

## ***Matthew 12:33-37***

"Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit. You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned." - Matthew 12:33-37

These are harsh words that come from the mouth of Jesus. It is important to note that he was speaking to his enemies – those who didn't believe in him and even wanted to kill him. They were like bad trees that only could produce bad fruit. The hatred in their hearts toward Jesus caused them to speak spitefully against him. We recall how they accused Jesus of driving out a demon from a man by the power of the devil, thus implying that Jesus was in league with Satan himself (Matthew 12:22-24). It's no wonder, therefore, that Jesus addresses them as a "brood of vipers."

How different are believers where God has planted faith in Jesus as Savior! They're like good trees which produce good fruit – their sincere trust in Jesus and their deep love for him lead them to speak well of Jesus. "For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks," Jesus teaches. The God-given faith in the hearts of believers will show in the way they speak about Jesus. The opposite is similarly true. Not believing in Jesus will be revealed in the manner that people talk about Jesus and the Christian faith.

Keeping in mind that words indicate faith or unbelief in the heart, helps us understand what Jesus means about being acquitted or condemned by our words on judgment day. God's Word is very clear: we are saved by faith alone, which is a gift of God, not by what we say or do (Ephesians 2:8,9). Although it is not our words and actions that save us, our words and our actions are how we show our faith or lack of it. Thus on the last day when God brings all people under his final judgment, it

will be on the basis of faith alone in Jesus. The evidence for his judgment will be our words and actions.

Try as we may, though, we don't always speak and act consistently with the faith in our hearts. Sometimes what we say (or don't say) doesn't show that we are faithful followers of Jesus. Very often we are led to regret the words that we let slip from our lips or the times that we should have confessed Jesus but didn't. But the good news is that Jesus died for all our sins – including our sinful speech. Therefore, by faith in Jesus we don't need to fear what will happen on judgment day. We have the blessing of God's forgiveness and will be saved from condemnation through Jesus.

Prayer: Jesus, forgive me when my words don't always indicate that I am one of your believers. Take away my fear of God's judgment by focusing my heart on your death by which you paid the penalty for all of my sin. In the peace of forgiveness, help me speak and live more consistently with the gift of faith in my heart. Amen.

## ***Pastoral Vacancy***

Our worship services will continue on the same schedule till Memorial Day. Services will continue at 8:00 AM and 10:30 AM. For April 22<sup>nd</sup>, Pastor Schupmann will lead our services, also Bible study and Sunday school will continue to be held at 9:15 AM.

Pastor Schupmann will provide pastoral care during the vacancy. He has been our vacancy pastor in the past. Feel free to contact him as needed; his contact information is: Home: 630-859-3725 Church: 630-907-1333 Email: [philipschupman@msn.com](mailto:philipschupman@msn.com). You may also contact Dan Woltman by phone at (630) 483-3049 or by email at [wolt2012@comcast.net](mailto:wolt2012@comcast.net).

Pastor Prange our circuit pastor will be assisting our congregation by arranging pastors for our Sunday services. If you need to reach him, he can be reached at (847) 965-7340 (church), (847) 663-9443 (home) or by email at [pprange@juno.com](mailto:pprange@juno.com).

### ***Bible Study - Heroes of Faith***

Hebrews 11 is like the Bible's Hall of Fame, describing people who did or witnessed amazing things--not by their own power or skill, but by God's gift of faith. Join us Sundays at 9:15 a.m., as we look at the lives of these Heroes of Faith and learn to trust God in our own lives.

### ***Weekly Mission Prayer***

*Bolivia* – Holy Spirit, guide the work of the Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Bolivia as they strive to grow in your Word. Bless our instructors who continue to train the believers in your Truth. Encourage these seven congregations so that they may reach out to those around them with your life-giving gospel. Amen.

### ***Lawn Mowing Help Needed***

Pastor & Elisabeth are seeking someone who is willing to mow the lawn at their house in Elgin until it sells. Anyone who might be willing to help them in this way is asked to contact Dale Manzel.

### ***Pastor's Final Sunday***

Today Pastor Wagner will lead worship and preach his final sermon here at Abiding Peace. We wish him and his family the Lord's blessings on their ministry in Columbus, OH. Their new address will be 2734 Alder Vista Dr, Columbus, OH 43231.

### ***LWMS Convention***

Want an easy launch point to venture on your own to Mount Airy, North Carolina, the home of all your Mayberry friends, or to the Winston Cup Museum? How about golf, minor-league baseball, children's and art museums, fine Piedmont crafts, and wineries? All of these are very close to Winston-Salem, North Carolina, the site of the Annual LWMS Convention

June 21-24, 2012. Early Bird registration must be postmarked by April 2; all others postmarked by May 1 to avoid late fee. For more news, please visit the convention Web site [www.lwms2012convention.com](http://www.lwms2012convention.com) and [www.VisitWinstonSalem.com](http://www.VisitWinstonSalem.com)

### ***This Week Birthday's & Anniversary's***

- April 18, Ruth Buck Birthday
- April 19, Heidi Christiansen Birthday
- April 19, Isabella Crosley-Turner Birthday
- April 20, Becky Miller Birthday
- April 20, Jeff Bruemmer Birthday
- April 20, Todd & Michelle Jensen's Anniversary 29 years

### ***Serving the Lord Today***

- Ushers (8:00): Dale Manzel, Bill Miller
- Ushers (10:30): Doug Salzwedel, Howard Smith, Earl McCormack
- Accompanist: David Frick
- Refreshments: Cook, Baird

### ***Serving the Lord Next Week (4/16-4/22)***

- Church Cleaning: Stenning, Kreklow
- Ushers (8:00): Jeff & Jared Bruemmer
- Ushers (10:30): Dan Woltman, Dan & Rosie Schoebeck
- Accompanist: Margaret Schubring
- Refreshments: Schubring, Werda

### ***Give Thanks to the Lord!***

- Worship Attendance: 116 (35–8:00/ 81–10:30)
- Maundy Thursday: 30
- Good Friday: 35
- Heritage Woods Worship: 16