

Trinity Tribune

Trinity Lutheran Church ✠ Paola, Kansas

2019



"My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry, for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires."
(James 1:19-20)

Last month there was a firestorm in the news and on "social media" regarding a group of boys from a religious high school who had participated in the annual pro-life "March for Life" in Washington, D. C. A video clip just a few seconds long that went "viral" showed a brief portion of an encounter between these boys and a different group, who happened to be protesting there the same day about unrelated matters.

Many misconstrued this short video as showing the boys being disrespectful, even antagonistic. There was immediate, widespread condemnation of the boys, leading to calls for them to be harassed, expelled, fired from their jobs, denied entry to college, and even many outright calls for violence against them, to the point of hundreds of death threats.

Some of these slanders came from leading figures in the entertainment, media, and political arenas. As a result, their high school and several related facilities had to be closed for a week due to numerous threats of bombings and school shootings—by those who claimed to be upset the boys had supposedly been merely disrespectful!

Even worse, within days over two hours of additional video of this encounter was released. It turns out that the boys were simply waiting in a designated area for a bus to pick them up following their participation in the "March for Life." Far from them being disrespectful or antagonistic to the other group of protestors, these additional videos clearly show that it was the boys who were subjected to two hours of the most vile, nonstop verbal abuse, and they had in fact shown remarkable grace and restraint. The few seconds of video that initially went "viral" was deceptively taken out of context and edited to give a completely false impression of the actual events.

It almost seems like Martin Luther is prophesying today's "social media" environment with its "viral" stories and videos when in the Large Catechism, in his typical, colorful manner, he denounces "relishing and delighting in gossip like pigs that roll in the mud and root around in it with their snouts."

Threatening a school facility is a felony in the state where the high school is located, and their district attorney vowed to pursue all such threats. So, in light of the new video evidence, and facing the possibility of both prosecution and lawsuits from the boys' families, hundreds of those who had slandered them sheepishly retracted their statements and apologized.

Most shocking was the very bishop of their denomination, who oversees their high school. Before even talking with the boys or having the basic facts

of the situation, he had immediately issued a scathing public condemnation of his own young parishioners. Sadly, although it took him only a few hours to publically attack them when the initial short video went "viral," after the extended video was released that clearly and completely vindicates them it took him five days to finally issue an apology.

This situation shows us the extraordinary wisdom and insight of Martin Luther in his explanation in the Small Catechism of the Eighth Commandment, "*You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor,*" or in the King James Version, "*Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.*"

Luther masterfully expounds the full, Biblical meaning of this commandment: "*We should fear and love God so that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him, slander him, or hurt his reputation, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way.*"

Or, you may have memorized as a child the older translation: "*We should fear and love God that we may not deceitfully belie, betray, slander, nor defame our neighbor, but defend him, speak well of him, and put the best construction on everything.*"

As Luther explains, Scripture makes clear that to "give false testimony" or "bear false witness" goes beyond simply saying something about others that you know is not true. For, it is not only such *negative* actions that violate this commandment. We are equally guilty of breaking the Eighth Commandment whenever we fail to *postively* "defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way" and "put the best construction on everything." In this situation, hundreds of influential figures, including the boys' own bishop, instead put the *worst* construction on everything.

It almost seems like Luther is prophesying today's "social media" environment with its "viral" stories and videos when in the Large Catechism, in his own typical, colorful manner, he denounces such sins against the Eighth Commandment: *"Those are called backbiters who are not content just to know but rush ahead and judge. Learning a bit of gossip about someone else, they spread it into every corner, relishing and delighting in it like pigs that roll in the mud and root around in it with their snouts."*

Our duty to "put the best construction on everything" applies also to "social media," even to people we do not know personally.

We are allowed to publically reprove crimes that are publically committed, and other indisputably sinful public actions, including false doctrine, as Jesus Himself harshly denounced the Pharisees (Matthew 23). Also, to testify truthfully against others when called upon to do so by the proper authorities, even if that testimony is negative, and to denounce for their crimes those who have been duly found guilty by the proper authorities—an actual judge and jury.

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But, apart from those exceptions, there are numerous Scripture passages that forbid malicious talk about others, and instead require us to "put the best construction on everything." All this applies even to "social media," even to people we do not know personally:

"Brothers, do not slander one another." (James 4:11)

"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves." (Proverbs 31:8)

"Reckless words pierce like a sword." (Proverbs 12:18)

"Those who control their tongue will preserve their lives, but those who speak rashly will come to ruin." (Proverbs 13:3)

"The heart of the godly thinks carefully before speaking, but the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil." (Proverbs 15:28)

"There is more hope for a fool than for someone who speaks without thinking." (Proverbs 29:20)

"Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? . . . You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye." (Matthew 7:3-5)

Luther wisely observes, "Honor and good name are easily taken away, but not easily restored."

"Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven." (Luke 6:36-37)

As Luther concludes in the Large Catechism: *"Therefore, if you encounter somebody with a worthless tongue who gossips and slanders someone, rebuke him straight to his face and make him blush for shame. Then you will silence many a one who otherwise would bring some poor man into disgrace, from which he could scarcely clear himself. For honor and good name are easily taken away, but not easily restored."*

Pastor Kevin Vogts



Sermons for February

Sermons by Pastor Vogts are available in both printed and audio form on our website at www.trinitylcms.org/sermons; as podcasts in the iTunes store by searching for "Rev. Kevin Vogts"; and printed copies of that day's sermon and several of the most recent sermons are available in the Gathering Room.

February 3

*"Your Labor in the Lord
Is Not in Vain"*
1 Corinthians 15:58

February 10

"What Must You Leave Behind?"
Luke 5:1-11

February 17

"To Touch Him"
Luke 6:17-19

February 24

"Your Father Is Merciful"
Luke 6:27-38



Could you—individual, family, or group—serve snacks sometime after worship during 2019? Most of February remains open! Consider signing up for special occasions such as birthdays or anniversaries.

There is a sign-up sheet on the table with the snacks. Our Generations group has generously agreed to provide and prepare the coffee and juice each week! So those signing up are only asked to provide some treat. Thanks to all those providing snacks for Coffee Hour!

February 3

Schlegels

February 10, 17, 24
Need Volunteers



Each month we remember in prayer in our worship services—and you are encouraged to remember in your personal prayers—specific missionaries around the world who are supported by our congregation through our mission offerings to our Synod.

February 3

Rev. Gustavo & Rosana Lavia
Spain

February 10

Herman & Sheila Strozier
Czech Republic

February 17

Rev. James & Angela Sharp
Uruguay

February 24

Rev. Charles & Connie Cortright
Russia



Nursing Home Services **February 17**

You are invited to help Trinity provide brief worship services for nursing home residents at North Point and Medical Lodge on February 17. The simple services are approximately 20 minutes in length at each home. We begin at 1:30pm at North Point and then go to Medical Lodge for the second service.

The residents really enjoy these services, especially singing their favorite hymns. It's great to have church members there to greet the residents and sing along. We have a faithful few members who help but we could use your help too!



Ash Wednesday Soup Supper

Trinity Youth invites you to a Lenten soup supper before the Ash Wednesday service on March 6. Proceeds will be used to help fund youth activities.

Other dates for Lenten services and dinners are March 13, 20, 27 and April 3 & 10. Check the bulletin for the hosting groups and menus. Thank you to all those hosting these fun fellowship events!

Trinity Youth's Annual



Sweetheart Dinner

Sunday, February 24

Drinks, Appetizers, & Entertainment 4:00pm – Dinner 5:00pm

Delicious Italian Buffet & Dessert Assortment

Reservations Required – \$20 per person – Child Care Included

Sign Up After Worship with Trinity Youth Member
or Call or Text Lori Schlegel at 913-731-3267

All Invited—Everyone Welcome!
Come Enjoy the Fun, Food, and Fellowship!

February Birthdays & Anniversaries

Our records of birthdays and anniversaries may not be complete. If your information is missing or inaccurate, please accept our apologies and notify the Church Office at 913-849-3344 or email Church Secretary Stacey Elkinton at trinitylutheranblock@gmail.com.

February 2 Ashtin Armstrong
February 4 Jodie Wood
February 4 Leslie Vohs
February 6 Kerry Brandt
February 6 Tanna Jones
February 6 Glenn Minden
February 7 Stacey Elkinton

February 7 Tyler Allen
 February 8 Karen Ohlmeier
 February 9 Daniel Wendte
 February 10 Darrell Brandt
 February 10 Terry Bunch
 February 10 Kathy Gerken
 February 10 Leonard Oberheide
 February 11 Hannah Raines
 February 12 James Haley
 February 12 Mike Giager
 February 13 Valerie Gerken
 February 13 Logan Hendrickson
 February 18 Joey Stephens
 February 18 Stan Windler
 February 19 Debbie Windler
 February 20 Judy Kutz
 February 20 Angie Fickel
 February 20 Carolyn Warner
 February 21 Jeff Davis
 February 21 Marty Stutzman
 February 25 Michelle Haley
 February 25 Curtis Hall
 February 25 Duane Rodewald
 February 26 Glenn Block
 February 26 Cate Minden
 February 27 Matthew Kriesel
 February 27 Reita Woodall
 February 28 Slina Prothe
 February 29 Austin Henry
 Feb 10 Curtis & Kristie Weaver (23)
 Feb 11 ... Lloyd & Karen Ohlmeier (57)
 Feb 13 Jeff & Windy Davis (26)
 Feb 15 Curtis & Jamie Hall (16)
 Feb 19 Michael & Katie Taylor (14)
 Feb 21 Ron & Marcia Raines (30)
 Feb 22 Kevin & Denise Debrick (27)
 Feb 22 Rick & Jill Druse (22)



Lent Begins March 6

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on March 6. Services that evening and each Wednesday throughout Lent will be at 7:00pm, with a Lenten Supper before each service.

The Maundy Thursday Service with Holy Communion and Good Friday Tenebrae Service will be held on April 18 and 19 at 7:00pm.

The theme for this year's Lent services is *The Sounds of Lent*, meditating each week on several sounds from the familiar Lenten story, such as the donkey's hoofs, crowing rooster, flogging, slapping, jeering crowds, and pounding hammer. The sermon series will conclude on Easter Sunday with the sound of "The Rolling Stone."

Adult Bible Study



Our current study in Adult Bible Class is "Put on the Full Armor of God!" as described in Ephesians 6:10-19: *the belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, sandals of peace, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, and sword of the Spirit.*

What is the meaning of each of these for you? How can you "Put on the Full Armor of God!" in your life? Join in Sundays at 9:00am in the Heritage Room!

Use Your Thrivent Choice Dollars!

If you have a Thrivent product, with the change of year it is a good time to check if you have Thrivent Choice Dollars available that could be designated for our congregation or other charitable cause.

Just call toll-free at 1 800 847-4836 and state "Thrivent Choice" at the prompt, or log in to your account and designate your "Choice Dollars" online. The deadline is March 31 to request designation of Choice Dollars from the previous year. For more information contact Karen Windler.



Henry Michael Slack

Son of Sara Michelle Oberheide Slack and Michael Adam Slack

Born December 14, 2018
 Baptized January 27, 2019

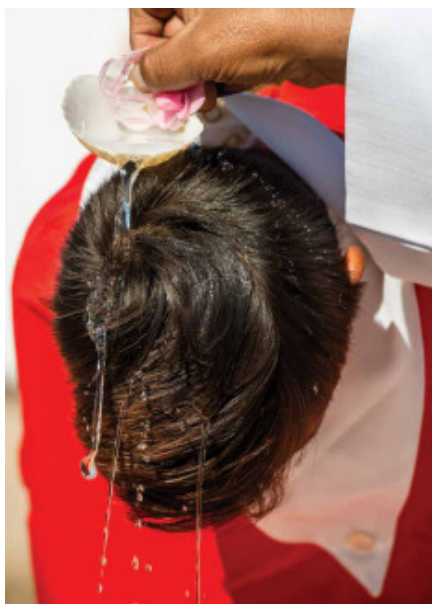
"Let the little children come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."
 (Mark 10:14-15)



Born Again in Mexico

For 10-year-old Kimberly, October 26, 2018 was no ordinary day. Even as she laughed and ran around with her friends, adults hastily hung bunting and floral garland and prepared pots of chicken mole, rice and beans for the gathering crowd in Anapra, Mexico. Soon, Kimberly would join nearly 25 other children and adults around a "pop-up" chancel with a makeshift altar,

pulpit, and two baptismal fonts. In a dusty corner surrounded by a tall chain-link fence, Kimberly and the others were rescued forever from sin, death and the devil through the waters of Holy Baptism.



A boy receives Holy Baptism on October 26, 2018 at the Lutheran mission in Anapra, Mexico.

Communities like Anapra, on the edge of Juárez, Mexico, sprung up rapidly when American corporations built manufacturing facilities in Mexican border town. Filled with hope at the promise of good jobs, Mexican families relocated from every corner of the country, rapidly expanding the population of sleepy, old border towns. Built with salvaged materials, the humble homes have only recently begun to receive basic services such as power, water and paved roads.



Excited boys racing to the special service where they will be baptized.

Kimberly is one of many children upended by the violence caused by smuggling and drug cartels. She was just 4 years old when father's decision to pay the rent rather than "protection money" to the cartel cost him and his wife their lives.



2019 Lent Services ***Wednesdays, 7:00pm*** ***Lenten Suppers Before Services***

March 6 – Ash Wednesday

***"Clanking Coins," "Kissing,"
"Lying" & "Crowing Rooster"***

March 13 – Lent Service II

***"Slapping," "Beating"
& "Taunting"***

March 20 – Lent Service III

***"Flogging," "Mocking"
& "Spitting"***

March 27– Lent Service IV

***"Washing Hands" &
"Cross Scraping on Back"***

April 3 – Lent Service V

"Sneering" & "Weeping"

April 10 – Lent Service VI

***"Pounding Hammer,"
"Spurting Water and Blood"
& "Confessing"***

April 14 – Palm Sunday

***"Donkey's Hoofs,"
"Cheering Crowds,"
& "Jeering Crowds"***

April 18 – Maundy Thursday

***"Singing," "Breaking Bread"
& "Pouring Wine"***

April 19 – Good Friday

"Dice" & "Death Cry"

April 21 (Easter Sunday)

"The Rolling Stone"

Lutheran mission work in the border area began 36 years ago when the Rev. Karl Heimer was called as a mission developer on the border and established San Pablo Lutheran Church. His son, Rev. Stephen Heimer, was four years old when his father accepted the missionary call, and now works with his father preaching and teaching in El Paso and across the border in Mexico.



The group being baptized (in robes on the right) was so large that the service was held outdoors.

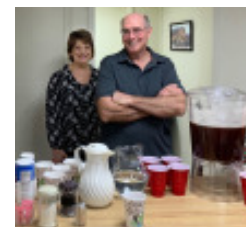
Rev. Stephen Heimer works primarily in El Paso, but in January, 2018 he also committed to making the weekly journey across the border to instruct the children and their parents in Anapra in preparation for Holy Baptism.

Ten months later, two lines formed in front of the baptismal fonts with the crowd pressing close around. They were eager to witness the eternal miracles taking place through water and the Word in this spot near the U.S.–Mexico border—with patrol helicopters flying overhead!



Many adults were also baptized, including parents of the baptized children—entire families born again!

Kimberly waited for her turn and climbed up the stepstool to reach the font. Rev. Stephen Heimer baptized her



Thanks to All Who Helped!

Thanks to Kevin Debrick for the Photos



“en el nombre del Padre, del Hijo y del Espiritu Santo.” As Kimberly raised her dripping head, Heimer announced her birth into the family of God. The crowd cheered and praised God just as they did for each one baptized that day.”

Reflecting on the day’s events, Rev. Stephen Heimer said, “Most of these children and families have faced great hardship and tragedy all their lives. Jesus said, ‘Let the children come to me.’ Here they are! Now baptized! Born again as His children!” Lives changed, now and for eternity—thanks be to God!



A little Mexican girl wears a braided crown to celebrate her Baptism.