



SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

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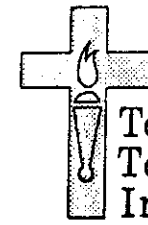
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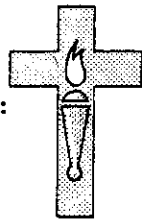
CONCORDIA WORSHIP STATISTICS:

Average Sunday Worship for: (Summer)

1991.....	108
1992.....	144
1993.....	168

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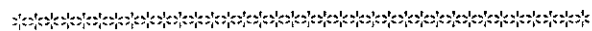
August 1991.....	108
August 1992.....	151
August 1993.....	195



Worship Stats for August 1993:

Week #1.....	137 (M)	33 (E)
Week #2.....	161 (M)	41 (E)
Week #3.....	174 (M)	32 (E)
Week #4.....	153 (M)	49 (E)

Our Sunday evening service this summer (June-August) has averaged 30 worshippers.



Our two worship opportunities here at Concordia are important and effective. On several occasions this summer we have had nearly 50 people attending our evening service.

I am thankful for the support of our Concordia family for the support and regular participation in our ministry. It is a real witness to our visitors and community.

God will continue to bless our efforts as we seek to serve our congregation and community with a Scriptural and Christ-centered, Word and Sacrament ministry.

NEW MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

Wednesday evening prayer and Communion will be offered on the first Wednesday evening of each month. The time of this meeting will be at 7:15pm. Our time of prayer and Communion will be done by 8:00pm at the latest.

The focus of this congregational prayer group will be Word and Sacrament. We will pray for the various ministry points that our congregation is pursuing. We will also pray for individual concerns. Also, community and wider concerns will be prayed for.

Prayer is a time when we can talk to God about that which He is fully aware of. It is a time of connecting with one another and our Lord, in a very reflective way.

Please keep in mind that other ministries in this town, and other ministries on the Christian radio, may have a "charismatic" agenda to a prayer/worship service. That will not be the focus for our Wednesday group.

Prayer is a gift from God. It is a gift that has been given to the individual as well as the church. This group will not be a group that is separate from the rest of the life of our congregation. It will be an expression of the life of our congregation.

The Lord has done great things for us!

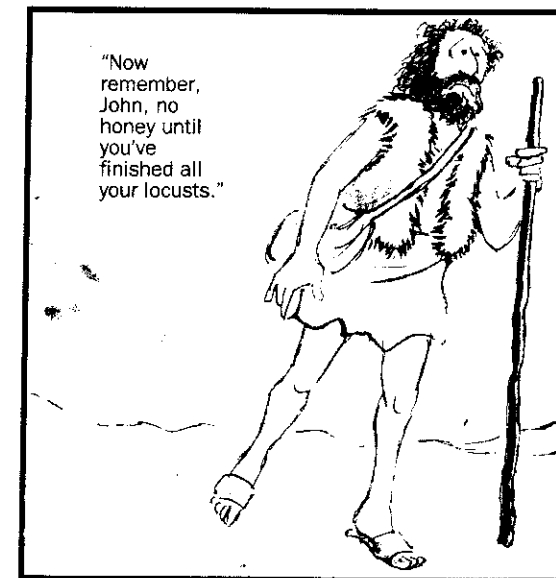
Seven outreach steps

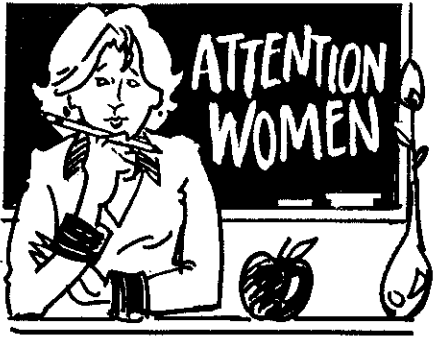
God continues to bless St. John's in Lafe, Ark., with growth—even though the congregation is located in a community of 300 people. This doesn't keep St. John's members from intentionally reaching out and using their church's strengths:

- An attitude of outreach:** Because members care about their community and neighbors, their attitude is one of "I want them to have what we have in this congregation." They believe in the mission of this congregation and that we have been given something to offer that no one else can.
- Steps toward user-friendly worship:** Because this is a small community and a mid-sized congregation, many people in the congregation are known to the visitors. We try to make it a practice to have someone sit with our visitors who don't have a Lutheran (or liturgical) background, so the visitors feel more comfortable. The pastor tries to help by giving verbal directions from time to time during the service.
- Building a strong children/youth program:** A number of years ago, St. John's began a weekday school program for grades 3-8 once a week. This program has served as an entrance for a number of families. The congregation also emphasizes its youth program. That emphasis has had a tremendous effect on a community where many of the local churches have very few children or youth involved at all.
- Welcoming atmosphere:** Although we have a greeters program, that doesn't stop the rest of the congregation from warmly welcoming our visitors. You can call it Southern hospitality, but the point is the members make it a priority to communicate how glad they are when somebody visits the church.

- Long-term relationships:** Because this community does not have a lot of people moving in and out, the members can build on long-term friendships with their neighbors and family members in order to share the love of Christ. This is really the web concept at its finest.
- Being neighborly:** Non-members often comment how one or more members really came to their aid in a crisis or showed their love in some other way. It's simply letting the light of Christ's love radiate daily into one's relationships.
- Mutual encouragement to keep reaching out:** This takes many forms. Some Bible classes begin by having a specific time for anyone to talk about experiences they had that week in reaching out to others.

—by Rev. Jeff Shanks, pastor





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WEDNESDAY EVENING PRAYER SERVICE

On the first Wednesday evening of each month Concordia will be offering a special prayer and communion service. The time of this service will be 7:15pm to 8:00pm.

The focus of this Word and Sacrament, Christ-centered service will be to enrich our prayer life here at Concordia. This service is an extension of our total ministry here at Concordia.

Corporate prayer, individual concerns, community cares, and world issues will be brought to our Lord in prayer. Communion will conclude each service. Worship services with preaching and Bible classes with instruction are offered at other times of the week. The focus of this service will end with communion during this service.

Come and join with your worshipping family on these evenings. We will pray for our ministry here at Concordia. This reflective service will give us the chance to listen to the gentle voice of our gracious Lord.



Living the Mission

The telephone: a valuable evangelism tool

Much of our evangelism work at Memorial, Houston, Texas, is done over the telephone. Our members are constantly encouraged to invite their unchurched friends, acquaintances, fellow employees and business associates to come with them to worship services. Members are also encouraged to submit names of people who might be interested in learning about the Christian faith.

Pastor Gene Oesch tries to telephone all first-time visitors the day after they visit. Follow-up calls are also very important. Interested individuals are invited to attend not only all church functions, but also the adult instruction class.

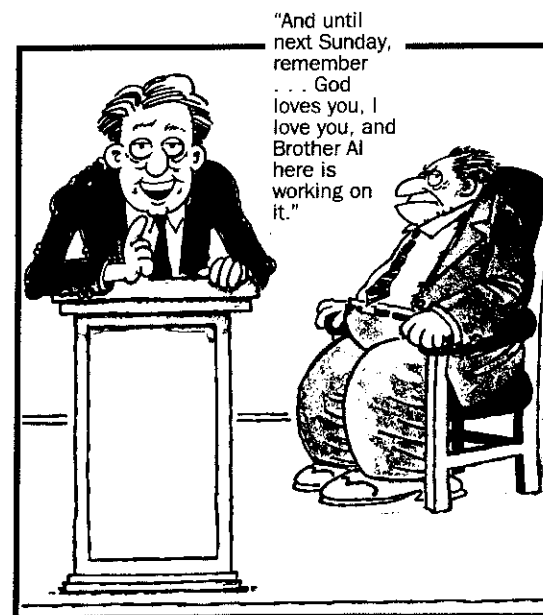
Especially important in the gathering of a class is the activity of former class members. They are encouraged to bring their unchurched friends to the next class and accompany them through the entire course.

All sessions are audiotaped as well as videotaped, for both review and for those who might miss a class session.

—Rev. Gene A. Oesch, senior pastor

LABOR DAY GOD USES US IN OUR DAILY WORK

We talk a lot about "the ministry of the Laity" in church these days, and many books, church programs, and whole ecclesiastical bureaucracies are devoted to developing "lay ministries." Perhaps we have not devoted enough of our attention to the ministries the lay people of the church already have in their day-to-day work. We call our work our "vocation" ... and that word really means "that which we are CALLED to do." Whether we have consciously acknowledged a specific CALL by God to work in a particular occupation, I believe God does expect to use us in our daily work. In fact, He sometimes does use us even though we are unaware of His activity. But the more aware we are of His intention to use us where we are, the better able we will be to fulfill the ministry He has in store for each of us. ■



WHAT IS THE TITHE? GROWTH IN FAITH AND COMMITMENT ARE NEEDED

In the life of a Christian steward today the tithe may become something quite different from what it is usually conceived to be. It is well known that the tithe was an Old Testament law requiring one-tenth of a citizen's agricultural produce for the support of the landless Levites who served as priests in the temples.

We have often seen the tithe promoted as the answer to all church financial problems. But in fact tithing has more to do with faith than finances. In our time the tithe is a discipline to guide Christians in their giving. It has nothing to do with the law of the land; nor is it limited to sharing the produce of our fields with those who are landless.

Whether giving less than a tithe or more, the Christian steward should acknowledge that all they are and have belong to God

Normally tithing is taught as the base for sharing in the Christian enterprise. It is sometimes offered as the floor, not the ceiling for giving. Many practice tithing that way, making sure that they give ten per cent of their incomes and more. For others, the ten per cent portion is their goal yet to be achieved. Whether he or she is giving less than a tithe or more, the Christian steward should acknowledge that all they are and have belongs to God. Tithing is a Christian way of giving priority to God's will as carried forward through the mission of the church.

The tithe is an ever-present guide to check our growth. How far must we grow to reach it? Or, how much beyond it have we been able to grow? ■

SEPTEMBER

1993

AUTUMN

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 Wed. Eve Prayer Service 7:15PM	2 BAZAAR WORKSHOP 1-4PM WOMENS STUDY 9:30AM	3	4
5 WORSHIP 9AM PRE-EVENING SERVICE LABOR DAY BBQ 5PM WORSHIP 7PM	6 LABOR DAY	7 COMMITTEES 7:30PM	8 Addiction, Support & Info. Group 7:15PM	9 BAZAAR WORKSHOP 1-4PM WOMENS STUDY 9:30AM	10	11 MEN'S BREAKFAST FELLOWSHIP 7-9AM
12 WORSHIP 9AM RALLY DAY SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:30 CONFIRMATION 4:30PM WORSHIP 7PM	13	14 VOTERS 7:30PM	15 Concordia Women's Guild 6:30PM Soup & Salad at Svendens	16 BAZAAR WORKSHOP 1-4PM WOMENS STUDY 9:30AM	17	18
19 WORSHIP 9AM SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:30 WORSHIP 7PM YOUTH MEAL 4:30PM	20	21 CALLERS 7:00PM	22 Addiction, Support & Info Group 7:15PM	23 BAZAAR WORKSHOP 1-4PM WOMENS STUDY 9:30AM	24	25
26 WORSHIP 9AM SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:30 ECC WORSHIP 12:45PM CONFIRMATION 4:30PM WORSHIP 7PM	27	28	29	30 BAZAAR WKSP 1-4 WOMENS STUDY 9:30AM		