



Worship the Lord

No. 13, May 2005

Sharing worship ideas with WELS pastors

In the last issue of WTL we heard a musician's encouragement for pastors. This issue gives an example of the kind of planning that musicians and worshipers appreciate. The article provides practical resources to use or modify for planning worship this summer. Additional resources are available at the Worship website. Whether you use this series or not, the concept is one to consider in future planning. David Kolander serves The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Christ the Lord, Brookfield, WI. Previous service includes St. John's, New Ulm, MN, and St. Paul's, Saginaw, MI.

Bryan Gerlach

Summer Series Worship *By David Kolander*

Midweek Advent and Lenten services provide good opportunities to develop a series theme for the season. It is customary in many congregations to see a particular Advent or Lenten theme carried out in sermons, orders of service, anthems, posters, banners, newsletters, and perhaps even in Bible classes. It can be very meaningful for our members to see how the entire "flow of the season" focuses on a specific topic or theme.

This "flow of the season" approach is carried out quite naturally during the festival half of the church year. Even without thinking about it too much, the pastor and worship planners can present a thematic approach for that particular season of the year. Essentially it is already in place with the emphasis on how God carried out our salvation.

Worship during the non-festival half of the year may not lend itself quite as naturally to thematic worship planning, at least not with the lectionary. That is why some pastors find the summer months, in particular, a good time for a series on some aspect of Christian faith and life.

It is possible, however, to use the lectionary as a springboard for a thematic series. As recent issues of *Worship the Lord* have emphasized, advance planning is necessary. When God's people see the care with which we are seeking to edify them through public worship, we will see that the results of this planning are well worth the effort.

Below I outline the worship series which I have developed for this summer. It is drawn from Series A of the Three Year Series. A fuller outline will give the general theme,

the sermon texts, the specific emphasis of each day, and the hymns. Providing this information in advance helps our music directors and those gifted in other areas of the arts to provide musical and visual support to the messages which I will share in the sermons. This advance planning makes it easier to organize special summer musical participation by groups other than the regular choirs: solos, duets, small groups, college students home for summer.

Please feel free to adapt the information below or to use it as a way to think about your own unique approach. If you would appreciate having our summer hymn choices, they are available on the Worship website after May 5 along with more detailed sermon theme information. Look under "Worship the Lord / Preach the Word."

Summer 2005, Pentecost 2 – 16

The continuous reading from Romans gives a good starting point for a summer worship series. The lessons themselves, obviously, will provide the messages. Doing something as simple as developing a theme can tie the series together for you as a pastor and for the members of your church.

The paragraph below the summer theme will appear on the first page of each Sunday's worship folder as a general introduction to worship. After this seasonal paragraph will be another brief introduction to each Sunday's specific text from the letter to the Romans.

A Summer in Rome *The Trip of a Lifetime*

This summer our sermons are based on lessons from St. Paul's letter to the

Romans. In this book, the apostle emphasizes above all else how a person is made right with God. He makes it clear that this right standing before God does not come as the result of our own efforts. It is totally the result of God's grace through Christ Jesus. May God bless all of us, as we spend this summer in Rome. With God's Word as our guide, it truly will be a trip of a lifetime!

Today's Emphasis: Justified by Faith

In today's selection from St. Paul's letter to the Romans, the apostle Paul gets right to the heart of spiritual life. He tells us how we get to live in heaven after we die...

From Pentecost 2 (May 29, Memorial Day Weekend) until Pentecost 16 (September 4, Labor Day Weekend), I will use each lesson from Romans as my sermon text. Paul's flow of thought provides natural sub-themes and emphases along the way. The pastor's vacation plans or special emphasis Sundays might require adaptations. These would provide "side trips" for your summer in Rome.

- Romans 3-5 (Pentecost 2-5) lay the foundation – justification. (The Romans 5:12-15 text on Father's Day could lead to a natural application on the "gift" of fathers or gifts we give to fathers.)
- Romans 6 (Pentecost 6) emphasizes our connection to Christ's justification through our baptism. In Rome are many prominent fountains. We need such powerful reminders of baptism in our daily lives as well.

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- Romans 7 (Pentecost 7) speaks of the internal struggle of the Christian on the same day we express our gratitude to God for taking our nation through its many struggles (July 3).
- Romans 8 (Pentecost 8-11) gives four powerful reminders that through Christ we are “more than conquerors.”

This is a natural place to stop the series – the end of July and the end of the first main part of Romans. If you go on, you will be able to emphasize Paul’s continuing thought.

- Romans 9-11a (Pentecost 12-13) are difficult texts which express Paul’s anguish over the rejection of Christ by his fellow Jews and the Lord’s comfort that “all Israel will be saved.” Here are opportunities to emphasize North American Outreach and gearing up for the fall season’s more intense parish activities.
- Romans 11-13 (Pentecost 14-16) emphasize our amazement at God’s love and power, our joy in offering our bodies as living sacrifices and our responsibility to our governing authorities.

June 26: A Wrinkle in the Series?

Saturday, June 25, is the 475th anniversary of the Augsburg Confession and the 425th anniversary of the Book of Concord. Some churches will observe this on June 26. A variety of resources will be posted on the Worship website. Use the jumpword “475th” to find sermon resources which are not otherwise visible.

Note that the appointed second lesson is Romans 10:5-17 (CW: *Manual*, 458.) These verses do not occur in the summer *lectio continua* from Romans. (Verses 8b-13 occur at Lent 1C.) An anniversary observance can be inserted into the series above by adjusting the placement of other Romans texts. Note how the anniversary, falling on Pentecost 6, comes right after the “justification foundation” prepared on the preceding three Sundays. The series theme, “A Summer in Rome,” also sets up this irony: God blessed the history of his Church with a 1530 summer in Augsburg instead of Rome!

Other Summer Lectionary Series

2002 Series A

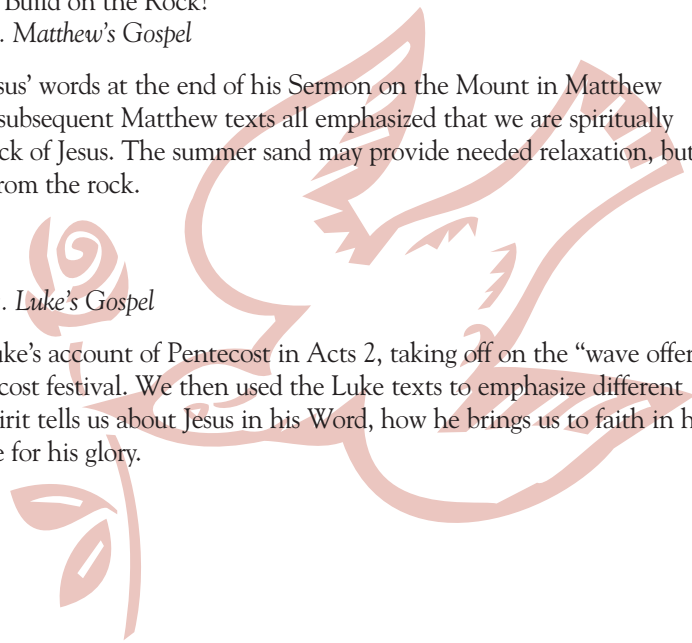
“Have Fun in the Sand, but Build on the Rock!”
Summer-time Lessons from St. Matthew’s Gospel

This theme was based on Jesus’ words at the end of his Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 7:15-29 (Pentecost 2). The subsequent Matthew texts all emphasized that we are spiritually secure by building on the rock of Jesus. The summer sand may provide needed relaxation, but eternal refreshment comes from the rock.

2004 Series C

“The Pentecost Wave”
Seeing the Spirit at Work in St. Luke’s Gospel

This theme was based on Luke’s account of Pentecost in Acts 2, taking off on the “wave offering” of the Old Testament Pentecost festival. We then used the Luke texts to emphasize different aspects of what the Holy Spirit tells us about Jesus in his Word, how he brings us to faith in him, and how he moves us to live for his glory.



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Worship Conference Topics and Inspiration July 18-21, 2005 in St. Peter, MN

If pastors and musicians attend the national worship conference together, they are better able to implement in their parish some of the ideas they discover in 50+ workshops and six plenary services. Every workshop time slot has something for pastors. Titles of special interest to pastors include:

- A Lutheran Approach to Blended Worship – James Tiefel
- A Tale of Two Liturgical Renewal Efforts – Dennis Marzolf
- Building a New Church – Brent Brutlag
- Checklist for Improving Worship Environment – Wayne Schulz
- Preaching Seminar – Daniel Deutschlander
- Presiding Minister Practicum – James Huebner
- Singing the Christian Faith: Christ in the Song of the Church – David Prillwitz
- Teaching Theology through Worship and the Arts – Paul Lehninger
- Technology in Worship – Jon Schroeder
- The Wittenberg Trail – Aaron Wolf
- We Confess as We Worship – Aaron Christie
- Worship and Outreach – Donn Dobberstein
- Worship and Outreach – Panel Discussion

See the conference brochure or website for detailed information on these and all other workshops. Some other workshops might be valuable for pastor and musician to attend together.