



What is Praise & Worship?

Praise & Worship is a **Christ-Centered, Disciple-Making Community**.

What is “Christ-Centered”?

The word **CHRIST** is the Greek word used in the New Testament as a translation of the Old Testament Hebrew word: **MESSIAH**. Messiah means: *Anointed One*. “Anointed One,” in the over-arching story of the Bible is a title (not a name) referring to the One who would come to save the world! Being Christ-Centered means, **we are centering ourselves NOT in what we do**, but rather *in Him* as a person, the work He did, and the work He is now doing...through us!! **See Titus 3:4-8**.

What is “Disciple-Making”?

In Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus proclaimed His mission, which He assigned to us:

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Wherever we go, whatever we do, we are to be making disciples by baptizing and teaching. And He promises to be with us! **See also: Luke 19:10, 24:46-47, John 20:21-23, Acts 1:8, Romans 10:14-17.**

A disciple is someone who trusts the promises of Jesus and seeks to follow him. Following Jesus means we seek to continue in our learning of (1) what Jesus teaches, (2) what Jesus does and to (3) go where He is leading us to go. The simplest example of this is what He called His greatest command: “Love God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind,” and, “Love your neighbor as yourself.” **See Matthew 9:1-13 and 22:34-40.**

Where did Praise & Worship come from?

Praise & Worship was founded by Pastor Dar Karsten in July 2007. A mission group, consisting of a team from Faith Lutheran Church in Branson, gathered at the Bart Rocket theater. Later the group would grow and move to the Golden Corral Theater. During this time the group grew more cohesive and began organizing as more than just a mission group, and a sign with the words “Free Praise and Worship Service,” appeared outside the venue.

By late 2013, the group had incorporated and chartered as a congregation with the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and completed a move to the Lindwedel Winery. **On December 15, 2013, Praise and Worship Lutheran Church was born!**

On June 28, 2015, Mark Hunsaker was installed as Pastor of Praise & Worship, seeking to partner with this team of Jesus followers who desire for more and more people to receive the gifts of Jesus, which is to say: *make more disciples*.

What does “Lutheran” mean?

The word “Lutheran” does not mean we think Martin Luther was some sort of higher man. Quite the contrary. “Uncle Marty” was a normal man, a broken man, who through **his own struggle** of asking, “Who is God?” and, “What do I think of Him?” was led to a moment which he describes this way:

At last meditating day and night, by the mercy of God, I began to understand that the righteousness of God is that through which the righteous live by a gift of God, namely by faith. Here I felt as if I were entirely born again and had entered paradise itself through the gates that had been flung open.

A quote from the Preface to the Complete Edition of Luther’s Latin Writings

His “discovery” led to the ignition of a chain of events in the 1500s which we now call the Protestant Reformation, a time in the history of the world when everything began to change—again. Most notable for us, was when these reformers stood up amid a boiling cauldron of political, social and religious pressures and “confessed” in Augsburg in June of 1530, what we now call the Augsburg Confession. At Praise & Worship, we continue this Confession that Jesus is LORD, who saves us by grace through faith alone, along with all the confessions collected in the 1580 Book of Concord, which constitute a true and unadulterated statement and exposition of the Word of God! The Confessions point us to Jesus through His Word!

Why no “Lutheran” on your sign or logo?

While we don’t hide the fact that we are a Lutheran church, but because many do not understand the word “Lutheran”, we don’t lead with that fact either. In fact, Luther Himself would say:

The first thing I ask is that people should not make use of my name, and should not call themselves Lutherans but Christians. What is Luther? The teaching is not mine. Nor was I crucified for anyone. How did I, poor stinking bag of maggots that I am, come to the point where people call the children of Christ by my evil name? Not so, my dear friends; let us abolish all party names and call ourselves Christians, after him whose teaching we hold.

Martin Luther, Luther’s Works, Vol. 45: (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1999), pp. 70–71.

When we present ourselves to the world, instead of presenting a “**party name**” as Luther called it, **we present what we believe, teach and confess: That we are a Christ-Centered, Disciple-Making Community.**

What is “Community”?

Simply put, this happens both in our hearts AND out in the bodily world. These words from Acts 2:42:

They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.