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# The Pastor's Page

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In one of my earlier churches we had “Koinonia Carnivals”

They were wonderful events of sharing the fellowship of the church. On a warm August day, it was a time for the congregation to bring its talents together and celebrate the gifts we are to each other.

While other congregations were having carnivals to raise money, we were having carnivals to raise the wholeness of the church. We were celebrating the intimate relationship that comes to Christians who see each other truly as brothers and sisters in one family – Lutheran Church of the Master in this case..

People who had craft skills brought items to display – no selling – only celebrating the talents that God gave all of us in each member.

There were tables set up with games for children (and not a few adults) to play. There was an apple pie contest, and I was assigned to judge the best pie. Not being Solomon, I just said they all were the best, and in their own way they were.

The choir got to sing songs it couldn't sing in church and everyone got to sing with the choir – so everyone was in the choir that day.

It was a marvelous way to say, I love you in Christ. Thank you for loving me in Christ.

Koinonia is a Greek word. We could have called it Ubuntu Carnival. Ubuntu is a Swahili word. It means community.

From the beginning the early Church learned that it needed each other's gifts. Paul wrote about that in First Corinthians. “For all have been given gifts by the Spirit, for the common good.” “Common good” is koinonia. It's ubuntu.

We have a diverse congregation. That is so wonderful in some ways. It is so challenging in other ways.

We are a multi-generational church. While the demographics shows that the largest group is the generation of those in their 30's and 40's, we are blessed to have new borns to almost 100 year olds. We have families who are three and four generations in our church. And we have people who have joined this year.

We have people who are life-long Lutherans, and those who have never attended a Lutheran church before ours.

We are Koinonia. We are Ubuntu. We are this wonderful mix of the Body of Christ.

When Paul talked about Koinonia, he likened it to a body. The eye and the ear are different but both necessary. One cannot say to the other “I don't need you.” All parts are from the one and same Spirit.

This summer we get to worship together. The Body is in the house all at the same time. Like most households, when everyone comes home at the same time, there are some accommodations to be made. We may have to spiritually slide over this summer and make room for someone else.

We have tried to blend our two very different worship services into a service that celebrates new and old ways of praising God. It may be difficult to adjust to the new, or it might be refreshing to have our worship experience expanded a bit.

Thank you for your participation in worship. Thank you for trying new songs and being exposed to old traditions at the same time. Thank you for putting the best construction on what is new to you. Thank you for explaining your fellow worshipers actions in the kindest way.

In Galatians it says to bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of love. I pray that this is the pattern we adopt not only for summer worship, but for all that we say and do as a congregation.

If we ask God to help and guide us in all of this, we surely will have a Koinonia Carnival at Zion this summer and beyond.

Blessings to you all,

- RHV