

Pat's Pondering from the Pews
Lost but not Forgotten

In recent phone conversations with a few friends across the country, the conversations each quickly turned to 'stuff' in the church, symbolism, worship accretements, liturgical dance, music styles, dress codes, to why many young people (under age 40) do not come to worship on a regular basis, and even the length of a sermon and how communion is presented and taken.

These questions and comments got me to pondering that maybe many Lutherans, especially those west of the continental divide, may not realize that incense, bells, and dance are still used in some ELCA and LCMS congregations, especially at mid-week vespers and all festival Sundays.



Because incense and dance seem to be a stickler for many people and thought to be only Catholic or Anglican/Episcopal/Calvinist and/or more Orthodox in nature, I thought I would ponder on this first. We must ask ourselves a few questions first such as: Is Incense

Lutheran? Is Incense Biblical? Does the use of Incense point to Jesus? Does the use of incense glorify God?

You betcha, is the answer for all four questions. When we journey back into the Old Testament, we discover that all the senses, sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch were incorporated into the worship experience in the Hebrew children's worship, even while they were traveling the desert.

Although we no longer are traveling through a literal desert but often travel paths with items having a symbolic meaning. The liturgical worship service of the more conservative or orthodox churches utilize most if not all the senses to give people a more meaningful experience and draw them closer into fellowship with Eternal God.

"Holy Smoke" was a sign of God's presence, that He was leading his children and was with them right in their midst, when the pillar cloud of smoke stood over the tent of meeting (Ex 13:22 and Ex 40:34). God himself ordained and directed the building of the incense holder as well as gave the perfumer's the exact

quantity and list of ingredients to make the incense and even provided the plans for the building of the altar that was specifically used to burn the incense. (Ex 30: 7-8, Ex 25: 31-40, and Ex 30:34-38) This was during a time of God's earthy sanctuary.

The use of incense in the New Testament was accorded for visiting people of important high status and as it was mostly frankincense was quite expensive to buy and used sparingly. We know that the Magi brought gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh to the baby Jesus (Matt 2:11) then we jump to the anointing of Jesus by the woman with expensive perfume in preparation for his eventual burial. (Matt 26:12) This sweet odor of Incense continues in Luke 1:10 while the people are praying outside at the hour of incense. See also Psalm 141. "Let my prayers rise up like incense before you----"

Eph 5:2 reminds us that Christ gave himself up as a sweet offering for us. In Malachi 1:11 we also are mindful that God said, "My name will be great among the nations, from the rising of the sun, in every place incense and pure offerings will be brought in my name because my name will be great among the nations, says the Lord Almighty"

When the end of the age comes, an angel will pour out the 'smoke' of our incense offering as the prayers of the saints before the throne of God. (Rev 5:8) How cool is that? And after a silence of ½ hour, an angel with the golden incense burner pours out the 'prayers of the saints' (Rev 8: 1-4).

We have to re-call that Martin Luther 'did not throw out the baby with the bath water', so to speak, and had no intentions of eliminating these from the worship experience. However, "Holy Smoke" (incense) was used every service up to the 18th century, then even today, some churches (in the USA and ELCA & LCMS congregations) continue this practice. So why not use and honor holy things by holy people?



School's out----- **DRIVE SAFELY** and watch for those young ones!

Congratulations to our 8th graders as they transition to high school. We wish them all well and much success!!!

Joanie Dunn and Janet Carlson are preparing for the onslaught of VBS children in July. Don't wait to be asked, Volunteer your time , talent or treasure for this outreach into the community. Dates to be Determined!



New to Grace--- Web site---Have you visited it yet? It is relevant, fresh, informative and

welcoming. Thanks to the hard work of web master, Cheryl Johnson --- while you're checking that out, give Social Media a look see at our face book page that Shelia Prax manages for GLC. And if that is not enough you can see our business size ad on Comcast channel 3. Or print media in the local paper on the faith page each week.

Honor our flag of this great nation on June 14 (Flag Day) and again July 4



(Independence Day) by flying it high on your fence post, gate, pole, barn, house. A price has been paid and still is being paid for the freedom it represents.

Thanks

Kudo's and blessings to Diane Pauli for filling in during the absence of Pr Martha while she attended the Synod Convention.



Our Condolences and prayers with the family of Bill & Pat Dabbs on the death of Bill's father late last month.

It makes our hearts glad to see Joe S walking down the aisle to her favorite seat to worship . amazing that she is 100 plus yrs and still going strong. God is good! Prayers answered !

We continue prayers for the call team members as the process progresses, especially for leader, Jeanne Y as she recovers from recent surgery. We note that Henry M has declined our call as he and his wife desire a joint ministry position.

On the Move ----- Louise B is settling in at her new home on the west end of town with granddaughter Robin and hubby. Congratulations Louise!



Coming soon at Grace—VBS—I hear that Tom K is looking for a good man to help him with daily clean and tidy up duties and a little oversight to avoid wandering children to keep them all safe and happy. Give Tom a call men of Grace-----

Holly C. has put out a call for ideas and assistance for the fellowship team that she is the council liaison. Give her a call to volunteer----

-----REMINDER-----

It's that time of the year when our tithes and offerings seem to drop a bit--- Please remember that when you take your vacation, God doesn't!!!! The work of the church continues on a 24/7 basis.

GRACELINES

Gracelines has a new Editor beginning with the June issue. Ardis W. has decided to take a well earned break and concentrate on other projects she is involved with. Blessings to Ardis in these endeavors, Your hard work on Gracelines is appreciated.

Pat B is . picking up the mantle of editor. Please e-mail her your teams efforts by the 20th of June for inclusion in the summer July/Aug issue. Address is: patriciaboesel@gmail.com

Grace at Grace takes many forms

Grace has a long history of being generous with their giving of time, talents and treasures and have given abundantly for over 50 years to various non-profits and individuals in the community and throughout the nation. 2015 is no different. The need is only greater.

Hunger for both physical food as well as spiritual food is never ending Many will not hear the good news of Jesus Christ and what he did for them until their tummy's are full.

Please be generous with your gifts of canned food or other non-perishable food items



THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT
by Cheryl Johnson

At first glance, the array of different fruits seem perfect, but under closer scrutiny, there are usually imperfections to be found. That's how it is with the fruits of the Spirit. Our love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control, never goes as good as we'd like. Instead of feeling like we let God down, when things are not done perfectly, know that God sees us trying, and *that* is what gives Him pleasure. Our fruits of the Spirit are a tasty treat to God. That is why we are blessed with them. He made us all different, just like the fruit display. No two pieces of fruit are exactly alike, and all are created to be savored just the way God made them. Our expressions of faithfulness come in a wide and rich variety. One person may be good at kindness, but maybe self-control is a struggle. Another may be very adept at patience, but not have much peace. God must love variety, or He wouldn't have made us all so different. He doesn't expect us to be perfect just yet. An active faith walk brings us closer to that perfection. Can we look back and see the progress we have made over the years? If the answer is yes, then rest assured that God is very pleased. God loves your frutiness!

Tripping Down Under

by: Pat Dabbs

This past January, the Coates, Dabbs, Telschows', and John Strittmatter, along with nine others embarked on an adventure of a life time to New Zealand and Australia.

Some interesting facts we learned about this part of the world include:

- *New Zealand has NO native poisonous animals, while Australia is loaded with them.

- *New Zealand broke off from Australia and was not inhabited by man until about 1000 years ago when the Maori arrived in their outrigger canoes.

- *The Aborigine arrived some 70,000 yrs ago.

- *Australia broke off from South East Africa

- *Tasmania broke off from mainland Australia and is about the size of state of West Virginia

- *The Koala is not native to Tasmania, only mainland Australia.

- *A Fiord is carved out by glaciers, while a Sound is carved out by rivers. All of the Sounds in Fiordland are really Fiords.

While John S joined us for only the cruise portion of the trip, the rest of us arrived in Auckland, New Zealand on Jan 1st, giving us the opportunity to explore on our own before the cruise began on Jan 4th. Our ports of call included: Bay of Islands, Tauranga, Wellington, Akoroa, Dunedon, Fiordland, (Dusky, Doubtful, and Miliford Sounds), Tasmania, Melbourne, and Sydney. Milford Sound was breathtaking,

Each of us took whatever excursions appealed to us during the cruise, so, depending on who you are talking to about the trip, you will hear of different adventures.

We all visited more wild animal parks than you could shake a stick at, and enjoyed every single one of them. As we were arriving in Sydney, the ship very slowly pulled right past the Opera House, What a wonderful introduction to the city!

Sunday, after, disembarking for the ship in Sydney, the 15 of us that were continuing the trip took an excursion to the Blue Mountains. The countryside was beautiful and reminded me of Northern California. That evening we boarded a plane to Cairne (pronounced Cans) where we all went to the Great Barrier Reef where the majority of us snorkeled. The reef itself was brightly colored with vibrant blues, greens, oranges, purples and was beyond beautiful.

About dusk, several hundred parrots would congregate in one tree in downtown Carins, then shortly after dusk the sky would fill with bats, thousands of them. During the day, if you looked up into the trees overhead, you could see bats just hanging there sleeping.

Tuesday we traveled to the Dainetree Rainforest, where, by the way, we had an absolutely marvelous lunch. Wednesday, we flew back to Sydney.

While in Sydney, we each spent the next two days on our own, building memories with our adventures. There were many things to do and see, along with a number of transportation opportunities, as well as sights within walking distance of our hotel. Saturday, Jan 24th we boarded the plane for the long trip home, First a 3 hour flight to Auckland, then nearly 12 hours in flight to San Francisco and another 3 hours back to our own ever so inviting beds and resting up from our trip down under.



Little of this and a little of that (at the last minute)

We want to remember Eula Kahle who has moved to another address. And would enjoy having visitors not all at same time though.

Gracelines will be posted on line—so please encourage former members who live out of town to keep up to date via our WEB Site. (saves a bit on postage)

Creativity Encouraged

This editor will attempt to include original thoughts, poems, prose, prayers of members into each issue. Deadline is the 20th of each month with a combined issue in July/Aug and Nov/Dec . Leadership is encouraged to get their events on the church calendar (in the office) as soon as possible.



June 21 FATHERS DAY is a set aside to honor the man in your life who was like a 'dad' to you. He may have been your teacher, your pop, your mentor, your grandparent, your pastor, or youth leader or even the neighbor man. Whoever he is, let him know how he impacted your life.

More than that Celebrate the Father of us All- Our Extraordinary Father ,God

Congratulations are in order for :

Jessie Horton, PHD who will be teaching at the U of Tenn this fall

And to her brother Zack Horton, completing his final paper for his PHD in Literature.

Randy Johnson, newly acquired his EMT and beginning the next step toward becoming a firefighter.

To Trenton Yates, now an EMT and paramedic.

To Steve Switzer for fulfilling his call in a prison ministry in NC and serving on their synod council ,while wife Vickie is active in the women' s ministry of Grace (their new church home)

Penny Ministry



Lets surprise our Sunday School youth over the summer by filling up the offering plates with our pennies. The kids donate these funds to our local law enforcement K-9 program.

This is a great way to join in their ministry out reach and community service