



March 2015

Pastor's Page



Zion Lutheran Church

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Chippewa Falls, WI 54729

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Christians Can Celebrate Christmas Everyday, Even During Lent

As we are now in the middle of Lent, I thought I would draw your attention to Christmas. I do this by including below my Christmas Eve sermon. Christianity isn't only something for Christmas and Lent, but for everyday.

12/24/14- For many, Christmas ends tomorrow night. They have been listening to Christmas music since Black Friday, shopping, wrapping, traveling, celebrating—and are glad it's all over. Time to wrap a plastic baby Jesus in plastic wrap and lay him in a plastic storage box. Yes, for many, Christmas is like plastic—it is cheap and disposable. For many, Christmas, the Savior of the world born to die for sinners, isn't a solid Biblical teaching that is worth celebrating everyday of their lives. No, for them, Christmas is just a cold dead tradition that lasts about a month. And, in our culture, it isn't just Christmas that is disposed of so quickly, but Christianity as a whole. Christianity in our culture is fleeting faster than discount wrapping paper after Christmas. Churches are closing. Even some of the few that are growing numerically are just gobbling up from the smaller churches who can't compete with the latest fads. There is no denying it—America doesn't confess Christianity as it did. Christian billboards are being replaced with Atheist ones. Even Easter and Christmas Eve services that usually experienced a big spike in attendance—well, the spike gets smaller each year.

There is an expression that says, **“Christianity is always within one generation of being extinct.”** What it means is that it takes a lot of hard work by the current generation, parents especially, to pass the faith to the next. It means Christians must actually live as Christians every day and not just say they are Christians on special occasions. And, the Church today is reaping what it has been sowing. **So, why the decline?**

For one, Christians stopped having as many children as they used to, so there have been less babies to baptize and enlarge God's kingdom and strengthen the Church. The fewer kids that were around have not been taught the Christianity that their grandparents taught their parents. Many parents bought into the lie that it is the church or pastor's job to teach the faith to children, and so little of God's Word found time in the home. God's Word in the home was replaced with schedules that were just too busy with everything else that is less important. Others thought they could just drop their kids off at Sunday school while they went to brunch, which taught their kids that learning God's Word is for children not for adults. Well, what do you think happened when they grew up—restaurants got more crowded? Others taught their kids that it doesn't matter what church you go to—that is, it doesn't matter what it teaches—the church might handle snakes while listening to heavy metal, but at least they are in 'church'. Others have taught their children that a good church must be fun and have a lot of programs—so when the fun stopped—so did going to church. Others, even though they made their kids attend school, decided not to make them attend church. Well, it is no surprise what their sinful flesh chose--laziness. And, it is no surprise that they learned that “my parents believe school is important, but church is optional.” Yes, there are always exceptions to the rule of “train up a child in the way he should go and he won't depart from it”, but this has been the rule. Train your kids to live daily as Christians--or train them to live mostly like the dying world.

Yes, **Christianity isn't some magical thing that gets passed down to the next generation apart from means—they must be diligently taught God's Word daily to live and believe as Christians.** And, I am talking about past generations. It is only getting worse. Church doors are closing like crazy and what was apathy toward Christianity is now open disdain for it. Many of the churches that stay open have gutted the teachings so they are more PC therapy than Christianity. Many are tired of

living the lie that they are Christians and are out of the closet and embracing their unbelief---and I'm talking about those from Christian families.

If the truth of Christmas and Christianity doesn't influence every day of our lives, certainly not just on Christmas Eve and Easter, we are in real danger. Do we care more for the things that parish than for the one thing in this world that will last forever—The Holy Word of God? Health, wealth, school activities, and sports will all pass away and not matter on the Last Day.

Yes, it is a sad reality. But let's not ignore the truth because it is uncomfortable. Even though this is not what God wants, most people will reject Christ and go to hell—broad is the road that leads to destruction. Yes, God made hell for the devil not people, but many stubbornly resist the Holy Spirit in the Gospel call and, by their own fault, will end up in a real hell. Many of us here today know this Biblical fact. We know that atheists, agnostics, deists, Muslims, Mormons, Buddhists, Jews—well, all non-Christians—who die in their rejection of Jesus will be in hell. But, also many who confess with their mouths, “Merry Christmas” and say that they are Christians will go to hell too.

Jesus says, as recorded in[Mat 7:19-20, 22-29 ESV] 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Thus you will recognize them by their fruits. ... 22 On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' 23 And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.' 24 'Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. 26 And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. 27 And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.' 28 And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, 29 for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.

Among those who confess Jesus, some are really hypocrites. A hypocrite is someone who says one thing, but does another. A hypocrite is also someone who says and does one thing, but inwardly secretly believes another. Even though this stat is changing, there are still many in our country who claim to be Christians, but really are not because they don't really have faith in Jesus. And, there are two main manifestations of hypocrisy—one you can see, one you cannot see.

The first type of hypocrite are the ones who say they are a Christian, but their lifestyles tell a different story. They claim to be Christian trees, but the fruit in their lives is not in keeping with repentance, but is in keeping with the dying bad trees. Christianity—that is saving faith in Jesus—is not compatible with choosing comfort over church. Faith in Jesus can't cohabit with fornication. Abortion doctors, drug dealers, drunks, and thieves can't embrace their sins and be Christians. Those who could, but don't go to church or murder babies can be identified. This hypocrisy is seen.

Other hypocrisy is unseen. The one who never misses church or Bible class. Never has outwardly murdered. The one who never misses a day in the *Portals of Prayer*. But, they trust in these fruits—for salvation. That is they trust they are going to heaven because they are a good person, doing their best, or better than others.

Why have I chosen this text and topic to address tonight of all nights? Can't we just keep the happy light feelings of Christmas going? Many pastors do this. They try to sweet talk people into coming to church by not offending their flesh, but appealing to it—we have better coffee than the church down the road. But, I'm here not to talk you in to anything. I am here to warn you as from Jesus. I know that there are hypocrites here. Jesus says so in many parables. But, for you who are mad that you were drug here, can't wait to leave, and think the true Christianity that I speak is bunk—know this--know that

Holy God out of love has warned you and called you to change your mind. Why? Because God doesn't want anyone going to hell.

Christmas is about God's Son coming to earth to save the entire world. That includes all of us. That includes all of us who are arrogant and prideful. That means all of us self-righteous hypocrites. That means all of us Pharisees and tax collectors. Jesus has lived a perfect life for you and me. Jesus has died on the cross for all of our sins—all of them. All of our thoughts, words, and deeds. He paid for all of our sins as parents, grandparents, and children. God doesn't hold our failures against us since He held them against His Son on the cross.

Yes, we confess our failures, but our Lord says, "I forgive you." **We can't change our past history, but Jesus' past history has changed the way we see our past.** Our past sins have been blotted out by the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world. In your baptism all your past sins are washed away—even the daydream 1 minuet ago. Baptism doesn't expire, but is a present reality that keeps you clean everyday. There isn't one sin in your life that was too big for Jesus—He paid for them all. Peace on earth—peace between God and man.

But, what about the future? Jesus will return soon. And, what should we be doing until then? Come to church where Jesus is present forgiving our sins in Word and Sacraments. Christmas comes from the two words, Christ –Mass. Mass is the Word for Holy Communion. Come and celebrate Christ-mass every Sunday and special occasions like Christ-mas Day tomorrow. Come here where Christ strengthens your faith and forgives your sins. Call on your baptism daily. Study God's Word daily. Teach it to your kids and grandkids. Show the next generation that God's Word is like air to breath that sustains you daily against the world, the devil, and yourself. If you have fallen into bad patterns, change directions—that is repent. Fight against your sinful flesh, the world, and devil that are always looking to lead you away from Christ to hell. Continue on the narrow road.

Yes, I know this may not be the sermon we were hoping for our Christmas Eve traditional hymn sing. I know I may have made for some awkward situations in your families. **But, this is what we ALL need to hear and keep on hearing until Christ returns, not in a manger, but on His throne to judge. Better an awkward narrow road than the happy broad one. For the sake of Jesus Who took on our flesh—God declares you righteous. That is what Christmas is about. May that Joyous news ring in your ears all the days of your life. Amen.**

In Christ,

Pastor

Hymn list continued on next page.

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

Alex Welke	3/1
Donald Verch	3/2
Barbara Calkins	3/5
Krysta Martinek	3/6
Karla Amys	3/7
Myrna Mattison	3/11
Katherine Gonyer	3/14
Janice Blair	3/17
Judy Benson	3/20
Doris Post	3/20
Alex Ziebarth	3/26
Bryan Myers	3/29

♥ HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO: ♥

Larry & Carol Gale 3/26/1977

Jim & Rita La Nou 3/27/1965

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

Juanita Lueck

Myrna Mattison

Lila Pahl

WOMEN'S SOCIETY NEWS

Women's Society met on Thursday, February 12th. A delicious dessert was served by Lyn Brace and Marge Thorson. Pastor Yunghans opened devotions with a prayer and we sang "Swiftly Pass the Clouds of Glory". Then several passages were read and discussed from Exodus, I and II Corinthians. There were a lot of conflictions with the law among the people and twisting of God's Word. There were those who resisted God's word and Satan drew a veil over their eyes so they could not see and plugged their ears so they could not hear. To those who received Christ their eyes were opened and their ears could hear. Christ humbled himself in death and became one of us. We are reconciled to God thru Jesus. Devotions ended with a prayer. President Arlene Hakes opened the meeting with fifteen members, one guest and Pastor Yunghans attending. Treasurers report: \$1,318.18 in checking. During the March meeting it will be decided when we will meet to clean the chairs in the fellowship hall and discuss cleaning of the church and other rooms. Sam Norton donated a stable to the Women's Society. We thank her for that. Members of Women's Society hosted the first Lenten supper on Ash Wednesday. Various rolls, breads, hot dishes, salads and desserts were served. A free will offering was taken. Supper is served from 5:00 - 6:00 p.m. each Wednesday during Lent with Lenten services at 6:30 p.m. Our next meeting is March 12th at 1:00 p.m. Hostesses are Carol Evenson and Lois Eichinger. We invite all ladies to join us for dessert, devotions and a short meeting. Guests are most welcome.

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.

Table of Duties Monthly Review: Of Citizens

Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's. **Matt. 22:21** It is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience. This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor. **Rom. 13:5-7** I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior. **1 Tim. 2:1-3** Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good. **Titus 3:1** Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. **1 Peter 2:13-14**

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."

Organ News: An organ Committee is being formed to gather information to bring to the Congregation. Funds have been received, designated for an Organ Fund. Our present organ is in great need of extensive repair, including the need for a new console. Because of the high cost of repair, we are also looking at digital organs as an option. If you would like to be on the committee, please contact Brian Schweishtal at 715-529-8342. (email address: brians8881@gmail.com)

NEW COLLEGE AGE BIBLE STUDY:

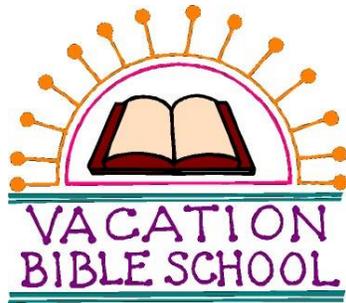
I have started a new Bible study aimed for those around the college age range (anyone may attend). We are meeting in Eau Claire to be close to both colleges. Meetings are Wednesdays at 1:30 p.m. at The Nucleus Coffee Shop.

A MESSAGE FROM THE FELLOWSHIP BOARD:

The board is serving suppers on Wednesdays before the worship services. Serving time will be from 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. with a freewill offering taken. The church service will follow at 6:30 p.m. The remaining suppers will need to be provided by members willing to volunteer their services to do so. Hopefully we will have enough support from the congregation to be able to continue the meals through the Lenten season. Bars will also be needed. A sign up sheet is posted by the office for the meals and the bars. You may sign up for the meals as an individual, family or go together with others as a group. Please include the menu being served. The boards can help our providing items if needed. If you have any questions you may contact: Carol Evenson 715-723-2718, Lois Eichinger 715-723-4471 or Jan Blair 715-720-2899.

SAVE THE DATE:

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL will be held from Sun. July 26 thru Thurs. July 30 in the evenings. Our theme will be on the Lord's Prayer. We will be purchasing our curriculum thru "Higher Things" again this year. As time gets closer prayerfully consider how you may help in our efforts to teach the children of Zion and of Chippewa. Our annual Worship in the Park and Potluck Picnic will follow on Sunday, August 2nd.



LENTEN MIDWEEK SCHEDULE:

3/4 - 6:30 p.m. Vespers

3/11 - 6:30 p.m. Vespers

3/18 - 6:30 p.m. Vespers

3/25 - 6:30 p.m. Vespers

4/2 - 6:30 p.m. Holy Thursday with Holy Communion

4/3 - 6:30 p.m. Good Friday

FROM PASTOR JOHN FEHRMAN

CLEF IN SOUTH AMERICA – JANUARY 15, 2015 #1

Greetings and all that kind of stuff to all of you CLEF supporters and friends!

I left home early this past Tuesday morning and arrived in Buenos Aires, Argentina almost exactly 24 hours later. It has been 17 months since I was last here - never the less - CLEF did have contact with the translation folk here in Argentina and Chile in the mean time - in Antigua, Guatemala.

My travels were severely curtailed the second half of 2014 - the left hip decided it wanted to be like the right one (replaced in October of 2012) so that finally happened on 10 Dec of 2014. I am back to mostly almost completely better. Can't run and such but other wise no restrictions - including 24 hour airplane trips. So I am back.

Our CLEF agenda this trip includes the following:

1. The International Lutheran Hymnal Project (ILHP) - Spanish - a project begun in 2008 in cooperation with The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Republic and The Evangelical Lutheran Church Argentina (ELCA) - at their official request. With your generous gifts of time, talent and treasures we have brought the project along (now a whole group of other interested parties are climbing on the project). The CLEF has invested tens of thousands of US dollars to get the book to where it is today. We will not give up but we will not forget the initial requests from Chile and Argentina. And, yes, I had a very productive meeting yesterday with the President of the ELCA Seminario Concordia our Argentine "leader" with the project and in addition with our CLEF coordinator of Spanish translation work in South America yesterday and today (Thursday) - I am staying at his home. Please do not forget

: this ILHP work accomplished in South America carries on to Africa and Asia.

2. Many of you are familiar with the series of books produced by Lutheran Press, funded much / mostly in part by The CLEF, translations of some Dr. Martin Luther's stuff which have never appeared in such a fashion in all of history. That, now series of 8 with more to come, is being fully translated into Spanish for the entire Spanish speaking world. Yesterday and today we finalized our joint commitments to our primary translator (he did portions of the Spanish edition of the Lutheran Study Bible so you know he is good) to finish the current volumes - three are completed. Tomorrow morning we meet with the "final editor / reviewer" and confirm that process. Additionally this evening I will meet with the copy / page editor and finalize the details of the remaining stuff to bring it to printing. Sometime tomorrow or Saturday we will accept "bids" to print the books for here in southern South America. The exact same thing will be printed in other countries to save money - primarily in shipping. AND OF COURSE - UNLIKE OTHER (even LCMS RSO's) all CLEF stuff will be / is available for FREE through the CLEF Theological Library E-Reader Project! And the copy rights will not be ever held hostage by anyone as you can down load - even today (in English) for FREE the CLEF Theological Library with no copy right restrictions!

3. And I also made a "pastoral" / "friendship" visit to a retired pastor who has been working hard on translating a major Lutheran set of books. We are 7/10ths done with the initial portion of that work. That I did this late afternoon.

And so it goes. Please continue to pray for the CLEF. The CLEF is your Confessional Lutheran "mission" organization, working with fellow Confessional Lutherans all over the world FOR THE SAKE OF THE GOSPEL.

CLEF IN SOUTH AMERICA – JANUARY 17, 2015 #2

Greetings Kind Friends and Supporters!

Thursday evening and yesterday were wonderful - tons accomplished - by the Mercy of God.

We have our graphic designer / page and layout editor secured! We have our Theological Editor secured and our primary translator /

coordinator secured AND we have several "initial / primary bids" for the printing of the books!

So all is going well - even the thunder storms last evening are welcome - bringing to the sleeping hours (no AC) the coolness prayed for.

CLEF IN SOUTH AMERICA – JANUARY 18, 2015 - #3

Good 2nd Sunday after the Epiphany to all of you from Buenos Aires,

Yesterday was spent with Dr. Jose Pfaffenzeller working on translating my sermon into Spanish - I had agreed to preach at St. Peter's LC on Saturday evening. Once a month (all year), the Saturday before the 3rd Sunday they have their weekly worship service on Saturday evening at 6.30. So that is where I spent my last evening. I'll send a picture of the altar Bible - a CPH German edition printed in 1911. So I preached in English (surprised at the English bit?) and Jose repeated me in Spanish. The liturgy was basically page 15 from TLH.

Today we finalized the finances for our CLEF efforts in the coming months and are now in the process of fixing the famous Argentina BBQ called, "Asado" - Google it for more info.

This afternoon I leave for the airport and then get on a Delta flight to Atlanta and then home Monday afternoon. As always these now past 16 years of doing this "stuff" I thoroughly enjoy the people we work with and where they live and what unworthy I am blessed and able to be a part of - with the exception of the the occasional robber, kidnapper, thief, thug and such and above all the eternal time spent on airplanes and at airports.

Most of you get these notes and pictures through emails via clefnews@gmail.com.

CLEF IS ON FACEBOOK

You can now find The Confessional Lutheran Education Foundation on that thing called, "facebook" - a year ago President Harrison made me promise to get a CLEF facebook thing and our CLEF Board member Rev. Strawn pushed me to succumb and he has made it happen. And as an extra bonus you can go to: [facebook.com/tclef.org](https://www.facebook.com/tclef.org) and each day you will find a short devotion written by Dr. Martin Luther newly translated by Dr. Sonntag of Lutheran Press - I don't think they have

ever appeared before in English. You will also find other CLEF stuff and links.

And again, do know that nothing happens without your kind, generous, faithful, loving and so on support. You just do not make a difference - YOU ARE THE DIFFERENCE.

And as always, what ever we do, we do not for ourselves, we do these things FOR THE SAKE OF THE GOSPEL.

A Dios - To God

Thank you, President Harrison!

Recently, President Harrison posted this statement at his Witness, Mercy, and Life Together blog site:

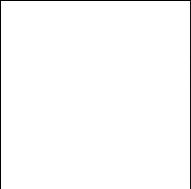
When a public teacher on the roster of Synod can without consequence publicly advocate the ordination of women (even participate vested in the installation of an ELCA clergy person), homosexuality, the errancy of the Bible, the historical-critical method, open communion, communion with the Reformed, evolution, and more, then the public confession of the Synod is meaningless. I am saying that if my Synod does not change its inability to call such a person to repentance and remove such a teacher where there is no repentance, then we are liars and our confession is meaningless. I do not want to belong to such a synod, much less lead it. I have no intention of walking away from my vocation. I shall rather use it and, by the grace of God, use all the energy I have to call this Synod to fidelity to correct this situation.

Matt Harrison

On behalf of the ACELC Board of Directors I would like to thank President Harrison for his bold statement in light of the Dispute Resolution Panel decision in the Northwest District regarding the very public teachings of Dr. Matthew Becker.

We believe that the Dispute Resolution Process, as currently structured in the LCMS, is hopelessly broken, This decision is further proof. In fact, it is a perfect example of why we identified the Dispute Resolution Process as one of the [10 errors tolerated and/or promoted in the LCMS](#).

President Harrison, in his statement, has also described quite well, why the ACELC exists and why we likewise have no desire to walk away from our beloved Synod, nor from our vocations as pastors and congregations. We long for the day when



false doctrine and practice can be honestly identified among us, and those responsible called to repentance. We support President Harrison in his call to fidelity and pray that you will too.

There is still time to join us for our [upcoming Conference in Kansas City](#). Please check out our video, "[If Not Now, When?](#)" if you haven't already done so.

In Christ,
Rev. Clint K. Poppe
Chairman, [ACELC](#)