



Connecting people to Jesus

The *Good News*

JUNE 2020

Our Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hawaii

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NEWSLETTER DEVOTION

I shared this article from Chad Bird with some friends some time ago. I have enjoyed starting some of our Board of Directors meetings with a few of his devotions. But I felt this one was really special and I thought I would share it with you for my June article.

Listen with your ears! Enjoy Pastor Christian

The world is teeming with anonymous saints who labor unnoticed on their little plot of God's kingdom. There's nothing splashy about them. No one uploads a YouTube video about their cutting-edge ministry. Their churches aren't towers of awesomeness. The ministers aren't famous. But here, in the shadows, in the simple rhythm of song and response, prayer and praise, preaching and baptizing, the unimpressive church does Christ's work.

And to see it, all we have to do is open our ears.

If you want to see what God is doing in his church, pluck out your eyeballs and stick them in your ears. One of my sainted professors told me that. And he was spot on. "Godsight" is different from eyesight. None of us, for instance, having walked by the scab-covered, dog-licked Lazarus, would've seen him as better off than the rich, well-fed guy. Obviously, our eyes say, that bum on the street didn't make God's friend list. But he did. Our eyes don't tell us that; our ears do—ears tuned to the frequency of God's Word. So if we want to see the Lord at work, we need to put our eyeballs in our ears.

My ears saw the work of God in the basement of a Russian apartment building in the frozen heart of Siberia. A small group of babushkas, bearded old men, university students, and this American huddled together. Up front was a table covered with a simple white cloth. On top sat an open Bible, a silver cup, a plate. On the wall hung a wooden cross. Our pews were folding chairs. During the reading of the Gospel, a meowing cat sauntered in and had to be shooed away by one of the worshippers.

Here, in the half-lit, mold-smelling bowels of the earth, surrounded by people the world doesn't give a rip about, I stumbled on the splendor of the kingdom. This was none other than the house of God; this was the gate of heaven. In this unpromising place, colored with gray simplicity, Jesus radiated jaw-dropping glory. He descended among us not to be served, but to serve, and to pour his life and salvation and forgiveness into us. In this ugly-duckling church, the Lamb of God showed up to robe us with the beauty of holiness.

I saw it all through my ears.
God Makes His Home in Our Mess

Throughout the centuries—from Jacob’s Bethel to Moses’s tabernacle to St. Whoever Church—God’s workplaces have always shared one thing in common: they’re messy. Jacob himself was the mess at Bethel. A lying, thieving, heel-grabbing runaway whom God nevertheless loved. The tabernacle, which must have looked and smelled like a butcher shop, was a bloody mess. And churches today? I don’t need to tell you what a mess they can be. Just read the news.

God says to us, “Mi casa es su casa.” My home is your home. And we proceed to drag our messes inside. There is blood on the floor from those of us who crawl here after a week of battling addiction, grief, shame, failure. There are stains on the carpet from when we lost our lunch because we’re sick of abuse, sick of anger, or just sick of life. In God’s house are tiny fragments of broken hearts and tear-drenched pews. Here, echoing from deep within tortured souls, is the “roar on the other side of silence” (George Eliot).

In this mess of sinners, with jacked-up lives and crumbling dreams, Christ shows up week after week to do his thing: he gives us himself. Over and over, more and more. He rides into our midst Palm Sunday style: on the back of simplicity, astride normality. His home is our home. And he makes our messes his messes. Into the void of hopeless hearts he speaks words pulsating with life. He strips off the filthy rags of prodigals, washes us with pure water, puts sandals on our feet, rings on our fingers, and robes bleached white in the blood of the Lamb.

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All this he does camouflaged in the ordinary stuff of church. Hymns. Homilies. Baptisms. Prayers. Suppers. Nothing to write home about. Nothing really worthy of Instagram. But this is the way of the God of the cross. The Son who hung naked on that ugly tree, with nothing to attract our attention, and much to repel us, still walks into our assemblies in unassuming, even offensive, ways. He dares call us to repentance. He dares tell us we’re not enough. And, more surprising still, he dares to love us when we’re supremely unlovable.

What kind of God does that?

I’ll tell you: the God who is, and always will be, a bore in the eyes of the world. The God who isn’t big into bells and whistles, but loves full crosses and empty tombs. The God who labors among us far from the limelight. The God who works below the radar, where only ears that have been opened by the divine Word see what he’s up to.

God Is Doing Little, Beautiful Things

When we’re always on the lookout for the mind-blowing, *new big thing* God is doing in his church, we miss the old little things he’s been doing all along. And what he’s been doing all along is washing our feet when we’ve dirtied them in the pigpens of immorality. He kisses away our tears when we’ve been used up and thrown away. When, like baby birds, we open our mouth around the nest of the altar, he comes by and puts the food and drink of heaven into them. When we’re duped by the lie of greener pastures on the other side of the law’s fence, he leaves the 99, locates us, heaves us on his shoulders, and carries us home with a smile on his face. When we don’t know what to say, when words fail us, he prays in us and for us, and teaches us how to cry, “Abba, Father.”

All this he does in churches large and small, cathedrals and basements. He’s good at it. He’s been doing it for millennia. And he’s been doing it all for us. We see it through our ears. They peek behind the veil of the visible to see the invisible Lord at work among us.

The church doesn’t need to sexy herself up. She doesn’t need a membership at Gold’s Gym. She doesn’t need Botox. She might initially look unattractive. But our ears see the unseen. Our ears see the Lord of

dance take her in his arms. Our ears see her as resplendent, without spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. And on the dance floor of grace and mercy, she glides along in the arms of the God who loves her. We're in that dance, we who are the body of Christ, the bride of Jesus, the church where there's always more than meets the eye.

O Lord, give our ears 20/20 vision to see the glorious work you're doing in the humdrum realities of our life together as your people



PRAYERS FOR THE MONTH



We continue to pray for those affected by the Coronavirus pandemic:

- for those who have lost their jobs
- for all first responders, doctors and nurses
- we pray for protection of the elderly and those with underlying health conditions

We pray for the sick, injured, those undergoing and recovering from surgical procedures and those facing long term illness: Luella, Kathy, Mark, Carl, Randy, Betty, Katarina, Tish, Cal, Jane, Peggy, Gabi, Karen, Joyce, Linda, Trudy, Bill, Scarlett, Tom, Laurie, Vivian, Audrey, Monica, Dan, Linda, Heather, Troy, Peter, Parker, Annie, Summy.

BIRTHDAYS FOR THE MONTH OF JUNE



Valerie Heath	Wendy Pung
Kathy Emery	Ava Kuhn Mendez
Stephanie Spangler	Preston Shinno
Lauren Block	Brennan Shinno
Maxwell Hardoby	Donald Morgan

ANNIVERSARY FOR THE MONTH OF JUNE

Carl and Luella Seyfer
Lester and Lorine Pelletier
David Rockeman and Dr. Margaret Perkinson
Stuart and Martha Peace

Happy Anniversary!

ANNUAL VOTERS' MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the voters will take place on Sunday, June 28 at Noon in the auditorium. It will be a live, in person, meeting and we will ask members of the congregation to wear masks and keep a safe distance from one another. Chairs will be so arranged to allow that to happen.

At the Annual Meeting we will adopt a budget for the next fiscal year, elect new officers, hear reports from various individuals, boards, and committees, and take care of any old and new business that comes before the congregation. One of the items of new business may be that we borrow money to fix our roof. The details are not yet available, but we should know more prior to the meeting.

There is a resolution on the books that requires Sunday meetings of the voters to take place at 10:45 a.m. At the present time we have worship at that hour, therefore it is necessary to move the time of the meeting. If the situation changes before that date we will let the congregation know of the change.

Anyone in the congregation having an item of business that they would like to bring before the voters, please submit it to the Board of Directors prior to June 14, Noon. Submit it to the president at music@ourredeemerlutheran.us.

Karl D. Bachman
President

We will continue to gather on Sunday mornings at 9 am and 10:30 am. We will be offering zoom live at the 9 am service.

We need to keep a balance between the services as we have limited capacity at each service to follow the guidelines for Hawaii. These rules keep changing, but the guidelines we have now only allow for 28 at each service. (we have measured our sanctuary)

I was reminded during our circuit zoom meeting that there are fines of \$5000.00 for not following the present guidelines. I pray that this will change soon.

We are asking everyone to let us know which service you plan to attend. We are working on a program to expedite your registration of attendance. Until you receive an update, please email the office office@ourredeemerlutheran.us or call the church office.

I really do appreciate your willingness to work with us throughout this difficult time. Your prayers and support have been incredibly valuable to me!

I am still offering to meet with members separately at home/church by appointment for offering the Lord's Supper. If you have prayer requests please send them to the office.

God Bless
Pastor Christian

WOMEN FELLOWSHIP

There will be a Women's Fellowship Luncheon in the fellowship hall on the third Thursday in June (June 18). We will meet at 11 am and ask that each person coming to bring their own brown bag lunch. Dessert and drinks will be provided. We have been many months without getting together and many of us are looking forward to some fellowship. This fellowship will be exercising the use of masks and also social distancing. Please let Marcy Reginelli or Nelda Peterson know if you are planning to attend. We can share stories of our confinement.

READINGS FOR JUNE 2020

June 7	Genesis 1:1- 2:4a	Acts 2:14a, 22-36	Matthew 28:16-20
June 14	Exodus 19:2-8	Romans 5:6-15	Matthew 9:35-10:1-20
June 21	Jeremiah 20:7-13	Romans 6:12-23	Matthew 10:5a, 21-33
June 28	Jeremiah 28:5-9	Romans 7:1-13	Matthew 10:34-42

CHURCH OFFERING

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church depends on regular offerings in order to keep up with the operating expenses. Thank you for continuing to mail in your offerings.

Mail to: Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
1404 University Avenue
Honolulu, HI 96822

PORTALS OF PRAYER

The Portals of Prayer for the 2nd quarter are still available. If you desire a copy, please call the church office (leave message) or send an email. The Portals of Prayer will be mailed to you or you may pick one up during worship. Let me know if you prefer the digest or small size.

June

2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 6:30 Board of Finance via Zoom	2	3	4	5	6
7 9:00 Divine Service 10:30 Divine Service 11:45 Budget Town	8 6:30 Board of Spiritual Life via Zoom	9 10:00 Board of Property Management	10	11	12	13
14 9:00 Divine Service 10:30 Divine Service	15	16	17	18 11:00 Women's Fellowship-Auditorium	19	20
21 FATHER'S DAY 9:00 Divine Service 10:30 Divine Service	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 9:00 Divine Service 10:30 Divine Service 12:00 Voters' Assembly	29	30				



Our Redeemer Lutheran Church

Pastor
Missionary to Kauai

The Rev. Christian J. Rasmussen
William Pierce

Administrative Assistant:
Director of Music:
Trumpet:

Sharon Shinno
Karl Bachman
Roger Koopman
Jillian Madanay

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

President:
Vice-President:
Secretary:
Treasurer:
Board of Spiritual Life Director
Board of Community Life Director
Board of Finance Management Director
Board of Property Management Director

Karl Bachman
Stephanie Spangler
Bonnie Jo Alle
Roger Koopman
Jerry Groth
Stephen Okumura
Henry Kuhn II
Michael Riess

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