

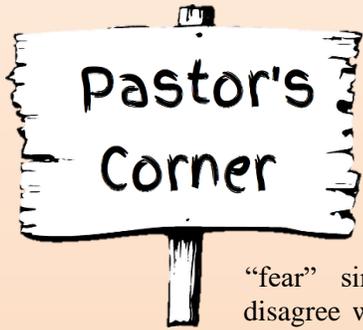
FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

Volume 5, Issue September, 2020 928-535-9575 2750 Mogollon Drive, Overgaard, AZ 85933

www.faithlutheranovergaard.org

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES – 9:30 am

Fear -or- Faith



I hear a lot about of fear today. On the one hand there is what I call “mis-labeled” fear. Some accuse others of this “fear” simply because they disagree with the premise that something is necessarily or inherently “good” or “beneficial”. So we hear words like “transphobic”, “homophobic”, and “Islamophobic” when the accused may not, in fact, harbor *any* fear (or even personal resentment) against the particular group or individual ... just disagreement. For instance, one is not necessarily “xenophobic” (afraid of ‘other people’) simply because one draws a distinction between lawful and illegal immigrants.

Yet, the suffix “-phobic” (afraid of) is frequently added to people-group descriptions in order to demean someone with whom one might disagree ... as if to suggest the alternate point of view or opinion stems from a completely irrational terror of someone or something that is perfectly benign, harmless, righteous, and acceptable ... in fact; someone or something that should (MUST, even) be *celebrated*. The intended, hardly subtle, implication is that the accused “irrational and terrorized” individual of the differing opinion is, “quite obviously”, an ignorant, unenlightened, troglodyte of a racist bigot (and quite probably; a misogynist, to boot!).

The use of the suffix “-phobic”, then, is ironic, as it tends to be employed by people who are genuinely intolerant (and actually afraid) of differing opinions. It is used to end the conversation and silence free exchange of thought. Therefore, the practice properly understood could really lend itself to some creative uses. For example, how about “Democrat-o-phobic” or “Republican-o-phobic”? We could see “vegetable-o-phobic” employed to put steak lovers in their place.

Or maybe “good-music-o-phobic” could be used against people who prefer Classical music (although I doubt if anyone would get away with calling a *Country* music fan that in *our* town!).

On the other hand “real” fear is actually quite prevalent in our society today. We have what some would consider acceptable (and not entirely unreasonable) fears. Fear of spiders; Fear of snakes; Fear of leaving the house; Fear of heights; Fear of enclosed spaces; Fear of water; Fear of fire; Fear of flying (which is really fear of *crashing*); and my personal favorite – Fear of clowns.

More and more, however, we are seeing some other fears surfacing that are becoming increasingly pronounced – Fear of what disease *might* do to us or our loved ones (even though we’re *not* afraid of getting behind the far more deadly wheels of our cars!); Fear of political parties. Fear of disease. Fear of terrorism. Fear of conspiracy. Fear of foreign interference; Fear of Police; Fear of certain candidates or politicians; Fear of “them”; Fear of losing power; and Fear of losing control.

Ultimately, that is what *real* fear is all about – loss or lack of control or power. Think back on your earliest fears. What were you afraid of? Was it really the dark (absence of light to see what is *really* there), or was it what you thought *MIGHT BE* in the dark? That foul, horned and hairy, bloody-fanged, under-the-bed monster with evil eyes glowing like two coals you just knew to be stronger than you and intent on your slow and painful demise. You were afraid you weren’t in control of your immediate future. You were afraid that you were powerless to defend yourself against the raging strength that you were *sure* was a hair’s breadth away from ripping you open throat to gullet. If only you were bigger. If only you were stronger. If only *you* were in control.

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MONTHLY MEETINGS & EVENTS



Sep 01 – Church Cleaning 9:00am

Sep 09 – Pastor in Phoenix

Sep 21 – Elders Meeting 9:00am
- Women's Ministry 1:00pm
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Sep 22 – Council Meeting

*Pot Lucks suspended
during COVID restrictions*

**September Rummage Sale
postponed until May of
2021**



Women's Ministry

**Open to ALL women who attend
Faith Lutheran Church!**

Women's Ministry activity in general has been slowed by COVID restrictions. Accordingly, the Rummage Sale planned for September has been postponed until May of 2021 as limiting occupancy of the Sanctuary to 50 would prove impossible.

Seminary Student Bill Winters has been "adopted" for this Academic year to receive monthly support from Women's Ministry. He is married with 3 children.

Pastor's Office Hours

Mondays - 10am - 4pm *In the Office*
Tuesdays - 10am - 12pm *In the Office*
Wednesdays - *Visitation Day*
Thursdays - 10am - 12 pm *In the Office*

**Call for appointment -
928-535-9575 or 323-717-4390
revnwirtz@yahoo.com,
or just drop in, or call anytime**



CHURCH COUNCIL UPDATE

- We are still financially "in the black" ... but winter *is* coming.
- Building fund now almost \$5K
- South End of the Prayer Garden is now complete (thanks Lin & Jerry) except for final electrical trench.
- Faith Lutheran signs on town entrances revisited. Pastor will contact chamber re requirements.

Birthdays

Sept 6 Bill Pebler
Sept 7 Patty Wirtz
Sept 7 Kris Gram
Sept 18 Wayne Minde
Sept 28 Joyce Gill

Anniversaries

None



Bible Studies & Sunday Services

Bible Studies

Sundays – 8:00 am: 2 Peter
– 10:45 am: Youth Confirmation
Thursdays – 9:30 am: 2 Samuel
- 3:00 pm: Adult Confirmation

Sunday Services

9:30 am

Sunday Services can be listened to on the website

www.faithlutheran.org/worship

(audio usually posts by 1:00pm Sunday)

FEAR -or- FAITH (Continued from page 1)

And so began our life-long quest for self-determination, power, and control. Sadly, though, it seems to be an endless and futile quest. If what we are looking for is ultimate power and control, we will always know only disappointment and failure, as we will always eventually “come up short”. One thing I learned in over 30 years of practicing martial arts is that, sooner or later, there will *always* be somebody stronger, bigger, badder, and better than you ... ALWAYS.

If you believe that *wealth* is the key to power and control, you will never be satisfied, because there will never be enough. The more you have, the more you will think you “need”. Solomon knew this when he wrote, “*He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity.*” (Ecclesiastes 5:10)

If you seek power by climbing the corporate or political ladder, you will eventually be equally disappointed. The “Boss” or CEO will never have total control and power ... even over his/her own company. They are ultimately subject to the whims of the board and shareholders ... and even more to the market and general consuming public. It is the same in politics. Even the president finds him/herself in a struggle with the other branches of government ... and finally, at the mercy of the voter. Even the Supreme Court Judges find themselves ultimately bound by the “constraints” of the Law. Even for ruthless tyrants and dictators, most deal with constant fear and suspicion of the “unseen” threat to their power and position. In the end, that fear itself is more powerful than they, themselves, have sought to become.

Ultimately, if we remember four truths about fear, we need never be oppressed by or obsessed with it ever again.

Fear is what is used to usurp control over us and enslave us.

Unreasonable fear is not healthy, but always destructive. Healthy fear is *respect* for things that truly *are* dangerous or more powerful than us. (I *respect* electricity, but am not terrorized by it. I know that while it can kill me, it can also be of great help to me ... if used correctly and wisely)

Fear is finally put away when there is confidence (trust) in that which is more powerful than the thing that you fear.

Are *we* ever REALLY in “control”? No. Is there some enemy and evil under-the-bed monster or power who *is* really in control? While there *may* be some creature who *thinks* they are supremely powerful and in control, the fact is, they aren't.

There *is* One who is more powerful than anything or anyone we know. There *is* One who *is* in control of all things ... and has never lost, nor will ever lose control over *any* thing. There *is* One who deserves the fear of respect, yet does *not* desire to evoke the fear of terror, but rather freedom of gratefulness for every good and loving gift received through liberating trust (faith) in His good will and love for us.

And this One is *not* a creature, but so much more and beyond what any creature could ever imagine or really aspire to; He is the very Creator Himself. He is the One who exists beyond all matter, time, space, *and* evil that would seek to terrorize and enslave all of His creation. Yet this Creator has Himself come into that creation to confront evil to its face, and defeat it once and for all at the cross, where evil thought it should have won ... where evil's greatest power, death, was swallowed up forever by the author of Life, when He broke its chains and rose from the grave, which is ultimately our greatest and most powerful fear and enemy.

So, according to the fourth point, all of our fear *can* be put away when we trust in Him who has proven to be more powerful than any thing that we fear; when we trust in His Word that as surely as He broke the chains of death, not only for Himself, but for us as well, He has also broken the chains of terror and debt that would and are trying to be used to enslave us. In Christ Jesus, our debt has been paid. In Him, our chains have been broken and removed. In Him, we find the end of terrible fear, and the freedom of tender fealty to His loving good will toward us.

When I am afraid, I will trust in you. In God, whose word I praise, in God I trust; I will not be afraid. What can mortal man do to me? (Ps 56:3-4)

“Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the LORD GOD is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation.” (Isaiah 12:2)