



Concordia Lutheran Church

"Learning, Living, Sharing the Gospel"

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Greetings to you, dearest brothers and sisters in the Lord, in the name of the Living Jesus who possesses all authority in the heavens and on the earth!

Have you ever caught someone staring at you? Have you ever had that feeling that someone was staring at you? Makes you uncomfortable, right?

I remember my "growing up" years as the son of missionary parents, having moved to Taipei, Taiwan as a second grader. We lived some distance from the "American community," in the heart of a unique place, surrounded by the Chinese my parents had come to serve. I remember being stared at ... a lot. My skin color gave me away. I would often hear, and many times see others pointing at me, saying, "American." We were the clear and obvious minority, learning to live in their community, being watched constantly, waiting to see what we would do or how we would respond.

Have you ever been stared at like that?

Jesus was stared at like that! There was something remarkably different about him; he stood out in a crowd, being watched by everyone to see what he would do or to listen to what he would say. He looked just like all the others (so it was not his skin color). What was different? One answer to this question is "he acted and lived in a different way."

Listen as Jesus speaks: *"Love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful."*

Too many people hear these words, thinking "great, now I have to love those who want to destroy me and my way of life, and I'm supposed to lend my stuff to those people even when I know I will never see it again." Jesus is not offering "instructions to live by." If that is what he is doing, then go ahead and be grumpy and stingy.

Jesus is revealing the lavish generosity of the heavenly Father, inviting us to watch how He acts and lives, and, in so far as we are enabled, to live that way too. "The heavenly Father is merciful," says Jesus, "most certainly to those who do not deserve it or will not appreciate it, be that way – merciful – yourselves."

That is why people stared at Jesus! He lived generously, mercifully, lovingly, forgivingly, graciously toward and with ALL people. His skin color was the same as everyone else. Yet, his response to and behavior around the hurting, the poor, the disenfranchised, the outcasts, the "different" and the "sinners," even the "religious insiders/elite" caused many to stare and some to condemn. Knowing that we, too, have been forgiven, what would happen if we lived like that in our congregation and community? I think it would be great if we were stared at for all these right reasons!

The LORD be with you as you reflect His Joy and Life to many others!

Luv ya'!
Pastor Craig

Happy July Birthdays

07/01 Bonnie Sohn	07/04 Greg Fritz	07/05 Eli Moon
07/07 Jeanne Willman	07/12 Peter Wharton	07/14 Shirley Zuehlke
07/20 Rick Riemenschneider	07/27 Andy Hogrefe	07/27 Leon Rinck 07/28 Lara Craig

Happy July Anniversaries

07/08 Chris & Rebecca Duryea	07/12 Brian & Jerry Thornton
07/29 Bradley & Lara Craig	07/29 Greg & Jan Fritz



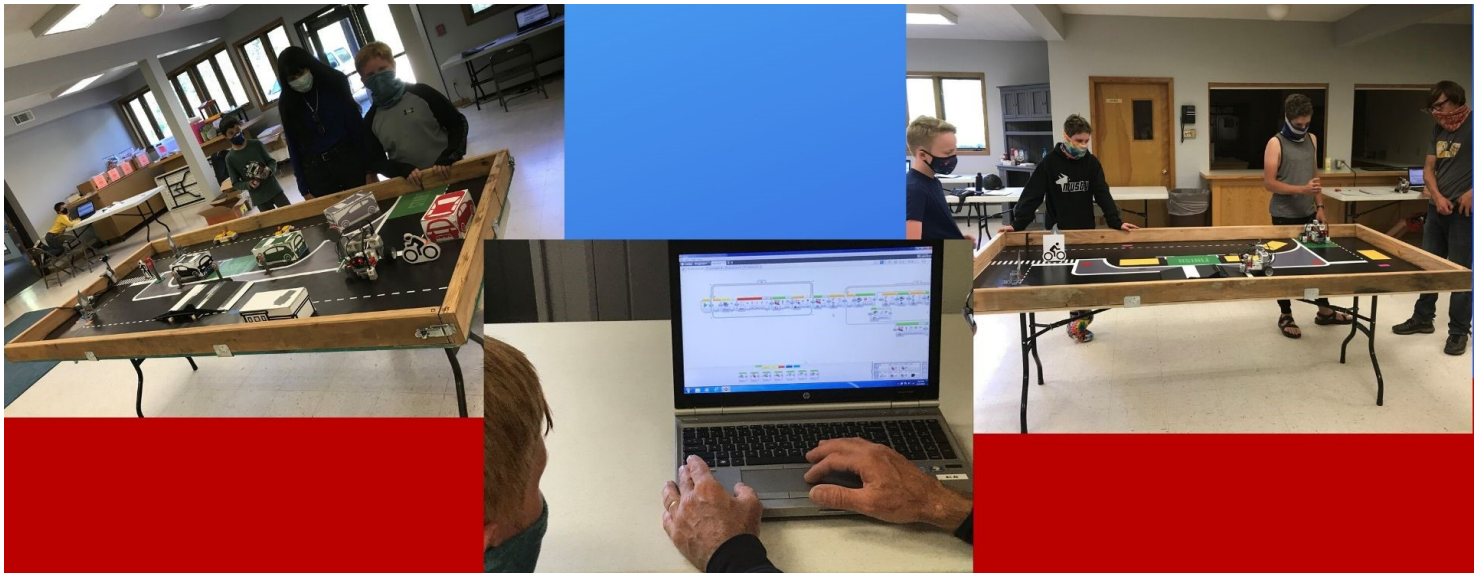
Concordia
Seminary
ST. LOUIS

We are pleased to announce that we have "adopted" Aidan Moon through the seminary's Adopt-a-Student Program; a young man of character and commitment to the pastoral vocation.



Click on the image to read the Declaration of Independence

See you outside
on Sunday!
Bring a lawnchair!!



4-H Robotics getting ready for their July exhibit in our Fellowship Hall



We are so excited to announce that **VBS WILL BE HAPPENING** this year! With one modification, though. Instead of you bringing your kids to **VBS**, we're bringing **VBS** to your kids.

This summer, on **July 6-8**, we'll be using a quarantine-friendly **VBS** called **BOLT**. With minimal preparation, easy-to-follow instructions, and a video that leads you and your kids step-by-step through each of the 3 days, **BOLT** is designed for you to perform with your family at home. *And... if these dates don't work for you, you can access the materials at any time and use them when they work for your family!*

During **BOLT**, your family will participate in fun games that illustrate what it means to listen to, focus on, and follow Jesus. Depending on your pace, you can expect that each day's experience will last about an hour and a half. It's great for kids 5 and up. Even middle and high school kids can enjoy it!

If you feel comfortable gathering with more people, you can invite as many neighbors, friends, and family to your house for **BOLT** as you would like. It's such an easy and fun way to share the good news of Jesus with our community.

To get a better idea of what **BOLT** is, click on the link below
(but don't let your kiddos see it just yet--we want to save the fun for later!)

[**BOLT day 2 sample video**](#)

Click on the link below to **register** and we will send you more information as we get closer to July 6-8.
Feel free to share this link with others!!!

[**VBS 2020 Registration**](#)

Thank you to our sponsors!

Concordia Lutheran Church

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