



June 26, 2020

Truth Beyond Genre

" We are in a period of unprecedented upheaval. Community is collapsing, anxiety is building, and we're distracting ourselves with artificial political hatreds. That can't endure. And if it does, America won't but there is an alternative. That alternative is restoring community for our new moment, and recognize that the old modes are obsolete and that we need to figure out a way to realize a sense of home in a world that looks very different than anything we've known before. New technologies and experimentation can help with that, but ultimately it will require new habits of heart and mind that introduce neighborliness into a new, more rootless age. It will require us to build new institutions of community that can bond increasingly mobile people. There is no formula, yet, for how to do that. The only thing we can do is start wherever we are. Embrace the American genius that de'Tocqueville identified 2 centuries ago: come together and create something new. Even if what you've got is you, your buddies, and some bad oldies music. Because you'll never start building community until you start building community. "

Them: Why We Hate Each Other--and How to Heal, by Ben Sasse

What is crazy about this quote is that I have heard this sentiment before. I read books that talk about our dining room table and Our Lord's Table, and they talked about how deeply community can be formed around a meal. I read books on simplicity and spirituality and they talk of the detriment of technology on community and the joy of

spending time in one another's presence. I read books of ecology and they describe the wondrous resilience and beauty of balanced and connected ecosystems, and how the loss of any one part diminishes the whole. All of these and more lift up the restoration of community as necessary for our survival and growth as a society. They had the same idea as a Senator from Nebraska.

It was the title that captured my attention as I scrolled through the library's app, and since there was no wait for the download, I grabbed it. Now, I have to admit that I did not research the author before I began. What I had heard couched in spiritual imagery and ecological metaphor, I now heard in references to American exceptionalism and the capacity of an active and engaged citizenship.

That was amazing to hear.

Did I agree with everything he said? No, but I also disagree when the folks who claim technology will destroy us because there are communities built online that become the lifeline for people without a support system in their geographical area. It is not a problem to disagree with someone either, as long as you give them a place to stand.

This is why the world needs the church. It needs the best of the people of God, who recognize what Ben, me, and all those other authors recognized. We need one another and the work of coming together is messy and confusing and worth every ounce of blood, pint of sweat, and ocean of tears it takes to come to the point where each one of us hears and honors one another's stories, has felt the pain and the joy that each one has felt, and affirms the essential humanity and Imago Dei in each person. That is what incarnation means.

"The Gospel of Jesus Christ afflicts the comfortable and comforts the afflicted."

I cannot recall who I first heard say this, but we hear it in the Magnificat, we feel it in Luther's challenge of "Work's Righteousness," and in God's promise to walk with us through the valley of the shadow of death. When we think we have gotten the world, God, and everything figured out in our understanding, the Gospel opens our eyes to those things we are missing. The Gospel reveals the beauty of life with God, beyond our understanding. And, when we cannot make heads or tails of life and the night is starless and deep, the Gospel opens our eyes to God's presence with us. It constantly challenges us and the world with the vision of God's Kingdom. How no one is superior or inferior, but that when one suffers, all suffer.

There is one community built around the cross that can begin with some buddies in a garage, but it does not stay there. Just like you and your buddies know one another's stories, have shared struggles and joys, there are other's whose stories we can listen to, and other people who will hear us. It does not mean our stories have been silenced,

or that we have no place to stand. It means we hear their struggles and joys and help them stand.

The community we are bound to in the cross is amazing to hear. It transcends genre. It transcends culture. It lifts up the best of us, forgives the worst of us, and transforms us into something that the world needs to see, the body of Christ.

Pr. Justin

Greetings from Our South African Companions

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ

I am sending greetings from Madikwe Circuit in the name of our triune God. I hope you are continuing to pray for all in these trying times. South Africa like the rest of the world is experiencing problems of COVID-19 pandemic. We have above 70 000 confirmed cases and 1420 deaths. it is winter and bitterly cold and therefore number of cases is rising drastically. we have just reopened schools on the 8th June 2020 for Grades 7 and 12 and we are worried children may be infected.

We have not yet reopened church service though the government has allowed for the reopening under strict regulations. the number of people to attend service at a time is limited to 50. ELCSA has however directed that services will reopen on 15 July 2020 and councils must begin to prepare thoroughly to comply with regulations.

We hope that your situation will change and improve as you are in summer. We keep you in our prayers.

With kind regards in His service

Benjamin

Join the Stream Team

Do you enjoy videography or video production or would like to learn more about it? Consider joining the group of Saint Andrew members, the Stream Team, who support the video streaming of worship services. Six teams will be created for a rotating schedule about every six weeks. Interested? Send an email with your contact

information to info@salc-wausau.org and someone will contact you with more information.

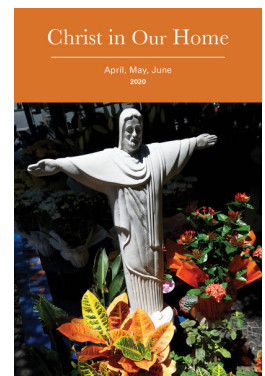
Weeding Assistance Needed



Though we are not gathering in person quite yet, the weeds have not taken a break this summer! Anyone is welcome to stop by the church at their convenience and weed any section that looks like it needs a little TLC. All help is great appreciated in caring for Christ's church!

Christ in Our Home Devotional

Christ in Our Home quarterly devotional resource encourages readers to live out their faith daily. Each reflective reading is accompanied by a daily scripture reference and prayer for the day that follows the Revised Common Lectionary. The complementary email subscription will end on June 30. The third quarter devotional which begins July 1, is now available at church in a plastic bin outside the north (Chapel) entrance. Please stop by and pick up a copy for your family.



Face Masks Needed for LWR and Local Use



As there continues to be a need for face masks both locally and globally, the quilting group is offering ready-to-sew kits **with elastic straps** for those interested in helping fill this need. They can be picked up and dropped off in the plastic bin located outside the north (Chapel) entrance of the church. Please call or email Linda Peterson to order kits: 715-573-4866; lindaksp@aol.com.