

THE CONNECTION

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” Colossians 3:16

Greetings Lamb of God,

Free will is a pretty complicated subject. On June 14th I talked about it in a sermon which is still available on our Facebook page. I would like to add a little more here. I know free will can sound like one of those academic topics only theologians discuss. Maybe you think it has as much impact on your life as “How many angels can dance on the head of a pin?” If you aren’t curious in the slightest, feel free to exercise your free will and skip this article. I’ll have a new topic next month!

For those who have at least a little interest, I will start by saying there are some critical doctrines in Christianity. If you don’t believe that Jesus was really God and really human, then you don’t really believe in Jesus. Free will is not one of those doctrines. I think I am right about this, but I’m not 100% certain. More importantly, I know our salvation does not rest on being right about this. That said, I still think it’s important and here’s why:

The challenge with free will is that people who believe we have free will usually believe we choose whether we will believe in God. Unfortunately, they will often start to worry about the quality of their faith. Do I *really* believe? Is my faith strong enough to save me? Before too long, they can turn God’s gift of salvation into something we do. If you’ve never thought about it before, the cross shows us what a radical solution was required to solve our sin problem. If we were good at handling things ourselves, I think God would have solved sin with something less than the death of His Son. On the other hand, those who believe we don’t have free will would be in favor of the doctrine of election. This means God determines who will be saved and who will not even before we are born. You can imagine this might lead to a bit of a fatalistic attitude toward or behavior in general, especially evangelism. There’s a great illustration of free will in *A Good Man is Hard to Find* by Flannery O’Conner. Spoiler alert: I have to give away the ending to make my point, but in my defense, you were probably supposed to read this in college, so that’s on you.

The story involves a husband, his wife, their kids and their grandmother who lives with them. The grandmother is a very unpleasant person. Opinionated and hypocritical, ungrateful and selfish, she makes the rest of the family miserable. The family is in a car accident and is stranded at the side of the road when another car stops and three men get out. The grandmother recognizes one of them as an escaped prisoner call the Misfit. Upon being recognized, the group marches the family away in groups and kills them, leaving just the grandmother. While she never pleads for her family, toward the end, she does begin to change. She seems to show genuine affection for the Misfit, calling him

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Lamb of God Lutheran Church

3923 103rd AVE SE

Lake Stevens, WA 98258

www.lambofgod-lakestevens.org

Office: 425-377-2173

Office Hours:

Tues 12:30-3:00 pm

Wed 8:30-3:00 pm

Fri 8:30-2:00 pm

Sunday Morning Schedule

Worship: 10:15 am

Pastor: Mike May (314) 775-6956

pastormike@lambofgod-lakestevens.org

Worship/Youth Leader: Jan Novak,
(360) 691-3372

worship@lambofgod-lakestevens.org

Meetings This Month

Council Meeting:

TBD

Elders Meeting:

TBD

Church Office Temporarily Closed

Pastor Mike, Jan and Shara are currently working remotely. Please contact them directly.

Pastor Mike (314) 775-6956 or sidace99@yahoo.com

Jan (425) 418-6270 or worship@lambogod-lakestevens.org

Shara (425) 299-1518 or secretary@lambogod-lakestevens.org

***Shara will be out of the office August 1-11*

****Moving? New Phone Number? Please contact the church office with address, phone number and email changes so we can update our records. Thank you!*

Pastoral Assistance

Pastor:

Mike May (314) 775-6956

Worship/Youth Leader:

Jan Novak (360) 691-3372

Elders:

Ernie Frederickson (360) 668-1234

Rick Ihrle (425) 481-3247

Larry Aalbu (360) 568-4757

Dale Rahn (425) 422-9789

Gary Beck (541) 740-5727

***Next month's newsletter deadline is July 23rd.*

July Birthdays, Baptismal and Wedding Anniversaries

Happy Birthday!

Rebecca Geiger	4	Jim Hassebrock	21
Elsa Uchikawa	6	Daisy Llerenas	23
Alli Dalton	7	Delanie Frazee	27
Jason Knapp	11	Jill Murray	27
Holli Lawrence	13	Ben Ihrle	30
Cody Farnsworth	14		
Julie Wolcott	14		

Baptismal Anniversaries

Mike Caldwell	1
Kirk Geiger	1
Sandy Mitchell	1
Ingrid Uchikawa	1
Chris Caldwell	7
Taylor Caldwell	7
Sarah Llerenas	7
Jon Rasmussen	15
Maddie Knapp	20
Janice Carpenter	22
Logan Frederickson	22
Peter Ihrle	23

Happy Anniversary

Jan & MJ Novak 7/15	Rick & Becky Ihrle 7/30
Pete & Debbie Jones 7/17	Dan & Judy Bartelheimer 7/31
Jason & Shara Knapp 7/22	Scott & Pam Ziemann 7/31
Jessica & Brock Wolitarsky 7/22	



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her own child. Finally, he shoots her as well. “She would have been a good woman,” the Misfit said, “if it had been somebody there to shoot her every minute of her life.”

I love that line. It makes the reader wonder, if she were threatened into obedience every minute of her life, could we really consider her behavior good? That’s merely the illusion of free will. Would you value a relationship with someone under those conditions? Would you expect God to want us to love Him under any circumstance where we were forced to comply? God’s ways are not my ways, so I need to admit I might not understand this as He does, but it just doesn’t seem consistent with what God has revealed to us.

I try to describe my belief as limited free will. We all understand that even if we have the ability to choose, it doesn’t mean we can choose to do anything at all. We can’t fly or bend steel. Despite what our kindergarten teachers told us, we eventually realize we can’t actually grow up to be president. We can choose to do a lot of things, but not everything. Now imagine you are at the gym for a pickup game of basketball. Michael Jordan shows up and picks you for his team. Does he need you to help him win? No, not even with him pushing 60. He could pass you the ball and let you have a few dribbles. He could even let you take a shot or two. But you’re going to win. The only thing you could really do to mess it up is walk off the court.

That’s at least a vague sense of what I imagine free will is like. God didn’t pick you because you looked better than the others. He certainly didn’t need you. But He picked you just the same. You could walk away. People actually do that. It seems like a better idea not to ask too many questions. Instead, maybe we should just accept His grace and share in His glory.

Blessings,
Pastor Mike

Worship Services are Currently Online Only

Facebook LIVE

We will be streaming Sunday services during the coming weeks. Watch us Sunday mornings at 10:15 am on our Facebook page.

www.facebook.com/lambofgodlakestevens/

www.lambofgod-lakestevens.org

We are hoping to begin meeting for in person services sometime in July. Information will be posted on the home page of our website, on our Facebook page, and in our Weekly Connection emails.

Stay Connected

Weekly Connection News Emails

If you would like to subscribe to our weekly Connection News emails, visit the homepage on our website at www.lambofgod-lakestevens.org and fill out the form at the bottom of the page.

Thank You

This past Sunday marked our 14th Sunday worshipping online only via 'FaceBook Live.' Crazy! This on-line worship experience has gone well but would not have been possible without the help of some amazing individuals. Pastor Mike and I would like to especially thank all those who have helped make this happen: Shara Knapp-PowerPoint, camera operator; Hayley McClellan- PowerPoint and musician chauffeur; Luke and Lindsey McClellan-keyboard, bass and vocals; Lori, Delanie, Jill May-vocals and guitar and PowerPoint; Kylie and Sam St. John-vocal and PowerPoint; Dale Rahn-Drummer (BGV); DuWayne Brave-drummer and vocals, Cody Farnsworth-A/V technician for our new equipment, and lastly Zion Lutheran School and music teacher Mrs. Amy Riffle-Kouyeas for allowing us to turn Mrs. Riffle-Kouyeas' classroom into Lamb of God Studios. All of you are a huge blessing to the ministry of our Lamb of God faith community.

Our goal throughout this unique time is to make sure that once we were able to move back to in-person worship that on-line services will continue. The last of the on-line video components will arrive this week and we are hopeful that we will be back with both 'Live' and 'on-line' worship in early July. Please continue to pray for this transition and for the overall impact that each these worship experiences have to offer.

In His Grip,
Jan Novak, Worship and Youth

Summer Camps—More Info Coming Soon!!

Summer Camps are happening on a smaller scale this year

Tentative Summer Camp Dates:

Golf Camp July 21-23 2:00-4:00 pm—\$20

If you are interested in registering for Golf Camp, please contact the church office.

Amazon Smile

Good News! Lamb of God received \$22.32 for the first quarter of 2020 from Amazon Smile. This amount is one half of one percent of purchases where Lamb of God was identified as the charity of choice.

Want to add Amazon Smile to your phone applications?

AmazonSmile customers can now support Lamb of God Lutheran Church in the Amazon shopping app on iOS and Android mobile phones! Simply follow these instructions to turn on AmazonSmile and start generating donations.

1. Open the Amazon Shopping app on your device
2. Go into the main menu of the Amazon Shopping app and tap into 'Settings' Tap 'AmazonSmile' and follow the on-screen instructions to complete the process.



Zion Lutheran School News

Scholarship Applications: Lamb of God Scholarship Applications for those attending Zion Lutheran School are now available. Please contact the church office if you'd like an application Thank you!

ZLS Auction Update:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FAITHFUL AND GENEROUS SUPPORT!

Our first ever online auction was successful! With support, kindness and generosity from our school community we were able to raise \$50,000. Thank you to everyone who donated items, their time and participated in the auction.

ALL 2020 RESERVATIONS & CATALOG SPONSORSHIPS WILL REMAIN VALID FOR OUR NEXT AUCTION AND IN PERSON EVENT.

On behalf of our faculty, staff and students, thank you!

July

Everett Outreach-Lord's Little
Cooker (Every Saturday morning
7:45-9:30 am)

News From NEHLM—Haiti Updates (June 25, 2020)

June 25, 2020

Greetings,

When I recently called Rev. Paul at 7:30 p.m. on a weeknight, I heard singing in the background. I asked if they were having a service. He responded, "Oh, yes, every evening we are having a service. But we have to limit it to just the children and people of the ministry. Regulations are still in effect." He reported that Haiti has 6000 Covid cases with 100 who have died. As we talked he revealed that there may be more because they are not able to do very much testing nor follow up on causes of death. Let us praise God that those of this ministry are daily raising their voices in songs and prayers as their country and the world navigate this situation.

The government in Haiti continues to work on roads. In the previous updates I shared how a wall on one side of the school ground had to be removed. We trust that they now have a proper boundary line that will accommodate the larger road on the west side of the prop-

erty. This week I found out that the road construction is active also in Cap Haitian. Many houses were leveled by a bulldozer to make the road. Rev. Paul explained how most of those people worked hard for the little piece of land and the construction of their home and now it is gone. There does not appear to be any compensation for taking the land for the road. That was a situation also for a neighbor on the west side of the ministry. Improved roads are needed in Haiti; however, the expense to some individuals is devastating.

Rev. Paul's response to "How are you doing?" was "We are doing very well--working in the gardens and homes and school."

We pray, "Dear Lord, Please continue to strengthen him and those of his ministry. Amen."

God's peace,

Rev. Sam Wiseman

**Watch the video of Rev. Daniel Paul's message of thanks on our website. Click the link on the homepage.*



Youth and Family News

One of the blessings this unique COVID19 time is the opportunity for families to 'slow down' and rediscover one another. I know, I know we are all ready for a little 'speed up' in our lives but don't underestimate the positive power of this time of the here and now. We may never get this kind of down time with our families and loved ones ever again. It may still be awhile before we are able together in person and you may be running out of fresh ideas of things to do...so I 'borrowed' few ideas and activities from a cool website I found to help you and your family continue to make the most of this unique time:

30 Family Activity Ideas: Gleaned from Valley Children's Healthcare website: '50 Family Activity Ideas' Comments are from yours truly.

<https://www.valleychildrens.org/media-center/family-activity-ideas>

- *Create an indoor or backyard scavenger hunt. (no food...unless you make a map)
- *Read your favorite books together. 'Go Dog Go!' 'Aslan!'
- *Make a meal inspired by your favorite children's book (for example, cook up some green eggs and ham for Dr. Seuss or make chocolate chip cookies while you read "If You Give a Mouse a Cookie") "Will you eat them here or there?"
- *Dance party! Challenge each family member to come up with their own "signature move." This has Mr. Repp written all over it!
- *Play your favorite board game...YAHTZEE!
- *Create your very own "Top Chef" competition in your kitchen. I vote for S'mores
- *Call friends and family on video chat...have you tried the 'Marco Polo' app yet?
- *Play tag in the backyard (or in the house)
- *Use chalk to write positive messages on the driveway and sidewalk (or play hopscotch)
- *Paint pictures and hang them in your front windows to share with people walking by (Jesus Loves You and so do we!)
- *Backyard Olympics! Look on Pinterest for ideas on creative "Olympic sport" activities you can do right in your backyard. (I'm still a fan of Jarts...you just have to be quick on your feet and wear a helmet)
- *Look through old photo albums together (Awwwwwww 📷)
- *Cook your child's favorite dish together (you can do a lot with Mac n cheese)
- *Learn a magic trick together "Hey Rocky...watch me pull a rabbit out of my hat"
- *Karaoke night! Belt out your favorite tunes together. BBBenny and the Jetsssssss!
- *Watch a favorite family movie together. Make some homemade snacks to enjoy during the movie. "Sandlot, Sandlot, Sandlot..." "You're killing me, Smalls!"
- *Take a walk around the neighborhood...preferably your own but it doesn't have to be.
- *Create a pillow fort in the living room (Pillow Fight!)
- *Come up with new silly products and challenge your kids to "pitch" the products to you as their very own version of "Shark Tank." Please, please share these ideas with me...I, I mean we could make a fortune on that show!
- *Play hide and seek...Think this through...be sure to save that great spot for yourself when you are just done with the kids
- *Bake cookies! Do you really need a reason?

Connect with us!



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Follow us on Instagram:
[@lambofgodlakestevens](https://www.instagram.com/lambofgodlakestevens)

Lamb of God Lutheran Church

LOVE GOD, LOVE PEOPLE, LIVE LIKE JESUS

Join Us for Worship at 10:15 am

Lamb of God Lutheran Church

WORSHIP SCHEDULE:

Family Education: 9:00 am

Worship Hour: 10:15 am

Holy Communion is celebrated during worship the 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month.

Office: (425) 377-2173

www.lambofgod-lakestevens.org

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3923 103rd Avenue SE
Lake Stevens, WA 98258

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