



Peace Lutheran Church

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March, 2014

Toleration

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“Toleration” seems to be the biggest buzz word in our culture today. The highest virtue you can have today is to “be tolerant”. The worst sin you can possibly commit today is to be “intolerant.” Should Christians be tolerant or not? The answer is yes.....and no. It all depends on how one defines “tolerant”.

The definition and application of “tolerance” has changed in recent times. It used to be that “tolerant” meant that, while I might disagree with your position or action, I would allow you to continue in it without trying to hurt, harm, or kill you for that such a position or action. Using this definition, then, yes, Christians ARE to be tolerant even when it comes to sinful views or actions. We are to love our enemies and pray for people who attack us (Matthew 5:44). We are not to seek to harm those with whom we disagree or even those who sin, but are to leave any justice or retribution up to God and those human officials to whom He has given His authority. (Romans 12:18-19)

However, the new definition of tolerance in our culture goes beyond allowing someone to hold a certain view. Tolerance now means agreement with and acceptance of one’s position or actions. To disagree with a position or oppose an action is now called intolerant. Christians are ridiculed and, in some places, are on the verge of being persecuted for standing against non-Biblical beliefs and practices. While we can be tolerant of non-Biblical beliefs and practices and those who practice them, we must speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15) and oppose that which opposes the Word of God. The consequences of such action may be difficult, but we must be prepared to accept them.

Some might say, “But God is loving and tolerant of all people”. We are entering the season of Lent, a season which shows in graphic detail how intolerant of sin and evil God is. God does not accept sinful positions, sinful practices, or sinful people who practice them. God, in His righteous wrath, must punish sin and destroy it. Jesus Christ, hanging dead and bloodied on the cross for the sin of the world, shows that God does not tolerate sin but punishes it severely.

The good news is not that God is tolerant, but that God is merciful. God not only takes the sin of every person who has ever lived and puts it on Jesus to punish sin there instead of us, but He extends His mercy and the forgiveness which Christ earned on the cross to every sinner who repents and believes. This includes, not only so-called “good people” who do very ordinary sins, but also the ones considered to be horrible sinners who practice and justify the “hot button” sins which are being forced on us today. EVERYONE who repents from sin and trusts in Christ will be saved.

The additional good news is that God is patient. As much as we might become frustrated with the sin of this age, the people who justify that sin, and for the grief we experience in opposing that sin and want God to show His power and judgment, God is patient. He is slow in exercising His judgment so that more people would have more time to repent and be saved. St. Peter expresses it this way in his second letter, “The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.” (2 Peter 3:9) The Lord is not giving free reign to sin and evil in our society, nor is He unable to do anything about it. The sins which we see so blatantly practiced will one day be wiped out and those who justify them will be judged. But the Lord is, for the time being, giving people time to be guided into repentance and the free gift of faith in the Lord Jesus.

So be tolerant in allowing people to say and believe whatever they want without exercising personal retribution. However, do not accept sin. Speak against sin when necessary with love and respect. If change is needed to stop sin or prevent sin from happening, use the God-appointed authorities available to you as a Christian citizen to bring that change about. In that way, you are being truly tolerant!

In Christ,

Pastor Steven R. Schlund

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Everyone who helps prepare, setup, and clean up after Sunday school and Bible study each Sunday.

All of the ladies who go to Park Place, Benefis Skilled Nursing Center and Highgate House to sing hymns and read devotions and minister to the shut-ins.

Val Martin, Gloria Creek and Karen Schaefer for playing the organ and piano during our worship services.

The adult choir for enhancing our worship services.

Jill Keil for directing the choir.

Karen Schaefer for accompanying the choir.

All those who volunteer to teach Sunday school, Bible class, and midweek classes on Sundays and Wednesdays.

Idell Croskrey for changing the banners and paraments.

Angelika Fischer for cleaning the church.

Everyone on the Prayer Chain for their time and prayers.

Everyone who has donated treats for our fellowship time.

All of the men who volunteer to usher.

Cheri Magnuson for cleaning the Communion linens.

This list is not inclusive. Please accept our apologies if we have missed giving you credit for serving the Lord in any fashion. We know that the Lord knows your service to Him.

LWML

- ♥ On **Saturday, March 8 at 10:00 a.m.**, the ladies of LWML at Trinity Lutheran are hosting a Lenten Brunch in their Narthex. Enjoy a morning of meaningful fellowship as we consider what it means to be a baptized, forgiven child of God! Soup in bread bowls and prayer pretzels are on the menu! Please plan to attend and RSVP to Sylvia Adams at 781-3911 or the church office at 452-2121.
- ♥ **Our next meeting will be Tuesday, March 11 at 6:30 p.m. with a Bible study.** All ladies of Peace are invited and encouraged to come and join us! We will form a Nominations Committee for the elections that will be held at the May meeting. Don't forget your Mite Boxes!
- ♥ **We, along with members of Christ for the Deaf, will be hosting the last Lenten soup supper on Wednesday, April 9 at 6 p.m.** We will plan this more at our meeting on the 11.
- ♥ **Remember to bring your new soap for Soap Sunday on the second Sunday of each month.** Soap collected will go to Lutheran World Relief. Thanks for your continued support.
- ♥ **Remember that Purple Pockets are due to Elsie Huss at the end of March.** This money goes to mission work both locally and afar. Thanks for your continued support.
- ♥ **The Montana District Convention is at Trinity Lutheran Church in Miles City from May 2 through 4, 2014.** Peace's society is allowed 2 delegates. If there is anyone interested in going along as a delegate, please see Ruth Denning or Helen Lewis and come to the meeting where we will discuss who is going to go. There are a couple ladies who will be driving so if you would like to ride with someone, contact Ruth Denning or Gloria Creek. We look forward to a great time of fellowship and Bible study with our sisters in Christ and encourage all who can to attend!
- ♥ **The Lutheran World Relief Drive will be May 18, 2013.** More details will be available as the time gets closer.

Ladies Bible study schedule

The bluebirds will be in the foothills of the mountains, and the robins arrive in Great Falls by March 15th. What welcome harbingers of spring!!

The FRIDAY LADIES BIBLE CLASS will not meet for Bible study in March.

Assisted Living Ministry will continue to have hymn singing and a devotion at the following locations. On Tuesday, March 11th at 11:00 a.m. they will be at Bee Hive Home #1, 2816 15th Ave So. Friday, March 28th they will meet at 11:45 a.m. at 4B's restaurant, 4610 10th Ave. So. for a no host lunch. Afterward they will go to Highgate House, 3000 11th Ave So. As part of our Lenten journey, come and join in the singing with these residents. God's Word and your smile lift their spirits!



March Anniversaries

- Mar. 2 Rick and Lori Symonsbergen
- Mar. 3 Hank and Kathy Politz
- Mar. 6 Gary and Tami Creek
- Mar. 24 Charlie and Cheri Hirst

Baptismal Anniversaries

- March 2 Charlie Fisher
- 3 Stephanie Blomgren
- 4 Elizabeth Becker
- 4 Elizabeth Schoenthal
- 4 Amber Schoenthal
- 5 Mitch Grove
- 13 Val Kraenzel
- 13 Richard Brandt
- 17 Kevin Aguiar
- 20 Michael Drummond
- 20 Leah (Huttinger) Taylor
- 20 Cheri Magnuson
- 22 Clarissa Shaffer
- 23 Cheri (Bricks) Peterson
- 23 Hailey McPartlin
- 23 Kandace Faller
- 23 Natalie Gerard
- 25 Aedan Lewis
- 25 Lucile Back
- 25 Judy VanVleet
- 26 Tyler Denning
- 27 Janet Rubino



INCLUDE THESE PEOPLE IN YOUR PRAYERS:

The following people are experiencing health problems:

- John Birkholz**
 - June Foard**, June Meier's daughter
 - Sandi Graf**
 - Jane Hering**
 - William McBride**, brother-in-law of Shannon Birkholz
 - Joyce Sponheim**, Carol Thurston's sister
- Our members who are away serving in the military are **Kurt Mueller** and **Michael Lewis**.

40 Days for Life in Great Falls

Ash Wednesday, March 5 through Palm Sunday, April 13

The Pro-Life community stands in front of Planned Parenthood, 211 9th St. South
from 7 AM to 7 PM

to pray for an end to abortion, for people inside, those going in and those going by, for a change of heart..

Lutherans for Life organizes three days of volunteers, many from our congregations. Other congregations also participate. LFL days are

Friday, March 28, April 4, and April 11.

Hearts are being changed and lives are being saved.

Can you spare an hour or two to pray for life?

www.40daysforlife.com Check the website for more information.

Free scrapbook day & potluck at Peace

Free scrapbook day & potluck at Peace on Saturday, March 1 starting at 11 a.m. Please come and join us and spend the day or just part of the day with us making new friends, enjoying each other's company, working on projects that you've been wanting to finish, whether it be a scrapbook, making a card for someone, or some other craft project. Let's have some fun, see you there! Please RSVP to Angelika Fisher at 231-1115. Thank you and God bless.

Ushers for March

- March 2 ----- Reilly Jacobsen
- Greg Franczyk
- March 9 ----- Darrell Greenwood
- Kevin Aguiar
- March 16----- Dan Grove
- Lee Henselin
- March 23----- Arnie Gidlow
- Dan Grove
- March 30----- Matt Schlund
- Pat Lewis

Finances

Our giving in January, 2014 is \$8,073.73 and our expenses for January were \$13,521.93. The general fund balance at the end of January is \$12,940.35. As you can see, the need for people to continue given is very great!



The People Around the Cross

Judas, Pontius Pilate, Caiaphas and others are the well known characters in the story of our Lord's Passion. Usually, we focus our attention on them during our Lenten journey. What about the many other people, often unnamed, who interacted with our Lord during His Passion – the soldiers, the crowds, and so on? What is their story? *The People Around the Cross* will be the theme of our Wednesday evening Lenten worship services at 7:00 p.m. We will explore the actions of these everyday people and how their story is often our story. There will also be a soup supper sponsored by various groups at 6:00 p.m. each Wednesday.

March 5, 2014 (Ash Wednesday)

"Those Who Crucified Him" - Matthew 27:33-36:

March 12, 2014

"Those Who Clung to Him" - John 19:25-27:

March 19, 2014

"Those Who Reviled Him" - Matthew 27:39-43:

March 26, 2014

"Those Who Acknowledged Him" - Luke 23:42 & Matthew 27:54

April 2, 2014

"Those Who Disowned Him" - Luke 23:48

April 9, 2014

"Those Who Buried Him" - John 19:38-42

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“Life Quotes” from Lutherans for Life

“We limit the power of God if we say He can accomplish things only in people who are healthy and up and around. He's God! He can work in your life as well as in the life of Paul. He can work in the life of the chronically ill or the terminally ill or the bed-ridden grandma unaware of her surroundings. Christ isn't honored because of what we do. He is honored because of what He does in us! In fact, you could say that the less we are able to do, the more Christ is exalted as He works through us!” *Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb, executive director of Lutherans For Life – A “Life Quote” from Lutherans For Life · www.lutheransforlife.org*

Applying Biblical Teachings

St. Paul wrote in his first letter to Timothy, “But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction” (1 Tim. 6:6-9).

God blesses each of us with the money and possessions we need to support this body and life. But there is always that temptation to feel that God has not provided us with enough.

We may tell ourselves that possessions and money are not our obsessions in life. We may not focus all of our time and attention on them, yet, we find ourselves trying to follow two paths by placing security, peace of mind and happiness in our earthly wealth.

Jesus said, “No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money” (Matt. 6:24).

Satan tempts us to try to serve two masters. Satan uses our fear of not having enough. He plays on our desires for the things of this life. He leads us in a path just slightly separate, but in sight of the path God intended for us. Eventually, he would have us lose sight of the path of righteousness. He would lead us away from the Lord.

Through Word and Sacrament, the Holy Spirit works faith in our hearts to take hold of Christ’s righteousness, a righteousness we undeservedly receive on account of Christ’s bitter suffering and death. It is by this wondrous work in us that we look to the Lord for strength and guidance to “stay the path.”

In his book, *The Gift of Giving*, Wayne Watts wrote this: “God always lovingly instructs us in the path that is in our best interest and which will bring us the greatest happiness in life. Therefore, for our good, He instructs us to put Him first in all things, and this includes how we use our money.”

God alone will provide the essentials as we, through the Holy Spirit, set our hearts first on His kingdom and His righteousness.