



February 2013

# Pastor's Page



Zion Lutheran  
Church

110 East Grand Avenue  
Chippewa Falls, WI  
54729

## Confessing The Faith during Lent and All Year Long

**“O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.”** The faith that the Holy Spirit creates in us via the Word of God also creates the confession of that faith from our lips. **[10] For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. (Romans 10:10 ESV)** Faith confesses. Christians confess the truth, which also exposes error. It is confessing the faith that the gates of hell cannot prevail against (Matthew 16:13-19). Christians have always confessed the truth against error and always will until the end of time.

Understand that where Christ's Church is, there the devil will also be attacking. The Nicene Creed, which Christians have confessed since 325 A.D., was/is a confession of the truth against error. The same is true of many of our other Lutheran Reformation documents, which confess the truth against the errors of the Roman Catholic Church and other erring church bodies.

Don't think that devil has stopped hounding Christ's Church since the Reformation or since the founding of the LCMS. He has not; and I could list several examples of how Christians have had to confess and contend for the faith in every generation against errors. As to say, we can never stop being alert to the devil's darts—we must always confess and fight for the pure Gospel for the sake of us all.

*The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod*, which we are a member of, has been blessed with the pure Gospel of Christ. We have a rich and wonderful history of God's gifts to us. But, as history and Scripture tell us, where Jesus' pure Gospel and Christians are--so will the devil's attacks be. Sadly, there are some errors that have made their way into our Synod. That isn't to say that the LCMS isn't still very blessed—we are. We have some of the best seminaries in the world, many great pastors, missionaries, church workers, and congregations. However, the errors that have crept into our synod must be confessed against for our own well-being, for the benefit of our erring brothers and sisters in Christ in the LCMS, and for the whole world.

I know that prior to the Call to serve as your pastor, Zion was known for speaking the truth in love to the erring, even with in the LCMS. I was delighted when I arrived to see that you had stood firm where many in the LCMS had not--like maintaining Christ-centered liturgical worship, Closed Communion, the pastoral office, church discipline, the role of men and women--and refusing to participate in worship services with Muslims and others who deny that Jesus is the only way to the Father. With the help of God, our standing firm together has not changed. Together, we have and will continue to confess the truth against errors, even errors in our own synod (i.e. our overtures that we sent to Synod). In fact, it very important

that congregations confess the truth, just as much as their pastors. In the LCMS, pastors and congregations make up membership, so if only pastors confess the truth, that would only make up roughly 50% of Synodical membership. Thank you for supporting your pastors over the years and for also speaking the truth in love. Laypeople have the right and duty to judge doctrine and insist that it is pure also.

So that we can continue to confess together God's truth against error out of love, I plan to continue to inform and warn you of all false doctrine—even in our Synod. I know many of you are aware to varying degrees of some of the errors within the LCMS. For example, you have visited other LCMS churches that are publicly sinning by allowing almost everyone to commune. Sadly, there is much more that you may not be aware of, like an LCMS district president worshipping with Muslims, women preaching, a push for women's ordination, and other great shameful sins that our LCMS has tolerated or supported. Many laypeople in the ELCA were kept in the dark by their pastors about the changes that were happening over time in the ELCA, and were surprised when they learned about these changes in the news. Since they didn't know, they couldn't confess the truth. We must be aware of the errors in our Synod so we can continue to confess out of love. We wouldn't want our silence on these LCMS errors to be seen as condoning. With respect and gentleness, we must continue to confess, knowing that our enemy is the father of lies—not our brothers and sisters he has misled.

In Christ,  
Pastor

P.S. You may have noticed the articles in our newsletter that are written by the, “Association of Confessing Evangelical Congregations (ACELC).” This group is made up of LCMS congregations (not pastors) that have banded together to speak against the errors in the LCMS. It is also made up of non-voting associate members like me (I'll be preaching at their annual conference in April). It is not a political association nor is it a Synod within the Synod. I encourage you to read more about this group at [www.ancelc.net](http://www.ancelc.net) I think you will find it comforting that Zion is not alone and that there are other LCMS congregations (and pastors) that care about contending for the truth in the LCMS and beyond. However, I am not saying that congregations joining the ACELC is the only way to confess the truth. There are also many other congregations and pastors who also contend for the truth in the LCMS, like us currently, who are not members of the ACELC. There is no line drawn in the sand that to be faithful one must join the ACELC. Of course not! However, in freedom, it is a good way to band with other faithful congregations to confess. As a practical matter, it is harder to ignore a group of congregations than it is isolated ones.

I am including a letter that the ACELC wrote 2 years ago and sent to all LCMS congregations. Please take a look at it, and their website if you can, and let me know what you think of this group. See letter here [http://ancelc.net/page/ancelc\\_admonition\\_\\_error\\_documents](http://ancelc.net/page/ancelc_admonition__error_documents)



**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL  
THE ACTIVE MEMBERS WHO  
HAVE FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS!!**

SAMANTHA HEISINGER 2/2  
LINDA KRARUP 2/3  
EMMA BOLLUM 2/8  
JERRY CLARK 2/22  
HELEN HEMPELMAN 2/22  
CODY TAYLOR 2/22  
GENEVA EMANUEL 2/24  
KENNETH BLAKE 2/25

**LENTEN MIDWEEK SCHEDULE:**

2/13 - 6:30 p.m. Ash Wednesday with Holy Communion  
2/20 - 6:30 p.m. Vespers  
2/27 - 6:30 p.m. Vespers  
3/6 - 6:30 p.m. Vespers  
3/13 - 6:30 p.m. Vespers  
3/20 - 6:30 p.m. Vespers  
3/28 - 6:30 p.m. Holy Thursday with Holy Communion  
3/29 - 6:30 p.m. Good Friday



Sermon Series: "These are the Holy 10 Commands"

♥ **HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO:**  
♥

Ed & Kathy Heidtke 2/26/1972

**† WE ASK YOU TO REMEMBER IN  
OUR**

**PRAYERS THE HOME PRAYERS:**

Lila Pahl  
Erna Welke  
Mike Ziebarth  
Jan Rothbauer



**PRAYER REQUEST**

If you would like a prayer on Sunday morning, please contact the secretary during the week. If it is last minute, you can also catch pastor before service.

**THE LUTHERAN FATHERS  
CONFERENCE:**

The Lutheran Fathers Conference will be held here at Zion on Tuesday, February 19, 9:30AM to about 3PM.

The Rev. Dr. Paul Hunsicker will present part 2 of "Responsibility in the Parish: Job descriptions for Pastor and People." At our last meeting, discussion centered on the layman, and this time we will cover the office of the public ministry. These meetings are open to all pastors, laymen, and laywomen. There is no cost and prior attendance is not required. Please come and join us!

**NEW CHOIR MEMBERS NEEDED!**

If you are interested in joining the choir please speak with Lyn Brace.

**MISSION NEWS:**

Many of you will recall our mission speakers of recent years: Pastor Otto Brillinger and Pastor Paul Bittner, who are both associated with Concordia Mission Society (CMS). The December CMS newsletter, "Glad Tidings", is very interesting and included in our newsletter this month. Pastor Brillinger (now 81 years old) continues to travel to Kazakhstan about 3 times a year for about 6 weeks each time where he assists in the work of the

**WOMEN'S SOCIETY NEWS:**

The Women's Society met on Thursday, January 10<sup>th</sup>. Fourteen members and two guests attended. Geneva Emanuel was hostess and served a delicious cake with ice cream. In the business meeting it was decided that the Women's Society would again provide the meal for Ash Wednesday, February 13<sup>th</sup>. We closed with the Lord's Prayer and a special prayer for Pastor and his family as they cope with health issues. Our next meeting will be Thursday, February 14<sup>th</sup>, beginning at 1:00 p.m. Carol Evenson

**YOUTH RETREAT:**

The Youth Retreat in St. Croix Falls, WI at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church on March 8-9 from 5pm - 5pm. Our speaker will be Rev. Lucas Woodford speaking on *The Totally Awesome Mission of God: Salvation, Congregation, and Vocation*. **Cost is \$30 per person and only \$70 for a family.** This includes the cost of going tubing at Wild Mountain Ski Resort and Dinner on Friday and Breakfast and Lunch on Saturday. This is a wonderful opportunity for our youth to see that there are indeed other youth who believe what the Word teaches! Friends are welcome. We need to let Rev. Gerald Heinecke know how many will be attending soon. For more information speak with

## **A MESSAGE FROM THE FELLOWSHIP BOARD:**

**January News** - The Fellowship Board hosted a reception on Sunday, January 13<sup>th</sup> to recognize the members who joined our congregation in 2012 and to show our appreciation to the newly elected and appointed board members and to those completing their time of service.

**February news** - Easter is early this year so the Lenten season will be here soon. As in the past the Fellowship Board will be serving suppers Wednesday evenings before the church service. Serving will be from 5:15 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. with a freewill offering taken. The church service will follow at 6:30 p.m. The Women's Society will be providing the meal on Ash Wednesday, February 13<sup>th</sup>. We are again asking members to help provide the suppers. There is a sign-up sheet by the office for the meals and also one for the bars. Some dates are already spoken for, but more are still open. You may sign up as an individual, family, or if you prefer you may go together as a group. Please indicate the menu you will be providing and let Fellowship know if their help is needed with any items. The Board is looking forward to a very positive response from the congregation for their help with the Lenten suppers. Both in supplying the meals and also in attending the suppers. Please join us this Lenten season for

### **LENTEN LITURGICAL INFORMATION:**

February 22 is Ash Wednesday. It is called Ash Wednesday because churches since the Middle Ages have placed ashes in the shape of a cross on their foreheads as a reminder of the curse of sin, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." They are made in the shape of a cross to also remind us that Jesus was made to be the curse for our sin on the cross. Ash Wednesday is the beginning of the penitential season of Lent. Lent is penitential because we focus on the reason why Jesus came to earth—our sin. He came to die on Good Friday to save us from our sins, death, and the power of the devil. Because it is a somber season of the church year, you will also notice some liturgical changes. There are some joyous parts of our liturgy (as noted in the hymnal), like singing the Alleluias, that are buried during Lent and then resurrected on the joyous occasion of Easter. You will also notice no altar flowers and a plainer looking chancel. Also note the Paschal (Pascha means Easter) Candle next to the lectern (Also called the Christ Candle). The use of this candle dates back to the 4<sup>th</sup> century. The candle symbolizes the resurrection victory over the darkness of sin and death. Therefore the candle will remain unlighted until we celebrate Easter. It then will remain lighted until we celebrate Christ's Ascension (40 days after His resurrection) giving us a visible symbol of His resurrected presence until His ascension. We also light the Paschal Candle when

### **THRIVENT MEMBERS:**

Please remember that the recurring direction, the "set it and forget it" method of directing Thrivent Choice Dollars is no longer an option. What does this mean for members? For members who selected recurring direction in 2012, their last automatic contributions will occur in the next few weeks. To direct your Choice Dollars in the future, members have two options. You can go online to [www.thrivent.com/choicedollars](http://www.thrivent.com/choicedollars) and select "Get Started" or talk with a representative by calling 800-847-4836 and saying "Thrivent Choice". Members have until March 31 of the following year to make their selection(s). This means members can direct 2012 Choice Dollars through March 31, 2013. Please don't let

January 2013

*“Every day that error is tolerated without challenge, the roots of that error deepen!”*

These words, spoken recently by a fellow pastor, reminded me of the Pastors' Conference I had just attended in which First Vice-President Herb Mueller addressed us regarding progress on the [“Koinonia Project.”](#) In Draft 10 of the Summary of the [“Koinonia Project”](#) we find the following words in bold type:

**In the [“Koinonia Project”](#) several representative groups will meet together to work on a basis for agreement that includes the following:**

- **A clear statement of the controversy – what is the real point at issue?**
- **A clear statements of what we affirm together;**
- **A clear statements of what we reject; and then,**
- **An agreement of what we will therefore DO together.**

**This material then needs to be studied and worked on together throughout the Synod so that the Word of God has its way with us in our life together, our witness to Christ and our service for the world.**

A tip of the hat is due the [“Koinonia Project”](#) for this confessional Formula-of-Concord-like approach to the deeply rooted errors that are tolerated among us and grow deeper by the day. What disturbs me, however, is not the confessional Formula-of-Concord-like strategy, but the naivete of those who have been given (according to the Constitution and Bylaws) the charge to be “ecclesiastical supervisors” in the Synod. Consider the following ...

The [ACELC](#), *speaking the truth in love*, has **already** done the bulk of this work in the documentation we have presented to the Synod, beginning with ten areas of controversy in the LCMS set forth in our July 15, 2010, [“Fraternal Admonition”](#) letter to the Synod. Following shortly thereafter the ACELC published an [“Evidence of Error”](#) document for each of the ten areas of controversy, and, in addition, we have filed three official dissent documents with the CTCR for those areas where the Synod has officially adopted false doctrine. The ACELC has also forwarded a full set of our documentation to the Praesidium, appealing to them “to deal with these errors in an evangelical manner.” And the ACELC continues to bring about genuine discussion and debate regarding the issues that are dividing our Synod in our annual conferences and website resources.

What's my point? Simply this ... leaders (i.e. those Synod has elected to serve in what the Bylaws call “ecclesiastical supervisor” positions) lead on the basis of, and in the order of, Scripture, Confessions, Constitution, and Bylaws as the Synod has previously established. When one compares the work done by the ACELC with Scripture, Confessions, Constitution, and Bylaws in each of the ten areas of controversy, the conclusion is manifest. The ACELC has already (in the above referenced documents) set before the Synod **a clear statement of the controversy**, including **clear statements of what we affirm together** and **clear statements of what we reject**. Put all this documentation together with the fact that **all members** of Synod (when they became members of Synod) have already sworn to **an agreement of what we will therefore DO together** ... and it leaves us with an elephant in the room no

one in Synod seems willing to deal with!

To borrow a line from Pastor Todd Wilken's recent Issues, Etc. Journal article, "[Behind the Music The REAL Worship War](#)," ... *What does this confess?*

*What does this confess ... when in each of the ten areas of controversy the ACELC has already set forth: Synod's original position; at least three supporting witnesses for that position that always include Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions; actual evidence of errors that are advocated and/or practiced today in the Synod with impunity; and the ACELC response to these errors in light of the witnesses and the Synod's current indifference to these errors? *What does this confess ... when Synod's leaders do not or will not acknowledge the evidence and deal subsequently with said evidence in accord with the accountability that is bound to their office? *What does this confess ... when we as Synod (or Districts) continue to elect (or re-elect) leaders who simply do not acknowledge the elephant in the room, or refuse to deal with it?***

This is what it conjures up in my mind: Adam's failure to be pastor to Eve; Aaron's debacle as high-priest to God's people when Moses was on the mountain; Eli's negligence as priest who honored his two sons more than he honored the Lord; Judas Iscariot's rejection of Jesus' words, opting instead to betray Him for 30 pieces of silver; and Peter's triple denial of even knowing Jesus on the night of His betrayal.

But thanks be to God, ... none of this persuades me to cease confessing the Father's faithfulness in sending His only begotten Son to reconcile the world to Himself ... none of this persuades me to abandon the confession of the Son's faithfulness in carrying out the will of the Father even unto death at Calvary ... none of this persuades me to renounce the Holy Spirit's faithfulness in delivering the message of reconciliation in Jesus Christ through faithful administration of Word and Sacraments ... none of this dissuades me (or the 21 congregations who have joined the ACELC) from continuing to proclaim Jesus Christ crucified and resurrected for the forgiveness of sins using the historic liturgies of the Church even while we call the Synod to repent and return to its historic teachings and practices.

But what pray tell are we to conclude regarding those who, although elected to positions of "ecclesiastical supervisor," simply refuse to acknowledge the elephant in the room or refuse to deal with it? Remember ... *"Every day that error is tolerated without challenge, the roots of that error deepen!"*

Pastor Bruce G. Ley  
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### **Trusting God's Means of Grace in Evangelism [www.ancelc.net](http://www.ancelc.net)**

Among many of the congregations of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, evangelism has become the hallmark of their purpose for existing as a congregation. Becoming "Missional" has become the mark of

“successful” congregations, while those congregations who have not demonstrated numerical growth have been identified as “dysfunctional” or in need of “revitalization” (a case in point is the work of the "[Transforming Churches Network](#)"). In order to become more “Missional,” many LCMS congregations have radically changed the way they “do Church.”

It was for the ostensible purpose of achieving numerical growth that many congregations of our Synod abandoned or limited the use of the historic liturgies of the Church and often redefined the role of the pastor as being the one who is called to feed God’s sheep by rightly proclaiming the Word of God and administering the Sacraments to one who is called primarily to work within the community to evangelize for new members. Other congregations restructured their governance to become “Mission Outposts” to the community in which the Lord has placed them. Counting “Critical Events” (one person sharing their Christian faith with another) became the subject of a Synodically posted “Tote Board” (which has now thankfully been removed from the Synod’s website).

Many District Presidents jumped on the “Missional” bandwagon, openly promoting such changes, while those pastors and congregations which opted to conduct their ministries by concentrating on the marks of the Church (Word and Sacrament) as a primary focus were often seen as obstacles standing in the way of “progress” in achieving a new “Missional” Synod. Such pastors were often either not placed on call lists or else described in their District President’s evaluation to a calling congregation as “inflexible” or “rigid.” Sociological studies from the [Barna Group](#) (which showed the shrinking numbers of people coming to Church) were often employed by some District Presidents as a way of demonstrating that pastors weren’t carrying out their jobs of adequately adapting to our culture, when all these surveys really reveal is that our culture is simply becoming more secular.

Behind all this was a clear “warning” that if we did not become more “Missional” and become more proficient at our evangelistic task, that there would be people going to hell who otherwise wouldn’t go there at all. This is nothing more than a guilt trip – not to mention false doctrine! From Holy Scripture we learn that not a single one of God’s elect will ever be lost and that their number is set before the foundations of the world were laid. As our Lord put it:

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand.” (John 10:28-29)

This is most certainly not Calvinism’s double predestination! Rather this is quite simply what Scriptures tell us regarding God’s desire that all men be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth – that of all whom God has graciously called, gathered and enlightened, He will lose not a one. (I Timothy 2:4 and Luther’s *Small Catechism*)

Sadly, many aspects of our Synod’s attempts to become more “Missional” reflect an errant theology of glory rather than the Biblical doctrine of the [theology of the cross](#). The [theology of glory](#) (as Luther ably pointed out) is all about what **we** do to grow the Church rather than **what Christ has done** to grow the Church. The theology of glory is all about how “successful” our congregations look to the world with growing numbers in attendance in worship, ever larger budgets, and ever expanding facilities that appeal to the world’s expectations about how the Church ought to look. How very different this is from what Holy Scripture says about how the Church will look in the end times.

“Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and put you to death, and you will be hated by all nations for my name’s sake. And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.” (Matthew 24:9-13)

Or as our dear brother, Martin Luther put it: “Since the Gospel is so despised, I suppose that Judgment Day is not far away ... God’s Word will decline again and fall; and, because of a lack of upright and faithful servants of the

Word, a great darkness will come. Then the whole world will turn wild and epicurean and will live wild and abandoned lives in all security. But then the voice will come and ring out ‘Behold, the bridegroom cometh’ for God will not be able to put up with conditions any longer.” (*What Luther Says*, # 2166, Concordia Publishing House, p. 697.)

Rather than embracing the theology of glory as a model for our evangelistic task, let us rather embrace a theology of the cross! What does such a theology look like in practice? First, it trusts in the power of God’s means of grace to accomplish what God promises. Pastors are called primarily to faithfully feed God’s sheep with His precious Means of Grace – Word and Sacrament. It is then that these well-fed sheep will naturally share that faith with others in their various divine vocations in whatever venue God has placed them. The divine vocations of God’s people are the sacred places in which we all live: family, friends, career, leisure, recreation, in Church, etc. It is in these places where the powerful witness occurs in already existing, credible relationships in the home, at work or wherever we may happen to be. This is precisely the way the early Church grew – and grew exponentially!

By the way, numerical growth is not promised us by God in every time and at every place. Such growth comes only where, when, and as He wills it. Again, quoting Dr. Luther: “...the preaching of the Gospel is not a constant, permanent, and continuing proclamation. The Gospel is rather like a pelting rain that hurries on from place to place. What it hits it hits; what it misses, it misses. But it does not return nor stay in one place; the sun and heat come after it and lick it up. Experience also teaches us that in no section of the world has the Gospel remained pure and unadulterated beyond the memory of a man. On the contrary, it stood its ground and flourished as long as those remained who had brought it to the fore. But after they had passed from the scene, the light also disappeared. Factional spirits and false teachers immediately followed.” (*What Luther Says*, # 1742, Concordia Publishing House, p. 573.)

As Lutherans, we joyfully proclaim and give witness to the Gospel of salvation *whenever* and *wherever* the Lord gives us the opportunity in our God-given vocations. It is our great and high privilege to be the instruments of His grace in such circumstances. However, there is no need to resort to the theology of glory with respect to our evangelistic efforts. Instead, we must rest secure in the theology of the cross and trust God’s Word that He will bring about the result He intends.

As Isaiah the prophet said: “For as the rain and snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.” (Isaiah 55:10-11)

Rev. Richard A. Bolland

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