



Trinity Tidings

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From the Pastor's Study...

JULY 2017

Recently I read an article by the Rev. Dennis D. Nelson, Director of Lutheran Coalition for Reform (CORE). CORE seeks to build bridges between our sundry Lutheran denominations; a difficult task at best these days. But recently it became even harder with the advent of a new philosophy that is permeating ELCA seminaries. Called "*WE ARE NAKED AND UNASHAMED*" the movement seeks to remove all limits of human sexuality in the church: eliminating marriage as necessary for church-sanctioned unions, approving sex outside of marriage, and even endorsing polyamory (sexual/romantic relationships among multiple partners... 'marriage' of 3 or more). Below I present an excerpt of Pastor Nelson's column (the entire text is available at <http://www.lutherancore.org/blog/clothed-and-forgiven-lutheran-cores-response-to-we-are-naked-and-unashamed/>). It is a bit long, but well worth the effort: an all-too vivid example of a slippery slope. Please allow me to emphasize - neither our congregation nor the North American Lutheran Church (NALC) ascribe to these ideas.

Let us hold the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in our prayers that they may return to the authority of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Mike

"In 2009 the ELCA Churchwide Assembly rejected as normative the traditional, Biblical definition of marriage by allowing for the endorsement and ordination of persons in "publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same gender relationships." Now this spirit of revision has crafted a new movement that hopes to reject any definition of marriage as normative for sexual relationships.

Known as "Naked and Unashamed," this movement was started by seminarians at the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago, and since then it has reached out to other pastors, leaders, and seminary students in the ELCA who share its beliefs and values. Its website contains such statements as the following:

*"The limited and hierarchical focus on marriage and family life over alternative forms of relationality is oppressive, preferential, manipulative, and culturally irrelevant to the variety of healthy sexual, emotional, contractual, and/or romantic expressions that could be part of an appropriate Christian lifestyle."

*"Life and liberty are being oppressed in the pressure for church leaders to be in marital relationships, or otherwise abstain from all sexual intimacy."

*"Marriage is not the only healthy relationship model within which sexuality can be safely enjoyed."

As seminarians and pastors of the ELCA, they are objecting to "overt policies and direct questioning during the ELCA candidacy process that disallow sexual intimacy, cohabitation, and committed relationality outside of civil marriage."

There is no Biblical basis for this group's arguments. Just as the documents approved by the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in 2009 were based not upon the Bible, but upon psychology, sociology, and the dynamics that build trust between and among people, so this group argues on the basis of such vague reasons as "the common good," "the plethora of stories we hear," "our values and lived experience," and the idea that such unmoored sexual behaviors are "healthy" and "life giving."

This group's website claims that the ELCA's teaching, expectations, and documents surrounding sexuality are "heteronormative, white-centric, economically oppressive, and non-Lutheran." This group asserts that other cultures have different understandings of sexual good, and Biblical norms of "life together" are dismissed as the invention of elite, wealthy, and white Europeans. In so doing, they not only ignore the very staunch standards for sexuality of our African fellow Lutherans, but they also ignore the sexual ethics of the Old and New Testaments, which are neither elite, wealthy, white, nor European.

Many people had supposed that the decisions made in August 2009 to accept same gender relationships if they are publicly accountable, lifelong, and monogamous would satisfy revisionists. Now we see the truth, and the "slippery slope" prophecy has proven true: this group is rejecting the 2009 decisions because they do not want anyone – heterosexual, homosexual, or a member of any sexual minority – to be held to the standard of monogamy and faithfulness.

The documents of this group even advocate for polyamory (multiple partners), as evidenced in these statements.

*"This is what we are pushing back on: the idea that one person in your life must be the one whom you trust the most, and with whom you simultaneously work together financially, domestically, sexually, emotionally, and parentally."

*"There exist in the ELCA multiple positions on [here follow several different relational patterns, including polyamory]. We lift this multiplicity up and demand that its full diversity be recognized within the Christian lifestyle in our church."

Absent is any sense of marriage based upon our creation as male and female. Gone is the Biblical conviction that marriage finds its most perfect expression in God's faithful and permanent love for His Israel. Forgotten is Jesus the Bridegroom's love for the Church, His bride.

This past February we were all reading and hearing with great alarm about the Oroville Dam in northern California. Because of unusually heavy rains, the dam's main and emergency spillways were significantly damaged, prompting the evacuation of more than 180, 000 people living downstream. Those who oversee the Oroville Dam would be grossly irresponsible if they were not to take any and all necessary measures to repair the damage and ensure the future integrity of the dam. Will the leadership of the ELCA say, "Enough is enough; this has gone too far; this is not what was voted on and approved at the Churchwide Assembly in 2009"? Or will they allow the damage and the erosion of Biblical values to continue – at probably an ever increasing rate?

When the prodigal son came to his senses, repented, and returned home, his father embraced him and immediately ordered that the lad be dressed in a festal robe and adorned with the father's signet ring. Such a gracious welcome awaits all who turn from the folly of their sin and return to the Lord with all their heart. It is our hope and prayer that the signatories to "We Are Naked and Unashamed" will do this, so that they may be embraced by their heavenly Father's forgiveness, clothed once again in the robes of Jesus' holy righteousness, adorned with the signet ring of salvation, and seated at the feast of all who have been redeemed."

MISSION OFFERING JULY 30TH

Our monthly mission offering, in addition to our regular Sunday offering, will be collected on Sunday, July 30th during worship. The mission offering (formerly called the "Noisy Offering") for July will benefit the Habitat for Humanity home building project in East Flat Rock. _At the request of our Offering Counters and the bank, we are asking not to receive coins for this offering any longer. Unfortunately, although the coins sounded nice in the collection cans they were difficult to count and (as we have unfortunately discovered!) COINS DO NOT FIT THRU THE DEPOSIT SLOT AT THE BANK. Thank you for understanding.

MISSION OFFERING FOR "GARY'S FUND" BIG SUCCESS

Our mission offering of June 25th was a big success! \$ 251.25 was given! The total donation will benefit our congregation's "Gary's Fund." The "Gary's Fund" was established in honor of our late charter member Gary Goetz. The fund provides supermarket food cards to those in need in the East Flat Rock area.

PASTOR MIKE'S ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY JULY 16TH

On Sunday, July 16th Pastor Mike will celebrate the 17th anniversary of his ordination. During our morning worship that day Pastor will reaffirm his ordination vows and the congregation will reaffirm its call to him as our pastor.

Following his personal tradition, our sermon format for that day will be changed. Instead of a regular sermon, Pastor Mike will respond to questions *that have been submitted to him in advance*. Questions may be about almost anything, he says; but he will answer them from a theological perspective. To submit questions for Pastor Mike, please e-mail them to him at PASTORTLCF@GMAIL.COM. He will select several to address during worship.

T.W.I.G.S (TRINITY WOMEN IN GOD'S SERVICE)

Mark your calendars ladies for Friday July 28th. We will meet at Brixx Wood Fired Pizza for our monthly luncheon. Located at 30 Town Square Blvd, Ste 140, Asheville, NC 28803. Brixx offers a variety of items including pizza, sandwiches, salad, pasta, and dessert. We will meet there at 11:30. If you need more information or would like to car pool, please contact Dorothy at 333-8851.

MEN UNDER GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY (MUGS)

Our Trinity men's group will meet for its monthly breakfast gathering on Friday, July 28th at 9:00AM. The location will be the Mills River Restaurant.



*******WORSHIP ASSISTANTS NEEDED*******

*From him the whole body, joined and held **together** by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its **work**.*

[Ephesians 4:16](#)

Greeters, Ushers, Acolytes, Lectors, Cantors, Communion Assistants, Counters, Coffee-Time, and Trash Removal are needed July/August. Please take the time to look at the "WORSHIP ASSISTING" sign-up sheet and add your name.

*****COFFEE TIME
FELLOWSHIP*****

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the **fellowship** of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

[2 Corinthians 13:14](#)

Thank you to everyone who participates in our fellowship time after service. Thank you to those who lovingly prepare the food, thank you to those who stay to visit, and thank you to those who help to clean-up. Fellowship time is a wonderful way to touch base with each other and bask in the love we share with Christ. Volunteers are needed. Please add your name to the sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the back of the church.

******ALTAR FLOWERS******

There is a sign-up sheet for altar flowers on the bulletin board located in the back of the sanctuary. If you wish to order special flowers please be advised that Trinity is currently partnering with FORGET-ME-NOT florist on a trial basis. The shop is located Hendersonville and JEAN, the owner, will be happy to work with you on any special requests. The cost for Sunday altar flowers is \$30.00. (Special requests may differ in price.) The phone number is (828)692-3749.

PASTOR MIKE ON VACATION

Pastor Mike will be taking some vacation time out of the area from June 29th to July 10th. If there is a pastoral emergency while he is away, please call him on his cell phone. In his absence worship will continue as scheduled led by laity. Lay leaders will share Pastor's prepared message and will distribute Holy Communion using the protocol for Communion in Special Circumstances as outlined in our Lutheran worship guides.

FREE "LOVE MEAL" JULY 25TH

The monthly free meal for those in need in our community will be prepared and served on Tuesday, July 25th at noon. Volunteers are needed, and requested to meet in our church kitchen by 11:30 AM.

ST. PAUL'S MOUNTAIN WINERY OUTING JULY 23RD

Plan now to gather after church on Sunday, July 23rd at St. Paul's Mountain Winery on Chestnut Gap Road in Hendersonville. This unofficial outing will see those who desire to participate arrive at the winery at noon or after and gather at the shady outside tables. Wine, cider and other beverages will be available for purchase; food will also be available for purchase prepared by "Great Food for Any Mood" catering. Please dress casually for worship that morning if you are proceeding to the winery directly from church.

Hello from South Dakota to our Trinity Family. We made it safe and sound with an uneventful journey. Your sending blessing really worked. Thank you for that.

Our temporary address is 1515 East 30th St. Sioux Falls, SD 57105. We are still on schedule to move into our house around September 1st. We're in the process of finding a church home. We sure miss all of you!

*Much Love!
Bob and Jody*



July

Happy Birthday

18 - Joan Kline

20 - Michael McPeters

22 - Bonnie Duffner



PRAYER CHAIN MINISTRY MEETING

Yet give attention to your servant's prayer and his plea for mercy, Lord my God. Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is praying in your presence this day. [1 Kings 8:27-29](#)

What is a Prayer Chain? A prayer chain is a group of people who pray for others in time of emergency. It begins with the pastor receiving a request for prayer. He contacts the prayer chain coordinator who starts the "prayer chain". Each member prays with another prayer chain member and then passes the emergency need on to the next member. The chain is complete as the request comes back to the coordinator.

[The Prayer Chain Ministry team will meet on Sunday, July 30th](#) after church for a short meeting. If this is a ministry that you might be interested in, please join us.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY BUILDING PROJECT

TLC has volunteered for 2 Saturday workdays. Those dates are July 29th (siding), and August 19th (interior paint & trim). Although, TLC has committed for these days volunteers are needed for many other dates.

TLC has also volunteered to serve lunch on 2 Tuesdays throughout the building project. Those dates are July 25th, and August 29th. We need at least two people to set-up, serve, and clean up. Meals will be simple and served in disposable containers to approximately 20 crew members. The menu for July will be Sloppy Joes, salad, and dessert.

TLC has committed to providing \$500.00 toward the fundraising. Currently, we have met \$140.24 of our pledge. TLC will be having several fundraisers and well as "Mission Offerings" to meet and hopefully exceed our pledge.

For more information please contact Dorothy.

****THE STOREHOUSE****

The Storehouse is a faith-based organization and serves clients based on their needs – not their religious beliefs. Clients are referred to The Storehouse through various social agencies, pastors, churches, doctors or schools. Clients under the age of 60 are given assistance for a limited period of time. These clients are given the opportunity to participate in an interagency basic budgeting class to help them learn to manage their finances. Since clients over the age of 60 are unlikely to see their financial situation improve, they are eligible to receive services, as needed, for the duration of their lives.

The Storehouse is staffed by two part-time paid employees and over fifty trained volunteers. We are open to serve clients Wednesday through Friday from 9am to 2pm.

Needs for July: Pastas, soup, peanut butter, & jelly