Anger Management

“And the Lord said, ‘Do you do well to be angry?’” (Jonah 4:4).

En route to Orlando, a Christian man arrived at the Chicago airport early and had to wait an hour for permission to board the aircraft. He soon noticed a woman sitting nearby, clothed head to toe in the distinctive garb of a devout Muslim. Immediately, anger welled up inside of him due to the violence perpetrated against his country in the name of Islam. Secretly he hoped she would not be traveling on his plane, but to his dismay, she sat next to him on his flight.

How often do we adopt a similar attitude toward the non-believers around us, imagining that we are somehow inherently worthy of Christ’s forgiveness? We know we are to make disciples of even the worst sinners (Matt. 28:18–20), but do we eagerly live out the Gospel for our unconverted friends and family? Do we really believe the Lord takes no pleasure in the destruction of the wicked (Ezek. 33:11), so that we pray for their regeneration long before we pray for judgment?

As today’s passage indicates, such an attitude is not new among God’s people. Jonah 4:2 reveals that the prophet did not obey the command to warn Nineveh because he feared her citizens might repent, thereby moving our Father to forgive them. He falsely believed divine mercy was somehow the exclusive right of Israel and did not want to see the heathen of the nations converted. Today, we are likewise foolish when we allow the church to become a country club that, in word or deed, rejects sinners seeking restoration.

Moreover, any anger we feel when God is merciful to repentant men or any action we perform that prevents the free spread of the Gospel is not only foolish, it is also evil. The Hebrew word for Jonah’s displeasure in 4:1 is the same one used for Nineveh’s evil in 1:2. Plainly, the Lord wants us to see that we are sinning when we are upset by His great grace toward the most heinous transgressors.

When God asks Jonah if it is right for him to be angry for His mercy on Nineveh (4:4), the expected answer is no. Jonah erred in pitying a plant more than he did men in slavery to wickedness (vv. 9–11), but may we never become so callous to those outside the church that we cease to preach the Gospel to them with compassion.

Coram Deo

Our attitudes toward non-believers can prevent us from spreading the good news. Our Father has His elect among every race and class (Rev. 5:9–10), and there is no sinner He cannot redeem, no matter his evil. How do you regard the non-believers around you? Do you think they cannot be saved? What are you doing to extend the Gospel to those on the margins of society? Consider helping an organization that ministers to “outcasts,” such as a prison ministry.
We Care and Pray for One Another

**HEALTH CONCERNS:**
Irene Ahl; Sharon Algar; Bill Amspaugh; Richard Ashbaugh; Kathleen Bell; Linda Bennett; Carroll Boettcher; Maun Boettcher; Angie Breitbarth; Scott Brister; JR & Debbie Bromley; Heidi Buchholz; John & Joan Burns; Ralph Chambers; Linda Cirelli; Moose Creighton; Larry Dahl; Richard Dahl; Ashlyn Dahnke; Kim Damiano; Elaine Durham; Dianne Ewald; Harriet Feree; Gary Forrest; Ed Fowler; Walt Goedecke; Richard Greene; Karen Hammel; Gizelle Hayes; Katie Hayes; Jane Heine; Carl Heldt; Evelyn Horst; Annette Idso; Christopher Idso; Wally Jakubin; Susan Jerez; Cindy Kelley; Forrest Kelley; Donna Koelling; Pat Konrad; Brian Kowalski; Debbie Kowalski; Denny Laue; Keith Leikel; Richard Lohr; Alice Masherella; Donna McCullough; Myles McHugh; Howard Morrow; Tom Morton; Chris Murphy; Jackson Myerscough; Lily Navarro; Tanner Nelson; Wayde Nelson; Beverly Osier; Bob Ott; RJ Ott; Leslie Owens; Helen Perrodin; Ben Petersen; Virginia Potter; Martin Radloff; Shirley Radloff; Antonia Rafter; Steve Ratz; Esther Riesen; Mickey Scoffin; Oliver Shaw; Marty Sjursen; Estelle Sykes; Annie Walsh; Clarissa Weaver; Joe Wells; Wally Wentzel; Marie Wood; Jane Wright; Pat Zanta; Gretchen; Joann; Kim; Mike; Suzie

**MILITARY:**
Isaac Jackson; Tim Mace

**NEEDS:**
We pray for all who are in the midst of making difficult decisions. May they be filled with God's peace, love, and assurance.

**CALLED HOME:**
We give prayers of sympathy and compassion to the family and friends of Vera Lambert who recently entered the church triumphant. We give prayers of sympathy and compassion to the family and friends of Debbie Schmidt who recently went home to our Lord.

Make your prayer requests known, call the church office 520.297.3095.

THE NEW CENTER OF OPPORTUNITY

**THE CENTER OF OPPORTUNITY,** located at 4550 S. Palo Verde Rd. in Tucson (formerly the Radisson Hotel), has been purchased by Humberto Lopez for the purpose of a "one-stop homeless center". Knowing that Gospel Rescue Mission (GRM) in Tucson, an Arizona non-profit corporation, was looking to relocate the Men's Shelter to a larger facility, Mr. Lopez suggested that GRM move the shelter to The Center of Opportunity in order to have a faith-based shelter and recovery program. He also requested that GRM serve as the managing entity to recruit, vet, and coordinate partner organizations.

Various private and governmental organizations will occupy office space within the Center and provide wrap-around services for training, transitional and permanent housing, counseling and educational programs, veteran's services for the homeless and working poor, including medical and dental services, behavioral health, government benefits, job training, and GED preparation. One of the services offered in the Center is BRIDGE PRISON MINISTRIES, a re-entry program, which now occupies one of the offices at the Center.

About eighteen of our Ascention members attended the the Grand Opening of the Center of Opportunity last weekend May 18 and 19. Members of Ascension church were involved in rebuilding and furnishing five casitas to be used by those in one of the programs for their recovery.

Information provided by Lutherans for Life, Beautiful Feet Team.

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER (Cantate)

Isaiah 12:1–6; James 1:16–21; John 16:5–15

**Jesus Promises to Send His Holy Spirit, the Helper**

Though Jesus has departed from us visibly to the right hand of the Father who sent Him, yet this is to our advantage. For Jesus—who is Lord over all creation, who intercedes for us before the Father, who is preparing a place for us in heaven—has sent the Helper, the Spirit of Truth (John 16:5–15). “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights” through Jesus Christ (James 1:17). The Holy Spirit helps us by taking what is Christ's and declaring it to us. In the Word of truth, the Spirit works repentance and delivers to us the forgiveness of sins, the righteousness of Christ, and victory over the devil. For the ruler of this world is judged and defeated by the cross. Through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, we have been brought forth to new life in Him who is the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. Confident of our resurrection with Christ we confess, “Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid” (Is. 12:2).

**FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR** are given by Fred and Ruth Plebanek in celebration of Ruth's 88th birthday on May 29.
I Am a Servant

Over the past couple of weeks, our pastors introduced a set of Staff Values. These were first shared at a staff meeting at which Jim Schultz, chair of the Board of Elders, and I were asked to attend. The sheet of staff values is titled “I Am a Servant,” and each of the value statements begins with that phrase. The following week, the four of us joined together in meetings with each individual staff member. These meetings were amazing… clearly guided by the Holy Spirit!

During Holy Week, Pastor Doug shared with me some insights he had when reading Luke’s Gospel account of the Last Supper and what followed, in preparation for a sermon he was working on. The disciples are with Jesus in the upper room celebrating Passover. Most of you remember the account quite well, as Jesus spoke, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you I will not eat it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.” “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” “This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.”

We cannot begin to imagine all the emotions in that upper room that evening. Most certainly, the disciples realized Jesus was talking about some pretty heavy things. Then comes the conversation of who will betray Jesus. However, I did not remember the conversation that immediately followed. When Pastor Doug reminded me of it, I was shocked… but as my mind gave it a second pass, I wasn’t shocked at all… I was just sad. It was so human—so unbelievable and yet so absolutely believable.

So what was this conversation? Well, of course, it could be nothing other than, Who Is the Greatest?! I mean, after all, we are celebrating one of the most important religious meals; Jesus has just told us he is preparing to suffer; one of us is going to betray him; so, naturally what follows has to be refocusing on ME! I mean seriously, how many minutes can we possibly endure without our selfish pride regaining the spotlight? Even in the presence of our Lord, evidently not very long.

Jesus speaks, “The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. For who is the greater, one who reclines at table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at the table? But I am among you as the one who serves.”

Although this passage from Luke was not specifically shared with the staff, it is the core of I Am a Servant. Each of the staff will fail at these values on an all too regular basis… no differently than you and I. Pray for them! Encourage them! Love them! After we fail, each of us gets to decide what happens next. At this point, the devil has not yet won. With our free will, we can choose to remove the plank from our own eye… or try our best to justify our search for the speck in our brothers. If we follow the path of our Lord, we will see our sin. Our brother’s sin does not matter right now. We have an opportunity to get ours right first! Now is the time to be people of prayer first! Now we repent! Now we go to our brother, make amends, and ask for forgiveness! And when we have done so, we have truly been disciples of Christ. Jesus is victorious! God can take what was intended for bad and use it for good… if we let him.

As a fellow member of the body of Christ at Ascension, pray for our staff and our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ as we focus on Jesus as the perfection of the statement, I Am a Servant.

Noel Robinson,
Servant of God and Congregational President
SUMMER CAMP

Ascension Lutheran Church and School are holding camps for ages 3-4 through the preschool and children 5 years-old (by June 1, 2019) through children going into 6th grade in the fall of 2019. Information and registration can be found at the following links:

Preschool (3-4 yo):
http://ascensiontucson.org/school.html

Older children:
http://ascensiontucson.org/summer-camp.html

Employment opportunities for those that qualify, can be found at:
http://ascensiontucson.org/camp-employment.html

Volunteer opportunities are also available at the link shown above.

FAMILY MOVIE

Join us in the ROC for Movie Mania as we munch on snacks and watch How to Train Your Dragon: The Hidden World, Saturday, May 25 beginning at 2pm. Feel free to bring pillows and blankets to get cozy. RSVP to Callie at c.baker@alcs-az.org by May 23.