

“Atonement Variety Show”

--Participants Needed

--No Talent Required

--Exceptions Welcome

Date and Time and Location: August 17 at 9:30 AM in the Fellowship Hall (Adult Forum)

There's one aspect of being a Lutheran that I'm ever grateful for, our acceptance that our ever-changing understanding of the Bible is normal and ought to be encouraged. For example, there's a verse in the Old Testament that says something like, "Make a joyful noise for our Lord." I initially thought this was there to cover for kids and the noise accompanying their very existence but now I believe it was put there specifically to cover church variety shows – often referred to as "Untalent Shows."

I know there are some among you who believe joyful noises should not be atonal. So let's define noise, or better yet here's The Random House College Dictionary's definition of noise (title pun intended). Actually RH had lots of noise definitions—here are the first three—"sound of any kind," and "a sound, especially of a loud, harsh, confused kind," and my personal favorite "a loud shouting or clamor."

As an aside, I'm certain some of you know about the state of Washington's singing mussels—they're considered to be quite a delicacy. Here's a lesser known fact, the state of Oregon has singing clams—on clear nights you can hear them making quite a clamor, especially when the moon's full.

Back to God's definition of a joyful noise; He didn't say it had to be tonal. My laughter, for example, is a sign of my joyfulness and it's loud yet not even the tonal challenged would call it melodic.

"Oh sure with the noise and all," you might be saying, "but what about mimes?"

Keeping with the equal opportunity flow I'm thinking mimes make joyful optical noises so they get in on a technicality. But it should be that way, our God's open and accepting; we're inclusive and proud of it.

Many people misuse quotes from the Bible, here's an example of mix-and-mismatch for effect. If we consider laughter to be a talent like teaching and use the quote from Ecclesiastes -- "there's a time for laughing and a time for weeping (another talent)," then we get to use the intent of the "talents" verses from First Corinthians. This then satisfies the unwritten Lutheran Rule that we have to use both the Old and New Testaments. Our Variety Show is intended to be of the happy, laughing variety, but being of the inclusive type I won't say no weeping—if you want to laugh until you cry, people will understand—trust me.

I had an actual audio-tape (prehistoric origin) of people laughing. This sound was supposed to encourage others to climb up out of their Blue Funk and join in. (Now we've got the Old and the New and the Blue—almost like a wedding.) I never did own a Blue Funk so I don't know about climbing up out of one but I did laugh. Some laughs are really easy to laugh along with. One woman I worked with had a laugh like a fire alarm going off. We really worked hard to get her to laugh so we could join in. And I have a female cousin whose laugh is loud and boisterous like mine—she was ashamed of it until I told her how my kids could avoid me in dark theaters by following the sound of my laughter.

Okay, now that I've gotten you in the mood to laugh at me, here's the pitch. We can't have a Variety Show without participants. Almost anyone can make a joyful noise for the Lord--this is really true, try it sometime. Please join our happy group. This will be a lot of fun, Gar-Ohn-Teed.

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Please contact Joyce Krueger or Paul Amundson if you'd like to reserve a spot in this "sure to be popular" event.

