
THE ZION HERALD

May 2023

"Happy are those whose strength is in God, in whose heart are the highways to Zion." Psalm 84:5



The Pastor's Ponderings What Does the ELCA Teach about Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust?

The 2009 vote to adopt the social statement of the ELCA on Human Sexuality is one of the most controversial, impactful - even divisive of all the social statements of the ELCA. Whether each member as an individual agrees with portions of the statement or not, the ELCA was forever changed (some say for the better, some say for the worse) after the adoption of this social statement.

While it is often assumed that this social statement is only about same-sex relationships, it covers far more – most of which are largely what you might expect and are far less controversial. Some of the assertions of the social statement include:

-Marriage is a civil (legal) promise by two individuals. A Christian marriage, then, is a marriage that is then prayed over to ask God's blessing. The commitment and solemn promises of marriage are intended to create a place for safety, security, openness, and care for one another in body, mind, and spirit.

-Sexual Intimacy can be something that supports and fosters love, care, affection, and joy or it can be manipulative, harmful, exploitative, or even criminal. As Christians, we are called to live a healthy sexual ethic that reflects the Greatest Commandments: "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest? [Jesus] said to him, " 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

-Our salvation or our righteousness before God is not determined by our adherence to a sexual ethic. Instead, our ability to live a healthy sexual ethic is a result of our freely given salvation and being made righteous through Christ. (This aligns with the Lutheran understanding of Grace and Works outlined in Luther's Freedom of a

May Readings

May 7

Fifth Sunday of Easter

- Acts 7:55-60
- Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16
- 1 Peter 2:2-10
- John 14:1-14

May 14

Sixth Sunday of Easter

- Acts 17:22-31
- Psalm 66:8-20
- 1 Peter 3:13-22
- John 14:15-21

May 21

Seventh Sunday of Easter

- Acts 1:6-14
- Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35
- 1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11
- John 17:1-11

May 28

Day of Pentecost

- Acts 2:1-21
- Psalm 104:24-34
- 1 Corinthians 12:3b-13
- John 20:19-23



Christian which reminds us that our love and care of our neighbor is possible because we have been saved – not our care and love of our neighbor being what saves us. Let me know if you want to discuss this further!)

-The ELCA is committed to care, love, protection, and justice for all our neighbors, including those who might face discrimination or hardship based on their sexual orientation. The ELCA, our congregations and ministries, and our members ought to work and advocate for a world where hate speech, harassment, and violence our LGBTQIA+ experience is a thing of the past regardless of our individual convictions about same-sex relationships.

When it comes to the part of the ELCA Social Statement that is the most contentious, we are look at a section labeled “Lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships.” Remember that this was written in 2009 when same-sex marriage varied significantly from state-to-state. The ELCA gathered these four responses to the question: How should the church treat same-sex relationships? The ELCA does not say that one of these is the “answer” but instead, states that these are the range of answers.

1) Same sex relationships – in and of themselves – are sinful and fall under the category of “fornication.” As a result, those who continue to live in same-sex sexual relationships are living a life of unrepentant sin. We care for and love our neighbor by encouraging these individuals to a celibate life.

2) Same sex relationships – even those that are loving and caring – reflect a broken world. God intended man and woman to be together (as described in Genesis) and marriage reflects that plan. Same sex relationships reflect a diversion from God’s plan for creation. As a result, the church and the community should not place these relationships in the same category as “marriage.”

3) Biblical witness does not address same-sex relationships as they are today. Contextual/Historical/ Anthropological readings of scripture reflect the relationships others point to as inherently sinful describing relationships between male slave holders and adolescent slaves, sex/rape intended to emasculate, etc. The church

should uphold and support lifelong, monogamous, same-sex relationships. However, these relationships are not “Christian marriage” because Christian marriage reflects the male-female pairing described in Genesis.

- 4) Biblical witness does not address same-sex relationships as they are today (see above). The church should uphold and support same sex relationships and marriage is a part of that support. If marriage is a civil/legal promise between two people and Christian marriage is God’s blessing of that promise, it is fully within the Christian ethic to ask for God’s blessing on same-sex relationships and name that relationship “marriage.”

This being Mental Health Month and coming to you from my first career as a social worker, I feel the need to bring up “Conversion Therapy.” My professional organization (National Association of Social Workers) has denounced conversion therapy along with almost every medical and psychological association in the United States. This dangerous pseudo-scientific intervention is designed to change someone’s sexual orientation and has not only been shown to be unsuccessful but is deeply harmful and damaging. This is not a stated position of the ELCA as a denomination, but if you are interested in the mental health impact of conversation therapy, I’d be happy to sit and discuss it with you or send you some information.

You may be aware that this social statement created a great deal of division in the ELCA – some ELCA congregations left and formed other Lutheran denominations. Some of our pastors and bishops resigned or moved to the new denominations, some members left. While it was a difficult time for the ELCA, this issue needed to be addressed as remaining silent was no longer an option. It’s important to know that there is room for everyone in the ELCA on this issue – and from very casual conversations with members I think there is also a variety of points of view in our own pews on Sunday! Naturally, I as your pastor have my own point of view. At the same time, I remain committed to respecting and honoring the viewpoints of all our members, even if we disagree.

In Christian love,
Pastor Sharilyn



Sing To The Lord A New Song! Or An Old Song!

During the season of Pentecost (June 11-October 22) everyone’s input is needed as we choose our hymns for Sunday Worship. Starting in mid-May, we will have hymn request cards available for you to tell us your favorite hymns or to request a particular hymn. The Worship/Music/Memorial committee will do our best to fit as many of them into our Summer/Fall worship schedule as possible. Start thinking of what you would like to have us sing together!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR VBS AT THE 4H FAIR! (July 17-20)

We are in the planning stages of a scaled-back Vacation Bible Study at the 4H Fair this summer and need your help! If we don't have enough volunteers we will have to cancel it for 2023 and we will miss this opportunity to reach children in our community.



Each day we have plans to include a Bible Story, a craft, and a song around a theme.

We need:

- 1) Helpers for each day at the fairgrounds
- 2) Craft Helpers to put together craft kits (can be done before the fair itself on your own timeline)
- 3) Take-Home Kits Assemblers to put together a kit for kids to take home (can also be done before the fair)

Daily Topics: Care for the Animals, Care for the Earth, Care for Each Other, God Cares for Us.

First Presbyterian is currently considering joining us for the event - what a great way to show that our local churches can work together for the Glory of God!

May Birthdays

Carolyn Hughes	5-1
Teresa Banter	5-1
Nolan Willmann	5-4
Dick Smith	5-5
Dorothy Hale	5-14
Zackary Monce	5-14
Carolyn Smith	5-18
Michelle Habegger	5-20
Chris Walker	5-22



IN-KY SYNOD ASSEMBLY JUNE 10, 2023

Zion Lutheran has the need for one more person to serve in this role for an ONLINE ONLY ASSEMBLY. This is an excellent chance to take part in a synod assembly without the additional travel and time usually required. You will need either a stable internet connection and internet-connected device (phone/ computer/tablet) or you can attend at Zion Lutheran and use the technology here. Contact Pr. Sharilyn if you can serve!



A New Musical Setting for Worship!

Starting in the season of Pentecost, we will transition to a new music setting for worship! We will be trying this out for the summer and then determine if we enjoy it enough to add to the settings we already know. We will be using Setting 10 from Evangelical Lutheran Worship (also called “the cranberry hymnal”) and what is really great about this setting is that it puts all of our liturgical text to hymns that we likely already know! We will transition over time, letting us get used to the

new part one section at a time. If you’d like to hear the setting before, you can listen to it on YouTube by going to: <https://tinyurl.com/ycy5exrj>



Mental Health Awareness Month May 20, 2023

Did you know that May is Mental Health Awareness Month? One in five Americans have a mental health condition – that’s approximately 12.8 million adults in the United States alone. There is a mental health awareness 5k and Zion Lutheran Church is one of the local sponsors of the walk to raise awareness. Would you like to volunteer or participate? It’s free and right here in Hartford City on Saturday, May 20, 2023 and is organized by the Healthy Community Alliance of South-Central Indiana.

Get Moving for Mental Health Family Fun 5k Walk/Run



Blackford Greenway - Saturday, May 20 2023

10am....Fun Walk/Run Begins

9:30am.....Check-in

Park, Start and End at Blackford Jr/Sr High School

Pre-register for a t-shirt and reusable water bottle!

<https://tinyurl.com/bdz8vt38>



Community resource booths!

Raffle to win a Fitbit Charge4!



Thank you to event sponsors and volunteers!

This event is hosted by the local partners of the Blackford County Client Consultation Board and the Healthy Community Alliance

- to bring awareness to mental health
- and to encourage individuals, families and friends to get out and moving on the Blackford Greenway!



IN THE EVENT OF STORMY WEATHER, LOOK FOR ANOTHER DATE IN SEPTEMBER OR OCTOBER - THANKS!

Calling All Gardeners!

“When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. You shall not strip your vineyard bare or gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the alien: I am the Lord your God.” Leviticus 19:9-10

This ancient practice of gleaning was a way to feed those without means to support themselves. In practical terms, many – perhaps even most – gardeners end up with some produce beyond what they can use. Grow a Row is a program of the Healthy Community Alliance of East Central Indiana. It connects gardeners and farmers with food banks that can distribute fresh produce to those who need it. There will be two drop-off locations in Hartford City (Community & Family Services and the Public Library) so whether you can donate a little or a lot, your contribution is needed! Talk with Pr. Sharilyn if you want more information!



PLEDGE YOUR PRODUCE!

Grow-A-Row is seeking backyard gardeners who will **grow extra produce to donate to local food pantries**. You're already growing food, why not grow your community?



Visit tinyurl.com/b8vcc88e to get involved, find seed suppliers and growing support, and to pick a food drop-off site in your neighborhood.

Interested in being a drop-off site?
surveymonkey.com/r/2023GAR or
jdisher1@IUHealth.org





May 2023



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Coffee & Jesus 8am Living Grace Support Group 6:30pm	2	3	4	5	6
7 Education Hour 9:30am Worship & Communion 10:30am	8 Coffee & Jesus 8am Living Grace Support Group 6:30pm	9 Piecemakers 9am	10	11	12	13
14 Education Hour 9:30am Worship 10:30am	15 Coffee & Jesus 8am Living Grace Support Group 6:30pm	16 Council Meeting 7pm	17	18	19	20
21 Education Hour 9:30am Worship & Communion 10:30am	22 Coffee & Jesus 8am Living Grace Support Group 6:30pm	23 Piecemakers 9am	24	25	26	27
28 Worship 10:30am	29 Memorial Day Office Closed	30	31			



308 S Monroe St
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Sharilyn Wendt, Pastor
Church Office: 765-348-3157
zionluth.hc@gmail.com
www.zionhc.org

Education Hour at 9:30am
Worship at 10:30am

2023 Council Members:

President & Elder	Cindy Knot
VP & Elder	Mark Prout
Secretary	Paige Walker
Treasurer	Libby Stroble
Deacon	Scott Clamme
Trustee	Neil Stroble

Pastor Sharilyn's Information:

Cell Phone: 812-272-2936
Email: sharilyn.wendt@gmail.com

Office Hours:

Monday: 2:30pm-5:30pm
Tuesday & Thursday: 9am-Noon
Other Times by Appointment
Please call first to be sure she is in!

May 2023 Sunday Servants

Greeters:

7 - Peggy Willmann
Gene & Aneta Gardner
14 - Mark & Julie Prout
Claretta Dutro
21 - Mark & Julie Prout
Dennis & Debbie
Walker
28 - Larry & Denise Hile
Claretta Dutro

Lector:

7 - Cindy Knot
14 - Mark Prout
21 - Mark Prout
28 - Denise Hile

Acolyte:

7 - Walker
14 - Clamme
21 - Walker
28 - Clamme

Assisting Minister:

7 - Mark Prout
21 - Michelle Walker