



Phone: (972) 867-5588

Fax: (972) 985-5588

Internet Home Page: <http://planolutheran.com>

Vol. 36, No. 2

Plano, Texas

February 2022

## What Do You Believe about Heaven?

What did Jesus look like? To be sure, we don't really know, because the Bible doesn't tell us. But that hasn't stopped people from guessing! Jesus has been portrayed a variety of ways in art. Whether it is paintings and sculptures or stained glass windows and movies, people have imagined very different versions of our Lord. Depicting Jesus on film or canvas, necessarily involves an artist using his or her imagination and adding details that Scripture just doesn't supply. The result is, that one way or another, he or she will communicate something about our Lord that is not written in Scripture. But is this wrong? Should Christians engage in this sort of non-biblical speculation? Or, does this cross a line?

Christians have debated this issue for a long time. On the one hand, good Christian art can have a powerful teaching effect. Great paintings and icons have been called "the books of the unlearned." More recently, movies and Passion plays, have a way of drawing people into the story of Jesus and helping us to understand how much He suffered for us and thus, how much He loves us. On the other hand, not every artist seeks to faithfully portray Scripture or represent Jesus in the best light. Some art is created to challenge the narrative or explore new ideas.

(Think, for example, of Martin Scorsese's *The Last Temptation of Christ*!) Art like this communicates false things about Jesus that mislead and confuse people who consume them unaware. Which is to say that good art is good, while bad art is bad and not all art is one or the other. Christians can benefit greatly from good art but it is no substitute for what God has revealed to us in the Bible.

Why bring this up? I was thinking about this recently because of our Wednesday Bible class, which is centered on the topic of heaven. We are using a video series by Lee Strobel, called *The Case for Heaven*, which is based on his most recent book by that same title.

When considering the subject of heaven, Christians must engage in a lot of speculation if they want answers to questions like: What will heaven be like? Scripture only tells us so much about what happens after we die and what it will be like for those who go to the Kingdom. And much of what it says is couched in vague picture language, (see for example Revelation 21.) St. Paul, even wrote to the Corinthians (loosely quoting Isaiah 64,) **"But as it is written, 'No eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has imagined the things that God has prepared for**

**those who love him.”** (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 2:9) He admits that what is to come is beyond our ability to imagine! So, why do we do it anyway? Because like good art made by a faithful artist, we can learn to understand God better, thinking about what He has done and what He will do.

Imagining heaven and wondering what it will be like can help us look forward to going there and perhaps even inspire us in the meantime to act a little more heavenly. Paul did something like this when he reminded the Philippians of their true home in heaven: **“But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.”** (Phil 3:20-21) It seems that getting our minds wondering about the kingdom of heaven and being “transformed in glory” may be a helpful thing for Christians to do. But, as with art, a caution is in order. Unfaithful speculations asserted as firm certainties can be misleading. When wondering about heaven, there is no human substitute for what God has already inspired in His Word. Whenever we think about

heaven and what it will be like and what we will do there, we need always ground these ideas and hold them subject to our infallible source of information: God’s holy Word.

*The Case for Heaven* is a helpful tool in getting us to think about what happens when we die, what we have to look forward to, and how we should live in the meantime. If you are interested in the book, I would recommend it, though some chapters are certainly stronger than others. For example, Strobel feels that Near Death Experiences offer good corroborating evidence that the soul lives on after death. I remain pretty skeptical of NDEs and of course, Scripture says nothing about them. On the other hand, his chapters on hell and his arguments against annihilationism and universalism are chock full of Scripture and offer good arguments for the traditional view.

The study will continue for a few more weeks if you would like to join us, we would love to have you.

PrS



*In my Father's house are many rooms.  
If it were not so, would I have told you  
that I go to prepare a place for you?*

John 14:2







### Sanctity of Human Life Sunday

Lutherans for Life celebrated Sunday, January 23, 2022 as Sanctity of Human Life Sunday. Our Life Sunday's theme was based upon John 15:16 – “You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit.” Our Life Team at LOL celebrated and were joined by other members with a street side Life Chain. A Life Chain is a prayer service with signs and the service was held from 1:00P–2:00P, January 23, 2022 at LOL. Our prayer service included songs for personal meditation, and personal prayers to end abortion and protect the unborn. Our songs sung softly and meditatively by each of the participants during this hour at street side included: Create in Me a Clean Heart, Jesus Loves the Little Children, He is Lord, Amazing Grace, How Great Thou Art, and America. Our meditation with prayer covered topics, to name a few, such as: 1) pray the motorists who witness our Life Chain will have receptive hearts and minds 2)pray God's grace and healing on mothers who have had abortions, and pray for local crisis pregnancy centers, such as Real Options, and other pro-life healing-support ministries 3)pray for Godly wisdom in our government and courts, and pray that God will strengthen and aid pro-life officials 4)pray that God will direct a profound spiritual awakening in the Plano area and throughout our Land 5) Psalm 51, and finally we concluded our personal hour of meditation time with the Lord's Prayer.

The Life Chain was conducted with humility and boldness in obedience to our Lord and Savior and in the Spirit of Christian Love, It was estimated that 1500 cars passed by and were occupied by 200 plus motorists. Several motorists honked their horns in recognition of our Life Chain. Participants included the LOL Lutherans for Life Team of Melanie Scarth, Terry Strecker and Dave Peters, as well as Ben, Emily, Ana, and Rix Scarth, Stephan Strecker, and Pat Greer. (See picture)

In Chronicles 7:14 *“If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”*

# Teen Times

## *"Chapter 2022"*

It's a new year and time for a page to be turned in the journal of the Lord of Life IMPACT Youth Ministry. This chapter will include lots of drama (teenagers are well-known for that), excitement, entertainment, erudition, and excursions. One event that can fulfill all of these adolescent experiences is the annual Higher Things youth conference. Over the past several years, our youth have traveled to many different locations for this conference. Places like Austin and San Antonio; Gainesville, Florida; Carbondale, Illinois; Seward, Nebraska (twice); and Nashville, Tennessee have been home to great fun, fellowship, worship, and Biblical instruction for one week in summer. 2022 will be a little more of a challenge to attend Higher Things, as our youth and adult leaders will make the longest journey to date: to Bozeman, Montana and the campus of Montana State University. Normally our group travels by passenger vans to our destination, but the distance to Bozeman tells us that it makes more sense to fly. So, the planning has begun to meet 800 to 1000 of our fellow Lutherans in Montana from July 19-22. A big part of that planning is fundraisers, and the fundraiser that most of you are very familiar with, the annual Valentine Dinner, will look very different this year. Allow me to refresh you with a recent history.

February 2019 was the last time our youth ministry hosted cupid's ceremonial banquet. The next year, 2020, a Mardi Gras themed dinner was held in late February which was right before the beginning of the pandemic. Last year, 2021, the dinner was suspended for health and safety reasons. This year's event will have a somewhat different setting. The main reason is that over the past two years, there have been 10 or more youth involved with this fundraiser who have graduated high school and began their college vocations. The Valentine dinners in the past have been attended by 50-70 people whose support we are so grateful for. To prepare for, cook and serve, and clean up for that many people takes a great deal of man-power; or in this case, youth-power. Our youth ministry does not have the capability to do an event of this size at the moment, but this is where the new look for this fundraiser comes in. Instead of one large banquet in February, there will be multiple small dinner parties for 10 held at the home of the Director of Youth Ministry at Lord of Life (Yes, you read that correctly, my house). Understandably, I should mention that the first person who was approached with this idea was my lovely and culinarily talented wife, Jonelle, who graciously agreed to be a part of it and open our home to all who participate!

The concept will be the same as the large dinner event. Beginning in March there will be a three course meal serve to a party of 10 adults once a month on a Friday or Saturday night continuing through June. The fundraiser will be a free-will offering toward the youth ministry as in the past to help offset the costs for this year's trip to Higher Things in Montana. There will be reservation lists posted later this month in the narthex with dates and menus for signing up to reserve your spot(s). There will also be more details for these dinners coming soon in the Sunday bulletins and the Lifelines issue next month. The youth and parents will assist in the same manner as before, helping prepare, cook, serve, and clean up at the events.

This endeavor will require a very different planning strategy since it will be spread out over a 4 month period. However, the goal is the same; to serve our members at Lord of Life and teach the youth to develop a sense of ownership in their youth ministry and their church. As always, I thank God for the blessings and support that you, the members at Lord of Life give to the youth and our ministry efforts.

Until next time, God's blessings.  
Scott Peters

## Lord of Life Small Groups

### EPIC PARENTING

- † For 30ish couples with kids
- † For info contact Ben Scarth  
[BenjaminScarth@yahoo.com](mailto:BenjaminScarth@yahoo.com)
- † Usually meet one Sunday a month in the afternoon or evening

### FRUITS OF THE VINE CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Scott Peters at 972-898-3351 cell or [speters@planolutheran.com](mailto:speters@planolutheran.com)
- † Usually meet one Sun. a month at 5:30 PM

### GOOD NEWS CARE GROUP

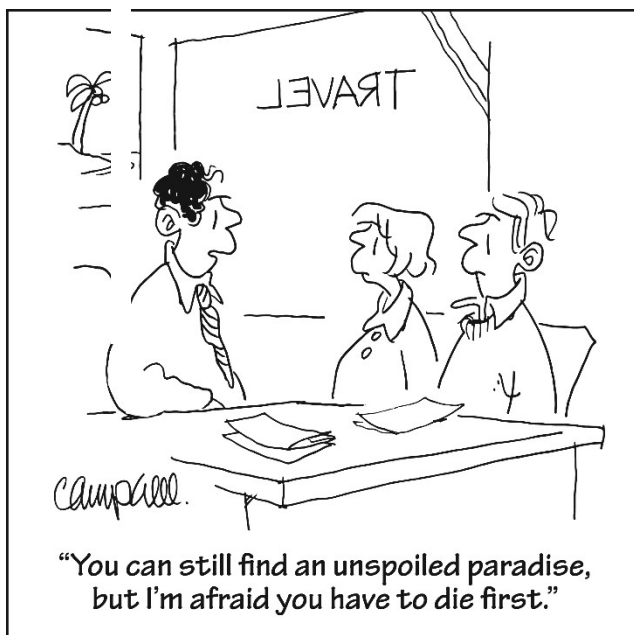
- † For info contact Chris Oltmann at (972) 727-6330 or Mike Kunschke at (847) 951-6974
- † Usually meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sat. of each month at 6:30 PM for Bible study


### MIXED BLESSINGS

- † For info contact Fred and Ruth Bernhardt at (972) 398-0771
- † Will meet Sat. 2/12 at 6:30 PM

### TWENTY SOMETHINGS

- † For couples and singles in their twenties
- † For info contact Pastor Shaltanis at [PastorShaltanis@yahoo.com](mailto:PastorShaltanis@yahoo.com)
- † The group is currently in transition, but has usually met on Sundays after late service





# FEBRUARY

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 Bette Martin
- 3 Julz Cruz
- 4 Cheryl Scaglione
- 5 Becky Armstrong
- 6 Sal Cruz
- 6 Dee Peters
- 6 Tom Womack
- 8 Marty Buckmeier
- 13 Stephen Belcher
- 14 Tom & Karen Ashburn [57]
- 14 Gary & Bonnie Holtzman [46]
- 14 Jerry & Winona Parish [16]
- 15 Kevin Doughtie
- 19 Paul Grabow
- 19 Charles Hacker
- 19 Rebecca Short
- 20 Catharine Borck
- 20 Ruben Martin
- 23 Sarah Loewecke
- 25 Jackie Barnes
- 25 Madeline Prescott
- 27 Ernie Gromatzky
- 27 Bailey Lund





# prepare for worship in february

**Feb. 6: Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany**

Texts: Is. 6:1-8 (9-13); 1Cor. 14:12b-20; Luke 5:1-11

Hymn of the Day: "Hail to the Lord's Anointed," 398

**Feb. 13: Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany**

Texts: Jer. 17:5-8; 1 Cor. 15:(1-11) 12-20; Luke 6:17-26

Hymn of the Day: "Songs of Thankfulness and Praise,"  
394**Feb. 20: Seventh Sunday after the Epiphany**

Texts: Gen. 45:3-15; 1 Cor. 15:21-26, 30-42; Luke 6:27-38

Hymn of the Day: "My Soul, Now Praise Your Maker,"  
820**Feb. 27: The Transfiguration of Our Lord**

Texts: Deut. 34:1-12; Heb. 3:1-6; Luke 9:28-36

Hymn of the Day: "O Wondrous Type! Of Vision Fair,"  
413

## SUMMARIZED STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 12 Months Ending December 2021

	Y-T-D Operating Funds	Y-T-D Budget	Variance	Jan-Dec 2021 Budget
<b>Contributions</b>				
Regular Offerings	\$581,096	\$581,908	(\$812)	\$581,908
Other	\$481	\$0	\$481	\$0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$581,578</b>	<b>\$581,908</b>	<b>(\$331)</b>	<b>\$581,908</b>
<b>Expenses</b>				
Operating Expenses	\$546,200	\$550,845	(\$4,645)	\$550,845
Mortgage Payment (P&I)	\$41,676	\$30,960	\$10,716	\$30,960
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$587,877</b>	<b>\$581,805</b>	<b>\$6,072</b>	<b>\$581,805</b>
<b>Surplus or (Deficit)</b>	<b>(\$6,299)</b>	<b>\$103</b>	<b>(\$6,402)</b>	<b>\$103</b>
<b>Other Information:</b>				
Operating Fund Balance	\$104,752			
Restricted Funds Balance	\$117,262			
Building Loan Balance	\$156,766			

**DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER ARTICLES IS THE 20th — [lol.newsletter.editor@gmail.com](mailto:lol.newsletter.editor@gmail.com)**