Following a Different Spirit? Modern Evangelism's Divorcing of The Spirit from the Word

"Let her out. Get out of her way."

"Open the doors and let her out."

"She's out! She's loose!"

The above statements are direct quotes. By whom and about what we'll see in a moment. Before we do, try and guess. Who was speaking? About what were they speaking? Farmers warning about a heifer in a hurry? Worshipers with a bat in their belfrie? A family with an overzealous dog? No.

The above statements are an excerpt of a recent interview with six newly elected female[1] bishops in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) about the work of the Holy Spirit. Here is a fuller selection of the interview:

> **Bishop:** We've become a really settled people who have become very comfortable with the way we've always done things. So trying to figure out, how do we be open to the Spirit and be open to the Spirit's work? Because I'm telling you what, the Spirit is up to something …
>
> **Bishops:** Amen. Yes, she is.
>
> **Bishop:** … if we would just let her out.
>
> **Bishops:** Let her out. Get out of her way.
>
> **Bishop:** Open the doors and let her out.
>
> **Bishops:** She's out! She is loose!
>
> **Bishop:** I see that in all sorts of little ways. As I sit around the table and listen to this, I think, *Wow, God, you are up to something*… I am convinced that God is up to something big right now and that this is about not death but change. God is up to bringing change and growth and newness.

Aside from the intentional regendering of the Holy Spirit to the feminine (an offense grievious enough in itself that arrogantly stands in contradiction to 2,000 years of the Chruch's confession), their words are reflective of a growing trend in both mainline, liberal protestant churches and evangelical, seeker-driven churches in which Scripture is spoken of less and less (let alone carefully exegeted to draw out its meaning!) and the moving and leading of the spirit is emphsized more and more.

Yes, I left *spirit* in lowercase because I don't believe they're speaking of and following the Holy Spirit of Scripture. The Spirit of Scripture has promised to work in and through God's Word and Sacraments. Take a look at the footnote for a list of verse references.[2] We have no promise that God's Spirit works apart from the Word (Christ) and His Sacraments.

Further, pastors and churches emphsizing the leading of the spirit apart from Scripture and the Sacraments are increasingly (as in the ELCA) insisting that the spirit is endorsing that which is clearly contrary to God's Word. While words like "change and growth and newness" are positive sounding, when divorced from Scripture (as is being done in the name of following their spirit)

[1] Scripture establishes the Office of Pastor and teaches that it should be filled by qualified men who are called to stand in the stead of the Church's Head, Christ. See 1 Timothy 3:1-7.

[2] 2 Thess 2:13–14; 2 Tim 1:9; Jn 1:12; 16:13; 17:3, 17; Eph 2:10; Rom 3:28; 8:14; Acts 2:38-39; 22:16; 1 Cor 6:11; Gal 3:27; Eph 5:25-26; Titus 3:5-8; 1 Pt. 3:21; Mt 26:26-28.

they are free to be defined by the powerful and influential (a terrifying thought given man's fallen nature!).

In the ELCA and other like-minded churches these words are increasingly defined by the contemporary culture's sexual ethic, from same-sex marriage to gender identity to LBGTQ celebrations compelte with church rites and endorsements. These are the "change and growth and newness" being endorsed by the spirit these bishops are insisting be "let out."

For this reason I cannot in good conscience captialize the spirit of which they speak. I am concerned that the spirit they have let out has not proceeded from the Father and the Son (as the Nicene Creed confesses about the Holy Spirit), but from Pandora's Box. I do not write this lightly or in jest.

The Lutheran Reformers presciently warned of such individuals in the *Book of Concord*. Luther writes,

> In these matters, which concern the spoken, external Word, it must be firmly maintained that God gives no one his Spirit or grace apart from the external Word which goes before. We say this to protect ourselves from the enthusiasts,[3] that is, the 'spirits,' who boast that they have the Spirit apart from and before contact with the Word…. It is the source, power, and might of all the heresies… Everything that boasts of being from the Spirit apart from such a Word and sacrament is of the devil.

Appreciate what's being said: God doesn't want His Spirit divorced from His Word (Christ). Those who claim to be following a spirit that is leading independetnly from the Word, even in contradiction to the Word, are not following the Holy Spirit, but the devil (no matter how culturally popular the issue is). Pastors and bishops exhorting congregants to follow such a spirit need to be called to repentance and congregants need to be warned. They are not following the Holy Spirit, but a spirit of Satan.

The Holy Spirit has wed Himself to the Gospel and promises to work through this Gospel to accomplish God's ends. The Small Catechism does a fine job of summarizing the Holy Spirit's work:

> 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 by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith. In the same way He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. In this Christian church He daily and richly forgives all my sins and the sins of all believers. On the Last Day He will raise me and all the dead, and give eternal life to me and all believers in Christ.

This is the big work the Holy Spirit is doing, the work He has been doing throuhgout history, and the work He will continue to do through God's Word and Sacraments. We follow the Spirit by centering our life and worship in this Word and these Sacraments. He doesn't need to be let out. We need to be brought in, which is precisely what the Holy Spirit does and continues to do. – Pastor Conner

[3] An *enthusiast* was the term for someone who claims God's Spirit works apart from the revealed/preached/incarnate Word (Christ).

Ghosts, Angels & Demons, and the BIG Hope

We've come to the end of this series. We've seen that the Bible clearly speaks of a reality that exists beyond our eyes. Angels and demons – are they real? Check. We've also appreciated the fact that ghosts, angels, and demons aren't the focus of our hope. That is, we're not looking to transform into angels nor are we turnin' over rocks for demons' footprints. Fair enough? So what exactly are we doing in the here and now while loved ones die and we may be near to joining them?

The Christian faith passed down in the Bible proposes at least two things: waiting and hoping. We're going to focus in on hoping.

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. Therefore encourage one another with these words.
+1 Thessalonians 4:13-18+

So what is the Apostle Paul saying? Well, he wanted the people of Thessalonica, and by extension you, to be informed. Informed about what exactly? Well, he wants you know the truth about those who have fallen asleep (i.e. those who have died). Why? So that in the midst of your loneliness, pain, crying, readjusting to new situations, figuring out how to do a budget since he or she always worried about that – you can move forward with hope.

Where's the hope? Our believing in Jesus – the guy who we claim actually, really, literally fell asleep or died – means something, because eventually Jesus actually, really, literally woke up or resurrected. As a result Jesus has the power to make dead people alive too.

In the meantime we're waiting for the "coming of the Lord." When that time arrives, Jesus will come down, not the other way around, with a loud sound (louder than any alarm clock – no one, not even dead people who have been napping for centuries will be able to hit the snooze button). Dead people will rise, resurrect, wake up first. Their bodies will be new and imperishable. Can you imagine it?

Evidently, if we're still living we will be sucked up to meet Jesus like the people of old who used to rush out of the city gates to meet the incoming king on his noble steed. His appearance and presence will be so awesome that'll be like the best rock star you've adored for years (multiplied by a million). You just have to get close! Be near Him! We may even be so clueless by the excitement of it all that our own bodies will have transformed into something imperishable without us even noticing.

And once everything is said and done – we've risen just like Jesus (1 Corinthians 15:20) – then "we will always be with the Lord." All of this, Paul says, is the BIG hope.

Trizion Youth Group

We finished up our off-season youth group experience. We walked through some of the distinctions between Roman Catholicism and Lutheranism, enjoyed a family style dinner, enjoyed an outdoor activity, and finished the evening with video and board games. The sports was open to the whole community so some of our confirmation kids joined in for football and kickball. Tiffany has worked hard to create a core group of 8-10 kids. We're looking forward to our season opener on August 26th @ 6pm for Dye Wars. Kids are encouraged to bring clothes that they don't mind being dyed, a change of clothes, and a towel.

VBS @ Trinity

Trinity hosted 25 kids for vacation Bible school. This year's theme was "What's in the Bible?" The series connected Jesus to the New and Old Testaments of the Bible. Kids were able to paint ceramic Jesus figures, create Easter scenes, and paint cross sun-catchers. We played tag and on the final evening threw water balloons (thanks to Luke Jorgensen for being our moving water balloon target!). I'm especially thankful for our volunteers and donors. Next year we're hoping to partner with Manilla Manor's senior care facility for VBS.

Ministry Apps

Applying the Gospel to Hearts and Homes (September 2018): Zion and Trinity Lutheran

The Power of the Preposition (and Parents)

With school classes back in session, I'm going to share a grammar review (remember "School House Rock"). Prepositions carry messages. We would typically be adverse to someone doing something "to" us. We welcome someone doing something "for" us. "With" implies partnership and teamwork. Zion Christian Education Committee is dedicated to nurturing the faith of our children "with" parents. For various reasons parents sometimes enroll their children in Sunday school and Confirmation assuming the pastors and teachers will teach the truths of Scriptures "to" children "for" them. Ephesians 6:4 directs fathers/parents to "bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord." "With" will shape our Christian education journey this year. We invite you into the classrooms—as an aide or just to listen. We encourage you to worship and learn "with" us. We pray for an exciting year TOGETHER.

Rally Day—September 9

Sunday school classes will resume Sunday, September 9. Teachers will be installed into their special roles at the 9 a.m. service. Families will gather for the special fellowship time following the service. Children will transition to their new classes at the 10:30 Sunday school hour. We encourage all children to begin the year in the name of Jesus with us. It is important for families to make worship and Christian education a weekly priority. Confirmation classes for grades 5 through 8 begin on Wednesday, September 5.

Children's Mission

Sunday school and children's offering for the next months will be directed to Missionaries James and Angela Sharp and family. They are planting churches in the South America country of Uruguay. Angela grew up in Denison. Zion's own Lucas Witt served as a vicar under Pastor Sharp in Baltimore, Maryland. The children and congregation will learn more about the work of Missionary Sharp in the months ahead. Pray for this mission as the children bring their offering forward.

Vocation Celebration—September 10

"Your work is a very sacred matter. God delights in it, and through it He wants to bestow His blessing on you. This praise of work should be inscribed on all tools, on the forehead and the face that sweat from toiling." (Martin Luther) The Zion Fellowship Club continues the monthly focus on "Vocation," celebrating the callings of congregation and community servants. September's special guest will be Pharmacist (spouse, mother, community volunteer, preschool board chairperson) Jen Morris. Jen will share her professional journey as well as practical advice on medications. Everyone invited. The Fellowship Club will meet at 7 p.m.

Thank You!

Zion and Trinity were blessed to again offer monthly summer services at Historic Trinity. We thank the Heritage Park board and staff (especially Sam Musfeldt) for their special efforts in making the Trinity setting available. It's a blessing to gather in the historical setting celebrating the Christian faith that has been a blessing to families and the community for generations. See you next summer!

Joy Fully!

"Rejoice in the Lord always, again I will say, rejoice" (Philippians 4:4) The joy of Paul and the church at Philippi will be celebrated and shared in a special Monday morning Bible study beginning, Monday, October 1. More information next newsletter!

Joy of Jesus! -- Pastor Bob

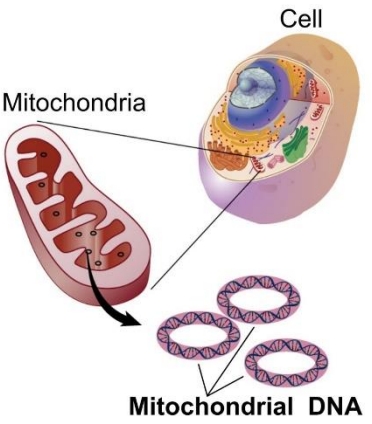
Divinely Barcoded Species?

Has God encoded evidence of creation in every creature?

A recent genetic study published in the journal *Human Evolution* is rocking the evolutionary edifice, leaving Darwin's faithful scurrying desperately to shore up the fractured foundation lest the whole house collapse around them. To understand why you'll need to endure a couple paragraphs of technical explanation, which we'll make as simple and brief as possible!

You're familiar with DNA (the genetic instructional code inside the cell) and you know that all animals have it. What you might not know, however, is that animals have DNA in two locations. Nuclear DNA contains the aforementioned genetic code or blueprint for organisms. Last month we marveled at the genetic code that directed the production of proteins, which form the basic building blocks of life.

DNA is also located in an organism's mitochondria. These tiny structures are like the electric and light companies providing energy for the city of the cell. Their job is to convert energy from food into a form useable by the cell. One of the mitochondrial genes is known as COI (Cytochrome c Oxidase subunit 1) and is has proved useful in something called *DNA Barcoding*, which is basically a tool for identifying animal species.



This particular snippet of DNA has proved useful because it is simultaneously similar across all animals (nearly all of them have it), which makes comparing it easy, and different enough to enable scientists to quickly distinguish between species. Because of this sufficiently similar yet discernibly different characteristic, scientists are able to determine how (or *if*) species are related. Further, a single mitochondrial genome is transmitted to offspring by breeding females. In other words, each breeding female passes on a unique genome (like a unique barcode) to her offspring. This allows scientists to trace animal populations back to a single, original breeding female!

In Darwinian terms, DNA barcoding should allow researchers to trace the process of evolution in a sort of bread crumb trail through species. In other words, DNA barcoding has the potential to reveal the genetic lineage of every living animal, the progression from one species into the next, thereby demonstrating the veracity of Darwin's theory.

Surprise inside!

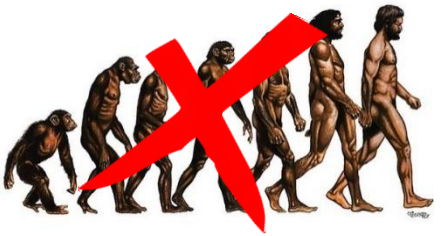
This is why the findings have proven to be so disconcerting for committed Darwinists. When they compared the aforementioned snippet of mitochondrial DNA, there was no genetic lineage. The evidence doesn't show a gradual slide from one species into the next (as Darwinism predicts and requires). Instead, the research definitively shows that species are distinct from each other

with surprisingly little genetic variance within the species.

Translation: species demonstrate limited variation within their kind, with no evidence that they evolve into new kinds.

To quote the study: "intermediates are not found." Process that phrase: *intermediates are not found*. And this isn't a situation parallel to the fossil record in which Darwin's faithful could hold out for more discoveries. To date over 6 million specimens from over 280,000 species have been barcoded. The intermediates required for Darwin's theory to be true aren't there.

To put it kindly, this is a devastating blow to proponents of Darwinian evolution. To put it less kindly, the standard evolutionary "just so" illustrations littering children's textbooks across America are not supported by the evidence. They're outright falsehoods.



Genesis corroborated

For those who confess creation as revealed in Scripture, the study corroborates what the Word teaches: animals have been created according to distinct kinds (the horse kind, dog kind, cat kind, etc.). Scripture teaches:

> And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good (Genesis 1:25).[4]

These kinds have firmly established boundaries. Variation within these kinds is possible (different expressions of dogness, for example); transition into new kinds is not (dogs cannot evolve into a horse – ever). And the evidence bears this out.

Surprise *again!*

In addition to demonstrating fixed boundaries between kinds, this mitochondrial study revealed another startling surprise: nearly all animals emerged about the same time as humans.[5] Read that again. Darwinian evolution insists that humans showed up millions and millions of years down the evolutionary line, but this study demonstrates otherwise. Based on certain assumptions related to the accretion (accumulation) of genetic variation, the researchers postulate an upper limit for the originating of all living animals today to be no greater than 200,000 years.[6]

That is a large number, but compared to the millions and billions of years required by Darwinian evolution, it's a blip (and remember, it's built on outer-limit assumptions, so it may prove to be much smaller yet). But process what the study

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[4] See also Gen. 1:11, 12, 21; 6:20; 7:14

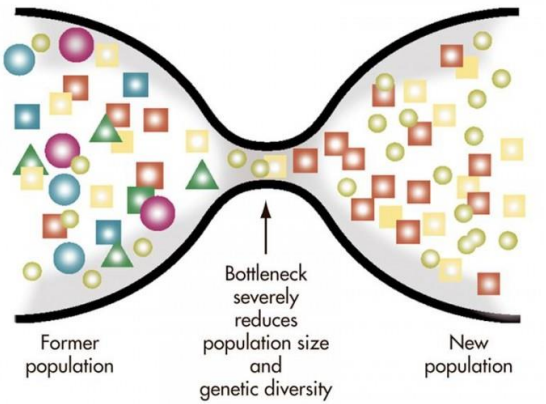
[5] Researchers determined this by comparing something called "neutral mutations," (slight changes in DNA across generations that neither help nor hurt an organism's survival). They then compared these neutral mutations across species to determine similarity/differences and then made outer-limit guesses as to how long species had been in existence.

[6] This "molecular clock theory" is based on a flimsy assumption that 1% of DNA mutates every 1 million years, but there are countless examples of a much higher mutation rate which greatly reduces the 200,000 year number.

is saying: all living varieties of animals and humans appeared on the scene together.

Translation: humans didn't evolve from lower animal species. They appeared on earth simultaneously with animals.

Sound familiar? Once again the Genesis account is corroborated. You can see why the evidence is giving evolutionists fits. It destroys their theory. Committed evolutionary believers are scrambling to save their theory through creative explanations. One is particularly fascinating. As mentioned, the evidence shows that all living varieties of animals and humans emerged simultaneously. Perhaps, evolutionists suggest, a mass reduction in the population size occurred about 200,000 years ago to reduce all living animals on earth down to roughly one mating pair per species and then expanded rapidly from there.[7] They call this a "bottleneck event."



In other words, Darwinian evolution went along swimmingly for millions of years only to be abruptly interrupted (bottlenecked) some guesstimated 200,000 years ago by a global event that suddenly reduced all living species down to one mating pair per species that then expanded in number again.

Putting the 200,000 year number aside for the moment (remembering that it is built on weak outer-limit assumptions for mutation accretion that may prove to be much smaller), think about what they're suggesting: a global event reduced living animals down to one reproducing pair per species. Does anything from Scripture come to mind? Perhaps a global flood?

Unsurprisingly, this is one suggestion committed Darwinists have been unwilling to entertain. They have proposed viruses, ice ages, new competitors, and the loss of prey to account for the sudden drop in species populations. These would be fine proposals if we were only trying to account for a few species. Such, however, is not the case. We're trying to account for the reduction of nearly ALL species to one reproductive pair, which is precisely the scenario presented by Scripture in the great flood of Noah's day.

As with last month's article detailing the specified, complex information required to produce even one protein that pointed to the need for a super-intelligence (i.e. God), this month's article again shows us how scientific discovery continues to show both the veracity of Scripture and the glory of God.

If you want to visit more on this or if you have questions, you are always welcome to call/email/stop in to visit. I welcome the conversation! - Pastor Conner

[7] The evidence from the mitochondrial DNA dictates that the population must be reduced back to one mating pair due to the revealing of the shared genome in species' populations. In other words, scientists are able to trace the mitochondrial barcode from the species' original breeding mother.

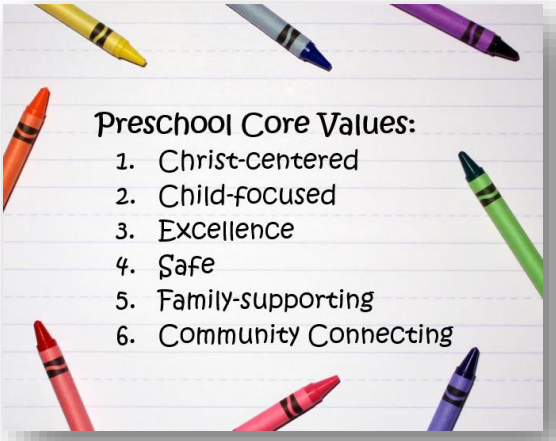
Preschool Praises for August 2018

Although Thanksgiving isn't until November, we have a lot to be thankful for this month! Thank you so much to everyone who has donated for the preschool giving tree! We appreciate all the donations as do the children! Thank you also to Marlene for volunteering to help again this year - she is a wonderful help and always much appreciated! Thank you to Cindy Karsten who volunteered to help with transporting some of the preschool children with her personal vehicle! What a blessing this has been as we would most likely not have half of the morning class if it hadn't been for Cindy!

Our numbers have gone up a bit, but are still lower than normal - we have 9 children in the morning and 5 children in the afternoon. The daycare center in Manning has agreed that this 3 year old group has always been smaller, so we are chalking it up to a low birth rate year. Although we have smaller classes, this is a great thing for the children as they will get even more individualized educating and be able to do more. I'm thinking more science experiments and hopefully some cooking!

We have had our first day and it was great! This first week we are just learning the ropes and rules of preschool. I am so blessed by these children and their families as well as my wonderful co-workers who make everything work seamlessly. Please keep us in your thoughts and prayers as our school year goes on!

Yours in Christ,
Mrs. Gore & Mrs. Nemitz



Nearly 50 ladies attended Zion Ladies' Guild's Guest Day and August 1. In addition to a marvelous meal accented by delicious dishes and savory deserts, ladies enjoyed an afternoon of fellowship, laughter, and encouragement.

Zion and Trinity youth enjoyed Dye Wars as the kickoff to the 2018-2019 Youth Ministry year. Special thanks to Pastor and Tiffany Johnson and Mrs. Jodi Riggert for coordinating the event!

Illuminating the Penumbra's[8] Shadow

Shadows hide things. Such is the nature of darkness. If light is forbidden entrance, sight is rendered powerless. Much like physical objects, words have the power to cast shawdows, not darkness discerenable on the sidewalk, but darkness discernable in lies and obfuscations. This has perhaps never been more apparent than in the line of reasonings and opinions issued by American Supreme Court justices over the last 50+ years to justify and defend abortion on demand. In those shadows lurk not only lies, but death.

Over the next several paragraphs, I invite you to journey with me on a brief tour through these shadows to see how the truth of the unborn's inherent worth has been devastingly hidden from our eyes. As we journey, I ask you not to let politics color your perspective. It doesn't matter which president from which party appointed which justice. That may be an interesting historical question and one that concerns political parties, but the Church is not a political party. Their platforms are too small. Their missions are too myopic.

As I have written before in this newsletter:

> The Church's great hope isn't living wages, affordable education, renewable energy, and national security (although these may be fine cultural objectives). The Church's great goal is not electing a certain politician or president (although these may be worthy aims). The Church's great hope is Jesus Christ and His present and coming Kingdom and we would stake our life on this great hope a thousand times before we would settle for something less.

With that in mind, we turn our attention to the darkness to which we must bring the light of the Gospel of the Kingdom.

Privacy

The "right to privacy" is so pervasive today that many are surprised to learn that it is nowhere found in the Constitution, let alone being a right guaranteed by God! Imagine what evil would be committed under a general right to privacy, if the law had absolutely no domain over what people did in private! Jesus Himself told us, "Everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed" (John 3:18). In other words, man hides evil in the shadows of privacy.

So, where did the idea originate? Ultimately, it finds its origins in man's rebellion against God, but to limit our conversation to American justices, Justice John Marshall Harlan, in his dissenting opinion to *Poe* v. *Ullman*,[9] wrote in 1961,

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[8] This is an astronomical term for the partial shadow formed by an eclipse. Why it is used in the title will become clear momentarily.

[9] Planned Parenthood directed this case at a Connecticut law prohibiting the sale and use of contraceptives. While contraceptives have been widely embraced today, it was not always so and dissenters had (and still have) thoughtful, cogent arguments for their rejection of contraceptives. The question before us, however, isn't the legality or even the morality of contraceptives, but where the "right to privacy" finds its origins. Further, this case was never technically heard because the individuals being represented by Planned Parenthood hadn't actually had this law enforced against them. So, Justice Harlan's opinion was unnecessarily offered.

> I believe that a statue making it a criminal offense for married couples to use contraceptives is an intolerable and unjustifiable ***invasion of privacy*** in the conduct of the most intimate concerns of an individual's personal life.

It's important that we read Justice Harlan's words carefully. He's not just arguing that the government shouldn't prohibit contraception, he's introducing a right to privacy that neither the Constitution nor God guarantees. And, to restate our aforementioned point, neither the Constitution nor God guarantees an absolute right to privacy because man is fallen and will use this right to conceal evil. This is precisely where abortion hides today, under a supposed absolute right to privacy

Penumbras formed by emanations

Four years later, Justice William O. Douglas embraced Justice Harlan's rhetoric in his 1965 majority opinion for *Griswold* v. *Connecticut*, which threw out Connecticut's law prohibiting the sale of contraceptives. Justice Douglas famously (or infamously!) wrote, "specific guarantees in the Bill of Rights have penumbras, formed by emanations from those guarantees that help give them life and substance."

In other words, a right to privacy isn't actually in the Constitution, but the Bill of Rights has penumbras (the partial shadow in an eclipse or the edge of a sunspot) formed by emanations (a gas made from radioactive decay) in which the right to privacy is hidden. In plain English, *I can't rule like I want unless I make up a right*.

To bear or beget children

Seven years later in 1972, Justice William Brennan Jr., in his majority opinion overturning Massachusetts' law prohibiting the sale of contraceptives, expanded privacy's shadow:

> If the right of privacy means anything, it is the right of the individual, married or single, to be free from unwarranted governmental intrusion into matters so fundamentally affecting a person as the decision whether to bear or beget a child.

Please note that this decision was solely over the sale of contraceptives, but Justice Brennan wrote that the right of privacy reached into a person's "decision whether *to bear* or to beget a child." Privacy now included the right not just to beget a child, but to decide whether to bear that child that had been begotten. The door for abortion was left ajar. Subtly and stealthily privacy's shadow was being cast further over man's doings.

No need to ask when life begins

With the door left ajar, it was easy for Justice Harry Blackmun in the landmark 1973 *Roe* v. *Wade* case, to find a right to abort a baby in the womb. Writing for the majority, Justice Blackmun admitted,

> The Constitution does not explicitly mention any right of privacy. In a line of decisions, however... the Court has recognized that a right of personal privacy, or a guarantee of certain areas or zones of privacy, does exist under the Constitution.

He further commented that the roots of such a right (not the right itself) could be found in various Constitutional amendments, and returning to Justice Douglas' shadowy language, "in the penumbras of the Bill of rights." The right to privacy lurked in the shadows; it didn't stand in the light.

And when life began didn't matter to the Court with Justice Blackmun going so far as to say, "We need not resolve the difficult question of when life

begins." What mattered was man's privacy. Period. If that privacy took a life, so be it. That would be the price of man's coveted shadow.

Liberty means the right to define everything

In 1992 certain aspects of *Roe* were challenged, but were turned back in the majority opinion penned by Justices O'Connor, Souter, and Kennedy. Pay especially close attention to their words:

> For two decades of economic and social developments, people have organized intimate relationships and made choices that define their views of themselves and their places in society, in reliance on the availability of abortion in the event that contraception should fail. The ability of women to participate equally in the economic and social life of the Nation has been facilitated by their ability to control their reproductive lives…
>
> At the heart of liberty is the right to define one's own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life.
>
> It should be recognized, moreover, that in some critical respects, the abortion decision is of the same character as the decision to use contraception…

Notice the emphasis on the need for abortion as a backup to failed contraception (and the perceptive observation that abortion and contraception have some striking similarities) and on control. These should rattle the Christian's conscience and force him to question some of the assumptions built into a contraception culture.

For our purposes, though, notice the emphasis on liberty – the right to define existence, meaning, the universe, and human life! Is this a right man truly has? Are we each a god? Would such a multitude of gods be governable? What could be done when these gods differed on their definitions? Would not the concept of objective truth (truth beyond us) become irrelevant? Would not culture be reduced to a struggle for power and influence? And is this not the culture in which we find ourselves? Truth has been lost in the shadows and the will to power is all that remains, and this will has taken the lives of over 52,000,000 babies (not counting babies killed through chemical abortions) since 1973. Justice Douglas' penumbra of privacy has cast a long and sinister shadow.

What should we do? We begin with what we don't do. We don't reduce the Church to a political movement. Yes, Supreme Court justices matter because laws do more than limit, they also protect and teach. And good laws protect and teach well. We need good laws to protect life and to teach its value from the moment of conception. And we desperately need wise legislators and wise justices (wisdom ultimately rooted in the fear of the Lord) to write and uphold these laws.

But! The Church's goal is bigger than the next Supreme Court justice. The Church's goal is the Kingdom of God. Our final goal is not legislation from without (although a world in rebellion against God needs this for its own good), but legislation from within as God's Spirit guides us through His preached and taught Word, as God reigns as King in our lives.

Sadly, many of the opinions of our justices have lengthened sin's sinister shadow and left us blind to its ravages. For the sake of truth, life, and love, we need to bring Christ's light into the shadows. God is God and we are not. Man bears His image from the moment of conception into eternity. What we do in private as His image bearers and to His image bearers matters. As Christ's confessors, it is our commission to bring His light into the penumbra's shadow. – Pastor Conner

SERVING THE LORD IN
PANAMÁ
NEWS FROM THE GAUTHIER FAMILY

August 2018
Vol. 3 Issue VIII

Greetings from the United States! We have returned to the US for our furlough (home service). Every 22 months deployed missionaries are to return to the US to visit congregations and give updates on their work. To some of you, it was great seeing you already. To many others, we will see you soon! While we are in the US, our missionary work does not stop. In addition to traveling to congregations around the US, giving presentations and preaching, I continue to remain in contact with pastors in Panamá and am working on planning, projects and reports for our upcoming FORO.

Before leaving Panamá in early August I was blessed to do the rite of Confirmation for a man who had been attending Dios Es Grande (God is Great) Lutheran Church in Loma Cova for sixteen years. Imagine that! Sixteen years going to services, cooking meals for events, and assisting his wife, Griselda, with youth activities and he has never taken the Lord's Supper.

Mauricio approached me in December of last year to see if I would be willing to teach him the Catechism. It was an honor and joy to teach him the catechism weekly for 7 months. Some of the classes were taught at his church on Fridays, some at the church in Balboa on Sundays, some at the Lutheran Hour Ministry office on Thursdays and we even did a few classes while sitting in traffic on the way to Loma Cova. I was impressed with how well Mauricio knew Lutheran doctrine and the depth with which he was able to think critically about our doctrine in comparison to that of the Catholic church and that of the Pentecostal church. During his confirmation, I remember hearing him respond to each question, "I will with the help of God" (in Spanish, of course). What a blessing it was to hear a person make that commitment to and confession of the Christian faith. Moreover, giving him and his wife the Lord's Supper for the first time ever was an experience I will forever remember and cherish as a missionary.

The life on the mission field is not always easy. There are many days of frustration and days that feel like failure. This day was not one of them. Mauricio is a communing member of the church and we are in conversations about confirmation for their two children. The Lord is indeed good and grows His church according to His timing and will. To God be the glory.

We are two weeks into our home service. Thank you to the following congregations for welcoming our family to share about the mission of the Lutheran Church in Panamá. • Lutheran Church of the Messiah - Grand Junction, CO • Bethlehem Lutheran - Rapid City, SD • St. Paul Lutheran - Pipestone, MN • Peace Lutheran - Antigo, WI • Pilgrim Lutheran Church & School - Green Bay, WI In the next few weeks we will be visiting congregations in eastern and western Iowa, Illinois, Nebraska, west Texas, Wisconsin, north Georgia, Florida and Mission Central. We have a few stretches were we have visits/presentations seven days in a row. When we have a day or two between visits, we enjoy hiking and spending time in nature. We really do appreciate all of your hospitality and willingness to host our family. We truly would not be able to serve in Panamá without your love and generosity.

Visiting Rocky Mtn., Wind Cave, & Badlands Ntl. Parks

SERVING THE LORD

ALL OVER ASIA

NEWS FROM THE FERRY FAMILY

Julu 2018

Charles, Cheryl, Caleb, Caitlin, Carissa, Cassie, Chloe, and Charlotte Ferry

Meeting the Neighbors: So what is around us in our new surroundings? The temptation is to retreat when you move to a new place and the culture-shock starts to set in. You want to stay inside the house and pretend there is no outside world. We know that's not helpful, and have had some wonderful help in getting to know our new home in Taiwan.

We have been blessed with some incredible people who attend Salvation Lutheran Church with us in Chiayi. Pastor Wu and his family have been selfless servants, and we've had a few other couples who have stepped up to help the Westerners feel at home. They've taken time out of their own schedules and lives in order to translate for us, show us around, and make sure we have what we need for our homes.

One family from church took us over to the local hospital so we could get our medical reports for Immigration. The man is a doctor who took time away from his patients in order to get us from one area of the hospital to the other, and his wife stayed with us to translate and to advocate for us.

Another family knew a friend who dealt in solid wooden furniture. So he not only told us about this source of reasonably priced items, but picked us up, stayed with us the whole time, and gave us a guided tour of Chiayi on the way home.

Chloe plays in the local park with new neighborhood friends

SELAMAT

Read more online at:
http://ferrys.asia

Cheryl and the kids have been in full-time Chinese class during our weeks in Taiwan, and their teachers have also been a source of help. They took the families on an outing to a popular shopping and eating destination in the local area. The kids had to interview some random people in order to practice their Chinese: they asked about the favorite colors, animals, and foods of the people they met. We are thankful to live in a place with such welcoming and friendly native people.

Please continue to keep us in your prayers as we settle in, learn new things every day, and generally make Chiayi and Taiwan our home base to accomplish the work YOU have sent us to do all throughout Asia.

Missionary kids: young and seasoned… We were blessed by the visit of a family who grew up in Taiwan during the initial efforts of LCMS to reach out in Taiwan some 30+ years ago. These "kids" returned to Chiayi for the first time, and now met the new generation of LCMS missionary kids who are growing up in the same location they did. The building and property look much different, but it's still the Body of Christ reaching out with His Word and truth to people living in darkness.

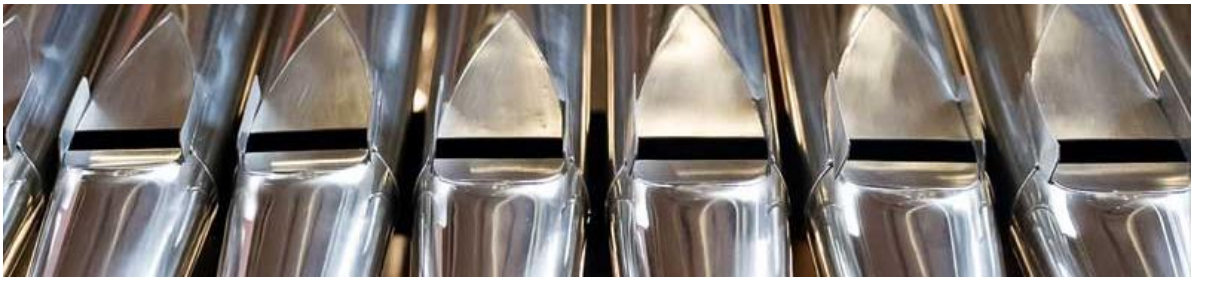
Many thanks to all of you for allowing us to continue on this tradition of reaching out with the Gospel truth. We take great joy in the service we can give through our partnership!

- Your Servants and partners in Asia, the Ferry Family Charles, Cheryl, Caleb, Caitlin, Carissa, Cassandra, Chloe, and Charlotte

To support our work financially, send a tax-deductible gift to: The LCMS, P.O. Box 790089, St. Louis, MO 63179

Or: Mission Central, 40718 Highway E-16, Mapleton, IA 51034
Make checks payable to **The LCMS**, and mark them "Support of Charles Ferry." Gifts can also be given securely online through our online giving page at *www.lcms.org/ferry*.

On Sunday, August 19, Zion was privileged to host the Music Conservatory of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Council Bluffs in an afternoon organ recital and hymn sing. Nine students, ranging from 10 to 29, performed sacred music and led nearly 80 attendees in some of the beautiful hymnody of the church. Zion provided a marvelous reception following the event. Thank you Zion for your continued support of aspiring musicians!



Dump debt, make a financial plan, become money wise.

Nine sessions to change your life!

Sessions begin Wednesday, September 5 at 6:00 p.m.
Zion Lutheran Church, Manning
Childcare available

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH
MANNING, IOWA
Celebrating and Sharing Christ's Redeeming Love

FINANCIAL Peace UNIVERSITY

Call 655-2352 to register and purchase your participant kit (or purchase online at www.daveramsey.com)!

Orphan Grain Train (OGT) Update

The Zion Fellowship Club is blessed to support the Iowa West Branch (Ida Grove) of Orphan Grain Train. The most recent donations from Zion and the community were delivered on August 10. With the delivery the group worked several hours sorting and boxing clothing donations. Recently the Iowa West Branch loaded a 40ft. shipping container with quilts, hygiene supplies, clothes, coats, shoes, and wheelchairs for the Republic of Georgia (formerly part of the Soviet Union).

ORPHAN GRAIN TRAIN
Relief for Human Need Worldwide

"Women for Justice" received the shipment for delivery to women living in extreme poverty as well as disabled women and children. It cost over $5,000 to send the shipment to its destination. A few facts about OGT:

- It was started by Pastor Wilke and a laymen in Norfolk, Nebraska in 1992;
- over 25 million meals have been shared worldwide in the 26 year history;
- 90 orphanages in Russia and the former Soviet Union are served by OGT;
- Clothing and other needed goods are gathered in 27 regional locations;
- Charity Navigator recently recognized OGT among the 10 best humanitarian organizations for its wise stewardship of donations and resources.

Join us in prayer for Orphan Grain Train. Watch for future donation opportunities. Join us in a journey to Ida Grove. Visit www.ogt.org to learn more about this ministry.

MAIN STREET living

Great News! The Main Street Living Television program is coming to Iowa District West, and will be aired on KCAU, channel 9 in Sioux City, at 10am every Sunday Morning beginning on October 7 of this year. The first 30 minutes will feature the acclaimed "This is the Life" program from Lutheran Hour Ministries. These programs are re-mastered and brought to HD format. The final 30 minutes is a modified Lutheran worship service that will feature pastors of the LCMS from the local Sioux City area. A different Pastor will be featured each week.

Main Street Living started airing in South Dakota on January 6, 2002. It has become an important asset for shut-ins and others who cannot or do not attend church on a regular basis. Since January, 2017, the Board of directors of Main Street Living has set out on a plan of expanding the ministry. This planned expansion has the enthusiastic endorsement of Iowa District West President, Rev. Dr. Steve Turner. Inform your friends and neighbors who are not currently attending services. We think they will be pleasantly surprised.

PROJECT ZION CONNECT
ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH MANNING, IOWA
Celebrating and Sharing Christ's Redeeming Love
Strengthening the student-church connection

From her newborns to her newly launched, Zion loves her children. That loves motivates us to build relationships throughout their childhood, into young adulthood, and beyond. The years following high school are filled with transitions and questions. We believe these are critical years to strengthen existing connections.

In order to do that, we need your help! Please complete the Project Connect form (available in the church office and at the resource center in the fellowship hall) and return it to Zion or email the listed information to one of the following emails: zmanning@mmctus.com or connerjonathanidw@gmail.com. Thank you for helping us strengthen the student-church connection!

UPCOMING EVENTS @ ZION & TRINITY

September 7

Potluck at 5:00 p.m. / Presentation at 6:00 p.m.
Pastor Brian Gauthier, Amanda, and Ezra (missionaries in Panama) are coming to Zion! They'll be present for an evening presentation (watch for times). Come hear and celebrate what God is doing in Panama!

FINANCIAL Peace UNIVERSITY

September 5 – October 31

6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. at Zion
Journey with financial expert Dave Ramsey through nine weeks of fast paced, information-packed financial encouragement that will help you dump debt, make a financial plan, and change your future. Call 655-2352 to register and purchase your participation kit (or purchase online at www.daveramsey.com). Individuals/couples who attended last fall can attend for free!

Rally SUNDAY

September 9

Sunday School teachers will be installed and classes will begin. Register your child online at www.zionmanning.com. Click on "forms and downloads."

October 14

Preschool Pancake Breakfast
Support Zion Lutheran Preschool from 9:00 to Noon by enjoying fantastic pancakes and giving generously.
Worship begins at 8:00 a.m.

December 2

Advent by Candlelight (at Zion)
Experience the Christmas story through narration and song in the enchanting candlelight setting of Advent by Candlelight.
Watch for news on ticket prices and table decorating.

September Birthdays and Anniversaries @ Zion & Trinity

Birthdays (T = Trinity)

1. Lucille Ress
2. Collin Brus
   Cindy Scheuring (T)
3. Graham England
   Bruce Grimm
4. Brock Kusel
   Alaina Salter
5. Madelyn Dreher
7. Kyle Arp
   Taylor Lapel
   Timothy Rosener
8. Austin Johnson
   Jaide Paska
   Carlys Stribe
   Darlene Vollstedt
   Caleb Lahr (T)
   Mary Lueth (T)
9. Katie Cornelius
   Brice Shrimpton
   Diane Vetter
10. Alison Karsten
11. Ambria Johnson
    Brandi Wiig
    Harold Jourgensen (T)
12. Kristie Borkowski
    Robert Hagedorn
    Chris Birks (T)
13. Dennis Backhaus
    Allen Stribe
14. Dakota Bradley
    Lauren Greving
    Erin Renze
15. Dylon Bauer
16. Brooke Kienast
    Diane Lahr (T)
17. Ben Langel
    Kaien Stoeckel
    Charlie Tibben
18. LeAnn Hacker (T)
19. Kora Kusel
    Sue Soll
20. Marlene Jahn (T)
21. Daniel Hilsabeck
    Alexis Karsten
    Wendy Stribe
    Daniel Vonnahme
22. Haley Kuchel
    Jason Boell (T)
24. Elizabeth Scheuring (T)
25. Jennifer Grau
26. Tanner Crawford
    Lillian Genzen
    Terri Rosener
27. Don Beck
    Shaun Grau
    Ashley Martin (T)
28. Cassandra Burcham
    Susie Ulrickson
29. Mike Lorenzen (T)
30. Karl Albertsen
    Jason Ehlers
    Judy Irwin (T)

If we missed or misspelled your name, please inform the church office.

Anniversaries

2 Mike & Becky Bruch
3 Bary & Karen Kienast
Frank & Gloria Boeck (T)
Dara & Steve Jorgensen (T)
4 Don & Trisha Beck
Jon & Jill Saunders
6 Gary & Joyce Schroeder
7 Derek & Brenna Hodne
9 Jason & Lori Ferry (T)
8 Bradley & Heather Kusel
11 Rodney & Deanna Frank
14 Scott & Kristine Lingle (T)
15 William & Louise Bruhn
16 Gene & Susan Mahnke
19 David & Joene Bohlmann
Kevin & Janet Brus
Jeff & Jean Hargens
20 Todd & Dawn Ketcham
Alex & Kari Ranniger
22 Larry & Connie Ahrendsen
24 Ben & Beth Booth
Karl & Donna Rutz
25 Dick & Sylvia Saunders (T)
27 Jesse & Katie Weitl
28 Conrad & Juanita Kurth
30 Allen & Carlys Stribe

Official Acts

Baptism:
Bowen Tyler Bruck, son of Tyler & Morgan Bruck; August 12, 2018; Pastor Jonathan Conner

Funerals:
Robert D. Hansen; Died August 7, 2018; Funeral August 11, 2018 (Trinity Lutheran Church); Pastor Robert Riggert

LaVern Robert Bald; Died August 19, 2018; Funeral August 22, 2018 (Trinity Lutheran church); Pastor Jonathan Conner

Adult confirmation:
August 26, 2018 by Pastor Jonathan Conner, Neil and Shala Hass

In Our Prayers

Walt Noelck, Dave Grundmeier, Heather Kusel, Sherri Steffes, Jim Deevers, Rick Spack, Susan Lamb, JoAnn Karsten (Geogia Lohrman's sister), Natalie Mason (Bruce and Mary Grimm's daughter), Bob Henkelman