

By this everyone will know

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'By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.' John 13.35:

Once upon a time in a land far, far away lived an unhappy man. The unhappy man belonged to 3rd Lutheran Church, a little but proud congregation. 3rd Lutheran Church was going through some tough times. They were an aging congregation that was struggling financially and their building had some serious structural problems. The state warned 3rd Lutheran that they had to fix those problems or they would have no alternative but to close it as the building in its present condition was dangerous.

3rd Lutheran Church, for these and other reasons, decided to merge with 2nd Methodist Church another congregation in town. 2nd Methodist Church was a young, growing congregation with a fairly new facility and it was only a block away.

The unhappy man was a lifelong member of 3rd Lutheran Church. He was a strong supporter of his church, offering his time, talents and treasures with no desire for recognition. The man was very unhappy about the decision to merge. He was so unhappy that he worked himself into a tizzy.

The unhappy man entered the church building one morning. The pastor was sitting in his office with the newspaper and his morning cup of coffee. The pastor seeing the man come in greeted him, "Hey, how you doing?" "Fine," said the man. "Whatcha doin?," asked the pastor. The unhappy man with a sledge hammer in his hand said, "I have some work to do in the sanctuary." This was not uncommon; he often did jobs around the building. "Well," said the pastor, "when you're done I'd like to talk, I've been worried about you." "Ok", the man said.

A few moments later there was a loud crash followed by a scream. The pastor ran into the sanctuary - his heart pounding. He took one look then ran back to his office to call for an ambulance. The man had taken the sledge hammer to the beautiful new piano. It was the beautiful new piano he had recently donated to the church. He would not allow this new merged church to have that new piano. When the pastor looked in, he saw what looked like the baby grand piano swallowing the man. The man smashed the piano with his sledge hammer and somehow wound up inside. The man's hand was right next to the little plaque on the piano that read, *Donated to 3rd Lutheran Church, to the glory of God.*

We witness to God's glory by the things we say and do. How will we witness to the world - the world to which God gave his only son to die for us?

Jesus said, **"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."** John 13.35

Pastor Arthur Sharot, Urland Lutheran Church