



ENGLISH CHANNELS

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Love your neighbor as yourself

**By Rev. Ben Eder
Pilgrim Lutheran Church
Kenmore, NY**

Many years ago, when I was fairly new in the ministry, our country was facing one of those severe recessions that seem to pop up with some regularity these days. I remember turning to one of my parishioners, (a young engineer with a steel company) and asking him, “How is your company going to handle the recession?” He explained to me that the CEO recently paid a visit to his plant and told the assembled workers, “Ladies and gentlemen, a recession is upon us; I am here to announce that we choose not to participate.”

Those words have stuck with me as I have continued to labor in the Lord’s vineyard in the succeeding years. There is no question that the landscape around us is changing: we are living in a postmodern, post-Christian era in which the Church’s influence upon the culture is quickly evaporating. The reports from the field – from our pastors and congregations – are often dire and bleak: we hear of dwindling attendance and shrinking budgets. For many, morale seems to be at an all-time low.

Yes, we know that conditions are difficult, and that the culture is not as supportive of the Church as it used to be. However, I am here to tell you that as bleak as conditions may seem to be in the world, “I choose not to participate.” That is to say, I choose not to give in to the “doom and gloom” of the naysayers as long as Christ continues to give me the health and the will to proclaim his Gospel.

To be frank, we in the Church are often our own worst enemies in this regard. Our attitudes and our

language can be very self-defeating. At times Jesus would rebuke his disciples and others with the words, “Where is your faith?” I know that “Lutherans love Lent,” but we don’t have to act like we’re in Lent all of the time! We are a Resurrection People, for Christ lives and he abides in us through his Word and the Sacraments.

Even though the Church faces greater challenges in the Western world today, I choose not to participate in the hand-wringing and defeatist attitudes of some in the Church; rather, I choose to continue to participate in the world with the life-saving, life-changing

Gospel of Jesus Christ! When times get difficult, churches have a tendency to become a “fortress” in order to preserve doctrine (think “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God”); this is all well and good, but also remember that a fortress has a drawbridge which connects the Church with

the world outside. As our Lord has made clear, we are in the world but not of it. Jesus and his disciples did not “hide,” but rather they were engaged in the streets, communities, and hillsides where they were active in ministry: they went where people were.

Bishop Hardy’s theme for the next three years is “Love your neighbor as yourself.” It is our prayer and goal to see more pastors and congregations of our English District showing, practicing, and demonstrating the love of Jesus to our neighbors both near and far. May our Lord Jesus Christ grant us the will, zeal, and resources to do so.

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Bishop's Notes

The Rev. Dr. Jamison J. Hardy
Bishop & President of the English District

Love your neighbor as yourself

“Love your neighbor as yourself,” my triennial theme for the English District, is borne out of a strong belief that we Lutheran Christians must return to an adherence to this command of Christ. Too often in the Church, members live within the church as children of the heavenly Father. Nevertheless, outside the church, Christians live as members in the world not as children of the Father.

The lifestyle of loving your neighbor is one that comes to us fairly easily theologically. When Christ commands us to “love our neighbors,” we see an opportunity to fulfill His commands. However, when we actually attempt to put this lifestyle into practice, we find ourselves stumbling and fumbling. It is laborious to love someone who is mean to us and even harder to love someone who is a stranger. We all have family members and co-workers that make showing love very hard. They cause us to want to withhold love as a form of punishment. Satan wins and we withhold the greatest gift God has given us, His love and mercy.

Biblically speaking, Christ declares the reality to all believers. If you do not forgive, you will not be forgiven before my Father who is in heaven. Wow, that is a command from Christ that hits home to all believers

and sounds the alarm to pay attention. It is a command that comes with a promise. God the Father has given us a promise within the command. He tells us in 1 John 4:10, “This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.”

What a comforting message this gives to all who listen. God the Father has sent His son into this world to love us and to give His life for ours. This is the greatest example of love that we have and one that is unmatched by anyone or anything. It is precisely in the love of Christ that we are capable of loving one another. It is by His example that we are able to pray for our enemies and for those that persecute us.

Today is the time for the Church to stand up and live the post-baptismal life of love and mercy. Now is the time for the pastors, teachers, DCEs, and all children of Christ to truly “love your neighbor as yourself.” We can, by the power of the Holy Spirit and not by our own means, love all of God’s people, care for all of His creation and obey the command of Christ without reservation or fear. Join me in the next triennium in fulfilling my theme “Love your neighbor as yourself” in word and deed.

Board Bulletins — August 2015

By Rev. Luke Zimmerman, Secretary

The English District Board of Directors met Aug. 10-12, 2015. The Board was hosted by the members of Angelica Lutheran Church - Allen Park, MI, for part of the meeting sessions.

Actions taken by the Board at this meeting include:

- * Electing Rev. Wayne Morton as chairman and Mr. Paul Lagemann as vice-chairman.

- * Granting approval to Chapel of the Cross Lutheran Church - St. Peters, MO, to transfer membership to the Missouri District.

- * Listening to District President Jamison Hardy present his vision for the District in the 2015-2018 triennium, a vision rooted in Jesus’ statements about the great commandment (*Mk 12:28-34*).

- * Reviewing the ministry plan for 2015-2016 fiscal year to include necessary funding for the addition of a Mission Executive to the District staff.

- * Reviewing the 2015 District Convention and the responses to surveys provided by delegates.

- * Requesting exceptions for several electoral circuits to enable them to send delegates to the 2016 Synod Convention.

- * Approving changes to the constitution of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church - Hudson, IN.

- * Receiving a report from the District Mission Council about potential locations for new church plants as identified by delegates to the District Convention.

- * Establishing future meeting dates and locations.

School News

Faith Lutheran still serving families after 63 years

Faith Lutheran School has been serving families in Tucson for over 63 years. We are the last Missouri Synod Lutheran Elementary (K-6) School in our area and are proud to still be witnessing to students and their families as we educate them and spread the good news about Jesus.

Last year at this time, significant rainfall poured on our church and school during our Grandparent's Day chapel. Our campus was flooded in a matter of minutes. Still, our celebration of grandparents continued. Students brought puppet shows to the sanctuary, staff supplied snacks and activities, and volunteers continued cooking to offer our pre-planned lunch.

As our special event concluded, we closed school and assessed the damage. It was great! However, God and His people blessed us significantly and today we are in better shape than we were before the flooding.

Faith Lutheran School would especially like to thank the English District, as well as all of the congregations and schools from within our district that generously supported us during our time of hardship. Prayer was poured out from all over the nation for Faith! Many LCMS schools contributed their offering to aid us, and churches sent financial help. We are so appreciative!

We continue our mission of encouraging our students to advance academically, spiritually, emotionally, socially and physically while ministering to their families, our community, and the world around us.

It is interesting to note that this year's student body is very diverse with children from many cultures, nations and ethnic groups. Still, our students function together (with our teachers, staff and volunteers) as one family in the Lord; a real-life example of the Kingdom in action.

Our "Extra Mile" class teaches children to serve others as Jesus served others. Each child joins a



class that pairs with a local service organization or church mission. Together they offer aide to others in need and share with them what they are learning in chapel. This year's focus is "The Fruit of the Spirit." Currently, we have a class that partners with our church members to care for shut-ins.

Another class is witnessing to the elderly through visits to a local nursing home where they sing and read to men and women. We reach out to our military and send gifts and prayers to those who are deployed. Faith students are making a difference in our community and the hearts of those around them.

Again, sincere thanks for the friendship and support throughout the Missouri Synod!

Around the District



Rev. Jamison Hardy installed as Bishop/President

The English District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod officially welcomed its new Bishop/President, the Rev. Dr. Jamison Hardy, at a special installation service and dinner on Sunday, September 6, 2015, at Peace Lutheran Church in McMurray, PA.



Pastor Jeffrey Teeple (center front) was installed at Peace, Fremont, IN on September 27, 2015

Ferguson Day of Hope

Late in July, 19 volunteers from Chapel of the Cross-Lutheran in North St. Louis County joined other volunteers from around the St. Louis area to

share food, love and the hope that is ours in Jesus Christ with the people of Ferguson, MO at Ferguson's "Day of Hope." Chapel of the Cross partnered with the LCMS, the LCMS Missouri District and other local LCMS churches as over 1500 bags of food were distributed, children were invited to visit a "mini-VBS," and conversations about faith, hope and healing took place. Volunteers also took prayer requests and prayed for children and adults in attendance.

Chapel of the Cross looks forward to its continued ministry in Ferguson, partnering with the Synod's planned "Lutheran Hope Center of Ferguson." The Hope Center is an effort to offer youth education, mentoring, sports camps, character building, Bible studies, spiritual care and other assistance to children and their families in Ferguson. (To read more about Ferguson's "Day of Hope," visit <http://blogs.lcms.org/2015/fergusons-day-of-hope>.)



Pastor Richard Klein installed as new pastor

Pastor Richard Klein was installed as pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church of Germanicus in Golden Lake, Ontario, Canada on September 13, 2015. Seen in the group photo front row, left to right: Pastor Orlen Lapp; Pastor Richard Klein; and Pastor Daniel Barr. Back row, left to right: Pastor Kevin Klein (Pastor Richard Klein's son); Pastor Stephen Alles, Circuit Visitor; and Pastor Paul Williams.

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Around the District (continuation)

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Connect with Us!

We're a click away! Connect with the English District via social media! Stay up-to-date with conferences, events, happenings around the district and blog posts.

On our Web site you will find resources, our blog, contact information and so much more: www.englishdistrict.org

"Like" us on Facebook: **English District LCMS**

And join the English District Connect Group:



English District Connect

"Follow" us on Twitter: **EngDistrictLCMS**

If you would like to publish a blog post or share anything on our social media pages, contact Lynne Cobb, Communications Coordinator, at lcobb@englishdistrict.org.

Surprise farewell party for Bishop Emeritus David Stechholz

Bishop Emeritus David Stechholz thought he was scheduled for a meeting on August 21. Imagine his surprise when staff and clergy had gathered to say "hello" and "good bye" at the English District office (see photos at left). An unofficial passing of the torch, surprise gifts, plus a delicious cake and ice cream was served in honor of the incoming and outgoing bishops. Thank you, Bishop Stechholz, for your many years of leadership, and welcome, Bishop Hardy, in your new leadership role.



Sharing First Fruits

Redeemer Lutheran Church of Elmhurst, IL, has already produced over 550 lbs. of vegetables this growing season. Congregation members helped plant, maintain and harvest the crops, which included zucchini, green beans, cucumbers, tomatoes, butternut squash and much more. The produce from the community garden was donated to the Yorkfield Food Pantry.

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Loving your neighbor through gospel outreach

By Tom Kuwazaki, Deacon

Morning Star Lutheran Church, Lakeside CA

One of the members of English District Evangelization Team, Tom Kuwazaki, shares in the following article just one example from his congregation's ministry of how you might "Love your neighbor" through Gospel outreach. Please be encouraged and inspired through this warm and loving example of sharing the faith.

"Hey Rick! How would you like to go with me to a park and meet some people?" With the excitement and enthusiasm of a young child, Rick replied, "I would love to do that!" You would have thought that we were going on a fishing trip.

I met Rick at a care facility several years earlier. He had made a request of the activities director, asking her if she knew anyone that could spend time with him to study the Bible, and she contacted me.

After volunteering my time at this facility for many years, I welcomed the opportunity to share God's Word. We would spend time every week, growing in God's Word while building a closer relationship. During these visits, I found out that as a teenager, Rick was injured by a drunk driver in a head-on collision, leaving him in a wheelchair for the rest of his life.

We were studying Matthew 25:31-40 when I asked Rick if he would be interested in joining me for an outreach that I was involved with at Lindo Lake Park in Lakeside, CA. He was very excited about that opportunity. After some prep time at the park, we started our day in prayer, asking the Lord to help us to be sensitive to the leading of His Holy Spirit in meeting the needs of the people we would encounter this day.

"Now that we are all set up, Rick, I would like you to start out by just saying "hi" to people. It wasn't long before someone walked by. Rick said good morning, and the greeting wasn't acknowledged. Rick yelled at the person, saying, "What's the matter with you? Are you stuck up!?" Turning to him I said, "Rick, you shared with me that you love to fish. I bet that *every* time you threw out your line, you caught a fish *right away*." He started to shake his head yes before he caught himself, realizing that he *didn't* catch fish as soon as his line was cast.

"We are here at the park learning how to be fishers of men," I explained. Our Lord will direct the ones

that we will be ministering to." A few minutes later, three women approached us and asked what we were doing. We explained that we were meeting people in the community and seeing if we could help them in whatever way possible, including praying for any of their needs. One of the women told us that she had cancer and asked if we could pray for her, which we did. We also wrote her need on a paper butterfly that we took back to our church so that others could pray for her as well.

After they left, I asked Rick, "Isn't it interesting how God works by bringing those who are in need to us, so we can meet that need?"

What a great privilege we have been given in learning how to care for others. Our Lord truly gives us different ears to hear with, eyes to see and a heart of compassion to meet people right where they are in their life situations.

I shared this story about Rick because he was very open to learning how to share God's Word by simply saying "Hi." For those who respond to our greeting, we are then given the opportunity to start building a relationship with them. I've been given the opportunity to disciple Rick on how to hear with new ears, see with new eyes and a new heart that is sensitive to Jesus Christ and His Holy Spirit that dwells within us. As we acknowledge their struggles, our Lord gives us the words to speak into their lives, helping them know that there is a God that loves and cares for them.

Our Lord has blessed us with experiencing four baptisms and one person who was set free from a spirit that was holding him in bondage. Last month, we had another person that was baptized at Morning Star Lutheran Church, who has been involved with caring for our church grounds and participating with the Praise and Worship team.

About the Channels

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Phone - (800) 755-9335

Staff Editor - Sally Naglich

Page Designer - Ed Wright

Send articles to: snaglich@englishdistrict.org

Love Your Neighbor As Yourself...At Your Work

Pastor Mark Braden serves as keynote presenter in Bolivia

Pastor Mark Braden of Zion Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Detroit, MI, traveled to Bolivia in August to serve as keynote presenter at a theological conference for pastors. The conference, a Luther Academy event, was held in Cochabamba, in the Andes Mountains.

Conference attendees included pastors of the Bolivian Lutheran Church (*La Iglesia Cristiana Evangélica Luterana de Bolivia*), and visiting missionaries from the Norwegian Mission Society. The all-day course met from August 24-28.

Pastor Braden presented on "Christ and the Church," a combined course in Christology and Ecclesiology. The course was based in Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, and included the writings of Martin Luther, C.F.W. Walther, and Lutheran theologian John Mueller. Copies of *Good News* magazine in Spanish were also included in the course.

"The Bolivia conference was an excellent opportunity to put into action the triennial theme of our District, 'Love your neighbor as yourself,'" said Braden. "We

were able to work with our Bolivian neighbors to help the pastors of their church grow in their knowledge of God's Word, and in their understanding of these fundamental Christian doctrines."

Vicar Winston Grieser, who served at Zion in Detroit during the last academic year, traveled with Pastor Braden. Vicar Grieser taught English as a Second Language classes in a local congregation to provide an evangelical outreach to the community of Cochabamba.

The conference in Bolivia was the second for Pastor Braden, who taught a course for pastors on the Book of Revelation in Cochabamba last year. He serves as an International Fellow for the Luther Academy, and travels in support of the LCMS Office of International Missions in South America and the Caribbean. Pastor Braden has worked in Venezuela, the Dominican Republic, Colombia and Bolivia. Three Vicars of Zion have had the opportunity to travel with him.

Around the District (continuation)

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Chapel of the Cross-Lutheran celebrates 50th anniversary

Chapel of the Cross-Lutheran, located in St. Louis, MO, celebrates its 50th anniversary this October. The congregation has chosen "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" as its anniversary theme, and they will be celebrating this milestone with special services and a dinner on Sunday, October 18. May the Lord continue to bless the ministry and mission of Chapel of the Cross-Lutheran.

Fifty-five years recognized

Pastor Orlen Lapp and his wife, Roberta, were honored with a special recognition for his 55th year of ordination in the ministry. A special certificate from the District was presented to the Lapps. Members of St. John's Lutheran Church, Pembroke, Ontario, Canada, reflected on the highlights of his ministry and a special fellowship gathering followed. Congratulations and God's blessings to the Lapps on this ministry milestone!

May God's peace be with you!

Official Acts

Pastors - Installations

The Rev. Dr. Jamison Hardy, September 6, 2015, Installed, Bishop/President, English District; *The Rev. Richard Klein*, September 13, 2015, Installed, Sole Pastor, St. John's, Golden Lake (Germanicus), ON

Teachers - Installations

Anna Hu, August 9, 2015, West Portal, San Francisco, CA; *Hillary Czernicki*, August 22, 2015, Hales Corners, Hales Corners, WI; *Rachel Stathakis*, August 22, 2015, Hales Corners, Hales Corners, WI; *Kerrie Roesler*, August 23, 2015, Hales Corners, Hales Corners, WI

Calls Accepted

The Rev. Richard Klein, Sole Pastor, St. John's, Golden Lake (Germanicus), ON; *The Rev. Anthony Oliphant*, Sole Pastor, Redeemer, Elmhurst, IL; *The Rev. Eric Carlson*, Associate Pastor, Peace, McMurray, PA; *Candidate Warren Choy*, DCE, West Portal, San Francisco, CA

Transfers In

Kerrie Roesler, June 15, 2015, South Wisconsin District; *Al Kahlfeldt*, July 28, 2015, Northern Illinois District; *The Rev. James Witt*, August 15, 2015, Nebraska District; *The Rev. Jeffrey Teeple*, September 15, 2015, North Wisconsin District

Transfers Out

Emily Goins, July 1, 2015, Pacific Southwest District; *Ethel Garrett*, July 10, 2015, Northern Illinois District; *Marlene Jensen*, July 10, 2015, Northwest District; *The Rev. Keith Kinslow*, July 22, 2015, Northern Illinois District; *Emily Marlar*, July 22, 2015, Ohio District; *The Rev. Scott Stiegemeier*, July 27, 2015, Pacific Southwest District; *Franklin Grepke*, August 20, 2015, Southern District; *JoAnn Grepke*, August 20, 2015, Southern District; *The Rev. Dr. Mark Hoehner*, August 25, 2015, Missouri District; *The Rev. Dr. Robert Hoehner*, August 25, 2015, Missouri District; *The Rev. James Prince*, August 25, 2015, Missouri District; *The Rev. James Uglum*, August 25, 2015, Missouri District; *Andrew Nelson*, August 25, 2015, Missouri District; *George Nelson*, August 25, 2015, Missouri District; *The Rev. Mark Koschmann*, September 1, 2015, Minnesota South District

Transfers Out

Chapel of the Cross, St. Peter's, MO, August 11, 2015, Missouri District

Change of Status

Jane Boye, May 1, 2010, Candidate to Non-Candidate; *Valjean Schallhorn*, June 15, 2013, Candidate to Emeritus; *Karen Herz*, June 30, 2015, Active to Emeritus



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