



Connections:



King of kings Lutheran Church

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God Loves Justice

Recently I had the pleasure of attending the Southeast Michigan Synod Assembly in Lansing. While a three day church meeting filled with parliamentary procedure, resolutions, and presentations may not excite or inspire, this year was especially powerful. The theme for the assembly was "For the Lord Loves Justice" focusing on how God's vision for our lives and our world is justice. The assembly featured key talks and workshops which brought awareness to justice issues and ideas and opportunities on how to act.

I cannot think of more important work for the larger church to be engaged in than working for and on behalf of those living in unjust circumstances. God's vision for our world is one where all people are honored and seen as God's creation, worthy of respect and dignity. Where injustice and oppression occur, people of faith are called to stand up and resist. Liberation and justice are key biblical teachings and themes and the center of Jesus' ministry and message.

When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." Luke 4:16-21

The heart of Jesus' message was to proclaim the good news that whatever in this world which has bound us, held us captive, oppressed us, kept us from being healthy and whole, that God, through Jesus Christ, has come to set us free and bring life and salvation to the world. Through Christ we are no longer victims of the demonic powers of this world, we are liberated as children of God. Wherever there is oppression and injustice the good news of God's kingdom resists and proclaims a better way.

Tying into the theme of justice, the synod also revealed its new purpose statement. The statement emerged after a mission strategy process which took place throughout Southeast Michigan and involved congregations from the entire synod. The purpose statement is one which casts vision on the role of the synod and the church.

God is calling the people of the Southeast Michigan Synod, ELCA to rise up to:

Bear burdens; Build bridges; Break chains; Bring hope!

These are powerful and evocative words which helped me focus on how the liberating word of God might be shared with the people of Southeast Michigan. Let these words seep in, contemplate the power of gospel, and ask God to give you opportunities to share a word of hope or to be an agent of God's grace in a hurting and needy world.

God's Peace, Pastor Ben

July 2010

Special points of interest:

- The Church office will be closed on Monday, July 5th in observance of Independence Day.

There will be worship services at both 9:30 & 11:00 a.m. on Sunday, July 4th, but **NO** service on Monday, July 5th.

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RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

**MONDAY,
JULY 26th**

2:00 - 8:00 P.M.





Backyard BBQ and Music Series continues ...

Who: All are welcome, especially neighbors and friends.

What: Join us for a night of great grilled food, live music, and outdoor games and fun.

Where: The Backyard of King of kings Lutheran Church

Why: Great food, music, fun in the summer ... why not!

When: Saturday nights from 6:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Bring: Your own lawn chairs and beverage.

July 31

BBQ Rib Competition

Music by: Jet Rodriguez hosts Open Mic

August 14

Pig Roast

Music by: Andrew Robinson: Acoustic Rock

We are reaching out to our neighbors near the church and inviting them to join us for this fun-filled summer series. Please plan on attending and invite friends and family to join us.

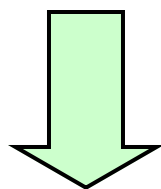
Vacation Bible School Will Be Here Soon

Mark your calendars to save the date for our High Seas Expedition this summer at King of kings. The ship sets sail **August 2nd - 6th**. Get ready to splash and make waves through God's Word as we plan to transform our church for this incredible journey. To make this a successful trip we need as many hands on deck as we can get.

We have various areas where you can volunteer.

Please visit the website to see the many volunteer opportunities available and sign up today.

Don't forget to register your children for VBS at the website as well.



Important Dates to Remember:

Tuesday, July 27th @ 7pm
> **Volunteer Round Up Meeting**

Thursday, July 29th, 9am-12noon
> **Decorating Day** ... come help decorate the church for the VBS week. Lunch will be provided.

www.groupvbspro.com/vbs/ez/kok

Youth & Children's Programs will resume in September

Sunday School (preschool - 6th grade)

† Will meet at both
9:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m. on Sundays

For more information contact
Stacey Lambert
248-561-3473
or the Church office
586-566-8660

Confirmation (7th & 8th grade)

† Meets on Wednesdays from
7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
Check the schedule for
specific events.

For more information contact
the Church office
586-566-8660

C.H.A.O.S. (9th - 12th grades)

† Meets on Wednesdays
at 8:00 p.m.
Check the schedule for
specific events.

For more information contact
Tim Mackey
586-532-9032



Original Sinners

The story of Adam and Eve in the garden is one of mythic proportions. It is a story referred to by many in a variety of forms, and is known both within the church and is part of the collective conscience of our culture. The story of Eden is also tremendously misunderstood, misread (if it is actually read at all), and misapplied. Fundamentally, the story is not about Eve tempting Adam (and by extension how women are inherently wicked and sinful -- how some have used this scripture) it is not about the satanic serpent who seduces the otherwise righteous Adam and Eve, and I don't believe it is a story of God entrapping humanity. Rather, Genesis 3 is a powerful story about sin, rebellion, and human nature. The story tells us about ourselves and our deepest and darkest inclinations. It is a story which reminds us that when we go our own way we are in big trouble.

But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Genesis 3:4-6

After Eve's conversation with the serpent, when she is told that she could know good and evil and be like God, she and Adam both ate the fruit of the tree. The serpent provides information to them in a seductive way but doesn't have to do much convincing for them to directly defy God's command.

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die." Genesis 2:15-17

God created Adam and Eve for relationship. They were given all that they needed for life in the garden, and they were given the responsibility to care for it. Within the boundaries that God established, they had absolute freedom. The only restriction was they could not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God designed the relationship with humanity to be one of trust and dependence. God created human beings and asked them to place their complete trust in God. Adam and Eve sinned not simply because they ate the forbidden fruit, they sinned because they failed to trust God. They wanted to be like God, having all the knowledge and wisdom of God. With this knowledge, they would no longer be dependent on God, they could be independent and autonomous. **The original sin is to reject relationship with God.**

The power of this story lies not in the historicity of Adam and Eve, but in the knowledge that the original sin of Adam and Eve is alive and well today. In Genesis 3, we don't read about Adam and Eve, we read about ourselves; **we are Adam and Eve.** For me, and I believe most of us, the urge for independence, the resistance to be told what to do, the refusal to submit to authority, and the lack of obedience is at its core a rejection of relationship. When I believe that I know best, that I can do it all on my own, that I must be in control, I am incapable of being in a relationship of mutuality and trust.

Relationships of any kind require openness, humility, and trust and reject all forms of domination and subjugation. God calls us into relationship, names us children of God, calls us to trust. We would rather trust ourselves, our possessions, and live independent and autonomous lives. Sin enters the world when we fail to trust because we ourselves are not trustworthy. Left to our devices we make the wrong choices, become fixated and obsessed with status, power and "being successful." When we fail to trust God in our

lives we make wrong choices with disastrous consequences. As the apostle Paul reminds us:

For we know that the law is spiritual; but I am of the flesh, sold into slavery under sin. I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.
Romans 7:14-15

For anyone who has ever tried to live life for God, tried to be a truly good person, or simply reflected deeply on their life, knows the feeling Paul describes. We want to be kind, generous, patient, loving but we often are mean, stingy, ungrateful, angry, jealous, spiteful. We know life with God is better, and yet with consistency fail. The original sin of defiance and autonomy has been repeated so often it seems almost comical to describe it as "original."

The story of Adam and Eve is alive and well in our lives today. We are without doubt no more advanced than the first generation described in Genesis:

The Lord saw that the wickedness of humankind was great in the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually. Genesis 6:5

The good news for us and the world is that Jesus Christ delivers us from our sin and from ourselves. Through Christ, the relationship with God which has been severed and found to be irreparable by human effort is restored and renewed by the love and grace of Jesus Christ. Jesus saves us from sin and saves us from ourselves. In Christ we are a new creation, in Christ we are free to love and serve, knowing the certainty and security which comes from God's love. May we trust in the Lord with all our heart, mind, and body and know with certainty that our salvation rests in the arms of a loving and merciful God.

Please check out Pastor Ben's blog at:

<http://biblestudyinsideout.blogspot.com/>



King of kings Lutheran Church
4750 Schoenherr Road
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Pastor Ben Sandin

We're on Schoenherr Road, just north of 21 Mile Road

Join us for weekly worship:

We have Contemporary Praise Worship
at **BOTH** 9:30 & 11:00 a.m. on Sundays

Sunday School will resume in September

Contemporary Praise Worship, Mondays at 7:00 p.m.



*Don't forget to register for
Vacation Bible School
as a participant or volunteer
'High Sea's Expedition'
August 2nd - 6th*

