

Chronicles

January 2024, Vol. 64, Issue 1



Christmas Caroling 2023

OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH , MISSOURI SYNOD
Newton, Iowa 641-792-1084
email: oursavr@windstream.net
www.oursavlutheran.com

In confession of sins, we say to our Father, "We deserve your temporal and eternal punishment." Then, we say that we're sorry.

I wonder if this phrasing is formulated the best way that it could be. Doesn't this formulation give you the impression that what you are to be concerned about is the punishment of sin -- temporal and eternal?

That's surely not correct. Sin's punishment is **not** what we're trying to get out of. We're trying to get away from sin itself -- from sinning. The problem isn't that there is punishment. The problem is that we sin.

Punishment is a treatment for sin and, therefore, not to be avoided.

Now -- punishment amongst humans is often very badly practiced and applied. But surely God is not guilty of the same sorts of mistakes we make.

Did you ever, as a child, get caught doing wrong and wish for punishment? Surely, at some time as a child, you desired to avoid punishment. Punishment isn't pleasant.

But what is the effect of simply getting out of punishment? Don't you often, then, go ahead and repeat the same sin?

Frequently, when you are not punished, you so desire, deep down to be punished, that you punish yourself. Feeling guilty is a kind of self-inflicted punishment that you apply to yourself when the external punishment for your transgression seems insufficient. You beat yourself up because you didn't receive the beating you deserve.

Your Lord did not die and rise to take away the punishment for sin. He did these things to remove sin altogether. Once sin is gone, the punishment disappears, too.

You may say to yourself, "But I still sin." Yes, you do. And that's what Jesus is in the process of rescuing you from. You're not there yet. But faith means believing that you can and will reach that point.

Removing punishment and simply accepting bad behavior does you no favors. Rather, when you see what sin does to yourself and to others, you wish to part company with those behaviors. The forgiving of sins necessarily requires having your eyes fully opened to sin. Brushing things under the rug is just a delusion. Confronting your sin is how you begin to get over it.

To be let 'off the hook' is to be denied the opportunity to pin Jesus on the cross. That is not the fate you are promised. "Take up your cross and follow me." "We died and are buried with Christ" so that we might rise anew. To arise anew is not to avoid punishment, but to go through it to get beyond sin.

All through life it's not about what you go around, but what you get through.

OSL Caroling & Chili



An OSL tradition continued in full VOICE the afternoon of Sunday December 10. 23 people loaded the 'yellow limousine' to make the rounds for an afternoon of caroling to our Newton friends and neighbors. First stop, Park Centre, where we were greeted by our church friends Doc and Marilyn Jessen and Dianne Breckenridge, plus the residents celebrating birthdays in the lobby. We then walked across the street to Newton Village to sing to Virgil Hartz and Marva Doerring, as well as their welcoming group of fellow residents. We sang 'in the round' of the lobby of Newton Place apartments, joined by Beverly Willaby and Karen Doak, and many of their resident neighbors. Back on the bus, we crossed town to the home of Nancy Janssen and her family to serenade them with several of our favorite Christmas hymns and songs. Our last stop was to Selina's mother-in-law before we headed back to the Church for warm chili and treats.

Thanks to Doug Woebeking for making the chili (with his homemade tomato sauce) and his helper crew - Rick Hartz, Ron Dlouhy, Randy Ervin

and Marilyn Jessen. A Big thanks to Steve Hartz for once again chauffeuring us all about town. And THANK YOU to Pastor Brandt for spending his afternoon with us in song and greetings.



CHRISTMAS EVE DIVINE SERVICE



LWML Christmas Celebration





DISCOVER HOPE is opening a "Restoration House" for men in January. They have also hired a male housing manager to oversee it. They are in need of twin sheets, nonperishable food items, meat, & men's hygiene products. JoAnn and Dorothy delivered a dozen quilts in December that will be used for homeless requests.

They serve free meals 5 days/week for anyone in need and would love to have cookies to serve. They have a volunteer who drives over every Tuesday to help serve the meal.



Carol delivered 5 Quilts to West Academy in December.



In their Advent Focus presentations, Pastors Brandt and Berry included the confirmation students, Will and Gabe, and Hayden, during our Advent services.

