**The Monthly Newsletter of Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church**

**Lindy, Nebraska**

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**The Rod and Staff**



**September 2018**

**“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”**

**The Ten Commandments: The Eighth Commandment**

All of the Ten Commandments that we have explored thus far in the year 2018 are relevant for our lives today, as we have seen. But I have to admit that this eighth commandment hits home for me personally more than any other. In the Bible, there are many warnings about the power of the human tongue. In other words, the words that we speak have power, and we need to be careful how we use those words. In the New Testament letter of James, it says this:

*How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness…It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so.* – James 3

When I think back on the things I regret most in life, almost all of those things have to do with something I said. From my “mouthing off” to teachers to my hurtful words directed at others close to me, I know that the words of James in the Bible are true. By this commandment, God searches our hearts. We know that we are sinful and unclean. It is much more exciting for us to hear juicy gossip about someone else than to hear something positive. Perhaps negative news about someone else has the ability to make us feel better about ourselves? Martin Luther described it in the following way in his *Large Catechism*:

*It is a common vice of human nature that everyone would rather hear evil than good about his neighbor. Evil though we are, we cannot tolerate having evil spoken of us; we want the golden compliments of the whole world. Yet we cannot bear to hear the best spoken of others.*

Our personal reputations are important to our well being, just as our physical well being and personal property are. God knows that our words can harm other people and therefore the world at large, and so this eighth commandment addresses how we speak. Martin Luther’s brief explanation of the eighth commandment in his *Small Catechism* goes as follows:

*We should fear and love God so that we do not betray, slander, lie, or gossip about our neighbors, but defend them, speak well of them, and put the most charitable construction on all that they do.*

Understanding this eighth commandment in the right way is challenging. Sometimes people get the idea that Christians are never supposed to speak about anything controversial. This is not true. There are some circumstances where we as Christian people should speak about others, but we need to exercise care in doing so.

The way Luther talks about it, when we hear about someone else’s sin, we should remain silent about it or follow the proper procedure for dealing with it. There is a good chance that what we have heard is not true. Even if we know something to be true about someone else, we should first confront the person directly about it, and, if appropriate, report such activity to the proper authorities. Judges, rulers and witnesses are appointed by God to deal with such matters. Outside of this, our own tongues can easily spread false information and can destroy lives. We should seek to “put the most charitable construction” on things that we hear about others, at least until the full truth is revealed.

On the other hand, this eighth commandment has sometimes been used as a license for people to adopt an indifferent attitude toward life, as though there really is no such thing as right or wrong and we should just “accept everything.” But this is not the meaning of this commandment. Luther points out that when a situation is very public and visible, we should feel free to address the situation. In Luther’s own life, when he saw false teachings threatening the truth of the faith, he did not hesitate to speak. When we look at the world around us and the many harmful things that seek to tempt us, we also should not hesitate to, respectfully of course, “call a thing what it really is.”

Our words have power, and so we pray that God would help us to tame our tongues and use them in the right way.

* Pr. T. E. Jacobson

**Commemoration of the Saints**

Lutherans do not venerate (pray to) special people called “saints.” Our Lutheran confessional documents speak against that practice. However, those same documents that prohibit the veneration of saints encourage Christian people to look to the lives of significant Christians of the past as a source of encouragement for our lives in the present.



This month, we look at the life of **Cyprian of Carthage**, a Christian bishop (pastor) from the city of Carthage in North Africa, in what is today the country of Tunisia. The ancient city of Carthage is now a suburb of the city of Tunis. Cyprian was born around the year 200 AD. He is commemorated on September 13, the day before his death.

Cyprian’s parents were pagans, meaning that they were not Christians. This was not uncommon, as Christianity was still a minority faith in the Roman Empire and was still persecuted. Cyprian came to faith in Christ and was baptized in 246 AD, being chosen as the bishop of Carthage two years later. Much can be said of Cyprian’s life and influence, but perhaps the most important thing is his view about sinners being restored to the fellowship of the Church. When a persecution of Christians broke out under Emperor Decius in 249 AD, a number of Christians abandoned the faith to save their lives. Some suggested that those who had abandoned the faith under persecution should not be readmitted to the Church, but Cyprian believed that if people were truly repentant, they could indeed receive forgiveness for their mistakes.

Some years later, an epidemic of the plague struck the city of Carthage, and many blamed Christians for inciting the wrath of the Roman gods. This led to another persecution, and Cyprian was himself tried and beheaded in 258 AD. In addition to his contributions in other areas, Cyprian is remembered as someone who bore witness to his faith in Jesus Christ through his death as a martyr.

* Pr. T. E. Jacobson

**Featured Hymn for September 2018**

***Precious Lord, Take My Hand***

*Lutheran Hymnal for Church and Home, 206*

1. Precious Lord, take my hand, lead me on, let me stand, I am tired, I am weak, I am worn. Through the storm through the night, lead me on to the light. Take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.
2. When my day grows drear, precious Lord linger near, when my life is almost gone. Hear my cry, hear my call, hold my hand lest I fall. Take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.
3. When the darkness appears and the night draws near, and the day is past and gone, at the river I stand, guide my feet, hold my hand. Take my hand, precious Lord lead me home.

* Thomas A. Dorsey, 1899-1993

*Note: Written after that author/composer had heard that his wife and son had died while he was away, this hymn has become the anthem of the Gospel tradition in America.*

**Monthly Watchword for September 2018**

[God] has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man’s heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.

* Ecclesiastes 3:11 ESV

**Ushers for September:**

* Head Ushers:
  + Ed and Tina Sage
* Ushers:
  + Dale and Connie McDonald
  + Chris Braunsroth
  + Doug and Amy Stewart
  + Roger Guenther
  + Jarrin Sage

**For Further Information on LCMC and the NALC:** You can download and read the newsletters of both organizations at the following addresses:

* **http://www.lcmc.net/newsletters**
* **http://thenalc.org/newsletter/**

**Website:** The web address is as follows:

* **www.gselclindy.weebly.com**

**From Martin Luther’s Small Catechism:**

**The Apostles’ Creed: The Third Article – Sanctification**

*I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.*

*What does this mean?*

*I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to him; but the Holy Spirit has called me through the gospel, enlightened me with his gifts and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith. In the same way, he calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and preserves it in unity with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian church, he daily forgives abundantly all my sins, and the sins of all believers, and at the last day will raise me and all the dead, and will grant everlasting life to me and all who believe in Christ. This is most certainly true.*

**Birthdays for September**

*Note: This list of birthdays is a work in progress, as we are currently trying to gather membership information from the old congregational record into an electronic form. If your name is not listed in the appropriate month, please let pastor know your birthday so that it can be added in the future. If you would not like your name to be listed, simply let pastor know. The birthdays are provided here as a way of giving thanks for the lives of members of the congregation. Happy birthday to all!*

* September 2: Dixie Stewart
* September 5: Jerome Sage
* September 7: Brandon Barger
* September 8: Myva Scott
* September 13: Dennis Stewart
* September 14: Galen Guenther
* September 14: Madisen Petersen
* September 23: Jeff Barger

**Baptismal Anniversaries for September**

*Note: Just as it is important to acknowledge the beginning of our earthly lives with our birthdays, it is even more important for us as Christians to remember the day when God has given us a new birthday, a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (1 Peter 1:3). Lutherans confess that baptism is the means by which God gives us as a part of sinful humanity a new relationship with him, a promise that our faith can look to all our lives. In turn, we are called to a life of repentance and faith that trusts in Christ as our salvation. As with the birthdays, this list is a work in progress. Blessed baptismal anniversaries to everyone!*

* September 1: Jerome Sage
* September 3: Lacey Barger
* September 12: Mariah Sage
* September 22: Brandon Barger

**Worship Schedule**

September 2: The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost with Holy Communion at altar rail (Green)

September 9: The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Green)

September 16: The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost with Holy Communion, continuous (Green)

September 23: The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Green)

September 30: The Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost (Green)

**Highlights: 2018 North American Lutheran Church (NALC) Convocation**

*Note: The annual convocation of the NALC, of which Good Shepherd is a member, was held recently in Denver, Colorado. Below is a brief summary of the actions taken, for your information.*

About 600 delegates and visitors gathered August 15-17 in Denver, Colo., for the 2018 Convocation of the North American Lutheran Church around the theme, "The Holy Spirit: Calling, Gathering, Enlightening, Sanctifying."

The Mission Festival began with a focus on discipleship. Featured speakers Sherry Weddell and Katherine Coolidge of the Catherine of Siena Institute in Colorado Springs, Colo., talked about ways congregations can form intentional disciples. The Mission Festival also featured a variety of breakout sessions to equip members for mission.

Pastor Gemechis Buba, Assistant to the Bishop for Missions, offered presentations at the Mission Festival and Convocation sessions. He told inspiring stories of God's work in providing buildings for some NALC mission congregations serving Oromo people.

Bishop John Bradosky will not be seeking reelection as Bishop of the NALC when his term expires in 2019. The Bishop talked about "passing the baton" of the office of Bishop and pointed out the need for all of us to "pass the baton" of faith and discipleship.

To prepare for the nomination and election process for Bishop, a packet of information was provided to congregations including a booklet of prayers encouraging NALC members to engage in a year of prayer and discernment leading up to the election at the NALC Convocation August 7-9, 2019, in Indianapolis, Ind.

Elections: Richard Jansak of Hendersonville, N.C., and Pastor Melinda Jones of Summerville, S.C., were elected to four-year terms on the Executive Council. Pastor John Moffett of Ashland, Ohio, and James Gale of Washington, D.C., were elected to the Court of Adjudication. Ralph Wold of Red Deer, Alberta, and Pastor Rolf Bjornstad of Sherwood Park, Alberta were elected to the NALC Canada Section Governing Board. Pastor Wendy Berthelsen of Midlothian, Texas; Pastor Dennis Di Mauro of Herndon, Va., and Pastor Phillip Gagnon of St. Albert, Alberta, were elected to six-year terms on the North American Lutheran Seminary Board of Regents.

The North American Lutheran Seminary will be seeking a new president. The Rev. Dr. Amy Schifrin, president of the NALS, has been serving as both president and seminary faculty. She will continue as full-time faculty and transition out of her position as president after the 2018-2019 school year or when someone is called as president.

2019 budgets were approved. The Convocation approved a $2.1 million Operating Budget for the NALC. Budgets were also approved for NALC designated funds: $589,000 for the Theological Education Fund (which includes the seminary); $175,500 for the Great Commission Fund; and $89,000 for the Disaster Response Fund. Most of the budgets anticipate spending some cash reserves.

A resolution regarding ecumenical consultation between the NALC and the Roman Catholic Church was approved. The resolution inviting the Roman Catholic Church into conversation and cooperation was proposed by the NALC's Commission on Theology and Doctrine.

A new NALC Global Worker, James Puotyual, who will serve in South Sudan, was commissioned at the Convocation.

Stuff the Tonka Truck for NALC Disaster Response received more than $11,000 worth of gift cards to assist those recovering from disasters. The effort was organized by the Women of the NALC.

Reports of the work of the NALC's staff, teams, task forces, ministries and ministry partners were warmly received.

**Important Announcements**

* Confirmation class begins on Wednesday September 5. Throughout the year, class will begin at 5:15 (note slight time change from 5:00) and go to 6:45.
* Sunday school begins on Sunday September 9 at 9:30 and will be held each Sunday until November 4, when there will be a break due to the time change. The youth will be assisting with Sunday school class this year, and we thank them in advance for their service.
* The first youth meeting of the year will be on September 12 at 7:00 PM.
* The youth will typically assist with worship on the third Sunday of each month, beginning September 16.
* The Sunday school Christmas program will be held during worship on December 9.
* The Women of the Word of Good Shepherd will hold their monthly meeting on September 12 at 10:00 instead of the third Sunday of the month.
* The annual soup and pie lunch and dinner in Bloomfield is scheduled for October 3. Many thanks to everyone involved in making that happen!
* During the school year, once a month on the fourth Sunday of the month, we will have a time of adult education during the Sunday school hour, starting at 9:30. As time goes on, we will use this time to discuss various topics, but we **will begin on Sunday September 23** with the first part of a confirmation refresher course. There will be coffee and some goodies available.
* During the months of September and October, Good Shepherd will be collecting donations of old clothing for the Native American Heritage Association. These clothing items will go to reservations across South Dakota. All kinds of clean, usable clothing are welcome, ranging from clothing for infants to adults. Boxes will be placed in the entryway of the church

**Recent Pastoral Acts**

* Marilyn Kay Sage, funeral on July 23, 2018
* Barry Dallas Cross, graveside committal service on July 21, 2018

**I have held many things in my hands, and I have lost them all. But whatever I have placed in God’s hands, that I still possess.**

**Martin Luther**

**September 2018**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 |
| 2  Worship, 10:30 with Holy Communion (altar rail)  Green | 3 | 4 | 5  Pr. Tom in Lindy  Confirmation class, 5:15 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 9  Sunday School, 9:30  Worship, 10:30  Baptism of Carter Matthew Sage  Green | 10 | 11 | 12  Pr. Tom in Lindy  WOW/WNALC meeting, 10:00  Confirmation class, 5:15  Church council, 7:00  Youth meeting, 7:00 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16  Sunday School, 9:30  Worship, 10:30 with Holy Communion (continuous line)  Green | 17 | 18 | 19  Pr. Tom in Lindy  Confirmation class, 5:15 PM | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23  Sunday School, 9:30  Adult education, 9:30  Worship, 10:30  Green | 24 | 25 | 26 27 28 29  Pr. Tom in Lindy  Confirmation class,  5:15 PM | | | |
| 30  Sunday School, 9:30  Worship, 10:30  Green |  |  |  | | | |

Good Shepherd Evangelical

Lutheran Church of Lindy

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Bloomfield, Nebraska 68718



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