



St. Matthew's Cathedral eNews

Christ + Compassion + Community

From the Dean

Do You Want to Pick your own God?

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Icelanders will begin construction of the island's first major temple to the Norse gods since the Viking age. Worship of the gods in Scandinavia gave way to Christianity around 1,000 years ago, but a modern version of Norse paganism has been growing popularity in Iceland. People will be able to go to this temple and worship Odin, Thor, and (my personal favorite) Loki, the trickster.

What are we to make of this development?

Welcome to the Postmodern Age, the age in which there is thought to be no central truth: "if it works for you, fine, just don't impose your belief system on me."

The difference between the Norse gods and the God of the Universe is that they are extensions of the foibles and aspirations of humanity. They are fallible, imperfect, and at times, flaky—sort of like all of us.

The God of the Universe whom we worship as Christians is a God that we would not have conceived of. In our finiteness, God is infinite. With our limited life span, God is eternal. Where we are critical, unforgiving, and competitive, God is love. We could not have conceived of this sort of God on our own.

The Christian faith claims that Jesus rose bodily from the dead. That is a game-changer. Without the resurrection, you can pick your own god, because without the resurrection, any god will do.

But if you want the "peace that passes all understanding" you'll never find it in an extension of your own imagination. You will have to go beyond yourself, to a God beyond your wildest imagination.

