

Our Savior Lutheran Church – LCMS

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Pastor Gregory Cumbee



2018 August Newsletter

Tell the Truth

“Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, but those who act faithfully are his delight.” Proverbs 12:22

“If you falsify, the child will learn to deceive also.” - *Wise Parenting Tips* (1886)

Intro

My secretary reminded me that my newsletter article is due and since we are preparing to leave town, I am writing about the first topic that came to mind. I begin with a confession. Last week, I told my children a lie (yes, pastors are sinners too). Most people would label it a “white lie,” but it was a lie nonetheless.

It began when one of my children asked, “Dad, I thought of something last night. I can’t tell if it was a dream or a memory. Can I ask you about it?” Though focused on a home project, I said, “Sure.” My child continued, “I had a memory of us being in a cabin at night. Mom looked worried. She motioned for us to keep quiet and was pointing a rifle out a window. I heard you whisper something outside and then heard men cursing and running away. Did that ever happen?” I paused for a moment and said, “No, that did not happen, you must have dreamed it.” My wife immediately gave me the eyes of displeasure, and after granting me a few moments to come clean said, “Children, it is true. Dad, tell them the truth!”

Rebekah was right. The motive behind my “white lie” was twofold: 1. I did not want to stop and explain an adult-themed situation to children who may not be able to maturely process it. 2. The event included me using lawful tactical deception against criminals. Lying is an intrinsically complicated subject. St. Augustine wrote two entire volumes on the eight levels of lying. Though my intentions were good, in the final analysis, it was still a lie.

The reason why this was a big deal in my family is that Rebekah and I promised each other before we married that we would never lie to each other or to our children, but always tell them the truth in an age-appropriate way. The good news is that after Rebekah and I explained their memory and I confessed my deception they understood completely and granted forgiveness.

Good Intentions, “White Lies” and Unforeseen Consequences

Sociologists tell us that humans lie far more often than we think we do and everyone occasionally could be nominated as an Oscar-winning liar. “White lies,” told for selfish purposes are unacceptable, but there are also socially acceptable degrees of lying. Using the flawed logic and ethics of end justifying the means (utilitarianism), a lie told to protect someone’s feelings is considered by most Americans to be good.

A new pastor in Florida was welcomed by a church member who brought him olive meatloaf. The pastor responded, “Thank you. My family loves olives!” even though his family detested olives. The member responded, “Yes, it’s one of our favorites too!” The lady decided then to regularly bring olive-themed dishes to his family for the rest of his tenure. “Polite lies” have consequences.

Adults can deceive their children with good intentions. An adult comforting a child and telling them that their recently deceased pet went to a special place (animal heaven) is arguably kinder than telling the graphic truth about Jack or Ginger's imminent re-entry into nature's carbon cycle. But taking the easy way out has consequences and promotes bad theology to our children.

"White lies" can also have unforeseen consequences. Though we have never judged families with different customs, Rebekah and I chose not to promote the belief in fictional holiday characters. The reason why is that we both personally know of several intellectuals who first questioned the existence of God as children when their parents told them that their holiday heroes with miraculous powers were not real.

None of these academics knew each other, but each told the same story from their childhood perspective: They grew up in Christian homes that taught there were several entities with godlike powers of omniscience, omnipresence, and omnipotence. Jesus was the chief entity honored every Sunday and the others were venerated in their homes during their respective holiday.

After years of this forming the framework of their reality, when mom and dad finally told them that no member of this miraculous pantheon (except Jesus) existed, they were traumatized and questioned their parents' integrity. The parents' intention of providing a "magical" childhood, in the end, made these gifted children doubt the miraculous. For each of these brilliant little minds, it was truly a "Pearl Harbor/JFK moment." Each of them remembered in vivid detail precisely where they were when they processed the traumatic news.

Atheist scholar Richard Dawkins addresses this in his book *The God Delusion* (2016). Dawkins believes that this holiday tradition persists primarily not for children but for parents to relive their long-lost childhood in some idealistic way. Dawkins encourages atheists not to criticize Christians who practice this custom since "it teaches their children to be skeptics of the miraculous when their parents finally reveal the elaborate deception." Three of Dawkins' points ring true: 1. Young children are naive. 2. Young children assume that parents tell them real things. 3. Young children need to implicitly trust what their parents tell them for basic survival and well-being.

To be clear, I am in no way suggesting that parents who choose to practice this common custom are guilty of violating the 8th Command or promoting atheism. Far from it. On non-essential (*adiaphora*) matters only parents have the right to determine what is best for their own children. My point is simply that a common socially acceptable "white lie" that is arguably harmless for some children, can unintentionally be devastating to other children.

"Speaking the truth in love" (Ephesians 4:15) stands in contrast both to telling social lies on the one hand or being brutally blunt on the other hand. No one respects a liar. No one likes a jerk. The solution is to think of creative ways of being truthful and respectful at the same time. Instead of calling olive loaf your favorite dish (deception) or saying it made you nauseous (jerk), honest appreciation for how kind and thoughtful it was for them to make it for you is a simple and elegant solution that protects your integrity.

What is Truth?

In **John 18:38** Pontius Pilate asked: **"What is truth?"** The tragedy of Pilate's bewilderment was his lack of comprehension regarding the character of the Person standing before him. *The Truth* was standing right before him. But expediency, not truth, commanded Pilate's final decision.

In years of counseling, I have seen families recover from a host of problems ranging from infidelity to verbal/physical abuse. The only sin that I have never seen a fractured family recover from is persistent deception.

Trust that takes years to build can be undone in one day. Without trust, relationships crumble. Can trust be regained? The answer is “sometimes, but not quickly or easily.”

Is all Deception Lies?

The short answer is “no.” Though there is no biblical evidence justifying social lies, there is ample evidence justifying deception when it is mutually agreed upon. For example, no one will call a chess player or a sports team “liars” if they pretend to be performing one action in order to confuse the opposition by actually performing another. There are commonly agreed upon ground rules not only allowing but encouraging clever plays.

The most serious application of justifiable deception is found in warfare. In Sun Tzu’s classic *Art of War* he writes, “All warfare is based on deception. Let your plans be dark and impenetrable as night, and when you move, fall like a thunderbolt.” Military General Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson, a devout believer whose brilliant tactics are studied at military academies worldwide, said, “Always mystify, mislead, and surprise the enemy ... Such tactics will win every time, and a small army may thus destroy a large one.”

War by its very nature is waged with all available weapons, including psychology and deception. God himself wages war this way. He told Joshua to set an ambush (**Joshua 8:2**), and even set a deadly ambush himself (**2Chronicles 20:22**). When it was time to launch an attack on the enemy, God commanded the most quintessential form of deception, espionage. God blessed King David using guerrilla tactics that British officers successfully imitated in Palestine centuries later. If just wars are legitimate, then ambushes, camouflage, spying, deceptive strategy, communicating in code, as integral parts of war, are also legitimate. We are never called in Scripture to be transparent with mortal enemies.

Deception permitted for soldiers in warfare logically extends to deception permitted for police or civilians opposing criminals. Criminals forfeit all rights to truth and safety. If a homeowner, away on a trip, leaves a timer on her light system to deceive a potential thief into believing someone is home, surely she does not sin. When a home intruder demands access, and he can be dissuaded by deception, the homeowner has not chosen the lesser of two evils. She has chosen what is morally right.

Conclusion

An aide to our President recently made headlines when she admitted telling “white lies” for her boss. An article in *Forbes* magazine examining the event drew these conclusions. 1. Telling trivial lies makes it easier to lie more often. 2. Telling trivial lies will damages your personal reputation and that of your business. 3. There are better alternatives to trivial lies.

It is a violation of the 8th Command to deliberately deceive someone to whom truth is owed. And though we are not under obligation to enlighten everyone on every subject on which we have knowledge, we have no right to deceive honest neighbors except in mutually agreed upon social arrangements, an enemy at war, and in resisting criminal activity.

God is the ultimate reality, and His reliability is what enables the world to hold together and make sense. To the extent we conform to that reality we live. To the extent we split from that reality, we destroy and are destroyed. To love the truth is to hate the lie. It is God’s desire that each of His children, created in His own likeness, put aside all lying in order to find our way into the bright light of God, the Trustworthy One. **“Therefore, each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body.” Ephesians 4:25**

Soli Deo Gloria,
Pastor Greg



Ecclesiastes 3:11a He has made everything beautiful in its time.

One of the 2x4 boards with scripture inscribed by OSLC Youth that was incorporated into the building of the basement.

The basement construction is finished and just in time for VBS! Special thanks to Warfield Homes and all of those who assisted with the design. Thanks also go to all of those who generously contributed funds to the project. A plaque has been prepared which will display the names of those whose memorials were used for the project.



**'Splash Canyon'
Vacation Bible School**



Thanks to everyone who helped put on a successful VBS! It appeared that the children were having a great time. It also appeared that the large children who were volunteering had a good time too. Special thanks to Karen H. for taking the lead on VBS. Thanks to Pastor and his family for making some of the best BBQ, sauce and pickles you could ever wish for. Also, thanks to the folks from Advent Lutheran for helping out and bringing kids. It was great to see the kids and adults from both congregations working together to put this on.
- Dan C., Council President

A BIG THANK YOU to everyone who volunteered to teach the kids, provided security, made donations, brought food, attended **VBS** and the BBQ and generally made VBS a wonderful time of learning about the promises of Jesus and a **FUN** event! - Karen H., VBS Director

Easy Refrigerator Pickles

Served at the VBS BBQ - recipe from Rebekah C. - requested by everyone who tasted them!

Ingredients:

1 ½ cups water	3 Tablespoons white vinegar or apple cider vinegar
1 ½ Tablespoons kosher or pickling salt	2 teaspoons black peppercorns
5 cloves of garlic, peeled	6 large sprigs fresh dill
1 bay leaf	½ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes (optional) enough cucumbers to fill a quart jar

Directions:

1. Add the water, vinegar, salt, peppercorns, garlic, dill, and bay leaf to a 1 quart jar or divide the mixture evenly between two pint jars and stir to combine.
2. Add the sliced cucumbers to the jar. Then place the lid on the jar and shake to combine.
3. Refrigerate ideally for at least 2 days before eating. The pickles will keep for several weeks in the refrigerator. **Enjoy!**

Youth Coordinator



Do you enjoy working with youth? We are currently seeking adult leader(s) to oversee the OSL Youth Group. This person or persons would coordinate activities with our congregation's youth with the goal of assisting and leading them to know, love, and share Christ through fellowship, growth, and service opportunities. If this sounds like something you may be interested in, please contact Karen H. or the church office at 540-667-1459. We are praying for you!

Thank you to all who have been busily knitting and crocheting shawls for the **Prayer Shawl Ministry** and **ABBACARE!** We have given three shawls and a hat to ladies who are struggling with cancer and heart issues. If you know someone who could benefit from the comfort of a shawl and prayer, contact the office 540-667-1459. We have also knitted six baby sweaters, six blankets, several pairs of booties and hats for ABBACARE. Keep those needles going!!!!



The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

LCMS Stewardship Ministry August 2018 Newsletter Article

When it comes to stewardship, a favorite Bible verse is the account of the widow's mite **Luke 21:1-4**. It's a moving account. Our Lord praises the seemingly small gift of two copper coins given by a poor widow above the abundance of gifts given by the rich, saying, *"Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them"* **Luke 21:3**. And that is usually where we stop. But the text goes on. *"For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on"* **Luke 21:4**.

"She ... put in all she had to live on." She gave everything. She held nothing back. She trusted that the Lord who made her and all creatures, who gave her everything she had, who redeemed her from her own sin, from death, and the power of the devil, who called her by the Gospel and enlightened her with His gifts of Word and Sacrament, would continue to do this. He would provide her with all that she needed for this body and life because that is the character of the God she had.

But this is not why we give small gifts. Her gift, though it appeared small, was actually large. When we are tempted to give small gifts it is precisely because we want them to be small! We don't trust the Lord to provide for us.

We give small gifts because we lack faith in the One who created us, redeemed us, sanctifies and keeps us in the one true faith. We give small gifts because we doubt that God will really give us what we need and desire. We give small gifts because we are not content with what God has already given.

We are not slaves, children of the slave woman, under the Old Covenant **Gal. 4**. We are adopted sons of the free woman. And since we are sons, we are also heirs. And heirs receive the inheritance. For everything is already ours in Christ. And thus, moved by the willing spirit of adoption, we do the will of God in financial matters far beyond all that done by those under the Old Covenant who were forced by legal demands.

So, what have you decided to give? How do I decide what to give? Let the Scriptures be your guide.

We are to give proportionally to what we have received from God's giving to us **Luke 12:48; 1 Cor. 16:1-2, 2 Cor. 8:12**. But you have not been set free to give nothing. See that you excel in the grace of giving **2 Cor. 8:7**.

We are not free to live selfishly outside the Gospel, without regard for God who gives us all good gifts, without generosity for our neighbor who needs us and our gifts, without supporting the community of faith in which we live, without care for our spiritual fathers and those who teach and help raise our children in the faith, without resources for the poor and needy – in short, we are not free to live unto ourselves, hoarding what God has given us only for us.

For love is the fulfillment of the law **Romans 13:10**. And the sum of the law is this: Love God and love your neighbor **Matt. 22:34-40**. We love because He first loved us. We give because He has given to us.

Luther once said, "Possessions belong in your hands, not in your heart" (LW 14:240). There is a reason your 10 fingers spread apart. With your hands you catch God's gifts for what you need and let the rest fall through your fingers to your neighbors – your family, your friends, your community, your church.



Dear friends at Our Savior:

I am overjoyed to be back among you after a 7-month period away in Charlottesville and Omaha for treatment of Acute Myeloid Leukemia. Our most gracious Lord has heard your prayers and those of many hundreds of others on my behalf for healing, and 100 days after a stem cell transplant, I was declared cancer-free! 90% of adults who continue 2 years with no relapse are considered cured! That is our next prayer.

I continue to be monitored at UVA for the rising levels of white blood cells and platelets over the next few months until my immunities are back in full swing. I must be careful about my surroundings for now, but I feel quite well, and savor each day. That, I am certain, is God's plan for each of us in knowing and spreading the good news of Jesus!

God bless you all!

— Daniel Hannemann

CCAP CORNER



CCAP – Winchester (the Congregational Community Action Project) has paid about \$58,000 in client services thus far this year—providing food, clothing, personal and household products, baby food, diapers, and financial help with rent, utility bills, prescription drugs, GED testing fees, and heating and cooling—to those in need.

While CCAP will not have a school supply collection this year because that is now done by Bright Futures for both Winchester City and Frederick County Public Schools, whatever school supplies are donated to CCAP will be distributed to clients who need and ask for them.

Current needs for CCAP clients include the following:

- Canned soups and dried beans
- Crackers
- Pull-top cans of ravioli, etc.
- Bug spray
- Toilet paper
- New men's underwear (boxers) in all sizes, including XXL, XXXL
- Men's jeans (especially sizes 34, 36, and 38)
- New children's underwear (all sizes)
- Disposable baby diapers in all sizes, but especially size 5

Please place your donations in the CCAP box in the narthex. Thank you for your generosity!
Questions? Ask Nancy B.



BIRTHDAYS

Aug 5 Justin D.
Aug 7 Andrew C.
Aug 9 Scarlett C.
Aug 9 Kendra G.
Aug 16 Wayne W. Sr.
Aug 18 Rob W.
Aug 23 Ben C.
Aug 27 Katie C.

ANNIVERSARIES

Aug 8 Dan and Bethany C
Aug 10 Gary and Carol C.
Aug 27 Larry and Ann G.

VOLUNTEERS IN AUGUST



FLOWERS FOR THE ALTAR

Aug 5 Gary K.
Aug 12 Carol & Sarah C.
Aug 19 Dave & Nancy S.
Aug 26 Bill & Scarlett C.

ACOLYTES

Aug 5 Mattea K.
Aug 12 Jonny D.
Aug 19 Jennifer F.
Aug 26 Josiah C.

ALTAR GUILD

Marilyn G.

COMMUNION ASSISTANT

Aug 5 Bob W.
Aug 12 Shannon D.
Aug 19 Wayne W. Jr.
Aug 26 Bob W.

GREETERS

Aug 5 Karen, Dave & Hannah H.
Aug 12 George R. & Phil M.
Aug 19 Larry, Marilyn G. & Ben, Naomi C.
Aug 26 Nancy N. & Sharon W.

LECTORS

Aug 5 Bethany C.
Aug 12 Larry G.
Aug 19 Hannah A.
Aug 26 Scarlett C.

NURSERY

Aug 5 Kendra G.
Aug 12 Stephanie D.
Aug 19 Deborah C.
Aug 26 Sharon W.

OFFERING COUNTERS

Aug 5 Bethany C. & Phil M.
Aug 12 Larry G. & Joan J.
Aug 19 Hannah A. & Kendra G.
Aug 26 Dan C. & DeeDee W.

USHERS

Aug 5 Gary B. & Dave H.
Aug 12 George R. & Phil M.
Aug 19 Shannon & Jonny D.
Aug 26 Eric & Curtiss F.



SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

			1	2	3	4
5 10:00 am Worship with Holy Communion	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 10:00 am Worship with Holy Communion 11:30 Council Meeting	13	14	15	16	17	18
19 10:00 am Worship with Holy Communion 11:30 Thrivent Fellowship	20	21	22	23	24	25
26 10:00 am Worship with Holy Communion 11:30 OSLC Prayer Group	27	28	29 September Newsletter Deadline	30	31	