

MTC STUDENT MINISTRIES

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AUGUST 2017



UPCOMING

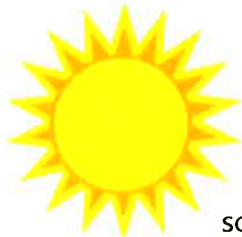
AUG 6, 13, 20 EDU SUMMER CLASSES 9:45-10:45 AM

AUG 7-11 SERVE RECREATION CAMP

Speak to Lauren Hannemann if you are able to volunteer!

AUG 27 EDU CELEBRATION SUNDAY 9:45 AM & 5:00 PM

This is the day we kick off our fall semester and celebrate the beginning of another year of growing in faith through the study of God's Word! Interested in our Youth Confirmation program? See next page.



SAVE THE DATE! STUDENT MINISTRY WELCOME WEEKEND

Mark your calendars for our first event of the new school year—**Sunday, Sept. 10th**, departing right after late service and returning to the church by 5:00pm! This will be a super-chill grilling & pool party event. If you don't know many of the other students, this is a great chance to do just that! Bring your swimsuit, a towel, and sunscreen. Food will be provided. Not a big "pool" person? Bring your favorite board game to share!



AUGUST SCHEDULE

SUN 6 9:45am Education Hour {youth room}

MON 7—FRI 11 RECREATION CAMP

SUN 13 9:45am Education Hour {youth room}

SUN 20 9:45am Education Hour {youth room}

SUN 27 CELEBRATION SUNDAY

9:45am Morning Program {gym}

10:30am Education Hour Open House

5:00pm Church Picnic & Variety Show

YOUTH CONFIRMATION

Mount Calvary Lutheran Church is pleased to offer a rigorous Youth Confirmation program taught by our Pastors, Lay Minister, and DCE. Individuals who are interested in hearing more about this program should plan to attend an informational meeting on **Sunday, September 3rd**. For more information, contact Pastor Mark at the office.



QUESTIONS?

Do you have questions about educational opportunities or student ministries at Mount Calvary? Contact Susan at the church office to find out the point of contact for that particular ministry.

FROM THE DCE

In honor of Reformation 2017, the months of June through September of "From The DCE" will feature excerpts from the final chapter of my Master's Thesis— "Chapter 4: Implications and Possible Applications for the Church Today." Complete copies are also available.

(CONT.) CHRISTIAN WORSHIP IN THE FIRST THREE CENTURIES: BALANCING CULTURE AND HISTORY IN CORPORATE WORSHIP

KEY APPLICATIONS FOR THE CHURCH TODAY

Knowledge of history can help churches avoid the heretical potholes of preceding eras, and knowledge of culture can help them communicate the pure Gospel in a meaningful way. A practical suggestion for leaders who are in the beginning stages of crafting out their congregation's worship life is to utilize the resources offered by those who *know* the church's history as well as those who *understand* the challenges of the present age. Just as a new church would not think twice about consulting an architect for advice on crafting a building, they should consider just as carefully the advice of a "worship curator" who could help them in crafting a service. Congregations should develop "their own liturgy within strict parameters by taking advantage of the expertise of liturgiologists who know the tradition and who are trying to be faithful to it" and balance this with the advice of those who are in touch with the cultural climate (Brauer and Precht, *Lutheran Worship*, 25).

We can learn much from the early church, even from its struggles. I find it comforting that the book of Acts "records the instances of smallness and inconsistency among the apostles, the squabbles between the missionaries, the dishonesty and economic jealousies of some early church members, and inevitably, the theological controversies that could rage in the church, then as now" (Maier, *First Christians*, 73). In spite of the problems, the Gospel message was spread.

Another reason such scenes [as the Antioch squabble between Paul & Peter in Galatians 2] were included in the record may have been to comfort future generations of Christians. If, in the ruddy afterglow of the first Pentecost, the early church, informed and inflamed as it was by the Holy Spirit, could *still* become an arena of controversy between liberals and conservatives, parties and ethnic groups, then there is some small consolation for later generations of

Christians which have done—and are doing—the same thing (Ibid., 79). As we of the church today are evidence, the establishment and growth of the church was ultimately not up to people—it was up to God and still is today.

This brings us to the practical question: *What are the essentials? How should we model our worship?* The keywords are *caution* and *freedom*. On caution, Luther says, "We therefore first assert: It is not now nor ever has been our intention to abolish the liturgical service of God completely, but rather to purify the one that is now in use" (Martin Luther, *Luther's Works: Liturgy and Hymns*, 20). Tertullian mentioned several essential elements of the Christian life in his *Apology*. Those pertaining to corporate worship include both praying and reading the "sacred writings" (Tertullian, *Apology*, Ch. 39). Maschke expands this list of essentials in corporate worship: confession and absolution, praise and prayer, reading of the Word of God (according to a pericopal system), exposition on the Word of God (sermon), prayer for all sorts and conditions and offerings of the people, preface and consecration of bread and wine with the Words of Institution, reception of the Sacrament of the Altar, dismissal with the Lord's Blessing (Maschke, *Gathered Guests*, 534). Different theologians will enumerate their own interpretation of "the essentials." The diversity of opinion actually strengthens the argument that, in many things, we have freedom; in other things, we should use caution; in all things, there is grace.

A key concept to keep in mind is that newest is not always best, nor is oldest always best—biblically-faithful is best. A leader's guide to corporate worship simply does not exist. If one was necessary, God would have given it to us. As it is, historical patterns and present-day culture must be thoughtfully balanced and "what is good for one congregation may be a disaster for another" (Brauer and Precht, *Lutheran Worship*, 21). For example, "a 'high church' service in a small country church is not just bad liturgy, it is bad taste" (Ibid., 37). This leaves room for flexibility. Congregations should give grace to one another as each one determines the practicalities in their own context.

NEXT MONTH: CONCLUSION