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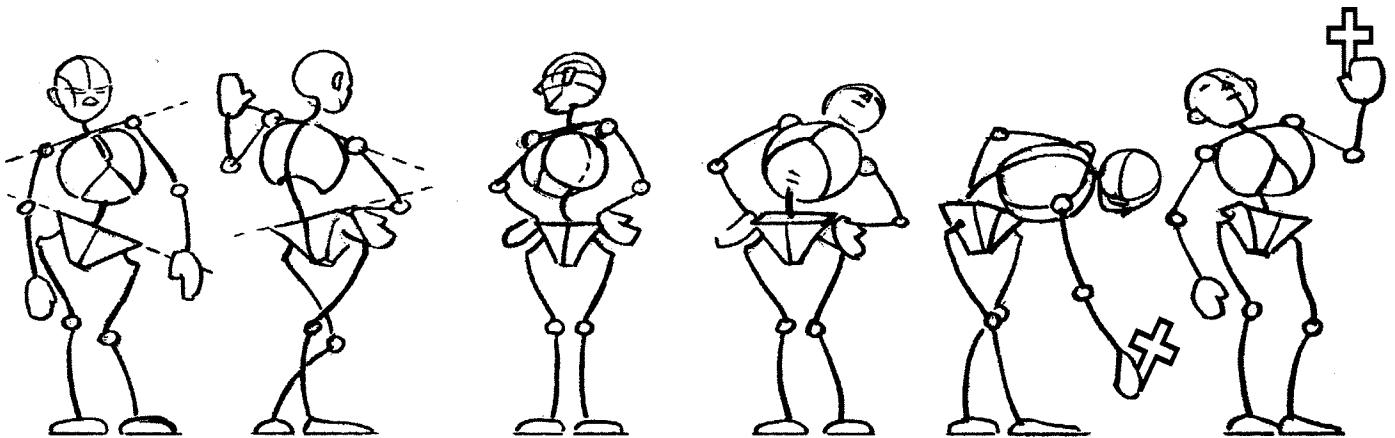
Volume 16, No. 1

A Newsletter for those who Appreciate and Participate in Worship and the Arts

Spring 2006

Whole Body Worship *Living Liturgy for the Sake of the World*

In Celebration of the 50th Anniversary of Lutheran Campus Ministry in Alberta



Marty Haugen and Susan Briehl are coming back to Alberta! Many of you will remember them from their participation in the convention held at Augustana in Camrose a few years ago, and those of you who don't, now have an opportunity to meet them. Marty, a liturgical composer and pastoral musician from Minnesota, has been presenting workshops on music and the renewal of worship for the past 20 years. His workshops have taken him all across North America, Europe, Polynesia, Asia and Central America. Susan Briehl, a Lutheran Pastor and writer who makes her home in Spokane, Washington, but also serves as Professor of Homiletics at the Wartburg Seminary in Iowa, brings her experience in parish, campus and retreat centre settings.

At Hosanna Lutheran Church in Edmonton this coming March 17 and 18, 2006, Marty and Susan will be offering a workshop which will stimulate renewal in the worship life of our church, and give contemporary expression to the gospel. They will also discuss how to plan and lead relevant and meaningful worship services that reflect on the image of the body ... the body we bring and that which we become ... *"Whole Body Worship."*

Both Susan and Marty are energetic, animated, and thought provoking presenters, well worth making the effort to take the time on Friday and Saturday to attend this Seminar. "The Heart of the Matter", "Singing Down the Bones", and "Liturgy with Legs", are just a few of the sessions being offered. All focus on theology, scripture, music, worship and God's love for his people.

A registration form may be downloaded from www.albertasynod.ca/campus_ministry or contact the Registrar, Jenny Samm at 1-780-435-6328 (email: jsamm@telus.net). The registration forms and fee of \$65.00 should be sent to the Synod of Alberta and the Territories at 10014 - 81 Avenue, Edmonton, AB T6E 1W8. **A**

Better Tomorrow ... *It's a new year, full of promise.*

I learned something the other day. It was only a small "aha" moment, but the kind that gives me great pleasure. While doing research on the Seasons of the Church Year, I stumbled across a Christian children's story from Australia, that in a round-a-bout way, led me to the book of Jeremiah 31, 10 - 13, which says:

Hear the word of the Lord, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away; say, "He who scattered Israel will gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd a flock."

For the Lord has ransomed Jacob, and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.

They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the Lord, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall become like a watered garden, and they shall never languish again.

Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy, I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow. (*NRSV*)

All of a sudden I found myself humming a familiar tune. I reached for the LBW, and there it was. Somewhere between his birth in 1922, and his death in 1980, Jeremiah's words, recorded many years before Christ was born, was rewritten in lyric form by John W. Arthur. It was set to a tune composed by J. Bert Carlson, printed in our Lutheran Book of Worship and then sung countless times by Lutherans everywhere as Canticle 14. "Listen, you nations of the world: listen to the Word of the Lord Young women will dance for joy, and men young and old will make merry. Like a garden refreshed by the rain, they will never be in want again."

"I will turn their mourning into joy. I will comfort them. I will give them gladness for sorrow. They will never be in want again." These are not featherweight words meant to skim the surface of our consciousness. They are meant to be heavy, to sink into our bones and to be remembered. They are promises made ... as if God were making resolutions.

This is the time of year we traditionally resolve to do something, for ourselves or for others. We make

promises that we are going to get more exercise; watch less TV; say "no" more often to avoid being pulled simultaneously in a dozen directions; or maybe say "yes" more often and become involved in community or charitable projects. Sometimes we even keep our promises. In fact, I did very well the year I resolved to make *no* resolutions at all.

Although I made jokes about how I had "beat the system", the year with no resolve just didn't feel right. I felt like I was cheating myself out of an opportunity to grow. Even if I don't always do a good job of seeing my resolutions through, at least I am making an effort, and something good may come of that. Two hundred years ago, the Hasidic Rebbe Nachman of Bratslav challenged his followers by saying: "If you are not going to be better tomorrow than you were today, then what need do you have for tomorrow?"

For me, a new year is like opening the cover of a book I haven't read yet. Oh, I might read the back flap to get the general idea of the story, but there's a whole lot of stuff sandwiched between the covers that I know nothing about. All those clean, crisp pages just waiting to be turned, and I *know* that something good or exciting or at least, interesting is going to happen. And, I can help direct the plot by the decisions I make. But, in spite of my best efforts at control, the plot always takes unexpected twists and takes me to places I would rather not be - like in my basement this past summer, watching it turn into a swimming pool even with the help of a sump pump and bucket brigade. Or, like taking the car in for routine maintenance and having the engine blow just as it is ready to be driven out of the shop. But just as Jeremiah says, God gives us comfort, and trades our sorrow for gladness. Before I know it, my aggravation is gone. I'm back on track and thinking positively about tomorrow, my life once again like a watered garden.

So, here we are, embarking on another yearly adventure. We make our resolutions. We go to church; some of us on New Years Eve, and some of us on New Years Day; to ask God's guidance and blessing on our efforts as we begin to page our way through the book of 2006. Although the celebration

Rejoice in the dance.

By: Colleen McGinnis, St. John's Lutheran Church, Wetaskiwin, AB

of New Years Day has become a Christian tradition, history tells us that before the church existed, the new year was celebrated on March 1. When Julius Caesar introduced his calendar in 45 BC, he set aside January 1 to honour the two-faced Roman god, Janus, who looks backwards into the old year and forward into the new. The practice of making New Years resolutions also began about this time.

When Rome took on Christianity as its official faith, the Christians kept January 1 as a religious feast day. But the church didn't like the wild parties that took place at the start of the new year, and in AD 567 the Roman Catholic Council of Tours declared that having the year start on 1 January was an ancient mistake that should be abolished. Then, when the Gregorian calendar was finally adopted by Britain and her colonies on September 2, 1752, January 1 again became recognized and celebrated as the first day of the year. Most of continental Europe had already adopted the Gregorian calendar, which meant that previous to that auspicious date in 1752, September 2 in London was September 13 in Paris, Lisbon and Berlin. Russia only accepted it after the revolution of 1918, and Greece about the year 1923. Currently many Orthodox churches still follow the Julian calendar.

There are many other calendars still in active use throughout the world, all celebrating the New Year at a different time. For example, the Bahá'í New Year's Day (Naw Rúz) falls on the Spring Equinox which usually occurs on March 21. But if the Equinox falls after sunset on March 21, the New Year is celebrated on March 22 because the Bahá'í day begins at sunset. The Persian year follows a similar rule but using noon as the pivot point. The Ethiopian New Year is on September 11, but Christmas is celebrated on January 7. This year, since the date relies on the second new moon after the winter solstice, Chinese New Year falls on January 29, 2006. There are four traditional Jewish New Years celebrations during the year, and the list goes on.

As Lutherans, we now celebrate the historical year, which starts on January 1, and the liturgical year, which begins on the first Sunday in Advent.

The beautiful thing in all this is, that no matter how

many cultures or religions celebrate the new year at different times, no matter what new years resolutions are made, no matter how many of those resolutions are kept or not kept, the fact remains that God's promises are firm. Not only does he give us comfort and joy - enough reason right there to rejoice in the dance and sing with radiantly happy faces - he has given us his Son. On that silent and holy night, with glories streaming and angels singing alleluia, Christ, our Saviour was born.

When I reach the end of my yearly book, the pages are a little tattered and well thumbed. Between those covers, many stories have been lived, loved, and sometimes even regretted. But they are part of my life. They make me who I am, and will lead me to the person I will one day be. I'm not afraid of the future. God has promised to go with me and I believe Him. **A**

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YOU ASKED . . .

Why do we use candles in our worship?

By: Pastor Lawrence Likness, Calgary, Alberta



The liturgical name for candles is "lights". In the early church the use of lights was probably purely functional - the ministers and worshipers needed to see. The first lights were probably oil lamps, which later became wax candles. Today "lights" have a symbolic purpose. They signify the presence of God and Christ as "the Light of the world."

They also express the glory and joy of our Christian faith. Christ the Light comes to us in both Word and Sacrament.

The two lights on either side of the altar are called "Eucharistic lights". Other candles (or lights) in the chancel are called "office lights", which were used usually for non-eucharistic Services.

The lighting of the candles, in itself, has no liturgical significance. It is simply a utilitarian action. That is why the candles are lit during the Prelude before the liturgy begins and are extinguished after the liturgy is concluded. However, there is protocol for lighting the candles. The two eucharistic candles are lit first (by the altar), beginning with the one on the "epistle side" (right side) of the altar, then the one on the "gospel side" (left side). Other candles are lit, beginning on the left closest to the cross, then on the right. The opposite procedure is used in the extinguishing of the candles. One or two acolytes usually light candles.

Of course there are other candles in the church. There is the "sanctuary light" or "eternal light", the light enclosed in the red glass which hangs high in the sanctuary from the ceiling. Originally its purpose was to indicate the presence of the reserved sacrament. Today it is thought to symbolize the presence of God. It is usually a seven-day candle, which burns continuously. In our church it is an electric bulb.

There is the "paschal" or Easter candle, the large candle on a stand, which is lit at the Vigil of Easter and stands by the altar until after Ascension Day. It is lit for every Eucharist during the Easter Season. Then it is moved to stand beside the baptismal font. It is used for Baptismal Services because of the connection between Easter and Baptism (Romans 6). It is also used in the Christian burial Service, being placed at the head (or foot) of the coffin. It symbolizes Christ's triumph over death and the grave.

We use individual candles on Christmas Eve, to symbolize the light and joy of Christ's coming, and at the Easter Vigil, to welcome the glorious resurrection of our Lord. The only day in the year when candles are not usually used is Good Friday, when the altar remains stripped and stark bare in recognition Christ's crucifixion. Good Friday is also the one day in the year when it is inappropriate to celebrate Holy Communion. **A**

Last Chance to tell us

*what you did
in your church
for a Sunday School
Christmas Pageant.*

*Please tell us your
favourites, present or
past, list your resources
and where to find them.*

*We will share this information
in Adoramus in early 2006.*

Please address your response to:

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A publication of the Alberta and the Territories
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