



January
2015

Pastor's Page

God Speaks



Zion Lutheran Church

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Overview of the Many Opportunities to Hear and Learn God's Word at Zion

[Heb 1:1-2 ESV] 1 Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

God speaks. He speaks by His Word—Scripture, the Bible, God's Word. We have the written Word of Holy God. He tells us the Good News that is ours in Christ. As you heard in my Advent 3 sermon, "And, it is this Word of Christ that we hear often, which the Holy Spirit uses to create and strengthen our faith.

*Sadly, there are many Christians who don't look for God to speak in Scripture alone, but also from within their hearts and in outside circumstances. This is an error that Bible believing Lutherans like us reject in hopes that those Christians caught in this confusion will see the pure Light. There is a German word that describes this false belief that the Holy Spirit speaks to us apart from Scripture—the word is, **Schwärmerei**. What it means, in a negative way, is that the Holy Spirit is like a swarm of bees buzzing chaotically flying around near our ears—rather than the clear way the Holy Spirit really speaks in one clear unified voice-written down so you know where to find it. The other term that is used to describe this false doctrine is enthusiasm, which means God-with in us. Instead of looking outside of themselves for the Holy Spirit to speak in Scripture alone, they look within their hearts. One major figure of the Reformation, whose descendants are the majority of American 'Evangelicals', names Zwingli, is described as swallowing the Holy Spirit that descended as a dove, "feathers and all."*

No, we don't look for God to speak to us His will for us from the Spirit within us or Him buzzing around like a bee. The Spirit speaks and works in the Word alone; remembering that the main thing in our sacraments is the Word too. For without God's Word, water is plain water in baptism. The Spirit creates and sustains faith—reveals God's will—all by the Word. He doesn't promise to do that any other way."

This past Advent the church celebrated the beginning of another year on the Church Calendar. The Church Calendar is focused on Jesus, Who is the content of Holy Scripture. As we begin another year, let us take a moment to give thanks for the many opportunities to hear and learn God's Word here at Zion. And, let us also make plans to participate, as we are able, so that Lord can continue to teach us, strengthen our faith, and enlighten our paths. – Pastor

Opportunities for all of Zion:

- Sunday Divine Service (On radio for homebound members)
- Advent and Lenten Vespers with Catechetical Sermons
- Sunday Bible Class and Sunday School with VBS
- Adult and Youth Catechism Classes
- Wednesday Bible Class with Matins
- Ladies' Society Monthly Study & LWML Quarterly Study
- Newsletters & Library and Website Resources (Especially for Home Devotions)
- Lutheran Father's Conference and Other Conferences

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL
THE MEMBERS WHO HAVE
JANUARY BIRTHDAYS!!

Jeff Kummerow	1/2
Mary Stark	1/2
Coila Ziebarth	1/6
Loretta Erickson	1/8
Grant Lyberg	1/9
Kyril Kiutukcief	1/13
Kathy Heidtke	1/14
Louis Gettler	1/16
Samuel Krarup	1/20
Ed Heidtke	1/23
Matthew Potts	1/23
Gary Gonyer	1/25
Pastor Stark	1/28
James Walton	1/28
Steven Taylor	1/30

♥ HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO: ♥

Gerald & Rosie Hoepner 1/19/1974

WE ASK YOU TO REMEMBER IN OUR
PRAYERS THE HOMEBOUND MEMBERS:

Robert Jacobson

John Emanuel

WOMEN'S SOCIETY NEWS

Members of the Women's Society met at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, December 11th. Cookies were prepared for the shut-ins. They were delivered by Pastor and other members of the society.

Members brought items for the Food Pantry and a donation was taken for the radio broadcast.

At noon the table prayer was said and 12 members, 4 guests and Pastor, Brianne & Simeon enjoyed a variety of tasty dishes and desserts. After eating Pastor had a short devotion. We then sang several Christmas songs. Then we played Bunco (21 points).

Thank you everyone who attended and furnished food for the potluck! It was an enjoyable afternoon.

Our next meeting will be Thursday, January 8th at 1:00 p.m. All women of the congregation are invited to join us. Hostesses will be Lyn Brace and Marge Thorson.

Table of Duties Monthly Review: What the Hearers Owe Their Pastors

The Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel. **1 Cor. 9:14** Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor. Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. **Gal. 6:6-7** The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, "Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain," and "The worker deserves his wages." **1 Tim. 5:17-18** We ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other. **1 Thess. 5:12-13** Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you. **Heb. 13:17**

Household of Faith Fund: *Gal 6:10 ESV 10 So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.* This fund is for members with emergency financial needs. If you have a need, you may speak with pastor confidentially. The funds are overseen by the Church Council. To donate to this fund, please mark it, "Household of Faith Fund."

WEATHER CONDITIONS:

If weather conditions ever become severe enough that worship services may be cancelled, please tune to WCFW 105.7 FM for announcements of any worship service cancellations. The Board of Elders will make the decision to cancel a service and send notification to WCFW at least one hour prior to the scheduled service.

New Adult Class Starting January 25th

The Class:

The purpose of the class is to teach what we believe, teach, and confess here at *Zion Lutheran Church*, as Lutherans who hold to ALL of the *Holy Scriptures* as confessed in the *Book of Concord of 1580*. To accomplish this task I will primarily teach from the Bible and Martin Luther's *Small Catechism*. The class is designed so that participants are free to ask questions when they arise. The class meets Sundays for 15-20 weeks from 11:15-12:45 in the *Fireside Room*. The class is free and we will provide the materials you need.

Who is the Class for?

1. The class is for adults seeking confirmation: Adults not yet confirmed may take the class, and upon completion become candidates for confirmation leading toward full communicant membership.
2. All who are seeking membership at Zion either by Profession of Faith (those who have been confirmed, but then left the LCMS), Transfers from other LCMS/AALC congregations, or inactive LCMS/Zion members who are looking to reactivate their membership. I understand that it may surprise many that I 'require' the class for transfers or former members. Some may even decide to go somewhere else because they are too prideful to take the class. But, the way I see it—it gives me a chance to get to know all potential new members and them me. If I am going to be their shepherd and they are going to listen to me, it helps if we can get to know each other. Those who don't want to get to know their pastor, already show what kind of membership they are really looking for. The church isn't a country club that one can take or leave the parts they want, or do what they want. My goal is not to grow the membership rolls here, but to be a faithful shepherd. I can only shepherd those who want me to. If from the start someone doesn't want to listen to my request to take the class with me for their spiritual good, then it is better for us, not them, that they go somewhere else. Besides, who can really say that they remember everything from the class when they were confirmed? Additionally, not all LCMS congregations and pastors do their duty in thoroughly instructing in their confirmation classes. And, not all LCMS congregations have retained true Lutheran doctrine. This means there are many LCMS members who really don't know true Lutheran (Biblical) teachings even though they think they do because they have been LCMS members for years. This class allows me to fill in any possible holes, which will hopefully prevent any conflict in the future over what really is Lutheran doctrine.
3. "Church Shoppers:" Anyone who is just curious of what we believe, teach, and confess here as Christians. Think visitors, friends, and relatives. The class is for informational purposes and is not intended to pressure anyone into becoming a member. Why not come and give us a fair hearing? I promise that everything we teach comes from the Bible alone—nothing more, nothing less.
4. For Current Active Members: If you would like to join the class and there is room, I would love to have you.

If you (or someone you know) are interested in taking this class, please contact me ASAP. Also, if this time doesn't work for you, but you are still interested, please contact me so we can work it out.

In Christ,

Pastor

PastorStark@gmail.com
715-379-3236 (cell)

**Meeting, February 10-12, 2015 at Holy Cross Lutheran, Kansas City,
Missouri:
"Office of the Holy Ministry, Part II" (Unbiblical Removal of Pastors)
If you are interested in going to this too, please contact me ASAP.**

Pastor

**Recharging at the 2015 ACELC Conference
www.ancelc.net**

The last time I wrote one of these e-mail blasts, I called myself the "pet layman" of the ACELC Board of Directors. While that description remains frightfully accurate, my real job is to lecture mathematics at the University of Texas at Austin. Academia is a wonderfully interesting place, not just because of all the fascinating mathematics being discussed and created, but also because there are so many, very different sorts of people crowded into one small space. At any given moment on the 11th floor of Moore Hall there must be at least 10 different languages being spoken. We have people weighing 80 lbs, and people weighing over 300 lbs – all genders (there are a surprising number of these), all colors, all religions, all political bents, and every dietary variation imaginable. "Diversity" is one of our sacred cows. I enjoy interacting with my colleagues and students, and learning about their opinions, countries, and their perceptions of America, Texas and meat-eaters. But, having said that, there are times I just want to seek out "my own kind." It takes extra effort to carry on a conversation with someone who doesn't speak English well. It takes extra effort to listen closely to a narrative and not try to interpret it through one's own world view. It takes extra effort to pay attention so that one does not give offense. And that extra effort is often tiring.

So it can be a great relief to retreat back home, where communication flows effortlessly, where I share a common context with others, and where I'm not so worried about making someone angry (...again...). I would guess that pastors, especially confessional pastors who may find themselves surrounded by pastors who are not-so-confessional, might have the same experience. After walking on eggshells at the circuit meetings and winks, it must be a relief to gather with other confessional pastors who have the same troubles, same opinions, same taste in beverages, etc.

Erblicken Sie: The annual ACELC conferences. What a delight it is to be able to travel to all the various host congregations and see The Familiar. There are the Church ladies, serving up coffee and homemade snacks (and sweetly not seeing all the crumbs and spills.) There's that

one retired elder who knows where everything is and has a key to it. But mostly, here gather people who believe that to be Lutheran means to adhere to the Lutheran Confessions. They agree that "lay minister" is an oxymoron. They believe in Closed Communion. They dislike contemporary worship almost as much as I do. And the reports (the shockingly many reports) of faithful pastors being unBiblically removed, their families impoverished and their reputations tarnished (and, I suppose, their naive, youthful dreams crushed), hurt them as they hurt me.

The theme of the 2015 ACELC Conference, February 10-12, is "Office of the Holy Ministry Part II (The Unbiblical Removal of Pastors)." The Conference will be held at Holy Cross Lutheran in Kansas City, Missouri – and I, for one, am really looking forward to it. Like you, these reports of injustice gall me, and every time I hear one, I want to do something about it. Who do I have to write, bribe, punch, or tattle on to get this evil to stop spreading? As Lutherans, we should probably refrain from bribing and punching, and go with what we do best: Teaching and preaching (or "barking"), which is what the ACELC Conference is all about. I hope my presence at the conference adds, in a small way, to our collective voice when we publicly decry the unBiblical practices which seem rampant throughout the Missouri Synod.

And one thing I hope to see this year is many new faces. Kansas City should be a much more do-able drive for most than, say, Austin was in 2013. At least for those who don't live in Austin. We have a great program of speakers, and offer a healthy dose of *Gemütlichkeit* – and we would love to see you there with us. [Details of the Conference](#) can be found on the [ACELC website](#). Come, join us, and get recharged!

Dr. Bart Goddard, [ACELC Board](#)
Member, Trinity Lutheran Church
Austin, Texas

P.S. If you haven't yet seen the new ACELC film, "If Not Now, When?" you can find it on our website under the "[ACELC Film Project](#)" link. There you will find the full film; parts I and II, broken down for easier viewing; as well as six study guides on different parts of the film. You may also [order DVDs](#) (one copy or more) if you would like to have a copy that can be viewed without a computer or shared with your friends as a gift.

Sessions Include:

Removal of Pastors: Reality and Consequences (Rev. Alan Kornacki, Jr.)

Duties of the Pastor: Expectations and Evaluations (Rev. Bryan Wolfmueller)

What Hearers Owe their Pastors: The Table of Duties (Rev. Todd Wilken)

The Pastor: CEO or Shepherd? (Rev. Rolf Preus)

Deposing a Pastor: Biblical and Unbiblical Reasons (Rev. Dan Bremer)

Unjust Treatment of Pastors: Late Reformation Germany (Rev. Robert Mayes)

Unbiblical Removal of Pastors: Summary & Resolution (Rev. Clint Poppe)

- See more at: http://www.ancelc.net/page/2015_conference#sthash.UIMeNdx2.dpuf

Fear This?

Posted on [October 6, 2014](#) by [Rev. Paul R. Harris](#)

Ebola is the sum of all current fears. It's zombies come alive; it's the outbreak scenarios films have warned us of; it's the pandemic Big Brother has promised is surely coming. Be afraid; be very afraid. We're on the Eve of Destruction. An editorial cartoon published 10/3/14 in *The Austin American Statesman* pictured Americans panicked by ISIS, Ukraine, the economy while behind them sneaked a big, black, ominous cloud of Ebola. I'm making the opposite point.

The head doctor for my county said on 10/2/14, "If you want to be afraid of something, be afraid of influenza. It kills far more in our county every year than any exotic illness does." I say, if you want to be afraid of an illness fear the pandemic that has been around for almost 30 years: HIV.

Have you noticed that Ebola is spread the same way HIV is? Contact with bodily fluids. HIV caused panic in the 90s. When there was talk of treating it as the epidemic it was, the political left would have done of that. Then began the campaign to emphasize how difficult it was to get HIV. You could *not* get it through casual contact.

Twenty years later and equally mysteries virus is on our shores. People are calling for quarantines, for stopping travel from Africa, for pandemic emergency plans. All this because of one infected man. U.S. Statistics – [AIDS.gov](#) says that 1.1 million people with HIV infection live in the United States. One in six doesn't know it. They cook and serve your food. They take your temperature at the doctor's office. They nurse you in the hospital. They are daycare workers, school teachers, doctors, dentists, and clergymen.

So if you want to make of list of what to be afraid of start with HIV or influenza before you get to Ebola. Jesus, however, says something different. If the subject is fear, the object is God. He says not even the Devil belongs in the same category as God let only any illness of the body.

If you want something to be afraid of, if you want something to focus your fear on don't start with the Devil or any disease that once it's killed your body can do no more to you. Instead, "fear Him who is able to cast body and soul into hell." That's what Jesus says, and then He says, "Don't be afraid." Jesus takes all our fears, collects them in one jar – for who but God is in control of disease or Devil – and then He smashes that jar by saying, "You don't need to be afraid."

Someone is very interested in keeping us afraid but of the wrong thing. In the 1990s it was AIDS. In the early 21st century it was terrorism and that gave way to the Great Recession which now seems to be giving way to infectious disease and over all of these tolls the solemn bell of climate change.

In the 1950s, it was nuclear war. Check out the 1951 movie "Duck and Cover." It teaches children how to protect themselves in the event of a nuclear strike. In one segment Tony is depicted on his way to his Boy Scout meeting alone. The blast strikes and good ol' Tony ducks and covers like a champ. A nuclear strike never happened. Instead in her indolence and unbelief America was struck with a decadence that now makes it unwise for 10 year old Tony to go anywhere alone because of child predators. Running from one fear we ran right into the arms of a disturbing reality unseen and undreamed of.

As the person who ceases to believe in God doesn't cease to believe but finds that he believes in everything – which is superstition, so the person who ceases to fear the true God finds he is afraid of everything – which is panophobia.

