



March 2013

Pastor's Page

Zion Lutheran
Church
110 East Grand Avenue
Chippewa Falls, WI
54729

Website:
www.cfzionlutheran.com

40 Days of Purpose

Time is definitely flying by as we are already about to enjoy March Madness (College Basketball). Not only is time flying by on our school, work, or retirement calendars, but on the Church Calendar too. Our Church Calendar helps us to stay out of step with the world. To quote Scripture, we live “in” the world for a time, but we are not “of” the world. Our Church Calendar has a different New Year’s and an all-together different focus. The focus of our calendar is not on our purpose or the world’s, but on the purpose driving the life of Jesus. Focusing on what Jesus has done for us gives us a joy and peace that our lives and the world cannot.

We have in joyful repentance moved through Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany. It is hard to believe that the Season of Lent is already here! The Lenten Season, as you know, lasts for 40 days, excluding Sundays. Thus, the Sundays are “in” Lent but not “of” it. Lent is a time to reflect upon baptism, a time for rebirth and renewal in preparation for the celebration of Easter. It is a time for the discipline of learning and growing in the faith. Our midweek services this year focus on the 10 Commandments. It is also a time for repentance, fasting, and prayer as we emphasize Christ’s suffering and death. This concentration is heightened when we begin Passion Week. Passion Week begins with Palm Sunday and continues with Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday. These days are somber as we concentrate on what Jesus went through on the cross for our sin.

Our somberness quickly turns to joy as we celebrate Easter! *Death has been swallowed up in victory!* Thanks be to God that we have **Good** Friday so we can celebrate Easter! Even though it is somber and seems bad, it is **Good**, because, there, Jesus defeated sin, death, and the power of the devil for good. As He says, “*It is Finished.*” This is what we focus on throughout the year--the purpose of Jesus’ life and what He came to accomplish for us sinners. And accomplish, Jesus most certainly did! He lived the perfect sinless life in our place and died on the cross for the many times that we aren’t perfect. Now, that’s something worth remembering and holding onto this season!

Have a blessed Lenten Season, as we, the bride of Christ, focus our attention away from the world and ourselves to our saving Groom.

In Christ,
Pastor



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

1	ALEX WELKE	3/1
	DONALD VERCH	3/2
	BARBARA CALKINS	3/5
	KRYSTA MARTINEK	3/6
1	KARLA AMYS	3/7
	MYRNA MATTISON	3/11
	JUDY BENSON	3/20
	DORIS POST	3/20
1	ALEX ZIEBARTH	3/26
	BRYAN MYERS	3/29

♥ HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO: ♥

Karl & Pamela Rose 3/2/1974
 Lawrence & Carol Gale 3/26/1977
 James & Doreen ... 3/27/1975

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

Mavis Berry
 Emma Bollom
 Loretta Erickson
 Helen Hempelman



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.

ZION WELCOMES NEW MEMBER

Timothy Meyer

MISS A BIBLE CLASS OR SERMON?

Audio of the most recent Bible classes and sermons are on our website. Click the "Education" tab for Bible class or the tab for "Sermons."

CD'S OF SERMONS & BIBLE STUDIES

CD's of Sermons and Bible Studies will be made available for those who request them. Contact Brian Schweisthal with any requests. Brian's cell phone is 715-529-8342 and his email address is brians8881@gmail.com.

NEW CHOIR MEMBERS NEEDED!

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

LENTEN MIDWEEK SCHEDULE:



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"

WOMEN'S SOCIETY NEWS:

The Women's Society meeting was cancelled on Thursday, February 14th due to weather conditions and school closings. Our next meeting will be Thursday, March 14th, beginning at 1:00 p.m. Carol Evenson will be hostess. All ladies are welcome to join us.

LWML YOUNG WOMEN & YOUNG AT HEART RETREAT:

Register now for the *Young at Heart Retreat* on April 6th. It will be held at Camp Luther, Three Lakes, WI. Women 8-80 yrs. welcome. The day will begin with registration from 9-10 a.m., include inspirational speakers, bible study, fellowship, lunch, snacks, and will conclude at 3 p.m. Registration Fee is \$25.00. Child Care Available, upon request. Optional over-night beginning at 7pm on Friday, April 5th. Check your *Jan. Mission Tidings* for more information and registration forms or speak to Carol Gale.

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS:

Each Wednesday at 9:30am 14-17 men and women meet in the Fireside Room to go over the upcoming Sunday's scripture lessons. Lively discussions prevail and there is always room for more participants.

ADULT INFORMATION CLASS:

A new class began January 27th. It meets Sunday mornings at 11:30am in the Fireside Room.

SUNDAY SCHOOL:

On February 10th the students received Valentine goodie bags. Thank you to the Zion Women's Society and Brian and Laurie Schweistal for these items. Lenten magnets and devotions were also handed out to each family, donated by Brian and Laurie. The Sunday School children continue to sing or play bells for the third Worship Service of each month.

YOUTH GROUP:

KwikTrip script sales continue on Sunday mornings. During the week Zion members may purchase script during church office hours. Please save and drop off aluminum cans in the church's garage. So far over \$60 has been collected. The Youth thank Mel Dommer for his help with this fundraiser. Robbie and Herman Sahr attended the Higher Things retreat in Sheboygan, WI on February 15-17th. Youth members are encouraged to attend the winter retreat in St. Croix Falls in March. There are three 2013 calendars left, priced at \$5.00 each. They are located on the table in the back entryway.

REALITY CHECK TIME

By Pastor Dan Kohn - District Counselor
From the February District Newsletter, "The Happenings"

"I'm fine." This two-word reply is one of the most common given by pastors (and other harried folks) to the frequent question - "So how are you doing?"

Let's "freeze-frame" this brief encounter. Now let's "reframe" it for a different outcome. Let's say that the conversation went deeper (rare as that is): "No, pastor, I mean, how are you really doing?"

Now let's create some "grace space" for a real honest sharing by this "all-too-normal" pastor. Put yourself in this "grace space." What would you share, given this chance to be truly honest about how things are going on the inside (i.e. heart, mind and soul stuff), as you appreciate the true concern of this listening partner?

As you contemplate your response as a pastor, consider these insights compiled by Tony Cooke Ministries regarding the "health" of today's pastors:

+1500 pastors leave the ministry each month due to moral failure, spiritual burnout, or contention in their churches.

+80% of pastors and 84% of their spouses feel unqualified and discouraged in their role as pastor.

+50% are so discouraged that they would leave the ministry if they could but they have no other way of making a living.

+85% said their greatest problem is they are sick and tired of dealing with problem people such as disgruntled elders, deacons, worship leaders, board members, and associate pastors.

+90% said the hardest thing about ministry is dealing with uncooperative people.

+80% of pastor's spouses wish their spouse would choose another profession.

+70% of pastors do not have a close friend, confidant, or mentor.

+70% of pastors constantly fight depression.

+80% of seminary and Bible school graduates who enter the ministry will leave within the first 5 years.

A key question arises from this "reality check" of pastors - Do we need to redefine what "normal" is for pastors today?

Said differently - Do we need to get rid of the stereotype that every pastor is "confident and healthy?" Is it possible that the norm is far closer to - "browning-out"... "burning-out"...and, "getting-out?"

The demands of parish ministry are real! The opportunities for "relief" and "renewal" are rarely accessed by pastors...and rarely offered by churches.

How many pastors are wandering "suffering shepherds" struggling with the "dark "D's" interwoven into "normal" ministry-- Disappointment, Discouragement and Despair? How many have lost sight of the God whom King David spoke of - the One who

"...lifted me out of the slimy pit,
out of the mud and the mire;
he set my feet on a rock
and gave me a firm place to stand." (Psalm 40:2)

Perhaps many more would echo the thoughts of another, ancient psalmist-
"Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord;
O Lord, hear my voice." (Psalm 130:1-2a)

How many have given up listening for God's response? How many have given up their "hope in the Lord"...and no longer "soar on wings like eagles" (Isaiah 40:31a). For these, the "run" is full of weariness...even in their "walk," they are prone to "faint" (vs.31b).

God's welcome mat is still out. The signs on the door remain just as inviting-

"...let the wise listen and add to their learning,
and let the discerning get guidance." (Proverbs 1:5)
""Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will
give you rest."" (Jesus) (Matthew 11:28)

There is room to venture out of the "mud and mire"...back to that "firm place to stand." The "path" offered by God is to seek His "counsel" (Psalm 73:24a)...as He would make that readily available to all who humbly admit - "I am not fine."

Now the threshold has been crossed. Now there is room for God, and other caregivers whom He will make available, to intervene toward restored hope.

January 22, 2013, 9:54 AM

Christ For US - Worship Matters . . . Not Worship Wars

We hear so much about ending a decade of war overseas; everyone is ready for peace. We also have heard about Worship Wars over the past decades in the Church. Wouldn't it be nice to reach genuine agreement on the matter of worship in the Missouri Synod? Isn't it time for peace?

The ACELC – in the spirit of genuine *koinonia* with sister congregations of the LCMS – invites you to its 3rd National Free Conference, April 16-18, 2013, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Austin, TX where our theme will be - **Christ For Us: The Divine Service.**

It is no surprise that we have various worship practices in the congregations of our Synod today. Are these all a matter of adiaphora? Are they complementary or contradictory? What are the Biblical and Confessional grounds for each? On the basis of our common faith, how may we achieve a commonality of life and practice as we gather before our God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit?

The ACELC sincerely wants to provide a forum in which these questions may be discussed, even debated, in a fraternal, loving and God-pleasing manner. Toward that end, our Free Conference will address the Distinctives and Bases for Contemporary, Traditional and High Church Worship.

We will outline the essential questions regarding the theology and practice of Lutheran Worship and then hear from representatives of the various types of worship current in our Synod today. We want to submit ourselves to an honest hearing of each other on the basis of God's Word and our Confessions. We want to engender mutual trust and a better understanding. We want to talk together about what is common or still conflicted. We believe that it's time for us to come together and work toward a genuine, Godly walking together in peace. For Lutherans, we call it Concordia!

Again . . . the ACELC invites you to its 3rd National Free Conference, **Christ for Us: The Divine Service**, at Trinity Lutheran Church, Austin, TX, April 16-18, 2013. We hope you will come.

Scholarships are being graciously provided by our host congregation, Trinity Lutheran in Austin, TX, to cover conference registration and two nights in a hotel for SEVEN pastors meeting the criteria on the registration form. Please note that only seven such scholarships are available.

Registration information is now available on our ACELC home page. Please click on this link <http://www.ancelc.net/> for registration information!

Our registration form is also available. Please click on this link <http://www.aceclc.net/message.php?formID=2256&> to register online for **Christ For Us: The Divine Liturgy**, in Austin, TX this coming April 16-18.

See you in Austin - Deo Volente!
www.aceclc.net

Unionism and Syncretism in the LCMS

Dear members of Zion,

2/10/13 A.D.

Per our discussion in Bible class today, I have put this page in place to help you wade through the recent events that have taken place in the LCMS, which have also made the public news--chiefly, the interfaith prayer/worship service following the tragedy in Newton, in which an LCMS pastor gave the benediction. Before you look at the most recent occurrence through the links below, please review what "unionism and syncretism" are by visiting this website: http://aceclc.net/page/aceclc_admonition_error_documents (There is a document under Roman Numeral IV.) Sadly, the promotion and tolerance of the sin of unionism and syncretism has been an ongoing problem in the LCMS, and has again made headlines with the most recent example.

I know that this issue is a difficult one to understand and explain to a world hostile to the truth, and so we will be studying it in Bible class in the near future. Until then, you may familiarize yourself with the issues and events and see me for further teaching.

First, read this article which links to the actual video of the nationally televised interfaith worship service. That way you can see first hand what actually happened. This article also links to LCMS President Harrison's blog that contains a video statement released today and multiple letters, including the letter of apology by Rev. Morris, the LCMS pastor who participated in this worship service. <http://steadfastlutherans.org/?p=26555>

Second, as you read/watch President Harrison's letters/video and Rev. Morris's letter, please keep in mind these observations: President Harrison rightly condemns the participation. He says,

"I asked Pastor Morris to apologize for taking part in this service. I did this for several reasons:

I believe his participation violated the limits set by Scripture regarding joint worship, particularly with those who reject Jesus (Romans 16:17), and was thus a violation of Article VI of the LCMS Constitution.

Pastor Morris's participation gave offense in the Synod, something we are to avoid, even if we are doing something we believe might be appropriate (1 Corinthians 8).

I most sincerely desire to avoid deep and public contention in the Synod. Our mission is too vital, our fellowship too fragile for a drawn out controversy." <http://wmltblog.org/2013/02/letter-from-president-harrison-on-newtown-ct/>

President Harrison's faithful confession of the faith by exposing the error has brought him much criticism from the unbelieving world and from many in our divided Synod. Please see this site for links to an article in the *New York Times* and an article written by our former LCMS President, Jerry Kieschnick. The article in the *New York Times* also quotes one of our LCMS district presidents, Rev. Benke, who also has participated in unionism and syncretism without repentance or church discipline for his sin. <http://steadfastlutherans.org/?p=26878> We must keep President Harrison in our prayers as he suffers for the sake of Christ in a fallen world and Synod. We must also keep him in our prayers so that he has the strength to carry out his duties. While President Harrison is a faithful brother and a wonderful gift from God to us, he also needs our encouragement. Currently, he has accepted Rev. Morris's apology. While this seems good on the surface, Rev. Morris didn't apologize for his participation in a sinful syncretistic service, but only that it offended. It would be like a man telling his wife, "I am sorry that my adultery offend you, but what I did wasn't, in itself, sinful." What Rev. Morris, Rev. Kieschnick, Rev. Benke, and all those who defend this sin need, is true confession of sin and true absolution. There can be no forgiveness apart from confession and repentance. This loving Biblical church discipline is a hard task for the one charged to carry it out, Pres. Harrison. May he have the courage to do so. And, may the Lord bring about repentance in our sincerely intended, but misguided and erring brothers, so that we can have true unity in the faith and not unity for unity's sake.

In Christ,
Pastor

P.S. Below is an article written by another LCMS pastor, Rev. Phil Hale.

Joint Prayer Service

You may remember the controversy in our church after the 9/11 prayer service in 2001. Unfortunately, after another sad tragedy, the Newtown school shooting, the LCMS is in the news again because of doctrinal disagreement. I realize that times like this are emotionally charged and you may have strong feelings one way or the other, but note that we, as followers of Christ, are not to get our beliefs from our own hearts, nor from the news, but Christ Himself who speaks in Scripture. Let's take a step back and consider what is actually the issue here and why there is disagreement.

Before we can see the source of disagreement, we must consider what actually happened. On December 16, just days after the shooting, there was a prayer service or vigil. Clergy representing Christian churches and non-Christian religions were present. It was organized and planned. President Obama gave a message. Rev. Rob Morris, the pastor at the LCMS church in Newtown, read Scripture and gave the closing benediction. That may not seem sinful to you, but what does our Lord say?

LCMS President Matthew Harrison wrote a letter saying that what Pastor Morris did was improper. It said, in part:

I asked Pastor Morris to apologize for taking part in this service. I did this for several reasons:

I believe his participation violated the limits set by Scripture regarding joint worship, particularly with those who reject Jesus (Romans 16:17), and was thus a violation of Article VI of the LCMS Constitution. Pastor Morris's participation gave offense in the Synod, something we are to avoid, even if we are doing something we believe might be appropriate (1 Corinthians 8). I most sincerely desire to avoid deep and public contention in the Synod. Our mission is too vital, our fellowship too fragile for a drawn out controversy.

What is interesting is the the news media did not get too worked up over our official teaching. Instead, they couldn't believe that Pastor Morris would dare apologize to those who were offended at his participation. Rev. Morris did apologize, but not for his participation, just insofar as it gave the wrong impression. Here is one media reaction:

Have we made so little progress? Do we still love faith traditions more than we love God? I know that in each tradition there are those who object to praying along with others. After all, to pray with someone is to suggest—horror of horrors— that their tradition too might have validity, that God might be multilingual. Well do I remember when Bailey Smith, then president of the Southern Baptists said, “God doesn’t hear the prayers of Jews.” Of course if you have forgotten the name Bailey Smith, maybe God does hear our prayers after all. There is no reason to make God so small. Traditions do not all agree with one another. Surely there are false doctrines. But is there really only one path to the ultimate reality? (Washington Post - Rabbi David Wolpe)

Do you see why people are offended at our teaching? How dare we say that we have the truth, while those who deny Jesus and say He is only man or a myth, are under God's wrath for their sin and must repent. The issue is whether doctrine and the truth matter. Clergy participating in a joint service give the impression they agree and are addressing the same God. But do we have the same God as the Muslims and the Jews, who deny that God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? No. While we can and should love them in our daily lives as neighbors, that is not what our church stands for and what we confess. When clergy lead worship and pray together publicly, it says the differences don't matter. That's exactly why the world is offended: How dare we say that Jesus is the only way to heaven and that we have the full truth of God that alone brings comfort. The world loves joint services which show unity and human love. By abstaining from services with false teachers, ministers confess the true God and the full saving truth as revealed in Scripture.

In a church service people naturally assume that they are praying to the same God and confessing the same doctrine about Him. Who would dare to think that we are confused about which God we worship? But this Newtown prayer service had clergy of the Muslim, Jewish and Baha’i religions. Were they praying to the same God as Pastor Morris, who confesses Jesus Christ as Lord? No, but the average American does, and would have had that impression from the vigil. While it is good to pray and call upon God for help in our trouble and grief, ministers praying officially with leaders of false religions and churches who deny some of Christ's teaching, is misleading at best and denies Christ at the worst. We pray in Jesus' name and in faith. The Spirit intercedes for us. God has not promised to hear the prayers of those who do not believe and have not been accounted righteous in faith. It is not the beauty or sincerity of our prayers that cause God listen to us. It is that we are first forgiven of sin and God tells us He wants us to present our requests to Him because He loves us. Only those who are the Father's forgiven children by faith does He listen to in prayer.

Our reason for existence is at stake: Do we have the truth of Jesus, the only Gospel that comforts and forgives sins? Praying with people whom God does not hear and who deny Christ's sacrifice on the cross is not loving. Unfortunately, there is a lot of pressure from the world to follow along, "play nice" and be generically "religious," even if that religion is man-made and does not lead to heaven. Read Luke 13:1-5, where Jesus responds to a similar tragedy by saying: "Do you suppose that these Galileans [who were murdered] were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish." Jesus would not be allowed near a civil prayer service to speak the saving truth which makes unbelievers uncomfortable.

These joint services are not about comfort from God---that we are loved and forgiven in Christ and should repent of our sins---but about making everyone feel good. The world is more concerned with not offending anyone or telling them they are wrong, than the only name under heaven which saves: Jesus. The message (or sermon) that was spoken to comfort the grieving was by the same man who boldly supports the murder of children in the womb. Where was the true comfort that in is Jesus' murder? God knows our pain, because His holy Son died on the cross for us. Only the truth of the resurrection, that shows Jesus is true God, can help those stricken with grief and give certain hope of the life to come.

What is interesting is that in Rev. Morris' "apology" he did state that joint worship was wrong and not possible, which is correct. But he made the claim that "In the end, I believed my participation to be, not an act of joint worship, but an act of community chaplaincy. Chaplains are expected to give faithful witness under circumstances which are less than ecclesiastically perfect, even as their fellow chaplains may proclaim a different witness." It was not an informal setting in which a chaplain operates independently (like in the military or a hospital), but a formal and pre-arranged service. The news media accurately stated that it was a service to worship and pray to God. We are called to confess, but to give the formal impression by our actions that different religions and denominations believe the same, when they clearly don't, is wrong.

Pastor Morris further said:

Thus, to those who believe that I have endorsed false teaching, I assure you that was not my intent, and I give you my unreserved apologies. If any of you know church members or friends or family who are now confused because of my participation, believing that the

Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod fully endorses the doctrine of anyone else who was on that stage, please correct this confusion lovingly, and I will personally be happy to help in any way that I can. Feel free to pass on my apologies for having given that impression.

Unfortunately, his intentions are not the issue, but his actions. It did give the wrong impression: that Jesus is not necessary for salvation and His righteousness is not required for God to hear prayer. LCMS members should know that other religions and false teachers should not be believed. But what about the majority of the TV audience? Who will correct them and tell them that Jesus is the only way to heaven and it matters what teachings we believe?

If a pastor of a local church is televised marching in a gay pride march, you should be offended. Maybe he was just going to the dry cleaners and he did not intend to show support for homosexuality, but one's public actions speak louder than what is hidden in our hearts. That is why we must be careful to not give the impression that we approve of sin or false teaching, which destroy faith in Christ.

This issue is likely to dominate the discussion of our church for at least another decade. I wish we could agree and have unity in God's Word. However, Jesus did not recognize error or tolerate unbelief. He is the one who said: "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as you are. ... You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell? Therefore I am sending you prophets and wise men and teachers. Some of them you will kill and crucify; others you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town" (Matthew 23).

Jesus accurately predicted that the world (including its religious leaders), which hates God, would not accept His truth. That God's love is only found in Jesus is offensive to those who are not saved. We cannot fix that or help them by denying what we believe. Only the truth of Christ can bring sinners to love God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This concern and care for Christ's Word, matters more than what the world says. That is why Scriptures say clearly: "I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them. For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people" (Romans 16:17-18).

Pastor Philip Hale

St. Paul, Bancroft; St. John, Lyons, NE