

July 2023 Newsletter



Pastor Carlin's Page

The Caustic Tongue

Mark Twain was quoted as saying, "It is better to keep your mouth closed and let people think you are a fool than to open it and remove all doubt". Today with the emergence of social media many people are emboldened, and in fact, believe it their duty to tell you what they think. Certainly this is not a new phenomenon but just seems more prevalent than ever. Just for the record, when you are on social media there are three things you can offer but I for one will not be listening, hearing or reading, your medical advice from some random website, your political advice given you from a website affiliated to your political party, and your religious platitudes and generalities from your favorite TV ministry. You are free to post them but expect me and many others to just scroll on through. I desire to see pictures of your children and grandchildren or your vacation and preferably what you are having for your latest meal but not the aforementioned. Now that that rant is over let us get down to where the rubber meets the road.

Most of us have opinions, however, opinions are like armpits most folks have them and they generally stink. We need to be more aware of our words and the affects they have. Remember once a word is spoken it cannot be taken back. In the same manner, once you push send on a computer message it is out there forever in cyberspace. The Bible has a lot to say on the subject of the caustic tongue. The scriptures are filled with warnings about our words. Perhaps the most notable of these warnings on the tongue is found in the book of James.

James 3 English Standard Version (ESV)

Taming the Tongue

3 Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. **2** For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body. **3** If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide

their whole bodies as well. **4** Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. **5** So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things.

How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! **6** And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life,^[a] and set on fire by hell.^[b] **7** For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind,⁸ but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. **9** With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. **10** From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers,^[c] these things ought not to be so. **11** Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and salt water? **12** Can a fig tree, my brothers, bear olives, or a grapevine produce figs? Neither can a salt pond yield fresh water.

Wisdom from Above

13 Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. **14** But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. **15** This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. **16** For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. **17** But the wisdom from

above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. ¹⁸ And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

As stated the tongue is a very small part of the body that has great power to hurt, offend and even kill. Often we fail to think before we speak, operating primarily with emotion and not with wisdom or restraint. James is quick to remind us that blessings and cursing's should not come from the same source, however, they do.

We as Christians are held to a higher standard as we should be and the teachers of God's word even higher. Though, often Christians seem to be the biggest offenders.

People rail about the state of Christianity and the church as a whole, however, many of these same folks fail to see the connection with the unbridled tongue. Now for the record, there is nothing wrong with having an opinion or a disagreement. However, we must know how and when to express them. Also, our tone and the manner in which we bring opinions and disagreements forward must be measured. If care is not taken, our words and intent can be misconstrued and cause ill reputable harm. So how does this affect the church and the ministry of the mission of God?

First, grievances and opinions should be taken to leadership. To bring these up in a congregational setting or to just talk to multiple people to stir up folk's emotions and cause misunderstandings can lead to uprisings and cause trouble for those who are in leadership. Also, to do things in this manner can send a wrong message to visitors that the church is dysfunctional and can cause hurt feelings among parishioners. Many individuals have been driven from the house of God for good because of unwise use of the tongue. Others have given up on their ministry aspirations simply by feeling betrayed and hurt very badly.

Second, pastors are leaving the ministry in droves because of the problems they must deal with from those who wish to say things in great emotion and without thinking. In fact, many people stay away from ministry as a vocation because of the troubles they have seen in their home churches and don't wish to be bogged down with the same types of issues.

Third, it is not only hard to get folks to go into ordained ministry but it is equally hard to get good people to commit to teaching Sunday school or serving on council or any other board because of the caustic tongues of some Christians.

The advice of Mark Twain is certainly needed today. Sometimes not opening ones mouth is far better than opening it and later regretting the words that come out. As Christians, if we are not going to take the words of James and others in scripture to heart we might as well put a sign up outside that reads don't come here we are mean, dysfunctional and ornery and cannot and won't get along with anyone. Also, we will continue to see good and qualified pastors leave ministry by the bushel; and many who may sense the call of God on their lives may pass to venture into other less troublesome vocational paths.

Blessed God, help us to be wise with our words and only speak at the proper time and way as to bring only your love to this world and not consternation. Amen

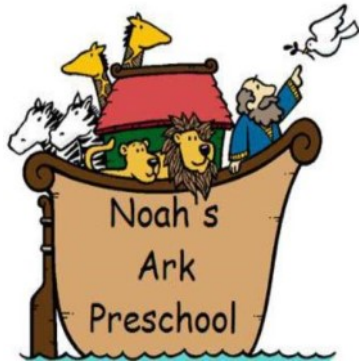
Many blessings from our most relevant Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Pastor Carlin

REMINDER—If you wish to make a contribution to the church and are uncomfortable/unable to attend in person, you may mail it or drop it off between 8 am & 3:30 pm M-F.

2023/2024 CONFIRMATION CLASS

Please continue to watch this space for updates when the 2023/2024 school year gets closer to starting.



July at Noah's Ark

We had a good turnout at Pre-Registration and are excited for our enrollment for this next school year! We still have lots of room for more students, so PLEASE tell your family and friends and we will be holding Registration on Tuesday, August 1st from 11-1 and 4-6. OR please feel free to email pontiacnoahsark@gmail.com anytime for your questions.

We also offer the option of your 3-year-old being enrolled the month AFTER they turn 3! We are so excited to have added this option to our classroom environment!

The 3-year-old classes are held on Tuesday and Thursday from 8:15-10:15 and 10:30-12:30.

The 4-year-old classes are held on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 8:15-11:15 and 11:45-2:45.

The 3-year-olds did a fantastic job at their Spring Concert and are off to Summer Break! We have a majority of our 3-year-olds coming back for our 4-year-old program in September and we are so thankful they have once again chosen Noah's Ark for their child's education!

Our 4-year-olds have officially GRADUATED! It truly was such a blessing to have these two groups this year! They did not let any obstacle bring down their love of school and interactions with their friends! They did such a fantastic job singing their songs for parents and everyone who was in attendance for their graduation celebration! These classes have learned so much this year and last that I know they will be well prepared for Kindergarten! We pray that they show the love of Jesus to all they encounter in their new journey!

Our primary goal is to always ensure the safety of our students; parents and teachers while at the same time promote a **positive and fun** preschool experience.

Thank you for your support here at Noah's Ark!

*Breanne Immke
Director of Noah's Ark Preschool*

Please contact me at pontiacnoahsark@gmail.com for any questions!

Check out our Facebook page too!



ANNOUNCEMENTS

SUNDAY SCHOOL: Summer Sunday School began June 4th.

COMFORTING (QUILTING) LADIES: meets on Saturdays from 9 am—5 pm in the large Sunday School room downstairs. You don't have to come every Saturday and you are free to choose which hours are best for you (whatever fits your schedule) . Come first thing in the morning OR come just before lunch; work a while, take a lunch break; come back and work some more OR come to work later in the afternoon and then attend the 5:30 pm worship service. If you have any questions, please contact Lynnette @ 815/796-3216

NO Quilting on July 1

ANNA CIRCLE: Will meet on Thursday, July 6, 2023, @ 1 pm in the Munson Room. We will continue our current Bible study, The Women of Easter. We will be starting our discussion of Chapter 5— O Most Afflicted—pages 87 to 113. Visitors and new members are always welcome to join us on the 1st Thursday afternoon of each month. Questions—please call Lynnette @ 815/796-3216.

KNITWITS: *Knitwits has gone on hiatus until after Labor Day*

JOYFUL WOMEN: Will be on hiatus until after Labor Day. Joyful Women is open to all ladies of First Lutheran, as well as their family and friends. Contact: Vicki Day @ 815/844-5420. or Sue Hiatt @ 815/844-7933 with questions

Please Note:

If you have submitted a name for the prayer list & would like them to receive a "Thinking of You" card, please provide the church office with a good address so that the volunteer coordinator can mail the card to the proper address.

Also, please update the office if/when the name on the prayer list can be removed (or any "address" changes).

Thank you.

~Beth Ray~





Thank you to all who have continued to generously donate food and supplies to the Livingston Area Food Pantry. The mission and social committee continues to monetarily support the pantry, especially during these difficult times when so many are unemployed and money is tight. During the month of **July** we would like to suggest:

Complete Pancake Mix (& syrup)

Peanut Butter (& Jelly)

Canned Meats (such as: Spam, chicken, etc.)

Laundry Detergent

Dish Soap

Toilet Paper

Paper Towels

Women's Feminine Products (including "pads" & tampons)

The pantry will accept **ALL** donations of **UNOPENED, NON-PERISHABLE** FOOD/SUPPLIES.

The pantry encourages us to purchase items inexpensively at Dollar Tree and Dollar General.

The church is open daily (M-F) from 8:00 am-3:30 pm. The grocery carts are located in the fellowship hall & by the ramp door, and are checked weekly so that I might make deliveries to assist in feeding our community members. I truly appreciate the support members of First Lutheran have given to our pantry for so many years. Bless you all for your generous and giving hearts!

~~Chris Lauritzen~~

July Birthdays

Kaitlyn Hamilton	7/3	Melissa Horning	7/9	Betty Bartley	7/25
Joanie Swenson	7/3	Stephen Hartke	7/10	Karol Hall	7/25
Tina Melvin	7/4	Christine Brown	7/13	Candy Jones	7/27
Rupert Rodriguez	7/4	Kara Mehrkens	7/13	Patti Drengwitz	7/29
Phyllis Bradley	7/5	Steve Croft	7/14	Bob Thompson	7/29
Korri Mehrkens	7/5	Sharrie Orendorff	7/14	Kerry Foster	7/30
Roger Henkel	7/7	Winnifred Cox	7/16		
Parker Krominga	7/7	Terry Pinkerton	7/17		
James Brown	7/8	Keith Tribley	7/17		
Carson Kelly	7/8	Brian Friedman	7/18		
Nancy LoPiccalo	7/8	Corey Johnson	7/19		
Cathy Robinson	7/8	Julie Rapp	7/23		
Katy Wiechmann	7/8	Barbara Sear	7/23		
Erma Hesterberg	7/9	Roger Weber	7/23		



Mission/Social Committee Project: LWR School Kits

Impossible to believe, but it is once again time to think of collecting supplies for school kits that are distributed to needy children throughout the world. We will run the collection from mid-July through September. Again, there will be bins placed at the entrances to the church. I will also run off extra sheets near the bins, so feel free to take on for when you are shopping.

Items needed for the School Kits:

- * 70-sheet notebooks of wide- or college-ruled paper 8" x 10 ½" (**NO** loose-leaf paper)
- * 30 centimeter rulers, or rulers with centimeters on one side and inches on the other
- * Pencil sharpeners
- * Blunt end scissors (**NO** pointed ends)
- * Unsharpened #2 pencils with erasers
- * Black or blue ballpoint pens (**NO** gel ink)
- * Boxes of 16 or 24 crayons (**ONLY** sizes)
- * 2 ½ inch erasers

NOTE: LWR **cannot** accept any supplies other than those on the list. We ended last year with an abundance of pencils that will carry over to this year. We are usually mostly in need of the spiral notebooks, as **FOUR** of them go in each kit. Please make sure they are the 70-sheet, 8 x 10½ spiral notebooks. They are often sold for 15-25 cents during the back-to-school sales during July & August.

Last year we delivered 98 school kits for distribution! Hopefully, we can do as well this year. Thank you to First Lutheran for your support and generosity.

Linda Frank, School Kit Chair

Prayer Works



**Please Pray
for our
Members &
Friends:**

Robbie Becker, Phyllis Bradley, Sharon Carr, Ron Cox, Deb Follmer, Kerry Foster, Terri Heins, Carol Jones, Jim Jones, Jean Miller, Beth Ray, Rupert & Cindy Rodriguez, Cheryl Weber, Stephen Weber, Cindi Arnold, Pastor Gabe Baumgardner, Jonathan Becker, Windy Birch, Betty Edwards, Katy Edwards, Marsha Follet-Pauly, Jeff Garretson, Sheila Geschwind, Katherine Harding, Wolf Knappe, Joni Koch, Alisha Landrus, Owen Lyons, Tim Mehn, Jakob Miller, Rochelle Nolan, Michael O'Shea, Rick Ours, Matthew Paternoster, Chris Ross, Anita Sands, Gail Shaffer, Steve Shaffer, Eric Smith, Kathy Telford, Gavin Wallace, John Winchester, John Wolf, Tim Woodard, & Pat & Jerry.

CHILDREN: Elliot Buchheit, Able Fuchs, Kylene Krominga, Lucy McKinley, & Jalene Woolford

Let us pray for the following members

Accolade: Phyllis Bradley

*Evenglow Lodge:
Harley & Marian Mayer*

Evenglow Inn: Delores Schultz

*Goldwater Care (formerly Good Sam):
Ron Cox, Kerry Foster & Maurine Kalkwarf*

IL Veteran's Home, LaSalle: Jim Jones

HIPAA Laws...Because of the HIPAA Laws, if you would like the Pastor to visit you in the hospital, **you must call the church office** (or have the Chaplain at the hospital call the office).

Meetings in July

**Mondays, July 17 @ 9:15 am
Bible Study @ The Pointe**

**Mondays, July 3 & 17 @ 6:30 pm
Euchre**

**Saturdays from 9 am—5 pm
Comforting Ladies (Quilters)**

**Tuesday, July 4
OFFICE CLOSED**

**Wed., July 5—Sat., July 8
Helping Hands Sales Benefit Mission/Social**

**Thursday, July 6 @ 1 pm
Anna Circle**

**Monday, July 10 @ 6:30 pm
Memorial Committee**

**Tuesday, July 11
NO Council this month**

**Friday, June 30—Friday July 14
Pastor on vacation**

**Tuesday, July 18, 2023 @ 7 pm
Worship Committee**

**Sunday, July 23 @ 3 pm
Pastor to Flatville for installation service**

**Monday, July 24 @ NOON
Newsletter Deadline**

**Monday, July 24 @ 7 pm
Mission/Social Committee**

**Friday, July 28 @ 9 am
Newsletter Assembly**

Come join the fun every other Monday night



Mark your calendars for the first and third Mondays of the month. Spread the word.

We will open doors at 6 pm, play begins at 6:30 pm. Cost is \$4/person

We want everyone who attends to feel safe and comfortable. Please do not attend if you do not feel well .

If there are any questions, please direct them to Fred Shirley.

July 3 & 17 August 7 & 21 September 4 & 18 October 2 & 16

HOW TO WATCH OUR CHURCH SERVICES ONLINE:

YOUTUBE: www.firstlutheranyoutube.org

You can also subscribe to our YouTube channel by going to YouTube and searching for "Pontiac First Lutheran"

OUR CHURCH WEBSITE: <https://firstlutheranpontiac.org/live-stream/>

APPLE TV & ROKU: *Download an app called "Box Cast" and search for a channel called "Pontiac First Lutheran" Once you find it, make it one of your favorites and you can watch from your tv or phone!*

FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/pontiacfirstlutheran/>

Go to this link and request to be added to the group. Once you are added you will get notifications of our next service and see past services!

TWITTER: <https://twitter.com/FirstPontiac>

If you have the twitter app, search for "First Pontiac" and you can 'follow' us on Twitter!



First Lutheran Church
Worshiping Christ - Serving Our Neighbor



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Fax: 815-844-7580

Email: info@firstlutheranpontiac.org

Pastor Carlin: carlinours@gmail.com

704/775-9823

www.firstlutheranpontiac.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



J U L Y
2 0 2 3

“Worshiping Christ, Serving Our Neighbor”

Weekend Worship Schedule

Sat. 5:30 pm

Sun. 8:00 am

Sun. 10:30 am

Sunday School 9:15 am

Our Staff

Pastor: Carlin Ours
Office Admin: Beth Ray
Acct: Angel Hall
Custodian: DeAnn Dennis
Vol. Coord: Beth Ray
Choir Dir: Joseph Durbin

2023 Congregational Council:

Jim Drengwitz, President	Jeff Bressner
Michael Carlson, V. President	Christine Brown
Cathy Robinson, Secretary	Elizabeth Diemer
Steve Ray, Treasurer	Al Fahsbender
Michelle Janssen, Fin. Secretary	MaryAnn Johnson
Stewart Alvey	Julie Rapp