

The Voice of Our Savior



Indifferent Things

“Everything is permissible”—but not everything is beneficial...No one should seek his own good, but the good of others. (1 Corinthians 10:23-24)

These verses stand at the heart of how we act in areas where God has not spoken concerning our worship life. The German term was *mit-teldinge*. Theologians use a Greek word, *adiaphora*. *Adiaphora* means “indifferent” that is, God has not commanded that these things be done one way or the other, he is indifferent. The German word means “middle things.” These issues lie in between what God has commanded or forbidden.

Much of our worship practice lies in this area. However, we seem to have a tendency to move them out of *adiaphora* and into the area of commanded or forbidden by God. If we have done it regularly in the past we begin to act as though it is commanded by God to do it that particular way. If we have not done it and some other church does do it, we act as though it is forbidden by God and those who do it are sinning. We also have a tendency to think that if we change the way anything is done it is the same as saying the way we did things before was wrong. That is simply not the case. This happens because we quickly forget the truth that many of the things we do or do not do are neither commanded nor forbidden by God.

Here is an example. The past number of years we have used the rite, Farewell to Alleluia on Transfiguration Sunday. We have chosen not to sing Alleluia during the Lent to emphasize the penitential nature of the season. God does not command this. We have chosen to do it because it is beneficial to us to em-

phasize the nature of Lent. However, there are other WELS churches that sing Alleluia in worship during Lent. Is that okay for them to do? Of course it is. We are free to choose.

We are going to try something different this year to help teach and emphasize the penitential nature of Lent. I know that different can be uncomfortable because it is, well, different. This was discussed at council and at our recent voters meeting. This year we will offer members the opportunity to impose ashes on a banner during worship on Ash Wednesday. Ashes are an ancient Biblical picture of repentance. Some may be troubled that it is too Roman Catholic, but in reality the imposition of ashes is the practice in many churches. It is even one of the many rites that is included in our own WELS service book. However, if it is not beneficial for you, do not participate in the rite. You are free to not participate. For many the visual reinforcement of “dust to dust, ashes to ashes” may well be beneficial to aid them in focusing on sorrow over sin. This rite offers them the opportunity to do so. Ashes are neither commanded nor forbidden by God. We pray they may be beneficial to some of our members this year.

More information will be included in the bulletins the next two Sundays including a condensed article on the Imposition of Ashes written by Professor Tiefel of our Seminary when the practice was introduced there.

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Our Mission

is to
Glorify
 God
 as we
Gather
 around the
 Gospel
 to
Grow
 in the
 Word and
 Sacraments
 and then
Go
 to others
 with the Gospel

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Council and Voters Meeting Notes

The Voters met after worship on January 21. They elected the following to serve on the church council:

- Chairman: Jon Meyer
- Financial Secretary: Mike Henrichs
- Recording Secretary: Brian Henrichs
- Elders: Kelan Birnbaum
Ken Bundy
- Trustee: Tim Lindgren

The following were also elected to serve the congregation:

- Sunday School Superintendent: Jon Meyer
- Head Usher: Tim Lindgren

Thank you to everyone who has served the Lord by serving on the council and in other capacities in the past.

The Votes also issued a divine call to Pastor

Randy Ott to preach once a month and teach Bible Class at the direction of Pastor Nelson and the Council. The funds to compensate Pastor Ott have been received for the next two years from congregations in our circuit that Pastor Nelson has served.

The 2024 budget was set at \$122,427 which is \$2,354.per week. Please let Pastor Nelson know if you would like a detailed copy of the budget.

Our Mission Commitment was set at \$10,000

Our Great Plains Commitment was set at \$1,000

The next council meeting will be Sunday February 11 after worship.

Needed for January	\$9,417
Received in January	\$5,855

Worship In February

Notes on Worship

In January we begin the season of Epiphany. Epiphany means “to make known or reveal”. Jesus is revealed as the promised Messiah by his powerful words and actions. In February we will conclude Epiphany with Transfiguration Sunday and then begin the season of Lent on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 14. Imposition of Ashes on a banner is a new rite we will use this year (see p. 1).The theme of Midweek Lenten Worship is *God on Trial*.

Join us for Soup Suppers at 6:00 p.m. before Wednesday midweek Lenten worship!

Worship is Sunday at 9:00 a.m. Midweek Lenten worship is Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. All services are streamed on Facebook at fb.com/WELS.South.Shore/.

The theme of each service is below.

Sunday		Wednesday Lenten Worship	
Feb. 4	Jesus provides meaning for life!	Feb. 14	Accusations Job 40:10,2;42:1-6
Feb. 11	Jesus’ glory is revealed	Feb, 21	Restraint Luke 22:47-53
Feb. 18	Nothing separates us from God’s love!	Feb. 28	Testimony Matthew 26:57-75
Feb. 25	Peace and joy are ours through Christ!		

Book Fair A Success

The Book Fair from Northwestern Publishing House was a great success! Representatives from our synod’s publishing house were impressed with the number of orders they received! Yes, we are planning on doing another Book Fai in 2024. It is tentatively scheduled at the beginning of November which should give us plenty of time to shop before Christmas. Thanks for all the input on how we can make the Book Fair even better.

Grow in Grace and Knowledge!

“Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” 2 Peter 3:18. The command “grow” is a present imperative. It emphasizes ‘grow, and keep on growing.’ God’s goal for his people is that the continuing growing in their knowledge of him throughout their lives! Why wouldn’t we want to know a God who was willing to leave heaven and live and die for our sins! At Our Saviors! we help all ages grow in Jesus. We have Sunday School, Adult Bible Class and a church library for those who wish to grow on their own.

Sunday School meets at 10:15 a.m. Lessons for February are:

- Feb. 4 Elijah and Elisha
- Feb. 11 Naaman Is Brought to Faith
- Feb. 18 Jonah and the People of Nineveh
- Feb. 25 Three Men in the Fiery Furnace

Adult Bible Class meets at 10:15 a.m. on Sundays. We are studying *Church-Mission-Ministry*. This 8 lesson course is a great introduction to who we are and why God has put us here in South Shore! Join us! The topics for February are:

- Feb. 4 What Does the Church Look Like?
- Feb. 11 Walking in the Truth
- Feb. 18 The Mission of the Church: Point People to Jesus
- Feb. 25 There Will Be One Flock

During February many people exchange valentine’s and talk about love. If you want to read about God’s definition of love turn to the book of 1 John. It is short, but full of information about love. You may also wish to take your study deeper by reading through *The People’s Bible: 1 John* from the church library.

Great Plains News



“Camp Luther” will be held this year at Sibley State Park’s Group Campground, New London, MN. Camp is set for June 16 to 22, 2024. (Sunday afternoon through Saturday morning). The camp is for those entering 4th-9th grade in fall of 2024. There are registration forms available at church. More information and forms for registering may also be found online at: www.campshetek.org. The web site will open on February 4, 2024.

Our plans for adding classrooms to our facility are moving forward. We are working with Catalyst Construction and have engaged an architect. Fundraising will begin this week, as building plans continue to be developed. The goal is to have all the information needed for a “go” decision at our May delegate meeting. We would then break ground this summer, with a completion date for a four classroom addition in February 2025.

Ladies Aid

At their annual meeting the Ladies Aid elected the following to serve as officers:

President
Colleen Quade
Vice President
Peggy Meyer
Treasurer
Linda Henrichs
Secretary
Penny Nelson

Others Serving are:
LWMS Reporter
Gayle Koll
Cards
Alaine Bunde

Thank you to those who have served and are serving the Lord and his people!

Community News



We are expanding the reach of our newsletter to the communities around us. The hope is that we can reach out to others who are not yet a part of our congregation with the precious message of our Savior. The community can also see what we are all about and how we want to be a blessing to others in this area! If you know of anyone who would like to receive our newsletter, please let us know.

During January we opened the fellowship hall to members of the community to play cards, do crafts, have a cookie and some coffee or just stop on in. Check out the calendar (p. 4) for the dates we will do this in February and come on down for part of an afternoon!

