

THE VIEW

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A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

The Augsburg Confession: Article VIII - A Bunch of Hypocrites!

Hypocrisy is unavoidable in this life. I grew up with my parents telling me: “Do what I say, not what I do.” In my naïve idealistic youth, I vowed to never be like that with my children. I pledged to always match my intentions, words, and actions without fail. Now that I am a parent... Yep. I failed. I also find myself telling my children: “Do as I say, not as I do.” It is not that the sentiment of my idealistic younger self was wrong in his desires; it was that as a flawed and corrupted human being, I was incapable of keeping the promise I made to myself.

We are sinners, every one of us. This is even more apparent in Christians who are keenly aware of the struggle between the desires of the regenerate, who has a new life in Christ and wants to live that life attuned to the will of God, versus the desires of the flesh that seeks to serve and worship itself with all manner of rebelliousness against God, His will, and His Word. Both are at war within us. St. Paul wrestles with the reality of this in the seventh chapter of Romans.

For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. ¹⁶ Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. ¹⁷ So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. ¹⁸ For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. (Romans 7:15-20)

This battle between the regenerate life and the Old Adam quite often makes us hypocrites. We know what is right, and we declare it faithfully, but in our actions, we betray God and ourselves. Therefore, the accusations of those making excuses to remain in their depravity and refusing to go

near God's Church possess a fragment of truth when they say that all those people in the church are a bunch of hypocrites. We are; although not necessarily by will or choice.

Yet this too also brings to the forefront a painful reality: there are actually some within congregations, who are willful hypocrites. They do not believe God or His Word. They may outwardly look the same as everyone else, but inwardly they are hostile toward God. I do not say that there are hypocrites IN the Church, for the Church is all believers who live by faith in Christ. The unbelieving hypocrites may be amongst the Church and all her external signs, but their unbelief excludes them from being a member of Christ's Body.

The Lutheran reformers recognized that to the eyes of man, the hypocrite may look no different than a believer and that there could be great difficulty in maintaining unity between congregations if we cannot even ferret out the hypocrite in our midst. Therefore, they identified marks of the church that signal the presences of the true church, even though she may be surrounded by falsehood. Last month we examined their teaching on this in Article VII of the Augsburg Confession:

Also, they [the Lutheran Churches] teach that one holy Church is to continue forever. The Church is the congregation of saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments are rightly administered.

And to the true unity of the Church, it is enough to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments. Nor is it necessary that human traditions, that is, rites or ceremonies, instituted by men, should be everywhere alike. As Paul says: One faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all, etc. Eph. 4:5-6. (AC VII)

We may not be able to see into the hearts of men to know if they are true or false, but we do know is that the true Church must be present where the Gospel (Forgiveness and reconciliation with God through the redeeming life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, our Messiah and Lord, by whom we this free gift of God's grace as we look to him in faith.) is rightly taught and the Sacraments (The outward sign and promise of the Gospel through prescribed tangible, yet supernatural, means.) are rightly administered according to Christ's institution. Where these things are, the Body of Christ must also be present, even though she may be swallowed up in a sea of hypocrites, who deny the workings of God right under their noses.

Article VIII immediately follows this to address a natural worry that arises with awareness to hypocrisy within the congregations: What if the clergy are hypocrites? This was especially pertinent at the time of the reformation as parishioners became acutely aware that their priests, bishops, popes had taught falsely for generations. Does the unbelief or hypocrisy of their local priests invalidate the baptism they have received through them? What about the Lord's Supper? The Roman Church taught that the validity of the Sacrament was according to the actions of the priest. Does an unfaithful clergy make it so that no forgiveness was given in the Sacrament?

To address these concerns, the Eighth Article of the Augsburg Confession states:

Although the Church properly is the congregation of saints and true believers, nevertheless, since in this life many hypocrites and evil persons are mingled therewith, it is lawful to use

Sacraments administered by evil men, according to the saying of Christ: The Scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat, etc. Matt. 23:2. Both the Sacraments and Word are effectual by reason of the institution and commandment of Christ, notwithstanding they be administered by evil men.

They condemn the Donatists, and such like, who denied it to be lawful to use the ministry of evil men in the Church, and who thought the ministry of evil men to be unprofitable and of none effect.

Although wicked men and hypocrites may at times be seated in the pastoral office, the validity of the Sacraments, if conducted according to the command and institution of Christ, is preserved in spite of the those conducting them. The Means of Grace, God's Word and Sacraments, are valid and efficacious because of the promise and command of God, not the man who repeats them according to his office. Scripture is full of examples of wicked men (Balaam, erring priests like Eli, Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, most of Israel and Judah's kings, etc.) through whom God worked for the good of his people. Their office was valid and the work done according to it was valid, even though they personally were hypocrites and unbelievers. The same is true for if a scoundrel slithers into the office of ministry or if one who holds the office finds himself in disgrace. The good work that God had done through him stands, even if the man falls, since man cannot invalidate the promises of God.

This, however, should not be an excuse to keep a wicked or unbelieving man in the pastoral office. God has spoken through the Apostle Paul to lay out the qualifications for the pastoral office.

The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. ²Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, ⁵for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? ⁶He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. ⁷Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil. (1 Timothy 3:1-7)

To Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior. ⁵This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you— ⁶if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. ⁷For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, ⁸but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. ⁹He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it. (Titus 1:4-9)

Those who violate these qualifications should not hold the office. However, should a member of the clergy disqualify himself, the works that God had done through this imperfect vessel still hold

true. It may also be that the man would repent, turn from his unbelief, hypocrisy, or sin and be deemed worthy again to hold the office, such as what happened with Peter, who had denied Christ three times and was later forgiven and reinstated.

Clergy is not immune to sin. They can be hypocritical at times as the regenerate life battles with the flesh. Hopefully, they are not hypocritical in their faith, but even if that tragedy should occur, the works that God has done through the office they hold are still a benefit to Christ's Church. All sins can be forgiven. A hypocrite, whose words and actions are out of sync, can repent and be restored. The unbelieving heart can come to faith. When we are faced with hypocrisy in others, it is good to remember that we too suffer from this at times. We too need to be confronted with our sins and led to repentance with a gently, but firm, hand. Clergy is no exception. Dealing with hypocrisy is a dirty job that is unpleasant to deal with, but thanks be to God that he does call those in error to repentance and faith and that He is able to work, even though flawed and wicked people, for the good of His Church.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members of Mt. Pisgah,

Autumn has arrived and the leaves will be changing colors in a few weeks. Let's rejoice in the beauty our Father provides for us!

At our September 18 church council meeting we:

- Reviewed the **financial reports** from the Treasurer and Financial Secretary.
- Heard that the financial team had reviewed our **Concordia Plan** and determined that it is still the best option for benefits for our employees. It will be reviewed again next summer.
- Received **reports** of the boards and committees.
- Approved amendments to the **pre-school director's position description**, clarifying the director's responsibilities in hiring, overseeing, and firing staff members.
- Heard that the Mission Committee appreciated all who signed the greeting cards to our **seminary students**.
- Learned that there will be a **luncheon** following second service on **Reformation Sunday**, October 29.
- Were reminded by our property committee chairmen that Sylvia Gonzalez should be notified **if anything needs cleaning**.
- Received reports on the **Missions of the Month**: The August MOM, Safelight's Child Advocacy Center, received \$321 plus items from their wish list. Patchwork Foster Closet is September's MOM, including an ingathering of socks, underwear, and diapers. October's will be Back on Track addiction ministry. We will have a booth at Hendersonville's Main Street "**Treat Street**" fair on Halloween. Thanks were extended to all who participated in planning, decorating, and walking/riding on our entry in the **Apple Festival parade**.

- Heard an overview from Pastor Jon about the **evangelism training** program that is being conducted during the Bible study hour on Sundays. It is also available for viewing on the church's website.
- Learned that the **outdoor electronic sign** is still in the process of being repaired.

If you ever have questions about anything we covered at the council meeting or any suggestions, please contact me (828-693-5692 or bgv@ioa.com). Our next meeting will be Monday, October 16, at 7:00 in the church library.

Barbara Volk

Outreach and Community Concerns



Our Mission of the Month for October is Back on Track Addiction Ministry. Back on Track was started by a local Christian woman, Lynette Oliver, following the tragic death of her son from a drug overdose.

Here is their mission and services taken directly from their website, backontrackministries.com:

Our Mission

To provide no cost care, education and religious guidance to those suffering from addiction related issues, their families, and to the homeless community.

We invite the addicted and homeless to a better life:

- We offer food, personal hygiene products and clothing
- We offer classes and programs to show the way to a better life
- We offer acceptance and understanding with condemnation

When the time is right, we offer a way out:

- We pay fees and provide transportation to detox and rehabilitation programs
- We pay the cost of health insurance for the addicted with mental health issues or suffering from trauma and place them in mental health programs
- We advocate services for legal issues and work with probation officers, social workers, and family services

When they return, we provide support:

- We find transitional housing
- We offer classes to support family life, leadership, recovery support groups, teen support groups and Bible studies
- We help with food and clothing to help them re-start

Lynnette also runs the Back on Track thrift store located at 1900 Spartanburg Highway. The proceeds from the thrift store and financial donations help keep this life-changing ministry alive.

Outreach & Community Concerns

Apple Festival



Prayer List

Long Term Illness

Cynthia M. (Lundquist)
Michael Terzian (Keeney)
Brian Keeney
Joyce (Kruse)

Brenda Ridgeway (Amato)
Gretchen Sweetser
(Mincer)
Mary Coffman (Coffman)

Annette & Jim Bodden
(Heaphy)

Surgeries and Illness

Marianne Bugner
Albert Bugner
Donald Young (Rappley)
Marjorie Zell
David Moore (Gonzalez)
Dewayne Grooms
(Gonzalez)

Kurt Dellutri
Jackie Fry
Madeline Biddle
Jan Tharp
Wally Rose Mincer
Joe Gabriel (Amato)
Agapia Dragan (Luecke B)

Joanne Blanchard (Clancy)
David Hawthorne
Vicki Fisher
Mary Hill
Betty Ude

Personal and Family Concerns

Roger & Kay Lund
(Heaphy)
John Renick
Nancy Stang
Joann Kapugi

Kaufman Family
Debbie Leger
Sandi Rivers (Ryel)
Wayne & Karen Mathis
(Steen)

Teresa Fisher & children
Colby & Audrey
(Kaufman)

Karen Ude

Homebound

Warna Berryman
Albert & Marianne Bugner
Kathleen Fox
Joann Kapugi

Suzie Karnatz
Dianne Luecke
Jan Nelson
Sue Smith

Nancy Stang
Betty Ude

Compassion and Sympathy

Ministry Concerns

Our Preschool staff, children & families
Evangelical Lutheran Church & School in Laotchikit, Haiti
Pastor Dale Kaster (Missionary, Czech Republic)
Pastor Daniel Jastram (Missionary, Japan)
Pastor Daniel Conrad (Missionary, Dominion Republic)
Erik and Katie Saunders (Seminararian)
Josiah and Hannah Schultz (Seminararian)
Jacob and Caroline Moede (Seminararian)

Birthday Blessings

10/01 Tyler Maloney
10/02 Roy Reinhold
10/03 Robert Hamrick
10/04 Alethea Gaston
10/08 David Walters

10/10 Michael Luecke
10/14 Bruce Luecke
10/14 Shirley Wing
10/16 Anya White
10/17 Ruth Kugler

10/18 Steve Kirchoefer
10/20 Tony Selius
10/22 Jackie Fry
10/23 David Maloney
10/27 Jessica Luecke



Special Invitation to All Church Members

Monday, October 9 at 1 pm, the Ladies Guild will be hosting a representative from Four Seasons Hospice. We will hear about services available to us and to others in the community and how we can support the good work that Four Seasons does.



All church members (women and MEN) are invited to attend. There will be refreshments available. Kathy will be bringing an apple crunch cake, recipe attached. This is the cake recipe that won Best of Show at the Apple Festival Baking Contest this year.

Questions? Please contact Kathy Kirchoefer.

Apple Crunch Cake

Submitted by Kathy Kirchoefer

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour 3 9-inch cake pans, line the bottoms with parchment paper, grease the paper.

1 cup pure maple syrup

3-Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored, and cut into eights

In a large saucepan, bring the maple syrup to a boil over high heat, then simmer over low heat until reduced to $\frac{3}{4}$ cup, about 20 minutes. Pour thickened syrup into one cake pan. Arrange the apples in 2 concentric circles, overlapping slightly.

1 cup cinnamon graham cracker crumbs

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup brown sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup finely chopped pecans

1 stick of butter melted

Combine in a small bowl. Divide in half and press into an even layer into the other 2 of the 3 pans. Make the cake batter, recipe follows.

Chop up enough Granny Smith apples to make 2 cups. Set aside.

Sift together the following, set aside:

- 2 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon apple pie spice
- 1 teaspoon salt

Whisk together and set aside:

- ½ cup whole milk and 1 cup sour cream in a 2-cup liquid measuring cup.
- Cream together until light and fluffy:
- ½ cup butter, at room temperature
- 1 ¾ cup sugar

Add 2 eggs, one at a time. Add 1 teaspoon of vanilla.

Add the sour cream mixture and the sifted dry ingredients to the butter and egg mixture alternately, a little at a time until combined. Stir in the 2 cups of chopped apples. Divide equally between the 3 prepared pans. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes until toothpick comes out clean when put in the center of one of the layers.

Cool in pans on a rack for 10 minutes. Carefully remove from pans. Cool layers from pans with graham cracker crust side up. Apple layer can cool as usual; making sure to rearrange any apples that shifted. When layers are completely cool, make browned butter icing. Melt 1 stick of butter in a small pan on medium heat until melted and browned. Cool to room temperature. Add to 8 ounces of softened cream cheese in mixer bowl. Gradually add 4 cups of sifted powdered sugar and 1 teaspoon of vanilla. Beat until fluffy.

To assemble cake:

Put one layer, graham cracker crust side up on serving plate. Frost with a small amount of the icing. Spread about ¼ to ½ cup of apple butter on top of icing. Repeat with second graham cracker layer. Add plain layer with apples on top and frost the sides of the cake. Refrigerate cake until serving.

Parish Life

Parish Life will be hosting a Reformation Day dinner on Sunday, October 29th after second service. A signup sheet will be in the narthex. A free will offering will be collected to cover the cost of the food.

FALL YARD CARE DAY

Come and enjoy some hot apple cider, friendship, and God's creation!

WHEN: Saturday October 14th, 9am to Noon

WHAT: Trimming, weeding, transplanting, other

WHO: Any member of Mt. Pisgah Lutheran Church,
Any Preschool parent
Friends and Visitors



HOW: Sign up on board in Narthex. Bring your own tools.

Contact Bill Paris if questions (828-595-5622) (wmsaparis@hotmail.com)

Thank You Notes

To all our friends at Mt. Pisgah Lutheran Church,
We want to thank you for your very tangible support by helping us create a new teen space for our clients. Additionally, because of your support, we will be able to add item's specific to teens in our general waiting area. This will help to make a much more comfortable experience during their time with us. Again, thank you for your support,

The staff at the Safelight Child Advocacy Center





I've been wishing this day away for a long time. From the bottom of my heart, thank you for loving Jensen, for keeping him safe everyday (through a pandemic), getting him ready academically for kindergarten having him learn about the Lord, and for having patience as he grows.

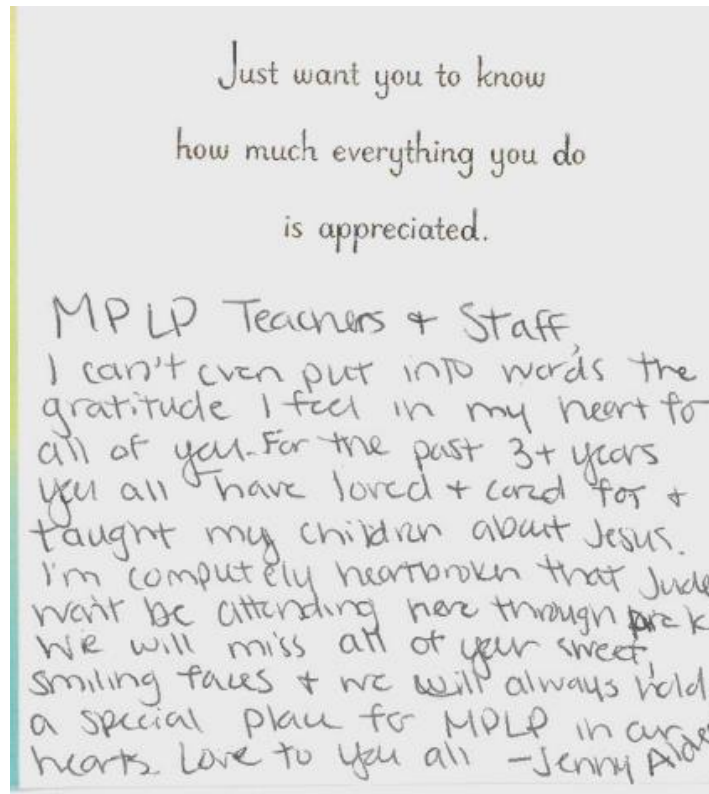
I always have felt that he was in caring arms here & I pray that he

will get the same love and feeling of comfort as he has at this preschool

I also want to thank you all for the love you shown our family through our valley of death. The Lord blessed us greatly with this school and we are forever grateful. ♥

We will miss you all.

Love,
The Rogers, Taylor, Melissa & Jensen



NO NEED TO MISS CHURCH SERVICES OR EVENING BIBLE STUDY

Information for accessing church service or evening Bible Study

Online: Video will be found on the home page at <http://www.mtpisgahlutheran.com>

The service bulletin will also be available on the homepage.

Phone: Service will begin at 10:45 am, dial in direct with no access code to (508) 924-5662 or call toll-free (844) 802-6666 and enter access code 889956

YouTube: Recording link will be published on the home page once it is available.

A DVD is available outside church door in the red box on the wall.

For complete information on church events, please visit the website:

<https://mtpisgahlutheran.360unite.com>



 We are actively reaching out to our neighbors through Facebook and Instagram. In sharing the Gospel, we need to also share the warmth of Mt. Pisgah LCMS. As a new Lutheran, I welcome your ideas, stories and suggestions, especially as we approach the Season of Advent. - Karen

Please contact
Karen.Lundquist@yahoo.com