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Volume 19, No. 2 A Newsletter for those who Appreciate and Participate in Worship and the Arts Fall/Winter 2009

One Faith Community's Journey to Using a Projection Screen

By: Larry Kochendorfer, Ascension Lutheran Church, Edmonton



Photo by Darla Wildfang

Ascension Lutheran Church, Edmonton through the leadership and vision of its Worship and Music Committee now uses a projection screen on a regular basis in its worship services. The journey toward the decision to purchase, install and use a projection system was one of much conversation and of reflection together along with demonstration sessions on how a projection system and screen might be used at worship.

With the gifts of one of the members, two identical sessions following worship were prepared using a screen relatively the same size as that which would be purchased, and various possibilities were shared. For example – a song with musical notation was projected and sung; images were projected including scripture texts; possible uses during the prayers at a

funeral were shared – verses of Marty Haugen's "Shepherd Me O God" were sung by a soloist while images related to the text were projected, participants sang the refrain followed by the Prayers of the People which concluded with a final singing of the refrain; and a recorded choral anthem sung by the choir was played while images related to the text of the anthem were projected.

Through reading and conversation a list of twelve values (see below) was generated which is seen as central and important to the planning and envisioning of worship at Ascension. A list was also developed which we called "implementation" (see below) which focused specifically on the use of a projection system and screen given the corresponding value. We were guided in our conversation by an article from Third Christian Reformed ▶

Church, Zeeland, Michigan, “Using Screens in Worship: One church’s criteria” posted on the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship site (www.calvin.edu/worship). In addition, Terms of Reference were developed and approved for a Projection System Ministry Team whose purpose “is to create, maintain and operate the projection system for use during worship services and other events according to the values and implementation criteria identified by the Worship and Music Committee.” At this point in time a staff person is responsible for preparing any material needed for our worship and we are hoping to create at least two teams.

Currently we do not use the projection system and screen every Sunday but often seasonally. For example, throughout the season of Lent this year an image of a crown of thorns was prepared for each service and text was included identifying the First Sunday in Lent, the Second Sunday in Lent, and so on. And during the Lenten mid-week services a twelve-minute film was shown, followed by time for quiet reflection or guided conversation in small groups.

We have discovered that the use of this visual technology has enhanced our rich and varied worship life together. **A**

Worship Values and Projection System Implementation

Value 1 - We value a blended style of worship. We value songs, liturgy and worship that mixes old and new, and is the kind of worship within which all may find a “place.”

Implementation 1 – The screen will enhance the praise and worship component of our services. It will also reach a younger generation with a user-receptive medium.

Value 2 - We value sermons that proclaim the Good News of God’s love in Jesus Christ.

Implementation 2 – The screen could function as a place for sermon outlines, bullet points, video clips, and visuals, and could aid pastors and listeners in the covenant of learning.

Value 3 - We value the nurturing and building of a community in which all worshippers can see, hear, and participate in worship.

Implementation 3 – The screen should be readable and visually accessible for all members, regardless of where they are seated in the sanctuary.

Value 4 - We value silent prayerful, meditative, and reflective time prior to worship for preparation to meet God.

Implementation 4 – The screen should function as an accompaniment to worship. It should not be used prior to the beginning of worship for bulletin “advertisements” or announcements.

Value 5 - We value the existing symbols in our worship space, including the furnishings and their placement for the sacraments and the proclamation of the Word. We also value the cross. These symbols aid our worship of God and communicate grace, stability and permanence.

Implementation 5 – The screen should not be a focal point of the sanctuary. The screen and its images should be regarded as “less than” those things that are permanent and centrally located in the worship space.

Value 6 - We value a worship space that is aesthetically pleasing and is consistent with liturgical colors.

Implementation 6 – The screen and projector should be discreet and should not be distracting in their placement or function. Their colors and tones should not diminish liturgical colors in our worship space.

Value 7 - We value a music-reading congre- ▶

A four-year old boy came home from Sunday School and said to his mother, “It was sure nice of the shepherds to clean up before they went to Bethlehem.”

“How do you know that?” asked his mother. “We learned a song in Sunday School today called ‘While Shepherds Washed Their Sox by Night.’”



gation that sings its hymns and songs in four-part harmony or with one voice.

Implementation 7 – We will have the capacity to reproduce printed musical notation on our screen.

Value 8 - We value a worship guide that is accessible for all worshippers and contains much of the worship service.

Implementation 8 – The screen should not replace the use of books in worship or take away the function of “turning together” to books for the public hearing of Scripture.

Value 9 - We value simplicity and stewardly use of resources.

Implementation 9 – The screen should be uncomplicated and cost-efficient enough so that its use is not expected for every service. We recommend using the existing screen and space if it is wise to do so.

Value 10 - We value the time and creative energies of our staff and volunteers

Implementation 10 – We recommend a “PowerPoint” or “Screen” team to create and maintain what is on the screen. Like the sound system, staff should not be responsible for the screen’s use, its success, or its failure.

Value 11 - We value the “hearing” of the Word through use of relevant examples and images, recognizing the profound impact of images on our imagination.

Implementation 11 – The use of images on the screen should be managed with great care. Pictures and icons can have a profound effect on viewers’ spiritual imagination both for good and bad. We urge pastors and screen caretakers to choose images with great sensitivity and care.

Value 12 - We value following all copyright laws.

Implementation 12 – Visitors and members should be assured that we are licensed to display what appears on the screen. **A**

Art Important to Lutheran Church of Our Saviour

Art and life are intertwined for Preston Pouteaux, Director of Discipleship Ministry at Lutheran Church of Our Saviour in Calgary. It has become a part of life within the church as well.

“We’ve been exploring art more and more at Our Saviour,” says Preston. “For example, we had a community art show in our church a few years back and a photography exhibit this year.”

When they realized that art would be a valuable tool to express the hope they’ve found in Christ, they began looking at their sanctuary in a new light. Creating a piece with a depth and range of meaning would speak to people wherever they are in their personal journey. So, in early 2008 Preston came up with the rough concept of the piece (multiple panels representing water and fire, or the Spirit of God). A small budget was set aside and he contacted his friend - artist, Steve Waldschmidt. The two men had studied together at Regent College in Vancouver where art is central to their theological reflection.

Steve holds a BFA in drama from the University of Calgary and has worked in Christian theatre across Canada. He has even played the role of Jesus the last couple of years at the Badlands Passion Play.

Also a professional theatre scene painter, Steve came to the church over the course of a week to create the panels. Only a few people knew about the project, so when the congregation came to church on Sunday morning, they were pleasantly surprised by this fantastic installation.

“It is a unique medium for the church,” says Preston. “We are used to stained glass or cloth banners. I consider this another way of creatively depicting the redemptive work of Christ.”

Photos of the installation and Stephen’s thoughts on its creation follow on the back page. **A**

A Green Winter ... in Canada?

The season of cold, snow and ice is here. Save energy by draftproofing your building. Turn the thermostat down a notch and wear a sweater. Look for an alternative to traditional ice melters. There are a few “green” products out there, which don’t contain toxins that harm the water table, kill your grass, damage your concrete or make your pets sick.

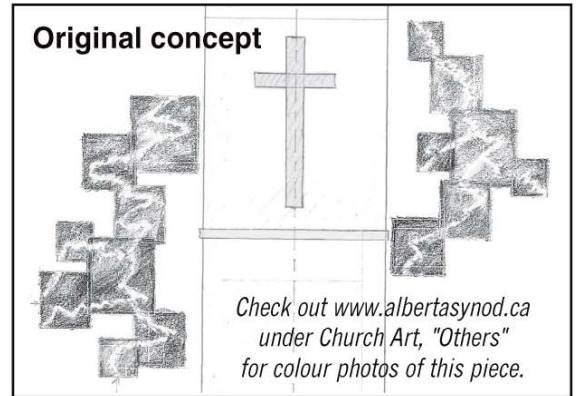
And yes, the snow shovel is still the most environmentally conscious way to remove snow. Just think of it as getting fresh air and exercise. **A**

But Down He Reached ... a visual art installation

By: Stephen Waldschmidt, Hope Community Covenant Church, Strathmore



Photos by Stephen Waldschmidt



When Preston Pouteaux of Lutheran Church of Our Saviour in Calgary asked me if I'd be interested in creating an art installation for Our Saviour's sanctuary, I was delighted! We talked about images related to the Holy Spirit and to baptism.

The morning I was to design the piece, I read Psalm 18, a text through which God sustained me during several dark years of illness in my family. I've read it so many times, David's story of God coming to save him, riding on massive storm clouds, spraying fiery hailstones and lighting bolts. And then these words jumped out at me: "He reached down from on high and took hold of me; he drew me out of deep waters." And later, "You, O LORD, keep my lamp burning; my God turns my darkness into light." An image formed in my head—fire from heaven in the deep.

That set off ideas about two of the biblical images for God's Spirit—living water and holy flame. So the water is beautiful. And the flame has a thread of gold woven through it—gold in the Orthodox Church tradition of iconography represents heavenly glory.

And what about baptism? The ocean's waters are associated with chaos and death in the Old Testament. The waters of baptism signify our death to our old life and our identification with Jesus' death on the cross, from which we are raised to new life with Christ, receiving his resurrection-life by his Spirit. So the water is also darkness, illumined by bolts of falling flame.

The multiple canvases, beyond providing visual interest, suggest the diversity of lives in which God's Spirit dwells, unique lives which are called together into local bodies of Christ. And each local church forms part of mosaic of the worldwide Body of Christ. To God be the glory! **A**

Gathering in Boulder - 2010
 July 12 - 15 in Boulder, Colorado
Faith - A Compass for Leaders
 with great keynote speakers, forums,
 workshops, worship and, of course, music!
 Assoc. of Lutheran Church Musicians
 Website: www.region4boulder.org/

2010 National Worship Conference
 July 4 - 7, Vancouver School of Theology
<http://nationalworshipconference.org/>

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A publication of the Alberta and the Territories
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