



Sermon
Rev. Lang Yang

"The Church is United in Christ"

5th Sunday after Pentecost
Our Savior Lutheran Church - Lansing, MI
7-5-2020

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

John 17:20-21, "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me." 'This is the Word of God.' (Cross-reference – John 3:17, 10:16-17, 30, 38; 11:42 17:3, 8-9, 19,11, 20-21, 23 Jeremiah 32:39).

Illustration "Religious group united" (Show Hitler)



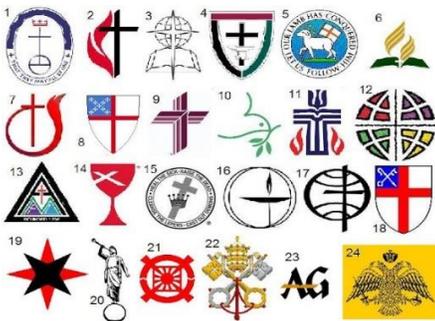
During World War II, Hitler commanded all religious groups to unite so that he could control them. Among the Brethren assemblies, half complied and half refused. Those who went along with the order had a much easier time—those who did not face harsh persecution. In almost every family of those who resisted, someone died in a concentration camp. When the war was over, feelings of bitterness ran deep between the groups, and there was much tension. Finally, they decided that the situation had to be healed. Leaders from each group met at a quiet retreat. For several days, each person spent time in prayer, examining his own heart in the light of Christ's commands. (Show love prevails)



Then they came together. Francis Schaeffer, who told of the incident, asked a friend who was there, "What did you do then?" "We were just one," he replied. As they confessed their hostility and bitterness to God and yielded to His control, the Holy Spirit created a spirit of unity among them. Love filled their hearts and dissolved their hatred. When love prevails among believers, especially in times of strong disagreement, it presents to the world an indisputable mark of a faithful follower of Jesus Christ. *Our Daily Bread*, October 4, 1992.

<http://www.sermonillustrations.com/a-z/u/unity.htm>

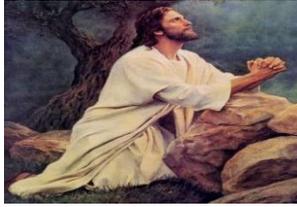
(Show different Christians Denominations Logos)



In the United States and all over the world, there are thousands and thousands of different denominations and religious groups. Most familiar are, Lutherans, Methodist, Roman Catholics, Baptist, Christian and Missionary Alliance, Presbyterian, Amish, Mennonite, Reform, Assemblies of God, Pentecostal, Disciples of Christ, Episcopalians, United Church of Christ, the Church of the Brethren and Orthodox and the list go on and on. If you carefully look at the different denominations, their name may be different, but the way they worship and preaching the Gospel also different. Even though their doctrine, theology, and understanding the

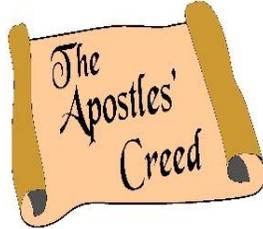
Scripture is different than our Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod; they are proclaiming Christ.

I. The non-believer always asks, "Why is it that the Christian has so many denominations? Why can't they just be one Christian denomination as one Church united in Christ?" (Show Jesus prayer)

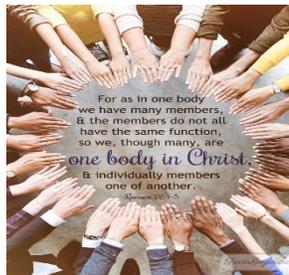
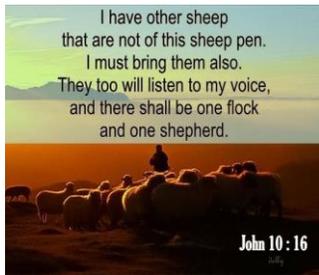


Today Jesus pray in our Gospel lesson, He says, "that they may all be one." Can all the Church with different denominations with a separate doctrine of believing, teaching, and confessing be one Church united in Christ? Every Church that confesses Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior even though each belongs to different denominations, we are united in Christ.

(Show Nicene and Apostles' Creed)



In the "Nicene Creed and Apostles' Creed," we confess, "I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church.... I believe the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, and the communion of saints....." It is every nation, from all tribes, and people and languages that confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior are united in Christ. (Show John 10:16 and Romans 12:5)

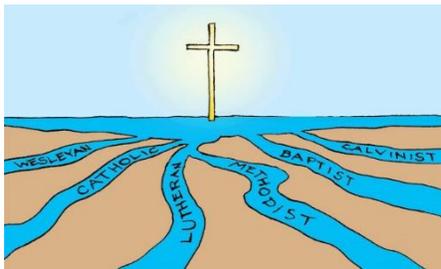


One holy Christian Church is not something that the human race created. Jesus said, "And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there shall be one flock and one shepherd." (John 10:16). The Apostle Paul writes, "So we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another." (Romans 12:5).

The truth is that we are one flock, one body with many members of Jesus Christ.

Brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus, during this pandemic of the Coronavirus (COVID-19), we are united by faith in Christ even while apart of not able to gather to worship and praise God's name.

(Show Christians Denomination So Who's Right)



There are too many denominations that are not getting along. Their doctrine teaches that "Infant cannot be baptized because the infant doesn't know what sin is? The Lord supper only symbolizes the body and blood of Jesus since Jesus already went to heaven.

Women can be pastors when Jesus only chose men to be Apostles and gave explicit instruction for the qualification for overseer position. (1 Timothy 3:1-7). Others say that they can pick and choose what to accept and omit from the Bible, while Scripture

says, "You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you. (Deuteronomy 4:2). Others say you have to speak in tongue to be true Christian, and you have to follow the Old Testament Law (1 Corinthians 14:27-33), such as observing a special diet, holidays, and so on. (Colossians 2:16). When the Church cannot be united because of different understandings and interpretations of Scripture, then it confuses the believer concerning the Church united in Christ.

II. The believer instead of coming to fellowship with one another, but they further staying away from each other. (Show LCMS – MAF Logo)



How are the Church be united in Christ, if the Church continues to disagree with one another? Our church body, The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, Military to the Arm Forces slogan, writes, "Cooperation without Compromise."

(Show God's Word is Our Foundation)



We can work together and be a church united in Christ in the area that we can show Christ's love for the nations. When we know that our foundation of life is under God's word, united in Christ, make it easier. (Show Lucy and Linus)



In a Peanuts cartoon, Lucy demanded that Linus change TV channels, threatening him with her fist if he didn't. "What makes you think you can walk right in here and take over?" asks Linus. "These five fingers," says Lucy. "Individually, they're nothing, but when I curl them together like this into a single unit, they form a weapon that is terrible to behold." "Which channel do you want?" asks Linus. Turning away, he looks at his fingers and says, "Why can't you guys get organized like that?"

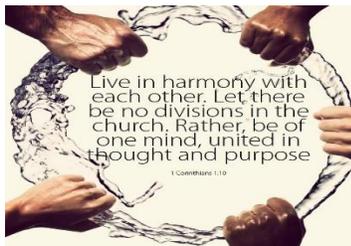
Charles Schultz. <http://www.sermonillustrations.com/a-z/u/unity.htm>

Jesus prays, "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me." (John 17:20-21). (Show one voice)



Christian can be united in Christ when we have one voice of how we believe, teach, and confessing the truth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Don't let the rules and policies of the Church get in the way of proclaiming Christ's salvation to others. (Show 1 Corinthians 1:10)

III. The Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians saying,



"I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment." (1 Corinthians 1:10). For the Church to be united in Christ is that we can hold fast and stand firm to the teaching of His word. Christ's purpose is not for the Church to be divide but to be united to share his salvation so that the non-believer may come to faith for their salvation.

Before Jesus ascension, Jesus gave us the Great Commission, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:19-20). Jesus didn't say "teach part of it, or only observe what you want, but observe all that He has commanded you." (Show family of Christ)



The Church is a Christian family united in Christ. We need to "Confess the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth and reject the error." Christian can be united in Christ with other Christian through "Cooperation without Compromise" of our faith. (Show fork tuning piano)



In the book "The Pursuit of God, A.W. Tozer said, "Has it ever occurred to you that one hundred pianos all tuned to the same fork are automatically

tune to each other? They are of one accord by being tuned, not to each other, but to another standard to which each one must individually bow. So one hundred worshipers [meeting] together, each one looking away to Christ, are in heart nearer to each other than they could be, were they to become 'unity' conscious and turn their eyes away from God to strive for closer fellowship.

[A.W. Tozer, The Pursuit of God.](#)

<http://www.sermonillustrations.com/a-z/u/unity.htm> (Show unity thru Christ)



In today's society, we have many denominations, with a different belief, teach and confess then we are, The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, but we can respect one another, serving one another, love one another because it is Christ Church, and the Church can be united in Christ. Christian in the United States and all over the world can come together as one people united by faith worshipping our Lord and Savior through the expansion of Christ's Kingdom. Amen.

Now may the peace of God which passes all understanding keep your heart and mind in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Children Message

Jesus Pray for His Disciples



Theme: Jesus Pray for His Disciples – They May All Be One

Object: Globe

Scripture: "I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me." (John 17:20-21, ESV).

Before I get started, I want to teach you our word for the day. Are you ready? It's "ONE". Every time you hear me say "ONE", I want you to hold up one finger. Ready? Let's practice. "ONE!" (*Let them hold up their finger*). Great job!

Hold the globe/earth ball in your hands as you talk so the children can see a visual. I'm sure most of you have heard the song "He's got the whole world in his Hands." (All God's People Sing – Hymn number 117). Right? (*Let them answer*). It talks about how God has the mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, babies, animals, sun, moon, wind, rain in his hands. In the Bible it tells us that Jesus prayed for all of us to be ONE, to love each other and accept each other as God does so that we would have unity – "ONE." (*Let them hold up their finger*). Great job again.

So, what does this mean? It means that God created "ONE" (*Let them hold up their finger*) world. How many? ONE! (*Let them hold up their finger*). He created ONE (*Let them hold up their finger*) world for lots of different people and Jesus prayed that we would act like ONE (*Let them hold up their finger*). How can we do that? Well, ONE (*Let them hold up their finger*) of the most important things we can do is to love everyone. (*Point to the country on the globe where you live*). This is the country where we live – does God want us to love only the people in this country? Of course not! That wouldn't be unity – or ONE. Jesus Say, "they may all be one."

The next time you see a number #1 or when someone say "ONE," I hope that you will remember that God wants us to love everyone all over the world (*Point to countries all over the globe*), so that we maybe "ONE" in Christ. (*Let them hold up their finger*). Great job, you can return back to your seat.

Prayer: Dear Jesus, thank you for calling us to faith. May we all be united as "ONE" in Christ. Amen. Great job, you can return back to your seat.