

October 2011

Love, Homosexuality, and Christianity

Do Ask, Do Tell

If you have paid attention to the news you have noticed that there has been a lot of attention given to the topic of homosexuality, especially over gay ‘marriage’ and the, *Don’t ask, Don’t tell*, policy. There are so many opinions out there, and many in the name of Christianity, that it is often difficult to wade through them all. This discussion will not review all of the opinions on the subject of homosexuality, but it will highlight the loving Christian response to homosexuality based on Scripture alone. This is important so that we can guard against both the errors of those who condone the sinful behavior and the errors of those who hate the sinner and deprive them of the Gospel of forgiveness. So, let’s *ask* what the Christian response to the topic of homosexuality is and *tell* the answer.

As stated above, it is important to define what it means to give a Christian response to something. A Christian response always comes from the Word of God. If a response doesn’t come from God’s Word it is only the opinion of fallen man. Scripture is the only source and norm for all of our Christian doctrine. And what does the Word of God say about homosexuality? Scripture clearly condemns homosexuality in both the Old and New Testaments (Genesis 19: 1-29; Leviticus 18:22; Leviticus 20:1-12, 13, 14-27; Romans 1:18-26-27-32; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 1 Timothy 1:3-11; Revelation 21:8, 27:22:15). Christians must maintain the Scriptural stance that homosexuality is sinful. No matter what rhetoric is used, gay by birth or by choice, the Christian message remains the same; confess and repent (turn away from), as you do with all sin, in order to receive forgiveness. It is very unloving to tell someone to embrace their sin (even if their human opinion is that their behavior isn’t sinful) because Scripture tells us that if we don’t repent and confess our sins, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us (I John 1:8-9). This isn’t just true of the sins that people like to display on bumper stickers, like homosexuality and abortion, but this includes heterosexual sex or cohabitation outside of Holy Matrimony, unscriptural divorce, viewing pornography, rarely coming to Church, false doctrine, gossiping, and the like (all 10 Commandments). When a person stops repenting and confessing a sin as such, they should fear the wrath Holy God. It is always loving to warn of this danger. This is why the Christian response to all sin, including homosexuality, is always proclaiming the Law of God. The Law of God shows us sin and miraculously brings about confession and repentance. The Scriptural response calls sin, sin, but never makes a sin seem unforgivable. Christ has died for all sins and freely forgives those who keep on confessing and repenting, no matter what they have done.

The Church is a place for all sinners, including those who struggle with the sin of homosexuality. We poor miserable sinners who were conceived in sin, born sinful and choose to sin, come to Church confessing and repenting of all our sins, and the Great Physician feely forgives us. We cannot rid ourselves of sin. We cannot fix the sins that we struggle with, be it gossiping, lusting, or any other sin. The Gospel is that Christ has fixed the problem of sin by His keeping the 10 Commandments for us and by His death on the cross. In Holy Baptism the sinless life of Christ covers all of our sin. In Holy Communion Jesus forgives all of our sins. In Holy Absolution we confess our sins and Jesus sends them all away. This is the Christian response to homosexuality and every other sin. God’s Word diagnoses and brings to light the problem of sin by preaching the Law, then comforts with the medicine of the Gospel. As we move closer to Advent (a penitential season), may this Christian, Biblical, and loving response to sin be heard

and believed by the whole world.

In Christ,

Pastor Stark

ZION'S WOMEN'S SOCIETY

The Women's Society met on Thursday, September 8. Fourteen members and Pastor Stark were in attendance. Mary Gettler was hostess and served dessert with ice cream. A beautiful centerpiece graced the table.

After a short business meeting, Pastor gave an inspirational reading. As usual we closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Arlene Hakes will host the October 13th Meeting.

Remember we meet every second Thursday of the month at 1:30 p.m. at church in the fellowship hall. All women of the congregation are cordially invited to join us.

BIBLE CLASSES

You are invited to attend our Bible studies on Sunday mornings following our worship service.

Wednesday morning classes are at 9:30 a.m. Come early if you would like to talk with your fellows members.

Everyone is invited to attend one or both classes. You are most welcome!

LWML

Zion will host the Lutheran Women's Missionary League Fall Rally on Saturday, Oct. 22nd. Registration is at 8:30 a.m. The study begins at 9:00 a.m.

We will collect items for "Gifts of the Heart" in remembrance of the 10th anniversary of "9/11" and remembering those who have given of their time and lives serving us in the military. Items will be donated to the veterans living at the Northern-Klein hall.

Needed: Postage stamps, phone cards, Walmart gift cards, deodorizers, computer paper, expandable folders, laundry detergent, liquid hand soap, gloves, manicure sets, coffee (drip), wash cloths and slippers.

Exciting News from the Board of Education
Worship, Sunday School, and Youth and Adult Bible Classes

Children in Worship:

What a joy that we are hearing the sweet sound of "children in worship" regularly! To further encourage the presence of the young ones in church--through a donation of a member—we have available a "CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY BULLETIN" each week and a clip-board with a baggie of colors & pencil attached. These bulletins have activities which correspond with the Bible readings for the day.

Parents, encourage your children to pick up a "baggie" of pencils and crayons so that they may quietly work on their bulletin during the sermon time. This helps them to understand what is happening during worship and their faith to "Grow in Christ". After worship they may take home the bulletin, just like we adults do, but please put back their clip-board and "baggies" for use next week.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

If you haven't enrolled your child(ren) in Sunday School you may still do so. Invite your children's friends if they are unchurched.

Sunday school. Classes are available for Pre-school (3 & 4 year olds); Kinder- garten - Second Grade; and Third - Sixth Grade. We meet in the front of the church for opening devotions after worship ends...about 10:10 a.m. each

Sunday morning. Classes conclude at 11:15 a.m. in their class room.

There is no charge for materials.

(We do appreciate an occasional donation of juice bottles and small paper cups, or juice boxes; snack crackers or fruit which we will serve to the children as a snack during lesson time). (It is a long time for those little tummies from breakfast until lunch).

We hope to have the children singing/playing bells once each month during the worship services...using their talents to the glory of God. We will again be giving faithful attendance awards to the children each time they have been in class 4 times. We are also offering a challenge for them for extra memorizing with a reward from the "Memory Treasure Box".

Nursery

We would like all children in worship, if possible, since Christ's bids infants to hear Him too. However, we understand that sometimes parents need to use the nursery at various times for various reasons. We now have a radio in the nursery so parents can still listen to the service when they need to step out of church. Additionally, we would like to offer babysitting in the nursery during Sunday morning Bible class if possible. However, **we need volunteers** to fill a rotation so that young parents too can enjoy the gift of Bible class. Adults, if you are interested in doing a Sunday a month, please contact the Board Of Education.

Youth and Adult Bible Classes

Pastor Stark is teaching our Sunday morning Adult Bible class at 10:15 each week. He would like to strongly encourage all jr. & sr. high school youth to attend this class along with the adults, as he thinks they are mature enough for this challenge, and will help prepare them for adulthood (which is our goal). This will also help adults get to know our youth so that they can encourage them in the faith during such a crucial time in life. Additionally, it will give Pastor some face time with the youth, while, of course, teaching them the Word of God, which is what young and old alike need.

We will soon be studying the book of Galatians. Please join us!

Look for updates and further information about our Parish Education in the Church Newsletter and bulletins. Also, feel free to contact Pastor or the Board of Education with any questions or suggestions.

VOTER'S MEETING

All boards should have their 2012 budget for the council meeting on Tuesday, Oct. 11th at 6:30 p.m. The budget will be presented to the voters at the October Voter's meeting on October 23rd at 10:15

a.m. New board members will also be voted upon to fill terms of the officers who have fulfilled their term limit.

If you are called upon to be a board member, please prayerfully consider it.

All members 18 years old and above are encouraged to attend. This is your opportunity to have a say about how your church operates.

REMINDERS

Please continue to save your Gordy's receipts and stamps. The stamps need to be trimmed about ¼ inch around the stamp. The monies received from these are sent to -missions. Thank you!

Our local food pantry is always in need of non-perishable food items - ESPECIALLY THIS TIME OF YEAR.. Needed: Non-Perishable food items such as boxed dinners, soup, canned vegetables, flour, sugar, cake mixes, soap, toilet paper, etc. There is a barrel in the back entrance or drop the items off at the Salvation Army.

Flowers and radio: If you would like to furnish altar flowers or sponsor a radio broadcast for a special occasion, please call the office. Altar flowers are \$30.00 and the radio broadcast is \$76.00.

Prayer requests: if you would like a prayer on Sunday morning, please contact one of the secretaries during the week. If it is a last minute, you can also catch pastor before service.

HIGHER THINGS: SUMMER 2012 HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH CONFERENCE July 2-7, 2012

Why is trip so important? There are many reasons that this trip is important. Primarily, it is a great way for your child to learn more and grow deeper in the faith. The instruction that is given by LCMS pastors and professors at these conferences is top notch. Second,

this trip helps your child get to know better other youth from our church and around the U.S. These conferences are limited in size, so they are big, but not overwhelming so. There really is a practical benefit for our children to see that there are hundreds of other Lutherans their age who value the same doctrinal and liturgical heritage that we do at Zion. Finally, it just good old fashioned fun. The Conference focuses on three things: worship, work (learning) and play. The conference schedule always has been fun activities like sports, entertainment, and the like.

High school students (and parents) be looking for more information in the coming weeks about signing-up for next summers' **Higher Things** trip with Pastor.

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

We will be participating in the Younkers Community Day Fund Raiser. All money raised will be used for furnishing the our empty meeting room downstairs. The event will be on Friday, November 11 and Saturday, November 12. This has become a two event this year. The booklets can be purchased for \$5 per booklet with 100% of the booklet sales benefiting Zion Lutheran Church.

The booklet includes: One coupon worth \$10 off a \$10 or more purchase; one 20% off shopping pass that you can use over and over; one 30% Early Bird coupon valid Saturday only from 6:00 a.m. until 10:00 a.m.; 11 bonus buys and two web exclusive offers.

Zion is signed up to sell the booklets on the following Saturdays: Oct. 1, Oct. 8, Oct. 15, Oct. 29 and Nov. 5. The Stewardship Committee is looking for people to volunteer to sell the booklets.

If you can't volunteer to sell consider selling some to friends or co-workers or purchase them for yourself. This is an excellent time to do Christmas shopping, save money and earn money for the church.

ADULT MINISTRY

The 2011 Adult Gathering will be held on Thursday, November 3rd at Mt. Olive Lutheran Church in Weston, WI. The cost is \$22.00, which covers the program, break, and lunch.

The North Wisconsin District

*Adult Ministry Task Force
Invites you to attend.*

The theme, based on Acts 4:36, is "Be A Barnabas". This passage notes that Barnabas means "Son of Encouragement."

*Program includes: Chaplain
Mike Moreno, director of Operation Barnabas is the keynote speaker.*

Operation

*Barnabas is a newer Synodical
Program which focus on ways
Congregations and individuals*

*Can assist veterans and their families during deployment and
returning from deployment.*

*Our own North Wisconsin District Chaplain Hoogland will share his
experience and insights of families and service men and women
deployed to active duty for our District.*

*A local VFW will have a Color
Guard Presentation. Helpful Christian literature will be available.*

*The Claurson Family from Coloma, WI will provide Gospel
Music entertainment.*

(See enclosed brochure and registration form.)