

Contact Information

Pastor Kris Bohac—402 499 4993

krisbo90@gmail.com

President Diane Rine—402.480.1483

Facebook—[Zion Lutheran Church ELCA](#)

Website—www.zionithaca.org

GOOD TIDINGS FROM ZION

June/July 2022



Guns, Morality, Law and Gospel

Log in information and the worship bulletin for worship can be found on our website on the “Worship online and in person” page

June helpers

Clean—Cindy and Jerry Otto

Lectors— Ficks

Communion Assistant—Merlin

Ushers—Merlin Fick/Aaron Nygren

July Helpers

Clean—Lacey and TJ Sabatka

Lectors— Rines

Communion Assistant—Carol

Ushers—Gail Otto/Charlie Rine

Zion Lutheran Church
589 County Rd. 13
Ithaca, NE 68033

In Wednesday’s newspaper op ed section, there was a column by Cal Thomas. Cal Thomas is a very conservative columnist with whom I often don’t agree. His column, like many others lately, was about the recent horrific shootings, particularly at the school in Uvalde. Thomas never misses a chance to take a dig at President Biden and Democrats in general. But, then regardless of political bent, op ed writers make their living by taking digs at the other side.

In this column, he did write something with which I agreed. He said what I think more and more people on both sides are beginning to believe – that purchase of military style weaponry should involve a whole lot more rigorous process than it does now...at a minimum.

I’m of the mind that at this point, we should do everything that has been suggested from both sides, from better mental health care funding to stricter gun laws to heightened security at schools...maybe even arming teachers who are willing to be. Although I’m at least as skeptical of that plan as conservatives are of stricter gun laws. But we are well past the time when simply arguing and doing nothing is even an option. I’ve written to my Senators to share my views.

But here’s why I’m even bringing this up. The last two lines of the column said, “There is also a moral element to this and other school shootings that should not be overlooked. Preachers take note.”

OK...I’m a preacher and I’m taking note. My question is “What is that moral element we should preach about?” It’s hard to imagine that anyone on the face of the planet thinks murdering 4th graders isn’t immoral. You don’t need a preacher to say that.

Knowing Cal Thomas’s perspective, I suspect he would talk about things like the breakdown of the traditional family, lack of structure and discipline in the home, and adherence to his particular brand of Christian faith...one that often comes off, at least publicly, as being very legalistic and judgy—very focused on a particular view of morality.

OK, so I’ve probably gone as far as I can with Cal Thomas without reading far more of his writings than I want to.

But it did get me thinking about what preachers should preach on this particular issue. First of all, I’ll say this, I don’t actually view preaching morality my primary job. You don’t have to be Christian to be a moral person. By the same token, some very immoral people have been Christian preachers.

(continued pg. 2)

In Lutheran seminaries, we learn about preaching law and gospel. So yes, we do preach law. We preach about the kind of life God wants us to lead. And we also preach about how often we fall short, and how at our worst, human actions lead to death.

But then we also preach the gospel...the gospel about how God breaks into all the places where human action brings death...and out of it brings life.

If Christians proclaimed and lived by that morality, if you want to call it that, instead of a more legalistic morality, would that help tame horrific violence? And what would that look like?

I don't have all the answers, but it's made me think. Maybe it would look like Christians letting Christ's love flow through them to young people who are struggling...especially the ones who drive everyone nuts. Or being extra kind to those who just always seem a little off. Maybe it's you being the one caring adult in the life of a child whose home life is chaotic. Or walking with and helping a family who is struggling. Or helping support a single mom barely keeping her head above water. Or visiting a father or mother in prison. All without judgment. It might also mean giving up a little of what we're sure are our rights if it has even a shot at keeping more 4th graders alive. If Jesus could lay down his life, then maybe we ought to think about what we're asked to lay down.

Bottom line, I suspect living the gospel means trusting that God really is working in the most broken people in the most broken of situations to bring life out of death...and then joining in that work, and showing what it looks like when God brings life out of death. That's a great deal harder than preaching morality. But if we really believe the gospel...if we truly believe this death and resurrection stuff, then maybe it's the one thing that will truly help.

Pastor Kris

Pastoral Coverage

Here are my vacation dates:

June 13-17

June 21-26

June 30 - July 5

Pastor Glenda Ferguson will be covering for emergencies during those times. Her phone number is 402-443-5503. If she doesn't answer, leave a message so she knows it's not spam

Synod News

Synod Assembly was the first weekend in June. The biggest item of business was to elect a new bishop. Our new bishop is Pastor Scott Johnson. He is currently campus pastor at Midland University.

Calendar

Worship services are livestreamed to the church YouTube channel. You can find the link to that and the bulletin on our website: <https://www.zionithaca.org/worship>

June 5	9:00 am—Pentecost Worship with Holy Communion—Affirmation of Baptism for Izzy Wright and Gracie Hofmeister
June 12	9:00 am—Worship
June 18	9:00 am—Worship
June 26	9:00 am—Worship—Carol Mintzmeyer to lead worship and share a message
July 3	9:00 am—worship, no communion.
July 10	9:00 am—Worship with Holy Communion
July 17	9:00 am—Worship
July 24	9:00 am—Worship
July 31	9:00 am—Worship

Summer Themes

We will have three sermon series this summer that were decided with congregation input. The amount of time on each isn't set in stone, and we may break up the Singing Our Faith series, but here's the basic idea:

- **Singing Our Faith**—each week's message will be based on a hymn and a paired Bible passage. We'll share some background on the hymn, a reflection based either on the hymn, or scripture, or both woven together. Here are the first four:
 - June 12—Jesus Loves Me, June 19—Take My Life that I May Be; June 26—You Have Come Down to the Lakeshore; July 3—Children of the Heavenly Father
- **Heresies, New and Old**—we'll talk about beliefs the Church has labeled heresies, or false teachings over the years. We'll talk about the prevalent ones today. And we'll talk about how it was decided what was "orthodox." And we'll learn a little about the process of discernment and how we can approach issues that are controversial in the church
- **Ecclesiastes**—Someone requested a series on Ecclesiastes. The writer of Ecclesiastes is sort of the Eeyore of scripture authors. But I have found it one of the most helpful books there is in certain times of my life and its poetry is near magical