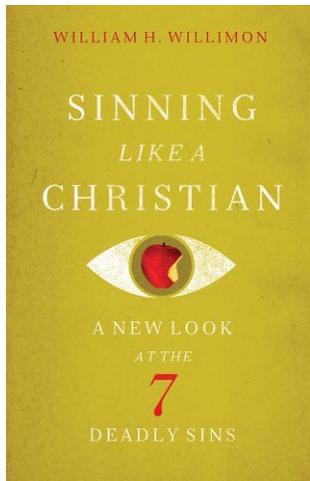


Worship Brainstorming Summary July and August Worship (version 2)

Monday, June 22, 2015



Members present: Karen Booth, Ken Lockett, Kathy Lockett, Marilyn Forton, Michael Boersma, Josiah Boersma, Ashley Boersma, Niki Epplett, Pastor Mary Ivanov, Ana Ivanov, Luka Ivanov, David Jirikovic, Lisa Jirikovic, Betty Kinney, Barb Gripton, Phyllis Jones, Jean Kelly, Dave Booth, Jim Post, Ron Zuker, Ivan Ivanov, Vicki Zuker

Background Information

Sinning like a Christian reminds us that sin isn't just outside of us. Sin isn't something we should be concerned about in others; it's pervasive and very much alive in us, too. For as much as we celebrate God's grace, the reason we need grace is because of sin. We can't have grace without sin. What if we were stuck in sin without grace?

This "list" of sins dates back to the 4th century, though Scripture offers us many examples.

Proverbs 6: 16-19

There are six things the Lord hates, seven that are detestable to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies and a person who stirs up conflict in the community.

Galatians 5: 19-21

The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

In popular culture, the movie "Seven" brought this list to light in 1995 (and disturbed many people in the process!). In some ways, these sins represent God's command not to have any other gods and not to worship idols.

"CLAIMING OUR SIN"

The Seven Deadly Sins and Seven Heavenly Virtues: While the idea has Catholic roots, it is relevant to a larger audience. We see ourselves and our sin more clearly when we encounter Christ - both in hearing his teaching and seeing his example.

Sin

Lust (excessive sexual appetite)
Gluttony (over-indulgence)
Greed (avarice)
Sloth (laziness)
Wrath (anger)
Pride (vanity)
Envy

Virtue

Chastity (purity)
Temperance (self-restraint)
Charity (giving)/Generosity
Diligence (zeal/integrity/labor)
Forgiveness (composure)/Patience
Humility (humbleness)
Kindness

According to the Urban Dictionary:

Seven things that are considered the worst things to do.

1. Greed - Wanting too much of something.
2. Gluttony - Similar to greed, but gluttony is the action of taking too much of something in.
3. Lust - The need to fulfill unspiritual desires (not just sexual desires, but this is usually what lust is associated with.)
4. Envy - Jealousy; wanting to have what someone has.
5. Sloth - Being too slow or lazy at doing something.
6. Wrath - Vindictive anger; angry revenge.
7. Pride - Being too self-satisfied

For each Sunday, I'd like to include a prayer of confession as our opening prayer and perhaps a verse from Proverbs.

Visuals for the whole series: 1) Confessional. 2) Apple with a bite gone (like the book cover). 3) Add one word each week. 4) Apple with seven worms, one for each sin. Could the "worms" turn into butterflies? Could the apple turn into apple pie? 5) Show all seven sins. Reveal the virtues as we go through the series. 6) Is there an image that we could pair with each sin? 7) Stickers that peel away to reveal light. 8) Worship designers used fabric panels for a slow reveal at Annual Conference. 9) Chalkboard from Pinterest: Sins erased daily.

Images: Car wash/cleansing.

Hands-on item: Small round mirror (tile) from Oriental Trading or Hobby Lobby.

General discussion points: 1) Admitting our own sin makes Jesus' sacrifice more beautiful. 2) Every service (and the series) needs to end on a note of hope: There is hope through Jesus Christ. 3) End the series with a prayer of commitment similar to the litany at the end of "The God We Can Know" series.

Ken's thoughts after the meeting: 1) Visuals: Fabric or ribbons on the wall below the ledge. The sin/color combinations are not set in stone, but artists often choose similar colors below that relate to the sin to represent it: Pride- Violet, Envy- Green, Gluttony- Orange, Lust- Blue, Anger- Red , Greed- Yellow, and Sloth- Light Blue. 2) Live introduction of a deadly sin each Sunday. Need seven volunteers, one for each week for about 30 seconds. Pastor Mary introduces one sin every week. The volunteer wears a t-shirt bearing the name of the sin. The person is preoccupied with their sin as Pastor Mary welcomes and introduces the sin to the congregation. Example- Sloth can say the word whatever after everything, and I don't care I guess, lots of yawning (this could be humorous). On the last service of the series if climaxing with communion they could even assist with serving communion and wearing the shirts. But shirt has changed with the sin crossed out and the corresponding virtue added. Would be wonderful to have 7 different volunteers but could be done effectively with less.

Karen and David Booth's thoughts after the meeting: 1) Lead into the series with a video that poses the big questions: If we know sin is inevitable and that we will never be completely virtuous, why should we try? Why should people come back week after week? 2) Prayer from a bulletin board at church: Dear Lord, So far I've done all right. I haven't gossiped, haven't lost my temper, haven't been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish, or overindulgent. I'm really glad about that. But in a few minutes, God, I'm going to get out of bed. And from then on, I'm going to need a lot more help. Amen.

Music suggestions:

#2152 Change My Heart, O God
#378 Amazing Grace
#377 It Is Well with My Soul
#402 Lord, I Want to Be a Christian
#357 Just as I Am, Without One Plea
#389 Freely, Freely
#98 To God Be the Glory

Open the Eyes of My Heart, Lord
#2164 Sanctuary
Here's My Heart, Lord (David Crowder
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xzxm1jMNaB4>)
#2040 Awesome God
#2051 I Was There to Hear Your Boring Cry

July 19, 2015: "Let's Be Honest: We Sin"

8th Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture: Leviticus 18:26-19:2 (tentative)

Contemporary English Version

²⁶⁻²⁷Now don't do these sickening things that make the land filthy. Instead, obey my laws and teachings.

²⁸Then the land won't become sick of you and vomit you up, just as it did them. ²⁹⁻³⁰If any of you do these vulgar, disgusting things, you will be unclean and no longer belong to my people. I am the Lord your God, and I forbid you to follow their sickening way of life.

¹The Lord told Moses ² to say to the community of Israel: I am the Lord your God. I am holy, and you must be holy too!

Scripture: Romans 3:19-24

"All Have Sinned"

Contemporary English Version

¹⁹We know that everything in the Law was written for those who are under its power. The Law says these things to stop anyone from making excuses and to let God show that the whole world is guilty.

²⁰God doesn't accept people simply because they obey the Law. No, indeed! All the Law does is to point out our sin.

²¹Now we see how God does make us acceptable to him. The Law and the Prophets tell how we become acceptable, and it isn't by obeying the Law of Moses. ²²God treats everyone alike. He accepts people only because they have faith in Jesus Christ. **²³All of us have sinned and fallen short of God's glory.** ²⁴But God treats us much better than we deserve, and because of Christ Jesus, he freely accepts us and sets us free from our sins. ²⁵⁻²⁶God sent Christ to be our sacrifice. Christ offered his life's blood, so that by faith in him we could come to God. And God did this to show that in the past he was right to be patient and forgive sinners. This also shows that God is right when he accepts people who have faith in Jesus.

Synopsis: Though there are some people who claim that Christians talk about sin too much (or at least we talk about others' sins too much), we're hesitant to be honest about our struggles. We don't like to talk about it. We don't even like to use the word "sin" when we gather in worship. But if we look in the mirror, we see that sin is a reality for us just as much as anyone else. And though the "Seven Deadly Sins" come out of church tradition, they remind us that sin is personal - and sometimes quiet and not so noticeable. We can praise God that God's grace and love is bigger than our sin.

Felt need: Claim our own sin

Visuals: Mirror vs. Window

Media possibilities: We also previewed “The Stool,” but decided to use it later in the series.

- “Are You Good Enough for God?” Length: 3:26. Cost: Free. Synopsis: Christianity is not about how “clean” (sinless) we appear to be to others, but about what Jesus has done for us. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cl9m47qM-m0> **Comments:** Good, but not our favorite.
- “Reverse.” Length: 2:20. Cost: \$20.00. Synopsis: This short video is a poem that demonstrates how God reverses the way we see things. <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/28742/reverse>. **Comments:** Liked the message, but the visual (flower) is a bit cheesy.

Activity: VBS celebration at Children’s Time

Skit (Jimmy Epplert): Two friends run into each other. Begin with small talk, but go into a real conversation about sin.

Music: #365 Grace Greater than Our Sin

Hands-on item: Guide or passport for the series. Matching game: Connect the sins to their corresponding virtues.

Discussion points: 1) What do we struggle with? Where do we see sin in ourselves? 2) C.S. Lewis calls pride the “mother of all sins.” 3) The seven sins seem so “ordinary.” There is a fine line between what is okay and sin. How do we avoid crossing it? 4) The key verse is Romans 3:23.

July 26, 2015: “Pride or Humility” (Ego-tripping) 9th Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture: Philippians 2:3-11 “Hymn to Christ” Contemporary English Version

³Don’t be jealous or proud, but be humble and consider others more important than yourselves.

⁴Care about them as much as you care about yourselves ⁵and think the same way that Christ Jesus thought:

⁶Christ was truly God. But he did not try to remain equal with God. ⁷Instead he gave up everything and became a slave, when he became like one of us. ⁸Christ was humble. He obeyed God and even died on a cross. ⁹Then God gave Christ the highest place and honored his name above all others. ¹⁰So at the name of Jesus everyone will bow down, those in heaven, on earth, and under the earth. ¹¹And to the glory of God the Father everyone will openly agree, “Jesus Christ is Lord!”

Scripture: Luke 18:9-14 “The Pharisee and Tax Collector” Contemporary English Version

⁹Jesus told a story to some people who thought they were better than others and who looked down on everyone else:

¹⁰Two men went into the temple to pray. One was a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

¹¹The Pharisee stood over by himself and prayed, “God, I thank you that I am not greedy, dishonest, and unfaithful in marriage like other people. And I am really glad that I am not like that tax collector over there. ¹²I go without eating for two days a week, and I give you one tenth of all I earn.”

¹³The tax collector stood off at a distance and did not think he was good enough even to

look up toward heaven. He was so sorry for what he had done that he pounded his chest and prayed, “God, have pity on me! I am such a sinner.”

¹⁴ Then Jesus said, “When the two men went home, it was the tax collector and not the Pharisee who was pleasing to God. If you put yourself above others, you will be put down. But if you humble yourself, you will be honored.”

***Scripture:** Matthew 18:1-4 **“Who’s the Greatest?”**

Synopsis: Pride (but not arrogance) is usually a positive trait. We take pride in our abilities and accomplishments. We feel a sense of pride in a job well done or in a group of people that we identify with. But pride is the root of so much other evil. Pride makes some of us think we are above the law, that rules do not apply to us, or that we simply cannot fail, whatever we attempt. Pride also causes us to make ourselves and others unhappy by demanding attention and recognition, or by not asking for help and guidance when we need it. But if even Jesus, who was in the very form of God, did not consider himself equal to God, we have no place being any less humble than Jesus, who came to serve the lowest of the low.

Felt need:

Visuals: Balance or teeter-totter. There is a July 15 wedding to consider.

Media possibilities:

- “Humilify.” Length: 1:27. Cost: \$15.00. Synopsis: What if repenting of your pride was a simple as taking a pill? <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/62665/humilify>.
Comments: Good use of humor. It gets the point across. Consult the minister for possible side effects. For people who take medicines, will this be offensive?
- “I Am Perfect.” Length: 2:55. Cost: \$20.00. Synopsis: For so long, I thought I deserved something good because I was good. But now I know, it is when I am wrapped in God’s grace that the I Am that makes me perfect.
<http://www.sermonspice.com/product/28042/i-am-perfect>. **Comments:** Too long.
- “The Danger of Pride.” Length: 1:15. Cost: We own it. Last used 10/27/13. Synopsis: When we allow pride into our lives, it is built one brick at a time. Eventually it creates a tower that is destined to crumble.
<http://www.sermonspice.com/product/3925/the-danger-of-pride>. **Comments:** Like it.
We used it recently with the Jenga blocks as the take home items.

Activity: Mission Trip reflection?

Music: 2131 Humble Thyself in the Sight of the Lord; Janene Start will sing at 9:00 am.

Discussion points: 1) Don’t use Genesis 3:1-7 “The Serpent.” 2) Dramatic reading: Luke 18:2-14. The Pharisee’s “prayer” is not a prayer. The tax collector was sincere and confessed his sin. 3) Cornerstone University sculpture (right): Adam is on the ground with the apple lying next to him. Both the apple and Adam’s side have a bite missing. 4) Michael has a quote about meeting Jesus on



⁸“That evening he told the foreman to call the workers in and pay them, beginning with the last workers first. ⁹When those hired at five o’clock were paid, each received a full day’s wage. ¹⁰When those hired first came to get their pay, they assumed they would receive more. But they, too, were paid a day’s wage. ¹¹When they received their pay, they protested to the owner, ¹²‘Those people worked only one hour, and yet you’ve paid them just as much as you paid us who worked all day in the scorching heat.’

¹³“He answered one of them, ‘Friend, I haven’t been unfair! Didn’t you agree to work all day for the usual wage? ¹⁴Take your money and go. I wanted to pay this last worker the same as you. ¹⁵**Is it against the law for me to do what I want with my money? Should you be jealous because I am kind to others?’**

¹⁶“So those who are last now will be first then, and those who are first will be last.”

Synopsis: Envy is the consuming desire to have everybody else as unsuccessful as you are.

Envy is a subtle form of hate—resenting the good and rejoicing in the bad that occurs to one's neighbor. It is a social sin, hurting our relationships (even to the point of murder, as in the case of Cain and Abel), and squelches joy in its tracks, as it maximizes others' good fortune and minimizes the blessings we ourselves enjoy. Envy leads us to criticize others and to attribute others' success to sheer luck, which makes us passive and (contrary to popular belief) unmotivated to work harder ourselves. Envy makes us miserable because it causes us to weigh and rank and compare. Envy makes our neighbors into competitors and our own blessings a prize to be boasted, rather than a gift to be shared. If we can claim the grace to rejoice in somebody else's achievement or good fortune as well as our own, we'll be far happier.

Felt need:

Visuals: Green-eyed monster

Media possibilities: We like the first two videos. If we did not have to stay in budget (\$20/week for videos, 3 weeks/month), we would show both.

- “Envyitis.” Length: 1:08. Cost: \$20.00. Synopsis: Funny video about envy.
<http://www.sermonspice.com/product/38047/envyitis>.
- “Dear God ENVY.” Length: 0:55. Cost: \$20.00. Synopsis: Funny letter to God.
<http://www.sermonspice.com/product/37442/dear-god-envy>. **Comments:** Do this as a skit a la Jimmy Fallon (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZvekOldRNum>). Person sits at desk writing a thank you note. A narrator could read from the back. Put the letter in the mailbox and put the flag up.
- “The Window.” Length: 3:59. Cost: \$15.00. Synopsis: A moving story of one man’s love set in counterpoint to another man’s selfishness.
<http://www.sermonspice.com/product/11445/the-window>

Activity: Holy Communion (sacrament puts us on equal footing before God)

Music:

Discussion points: 1) Examples of things we envy: Huge boats in Grand Haven; Zuker’s lake view; the nice cars we see on television. 2) Key verse: Matthew 20:15. 3) Envy seems to be about “stuff.” 4) Television has entire stations, like HGTV, devoted to promoting envy. How is it that so many young couples are looking at \$750,000 homes? We have a hard time sympathizing with them when they whine about having the wrong color granite countertops. What an

outsized sense of entitlement! 5) Use humorous media.

Thoughts after the meeting (Jimmy Epplert): Green colored lens. Bake green Communion bread. It is all level. We see it no differently. It is the same grace for all.

August 9, 2015: “Anger or Forgiveness/Patience?” (Violence) 11th Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture: Psalm 137:7-9

The Message

⁷God, remember those Edomites, and remember the ruin of Jerusalem, That day they yelled out, “Wreck it, smash it to bits!”

⁸And you, Babylonians—ravagers! A reward to whoever gets back at you for all you’ve done to us; ⁹Yes, a reward to the one who grabs your babies and smashes their heads on the rocks!

Scripture: John 2:13-17

“Jesus Clears the Temple” Contemporary English Version

¹³ Not long before the Jewish festival of Passover, Jesus went to Jerusalem.

¹⁴ There he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves in the temple. He also saw moneychangers sitting at their tables. ¹⁵ So he took some rope and made a whip. Then he chased everyone out of the temple, together with their sheep and cattle. He turned over the tables of the moneychangers and scattered their coins.

¹⁶ Jesus said to the people who had been selling doves, “Get those doves out of here! Don’t make my Father’s house a marketplace.”

¹⁷ The disciples then remembered that the Scriptures say, “My love for your house burns in me like a fire.”

Synopsis: One writer calls anger “the most fun” of the seven deadly sins, but also recognizes that anger can eat us up. We know that anger has redemptive qualities. For example, “righteous anger,” drives us to correct many wrongs in the world. Even Jesus displayed anger when confronted with unrighteousness. Anger is a natural response to knowing the world is not as it ought to be. The infamous Psalm 137 is a sincere cry from people in pain, asking God for justice as they would define it. But misdirected, anger can lead us to resentment, depression, and violence. It ferments into bitterness and unwillingness to take any responsibility to change things. Forgiveness, with God’s help, enables us to move beyond the immediate wrong to proactively work for justice and rightness in the world.

Felt need:

Visuals:

Media possibilities:

- “Stressed Out.” Length: 1:38. Cost: \$20.00. Several people in stressful situations completely “lose it” as opera music plays. <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/56381/stressed-out>.

Comments: Lots of likes and laughs. Does stress manifest itself as anger? Not everyone was a fan of the opera soundtrack, but wasn’t that bad either.

- “When You Don’t Get Along.” Length: 1:47. Cost: \$20.00. Synopsis: In an ideal world, everyone should get along. But reality is this: even in the church there are times when we don’t agree or get along. **Comments:** This is depressing.

<http://www.sermonspice.com/product/622/when-you-dont-get-along>

- “Road Rage.” Length: 2:45. Cost: \$18.00. Synopsis: The anger of an impatient driver affects his Christian witness. Humorous. <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/297/road-rage>.
Comments: It was not clear from the beginning that the Christian stickers were on the young man’s car, not the older woman’s. The stickers would make great visuals.

Activity: Possible Reaffirmation of Baptism service at Pere Marquette Beach

Music:

Discussion points: 1) Don’t use John 2:13-17. Jesus’ anger was righteous. People could not enter the temple because the money changers were in the way. 2) Pastor Mary found that the only verse that spoke to a family’s anger after a tragic car accident was Psalm 137. The Psalm makes it clear that justice is up to God. 3) Matthew 5:38-39 (turning the other cheek) also speaks to anger. It is particularly poignant in light of the recent shooting at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina during a Bible study. 4) Examples of anger:

- Office Space copier scene: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fjsSr3z5nVk>.
- Brothers and sisters not getting along.
- Tom and Jerry cartoons (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mZSQJ9RmBm0>).
- Pixar’s “Inside Out” portrayal of anger pictured here and halfway down the page at <http://www.businessinsider.com/what-pixars-inside-out-gets-right-and-wrong-about-human-psychology-2015-6.8>)
- “Christmas Vacation’s” jelly of the month scene <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1K8-kNuDgoA>.
- “Serenity Now” episode of Seinfeld https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ow_9MglZrhs.



Hands-on item: Traffic ticket

Thoughts after the meeting (Jimmy Epplert): 1) Holding an object for a long time makes it seem bigger/heavier than it is. Have everyone lift something and hold it. It’s no big deal at first, but gets heavier as time goes on. 2) Experiment with Alka-Seltzer and 7-Up. How long can you hold them in your mouth before you spit the mixture out? Good image for how anger will come out in unhealthy ways if we hold it in.

August 16, 2015: “Sloth or Diligence?” (Whining) 12th Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 1:1-9 **“Everything Is Meaningless!”** New Living Translation

¹These are the words of the Teacher, King David’s son, who ruled in Jerusalem.

²“Everything is meaningless,” says the Teacher, “completely meaningless!”

³What do people get for all their hard work under the sun? ⁴Generations come and generations go, but the earth never changes. ⁵The sun rises and the sun sets, then hurries around to rise again. ⁶The wind blows south, and then turns north. Around and around it goes, blowing in circles. ⁷Rivers run into the sea, but the sea is never full. Then the water returns again to the rivers and flows out again to the sea. ⁸Everything is wearisome beyond description. No matter how much we see, we are never satisfied. No matter how much we hear, we are not content.

⁹History merely repeats itself. It has all been done before. Nothing under the sun is truly

new. ¹⁰Sometimes people say, “Here is something new!” But actually it is old; nothing is ever truly new. ¹¹We don’t remember what happened in the past, and in future generations, no one will remember what we are doing now.

Scripture: John 5:1-9a

“Healing at the Pool”

New Revised Standard Version

¹After this there was a festival of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

²Now in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate there is a pool, called in Hebrew Beth-zatha, which has five porticoes. ³In these lay many invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed. ⁵One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. ⁶When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been there a long time, he said to him, “Do you want to be made well?” ⁷The sick man answered him, “Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; and while I am making my way, someone else steps down ahead of me.” ⁸Jesus said to him, “Stand up, take your mat and walk.” ⁹At once the man was made well, and he took up his mat and began to walk.

Synopsis: We’re quick to equate “sloth” with “laziness.” In that way, it’s a tough balance to keep between our work ethic, which condemns laziness, and God’s call for Sabbath rest, which we refuse to take. But if these Seven Deadly Sins are more about our heart than our actions, sloth is more about apathy toward spiritual matters to which we should devote ourselves rather than being lazy. Sloth is not caring enough about God to wrestle with Scripture and spiritual disciplines that would challenge us. We’re called to develop and nurture a “critical faith” - not to criticize God, but to be engaged and active in our spiritual lives and see the opportunity to grow.

Felt need:

Visuals: There is an August 15 wedding to consider.

Media possibilities:

- “Got Sloth?” Length: 0:51. Cost: \$12.00. Synopsis: Laziness can definitely get out of hand. We all have sloth, but are we this bad?
<http://www.sermonspice.com/product/1207/got-sloth> **Comments:** Lame. No.
- “Passion for God.” Length: 1:44. Cost: \$18.00. Synopsis: In a world where people are passionate about many things, it is sad that often where we see the least in is the pew.
<http://www.sermonspice.com/product/3890/passion-for-god>. **Comments:** Spot on.

Activity:

Music:

Discussion points: 1) The Greek word for sloth is better translated at “no care” or apathy, especially spiritual apathy. We might also say passionless or whiny. 2) In Revelation 3:15-16 God says that he will “spit out” churches with lukewarm faith. 3) In Matthew 25:14-30, the man who buried his talents demonstrates sloth. We often bury our gifts. 4) Crazy Love by Francis Chan: There is no such thing as a lukewarm Christian in heaven. 5) “Whatever”: Kimmy’s boyfriend, Duane, from “Full House” 6) Contrast “Everything is awesome!” from The Lego Movie and Churchill - Rockstars take advantage of every learning opportunity.



Hands-on item: “Whatever”

Thoughts after the meeting (Jimmy Epplert): 1) Image of a sloth with a Bible. Is this you? 2) Keep putting it off. Lots of skits come to mind including filling jar with ping pong balls or making time – use big rocks, pebbles, and sand to fill jar. 3) Ask Skylar and Ana or other youth to develop a skit saying “Whatever!” a lot.

August 23, 2015: “Greed or Generosity?” (Materialism) 13th Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture: 1 Chronicles 4:9-10 “Prayer of Jabez” Today’s English Version

⁹There was a man named Jabez, who was the most respected member of his family. His mother had given him the name Jabez, because his birth had been very painful.

¹⁰But Jabez prayed to the God of Israel, “Bless me, God, and give me much land. Be with me and keep me from anything evil that might cause me pain.” And God gave him what he prayed for.

Scripture: Matthew 6:19-24 “Treasure in Heaven” New International Version

⁹“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.

²⁰But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Synopsis: In the Western world, we live in a relative luxury compared to many around the world. It’s difficult to tell the difference between needs and wants. Is a functional computer a need or a want? What about shoes for different types of occasions? We struggle against defining ourselves by what we have and how much we have. We are driven to succeed and hope that, when we do, we will use our status and wealth to advance the kingdom. Perhaps rather than wishing and working for more, we should strive to cultivate gratitude for what we already have and focus on sacrificial living as Jesus exemplifies. Rather than “the more you get, the more you have,” we hear Jesus saying, “the more you give away in love, the more you are.”

Felt need:

Visuals: Statistics on worldwide basic daily wage. Harley Motorcycle Ad (Let Us Lead You Into Temptation).

Media possibility: We only watched the first video, but could name so many examples we don’t know where to begin.

- “Greed is good speech” movie clip from Wall Street.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PF_iorX_MAw The text of the speech can be found here: <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/MovieSpeeches/moviespeechwallstreet.html>
- “Young Designer” TV advertisement. Length: 0:30. Cost: Free. Synopsis: A young girl “playing house” already measures her life by what she has.
<http://www.ispot.tv/ad/7sUP/joss-and-main-young-designer>. **Comments:** This is a good example of how we teach greed from an early age. It has a nice innocuous tone to it.

Activity:

Music:

Discussion points: 1) The rich young ruler in Matthew 19:16-26 was greedy. 2) In Western culture is greed a sin or goal? 3) Use statistics on the daily wage throughout the world. Source: Crop Walk or NOOMA. 4) We live in relative luxury. How do we distinguish needs from wants? 5) Greed means never having enough – never being satisfied. 6) Song: The Rolling Stones’ “(I Can’t Get No) Satisfaction.” 7) Our television viewing habits can feed the greed monster. Examples: “House Hunters,” most of HGTV programming, “Buying the Bayou,” “Love It or List It,” “The Kardashians.” 8) Paul Harvey first broadcast “If I Were the Devil” back in 1965. This version, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H3Az0okaHig>, is probably from 1996. 9) “Money Doesn’t Spend Itself” commercial from Sprint <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H3Az0okaHig>. 10) Dave Booth’s experience in an ATT store: A mother and daughter argue over upgrading a phone or buying food.

Thoughts after the meeting (Jimmy Epplert): 1) Less is more. 2) “Give It Away” by the Red Hot Chili Peppers.

August 30, 2015: “Gluttony or Temperance/Moderation?” (Addiction)

14th Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture: Philippians 3:17-21

Today’s New International Version

¹⁷Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do.

¹⁸For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹Their destiny is destruction, **their god is their stomach**, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. ²⁰But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ,

Scripture: I Corinthians 6:19-20

Contemporary English Version

¹⁹You surely know that **your body is a temple** where the Holy Spirit lives. The Spirit is in you and is a gift from God. You are no longer your own.

²⁰God paid a great price for you. So use your body to honor God.

Scripture: Matthew 6:25-33

“Do Not Worry”

Contemporary English Version

²⁵I tell you not to worry about your life. Don’t worry about having something to eat, drink, or wear. Isn’t life more than food or clothing?

²⁶Look at the birds in the sky! They don’t plant or harvest. They don’t even store grain in barns. Yet your Father in heaven takes care of them. Aren’t you worth more than birds?

²⁷Can worry make you live longer? ²⁸Why worry about clothes? Look how the wild flowers grow. They don’t work hard to make their clothes. ²⁹But I tell you that Solomon with all his wealth wasn’t as well clothed as one of them. ³⁰God gives such beauty to everything that grows in the fields, even though it is here today and thrown into a fire tomorrow. He will surely do even more for you! Why do you have such little faith?

³¹Don’t worry and ask yourselves, “Will we have anything to eat? Will we have anything to drink? Will we have any clothes to wear?” ³²Only people who don’t know God are always worrying about such things. Your Father in heaven knows that you need all of these. ³³But more than anything else, put God’s work first and do what he wants. Then the other things will be yours as well.

Synopsis: Jesus himself was accused of this sin, called a “glutton” and “drunkard” by his critics, even if he didn’t eat and drink to excess. He stood accused because of his association. Gluttony seems more harmful to the sinner than anyone else - not as damaging as anger and greed. But, gluttony is about an overall preoccupation with matters of the flesh - food, drugs, alcohol. It takes the balance out of life and distracts us from work, relationships, and our spiritual life. “A glutton is one who raids the icebox for a cure for spiritual malnutrition.”

Felt need:

Visuals: Pictures from book about meals around the world

Media possibility: We did not preview “Appetites” and “Addiction Is Hard.”

- “The Stool.” Length: 1:52. Cost: \$20.00. Synopsis: Who is in charge? This is an illustration of the struggle we all face as Christians in our daily lives.
<http://www.sermonspice.com/product/21240/the-stool>. **Comments:** We previewed this an a video to open the series, but it might be more appropriate here.
- “Appetites.” Length: 1:02. Cost: \$15.00. Synopsis: We gorge ourselves on everything this world has to offer, and in the end, it leaves us sin-sick and exhausted.
<http://www.sermonspice.com/product/19211/appetites>
- “Addiction Is Hard.” Length: 1:12. Cost: \$20.00. Synopsis: Addiction is hard.
<http://www.sermonspice.com/product/57435/addiction-is-hard>

Activities: The Lord’s Prayer: “Give us this day...”

Music:

Discussion points: 1) Gluttony can be defined as misplace hunger, whether it is for food, drugs, alcohol, or something else. 2) Mark 6:30-44 is the story of Jesus feeding the five thousand with five loaves and two fish. 3) Jesus ate with people all the time. Feasting was (and still is) part of culture, celebrated in community. 4) Communion is a celebration feast. 5) Gluttony is physically visible, more so than other sins. 5) Every year Americans spend \$50 billion dollars dieting. That is more than is spent on education and several other areas combined. And yet we still struggle with obesity. 6) Once again, television adds to the problem. Examples: The Food Network; Diner, Drive-Ins, and Dives; Rachel Ray, Man vs. Food. 7) When McDonald’s opened, the burger was the same size as the burger in today’s kid’s meals. 8) Example of overeating: “Super Size Me.” 9) Today’s average woman weighs 160 pounds, the same as an average man weighed in 1960. 10) Ivanov’s book, Hungry Planet, has telling pictures of how much food people consume in different cultures in one week. 11) In the United States, we have both the means and encouragement to overeat. 12) Pic-n-Pac: Ivan found it annoying that the ice cream treats were not priced and left without buying one. 13) In Muskegon County, 1/3 of the population is overweight, 1/3 is obese, and 1/3 is within a healthy weight range as measured by their body mass index. 14) How is diet impacted by Bridge Card use at the farmer’s market? YFCA’s veggie van? Mona Shores Middle School? 15) In the midst of so many struggles with eating too much, it is ironic that we need the Kids Food Basket program to feed kids dinner.

September 6, 2015: “Lust or Purity?”

15th Sunday after Pentecost

Scripture: 2 Samuel 11:1-17

“David and Bathsheba”

New Living Translation

¹In the spring of the year, when kings normally go out to war, David sent Joab and the Israelite army to fight the Ammonites. They destroyed the Ammonite army and laid siege to the city of Rabbah. However, David stayed behind in Jerusalem.

²Late one afternoon, after his midday rest, David got out of bed and was walking on the roof of the palace. As he looked out over the city, he noticed a woman of unusual beauty taking a bath. ³He sent someone to find out who she was, and he was told, “She is Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite.” ⁴Then David sent messengers to get her; and when she came to the palace, he slept with her. She had just completed the purification rites after having her menstrual period. Then she returned home. ⁵Later, when Bathsheba discovered that she was pregnant, she sent David a message, saying, “I’m pregnant.”

⁶Then David sent word to Joab: “Send me Uriah the Hittite.” So Joab sent him to David. ⁷When Uriah arrived, David asked him how Joab and the army were getting along and how the war was progressing. ⁸Then he told Uriah, “Go on home and relax.” David even sent a gift to Uriah after he had left the palace. ⁹But Uriah didn’t go home. He slept that night at the palace entrance with the king’s palace guard.

¹⁰When David heard that Uriah had not gone home, he summoned him and asked, “What’s the matter? Why didn’t you go home last night after being away for so long?”

¹¹Uriah replied, “The Ark and the armies of Israel and Judah are living in tents, and Joab and my master’s men are camping in the open fields. How could I go home to wine and dine and sleep with my wife? I swear that I would never do such a thing.”

¹²“Well, stay here today,” David told him, “and tomorrow you may return to the army.” So Uriah stayed in Jerusalem that day and the next. ¹³Then David invited him to dinner and got him drunk. But even then he couldn’t get Uriah to go home to his wife. Again he slept at the palace entrance with the king’s palace guard.

“David Arranges for Uriah’s Death”

¹⁴So the next morning David wrote a letter to Joab and gave it to Uriah to deliver. ¹⁵The letter instructed Joab, “Station Uriah on the front lines where the battle is fiercest. Then pull back so that he will be killed.” ¹⁶So Joab assigned Uriah to a spot close to the city wall where he knew the enemy’s strongest men were fighting. ¹⁷And when the enemy soldiers came out of the city to fight, Uriah the Hittite was killed along with several other Israelite soldiers.

Scripture: Matthew 5:27-30

“Adultery”

New International Version

²⁷“You have heard that it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery.’

²⁸But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. ³⁰And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.

Synopsis: We are obsessed with sex. And if not obsessed with the having of it ourselves, we are obsessed with analyzing and critiquing others' bedroom activities. Lust reminds us of the relational impact of sin. Sex as an act of consumption, of personal gratification, rather than

for the benefit of the relationship and society as a whole takes us back to pride, greed, and envy, because it's about our most selfish tendencies. "Lust is the craving for salt of a person who is dying of thirst." Lust is thought of as a private sin, but in this most intimate area of our lives, we honor and seek the holiness of a God who wants every part of us, who is concerned not only for the actions of people and affairs of this world, but also for our thoughts and feelings. These sins of the heart and mind bear fruit in our actions. Jesus calls us to guard our hearts and be aware of the temptations around and the joy of honoring God's good gift of sexuality in each of us.

Felt need:

Visuals:

Media possibilities:

- "Temptation." Length: 2:08. Cost: \$12.00. Synopsis: A funny video from Andy Griffith. <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/23465/temptation>. **Comments:** This is like an early version of the Bachelor Show.
- "Temptation." Length: 0:30. Cost: \$12.00. Synopsis: A short comedic video that demonstrates how easily we can be destroyed by temptation. <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/41381/temptation>. **Comments:** This lends itself to a handout; Ken Lockett would be willing to help out here.
- "Purity." Length: 1:15. Cost: \$20.00. Synopsis: Purity is a daily choice and it matters, even in the small things. <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/60727/purity>. **Comments:** Two differing opinions: 1) Very powerful. 2) What did the guy do that was so bad? Just look?

Activity: Holy Communion will be a powerful way to finish this series

Music:

Discussion points: 1) In his book Sex God, Rob Bell uses the story of Amnon and Tabar (rape) to show that lust promises something it can't deliver. I leads to anger. 2) 1 Corinthians 13: Love endures much. Lust endures little. 4) Sexuality is a gift from God. It is celebrated in the Old Testament book, The Song of Solomon. 5) Lust has both a relational and personal impact.