

The Disciple

February 2017

UNBIBLICAL STATEMENTS THAT CHRISTIANS BELIEVE

I ran across this article by Shane Pruitt and had to share it with you. Pastors sometimes hear statements that make them cringe on the inside and I have had my share of those times as I'm sure you have too. So, this article spoke to me and I pray speaks to you as well.

Lutherans are people of the Bible and believe that the Bible is the Word of God. The Bible reveals errors in our thinking about God, people and the world we live in. Yet fallacies of belief happen even for Christians who have been taught the Bible. However, there are many things that Jesus-following, Church-going, Bible-believing (even Lutheran) Christians believe that are completely unbiblical. How does this happen? Often, we'll hear someone quote a statement that sounds nice to us, and we'll begin repeating it as though it's Biblical truth without ever researching it in the Scriptures. Several of these unbiblical statements have gained enough traction that many people believe they're actually Bible verses. Not only are the statements unbiblical; most of them teach the opposite of what the Bible teaches.

Here is a list of nine popular unbiblical statements that Christians tend to believe:

God helps those who help themselves.

This statement is actually anti-Gospel. Self-reliance and self-righteousness, or the attitude of trying harder and doing better actually gets in the way of the work of God. Jesus saves those who die to themselves: "Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me (Matthew 16:24)."

God wants me to be happy.

It's a common belief that God exists to be our "personal genie" waiting to give us our every wish. It's amazing how we will justify our sinful actions by saying, "God just wants me to be happy." Happiness is tied to feelings and emotions that are often based on circumstances, and those change all the time. God wants us to be obedient to Him, trust Him, and know that everything He does is for our good, even if it doesn't make me feel "happy" in that moment. "And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose (Romans 8:28)."

Continued pg.2

Mark Your Calendar

2.5
Food Pantry Sunday

2.6
Women's Bible Study Resumes
NEM Meeting
Elders Meeting

2.7
Food Pantry

2.11
Stewardship Meeting

2.13
Nominating Committee Meeting
Church Council Meeting

2.14
VALENTINE'S DAY
Community Meal

2.20
PRESIDENTS' DAY



Continued

We're all God's children

Although, God has created everyone. . .not everyone relationally belongs to Him. Only those who have repented of sin, placed their faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, and possess the Holy Spirit of God inside of them can claim Him as their Father: "But you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God (Romans 8:15b – 16)."

However, those who don't have Jesus as their Savior, nor have the Holy Spirit of God inside of them actually belong to Satan: "And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience (Ephesians 2:1 – 2)." "By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother (1 John 3:10)."

Cleanliness is next to Godliness

The people around you may appreciate you staying clean, but this is not Scripture. Parents may use this unbiblical statement to motivate their kids to clean their rooms. However, I'd suggest using an actual biblical statement: "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you (Exodus 20:12)."

God won't give you more than you can handle

Actually, all of life is more than we can handle. The point of living in a fallen world is not for us to try really hard to carry our heavy burden, but rather give-up, quit, and surrender to God, that's what faith is all about. Every thing is more than I can handle, but not more than Jesus can handle: "For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself (2 Corinthians 1:8)." "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest (Matthew 11:28)."

We all worship the same God

Yes, there is only one true and living God: "know therefore today, and lay it to your heart, that the Lord is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other (Deuteronomy 4:39)." However, He only accepts worship that comes through Jesus Christ, not Muhammad, Buddha, Joseph Smith, etc: "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12)."

Bad things happen to good people

Often we place ourselves in the judgment seat of what is good and bad, or who is good and bad. The most popular way to make that judgment is by comparison. For example, Bob is a good guy, because he is not as bad as Sam. However, according to the Bible we're all on equal ground because none of us is inherently good: "as it is written: 'None is righteous, no, not one (Romans 3:10)'."

When you die, God gains another angel

Plain and simple. Humans are humans, and angels are angels. This remains so even in eternity. In fact, angels are intrigued by the interaction between God and His "image-bearing" humans: "It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things that have now been announced to you through those who preached the good news to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look (1 Peter 1:12)."

We're all going to the same place when we die

There are two possible destinations when we pass: Heaven and Hell. However, only those who are in Christ will be with Him for all eternity when they physically die: "Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me (John 14:6)."

The fact that many of us Christians believe these unbiblical statements shows our unfortunate overall biblical illiteracy. Instead of swallowing popular statements hook-line-and-sinker; may we be like the Bereans in the Book of Acts. When they heard Paul preach, they wanted to research the Scriptures themselves to authenticate what he was saying: "The brothers immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived they went into the Jewish synagogue. Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so (Acts 17:10 – 11)."

Disciple Newsletter

Holy Cross Lutheran Church
(LCMS, SELC District)
4041 W. 120th St.
Alsip, IL 60803
708.597.5209

Office: Mon.– Thurs. 8:00am - 12:00pm

Web: www.hc-lc.org

Email: hc-lc@hc-lc.org

Pastor Chris D. Ongstad

Worship-8:00am & 10:30am Sundays
Bible Class/Sunday School 9:15am



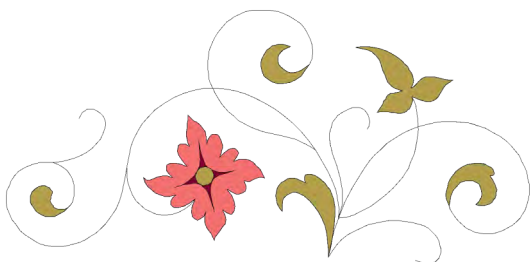
MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS OF HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

December 12, 2016

The December 12, 2016 Holy Cross Lutheran Church Council meeting opened at 7:35 pm with a prayer.

- * **TREASURER'S REPORT**– Envelope offerings are under budget, our General Fund is low. We did not take any money from our New & Enhanced Mission Fund all year. A motion was made and approved to accept the Treasurer's report.
- * **ELDERS REPORT**– Thank you gift cards will be given to our unpaid musicians at Christmas.
- * **EVANGELISM REPORT**– The post card service will probably stop after December since we do not see results.
- * **EDUCATION REPORT**– For the Alsip Holiday on Pulaski, December 9, a lot of children participated at the Burger King spinning wheel game with our church member volunteers.
- * **SOCIAL MINISTRY REPORT**– The Alsip Chamber of Commerce also donated a lot of food for our Food Pantry.
- * **CHRISTIAN ORGANIZATIONS**– The Carson's Community Days fundraisers' total for the year is \$230.
- * **NEW BUSINESS REPORT**– A motion was made and approved to hold the LWML **Spring Tea May 20.**
- * **2017 Budget**– A motion was made and approved to **accept the Budget and present it to the Voters in January for their approval.**

The Voters' meeting is January 15, the next Council meeting is January 16, at 7:30 pm.



Nutritious Meals Delivered to Seniors' Homes

PLOWS Council on Aging's Home Delivered Meals (HDM) can provide the nutrition necessary for seniors to remain healthy and independent. Seniors, age 60 and over, who have difficulty preparing nourishing meals or grocery shopping may be eligible for the HDM program. Meals are delivered by trusted volunteers Monday through Friday in the morning. Meal delivery also serves as a wellbeing check for homebound seniors. There is a suggested donation for meals, but seniors will not be terminated if the client is unable to meet that contribution.

Requesting meals is as simple as calling PLOWS at 708-361-0219. Our intake caseworker can explain the process and get it started.

The PLOWS Council on Aging is a 501(c)3 organization serving seniors and their families throughout suburban Cook County in Palos, Lemont, Orland, and Worth Townships. Those living outside the PLOWS area can find their agency by calling the Illinois Senior Help Line at 1-800-252-8966.



1 IN 6 seniors struggles with hunger



Dementia

An Honest Look at the Stages of Dementia from Diagnosis to the End Stages

by Aimee Wilczynski, LCPC

When I was asked to write an article on Dementia, I began to do some research. While I was researching Dementia, I found that there was something missing. What was missing from these articles, was the voice of someone who has been through Dementia with a loved one. I decided to do some research of my own. I found a person who was willing to share their experience with me. Someone who had watched her father eventually succumb to Dementia. Her name has been changed to protect her privacy. We will refer to her as Samantha.

Samantha's father was diagnosed with Dementia at the age of 61. She recalled how the diagnosis was discovered.

"We started noticing odd behaviors, such as dad getting up very early for work. He was leaving at 1am and returning home late. Looking back, we know he was having trouble actually doing his job."

Later, Samantha said her mother also started noticing that something was wrong.

"His checkbook was a mess. That was a huge indicator."

Samantha's mother eventually asked her father's secretary if she noticed anything wrong with him. Turned out, the Secretary had been covering for him as he was having more and more difficulty completing his tasks at work. Shortly after these revelations, a doctor's appointment was made which led to the diagnosis of Dementia, or in his case FTD (Frontal Temporal Lobe Dementia.)

"Looking back, we think he was showing signs of Dementia in his 50's." Samantha said.

Samantha continued, "After the diagnosis, the hardest part was the early stages. During the early stages, you start to notice odd behavior and the person becomes different."

For example, Samantha said her usually social and active father began to distance himself in social gatherings. He became quiet and his language began to deteriorate. During the early stages, Samantha said, the hardest part is that the symptoms are not as recognizable at first. The person seems fine as the symptoms are subtle. After the diagnosis, her father retired and was able to engage in activities that he enjoyed. Samantha said, although her father seemed like he was able to engage in activities like he always had, it soon became evident that he could not participate in activities without supervision or at all. For instance, Samantha's father did some home improvement work for a neighbor and he was not able to complete the work. As time passed, it also became clear that her father could no longer drive. He also started spending money frivolously. Samantha said it was very hard to not only make the decision to take away his financial freedom but also to have the conversation with her father about signing over the financial responsibilities and taking the car away.

"They seem so normal. You don't think they need supervision yet but it turns out they do. You feel so guilty taking away their freedom. They don't understand it yet so that makes it really hard too."

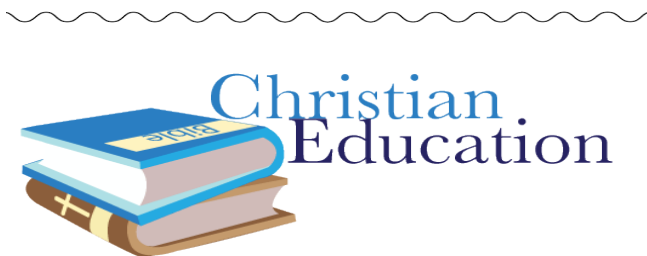
Samantha said during the early stages of Dementia, the family struggles with adjusting to their new normal. Family may not agree with the primary caregiver's decisions. Friction and tension may increase within the family when decisions for the loved ones care become a primary concern. Samantha urges family members and caregivers to seek support groups early on as a building block to self care. She said self-care is extremely important at the beginning in order to make it a habit for the years to come.

The next article (next month) will focus on the middle stages of Dementia. Stay Tuned!



Prayer Request

Joe Bradley
 Rita Joyce
 Donna Judd
 Joanne Kernahan (*hospice*)
 John Knoska
 Doris Kracht
 Marilyn Long
 Bob Long
 Joy Maddox
 Kathy Ridder
 Robert Schulz
 Erna Sherman
 Edna Wendt



Christian Education

15 Reasons Why Christian Education is Important by Pieter Stok

1. Sound Christian Education takes the Bible seriously.
2. Truth is seen as absolute.
3. Christian Education believes a Christian worldview can make a positive difference.
4. It gives students a strong foundation in a world of shifting values and morals.
5. Christian Education recognizes God's sovereignty and Christ's Kingship, and ...
6. therefore God's claims over all of creation are taken seriously.
7. No subject or curriculum is outside the orbit of God.
8. Students are recognized for who they are: sinners in need of God's grace in Christ.
9. Also students are given a vision of God's Kingdom and their place in it.
10. Good Christian education recognizes the unique, God given gifts and talents of the students and
11. challenges them to achieve their amazing potential.
12. It assists parents in their God given mandate.
13. Sound Christian Education treats the student as a whole person whose aim is to grow in Christ-likeness..
14. A foundation in God and His world prepares the student for tomorrow.
15. Healthy Christian Education develops critical thinking by having the courage to explore other world views from the perspective of its own worldview.

Loving Celebrations

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

James Bahr (3)
 George Lux (5)
 Peggy Medeiros (9)
 George Meyer (19)
 Martha Stevens (20)
 Donna Judd (20)
 Bill Love (23)
 Ron Wedster (25)
 Marye Meyer (25)
 Julie Wedster (27)
 Chris Fuller (27)
 Chris Vrshek Jr. (28)



FEBRUARY BAPTISMAL ANNIVERSARIES

Karen Vrshek (2)
 Samuel Meilahn (12)

FEBRUARY WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

Bob & Faith Schulz (14)

TUESDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY



On Tuesday evenings a life Light Bible study on the book of Exodus begins. A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board. This is an in-depth study designed for laymen. Was Moses wandering around the desert for 40 years because he was the first man who refused to ask for directions?

Were those really only the ten suggestions? Those questions and more serious ones like "what does all that have to do with Jesus anyway" will all be answered.



Stewardship is HEART WORK

STEWARDSHIP PRAYER

by: Pat Minet

Take Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding
and my entire will and all that I have and call my own.

You have given it all to me.

To you Lord, I return it.
Everything is yours; do with it what you will.

Give me only your love and your grace. That is enough for me.



Our versions translate that Greek participle as "Go." That's okay I guess, except for the fact that many understand it to be a command, "Go far away..." or "Go somewhere else..." to make disciples. Really, Jesus is telling us that we are to be making disciples as we go, wherever we are, in our own contexts, homes, families, neighborhoods, workplaces, schools and gathering places. *As you are going, make disciples.*

I've often said that when Jesus said, "**GO**" he meant "**Get Out!**" Get Out of the pews! Get Out of the church building! Get Out of your comfortable bubble and **Get Out** into the world - into your own personal mission field, wherever that might be! **Get Out** among people who may not be like you, but who need Jesus just like you do. **Get Out** where you can strike up conversations, where you can do real ministry, caring for people in their need, and where you will learn how to love your neighborhood and your neighbors.

The best example of this is Jesus Himself. He spent the majority of his time outside the Temple and synagogues. Jesus got out among the people, especially the poor and marginalized, the outcasts and sinners. His disciples learned as they were sent out, as they were on the road and in people's homes, and in the marketplaces with Jesus.

If the church exists to do God's mission, then to do the work of the church ("church work") means we need to **Get Out!**

Rev. Dr. Peter Meier is the Executive Director of the Center for U.S. Missions. You may contact him at peter.meier@cui.edu



THIS & THAT

VOTERS' MEETING JANUARY 15, 2017

Results of the voters' meeting include the following:

- The minutes from the March 20, 2016 voters' meeting were approved.
- The ballot from the LCMS for changes in the LCMS constitution was approved (all 3 parts).
- The 2017 budget was approved.
- Changes to the way flowers are donated was approved.

SATURDAY MORNING FOOD PANTRY

We thank Pat Minet for her 6 years of guiding the Saturday morning food pantry and leading our church in feeding many hungry families in the Alsip area. Pat decided that she could no longer function in this position any longer. Rather than shut down this mission a number of our members have stepped forward to lead the Saturday food pantry. Donna Meilahn has kindly consented to lead the food pantry and her leadership team includes Pauline Griffin and Barbara Euman. We thank God for the selfless work of those who are retiring from service and those receiving the mantle of leadership. Let us support them with our prayers and willing hands.



CARSON'S COMMUNITY DAYS BOOKLETS

Holy Cross is again selling Carson's Community Days Coupon Booklets for \$5.00 each. The days of this sale are Thursday, February 23 - Saturday, February 25. Every coupon book contains a \$10 off coupon, a 30% off coupon that can be used over and over again on those days, plus many other coupons. These coupons can be used at any Carson's store. All proceeds from the sale of these coupon books goes to our church. Please see Martha Stevens, Liz Wilczynski or Dorothy Lux to purchase your coupon booklets.

NEW FLOWER DONATION GUIDELINES

There has been a change in the giving of flowers for church worship services. Thanks to many generous members over the years flowers have been donated to be displayed in the church in memory of the dearly departed as well as upcoming anniversaries of family members. They were given in thanksgiving to God for His many blessings. Live flowers remind us of the living Lord- creator and redeemer of all. We certainly want to continue and encourage that practice. However, a change has been made by the voters' assembly in how that will be done.

Beginning immediately, those who wish to donate flowers for the chancel in worship on a particular worship day are asked to kindly sign up on the flower chart, include the \$25 donation in their church envelope, marked on the "other" line of the envelope with the amount, who or what they are giving in memory of and to which fund they wish the donation to go. If the fund is not listed it will go toward the general fund. The flowers will be arranged in house by Martha Stevens and will be available for you to pick up after the late worship service that Sunday. These changes were made because of the better quality of flowers we can get in-house rather than through the local florist.



FEBRUARY UPCOMING EVENTS

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NIGHT *to Shine*

On February 10, 2017, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 330 Highland Drive, Chicago Heights, will host Night to Shine, sponsored by Tim Tebow Foundation, with funding from LCMS Stand With Your Community Grant. Night to Shine is a prom night experience, centered on God's love, for people with special needs. Hope is that our LCMS churches can work together to make that possible. Please share this event with members in your church who qualify to be guests and would enjoy this night out. Also, with members who are able to volunteer, make donations, or contribute in any way making this night truly memorable for the special needs community of Chicago Heights. To register and for more information visit the website acswebnetworks.com/splch/nighttoshine.



AN EVENING WITH MR. & MRS. LINCOLN

St. John's Lutheran Church, 215 South Lincoln St., Lombard, presents an original two-person play dramatizing the final evening of President Lincoln's life, as the couple prepares to attend a play at Ford's Theatre. The performance, on Sunday February 12, will take place in the church sanctuary at 3:00pm. An informal reception with refreshments will follow. While admission to all events is free, a free -will offering will be received.



HYMNFEST

St. Andrews Lutheran Church and School, 260 N. Northwest Highway, Park ridge, cordially invites everyone to its annual Hymnfest, Sunday February 26, prelude beginning at 3:30pm. This year's Hymnfest, titled "Soli Deo Gloria," features readings by various Christian writers and a variety of Lutheran hymns and songs in settings for congregation, choirs, instrumentalists, soloists, a Contemporary Praise team, and St. Andrews' Dobson organ.

BETTER THAN A BOX OF CHOCOLATES



When considering what you will be doing for Valentine's Day think of the thousands of veterans who have exited homelessness but are in need of the basic household essentials most people take for granted. No matter how large or small the donation of new household items, everything you deliver to a VA facility will go to a qualified veteran in need. Don't know what to collect? Contact Military Outreach USA at info@militaryoutreachusa.org for further details. *The LCMS Northern Illinois District is a Military Caring Organization.*



SERVANTS IN WORSHIP -FEBRUARY, 2017

DATE	TIME	USHER	COMMUNION ASSISTANT	LECTOR	ALTAR GUILD	COUNTER	GREETER	PROJECTIONIST
5	8:00 am	Jim Boltz		Donna Judd	Barb Piekosz	Donna Meilahn	Barb Piekosz	Martha Stevens
	10:30 am	Jim Bahr		Donna Meilahn	Jeanne Simovic	Faith Schulz	Jeanne Simovic	Pam Rutlowski
12	8:00 am	Jim Boltz	Jim Boltz		Barb Piekosz	Dorothy Lux	Barb Piekosz	Martha Stevens
	10:30 am	Jim Bahr	Ron Wedster	Liz Wilczynski	Jeanne Simovic	Doris Kracht	Jeanne Simovic	Pam Rutlowski
19	8:00 am	Jim Boltz	Jim Boltz	Donna Judd	Barb Piekosz	Pam Rutkowski	Barb Piekosz	Martha Stevens
	10:30 am	Jim Bahr		Sue Wilczynski	Jeanne Simovic	Marye Meyer	Jeanne Simovic	Pam Rutlowski
26	8:00 am	Jim Boltz			Barb Piekosz	Pauline Griffin	Barb Piekosz	Martha Stevens
	10:30 am	Jim Bahr	Tom Griffin	Aimee Wilczynski	Jeanne Simovic	Nancy Fehser	Jeanne Simovic	Pam Rutlowski

Thank you for all you do for Christ and His Church!



February, 2017

Church Office Hours: Monday through Thursday 8:00 am - 12:00 pm, 708.597.5209 hclc@hc-lc.org

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2 9:00AM Senior's Group Gathering	3 Pastor's Day Off Jim Bahr (b)	4 10:30AM Food Pantry
5 FOOD PANTRY SUNDAY 8:00AM Worship/Traditional 9:15AM Sunday School/Bible Study 10:30AM Worship/Contemporary George Lux (b)	6 9:00AM NEM Meeting 4:30PM Womens Bible Study 7:30PM Southwest Chorus 7:30PM Elders Meeting	7 4:30PM Food Pantry 7:00PM LifeLight Bible Study	8	9 9:00AM Senior's Group Gathering Peggy Medeiros (b)	10 Pastor's Day Off	11 10:30AM Food Pantry 12:30PM Stewardship Meeting
12 8:00AM Worship/Traditional(C) 9:15AM Sunday School/Bible Study 10:30AM Worship/Contemporary/(C)	13 9:00AM Nominating Committee Meeting 4:30PM Womens Bible Study 7:30PM Southwest Chorus 7:30PM Council Meeting	14 VALENTINE'S DAY 4:30PM Community Meal 7:00PM LifeLight Bible Study	15	16 9:00AM Senior's Group Gathering	17 Pastor's Day Off	18 10:30AM Food Pantry
19 NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE 8:00AM Worship/Traditional/(C) 9:15AM Sunday School/Bible Study 10:30AM Worship/Contemporary George Meyer (b)	20 PRESIDENTS' DAY 4:30PM Womens Bible Study 7:30PM Southwest Chorus Martha Stevens (b) Donna Judd (b)	21 7:00PM LifeLight Bible Study	22	23 9:00AM Senior's Group Gathering Bill Love (b)	24 Pastor's Day Off	25 8:30AM Bd. of Education 10:30AM Food Pantry Ron Wedster (b) Marye Meyer (b)
26 8:00AM Worship/Traditional 9:15AM Sunday School/Bible Study 10:30AMWorship/Contemporary/(C)	27 4:30PM Womens Bible Study 7:30PM Southwest Chorus Julie Wedster (b) Chris Fuller (b)	28 7:00PM LifeLight Bible Study Chris Vrshek Jr. (b)				



HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!

