

MISSION & MINISTRY CONNECTION

Koinonia

Koinonia is a Greek word that occurs 20 times in the Bible. *Koinonia's* primary meaning is "fellowship, sharing in common, communion." The first occurrence of *koinonia* is Acts 2:42, "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer." Christian fellowship is a key aspect of the Christian life. Believers in Christ are to come together in love, faith, and encouragement. That is the essence of *koinonia*.

So now you have a general understanding of this word - *Koinonia*. Let's dig in a little deeper, Rev. Matt Richard writes the following:

"Let's talk about fellowship (*Koinonia*). The idea of fellowship is one where we all gather together to simply, "be." It is a gathering of people into a friendly association with similar personal interests. A person tends to seek out other individuals that have the same similar interests as they do. Besides, as human beings we certainly need interaction with one another, we need fellowship. We are programmed to be in community.



Most of us are familiar with the movie "Castaway." In this movie Tom Hanks finds himself stranded on an island all by himself for years. Lacking "fellowship" and a friend, he finds companionship with Wilson. Wilson is not a resident of the island or even a person. Rather, Wilson was a volleyball that washed up on the shore of the island. Tom Hanks drew a face on the volleyball and would have conversations with the volleyball face, Wilson, in order to keep his own sanity while being deserted on the island. We simply need fellowship we are not designed to be totally alone without community.

So, is this what the scripture means when it talks about fellowship? Does the scripture call us to come together for the sake of simply coming together? It seems to me that there is so much more to this idea of *Koinonia* in the **New Testament*** than friends hanging out over their own personal interests. ***Let's be honest, if Christian fellowship is simply people coming together, then what is the difference between Christian fellowship and the fellowship at a country club or any other type of club? Not much at all.***

The idea of *Koinonia* is an idea that can be summarized as an event that happens around something. While our view of fellowship typically happens over personal interests, *Koinonia* is a gathering and an event that occurs based on something outside of one's personal experience or tastes. In other words, *Koinonia* happens when people participate together in something external, something that pulls various individuals together into a common bond. **Christian *Koinonia* happens as God calls various people of various backgrounds with various ethnicities to participate and share in the common yet uniquely powerful Gospel. That is right, Christian *Koinonia* has the idea of different personalities and different people colliding together around and in the person of Christ."**

What does this mean for the church?

First, it means that there is no such thing as a lone ranger Christian. **Christian Koinonia means that we participate and do life together within God's story.** We share together the common message of the Gospel and the Sacraments - for us. We do not have a personal Jesus nor can we "do" Koinonia alone.

Secondly, what this means for the church is that regardless of sex, age, ethnicity, background, experiences, etc... that we are grafted into the same Koinonia. Christ and His shed blood for the forgiveness of sins is what joins the church together. Koinonia must have an object, and that object for the church is Christ and His Word and Sacraments - for us. Just think about all the people, who often don't have anything in common, that collide together in the person of Christ, that collide together in the waters of the baptismal font, that collide together at the Lord's Table.

Finally, but not least, in Christian Koinonia we are called together into Christ, we are assimilated into the grand meta-narrative. In Christian Koinonia an eternal assimilation happens as "our" unique personal stories are assimilated into a grand and divine story; God's story of redemption in Jesus. God's story doesn't become a part of our story; rather we are assimilated into the grand meta-narrative of God's redemption. As members of the church we join together "into" the bride of Christ; as common sinners with a common bridegroom, Christ. Christ doesn't become fragmented in us.

My friends, "God is faithful, through whom you were called into participation together in His Son, Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 1:9) May we find rest and unity as we collide together and into this Christian Koinonia.

I am a CHURCH member, you are a church member and TOGETHER we are the CHURCH

Pastor Mark Below

* A powerful example of what koinonia should look like can be found in a study of the phrase "one another" in the Bible. Scripture commands us to be devoted to one another (Romans 12:10), honor one another (Romans 12:10), live in harmony with one another (Romans 12:16; 1 Peter 3:8), accept one another (Romans 15:7), serve one another in love (Galatians 5:13), be kind and compassionate to one another (Ephesians 4:32), admonish one another (Colossians 3:16), encourage one another (1 Thessalonians 5:11; Hebrews 3:13), spur one another on toward love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:24), offer hospitality (1 Peter 4:9), and love one another (1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 3:11; 3:23; 4:7; 4:11-12).

A Note from our Director of Music and Worship

In just about a month, we will begin our Lenten journey. Ash Wednesday falls on March 6 this year, and during that season, we will explore the humanity of Christ. Using a series of material from Concordia Publishing House, written by Rev. Jeffrey Hemmer, we will consider what it means that Jesus had a body, complete with eyes, ears, a nose, and fingerprints. He got hungry, thirsty, prayed, and bled. Jesus had a mama, He drank wine, and He got sweaty and dirty. Jesus

was fully human. The following is an article, written by the fine folks at CPH, to further explain what we will be studying this Lent:

BEHOLD THE MAN!

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. . . . The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, the glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

—*John 1:1–3, 14*

“Behold the man!” proclaimed the unwitting preacher Pontius Pilate in one of the shortest, yet most profound, sermons ever recorded. This will be our endeavor this Lententide and Easter Sunday. Behold the man, God in human flesh, Jesus. His incarnation will provide the basis for our meditation and proclamation on His Passion. And His real, bodily suffering and death will provide the basis for our full-throated proclamation on Easter morning of a bodily resurrection, not just of Jesus but also for His saints. Real bodies that have suffered, wept, bled, prayed, eaten, hoped, and more will be those raised incorruptible from their graves on the day of Jesus’ return.

We will fix our eyes and our preaching on the man Jesus, contemplating the inescapable fact—indeed the most important fact in the course of human history—that God became man. The Second Person of the eternal, triune God, who we confess in the Nicene Creed as “God of God, Light of light, very God of very God . . . of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made,” became a living, breathing, flesh-and-blood human being, a man.

In some ways, you can understand that the first heresy the Christian Church had to contend with was that of Gnosticism, the hyperspiritual religion that held that because no man could be God, the Christ could not be God. Gnosticism is alluring because it tidies everything up, gives Christianity a more attractive, spiritual veneer, and pulls its adherents out of the mire of this world and gives them something other-worldly to strive for.

Considered correctly, it becomes pretty hard to spiritualize Christianity—a religion that bases its existence on the enfleshment, the incarnation, of her God—into the mess of disembodied, matter-rejecting, hyperspiritual Gnosticism. When God has flesh and blood, skin and teeth, cells and nuclei, DNA and RNA, it’s difficult to contend for the disembodied spiritual against the material. If God has a body, bodies must matter.

In case you aren’t convinced of the pervasiveness of the second-century heresy of Gnosticism, even in our twenty-first-century context, attend a funeral. If you hear talk only of heaven with nary a word of a bodily resurrection, you’ve witnessed firsthand modern-day Gnosticism. If the preacher doesn’t deal with the body in the casket as the real person whose death has assembled the mass of grieving relatives and friends, if he talks only about the bodiless soul in heaven, he hasn’t preached a genuinely Christian funeral. In other words, if he gives preference to the spiritual over the material, he succumbs to the Gnostic heresy the earliest generations of the Church sought to guard against by preaching the incarnation and resurrection of Jesus.

This Lent, we will consider what it means that God became man. In preparation for the celebration of a real, bodily, flesh-and-blood, bone-and-sinew resurrection, the resurrection without which our faith and our preaching are all in vain, consider the body of Jesus that exists in order to be nailed to a cross. The spiritual, bodiless Son of God became the embodied, enfleshed, incarnate Son of Mary. In Jesus, God has human flesh, a body, just like you. What could be more profound?

Each week, we'll consider a different aspect of the body of Jesus Christ. What does it mean that, in Jesus, God has hands, feet, lungs, lips, eyes, and ears?

Behold the man! In sermon, in study, in devotion, behold the man!

Elin Gomez

Lay Ministry

During February we will continue our review of the book "I Am A Church Member" authored by Thom S. Rainer. It is a small book with powerful messages for us as church members. The central topics of the book are also powerful for each church member:

- Worship
- Fellowship
- Nurture
- Service
- Witness

This study is happening during the season of Epiphany which celebrates the time when Jesus was made known to all people. Certainly the topics presented in the book by Rainer are important to be made known to all people as well.

The Small Catechism indicates February 24th as the festival day for St. Matthias who, according to Acts 1:16-26, was chosen to replace Judas Iscariot after the betrayal of Jesus. Matthias was selected because he had been with Jesus and the other apostles "from the baptism of John to the day He was taken from us" (v.22). Not much is known of Matthias. His name appears only twice in Scripture, both times in Acts 1, which tells the account of how he was chosen. The eleven sought the Lord's will in prayer concerning Judas' replacement. Matthias was an ordinary man the Lord elevated to an extraordinary calling. Today we can entrust our future to the Lord in prayer also. He will prepare our way as He did for the apostles. We can only wonder how many of Rainer's topics for church members were learned by Matthias and the other apostles from the Lord during their time with the Savior.

Lay Ministry wishes you and your family His blessings during the month as we prepare for the Lenten Season in March.

Preschool & Kids' Day Out

Our teachers started 2019 talking to the kids about snowmen, snowflakes, and wearing coats, mittens, and scarves, even though the temperatures were in the 50's. However, winter soon returned, and talking about wintry things definitely makes sense to the children now! When you have a moment, please wander down the preschool wing and check out our bulletin board decorations!

Registration is now open for the 2019-2020 school year. Parents wishing to enroll their children may visit the preschool page of the church website to view tuition fees and complete the online

registration form. We are encouraged that many of our current families who still have preschool aged children are registering their children for next year! The preschool office receives calls from parents interested in our program daily and several tours to prospective families are given weekly.

Students are very excited about our 3rd annual Pancakes and Pajamas Night held on January 28. Families came dressed in their pajamas to eat buttermilk, blueberry, and/or chocolate chip pancakes. The children were encouraged to make Valentines for Lord of Life congregation members who are homebound or in nursing homes, and/or the hospital while they wait for the evening's entertainment to begin. Tom Bonham delighted the audience with his "Puppet Potpourri." We are SO grateful to the members of the Mission and Ministry Council for making our pancakes and setting up and tearing down tables and chairs!

Finally, our most important focus has been during Chapel and our Sonshine Time: Jesus was a little boy just like us! He grew up, just as we are growing. Jesus pleased His Father, just as we strive to do. We have been learning about Jesus' ministry and His miracles. He raised Jairus' daughter from the dead and healed the blind man with some dirt and spit. In both cases, Jairus and the blind man believed and obeyed. The children have been mesmerized and so excited to talk about their amazing Friend named Jesus!

Miss Ann

3 Year Old Preschool Class

Hello Everyone!

It has been a very busy month in the three year old room. We have had several holidays and special events to build on in our classroom learning! After all this crazy weather behind us we really got down to business!

Children love their names and cannot wait to start writing it, so the natural progression was to have them start writing their names every morning! They have picked up on this so fast that we also have moved on from letter identification to writing our letters too! We have used a variety of methods to practice this, but a favorite has been using the individual white boards to practice again and again! We have also been using this method to practice drawing people, shapes and numbers.

As with many of our lessons we do this in small and large groups to get the most out of our learning. Each week we introduce a new theme and each theme gives us the unique ability to integrate math, science, literacy, writing, social emotional awareness, fine and gross motor activities. In the last month we have had Snow, Winter, Mittens and Arctic Animals as themes. Each unit has its own set of books specifically chosen to work with a lesson or skill we are trying to teach at that time. For instance, during our week on Mittens and Hats we read "The Mitten" and "The Hat" by Jan Brett. This gave us so many opportunities for learning. We made mittens and hats by cutting each out of folded paper, then lacing the two pieces together. After reading the story which encourages prediction through picture clues, we cut out the characters in the stories and used them to retell the story using the mittens and hats that they made during art.

These lessons incorporate multiple skill sets, as well as keep the children excited and engaged in their learning. This is just one example of the many types of activities we do in our classroom daily. Along with this theme we did mitten matching, mitten letter match and use our imaginations as we dressed up in different types of hats.

I love teaching these kids every single day at Lord of Life preschool. They are full of love and wonder. They have the creativity and magic that makes learning so fun and easy. My goal for these kids is to keep the magic alive and the learning fun as long as possible. I want them to grow into confident and secure learners and people. We move these kids from the “I can’t” to the “I can’t wait!”

Miss Deb

LCMS Stewardship Ministry

The season of Epiphany focuses on how God was made manifest in the flesh of Jesus. The church spends time hearing of the miracles, the signs and wonders, of Jesus in the world.

And this made plain to all that Jesus was who He said He was: He was the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, the only-begotten Son of the Father, in the flesh. For “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14).

It is revealed for all the world to see that Jesus is God in the flesh. It is made manifest by His words and His work, by what He said and by what He did. And these belong together, for “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.”

Jesus is the Word and will of God in the flesh, that is, He is the walking, talking, enactment of God’s Word.

It is no different for us. We are called not just to believe in God in hearts, but also to trust in God in word and deed.

As James wrote: “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves” (James 1:22), and again, “What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? ... So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. ... Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. ... For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead” (James 2:14, 17–18, 26).

Our faith is lived out in works for our neighbor. Our trust in the Word and will of God is lived out not in word only, but also in deed and in truth.

In other words, the Epiphany of the Lord creates in us an epiphany of our faith in our works of obedience to God who commanded them. By this, our faith is made manifest to the world. It is, as Luther wrote of faith:

“Faith is a divine work in us. It changes us and makes us to be born anew of God (John 1). It kills the old Adam and makes altogether different people, in heart and spirit and mind and powers, and it brings with it the Holy Spirit.

“Oh, it is a living, busy, active, mighty thing, this faith. And so it is impossible for it not to do good works incessantly. It does not ask whether there are good works to do, but before the question rises, it has already done them, and is always at the doing of them.

“He who does not these works is a faithless man. He gropes and looks about after faith and good works and knows neither what faith is nor what good works are, though he talks and talks, with many words about faith and good works.

“Faith is a living, daring confidence in God’s grace, so sure and certain that a man would stake his life on it a thousand times. This confidence in God’s grace and knowledge of it makes men glad and bold and happy in dealing with God and all His creatures.

“And this is the work of the Holy Spirit in faith. Hence a man is ready and glad, without compulsion, to do good to everyone, to serve everyone, to suffer everything, in love and praise to God, who has shown him this grace.

“And thus it is impossible to separate works from faith, quite as impossible as to separate burning and shining from fire. Beware, therefore, of your own false notions and of the idle talkers, who would be wise enough to make decisions about faith and good works, and yet are the greatest fools.” (*Preface to the Book of Romans*)

So, then, let our faith be active by God’s power in the Word through the Holy Spirit. And let then our faith be made manifest to the world by what this faith does: serving our neighbor — in church, in the family, and society — with the works of faith in time, talents, and treasures.



February Circle of Concern Needs:

- Pasta Sauce – Critical
- Jelly
- Cereal
- Canned Pasta
- Canned Chicken
- Feminine Hygiene Products – Critical
- Size 5 & 6 Diapers
- Baby Wipes – Critical

The Yellow Meal-A-Month Bags are on the Circle of Concern barrel in the entryway. Please take one, bring your items in those bags or a paper bag, and place them in the barrel. Circle has informed us that they can no longer reuse plastic grocery bags. They can only accept brown paper bags.

Our goal is 500+ cans each month. Thanks for your support!

February Baptism Birthdays:

- Lynne O’Connell 2/1
- Michele Rosemann 2/2
- Scott Strand 2/4
- Darrell Schelp 2/6
- Donnie May 2/8
- Colin Gilbert 2/12
- Kristie Nolan 2/12
- Ann Pancoast 2/13
- Tyler Tampow 2/14
- Martha Greer 2/23
- Ted Greer 2/23
- Cody Dickinson 2/24
- Donna Springs 2/25
- Jenna Rosemann 2/26

Happy Birthday To:

- Bev Klindworth 2/2
- Donna Springs 2/4
- Walter Wechling 2/4
- Betty Loebig 2/11
- Mary Kinzel 2/13
- Janet Kammeyer 2/14
- Pat Lichtenheld 2/16
- Charlotte May 2/18
- Cindy Gutzler 2/21
- Libby Liebig 2/24
- Lyla Christie 2/26
- Dean Jenkins 2/28

February Wedding Anniversaries:

- Arnold & Gladys Mueller 2/4

Serving Teams

Feb 3	8:00	Team 3
	10:30	Team 8
Feb 10	8:00	Team 5
	10:30	Team 10 - COGS
Feb 17	8:00	Team 1
	10:30	Team 10 - COGS
Feb 24	8:00	Team 7-11
	10:30	Team CAAN

Lay Readers

Feb 3	8:00	Mark Kammeyer
	10:30	John Dye
Feb 10	8:00	Zach Zeigler
	10:30	Robbie Doebert
Feb 17	8:00	Dine Wolf
	10:30	Sharon Delmore
Feb 24	8:00	Janet Kammeyer
	10:30	Kristie Nolan

Nursery – 10:30

Feb 3	Colleen Clasen
Feb 10	Barb Below
Feb 17	Kristin Dye
Feb 24	Carla May

Altar Guild

Team #2
 Beth Bossi
 Kristin Dye
 JoAnn Erselius
 Linda Rosemann
 Jackie Schamber

Counting Teams

Feb 3	Linda Rosemann Dennis Oneal
Feb 10	Jean Urban Sue Andrew
Feb 17	Joe Delmore Richard Barigela
Feb 24	Peggy Krause Gene Valett

Lay Ministers

Feb 3	8:00	Brian Andrew
	10:30	Donnie May
Feb 10	8:00	Justin Langrehr
	10:30	Mark Kammeyer
Feb 17	8:00	Gene Valett
	10:30	Eddie Marx
Feb 24	8:00	Ted Greer
	10:30	Nehemiah Langness

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