that drive and move us day in and day out and the reasons why we have divided wills and desires raging within us.

An Ancient Explanation

In Galatians 5:17 Paul offers up this as a possible explanation, "For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do

continued on page 6

Bethlehem **Revisited Update**

Crown of Life had planned to present "Bethlehem Revisited", a recreation of the little town of Bethlehem as it may have been that first Christmas night, complete with live animals including a camel, the weekend of December 21-22.

Due to circumstances beyond our control, the event must be postponed for this year. The storage container that housed most of the scenery, props, and costumes for Bethlehem developed a moisture problem over the last year and 90% of it is ruined.

It would have been a tremendous experience for our congregation and a wonderful outreach for the community. We will explore the possibility of reviving the project for the future.

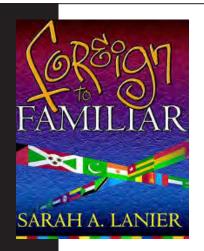


St Croix Circuit Fall Rally "Fields Ripe For Harvest"

Sunday, October 7, 2018

St. John Lutheran Church Hastings, MN | 651-438-3730 1:30 pm Registration | 2 pm Rally

Guest Speaker Shannon Bohme brings 17 years of international mission experience to his new position as the Coordinator of the Mission Journeys program. Prior to taking on this new role, he was a teacher and administrator with Friends of China.



"Foreign to Familiar"

BY SARAH A. LANIER | ★ ★ ★ ★ REVIEWED BY LUCAS BOEHM

Are you hot or cold? The staff at St. Croix Lutheran Academy read the book "Foreign to Familiar" this past summer and learned how "cold" we can be. Lanier is an author with a unique life-experience and consequently she has divided the world into either cold-climate or a warm-climate regions relative to their proximity to the equator and, for various

reasons, these two regions have distinct cultures. (She also notes that urban and rural settings reflect similar differences.) The book outlines how the region a person is from significantly influences:

- Attitudes toward possessions
- Expectations concerning hospitality to "drop in unannounced" or not and a host's and a traveler's "responsibilities"
- Approaches to doing work either task-focused or relationship-oriented
- The use of time to start and end functions and gatherings
- Preferring rugged individualism and responsibility or inter-dependency and collective support
- Privacy vs. inclusion

At first glance grouping people into either hot or cold-climate cultures may be a bit of an oversimplification, but it is not without merit and worthy of an honest look. The ideas are easily applicable to personal relationships, business interactions, and obviously to foreign travel. But I couldn't help but wonder how a church's culture can also be hot or cold and certainly impacts a first-time visitor's experience. Not only is Crown of Life in a "cold" midwest region but it is largely populated by "cold-climate" people and is a member or a "cold-climate", formal, "high context" culture of the Wisconsin Synod (you'll have to read the book to understand). That certainly has ramifications as we seek to share the Gospel with all people - and those not like ourselves! I also feel that "Foreign to Familiar" supports my understanding of the hot-culture of the biblical Old Testament and New Testament. It makes sense how Abraham reacted to the three visitors in Genesis 18: it also makes no sense whatsoever that Mary and Joseph would have had to fend for themselves because "there was no room for them in the inn"!

It is clear that the world is shrinking. The likelihood of experiencing a cross-cultural interaction in an average day is pretty high. Interactions with people from a different culture can be uncomfortable. Neither culture is right or wrong; they're just different. "Foreign to Familiar" is a short, simple, eye-opening read that made me slightly uneasy as I understood how my cultural tendencies are likely at variance with many folks I might bump into. "Yes" could actually mean "no" and "no" could really mean "yes"? I've got a lot to learn!



Ask the Pastor - Answered by Pastor Zachary Pudlo

Over the next several months we will be answering questions many skeptics or even atheists have concerning Christianity. However, as we answer these questions, we will try to avoid using any "insider language", or language that would confuse and possibly make a person turn a deaf ear to the response.

Why did God create the world if he knew ahead of time there would be sin and wickedness?

This is a question I have been asked a couple times in the past few months. It's a great question. Behind it is the premise that if God knew about wickedness and evil ahead of time, then he ultimately is the creator of evil and is, therefore, not who the Bible says he is. The answer to this difficult question can be summed up in two words...free will. If God created us to only do good things, then we wouldn't have any free will. C.S. Lewis covers this in Book 2 chapter 3 of Mere Christianity. He says quite well, "Some people think they can imagine a creature which was free but had no possibility of going wrong; I cannot. If a thing is free to be good it is also free to be bad." Lewis goes on to say, "Free will, though it makes evil possible, is also the only thing that makes possible any love or goodness or joy worth having." As an example of what Lewis is saying consider your computer. When you click on an application icon the application opens, assuming

your computer is running properly. Why does it do that? It is programmed to do so. You would not say your computer loves you. Compare that to your spouse. When you ask your spouse to stop at the grocery store to pick up some milk and your spouse does that, you can attribute that to love. Why? Because your spouse didn't have to stop off and pick up milk. Your spouse had the free will to deliberately disregard your request, but still was happy to oblige. Without free will there is no love.

So, getting back to the original question. Although he didn't create evil and wickedness, God created a world that had potential for wickedness and evil. Why? Because without it there would be no love either. Instead of creating a world which was programmed and without any free will, he created a world with potential for evil. But it is also a world with so much potential for love.

whatever you want." Paul is saying that the reason for the inner conflict is more than just a matter of the brain or instinct. It goes deeper than that. It is a moral/spiritual conflict. He says something similar in Romans 7:21-23, "So I discover this principle: When I want to do what is good, evil is with me. For in my inner self I joyfully agree with God's law. But I see a different law in the parts of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and taking me prisoner to the law of sin in the parts of my body." Paul is saying we all have desires within us. But those desires often go against what we know deep down to be true... a higher being created us. He designed us for a purpose, and when we go against that design and purpose we know we have to answer to him.

The Division in Me/Society

We live in a society that absolutely believes in living morally. Ask most Americans and they will say they 100% agree with the golden rule...love your neighbor as yourself. And yet, our culture also has attached itself to the statement, "Be true to yourself." The problem is those two axioms are fiercely opposite one another. At our core, we are selfish. That means when push comes to shove, we are going to choose ourselves over our neighbors.

We are divided as a society because we are divided at our own individual cores. We hear people preach day in and day out about the pollution that is overrunning our world. And yet, those same people take private jets to their private islands. We hear of a congress that passes laws and taxes and penalties, and yet exempts itself from those same laws, taxes and penalties. The same congress that can't balance a budget and yet wouldn't dream of decreasing their own paychecks and pensions in an effort to balance that budget. (This certainly isn't meant to be a political blog or rant of any sort. I only bring this up because it's the first type of blatant hypocrisy that comes to mind.) And here's the scary part...would we act any differently if we were in their place? Who of us wouldn't use a private jet if we could afford it? Who of us would voluntarily say, "Please, cut my paycheck!"?

We are divided at our cores. Who of us can say we have perfectly loved our neighbors as ourselves? Have you ever cried out for more to be done to help the poor and homeless while still living a comfortable life yourself? Have you ever cried out for justice in this world while still knowing you've had moments where you've been unfair. What's the point? We are divided. We are inconsistent. We are hypocrites. We believe in justice, and have ourselves been unjust. We believe in peace, and have

ourselves sewn discord. We believe in loving all, and have ourselves shown unkindness to certain people.

I recently heard an interview with Dr. Jerry Root. He recounted a time when he was eating lunch at Oxford University. He was asked by a member of the faculty why he was a Christian, knowing the faculty member wanted to have a debate about it. He mentioned that he hadn't become a Christian till college. And then he said, "But it took at least three weeks before I became perfect." When everyone busted out laughing he said, "Your laughter betrays you." He went on to explain that because they all laughed they showed how they all knew it was impossible. No one could be perfect...including them. He went on to explain that we all know deep down that we are divided. We believe in justice and have at times been unfair. We believe in love and have at times been unloving. And he said he couldn't possibly live without knowing that there is a thing called forgiveness.

A Unifying Conclusion

Da Vinci, Plato, Freud, the Apostle Paul...they all knew what we know too. Deep down we are all divided to our soul. We are all hypocrites who believe one thing and do another. Paul is the only one who burst out with complete joy and adoration knowing this when he said, "Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (Romans 7:25) Paul rejoiced because he knew that his only hope was forgiveness. And that's what he saw in the Son of God dying on a cross for him. He saw someone who was never divided. God saw people who turned from him, denied him, abandoned him, even hated him, and he still loved them with an undivided heart. God was committed to justice and to punishing sin, and still was committed to loving the world. In the crucifixion God accomplished both.

When you see an undivided love for you in Christ, it changes everything. It gives you the power to love someone, even when there is a part of you saying you should get even. It gives you the resource to be fair, even when there is a part of you that wants the rules bent for your own benefit. It gives you the ability to be forgiving when you see others be unloving or unfair because you know you yourself have committed the same crimes, and yet... you've been forgiven.

We are a divided as a society because we are divided to our very core. We want morality, and yet we ourselves will break the moral code if it means benefiting our own self. The only unifying solution is a resource so powerful that it heals my deep need to only benefit myself. An undivided love of God alone can do that.

SAVE THE NEW DATE....TRUNK OR TREAT - SAT, OCTOBER 27

decorate, dress up, hand out candy - donate candy, pumpkins, snacks



SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

Saturday, September 1 5:00 pm Worship EGN

Sunday, September 2

8:00 am Worship WSP Worship EGN 9:00 am 9:15 am Education Hour-WSP 10:15 am Education Hour-EGN 10:30 am Worship WSP

Monday, September 3 Labor Day - NO SCHOOL

6:30 pm NO - Worship WSP

Tuesday, September 4

10:00 am The Commons on Marice-Sr. Living Service

Wednesday, September 5 6:30 pm Bible Class EGN

8:00 pm Praise Band Reh Thursday, September 6

2:30 pm Southview Sr. Living Service

Saturday, September 8 5:00 pm Worship EGN

Sunday, September 9

Worship WSP 8:00 am Worship EGN 9:00 am 9:15 am Education Hour-WSP 10:15 am Education Hour-EGN 10:30 am Worship WSP 12:00 pm Annual Picnic - WSP

Monday, September 10

6:30 pm Worship WSP 7:00 pm Evangelism-EGN 7:00 pm Mary/Martha-WSP 7:30 pm Worship Committee

Tuesday, September 11

School Picture Day

Men's ÁM Coffee - WSP 9:00 10:00 am The Commons on

Marice-Sr. Living Service 4:00 pm Soccer HOME Game vs.

Christ Lutheran 4:00 pm A Team Volleyball HOME Game vs. Christ Lutheran

Education 6:30 pm **Properties**

7:15 pm Stewardship

Wednesday, September 12

Fall Sports Picture Day School Picture Day - Alt Prek Class

6:30 pm Bible Class EGN

Thursday, September 13

2:30 pm Southview Sr. Living Service 4:00 pm Soccer AWAY Game @

Salem, Stillwater A Team Volleyball AWAY

4:00 pm Game @ Salem, Stillwater 6:30 pm Adult Craft Club

Elders-WSP 7:00 pm Friday, September 14

8:00 am Matins & Muffins

Saturday, September 15

Dig-It Volleyball Tournament 8:00 am (A and B Teams) 9:00 am Red Cross Blood Drive-EGN

Worship EGN 5:00 pm

Sunday, September 16

8:00 am Worship WSP 9:00 am Worship EGN 9:15 am Education Hour-WSP 10:15 am Education Hour-EGN

10:30 am Worship WSP Monday, September 17

6:30 pm Worship WSP

Tuesday, September 18

9:00 am Men's AM Coffee - WSP 10:00 am The Commons on

Marice-Sr. Living Service 4:00 pm Soccer HOME Game vs.

Good Shepherd 4:00 pm B Team Volleyball HOME Game vs. Good Shepherd

7:00 pm Council-EGN

Wednesday, September 19 6:30 pm Bible Class EGN

Thursday, September 20

Southview Sr. Living Service 2:30 pm 4:00 pm Soccer AWAY Game @ Christ Lutheran

4:00 pm A Team Volleyball AWAY Game @ Christ Lutheran

7:00 pm Riverview Cemetery

Saturday, September 22 5:00 pm Worship EGN

Sunday, September 23 8:00 am Worship WSP

9:00 am Worship EGN Education Hour-WSP 9:15 am

10:15 am Education Hour-EGN 10:30 am Worship WSP

Monday, September 24

2:30 pm Lilydale Sr. Living Service Worship WSP 6:30 pm

7:00 pm Youth & Adult Education

Tuesday, September 25

Men's AM Coffee - WSP 9:00 am 10:00 am The Commons on Marice-Sr. Living Service

Soccer HOME Game vs. 4:00 pm Salem, Stillwater

4:00 pm A Team Volleyball HOME Game vs. Salem, Stillwater

Wednesday, September 26 6:30 pm Bible Class EGN

Thursday, September 27 2:30 pm Southview Sr. Living Service

4:00 pm Soccer AWAY Game @ Good Shepherd

B Team Volleyball AWAY 4:00 pm Game @ Good Shepherd

Saturday, September 29 5:00 pm Worship EGN

Sunday, September 30

Praise Service

A and B Team Volleyball Tournament

Worship WSP 8:00 am Worship EGN 9:00 am 9:15 am **Education Hour-WSP**

10:15 am Education Hour-EGN

10:30 am Worship WSP

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Jacque Beiblik Christina Belfield Kristine Friese **Brett Koker** Nellie Larson 2 Carol Lorenz 3 Betty Frederick Julie Capocasa Nolan Rahn Kyle Boyer Debra Myhre Chloe Rall Colton Rall 7 Rachel Lucas

Tia Wieden

Hertha Gryc

Kieran Hunter

Sophia Grunwald

- Robert Lucio Jermaine Prince, Jr. Margaret Bougie Rachel Cline **Devon Hart** Levi Johnson Noah Little Kirsten Munoz Kara Sylvester Diane Schneeberger
- 10 Colleen Myhre 11 Thomas Boehlke Thomas Goette Vanessa Olson Matthias Sandman 13 Jamie Hussong Sophia Moe J'anna Prince
- 14 ShellyAnn Farley Donald Paschke Mason Kelm 15 Chenwei Pan Ryan Bejblik 16 Cassin Farley Kyle Monn
- Abigail Orton William Stettner 17 Tim Grunwald Payton Monn Linda Wiplinger

Linda Lucio

- Jessica Quast Kory Ludden Alexis Vandenbosch
- **Xavier Conzet** Wendy Ellwein

- 20 Samuel Fischer Kim Peterson Darrell Sasse 21 Ana Hauck Julie Lemke Saniyah Steber
- 22 Penny Mielke Ava Ohm 23 Ethan Koeppen
- Asher Hussong Lori Kowitz Savon Lopez **Curtis Montgomery** Scott Olson
- Kendall Hanson Claire Kogler Thomas Lucas 26 Victoria Hansen

Rebbeca Ludden Sandra Boehlke Becky Huebner

Daniel Swiderski

- 28 Katy George Grant Peterson
- Nicole Doyle Laura Grossmann Haley Lasovich Alyse Loomis Elizabeth Rich Kaylyn Simonette
- Breanna Dennis Thomas Pavek Katie Sievert Jon Stensland

"Crazy Rich Asians"

REVIEW BY NAOMI MARZINSKI | ★ ★ ★ ★





"Crazy Rich Asians" is a surprisingly heartfelt and unique take on the typical romantic comedy film. Nick is returning home to Singapore with his Asian-American girlfriend Rachel, to be best man at his friend's wedding and to introduce Rachel to his ultra-rich family. She was not aware that he came from money, but starts to wonder when they get the royal treatment on the long trip to Singapore. While getting accustomed to the new and lavish surroundings, Rachel discovers that Nick's mother disapproves of her, as she is not in the same "class" as Nick, and doesn't truly share their background, since she was born and raised in America. Rachel attempts to ingratiate herself with Nick's grandmother, the matriarch of the family, and other wedding party participants, but finds that more of a challenge than what she thought. Nick's and Rachel's relationship is strained as the family puts pressure on both of them to break it off.

The movie, based on the novel of the same name, highlights an all-Asian main cast, a love story, relationships between parents and their adult children, and the cultural hurdles that can cause rifts in a family. With a PG-13 rating, young teens

would enjoy this movie, along with their parents, or grandparents! There are funny moments, beautiful locations (put Singapore on a bucket list for places to visit - it looks amazing!), fun, playful costumes, a surprising score and poignant moments as well (bring some tissues - you may need them)!

REPORTS

TREASURER Fiscal Year 7/18 - 6/19 July ended the fiscal year to date (FYTD) with \$103,864 in total income with expected budget income to be \$137,386 which was \$33,522 below budget. Expenses (FYTD) were \$168,033 which gave us a FYTD of -\$64,169. (FYTD) Envelope Offerings are \$3,236 less than budgeted. We owe \$70,000 to our special funds account (\$40,000 is carry over from 17/18 fiscal year) and current available balance is \$46,389.

BAPTISM – Ruth Jeanette Boehlke, daughter of Mathew and Kate Boehlke on 8/12/18 with Pastor Roger Wahl.

DEATH – Irving Langfield, died 7/21/18, funeral with Pastor Kom on 7/30/18.

William Mullenaux, died 7/31/18, memorial service Pastor Pudlo on 8/16/18.

Stanley Bougie, died 8/2/18, funeral with Pastor Schwerin on 8/6/18.

NEW MEMBERS

- Cody and Marisa Kogler and Claire
- Eric & Heidi Larson

Please direct ideas, questions or comments about this issue to ZacharyPudlo@crownoflifemn.org



CROWN OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL

West St. Paul Campus - 115 Crusader Ave W, West St. Paul MN 55118 Eagan Campus – 4150 Pilot Knob Rd, Eagan MN 55122