

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
753 N. CALUMET AVE.
VALPARAISO, IN 46383

(219) 462-7684

WWW.FAITHVALPO.ORG

Embraced by God through Jesus Christ our Lord, we share this gospel of hope and healing within and throughout our community



I have talked in the past about the Christian view of freedom vs. the way in which others view freedom, but what about in regard to freedom of speech? Once again this is a hot topic these days. I have been fascinated over my lifetime to watch how those who want to regulate speech and those who argue people should be able to or required to enable others to say anything they want often changes based on who is in power. Of course, taming the tongue is often no easy matter, not even for the one whose mouth it is in. In our last newsletter, we looked at what the bible and one of the church fathers had to say about patience. So as we prepare to celebrate our freedom this Fourth of July, let's see what one of the writers from *CompellingTruth.org* has to say about it.

Pastor Eric Schoeck

What is a biblical view on freedom of speech?

In 1789, the United States Congress ratified the Bill of Rights which made ten amendments to the Constitution. James Madison and many of the founding fathers proposed the amendments because they believed the original Constitution did not adequately protect human liberty. The first and most well-known amendment protects the freedom of religion, speech, and the press, and the rights of assembly and petition. It states, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances" (U.S. Bill of Rights). Freedom of speech essentially means having the right to speak without governmental restriction or censorship.

The United States is very proud of the concept of freedom of speech because it makes it a unique nation in comparison to most nations throughout history. Under many other governments people have been persecuted or punished for speaking freely if what they say does not align with the ideas of those in charge. In the United States, though, people have been encouraged to share their opinions and question the government when they feel change is necessary. However, recent debates over hate speech have caused Americans to question just how committed the nation is to the First Amendment and whether unlimited free speech is always a good thing.

Many of the founding fathers' ideas were greatly influenced by Christianity. Yet is freedom of speech biblical? At the beginning of the Bible, in the book of Genesis, we learn from the story of Adam and Eve that God has given people free will. God tells Adam and Eve, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die" ([Genesis 2:16-17](#)). God warns them that their actions have consequences, but still allows them to make a choice. Therefore, the Bible supports the idea that we have the freedom to say what we want to, but that what we say can have consequences.

Although the Bible does not outright advocate for or prohibit free speech, it does provide us with guidelines for what we should and should not say. These guidelines are rooted in the idea that sinful behavior leads to bondage whereas obedience to Christ leads to freedom ([John 8:31-36](#); [Galatians 5:1](#)). On the one hand, the Bible discourages cursing, lying, deception, filthy language, slander, and any evil talk that tears others down ([Exodus 20:7, 16](#); [Leviticus 19:11](#); [Ephesians 4:15, 25, 29](#); [Colossians 3:8-9](#); [Titus 3:2](#)). This stands in blatant opposition to how free speech is interpreted by many people in the United States. Influential people often lie in order to win the appeal of an audience, some businesses use deception to gain more profit, entertainers use explicit language, and the porn industry twists reality.

Instead of using destructive language, the Bible encourages us to speak truthfully, build others up with our words, and use our mouths to praise and worship God ([Ephesians 4:15, 29](#); [1 Chronicles 16:23-31](#)). It also tells us to speak up for what is right. We see a great example of this in the story of queen Esther. Esther must save the Jewish people by going before the king and asking him to spare them even though he has not summoned her. It is against the law for her to speak to the king without his permission, but her cousin Mordecai encourages her by speaking the truth in love: "For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" ([Esther 4:14](#)).

So what is a good rule of thumb for knowing when to exercise your freedom of speech? Follow the advice laid out in [Ephesians 4:29](#), "Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear."

This and other articles to consider on many topics can be found at www.compellingtruth.org

MARK MAKERS HAS RESUMED REGULAR MEETINGS. THEY PLAN TO GATHER ON THE SECOND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH FROM 2:00-4:00PM AT CHURCH IN THE PARLOR.

JOIN THEM FOR FELLOWSHIP AND CREATIVE FUN. FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE SEE SUE SCHOECH OR JAN DIXON.



Loretta Frank	July 2
Hannah Grossnickle	July 4
Gail Hoover	July 5
Paul Nord	July 5
Peyton Marton-Gipson	July 8
Nathaniel Koehneke	July 13
Mackenzie Brant	July 14
Mike Porter	July 14
Mark Price	July 14
Alice Bernard	July 23
Mike Blouir	July 24
Dayla Fryman	July 24
Elizabeth Dunlap	July 29
Cheyenne Nicholson	July 30

Dear Faith Family,

In our Church Board Meeting on 6/7/21, we updated the Faith Lutheran Church's Covid-19 policies to reflect those of the CDC, Porter County Health Department, and the Governor's office. As a result, we made the following changes and accommodations:

- **Mask Policy**
 - Masks are no longer required in **Most** of the building
 - We do recommend that those who are **not yet vaccinated** continue to wear a mask, until 2 weeks after are fully vaccinated.
 - Those who prefer to be in a **masks required environment** during worship have the option of attending worship in the Parlor/Cry Room.
- Please, try to maintain **six-foot social distancing** (except by family units) during worship by spacing out in the pews. When sitting down, please move all the way down the pew to allow another person (s) to sit at the opposite end of the pew, when distancing allows
- **Sunday School and Sunday Bible Class** should observe the previous safety precautions when meeting.

For the full set of current/existing guidelines please visit www.faithvalpo.org. These guidelines have also been sent out to members in an email and there will be hard copies available at church as well.

Please, continue to treat the choices of others with Christian love. If you have questions, please contact Pastor or the board. Thank you for your patience and ongoing care and support of our leadership and each other.

Pastor Eric Schoech Faith Lutheran Board of Directors

Vacations and building repairs may result in the staff being out of the building and/or working remotely more often during the summer months, particularly during the weeks of June 28-July 2 and July 12-15.

If you plan to visit, please call before coming to the church to make sure someone is here. (219) 462-7684 If we need to be out of the office we will be checking mail, phones and email regularly. Please leave a voice message or email: office@faithmemorial.net

Thank you!

May Offerings and Attendance

(Attendance includes both inside the church and in the parking lot, but does not include those worshipping at home)

May 2	51	\$2706.00
May 9	57	\$1960.00
May 16	50	\$1468.00
May 23	42	\$1350.00
May 30	39	\$1850.00
June 6	37	\$2675.00
June 13	86	\$6297.00

THOUGHTS FROM THE DEACONESS

““Burdens”

Overburdened, overloaded, over-stressed, overworked. Sadly, these words have become more prevalent in our conversations. These words are reflected in the number of ads for tranquilizers and antidepressants. We see the juggler with china plates twirling on several different poles. Like him, we struggle to keep our lives under control. But Psalm 68 may give us a different perspective on our crazy lives.

Hebrew is the original language for the psalms. Like other Semitic languages, Hebrew was originally written without any vowels. There are passages where changes needed to be made to make grammatical sense. At times, scholars have found mistakes in translations, some accidental, and others on purpose. So in working with the psalms, we try to find similar translations of a verse or phrase.

Psalm 68 is one of the more difficult psalms to translate, and verse 19 is no exception. The King James Bible reads, “Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation.” The Revised Standard Version says, “Blessed be the Lord, who daily bears us up; God is our salvation.” Do you see the subtle difference? In the first, God loads us with blessings. In the second, God bears our overburdened lives for us.

Many translations opt for the latter version. But in this case, the King James speaks more closely to my heart. Because you and I are overburdened in this world with so many concerns, it is a gift to think of being overburdened with blessings from God. Obvious blessings come to mind with family and friends, home and food, and our very selves. Blessings too numerous to count. But is it possible that the concerns in our lives are also blessings? Could the leaky roof remind us of those who have no home? Could we be thankful for the paycheck from a stressful job, knowing that many have no paycheck. Could our health problems help us remember those who have no health insurance? Ultimately, could those concerns force us to run to God for help?

So, maybe both translations of Psalm 68:19 are usable. We are loaded with more blessings from God than we could ever list. And even the burdens of life are blessings, for they allow God to bear us up and remind us of those in need.

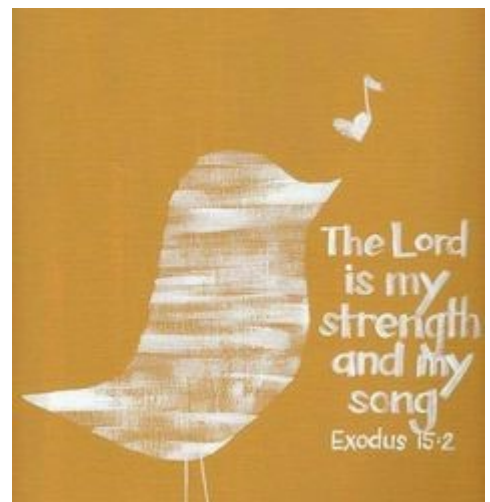
Copyright

Last month’s newsletter included an article about the technology and people who are “behind the scenes” making streaming and video possible of Faith’s worship services. This month, information about copyright issues will be shared.

Some of you may wonder why your favorite hymn or liturgy hasn’t been used since before Covid. Copyright is the answer. Any liturgy or hymn or even text of the Apostles’ Creed is under some type of copyright protection. That allows the author and/or composer the recognition and payment for their work. While many hymns and liturgies are in Public Domain (meaning there was never a copyright or the copyright has expired), others are fully protected with a copyright date.

In order for the worship services to be streamed on the internet, movies to be shown in the church or parking lot, pictures and video to be displayed on the screen in the sanctuary, hymns and liturgies to be published in bulletins, etc., Faith has five licenses with four companies to be granted permission to use the copyrighted material. The yearly cost for this is about \$700.

It is illegal to use copyrighted material without permission. The legal fine is rather large compared to the yearly cost. So, if you have not sung your favorites in well over a year, it is probable that the author/composer has not given permission for their material to be used in any form other than a hymnal. When we can finally begin worshipping again as we did pre-Covid, hymnals will be available and hopefully, your favorites will appear.



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Church

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FAITH WORSHIP SCHEDULE

The Sixth Sunday after Pentecost, July 4, 9:00am Holy Communion
The Seventh Sunday after Pentecost, July 11, 9:00am Morning Prayer
The Eighth Sunday after Pentecost, July 18, 9:00am Holy Communion
The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost, July 25, 9:00am Morning Prayer
The Tenth Sunday after Pentecost, August 1, 9:00am Holy Communion
The Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost, August 8, 9:00am Morning Prayer
The Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost, August 15, 9:00am Holy Communion
The Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost, August 22, 9:00am Morning Prayer
The Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost, August 29, 9:00am Holy Communion

The above services are subject to change if Covid 19 virus regulations change again. For questions please call the office at (219) 462-7684.

