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Pastor's
Page



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Unwilling Is Not the Same as Unable
Attending Public Worship or Listening to it On the Radio?

There is a big difference between *unwilling* and *unable*, especially in Theology. For example, the question always comes up about baptism. The Bible teaches that baptism saves (Mark 16:16). But, what about the person who dies before baptism? The way to answer this question depends on if the person was *unwilling* to be baptized (they reject Jesus in baptism), or they would have been baptized, but were *unable*—like the thief on the cross. Though both the *unwilling* and *unable* died before baptism, there is a huge difference in their repentance and faith.

The same is true in regards to the Third Commandment (Remember the Sabbath Day by keeping it holy). If you open up your LCMS Catechism you will find this:

37. Does God require the church to worship together on any specific days? A. God requires Christians to worship together. (Acts 2:42, 46) Hebrews 10:25, "Not neglecting to meet together...." 38. "When do we sin against the Third Commandment? We sin against the Third Commandment when we despise preaching and the Word of God. 39. How is this done? We despise preaching and the Word of God—A. when we do not attend public worship. B. when we do not use the Word of God and the Sacraments. C. when we use the Word of God and the Sacraments negligently or carelessly.

Christians are gathered into communities, communions, fellowships, local congregations. They congregate (3rd article of the Creed). They are fed by Jesus through their pastors (Table of Duties). Jesus says **where two are three are gathered in my name, there I am among them** (Matt. 18:20). There must be at least 2. One to preach and one to hear, one to baptize and one to be baptized, one to give Holy Communion and one to receive It.

But, what about listening to our Divine Service on the radio? Well, it is similar to those who are *unwilling* to obey Jesus' gracious command to be baptized and those who are *unable*. Those who are *unwilling* to obey Jesus' gracious command to gather together in person with other Christians to be fed by a pastor in Word and Sacraments and encourage one another are different than those who want to, but are *unable*. It is a matter of faith in the heart and not simply in the outward act. Additionally, one cannot receive Christ's body and blood over the radio. This is why I make communion visits to our homebound members so that the 2 of us are gathered to receive the gifts of our Lord, Who is really present.

Yes, the radio is great for those members who are *unable* to attend public worship. But, when we, the able, neglect public worship and choose comfort, fun, or optional duties elsewhere—we must ask ourselves how our actions effecting us and others—especially the little ones of our congregation. What example are we setting? What do we really believe about public worship? What are we really confessing?

And, the radio is also great for the non-members in the community who haven't heard the Gospel to hear It; but if they could over time come to our congregation or another faithful congregation, but reject joining "organized religion," that too is dangerous. Jesus wants Christians to gather together. Our sinful flesh, the world, and the devil are too dangerous for us to neglect joining together as God's Word invites and graciously commands.

Again, please don't misunderstand, it is a great thing that we broadcast God's Word over the radio; I simply want to point out some potential dangers that come from our sinful hearts, which want to neglect the Word and Sacraments of God--and gathering with the people of God for mutual consolation. It doesn't simply hurt the one who skips public worship for something less important, but the absence of any member of the body of Christ hurts the whole congregation. Therefore, I want to encourage us all to as it says in Heb. 10:25, "*Not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the day drawing near.*"

Pastor

Board of Evangelism

At our recent meeting it was noted that we had a successful mission festival on September 28th with Rev. John Fehrmann of The Confessional Lutheran Educational Foundation (CLEF) as our preacher. His update after the worship service of the work of CLEF was most encouraging to learn how they are able to provide education for Lutheran Pastors in Africa and provide them with Kindles and using this technology to further supplement their libraries and education on a regular basis. His presentation was followed by a pot luck meal enjoyed by all present and also offer the opportunity to further speak with Rev. Fehrmann.

Zion's Board of Evangelism is recommending we increase our mission support for 2014. Zion's mission outreach is focused on training pastors here in the USA and abroad, by supporting CLEF, our seminaries, and the Adopt A Student program. By recommending we also support ISSUES ETC. We not only support this confessional radio broadcast but our congregation would also be advertised on the program.

The LCMS and “Peace”

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.” Matthew 5:9

“Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a person's enemies will be those of his own household. Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.” Matthew 10:34-39

In these words from Jesus, at first glance, we have a seeming contradiction. If people who bring peace and work toward peace are blessed by God, how can Jesus say that He did not come to bring peace? If Jesus is truly the Prince of Peace what are we to do with His very clear teaching in Matthew 10? How are we to understand and make sense of this paradox? The key is to remember what it is that brings true and lasting peace, “For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.” Colossians 1:19-20 True Peace is Jesus, and the forgiveness, life, and salvation that only He can provide!

For many, the term “peace” means only the absence of war and hostility. While that definition is certainly true, it is only a partial definition. The peace that Jesus brings is clearly explained by the Apostle Paul, “For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, *so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.* And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.” Ephesians 2:14-22

Several weeks have passed since the close of the 2013 LCMS Synodical Convention. I have heard from many different people (from all sides of the political spectrum) that it was the most “peaceful” convention in many, many years. While it is true that there was little fighting and contention, does that mean that it was a convention of “peace”? Many have said that there was a “positive mood” and that delegates generally “felt good” about the work that was accomplished. I ask again, are these the things that make for true peace in our beloved synod?

Anyone who is honest must admit that there are serious issues troubling the LCMS, issues that have been growing in intensity over the years. There seems to be much division, in both doctrine and

practice, over topics like fellowship, Holy Communion, pastoral formation and the divine call, the propriety of mixing business principles with theology, and the giant elephant in the room, worship. Some of these issues were addressed at the recent synodical convention, however, all the issues that were addressed were simply delayed to a later date, generally for more study. Perhaps the church militant was simply put on hold.

One can certainly appreciate the pastoral approach to many of these issues by President Harrison. His critics claimed, after his first election, that he would be on a witch-hunt to ferret out false doctrine. Those critics are very quiet now. President Harrison has been like a pastor in a new parish that is beset with aberrant teaching and practice. He has been very patient and has sought to teach the Truth. But the LCMS is much different than an erring congregation. Our Synodical President cannot preach and teach in every congregation each week. Many of the same issues that were dividing our Synod before 2010 are still tearing us apart today. Each day the roots of error, error unchecked, are growing deeper and deeper among us. It appears that it is impossible to exercise godly church discipline among us. A family that has all the right rules but has no discipline will end in chaos; the same is true for the church. True peace is then absent.

True peace comes with godly reconciliation while contending for the Truth. Error is not ignored but dealt with, lovingly and evangelically, under God's Word and the Lutheran Confessions. In the forgiveness of sins Christ heals our wounds and divisions and binds the broken hearted. God has some pointed words for those who offer a false peace in His name; "They have healed the wound of my people lightly, saying, 'Peace, peace,' when there is no peace," Jeremiah 6:14 and "We looked for peace, but no good came; for a time of healing, but behold, terror." Jeremiah 8:15. Time will tell if the proposed studies and task forces from this year's convention will bear the fruit of true peace, or if they will be more of the seemingly endless discussion with the goal of "unity in diversity." Time will tell if the Koinonia Project will be a vehicle for honest discussion and godly resolution of the errors in our midst or if it will be just another program where "people agree to disagree," as long as we "play nice." In the meantime, for at least three more years, the pastors and congregations of the Synod are left to deal with the growing divisions in both doctrine and practice that we have been saddled with over the past 50 plus years. As we contemplate these matters in the weeks and months ahead, may God bless our elected leaders, our pastors and lay leaders, our congregations, yes, our entire synod, with a spirit of peace, true peace, in Christ our Savior and Lord.

Yours in Christ's Service,
Rev. Clint Poppe
Chairman, ACELC Board of Directors

P.S. If you would like to assist the ACELC in this effort you may encourage your congregation to [join as a full Member of the ACELC](#). As an individual you may join as an [Associate Member](#). You may also support our work by making a [donation online](#). Or, if none of those options work for you, we would like to ask that you remember our efforts in your prayers – that all we do would be pleasing to God and beneficial for the building of up His kingdom of grace.

b l b

Lila Pahl Erna Welke
Jan Rothbauer Gertrude Boettcher

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL
THE MEMBERS WHO
HAVE NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS!!**

Joe Calkins	11/2
Nancy Sahr	11/2
Tyler Lyberg	11/4
Gertrude Boettcher	11/7
Richard Hanson	11/7
Patricia Taylor	11/7
Joseph Blake	11/11
McKenzie Schwetz	11/13
Kimberly Krarup	11/15
Lindy Clark	11/16
John Liddell	11/19
Emily Hakes	11/21
Taylor Schoelzel	11/22
Eric Benson	11/23
Lance Clark	11/23
Daniel Schwetz	11/23
Mavis Berry	11/24
Jarred Ewings	11/27
Russ Blair	11/28
Laurie Hurt	11/29

NEW CHOIR MEMBERS NEEDED!

If you are interested in joining the choir or if you play an instrument please speak with Lyn Brace.

WOMEN'S SOCIETY NEWS:

Women's Society met on Thursday, October 10th. Eleven members, 6 guests and Pastor attended. Assorted cookies and muffins were served by Mary Gettler. Thank you Mary for the tasty desserts. Pastor led in devotions based on "How to Pray" written by Rev. Scott Murray, God hears all prayers. They do not need to be articulate - God understands our prayers. Weakness gives forth the best prayers because we have a God who is strong to save those who are weak to know how to pray. Christ himself prayed in the Garden. A business meeting was held after the devotions. Members of the Society volunteered to have Advent by candlelight for all ladies of the congregation, female family members, friends and neighbors on Sunday, December 1st in the afternoon at 4:00 p.m. This event will feature the Word, music and fellowship to prepare for the Advent season. Watch the bulletins for more information. Meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer. Arlene Hakes will be hostess for the November 14th meeting. All ladies are invited!

GORDY'S RECEIPTS

Please save all of your Gordy's receipts and leave them in the back entrance.

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS:

Each Wednesday at 9:30 a.m. 10-15 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.

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. We had a recent deposit of \$78.50 from collecting and recycling aluminum cans. Thank you.

♥ **HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO:** ♥

Jerry & Karen Clark 11/03/1990
Thomas & Brianne Stark 11/21/2003

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

RADIO & FLOWERS:

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** at Gordys if **you pick up** yourself or **\$40.00** if you would like them **delivered** to the church. You also may bring your own flowers. There is a flower chart in the church on the left of the door as you enter from the education wing. Sign your name by

the date you would like to furnish flowers July 2014. \$6.00 each. 50% Profit. Thank you!
The radio broadcast is \$76.00. Call the office if you would like to furnish a broadcast or if you would like the Secretary to order and have the flowers delivered. You may pay in the church office or put in the offering plate & write "for flowers."

**GET YOUR 2014 CALENDAR FROM A
ZION YOUTH:**

The purchase of a calendar will help to fund the opportunity for students to attend the Higher Things Conference in