

Good News

July
2023

Lord of Life
Lutheran
Church
(ELCA)

Worship
Sunday -
9:30 am
Wednesday -
6:30 pm

Ministers
The Lord of Life
Faith Family

Pastors
Steven J. Rye
Erika Nilsen

Office Hours
Mon.-Fri.
8:30am - 5pm

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The Power Of Music

The lights in sconces on walls and in the chandelier above dimmed, then cut off completely. The Sanctuary was now lit by a sea of candles, each a small, but intense glow in the dark of the December night. Then, all began to sing:

"Silent Night, Holy Night. All is calm, All is Bright. Round Yon Virgin Mother and Child. Holy Infant so tender and mild..."

Christmas Eve Services at my grandparents' Church in New Ulm, Minn. are some of my earliest memories of worship.

Our family would finish a Christmas Eve party at my Aunt and Uncle's before making our way to the church, greeting numerous extended family, before finally sitting down in the same pews our family had been in for decades.

I cannot share with you thoughts on those Christmas sermons or tell you which exact Bible verses were read, but I can tell you how it sounded.

How the noise was almost deafening as everyone sang "Joy to The World," accompanied by the massive pipe organ at the front of the Sanctuary! or how beautiful "Away in the Manger" was.

Music has the power to tell us the Word of God, and also serve as a way for the Holy Spirit to shape our response to the Word.

Fast forward a number of years, and my family was once again in that old, familiar church. Only this time, we were there to say goodbye to my Grandmother, Alice.

She had passed away while she and my Grandpa were visiting family right before Thanksgiving. That year, as we tried to pick up the pieces after her sudden death, I thought to myself that there was not much to be thankful for.

But her funeral changed that.

By the time she had passed away, the Church Choir Alice had spent many years singing in had disbanded. But for her funeral, as many members as could still perform came back to send her off with one of her favorite songs.

"And He walks with me and He talks with me. And He tells me that I am His own..."

Looking back, at that funeral I had much to be thankful for. This included all the people who used their musical gifts to comfort my family. Even more importantly though, as this song, "In The Garden" tells us, God has called us His own, and through Him we have eternal life in Heaven.

As I write this, another musician is on my mind. On June 27, we laid to rest Jacob Borgstrom. Jacob's skill and passion for music awed me everytime I heard him perform here at Lord of Life.

As we prepared for the funeral, there was a lot of reflecting on his music. One of the songs I found was his "Christmas Hallelujah" from this past Christmas Eve.

"Well I know You came to rescue me. This baby boy would grow to be, a man who'd one day die for you and me...Still every breath You drew was Hallelujah."

I give thanks to God for Jacob's life and how he used his gifts to testify to the love God has for him and all of us. Please join me in keeping his family and all who loved him in your prayers.

This summer, Pastor Steve plans to continue to explore the power of music during his sermons. I am excited to hear him dive deeper into the messages behind these hymns and songs and I think you will too.

I look forward to hearing you in worship,
Tyler Jensen
Communications and Volunteer Coordinator